

Tracing OPC DA in System 800xA using AfwApplogViewer

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Introduction

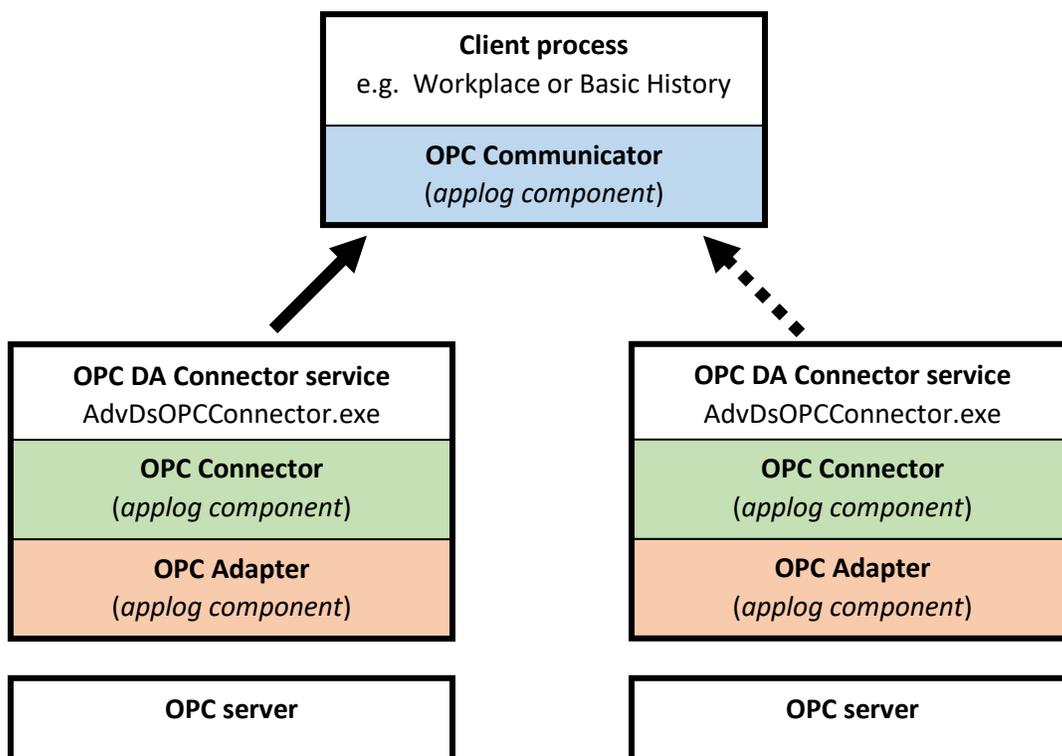
Each OPC data sample travelling between an OPC server and a client, e.g. a faceplate or history log in System 800xA can be traced using applog. The first key to success is identification of points to apply the logging at.

In principle, there are two locations available where logging can be made, one of them is split into two parts:

1. The client process
 - OPC Communicator (facing the OPC Connector)
2. The OPC DA Connector service provider
 - OPC Connector (facing the OPC Communicator in the client)
 - OPC Adapter (facing the source OPC DA server)

In redundant systems, there is often two OPC DA Connector service providers. The choice of server is either governed by *affinity* or random (in lack of affinity).

Some select services (e.g. Basic History and SoftAlarm) can use *Parallel Redundancy* where subscriptions are run in parallel towards both OPC DA Connector service providers. This allow ultra-fast failover, in fact there is no failover to talk about. The subscription is already running in the secondary, the client just need to switch feed.



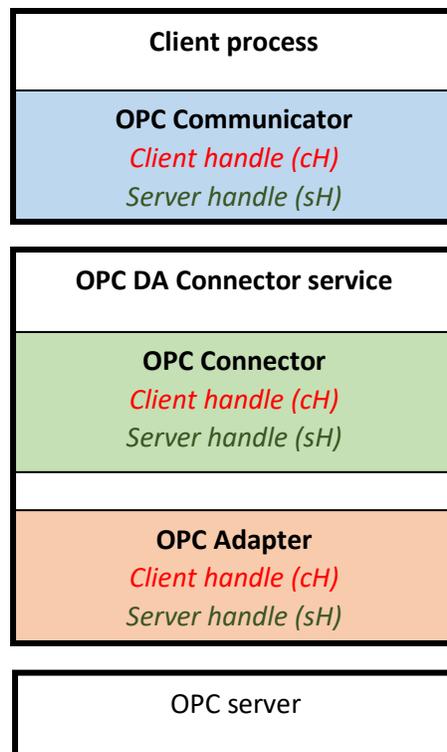
The second key to success is proper identification of the item identities, so called “handles” in the three (3) layers of logging that is possible between the server and client.

Each layer has its own representation of item handle. A handle also has a direction:

- “client handle” (facing towards the client)
- “server handle” (facing towards the server).

Notice that the complete chain involves “four” (4) parties:

1. The client
2. The OPC DA Connector (facing multiple clients)
3. The OPC DA Adapter (facing a single OPC server)
4. The server



1. A sample of logging in the **OPC Communicator** of Basic History (AdvHtHistorySrv.exe) may look like this:

```
2018-01-23 12:44:45:254#1065, ABBIT51, AdvHtHistorySrv, PID: 29536, Thread: 37848
OPC Communicator, Common, level = 2, Tag =

NewValues_2_0: OpcHandler=0x457b4e8

GroupSH:0 Client:CH(701), OPCHdlr:SH(68096), ItemID:'{7B6DA285-FFB0-4886-814E-
27F87062F6C1}{4C8CCD88-CCBA-4E6D-A642-15A4B7B010CC}:value.IOValue',
NewValue:value(VT_R4) = 101.727, Quality:0xc0, TimeStamp:01/23/18 12:44:44 864ms,
Result:0x0, OPCHdlr:CH(68096), Connector:SH(-1)
```

Comments

The log contains the Object and Aspect ID + property names (the IDs can be found out from object or aspect *Details...* and translated back to name by using the *Find Tool*). Along with the IDs we also see the data value, timestamp and data quality. Then we have the mission critical “handles” used by the **OPC Communicator**:

- Client:CH(701)
- OPCHdlr:SH(68096)
- OPCHdlr:CH(68096)
- Connector:SH(-1)

2. A sample of logging in the **OPC Connector** may look like this:

```
2018-01-23 12:44:45:242#1002, ABBIT51, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 6848, Thread: 8548
AdvDsOPCConnector, Basic, level = 2, Tag =

CConnector::OnDataChange - OPCHdlr:CH(68096), Connector:SH(60672), quality(c0),
1/23/2018 12:44:44 PM.864, value(VT_R4) = 101.727, Connector:CH(60672),
Adapter:SH(237)
```

As we can see, the OPC Connector does not expose any object or aspect IDs, only the data value, timestamp and quality + the “handles”

Handles used by the **OPC Connector**:

- OPCHdlr:CH(68096)
- Connector:SH(60672)
- Connector:CH(60672)
- Adapter:SH(237)

3. A sample of logging in the **OPC Adapter** may look like this:

```
2018-01-23 12:44:45:232#964, ABBIT51, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 6848, Thread: 40048
AdvDsOPCAdapter, Basic, level = 2, Tag =

Connector:CH(60672), Adapter:SH(237), quality(c0), 1/23/2018 12:44:44 PM.864,
value(VT_R4) = 101.727, Adapter:CH(237), OPCsrv:SH(224)
```

Handles used by the **OPC Adapter**:

- Connector:CH(60672)
- Adapter:SH(237)
- Adapter:CH(237)
- OPCsrv:SH(224)

Notice: The OPC item value (101.727) and quality (0xc0 = OPC good) is exactly the same in all levels of logging!

It may be easier to interpret all of the “handles” if we put them in their context

The client (Basic History, AdvHtHistorySrv.exe) adds an item which the OPC Communicator in the inside identifies as:

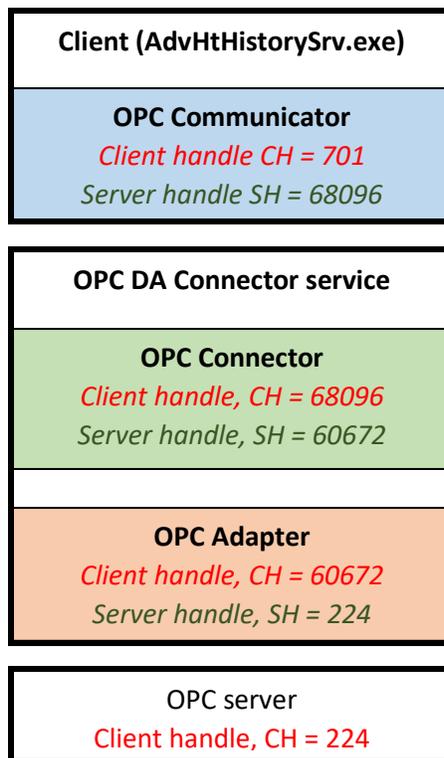
- Object ID {7B6DA285-FFB0-4886-814E-27F87062F6C1}
- Aspect ID {4C8CCD88-CCBA-4E6D-A642-15A4B7B010CC}
- Property name `value.IOValue`
- Client Handle 701
- Server Handle 68096 (*this handle is returned by the OPC DA Connector*)

Affinity (or randomization) send the subscription to the OPC DA Connector service in some computer (with Basic History, often the same node since Basic History often run in Connectivity Server nodes). The Connector has the following identifications:

- Client Handle 68096
- Server Handle 60672 (*this handle is returned by the OPC DA Adapter*)

The OPC Adapter gets the subscription from the OPC DA Connector. The OPC DA Adapter keep the item with the following identifications:

- Client Handle 60672
- Server Handle 224 (*this handle is returned by the true source OPC server*)



So, what the true client knows as data item #701 is known by the true server as data item #224. In the layers between, two more identities are used for the very same item!

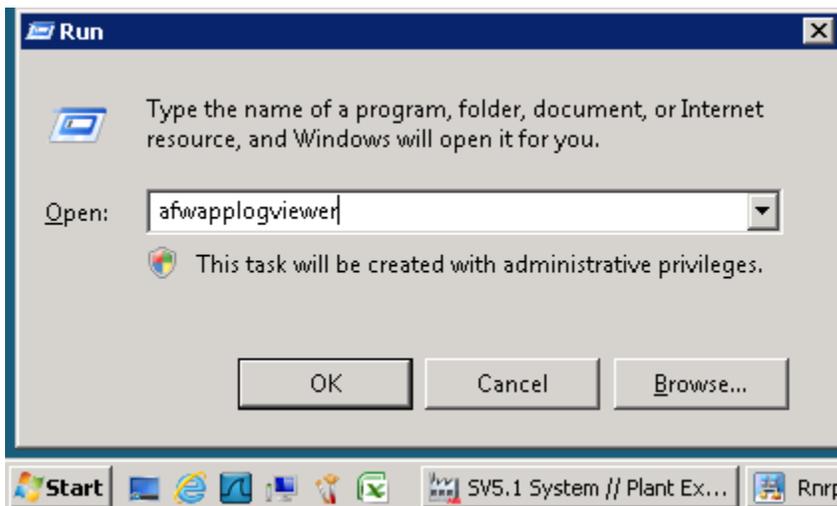
Understanding this chain of data communication and identification is crucial to be able to interpret the logs.

The logging can become quite substantial (an OPC server or client may handle several tens of thousands of items), and filtering is limited.

Only the **OPC DA Adapter** has a filter that can be applied. This filter takes an OPC group or OPC client as argument. It is indeed possible to limit the OPC Adapter logging to only one client, e.g. Basic History – but the client and server handles require you to log also in the **OPC DA Connector**. Without the Connector logging, you cannot follow the chain from start to end.

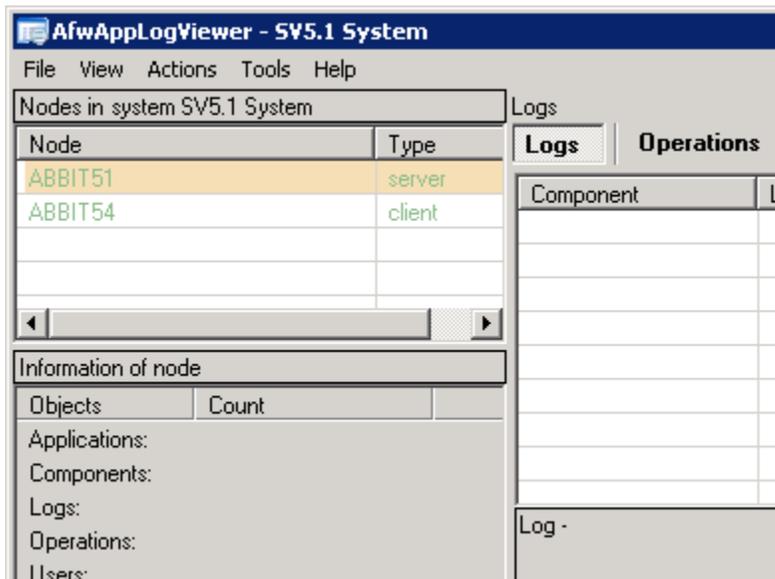
Let's begin with starting the **AfwAppLogViewer.exe** tool, hereafter called "aplog". The tool is decentralized, i.e. you can operate it from any node within an 800xA system; logging can be applied to any component in any node of the system. Ergo: it is possible to perform remote logging in a server from a local engineering client. The tool require the user to be member of the *IndustrialITAdmin* user group in the Windows workgroup or domain.

Start→Run... `afwapplogviewer`



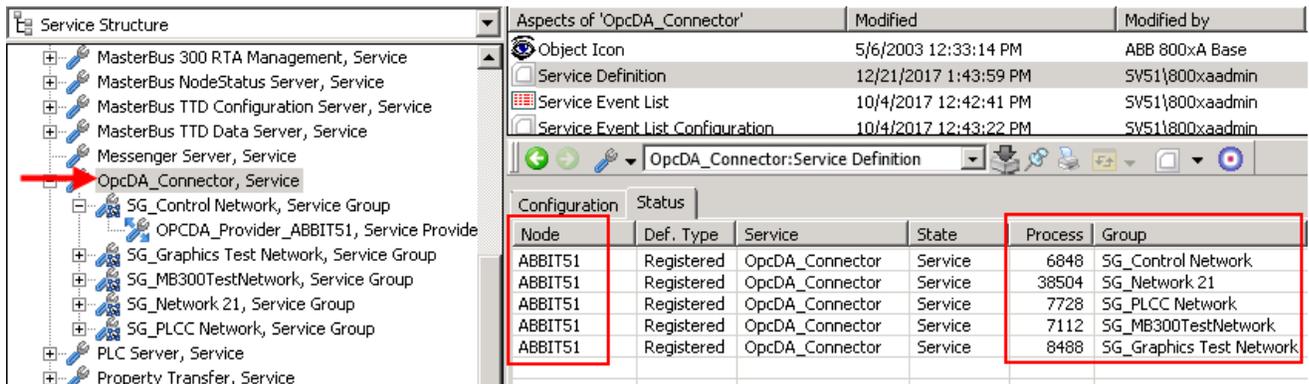
Click **OK** in the two following dialog boxes (accepting defaults)

After some short time, an application shall be presented having a list of nodes in the upper left corner. The list with nodes may take a while to populate, especially in systems having more nodes in the Node Administration Structure than in reality (e.g. a test system with only a limited number of the computers available).



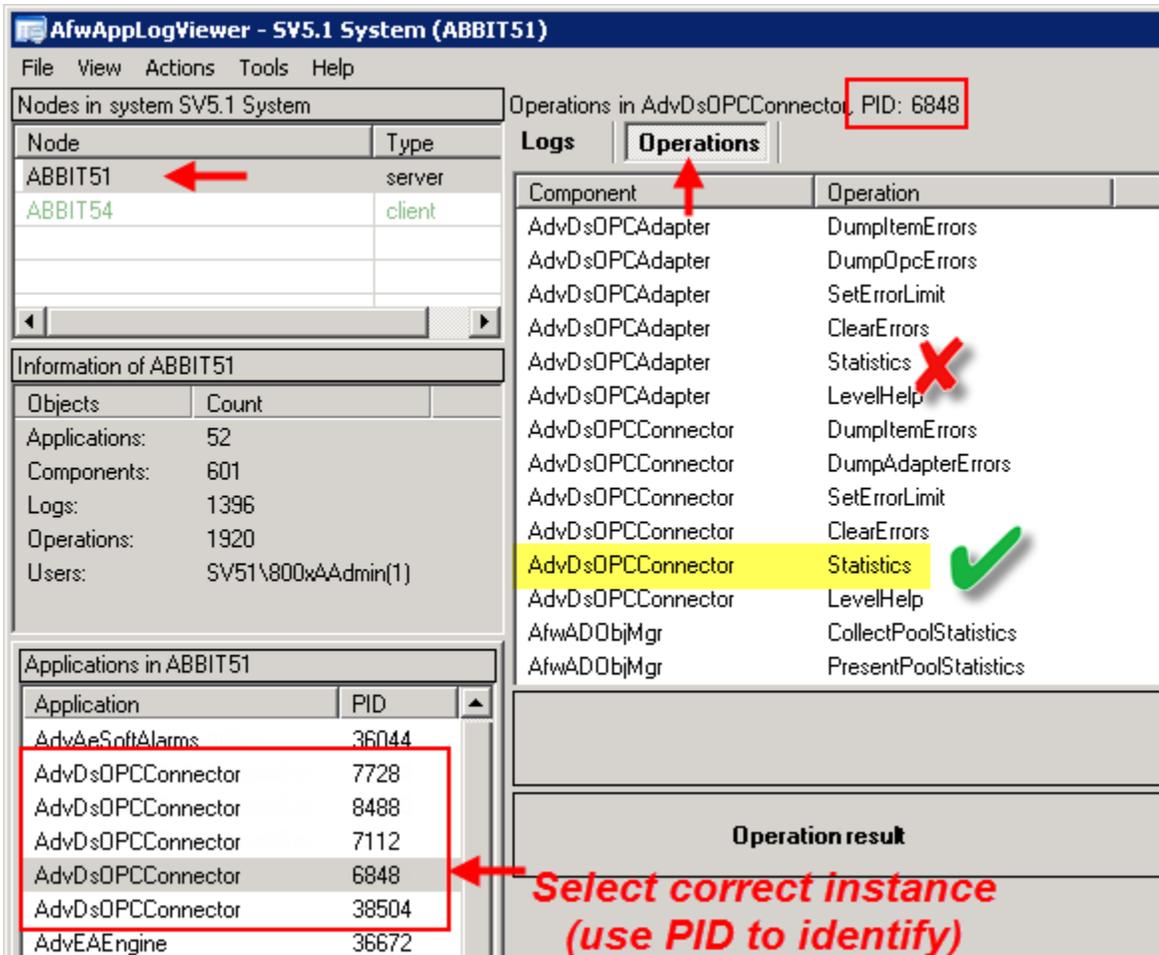
Lets begin with something simple, to list clients connecting to an OPC server. Before performing this, you must identify the node with the source OPC server and the PID of its associated OPC DA Connector.

The Service Definition aspect of the OPC DA Connector service in the [Service Structure] is an excellent place to make this decision from:



In this case I am using AC 800M Connect of PID 6848 running in the node ABBIT51

To list OPC clients connecting to the AC 800M OPC server in ABBIT51 via System 800xA OPC framework, select the ABBIT51 node in the upper left list in applog, then select the button **Operations**. Locate the *AdvDsOPCConnector Statistics* operation, then double click that row (or mark it, and click the **Invoke** button on the right side)



Select correct instance (use PID to identify)

The output should be like the below example:

```
2018-01-23 14:01:52:482 ABBIT51 AdvDsOPCConnector PID : 6848 AdvDsOPCConnector
ThreadId : 8548 Statistics
Execution time: 0 seconds, 33 miliseconds
...
Total number of connected clients: 5

Connected clients:
Id: -1, BackendId: 0x02CF91E0, Node: 'ABBIT51', App:
'AfwWorkplaceApplication', User: 'SV51\800xaadmin', Items: 0 (0 active + 0
inactive)
Id: 0, BackendId: 0x02CFA188, Node: 'ABBIT51', App: 'AdvAeSoftAlarms',
User: 'sv51\800xaservice', Items: 5 (5 active + 0 inactive)
Id: 1, BackendId: 0x02CFB530, Node: 'ABBIT51', App: 'AdvAeAlarmManager',
User: 'sv51\800xaservice', Items: 5 (5 active + 0 inactive)
Id: 2, BackendId: 0x02CFD340, Node: 'ABBIT51', App: 'AfwPropertyTransfer',
User: 'sv51\800xaservice', Items: 4 (1 active + 3 inactive)
Id: 3, BackendId: 0x02CFE7C0, Node: 'ABBIT51', App: 'AdvHtHistorySrv',
User: 'sv51\800xaservice', Items: 245 (245 active + 0 inactive)
...
```

There are more lines output, but for this investigation, it is enough to identify Basic History in ABBIT51 as client ID 3 (we can also see that it has 245 items subscribed towards this OPC Connector).

Next thing we can do is to ask for the complete set of OPC items subscribed by the Basic History service. Select the node where it is running (here ABBIT51) and the AdvHtHistorySrv.exe application, then locate the operation OPC Communicator Statistics, fill out the argument field with "D" (for Detailed analysis) then press Invoke (or double click the row with the operation name)

The screenshot shows the 'AfwAppLogViewer - SV5.1 System (ABBIT51)' interface. The 'Nodes in system SV5.1 System' table lists ABBIT51 as a server and ABBIT54 as a client. The 'Information of ABBIT51' section shows 52 applications, 601 components, 1396 logs, 1920 operations, and SV51\800xAAdmin(1) users. The 'Applications in ABBIT51' table lists AdvDsOPCConnector (PID 6848), AdvEAEEngine (PID 36672), AdvHtHistorySrv (PID 29536), and AdvMbAeOPCServer (PID 38448). The 'Operations' tab for AdvHtHistorySrv (PID:29536) is active, showing a list of operations. The 'OPC Communicator Statistics' operation is highlighted, and its arguments are set to 'D'. The 'Operation result' section displays a list of subscribed items, with 'Item #267: CH = 701, SH = 68096, ID = '{7B6DA285-FFB0-488' highlighted.

If the output is too large, it will be directly saved to a text file (the name will be output in the lower right window) or if small be put directly in the window.

Here, all items subscribed will be listed (which can be far larger than the 245 belonging to AC 800M Connect). I have marked out the item described in the earlier pages. Please notice the CH and SH identities which is important to know.

To limit the volume of the logging being applied next, we shall set filter in the OPC DA Adapter (which runs as a subcomponent inside the AdvDsOPCConnector.exe) – so we go back to that node and *AdvDsOPCConnector* process with the PID we identified as being in use for the OPC server in question.

Now we locate the *AdvDsOPCAdapter View/modify focus filter* operation, fill out the ID of the application (ID 3 was found in use by AdvHtHistorySrv.exe by running the *AdvDsOPCConnector Statistics* operation a few pages back)

Operations in AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832

Component	Operation	Arguments : 3
AdvDsOPCAdapter	DumpThreads	Name Value
AdvDsOPCAdapter	TMStatistics	Client Id A:3
AdvDsOPCAdapter	SetTransactionDelayLimit	Focus Policy
AdvDsOPCAdapter	DumpRecoveryItems	Group Handle
AdvDsOPCAdapter	DumpEvents	
AdvDsOPCAdapter	View/modify focus filter	
AdvDsOPCAdapter	ListOpcGroups	
AdvDsOPCAdapter	DumpItemErrors	

AdvDsOPCConnector - View (no args) or modify filter
 (focus args: 'A:<client id/group handle>' = Add client/group, 'R:<client id/group handle>' = Remove client/group, 'C' = Clear)
 (change focus policy arg: '0' = Show focused groups outside focused clients, '1' = Do not show focused groups outside focused clients.)

Operation result

2019-12-13 10:52:31:791 ABBIT26 AdvDsOPCConnector PID : 7832 AdvDsOPCAdapter ThreadId : 8196 View/modify focus filter
 Execution time: 0 seconds, 3 milliseconds

Parameters:
 Client Id = A:3
 Focus Policy =
 Group Handle =

Result:

```

***** View/Modify focus filter *****

Client id: 3 added to the focus filter!

The group focus filter is empty!

Focus policy is exclusive focus (1 = do not show focused groups outside focused clients).
  
```

From now on, the OPC DA Adapter logging is limited to this client (Basic History) only.

Now, lets apply logging onto these three locations discussed earlier (OPC Communicator in client, OPC DA Connector and OPC DA Adapter in the server).

First click the Logs button. Then select the AdvHtHistorySrv client, locate the *OPC Communicator Common* log, change log level to three (3).

AfwAppLogViewer - SV5.1 System (ABBIT51)

File View Actions Tools Help

Nodes in system SV5.1 System

Node	Type
ABBIT51	server
ABBIT54	client

Information of ABBIT51

Objects	Count
Applications:	52
Components:	601
Logs:	1396
Operations:	1920
Users:	SV51\800xAAdmin(1)

Applications in ABBIT51

Application	PID
AdvDsOPCConnector	7112
AdvDsOPCConnector	6848
AdvDsOPCConnector	38504
AdvEAEEngine	36672
AdvHtHistorySrv	29536

Logs in AdvHtHistorySrv, PID:29536

Component	Log	Level
OPC Communicator	TimeMeasure	0
OPC Communicator	ItemNames	0
OPC Communicator	Common	3
OPC Communicator	CSLIBClient	0
OPC Communicator	AspectClient	0
OPC Communicator	AD	0
SafetyAspects	Trace-log	0
ServiceManagerClie	ProtocolClient	0

Log -

Start time: [] Now [] T
 End time: [] Now [] Get

Then locate the OPC DA Connector process, and the *AdvDsOPCAdapter* component's *DataChanged** log and it to log level three (3):

**) In older versions of 800xA Base, this log does not exist, but the same content will be available in the Basic log.*

The screenshot shows the 'Logs in AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832' window. It has two tabs: 'Logs' and 'Operations'. The 'Logs' tab is active, showing a list of log configurations. The 'AdvDsOPCAdapter DataChanged' log is highlighted in yellow and set to level 3. Other logs include 'ADQueryAspectsCie...' (Protocol(Client), level 0), 'AdvDsOPCAdapter CheckedData' (level 0), 'AdvDsOPCAdapter Transaction' (level 0), 'AdvDsOPCAdapter Error' (level 0), 'AdvDsOPCAdapter Basic' (level 0), and 'AdvDsOPCConnector ITS' (level 0). Below the list is an 'Error - Error log messages' section. At the bottom, there are controls for 'Start time' (2019-12-13 10:43:12:672), 'End time', 'Now' buttons, 'Translate GUID' checkbox, 'Messages : 12', 'Get messages', 'Clear All', 'Stop scroll', 'Save Options', and 'Save incoming logs to file' checkbox with a 'View File' button. A log entry is visible at the bottom: '2019-12-13 10:43:18:355#1392, &BBIT26, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832, Thread: 7404 AdvDsOPCAdapter, DataChanged, level = 2, Tag = Connector:CH(6402), Adapter:SH(144), quality(c0), utc(2019-12-13 09:43:17 868ms), value(VT_R4) = 24.2301, Adapter:CH(144), OPCsrv:SH(1)'.

Probably, by now, there will be some output sent to the lower right part of the window. If not, click the upper **Now** button to enter a *Minimum Time* filter preventing old data to be logged, then click **Get messages** to refresh the logging settings. Now logging should become visible in the output window.

Let the log run for a minute, then reset the log levels back to zero (0). A service restart, or computer reboot will likewise reset the logging back to default settings. Please note that some logs are enabled by default. That is fully normal.

Now use menu item *File*→*Save log messages as...* to a text file of your choice.

The rest is decoding the output as listed on one of the early pages of this document; carefully mapping the Client and Server handles so that you can see if data for a certain handle is sent by the true source OPC server or not.

A missing item can be attempted to be “refreshed” by disabling and re-enabling the subscription, e.g. toggle the **Enabled** flag of a Log Configuration. Please note that doing so will most likely generate a new chain of Client and Server handles starting in the OPC Communicator in the client and ending in the OPC DA Adapter. I.e. you must establish the “chain” once more.

If the “new chain” deliver data, but not the “old chain”, it points to the source OPC server having “forgot” or erroneously “cleared” the subscription. In OPC of 800xA, the client does not monitor the feed, it is every OPC server’s duty to remember all items added to it. It must not “forget” an item until the client has removed the subscription.

With all the above in memory, you now understand that it is not possible to verify any *other* client’s subscription by performing “Subscribe for live data”, opening a new faceplate or process graphics aspect. You can only check your own subscriptions, from “now”. To see what Basic History subscribed to yesterday or previous week you must use *aplog*.

Happy troubleshooting! 😊
/Stefan

If it is desired to have a log enabled from startup of a process, it is necessary to add the log(s) with *Log Init*. A log init is made by dragging & dropping the logs to the list of log inits on the *Log Initial Level* tab.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Log Inits must be manually cleared, or they will continue to be in effect.

The screenshot shows the AFWAppLogViewer interface for system SV5.1. The main window is titled "AFWAppLogViewer - SV5.1 System (ABBIT51)". It features a menu bar (File, View, Actions, Tools, Help) and several panels:

- Nodes in system SV5.1 System:** A table listing nodes ABBIT51 (server), ABBIT52 (server), ABBIT53 (server), ABBIT54 (client), and ABBIT58 (client).
- Information of ABBIT51:** A summary table showing 43 Applications, 521 Components, 1203 Logs, 1543 Operations, and users including INDUSTRIAL\adm...
- Initial log levels in ABBIT51:** A table with columns Id, Component, Log, level, Application, and Node. It contains one entry: Id 81, Component OPC Communi..., Log Common, level 3, Application AfwPropertyTransfer, Node ABBIT51. A red arrow points to the 'level' column with the text "Log level at next startup".
- Logs in AfwPropertyTransfer, PID: 4556:** A table with columns Component, Log, and Level. It lists various logs like DebugSupport (Exceptions, Asserts), OPC Communicator (TimeMeasure, ItemNames, Common, CSLIBClient, AspectClient, ΔD). A red arrow points to the 'Common' log with level 0, and another red arrow points to the 'level' column with the text "Log level right now".
- Start/End time controls:** Start time is set to 2019-10-15 13:03:59:821. There are "Now" buttons and a "Get messages" button.
- Footer:** "Add loginit = Select a log and drag it to loginit list" and "Application: Log initial level Storage classes".

Applg operation: OPC DA Communicator Statistics (with argument "D" for full detail) on the client process

OPC Group statistics:

=====

Group #1: Name: 'Group1', Update rate: 1000, Number of items: 4, Pending write: 0, Pending read: 0
Item #1: CH = 1, SH = 0, ID = 'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_eow'
Item #2: CH = 2, SH = 256, ID = 'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_serverrum'
Item #3: CH = 3, SH = 512, ID = 'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_syd'
Item #4: CH = 4, SH = 768, ID = 'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_tavlan'

Applg log: OPC DA Connector/OPC Adapter Data Changed log - an update with 4 items is received from the source OPC server

2019-12-13 16:13:17:650#40302, ABBIT26, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832, Thread: 5332
AdvDsOPCAdapter, DataChanged, level = 2, Tag =
Connector:CH(6402), Adapter:SH(144), quality(c0), utc(2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms), value(VT_R4) = 24.4083, Adapter:CH(144), OPCsrv:SH(1)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:651#40303, ABBIT26, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832, Thread: 5332
AdvDsOPCAdapter, DataChanged, level = 2, Tag =
Connector:CH(6918), Adapter:SH(175), quality(c0), utc(2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms), value(VT_R4) = 18.9566, Adapter:CH(175), OPCsrv:SH(2)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:651#40304, ABBIT26, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832, Thread: 5332
AdvDsOPCAdapter, DataChanged, level = 2, Tag =
Connector:CH(6662), Adapter:SH(176), quality(c0), utc(2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms), value(VT_R4) = 22.6334, Adapter:CH(176), OPCsrv:SH(3)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:651#40305, ABBIT26, AdvDsOPCConnector, PID: 7832, Thread: 5332
AdvDsOPCAdapter, DataChanged, level = 2, Tag =
Connector:CH(3597), Adapter:SH(177), quality(c0), utc(2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms), value(VT_R4) = 25.1212, Adapter:CH(177), OPCsrv:SH(4)

Applg log: OPC Communicator Common log - the update is received in the client

2019-12-13 16:13:17:655#4592, ABBIT28, AdvDSOPCCClient, PID: 5224, Thread: 5612
OPC Communicator, Common, level = 2, Tag =
NewValues_2_0: OpcHandler=0x60acbd0, DataSource=Connector
GroupSH:0 Client:CH(1), OPCHdlr:SH(0), ItemID:'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_eow',
(+) NewValue:value(VT_R4) = 24.4083, Quality:0xc0, Time(UTC):2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms, Result:0x0, OPCHdlr:CH(0), Connector:SH(6402)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:655#4593, ABBIT28, AdvDSOPCCClient, PID: 5224, Thread: 5612
OPC Communicator, Common, level = 2, Tag =
NewValues_2_0: OpcHandler=0x60acbd0, DataSource=Connector
GroupSH:0 Client:CH(2), OPCHdlr:SH(256), ItemID:'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_serverrum',
(+) NewValue:value(VT_R4) = 18.9566, Quality:0xc0, Time(UTC):2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms, Result:0x0, OPCHdlr:CH(256), Connector:SH(6918)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:655#4594, ABBIT28, AdvDSOPCCClient, PID: 5224, Thread: 5612
OPC Communicator, Common, level = 2, Tag =
NewValues_2_0: OpcHandler=0x60acbd0, DataSource=Connector
GroupSH:0 Client:CH(3), OPCHdlr:SH(512), ItemID:'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_syd',
(+) NewValue:value(VT_R4) = 22.6334, Quality:0xc0, Time(UTC):2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms, Result:0x0, OPCHdlr:CH(512), Connector:SH(6662)

2019-12-13 16:13:17:655#4595, ABBIT28, AdvDSOPCCClient, PID: 5224, Thread: 5612
OPC Communicator, Common, level = 2, Tag =
NewValues_2_0: OpcHandler=0x60acbd0, DataSource=Connector
GroupSH:0 Client:CH(4), OPCHdlr:SH(768), ItemID:'Root/Control Network/Supportline_24x365/Applications/Application_1/Diagrams/Diagram2:temp_tavlan',
(+) NewValue:value(VT_R4) = 25.1212, Quality:0xc0, Time(UTC):2019-12-13 15:13:17 313ms, Result:0x0, OPCHdlr:CH(768), Connector:SH(3597)