

AutoDownload to SiTiming v3

This information sheet is aimed at users of AutoDownload moving to SiTiming, highlighting some of the changes. It is recommended that the document “SiTiming – Background” is also read.

Many things have changed but lots of screens should look familiar. We have also added many new features. We have also moved some of the screens in the menu structure!

1 New Application

SiTiming can be installed alongside AutoDownload so while you get familiar with the new concepts you can still use AutoDownload. Installing SiTiming does not uninstall AutoDownload or change the data stored in AutoDownload databases.

2 Database

Like AutoDownload SiTiming uses Microsoft SQL Server software for storing data.

If you already have AutoDownload and SQL Server installed on your computer you do NOT need to reinstall the SQL Server software.

However SiTiming has a new database structure, the changes from the AutoDownload structure are to allow us to add more functionality but also for performance, future-proofing and for fixing some long-standing design issues. The changes should be mostly transparent to the user.

Rather than converting AutoDownload databases we have decided to have a clean start so new SiTiming database(s) needs to be created from within SiTiming.

To create a new database within SiTiming go to Databases >> Add Database Connection. Add the settings including the new database name. You also need to tick “This database does not exist and I would like to create it” and then Save. This will take you back to the Databases list. Click on the “Description” for your new database to go into the database. The description may be “<No description>” if you did not enter one when adding the database connection. You will be asked to update the database structure to which you should answer “Yes”. You will then need to license your database.

So for example if you have an AutoDownload database called “Events” you may want to call your new SiTiming database “Events4”.

If you only have one database connection then AutoDownload automatically picked it for you. SiTiming does not do this so you will always need to select the database connection to see your list of events.

3 Licence Keys

AutoDownload licence keys work in SiTiming.

4 Old Events

It is possible to import AutoDownload events into SiTiming. This process is done from within SiTiming using the top level menu option “Import v2 Database”. An AutoDownload database is selected and all the events within that database are imported into the SiTiming database. If you have a very large database with a lot of events this can take a long time! You can import events from multiple AutoDownload databases into a single SiTiming database.

You don’t have to import old events into SiTiming as you can still use AutoDownload to view them.

4.1 Importing ad-hoc events

Instead of importing a whole database of events you may want to just import a selection. The following approach is recommended:

1. In AutoDownload create a new database e.g. “EventsTemp”. This database will need to be licensed using your AutoDownload licence key.
2. Restore an event backup of the event you want into the new AutoDownload database. Repeat for any other events you want to import.
3. In SiTiming use the “Import v2 Database” option for the “EventsTemp” database.
4. When the import process has finished the events in the “EventsTemp” AutoDownload database should be deleted so that if you want to do additional events in the future you can repeat the process. You can’t import the same event multiple times.

5 New Events

New events can be added using the “Add Single-Stage Event” and “Add Multi-Stage Event”.

5.1 Copying Events

It is possible to copy an event in SiTiming, however unlike AutoDownload it will only copy Event and Course settings, it will not copy Entries, Punch Data or Telemetry Data. If you want to have a full copy you need to do a backup and restore.

It may be tempting to import an old event from AutoDownload, copy it and use this as a starting point for your new event. **This approach is not recommended.** The import of AutoDownload events uses a large number of mappings and assumptions so that the results for the event in SiTiming are the same as the ones for the same event in AutoDownload. However with the new features available it may not be configured in the optimal way in SiTiming. It is better to “start from scratch” using the “Add event” options.

6 Validate Event

This button/option on the Event Overview will give you event statistics and also highlight any potential problems that you may need to investigate.

7 Courses vs Classes

In SiTiming all events are classed based however...

If your course only has one class which is the same name as the course then the event should work like an AutoDownload course based event! When you add a course in SiTiming then a class is automatically created with the same name. This also happens if loading IOF XML files from course planning software when classes have not been set-up.

8 Entries

The AutoDownload CSV, OE format and IOF XML format entries files all work with SiTiming.

In AutoDownload for multi-stage events all the entry information was stored against the individual events and thus some data such as name or club had to be stored in multiple places. In SiTiming some entry data is stored at the multi-stage level removing the duplication of data and making the information easier to manage.

9 Data Used For Results

One of the big changes with SiTiming is what punch data is used for calculating the results of an entry. Unless you were using “Sub-Stage Live” in AutoDownload an entry’s results was based on the punch data from a single download. In SiTiming it is possible to download cards multiple times to “build” a result for an entry over the duration of an event or use data collected via “radio” controls or by reading the backup memory of stations. What data can be used is set in “Number of Downloads per SI-Card” and “Use non-downloaded data in results” fields in “Add/Modify Event Step 3”.

10 Safety Check

In AutoDownload a competitor is considered to be “safe” and on longer “outstanding” when their SI-Card is downloaded. With the options to downloading a card multiple times or not at all it’s not so straight forward in SiTiming.

In SiTiming the concept of “Stop” controls is used. If a competitor’s last punch is at a stop control then they are no longer “outstanding”.

As part of the process of creating an event an “RDO” control is automatically created in the control master. This is the default “download control” and is set to be a stop control. When a SI-Card is downloaded as well as the data from the card being saved a download punch is created using the settings in the control master and the master station’s time. Thus downloading an SI-Card makes a competitor “safe” as the last punch for the SI-Card will be the RDO punch which is a stop control.

It gets a bit more complicated when the event allows multiple downloads. You may wish to set-up multiple RDO controls in the control master, some of which are stop controls and some are not depending at what point in the event you are doing the download.

It is possible to make any control a stop control. Stop controls will be needed if you don’t intend to download cards at all.

11 Downloading

Downloading has moved to “Data Collection >> Downloads”.

As explained in the Safety Check section above the master station/computer time becomes critical in SiTiming.

If you have not got your controls and computers time synced you may get the message “Download station time appears to be earlier than some timing punches”. The message means that there are punches stored on the SI-Card with a time after the download (master station) time. As your master station is connected to your PC and time checked then most likely explanation for this is that your timing stations are incorrect. Possibly they have not been synchronised for a long time or maybe they are set in a different time zone, possibly to or from daylight savings time? There are some possible side-effects of this but you may be OK for the remainder of this event. If you need to read punches directly from any timing station for your event then you may well have problems with participants shown as outstanding when they are not so be aware. More help on this is available within the help for the “Download SI-Cards” screen in SiTiming.

If you have multiple RDO control masters set-up you will be asked to select the one you want to use for the download session.

With the change in data structure downloads are now always saved to the database even if an entry cannot be found for the SI-Card.

Downloads can be managed via “Data Collection >> Management >> Manage Downloads”. This screen can be used to list downloads that have not been linked to an entry. This screen also has an “Adjust Download Time” option in the menu which you might need to use if you start downloading and the computer time was wrong.

Downloads can now be moved from one entry to another by firstly removing the card number from the wrong entry in “Modify Entry” and then adding the card number to the correct entry. There is now no need to delete the download and then re-download the SI-Card once you have changed the card numbers for the entries.

12 Multi-Stage Events

All events are now multi-stage events however some multi-stage events only have one stage! This change allows us to implement better data management and processing.

When an event has multiple stages then a multi-stage event should be created and then events added to the multi-stage.

Other than modifying the multi-stage event settings or backing up the Multi-Stage all the “multi-stage screens” are actually within the individual events. For example:

- Multi-Stage results are found under the results menu for each event
- Both “Modify Entry” and “Modify Multi-Stage Entry” can be found in the menu on the “View Entry” screen within each event.

13 SI-Card Archive

This works in the same way as in AutoDownload.