

AutoSave for System Platform

Frequently Asked Questions



Q1: What is AutoSave for System Platform?

A1: AutoSave for System Platform (A4SP) is an endorsed third-party software product built by MDT Software. AutoSave for System Platform complements AVEVA System Platform, formerly Wonderware, and the AVEVA Development Studio and IDE solution with unparalleled change management lowering risk and increasing control. It allows engineers to archive and retrieve versioned objects, templates, and instances for AVEVA System Platform as well as manage the versions. This delivers a high level of integrity assurance for AVEVA System Platform applications while lowering life-cycle automation system maintenance costs. The AutoSave user interface closely resembles the IDE interface for consistent developer familiarity and quick learning curve. Additional features include the ability to compare two revisions and report differences, and restore an object from AutoSave to the Galaxy Repository.

Q2: What are main benefits of AutoSave for System Platform?

A2: Benefits include:

- On AVEVA System Platform 2020 systems A4SP v5 runs without the need for a DevStudio to be running on the GR Node!
- Provides an “undo” capability to remove unwanted changes to objects and restore a previous version of an object.
- Enables comparison between versions of an object and detailed identification of differences
- Extends the AVEVA System Platform audit tracking capability with significant extra value.
- Ensures that intellectual property in the system design is retained.
- On AVEVA System Platform 2020 systems, A4SP v5 no longer requires an additional GR Access license to run!
- Allows for greater experimentation to be done during design phases to test new ideas with rapid rollback of undesirable changes.
- Assists in the mitigation and management of conflicts during development of a new system

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Q3: What key business challenges are addressed?

A3: AutoSave for System Platform addresses the following challenges commonly faced in automation environments:

- **Removal of undesirable changes** - The key to “undoing” an undesirable program change is to maintain a history of all revisions. With AutoSave for System Platform users can access and restore prior copies of objects which are essential in restoring plant applications quickly and correctly.
- **Access to prior versions of objects** – Each object’s version history is stored in AutoSave for comparison or reuse.
- **Ability to detail differences in versions** – AutoSave for System Platform provides the ability to compare any two versions of an object with detailed identification of changes.
- **Need for insight into an object’s associations** – A template may have many instances; AutoSave for System Platform provides the ability to see how one object is associated with others.
- **Need to restore object changes following a Galaxy restoration** – If a Galaxy becomes corrupted and must be restored from a backup, AutoSave for System Platform can update all objects that were modified after the backup was performed, so no work is lost.
- **Need to Schedule Galaxy backups** – The ability to schedule your galaxy backups, and maintain automatically a fixed number of backups, in a central location.
- **Need for historical reporting of changes** - A4SP provides a historical (configurable) report of objects changed over time.
- **New for A4SP version 5.0** – A4SP will run on any SP2020 galaxy without the need for additional GR Access licensing or need for a DevStudio resident on the node. This means even run-time galaxies that are not supposed to change except during designated update periods can be constantly verified as unchanged (for compliance audits, etc.) and galaxies where the DevStudio is used from a mobile device (laptop) can now be constantly monitored for changes.

Q4: What are the main features of AutoSave for System Platform?

A4: The main features include:

- Monitors incoming activity on the Galaxy Repository (GR) system while capturing changes as they are made.
- Actively manages the GR to track changes for multiple users, simultaneously.
- Intuitive client interface provides access to historical data archived in the AutoSave Server, including graphical objects, templates, instances, client controls and managed InTouch applications.

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- Additional tabs of information, such as “Inheritance” and “Derivation”, provide additional data that is not found in the IDE.
- Operations are a single-click away to provide users with the ability to compare or restore to a prior revision of a graphical object, template or instance.
- Full Galaxy backups can be scheduled or performed through the A4SP client. Each backup is stored as a revision in the AutoSave archive.
- Reporting of the history of object changes can be performed.

Q5: Is this a new product?

A5: AutoSave for System Platform has been Endorsed since 2011 and is built upon the MDT AutoSave change management system framework from MDT Software. MDT AutoSave is the market leading change management solution from MDT Software, the inventors of change management software for programmable devices. For over 30 years MDT has provided market leading change management solutions around all major brands of PLC, CNC, Robot, HMI and SCADA system to customers worldwide in a wide range of industries.

Q6: What industries benefit from AutoSave for System Platform?

A6: While any AVEVA System Platform installation will benefit from AutoSave for System Platform, installations in the baggage handling, food & beverage, life sciences, manufacturing, mining, petro-chemical, utilities and water & wastewater markets, where change management and version control are critically important, will see the most benefit in AutoSave for System Platform. MDT AutoSave is currently being used in each of these industries, including companies managing thousands of automation devices per site, and some with only a few devices.

Q7: How does AutoSave for System Platform capture changes?

A7: The AutoSave for System Platform server software runs on the Galaxy Repository (GR) node and acts as a monitor of incoming activity while capturing changes as they are made. By actively managing the GR, AutoSave for System Platform can track changes for multiple users, simultaneously.

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Q8: How are changes/revisions accessed?

A8: AutoSave for System Platform has an intuitive client interface that provides access to historical data archived in the AutoSave Server. This includes graphical objects, templates, instances, client controls and managed InTouch applications.

- Additional tabs of information, such as “Inheritance” and “Derivation”, provide additional data that is not found in the IDE.
- Operations are a single-click away to provide users with the ability to compare or restore to a prior revision of a graphical object, template or instance.

Q9: What are the compare details provided for objects?

A9: AutoSave for System Platform will provide detailed compare details regarding object attributes and relationships for symbols (in the Graphic Toolbox), templates, instances and more.

Q10: Can AutoSave for System Platform track changes to multiple galaxies on my GR Node?

A10: Yes, AutoSave for System Platform provides support for tracking changes in multiple galaxies on a single GR node or multiple GR nodes.

Q11: Will AutoSave for System Platform enable me to restore deleted objects?

A11: Yes, AutoSave for System Platform will enable you to compare and restore objects that have been deleted from the Galaxy.

Q12: Does AutoSave for System Platform provide a way to backup and restore the entire galaxy?

A12: Yes, AutoSave for System Platform provides a Galaxy Backup command & scheduled operation, which will store the Galaxy backups within the AutoSave server and maintain multiple revisions, as desired. In addition, the restore of a Galaxy can be done from AutoSave for System Platform, as well as an up to date re-import of all objects as they last existed. This provides an up-to-the-minute restore capability for objects, if a system failure occurs.

Q13: Can objects in different Galaxies be compared to each other?

A13: Yes, AutoSave for System Platform can compare objects between Galaxies.

Q14: Will it support third-party information logged in the Galaxy, like PLC applications?

A14: AutoSave for System Platform will back-up anything that is defined as an object within System Platform.

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Q15: Are there any other products on the market that provide version control support for AVEVA System Platform?

A15: This is the only change management system that provides object-level change management for AVEVA System Platform. The only other options for change management available to AVEVA System Platform users are the Galaxy Backup via the Archestra SMC from AVEVA (which is useful in the event of a system corruption, but would not be workable to undo changes to individual objects as it would require a restoration of a prior version of the entire Galaxy) or manually backing up every object when an edit is made. This would be akin to manually exporting every email message you receive, every day, in order to have a particular message available outside of the email system.

Q16: Can AutoSave for System Platform be used as a general-purpose version control software for archiving, storing and retrieving other types of applications/source code (i.e. PLC, drawings, instrument calibrations?)

A16: Yes! Device modules can be added to the existing A4SP environment to provide advanced change management for a wide variety of programmable devices. The product can also provide source code version control for any PC-based application.

AVEVA
 ▶ InTouch
 ▶ System Platform

Atlas Copco
 ▶ PowerFocus
 ▶ PowerMACS

ABB
 ▶ ABB Robots*

AUTOMATIONDIRECT
 ▶ DirectSOFT 6

Automation Studio
 ▶ Automation Studio

CODESYS
 ▶ CODESYS v2.3

DENSO
 ▶ DENSO Robots

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 ▶ FANUC Robots
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 ▶ IFIX

G & L Motion Control
 ▶ PicPro*

inductive automation.
 ▶ Ignition SCADA

Kawasaki
 ▶ Kawasaki Robots

KUKA
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 Automation Change Management
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