



Webinar Questions and Answers: Ask the Experts – June

APAC Time Zone Attendee Questions:

(US Time Zone Attendee Questions follow below)

We would like to update our attendees who attended the recent Ask the Experts webinar series.

Due to the volume of questions submitted, we apologize for the delay in responding to the questions.

Thank you again for your patience. In addition to reviewing the questions and answers below, please feel free to view the recording of the webinars at <http://info.nintex.com/Webinars.html>.

Thank you!

1) **Q: I noticed you're on Chrome - do you run into any particular issues which has made this difficult?**

A:

- a. The Nintex O365 product lines support all browsers SharePoint O365 support.
- b. For on Premise, the Designers are only supported in IE however they can be consumed by multiple browsers.

2) **Q: What is the best way to get user-started workflows (right-click on item, run workflow) to just run, instead of showing the Nintex Workflow screen with the "Run" button on it?**

A:

- a. Workflows can be added to the context menu, allowing easy access.
- b. The start screen can be hidden.

3) **Q: What happens if you happen to have more than 6 per second?**

A:

- a. This is per Web Front End, so if you have 2 Web Front Ends you will execute 12 per second. If you exceed this, you may need to review the size of your farm.
- b. Workflows that overflow are batched and are run in due course.
- c. More information on this here:

[http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc262787\(v=office.15\).aspx#Workflow](http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc262787(v=office.15).aspx#Workflow)

4) **Q: How do you move attached documents from a custom list workflow to a folder in a document library?**

A: Using the Copy action.

5) **Q: The safe looping feature seems to impose a 4-5 min wait between each loop cycle. Is it possible for the farm admin to shorten this time? When using a loop with 20 cycles, this can take FAR too long to complete.**

A:

a. You can reduce the timer job time interval, however this has its issues.

b. Support typically recommends never turning this on unless it is for a very brief test.

6) **Q: For the update document action in Nintex Workflow, is it possible have line breaks from the multiple line textbox in SharePoint reflected in the content controls in the word document?**

A: Under the "common" tokens, there is a line break insert.

7) **Q: I'm using a lookup list to display group names, but for some reason, I see the item ID showing in front of the group name. How can I get rid of the ID? I'm using NF2010 on premise.**

A: A user can also use the inline function "replace()" and include a regular expression to remove the ID portion.

8) **Q: Another question is about repeating section. Any chance I could easily get the value stored in a list column? I found a workflow online which could possibly extract the values but it seems very complicate.**

A: To extract values from a repeating section you have to use an xpath query using the Query XML action. Exactly the same way you would have to do it with InfoPath.

<http://www.sharepointpub.com/nintex-workflow-copy-list-item-attachments-into-a-library-folder/>

9) **Q: What widgets are affected by safe looping? What alternatives are there to those affected widgets, assuming you leave safe looping on, how to work around?**

A:

- a. There is no workaround to Safe Looping. To work around it you have to turn it off and just be more vigilant with your workflow designs.
- b. State Machine, Loop, for each.

10) **Q: Is there a timer job that causes the "complete task" action to run? It takes time to run normally so I'm wondering if it can be jump started.**

A: The action is batched and will be processed per workflow activity batching.

11) **Q: Does Nintex Forms 2013 have capability or roadmap to handle more of InfoPath features, including importing word based form?**

A: We are not planning support for importing word based forms at present.

12) **Q: How does my PKI certificates or CAC (common access card) work with web services and Nintex? Currently, I am unable to use web services because I get a prompt for my CAC.**

A: The call web service action is not going to provide sufficient low level access to utilize PKI or CAC devices however, you could likely use a request data action to request the key from the end user and pass the collected data to a variable for use in a web request action. We do not really have the materials to do a good proof of concept; so this is theoretical at best.

13) **Q: Do you know when support for jQuery version 1.9 will be available?**

Will there be JavaScript API documentation available, e.g. for People Picker etc.?

A: The People Picker API documentation is undergoing final review. We expect to release the documentation in early August 2014.

We currently support JQuery v1.10.1. For customers looking to leverage v1.9, it is possible to include it in their forms. For customers writing custom JavaScript, our recommendation is that they use their own jQuery version and own alias (not NWF\$) to avoid future compatibility issues with their code in the event that Nintex Forms upgrade the shipping version.

Register to attend the July webinar series:

APAC: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/930781026>

US: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/183992314>

Submit your best practice questions [here](#).

Questions Asked by US Time Zone Ask The Experts Attendees (June)

1) Q: Please show the YouTube address again at the end. Will you have a recording of this presentation?

A: This is where you may find the recordings of the Ask The Nintex Experts Webinar series:

<http://info.nintex.com/Webinars.html>

2) Q: We have Nintex but it is not the most recent version - we don't show a setting or section called Manage Farm Solutions. Was it called something else in earlier versions?

A: Manage Farm Solutions is something that is part of SharePoint 2013 and 2010 – Central Administration.

3) Q: Explain again what a timer service is?

A:

a. <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/besidethepoint/archive/2011/10/26/the-sharepoint-timer-service.aspx>

b. The SharePoint Timer service is a process that runs in SharePoint on certain farm servers and handle timer jobs. It also handles all time/date relations processes of a workflow (e.g. Delays, scheduling etc.).

4) Q: We don't show a setting or section called Manage Farm Solutions. Was it called something else in earlier versions?

A: Manage Farm Solutions is something that is part of SharePoint 2013 and 2010 – Central Administration.

5) Q: Are there any complexity limitations when building a workflow?

A: No there aren't any hardcoded limitations for the complexity of a Nintex Workflow.

6) Q: Is workflow history association deleted after 60 days as a regular workflow?

A: SharePoint keeps workflows history and Nintex Workflow also has its own history list. The 60 days' workflow clean-up job only affect the SharePoint history, not the Nintex Workflow history.

7) Q: Can Nintex workflow add/remove users from a SharePoint security group?

A: Calling the UserGroup.asmx action, you can create a SharePoint group, by specifically calling the AddGroup web method.

8) Q: We have been trying to use the repeating section control in one of our Nintex Forms. However, whenever we submit a form, all the fields that are associated with the repeating section control are shown blank within the list. You have to click into the submission to see what was input. We would like to export all information into Excel, but the blank fields leave a lot of the information out. Please advise.

A: This is an issue that should be raised with the Nintex Support team – support@nintex.com.

9) Q: We have created a Nintex Workflow from a Nintex Form. When users are submitting the form, only some come through and into the list. We have activated our ID column within our list, and notice the skipped numbers. However, we cannot identify why some form responses come through without issue and others are never added to the list. Please advise. We need to ensure that every submitted form is added to the list and that the approval workflow begins for all.

A: This is an issue that should be raised with the Nintex Support team – support@nintex.com.

10) Q: We have a Nintex Form that has a cascading drop down list. As such, it has lookup fields. The lookup fields are not populating on the list and thus cannot be directly exported into Excel. How do we get that information to be added automatically to our list? Thank you.

A: Make sure you open the List Lookup controls and in the Text Connected To, point it to the List field you want to store that in. Then it should export to Excel.

11) Q: I would like to know if there is an easier way to handle item permissions change within a workflow. I'm currently having to use the commit action in combination with the pause action and it's just not ideal. Any suggestions?

A: The Set Item Permissions action should let you set the permissions you need.

12) Q: We were told to turn off the timers on App servers?

A: Nintex has hard requirements on services required to run on servers. Every server that has the 'Microsoft SharePoint Foundation Workflow Timer Service' is going to be in a pool of servers that can/will process Nintex Workflows. SharePoint uses a round robin system to determine which server will process workflows so there is no real way to limit/configure this functionality other than to turn the service on/off on servers according to your requirements. Each server that is configured to process workflows needs to have the 'Microsoft SharePoint Foundation Web Application' service running. Nintex workflows make references to this service at runtime, if the assemblies are not available to Nintex, the workflow will fail (this can manifest as a workflow that runs successfully only part of the time).

13) Q: Please address the timers concern. We had a help desk case where Nintex told us to turn off the timers on app servers.

A: Same as previous question.

14) Q: Using the Query List Action WF 2010, how do you filter to return all events on a particular day that could be a single event, an all-day event, a recurring event - part of a day, a recurring event - all day event?

A: In this case, you will need to look at modifying the CAML query itself. This may help: <http://social.technet.microsoft.com/Forums/sharepoint/en-US/eb58847d-914f-4ce1-a8d8-ef874d14c50c/caml-query-getting-recurring-events-in-sharepoint-calendar?forum=sharepointdevelopmentlegacy>

15) Q: Due to heavy load, the latest workflow operation has been queued. It will attempt to resume at a later time NW2010 on premise, trying to start a workflow from a workflow. I get this error, suggestions?

A: This is basically SharePoint telling you that it is too busy at the moment to run this workflow. It will run it, it's just queued up.

The workflow throttle setting controls how many workflows can be processing at any one time on the entire server farm. This setting does not control how many workflows can be "In Progress" concurrently, but rather how many can be actively using the processor. When this number is exceeded, workflow instances that are started and events that wake up dehydrated workflows are queued for later processing. The default value is 15. This setting is per farm, so the number of front-end Web servers is irrelevant.

The impact of this setting is that when a workflow starts, the number of currently active workflows is checked. If it exceeds the throttle number, the workflow is not started and instead, a timer job is created to try running the workflow later. If the number of currently active workflows is less than the throttle setting, the workflow is started.

You can check the current throttle setting by running the following command:

```
stsadm -o getproperty -pn workflow-eventdelivery-throttle
```

You can change the throttle setting by running the following command, in which you can replace 25 with the new value:

```
stsadm -o setproperty -pn workflow-eventdelivery-throttle -pv "25"
```

The throttle property exists to allow you to control how many resources workflows require in your environment. Because you cannot designate dedicated "workflow servers" the way you can for index or query servers, this mechanism prevents workflows from overrunning your environment.

Throttle is likely the most important setting to get correct in your environment. Unfortunately, there is no magic formula to calculate how you should set this property. The value is highly dependent on your environment and the details of your workflows. If your workflows are all lightweight, you can likely set a high value. (A lightweight workflow performs tasks that do not overstress the server memory or processor and that do not perform an inordinate amount of database operations. Some examples are workflows that simply create and monitor tasks.)

However, if your workflow needs to perform more heavy-duty processing—such as creating sites, iterating through collections, or performing more-intense calculations—avoid setting the throttle value too high.

The best advice is to adjust the setting and then monitor your environment. Continue to adjust and monitor until you reach an acceptable level of performance for both workflows and standard site operations.

Anything over the throttle limit will show this message. **We never recommend making changes to this or other Workflow Infrastructure settings.**

Source of information: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/dd441390\(v=office.12\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/dd441390(v=office.12).aspx)

16) Q: I'm interested in Nintex, but actually looking for a solution for New Product Development process to update an ERP system hosted on an IBM P-series, using DB2/400. Is Nintex a tool that could possibly help with this?

A: This would depend on whether it exposes web services that Nintex Workflow can talk to, supports BizTalk and Nintex can talk to it through that, or direct DB calls to pull/push data.

17) Q: Is Nintex going to continue development/improvement of your products for on premise also?

A: Nintex releases updates to our on-premises products on a quarterly basis and will continue to do so.

18) Q: Is there a way to limit who can design a workflow without giving them site ownership?

A: In Site Settings, there is a link to Allowed Workflow Designers. The user needs to be added to that.

19) Q: How to create an email notification - scheduled workflow - that displays a table with a list of changes or new items - output similar to schedule alerts?

A:

- a. The Send Notification action just sends an email. You need to build up the HTML table yourself then insert it into the email body.
- b. <http://bradorluk.wordpress.com/2014/03/31/generate-an-html-document-with-dynamic-data/>
- c. <http://dataqueen.unlimitedviz.com/2013/05/creating-an-html-table-in-a-nintex-workflow/>

20) Q: How about Infomix Database querying?

A: It looks like Informix has an ODBC driver that can be installed. You need to install that on all far servers, then the Execute SQL action will be able to talk to this database.

21) Q: Can we get documentation for Client API for Nintex Forms?

A: This is currently a work in progress. As soon as possible, we'll release the documentation.

(More below)

22) Q: We have a possible workflow with external sign-off participants - how does Nintex Live target/track external sign-offs and more importantly how can I convince architecture that this doesn't pose a security threat?

A:

- a. Nintex Live can work through a proxy server, so that you don't need to expose your farm, just one port for Nintex Live to talk through.
- b. For external signoffs, you'd need them to put in a customer ID or something so that you can track who did what.

23) Q: Should the list level setting for requiring approval be turned on/off?

A: We don't have a requirement that this setting needs to be turned on.

24) Q: How do you move an action from one spot in the workflow to another?

A: The easiest way, is to left click on the image in the action and drag to the empty spot you want to put it.

25) Q: Can you attach a file that moves along with the workflow?

A: You can attach files to the notifications that go out, either just for the Send Notification action or for the task actions, like Assign Flexi Task.

26) Q: Doesn't safe looping still run an infinite loop? It's just delaying each loop for 5 minutes?

A: That is true. Safe Looping is not meant to stop an infinite loop. It's meant to prevent an infinite loop from using up all the CPU power of a farm server.

(more below)

27) Q: Is there any way to get a report of workflows that are running many safe looping actions?

A:

- a. There's no way to tell if a workflow is designed to have an infinite loop. Your best course of action is to find which workflows are using the Loop or State Machine actions and then get a good understanding of what they are doing, so that you can minimize the chance of an infinite loop.
- b. The following is a PowerShell that may help find the workflows that use those actions.
- c. <http://www.vadimtabakman.com/nintex-workflow-powershell-find-workflows-with-an-action-part-4.aspx>

28) Q: Is there a way to update a list item in another site?

A: Yes there is. Use the Call Web Service action, configured to point to the Lists.asmx web service on the destination site you want to update. Then call the UpdateListItems web method.

29) Q: Is there a way to increase timer job frequency so workflows that are queued will kick off quicker?

A:

- a. Take a look at the following:
- b. [http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/gg508755\(v=office.14\).aspx](http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/gg508755(v=office.14).aspx)
- c. <http://connect.nintex.com/forums/thread/8748.aspx>

30) Q: What is the risk of turning off safe looping?

A: A workflow design may accidentally build an infinite loop and the server that is running that workflow will have all its CPU being used to run that loop.

31) Q: What's the best way to reassign tasks in the middle of a workflow?

A: If delegation is enabled for the task, you can simply open the task and delegate it, if that task belongs to you. Otherwise, a Site Administrator can delegate a task on behalf of another user, regardless of whether delegation is enabled or not.

32) Q: Does a SharePoint Farm backup back up Nintex with full fidelity?

A: No. In order for full back up, you must also make sure that associated Nintex databases are backed up also.

33) Q: After installation, what should I be backing up to ensure full fidelity in Nintex? Is it just the Nintex Configuration Database and the files in the hive?

A: You need to continue with your normal SharePoint backup process and also include the Nintex databases (configuration and content databases).

34) Q: How can one collect mandatory feedback to specific fields of a SharePoint List from various approvers at the different stages of a workflow?

A: Assign a task to a user and as part of the configuration of that task, configure it to use Nintex Forms. Then, in the form, make sure the fields you require are actually set to be required. This can be done by opening the configuration of that control, going into Validation and enabled the Required property.

35) Q: What's difference between UDA and a snippet?

A:

- a. A UDA (User Defined Action) is some workflow logic that you can reuse in any workflow. If you need to make a change to it, you modify the UDA and republish it. It will allow you to republish all the workflow that use it so that it gets the latest UDA changes you have made.
- b. A snippet is also some reusable workflow logic, but it's more like pasting some actions into a workflow. After you've done this, there is no reference in the workflow to the snippet. So any changes you make to a snippet afterwards will not affect any workflows where you've used it.

36) Q: Based on your comment, if you add the timer service to app servers, do those then need to be licensed?

A: No it doesn't.

37) Q: I am currently having an issue after migrating from 2010 to 2013, where workflows with Pause tasks fail after the pause time.

A:

- a. You need to look at your SharePoint log files. Specifically, for "Workflow Infrastructure" error messages to see if there is anything there that explains what is causing this issue.
- b. If that doesn't help, please contact Nintex Support - support@nintex.com

48) Q: When I set ""Start workflow when items edited"" alone as ""yes"", workflow not getting triggered. Any specific reason?

A:

- a. The main reason why a workflow won't start automatically, is if the initiating account is the System Account. Check to see if that is the case.
- b. If it isn't, check your SharePoint log files. SharePoint controls the automatic starting of workflows and if it has an issue, it will usually log that reason to the log files.

49) Q: How to format a date as dd/mm/yyyy?

A:

- a. In Nintex Workflow, look at using the Build String action and inside that, the fn-FormatDate inline function.
- b. If you look at the help for that, it'll take you to some Microsoft pages that talk about date formatting.

50) Q: How many workflows can be in site collection?

A: Nintex itself has no limitations. I have not seen any such limitations put in place by Microsoft either.

51) Q: Forms Question - Button - Button action: What is the difference between "Save" and "Save and Submit"?

A:

- a. In normal forms, there really is no difference. The main difference is seen on Task forms, where a save will not progress the workflow that created the task and a Save and Submit will.
 - b. More information can be seen here : <http://vadimtabakman.com/nintex-forms-save-or-submit.aspx>.
-

52) Q: Is it possible to set up a workflow to sign up for a class and it stop after a certain number?

A:

- a. Yes. You need to have a list that keeps track of how many slots are still available.
- b. Then when someone signs up, have a workflow start on that event and then subtract 1 from the remaining number.
- c. If the number reached 0, you would need to do something like remove that subscription link or disable permissions to it.

53) Q: Error handling. Only a small subset of actions have error handling. Is there any plans to add more error handling to more actions that make updates to SharePoint items, such as update item?

A: For those actions where it feasible for error handling to be added, we will do so.

54) Q: Did Nintex build all these forms (configure action) using "Nintex forms"?

A: No, the configuration screen for the actions are not built using Nintex Forms.

55) Q: Can I put a code behind and into Nintex forms?

A:

- a. At this stage, you can use JavaScript in the forms.
- b. You could also build a custom web service and have your JavaScript call that.
- c. If you're looking at building a custom control for Nintex Forms, take a look at this : http://habaneroconsulting.com/Blog/Posts/Leveraging_the_Nintex_Forms_Object_Model.aspx

56) Q: Can we calculate the number of workflows running in our SharePoint environment per minute?

A: You would need to build a custom report for Nintex Workflow, which would including some XML and a custom built Stored Procedure which would query data in the Nintex Workflow content database.

57) Q: What is the best approach for pre-defined blocks of workflow or sections of forms for an organization or a department?

A:

- a. For Nintex Workflow, use a User Defined Action.
- b. For Nintex Forms, there's no support for pre-defined blocks. It is something we are currently looking into for the future.

58) Q: Is Nintex workflow 2013 a lot different than 2010?

A: No, the products are very similar.

59) Q: Adding image in email content is easier than 2010 workflows? Please showcase the same if possible.

A: The image needs to exist somewhere so that it can be added to an email. There's no support for embedding the image into the email itself.

60) Q: Is it possible to retrieve the username that is setup in a workflow constant (stored credentials)? In my workflow, permission inheritance is broken and custom permission assigned, thus the initiator becomes a read-only user on this item. While needing to update a couple of fields during the workflow, I am using the "Call web service" (UpdateListItems) to perform the update as a different user. The user credentials is setup as a workflow constant. The part I am needing to do, is when customizing permissions on the item, to grant contributor access to this user that is setup in the workflow constant; this is the reason for trying to retrieve the username of this (stored credential) user.

A:

- a. This isn't supported. Credentials are stored in the Nintex Workflow database in an encrypted form. There's no support for retrieving the username from it.
 - b. I would recommend you post this on <http://nintex.uservoice.com> as a feature request.
-

61) Q: Does the 'SPServices' JavaScript library (CodePlex) work within Nintex Forms?

A:

- a. Yes it does.
- b. <http://sharepointpapers.blogspot.com/2013/08/nintex-forms-with-spservices-library.html>

62) Q: If there are multiple workflows associated with a list that gets triggered when an item is changed; will updating the current item in one workflow trigger the second workflow to run? Or, will it know that the workflow updated the item so not to trigger another workflow start?

A: Yes it will, unless the workflows are running in the context of a System Account.

63) Q: When using the voting/majority option for requesting feedback (Flexi Task), is there a way to set a timeframe for when the assignees must respond by, and if so, does it just calculate the "majority" at that expiration time (regardless if all had replied)?

A:

- a. You can set the "Escalation" time so that after a certain amount of time, if the tasks are not completed, you can delegate them, or complete them etc.
- b. You will need to build in workflow logic to support what happens in that case.

64) Q: Could you demo debugging a workflow?

A:

- a. To debug a workflow, leverage the "Log in the History List" actions in the workflow and log the variables and fields that you're interested in.
- b. Then, when the workflow runs, it will log that data to the workflow history and will help me understand what is happening.
- c. You could also look at enabling Verbose Logging. That will create a large XML verbose log file, showing when and where fields/variables are modified.

65) Q: With Nintex Forms is there a way to print a form keeping all formatting? We are developing some HR/Logistics forms that will need to be printed to share non-electronically.

A:

- a. At the moment, printing is inherited from the browser.
- b. We are currently looking at building native product support for printing.

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APAC: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/930781026>

US: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/183992314>

Submit your best practice questions [here](#).

66) Q: What steps do I need to take if I upgrade from Nintex2010 to Nintex2013?

A: You need to look at this document:

http://connect.nintex.com/files/folders/upgrading_from_nw2010_to_nw2013/entry26920.aspx

67) Q: My organization is in the process to purchase Nintex. Meanwhile is it possible to practice Nintex before?

A:

- a. A trial is available for download or you can choose for a hosted trial.
- b. Nintex Workflow 2013 : <http://www.nintex.com/en-US/Products/Pages/TrialDownload.aspx?v=NWF.2013>
- c. Nintex Forms 2013 : <http://www.nintex.com/en-US/Products/Pages/TrialDownload.aspx?v=NF.2013>
- d. For other version, go to <http://www.nintex.com/en-US/Products/Pages/default.aspx> and select your product.

68) Q: Do you have an action to create a PDF of the item or document in the workflow? And better yet - if the item has attachments - create a PDF of the item and all include all attachments.

A:

- a. There is a Convert Document action that is part of Nintex Workflow Enterprise. It lets you convert a Word document to PDF.
- b. For extended support for PDF, you could look at a Nintex Partner named Muhimbi that have custom actions for Nintex Workflow.

69) Q: So we are stuck in sp2010 - is there a way to run as workflow author like was demonstrated with the action set earlier using 2010?

A:

- a. In Nintex Workflow 2010, add an action set action, open the configuration of it and click on the Common button in the ribbon. Then check the box, Run as Workflow Owner.
- b. Note: this is only available if the action set is in the main branch of the workflow. If you put the Action Set into another branch, like in the Set a Condition, the Run as Workflow Owner is not available.

70) Q: Are these numbers per site collection or per subsite or what?

A: You can configure the Reporting web parts to pick the report for the current site, or for all sites in the site collection.

71) Q: When you use "Run as Workflow Owner", you lose visibility of the person who actually initiated the workflow. Is there any way around this?

A: Before you run the action as Run as Workflow Owner, you can store the initiator in a workflow variable. Then you can use that inside the action set, if you need it.

72) Q: When will Lazy Approval be available in O365 workflow?

A: We are working on bringing Lazy Approval to Office 365 at the moment. Keep an eye on nintex.uservoice.com regarding the status of this and other updates.

73) Q: This is a great session, when will be the next one, so where do I send my questions?

A: You may submit your best practice questions [here](#).

74) Q: Why not use a loop?

A: This was asked in the context of showing some functionality in a State Machine. A loop can be used also. For overall design aesthetics, my personal preference is to use a State Machine as it's easier to understand and maintain over time.

75) Q: Can you please pass that XML to split values from the repeating section?

A: To get data from a Nintex Forms repeating section using Nintex Workflow, take a look at this post: <http://www.vadimtabakman.com/nintex-formsworkflow-parsing-repeating-section-data.aspx>

(more below)

76) Q: What is the best way to loop through a list? My goal is to look up an item and populate a field or calculate a total, or select a field for a summary report. I've seen several approaches and starting a separate workflow based on a task field but that seem like a lot of overhead. What is the most efficient and simple way do process items in a list.

A: The best way is to use a Query List action and get back the IDs of all the items in the list you're interested in and store them in a Collection variable. Then have a For Each action go through each ID in that collection. Inside the For Each, you can use an Update Item action to update the item in the list with the current ID (from your For Each action).

77) Q: How can I specify multiple Desktop layouts? ""Manage device layouts"" seems to only allow one.

A: Currently, only one desktop layout is supported.

78) Q: Can you please send me instructions on creating new items from repeating sections within a form?

A:

- a. You start off with this post : <http://www.vadimtabakman.com/nintex-formsworkflow-parsing-repeating-section-data.aspx>
- b. Then in the workflow, where there is a For Each, it is going through each row in the repeating section. You'll need to add a Create Item action there.

79) Q: The assignee and start date of a Flexi Task is automatically captured in the Workflow task list, but is the task completion date automatically captured?

A: That should be obtained from the Modified field.

80) Q: Where can I find definitions of workflow actions?

A: You'll be able to find these in the User Manual:
http://connect.nintex.com/files/folders/user_guides_and_help_files_nw2013/entry27022.aspx.

81) Q: We sometimes have workflows that error (ended unexpectedly) but upon review the workflow completed as expected. What would cause this?

A: This is strange behavior. You need to look at your SharePoint logs to see if there is something logged there that could explain the cause of this. We would also suggest you raise a case with support@nintex.com.

82) Q: Nintex form: I set the autocomplete for one of the column in the repeat section. It only works on the first row. I need to know the solution.

A: Please notify Nintex Support of this issue. support@nintex.com.

83) Q: When do I need to clean up the database for the workflow?

A:

- a. My recommendation is that when your WorkflowProgress table is nearing 10 million records, which is a good time to look at purging some old data.
- b. Every environment is different, which is why there isn't a general recommendation, since in on environment, 10 million records could cause some timeouts, but in another, 500 million records are fine.

84) Q: We have one workflow with a lot of choices where it can go. The State Machine has 20+ branches and often it errors out when we publish. This is a broad question, but is there a magic number that we should limit the branches of a State Machine?

A: While there is no hard limit on how large a workflow can be (the limit is dependent on your SharePoint farm configuration and overall performance), we generally start to see issues when a workflow is around 500Kb~. To determine how large your workflow is, export the workflow from the Nintex Workflow Designer to an '*.nwf' file. The size (not size on disk) of this file is the value we are looking for. Typically in these scenarios we recommend that you break the workflow up into smaller 'child workflows' that branch off of a smaller parent workflow. For more information on how to do this, please review this article: <http://connect.nintex.com/forums/thread/27855.aspx>

Note: If your workflow uses Nintex Forms, all data from the actual form is stored in the workflow for portability purposes (the workflow/form can be exported and imported and retain all configuration data). If a workflow utilizes UDA's, each UDA should be exported and added to the overall file size as they are combined at runtime.

85) Q: Could you cover what happens to workflows in process when the farm goes offline/down?

A: When an instance of the Microsoft Foundation Workflow Timer Service is stopped, all batches being processed are pushed back to the SharePoint database where the next iteration of the Workflow Timer Job will pick it up on another SharePoint server running the Microsoft Foundation Workflow Timer Service. If there are no services available the timer job will not run.

86) Q: What happens if a workflow is in a loop? Is there an internal governance to stop it?

A: If the workflow has a loop inside of itself that loops a set of actions, this can go on indefinitely. If the workflow instance itself is looping (Example: A workflow that triggers based on an item being modified and the workflow itself modifies the same item), SharePoint will prevent this behavior. The workflow is considered by the system to be recursive and is not permitted. You will see messages referring to this in the ULS logs under Workflow Infrastructure.

87) Q: What is the purpose of UDA's? Do they reduce publish time? Can they be secured for business admin modification?

A: UDA's make bits of workflow/commonly used workflow parts easy to re-use/manage as they can be upgraded with inheritance support, similar to the way content types work. They will not reduce publish/compilation time as they are still factored as if they were present in the workflow itself.

88) Q: Good stuff...please repeat monthly.

A: You can register for the future webinars [here](#).

89) Q: Please explain the proper use of Commit Pending Changes. Also, should we avoid using event driven workflows starts? Seems that in high volume environments we get Failed on Start (Retrying) and some never restart.

A: In Nintex Workflow you have two batches, one for Nintex activities that are non-blocking and one for SharePoint activities that are non-blocking. Non-blocking means that the workflow will not necessarily await the completion of the workflow the activity is doing (similar to threading). Typically this is not an issue unless you have activities that are utilizing each batch. When this happens you can end up with erroneous or null data

being passed from activity to activity. To avoid this, you can utilize the commit pending change action to force the batches to complete prior to moving to the next activity.

If you are unsure of whether or not an action is considered batched, it is fairly safe to assume that if you are modifying something in SharePoint, it is batched and should be handled as such.

Event driven workflows can see intermittent failures if they are not started with a delay action as the first action of the workflow. This is assuming that you are referencing data in the context of the current item (using the list item title for example). The reason for the failure is a race condition between SharePoint populating the data and the Workflow Infrastructure event receiver firing. Both of these things occur at the exact same time and it is not very predictable which will complete first. For durability use a delay.

90) Q: How long is left to support Nintex workflow 2010?

A: We are committed to Nintex Workflow 2010 releasing updates containing new features and bug fixes.

91) Q: If I want to change the structure of a workflow and there are several flows running, is it able that these take the change when publishing?

A: Workflow instances will always continue running with the version of the workflow they were initiated with. SharePoint compiles the workflow from XML to memory when the workflow is started. Because of this, modification is not possible.

92) Q: Which is the process to update the version of Nintex workflow?

A: The update process between builds of Nintex Workflow is outlined in the Version History document available on connect.nintex.com.

93) Q: Which are some of the alternatives for huge workflows?

A: Refer to question 84. While there is no hard limit on how large a workflow can be (the limit is dependent on your SharePoint farm configuration and overall performance), we generally start to see issues when a workflow is around 500Kb~. To determine how large your workflow is, export the workflow from the Nintex Workflow Designer to an '*.nwf' file. The size (not size on disk) of this file is the value we are looking for. Typically in these scenarios we recommend that you break the workflow up into smaller 'child workflows' that branch off of a smaller parent workflow. For more information on how to do this, please review this article: <http://connect.nintex.com/forums/thread/27855.aspx>

Note: If your workflow uses Nintex Forms, all data from the actual form is stored in the workflow for portability purposes (the workflow/form can be exported and imported and retain all configuration data). If a workflow utilizes UDA's, each UDA should be exported and added to the overall file size as they are combined at runtime.

94) Q: How is your Workflow 2013 different from Workflow 2010 in terms of architecture, ex) does it utilize Workflow Manager?

A: Nintex Workflow 2013 utilizes the same Workflow Infrastructure as Nintex Workflow 2010. It does not utilize Workflow Manager presently.

95) Q: Is Workflow/Form for Office 365 a SharePoint-Hosted app or Provider-Hosted app?

A: Nintex Office 365 products are provider hosted apps.

96) Q: Any issues with integrating Nintex workflow with the SharePoint Online 2013 version versus the On Premise version?

A: Nintex Workflow On Premises products provide the ability to build processes that can integrate with SharePoint Online. I would suggest contacting your partner or local Nintex territory manager for further info.

97) Q: When trying to terminate a workflow that is old but hung up (found in "workflows in progress" report), sometimes the workflow cannot be found. What causes this to happen? Perhaps a related report run has been deleted?

A: It is likely that the workflow history list is very large for that workflow causing a delay/timeout on updating the fields.

98) Q: How do we clean up old workflows that are in our environment? Task items that didn't get used... is there any feature that Nintex offers to help with clean up?

A: Nintex has some housekeeping tools that can help, but we would love to know more about what you're thinking. Please log a suggestion at nintex.uservice.com

(more below, EMEA attendee Q&A questions)

Questions Asked by EMEA Time Zone Ask The Experts Attendees (June 17th 1PM BST)

- 1) **Q: It is said that Nintex is a good solution within SharePoint, but not for connecting backend systems where data is stored and which have their own workflows.**

A: Nintex is the market leader in workflow and although being SharePoint centric, we offer a vast range of possibilities to integrate with backend systems. This will allow you to write data into other LOBs, retrieve information from LOBs but also trigger and interact with workflows from other LOBs.

- 2) **Q: For connecting SharePoint with multiple backend systems (Oracle, TOPdesk & Planon) Microsoft says that SharePoint workflow and forms (inclusive add on such Nintex are not appropriate. This is because the workflow is inadequate to deal with 'hops' 'queues' and 'wait for'-functionality.**

A: See Q1 above. As an addition: Nintex Workflow incorporates logic actions which allow you to wait for information or actions from other backend systems.

- 3) **Q: Would you recommend upgrading to newer versions?**

A: New versions always incorporate bug fixes, new features and in general improvements to the products. So yes, we encourage you to upgrade to newer versions to take full advantage of the products.

- 4) **Q: Upgrading to a newer version of Nintex; let's say 2010 to 2010: Looks like I need to uninstall the version on the server and install the new version. Is that in short correct?**

A: Yes, in short this is correct. The solutions will have to be retracted, removed and the new solutions deployed. This usually takes place during a system maintenance window.

- 5) **Q: Is there any recommendation in terms of amount of RAM or CPU needed for a certain amount of WF instances?**

A: I think Microsoft talks about that on the TechNet/MSDN page. It has charts on how many workflows instances can run based on the number of Web Front End's etc. and talks about hardware.

Register to attend the July webinar series:

APAC: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/930781026>

US: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/183992314>

Submit your best practice questions [here](#).

6) Q: Is there a printing function for Nintex forms for end users?

A: There isn't a native print function but you can leverage panels and views to create a "print" view.

7) Q: Is Nintex Workflow 2013 based on SharePoint 2010 workflow engine?

A: Presently, Nintex Workflow for SharePoint utilizes the SharePoint 2010 workflow engine. Nintex Workflow for Office 365 on the other hand runs on the new Workflow Manager.

8) Q: Is there a whitepaper from Nintex that describes the best list architecture of SP for Nintex workflows in regards to performance optimization? For instance is it recommended to have separate WF task list and form lists and other workflow lists for each individual workflow?

A: Nintex Connect (<http://connect.nintex.com>) is a great source when it comes to whitepapers and How To guides. There is performance recommendations described in this whitepaper.

9) Q: Is Nintex planning on supporting SharePoint Multilanguage environments in a better way?

A: Nintex offers versions of its products covering over 20 international languages, but we would love to hear your suggestions to improve this via nintex.uservoice.com.

10) Q: Is there a whitepaper from Nintex on best practices regarding performance optimization of SharePoint workflow engine when running thousands of instances within a week or month?

A: Nintex leverages the SharePoint workflow engine. Therefore our recommendations on workflow performance optimization go in line with Microsoft's recommendations that can be found here.

11) Q: Are you planning on changing the workflow engine to SharePoint 2013 for on premise installations? If yes, when?

A: We are looking at supporting the Workflow Manager engine in SharePoint 2013 in the future, we'll have more information to share about this in the coming months.

12) Q: Can we switch to SharePoint 2013 workflow engine?

A: We are currently looking at enabling support for the Workflow Manager in a future version of Nintex Workflow for SharePoint. A full upgrade path from current versions of Nintex Workflow to the new Workflow Manager version will be available. We will share more information around this as it becomes available.

13) Q: Would you recommend one central location for all workflows to run on an on premise SP farm or would you disperse them?

A: Where to run workflows heavily depends on your information architecture and application design. Therefore we can't recommend a specific scenario. Keep in mind though that ideally you have separate task and workflow history lists per application or/and business process.

14) Q: Do you support PowerShell to mass change workflows for instance values in java scripts used in workflow? We would like to look for a string in all workflows we run and exchange it with another. Any other method is welcome if there is one.

A: Unfortunately we don't support this particular scenario, but would be keen in understanding the exact problem you are trying to solve. Can you raise an item at nintex.uservoice.com?

15) Q: Can Action set be impersonated with custom permissions?

A: See this question and response above:

Would you recommend one central location for all workflows to run on an on premise SP farm or would you disperse them?

16) Q: can Action set be impersonated with custom permissions?

A: Using that Action Set, you can impersonate the Workflow Owner.

(more below)

17) Q: Can you custom headers with custom html? Like a Logo or something?

Like templates?

A: Customizing the notifications and forms using custom HTML is entirely supported and possible.

18) Q: Do you have a list of tags\classes used in Nintex form? (especially when list contain 2000 items)

A: At the moment we do not have a list of CSS classes and HTML tags. However you can easily access them when you open the forms designer and go to the form's settings.

19) Q: Nintex forms - can you query external list and find only rows from the list which contains part of the search text.

A: Nintex Forms does not have an out of the box functionality that offers a solution to this requirement. However this could be achieved using JavaScript.

20) Q: do you have a list of tags\classes used in a Nintex form? I am asking about HTML tags, classes.

A: At the moment we do not have a list of CSS classes and HTML tags. However you can easily access them when you open the forms designer and go to the form's settings.

21) Q: Can you use custom headers with custom html? Such as a Logo or something? I mean reusable.

A: Customizing the notifications and forms using custom HTML is entirely supported and possible.

22) Q: Can Nintex Workflow be set to run 1 a month or triggered once each month?

A: Nintex provides the feature of scheduling Workflows. Any site level workflow can either be kicked off manually or automatically based on a schedule.

23) Q: Is it possible to disable Safe Looping on Office 365?

A: Nintex Workflow for Office 365 does not have a safe looping feature at present.

- 24) Q: How long does it take to start a workflow with the web service call? On premise my users have to wait some time. During the wait time my custom UI is blocked because I am not able to start the workflow asynchronously.**

A: The web service call will kick off the workflow immediately. The UI will only come back when the workflow hits its first delay or task action. When the workflow is executed via the GUI, we put up a spinner during this, which of course is not available for a web service. The easiest workaround would be to put a pause action in as your first action in the workflow, causing a delay and the call / UI to return.

- 25) Q: Can I import a Nintex on premise workflow to Office 365 Nintex workflow?**

A: As Nintex Workflow for Office 365 utilizes the new Workflow Manager as its workflow engine, we are currently working hard to enable a migration pathway from Nintex Workflow On Premises into Nintex Workflow for Office 365.

- 26) Q: How is the state machine performance on Office 365? On premise, there was a delay if you change a state to another, if "Secure Looping" (or something similar) was activated in Central Administration.**

A: Nintex Workflow for Office 365 does not employ safe looping in Workflow Manager and no artificial pauses are added into the execution. Performance is the same as executed natively on workflow manager.

- 27) Q: How does one get or set value of people control in Nintex Form using JavaScript?**

A: Setting the value of the people control depends on where the information comes from. It might not be necessary to set the value using JavaScript but use out of the box functionality.

- 28) Q: Can we add JavaScript events like on change to Nintex Form Controls?**

A: JavaScript is entirely supported and those events can be used.

- 29) Q: How does one get items from another list using JavaScript in Nintex Form?**

A: Getting list items from another list can be achieved using out of the box features (list lookup for example). We would require more details on what it is you are trying to achieve in order to give an informed recommendation.

(more below)

30) Q: How do you filter a multivalued field, based on the input of another field on another list?

A: Please refer to this How To guide on Nintex Connect which will guide you through the process.

http://nintexdownload.com/SL/Supportfiles/NF2010_Cascading_Drop_Down.pdf

31) Q: How to make a search query on items in a list, and get all the value for one chosen item, in to the form. I have a list with 100 user names, and other details. I want to search for one user in the Form, and get all properties in the form.

A: A: We recommend to use the lookup() function in a Calc Val control. You can use multiple Calc Val controls, one for each column you are retrieving.

Use a List Lookup control to act as the selector control and then link your Calc Val controls to that one.

An example of the syntax where you have a List Lookup control called "CustomerCode" and your lookup list is called "Customers" would look something like this:

```
lookup("Customers","ID",CustomerCode,"Address Line 1").
```

32) Q: We have a multivalued field that has all departments, in all buildings in a company. When I select building 1, I only want to see departments that are in building 1, in the multivalued field.

A: Please refer to this How To guide on Nintex Connect which will help you.

http://nintexdownload.com/SL/Supportfiles/NF2010_Cascading_Drop_Down.pdf

33) Q: Can workflow be used to open an existing list and save a new record in that related list? Is that the best way to do this compared to using Nintex Forms?

A: Process logic and interaction with other LOB should ideally be placed in a workflow. Unless there is a very specific requirement to do this in the form (e.g. the data needs to be shown to the user), creating a list item in another list forms part of the workflow.

- 34) Q: Do you already have a library of Environmental, Health and Safety workflow templates that a person could use as a baseline?**

A: Nintex Workflow offers a variety of templates to start with. Unfortunately none of the mentioned processes form part of the templates. We will happily take on your feedback and look into adding those to the offering of templates.

- 35) Q: How do I make the forms look more "modern" (old "Metro")? Such as big tiles, touch/mobile friendly, instead of little conventional looking form fields, as in Windows 8?**

A: Nintex Apps provide a touch friendly and operating system-native way of interacting with business processes and forms. Alternatively images can be used to achieve a tile like look and feel.

- 36) Q: I have a list with a Nintex Workflow. When it runs for the first time it creates a column with the name of the Workflow. I created a list template of that list and tried to create a new list using that template in another site collection. When I did that it didn't create the Workflow in a new list but column was already there. How should I delete such columns?**

A: To delete the column you utilize the SharePoint UI and remove it within the list settings.

- 37) Q: Safe looping option is set for each version of the workflow according the current value in Central Administration at publishing time and not real-time?**

A: Yes, that is correct. Safe looping adds a hidden delay action to the workflow during publishing.

- 38) Q: Is the "Run as workflow owner" available also in Nintex Workflow O365 that relies on new 2013 workflow infrastructure where (in SharePoint designer workflow) there aren't impersonation step but app stage?**

A: We are currently developing the App Step action for Nintex Workflow for Office 365 and will be releasing this into service in the coming weeks. The app step will allow you to raise the permission level of the app. We also provide the ability to specify explicit credentials for some actions.

39) Q: Will there be JavaScript API documentation available, e.g. for People Picker etc.?

A: The People Picker API documentation is undergoing final review. We expect to release the documentation in early August 2014.

40) Q: Are you able to cover implementing a scheduled workflow that can be re-used across your SP site? We understand how to do individual list items but we wish to set scheduled workflows on an entire list which is done differently.

A: Please refer to this How To guide on Nintex Connect which will guide you through the process:

http://connect.nintex.com/files/folders/tutorials_and_how_tos_nw2010/entry23021.aspx

41) Q: Is the notification / email template HTML going to be improved in Nintex 2010? (currently have to configure the email and save the HTML and insert it into NINTEX 2010 notification) This is to keep tables aligned etc.

A: For improvements to existing features or request for additional features please log on to <http://nintex.uservoice.com>. The product management team is constantly reviewing those and will consider your ideas of improvements for future releases.

42) Q: How does the schedule workflow configuration look like? Is it possible to work with date variables here?

A: The schedule workflow functionality works on a user defined schedule, which unfortunately does not support the use of variables. However a master workflow can be built that starts every day and based on variables then does or does not kick off the required (sub) workflow.

43) Q: I am aware that we can set a workflow initialization start form using Nintex form on "itemCreated". Is it possible to have a similar behaviour for "itemModified"? In my case, I have a document library, is it possible to trigger a Nintex form to come up with some custom fields before starting the workflow when a document is modified?

A: This can be part of the actually workflow. Design the workflow in a way that it starts on item modification and make the first item be a collect data action. That way you can gather any necessary information by assigning a task to the user.

44) Q: How many states we can use in state m/c workflow?

A: I have built workflows with 10 states without issue. But, as a best practice a state machine with many states can be difficult to manage (visually due to size) so you could break it up into multiple workflows and kick them off in the various states.

45) Q: In O365, if we would like to pack a site that includes workflows as a template that we could deploy later on. Is that possible?

A: Deploying site templates which include workflow templates is currently not supported but we are looking into ways of adding this feature to our Office 365 offering.

46) Q: Is it possible to have a web service run with the credentials of the user running the WF (without manually entering credentials)?

A: By default the web service action runs under the initiators credentials without the need to specify additional credentials. However doing so, you will have to ensure that all users that potentially start this workflow have an appropriate level of access to the web service.

47) Q: How can we prevent one workflow to eat up all the resources from the workflow environment? We had the issue the other day where 1 workflow did use 100 of CPU of one of our workflow environment.

A: When designing workflow applications one should be mindful of the actual size of a workflow. The larger a workflow becomes the more resources it will utilise to compile, etc. We strongly recommend to think in modules when designing a workflow and create different logical sub workflows rather than a large single workflow.

48) Q: We upgrades from Nintex Workflow 2007 to Nintex Workflow 2010. Now I have multiple NWDB databases in SQL and I'm not sure which ones are used or not. How can I know which databases are really in use?

A: Within the Nintex content database there is a view called “dbo.Workflow InstanceView” which can be used to investigate when the last workflow action and therefore workflow instance was run. Based on that information you should be able to make an informed decision whether a database is no longer actively in use.

49) Q: Will the Nintex Workflows in SP2013 run in the Workflow manager, so outside of the SharePoint process? If this will be the case, will there be any migration process needed for existing Nintex Workflows?

A: We are currently looking at enabling support for the Workflow Manager in a future version of Nintex Workflow for SharePoint. A full upgrade path from current versions of Nintex Workflow to the new Workflow Manager version will be available. We will share more information around this as it becomes available.

50) Q: can the same workflow run twice on an item?

A: Yes, it is possible to run a workflow twice on the same item. Some simple logic (Set a condition or Run If) could be used to prevent this from occurring.

51) Q: Is there the ability to access or set session variables in a workflow?

A: Unfortunately there is no out of the box way to retrieve or set session variables.

52) Q: When breaking complex workflows into sub workflows, how can the workflow variables be shared with each other?

A: Workflow data can be share between workflows using the Retrieve Data and Store Data actions which can be found in the Operations category.

53) Q: How to use External Lists as source for drop downs in a Nintex form. We want to populate a drop down with a list of employees from our HR system.

A: Business Connectivity Services would be used to create an external content type, which in turn can be used in an external list. It is the possible to use the XX control in Nintex Forms to populate a drop down with a list of employees from a HR system. Be mindful of the amount of data that is coming back in such scenarios and how this might impact the end user experience when filling in the form.

54) Q: is it possible to change the values of the workflow column, so they don't always show "completed", but instead e.g. "approved", "rejected"?

A: The workflow status column is based on a completion code from the workflow engine. If you would like more granular control of what the workflow has done, I would recommend creating another column (perhaps called status) and then update it with whatever information you would like as the workflow hits various milestones via a Set field value action.

55) Q: is it possible to avoid starting the workflow (manually) twice?

A: Yes, you could create a status column on the list / library and then inside of the workflow you can simply use the RunIf action to evaluate if a workflow was already running based on the value of that column.

56) Q: Is there a way to create a link (url) to start a workflow directly? When I try to do this and I change something in the workflow, my url fails because of the changed templateID.

A: The URL currently only supports the TemplateID as a parameter. As a workaround you could implement a proxy workflow which then starts your original workflow. The proxy workflow should never really change, therefore you would not have the problem with the changing TemplateID.

57) Q: Do you know when support for jQuery version 1.9 will be available?

A: We currently support JQuery v1.10.1. For customers looking to leverage v1.9, it is possible to include it in their forms. For customers writing custom JavaScript, our recommendation is that they use their own jQuery version and own alias (not NWF\$) to avoid future compatibility issues with their code in the event that Nintex Forms upgrade the shipping version.

58) Q: In this way of starting a workflow, is there a way to skip the screen with the start button?

A: Nintex Workflow does not have an out of the box way to do this at the moment.