

## Understanding the ViewPoint MPI Flat File

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### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a detailed description of what the MPI flat file is and how to configure ViewPoint to import it.

### Overview

The ViewPoint software has the ability to alert the end user of issues with any of the thousands of cable modems the system may have. Entering this number of modems into the software manually is not practical, so the software has the ability to import a list of modems. This information usually comes from the billing system, is in the form of a flat file, and is placed directly onto the server daily.

There are four pieces of information needed in the flat file:

**Modem Name** – Can be anything, typically is the same as the modem MAC address.

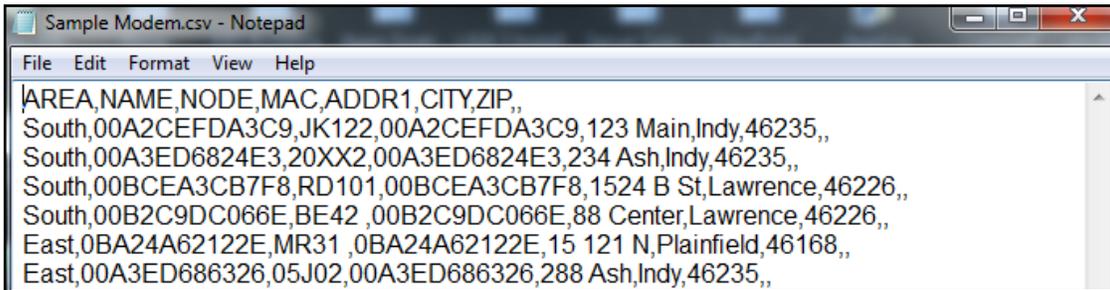
**MAC Address** – Cable modem MAC address, as listed in the CMTS.

**Fiber Node Name** – The node where the modem resides. For a combined dashboard with the RPM module, this name must match the node name as listed in the SST.

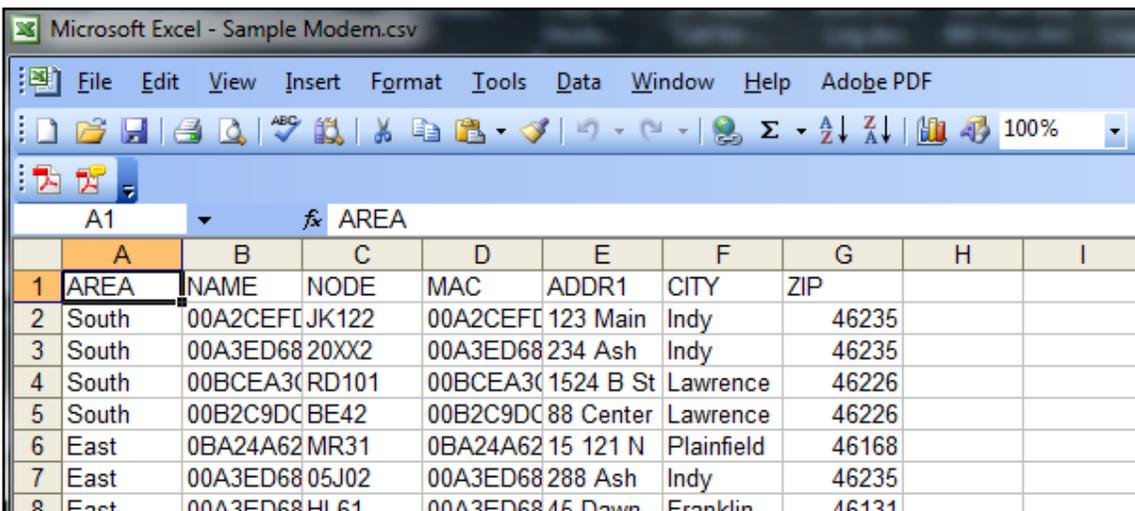
**Area** – Location in the ViewPoint hierarchy where the modem is to be listed. (Note: The Area field is only required if node names are duplicated in different areas of the hierarchy. If this is not the case, do not include this column in the flat file. For more information, see the ***Explanation of Area Field*** section.)

### Sample Flat File

The following image shows a sample flat file. In this example, we are using a .csv file, or a comma separated file. ViewPoint can import files of different types and delineation. This will be described later. Note that the column headers are present, and must be included for each flat file placed on the server.



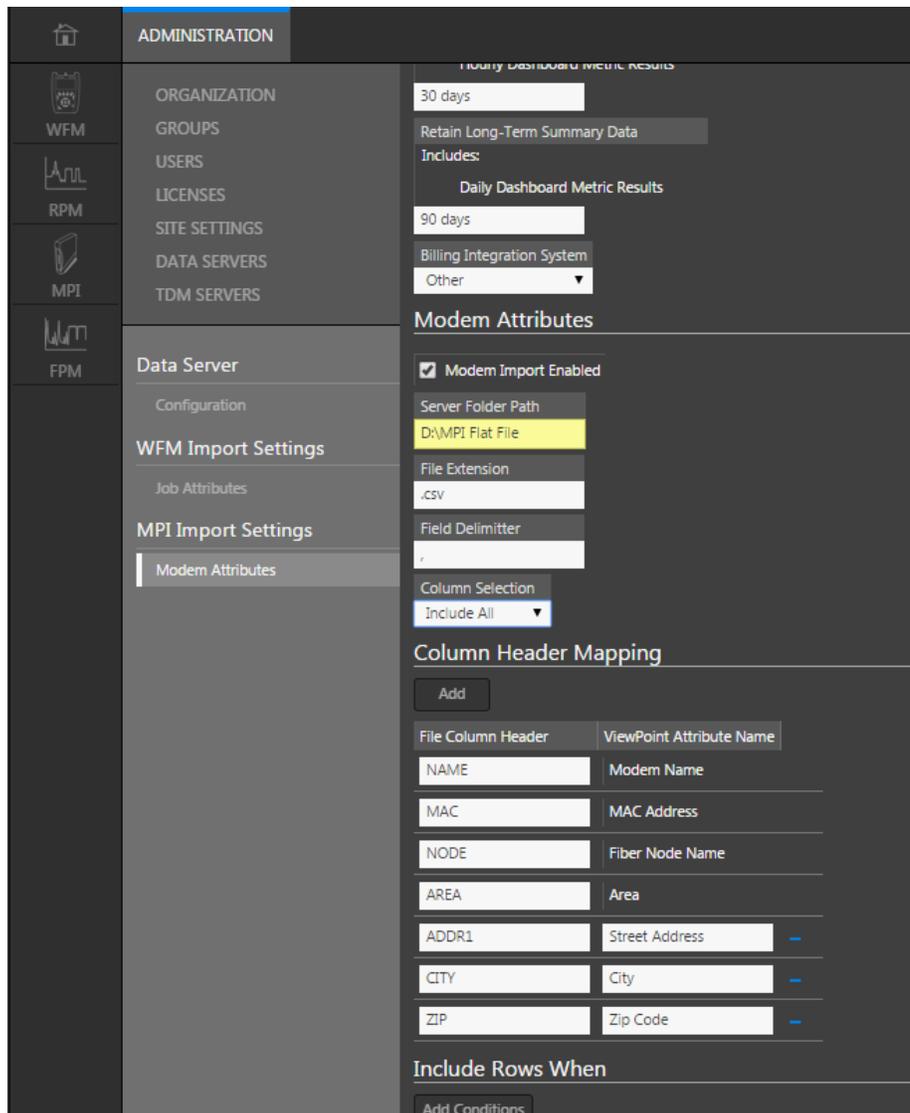
The above image shows the file being viewed with Notepad, but it is sometimes easier to view a .csv file with Excel, as shown below:



### ViewPoint Configuration

Once you have the flat file, the next step is to configure the Trilithic ViewPoint software to import it. You must have administrator rights in the software for these steps. First, select the **Administration** menu, select **Data Servers**, and select your data server (in most cases there is only one.) Then select the **Edit** button at the top of the page.

Select the **Modem Attributes** link under MPI Import Settings and then check the **Modem Import Enabled** box under the Modem Attributes section. The display should look similar to the image below.



The following is a description of the options under the Modem Attributes section. This section tells ViewPoint where the file is, what type it is, and what columns to import.

**Modem Import Enabled** – Enables the importing of the flat file. This should be checked.

**Server Folder Path** – Where the flat file is stored on the server. Typically this is on the data drive and can be configured by the end user. An example is D:\ MPI Flat File, which is a folder named MPI Flat File on the D:\ drive of the server. How the flat file gets placed into this location is left up to the end user. Most MSOs use ftp, shared folder, etc.

**File Extension** – The file type, e.g. .csv or .txt. In this example, we are using a .csv file.

**Field Delimiter** – The delimiter separating the different fields in the flat file, e.g. comma, tab, or bar. In this example, we are using a comma.

**Column Selection** – Options are Include All, Include Only, and Exclude. Include All is the selection most commonly used and tells ViewPoint to import all columns. If Include Only or Exclude are selected you will be able to define which columns to import or exclude.

The next section describes the options under the Column Header Mapping section. This section tells ViewPoint how to read the flat file.

You will notice there are three columns required by ViewPoint: NAME, NODE, and MAC. The File Column Header fields must exactly match the column headers in your flat file, as in this example. The ViewPoint Attribute Name is the common name for these fields. In this example, you will notice there are additional column headers named ADDR1, CITY, and ZIP. These are extra columns in the flat file the user can import as well.

Select the **Add** button at the top of this section to add additional columns. Match the File Column Header value to the column header name in the flat file, and then define the common name. If a column is imported, these values will be associated with the corresponding modem in ViewPoint.

The remaining options Include Rows When and Exclude Rows When are additional filtering options available when the flat file is imported. For example, if the flat file information contains modems that are associated with a node that is not on this server, you could use the Exclude Rows When and set the values to NODE = X, where X is the node name.

When finished with the ViewPoint configuration, select **Save** at the top of the main window.

## Additional Information

Once the flat file is placed into the correct folder on the server, it is imported almost immediately. Most MSOs will place the flat file onto the server at least daily. If any information for a specific modem has changed from an earlier file, ViewPoint will update the information based on the most current date.

After importing the flat file, it may take the server several minutes to process before the information is available on the dashboard.

## Explanation of Area Field

As mentioned earlier, the Area column in the flat file may not be required. The Area attribute can be thought of as a way to further define where the modem is located in the organization. This is really only necessary for cable systems that reuse fiber node names throughout their organization. If an Area column is specified, ViewPoint will use that column name to limit the search for the fiber node in the tree.

Looking at the Flat File example in this document, the Flat File importer will only place modems on fiber nodes that match the “NODE” column value and that are under an organizational folder/area with the name specified by the “AREA” column. This means that the first modem would be placed on the fiber node “JK122” if and only if it is under a folder or area named “South” in the organizational tree. (The area names and node names are case insensitive.)

If a fiber node named “JK122” is not found under the “South” area/folder, then a new node will be created under Unassigned Nodes, and the modem will be placed there. Again, this is really only useful for cable systems that have duplicate fiber node names in their organizational structure. If this is not the case, it is recommended to leave the Area attribute blank.



NOTE

**For Additional Help, Contact Trilithic Applications Engineering**  
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