

# 4 Ways to Connect with Collect

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The Collect family of RS232 data acquisition products includes 4 products - starting with Collect SL, a simple cost-effective RS232 collection program and finishing with Collect Pro the newest version of Collect that includes advanced process control capabilities.

While all of the Collect products share common features, each one includes unique capabilities that make it better suited to different RS232/Serial data collection applications.

## **Collect SL - Cost-Effective, Entry-Level Data Collection**

Collect SL, the junior member of the Collect family, is a simple cost-effective solution that collects RS232 data into its' own internal spreadsheet.

- A simple to use parser extracts the required data from the RS232 data stream.
- Data collection can be set up to automatically collect data at timed intervals.
- Date/time stamps and user information can be appended to the incoming data as it is collected. Keyboard macros can

**“... cost-effective, entry-level data collection... send data to any program... fully integrated with Microsoft® Excel® ... powerful automation and control from within Excel®”**

automate cursor movements within the Collect SL spreadsheet.

- Includes support for sending commands to the instrument user prompts can be added to help automate instrument applications.
- Collect SL worksheets can be saved and printed.
- Spreadsheet data can be exported as a file or to an Excel® spreadsheet.

## **Collect - Send Data to Any Program**

Collect includes all of the features of Collect SL with the added capability of putting data directly into any program.

Collect uses keyboard wedge technology to send the data to wherever the cursor is located in an application. Collect can execute keystroke macros to move the cursor automatically and automate any action that can be done through the keyboard, including hot key functions. For example, when

working with Excel®, Collect can automate the ALT/F8/Enter function to automatically run Excel® macros, CTRL+S to save the spreadsheet or CTRL+F to bring up the Find dialog to locate a record with a bar code.

Collect can simultaneously send data to multiple destinations including applications, a file, its' own internal spreadsheet, the PC screen, Excel®, SPC/QC databases, LIMS clients data entry forms, etc. Manual keyboard data entry to any program or file open in Windows® can be automated through Collect.

Collect can even send data to two destinations simultaneously. One way to use this capability is to have Collect create a backup file of the raw instrument data at the same time as you send parsed data to an application.

Because data collection with Collect uses wedge technology, it is best suited for RS232 applications that require interfacing a single

instrument to a dedicated PC where multi-tasking during data collection is not a requirement.

## Collect XL - Fully Integrated with Microsoft® Excel®

Microsoft® Excel® is one of the most popular applications for handling laboratory instrument data. Collect XL builds on that standard by providing RS232/Serial or TCP/IP/Ethernet data collection and automation that is controlled from within the Excel® application.

Collect XL uses COM technology to create a direct connection between instruments with RS232 or Ethernet ports and Excel®. With Collect XL this connection is independent of where the cursor is located.

Collect XL uses any Excel® template to pre-define where the instrument's data goes. Once data collection is started it can run without any further input from the analyst. Data collection can even take place from multiple instruments into the same spreadsheet or different spreadsheets at the same time. Since the software does not rely on the cursor at all, users are free to work in other applications while Collect XL is communicating with the instruments.

Collect XL also includes the Labtronics Instrument Library, a pre-configured library of interfaces for over 400 instruments including

balances, pH meters, titrators, density meters, force gauges, spectrophotometers and more. The Instrument Library allows users to simply select the instrument they are working with, specify the COM port it is connected to and they are ready to start collecting.

Collect XL is the ideal solution for laboratories and production facilities using Excel® who want to collect data from multiple instruments to the same PC or want to be able to multi-task in other applications during data collection.

*“...Collect XL allowed us to interface our balance, colorimeter and pH meter into one integrated workstation.”*

## Collect Pro - Powerful Automation and Control from Within Excel®

The newest member of the Collect family, Collect Pro, adds advanced process control capabilities and advanced data collection capabilities with database integration to Excel®-based applications. Collect Pro provides sophisticated instrument interfacing and analysis automation.

Like Collect XL, Collect Pro leverages COM technology to allow multi-tasking during data collection and simultaneous collection from multiple instruments. Collect Pro adds the ability to create automated processes that can control a wide

range of tests that use RS232/Serial or TCP/IP/Ethernet instruments and devices.

For example, one of our clients is currently using Collect Pro to control data collection from 3 different balances. Collect Pro automatically collects a stable weight from each balance, adds a date and time stamp and an operator name to the data and then prints a label for the product container.

Together Collect Pro and Excel® can create automated processes to:

- Start, stop and control instruments.
- Automatically check collected results and take action based on the results.
- Display messages to the user to request information.
- Display test instructions to users at key points throughout the analysis.
- Combine several instruments to work as an integrated workstation.
- Collect data over the network from a remote site.
- ... and much more

Collect Pro lets you define automation processes to meet your testing requirements.

The following chart can help you to identify the Collect product(s) that are best suited to your applications.

	Collect	Collect SL	Collect XL	Collect Pro
Interfacing Architecture Technology	Wedge	Wedge	COM	COM
<b>Data Collection</b>				
Interface RS232/Serial output	•	•	•	•
Date and time stamp incoming data	•	•	•	•
Collect data into the Labtronics spreadsheet	•	•		
Collect data into any program running in Windows®		•		
Send data directly into a Log/Data File		•		•
Combine data from multiple instruments simultaneously			•	•
Full integration with Microsoft® Excel®			•	•
Multi-task with work in other applications			•	•
Collect data remotely via TCP/IP			•	•
<b>Instrument Setup and Control</b>				
Send commands to control instruments	•	•	•	•
Automatically collect readings on a timed basis	•	•	•	•
Includes Instrument Library to simplify setup			•	•
Able to export and import instrument setups			•	•
Control instruments based on sample results				•
Monitor instruments via Internet				•
Control I/O lines (switches, valves lights, alarms, etc.)				•
<b>Application Control</b>				
Graph results over time		•	•	
Create user-defined automated processes				•
Display instructions to the analyst				•
Trigger Excel® macros based on results		•		•
Start and run other applications		•		•
Integrate with Access®				•
Integrate with Oracle®				•
Integrate with SQL* Server®				•
<b>Operating Systems</b>				
Windows® 95/98	•	•		
Windows® NT	•	•	•	•
Windows® 2000	•	•	•	•
Windows® XP Professional	•	•	•	•

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