# A Guide to the Setup and Configuration of Alerts

Ascentis®

HR & Payroll Made Easy

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CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

Welcome to Alerts!

The Alerts product can alert key people of various situations in the HR database. There are two main methods it uses:

**Query Alerts**

A query alert uses a SQL query to retrieve data from the database, on a specified schedule, and can then send it to key people as specified. An example would be a monthly phone listing to supervisors.

**Monitor Alerts**

A monitor alert "watches" for changing conditions in the database, and when they do, it can alert key people. For example, if a new employee is added, it can alert payroll that an employee has been hired.

The library is a set of predefined Alerts, tailored to the Ascentis HR product. You can choose which ones to use for your company, and can further modify them for your own needs. All Alerts are disabled by default.

You can also create your own Alerts from scratch, or copy existing Alerts and change them.

This document discusses

- How to configure and enable Alerts to work with your Ascentis HR database
- A description of all the included standard Alerts
- Release and Technical notes that discuss what's new in the current version of Alerts for users of previous versions

CHAPTER 2

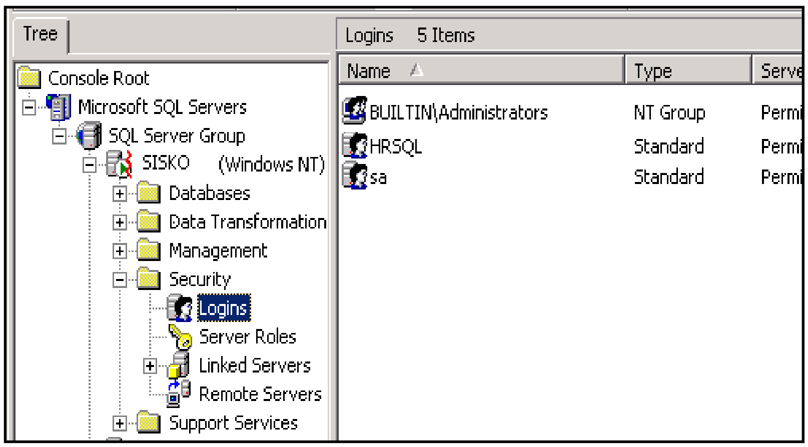
# Configuring & Enabling Alerts

### Setting up Database Access in Ascentis HR

Alerts must be able to connect to the Ascentis HR database. This section describes the steps necessary to grant the required access to the Ascentis HR database.

Ascentis HR ships with several pre-installed "Roles." A user can be assigned one of these roles, and gain access to the database. Alerts will need to run as a user with access to the database, and the easiest way to do this is to grant access to the account which the service logs in as, using one of these roles. The most appropriate role for alerts to use is "ROWithComp."

First, what login is being used for the Alerts service? You'll need to set that user up to access the Ascentis HR database.

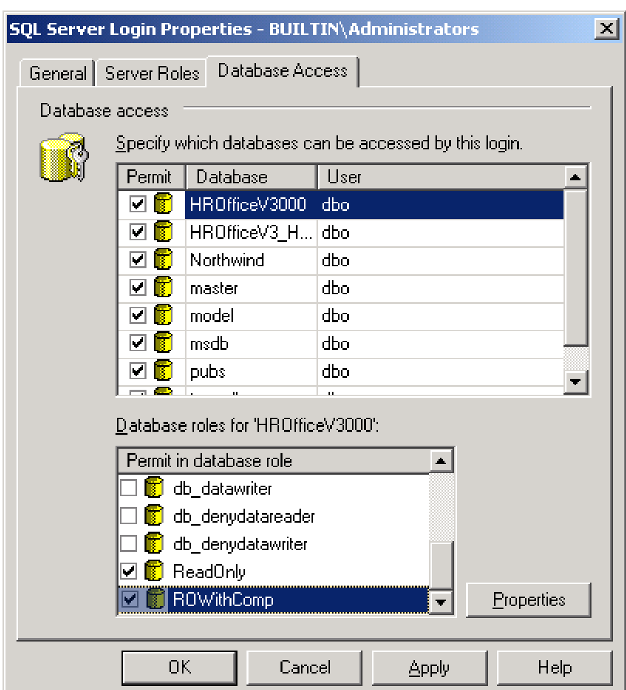



To set up NT Authentication access to the database, do the following:

1. Start SQL Server *Enterprise Manager* and find the server containing the Ascentis HR database. Expand the tree and find *Security* then *Logins*. Click on *Logins*.

2. If the user login used by Alerts is not in the list, you'll need to add it. Right click on Logins, and select New Login. Find and select the login

3. If the user login IS in the list, double click on the name to bring up the Login Properties. The user should be granted access, using Windows NT authentication.




4. Click on the Database Access tab.

5. The Database Access screen should permit access to the database Ascentis HR. You can give the user read-only access by checking the ROWithComp role in the lower box.

6. Click OK. This user now has read-only access to the database via NT Authentication.

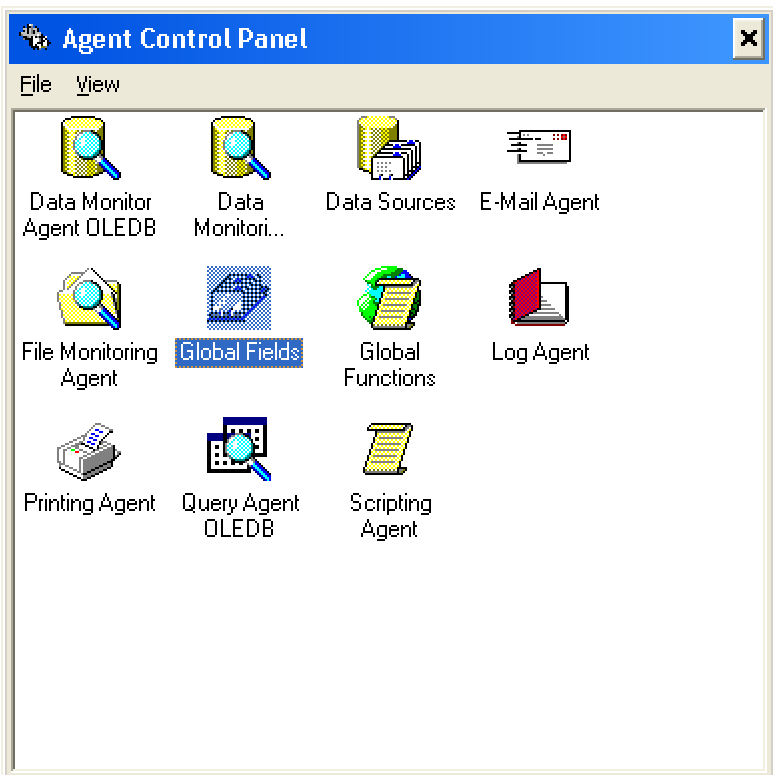
### Key Person Email Addresses

Alerts uses a number of "Global Fields" to contain email addresses of key people. This enables the alerts to be written and shipped using these fields, but then allows you to specify these email addresses after installation. That way, you can specify these addresses once, and they are then used in various alerts. Email addresses might be, for example, for the HR Manager or the Payroll Manager.

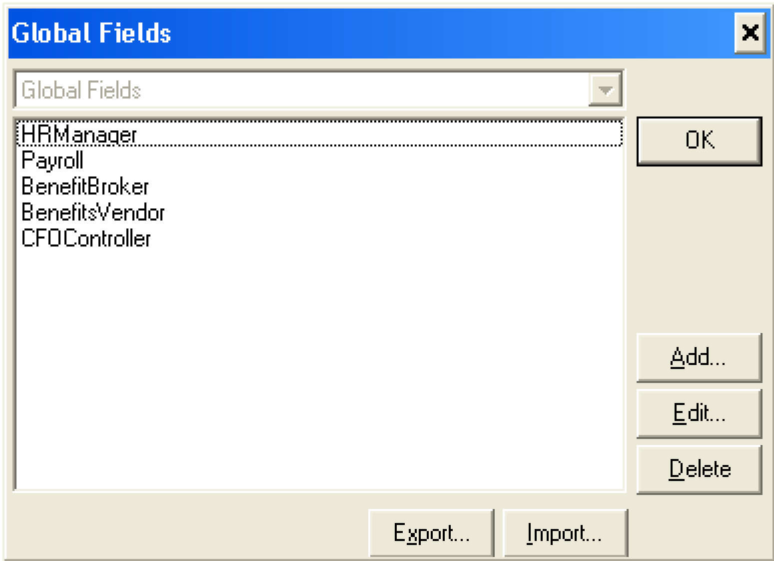
The Alerts Library uses these Global Fields to contain email addresses of key people:

- Payroll
- Benefit Broker
- Benefits Vendor
- HR Manager
- CFO/Controller

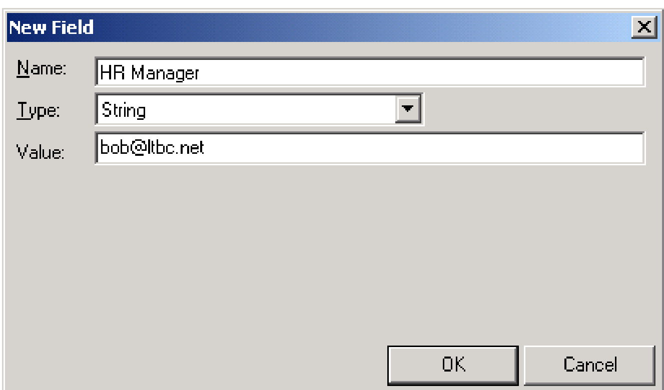
To set up these Global fields, click View on the menu, then select the Agent Control Panel.




Double click on "Global Fields"




You should see these Global Fields, but there will be no email addresses in yet. For each of these, use the 'Edit' button to put in an email address.



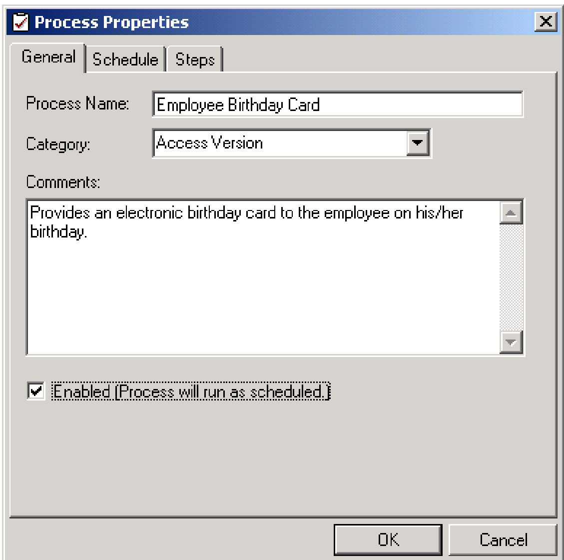

Type the email address into the "Value" field. These values can easily be changed later, if an email address changes.

You will need to define an email address for each of these roles. *Payroll* and *HR Manager* are used for many of the various Alerts. The others are used less, and depending on which alerts you choose to use, you may not need to define them.

When you are finished, click "Ok" to exit.

### Enabling Alerts

The end of this document contains descriptions of the Alerts. That would be the best place to look to decide which Alerts you want to enable.




To enable an Alert:

1. Open the Alert right clicking and selecting "Properties", or by selecting Process\Properties from the men..
2. Check the *Enabled* checkbox. A check in the checkbox indicates it is enabled.

The Alert is enabled. If this is a monitor alert, you should immediately snapshot the Alert (the next section covers Snapshotting).

### Initial Snapshot of Alerts

Snapshotting causes *monitor* Alerts to record the current state of the database, so that it can later detect changes. Query alerts do not need to be snapshotted.

**Note**: If you do not manually snapshot the Alert, the first time it runs, it will automatically snapshot, but this is somewhat erratic. We highly recommend Snapshotting manually.

To Snapshot the current state of the database:

1. Click the *Steps* tab. Highlight the step and click the *Edit* button.
2. The "Monitor an OLE DB Data Source" dialog comes up. Click the *Snapshot* button to snapshot. You can now exit this Alert, unless you'd like to further modify it.

C H A P T E R 3

# Description of Included Alerts

This section describes the Alerts included in the Alerts Library. These Alerts can be customized to meet your company's needs.

| **Alert Name** | **Alert Description** |
|---|---|
| **Acceptance of Address or Name Change** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification that a name or address change has been made to an Employee record in the Ascentis HR database.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Employee<br>• Supervisor<br>• Payroll Manager (if required)<br>• Benefit Broker (if required)<br>• Benefits Vendor (if required)<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Anniversary Listing** | **Description**:<br>Provides a listing on a monthly basis of all the anniversaries coming up in the next month. Runs on the first. This Alert will send the entire list of Anniversaries during the current month every time it is run.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager (if required)<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Monthly, on the first |
| **Benefit Eligibility** | **Description**:<br>Alerts employees when they are becoming eligible for benefits. Checks employee who are eligible for eligibility, including overridden eligibility, or will be becoming eligible within 30 days. Ensures that they are not already enrolled in (or have waived) that benefit. Alert waits for a valid employee email address.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Employee<br>**Runs**:<br>• Daily |

| Alert Name | Alert Description |
|---|---|
| **Benefit Compensation Expiring** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification that a Benefit Compensation record is expiring in one month.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Birthday Listing** | **Description**:<br>Provides a listing on a monthly basis of all the birthdays coming up in the next month. Runs on the first. This Alert will send the entire list of Birthdays during the current month every time it is run.<br>**Notifies:**<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Monthly, on the first |
| **Bonus Pay Notification** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification that a new bonus has been entered for an employee.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **COBRA Payment Overdue** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification when a COBRA payment is overdue.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Employee Anniversary** | **Description**:<br>Sends a note to employees on their anniversary date.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Employee<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |

| **Alert Name** | **Alert Description** |
|---|---|
| **Employee Birthday Card** | **Description**:<br>Provides an electronic birthday card to the employee on his/her birthday.<br>**Attached** Forms:<br>• Electronic Birthday Card (if required)<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Employee<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Employees Turning 65** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification when an employee turns 65.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **I-9 Expired Listing** | **Description**:<br>Provides a daily list of the employees that have expired I-9 re-verification dates (if any). This Alert will send the entire list of Expired I-9's every time it is run.<br>**Attached Forms:**<br>• I-9 Form<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **I-9 Not Complete** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification of employees with an incomplete I-9. This Alert will send the entire list of Incomplete I-9's every time it is run.<br>**Attached Forms:**<br>• I-9 Form<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |

| Alert Name | Alert Description |
|---|---|
| **I-9 Verification** | **Description**:<br>Provides a reminder notice 90, 60, and 30 days prior to the I-9 renewal date. Email contains the I-9 form for the supervisor to complete with the employee.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager (if required)<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Monthly Phone Listing to Supervisor** | **Description**:<br>Provides a list of employee home phone numbers on a monthly basis. This Alert will send the entire list of Phone Numbers every time it is run.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Monthly, run on the 1st. |
| **New Hire Eligibility** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification 90 days after an employee is hired for benefits eligibility.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **New Hire Forms** | **Description:**<br>Provides a notification of information that has been entered into Ascentis HR for a new employee to review and correct if necessary. Sends the appropriate new hire forms.<br>**Attached Forms:**<br>• I-9 Form<br>• W4 Form<br>• Any other forms or documents you wish to attach<br>**Notifies:**<br>• Employee<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs:**<br>Hourly |

| **Alert Name** | **Alert Description** |
|---|---|
| **Notification of Leave Taken** | **Description**:<br>Notifies the payroll manager when an employee takes leave. A separate version is available for systems using days as the unit for leave.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Every 30 minutes |
| **Old Picture** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification when an employee's picture is more than 3 years old.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Overage Dependents** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification of dependents who are turning 21, or 25 if they are a full-time student.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Payroll Notification of Employment Changes** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification to payroll if a change has been made to Employment Status.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Payroll Notification of Job Changes** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification to payroll if a change has been made to an Employee's job, including Job Title, Location, Division, and Department.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |

| **Alert Name** | **Alert Description** |
|---|---|
| **Payroll Notification of New Hire** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification to payroll of a New Hire's name, hire date, address and phone numbers<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Payroll Notification of Personal Info Changes** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification to payroll if a change has been made to Personal Information.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Payroll Notification of Salary Changes** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification to payroll if a change has been made to an Employee's salary.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• Payroll Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Pending Ascentis Employee Self Service Changes** | **Description**:<br>Notifies HR that changes have been made in Ascentis Employee Self Service, and are awaiting approval.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Performance Review** | **Description**:<br>Provides a list on a monthly basis of the employees who are due for a performance review. This Alert will send the entire list of Reviews Due every time it is run.<br>**Attached** Forms:<br>• Review Form (if required)<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager (if required)<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Monthly, run on 1st. |

| **Alert Name** | **Alert Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Returning from FMLA** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification of an employee that is due to return from FMLA within 4 days.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |
| **Ascentis Employee Self Service Account Lockout** | **Description**:<br>Alerts HR Manager when an Ascentis Employee Self Service user is locked out from using Ascentis Employee Self Service.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>• Continuously |
| **Termination Process** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification that a termination has been entered into Ascentis HR.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager (if required)<br>• Supervisor<br>• Payroll Manager (if required)<br>**Runs**:<br>Hourly |
| **Unknown Ascentis Employee Self Service User ID** | **Description**:<br>Alerts HR Manager when an unknown id is used in an attempt to log into Ascentis Employee Self Service.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>• Continuously |

| Alert Name | Alert Description |
|---|---|
| **Unsuccessful Ascentis Employee Self Service Authentication Alert** | **Description**:<br>Alerts HR Manager when an unsuccessful attempt is made to Authenticate in Ascentis Employee Self Service.<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>**Runs**:<br>• Continuously |
| **W4 Not Complete** | **Description**:<br>Provides notification of employees with an incomplete W4. This Alert will send the entire list of incomplete W4's every time it is run.<br>**Attached Forms:**<br>• W4 Form<br>**Notifies**:<br>• HR Manager<br>• Supervisor<br>**Runs**:<br>Daily |

C H A P T E R 4

# Release & Technical Notes

This section describes the changes in newer versions of Alerts for users of previous versions.

## Changes to Alerts 5.1

- Alerts has been updated to be compatible with Microsoft Vista and later operating systems.
- Added ability to set specific user at the process level to override the user the service is configured to use. Only available when the service is configured to use the Local System Account.
- Added ability for processes to interact with desktop. This feature should only be used when automating Excel or when debugging hung processes.
- Added checks to make sure process files are not saved with empty data.
- Changed processes handling to always make a backup of processes files before saving with new data.

- **Process Summary**
  The Process Manager has been enhanced to show a Process Summary of a selected process. The Process Summary will show
  the selected process in a report format, including Step Descriptions, Scheduling Options and Step Conditions. This new feature will give users a single view of the entire process without having to drill down into the steps to gain understanding
  of what a process is designed to do.

- **Process Summary Custom Fields**
  The Custom Field function has been enhanced to allow easier access to the editing of the custom field. An option has been added
  to the Custom Field definition to allow editing of the field from the new Process Summary screen. This gives users the ability to quickly
  change a custom field value within a process without having to drill into the query definition of a monitor for example.

- **Query Builder Custom Fields**
  The Query Builder has been enhanced to allow insertion of Custom Fields.

- **HTML Editing**
  The Email Agent has been enhanced to give simple HTML editing capabilities in a “What You See Is What You Get” (WYSIWYG) format.

- **Dual Format Emails**
  The Email Agent has been enhanced to allow saving of HTML and Plain Text versions of an email.

- **Table Wizard**
  The existing Table Wizard has been changed to allow easier access to the text and fields contained within the table.

- Fixed problem with Global Fields not being processed during snapshot creation when using User Defined Sorting in the Monitor an OLEDB Datasource.
- Query builder updated to not hang when querying tables that contain spaces.
- Fixed problem with parenthesis being dropped when editing queries with complex Custom Columns in the Query Builder.
- Fixed problem with the Preview button being disabled when "{fn" type ODBC fields are used in the Query Builder.
- Added Interpret Carriage Returns as Line Breaks functionality for easier HTML editing in the Email Agent.

## Changes to Alerts 4.1

### Process Manager Enhanced

The Process Manager has been enhanced with a more graphic user interface. Within the new interface, users can now;

- Directly edit steps without having to navigate through the process wizard.
- Copy, paste or move steps to any process node that supports sub-steps.
- View all the steps within a process at a glance.
- Upgrade process data fields to new database field formats.

### ODBC and OLE DB Query Builders Enhanced

The Query Agent has been enhanced to make Group-By queries easier to compose.

### Email Agent Enhanced

The email agent has been enhanced to allow for HTML formatted messages to be sent when using SMTP protocol. HTML email includes a Table Wizard to automatically insert a table made up of user defined fields into the detail section of the email. A Preview button allows the user to see what the HTML email may look like when sent.
The user interface can now be resized and the individual message sections can be resized for easier editing of email messages.

### OLE DB Data Monitor Enhanced

The OLE DB Data Monitor will now store old data values for query fields selected by the user.

Two new options have been added to the Advanced Configuration settings.

*Enable User Defined Sorting*

> With Providex data sources, there were situations were the snapshot would never complete, even though the Preview Now feature in the Query Builder completed in a reasonable amount of time. This is happening because the snapshot was adding an Order By clause containing the selected Unique Fields after the query for the purpose of finding duplicate records. Checking this option will exclude this Order By clause from the query and allow you to define your own sorting within the Query Builder.

*Enable Pre-Validation for Unique Values*

| |
|---|
| Selecting this option will force the Snapshot routines to check for duplicate values before creating the Snapshot value. Use this option during development of a process if the Snapshot process takes a long time to complete. |

### Custom/Global Fields

Formulas for custom and global fields no longer have a size limitation of 256 characters.

## Changes to Alerts 4.0

### MCURDATE

MCURDATE is now a global field that can be used everywhere that global fields can be used in the program. MCURDATE contains the current system date. Additional pre-configured global fields forAlerts include: MCURMONTH, MCURDAY, MCURTIME, and MCURYEAR. These are fields that contain current system month, system day, system time, and system year.

### Query Agent Enhanced

The Query Agent has been enhanced to allow more flexibility in selecting data sources.

### Script Agent Enhanced

The Script Agent has been enhanced for improved performance and portability of processes. The user interface now allows the contents of files to be inserted into the new script control. For ease of use, the entire script can be viewed and edited in one place.

### Email Agent Enhanced

The MAPI and SMTP Email Agents have been combined into one Email Agent.

### Standard, Custom and Global Fields

Standard fields are now called Data Fields. Custom fields continue to apply to a specific step in a specific process; global fields apply to all steps in all processes. Enhancements include a new Global Functions icon in the Alerts Agent Control Panel that allows you to add your own global functions. Global functions are available for use in both custom and global fields as well as in the scripting agent. You can also import and export Global fields from the agent control panel.

## Technical Notes

### Microsoft Jet

To install Alerts on a server with MDAC 2.6 installed as the first and only version of MDAC, you can first install the OLE DB Provider for Jet 4.0 from the installation CD (\MDAC\jet40sp3_comp.exe) and then install Alerts.

### Custom Field Replacement in Word RTF documents

Word assumes that anything with an "@" symbol is an e-mail address and makes it a hyperlink. This causes a problem with custom fields embedded in the document. To work around this, after inserting the custom field, right click on it in the document and select hyperlink, remove hyperlink.

### Creating Data Monitor Snapshots

If you encounter problems when creating a snapshot where it states 'Primary Keys are not unique'. Recommendations are: 1) Check your query; if you are using a join, include fields from all tables in the join to make the record unique. 2) Check your database configuration and the data -- using preview. Some fields may be null which may cause duplicate keys. 3) Some databases will report this if it needs to be re-indexed.

### ODBC and OLE DB Query Builders Enhanced

The Query Builders have been enhanced for greater flexibility in creating queries. You can now manually edit SQL queries and use the insert field button to include data fields passed by other agents and global fields.

### HTML Help System Updated

The HTML Help System has been updated with information on product enhancements. New topics have been added for Alerts Frequently Asked Questions and Troubleshooting.

### Process files (*.tsk)

Process files (*.tsk) are now in XML format. Although XML files can be edited with any text editor, we do not recommend doing so in this version. There are many reasons for this, including the way that snapshots are processed to determine if records have been added, modified, or deleted. It is during the setup and editing of processes that the Alerts program makes merge field data available to the agents. To ensure successful running of processes, please be sure to make all changes to your processes through the Alerts user interface.

### Conditional Execution

Process steps and sub-steps can be configured to execute conditionally based on process properties and the results of other steps and sub-steps.

### Steps and Substeps

Steps and substeps can be copied for ease of use.

### Data Sources

For ease of use, Data Sources can be managed from one location in the Alerts Agent Control Panel. You can also access the Data Sources Manager by clicking the Data Sources button in the Ole Db Data Monitor and Query agents.

Because Alerts is designed to run as an NT Service, user interactions are not possible while Alerts processes are running. This means that you cannot manually enter User Name and Password for DSNs when your processes run.