Peregrine

AssetCenter 4.3

Reconciliation

Peregrine
SYSTEMS

This edition applies to version 4.3 of the licensed program

AssetCenter

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Introduction

What is reconciliation?

Reconciliation is the integration of input data coming from a source application that is considered more up-to-date than the already existing data in the destination application.

The process is based on the following question: "Does the information that I would like to reconcile already exist in the target system?"

- If the answer is "no", the input data is inserted.
- If the answer is "yes", the existing data is updated according to the information contained in the input data.

What does the Reconciliation module do?

The Reconciliation module enables you to update records in AssetCenter using data obtained from external tools.

In this way you can control the information being used to feed your database and implement a manual or automatic validation process using specific criteria.

Figure 1. Reconciliation process
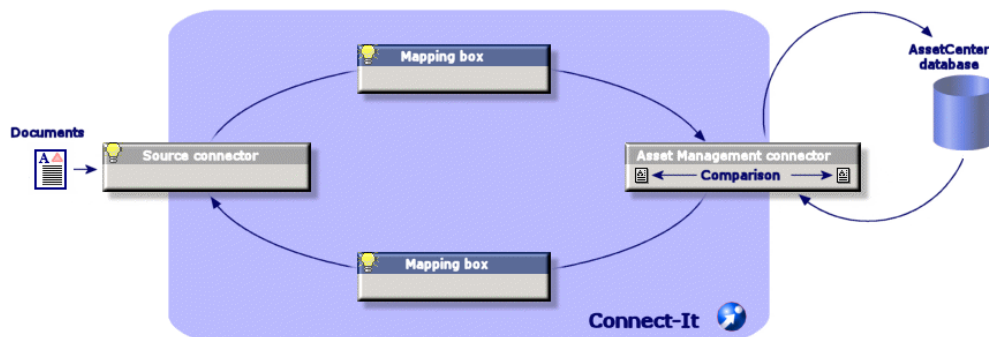
The Reconciliation module requires the use of the following program:

• Connect-It (provided with AssetCenter 4.3)

  The database administrator can insert a script in Connect-It to define the reconciliation rules. The updating of data in the AssetCenter database will automatic or manual depending on the conditions chosen by the user.

  One or more integration scenarios enabling you to transfer data from an external application to AssetCenter.

Warning:

Using the reconciliation module requires knowledge of the Connect-It integration platform.

For more information on using Connect-It, refer to the User's Guide.

To make full use of the **Reconciliation** module, Connect-It requires the use of:

• A source connector

  This external application (a scanner such as IDD or LDAP, for example) provides the data used to update the records in AssetCenter.

• A target connector

  Only Asset Management is supported as target connector for the moment.

The **amReconcProposal** table in AssetCenter stores the reconciliation proposals given by the administrator and enables you to validate them manually.

Who is the Reconciliation module intended for?

The Reconciliation module is intended for:
- AssetCenter administrators wishing to automate database updates: They create reconciliation rules in Connect-It using Basic scripts.
- Users designate to process reconciliation proposals in AssetCenter: They use the reconciliation proposals table (**amReconcProposal**) to manage and validate those proposals.

How to use this guide

General principles (Reconciliation) chapter

This chapter gives an overview of the implementation process of the reconciliation module as well as a description of this functionnality.

Reconciliation process chapter

This chapter describes a typical reconciliation process: Definition of rules in Connect-It (an administrator function) and management of the subsequent reconciliation proposals (by the designated user).

Sample scenarios chapter

This chapter shows two examples of reconciliation scenarios: Updating the Catalog in AssetCenter and updating the Portfolio after an inventory.

1 General principles (Reconciliation)

The reconciliation module in AssetCenter has been designed to facilitate updating your database. This module makes it possible to separate the roles of defining reconciliation criteria, making the technical implementation and applying these rules in practice.

In AssetCenter, the reconciliation module enables you to:
- Make an exhaustive definition of the criteria used to update database records
- Automate the update process when appropriate
- Manually validate changes requiring closer scrutiny before integration in the database

Implementation procedure for the reconciliation module

Data reconciliation in AssetCenter involves the following process:
- Analysis of the company's internal data control requirements

   One has to define the degree of control that has to be kept over changes in the database. For example, the sales manager might want to automate price changes within a certain limit but require individual validation in the case of larger price changes.

- Drawing up a set of business rules

  Once the needs have been analyzed, priorities and control criteria can be defined.

- Technical integration of control criteria

  In this step, the administrator adds a Basic script to Connect-It. This script creates reconciliation rules and generates records in the reconciliation proposals table (**amReconcProposal**) when a changes requiring a manual validation appear.

- Manual validation of changes

  The user separately validates each reconciliation proposal in AssetCenter. This step assures total control over the changes before integration in the database.

2 Reconciliation process

The use of the reconciliation module requires the two following steps:

- Consulting and editing the reconciliation rules in Connect-It

  This step is for the database administrator, who determines the degree of control to be kept over the updates.

- The management of reconciliation proposals in the **amReconcProposal** table in AssetCenter

  This step concerns the person in charge of the validation of the reconciliation proposals generated when comparing the old and new data.

Figure 2.1. Reconciliation process
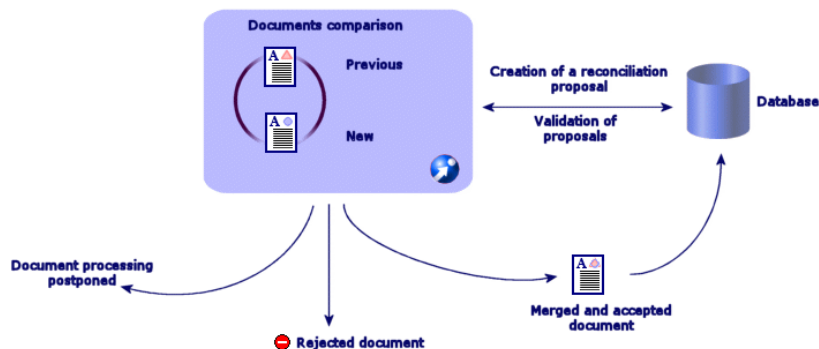
Defining the reconciliation rules - Administrator part

Before the reconciliation module can be used in AssetCenter, the administrator must first create rules. This step requires a Basic script to be inserted in Connect-It.

A customizable Basic script is provided by default in the **catalog.scn** and **iddac.scn** scenarios (these examples are explored in this manual).

This Basic script can be edited in the **Reconciliation scripts** tab of the mapping or consumed document type windows in Connect-It.

This script uses two functions that are designed for reconciliation:

- Update (**ValidateReconcUpdate**)
- Insert (**ValidateReconcInsert**)

⚠ Warning:

The **Execute the reconciliation scripts** option is selected by default in Connect-It. It is possible to clear this option when it is not required.

In order for the **Reconciliation** module to function correctly, make sure that the option **Execute the reconciliation scripts** option is selected in the **Advanced configuration/Connector configuration** menu.

To use the Reconciliation module:

1 Access the **Reconciliation scripts** tab of the mapping or consumed document type windows.

2 Edit the Basic script provided by default.

3 If you wish to request a manual validation of the modifications that have occurred during an inventory, use the functions available (**ValidateReconcUpdate** or **ValidateReconcInsert**). When changes occur in your database, reconciliation proposals are created in the **amReconcProposal** table and manual validation of these proposals is required.

🖊 Note:

If you simply wish to automate the update process without any manual validation, you can insert the script of your choice in the **Reconciliation Scripts** tab without using the above functions.

🖊 Note:

For further information on the parameters of the **ValidateReconcUpdate** and **ValidateReconcInsert** functions, please refer to the comments in the **ac.bas** file, which is located in the **config\ac\bas** folder.

⚠ Warning:

To call the **ValidateReconcUpdate** and **ValidateReconcInsert** functions, it is necessary to add the **ac.bas** file to the list of **.bas** files used by a scenario.

- If it is a new scenario, the **ac.bas** file is activated by default
- If it is an old scenario, make sure the **ac.bas** file is activated in the list accessible from the **Scenarios/Global functions** menu.

⚠ Warning:

After validating the reconciliation proposals in the **amReconcProposal** table in AssetCenter, it is necessary to restart the scenario in Connect-It. The modifications that have occurred will thus be taken into account and conflicts will disappear.

Note:

As a general rule, it is advised to restart scenarios regularly with the help of a scheduler. For further information implementing a scheduler, please refer to the Connect-It User Guide.

Validating the reconciliation proposals - User part

The administrator divides up the proposals to validate by populating the **Assignee** field located in the detail window of the **amReconcProposal** table. Only the administrator has access to the entire list of the pending reconciliation proposals.

Note:

By default, only users with administrative rights for AssetCenter database can assign reconciliation proposals.

The user in charge of validation manages the reconciliation proposals they have been assigned from the **amReconcProposal** table.

To manually validate the reconciliation proposals:

1 Display the **amReconcProposal** table, which is accessible using the **Portfolio/ Reconciliation proposals** or the **Administration/List of screens** menus.

Figure 2.2. Reconciliation Proposals table
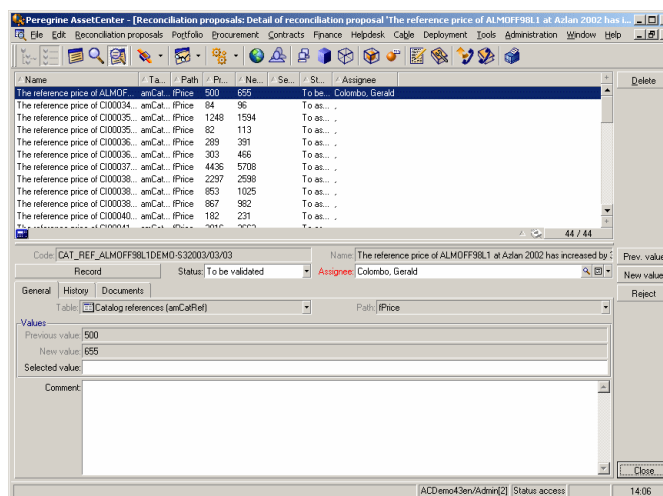
Each reconciliation proposal corresponds to a record in the table. All the information related to a proposal is available in the detail window.

Note:

To display the detail of the record related to a proposal, click the **Record** button in the detail window.

The validator has access to the list of the reconciliation proposals (validated or not) he has been assigned.

2 The user then has two possibilities to validate a proposal:

- Click the **Old val** or **New val** buttons situated to the right of the **Name** field of the proposal. The **Status** field is then automatically populated and becomes **Validated**. The **New value** and **Selected value** fields are also automatically populated according to the chosen criteria.

Note:

Using the **Old val** and **New val** buttons enables you to directly integrate existing values. This accelerates the process.

To reject a proposal (after a failed inventory, for example), click the **Reject** button.

- Populate the **Selected value** field with the values of your choice and manually select the status of the proposal in the **Status** field.

  To reject a proposal, select **Document rejected** in the **Status** field.

  The process is then entirely manual and allows you to integrate another value in the **Selected value** field.

⚠ Warning:

The rejection of a document leads to the rejection of the reconciliation proposal and the whole results of the inventory (FSF file).

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3 Sample scenarios

To illustrate the reconciliation process and the method to follow when using the module, we have created some sample scenarios. The data related to these scenarios are included in the demonstration database provided with AssetCenter.

Update the catalog (sample scenario)

Publishing a catalog enables the customers of a vendor to simplify the management of their purchases. It requires being updated manually or automatically. The Reconciliation module in AssetCenter enables you to customize the level of control you wish to keep over the update process.

Objectives of the sample scenario

In our example, you request the manual validation of the following modifications:

- Integrating new records in the catalog with a price in excess of $1000
- Price changes greater than 10%
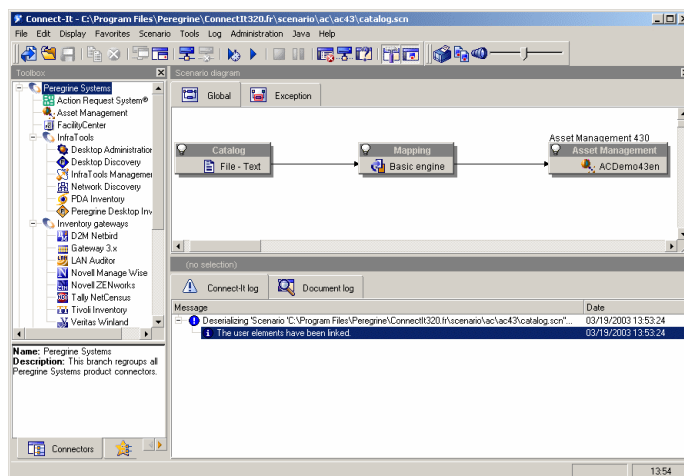
Using the sample scenario

In order to use this sample scenario, we advise you to connect to the demonstration database provided with AssetCenter as the administrator.

To launch the **catalog.scn** scenario:

1 Launch the Connect-It integration platform
2 From the **File/ Open** menu, select the **catalog.scn** file located in the **scenario\ac\ac4.3** folder of the Connect-It installation folder

The scenario diagram is displayed.

Figure 3.1. Catalog.scn scenario diagram

To display the script conditioning the sample scenario:

- Right-click the Asset Management target connector and then select the **Edit a document type** command
- Edit the consumed document type **amCatRef** and place the cursor on the **fPrice** element
- The **Reconciliation scripts** tab gives you access to the first script as follows:

```
' Tests whether the new value (vNewVal) is 10% greater than thei
r old value (vOldVal)
If vOldVal = 0 OR vNewVal <= vOldVal * 1.1 Then
' The new value is not 10% greater than the old one; it is retur
```

```
ned as is
  RetVal = vNewVal
Else
' The new value is more than 10% greater than the old one
' We save a reconciliation proposal to be manually validated
  RetVal = ValidateReconcUpdate("CAT_REF_" & [Ref] & [Catalog.Co
de] & [dPriceUpdate], FormatResString(PifStrVal("RECONC_SAMPLE_P
RICE_INCREASED"), [Ref], [Catalog.Name], Int((vNewVal - vOldVal)
 / vOldVal * 100)), "amCatRef", "fPrice", vNewVal, vOldVal, vOld
Id)
End If
```

It is an update script: A price increases greater than 10% will generate a reconciliation proposal that will have to be validated in AssetCenter.

- The **Reconciliation scripts** tab also gives access to the following script:

```
' Tests whether the new value (vNewVal) is less than 1000 dollar
s
If vNewVal < 1000 Then
' The new value is less than 1000 dollars; it is returned as is
  RetVal = vNewVal
Else
' The new value is greater than 1000 dollars
' We save a reconciliation proposal to be manually validated
  RetVal = ValidateReconcInsert("CAT_REF_" & [Ref] & [Catalog.Co
de] & [dPriceUpdate], FormatResString(PifStrVal("RECONC_SAMPLE_P
RICE_TOOBIG"), [Ref], [Catalog.Name]), "amCatRef", "fPrice", vNe
wVal)
End If
```

It is an insertion script: Every new record in the catalog worth more than $1000 will generate a reconciliation proposal that will have to be validated in AssetCenter.

3 Right-click the **Catalog** connector and then select **Produce now**.
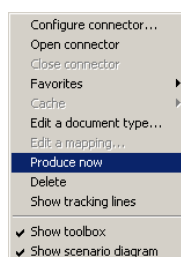
The sample scenario is launched.

4 In AssetCenter, select the **Portfolio/ Reconciliation proposals** menu. If necessary, refresh the data by pressing **F5**.

Figure 3.2. Reconciliation proposals of the catalog.scn scenario

The reconciliation proposals are displayed:

- Catalog items that have increased in price by less than 10% are automatically updated whereas items that have increased by more than 10% must be checked before their final integration in the database.
- New records worth less than $1000 are automatically integrated in the catalog whereas those worth more than $1000 must be validated before their final integration in the database.

Portfolio update and inventory (sample scenario)

Objectives of the sample scenario

In our example, you wish to:

- Make sure that the stated RAM of a computer never decreases
- Make sure that all new applications are installed on the C: drive

Using the sample scenario

In order to use this sample scenario, we advise you to connect to the demonstration database provided with AssetCenter as the administrator.

To launch the **iddac.scn** scenario:

1 Launch the Connect-It integration platform

2 From the **File/ Open** menu, select the **iddac.scn** file located in the **scenario\idd\iddac4.3** folder of the Connect-It installation folder.

The scenario diagram is displayed.

Figure 3.3. iddac.scn scenario diagram
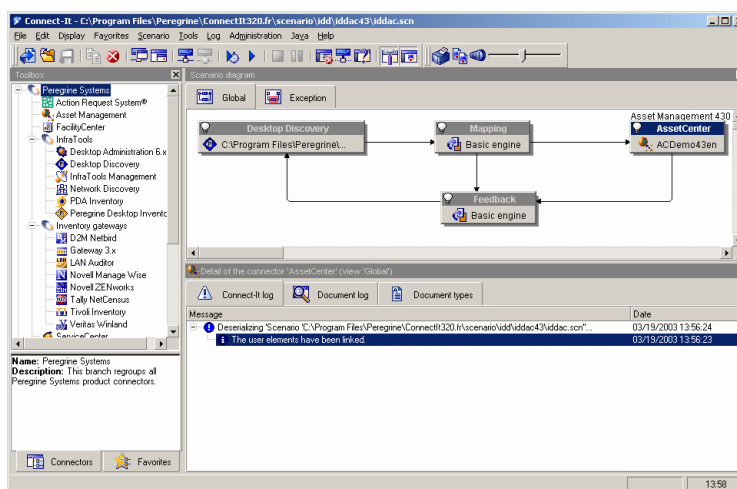
To access the script conditionning the sample scenario:

• Right-click the Asset Management target connector and then select the **Edit a document type** command

- Edit the **amComputer** consumed document type and select the **lMemorySizeMb** item

- The **Reconciliation scripts** tab gives access to the first script as follows:

```
If vNewVal >= vOldVal Then
  RetVal = vNewVal
Else
  RetVal = ValidateReconcUpdate("CPU_MEM_" & [AssetTag] & [dtHar
dScan], FormatResString(PifStrVal("RECONC_SAMPLE_LOWER_MEMORY"),
 [Name]), "amComputer", "lMemorySizeMb", vNewVal, vOldVal, vOldI
d)
End If
```
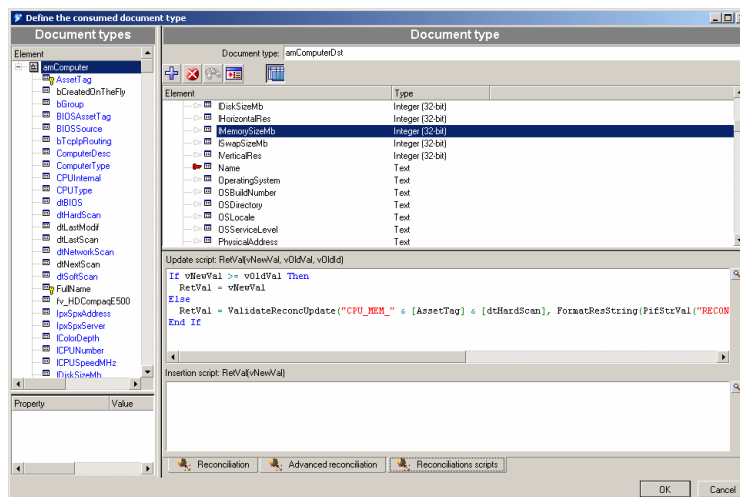
It is an update script: A reduction in memory of a computer in the portfolio will generate a reconciliation proposal that will have to be validated in AssetCenter

3 Right-click the **Desktop Discovery** connector, and then select **Produce now**

The scenario is launched.

4 In AssetCenter, select the **Portfolio/ Reconciliation proposals** menu. If necessary, refresh the data by pressing **F5**.

The reconciliation proposals are displayed:

- Computers whose memory has increased are automatically updated, whereas those with less memory must be checked before being integrated in the database
- New applications installed on the C: drive are automatically included in the database, whereas those installed on another drive must be checked before their being integrated

Note:

The scenario includes a feedback loop from the mapping box and the **Asset Management** connector to the **Desktop Discovery** connector. This feedback loop is intended to move or delete the **FSF** once they have been correctly processed by Connect-It.

For further information on the details of this process, refer to the Connect-It **User's Guide**.

4 References (Reconciliation)

Menus and tabs (Reconciliation)

The data from the Reconciliation module can be accessed from the following menus, tabs, links and fields:

Table 4.1. Menus and tabs (Reconciliation) - list

Sub-menu	Table the menu gives you access to (label and SQL name)
File menu	
Activate modules	Activates or deactivates the Reconciliation module, if your license file allows you to.
	This is the menu to use if you can't see the following menus in your application:
Reconciliation menu	
Portfolio/ Reconciliation proposals	Enables you to access the Reconciliation Proposals table (amReconcProposal)
Administration menu	

Sub-menu	Table the menu gives you access to (label and SQL name)
List of screens	Enables you to access tables that are not accessible by the present menus.
	This task is restricted to the administrator because such tables usually do not have to be modified directly.

Tables (Reconciliation)

The tables related to the Reconciliation module are the following:

Table 4.2. Tables (Reconciliation) - list

Label of the table	SQL name of the table	Menus enabling you to access the table
Tables specifically related to the Reconciliation module		
Reconciliation proposals	amReconcProposal	Portfolio/ Reconciliation proposals

Automatic processes (Reconciliation)

For further information on the automatic processes executed in the background by AssetCenter, please refer to the **Database structure** guide. Each table described in this guide has a corresponding **Automatic processes** section.

In order to find the **Database structure** guide, please refer to the section Other documentary resources (Reconciliation) [page 31].

Views (Reconciliation)

No view is assigned to the Reconciliation module by default.

For further information on using views, please refer to the **Introduction** guide, chapter **Using views**.

Other documentary resources (Reconciliation)

This guide only gives you information directly related to the Reconciliation module.

To obtain associated information not covered in this guide, we recommend that you read the following documents:

Table 4.3. Other documentary resources (Reconciliation) - list

Document	Information	Format	Location in the AssetCenter installation folder
Installation	• Installing Asset-Center	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\Installation*.pdf**
		On line	**\doc\chm\install*.chm**
Core tables	• Managing locations	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\CommonTables*.pdf**
	• Managing employees	On line	**\doc\chm\common*.chm**
	• Managing features		
	• Etc.		
Introduction	• User interface	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\UserInterface*.pdf**
		On line	**\doc\chm\userint*.chm**
Cable and Circuit	• Cable management	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\CableAndCircuit*.pdf**
		On line	**\doc\chm\cable*.chm**
Administration	• Using wizards	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\Administration*.pdf**
	• Customizing fields	On line	**\doc\chm\admin*.chm**
	• Using calculated fields		
Advanced use	• Managing itemized lists	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\AdvancedUse*.pdf**
	• Creating scripts	On line	**\doc\chm\advanced*.chm**

Document	Information	Format	Location in the AssetCenter installation folder
Help on fields and links	• Using fields and links in the database	On line	To access contextual help on a field or link: 1 Select a field or a link. 2 Perform one of the following actions: • Click-right and select **Help** from the shortcut menu. • Simultaneously press the **Shift** and **F1** keys on your keyboard • Select **Help/ Help on this field**.
Programmer's reference	• Using APIs	Hard copy	**\doc\pdf\ProgrammersReference*.pdf**
		On line	**\doc\progref*.chm**
Database structure	• List of the database's tables, fields, links and indexes • Automatic agents triggered by AssetCenter.	Text file	• **doc\infos\database.txt** • **\infos\tables.txt**
		On line	**\doc\chm\dbstruct*.chm**
General on-line help	• The functioning of the entire application	On line	To access the online help, perform one of the following actions: 1 Press **F1** 2 Select **Help/ Index**