Pentana VISION

What's New in Pentana Vision 3?

What is Pentana Vision 3.0?

Pentana Vision 3.0 is a general enhancement release to our Pentana Vision software, available from October 2013 onwards. It is available as a free upgrade to all supported customers and will be supplied as standard to new Pentana Vision customers including those who migrate from our Pentana Audit Work System ('PAWS').

This document is intended for Pentana partners and customers who currently use Pentana Vision 2.1 or prior, to help prepare for upgrade to Pentana Vision 3.0. Please refer to our separate Functional Overview or Help Guides if you need a more detailed description of general product features.

What does Pentana Vision 3.0 contain?

Pentana Vision 3.0 contains numerous general enhancements that will benefit both new and existing customers. Many of the changes are introduced as a direct response to feedback from customers using Pentana Vision 2.1 or prior. The enhancements in v3.0 are described below under the following headings:

- Logic-based Questionnaires

- LDAP integration

- Auto-populate and 'Get' features

- Reporting features

- Security features

- General usability enhancements

- Other specific enhancements

Logic-based Questionnaires

Pentana Vision 3.0 introduces a general facility to construct and complete logic-based audit questionnaires, utilizing our powerful logic engine as originally implemented in our Pentana Checker software. Pentana Checker is already used by thousands of customers worldwide to complete large and complex logic-based questionnaires, typically financial disclosure checklists. For more information about Pentana's financial disclosure questionnaire products, please visit: http://www.pentana.com/financial-disclosure/.

Within Pentana Vision 3.0, customers can author their own logic-based Questionnaires within the Library screens. Pentana can also offer standard questionnaires where a common need is identified. The compiled questionnaires can then be brought in and answered as needed within the relevant Audits. Question Answers can be flagged as 'Problem' or 'Alert' to bring them to manager attention and optionally given scores for subsequent analysis.

Questionnaires might range from very simple surveys such as an Audit Satisfaction Survey to large and complex ones such as detailed IT Controls Questionnaires. The Questionnaires feature is typically best applied in Compliance environments where:

- The questionnaire structure, questions and their allowed answers are fixed upfront;

- Questions become active/inactive based on the answers to earlier questions; and

- Users will not be allowed to create entirely new questions dynamically during an Audit.

LDAP integration

Pentana Vision 3.0 supports integration with UNIX based LDAP servers and Microsoft Active Directory, to simplify the maintenance of Staff and Contact details within the system. LDAP integration improves data quality, drives consistency and assists with security enforcement, for example by capturing the user's Identity and optionally linking LDAP attributes to Pentana Vision security concepts such as Organizational Unit and Departmental assignments.

Flexible configuration settings provide control over which LDAP attributes are searched and are mapped to which Pentana Vision fields. Separate configurations can apply for Staff versus Contact records and multiple LDAP directories can be configured within the same implementation.

When configured to use LDAP, end users will see additional menu options such as 'Add Person from LDAP' and 'Add Identity from LDAP'. The user may search for a person within a selected directory using a simple search screen and finally select from the list of results to add the person as a Staff or Contact within Pentana Vision.

There is also a 'Sync Person to LDAP' feature to allow subsequent updates to be synchronized in Pentana Vision.

Auto-populate and 'Get' features

Pentana Vision v2.1 already includes a number of features that enable auto-population and the manual 'get' (selection) of content from Libraries, Entity-level registers and other Audits. These features have been enhanced in Pentana Vision 3.0, including:

- Objectives, Risks, Controls and Tests (ORCTs) can now be optionally auto-populated into an Audit when it is set to 'Open'. This operates in a similar way to the existing Work Plan/Steps behaviour, according to optional 'Default' selections and Audit Type criteria.

- In Pentana Vision 2.1 the selection to 'Get' data was an all-or-nothing decision for a given Objective or Work Plan. In v3.0 users can make selections at a lower level of granularity, such as by individual Controls or Tests.

- When selecting to 'Get' from another Audit, in Pentana Vision 2.1 this required a precise match in terms of the Entity/Process Scope that the source Audit covers. This rule has been relaxed in order to allow users to select from Audits outside of the current Entity Scope (while still matching on the Process Scope).

Reporting features

The screen-based view and reporting features were already highly flexible in Pentana Vision 2.1 but there is always more that we can do in support of customer reporting requirements. Pentana Vision 3.0 includes the following general reporting enhancements:

- A new 'Report Mode' option is available and allows for more complex screen-based reports. In the read-only Report Mode, attributes can be included from all relevant 'parent' and 'child' objects of the current screen perspective, then saved as a 'view' for future use.

- A new column totalling feature allows for roll up values (e.g. sum, average, count) to be displayed against any numeric column that is displayed on screen.

- The 'Print Widget' and 'Export to Excel' options now also allow output of the currently selected record in detail, via the Properties Panel.

With regard to the automation of MS Word and MS Excel based reports, further enhancements in Pentana Vision 3.0 include:

- The ability to add new records in custom 'two-way templates'. For example, we can offer custom Findings & Actions templates in which the respondent can add a new Action, or a Risk Register template in which the respondent can add a new Risk or Control Assessment.

- Additional functions and new developer tools that help to simplify the process of custom template development for report authors.

- A user option to remove the automation mark-up after auto-population; this can be useful for one-time populations should the internal mark-up codes prove a distraction.

Security features

Enhancements to security features in Pentana Vision 3.0 include:

- Integration with LDAP as described above

- Ability to restrict access to Library content based on Departmental permissions; this can be useful if different elements of your Libraries apply to different groups of people within your implementation.

- Ability to set read permissions of 'Assigned' in respect of the various objects within each Entity or Audit; for example if you want to restrict your users such that they can see only the ORCTs, Steps or Findings/Actions for which they are the designated 'Owner'.

General usability enhancements

While Pentana Vision 2.1 is very flexible, powerful and generally intuitive, we often receive requests for improvement. General usability enhancements in Pentana Vision 3.0 include:

- Auto-save changes before executing commands; for example users can now enter their Test results and immediately mark as 'Complete' without having to save changes first.

- Ability to set two-way cross-references between items via a simple 'Copy Shortcut/Paste' mechanism, plus associated user interface improvements to display cross-references. This assists users with navigation between related items.

- Ability to move items from one parent to another via a 'Cut/Paste' method, for example if wanting to move a Control to a different Risk, etc.

- Ability to duplicate items via a 'Copy/Paste' method. This feature supports duplication of a full hierarchy of associated child items, for example when users duplicate a Control this can also duplicate child Tests, Attachments, etc.

- Ability to quickly re-order segmentations (pick list items) via 'Move Up/Down' options followed by a 'Reorder' command. The Reorder command will update all of the Order values based on the current screen display.

- Quickly expand/collapse child items on the screen data grids at the same time via a [Shift] + [Click] key combination. This can be particularly useful before reporting, if users wish to include all the child items in their output (see also Reporting Features).

- Ability to launch the same Audit multiple times in different tabs; this can assist in review navigation, if users find it inconvenient to jump to/from different screens within the Audit.

- Add emails and files as File Attachments by a simple 'drag-drop' directly from MS Outlook. Plus an option to initiate the Email of any File Attachment from within Vision.

- Right-click Context Menus have been consolidated, with similar items being moved into fly-outs in order to reduce overall size of the menus.

- Ability to wrap (rather than truncate) Data Grid column headers and an option to show/hide 'child' grid headers, which is useful when rearranging and sizing child columns.

- Guidance information can be entered in respect of Terminology and Segmentation (pick list) items and is displayed to users as tooltips in the Properties Panel.

- Allow controlled deletion of an item that has signed-off children without having to manually remove or update child items first. This includes the ability to delete an entire Audit even if it contains Complete/Approved items, for example, to quickly remove training or test data.

- The colour scheme has been adapted on several screens in response to feedback that the 'aura' background was too dark or distracting.

Other specific enhancements

Other specific enhancements delivered in Pentana Vision 3.0 include:

- Audits screen – Users can now see and navigate to all their assigned Audits, including those outside of their Org Unit scope.

- Audit screen – 'Check out' flags are available for display on the face of the Audits screen, so users can more easily identify which Audits are checked out.

- Offline Working – A new 'Export Read Only' option has been added. This is similar to a read-only 'check out' but saves the data to a zip file in a specified location. This option can be useful if required to share the Audit with a non-user, such as external auditors, for example.

- Audit Coverage – one can now multi-select the Audit Periods and Risk levels, for example if wishing to show coverage for planned Audits across multiple periods.

- Audit Reports – this is now split into two separate modules ('Findings & Actions' and 'Audit Reports') in order to improve clarity of the different functions. A sign-off cycle has also been implemented in respect of Audit Reports (Open, Complete, Approved), plus the ability to optionally assign an Owner and to capture Reviews and Review Points.

- Entity Risk Registers – Pentana Vision 3.0 reflects the 'External Assessments' feature more fully than in 2.1, for example in the various Analysis screens and in their treatment within 'Risk Review' type audits and related permissions.

- Staff – an Org Unit Navigator has been added (applies in Single client mode only)

- Analysis – additional fields have been exposed in order to provide more charting options.

- Terminology – new features to improve ease of maintenance, including 'Show Default Terms', 'Show Changed Terms' and Export to Excel, plus ability to set terminology for Property Grid Section Headers and Navigation ('Spine') Items.

Other internal changes have also been implemented in Pentana Vision 3.0 that would not be immediately apparent to customers, including:

- The application can be configured even more precisely to customer requirements, such as:

  o Restrict which items can be added to what parent; e.g. prevent adding Findings to anything other than Tests.

  o Hide unwanted features entirely; e.g. suppress the Risk & Control-related features for those customers that don't use R&Cs at all.

- A new system setting allows control of the maximum size allowed for any File Attachment.

- A new system setting allows spell checking to be disabled entirely; this is useful if working in multi-lingual environment where data may be entered in various languages.

Next Steps

We recommend that customers upgrade to Pentana Vision 3.0 at their earliest convenience. For more information about Pentana Vision 3.0, please contact Pentana or your local partner.