



Visioneer OneTouch Links

Simplifying Scanner and Software Interaction

By John Dexter,
Vice President of Business Development
Visioneer Inc.
www.visioneer.com

Introduction

Some of the most unnoticed challenges in scanner and application interaction involve the development and certification of drivers. Drivers, like programs, contain code that controls the operation of the device. Like programs, there are good drivers (well-written, feature rich and efficient) and bad drivers (not). For this reason, ISV developers do not always trust drivers at face value and many require they be certified to access their document capture/management/imaging program. Visioneer has gone to great lengths to address these two challenges.

In traditional scanning there are two industry-standard drivers, TWAIN and ISIS, for initiating scanning from document capture applications, basically any program that has a SCAN button or function. These drivers are very robust and most scanner manufacturers include them with their scanners. As intimated earlier, it is fair to say ‘all drivers are not created equal’ and for that matter they can be quite different, with dramatic variations among scanner models. One thing common to all TWAIN and ISIS drivers is that they are both pull-only drivers, that is, the document capture application controls the scanning process and “pulls” the raw image data from the scanner.

Simplify Scanning With OneTouch

Nearly 10 years ago, Visioneer introduced true ease-of-use document scanning with the development of OneTouch technology. Simply put, OneTouch technology enables the end user to scan with little or no training and transforms the usually complex process of scanning a document to an application or destination, into one simple action. With the touch of one button, the end user can initiate scanning to a variety of destinations such as their email program, printers, document management applications or OCR software.

As previously stated, TWAIN and ISIS are pull-only type drivers. Visioneer OneTouch sets itself apart as a pull *and* push driver. This allows control to be managed by either the scanner or the scanning application. Traditional TWAIN and ISIS drivers are included with all Visioneer and Xerox scanners to ensure seamless communication with industry applications, but OneTouch is the competitive advantage, set apart from other scanner companies.

OneTouch directly benefits both the ISV and end user since it controls the scanner and then routes the scanned documents to an application via a OneTouch Link.

Simplify Communication

Visioneer OneTouch directly links scanning hardware with industry-leading software, forming an easy to use conduit from paper to a selected destination. Every time the user scans a document, they no longer have to configure their scan job, launch their scanning software, or the application the scanned image will be “linked” to. The document to be scanned is simply placed in the scanner and one of the buttons on the scanner front panel is pressed. The scanner automatically and without further human intervention launches the desired application, scans and delivers the digital document to that application via a link.

Visioneer OneTouch links allow customers to scan their documents directly into a pre-selected application by simply pressing one button on a Visioneer or Xerox DocuMate scanner. These links can easily be developed by an ISV using Visioneer’s OneTouch Links SDK.

Simplify Development

In January 2007, we announced the Visioneer OneTouch® Links Software Development Kit (SDK). The OneTouch Links SDK is a wizard-based template that can be used to easily implement new functionality within OneTouch. For the first time ever, we are providing system integrators, solution providers and enterprise application developers with properly modularized and documented links development code to develop their own specific links and integrate them into the One Touch control panel quickly and easily.

Links developed with the OneTouch Links SDK will have access to all OneTouch functions, including the benefits of Kofax® VirtualReScan® (VRS™) technology, recently announced as a technology integrated into Visioneer OneTouch. Links can be created to provide scanning destinations, such as applications, devices (printers or fax servers) or locations (network or local folders).

From a technical perspective, the trends in many sectors are to provide ways and means by which a product can be integrated with other products, accessing sophisticated software and workflows without sacrificing ease of use. Until now, the OneTouch scanning interface has been limited to being used with only applications that OneTouch explicitly supports. By allowing third parties the ability to add support for custom, broader and even unanticipated applications, Visioneer is expanding the reach of OneTouch ease-of-use to a significantly larger developer base and end-user audience.

Simplify Integration

All links developed with the SDK will work across the entire line of Visioneer and Xerox scanners, from mobile sheet fed scanners to 120 IPM production scanners. Most ISVs require each scanner model to be individually certified due to the different scanner hardware and software features accessible from the drivers. This poses two potential time and resource obstacles. First, the scanning process is usually not an application’s primary function; therefore scanner certification is often not a priority to the ISV. Secondly, QA resources are heavily utilized in the certification process and it is common for there to be delays in providing a scanner certification to the manufacturer.

The days of shipping a pallet of scanners to an ISV's QA department for certification are officially over. As new scanners are released, the conventional certification process would usually start over again. However the certification process for new links developed with the SDK is already complete. Visioneer makes certain that the new scanner works with OneTouch and, as a result, scanning to the ISV application simply works. What could be easier?

Simplify Scanner and Software Interaction

The most important thing to keep in mind about OneTouch links is they are fundamentally a workflow transport for getting a scanned document into an external application. The job of OneTouch is to scan a batch of documents. The job of a Link is to deliver those documents to another application. From the perspective of OneTouch, a link is the gateway to the final destination. Once a batch of documents has been handed off to a OneTouch Link, the delivery mechanism is assured through the link certification.



Take advantage of Visioneer OneTouch with Kofax VRS Technology

You don't need to do a thing to produce scans with superior image quality. It is simple to take advantage of the sophisticated thresholding and image enhancement capabilities of Kofax VRS. Kofax VRS is not a OneTouch link or destination, but rather, an in-line process. And now, with the recent release of Visioneer OneTouch® with Kofax® VRS™ technology, the image enhancement feature is applied to all document scans, regardless of the destination or link selected. Therefore, all current AND ALL YET TO BE DEVELOPED LINKS reap the benefits of Kofax VRS features without any incremental development by the ISV or Link developer.



Develop a OneTouch Link

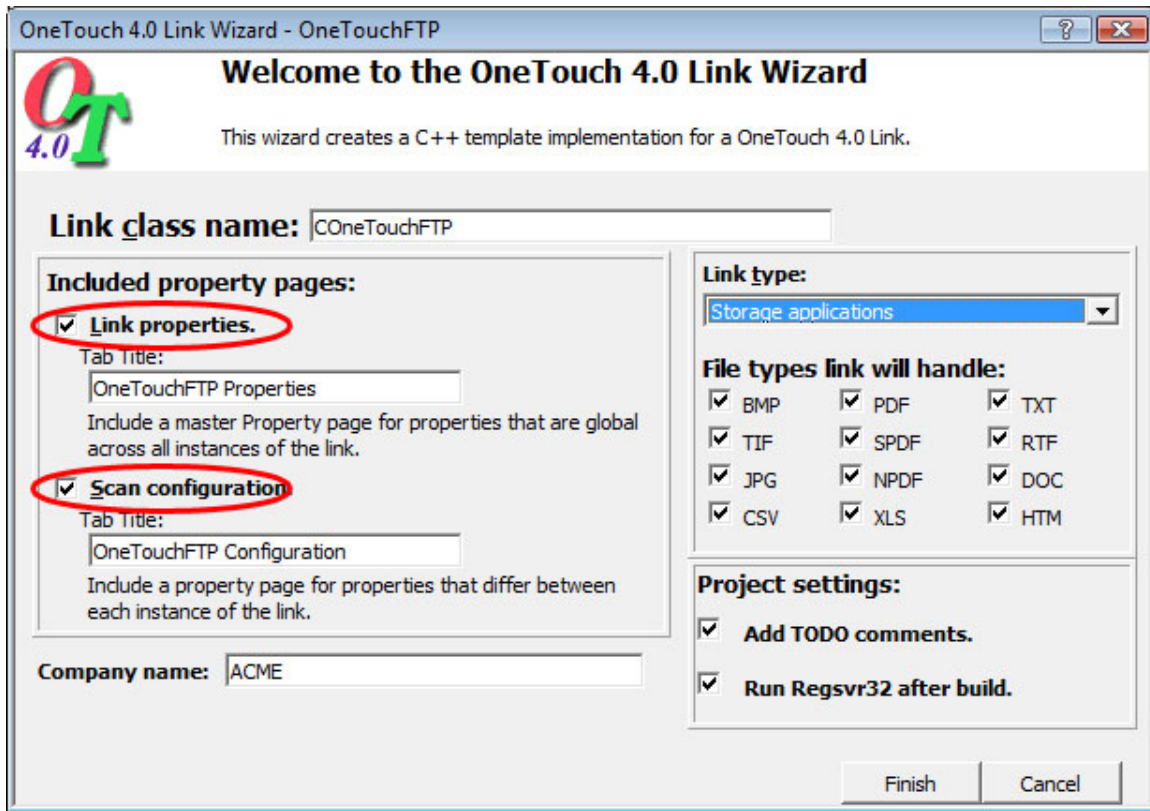
There are four main elements relevant to a OneTouch Link; two of them are required, two are optional.

#1: The link must broadcast information about itself so that the OneTouch Link Manager can discover it and display its icon in the OneTouch application (not unlike pairing two Bluetooth devices). This is not optional, but the Link Wizard takes care of almost all of the details for you. By filling out the Wizard dialog appropriately, you provided most of the information needed for this step.

#2: The link needs to transfer the batch of scanned documents to the destination application. This can be simply calling up an .exe with command line arguments, or more advanced by writing helper application to add index info, authentication, etc., before transferring.

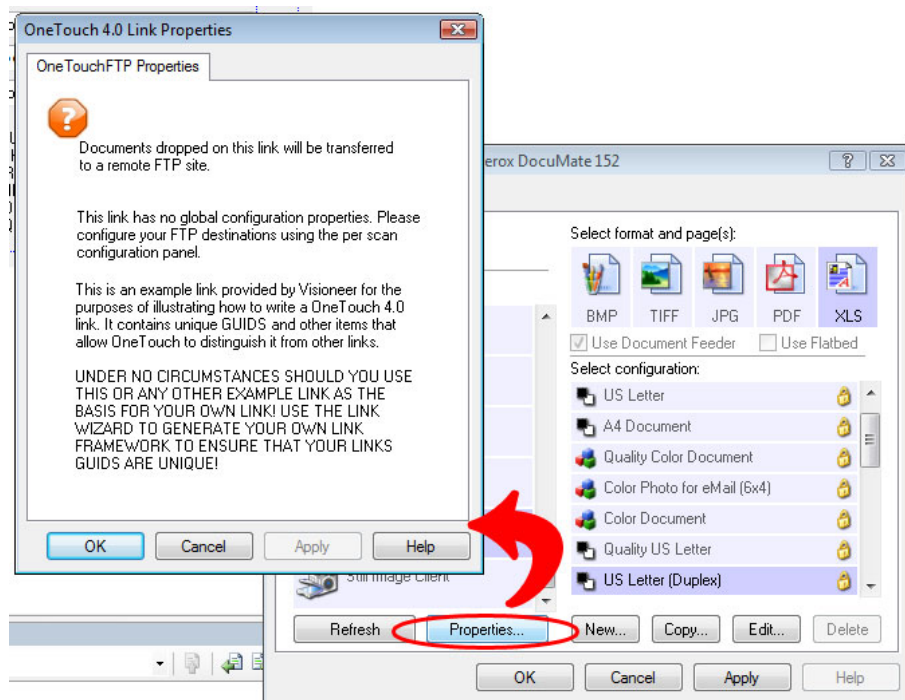
The other two things the link can do are both optional, and they both involve allowing the user to set configuration information for the link. #3: The link can have a "global" configuration panel that sets options that apply to all instances of the link, and #4: a "per scan configuration" panel that sets options specific to each instance of the link.

The “Included Property Pages” options controls whether the link has these two configuration panels as shown in the dialog of the OneTouch Link Wizard below:



Link Properties Page

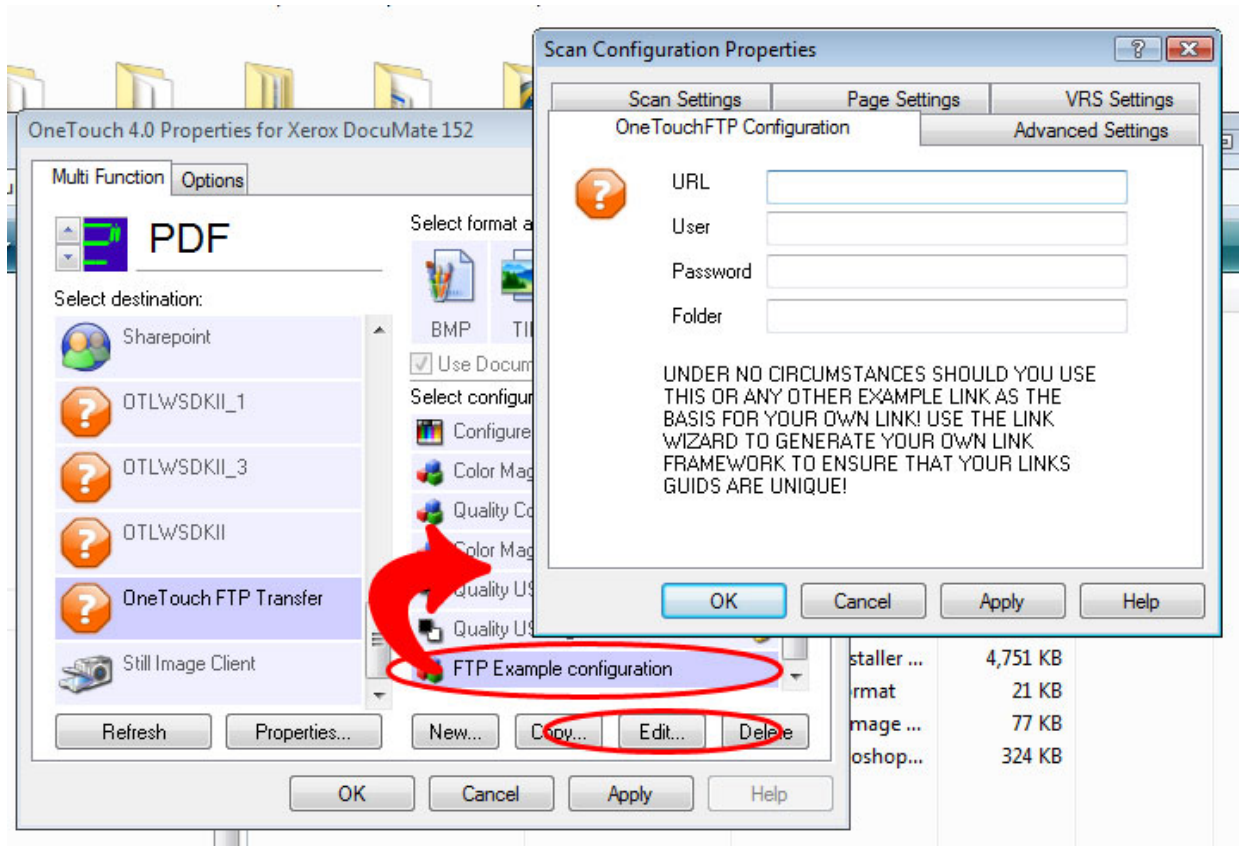
The screenshot below illustrates an example “Link Properties” dialog, and shows how that dialog is invoked by the user from within the OneTouch 4.0 application.



Scan Configuration Properties Page

To support multiple configurations, you need to enable the “Scan Configuration” property page, and fill it in with the code to implement your configuration interface.

The following screenshot shows a sample Scan Configuration dialog in context.



Notice that this property page lives in a TAB of a dialog with several other property pages. Also note that behind the property page dialog on the main OneTouch interface there is only a single instance of the FTP link on the left, but there are many scan configurations on the right.

Each scan configuration has its own unique settings. Information entered in the Scan Configuration dialog is associated with only one specific scan configuration (“FTP Example configuration” in this example). If your link needs to support multiple configuration setups, then you need to implement those settings using the Scan Configuration method.

ISV’s already certified with OneTouch:

- DataCap TaskMaster
- Documentum / eRoom
- Hyland OnBase
- Kofax Ascent Capture
- Microsoft SharePoint
- Xerox DocuShare

Additional information on Visioneer OneTouch:

<http://www.visioneer.com/onetouch/index.htm>

To request SDK information:
onetouchsdk@visioneer.com