



FabImage Library 5.3

Working with GigE Vision® Devices

Created: 7/20/2023

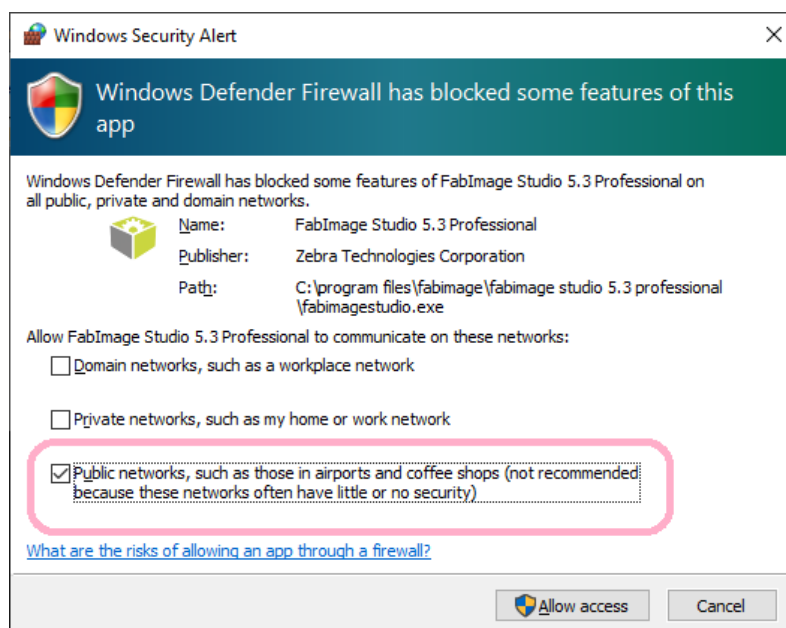
Product version: 5.3.4.94467

Table of content:

- Enabling Traffic in Firewall
- Enabling Jumbo Packets
- GigE Vision® Device Manager
- Connecting Devices
- Device Settings Editor
- Known Issues

Enabling Traffic in Firewall

Standard windows firewall or other active firewall applications should prompt for confirmation on enabling incoming traffic upon first access to the device. Sample prompt message from standard Windows 7 Firewall is shown on the image below.



Please note that **a device connected directly to computer's network adapter** in Windows Vista and Windows 7 will become an element of an unidentified network. Such device will be treated by default as **Public network**. In order to communicate with such a device you must allow for traffic also in Public networks as shown on the above image.

Clicking on *Allow access* will enable application to stream video from a device. Because of a delay caused by the firewall dialog first run of a program may fail with a timeout error. In such situations just try running program again after enabling access.

For information about changing settings of your firewall application search how to allow a program to communicate through this firewall in a Windows help or a third party application manual. GigE Vision® driver requires that incoming traffic is enabled on all UDP ports for application.

Enabling Jumbo Packets

Introduction

Jumbo Packet is an extension of network devices that allows for transmission of packets bigger than 1.5kB. Enabling Jumbo Packets can significantly increase video streaming performance.

Note that not all network devices support Jumbo Packets. To activate a big packet size, all devices from a network adapter through network routing equipment to a camera device must support and have enabled big packet sizes. Most suitable situation for using Jumbo Packets is when the device is connected directly to computer's network adapter with a crossed Ethernet cable.

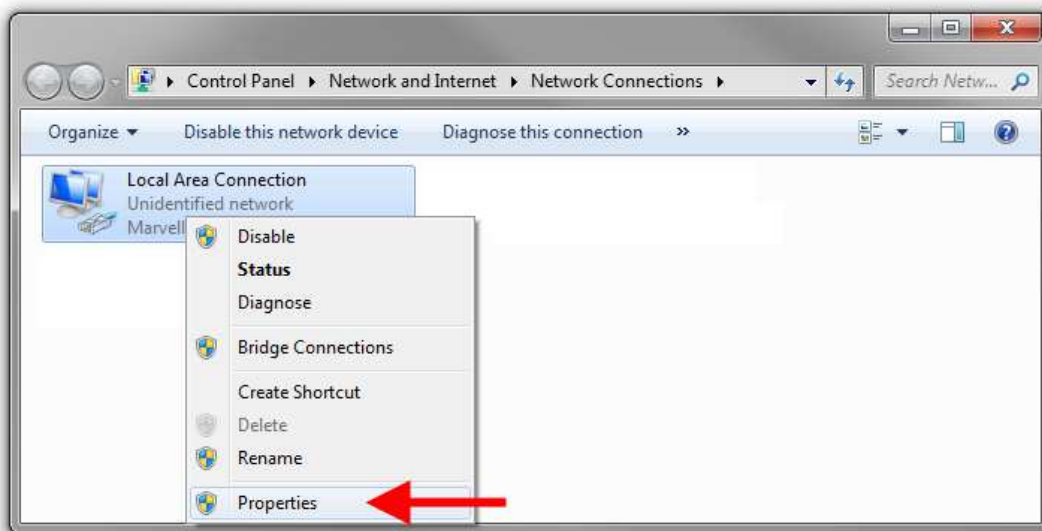
Do not enable Jumbo Packets when the device is connected through complicated network infrastructure with more than one routing path as maximum allowed packet sizes detected at application start can change later in the process.

Enabling Jumbo Packets in Windows Vista/7

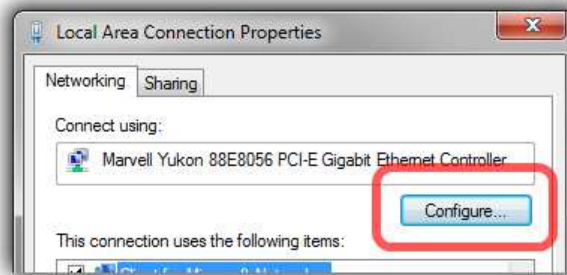
1. Open network connections applet from the control panel.



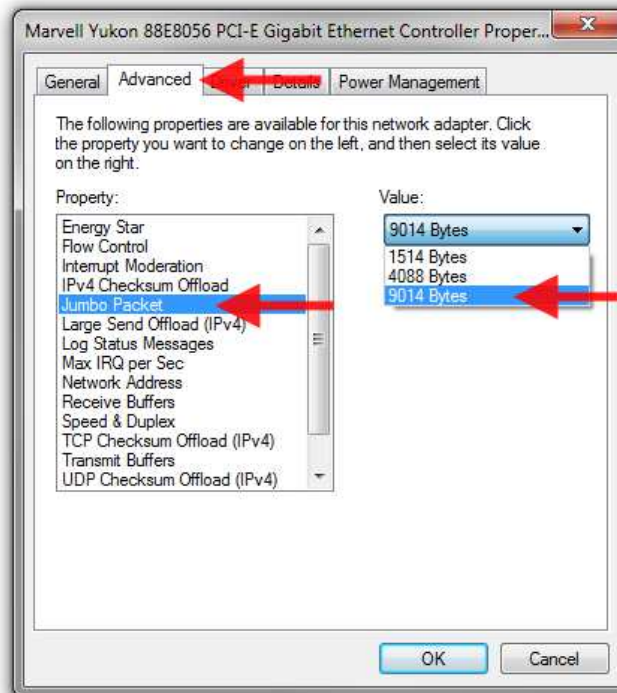
2. Right click a network adapter that have a connection with a device and open its properties (an administrator password may be needed).



3. In network adapter's properties click on *Configure*.



4. From Advanced tab select *Jumbo Packet* property and increase its value up to 9014 Bytes (9k Bytes). This step might look differently depending on the network card vendor. For some vendors this property might have different similar name (e.g. *Large Packet*). When there is no property for enabling/setting large packet size this card does not support jumbo packets.



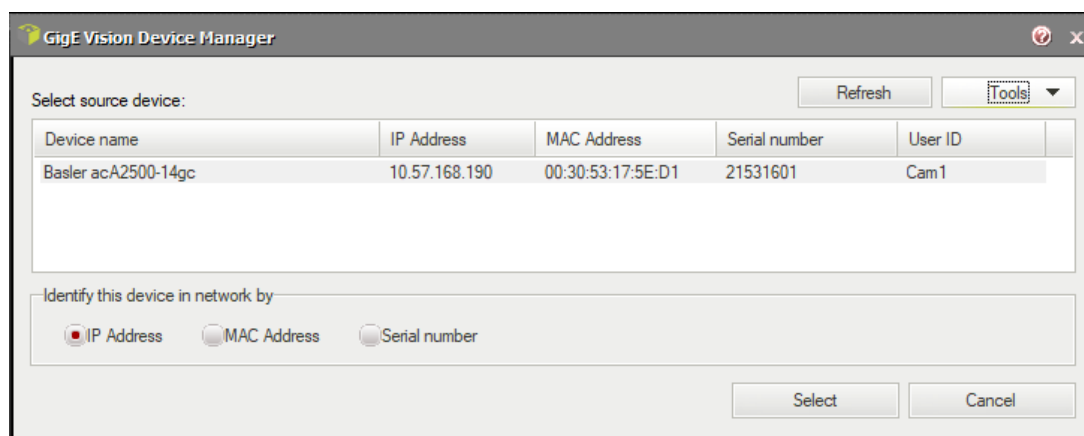
5. Click OK.

GigE Vision® Device Manager

The Device Manager is available as a separate tool in FabImage Library SDK.

Device Manager Functions

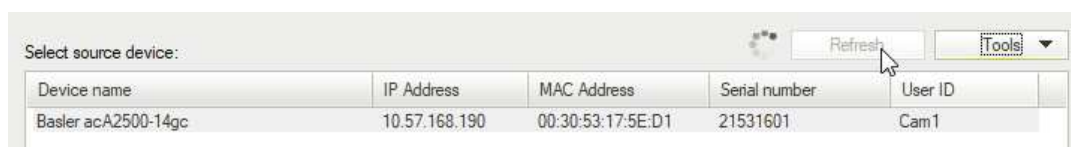
Typical state of the Device Manager is shown on image below. Note that the window may change its appearance depending on its purpose (like selecting a device address in a filter).



At first the manager will search local network for active devices. All found devices will be shown in list with the following information: manufacturer name and device name, current IP address, network interface hardware address (MAC address), serial number (if supported), user specified name (saved in the device memory; if supported by device). Informations like MAC address and serial number should be printed on the device casing for easy identification. Sometimes, when a device has more than one interface, it may appear in list more than once. In this situation every entry in the list identifies another device feature.

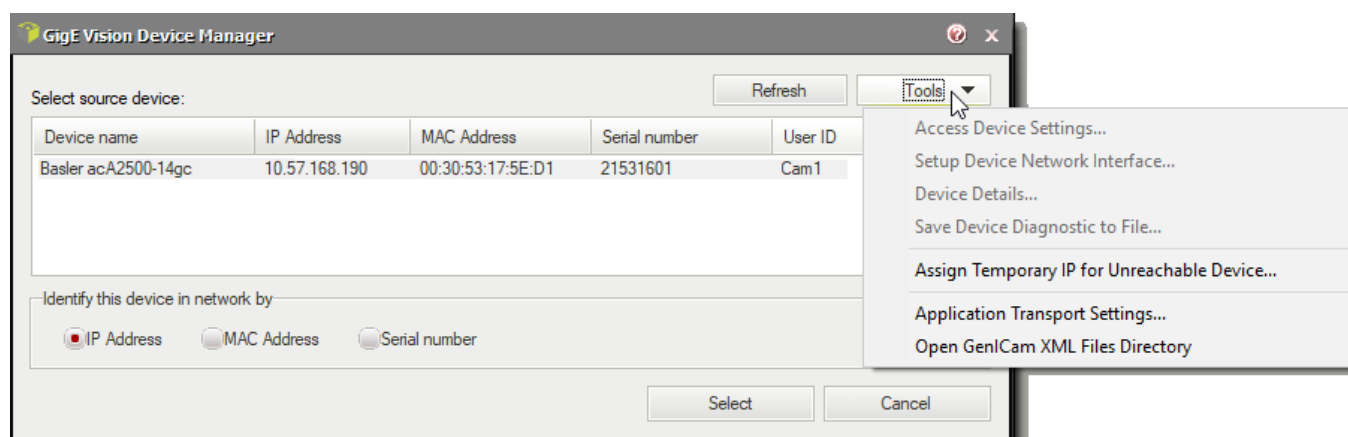
Refresh

Refresh button performs a new search in the network. Use this function when the network configuration has been changed, a new device has been plugged in or when your device has not been found at startup.



Tools

Tools button opens a menu with functions designed for device configuration. Some of these functions are device dependant and require the user to selected a device on the list first (they are also available in a device context menu).



Tool: Access Device Settings...

This tool allows to access device-specific parameters prepared by its manufacturer and available through GenICam interface.

See: [Device Settings Editor](#)

Tool: Setup Device Network Interface...

This tool is intended to manage network configuration of a device network adapter.

- **Static address** — this field allows to set a static (persistent) network configuration saved in device non-volatile memory. Use this setting when the device is identified by IP address that cannot change or when automatic address configuration is not available. This field has no effect when *Use static IP* field is not checked.
- **Current address** — this read-only field shows current network configuration of a device, for example the address assigned to it by a DHCP server.
- **Device IP configuration** — this field allows to activate or deactivate specified methods of acquiring addresses by a device on startup. Some of this options can be not available (grayed) when the device is not supporting specified mode.
 - **Use static IP** — Device will use address specified in *Static address* field.
 - **Use DHCP server** — When a DHCP server is available in the network, devices will acquire automatically assigned address from it.
 - **Use Link-local address** — When there is no other method available a device will try to find a free address from 169.254.-.- range. When using this method (for example on a direct connection between the device and a computer) the device will take significantly more time to become available in network after startup.

After clicking OK the new configuration will be send to a device. Configuration can be changed only when the device is not used by another application and/or is not streaming video. New configuration may be not available until the device is restarted or reconnected.

Tool: Assign Temporary IP for Unreachable Device

This tool is intended for situations when a device cannot be accessed because of its invalid or unspecified network configuration (note that this should be a very rare case and usually the device should appear in list). The tool allows to immediately change network address of an idle device (thus realizing GigE Vision® FORCE IP function).

This tool requires a user to specify device hardware network adapter MAC address (should be printed on device casing). After that a new IP configuration can be specified. The address can be changed only when the device is idle (is not connected to other application and not streaming video). The new address will be available immediately after successful send operation.

Tool: Application Transport Settings...

This tool allows to access and edit application settings related with driver transport layer, like connection attempts and timeouts. Settings are saved and used at whole application level. Changes affects only newly opened connections.

Changes made in Device Manager application does not affect applications based on FabImage Library. Application must set up its transport layer configuration individually (see [GigEVision_OpenSystemConfiguration](#)).

Tool: Open GenICam XML Directory

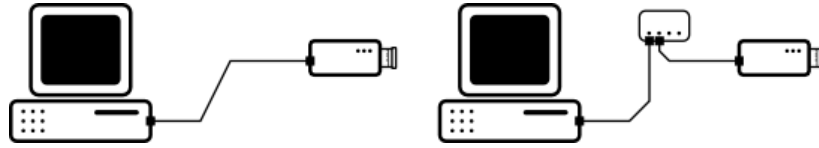
GigE Vision® devices are implementing GenICam standard. GenICam standard requires that a device must be described by a special XML file that defines all device parameters and capabilities. This file is usually obtained automatically by the application from the device memory or from manufacturer's internet web page. Sometimes the XML file can be supplied by manufacturer on a separate disk. FabImage Studio and FabImage Executor use a special directory for these files which is located in the user data directory. Use this tool to open that directory.

Device description files should be copied into this directory without changing their name, extension and content. File can also be supplied as a ZIP archive — do not decompress such file nor change its extension.

Connecting Devices

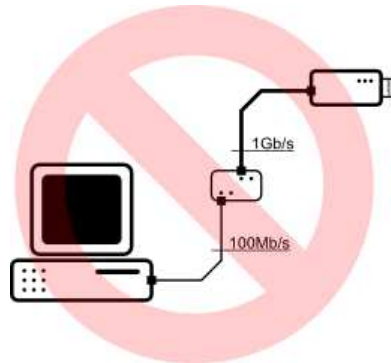
Connecting a GigE Vision device to a computer means plugging both into the same Ethernet network.

It is recommended that the connection is as simple as possible. To achieve best performance use direct connection with a crossed Ethernet cable or connect the camera and the computer to the same Ethernet switch (without any other heavy traffic routed through the same switch).



The device and the computer must reside in a single local area network and must be set up for the same subnet.

GigE Vision® is designed for 1 Gb/s networks, but it is also possible to use 100 Mb/s connection as long as the entire network connection have an uniform speed (some custom device configuration might be required when the device is not able to detect connection speed automatically). It is recommended however to avoid connecting a device to a network link which is faster than the maximum throughput of the whole network route. Such configurations require manual setting of the device's transmission speed limit.



Firewall Issues

GigE Vision® protocol produces a specific type of traffic that is not *firewall friendly*. Typical firewall software is unable to recognize that video streaming traffic is initialized by a local application and will block this connection. FabImage's GigE driver attempts to overcome this problem using *firewall traversal mechanism*, but not all devices support this.

It is thus required to enable incoming traffic on all UDP ports for FabImage Studio and FabImage Executor in a firewall on your local computer.

For information how to enable such traffic in Windows Firewall see: [Enabling Traffic in Firewall](#).

Configuring IP Address of a Device

In most situations a GigE Vision device is able to automatically obtain an IP address without user action (using DHCP server or automatic local link address). It is however recommended to set a static IP address for both local network card and device whenever possible. In some cases (e.g. when preparing the device for operation in an industrial network) it might be required to access and set/change the device's network configuration for a proper static IP address. Most suitable for this purpose will be a software and a documentation provided by the device manufacturer. When these are not available FabImage Studio offers universal configuration tools available from the GigE Vision Device Manager (see: [Device Manager section](#)).

Packet Size

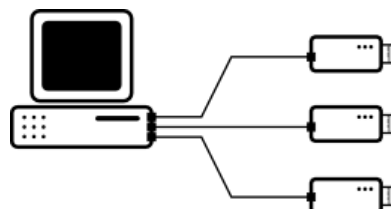
Network video stream is divided into packets of a specified size. The packet size is limited by the Ethernet standard but some network cards support an extension called *jumbo packet* that increases allowed packet size. Because a connection is more efficient when the packet size is bigger, the application will attempt to negotiate biggest possible network packet size for current connection, taking advantage of enabled jumbo packets.

For information how to enable jumbo packets see: [Enabling Jumbo Packets](#)

Connecting Multiple Devices to a Single Computer

It is possible to connect multiple GigE Vision cameras to a single computer and to perform image processing based on multiple video streams (e.g. observing objects from multiple sides), however it can introduce multiple technical challenges that must be considered.

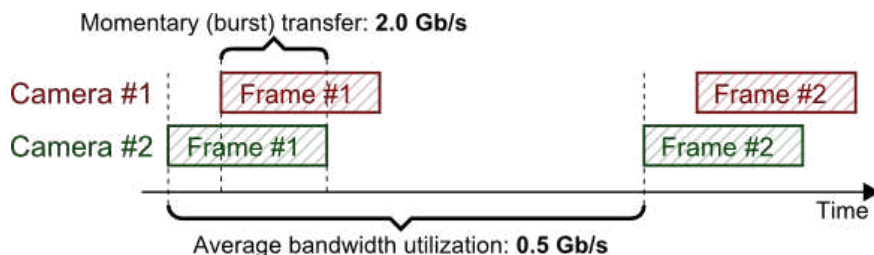
For the best performance it is recommended to connect all devices directly to the computer using multiple gigabit network cards:



In such configuration it is required for the computer hardware to handle concurrent gigabit streams at once. Even when separate network cards are

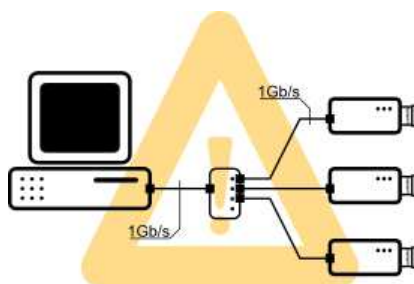
able to receive the network streams there still may be problems for the computer hardware to transfer data from the network adapters to the system memory. Attention must be paid when choosing hardware for such applications. When given requirements are not met the system may observe excessive packets loss leading to the video stream frames loss.

Even when the cameras framerate is low and the resulting average network throughput is relatively low the system still **may drop packets during network bursts** when the momentary data transfer exceeds the system capabilities. Such burst may appear when multiple cameras transmit a single frame at the same time. By default GigEVision camera is transferring a single frame with maximum available speed and lowering framerate is only increasing the gaps between frame transfers:



Although diagnostic tools will report network throughput utilization to be well below system limits it is still possible for short burst transfers to temporary exceed the system limits resulting in packets drop. To overcome such problems it is required to not only ensure camera framerates to be below proper limit, but also to limit the maximum network transfer speed of the device network adapters. Refer to the device documentation for details about how to limit the network transfer speed in specific device. Usually this can be achieved by decreasing value of parameters such as *DeviceLinkThroughputLimit* or *StreamBytesPerSecond* (in bytes per second), or by introducing delays in between the network packets by increasing parameters such as *PacketDelay*, *InterPacketDelay* or *GevSCPD* (measured in internal device timer ticks - must be calculated individually for device using device timer frequency).

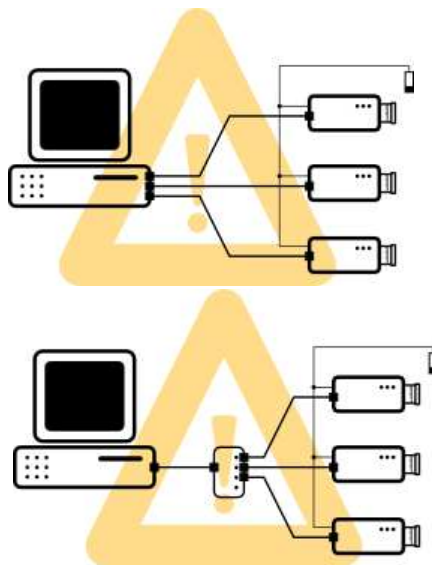
Above requirements are especially important when cameras are connected to the computer using a single network card and a shared network switch:



Special care must be taken to assure that all the cameras connected to the switch (when all transmitting at once) do not exceed transfer limits of the connection between the switch and the computer, both average transfer (by limiting the framerate) as well as temporary burst transfer (by limiting network transfer speed). Network switch will attempt to handle burst transfers by storing the packets in its internal buffer and transmitting packets stored in the buffer after the burst, but when the amount of data in burst transfer exceeds the buffer size the network packets will be dropped. Thus it is required for the switch buffer to be large enough to store all camera frames captured at once, or to limit transmission speed for the switch buffer to not overflow.

It is important to note that **the maximum performance of the multi-camera system with shared network switch is limited by the throughput of the link between the switch and the computer**, and usually it will not be possible to achieve the maximum framerate and/or resolution of the cameras.

A common case of using multiple cameras at once is to capture multiple photos of a object from a single trigger source (with synchronous triggering):



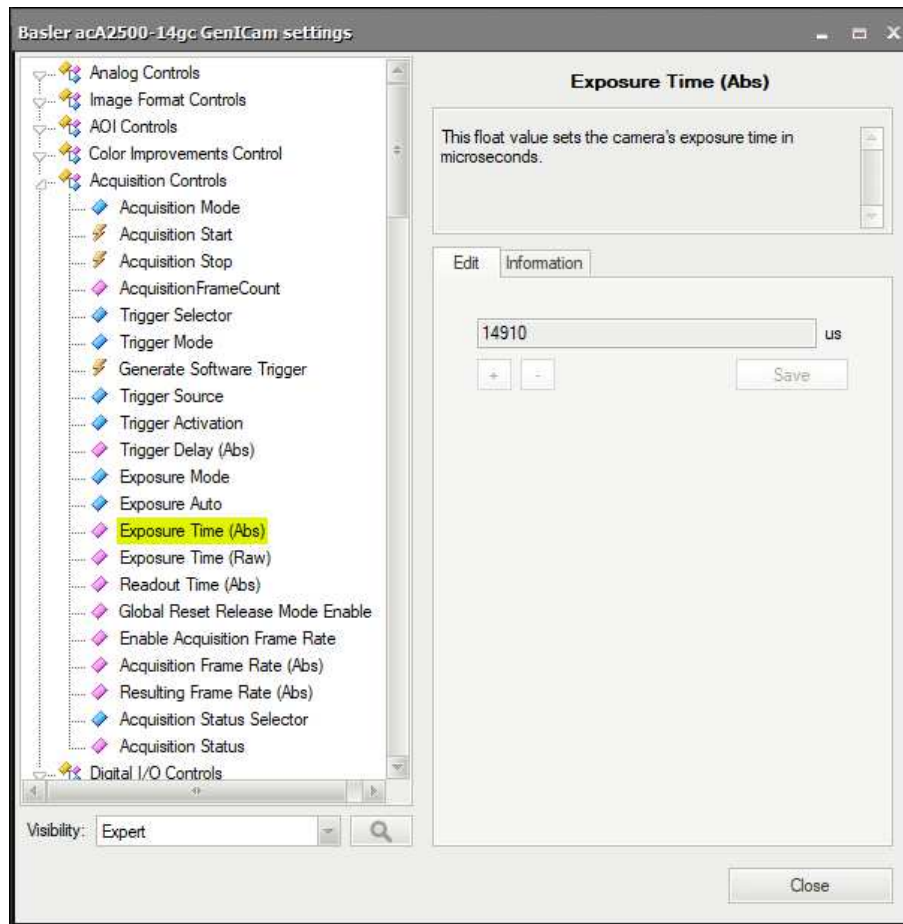
All above recommendations must be considered for such configuration. Because under synchronous triggering all the cameras will always be

transferring images at the same time the problem of momentary burst transfer is especially present. Care must be taken to limit the maximum network transmission speed in the cameras to the system limits and to give enough time between trigger events for the cameras to finish the transfer.

Device Settings Editor

GigE Vision® compliant devices are implementing GenICam standard that describes camera internal parameters and a way how to access them. **Device Manager** allows a user to access and edit device settings through a Settings Editor tool (available from *Tools » Access Device Settings*).

Example appearance of the Device Settings Editor is shown on the image below.



On the left side of the window is a tree representation of device parameters split into categories. All these parameters and their organization is device dependent, which means that different devices can produce different sets of parameters, with different meanings. Parameter's friendly name and a brief explanation (also provided by a device) is shown on the right side of the window after the parameter is highlighted in tree. For more information about specific parameter functions refer to a device documentation.

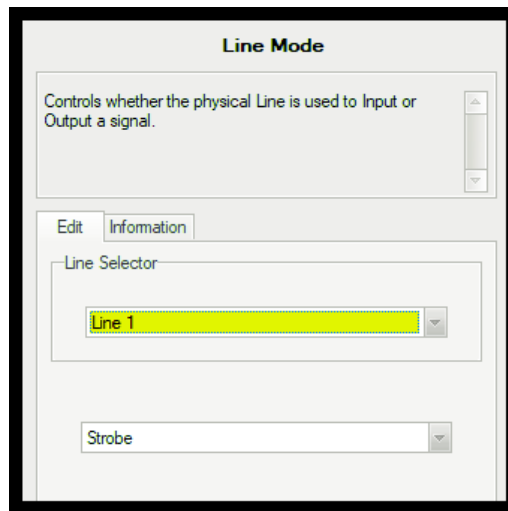
When editing selected parameter is possible and supported, an editor of the parameter value will be displayed below its explanation. Different editors are provided for the following parameter types:

- **Integer** - Plain number or hexadecimal number (indicated by *Hex* label on the left side of the text box). Values are limited by their maximum, minimum and allowed step. Numbers that does not fulfill this rules are corrected automatically upon confirmation. After clicking on **Save** button (or pressing *Enter*) new value will be validated and sent to the device.
- **Float** - Real number with fractional part. Values are limited by their maximum and minimum. Numbers that do not match this range are corrected automatically upon confirmation. A parameter can also have suggested step added after clicking in *+/-* buttons. After clicking on **Save** button (or pressing *Enter*) new value will be validated and sent to the device.
- **String** - Text of a limited length.
- **Boolean** - Single Yes/No value represented by check box. A value is sent to the device immediately after check state is changed.
- **Enumeration** - Parameter that accepts one of several predefined values. Predefined values are represented as list of their friendly names. Parameter is edited by choosing one of its values from a drop-down list. New values are sent to the device immediately after their selection in the list.
- **Command** - This is a special parameter that is represented only by a single button. Clicking on button will execute related activity in the device (for example Saving current parameter set to non-volatile memory).

Depending on situation, editor can be disabled (grayed), which means that this parameter is currently locked (for example parameter describing image format when the camera streaming is active). Editor can be read only (Save button grayed, grayed drop-down list or unchangeable check-box), which means that this parameter is read-only (for example informational parameters like manufacturer name).

Instead of an editor can there also be a displayed text: **"This parameter is currently not available"**. This means that the parameter can not be accessed or edited in the current device state or due to other parameter states. For example parameter describing acquisition frame rate value, when the user selection of frame rate is disabled (by parameter like *Enable Acquisition Framerate*).

Sometimes with the parameter editor displayed will be an additional editor, named selector.



In such situation selected parameter is connected with one of categories (slots) described by selector. In the example on the above image, parameter is determining whether the physical Line is used to Input or Output a signal. This device has two lines and both have its own separate values to choose from. Selector will pick which line we want to edit and bottommost editor will change it purpose. This means that there are actually two different *Line Modes* parameters in device.

Please note that selector will not always be displayed above editor. You must follow a device documentation and search parameters tree for selectors and other parameters on which this parameter is dependent.

The Device Settings Editor can be used to identify device capabilities and descriptions or to set up a new device. Device Editor can be also used when a program is running and the camera is streaming. In this situation changes should be immediately visible in the camera output.

Settings Editor gives a user an unlimited access to the device parameters and, **when used improperly, can put device in an invalid state** in which the device will become inaccessible by applications or can cause transitional errors in the program execution.

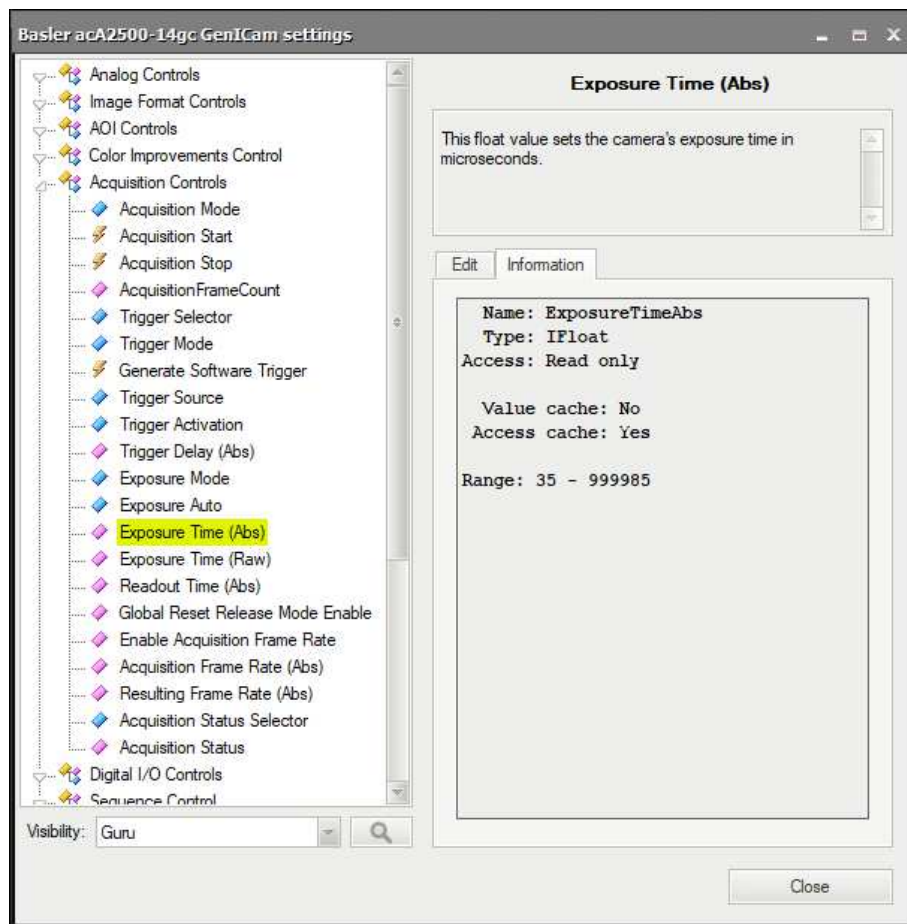
Saving Device Configuration

Most parameters available in the Settings Editor are stored by devices in a volatile memory and will be lost (reset to default) after device reset or power down.

A device should offer functions to save parameters set in *Configuration Sets* section of parameters tree. Refer to a device documentation for more information about configuration set saving and loading.

Parameter Information

Settings editor can also show information about selected parameter (by switching the tab on right side of the window).



In this mode the window appearance is changed. Instead of editors, on the right side of the window displayed are useful informations for a program developer, including:

- **Name** - parameter internal name. Note that parameter tree and descriptions are using human friendly name, not parameter ID. This field shows a proper parameter ID that must be used in parameter get/set functions.
- **Type** - parameter type name. This type must be consistent with the filter value type.
- **Access** - allowed access to parameter. Parameter must be writable to be set by program.
- **Range** - for numeric parameters this field shows the allowed range. Range of some parameters can change dynamically during its operation.
- **Value cache** - when GenAPI cache is enabled this field indicates if device allows to store this parameter value in local memory to reduce network operations.
- **Access cache** - when GenAPI cache is enabled this field indicates if device allows to store access mode of this parameter in local memory to reduce network operations on controlling parameter accessibility.
- **Available entries** - for enumeration parameters this field will list currently available values for a parameter. The field shows proper internal IDs that should be used when setting the parameter (note that editor's drop-down lists are using human friendly names).

Known Issues

In this section you will find solutions to known issues that we have come across while testing communication between FabImage products and different camera models through GigE Vision.

Imaging Source Cameras

There might be problems with image acquisition from Imaging Source cameras through GigE. It's caused by the implementation (regarding caching and packet size) of GigE Vision standard in those cameras and as a result no image can be seen in FabImage Studio (the previews are empty during program execution).

To resolve this issue, a camera restart (this has to be done only once, after you encounter the problem with image acquisition) and changing some parameters in FabImage GenAPI configuration are required. Parameters which should be changed are:

- Enable *GenAPI Cache* (should be set to *False*),
- Disable *Packet Size Negotiation* (should be set to *True*),
- Enable *Constant Packet Size* (should be set to *False*).

In order to change these parameters you should (before opening device connection) open library configuration with function [GigEVision_OpenSystemConfiguration](#), and using GenApi function set the following parameters (please note that these parameters have to be set separately for each application):

- `GevAppTLEnableGenApiCache` (Boolean) to `False`
- `GevAppTLDisablePacketSizeNegotiation` (Boolean) to `True`
- `GevAppTLEnableConstantPacketSize` (Boolean) to `False`



This article is valid for version 5.3.4