VTC-Monitor

The Polycom video conferencing system monitor.

Version 1.0.1j

May 26, 2009

This product is in early testing stage. There will be many changes before final release. Please contact Gary Miyakawa with any suggestions and/or comments on this product.

Email info@vtcmonitor.com

VTC-Monitor was developed to help the VTC professional monitor the operational side of their Video Systems. It gives them information about the active calls (Bandwidth usage, Frame rate, packet loss, Jitter, etc.) This is all done without using Port 23, 24 or snmp traps. This product was written for the Polycom FX, VSX and HDX systems.

VTC-Monitor is extremely flexible and allows the user to decide exactly what they want to see. EVERY column is soft. They can save a list of video systems they wish to monitor and also, they can save the columns they wish to see. They are also able to drag and drop the columns to change their order but at this time, VTC-Monitor can not save that order.

VTC-Monitor also provides both audio and video indicators of call start, call end and lost connection to a monitored endpoint.

Please try out VTC-Monitor and let me know how it goes. What works well, what is missing and what you need to make your job easier.

Email: info@vtcmonitor.com

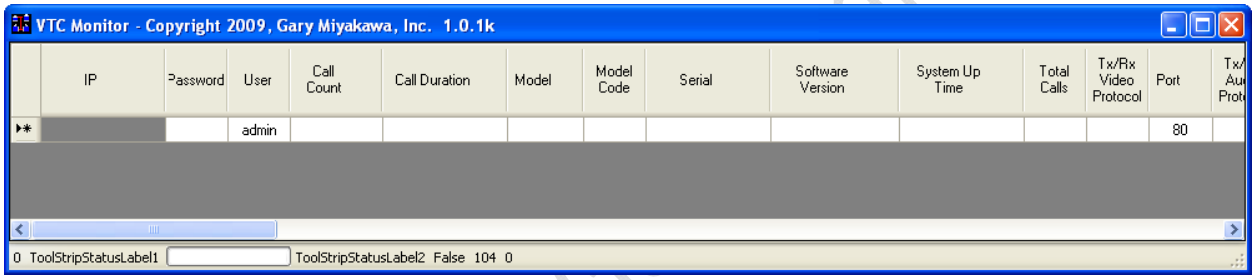
Installation of VTC-Monitor

VTC-Monitor has been tested on XP and Vista.

There are two files that VTC-Monitor will write to the harddrive. They are both located in the C:\ root. They are VTCMonitor_Sites.xml and VTCMonitor_Checked.xml. They are the files that are used to hold the sites and custom column list. They will get moved to the appropriate area by the release date. They are very small (less than 3kb).

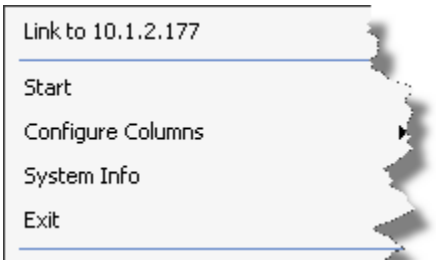
Installation is straight forward. Extract the .msi file from the VTCMonitorx.zip file to a directory and click on it. At that point it will be installed on your hard drive.

To start VTC-Monitor just click on the Icon (or program files). The system will come up with the basic (main) screen.

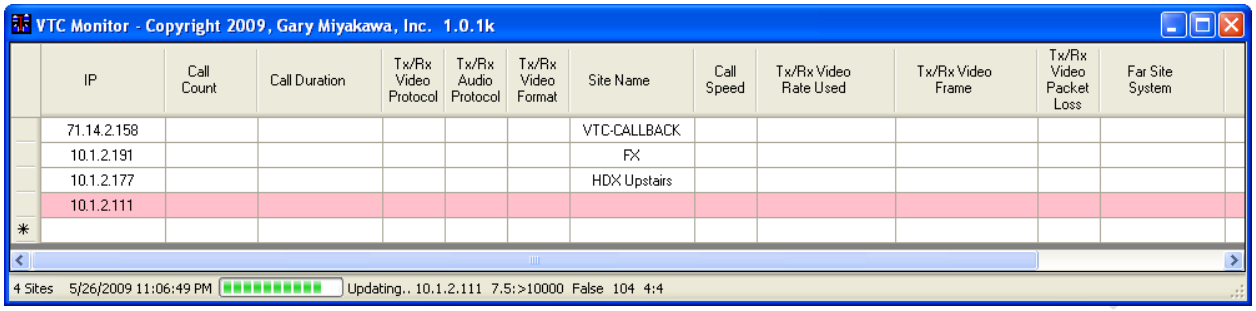


At this point in time, VTC-Monitor is up and running but waiting for sites to be monitored. To enter a site, just click on the IP Column of the first row. Then just type the IP address. If the system has a password or uses a port other than 80 for the web interface, then add those items to the appropriate columns. This version has a limit of 40 sites, the design goal is to support up to 200 sites in a future version.

To start the monitor, right click on any of the data cells (white) and click on the "Start" menu item. VTC-Monitor will then begin to contact the systems you have added. Note: This can take up to a minute to get started.

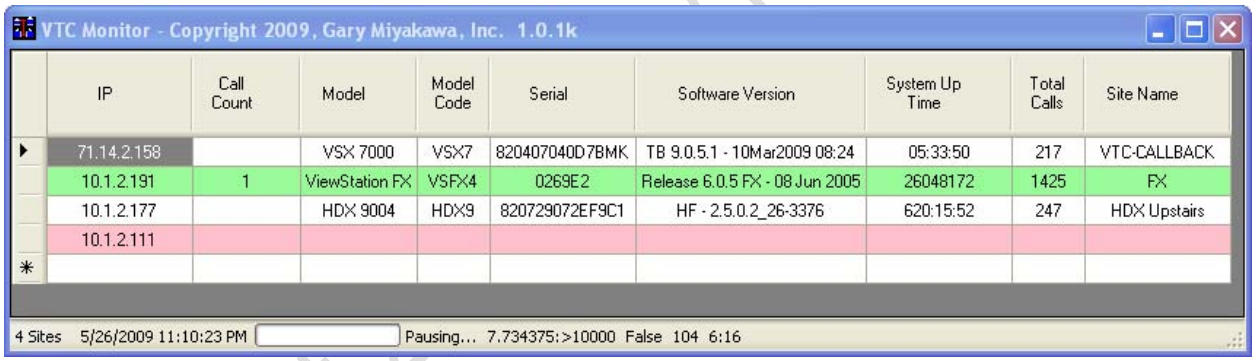


Once you click on start you will see the system start making contact with those sites. If VTC-Monitor can't contact one of the sites you entered, then the row will be turned a light red.



When first executing VTC-Monitor you may see this happen to the first entry in the table. Wait for the system to cycle a couple of times before you should worry that the system is offline. Offline is determined by VTC-Monitor's in ability to open a web page on that endpoint.

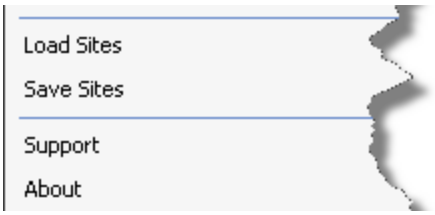
Once the systems have been contacted, you will see a screen like below.



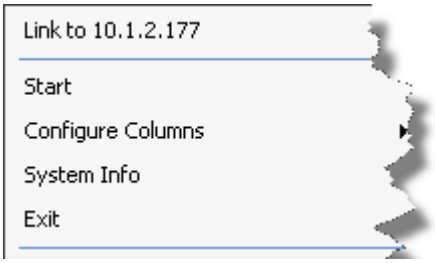
You will notice that VTC-Monitor has filled in all the site information including system up time and total number of calls (since reboot). Also, you will see that one of the system (10.1.2.191) is a light green indicating that system is in a call.

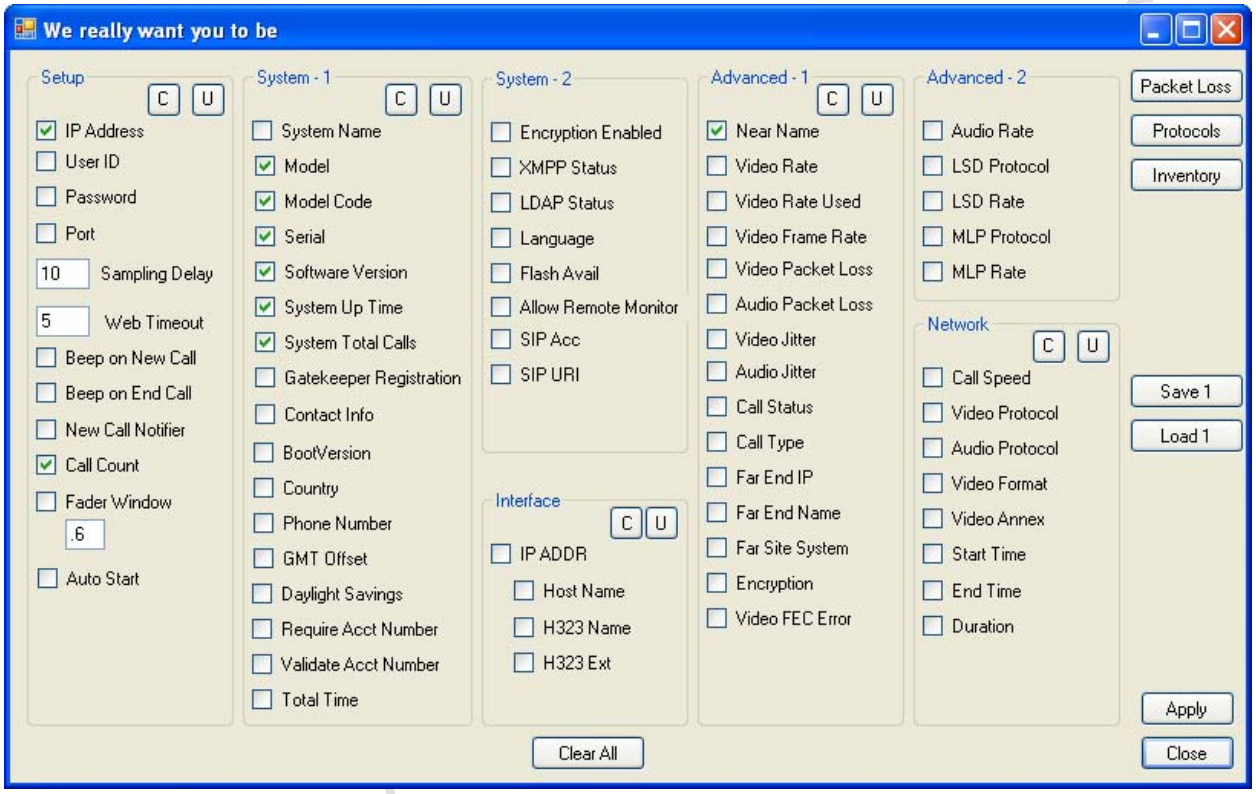
There are over 100 columns of information and I'm guessing that many of those are not of much interest to you. VTC-Monitor was designed to be very flexible allowing the user to determine what columns are important to you.

Before we leave this page, be sure and right click and then click on "Save Sites" button to save the sites you have inputted. This will make the restart of the VTC-Monitor much easier.



To limit columns you wish to see right click on a white cell and then click on “Configure Columns”. This will cause a new window to open.

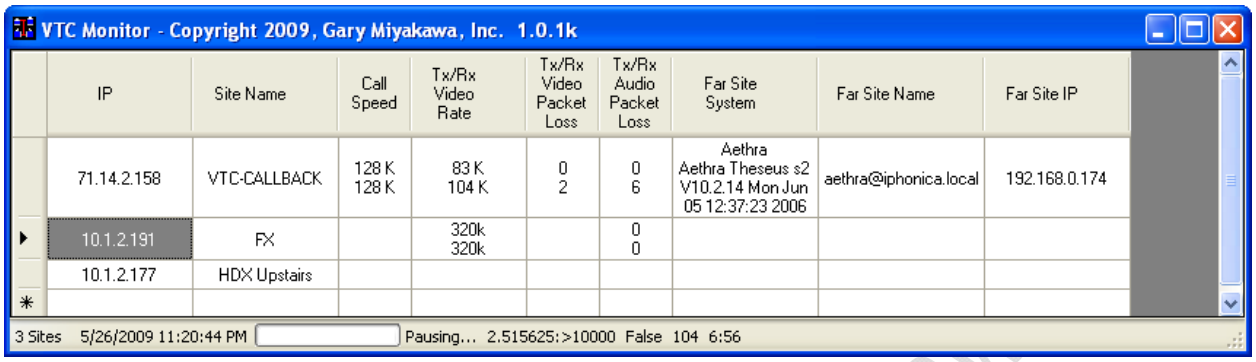




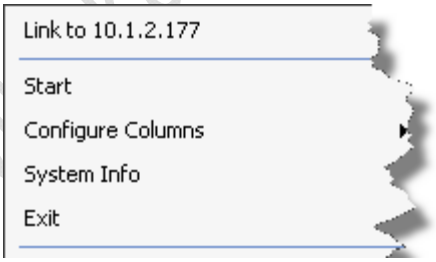
You see that every column has the ability to be shown/hidden. On the upper right side of screen are a couple of “preset” configurations. Packet Loss, Protocols and Inventory will limit the number of the columns to just what would be important for those functions. If you watch the main screen (the one with all the columns) you will see the layouts change as you click the buttons on the right side. If you check/uncheck an individual column, you will need to click the “apply” button to see the change on screen.

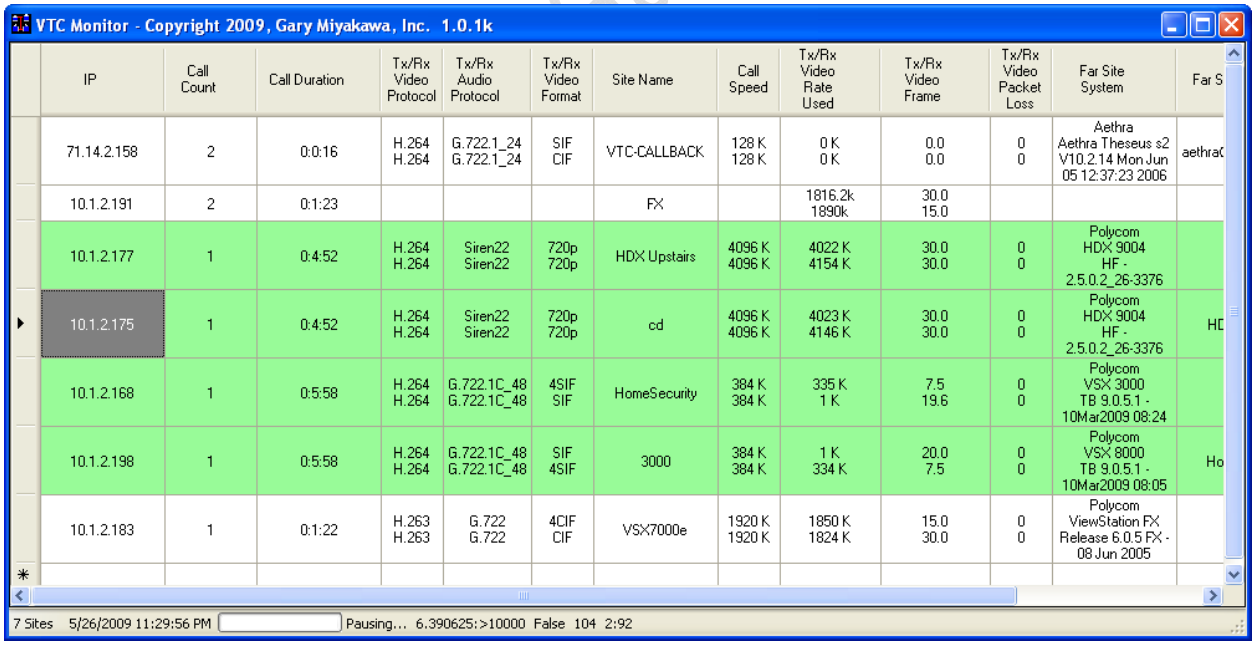
If you want a custom set of columns, just click the ones you want and then click “Save 1”. This will save the checked items which you can then reload at anytime by clicking “Load 1”. This will also save the order the columns will be shown.

Below is the layout you will get when you click on the “Packet Loss” button. As you can tell, many of the columns have been hidden. Also, at this point, you can drag and drop the column order.

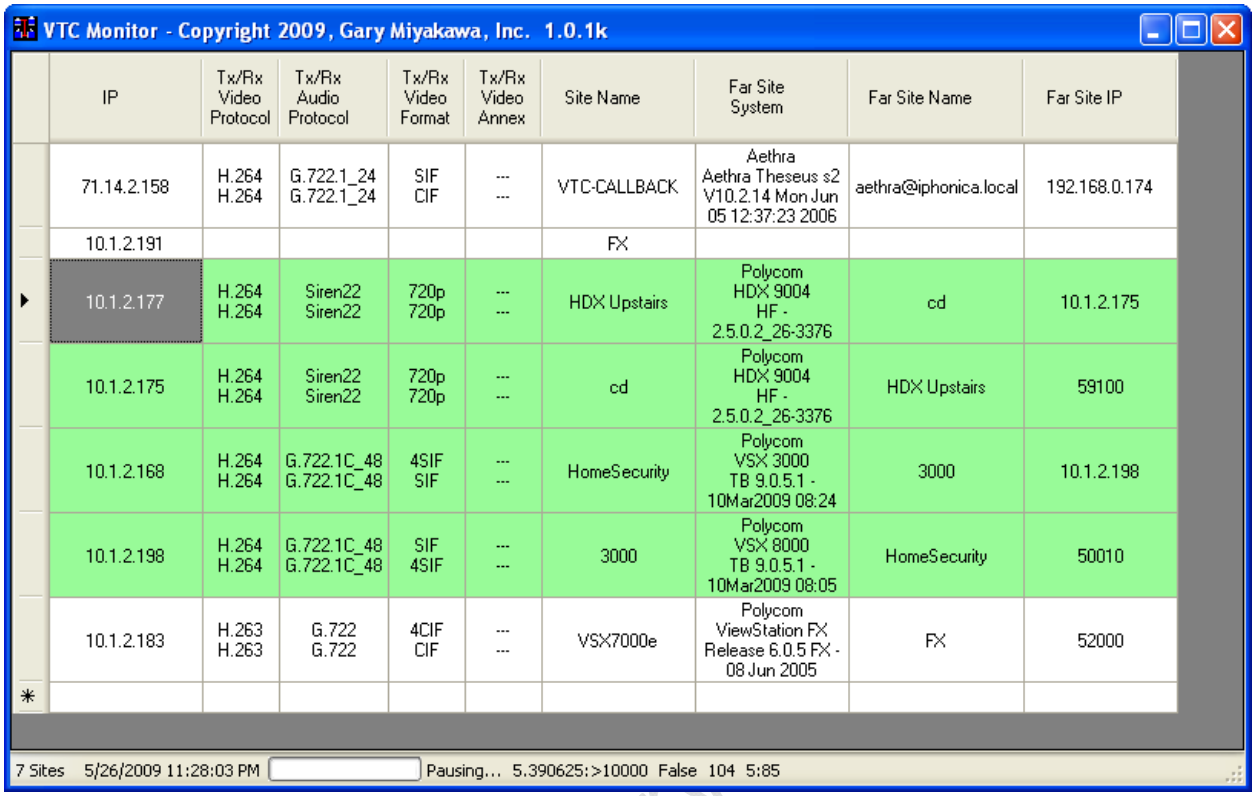


If you right click on any row, you will be given the option to open a browser directly to that system. Of course, you can click on any column and that will allow you to sort based on that column.

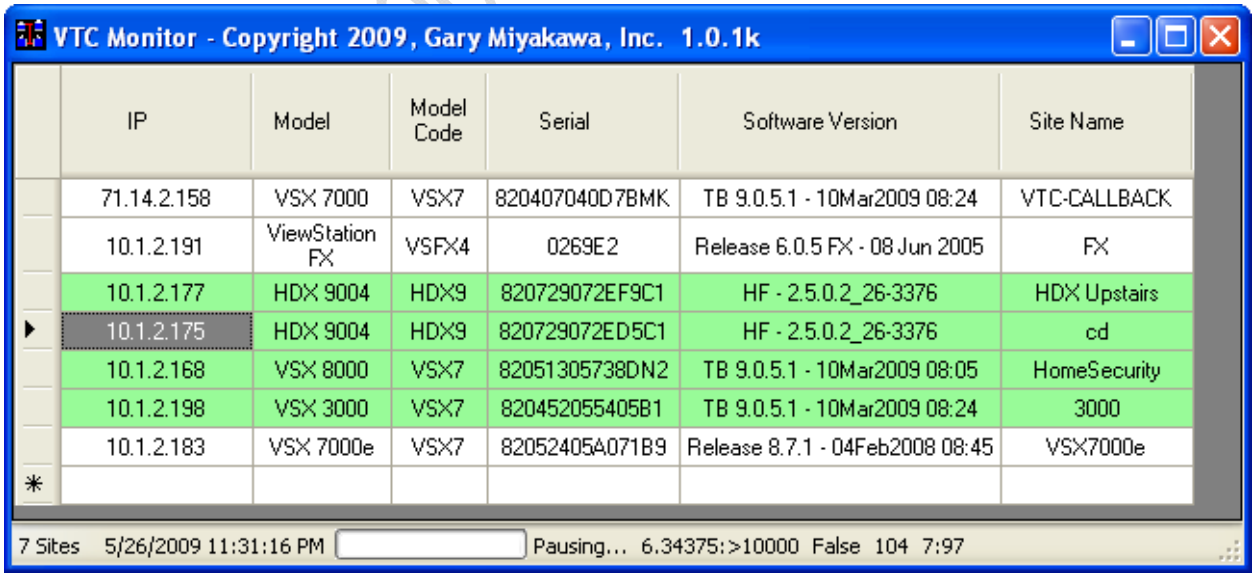




Here I’ve added the “Duration” column. The “Duration” column is an approximate duration of the calls just to give the operators an idea of how long the call has been up. If the call was up when VTC-Monitor is started, the duration will not be accurate.

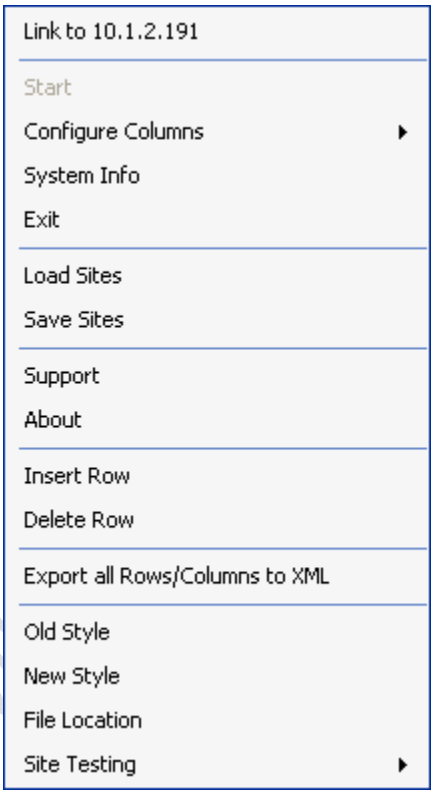


Here I've clicked on the "Protocol" button in the Configure page. It tells me the protocols that are in use with the calls. Notice that 10.1.2.183 is not green but still has protocol information. When a call completes, I don't erase the information so you can monitor what the last call to that site was.



Need those serial numbers for that software upgrade. Just click on the "Inventory" button in the configure page and you will get a listing that looks like this.

Right Click Options:



This gives you complete control over VTC-Monitor.

In the 1.0.1j version, some of these options are not yet implemented but should be available by release.

- "Link to" This allows direct linking (web browser) to the site.
- "Load/Save Sites" Load or save the list of sites currently on screen.
- "Support" goes directly to the support forum for VTC-Monitor
- "About" give a quick list of information about VTC-Monitor
- "Insert/Delete row" Allows the addition/deletion of a row
- "Export all data" Outputs all Columns/Rows to a text file. Location of this file can be found by clicking on "File Location"
- "Site Testing" Gives several levels of test for systems including Ping and Traceroute

Futures:

There is an extensive list of “possible” enhancements that I have but I would prefer to hear from people who are actually using VTC-Monitor to tell me what they need for this to be an operational tool.

I’m building a forums to allow quick communications with the folks using the product.

When VTC-Monitor is released, there will be a charge for the product (Annual basis).

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