

LC.400 Series DSP Controller Manual

(Version 1.19)



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Chapter 1	Introduction	3
1.1	Introduction	3
1.2	Unpacking	3
1.3	Software Installation	4
Chapter 2	Controller Interfaces	5
2.1	Back Panel	5
2.1	Front Panel	6
Chapter 3	Operation	7
3.1	Control Loop Tuning	7
3.1.1	PID Control Loop Tuning	8
3.1.2	Notch Filters	9
3.1.3	2 nd Integrator	12
3.2	Waveforms and Position Monitoring	15
3.2.1	Internal Waveform Generation	15
3.2.2	Continuous Position Monitoring	16
3.2.3	High Resolution Recording	17
3.2.4	Custom Waveform Files	17
3.3	Digital I/O	18
3.3.1	Digital Inputs - Start Signal	20
3.3.2	Digital Inputs - Start and Stop	20
3.3.3	Digital Inputs - Pause and Resume	21
3.3.4	Digital Outputs – Control Loop Error	22
3.3.5	Digital Outputs – Waveform Index	23
3.3.6	Digital Outputs – Fault	23
3.3.7	Digital Outputs – Sensor Based Position Pulse	23
3.3.8	Digital Encoder Interface	24
3.4	Graph Controls	25
3.5	Additional Software Features	26
3.5.1	Trajectory Generation	28
3.5.2	Raster Scanning	29
3.5.3	Spiral Scanning	31
Chapter 4	Advanced Controller Communication	32
4.1	LC.400 USB Drivers	32
4.2	Ethernet Interface	32
4.3	Memory Read/Write Commands	33
4.3.1	Read Single Location Command	33
4.3.2	Write Single Location Command	34
4.3.3	Read Array Command	34
4.3.4	Write Next Command	34
4.4	Controller Memory Locations	35
4.4.1	Channel Base Memory Addresses	35
4.4.2	Static Positioning Addresses	35
4.4.3	Control Loop Addresses	35
4.4.4	Wavetable Addresses	36
4.4.5	Digital I/O Trigger Addresses	37

4.4.6	General Addresses -----	39
4.4.7	Trajectory Generation Addresses -----	40
4.4.8	Raster Scan Addresses -----	42
4.4.9	Recording Addresses -----	42
4.4.10	Spiral Scan Addresses -----	44
Chapter 5	Maintenance and Cleaning -----	45
5.1	Maintenance -----	45
5.2	Cleaning -----	45
Chapter 6	Safety-----	46
Appendix A	Specifications -----	47
Appendix B	Instructions for connecting new stages with EEPROM -----	48
Appendix C	Parallel Interface Specifications -----	50
General-----	50	
Position Monitoring -----	50	
Demand Input-----	51	
Configuration-----	52	
Timing -----	53	
Connector Pin-out and Considerations-----	54	
Timing Waveforms-----	57	
Appendix D	PFM Interface Specifications -----	59
Overview -----	59	
PFM Pulse (Pin 15) / Direction (Pin 8) -----	59	
PFM Scaling -----	59	
Position Monitoring Data -----	60	
End of Travel (EOT) Limit Switches , Positive (Pin 1), Negative (Pin 9)-----	61	
Enable (Pin 7)-----	61	
Interface Connector -----	61	
Appendix E	Digital Encoder Interface -----	62
Overview -----	62	
15-pin Connector Schematic -----	62	
Signal Descriptions-----	62	
Status LED's-----	63	
Software Commands -----	63	
Appendix F	AFM Interface Specifications -----	65
Overview -----	65	
AFM interface functionality -----	65	
Appendix G	Control loop error signal-----	66

1.1 Introduction

The LC.400 series DSP controllers are designed to control nPoint nanopositioners. They are available in 1, 2, or 3 channel configurations. A complete nanopositioning system consists of the nanopositioner, controller and software.

This manual applies to the following LC.400 models:

- LC.400 (1 Channel)
- LC.402 (2 Channels)
- LC.403 (3 Channels)

1.2 Unpacking

The following items are included in a standard closed-loop system package:

- Nanopositioner
- Nanopositioner test specifications sheet
- Controller
- External 12V power supply with AC power cord
- USB cable
- CD-ROM with installation software, manual, and Labview VIs

Carefully remove the items from the package. Report any damage or missing items immediately by phone (608-824-1770 ext.207) or e-mail (support@npoint.com).

Controller Installation:

1. The controller box features an exhaust cooling fan on the back panel, and air intake holes in the sides or front panel. Position the controller on a hard flat surface such that the ventilation holes are not obstructed.
2. Connect the power supply to the 12V DC power jack on the back panel (see Figure 2-1).
3. Power can be switched ON and OFF with the power switch on the back panel adjacent to the 12V DC power jack.

NOTE: To provide proper EMC shielding it is required to connect the AC power cord to a fully earth grounded (3-terminal) receptacle.

1.3 Software Installation

- 1) Load the nPoint CD in your PC CD-ROM drive.
- 2) Connect the LC.400 series controller to your PC via USB, and power on the controller.
 - a. For Windows 7/8/10: the USB driver may load automatically if the PC is connected to the internet. This may take several minutes.
 - b. For Windows XP: if the Add New Hardware Wizard appears, choose to automatically install the USB driver.
 - c. If the USB drivers fail to install correctly, the drivers can be manually installed from the Windows Device Manager by right clicking the device “USB Serial Converter A” or “USB Serial Converter” and selecting the menu item “Update Driver Software”. Choose to specify the driver location, and browse to the USB driver directory on the nPoint CD.
- 3) In the nPControl Software Installation directory of the CD, run **setup.exe** to complete installation of the nPoint PC software. Windows 8 or Windows 10 may display a message regarding unrecognized software, select “Run Anyway”.
 - a. If prompted to install version 4.0 of the Microsoft .NET Framework, run “dotNetFx40_Full_Setup.exe” located on the nPoint CD, and then run setup.exe again to complete the installation.
- 4) After installation is complete, a shortcut to the nPControl software will be available in the Windows Start menu by selecting “All Programs” and the nPoint folder, alternatively search for “nPControl”.

2.1 Back Panel

The controller back panel features the power ON/OFF switch, 12V DC power jack, 9-pin digital I/O connector, and the USB interface connector. The back panel may also include an optional interface, such as a High Speed Parallel interface, PFM interface, or AFM interface.



Figure 2-1: The back panel of the LC.400 series controllers.

OEM controller versions may have a Molex power connector instead of the standard barrel connector. In that case, the power switch is not present. The customer can supply 12V-24V DC to power on the controller. The power and ground connection need to be made according to the following image:

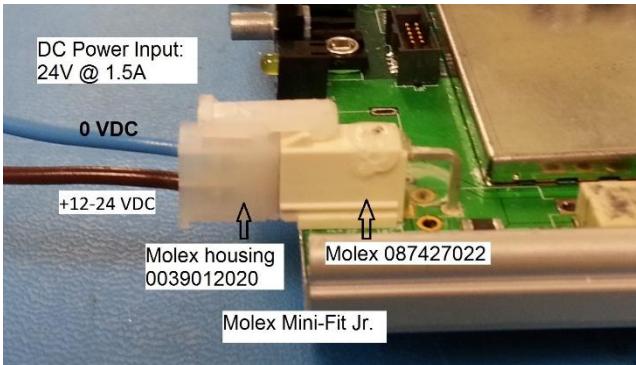


Figure 2-2: Optional OEM 2-pin Molex power DC power connection

2.1 Front Panel

The front panel (see Figure 2-3) features the nanopositioner D-15 connectors and the analog I/O connectors. The D-15 connectors contain the sensor signals and the high voltage piezo signals. The BNC connectors labeled provides the option to control position with an external voltage source. The standard voltage range of the BNC input is $\pm 10V$. The BNC connectors labeled is the position sensor monitor output with a standard voltage range of $\pm 10V$. The sensor monitor value provides position measurement with a 5 kHz bandwidth. The sensor monitor bandwidth can be decreased with a software filter in the Settings menu.



Figure 2-3: The front panel of the LC.400 series controllers.

CAUTION: For the safety of both the user and the device, do not connect or disconnect the stage to/from the controller while the controller is powered on. If a nanopositioner is disconnected while the controller is on, wait 2 minutes before reconnecting it. The nanopositioner has a high capacitance and may hold a high voltage charge. Never touch the pins on the connectors. When the stage is connected to the controller, always fully tighten the connector screws prior to powering on the controller.

The front panel LED's have two colors to indicate the channel's operating status. (When the LED's are off, the power is off):

LED Color	Channel Status
Red	Open-loop
Green	Closed-loop

nPoint PC Software: nPControl

The nPControl consists of three main tabs:

- Control Loop Tuning
- Waveform & Position Monitoring
- Digital I/O

Their functionality is described below. Additional software features are described in section 3.5.

3.1 Control Loop Tuning

The Control Loop Tuning tab, shown in Figure 3-1, consists of:

- Servo state: **Servo ON** – the system is in closed-loop mode; **Servo OFF** – the system is in open-loop mode.
- Control Mode Selection for choosing among four customizable control sets.
- P, I, and D sliders and text boxes used for changing P, I, and D parameters to optimize the step response.
- Step response parameters to test PID and notch filter tuning
- Step Response Graph to display the change in position over time during the step response test. Calculated settling time is displayed at the top of the graph. A yellow cursor is displayed at the time the stage has settled (defined as the time when the stage settles to within 2% of the commanded position). If the stage does not settle within the user selected sample time, no settling time is displayed, and the sampling time should be increased.

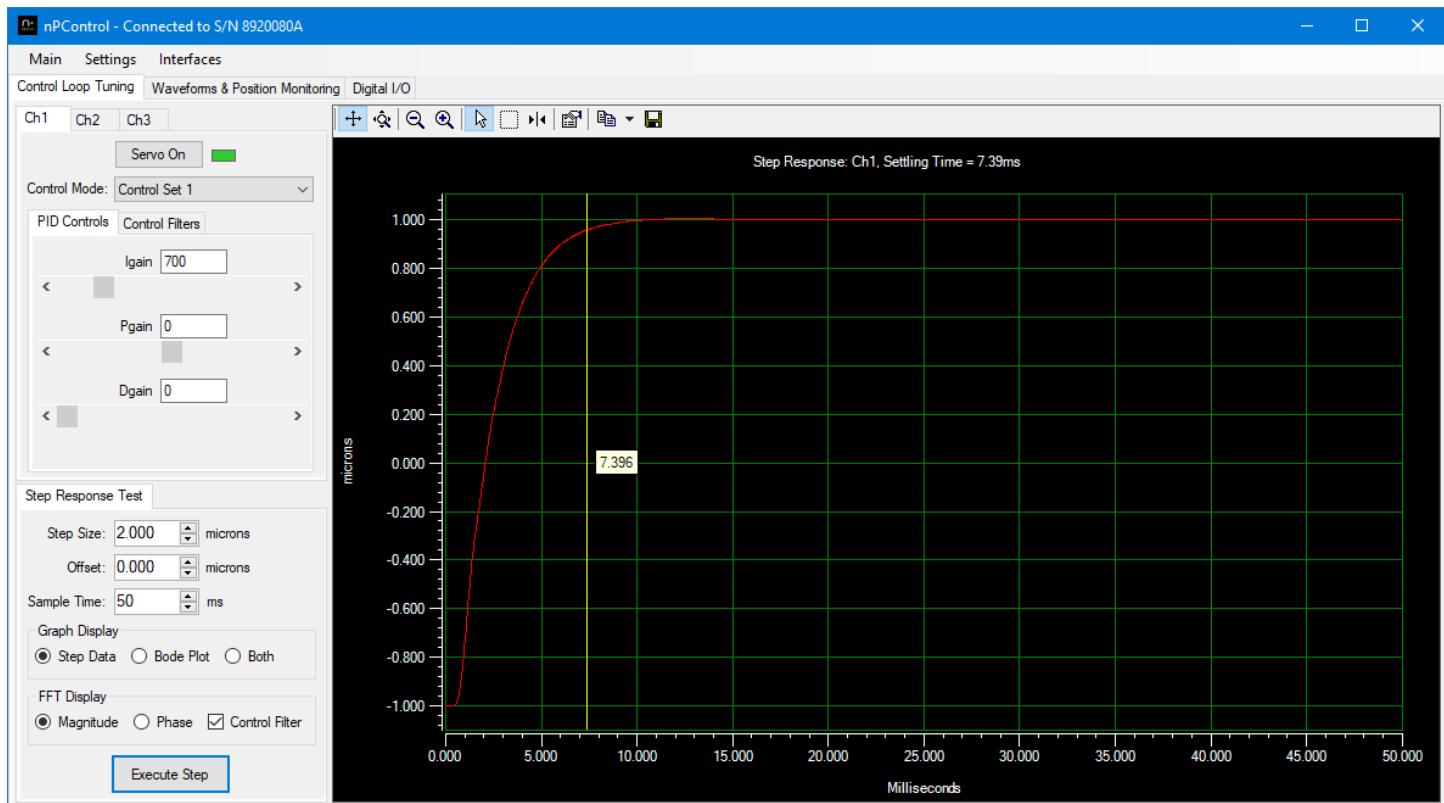


Figure 3-1: The control loop tuning tab showing a 2 μ m step response.

3.1.1 PID Control Loop Tuning

The recommended P, I, and D parameters for each axis of the unloaded nanopositioner are provided in the product Calibration Results document that shipped with the system. When the nanopositioner is installed at the user's site and loaded with a mass, the control loop bandwidth needs to be tuned properly to achieve the desired performance. This is achieved by enabling appropriate notch filters and tuning one or more of the P, I, and D parameters. I gain is the main parameter for tuning control loop bandwidth. P gain may be added to minimize overshoot. D gain is typically set to zero. Optimization of the P, I, and D parameters is application specific. The user can vary the control parameters by changing the values in the text boxes or by using the sliders. Section 3.1.2 describes how to tune the control parameters via the nPControl GUI.

Once the desired control parameters have been identified they can be saved by selecting **Save Configuration to Controller** in the Settings menu (see Figure 3-2).

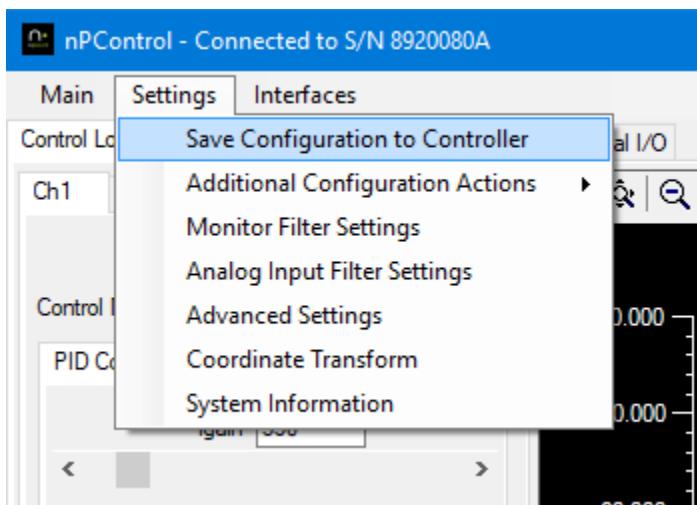


Figure 3-2: The control configuration can be saved to the flash memory of the DSP controller by selecting the **Save Configuration to Controller** in the Settings menu.

3.1.2 Notch Filters

The controller has the capability of storing up to four different control sets per channel. Each set includes two independent notch filters and a 2nd integrator. The 2nd integrator is described in section 3.1.3. Notch filter tuning has a significant impact on control loop bandwidth. Follow these steps to tune the notch filter parameters:

- Set the system to open-loop mode (the servo toggle button should display **Servo Off**). Perform a 1um step response to identify the resonant frequency of the system. The resonance peaks are identified in the **Bode Plot**, as shown in Figure 3-3.

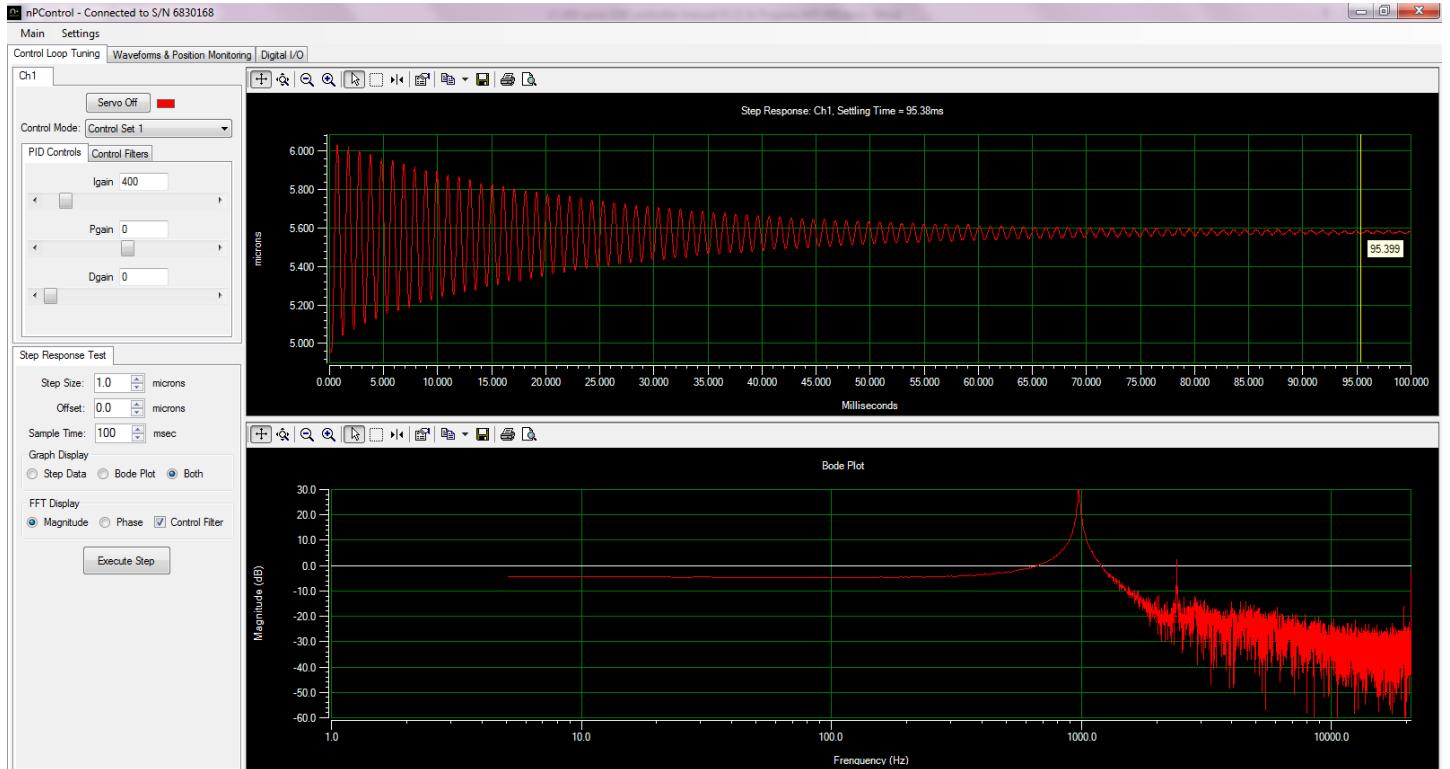


Figure 3-3: Step response of a system with a resonant frequency near 1000 Hz.

- In the **Control Filters** tab, set the **Center Frequency** of the notch filter to match the resonant frequency.
- Set the **Width** of the notch filter to match the width of the resonance as shown in Figure 3-4. In some instances a wider filter will improve system stability. A filter that is too wide can cause step response overshoot.
- Check the **Enabled** checkbox to enable the filter.

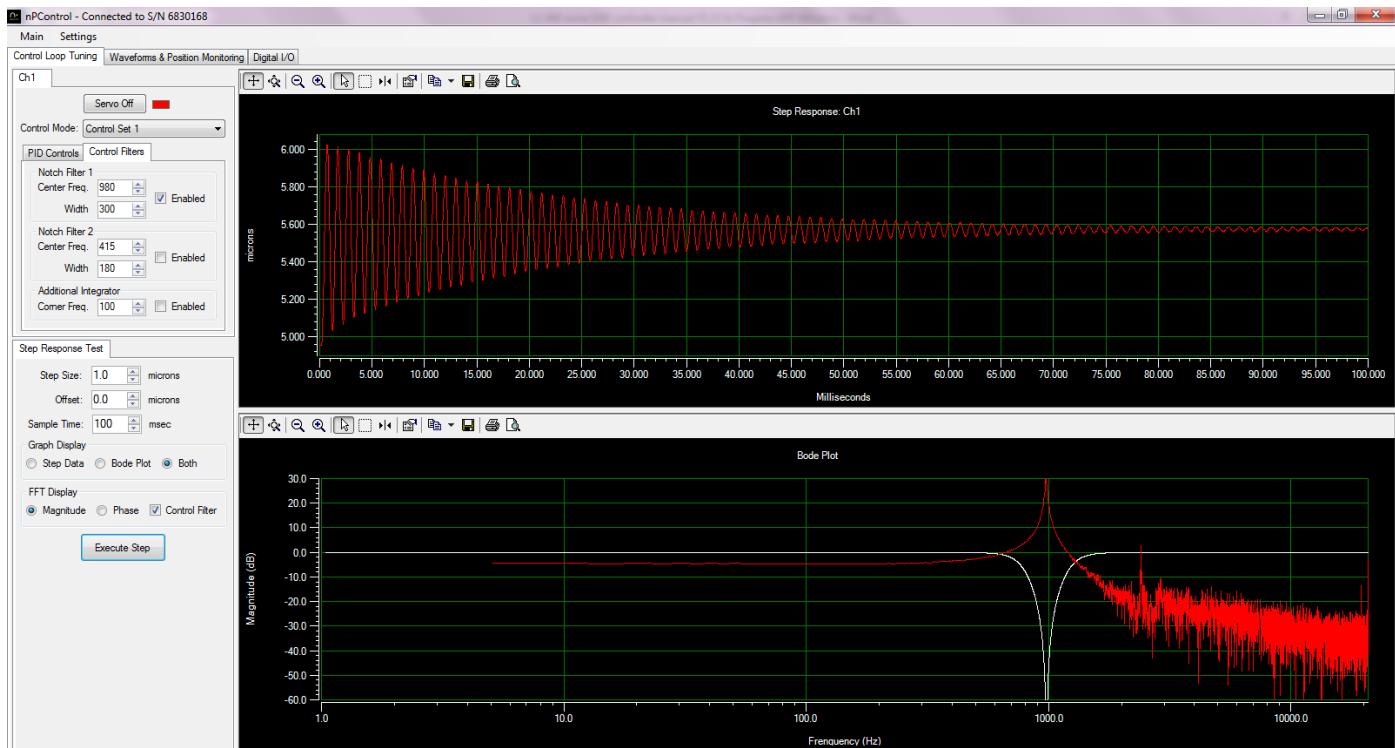


Figure 3-4: Applying single notch filter for the resonance identified in Figure 3-3.

- Set the system to closed-loop mode (the servo toggle button should display **Servo On**).
- Execute a step to observe the effects of the control filters, as shown in Figure 3-5.

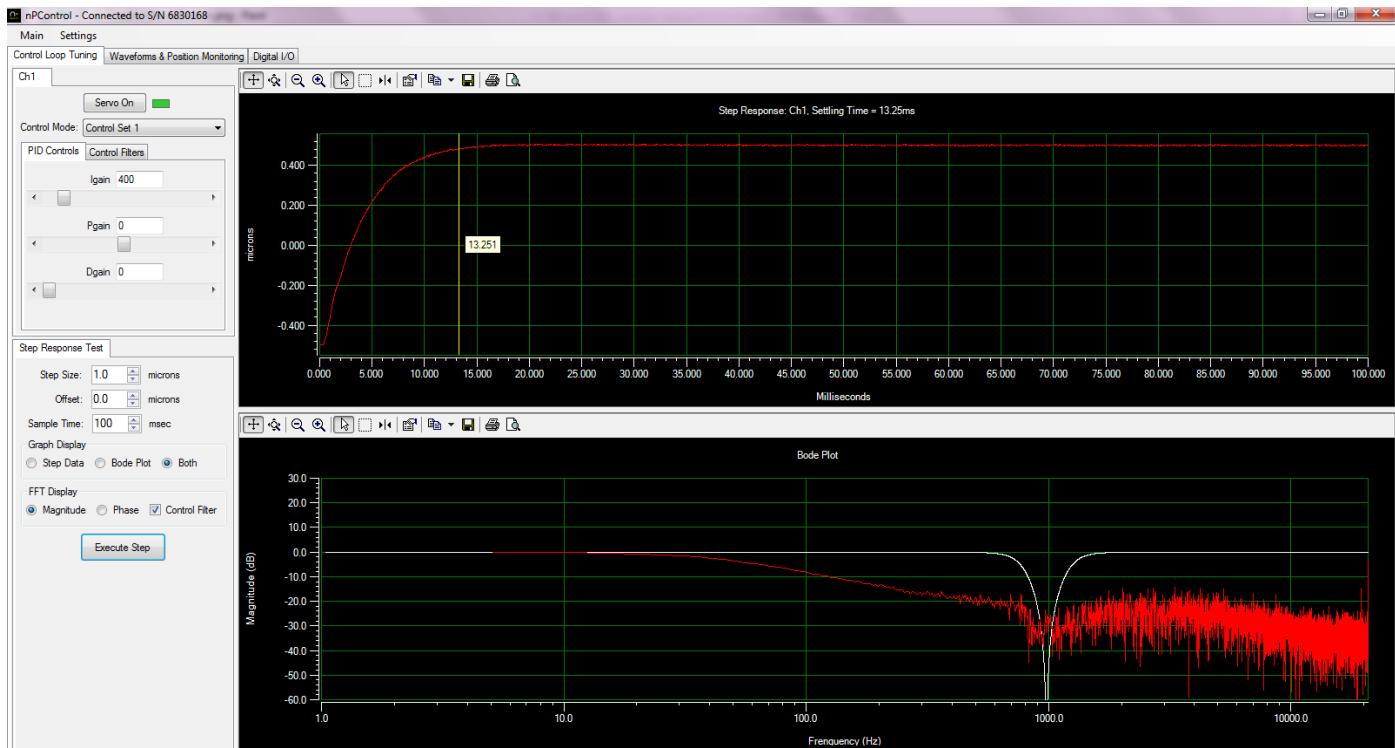


Figure 3-5: Step response of a system in closed-loop with the proper notch filters enabled and an Integral gain equal to 400.

- For comparison, the step response of the system without the notch filter enabled is shown in Figure 3-6. The same I gain used in both cases.

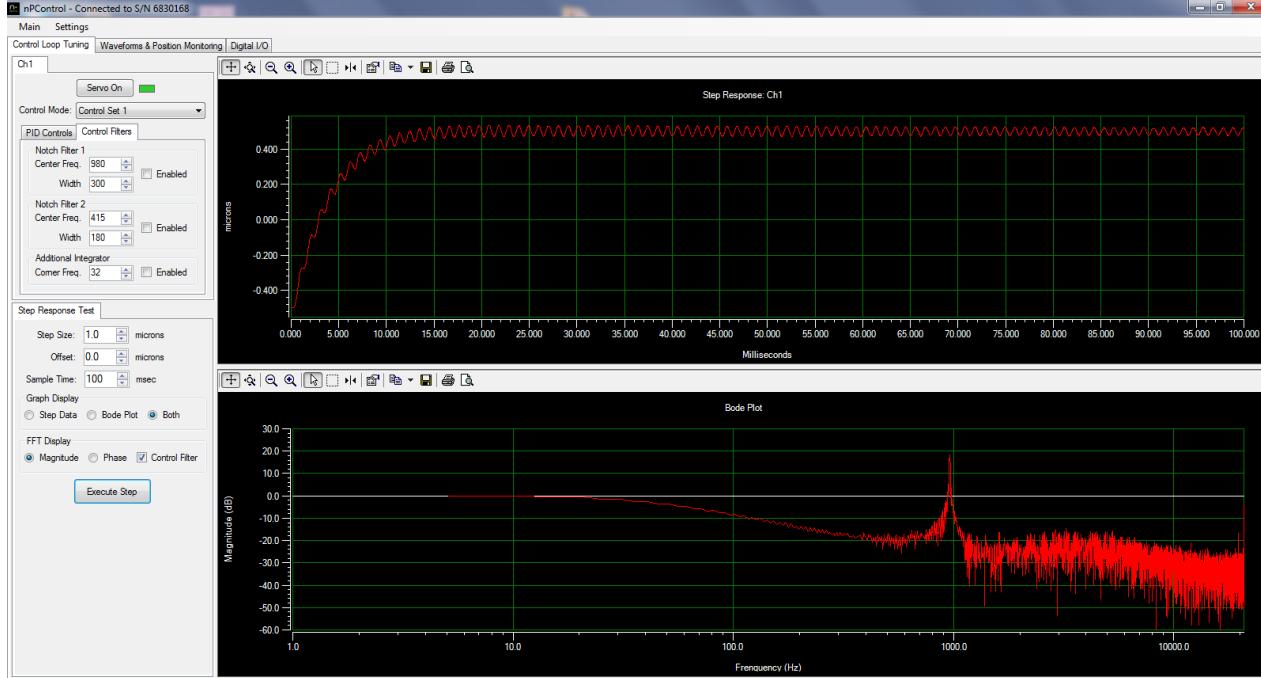


Figure 3-6: Step response of the system shown in Figure 3-5 in closed-loop without the proper notch filters enabled.

- For multiple resonances, use both notch filters at the lowest frequency resonances.
- Once the appropriate notch filter parameters have been enabled, a faster settling time can be achieved by increasing the Integral gain (in the **PID Controls** tab). This is shown below in Figure 3-7 where an I gain of 800 has been used.

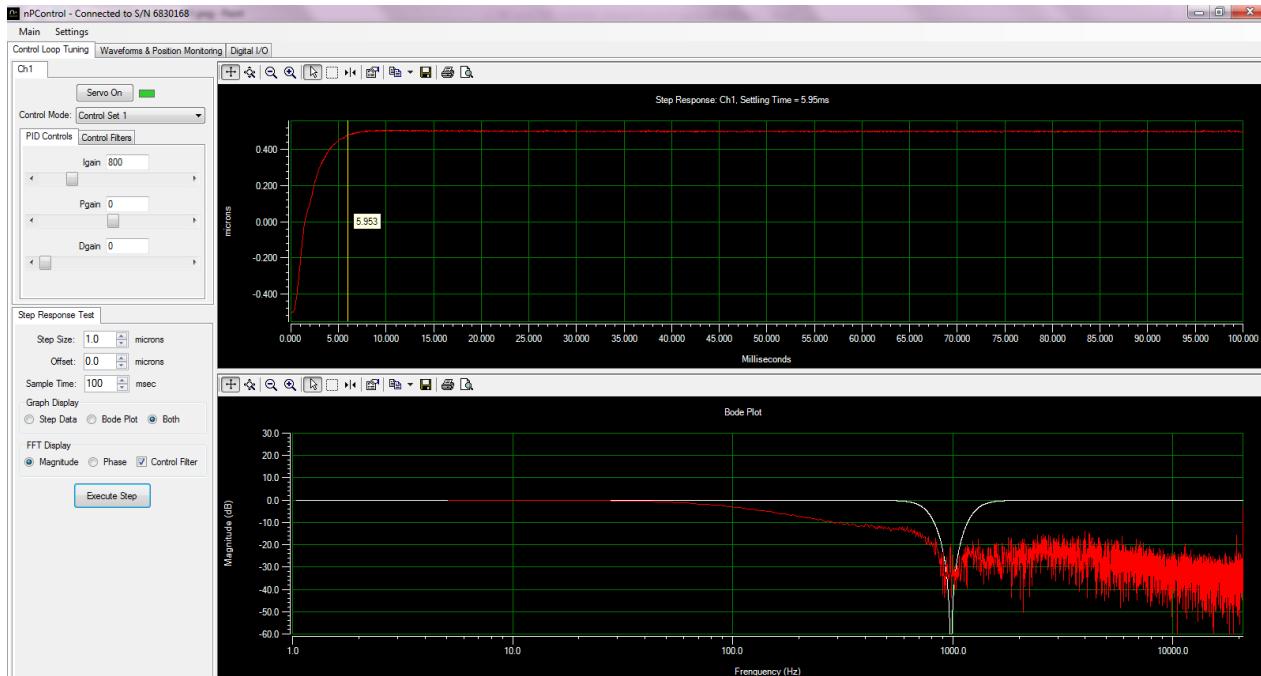


Figure 3-7: Step response of a system in closed-loop with the proper notch filters enabled and an Integral gain equal to 800.

The new control settings can be saved by selecting **Save Configuration to Controller** in the **Settings** menu (Figure 3-2).

With careful control parameter optimization one can achieve a closed-loop system bandwidth of approximately 1/3 of the resonance frequency of the system.

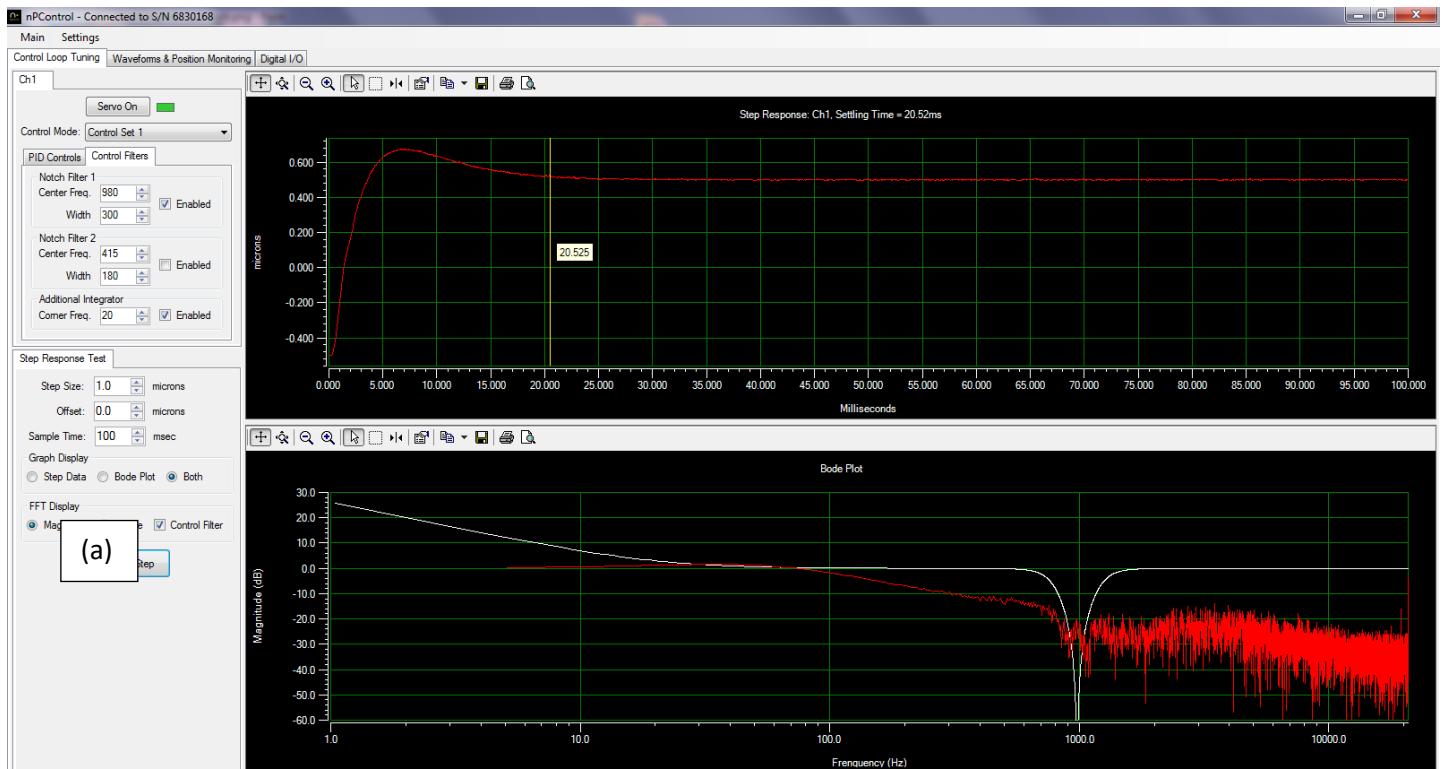
3.1.3 2nd Integrator

As described in the previous section, notch filters can help achieve a fast step response. In some applications the nanopositioning system is used for constant velocity scanning rather than stepping. In this case using the **Additional Integrator** control feature, in combination with notch filters, may provide the best performance. Enabling the **Additional Integrator** and selecting the optimum corner frequency minimizes phase lag between the commanded position and the actual position of the system (as measured by the sensor value).

Tuning this control feature is explained below.

- Make sure the system is in closed-loop mode with the appropriate notch filters enabled and the I gain set to an optimized value (**Servo On**).
- Set the **Corner Frequency** value of the **Additional Integrator** to a low number (significantly lower than the bandwidth of the system and, in some cases, as low as 1).
- Check the **Enabled** checkbox to enable the filter.
- Perform a step response and note the settling time. Note that the step response looks different than the step response with the **Additional Integrator** disabled; however, the main optimization goal is still to minimize the settling time.
- Keep adjusting the **Corner Frequency** value until the settling time is minimized.

The figure below shows three cases during the tuning process: one where the **Corner Frequency** value is set too low (a), optimized (b) and too high (c).



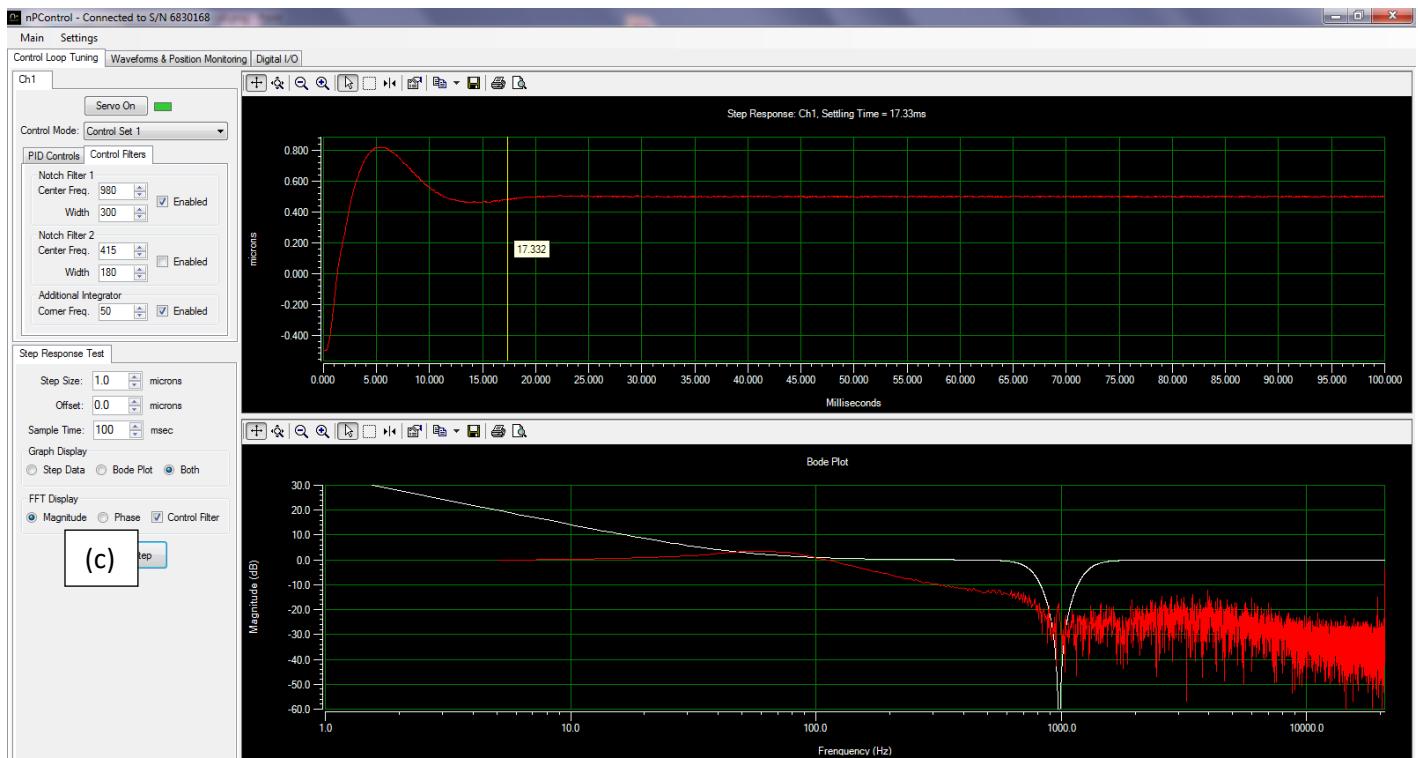
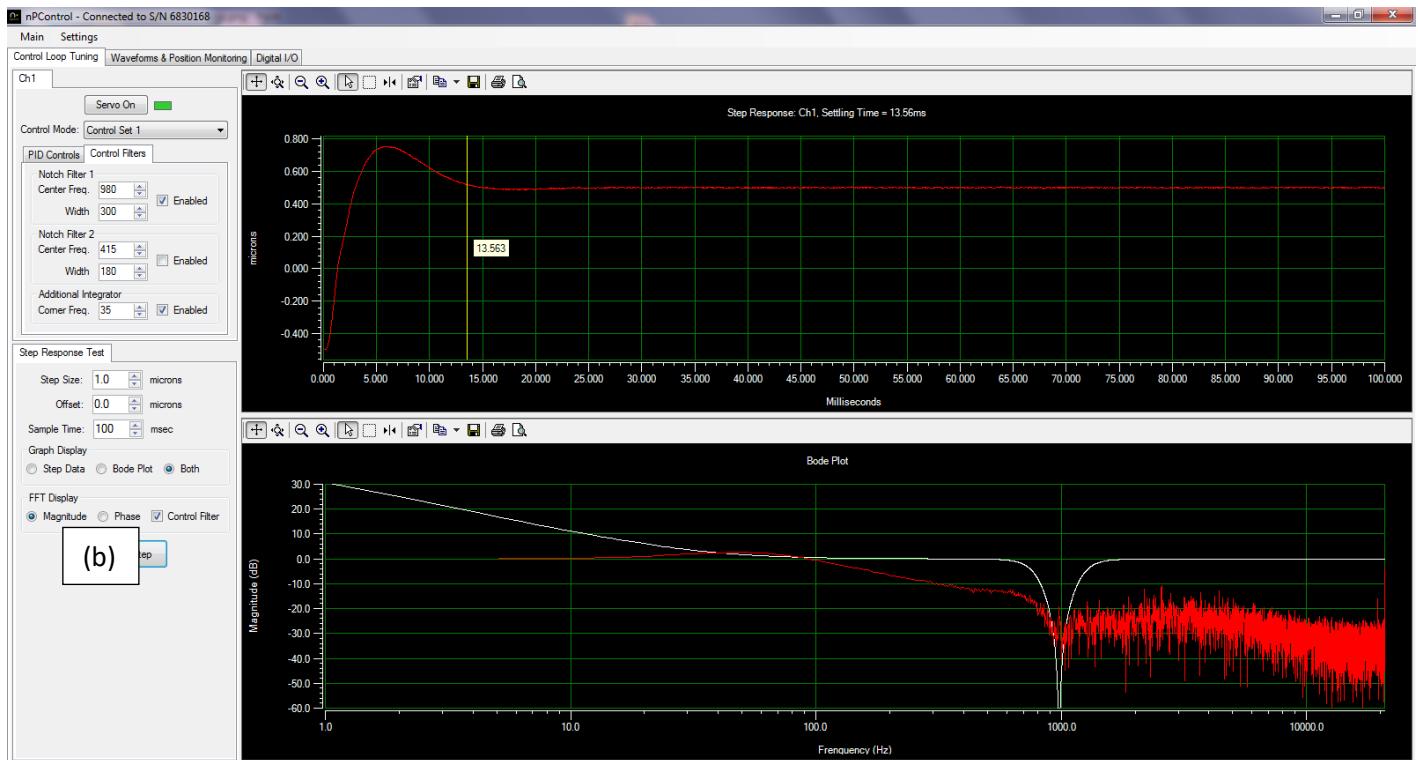


Figure 3-8: Optimizing the **Additional Integrator Corner Frequency** value. The step response is shown for a value that is too low (a), optimized (b), and too high (c).

Use of the **Additional Integrator** improves scanning performance for constant velocity scanning applications. The tracking error between commanded position and actual position is minimized when the **Additional Integrator** is enabled. Tracking errors can be monitored by using the high resolution recording interface.

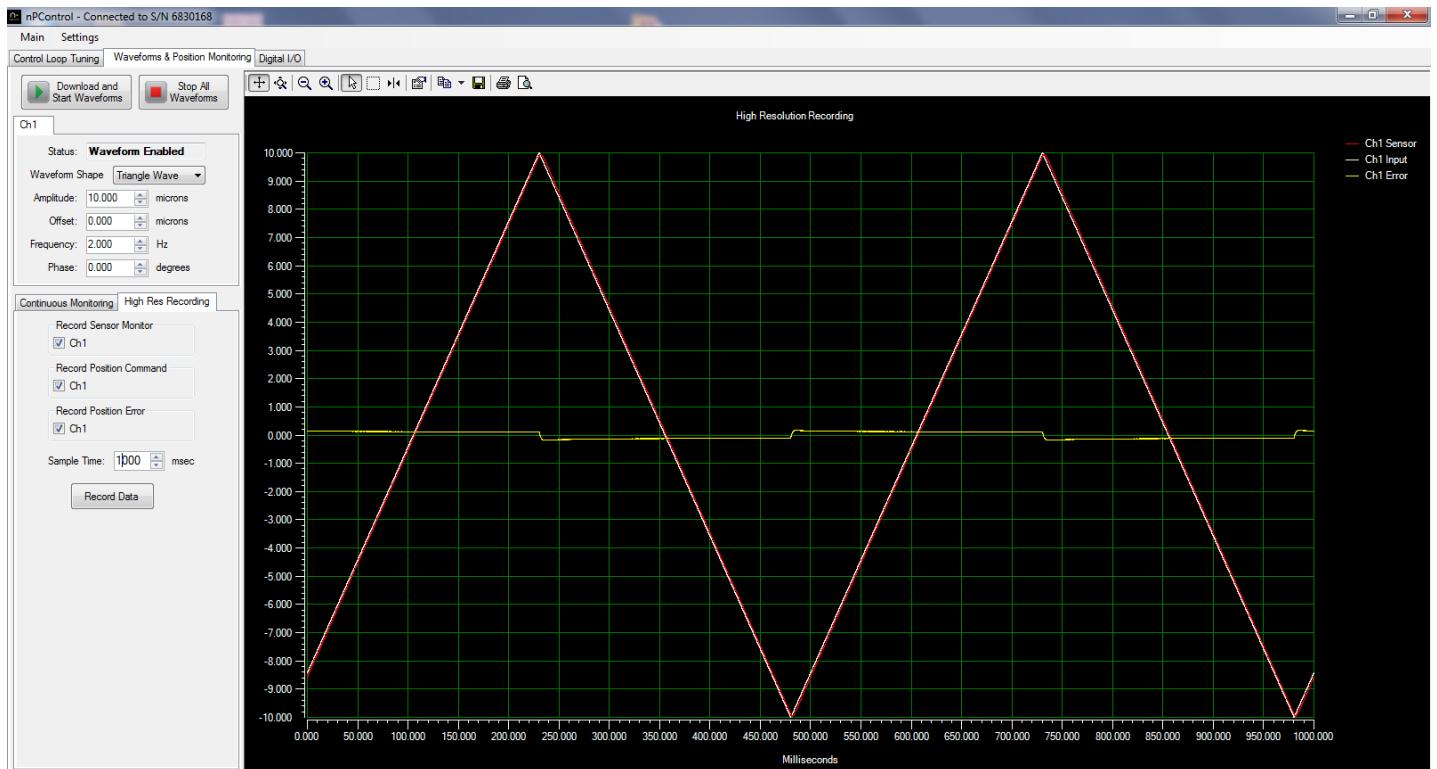


Figure 3-9: High resolution recording with the **Additional Integrator** disabled.

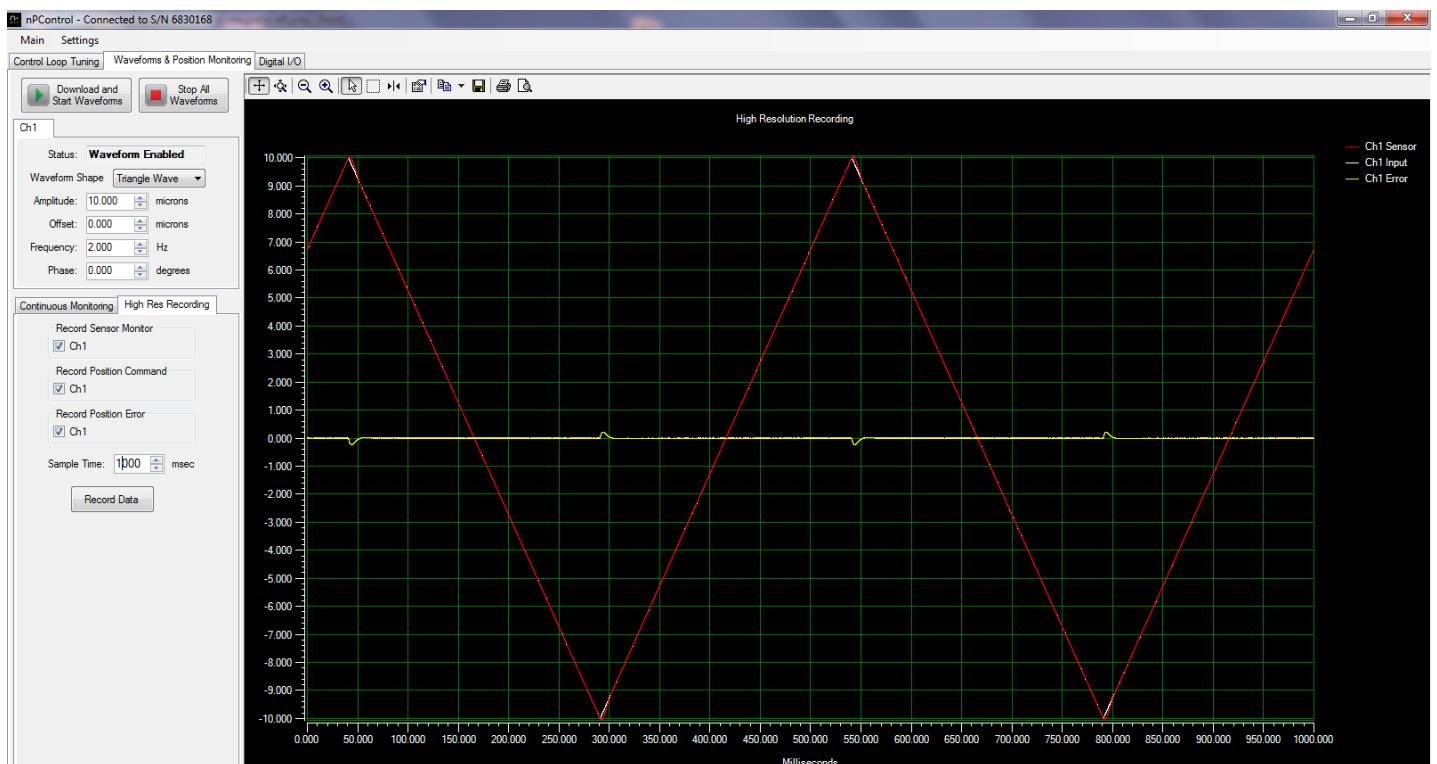


Figure 3-10: High resolution recording with the **Additional Integrator** enabled. Constant velocity tracking error is driven to zero after the nanopositioner changes direction.

3.2 Waveforms and Position Monitoring

3.2.1 Internal Waveform Generation

The LC.400 series controllers feature internal function generator capability. The user can choose from a variety of waveform shapes or load an arbitrary shape from a user created file. The waveform shape, amplitude, offset, and frequency can be independently configured for each channel (see Figure 3-11). After configuring waveform parameters, click the **Download and Start Waveforms** button to start the waveform. If parameters are changed while the waveform is running, click the **Download and Start Waveforms** button again to start scanning with the new configuration. The status indicator for each channel tab will display “Waveform Enabled” when the waveform is currently active for that channel.

When the Infinite checkbox is checked, the waveform period will repeat indefinitely. If the Infinite checkbox is not checked, the waveform will pause at the end of the number of cycles specified. Note that if the position at the end of the waveform period is non-zero, the stage will pause at that position until the **Stop All Waveforms** button is clicked to disable the Internal Waveform function.

The Static Digital Position command located on the Digital I/O tab is summed with the Internal Waveform function, and can be used as an offset to the waveform that can be adjusted while the waveform is running.

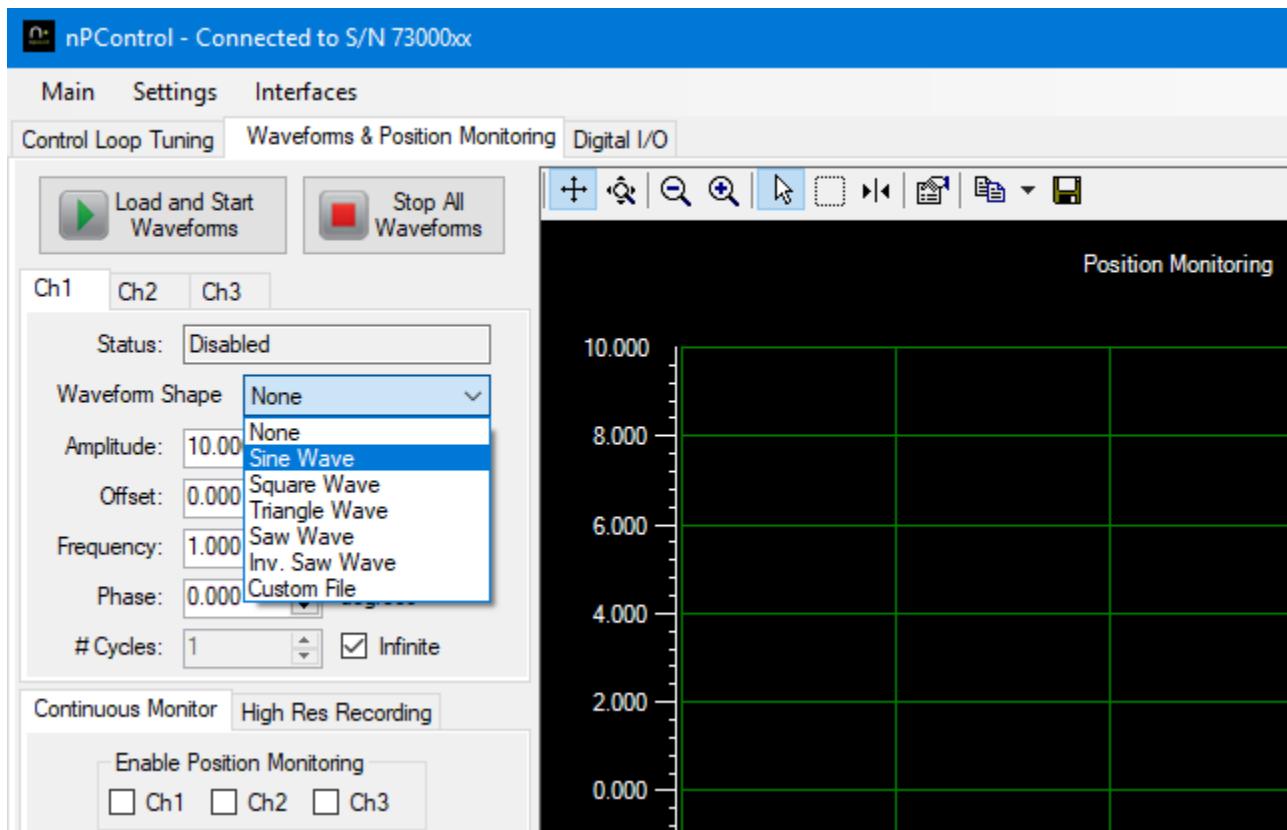


Figure 3-11: The Waveform Generation GUI.

3.2.2 Continuous Position Monitoring

To monitor nanopositioner motion during scanning, check the **Enable Position Monitoring** checkboxes for the desired controller channels in the **Continuous Monitoring** tab. Multiple controller channels can be monitored simultaneously. When continuous monitoring is selected, the sensor signal is updated continuously on the screen, as shown in Figure 3-12.

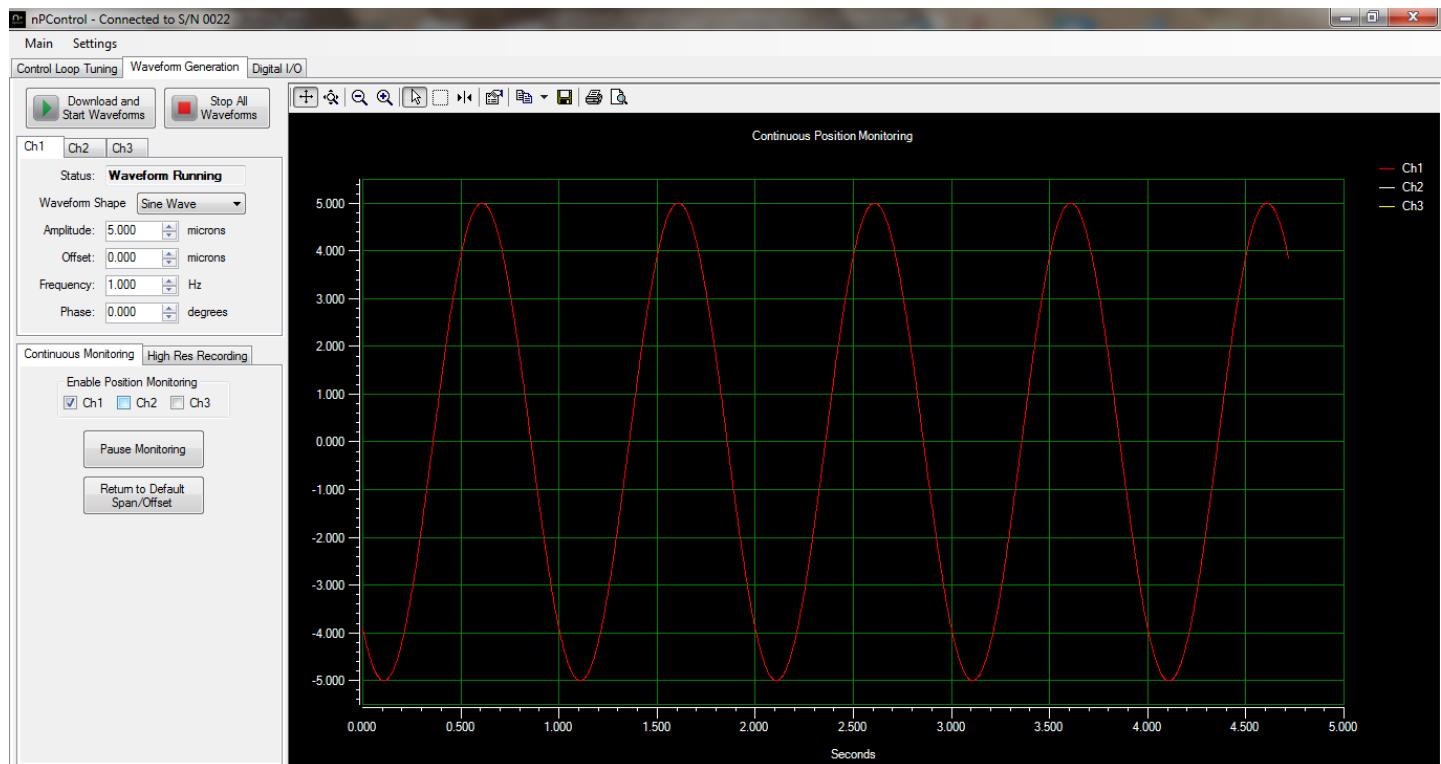


Figure 3-12: Continuous monitoring of a Ch1 waveform.

3.2.3 High Resolution Recording

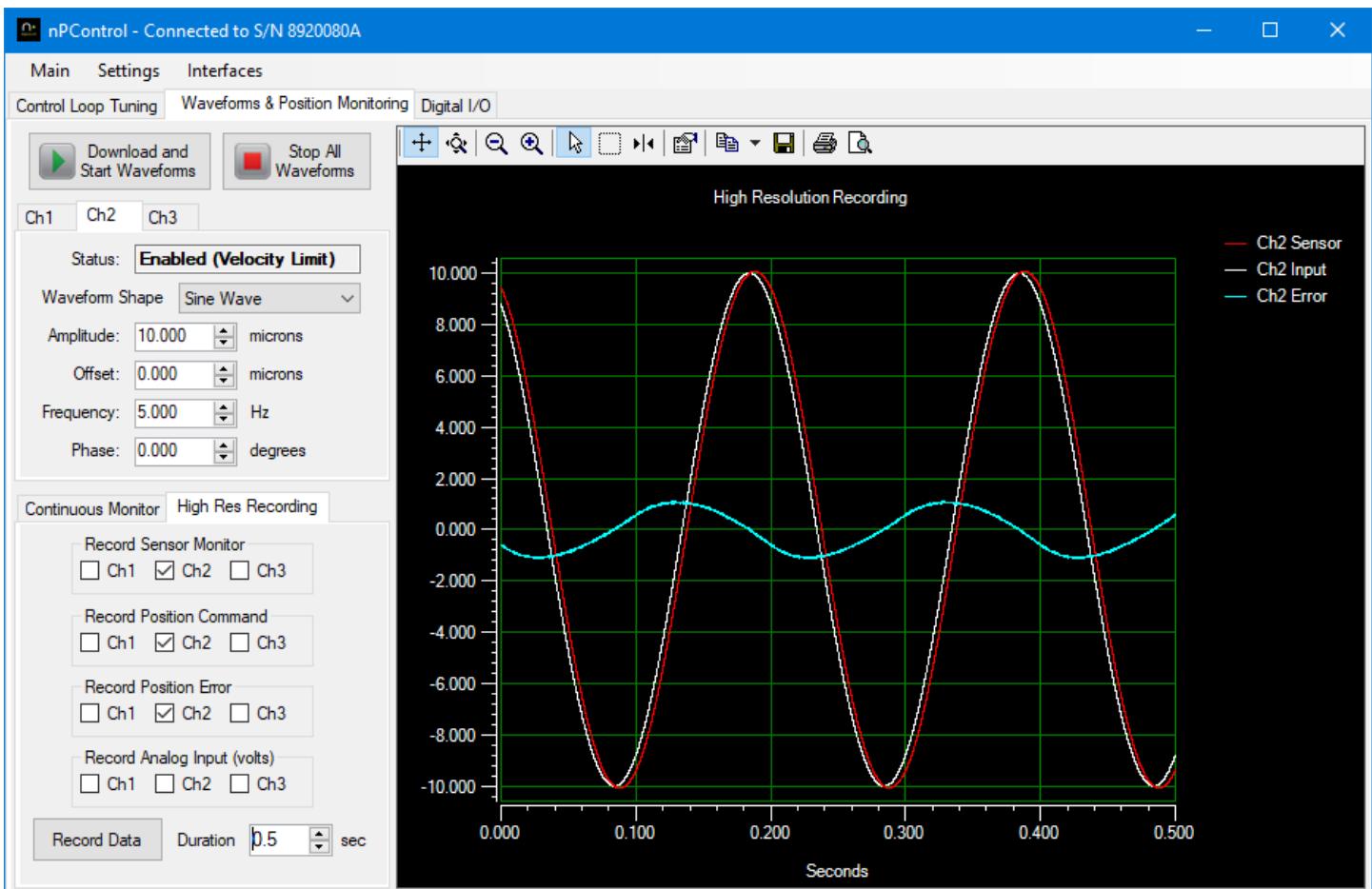


Figure 3-13 - High Resolution Recording user interface

The **High Res Recording** tab allows recording of high resolution data for a specified time. The recorded data is sampled simultaneously at an exact sample rate in controller buffers. The buffers are then read back to the PC when the recording is complete. If the recording time is less than 2 seconds, the data is sampled every 24 μ s. If the recording time is between 2 seconds and 4 seconds, the data is sampled every 48 μ s, and so on. This functionality can be used to better understand how control loop parameters affect the nanopositioner dynamic performance. For alignment applications, this can be used to record an external analog signal (such as detector intensity) relative to stage sensor readings. The BNC analog input values are displayed in volts.

3.2.4 Custom Waveform Files

A custom file can be loaded to scan with an arbitrary waveform shape. The file format is a text file (“.txt” extension) with a single position specified in each line. For example, a 100 micron stage would have values between “-50.000” to “50.000” for each line. The controller increments through the positions every 24 μ sec, and loops back to the beginning after reading the last position. The maximum number of positions is 83,333, which is equal to a 2 second period (0.5Hz frequency). A single column of positions in a spreadsheet can be saved as a text file for a convenient way to edit the file.

Once the file is created, select **Custom File** as the waveform shape parameter and a file selection window will open. After the file has been selected, click **Download and Start Waveform** to begin scanning with the custom file.

An example waveform file is included on the software CD. The example file contains the positions for a 1 micron peak to peak 2 Hz sawtooth shape waveform. The position ramps from zero microns to 1 micron over a period of 0.5 seconds. For viewing results after loading the example file, it is recommended that the high resolution recording feature is used to display the position command and sensor monitor.

3.3 Digital I/O

The LC.400 series controllers are equipped with programmable digital I/O capabilities through the 9-pin D-sub connector located on the back panel. The software interface for configuring the digital I/O pins is shown in Figure 3-14.

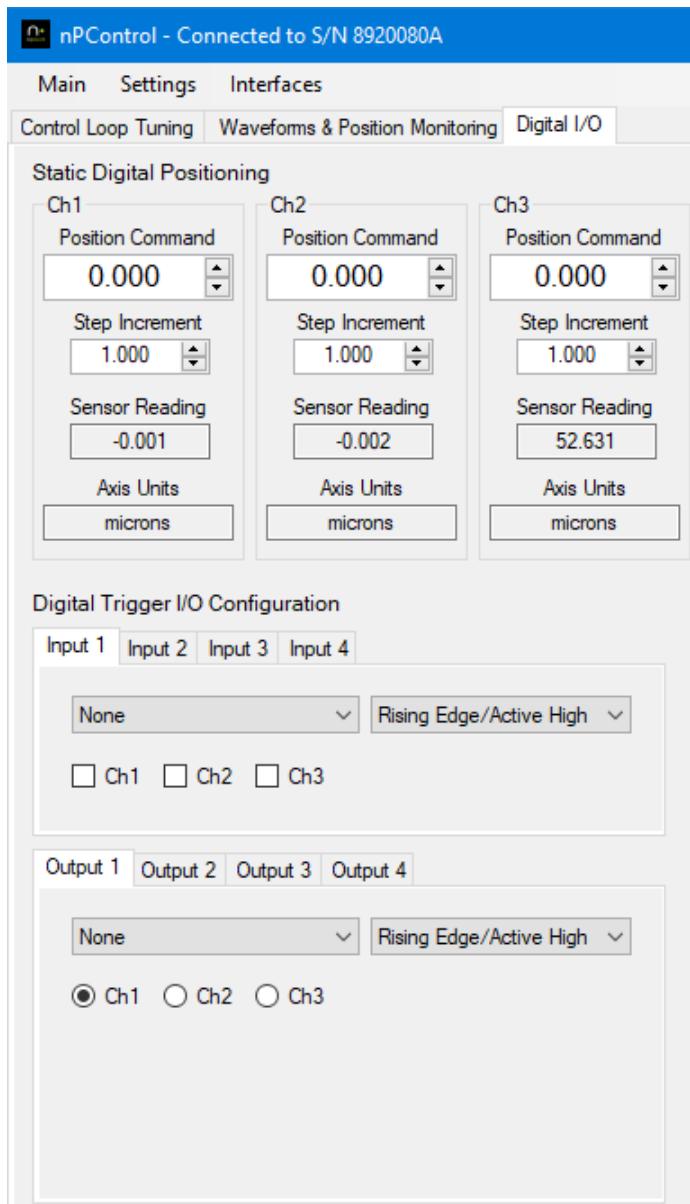
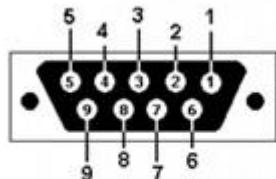


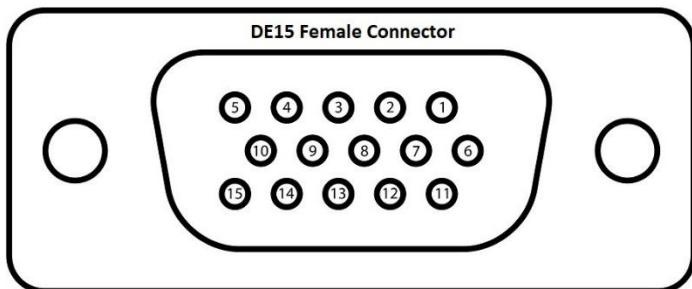
Figure 3-14: The Digital I/O tab.

The four inputs and four outputs can be configured independently as shown in Figure 3-15. For controllers with a DE9 connector the four inputs correspond to pins 1-4, and the four outputs correspond to pins 6-9. Pin 5 is ground.



DE9 Female Connector

For controllers with a D15 connector in standard single ended configuration, the pinout is:



Pin 1	Output 1
Pin 2	Output 3
Pin 3	Not Used
Pin 4	Not Used
Pin 5	Ground
Pin 6	Output 2
Pin 7	Output 4
Pin 8	Not Used
Pin 9	Not Used
Pin 10	Not Used
Pin 11	Input 1
Pin 12	Input 2
Pin 13	Input 3
Pin 14	Input 4
Pin 15	Not Used

The screenshot shows the 'Digital Trigger I/O Configuration' window. On the left, under 'Input 1', the dropdown menu for 'Trigger Source' is open, showing options like 'None', 'Edge Triggered Start', and 'Edge Triggered Stop'. The selected option is 'Edge Triggered Stop'. Below it, the 'Edge Type' dropdown is set to 'Rising Edge/Active High'. At the bottom, there are three radio buttons for selecting a channel: 'Ch1' (selected), 'Ch2', and 'Ch3'. On the right, under 'Output 1', the 'Trigger Source' dropdown is also open, showing various options such as 'None', 'Control Loop Error', and 'Waveform Index/TG Level'. The selected option is 'Waveform Index/TG Level'. The 'Edge Type' dropdown here is also set to 'Rising Edge/Active High'.

Figure 3-15: Configuration of the 9-pin digital I/O connector located on the back panel of the LC.400 series controllers.

Any channel can be assigned to any of the I/O pins. It is also possible for a single channel to be controlled by multiple inputs and to control multiple outputs. Each trigger function is explained in the following sections.

3.3.1 Digital Inputs - Start Signal

In the simplest configuration, an axis uses the digital input as a start signal. When the rising edge of the input is detected, the waveform index is set to zero and it advances through the waveform one entry time each time the control loop runs. When it gets to the end of the array, the index holds at the last location until the next start command is received. If the start command is received before the index reaches the end, the index is immediately reset at zero and continues to progress through the end of the waveform. Figure 3-16 shows the channel input when the edge-triggered start command is used.

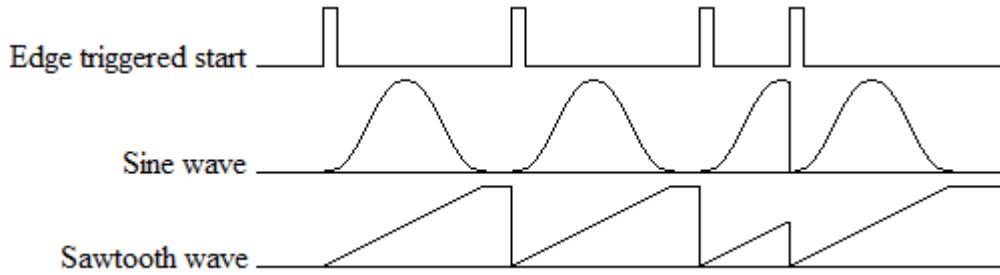


Figure 3-16: Edge Triggered Start Signal.

At the first start pulse the waveform starts running. Since it gets to the end before anything else happens, it holds the final value. At the next start pulse, the index resets to zero and the waveform starts running again. If a start pulse occurs before the index gets to the end of the array, the index will jump to zero and continue on.

When the start signal is used in a level triggering mode, the input will not hold at the end of the array if the signal is still high. If the start signal goes low, then the input will hold at the end of the array until the next time the start signal goes high. This is shown in Figure 3-17.

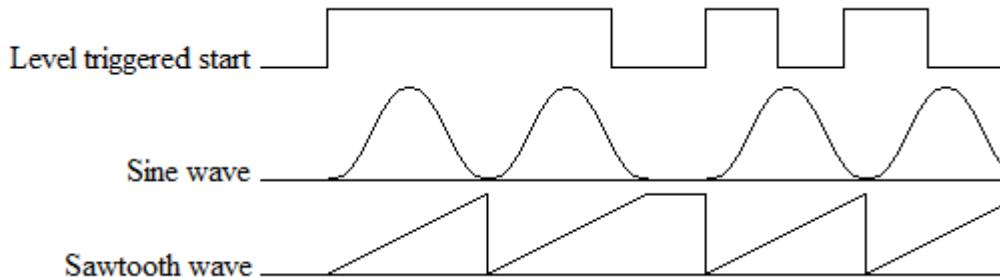


Figure 3-17: Level Triggered Start Signal.

When the start signal goes high, the index starts through the array. Since the start signal is still high when the index gets to the end, the index will automatically start back at zero and continue. The second time the index gets to the end, the start signal is low (it changed midway through the array) so the index stays at the end of the array until the start signal goes high again. This time through the array, the start signal goes low and then high before the array gets to the end. Since this is not edge triggered, the rising edge is ignored and the indexing resets to zero as if the start signal had remained high for the whole period.

3.3.2 Digital Inputs - Start and Stop

The next configuration shown has an edge triggered start signal and an edge triggered stop signal. The start signal will cause the indexing to start and run to the end of the array. The stop signal will force the index to stay at zero.

Figure 3-18 shows this. The waveform starts at the first start pulse, but the index is interrupted by the first stop pulse and is set to zero. At the second start pulse, the waveform starts again, runs to the end and holds. The stop pulse resets the index to zero, but the waveform does not begin until the next start pulse occurs.

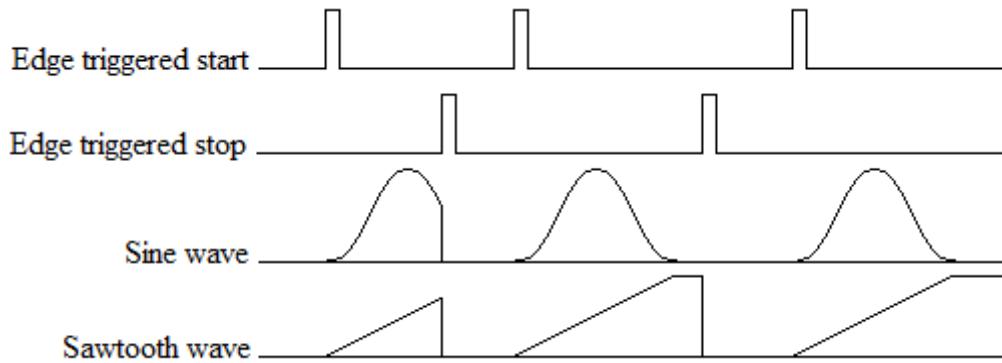


Figure 3-18: Edge Triggered Start and Stop Signal.

If the start and stop signals are received at the same time, then the stop signal will have priority and no motion will occur. These two configurations can be combined onto the same input pin by using a level triggered start and a level triggered stop. When the signal is high, the input will be in free run mode, when it goes low, the index is set to zero and held there. This is shown in Figure 3-19. The waveform starts when the signal goes high. Since the signal is still high when the index gets to the end of the array, the index goes back to zero and continues. When the signal goes low, the index is set to zero and is held at that value until the signal goes high again. In the next period, the signal is set low before the index reaches the end of the array and the index is set to zero and is held at that value.

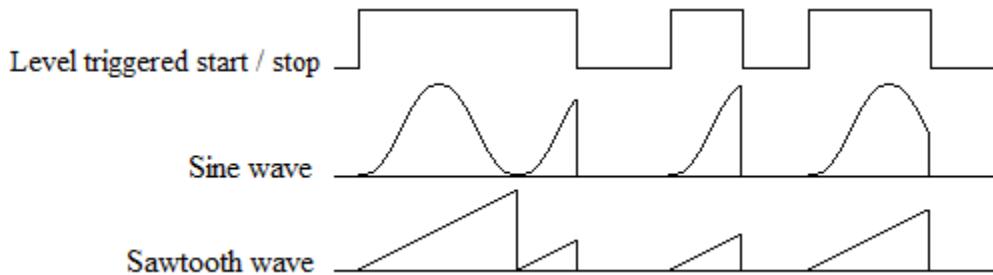


Figure 3-19: Level Triggered Start and Stop Signal.

The mixed cases where one signal is edge triggered and the other is level triggered will be similar. Since a level triggered stop signal has priority over the start, it must be low (for positive polarity) in order for the start signal to have an effect.

3.3.3 Digital Inputs - Pause and Resume

In order to stop the motion, but start from the last position, a configuration that has an edge triggered pause/resume signal can be used. The pause signal works just like the pause button on a music player where the same button is used to pause then resume the song. In this case the first edge will pause the index and the second edge will cause the waveform to resume.

In Figure 3-20 this is shown in combination with an edge triggered start.

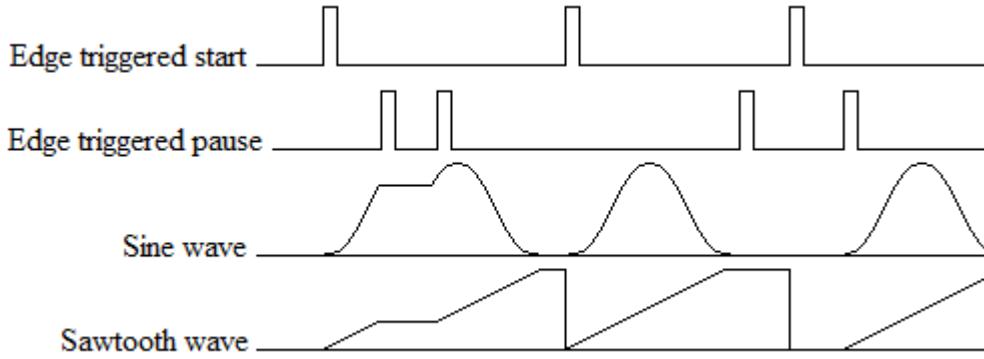


Figure 3-20: Level Triggered Start and Stop Signal.

The waveform starts with the rising edge of the start signal. As soon as the first pause edge is encountered, the indexing stops but the index is not reset to zero; it is held constant. When the next edge is sent on the pause line, the indexing resumes. Another pause signal is sent while the index is holding at the end of the array. The index is then set to zero, but it does not advance. When the resume signal is sent, then the index begins to increment through the array.

The order of precedence here is that the start signal can reset the index even when the waveform is in the paused state. However, the reset needs to be given before the waveform runs again.

If the pause/resume signal is configured as a level trigger rather than an edge trigger, there is no qualitative change in the behavior. The rising edge and high level will pause the waveform and the falling edge and low level will resume it.

All the edge triggered examples shown so far use the positive edge as the main source for the trigger point. However, they can be configured to use the negative edge instead. Likewise, the level actuated signals can have their polarity reversed.

3.3.4 Digital Outputs – Control Loop Error

In this configuration the digital output monitors the control loop error signal. When the error is small, this means that stage position is in the desired location.

This is illustrated in Figure 3-21.

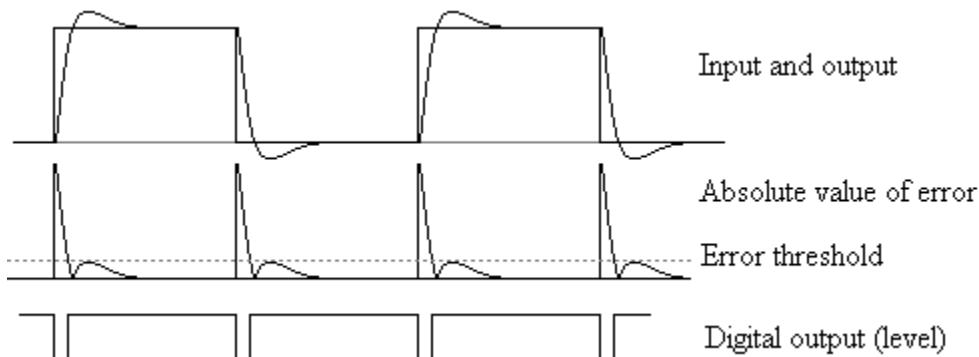


Figure 3-21: Digital Output Based on the Control Loop Error.

Here the input is the square wave shown in the top line along with the stage response. The difference between these two is the position error. When the absolute value of the position error is less than the specified error tolerance as

denoted by the dashed line, then the digital output is set high. When the error is larger than the tolerance, the output is low. A more detailed explanation on how the control loop error output works is given in Appendix G Control loop error signal.

3.3.5 Digital Outputs – Waveform Index

In this configuration the digital output changes the output level when the index of the stored waveform reaches a specified index. Each channel can store an array of such index values. In Figure 3-22 the waveform is a triangle wave. There are two index values where the output is set high (open circles) and two indexes where the output is set low (filled circles). The resulting level on the digital output is shown on the second line. The third line shows an optional pulsed version where the output is set high and then low again as each index (open or filled circle) is reached.

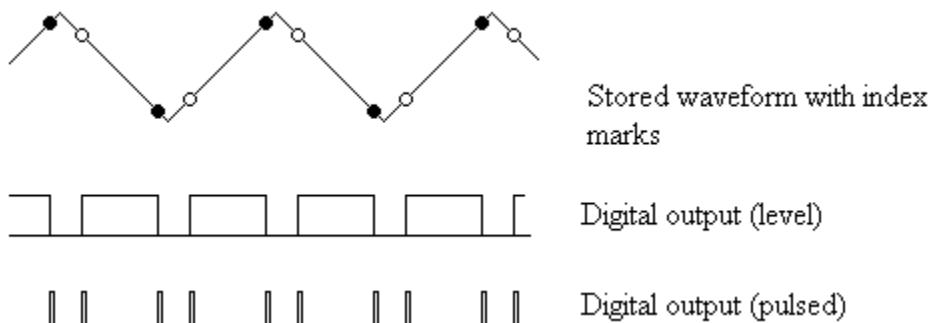


Figure 3-22: Digital Output Marking Points in the Waveform.

3.3.6 Digital Outputs – Fault

The digital output can also be used as an error indicator. If the control loop error stays larger than a given threshold for longer than some time limit, then the error signal would be activated. This can be an indication of mechanical obstruction. Default values for the tolerance and time limit will be 10% of the range for 1 second.

3.3.7 Digital Outputs – Sensor Based Position Pulse

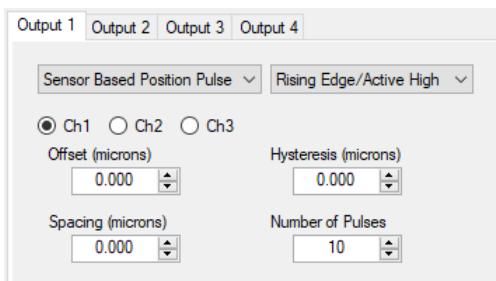


Figure 3-23 - Sensor Based Position Pulse

The Sensor Based Position Pulse digital output function will pulse the selected output for 24 μ s each time the stage sensor reading passes through the specified Spacing increment. The Offset defines the sensor reading at which the pulses begin, and the Number of pulses defines the total number of pulses including the pulse at the starting offset. For example an offset of -5, spacing of 1, and Number of Pulses set to 11 would pulse the output at -5, -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The hysteresis value can be set slightly above the sensor noise to prevent pulses when the stage holding a static position at one of the specified pulse positions. The sensor monitor lowpass filter can be used to reduce sensor noise magnitude, but the phase delay added by the filter can be an issue in some fast scanning applications.

3.3.8 Digital Encoder Interface

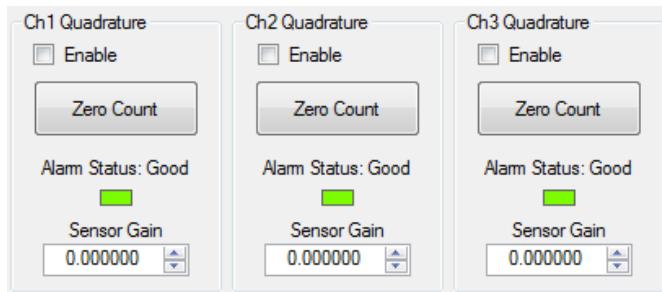


Figure 3-24: Digital Encoder user interface

For controllers equipped with a Digital Encoder Interface option, parameters can be adjusted with the Digital Encoder user interface located on the Digital I/O tab of the main nPControl window.

The **Zero Count** button will set the encoder position counter to zero for the current position. This function is typically used when the controller is in open loop, and all position input commands are set to the zero position (the center of stage travel). Position input commands include the Static Digital Position, Waveforms, and the BNC Analog Input.

The Alarm Status label and color indicator displays the state of the alarm signal. This value is updated once every second when connected to the controller via USB.

The Sensor Gain value is used to adjust the system based on the distance per encoder count of the connected encoder.

$$\text{Sensor Gain} = \frac{1048576}{\text{Stage Range in microns}} \times \text{Encoder Counts Per Micron}$$

For example using a 100 micron range stage with an encoder distance of 1.582 nanometers per count:

$$1048576 \text{ control loop counts} / 100 \text{ microns} = 10485.76 \text{ control loop counts/micron}$$

$$1 \text{ encoder count} / 1.582 \text{ nanometers} = 0.6321 \text{ encoder counts/nanometer}$$

$$0.6321 * 1000 = 632.1 \text{ encoder counts per micron}$$

$$10485.76 / 632.1 = 16.5888 \text{ Sensor Gain}$$

3.4 Graph Controls

This section describes the graph controls available to the user.

Toolbar	Function
	Allows the user to scroll the y-axis (position) up and down and the x-axis (time) left and right, by clicking and dragging the X or Y graph axis region.
	Allows the user to zoom in or out in the X or Y graph axis by clicking and dragging in the X or Y graph axis region.
	Allows the user to zoom out by clicking the button. If an axis region is selected zooming is applied only to that axis. If the main graph region is selected both the X and Y axes zoom out.
	Allows the user to zoom in by clicking the button. If an axis region is selected zooming is applied only to that axis. If the main graph region is selected both the X and Y axes zoom in.
	Allows the user to drag the main graph area, and hides the data cursor when selected.
	Allows the user to zoom in to part of the main graph area by clicking and dragging a box.
	Toggles cursor visibility, allows the user to click and drag the position of the cursor, and allows the user to right click on the cursor to change the cursor style.
	Allows the user to edit the graph options.
	Copies an image of the graph to the clipboard for pasting in another application.
	Allows the user to copy an image or data to the clipboard for pasting in another application.
	Allows the graph to be saved either as an image or data file.

Table 3.1: Description of the toolbar button functions in the step response and monitoring graphs.

3.5 Additional Software Features

In the **Main** menu the user can connect to the controller, as shown below. When multiple controllers are connected to the PC, selecting **Open New Connection** will bring up a new window that allows you to choose which controller to connect to.

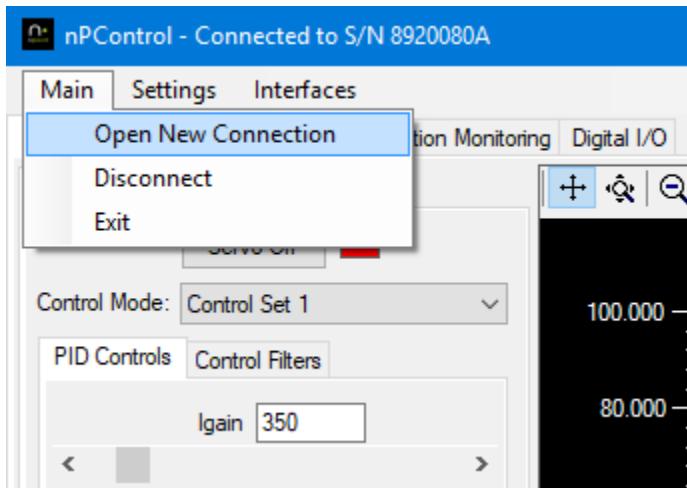


Figure 3-25: The nPControl software **Main** menu.

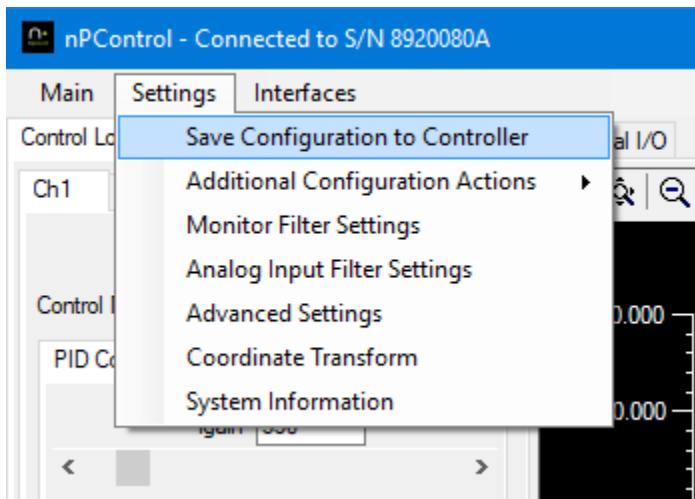


Figure 3-26: The nPControl software **Settings** menu.

The controller configuration can be saved to controller flash memory by selecting **Save Configuration to Controller** (See Figure 3-26).

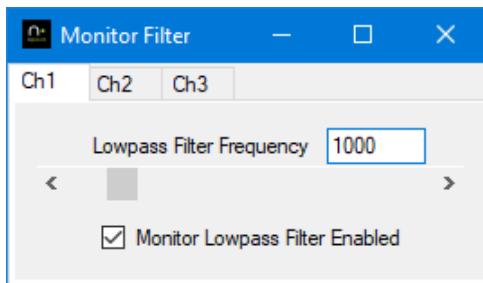


Figure 3-27: The **Monitor Filter Settings** window.

A low pass filter can be applied to the sensor monitor (including the analog BNC) by selecting **Monitor Filter Settings**. The filter has a range of 50 Hz to 8000 Hz.

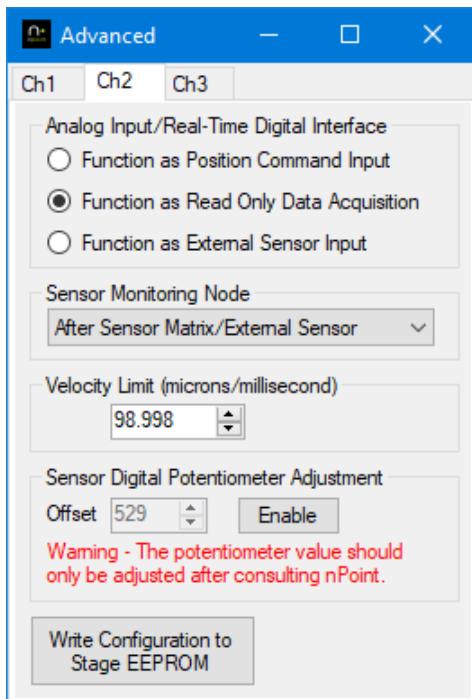


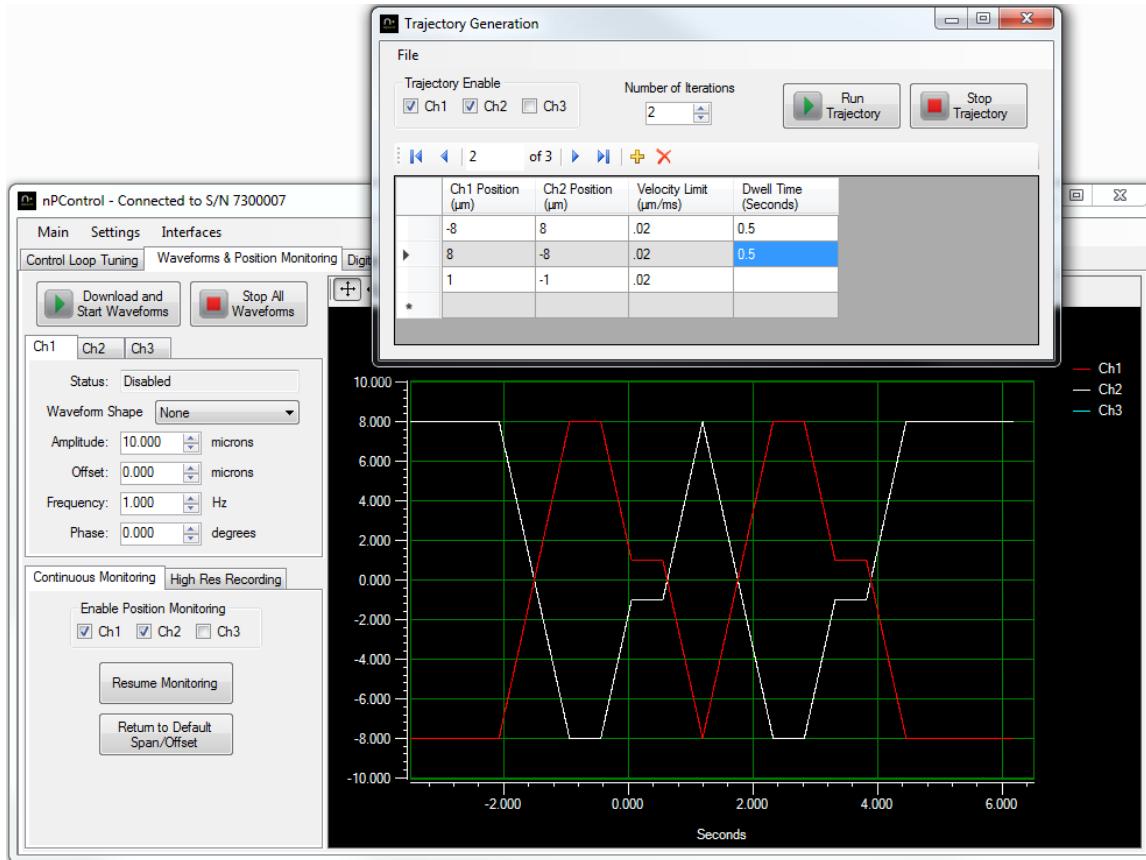
Figure 3-28: The Advanced Settings menu.

The **Advanced Settings** menu (see Figure 3-28) allows the user to:

- Set the mode of the analog input BNC. External sensor mode uses the external signal for closed loop operation, bypassing the internal sensor signal.
- Set the Sensor Monitor Node for the PC UI and analog BNC monitor output.
- Program an overall velocity limit for the control loop output. This feature works in closed-loop mode only. The velocity limit is useful as a safety feature to prevent high voltage driver current limit during large steps, and to reduce the severity of unstable oscillation. For example, unstable oscillation could happen if the stage load was removed and the controller was accidentally left in closed loop mode.
- Write the stage configuration to the stage D15 connector EEPROM. This is useful if you would like the current control loop configuration (Igain and notch filter values etc.) to travel with the stage to another controller.

3.5.1 Trajectory Generation

The trajectory generation interface can be accessed from the **Interfaces** menu. The trajectory generation interface allows you to scan through up to 500 position coordinates, with velocity and dwell time specified individually for each move.



3-29: Trajectory Generation Interface

Each row in the trajectory generation grid represents a coordinate. In each row enter the axis positions, the velocity for the stage to travel to the next coordinate, and the desired dwell time after reaching the next coordinate. Begin typing in the row marked with the “*” symbol to start a new row. Click the Run Trajectory button to begin the scan. The nanopositioner will immediately jump to the first coordinate if the stage is not positioned at the first coordinate prior to starting the scan. The static position can be set using the controls on the Digital I/O tab of the main window.

The current set of coordinates can be saved to a CSV file, or coordinate sets can be loaded from a CSV file using the **File** menu. This allows generation or editing of coordinate sets from programs like Microsoft Excel or Matlab.

When saving a coordinate set to a CSV file, the characters “//” at the beginning of the first line indicate a comment line of column header labels. There must be 10 comma delimited columns for the file to load correctly, however any columns that are not relevant can be left blank. For example a file for a three channel controller would leave Channels 4, 5, and 6 blank. The columns in the CSV file are defined as follows:

1. Channel 1 Position (in axis units, typically microns)
2. Channel 2 Position (in axis units, typically microns)
3. Channel 3 Position (in axis units, typically microns)

4. Channel 4 Position (in axis units, typically microns)
5. Channel 5 Position (in axis units, typically microns)
6. Channel 6 Position (in axis units, typically microns)
7. Velocity Limit (in axis units per ms, typically microns/ms)
8. Acceleration Limit (reserved for future use)
9. Jerk Limit (reserved for future use)
10. Dwell Time (in seconds)

For TTL control of the trajectory moves, select Trajectory Table Control for the input function of a TTL input pin in the Digital Trigger I/O configuration section of the nPControl software. When TTL control is enabled, click the Run Trajectory button to load the coordinate table to the controller and start the trajectory function. In this mode the trajectory function will wait for a pulse on the TTL Input pin before each trajectory move in the table. The number of iterations value is still used, and when the number of iterations is complete the Run Trajectory button will need to be used to start a new set of iterations. The Stop Trajectory button can still be used to end the controller function in TTL mode.

3.5.2 Raster Scanning

The raster scanning interface can be accessed from the **Interfaces** menu. The center point of the raster scan is determined by the Static Digital Positioning values located on the Digital I/O tab of the main software window. When the raster scan is completed, the stage position will return to the center point.

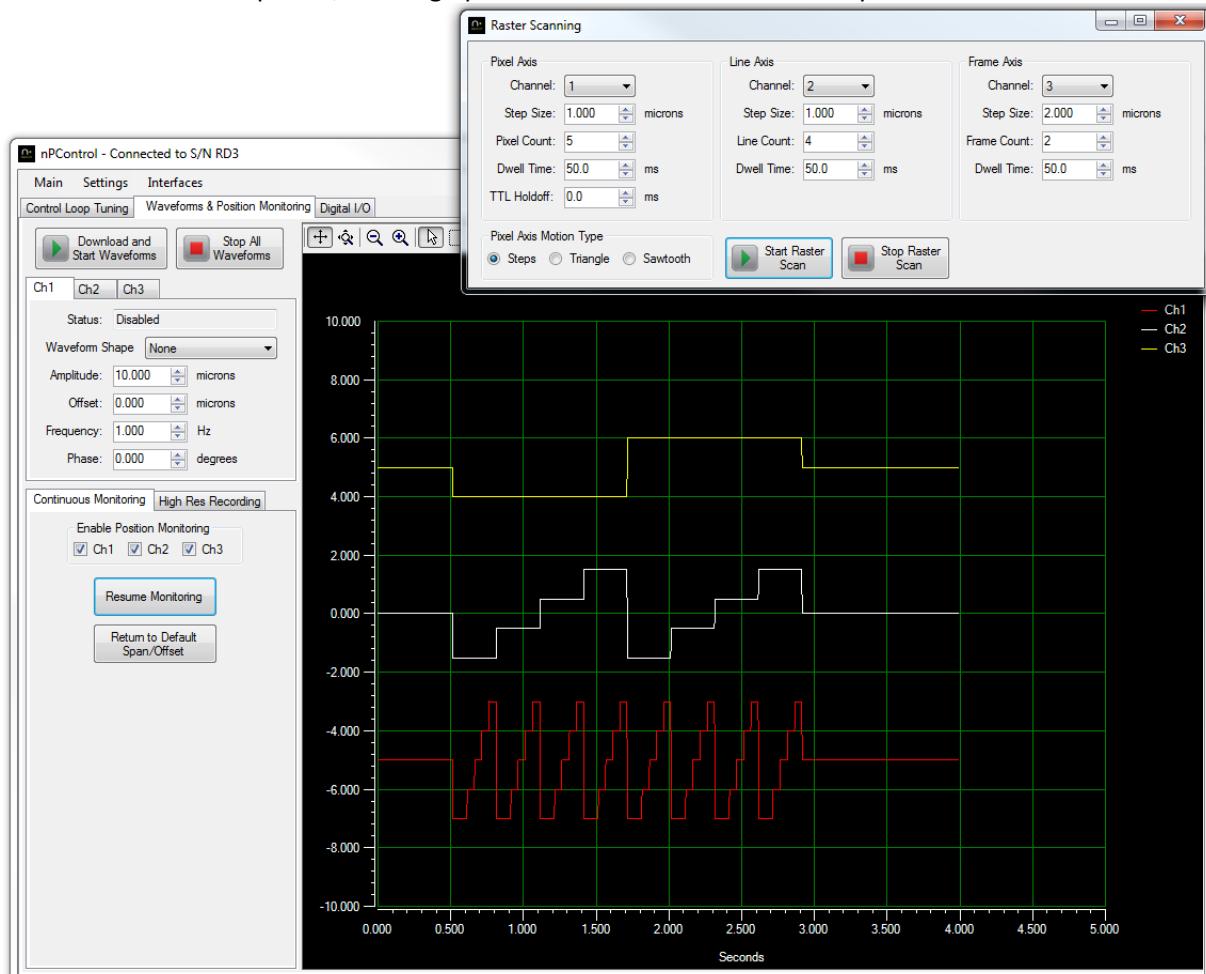


Figure 3-30: Raster scan stepping in the pixel (fast) axis.

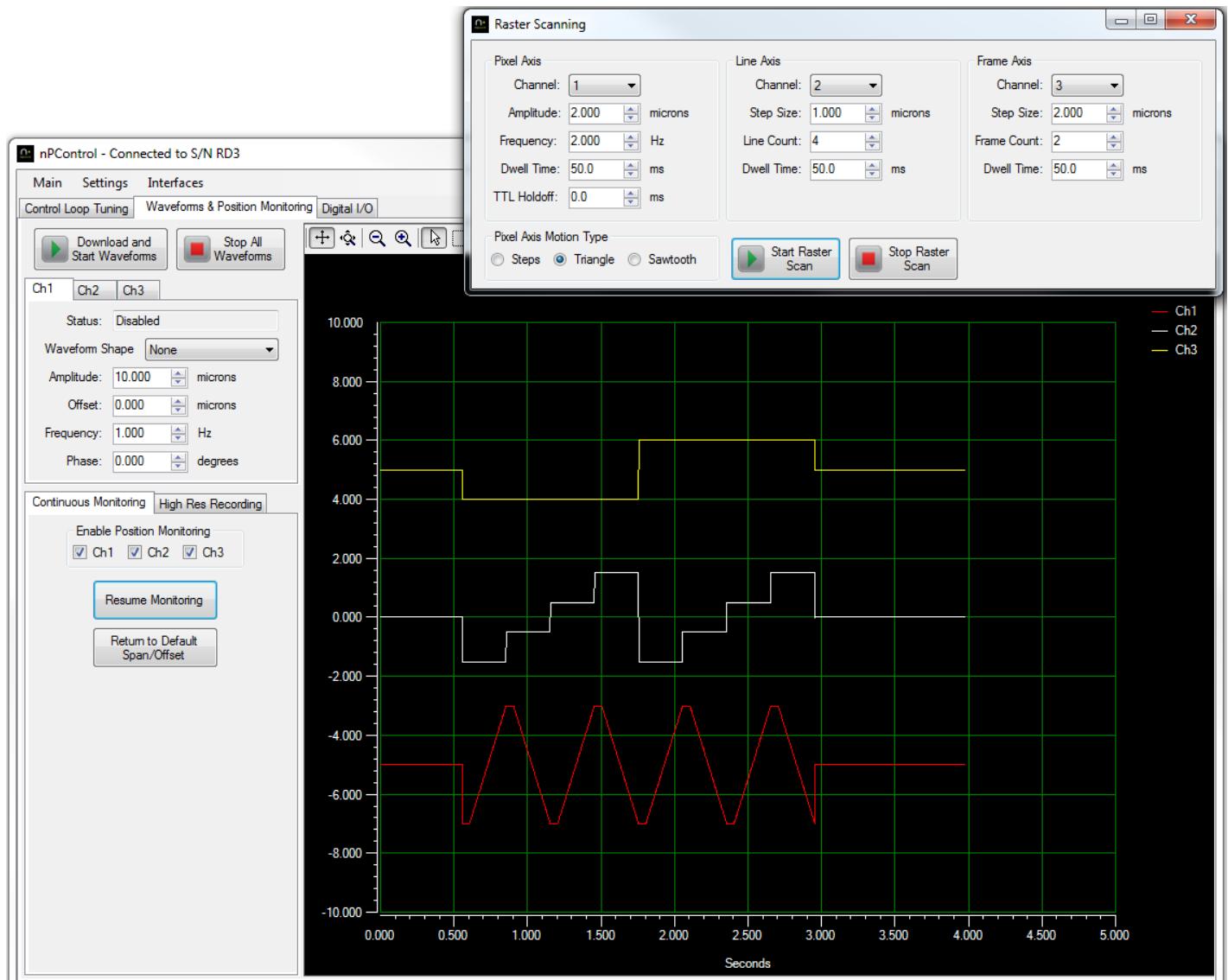


Figure 3-31: Raster scan with a triangle waveform shape in the pixel (fast) axis.

3.5.3 Spiral Scanning

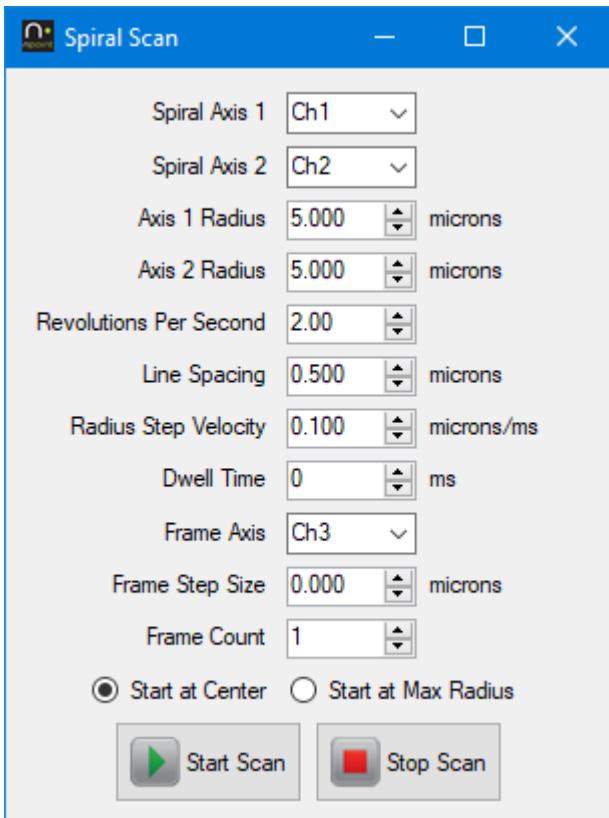


Figure 3-32: Spiral scan interface

The Spiral Scan interface can be accessed from the **Interfaces** menu. Spiral scanning is a 2 or 3 axis scan that uses a sine wave shape of increasing or decreasing amplitude in at least two axes. If multiple frames will be scanned, the frame axis moves to a new position prior to each frame.

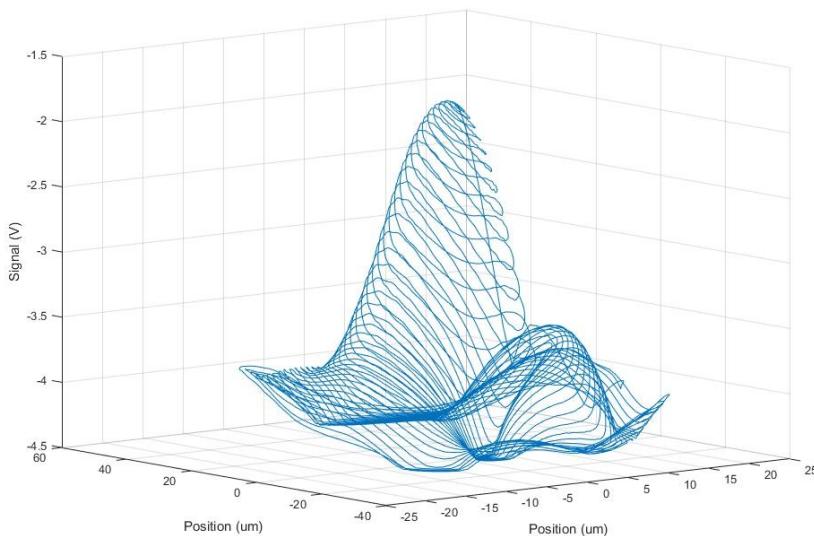


Figure 3-33: 3D plot of detector signal vs. spiral scan position. The detector signal was recorded using the LC.402 BNC analog input and High Resolution Recording controller function.

4.1 LC.400 USB Drivers

The drivers for the LC.400 USB interface are provided by Future Technology Devices International Ltd. Some LC.400 series controllers have two ports in the FTDI IC (A and B), however these controllers only use Port A. The FTDI drivers provide both a “Virtual COM Port” interface and a “direct” interface (FTDI refers to the direct interface as “D2XX”). The FTDI D2XX interface provides the fastest communication speed for applications where communication speed is critical. A Visual Studio .Net programming example is located on the provided CD-ROM. Additional programming examples for the FTDI D2XX interface are available at:

<http://www.ftdichip.com/Support/SoftwareExamples/CodeExamples.htm>

Visual Basic .NET programs can use the “managed .NET wrapper class” that can be downloaded in the C# section of the code examples.

To enable the “Virtual COM Port” interface in Windows OS, perform the following steps:

- 1) With the LC.400 series controller connected via USB and powered on, open the Device Manager.
- 2) In the Universal Serial Bus controllers section, right click on USB Serial Converter A and select “Properties”.
- 3) In the Advanced tab, check the “Load VCP” checkbox and click the “OK” button.
- 4) Unplug the controller USB cable, wait several seconds, and plug the USB cable back in.
- 5) In the device manager under “Ports” there will now be a listing for USB Serial Port followed by a COM port number.

Once the Virtual COM Port is enabled for a controller, a program can use standard COM port read and write functions to communicate with the LC.400 series controller via the COM port number assigned by the operating system.

4.2 Ethernet Interface

The optional Ethernet interface allows setup and control of the system on a network. The standard nPoint software can be used with the Ethernet interface as well as the standard communication protocol from your own program. When connecting from your own program, connect to port 23 of the controller hostname or IP address. The MAC address for the controller is located on a sticker near the controller Ethernet port, along with the hostname that the controller will request via DHCP. The requested hostname is “nPoint” (without quotations) followed by the last six digits of the MAC address.

If the hostname request is not compatible with your network, it is recommended that you set a DHCP reservation for the controller so that it retains the same IP address.

If the network does not use DHCP and you would like to set a static IP address, connect via USB and select System Information from the Settings Menu. Click the Set Ethernet Address button to set a static IP address. To return the nPoint controller to DHCP mode, set the IP Address to 0.0.0.0 with the Set Ethernet Address button.

When a port is open on the Ethernet connection, the controller will not respond to USB communication. Once the port is closed, a USB connection can be established. The Ethernet cable does not need to be unplugged to use the USB connection.

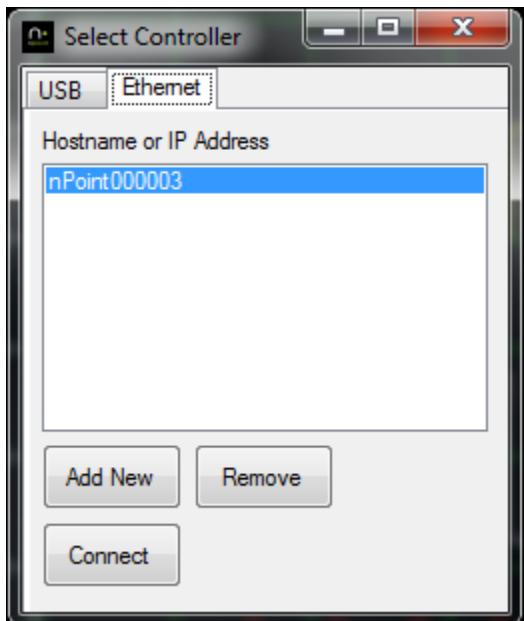


Figure 4-1: Connect via Ethernet with nPControl software.

To connect with the nPControl software, first add a hostname or IP address to the list. The list of hostnames and IP addresses will be saved on the PC for future use. Then double click the selection to connect, or click the Connect button after making a selection.

4.3 Memory Read/Write Commands

The following sections describe the commands needed to read and write values to the LC.400 series controller. The sample transmission text is written with the bytes sent from left to right, meaning that the A# byte is sent first and the 55 byte is sent last. The bytes in each element (such as [addr], [data] etc.) are transmitted with significance increasing (LSB transmitted first and MSB transmitted last).

4.3.1 Read Single Location Command

Number of bytes: 6

Format: 0xA0 [addr] 0x55

Return Value: 0xA0 [addr] [data] 0x55

Sample Hex Transmission from PC to C.400: A0 18 12 83 11 55

Sample Hex Return Transmission from LC.400 to PC: A0 18 12 83 11 64 00 00 00 55

The A0 command reads one 32 bit value from the specified address. In this sample the address used is 0x11831218 and the return data value is 0x64, or 100 in decimal. The address and data bytes are both 32 bit values, and are transmitted with significance increasing (LSB transmitted first and MSB transmitted last).

4.3.2 Write Single Location Command

Number of bytes: 10

Format: 0xA2 [addr] [data] 0x55

Return Value: none

Sample Hex Transmission from PC to C.400: A2 18 12 83 11 E8 03 00 00 55

The A2 command writes one 32 bit value to the specified address. In this sample the address used is 0x11831218 and the data value written is 0x3E8, or 1000 in decimal. The address and data are 32 bit values. Bytes are transmitted with significance increasing (LSB transmitted first and MSB transmitted last).

4.3.3 Read Array Command

Number of bytes: 10

Format: 0xA4[addr] [numReads] 0x55

Return Value: 0xA4 [addr] [data 1]....[data N] 0x55

Sample Hex Transmission from PC to C.400: A4 28 17 83 11 02 00 00 00 55

Sample Hex Return Transmission from C.400 to PC: A4 28 17 83 11 AE 47 E1 7A 14 AE F3 3F 55

The A4 command reads multiple 32 bit values starting at a specified memory address. In this sample the address used is 0x11831728 and the return data is a 64 bit float with a value of 1.23 = 0x3FF3AE147AE147AE. To maintain transmission integrity with slow computers using USB 1.1, testing has shown it is best to keep the number of values to read at 2000 or less. The address, number of values to read, and data are 32 bit values. Bytes are transmitted with significance increasing (LSB transmitted first and MSB transmitted last).

4.3.4 Write Next Command

Number of bytes: 6

Format: 0xA3[data] 0x55

Return Value: none

Sample Hex Transmission from PC to C.400: A3 E8 03 00 00 55

The A3 command increments the memory address pointer by 4 bytes after issuing a Write Single Location Command (described in section 4.3.2) to set the initial address, and then writes a 32 bit value to the new memory location. After the initial address is set, you can use multiple Write Next commands to continue incrementing the memory address. Care must be taken to not use a read command in between multiple Write Next commands. Read commands will also set the initial memory location. In this sample the data value written is 0x3E8, or 1000 in decimal. Bytes are transmitted with significance increasing (LSB transmitted first and MSB transmitted last).

4.4 Controller Memory Locations

4.4.1 Channel Base Memory Addresses

The nPoint LC.400 series controllers can have up to three stage axes populated in a single controller. The following base addresses are the start of the majority of memory locations of interest to the user. Note that the channels are separated by an offset of 0x1000.

Address	Description
0x11831000	Ch1 base address
0x11832000	Ch2 base address
0x11833000	Ch3 base address

4.4.2 Static Positioning Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x078	32 Bit Integer	Range - Stage axis range. For example, a 100 micron axis has a value of 0x64.
0x044	32 Bit Integer	Range Type – The type of units used for the Range parameter. 0 = microns 3 = radians 1 = millimeters 4 = nanometers 2 = μ radians 5 = milliradians
0x218	32 Bit Signed Integer	Digital Position Command - 20 bit digital position command (decimal range of +/-524287). For example, if travel range is 100 microns and you want to command the stage to move to +15 microns from center, you would set this address to 0x26666 = (1048574/100 * 15)
0x334	32 Bit Signed Integer	Digital Sensor Reading - 20 bit sensor reading for the current DSP cycle (decimal range of +/-524287). For example, if an axis is 100 microns and the sensor value was 15 microns from the center position, the sensor reading at this address would be 0x26666 = (1048574/100 * 15).

4.4.3 Control Loop Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x084	32 Bit Integer	Servo State – A value of 1 enables the servo loop, a value of 0 disables the servo (sets the channel to open loop).
0x720	64 Bit Float	Proportional Gain – Sets the proportional gain of the control loop.
0x728	64 Bit Float	Integral Gain – Sets the integral gain of the control loop.
0x730	64 Bit Float	Derivative Gain – Sets the derivative gain of the control loop.

4.4.4 Wavetable Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x1F4	32 Bit Integer	Wavetable Enable – A value of 1 enables wavetable scanning for the channel that will continue indefinitely, a value of 2 enables wavetable scanning for a specified number of iterations, a value of 0 disables wavetable scanning.
0x1F8	32 Bit Integer	Wavetable Index – The index of the wavetable point that will be output during the current clock cycle if the waveform is running. Users will typically want to set this to 0 before starting a waveform.
0x200	32 Bit Integer	Wavetable Cycle Delay – The number of clock cycles to wait before the next wavetable point is output. This can be used to achieve waveform shapes that are longer than two seconds. For example a Wavetable Buffer Size of 83,333 with a Wavetable Cycle Delay of 1 will have a period of 4 seconds.
0x204	32 Bit Integer	End of Wavetable Index – Specifies the waveform point index at which the controller will return to the first point of the waveform. This value should be set to the number of points in the buffer minus one (the first point is index zero). For example a 100 point waveform for channel 1 would have memory 0x11831204 set to a value of 99, and the last point would be located at memory address 0xC000018C. The maximum buffer size is 83,333 points, 2 seconds of data at full loop speed (1 clock cycle every 24 µsec).
0x208	32 Bit Integer	Wavetable Active – Set the value to 1 as a software trigger to start the wavetable output (if Wavetable Enable is also 1), a value of 0 will stop the wavetable output. This value will also be set to 1 or 0 by TTL I/O triggers if they are configured to start or stop the waveform.
0xD50	32 Bit Integer	Waveform Iterations – When running the waveform with a specified finite number of iterations, this offset should be initialized to the number of iterations. This offset will hold the specified iteration value.
0xD54	32 Bit Integer	Waveform Iterations Count – When running the waveform with a specified finite number of iterations, this offset should be initialized to the number of iterations. The value at this offset will be decremented by the DSP for each iteration.

The following table contains base addresses for the arrays of wavetable position points the controller will output when the wavetable is running. Each point in the array is a 20 bit digital position in the same format as the Digital Position Command in section 4.4.2. These addresses are not related to the channel base addresses.

Address	Description
0xC0000000	Ch1 wavetable base address
0xC0054000	Ch2 wavetable base address
0xC00A8000	Ch3 wavetable base address

4.4.5 Digital I/O Trigger Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x94	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 1 Function – Specifies the trigger type for pin 1 of the TTL I/O connector. It is recommended that the user does not program different functions (other than None) for different channels on the same pin. 0 = None 1 = Edge Triggered Start 2 = Level Triggered Start 3 = Edge Triggered Stop 4 = Level Triggered Stop 5 = Level Triggered Start and Stop 6 = Edge Triggered Pause and Resume 7 = Level Triggered Pause and Resume 8 = Raster Stepping Control 16 = Edge Triggered Start Recording
0x98	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 2 Function
0x9C	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 3 Function
0xA0	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 4 Function
0xB4	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 1 Polarity – Specifies the polarity for pin 1 of the TTL I/O connector. Note that if the user wants multiple channels to have a function for TTL Input Pin 1 with the same polarity, the polarity must be programmed for each channel individually. 0 = Rising Edge/Active High 1 = Falling Edge/ Active Low
0xB8	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 2 Polarity
0xBC	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 3 Polarity
0xC0	32 Bit Integer	TTL Input Pin 4 Polarity
0xF4	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 6 Function – Specifies the output type for pin 1 of the TTL I/O connector. An output pin should typically only have a function other than None for one channel at a time. 0 = None 5 = Waveform Index Clock 1 = Control Loop Error 6 = Raster Pixel Pulse 2 = Wavefrm/TG Index Level 7 = Raster Line Pulse 3 = Waveform Index Pulse 8 = Raster Frame Pulse 4 = General Fault 10 = Sensor Based Position Pulse
0xF8	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 7 Function
0xFC	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 8 Function
0x100	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 9 Function
0x114	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 6 Polarity – Specifies the polarity for Pin 6 of the TTL I/O connector. 0 = Rising Edge/Active High 1 = Falling Edge/Active Low
0x118	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 7 Polarity
0x11C	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 8 Polarity
0x120	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin 9 Polarity

0x154	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Error Function Tolerance – Specifies the control loop error threshold for the TTL Output Error function type. The threshold value is compared to the absolute value of the control loop error to determine the output state. This integer value is in 20 bit counts. Since this function operates inside the control loop, when scaling from Axis Distance Units to 20 bit counts the read only 32 bit single precision float scale factor from offset 0x22C must also be applied.
0x158	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Waveform Index Count – Specifies the number of low and high index pairs. For example, if two low indexes are specified and two high indexes are specified, the Index Count value should be 2 (not 4).
0x15C	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Off Index Array Base Offset – The base offset for an array of up to 16 waveform indexes. At the specified indexes, an output set to type Waveform Index Level will transition to the opposite level (High or Low depends on polarity). At the specified indexes an output function set to type Waveform Index Pulse will output a single pulse.
0x19C	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output On Index Array Base Offset – The base offset for an array of up to 16 waveform indexes. At the specified indexes, an output set to type Waveform Index Level will transition to the opposite level (High or Low depends on polarity). At the specified indexes an output function set to type Waveform Index Pulse will output a single pulse.
0xC60	32 Bit Integer	Sensor Based Position Pulse Spacing – Sets the stage travel between each pulse. This integer value is in 20 bit counts. Since this function operates inside the control loop, when scaling from Axis Distance Units to 20 bit counts the read only 32 bit single precision float scale factor from offset 0x22C must also be applied.
0xC64	32 Bit Integer	Sensor Based Position Pulse Offset – Sets the sensor value for the first output pulse. This integer value is in 20 bit counts. Since this function operates inside the control loop, when scaling from Axis Distance Units to 20 bit counts the read only 32 bit single precision float scale factor from offset 0x22C must also be applied.
0xC68	32 Bit Integer	Sensor Based Position Pulse Number of Pulses – Sets the number of pulses to specify the width of the pulse band.
0xC7C	32 Bit Integer	Sensor Based Position Pulse Hysteresis – Sets the amount the sensor must change from the most recent pulse before the output will pulse again. This can be set slightly higher than the sensor noise so that the output doesn't pulse constantly when the stage is holding at an output pulse position. Since this function operates inside the control loop, when scaling from Axis Distance Units to 20 bit counts the read only 32 bit single precision float scale factor from offset 0x22C must also be applied.
0xC6C	32 Bit Integer	Sensor Based Position Pulse Index - Set to zero when Sensor Based Position Pulse parameters are changed to ensure that the index is not out of range.

4.4.6 General Addresses

These are full addresses that are not related to the channel base addresses.

Address	Data Type	Description
0x118303A0	32 Bit Integer	Channel Boards Connected – Shows how many channels are physically present in the controller. The least significant six bits each represent a channel of the controller, with the least significant representing channel 1, and the third bit representing channel 3. If a channel board is physically present the bit will have a value of zero, if a board is not present it will have a value of 1. For example, if a controller had the first three channels populated with channel boards, the value at this memory address would be 0xFFFFFFFF8.
0x11829010	32 bit Integer	Save Configuration To Flash Command – Writing a value of 1 will save the current controller configuration to flash memory. The controller will subsequently power up with the current configuration. When the save to flash command has completed execution, this address will read 0 when queried. The save to flash command can take several seconds to execute. Care should be taken to not power down the controller during execution.
0x11829020	32 bit Integer	Save Wavetable Data To Flash Command – Writing a C.400 channel number will save the wavetable data for that channel to flash memory. When the save to flash command has completed execution, this address will read 0 when queried. The save to flash command can take several seconds to execute.

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x210	32 Bit Integer	BNC Analog Input Reading – A 20 bit value that represents the voltage at the analog input. For the standard -10V to +10V analog input circuit, divide the 20 bit value by approximately 51570 to scale to volts. Due to analog component tolerances, this scaling will be off by a small amount.
0x404	32 Bit Integer	Summed Position Command – A 20 bit value that represents all summed position commands used by the control loop. This includes static digital position, waveforms, and the BNC analog input or real-time digital interface if enabled as a position command. Prior to scaling from 20 bit counts to distance units, the read only 32 bit single precision float “inverse input scale factor” from offset 0x230 must also be applied.

4.4.7 Trajectory Generation Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0xB10	32 Bit Integer	Trajectory Generation Enable – A value of 1 enables trajectory generation for the channel, a value of 0 disables trajectory generation.

These are full addresses that are not related to the channel base addresses.

Address	Data Type	Description
0x11829048	32 Bit Integer	Start Trajectory – Send a value of 1 to start the trajectory path. This address will return a value of zero when the trajectory has completed.
0x1182904C	32 bit Integer	Stop Trajectory – Send a value of 1 to stop the trajectory path.
0x1182A000	32 bit Integer	Number of Trajectory Coordinates – Sets the number of coordinates in the trajectory path. The maximum number of coordinates is 500.
0x1182A004	32 bit Integer	Number of Trajectory Iterations – Sets the number of trajectory path iterations.
0x118304E8	32 bit Integer	TTL Control Pin Number – Sets the input pin number to be used for controlling the start of each trajectory move. A value of zero disables TTL trajectory control, and the specified dwell time is used prior to the next trajectory move.
0x118304EC	32 bit Integer	TTL Control Pin Polarity – Sets the polarity of the input pin used for controlling the start of each trajectory move. Set a value of zero for triggering on the rising edge, 1 for falling edge.
0x1182A6A0	Various	Trajectory Generation Parameters Array - Start address for the array of trajectory path parameters including coordinates, velocity limit, and dwell time. There are 10 parameters in a set, and a maximum of 500 sets. The 10 parameters in a set are as follows: 1. Ch1 Position (32 bit Integer)* 2. Ch2 Position (32 bit Integer)* 3. Ch3 Position (32 bit Integer)* 4. Ch4 Position (32 bit Integer)* 5. Ch5 Position (32 bit Integer)* 6. Ch6 Position (32 bit Integer)* 7. Velocity Limit for travel to next position (32 bit Float)** 8. Acceleration Limit for travel to next position (32 bit Float) 9. Jerk Limit for travel to next position (32 bit Float) 10. Dwell Time at current position (32 bit Integer)***

* Ch1 – Ch6 positions are sent to the controller in 20 bit counts from -524287 to +524287. This is the same as the digital position format described in Section 4.4.2.

** The Velocity Limit is sent to the controller in counts per control loop cycle. The Velocity Limit is scaled by determining the magnitude of the distance vector between the current coordinate and the next coordinate in both range units and in 20 bit counts. Then use the following equation:

$$\text{VelLimit(counts/control loop cycle)} = \text{VelLimit(range units/ms)} * \text{dCounts/dRangeUnits} * 0.024$$

An example of a 100 micron x 100 micron x 25 micron stage moving from 0,0,0 to 10,20,5 at 0.1 microns/ms velocity is as follows:

$$\text{counts/micron for 100 micron axis} = 1048574/100 = 10485.74$$

$$\text{counts/micron for 25 micron axis} = 1048574/25 = 41942.96$$

$$d\text{RangeUnits} = \sqrt{10^2 + 20^2 + 5^2} = 22.9128784747792$$

$$d\text{Counts} = \sqrt{(10 * 10485.74)^2 + (20 * 10485.74)^2 + (5 * 41942.96)^2} = 314572.2$$

$$VelLimit(\text{counts/control loop cycle}) = 0.1 * 314572.2 / 22.9128784747792 * 0.024 = 32.94973527$$

*** Dwell time is sent to the controller in control loop cycle counts. The control loop cycle is every 24 microseconds. For example a 1 second delay would be 41667 counts.

4.4.8 Raster Scan Addresses

These are full addresses that are not related to the channel base addresses.

Address	Data Type	Description
0x11830448	32 Bit Integer	Pixel ID – Set to the fast axis channel number, 0 = none
0x11830464	32 bit Integer	Line ID – Set to the slow axis channel number, 0 = none
0x11830480	32 bit Integer	Frame ID – Set to the slowest axis channel number, 0 = none
0x1183044C	32 bit Integer	Pixel Step Size – 20 bit number with the same counts per distance scale factor as the Digital Position Command in section 4.4.2
0x11830468	32 bit Integer	Line Step Size - 20 bit number with the same counts per distance scale factor as the Digital Position Command in section 4.4.2
0x11830484	32 bit Integer	Frame Step Size -20 bit number with the same counts per distance scale factor as the Digital Position Command in section 4.4.2
0x11830450	32 bit Integer	Pixel Step Count – The number of steps per line, 1 less than the total number of pixels.
0x1183046C	32 bit Integer	Line Step Count – The number of steps per frame, 1 less than the total number of lines.
0x11830488	32 bit Integer	Frame Step Count – The number of steps per scan, 1 less than the total number of frames.
0x11830454	32 bit Integer	Pixel Dwell Time - The number of control loop cycles to dwell after stepping to the next pixel. One control loop cycle = 24 μ sec
0x11830470	32 bit Integer	Line Dwell Time - The number of control loop cycles to dwell after stepping to the next line. One control loop cycle = 24 μ sec
0x1183048C	32 bit Integer	Frame Dwell Time - The number of control loop cycles to dwell after stepping to the next frame. One control loop cycle = 24 μ sec
0x11830458	32 bit Integer	TTL Holdoff Time - The number of control loop cycles prior to pulsing the pixel TTL output after stepping to a new pixel. One control loop cycle = 24 μ sec
0x1183045C	32 bit Integer	Index 1 – Fast axis waveform index at which the line axis should step to a new line.
0x11830460	32 bit Integer	Index 2 - Fast axis waveform index at which the line axis should step to a new line, for sawtooth type waveforms this can be set to a value higher than the number of waveform samples to “disable” it.
0x1182906C	32 bit Integer	Start Raster Scan – Set a value of 1 to start a stepping scan, set a value of 2 to start a waveform scan, set a value of 3 to start a TTL Input controlled raster scan. This will be set to a value of zero at the end of the scan for stepping and waveform scans. TTL Input controlled scans will start over again if the input continues to pulse.
0x11829070	32 bit Integer	Stop Raster Scan – Set a value of 1 to stop a raster scan.

4.4.9 Recording Addresses

These are full addresses that are not related to the channel base addresses.

Address	Data Type	Description
0x1183036C	32 Bit Integer	Number of Samples to Record – Sets the number of recording samples
0x118300F4	32 bit Integer	Control Loop Cycles Per Sample – Sets the number of 24 μ s control loop cycles for each sample. A value of zero or one will sample every 24 μ s, a value of 2 every 48 μ s, a value of 3 every 72 μ s, and so on.
0x1183037C	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 1 – The value of the controller address to record to

		Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 1.
0x11830380	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 2 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 2.
0x11830384	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 3 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 3.
0x11830388	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 4 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 4.
0x1183038C	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 5 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 5.
0x11830390	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 6 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 6.
0x11830394	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 7 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 7.
0x11830398	32 bit Integer	Record Pointer 8 – The value of the controller address to record to Buffer 1. A value of zero does not record anything to Buffer 8.
0xC03F0000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 1 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 1.
0xC0444000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 2 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 2.
0xC0498000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 3 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 3.
0xC04EC000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 4 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 4.
0xC0540000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 5 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 5.
0xC0594000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 6 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 6.
0xC05E8000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 7 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 7.
0xC063C000	32 bit Integer	Record Buffer 8 – The start address for the buffer that stores samples from the controller address specified by Record Pointer 8.
0x11830374	32 bit Integer	Start Recording – Write a value of 1 to start the recording. The DSP will set the value back to zero when the recording is completed. The value can be polled to determine when the recording has completed.

4.4.10 Spiral Scan Addresses

Address	Data Type	Description
0x118290D8	32 Bit Integer	Start Spiral Scan – Set to a value of 1 to start the spiral scan at the radius moving toward the center. Set to a value of 2 to start the spiral scan at the center moving toward the radius. When the scan has completed, the DSP will set this to a value of 0. The value can be polled by the PC to determine when the scan has completed.
0x11830510	32 bit Integer	Spiral Axis 1 – Sets the controller channel to be used for Axis 1.
0x11830514	32 bit Integer	Spiral Axis 2 – Sets the controller channel to be used for Axis 2.
0x11830518	32 bit Integer	Spiral Axis 3 – Sets the controller channel to be used for the Frame axis.
0x1183051C	32 bit Integer	Spiral Control Loop Cycles/Revolution – Sets the spiral scan revolutions per second. Each control loop cycle is 24 μ s, so use the formula $1/(0.000024 * \text{revs/sec})$ to determine the control loop cycles per revolution.
0x11830520	32 bit Integer	Spiral Radius 1 – Sets the Axis 1 scan radius in 20 bit counts. The scaling is the same as the Digital Position Command described in section 4.4.2.
0x11830524	32 bit Integer	Spiral Radius 2 – Sets the Axis 2 scan radius in 20 bit counts. The scaling is the same as the Digital Position Command described in section 4.4.2.
0x11830528	32 bit Integer	Spiral Line Spacing – Sets the spacing between lines in 20 bit counts. The scaling is the same as the Digital Position Command described in section 4.4.2.
0x1183052C	32 bit Integer	Spiral Radius Move Velocity – Sets the velocity of the move from the center to the radius or radius to the center in 20 bit counts per control loop cycle. The calculation for counts per control loop cycle is described in the Trajectory section 4.4.7.
0x11830530	32 bit Integer	Spiral Dwell Time – Sets the dwell time after the move from the center to the radius or radius to center in control loop cycle counts. Each control loop cycle is 24 μ s, so the formula is $\text{dwellSeconds}/0.000024$.
0x11830534	32 bit Integer	Spiral Frame Count – Sets the number of scan frames.
0x11830538	32 bit Integer	Spiral Frame Step Size – Sets the move size for Axis 3 between each frame. The scaling is the same as the Digital Position Command described in section 4.4.2.

5.1 Maintenance

- Periodically inspect the cooling vents on the case side to insure that they are not obstructed with dust or debris and clear as needed.
- Periodically inspect the fan grill on the back cover to insure that it is not obstructed with dust or debris and clear as needed.

5.2 Cleaning

If desired the outside surfaces of the case may be wiped with a damp cloth using a mild cleaner or water. Take care not to allow liquid to penetrate the seams as the controller case is not watertight.



This product has been tested to the requirements of CAN/CSA-C22.2 No. 61010-1, second edition, including Amendment 1, or a later version of the same standard incorporating the same level of testing requirements.

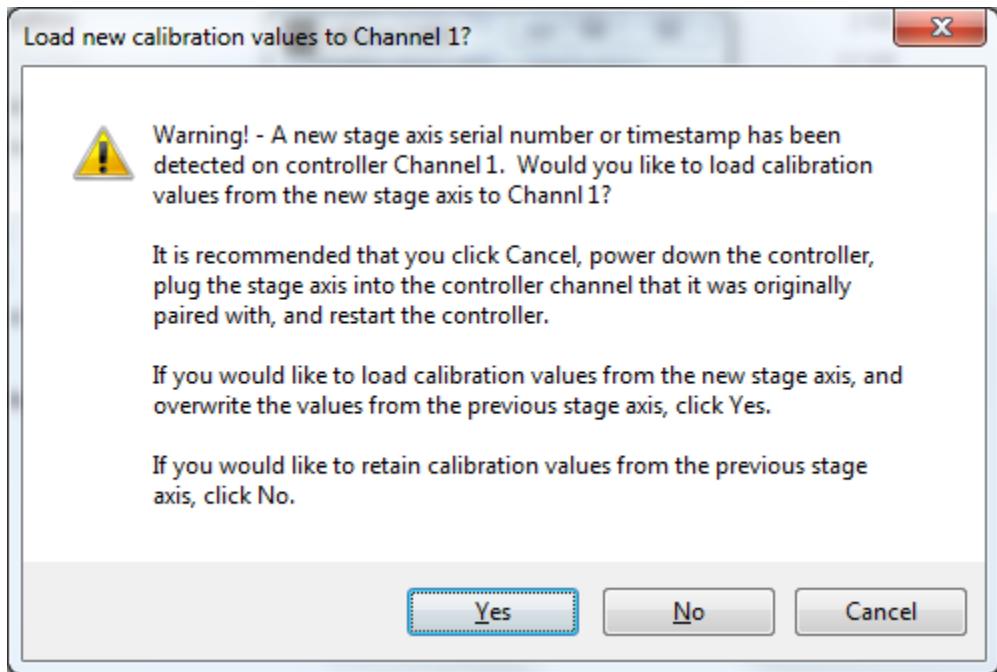
Appendix A

Specifications

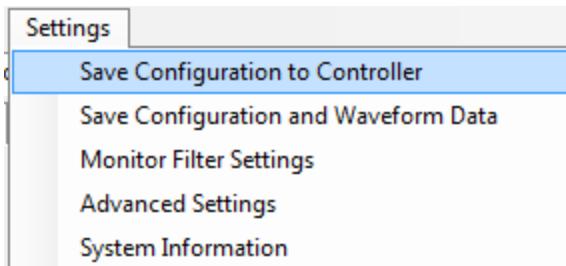
Number of Channels:	1 (LC.400), 2 (LC.402), 3 (LC.403)
Resolution:	20-bit
Processor:	32-bit floating point DSP
Sampling Rate:	24 μ sec servo-loop
Controller Interfaces:	USB 2.0 D9 or D15 Digital I/O with 4 inputs and 4 outputs, 3.3V TTL (5V tolerant Schmitt trigger) Optional: Ethernet, PFM, Encoder Input, High Speed Parallel, AFM (LC.403)
Channel Connectors:	BNC analog position command input (-10V to +10V) BNC analog sensor monitor output (-10V to +10V) 15-pin Dsub stage connector
Piezo Drive Voltage:	-30V to 150V
Piezo Drive Current:	100mA/channel
Sensor Type:	Capacitive or Strain Gage, others optional
Software:	nPControl Microsoft Windows PC Software LabVIEW and DLL drivers
USB OS Requirements:	Microsoft Windows XP/Vista/7/8/10, Linux, Mac OS X 10.4 or later
Operating Temperature:	10° C to 40° C
Maximum Relative Humidity:	80% to 31°C decreasing linearly to 50% at 40°C
Operating Altitude:	2000 meters maximum
Dimensions:	Height: 67 mm (LC.400 and LC.402), 88 mm (LC.403) Width: 106 mm (LC.400), 185 mm (LC.402), 260 mm (LC.403) Depth: 172 mm (LC.400), 240mm (LC.402), 264 mm (LC.403)
Weight:	1 kg (LC.400), 1.5 kg (LC.402), 3 Kg (LC.403)
DC Input Voltage:	12 VDC to 24 VDC
DC Input Current:	1.7 A max (LC.400), 3 A max (LC.402), 3.5 A max (LC.403)
Mains Voltage:	100 – 240 VAC, 50-60 Hz, recommended AC supply is CUI V-Infinity model ETMA120750U
Mains Current:	0.5 A max (LC.400), 1.0 A max (LC.402, LC.403)

When an nPoint stage and controller are shipped, the LC.400 series controller has the configuration of the stage that ships with it stored in controller memory. When connecting a different stage to the controller, the controller must read the calibration settings from the stage EEPROM in to the controller. To complete this process, please perform the following steps:

1. When connecting or disconnecting a stage axis from the controller, always power down the controller first.
2. Connect the new stage axis to the controller. Please make sure that the connector is fully plugged in and the two connector screws are tightened down.
3. Power on the controller. When a new stage axis is detected, the controller will start in open loop since the calibration settings and control loop tuning in the controller memory are for a previous stage axis. This prevents the stage from becoming unstable and oscillating.
4. Start the nPControl PC software version 1.1.5 or later. If you don't have the latest software, it can be downloaded from the nPoint FTP server at:
 ftp.npoint.com
 username = xnpoint-guest
 password = nPguest52
5. When the nPControl PC software connects to the controller, it will detect that the serial number and/or timestamp of the stage EEPROM does not match the values stored in controller memory. The nPControl PC software will then ask if you would like to load settings from the stage in to the controller for each channel, one at a time. Click “Yes” in the dialog box to load the settings from the stage EEPROM to the controller. After clicking “Yes”, the LED on the front of the controller will flash while the controller is reading the configuration from the stage EEPROM. Reading the EEPROM can take several minutes.



6. After the settings have been loaded for each channel that has a new stage axis, the software will start normally. The stage axes that had new configurations loaded will be in open loop, and have default control loop tuning loaded from the stage EEPROM. The control loop tuning should be adjusted to match your physical setup by adjusting the integral gain and notch filter settings. Please follow the control loop tuning procedure in the LC.400 series controller user manual, or use previously tested values.
7. After the stage performance is tested for each axis in Step 6, set each axis to the state you would like when the system is powered on (open loop or closed loop). In the Settings menu, click “Save Configuration to Controller” to save the configuration to controller flash memory. The configuration stored in the controller flash memory is loaded the next time the controller is powered on. This step is necessary so that the controller and stage configuration match, otherwise the process of loading the configuration from the stage axes will need to be repeated next time the controller is powered on.



General

The high speed digital interface has been designed to interface directly to a National Instruments PCIe-6535, PCIe-6536, or PCIe6537 32-bit DIO board. The timing of the 16-bit parallel transfers is straight forward hence the communication can be supported by other hardware as described in this document.

Position Monitoring

On the nPoint interface, data bits DIO16 through DIO31 are configured for 16-bit output, with DIO16 containing the LS bit and DIO31 the MS bit. These bits are used to read position monitoring data. Because position data is 20-bits, and the port is only 16-bits, position data for each channel is sent as two 16-bit words.

To receive the data for all three channels, six words are sent in sequence. The data is always sent in the following order:

Channel 1, LSW
Channel 1, MSW
Channel 2, LSW
Channel 2, MSW
Channel 3, LSW
Channel 3, MSW

The high speed digital position data is formatted as follows:

LSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	d3	d2	d1	d0	p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	i1	i0	0	e

MSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	d19	d18	d17	d16	d15	d14	d13	d12	d11	d10	d9	d8	d7	d6	d5	d4

d[19..0]: 20-bit position in Two's Complement (7FFFFh = positive full scale, 80000h= negative full scale, 00000h = 0)

p: parity bit (0 = even number of 1's in 20-bit data)

e: parity receive error in previous cycle 20-bit demand for this channel

i[1..0]: Channel ID ('01'= Channel 1, '10'=Channel 2, '11' = Channel 3)

Demand Input

On the nPoint interface, data ports DIO0 through DIO15 are configured for 16-bit input, with DIO0 containing the LS bit and DIO15 the MS bit. These bits are used to write position demand data. Because position data is 20-bits, and the port is only 16-bits, position data for each channel is sent as two 16-bit words.

To write the data for all three channels, six words are sent in sequence. The data is always sent in the following order:

Channel 1, LSW
Channel 1, MSW
Channel 2, LSW
Channel 2, MSW
Channel 3, LSW
Channel 3, MSW

The high speed digital demand data is formatted as follows:

LSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	d3	d2	d1	d0	p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n1	n0

MSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	d19	d18	d17	d16	d15	d14	d13	d12	d11	d10	d9	d8	d7	d6	d5	d4

d[19..0]: 20-bit position in Two's Complement (7FFFFh = positive full scale, 80000h= negative full scale, 00000h = 0)

p: parity bit (0 = even number of 1's in 20-bit data) The parity bit is optional, as it will not prevent the word from being used if wrong. If wrong, it will report an error bit in the position monitoring data for that channel (See Position Monitoring section).

n[1..0]: data enable ('01' = enable) The lower two bits of the LSW must be '01' to indicate new data. If they are any other combination, ie, '00', '10', or '11', the previous data sample is used. This may be useful when you wish to set your output buffer to all 0's or 1's to maintain the current stage position. However, setting '10' is used to indicate configuration data words (See Configuration section). For example, setting the output buffer to all 0's is one method to maintain the current stage position without having to repeatedly update the buffer.

Configuration

If the lower two bits of the first demand word are '10', that word along with the following word will be treated as configuration data. Other words sent in the same data cycle will be ignored.

There are three configuration parameters that must be set in these two words before using the high speed port:

1. Number of channels to be enabled for digital demand (e[1..0]). This can be 0, 1, 2, or 3. If set to 0, the high speed port is only being used for monitoring and all three analog inputs on the controller are still active. If set to 1, then channel 1 will use digital demand and channels 2 and 3 will use analog. If set to 2, then channels 1 and 2 will use digital demand and channel 3 will use analog. If set to 3, then all 3 channels will use digital demand and all three analog inputs are disabled. ***Once enabled, digital demand for a channel cannot be disabled until controller reset (cycle power).***
2. Number of positioning monitoring channels to read on the high speed port (m[1..0]). This can be 1, 2, or 3. If set to 1, then channel 1 monitoring is enabled. If set to 2, then channels 1 and 2 are enabled. If set to 3, then all three channels are enabled. There will always be at least channel 1 enabled for monitoring. If set to 0, channel 1 will still be enabled. The analog monitoring outputs always remain enabled in addition to the high speed digital monitoring.
3. The interval multiplier, a 16-bit value set in the second configuration word (i[15..0]. The number will multiply the full speed interval (24 μ sec) to extend the update interval beyond the full speed for situations where it may not be necessary. If set to 0 or 1, the interval will be 24 μ sec. If set to any other value, the interval will be (i * 24) μ sec.

The two configuration words are formatted as follows:

LSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	m1	m0	e1	e0	1	0	

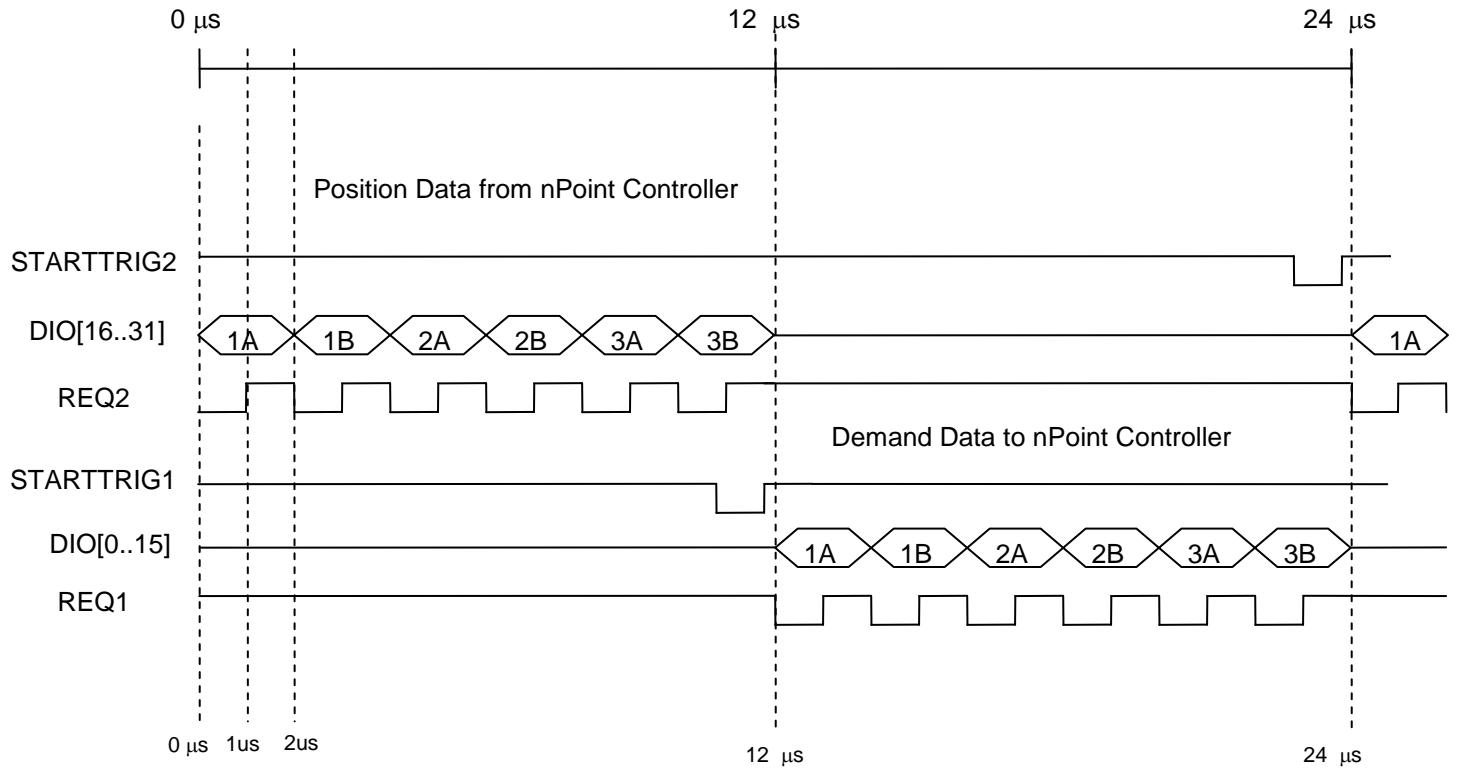
MSW:

Bit	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value	i15	i14	i13	i12	i11	i10	i9	i8	i7	i6	i5	i4	i3	i2	i1	i0

x = not used

Timing

Data is strobed on rising edge of REQ2 and REQ1, outputs from the nPoint interface. In the timing diagram below, 0 μ s = 24 μ s.



On National Instruments 6535/6536/6537 devices:

STARTTRIG 1 = PFI 1

REQ1 = PFI 4

STARTTRIG 2 = PFI 2

REQ2 = PFI 5

Connector Pin-out and Considerations

Pin 68, 'CABLE_DETECT', must be connected to GND (0V) to enable the interface. This input is pulled up to +3.3V via a 50K resistor in the nPoint interface.

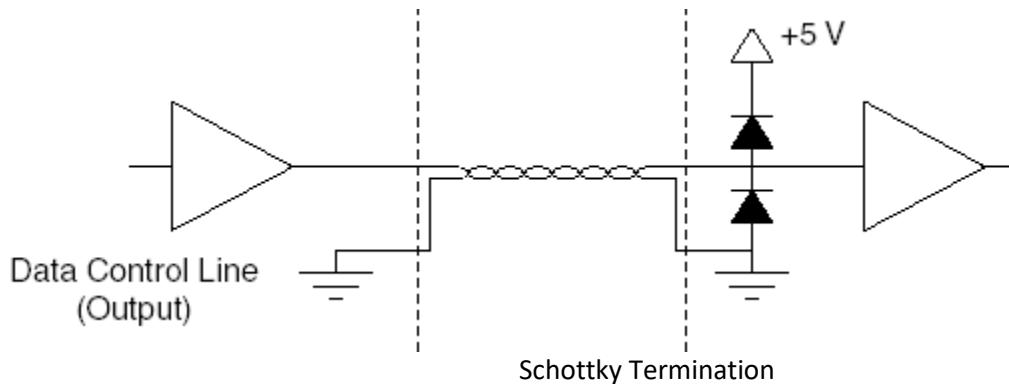
The data and control output signals, STARTTRIG1, REQ1, STARTTRIG2, and REQ2, are interfaced using 74ACT244 line drivers. The output voltage swing is 5V.

The connector on the nPoint interface is a 68-pin VHDCI receptacle connector. nPoint uses a R/A Molex 71430-0008 connector. Compatible interface cables with plug mating connectors on both ends are available in several different lengths from National Instruments, part number 196275-01, SHC68-C68-D4 Shielded Single-Ended Cable.

DIO 31	1	35	DIO 30
GND	2	36	GND
DIO 29	3	37	DIO 28
GND	4	38	GND
DIO 27	5	39	DIO26
GND	6	40	GND
DIO 25	7	41	DIO24
RESERVED	8	42	GND
DIO 23	9	43	DIO 22
GND	10	44	GND
DIO 21	11	45	DIO 20
GND	12	46	GND
DIO 19	13	47	DIO 18
GND	14	48	GND
DIO 17	15	49	DIO 16
GND	16	50	GND
DIO 15	17	51	DIO 14
GND	18	52	RESERVED
DIO 13	19	53	DIO 12
GND	20	54	GND
DIO 11	21	55	DIO 10
GND	22	56	GND
DIO 9	23	57	DIO 8
GND	24	58	GND
DIO 7	25	59	DIO 6
STARTTRIG 1 (PFI 1)	26	60	RESERVED
DIO 5	27	61	DIO 4
GND	28	62	GND
DIO 3	29	63	DIO 2
RESERVED	30	64	STARTTRIG 2 (PFI 2)
DIO 1	31	65	DIO 0
GND	32	66	GND
REQ 1 (PFI 4)	33	67	REQ 2 (PFI 5)
GND	34	68	CABLE_CONNECT

68-pin Connector Pin-out

For the 16 output data lines, DIO[16..31], and the four control signals, STARTTRIG1, REQ1, STARTTRIG2, and REQ2, it is recommended to use a Schottky diode termination on each of the lines at the user equipment.



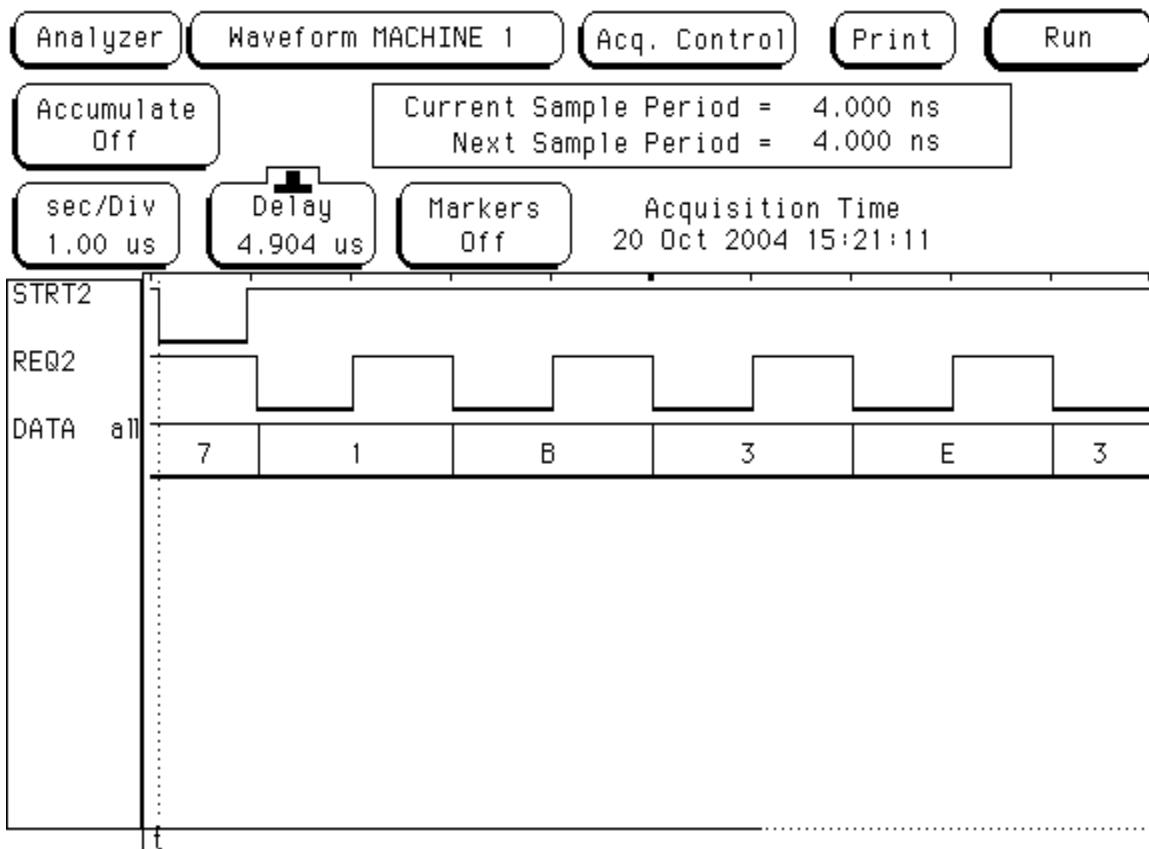
From the National Instruments NI-6534 manual:

"One suitable Schottky diode is the 1N5711, available from several manufacturers. For more specialized use, you may be able to find diodes packaged in higher densities appropriate to your application. For example, the Central Semiconductor CMPSH-35 contains two diodes, suitable for terminating one line. The California Micro Devices PDN001 contains 32 diodes, suitable for terminating 16 lines."

It is not necessary to add diodes to terminate the user's output signals. The nPoint interface contains onboard Schottky diode termination for the DIO[0..15] data lines.

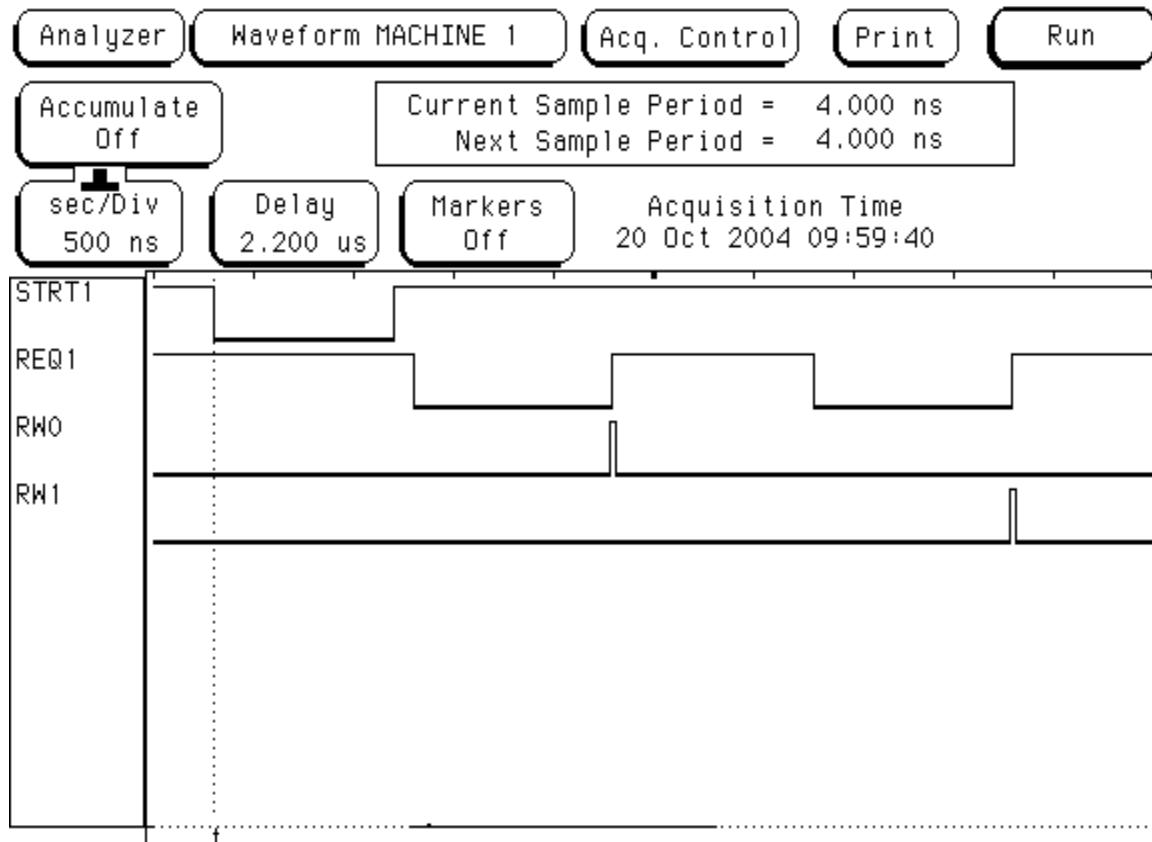
Timing Waveforms

The picture below shows an actual capture of the positioning monitoring signals. The STARTTRIG2 (STRT2) signal may be used for synchronization. Note that the 16-bit data bus changes on the falling edge of REQ2 and should be clocked in on the rising edge.



Position Monitoring Timing

The picture below shows an actual capture of the Demand Input signals. STARTTRIG1 (STRT1) may be used for synchronization. The signals RW0 and RW1 are internal FPGA signals brought out to test points to show when the data bus is read for the first two (of the six) 16-bit words. User demand data is clocked in on the rising edge of these signals. Therefore, the data should be stable for at least 100ns before and after the rising edge of REQ1. Normally the user would place new data on the bus on the falling edge of REQ1.



Demand Input Timing

Overview

The nPoint PFM (Pulse Frequency Modulation) Interface is designed to receive position commands and output position data in real-time. Position demand data is received as standard Pulse/Direction logic signals. Position monitor reporting by the LC.400 is output as standard differential quadrature A, B, and Z signals. An input/output scaling function is also provided by the interface. Positive and negative End of Travel (EOT) limit switch outputs are also provided for each axis.

PFM Pulse (Pin 15) / Direction (Pin 8)

The nPoint receivers are TTL compatible. TTL low is defined as 0V to 0.8V and high is defined as 2.0V to 5.0V. These inputs are compatible with either 5V or 3.3V logic. The nPoint interface has 10K ohm pull-down resistors on these inputs. The minimum pulse width is 100ns and the minimum time between pulses is 250ns. Direction change must be a minimum of 100ns prior to the next pulse.

PFM Scaling

The nPoint interface has a 3-bit scalar select function. The purpose of this is to allow the Pulse/Direction inputs to command larger steps if 20-bit resolution is not needed for a particular application. Scaling is selected by a 3 position DIP switch at the rear of the interface. This is only accessible by dropping the back panel of the controller (remove 2 panel screws). The switch is only read on power-up.

3-bit Scalar Select	PFM Increment
000	1
001	2
010	4
011	8
100	16
101	32
110	64
111	128



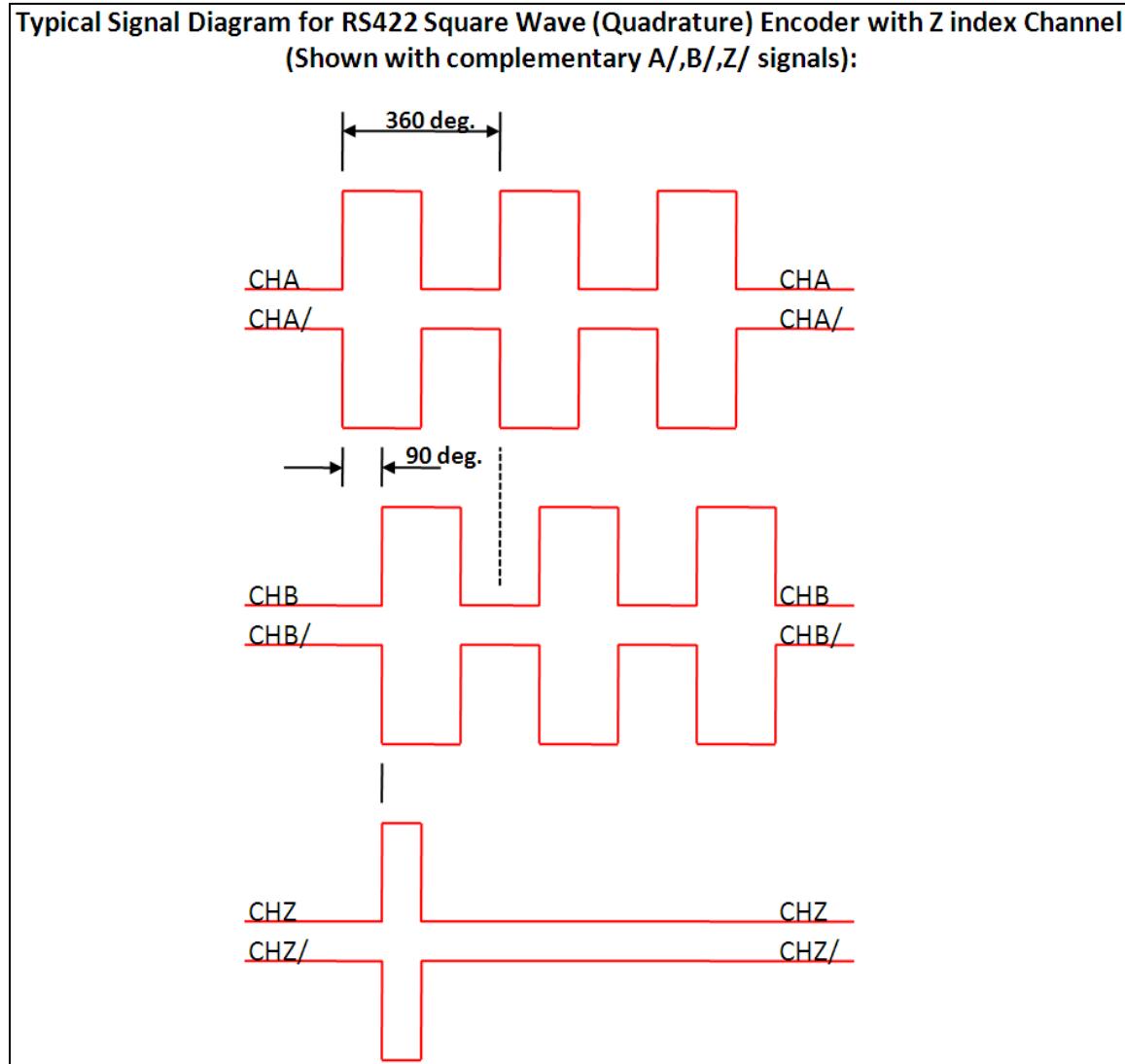
Position Monitoring Data

The nPoint position monitoring is supplied as a standard 5V compatible differential quadrature outputs A and B with Z-index channel output. This is an RS-422 type driver.

Minimum time for 360 degrees as shown below is 500ns. Therefore the fastest A to B edge changes (90 degrees) is 125ns.

If 125ns is too fast for the quadrature encoder receiving system they can be extended through the use of the Pulse/Direction scaling. These times will be multiplied by the scaling factor of the Pulse/Direction inputs. For example, if the scaling factor is x4, the fastest A to B edge change is 500ns.

Whenever the reported position crosses the mid-point (zero), the Z index will toggle.



End of Travel (EOT) Limit Switches , Positive (Pin 1), Negative (Pin 9)

There are two simulated EOT switches per axis. The purpose of the EOT switches is to signal the PFM controller when motion is near either end of the axis so that the controller can decelerate the motion before reaching the end of the range. They are set by default to 1% before the end of the range. This value can be changed by request.

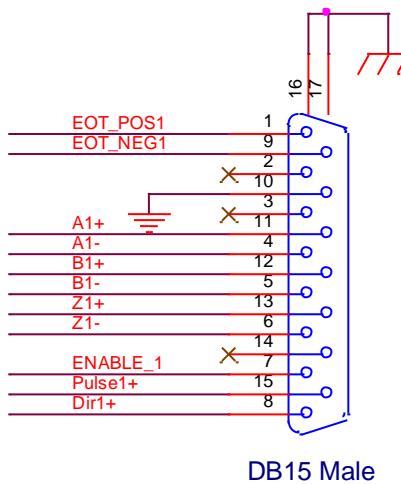
The EOT outputs are active high, 5V.

Enable (Pin 7)

Pin 7 on the interface connector is an active high Enable input which must be pulled to 3.3V or 5V to enable the PFM function on the LC.400. It has an internal 10K ohm pull-down resistor to GND. Toggling this pin is also a way to reset the Pulse/Direction counter to zero (mid-range) on all axes.

Interface Connector

The interface connector is a R/A pcb mounted standard 15-pin male DSUB. Use pin 10 as the GND reference for all signals.



DB15 Male

Appendix E

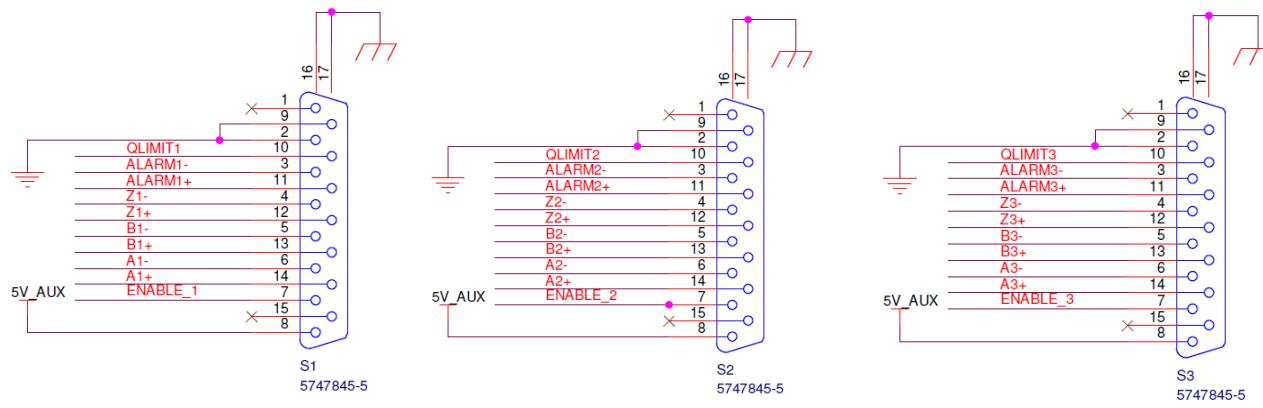
Digital Encoder Interface

Overview

The nPoint Digital Encoder Interface enables integration of an nPoint nanopositioning system with a quadrature encoder. The encoder signal is used instead of an internal sensor signal (such as capacitive or strain gage sensor) thus maintaining the functionality of the LC.400 series controllers. This interface is intended to allow the use of optical or interferometric encoders as the sensor input to an nPoint nanopositioning system.

The functionality and connector signals of the nPoint Digital Encoder Interface for the LC.403 are defined below. The interface connects directly to standard RS-422 type differential quadrature encoder outputs. A separate 15-pin Dsub socket is provided for each of the 3 channels.

15-pin Connector Schematic



Note: These are standard 15-pin Dsub sockets. Renishaw REE series interpolators match the above pinout and may be plugged directly into the back of the LC.403 or use an appropriate multi twisted pair extension cable, plug to socket.

Signal Descriptions

Notes about RS-422 signals: The following are RS-422 signal pairs: **A, B, Z, ALARM**. These signals are terminated with 110 ohms inside the Npoint controller.

'A and B': A1+ / A1- and B1+/B1- are the differential quadrature AB signals from the interpolator for channel 1. Channels 2 and 3 are the same.

'Z' : Z1+/Z1- are the differential quadrature Z signals from the interpolator for channel 1. Channels 2 and 3 are the same. This may not be functional in the Npoint system as shipped. Check with Npoint if this functionality is needed.

'ALARM': ALARM1+/ALARM1- are the differential quadrature ALARM signals from the interpolator for channel 1. Channels 2 and 3 are the same. This signal is provided by the interpolator to indicate that the A/B signals are NOT good, such as:

- Incremental signal <20% of nominal
- Incremental signal >135% of nominal
- Readhead speed in excess of specification

- Signal offset excessive

'QLIMIT': QLIMIT1 is an optional limit switch input, active low. This may not be functional in the Npoint system as shipped. Check with Npoint if this functionality is needed.

'5V_AUX': 5VDC @ 330 mA is available for each channel to power interpolater electronics. If not needed or desired a zero ohm resistor (R44) should be removed from the interface board.

'ENABLE_X': 5VDC is detected on this pin by the interface to know that an interpolator is connected. This enables the channel to use the quadrature input as the sensor.

Status LED's

The LED on the back of the interface indicates status of the connection for each channel.

LED State	Description
OFF	No encoder attached
Red	Encoder detected but the ALARM signal is active
Green	Encoder signal good

Software Commands

The user may send the following commands via the USB interface. See the controller user manual for details on the command structure.

Set position zero

Write to address h'EC000004'

Lower 3 bits of data are channel zeroing bits.

Send a "1" to set the sensor to zero

Bit	31-3	2	1	0
Value	x	z3	z2	z1

z1 is channel 1

z2 is channel 2

z3 is channel 3

This bit is cleared automatically so there is no need to send "0" after sending "1".

Enable Encoder Interface Channel

Write to address h'EC000000'

Lower 3 bits of data are enable bits, active low.

Bit	31-3	2	1	0
Value	x	e3	e2	e1

Send a "0" to enable the encoder interface channel, otherwise controller uses the internal sensor.

e1 is channel 1

e2 is channel 2

e3 is channel 3

Set Sensor Gain

Ch1 Sensor Gain address: h'11831245'

Ch2 Sensor Gain address: h'11832245'

Ch3 Sensor Gain address: h'11833245'

Sensor Gain is a 32 bit floating point value. The formula to calculate the gain is:

$$\frac{1048576}{\frac{\text{Stage Range in microns}}{\text{Encoder Counts Per Micron}}}$$

Read status

Read address h'11820024'

Bit	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23-0
Value	0	s3	s2	s1	0	e3	e2	e1	x

s1 is channel 1 signal status

s2 is channel 2 signal status

s3 is channel 3 signal status

Signal status bit is "1" when there is an alarm fault, "0" when the signal is good

e1 is channel 1 enable status

e2 is channel 2 enable status

e3 is channel 3 enable status

Appendix F

AFM Interface Specifications

Overview

nPoint nanopositioning systems are often integrated into commercial AFMs to provide closed-loop scanning functionality. nPoint facilitates the integration for Bruker or Agilent AFMs by providing a built-in AFM interface. The AFM interface is only available in LC.403 controllers.

AFM interface functionality

A photo of the back panel of the LC.403 with an AFM interface is shown below.



The AFM interface is installed in-between the Microscope and the AFM controller. The cable from the AFM now plugs into the connector labeled “TO MICROSCOPE”. The cable provided by nPoint plugs into the connector labeled “TO AFM CONTROLLER” and the AFM controller.

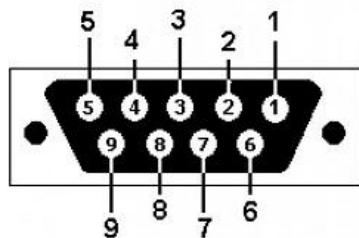
The two toggle switches enable the user to select the nPoint scanner or the original AFM scanner. This functionality is particular useful when the original AFM scanner is physically present even after the nPoint scanner is integrated (as is the case in Dimension™ AFMs). The Z SCANNER Selection switch is disabled when an XY-only scanner is integrated in the AFM.

When the switches point towards “npoint” the analog input BNC’s on the front panel are disabled.

1. Overview

The position error provided by the LC.400 and C.400 series of controllers is the calculated difference between the summed position input command, and the nanopositioner sensor reading. The position error is calculated during every 24 microsecond control loop cycle. The position error can be used to evaluate how control loop tuning affects position tracking accuracy, and the position error can be used to determine if there is a system malfunction. The position error can be recorded in nPControl PC software, used for an error threshold TTL output signal, or read via USB from a user program.

The TTL inputs and outputs correspond to the DB9 pinout as follows:



DB9 pins 1-4: Input 1-4

DB9 pin 5: Ground

DB9 pins 6-9: Output 1-4

2. Recording the Position Error in the nPControl PC Software

The position error can be recorded in the High Resolution Recording section of nPControl Waveform tab. Below is an example of the position error recorded for a conservatively tuned 100 micron nanopositioner.

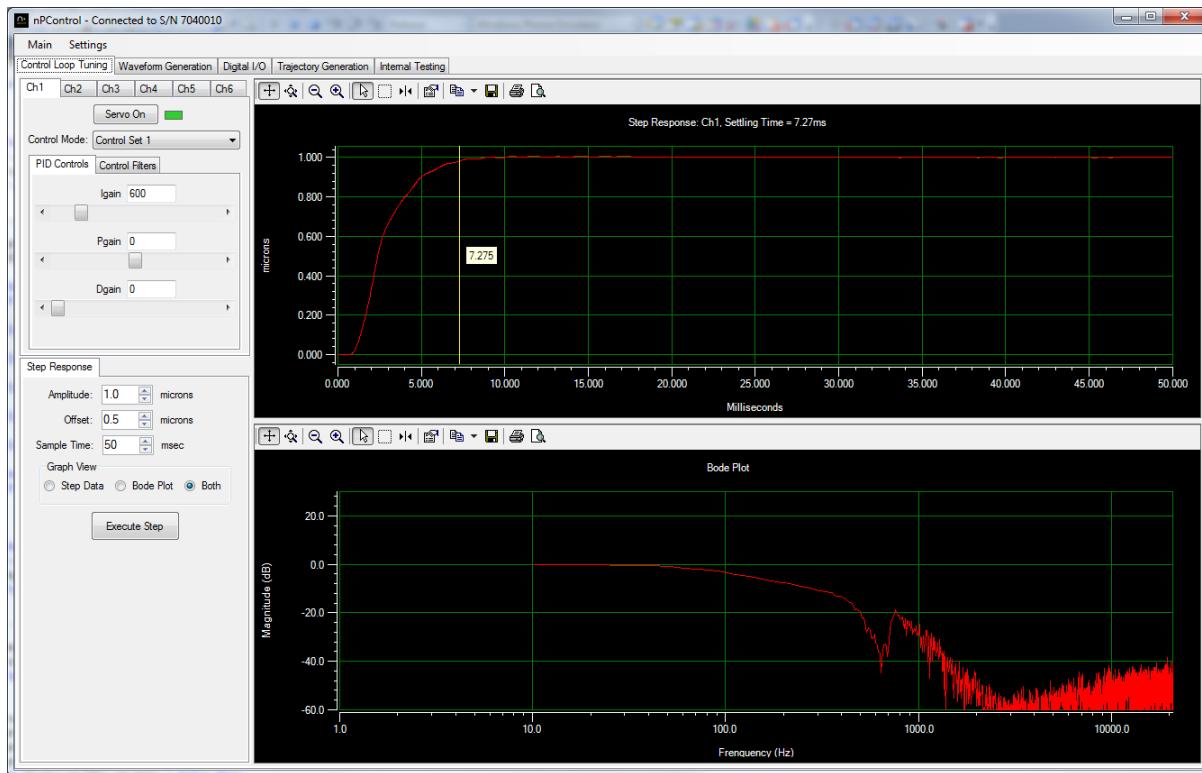


Figure 1: Conservative control loop tuning with a settling time of 7.3 milliseconds

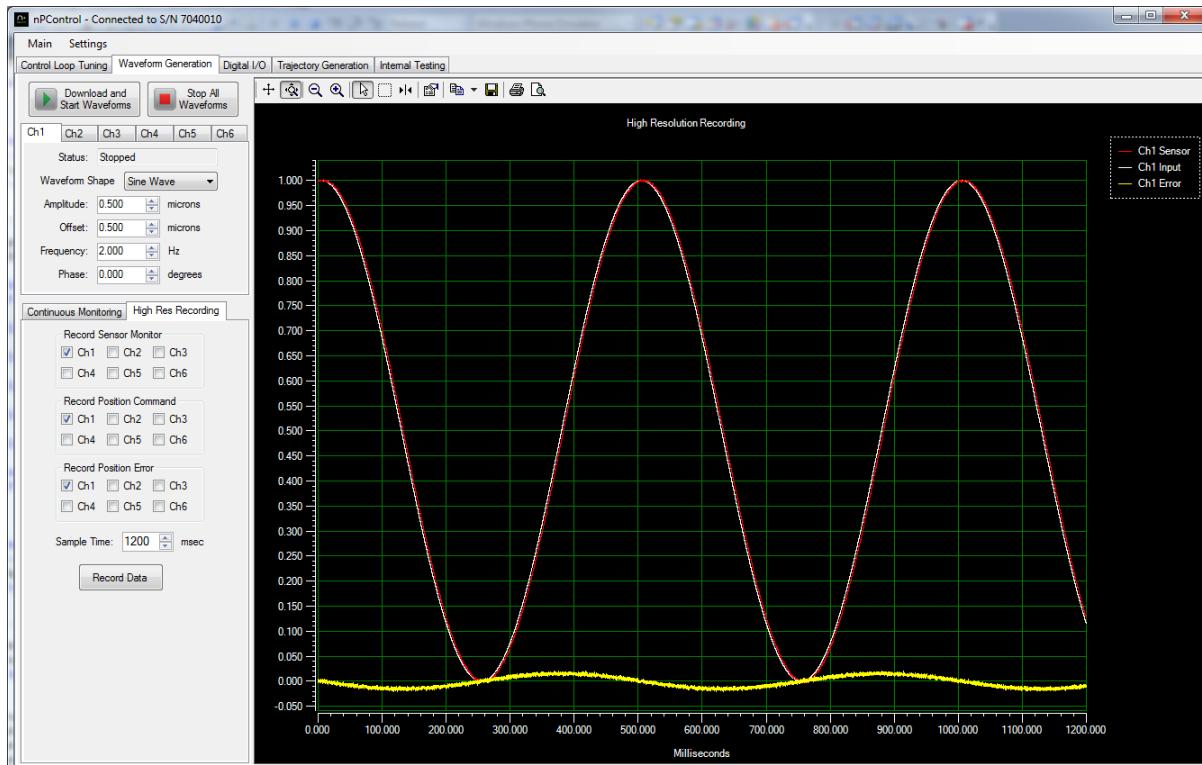


Figure 2: Tracking Error of +/- 15 nanometers scanning a 1 micron peak to peak sine waveform

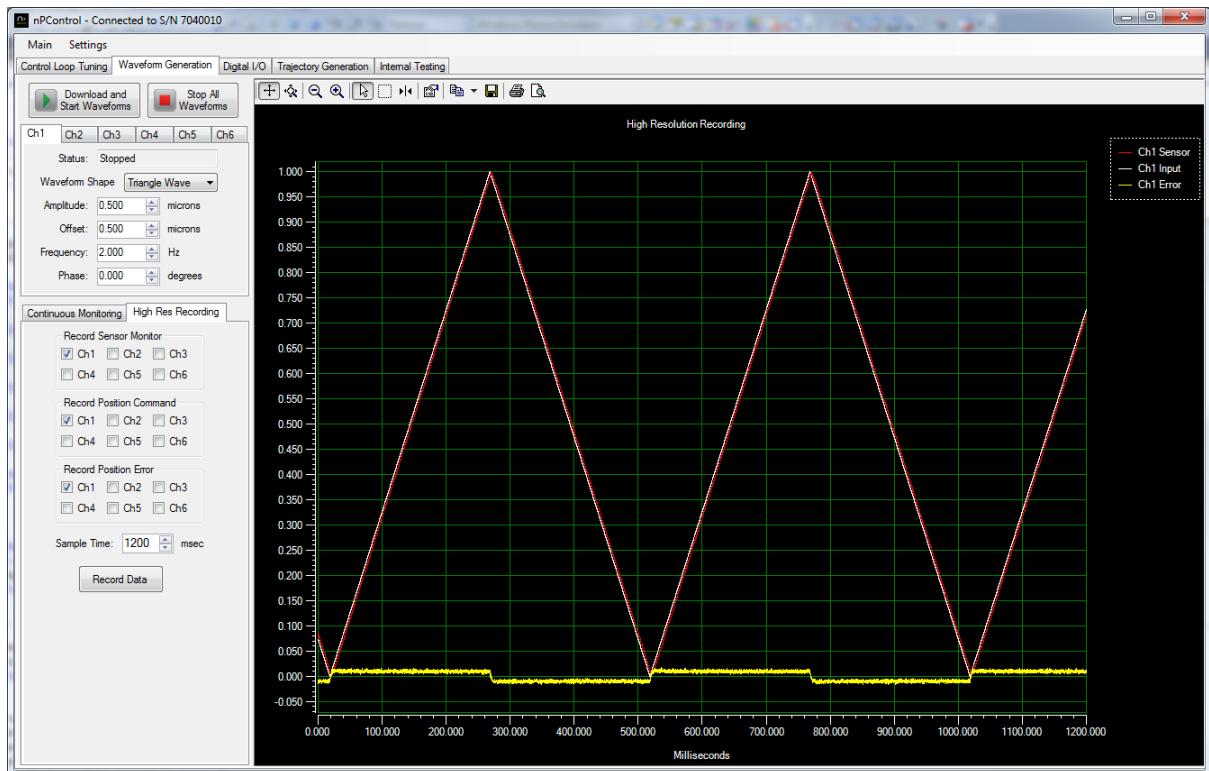


Figure 3: Tracking error of +/- 12 nanometers scanning a 1 micron peak to peak triangle waveform shape

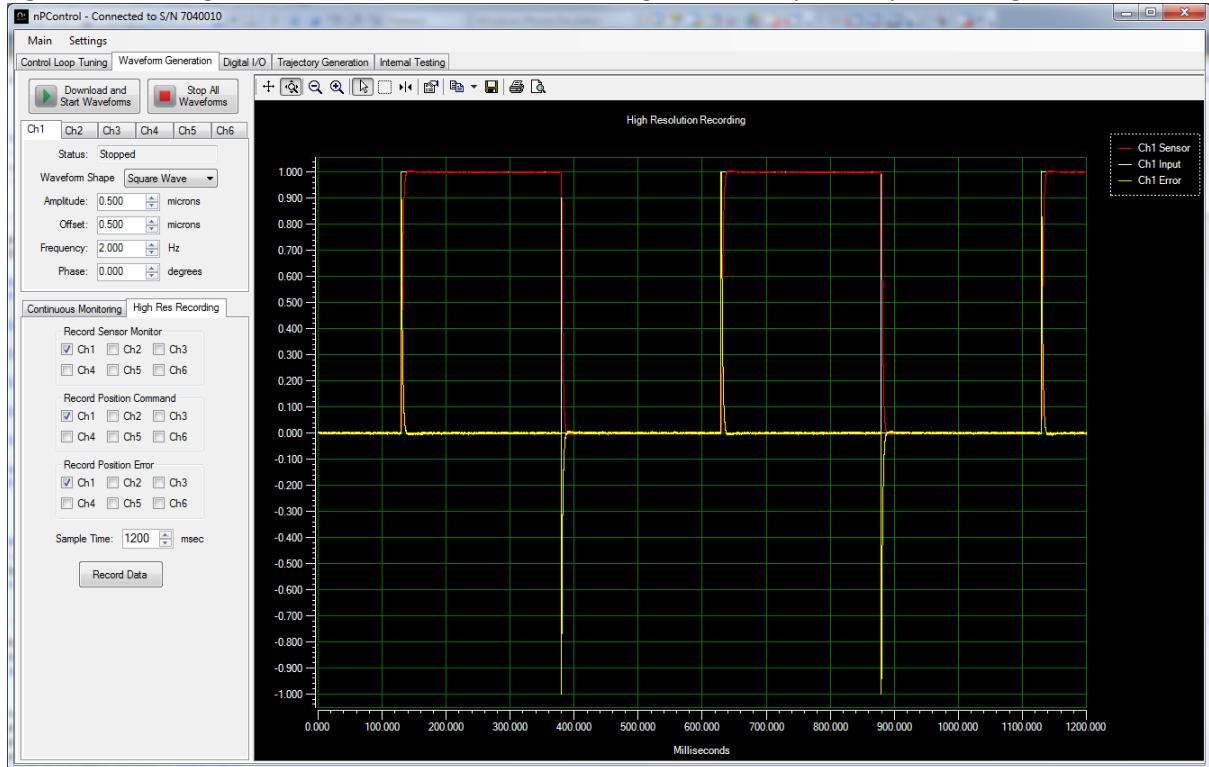


Figure 4: Tracking error of +/- 1 micron for short periods of time due to the instantaneous change in position command scanning a 1 micron peak to peak square waveform shape

3. Error Threshold TTL Output Signal

Using the nPControl PC software, the controller TTL output signals can be independently programmed to activate when the position error is above or below a specified threshold. After “Control Loop Error” is selected in the dropdown box for an output pin function, the user can then select a controller channel and specify an Error tolerance level. A polarity of “Active High” sets the TTL output high when the error level is below the specified tolerance. A polarity of “Active Low” sets the TTL output high when the error level is above the specified tolerance.

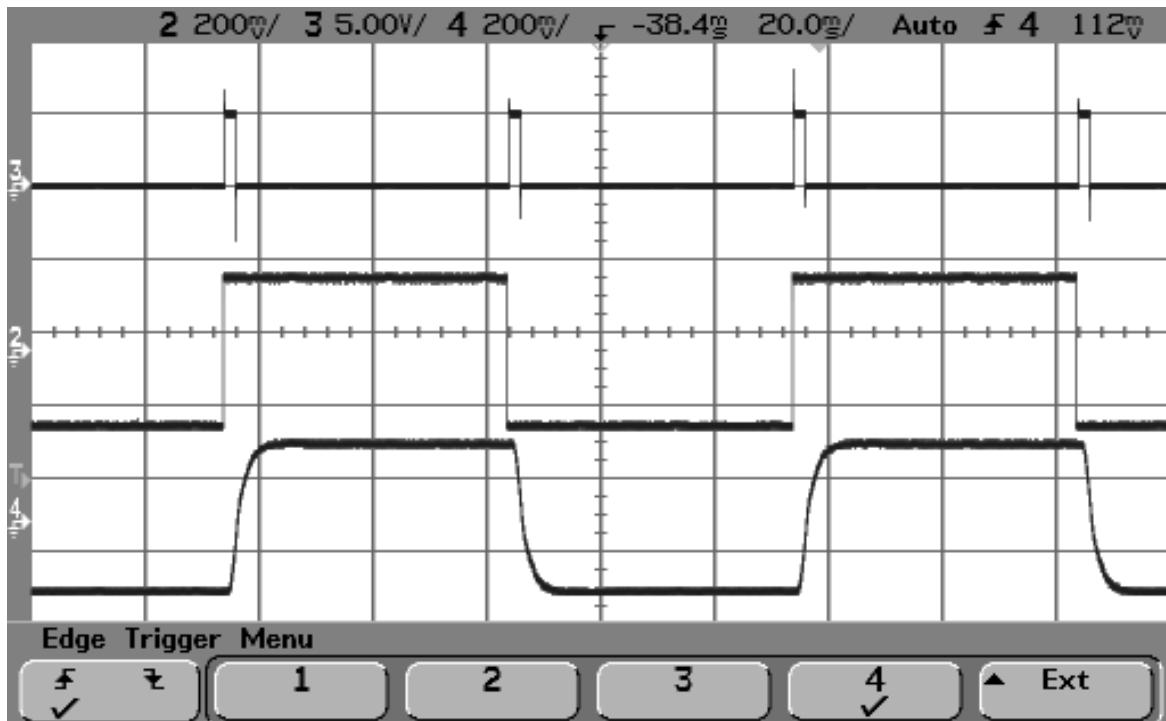


Figure 5: Active Low TTL top trace, input command middle trace, sensor monitor bottom trace

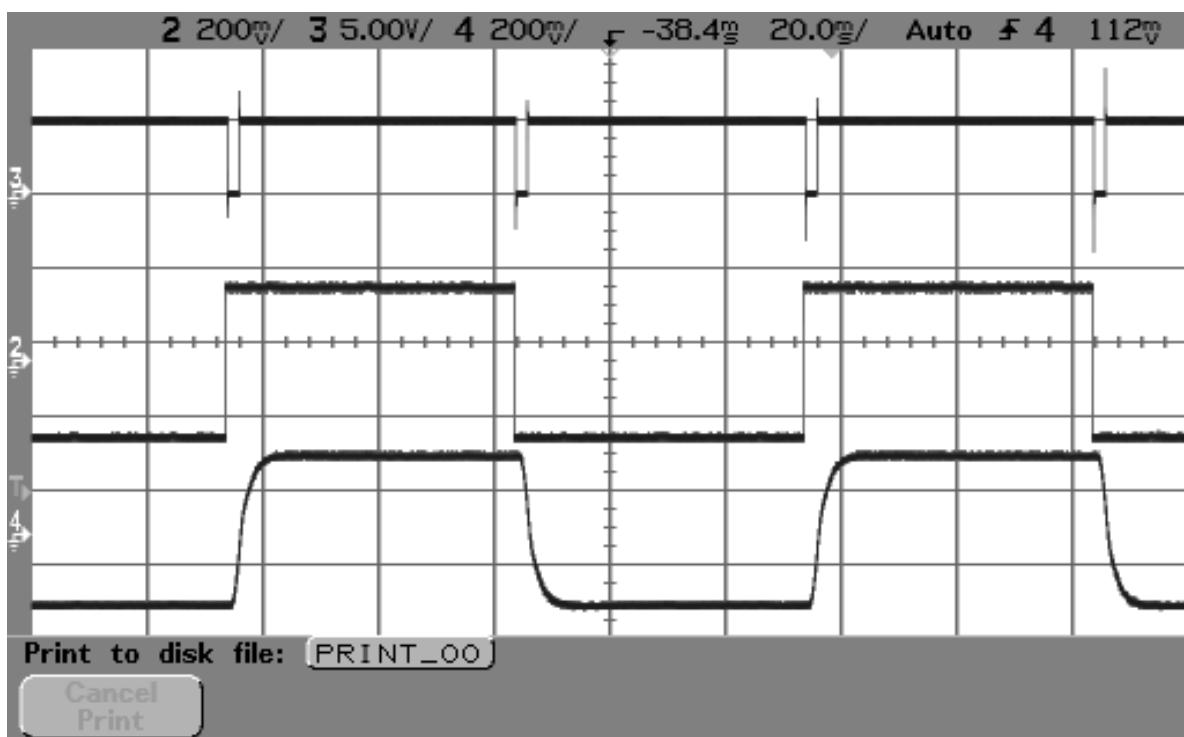


Figure 6: Active High TTL top trace, input command middle trace, sensor monitor bottom trace

4. Reading the Position Error Via USB

The position error can be read for each channel via USB by reading the controller memory address offset from the controller channel base memory address. For more information about general USB communication and programming, please refer to Chapter 4 in the general LC.400 or C.400 user manual, and refer to the programming example located on the nPControl software CD. If you need the latest version of the nPControl CD, please email support@npoint.com for download instructions.

4.1 Channel Base Memory Addresses

The nPoint C400 controller can have up to six stage axes populated in a single controller. The following base addresses are the start of the majority of memory locations of interest to the user. Note that the channels are separated by an offset of 0x1000.

Address	Description
0x11831000	Ch1 base address
0x11832000	Ch2 base address
0x11833000	Ch3 base address
0x11834000	Ch4 base address
0x11835000	Ch5 base address
0x11836000	Ch6 base address

4.2 Position Error Memory Addresses

Memory offsets are summed with a channel base address to set the parameter for a specific channel.

Offset	Data Type	Description
0x078	32 Bit Integer	Range - Stage axis range. For example, a 100 micron axis has a value of 0x64.
0x230	32 Bit Float	Digital Monitor Scale Factor – Value used to scale digital sensor monitor values. Typically this value is the exact inverse of the Digital Input Scale Factor.
0x408	32 Bit Signed Integer	Position Error - 20 bit value (decimal range of +/-524287).

4.3 Position Error Scaling

To scale the 20 bit Position Error value to nanopositioner travel range units of measure (typically microns), perform the following calculation:

Digital Counts Per Range Unit = 1048574 / Range

Scaled Position Error = Position Error / Digital Counts Per Range Unit * Digital Monitor Scale Factor

4.4 Error Threshold TTL Output Signal Memory Address

Address	Data Type	Description
0x118303B4	32 Bit Integer	TTL Output Pin State – The least significant four bits represent the TTL output states, with the least significant bit representing TTL Output 1. A bit value of 0 = TTL output low, a bit value of 1 = TTL output high.

To read a Boolean value indicating that the position error is either above or below a specified threshold, the user can set a TTL output function and scaled threshold through the nPControl user interface (described in Section 4.4.5). The state

of the output can then be read by “AND-ing” the value at address 0x118303B4 with a bit mask. For example if the TTL Output Pin State memory address has a value of 6, then TTL Output 1 = low, TTL Output 2 = high, TTL Output 3 = high, and TTL Output 4 = low. An example of using a bit mask to query the status of a bit can be [viewed here](#).

In the special case of checking the error threshold state for only a single channel, and using only TTL Output 1 (TTL Output 2, 3, and 4 are set to a function of “none”), then the TTL Output Pin State memory address can simply be checked for an integer value of either 0 or 1.