

A background image showing a Tecan liquid handler machine. The machine is a large, white, industrial-looking device with multiple pipette tips and a tray of multi-well plates. It is processing a large number of test tubes, which are filled with a red liquid. The machine is labeled "TECAN" and "MOSAIC".

# Simplifying Tecan Liquid Handler Integration and Programming using Mosaic Software's VSLH Application

Steffen Köhler, Titian Software Ltd

v2.0. JUNE 2020

## INTRODUCTION

Automated liquid handlers, such as Tecan's Fluent® and Freedom EVO® series, are an essential component of the modern laboratory, significantly improving pipetting speed and accuracy while reducing error rates by automating tedious tasks. However, liquid handlers still need to be programmed and set up for operation, and the data they generate needs to be combined with other process data and interpreted. These tasks can be distracting and time consuming for research scientists.

## WITHOUT INTEGRATION

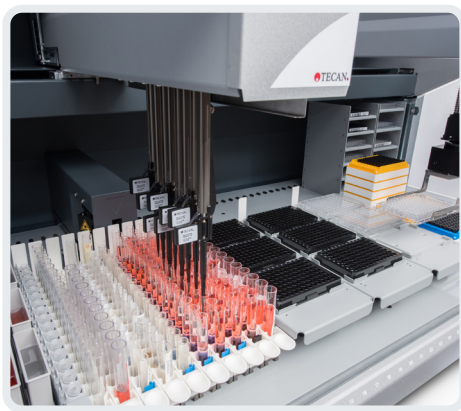
If automated liquid handlers are not integrated into lab workflows, they can present some challenges for their operators, such as:

- Requiring experts to write machine scripts for different operations
- Inventory errors caused by inaccurate manual transfers of data files
- Time consuming inventory updates to synchronise inventory data
- Human error in setting up the liquid handler ready for transfers
- Human error in calculations, such as half log serialization volumes
- Difficulties connecting information from stores holding the source samples used for dispensing
- Managing occasional equipment errors and updating the inventory accordingly

## WITH MOSAIC SOFTWARE INTEGRATION

Titian's Mosaic sample management software has a VSLH application (Variable Span Liquid Handling) designed to easily and seamlessly integrate automated liquid handlers with your sample inventory and lab workflow operations. Off-the-shelf integrations are available for Tecan's automated liquid handlers, including the Fluent and Freedom EVO series.





Once your Tecan liquid handler is integrated with Mosaic's VSLH application, lab scientists will see the following benefits:

- You simply select the pipetting operations you want rather than wrestle with writing scripts
- You can order assay plates and tubes knowing that the inventory amounts are automatically tracked and updated for you
- You can't make mistakes in setting up the liquid handler transfers, such as when calculating logarithmic dilution factors, as it is all managed by Mosaic
- You don't need to manage data files or perform data transfers, which eliminates a common source of errors
- If there is an error or blockage during the liquid handler run, you can intervene to solve the problem, and then a new script is automatically written to carry on processing from where the error occurred

## SUPPORTED OPERATIONS

Integrating your Tecan liquid handler using Mosaic's VSLH application ensures that you are guided through each step of the following process:

- Setting up a run on the liquid handler. This guidance is provided by the Mosaic order, which specifies



- Workflow segments (these include: cherry picking, dilution, solubilization, serialization, reagent addition and solvent transfers)
- Labware and tip placement and tracking
- Reagent sources
- Standard and control positions and required volumes
- Support for block replication operations with 96 and 384 tip heads
- Mosaic's VSLH application validates the run and writes the liquid handling instrument control scripts based on the user's requirements. No additional programming is needed
- Mosaic's VSLH application performs inventory and workflow updates in real-time
- Mosaic's VSLH application manages error handling
  - You can intervene to handle machine failures, and the inventory is only updated when transfers are completed
  - A new script will be written to complete the work from where the interruption occurred

## EXAMPLE OF INTEGRATED WORKING:

### Preparation of a Serialised 384 Well Plate with DMSO Controls and Standards

For example, a scientist may place a Mosaic order for assay plates where the workflow contains:

- A cherry pick process from a tube to a plate
- Addition of standard substances
- Dispensing of DMSO control wells


The last step of the run is to serialise the substances and standards.

To produce the scientist's assay plates using the Mosaic VSLH application, the liquid handler operator selects the appropriate order (which includes the necessary scripts for liquid handler).



**Choose Orders**

Please select orders to process.



Order ID	Required By	Comment	Items	Template
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 39	17/10/2017	transfer to plate...	2	from Tube to plate and serialise with controls
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	28/04/2017		1	End to End Process
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	07/04/2017		1	Serialise
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	07/04/2017		4	End to End Test
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	07/04/2017		4	[ST-SP D/B] From Solutions in Tubes transfe...

☒ View all orders  
☐ View selected orders  
☐ View grids for barcode...

Find orders

Orders selected: 1

Clear selection

**Key**

- Input
- Output
- Finished
- Liquid
- Unused
- Error
- Vacant
- Selected

System


Flush Machine    Unload    Ad hoc mode    Next >

## WORKFLOW SEGMENTS

The operator chooses which workflow process is to be run. In this case, the Cherry Pick operation is needed before the Serialisation (IC50) run.

**Choose Run Parameters**

Please select the process you wish to employ.



Process:


- Cherry Pick
- IC50

## LABWARE, TIPS, REAGENTS AND VOLUMES

To carry out the order, the Tecan liquid handler must be prepared with labware in the correct positions, the input rack with the sample tubes ready, a destination plate and solvent loaded to the working bed.

Mosaic's VSLH application instructs the operator which positions on the bed to load labware, samples and solvent. The solvent volume is automatically calculated based on the consumption for the selected process. When the operator presses "Start Run" the cherry picking process will be carried out by the liquid handler.


**Load Solvents, Standards and Controls**



Please load the following:

Solution	Stream	Loaded	Required
✓ 100% DMSO	Solvent	Yes	48µL



System

**Key**

- Input
- Output
- Finished
- Liquid
- Unused
- Error
- Vacant
- Selected

39 (Cherry Pick)

Flush Machine

Unload ▼

However, the assay plate is not ready yet: dilution, serialisation and adding the standard compounds still needs to be done. Mosaic's VSLH application flags this to the operator who selects which process should be fulfilled next.

For each of these processes, Mosaic guides the user where to load the liquid handler with solvent, necessary standard compounds for dilution and calculates the volumes needed automatically.

## STANDARDS AND CONTROL POSITIONS

When a scientist places the assay order, they can specify standards and control positions for the plates to be created. Mosiac's VSLH application passes these through to the liquid handler so that the operator is instructed to load the standards and controls onto the workbed for pipetting, the volumes are calculated automatically, and the liquid handler transfers them to the correct wells. As the liquid handling operations are carried out, the plate map is updated in real time.

[SampleBank](#)
[Ordering](#)
[Inventory](#)
[Stores](#)
[Query](#)
[Fulfillment](#)
[Shipping](#)
[Admin](#)

## Plate TestP\_3001

### CONTENT MAP

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A												
B												
C												
D												
E												
F												
G												
H												

### A09 SAMPLE

Position:	A09
Substance Type:	Small Molecule
CompoundBatch:	TST00000001-001
Name:	
Sample Amount:	100 µL
Available Amount:	100 µL
Concentration:	0.00316 mM
Solvent:	100.0 % DMSO
Total Thaw Count:	0
Filled Date:	28/04/2020 17:13:33

Edit Sample

### CONTENT LIST

Expand to view

### PLATE DETAILS

Barcode:	TestP_3001
Type:	SWP 96
Creation Date:	28-Apr-2020 17:13:30
Thaw Count:	0
Comment:	

### LOCATION

Location Path:	\\Home
----------------	--------

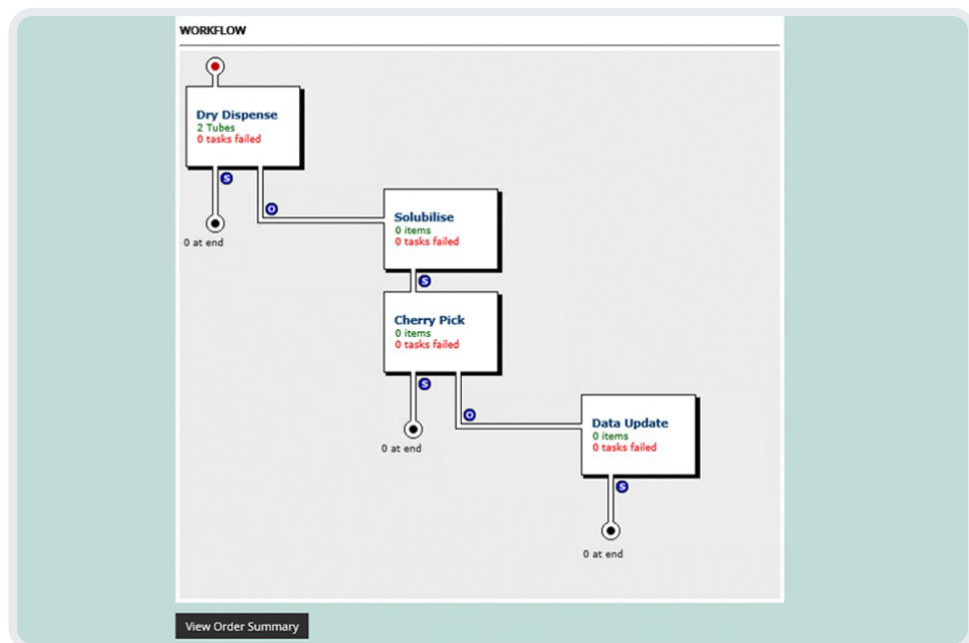
### SET DETAILS

Folder:	\\Sets\\Non-Orderable
Name:	Non-Orderable Plates

Edit Plate
 View Audit Trail
 Solubilise
 Dry Down
 Add to Pick List
 Pick
 Add to Place List
 Create Child Plates
 Dispose

# INVENTORY AND WORKFLOW UPDATES

Mosaic's workflows are updated in real time, showing the operator what the next steps in the sequence are and what tasks can be carried out next.



Mosaic's VSLH application offers additional advantages for managing liquid handling workflows. For instance, if one tube is currently in use elsewhere, the operator can choose to dispense, solubilize and cherry pick the rest of the order, and then do the missing tube when it becomes available.

This flexibility becomes particularly useful for larger HTS-type runs where an order of 5000 plates can't be fitted on one liquid handler. Alternatively, the assay may only have a daily capacity of 50 plates so Mosaic's workflow management allows a large order to be split into multiple runs.





## ERROR HANDLING

Mosaic's VSLH application maintains details of work in progress during a liquid handling run. If the run is interrupted by power failure or a tip crash, for instance, the operator is asked to check and confirm any suspect transfers at the time of the interruption. Mosaic has logged the work done so far and automatically writes a new script to complete the order. The inventory is only updated when transfers are completed. This ensures there is no need to abandon processing done so far and start again.

## SUMMARY

Using Mosaic sample management software with its VSLH application to integrate your Tecan automated liquid handlers provides a range of benefits in addition to fast and accurate dispensing. These include error-free pipetting, work list creation, advanced tip usage/tracking, volume tracking and automated data processing, resulting in auditable inventory updates. Workflow management and error handling also provide efficient processing and promote unattended operation.

For scientists, using Mosaic's VSLH application means they don't have to understand how to program each liquid handler, they just specify the transfers in Mosaic and the rest is handled by Mosaic.

### **Mosaic's VLSH application helps liquid handler operators to:**

- Provide on time delivery of requested substances, with the outputs defined, in the order that the scientists are looking for
- Maintain a highly accurate inventory by capturing volume transfer information on-the-fly without any user interaction. Data updates are carried out live, which removes any delays in downstream processing or analysis. This supersedes error-prone manual tracking of volumes and concentrations
- Track every sample preparation step via Mosaic's comprehensive audit trail, to capture data for quality security processes

An additional benefit is that Titian works in partnership with Tecan to continually evolve the VSLH application, so it is responsive to customer requirements and the development of new liquid handler types and software.



## ABOUT TITIAN SOFTWARE

Titian Software is the industry leader in providing sample management software for the life sciences. Using Mosaic software, our customers see significant benefits in terms of their throughput, response times, error rates, labor costs as well as in sample conservation. Titian have done this by producing an application that can process multiple requests with varying sources, and labware output formats. It can easily be run by any operators, instead of tying up an automation expert to write new protocols. We also use our extensive experience in interfacing laboratory instrumentation and robotic systems with our software to ensure that customers make best use of their investment in research and development technologies.

At Titian, our development efforts never stop as we continue to advance Mosaic toward higher levels of efficiency and practicality for the user. The ongoing collaborative relationship between Titian and lab automation suppliers, such as Tecan, continues to ensure that new applications are made available on a timely basis to fulfill our customer's research goals. We pride ourselves on taking into account customer feedback for all of our Mosaic applications to drive our product to be the best it can be. It's all part of Titian's commitment to providing innovative solutions that make life easier for sample management professionals.

### AUTHOR

#### STEFFEN KOEHLER

Steffen Koehler ran the compound management department at Evotec for 10 years before spending 4 years focusing on HTS, screening and automation as Director Industrial Applications at Direvo Industrial Biotechnology. He joined Titian Software in 2013 as a business application consultant.

Trademark notice: All trademarks are acknowledged as the property of their respective owners. Images reproduced with permission.





## Thank you for your interest in this document



White  
papers



Application  
notes



Product  
brochures



Video  
content



Webinar  
recordings

You can find a collection of further related material in the resources section on our website. Scan the logo QR code with your mobile or tablet to visit.



**info@titian.co.uk**

**www.titian.co.uk**

**UK Tel:**

**+44 20 7367 6869**

**USA Tel:**

**+1 508 366 2234**