Drive Composer 3 Frequently Asked Questions

This document captures the most asked questions about Drive Composer 3.

General questions

What are the features in first release? When do you release xyz?

First release is focused on key basic commissioning use cases: parameter access, backup and restore, monitoring a single drive, fault and event logs, Adaptive programs, Firmware updates, offline configuration. Connectivity works over both USB and Ethernet. All features will be developed further based on feedback from users and additional features will be added in coming releases.

ABB can't commit to release timelines of specific features.

When will Drive Composer 3 pro version come?

We are expecting to release the first version of Drive Composer 3 pro in H2/2026.

What happens to Drive Composer 2?

Drive Composer 2 pro is supported until further notice, at least until 2027. Currently Drive Composer 3 does not have all necessary features and therefore more releases will be expected to Drive Composer 2.

Both Drive Composers can be used on a same computer and therefore it is possible to switch between the apps. However, the drives only accept one application at a time so user can't connect to the same drive with two different applications at the same time.

How is the Drive Composer 3 different?

Many of the problems and pain points have been analyzed and resolved to make the application easier to use, more reliable and faster. Significant parts of the application have been reimplemented and for example parameter browser and online monitor are completely new.

Which drives are supported?

All all-compatible drives based on the ABB drives common architecture. ACS880, ACX580, ACX480, ACS380, ACS380-E, ACS280, ACS180, ACS8080, ACS6080, DCS880, DCT880 etc.

Since the development team has heavily collaborated with the development of ACS380-E, there are benefits to using these products together. Currently the best performance for many tasks such as remote access over VPN can be achieved with ACS380-E.

ACS800 and other older generation drives are not supported.

Is Drive Composer 3 backwards compatible with Drive Composer 2?

Many of the features still work the same way and the team is working to enable accessing Drive Composer 2 files in Drive Composer 3.

Notably, backup file format is different in Drive Composer 3. Backups taken with Drive Composer 3 are not accessible in Drive Composer 2. Drive Composer 2 backup file support will be added to Drive Composer 3 in later software update. In practical terms, since the filename extension is different (.dcparams-bak in Drive Composer 2 and .dcbak in Drive Composer 3) the Drive Composer 2 is not able to open the .dcbak file. Support package is not yet supported.

Monitoring files are also not compatible. Drive Composer 2 files (.dcemon and .dcpmon) are not compatible with Drive Composer 3 files (.dcmon).

Installation

Where can I download Drive Composer 3? What is the official distribution channel?

ABB Library is the official channel for downloading. Drive Composer files can be downloaded from this node: https://library.abb.com/r?cid=9AAC172662 or from the Drive Composer webpage at https://new.abb.com/drives/software-tools/drive-composer.

Where can I get the installation files on physical media?

Only Drive Composer pro will be provided on physical media (USB stick) officially from ABB. Currently only Drive Composer 2 pro is available. Drive Composer 3 pro will be available once it is launched at a later date.

What is needed for the installation?

Drive Composer 3 installation requires .net framework version 4.8 or later. Further, during the installation USB drivers for the drives are required to be installed.

Drive Composer 3 installation requires local admin rights for Windows, but ABB is looking into making it possible to install for any user.

Drive Composer 3 can be installed and used from virtual machines.

What kind of compatibility issues we can expect?

Drive Composer 3 has been tested with different versions of Windows 10 and 11. We have also tested that it works in the same PC with Drive Composer 2, Drive Application Builder, Automation Builder and other current ABB applications. Especially it is good to notice that Drive Composer 2 and 3 can be used in the same PC.

How can I find about the updates?

Drive Composer 3 will notify about new versions of the application. Users can do the decision to install the update during the startup of the application. Also, new latest version can always be downloaded

from ABB website: https://new.abb.com/drives/software-tools/drive-composer. The update notification also contains a link to a document stating the biggest changes in the application. ABB suggests always using the latest version of Drive Composer 3.

Licensing

Do I need a license for Drive Composer 3?

Initially Drive Composer 3 is free for users and premium features (pro version) will be added to application later in software update.

Users need to agree with the End-User license (EULA) for Drive Composer before installation or starting the application for the first time. Users have an option to read the EULA by starting the installer – no changes will be made to the users PC before agreeing to EULA. EULA is also available in ABB Library as a download (in .RTF format).

What are subscriptions?

Subscriptions are either monthly or yearly billing periods to access the application.

Drive Composer 2 pro is already available in subscription in certain countries. ABB is adding constantly countries where this option is available. Customers who purchase this subscription will automatically get also Drive Composer 3 pro subscription once it is available.

Drive Composer 3 will be available as monthly or yearly subscriptions. Customers who purchase Drive Composer 3 pro on physical media will have other options which ABB will communicate once the option is available.

Do I need to get another license? Do I need to pay for a new license?

ABB will arrange a campaign to migrate old licenses to new subscriptions or licenses. The details will be communicated closer to release of *Drive Composer 3 pro*-version.

Cyber security

What do you mean by secure?

Cyber security is important and as such Drive Composer 3 has been designed according to IEC62443-3-1 standards.

Depending on drive offering additional cyber security features may be available. Further information about cybersecurity with drives can be found from e.g. ACS880 drives cyber security guide, firmware manuals and other drive-specific documentation.

Cyber security alerts and notifications is also good resource to get insights into reported issues.

What VPN services are supported?

Drive Composer does not care which VPN services are used, so any VPN should work. The problem with VPN services is that they introduce latency to the network conditions. ABB has tested Drive Composer 3 in very demanding conditions over different continents and the biggest challenge is with networks where pings exceed 1000ms. In these extreme conditions, Drive Composer is still working but the network will become so slow that one should consider other alternatives.

Due to cyber security reasons, ABB does not recommend connecting to drives over the internet without proper VPN and firewall protections.

Where do I get support for Drive Composer3?

You can get support from your local ABB.

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