

Installing and Using Vidchecker with Vantage

This App Note
applies to
Vantage
Versions
6.3 - 7.1
& later

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Note: This guide is written for video professionals who are familiar with using Vantage. To implement applications in Vantage, you should know how to create workflows and submit jobs. If you aren't familiar with Vantage, we suggest that you review the *Vantage User's Guide* and *Vantage Domain Management Guide* as needed.

Synopsis

Vantage integrates Telestream's Vidchecker QC software tool for file-based media directly into a Vantage service and workflow action. This enables automated media QC checking, incorporated into any Vantage workflow.

Vidchecker performs a thorough check of the media: checking the file's video and audio parameters, characteristics, and quality extensively. It can also automatically correct the most common video and audio errors—providing not just legalization, but intelligent automated correction.

These are the most frequent Vidchecker users:

- Broadcasters, receiving file-based TV programs, shows, films, news, and commercials
- Distributors of file-based commercials, music videos, and other media
- VOD and Cable service providers
- Post production houses

The combination of Vidchecker and Vantage is ideal for those who face the challenges of checking file parameters, and video and audio contained in many different formats.

- Containers: MPEG-2 TS, MPEG-2 PS, MXF, MP4, MOV, ASF, AVI, LXF, GXF, Flash, MKV
- Formats: Web, Sub-SD, SD, HD, D-Cinema
- Video: MPEG-2, IMX, XDCAM, D10, DV25, DVCPro50, DVCProHD, MPEG-4, AVC/H.264 (all profiles), AVC-I, WMV/VC-1, ProRes (all profiles), DNxHD, MJPEG, Raw YUV and RGB
- Audio: MPEG1/2, PCM, AAC, WMA, DV, Dolby AC3, Dolby E, on multiple tracks

Vidchecker also automatically checks and corrects video and audio to ensure the video meets all requirements for distribution and transmission. This includes meeting the new US CALM Act, ATSC and EBU requirements for audio loudness, by automatically correcting the files, if needed.

Vantage Vidchecker Action Input and Output

These are the Vantage Vidchecker workflow action inputs/outputs:

Inputs

- Select the test plan to be used
- Specify one media file as an input by nickname in the Vantage Vidchecker action

Outputs

- *Result*—returns Passed, Failed, Rejected or Warning (depending on how the test template is constructed) as a text variable
- *Pass/Fail*—returns True if the task completed without warnings or errors; otherwise returns False, as a Boolean variable
- *Alert Count*—return the total number of alerts as a text variable.

Although the Vidchecker software can create test report PDF or XML files, it does not return file references (attachments) to them through the Vantage action.

Requirements

The Vantage Vidchecker service is available in the Vantage Setup installer. If you do not currently have the Vantage installer, download it from www.telestream.net and obtain a license from Telestream that includes the Vantage Vidchecker service.

Hardware

- Vantage-compatible server hardware
- Windows Server 2008 R2, 2012 R2, or Server 2016 (for Vantage 7.0 UP2 and later).

Note: Support for Windows Server 2008 ends on December 31, 2017. Telestream recommends using Windows Server 2012 or 2016.

Software

- Telestream Vidchecker software. Refer to the release notes for your Vantage version. For example, Vantage 6.3 supports Vidchecker 4.6.6, and Vantage 7.1 supports Vidchecker 7.1.

Licensing

The Vantage Vidchecker connector and the Vidchecker software must be purchased and licensed from Telestream or an authorized Vantage and Vidchecker reseller.

- *Vantage*—The Vantage Vidchecker connector license is required for each Vantage domain that will be used with Vidchecker. The Vantage Vidchecker service is installed through the Vantage Array (Multi-Node) Custom Installation option.
- *Vidchecker*—An instance of Vidchecker software is required for each instance of Vidchecker that will be used with Vantage.

Limitations

- Vidchecker QC software must be running in conjunction with just the Vantage Vidchecker service on a separate node within a Vantage domain. The Vantage Metric Service is also installed automatically with the Vantage Vidchecker Service and must also be assigned to the domain. No other Vantage service is permitted to be running on the Vidchecker QC server node.
- Vantage allows up to 4 concurrent Vidchecker sessions per server, depending on licensing.
- In order to see a Vidchecker template, follow these steps:
 - a. Use the Vidchecker web UI to create a template.
 - b. Put the Vantage Vidchecker service into maintenance mode.
 - c. Exit the Vantage Vidchecker service from maintenance mode.
 - d. Create a new Vidchecker action.
- Vidchecker actions created before a user template is created will not appear in the user template.
- If a Vidchecker action is stopped and restarted, the original jobs within Vidchecker will be stopped and new jobs within Vidchecker will be created for the restarted actions.

Important Note: Vantage jobs submitted directly to a separate application, or from other systems not within Vantage management control can cause undesirable workflow delays due to lack of available application resources or licenses. The best practice when using Vantage with other application services is to limit the use of the other application service to Vantage alone. This will prevent processing delays caused by resources being consumed by processes not under Vantage management control.

Vidchecker Integration with Vantage

Vidchecker integration is available in Vantage 6.3 - 7.1 and later. The following two configurations show how Vidchecker should be deployed with Vantage.

Note: The Vantage main installation and database must be located on different servers from the Vidchecker application. Vidchecker and the Vantage Vidchecker Connector Service must be located together on their own server. The Vantage default store and file locations that are passed to a Vidchecker action must be shared so that all servers in the domain, including the Vidchecker server, can access them. Connectivity to the shared locations within the Vantage domain can be 1Gbe, 10Gbe, Fibre or another appropriate protocol.

Individual Vidchecker QC Server

Follow these steps to install the Vantage Vidchecker service on the Vidchecker QC server and add the service to the Vantage domain:

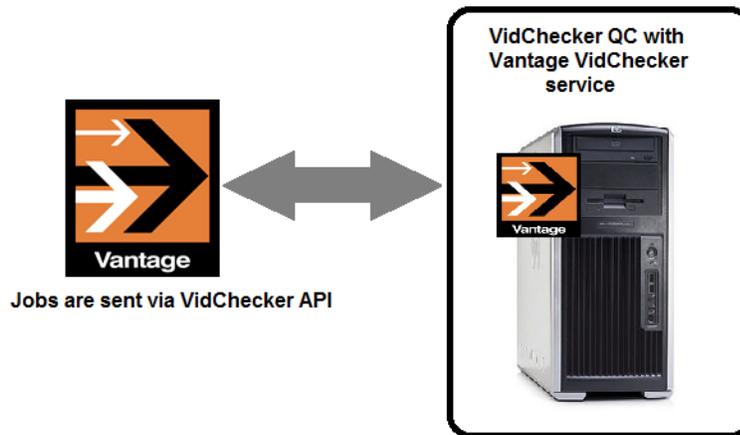
1. As an administrator on a standalone Vidchecker QC server, run the Vantage installer. (Only Vantage 6.3 - 7.1 or later may be used.)
2. Follow the various prompts as the installer runs. Newer versions of Vantage first extract the installer from an archive and then run the installer automatically.
3. Select Array {Multi-Node} Installation and click Next.
4. Select a Custom Install. The window displays check boxes for all of the available products.
5. Check *only* the box for Vidchecker, and click Next.
6. Browse to Configure the installation location for the Installation base.
7. When the Ready to Install dialog appears, click Install to begin product installation.
8. If Vantage 6.3 is installed, download the Vantage Vidchecker update patch from Telestream's Vantage download web site and install it now.

Note: The Vantage Vidchecker patch update has been tested with Vidchecker 6.1.5, 6.4.2 and 6.5.1. If a later Vidchecker release is installed, test compatibility in a non-production environment prior to full production use.

9. On the Vantage server, open the Vantage Management Console.
10. Click Services in the left panel.
11. Click the Add Service button  in the toolbar.
12. Select the Vidchecker and Metric services from the list, and click OK.

The Vidchecker service is added to the domain, and is available in the Vantage Workflow Designer. The following figure shows the functional operation of the integration.

Figure 1. Individual Vidchecker QC Server and Vantage Integration



Vidchecker QC Servers in a Vidchecker Grid

Follow these steps to install the Vantage Vidchecker service on the Vidchecker Grid Primary node server and add the service to the Vantage domain:

1. As an administrator on the Vidchecker Grid Primary node server, run the Vantage installer. (Only Vantage 6.3 - 7.1 or later may be used.)
2. Follow the various prompts as the installer runs. Newer versions of Vantage first extract the installer from an archive and then run the installer automatically.
3. Select Array Node Installation and click Next.
4. Select a Custom Install. The window displays check boxes for all of the available products.
5. Check *only* the box for Vidchecker, and click Next.
6. Browse to Configure the installation location for the Installation base.
7. When the Ready to Install dialog appears, click Install to begin product installation.
8. After installation completes, start the Vantage Vidchecker service using the Services admin program on the server.
9. If Vidchecker v6 or later is installed, download the Vantage Vidchecker update patch from Telestream's Vantage download web site and install it now.

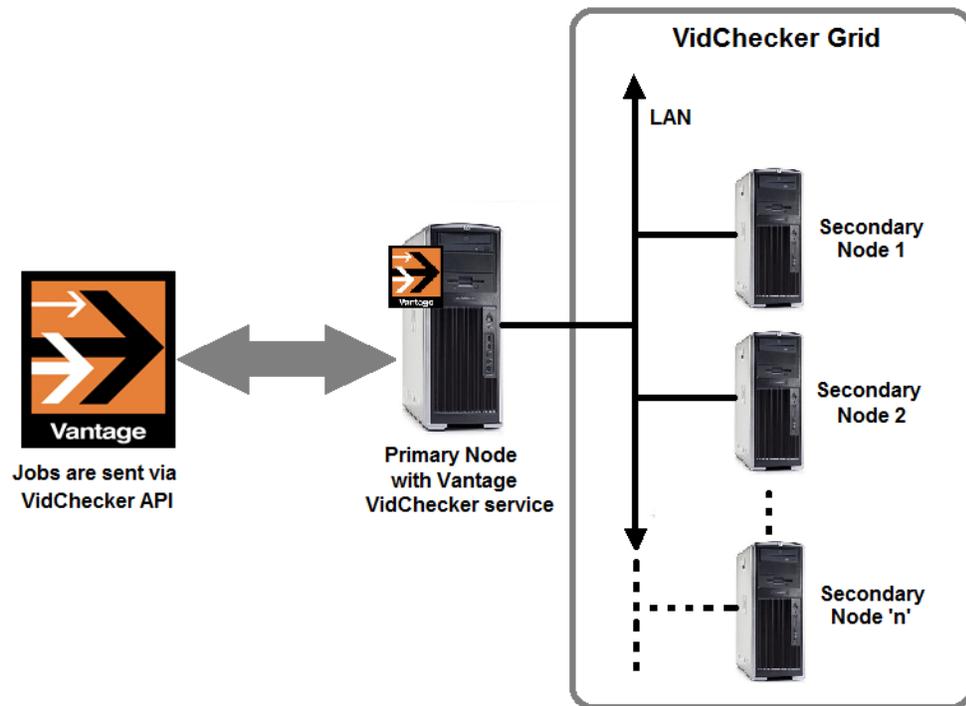
Note: Vantage Vidchecker patch update has been tested with Vidchecker 6.1.5, 6.4.2 and 6.5.1. If a later Vidchecker release is installed, you should test compatibility in a non-production environment prior to full production use.

10. On the Vantage server, open the Vantage Management Console.
11. Click Services in the left panel.
12. Click the Add Service button  in the toolbar.
13. Select the Vidchecker and Metric services from the list, and click OK.

The Vidchecker service is added to the domain, and is available in the Vantage Workflow Designer. Note that for the Vantage Vidchecker service to exit maintenance mode and enter the Online state, the Vidchecker server must be running on its host machine.

The following figure shows the functional operation of the integration.

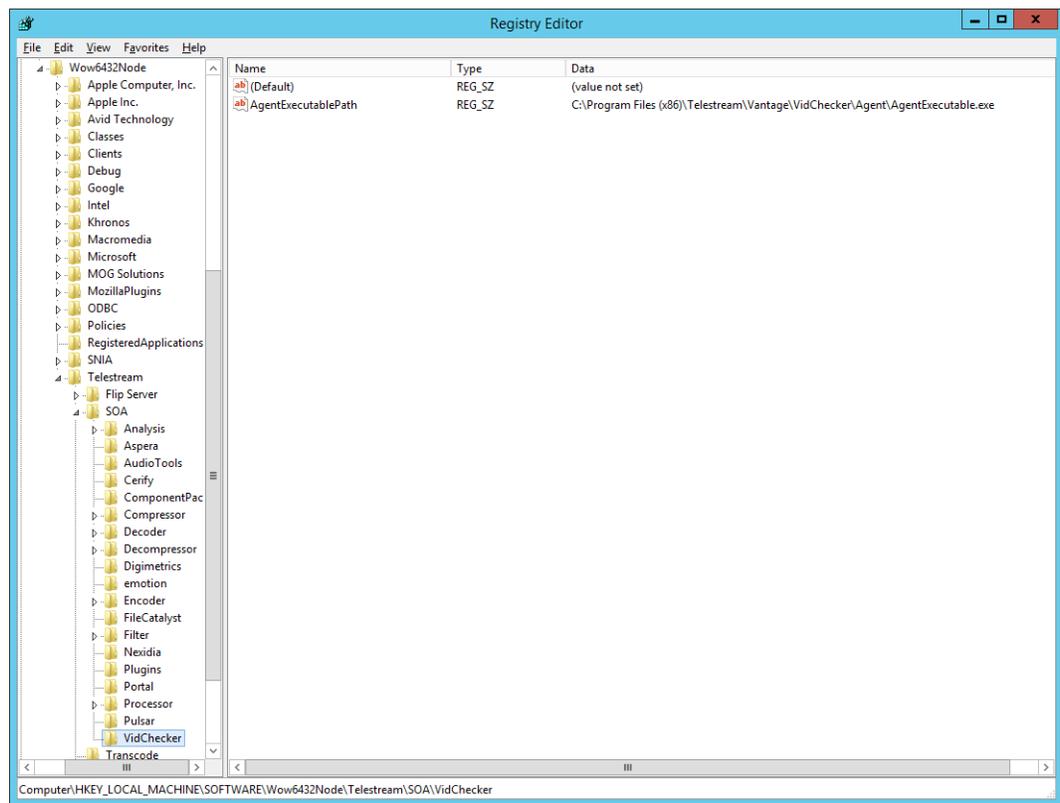
Figure 2. Vidchecker Grid and Vantage Integration



Integration Troubleshooting

If you installed Vantage 7.1 on top of Vantage 7.0 without uninstalling Vantage 7.0 first, third party services may get stuck in maintenance mode or may not function at all. To correct this issue, the following registry setting(s) must be applied to the server hosting the corresponding third party Vantage service(s). After a registry setting is applied, the corresponding service must be restarted.

- Create the Key Name:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Wow6432Node\Telestream\SOA\VidChecker
- Create the String Value:
"AgentExecutablePath"="C:\Program Files (x86)\Telestream\Vantage\VidChecker\Agent\MtkaATSCustomAgent.exe"
- Create the Data value:
C:\Program Files (x86)\Telestream\Vantage\VidChecker\Agent\AgentExecutable.exe



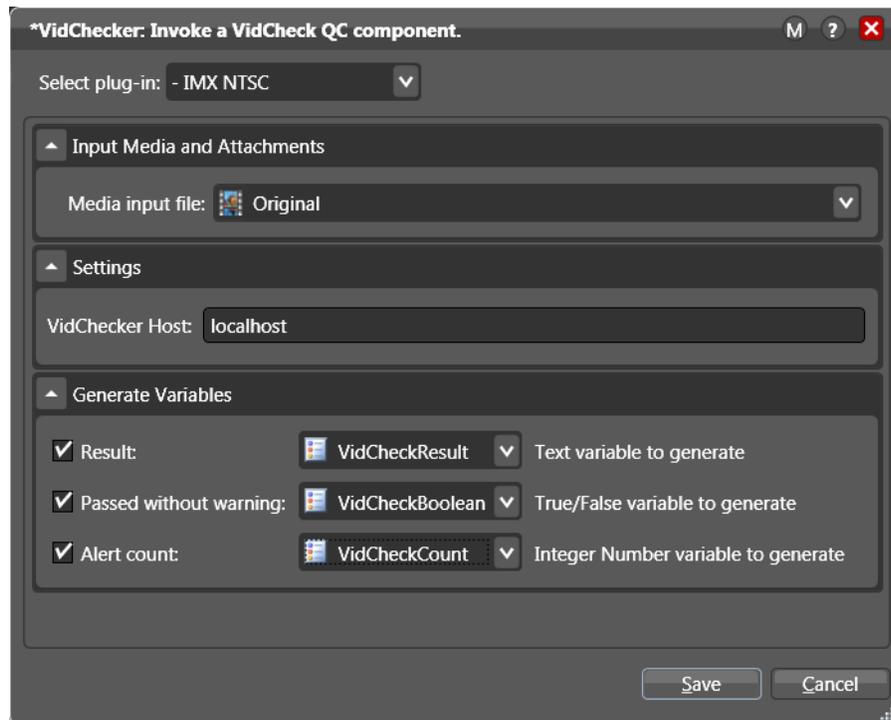
Telestream Support can help you with this procedure if you are unfamiliar with editing the registry. See [Telestream Support](#) later in this document for contact information.

Configuring Vidchecker Actions

Follow these steps to configure the Vidchecker action:

1. Create a workflow.
2. Click and drag the Vidchecker action into the workflow.
3. Click the “i” in the upper left corner of the Vidchecker Delivery action to open the Inspector. The following inspector panel displays.

Figure 3. Example Vidchecker Inspector (panel 1).

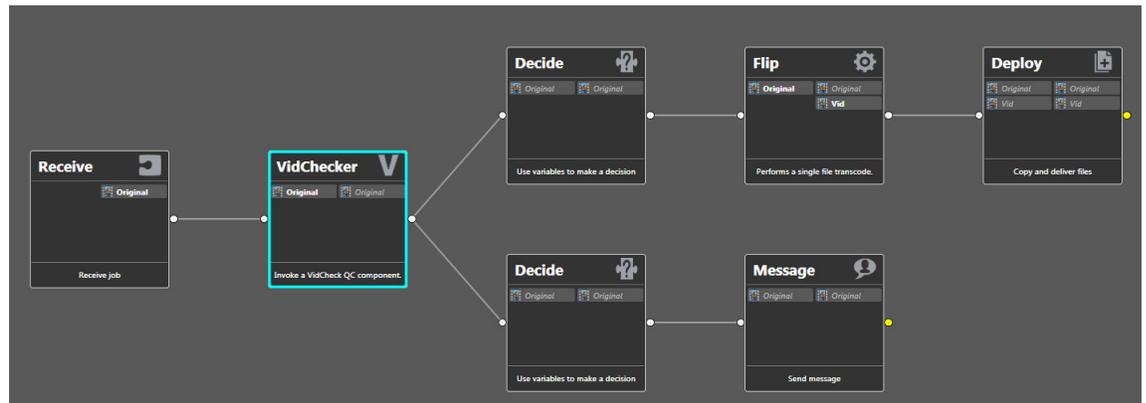


4. Configure the inspector.
 - a. Use the Select plug-in drop-down menu to select the Vidchecker test template.
 - b. Select the Media input file.
 - c. Set the Vidchecker Host field to *localhost*.
 - d. Within the Generate Variables set variables corresponding to the Result, Passed without warning, and Alert count.
5. Save the settings. Now when the workflow executes, Vantage Vidchecker service will engage Vidchecker to perform quality checks on the media file.

Example Vidchecker Workflow

The following figure shows a typical Vantage workflow with a Vidchecker action to send files to the Vidchecker server. Vidchecker tests the incoming media file based on the Vidchecker template selected. If the media passes the test, the upper Decide action forwards the media to the Flip action, which transcodes the file to the desired format. The Deploy action sends the file to the selected output location. If the media fails the QC test, the lower Decide action sends all variables set within the Vidchecker action to the Message action, which forwards the variables via an email message to the operator.

Figure 4. Example Vidchecker Workflow



Note: If the target Vidchecker template produces an output media file, the output file will be written back to the input folder location with a date and time timestamp. Consider preceding the Vidchecker action with a Copy action to a different location to prevent writing output files back to the watch folder (which can lead to an infinite loop of job submissions). Instead, the Vidchecker outputs will go to the location specified by the Copy action.

Telestream Support

To get support for Vantage and its third party services, click the link or email address:

- **Web Site:** <http://www.telestream.net/telestream-support/vantage/support.htm>
- **Support Email:** support@telestream.net

Terms and times of support services vary, per the terms of your current service contract with Telestream.

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