

Aircast 6.0

This page describes the new features and other notable changes in Aircast 6.0.

Note that not all features are available in all licenses/editions.

New Features

Playout

New icon set and default colours

Aircast 6 comes with new flat design icons and colour set.

Colour Ribbon

As a new design element, there is a coloured vertical band running down the playlist, which will reflect the item colour of the individual item colours, as an alternative to the row background colour. For many designs, it will be look much nicer to keep the same background colour for all rows, and only alter the ribbon colour according to the item colour. It is also possible to adjust the ribbon colour through skin.ini, using Ribbon Colour entries similar to the existing Row Colour mechanism.

Multi-Track Containers

Multi-Track Containers are a new kind of container playlist item. Unlike ordinary containers, items are not played one by one, but you can arrange them freely on the timeline using the Mix Editor.

News Containers

Another special kind of container items. Just point Aircast to the required audio files for your news break (intro, music bed, etc.) and the actual news content (which can also be an HTTP URL), and Aircast will “magically” construct a container from it, mixing all items perfectly together.

Revamped Hook Containers

In earlier versions of Aircast, we had the “Create Hook Container” command that would take a number of songs, copy their Hook In/Fade/Out points over to the regular Cue In/Fade Out/Cue Out points, and group them into a (regular) container playlist item.

Aircast 6 takes this feature to a new level. Hook Containers are now an item type of their own, which means that you can edit them at any time. There are new menu commands to add the hook container straight to the cartwall. And Aircast will also use a random 10 second part if you haven't defined any hook cue points for a particular item yet.

Padding (aka. Sweeper on Ramp)

This has been requested by a lot of people - it's now possible to place sweepers over the ramp in AUTO mode, also if the sweeper is shorter than the ramp. We call this “Padding”, as the sweeper is padded with silence and started at the same time as the song. You can set the padding in the Mix Editor, just by dragging the sweeper to the right over some kind of virtual “notch”.

Auto-Float and Fixed timing

Aircast can now automatically remove underrun and overflow sections in playlist, by moving songs up or down the playlist until all gaps are filled, and no songs remain in overflow status. This is enabled by clicking the new Auto-Float button in the playlist control bar, or enabling the respective option in the playlist configuration.

Only items with “Normal” timing will be affected by auto-float. There is a new timing option called “Fixed” to be used for items that should never float. If you build chains of “Fixed” items (e.g. news opener + news file + news close), this will prevent other items from breaking the chain by floating it between two items of the chain. The same is true for chains of “Back timed” items.

To prevent items from floating around particular “checkpoints”, e.g. the top of the hour, use the new *Prevent auto float around this item* playlist item option.

Use the cartwall in Voice Tracking

When doing voice tracking from the playout software (not the standalone DB app), you can now use the cartwall during voice tracking - it will switch into a special “VT” mode where Aircast records the start and stop of any carts, and creates a Multi-Track Container from the recorded voice tracks and all cart items. You can use the Mix Editor to edit this voice track container later.

Cartwall Page playlist item

Another new kind of playlist item is introduced: Cartwall Page. It stores name of an .mcp (Cartwall Page) file, and when the DJ drags that item from the playlist onto the cartwall, the associated page is opened. This provides a very convenient way to include information about all required cart set directly in the playlist.

File Recorder

(Professional only) The new file recorder can be used to make timed recordings and do easy rebroadcasts.

Aircheck Recorder improvements

There are new actions that can be used to remotely control the Aircheck Recorder.

Database and Scheduling

Playlist versioning and overwrite prompt

Aircast can now detect changes in database playlists made by another user, and display overwrite confirmations when two people edit the same playlist.

Multiple template assignments

There multiple sets of template assignments now. The default assignment, and separate assignments for e.g. “1st Monday in month”, “every odd each” and so on. There is also a “special” assignment that can be used for holidays.

Mini Scheduler speed improvements

The Mini Scheduler algorithm was optimized for faster generation of playlists.

External audio editor support

Edit any audio file from within the Aircast-DB library. Works with any external audio editor application that supports file names as command line arguments.

R128 loudness scanner

During file import, Aircast can now scan the audio file and determine loudness (EBU R128) and peak values to be used for normalization.

Improved DBServer REST API

We have cleaned up and removed the REST API used by Aircast-DB Server. We plan to release a public documentation of the API in the future, so you can build your own HTTP/REST based apps to work with your Aircast-DB.

Other

Demo Mode

FTDI licensing dongle support

We now support activation using FTDI dongles.

Important Changes

User who are upgrade from earlier version should read the following note carefully, because some changes in this release may break existing configurations or workflows.

No "Desktops" anymore

Aircast 6 drops the "desktop" feature found in earlier version. Instead, the playlists(s), open cartwall tabs, and open browser pages, can be saved separately in `.mlp`, `.mcp` and `.mlb` files. Likewise, there are now default files for all three kinds (`default0.mlp`, `default.mcp`, `default.mlb`, found in the `config` folder) which replace the earlier `standard.mlt` desktop template. You will find commands to save these default files in the respective menus of the playlist, cartwall, and browser.

Single Event Scheduler

There is now only one, global Event Scheduler per playout instance, accessible through the *Events* button in the main toolbar. The yellow events button was removed from the playlist control bar.

No Hook Mode anymore

The old Hook Mode feature found in the playlist players and cartwall was replaced by the revamped Hook Container items; you can find commands to create hook containers, and add them to the playlist or cartwall, in the playlist context menu.

Removed "Hide played items" option

The *Hide played items* option and button was removed from the playlist configuration and control bar. Played/skipped items will always remain visible until they are eventually moved to the Recycle Bin.

Logging On Air status

When playback of an item is started, Aircast will remember whether the instance was in "on air" or "off air mode" at that time. This flag is applied when doing "stop logging" at the end of the playlist: If a logging interface is set to operate only in "on air" mode, the stop logging will always take place if the item was **started** in on air mode, even if you switched to off air in the meantime. This will give consistent output in start/stop logging.

The on air status is also passed as an additional parameter to background scripts using the 'OnItemStart' and 'OnItemStop' procedures. You must manually adjust the definition of the procedures when migrating old script code to Aircast 6.

Old:

```
procedure OnItemStart(Item: IPlaylistItem; Region: byte; UniqueID: string);

procedure OnItemStop(Item: IPlaylistItem; Region: byte; UniqueID: string;
Duration: TTimeValue);
```

New:

```
procedure OnItemStart(Item: IPlaylistItem; Region: byte; OnAir: boolean;
UniqueID: string);

procedure OnItemStop(Item: IPlaylistItem; Region: byte; OnAir: boolean;
UniqueID: string; Duration: TTimeValue);
```

Live Feed devices

In earlier releases, the input audio device for Live Feed items was set directly inside the item properties dialog. In Aircast 6, you only select one of 8 Live Feed Input devices now, and the actual assignment to a physical audio device is done in the *Audio Devices* section of the config app. This facilitates the scheduling of Live Feed items from other computers than the actual playout PC.

DBServer authentication

AircastDB Server uses a new style of user authentication now, designed along the license of the popular OAuth2 standard.

On the server side, there is a brand-new user management dialog where you create or modify users and their respective permissions.

On the client side, no username/password is stored in the local configuration anymore. Instead, you log in in order to retrieve an authentication token, which is then used to perform the actual database access.

REST remote control authentication

The REST remote control uses the same new user management and authentication found in the DBServer.

Note to developers: Anonymous access is not supported anymore. While you can still use HTTP Basic authentication with username and password, we recommend that you use the new OAuth2-style authentication end point in order to retrieve an auth token, and then use HTTP Bearer authentication.