

ITAS FAQs

What are ITAS Alerts?

ITAS Alerts are a fantastic new feature available in ITAS version 8.0 and above.

Alerts enable users to be notified when areas of the ITAS database are changed. So if you are a trader and need to know when (for example) a port of destination is changed on a specific contract, or a BL date is changed on any contract, you can subscribe to those alerts and receive an email as soon as those data points change.

How are alerts created?

ITAS Administrators create alerts and publish them to their users. Users can then subscribe to the alerts they are interested in.

Are alerts contract or Counter Party specific?

They certainly can be, you administrator can select a single or multiple contracts or counter parties when creating the alert.

What about 'special' alerts for really important data changes?

The Alerting solution includes the concept of templates. When an Admin creates the alert they can specify the template to use. Templates can be edited by Admins and can have the text your organisation wants and include the data that has changed in the format or position you want.

And the future?

We have lots of ideas for the future of alerts as we feel this is a really useful part of our next generation system. If you have ideas for future functionality please tell us on the forum page of this community.

How can I change the design of my alerts?

ITAS NG Alerts have been designed in such a way that ITAS Administrators can create and modify templates available for alerts. Alert Templates are based on .rtf (rich text) files and can be edited directly in the system (Settings > Alert Setup > Templates) or created in a third party application like Microsoft Word and then copy and pasted into an ITAS Alert template.

To determine the values shown in the alert, Hivedome have provided a list of 'merged fields' which will be swapped for actual data involved in the alert. Examples include date/time of the alert, data previous value, data new value, alert company name, alert counterparty ID. To include a merge field in a custom template use the 'Insert Merge Field' menu in the Mailings tab in the Templates section of alerts.

ITAS NG comes with 3 standard templates:

- Notification.rtf – standard notification template.
- Priority Notification.rtf – enhanced visibility for priority alerts.
- Example Template – All Fields.rtf – example showing all available mail merge fields plus how some of those fields can be manipulated. For example the field Alert Date can be manipulated to show in a different formats (DD/MM/YY, d.MMM.yy etc) or even just show the day, month or year.

If clients do not wish to create their own templates Hivedome Consultancy Services may be able to offer custom built templates.

Limitations

- Currently images cannot be included.
 - Mail merge fields are limited to those available in the menu.
 - .doc and .docx templates cannot be used as well as .html markup
 - DOCDES string manipulation is not compatible with alerts, though this is being investigated.
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Why do menu items (eg Trade) flicker when activated via Trader Desktop?

ITAS 8.0 is a hybrid application which shares features and business logic between the Heritage application (ITAS 7.-) and the next generation application (ITAS 8.0).

This approach was chosen for many reasons but particularly because we wanted to make the migration as low risk as possible. ITAS 8.0 includes a brand new, user friendly user interface, new features such as Alerting and the Enterprise Reporting Database but importantly neither the data structure or the menu options (executables) have changed. This way we can ensure our customers' data and the business logic effecting our clients' data will remain as robust with version 8.0 as it is with any previous version.

So why do the menu options (executables) look different?

Good question. In order to control the behavior of each new window and to integrate the new and the old we have wrapped each executable in a new ITAS 8.0 wrapper and changed the background colour to the windows default. If you look close you will see that the fields are exactly the same as in previous versions.

The downside of the approach is that there can be a slight flicker as the wrapper is drawn on your screen and re-positioned - but we think this is a small price to pay for the awesome new look and feel application and the massive business value delivered by the ITAs Alerting System and the Enterprise Reporting Database. The wrapper approach is an interim measure and as features and functionality are migrated to the new system in future versions menu items will begin to slowly be removed.

What is the ITAS Reporting Database?

The ITAS Enterprise Reporting Database was introduced in ITAS 8.0. It is a reporting Data Mart consisting of multiple Star Schemas which together can be thought of as a Reporting data Warehouse.

The data architecture has been designed with data reading in mind, meaning that any reports using the new Reporting Database should be as fast as possible. The content of the Reporting Database focuses on transactions over time and includes calculated values such as Contract Value and Market Value. This is a significant strp forward for ITAS as previously these values did not exist in the database but were calculated when users required these fields in the front end.

The other significant update is that the data is stored in the reporting database over time. So, for example, once a day a snapshot of the current position is taken and this is transferred as a delta to the reporting db. The ability to review this data over time in a single set of reports will enable companies to analyse their business processes in order to make strategic decisions based on historical fact and current positioning.

Licencing

The ITAS Enterprise Reporting Database is available to customers with an enterprise license and as the name suggests the data is available for by your entire organisation - should you wish to expose it.

Access to Reports

Significantly the reporting database does not include a supported interface. This may seem an unusual decision but has been taken for a very good reason. While discussing the new release of ITAS with our customers it became apparent that most already had reporting solutions in house, these had either been build internally or bought in. What our customers said they really wanted was the ability to use ITAS data in their current reporting systems and importantly that this data should include calculated values not otherwise available,

We made a positive decision not to invest time and energy delivering a reporting interface when so many off the shelf solutions already existed. Instead we focused on migrating the data quickly, including calculated values and enabling automated and manual processing.

How are calculated values derived?

It is important to us that our customers are confident that their reporting data is accurate. For this reason we have used exactly the same code which calculates Contract and Market Values in the current ITAS product in the Reporting solution. Though tricky to deliver this approach minimises risk and ensures confidence.

What about historical Data?

It true that data appearing in the reporting database will only start from the day ITAS 8.0 is installed, this begs the question "what about my history? If the value comes in analysing the data changing patterns over time how can we capitalise on the reporting data today?" To address this we are developing a tool to import any frozen databases that will enable historical data sets to be imported at point of installation.

Which Data is available?

Currently data includes physical contracts, this will grow over the next few releases to include Inventory, F&O, Financial and Risk. We are looking to engage our clients to determine the backlog priority.