

Autodesk®
SystemCentral 2009

User Guide

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Contents

- Chapter 1 Introduction 1**
 - About SystemCentral 1
 - Architectural Overview 1
 - Notation Conventions 2
 - Related Documentation 2
 - Contacting Customer Support 3

- Chapter 2 SystemCentral Installation 5**
 - Installing SystemCentral 5
 - SystemCentral Client Configuration 6

- Chapter 3 Getting Started 9**
 - Accessing SystemCentral 9
 - SystemCentral User Interface 10

- Chapter 4 Running Plug-ins 13**
 - Adding Plug-ins to the Playlist 13
 - Removing Plug-ins from the Playlist 15
 - Saving and Loading Playlists 15
 - Running Plug-ins 17

Chapter 5	Viewing Plug-in Results	21
	Individual View	21
	Report View	22
	HTML Report	23
Chapter 6	Appendix: Configuring and Viewing the Log	25
	Configuring the Log	25
	Viewing the Log	26
	Index	29

Introduction



Topics in this chapter:

- [About SystemCentral](#) on page 1
- [Architectural Overview](#) on page 1
- [Notation Conventions](#) on page 2
- [Related Documentation](#) on page 2
- [Contacting Customer Support](#) on page 3

About SystemCentral

SystemCentral is a tool that combines the usefulness and power of command-line utilities with the ease of use of a Web-based interface. It enables you to access system information and run tests remotely on any Linux[®]-based Visual Effects and Finishing (Autodesk Inferno[®], Autodesk Flame[®], Autodesk Flint[®], Autodesk Smoke[®], Autodesk Backdraft[®] Conform) workstation in your network.

Architectural Overview

SystemCentral features a Web-based client-server architecture that allows you to access it from any computer in your network. This architecture eliminates the need to be at a Visual Effects and Finishing workstation to get hardware and system information, or to run various system tests.

SystemCentral comprises three main components.

SystemCentral Framework The main component of the system. It installs on the workstation and enables the remote SystemCentral Web client to run one or more utilities on the workstation.

SystemCentral Plug-ins Represent the actual utilities that are loaded into the framework. They perform the tests and retrieve the system information requested by the client. SystemCentral comes with several predefined plug-ins, which provide system information, graphics driver information, storage and network information, and allow you to run various performance tests.

SystemCentral Client A Flash®-based Web client that can run in any compatible Web browser, on any computer in your network. It communicates with the SystemCentral Framework via the HTTP protocol. The SystemCentral client features an intuitive user interface that allows you to configure plug-ins, run them, and view their results.

Notation Conventions

A number of style conventions are used throughout this guide. These conventions and examples of their use are shown as follows.

Convention	Example
Text that you enter in a terminal appears in Courier bold. You must press the Enter key after each command.	rpm -qa
Variable names appear in Courier, enclosed in angle brackets. No spaces are allowed in variable names.	<variable_name>
Variables that appear enclosed in square brackets are optional.	[<filename>]
Feedback from the terminal appears in Courier.	limit coredump-size
Directory names, filenames, URLs, and command line utilities appear in italics.	<i>/usr/discreet</i>

Related Documentation

This release has documentation that helps you install, configure, and use the software. The documentation is available from your product DVD, on the

Autodesk Web site, and is installed with the product (as PDF files and as an HTML help system).

For a list of all the documentation available to you, visit <http://www.autodesk.com/me-documentation>.

You can also refer to your application release notes for all late-breaking release information.

Contacting Customer Support

For contact information for Autodesk Media and Entertainment Customer Support, consult your release notes, or visit <http://www.autodesk.com/support>.

Customer support is also available through your Autodesk reseller. To find a reseller near you, consult the reseller look-up database at <http://www.autodesk.com/resellers>.

SystemCentral Installation

2

Topics in this chapter:

- [Installing SystemCentral](#) on page 5
- [SystemCentral Client Configuration](#) on page 6

Installing SystemCentral

SystemCentral is available on your Visual Effects and Finishing application DVD, or as a download from Autodesk. Install SystemCentral on the Visual Effects and Finishing Linux workstation you want to diagnose.

SystemCentral requires the Apache Web Server version 2.0.52 or greater. Apache should already be installed and configured by default with Red Hat® Enterprise Linux on your workstation. For details, consult your Apache or Red Hat Enterprise Linux documentation.

To install SystemCentral from the application DVD:

- 1 Insert the Autodesk Visual Effects and Finishing DVD in the DVD-ROM drive of your workstation, and mount it.
- 2 Navigate to the SystemCentral directory on the DVD, for example:

```
cd /mnt/cdrom/SystemCentral_2009_LINUX64_RHEL4
```

- 3 Run the installation script:

```
./INSTALL
```

SystemCentral is installed and automatically configured for the Apache Web server. No additional configuration is necessary.

To install SystemCentral from a downloaded *tar* file:

- 1 Log in as root, and unpack the downloaded *tar* file, for example:

```
tar -zxvf SystemCentral_2009_LINUX64_RHEL4.tar.gz
```

An installation directory is created.

- 2 Go to the installation directory, and run the installation script:

```
./INSTALL
```

SystemCentral is installed and automatically configured for the Apache Web server. No additional configuration is necessary.

SystemCentral Client Configuration

The SystemCentral client runs in any Web browser that supports the Adobe Flash Player plug-in, version 9 or later. This includes Mozilla® Firefox® 1.x or later, Apple® Safari™ 1.x or later, and Microsoft® Internet Explorer 6 or later.

If you already have the Flash plug-in installed in your browser, you don't need to perform any additional installation in order to use SystemCentral. Just point your browser to the workstation where SystemCentral is installed, and the application will automatically start.

If your browser does not have the Flash plug-in, you can download it for free from the Adobe Web site.

NOTE Currently, there is no Flash plug-in for 64-bit Linux browsers. To be able to access SystemCentral from the browser of your Visual Effects and Finishing workstation, perform the following procedure.

To be able to use the SystemCentral client on a 64-bit workstation:

- 1 Install the latest version of the *Discreet Kernel Utility* (DKU). The DKU automatically installs the 32-bit version of Mozilla Firefox 2 on your

workstation. For instructions about installing the DKU, see the *Red Hat Enterprise Linux Workstation 4 Update 3 Installation and Configuration Guide*.

- 2 Using Firefox 2, browse to the Adobe Web site to download the latest version of the Adobe Flash plug-in.
- 3 Follow the instructions on the Adobe Web site to install the plug-in for your browser.

Once the plug-in is installed, you are able to access SystemCentral from your Visual Effects and Finishing workstation.

Getting Started

3

Topics in this chapter:

- [Accessing SystemCentral](#) on page 9
- [SystemCentral User Interface](#) on page 10

Accessing SystemCentral

To access SystemCentral, simply open a compatible Web browser on any computer in your network, and point it to the workstation where SystemCentral is installed:

```
http://<workstation_host_name>/SystemCentral/SystemCentral.swf
```

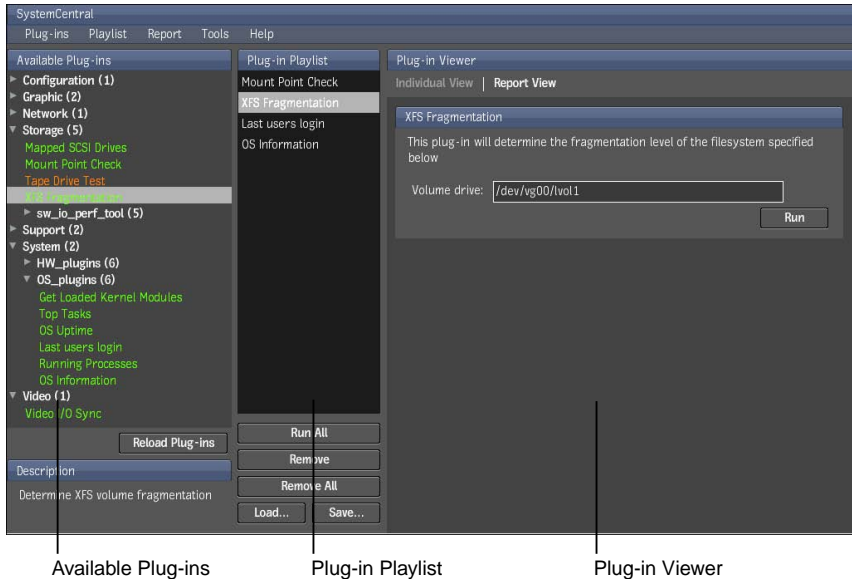
where <workstation_host_name> represents the host name or IP address of the Visual Effects and Finishing workstation where SystemCentral is installed. For example:

```
http://my_workstation.autodesk.com/SystemCentral/SystemCentral.swf
```

The SystemCentral Web client starts, and automatically detects the available plug-ins.

SystemCentral User Interface

The SystemCentral interface enables you to browse the list of available plug-ins, select the ones you want to run, set their parameters if needed, and view their results.

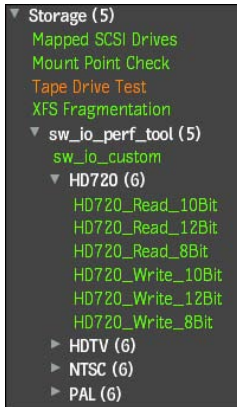


Available Plug-ins

The Available Plug-ins panel displays the plug-ins that are currently installed in SystemCentral.

When the application starts, the available plug-ins are automatically loaded and organized into several categories. Each branch of the plug-in hierarchy displays the number of plug-ins available in that category.

Some plug-ins have several branches that represent various presets.

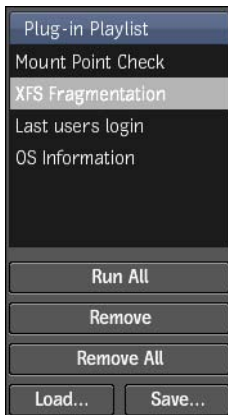


NOTE Depending on your version of SystemCentral, the available plug-ins might differ from the ones depicted in the image above.

Plug-in Playlist

The playlist contains all the plug-ins you chose to run. The playlist is manually populated by adding plug-ins from the Available Plug-ins list. The playlist enables you to run selected plug-ins or all the plug-ins you added to it.

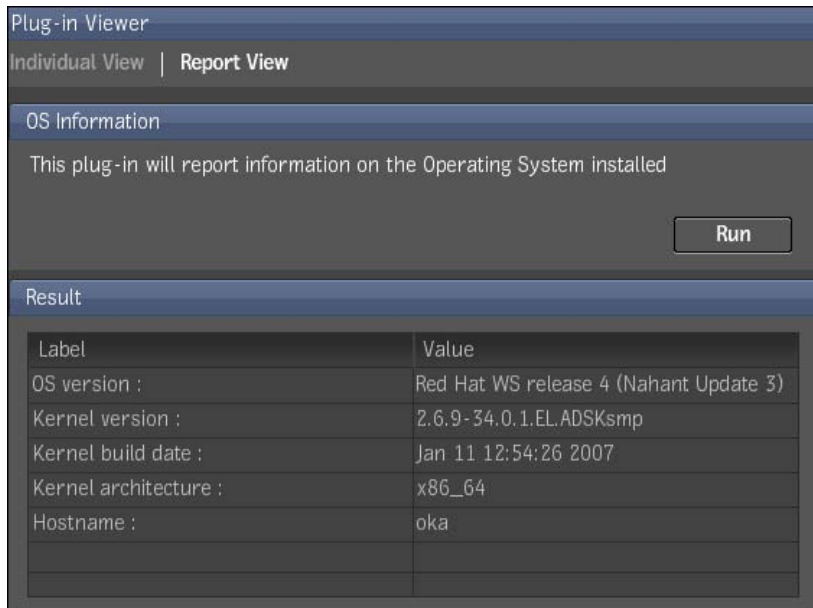
You can save the playlist, or load previously-saved playlists.



Plug-in Viewer

The Plug-in Viewer panel has multiple uses:

- Individual View enables you to view the description of the selected plug-in in the playlist, set its parameters if necessary, run it, and view its results.
- Report View displays an aggregated report of the results of all the plug-ins that were executed.



Menu Bar

The SystemCentral menu bar enables you to set application preferences, view HTML reports of the executed plug-ins, view the application log, and consult the SystemCentral online help.

Running Plug-ins

4

Topics in this chapter:

- [Adding Plug-ins to the Playlist](#) on page 13
- [Removing Plug-ins from the Playlist](#) on page 15
- [Saving and Loading Playlists](#) on page 15
- [Running Plug-ins](#) on page 17

Adding Plug-ins to the Playlist

The Available Plug-ins list contains all the plug-ins that are currently installed in SystemCentral.

To view detailed information about a plug-in, set its parameters, and run it, you must add it to the Plug-in Playlist.

To add a plug-in to the playlist:

- 1 Use the Available Plug-ins list to browse to the plug-in you intend to run. The list organizes plug-ins by category. For example:
 - Configuration
 - Graphics
 - Network

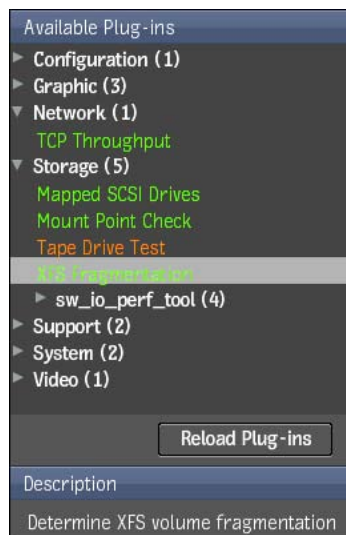
- Storage
- Support
- System
- Video

NOTE If new plug-ins are added while the SystemCentral client is running, click Reload Plug-ins to reload the list of plug-ins.

- 2 Use the arrow icons to expand or collapse the branches of the plug-in hierarchy. Some plug-ins have several branches that represent various presets. Select the preset that best suits your needs.

TIP You can also double-click a category to expand or collapse it.

- 3 Optional: To see a short description of a plug-in before adding it to the playlist, select it in the Available Plug-ins list. A description of the plug-in is displayed in the Description panel below the list.



NOTE Plug-ins that might have a negative impact on your system are displayed in orange, for example, “Tape Drive Test” in the image above. You receive a warning when attempting to run such a plug-in. Read the warning and assess the potential risks before proceeding.

- 4 To add a plug-in to the playlist, double-click it in the Available Plug-ins list, or drag and drop it into the Plug-in Playlist. You may select multiple plug-ins by holding **Shift** or **Ctrl** while clicking the plug-ins. You can also drag entire categories of plug-ins into the playlist.

After you have added the plug-in to the playlist, the Plug-in Viewer panel displays a more detailed description of the plug-in, allowing you to configure and run it. See [Running Plug-ins](#) on page 13.

Removing Plug-ins from the Playlist

The playlist buttons enable you to remove only the selected plug-ins, or all plug-ins from the playlist.

If you remove a plug-in that has already been executed, its results are also removed from the Plug-in Viewer panel (both the Individual View and the Report View sections). Save or print the plug-in results before you remove a plug-in from the playlist.

To remove selected plug-ins from the playlist:

- 1 Select the plug-in you want to remove from the playlist. Hold **Ctrl** or **Shift** to select multiple entries or ranges.
- 2 Click the Remove button at the bottom of the playlist, or select Playlist | Remove from the application menu.

The selected plug-ins are removed from the playlist, and their results are removed from the Plug-in Viewer panel.

To remove all plug-ins from the playlist:

- 1 Click the Remove All button at the bottom of the playlist, or select Playlist | Remove All from the application menu.

All the plug-ins and their results are removed from the playlist and from the Plug-in Viewer panel.

Saving and Loading Playlists

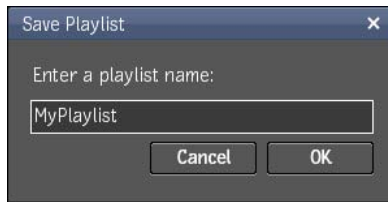
SystemCentral allows you to save the current playlist for later use.

NOTE The playlist is saved on the Visual Effects and Finishing workstation, not on the client system.

To save the current playlist:

- 1 Click Save at the bottom of the playlist, or select Playlist | Save from the application menu.

The Save Playlist dialog box appears.



- 2 Enter a name for the playlist and click OK.

NOTE If a playlist with the same name already exists, a confirmation message to overwrite the playlist appears. Click Yes to overwrite it, or No to choose a different name.

The playlist is saved.

To load a previously-saved playlist:

- 1 Click Load at the bottom of the playlist, or select Playlist | Load from the application menu.

The Load Playlist window appears, listing the available playlists.



- 2 Optional: To delete one of the playlists, click Remove. A confirmation dialog box appears before the file is deleted.

NOTE A playlist cannot be recovered once you delete it.

- 3 To use one of the available playlists, select it and click OK. The selected playlist is loaded and replaces the current playlist.

NOTE The newly loaded playlist does not display plug-ins that are no longer available to the application.

Running Plug-ins

Once you have added one or more plug-ins to the playlist, you can set their parameters, and run them.

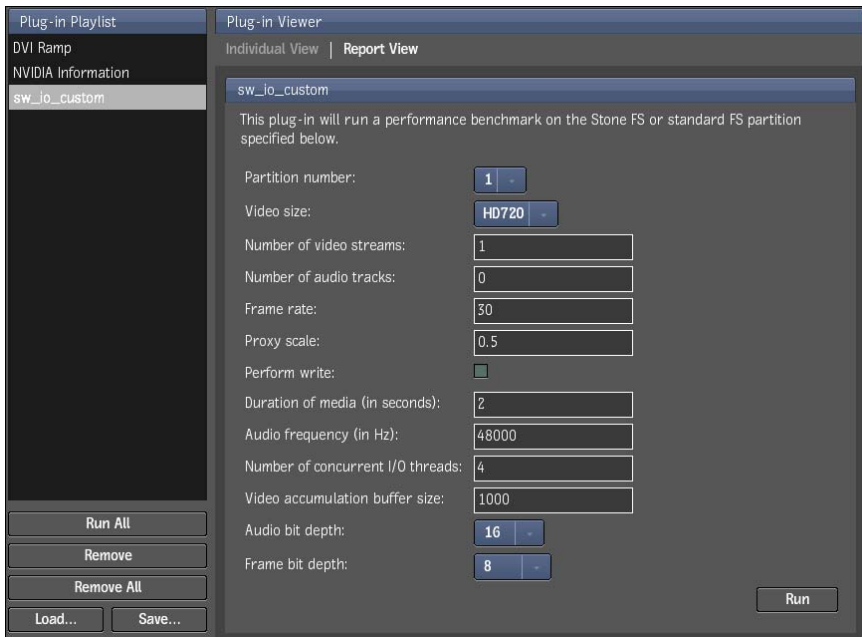
To view the details of a plug-in and set its parameters:

- 1 Click the plug-in in the playlist to select it. The Individual View of the Plug-in Viewer panel displays a description of the selected plug-in.



- 2 If the plug-in can be configured, use the fields in the Individual View to modify the settings, or use the default values.

NOTE The new settings of the plug-in apply only to the current session. Removing the plug-in from the playlist discards all custom parameters.



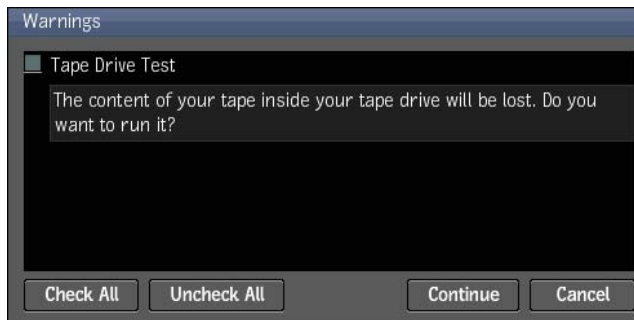
To run a single plug-in:

- 1 Select the plug-in in the playlist, and click the Run button in the Individual View section of the Plug-in Viewer panel.

NOTE If the plug-in can have a negative impact on your system, a warning is displayed prior to running the plug-in. Read the risks and confirm or cancel the plug-in execution accordingly.

To run all plug-ins in the playlist:

- 1 Click the Run All button at the bottom of the playlist, or select Playlist | Run All from the application menu.
- 2 Optional: If some plug-ins in the playlist can have a negative impact, a list of warnings is displayed, explaining the risk of each plug-in. Check the boxes next to the plug-ins you decide to run, and click Continue to execute the playlist.



While plug-ins are running, a progress dialog box is displayed. Depending on the number and nature of the plug-ins to be executed, this process could take several seconds.

- 3 Optional: To stop the execution of the plug-ins, click Cancel in the progress dialog box.

Viewing Plug-in Results

5

Topics in this chapter:

- [Individual View](#) on page 21
- [Report View](#) on page 22
- [HTML Report](#) on page 23

Individual View

After each plug-in is executed, its results are displayed in the Individual View section of the Plug-in Viewer panel.

To access the Individual View:

- 1 Click the Individual View tab in the Plug-in Viewer panel.

Depending on the type of plug-in, the results can be displayed in a table or in a terminal-style panel. The text displayed in the terminal-style panel can be selected and copied to the clipboard.

To sort the rows in the result table:

- 1 To sort the results by name, click the heading of the Label column. An icon is displayed on the right-hand side of the column to indicate whether the sorting is ascending or descending.

Label	Value
Bios version :	05.40.00.25.00
Card model :	Quadro FX 4000
Card type :	AGP
Driver version :	165.33.07

- 2 To sort the results by value, click the heading of the Value column.
- 3 To toggle between ascending and descending sort order, click the column headings again.

Report View

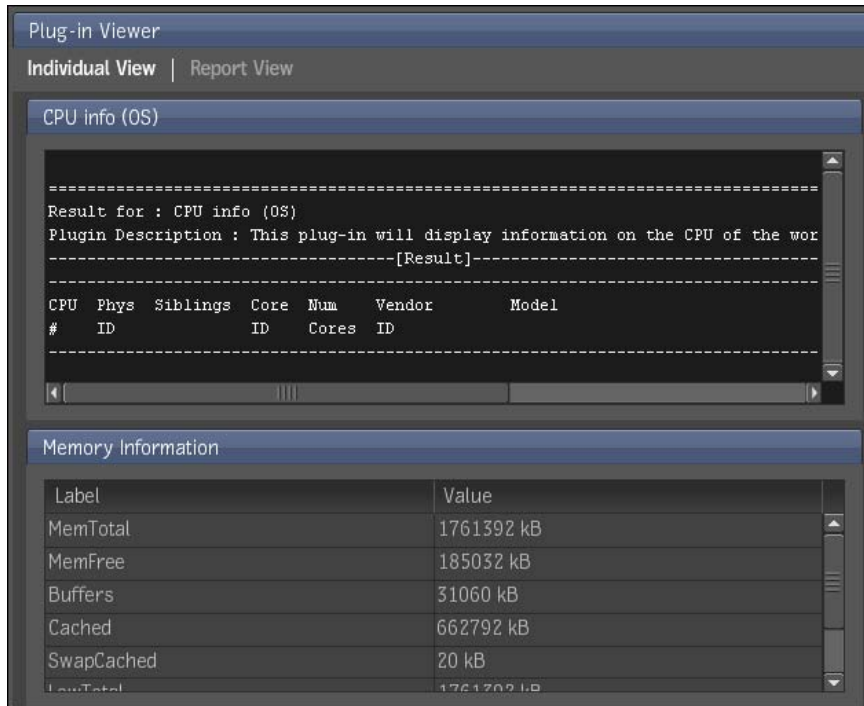
The Report View displays an aggregated report of all the plug-ins in the playlist that were executed.

To access the Report View:

- 1 Click the Report View tab in the Plug-in Viewer panel.

NOTE If you remove a plug-in from the playlist after having executed it, its results are deleted from the Report View.

The results of each plug-in in the Report View are displayed in the same format as in the Individual View. See [Individual View](#) on page 21.



HTML Report

You can view the results of all executed plug-ins from the current playlist as a HTML report. The HTML report is easy to save, print, or send by e-mail.

To view the HTML report:

- 1 Select Report | View HTML Report from the application menu.
A new browser window or tab displaying the report appears.

SystemCentral Report

OS Information

Date: 2008-03-18
Time: 17:05:55

Label	Value
OS version :	Red Hat WS release 4 (Nahant Update 2)
Kernel version :	2.6.9-22.0.1.EL.ADSKsmp
Kernel build date :	Mar 24 12:43:10 2006
Kernel architecture :	x86_64
Hostname :	minsk

CPU info (OS)

Date: 2008-03-18
Time: 17:06:01

Result for : CPU info (OS)
Plugin Description : This plug-in will display information on the CPU of the workstation (/proc/cpuinfo)
-----[Result]-----

CPU #	Phys ID	Siblings	Core ID	Num Cores	Vendor ID	Model	Speed	Unit Mult
0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	AuthenticAMD	AMD Opteron(tm) Processor 248	2193.791	MHz
1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	AuthenticAMD	AMD Opteron(tm) Processor 248	2193.791	MHz

NOTE If no new browser window or tab appears, your browser's pop-up blocker might prevent it from opening. Set your browser to always allow pop-ups from the workstation running SystemCentral.

- 2 Use your browser menu to save, print, or e-mail the report.

NOTE The report page is generated and hosted on the Visual Effects and Finishing workstation, not on the client system. If you do not save the report from your browser, it will be overwritten when the current playlist is discarded or replaced.

Appendix: Configuring and Viewing the Log

6

Topics in this chapter:

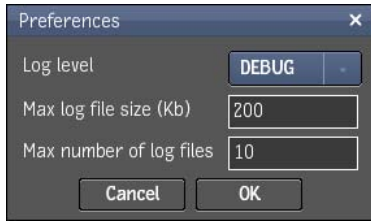
- [Configuring the Log](#) on page 25
- [Viewing the Log](#) on page 26

Configuring the Log

The SystemCentral log provides important information for troubleshooting problems you might have with the application or with a plug-in.

To set the log parameters:

- 1 Select Tools | Preferences from the application menu.
The Preferences dialog box appears.



2 Select one of the five log levels:

- **DEBUG** The most verbose log level. All errors, warnings, and information messages are logged, as well as detailed debugging information.
- **INFO** This level enables the logging of all errors, warnings, and information messages.
- **WARNING** All errors and warnings are logged.
- **ERROR** This level enables the logging of all errors.
- **CRITICAL** When this log level is used, only critical errors are logged.

NOTE It is recommended to use the INFO log level on a daily basis, and switch to other levels only when required.

3 Set the maximum size of log files, and the number of files to keep.

NOTE For best performance, it is recommended to keep the maximum file size below 500 KB, and the maximum number of log files below 20.

4 Click OK to save the new log settings.

Viewing the Log

Consult the SystemCentral log to view application activity, or trace back a problem with the application, the playlists, or the plug-ins.

To view the SystemCentral log:

- 1 Select Report | SystemCentral Log from the application menu.
The SystemCentral Log window appears.



```
SystemCentral Log
2008-03-17 12:41:19.290 [DEBUG] Test "Run dlConfigCheck" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.293 [DEBUG] Test "DVI Ramp" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.296 [DEBUG] Test "Graphic driver information" has been regist
2008-03-17 12:41:19.298 [DEBUG] Test "TCP Throughput" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.299 [DEBUG] Test "Map SCSI Drives" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.300 [DEBUG] Test "MountPoint check" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.302 [DEBUG] Test "Tape Drive Test" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.303 [DEBUG] Test "XFS Fragmentation" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.304 [DEBUG] Test "Check License File" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.305 [DEBUG] Test "Disk(s) Free Space" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.306 [DEBUG] Test "Get CPU Info (OS)" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.307 [DEBUG] Test "Get Machine Info from BIOS" has been regist
2008-03-17 12:41:19.308 [DEBUG] Test "Hardware Inventory" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.309 [DEBUG] Test "Memory Information" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.310 [DEBUG] Test "USB Information" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.311 [DEBUG] Test "Get Loaded Kernel Modules" has been regist
2008-03-17 12:41:19.312 [DEBUG] Test "Top Tasks" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.312 [DEBUG] Test "Get OS Uptime" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.313 [DEBUG] Test "Last users login" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.314 [DEBUG] Test "Processes running" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.314 [DEBUG] Test "OS Information" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.316 [DEBUG] Test "Video I/O Sync" has been registered.
2008-03-17 12:41:19.316 [INFO] Initialisation Playlist Manager...
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] Loading saved Playlist from file : /usr/discreet/Sys
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] MyPlaylist.cfg
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] ...Playlist /usr/discreet/SystemCentral/playlists/M
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] Loading saved Playlist from file : /usr/discreet/Sys
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] Test.cfg
2008-03-17 12:41:19.317 [INFO] ...Playlist /usr/discreet/SystemCentral/playlists/Tc
2008-03-17 12:41:19.319 [INFO] Stopping engine
OK
```

TIP You can select and copy the text in this window to the clipboard.

This window displays information only from the most recent log file (*/usr/discreet/SystemCentral/log/SystemCentral.log*).

To view the contents of older log files, go to the directory */usr/discreet/SystemCentral/log/* and open the files in a text editor.

Index

A

- Adding plug-ins to a playlist 13
- Apache Web server version 5
- Available plug-ins list 10

C

- Canceling plug-in execution 19
- Client configuration 6
- Configuring the log 25
- Customer support, contact 3

D

- Deleting a playlist 17
- Discreet kernel utility 6
- Documentation, related 2

E

- Executing plug-ins 17

F

- Flash plug-in version 6

H

- HTML report 23

I

- Individual view 12, 21
- Installing SystemCentral 5

L

- List of plug-ins 10

- Loading a playlist 16
- Log 25
 - configure 25
 - file path 27
 - levels 26
 - viewing 26

M

- Menu bar 12

P

- Playlist 11
 - adding plug-ins 13
 - deleting 17
 - loading 16
 - removing plug-ins 15
 - running all plug-ins 19
 - saving 16
- Plug-ins
 - adding to a playlist 13
 - HTML report 23
 - individual view 12, 21
 - list of available 10
 - playlist 11
 - removing from playlist 15
 - report view 12, 22
 - running 17
 - running all 19
 - setting parameters 17
 - short description 14
 - stopping execution 19
 - viewer 12
 - viewing results 21
- Preferences 25

R

- Related Documentation 2
- Removing plug-ins from playlist 15

- Report view 12, 22
- Requirements
 - SystemCentral 5
 - SystemCentral client 6
- Result table, sorting rows 21
- Running
 - all plug-ins 19
 - plug-ins 17

S

- Saving the current playlist 16
- Setting plug-in parameters 17
- Sorting rows in the result table 21
- Stopping plug-in execution 19
- SystemCentral
 - architecture 1
 - client 2
 - client configuration 6
 - framework 2
 - installing 5

- log 25
- menu bar 12
- plug-ins 2
- preferences 25
- user interface 10

U

- User interface 10

V

- Viewer
 - individual view 12
 - report view 12
- Viewing the log 26

W

- Web browsers, supported 6