TN DA136 Wonderware Protocols - DDE vs Suitelink

Description

When setting up communication in Wonderware products you will often be asked to select which protocol to use, DDE or Suitelink. This document will describe the differences between them.

- Author: Dillon Perera
- Published: 12/30/2015
- Applies to: Wonderware Software

Details

Most Wonderware products will give you the option to select between DDE and Suitelink when connecting to an outside application such as an IO Server.

DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange) - This protocol is a method of communication written by Microsoft in the early versions of Windows (Windows 2.0 - 1987). Because of the age of this protocol you will typically find it in use in older IO Servers, as well as products unrelated to Wonderware software such as Microsoft Excel. It is a general protocol, not specifically designed for the manufacturing space.
This protocol is very quick, but is limited in that it can only work on the local computer, and was not designed to run over a network. Wonderware did see this limitation and extend the DDE protocol by creating NetDDE to facilitate network communications.

Because of the age of the DDE protocol, and better technology becoming available, newer versions of Microsoft Windows make it very difficult to use DDE communications.

**Suitelink** - This protocol is one that was written by Wonderware, as is designed specifically with the manufacturing space in mind. As part of this design, all data transmitted by the Suitelink protocol includes not only raw data values, but also the time it was sent, and the quality of the data.

Suitelink is a newer protocol than DDE and was designed with networking in mind. As such there is no special configuration needed to use Suitelink with a network.

Because Suitelink is owned by Wonderware and distributed by Wonderware, there is no limitation based on the version of Windows.

**General Advice:**

The Suitelink protocol should be used whenever possible, as it will work with newer Windows Operating Systems, and will work over a network. The DDE protocol can be used if required, but should be avoided where possible due to Microsoft removing availability in newer versions of Windows.