VCA Tracer
Installation and Operating Instructions

Overview

VCA Tracer is software that allows optical outlets to trace and import shapes and then forward the shapes onwards to Web ordering software.   The software provides a method to adjust the shapes measurements.   There is also a facility that allows the user to post shapes to multiple suppliers. The software works with any OMA compliant device and has also been adapted to work with the Nidek format.   The software also has a feature to check on the accuracy of the tracer based on a daily measurement.

IMPORTANT Prior to using the VCATracer software it is important to close any other software that may be linked to tracer communication.   If software is left open it will affect how the program will work.

Installation

Before the installation can be carried out it is necessary to download the program from the website of the supplier you wish to place orders with. At this point it is not necessary to log into the suppliers website.   From the main page of the suppliers website click 'Download' in the Remote Edging section.

The software will start to download to the PC.   Once download is complete click on the software to allow it to run.   It is possible that some windows security messages may pop up, if this happens click on the option to allow the installation to proceed.   Follow the on screen instructions to complete the installation selecting to install for you/this pc only.

Once installation is complete a short cut will be created on the desktop for the VCA Tracer program.   Double click on the icon and the program will open.
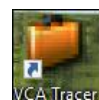
Initial Set up

**Confirming the Tracer Connection**

Connect the tracer to the PC using the manufacturer supplied cables.   Prior to moving forward with the next steps it will be necessary to confirm which communication port the tracer is connected to.   This can be found by going to Device Manager on the PC.   To access 'Device Manager' go to Windows Key and type in Device manager and press enter.

Or from a Windows Explorer window find 'This PC', Right Click on the mouse and select properties.
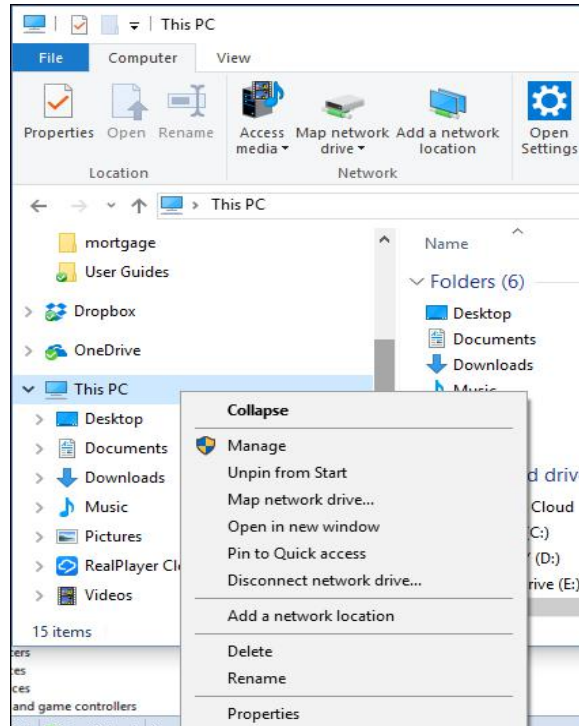
Once device manager is open look down the list for 'Port (COM & LPT)'. Click on the > to expand the list.   Some PC's may have multiple communication ports so it will be necessary to confirm which in the device is connected to.   Once the correct Port has been identified then make a not of the number.   In the case of this example it is com5.
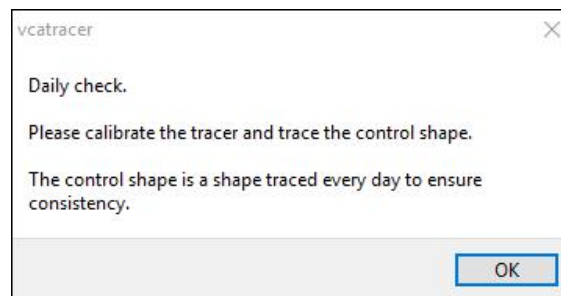
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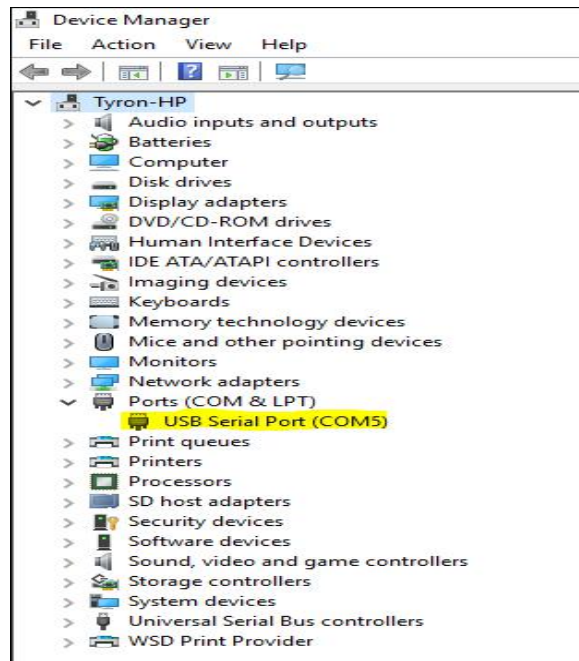
Setting up the Software

When the VCA tracer software is opened for the first time a number of messages will appear. These are as follows.
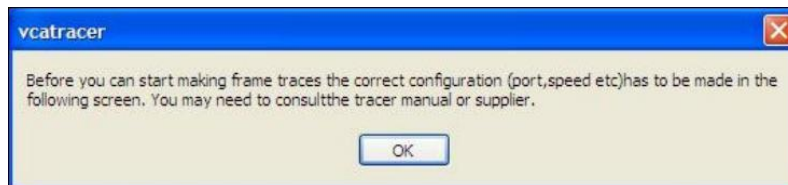
This will only appear once to ensure that you configure the tracer correctly.
The next message will appear on a daily basis until the test trace has been made.

Once the test trace has been successfully traced this message will not appear until the next day.

Setting up the Communications

Prior to processing any trace files it is necessary to activate the communication port with the correct settings. This is done on the 'Communication' tab which can be made visible by clicking on the 'Settings' button.

There are 3 communication formats and each have very specific uses.

Standard OMA Format

This type of communication utilises the Serial port on the PC. Along with this information it is necessary to provide further details.
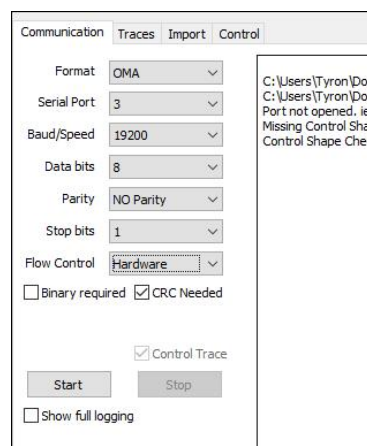
1. **Format** = **OMA**
2. **Serial Port** = **Serial port set in the device manager**

3. **Baud/Speed** = **2400, 4800, 9600, 19200, 38400, 57600, 115200, dependant on the setting on the tracer**
4. **Data bits** = **7 or 8**
5. **Parity** = **Odd, Even or No Parity**
6. **Stop Bits** = **0, 1, or 2**
7. **Flow Control** = **Hardware or X on/X off**
8. **Binary Required** = **Ticked or Unticked**
9. **CRC Required** = **Ticked or Unticked (Tess Tracer normally Ticked)**
10. **Control Shape** = **Ticked by Default**
11. **Start** = **Click to open communications with the tracer**
12. **Stop** = **Click to close communications with the tracer**
13. **Show full Logging** = **Click to allow the program to display detailed information of data transfer. Used for trouble shooting**

Nidek Format

1. **Format** = **Nidek**
2. **Serial Port** = **Serial port set in the device manager**
3. **Baud/Speed** = **9600, 38400, dependant on the setting on the tracer**
4. **Data bits** = **7 or 8**
5. **Parity** = **Odd, Even or No Parity**
6. **Stop Bits** = **0, 1, or 2**
7. **Flow Control** = **Hardware or X on/X off**
8. **Binary Required** = **Ticked or Unticked**
9. **CRC Required** = **Ticked or Unticked (Tess Tracer normally Ticked)**
10. **Control Shape** = **Ticked by Default**
11. **Start** = **Click to open communications with the tracer**
12. **Stop** = **Click to close communications with the tracer**
13. **Show full Logging** = **Click to allow the program to display detailed information of data transfer. Used for trouble shooting**
14. **Press to Get trace Data** = **Once tracer has finished this must be clicked to initiate communication with the tracer.**

VCA Over Network

This is the newest format.   This will search for a device that is connected via   LAN cable to the network.   It is necessary to set the device to this setting.   Once the option is selected the device should be displayed in the device drop down box.
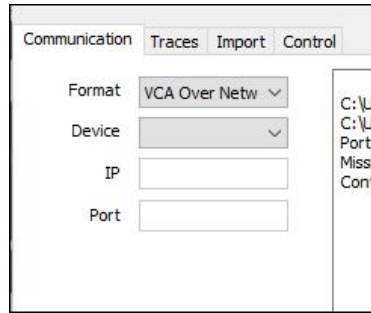
It may be necessary to set additional information up on the tracing device in order for the program to see it.

Tracing the Control Shape

Once the tracer has been set up successfully the next step is to trace a control shape.   The 'Master Control Shape' is used as a means to verify the accuracy of the tracer.   We suggest that this shape is the calibration plate used to calibrate the tracer.   This shape will be traced as a frame and not in the calibration function of the tracer.

NOTE: This is not a replacement for a regular tracer calibration but is meant as a means of checking that the tracer is retaining accuracy to help avoid unnecessary sizing issues.

Once a 'Master Control Shape' has been saved a trace will need to be completed on a daily basis. Taking the shape that was traced as the Master open VCA Tracer and place the Master shape in the tracer.   Start the tracer in the usual way, once the trace is complete it will automatically transfer the shape to the PC.   Once the trace is received a message will appear to confirm that this is successful. This message can be seen below.
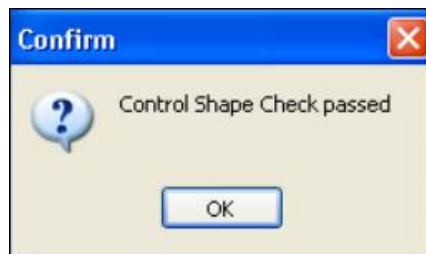
User Details

To enable the successful transmission of orders to the lab on-line ordering page, it is necessary to add the user credentials.   The first time orders are transmitted a request will be made for an account number.   This will be the user name provided by the lab.   It is possible to amend these details and save them prior to sending.

Click on the 'Lab Set up' tab and the screen below will appear.   If the tab is not visible click on the 'Settings' button.
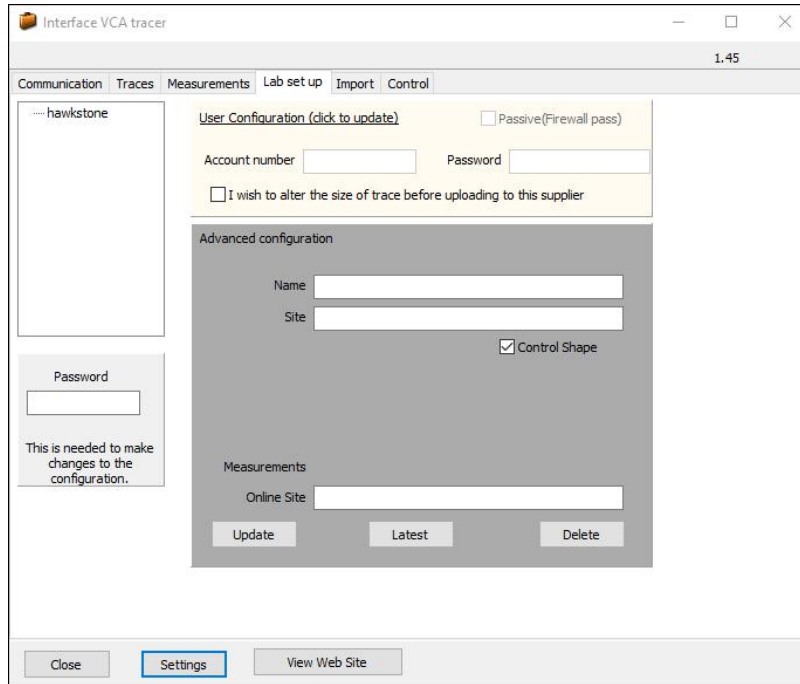
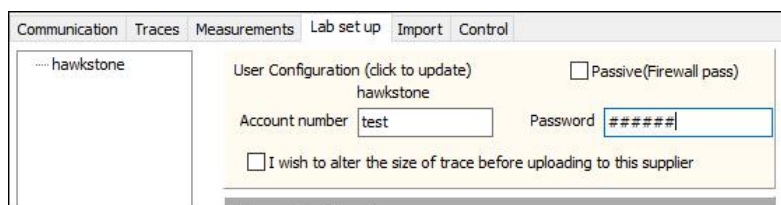To update the user name and password select the supplier from the list.   Click on the 'User Configuration (click to update).
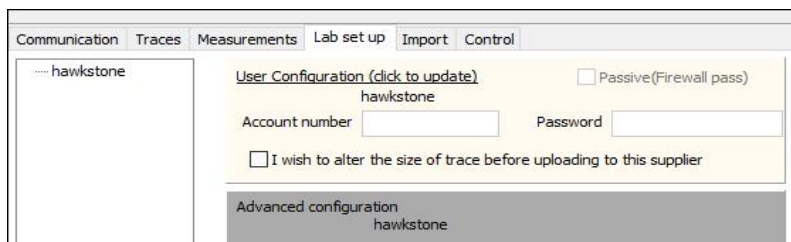
The boxes should now be open for the information to be populated.


Once this has information has been added there is not update process.   Click away and close VCA Tracer.   Re-open the software and confirm that the settings are still in place.

Tracing a Frame/Pattern

Once the communications have been set up and configured the process becomes simpler.   Ensure that the software is open and ready to receive a shape.   Turn on the tracer (most manufacturers recommend that this is done 30mins prior to first use).

Insert the frame or pattern into the tracer as per the instruction of the manufacturer and start the tracing process.   The software should be open on the 'Traces' tab.   Once the trace is complete the shape will transfer to the software and the shape should appear on screen.   It is necessary to give the shape a name, reference or number.   The shape will be displayed as 'No Reference'.
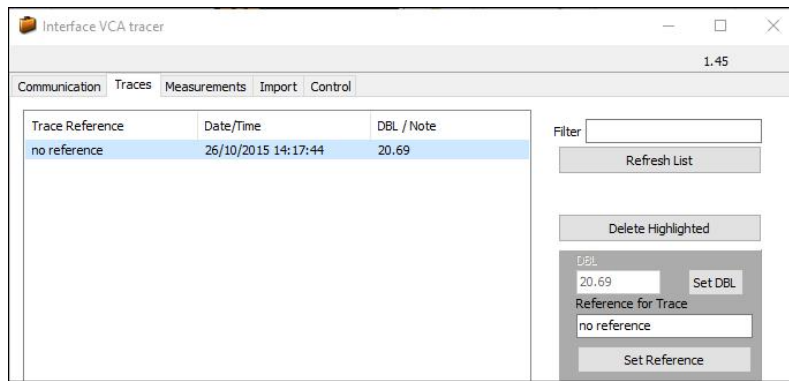
Click on the line that states 'no reference' then click in the box that states 'Reference for Trace'. Type the required reference into the box and click the 'Set Reference' button.   This shape is now ready to be uploaded to the ordering site.

Importing Shapes from External Source

From the main page of the VCA Tracer program select the 'Import' tab.   This will display a few import options.
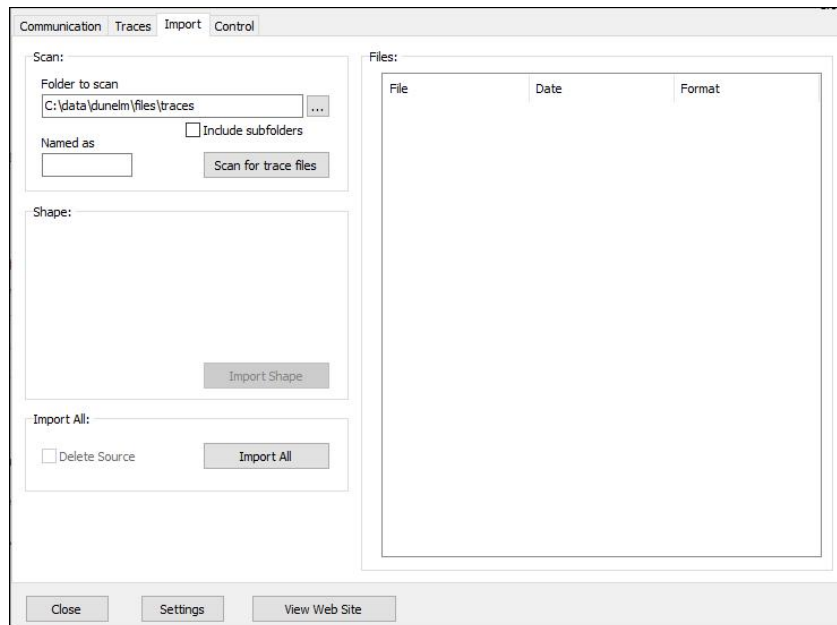
The first step is to enter or browse to the location where the traces are saved.   Place the file path in the 'Folder to Scan' section.   This is where the program will look for trace files.   It is also possible for the program to include sub folders in the search.   Simply place a tick in the 'Include Subfolders' box.   This will then locate all trace files in these folders and display them on the right side of the window.   Click on the 'Import Shape' button to move the selected file into VCA Tracer program.

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If there is a need to locate a specific file name this can be typed in the 'Named as' box.   This will run a search for any files with this name.   These files will be located and display them in the right section of the window.   Click on the 'Import Shape' button to move the selected file into VCA Tracer program.

There is also an 'Import all' function.   This will locate and move all files in the selected file and folder structure and move the files over to the VCA Tracer program.   If the implication of the installation is to move from a previous tracing program to VCA Tracer but retain the shapes the program has the ability to move and delete the source files.

NOTE: Using the 'Delete Source' function will permanently remove the files from the source folder. There is no way to undo this process once it is complete.

Transmitting Trace Files

Once the trace files have been created, either by tracing or importing the following steps will allow the traces to be uploaded to the labs web ordering site.

Hight light the required shapes that need to be transmitted.   Holding down the 'ctrl' or 'Control' key will allow the selection of more that one shape.
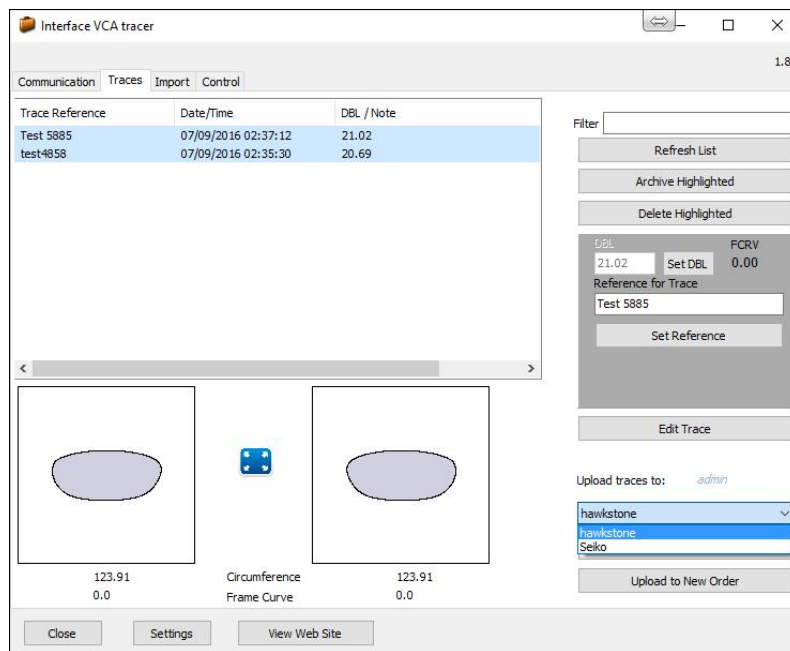

From the drop down menu select the lab you wish to upload the traces to.   Then click on the 'Upload Highlight' button.   Information will flash on the screen below the buttons to show that these have been uploaded.   This will only appear for a few seconds and can be easily missed.   Once the files have been uploaded click on the 'View Web Site' button and this will take you to the labs website.
It is also possible to upload a single trace directly to a new order.   High light the required shape and then click on the 'Upload to New Order' button. The shape will be uploaded to the website and a new order will be opened with the trace file name as the reference.   The order can then be completed and placed.   This way can speed the ordering process up especially when entering orders with the customer waiting for a frame or confirmation of a date.

Editing a Shape Prior to Transmission

It is possible to amend a shapes dimension prior to transmitting it up to the website.   This should only be used in the case of rimless or semi rimmed frames and by users that a confident with such amendments.

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To amend a shape high light it and click on the 'Edit Trace' button.
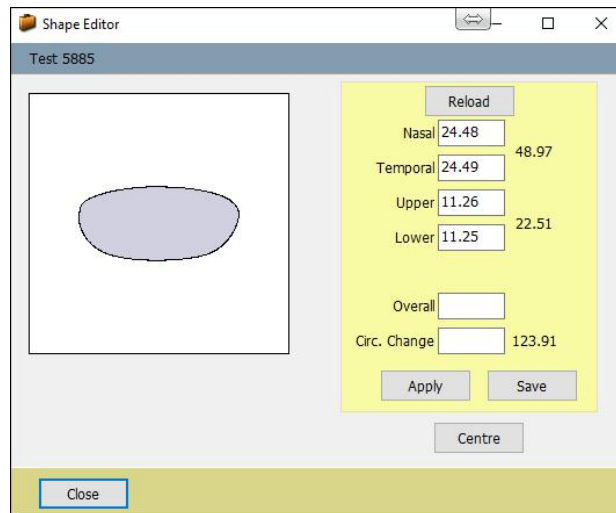

From this window it is possible to increase or decrease the shape.   This can be done in a number of ways.

1. Nasal   =   manipulate the nasal side of the lens
2. Temporal   =   manipulate the temporal side of the lens
3. Upper   =   manipulate the upper side of the lens
4. Lower   =   manipulate the lower part of the lens
5. Overall   =   manipulate the overall measurements of the lens
6. Circ Change   =   manipulate the circumference of the lens

Once the necessary change has been made to the shape clicking on Apply will display the changes that have been made to the trace one the image displayed. If a change has been made to one edge of the shape it is possible to re-centre the shape by clicking on 'Centre' button.   Once the changes have been approved clicking on the 'Save' button will save a new file with the suffix of '(copy)'.

Adding Multiple Labs

The easiest way in which to add an additional lab to VCA Device is to over install the software. Navigate to the suppliers website and down load the 'Remote Edging' software.   When progressing through the installation process this error may appear.
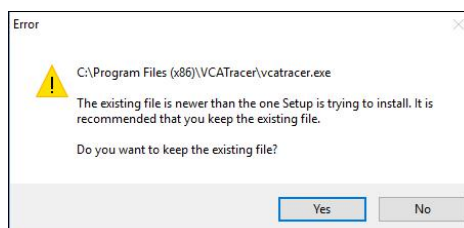
Click on the 'No' button and this will insert the necessary lab data.   Populate the account information in the 'Lab Set up' as previously done and the trace file will allow you to select the new lab when transmitting shapes to the website.   .