

A Web-Configurable LabVIEW Virtual Instrument for a BL2600 and RN1100

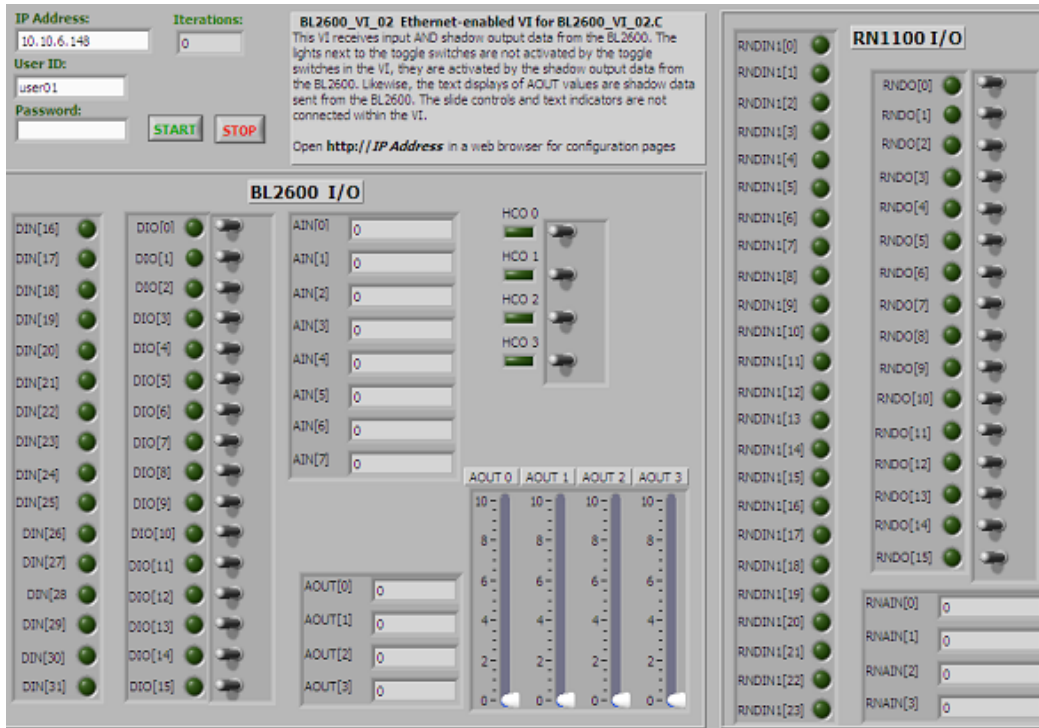
This Application Note (AN408) expands on Application Note 407 (AN407) to describe a more advanced BL2600 application to interface with a PC-based LabVIEW Virtual Instrument (VI). It is recommended that readers examine the AN407 application before considering this one. All application notes are available on the [Z-World website](#).

The application described in AN408 adds the following improvements over the application described in AN407:

- Configuration with a web browser
- Use of a RabbitNet RN1100 digital expansion board
- Web page display of BL2600 and RN1100 I/O data
- E-mail alarms for any BL2600 or RN1100 inputs.
- Flash storage of configuration parameters
- Multiple user IDs and passwords can be defined
- Allows different levels of access to several users
- Passwords are not transmitted in clear text
- Storage of last-entered IP address and user ID in Windows registry
- More efficient data transmission

The configuration pages are created using RabbitWeb™, our rapid application development system for creating web pages that interface with embedded applications. This application is not designed to handle multiple VI users simultaneously, but the web server can serve pages to multiple users concurrent with VI interface usage. Because multiple VIs are not implemented, attempting to access the BL2600 from a second VI while one is already running will cause a timeout or other TCP/IP error in the VI.

Figure 1. LabVIEW/BL2600 Virtual Instrument



In both the AN407 VI and the AN408 VI you can use switches and other controls to tell the BL2600 to set specific analog or digital outputs. The AN408 VI adds output indicators and more I/O by using the RN1100 expansion board. The AN408 VI reads the outputs from the BL2600, as well as from the RN1100, to set the state of the corresponding indicators. The VI receives the outputs from shadow data, allowing for independent setting of output data by the remote units if some autonomous control heuristics are added to the BL2600 program.

The BL2600 program is complete enough that some developers will be able to use it without modification, creating an application entirely in the LabVIEW development environment if local autonomy on the BL2600 is not needed. Others will want to modify the BL2600 program to have autonomy to control processes or tests when no VI is being used, or to augment human control when using the VI. The versatility of Dynamic C and LabVIEW make it easy to create applications with different degrees of autonomy. A BL2600 program that runs completely autonomously but allows real-time viewing only of data in a VI is another possibility.

Because the connection is done with simple TCP/IP socket programming, the same BL2600 program used here could also interface with PC front ends created with such tools as Visual Basic, Delphi, or Windows C++ development packages.

Running the Sample Application

You can loop back I/Os on the SBC to see the VI in action, as with AN407, or connect to external input or measurement devices. Read the *BL2600 User's Manual* before using the board's I/Os.

The BL2600

The sample program to run the SBC is `BL2600_VI_02.C`. The program can be found in `AN408.zip` and `AN408b.zip`, two ZIP files that accompany this document. `AN408.zip` contains application files and the installation for LabVIEW support. `AN408b.zip` contains only the application files.

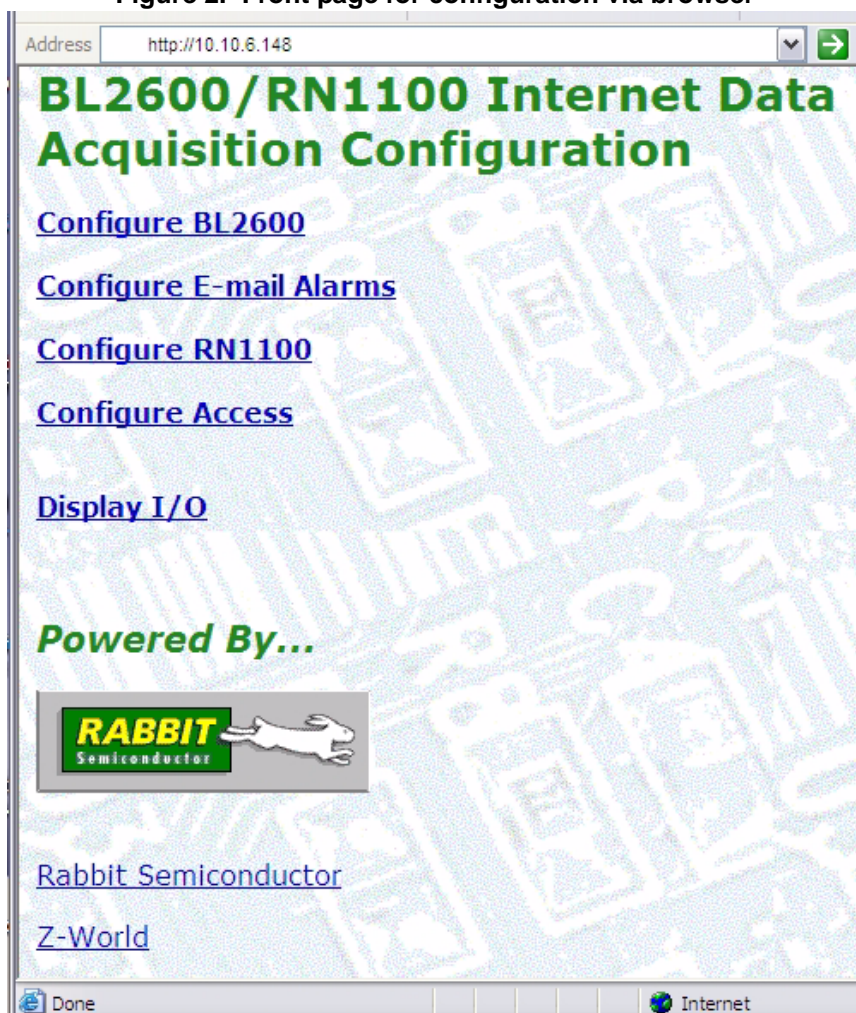
Connecting to the Network

You must have a free, fixed IP address on your local network to run this application. Connect the BL2600 Ethernet port to a hub or switch, or connect it directly to your computer's Ethernet port using a cross-over cable. The PC's IP address must be set to a fixed address different from the IP address for the BL2600.

Defining the Default Configurations

If you change nothing in the program `BL2600_VI_02.C`, you will be able to run the program and configure the BL2600 program using the RabbitWeb interface (i.e., the HTTP server provided in `BL2600_VI_02.C`) in a web browser using the factory default address of `http://10.10.6.148`. (The HTTP server and VI communications use the same IP address but different ports.)

Figure 2. Front page for configuration via browser



To change the default IP address at compile time, the following macros near the top of the program should be changed. These override the IP address setting in `TCP_CONFIG.LIB`, and are defined in separate macros and variables as a convenience for working with them as RabbitWeb variables.

```
#define IPADDR0 10
#define IPADDR1 10
#define IPADDR2 6
#define IPADDR3 148
```

A number of other default configurations can be changed at compile time. There are too many to list here, and they can all be changed at run-time via the more intuitive browser interfaces. If any default setting is to be changed at compile time, it is important to change at least one character in this macro definition:

```
#define DAK_INI_FLAG "00 BL2600 DAAK Z-World/Rabbit Semiconductor 2004"
```

Default configurations are stored in flash memory on program startup whenever the exact string above is not found in the first position in the User block space in flash. The first time the program is run the configuration parameters, including `DAK_INI_FLAG`, are written to flash. Thereafter, they are written only if `DAK_INI_FLAG` is different from the string stored at location 0 in the User block. This method is often called “super-initialization.”

All of the following may be changed at compile-time or at run-time via the web browser:

- BL2600 analog and digital I/O configuration
- RN1100 analog and digital I/O configuration
- IP address, LabVIEW port
- User account IDs, passwords, and administration rights
- E-mail alarms settings for inputs, e-mail alarm recipient addresses and the e-mail alarm interval

Read the code comments in the program to learn more about changing default configuration information at compile time.

Using the RN1100

To add an RN1100 unit, connect the RN1100 power and communication cable as described in the RN1100 manual, go to the “Configure RN1100 web page” and hit the Add button. The application currently handles only one RN1100, but most of the program is structured to allow for two. Only some of the target communication needs to be modified to handle the second unit. Modifying the VI and C program to handle a second unit is left as an exercise for the user. The application currently sends and receives dummy data for one RN1100 even if no RN1100 is connected. The design decision that needs to be made to handle a second unit is whether to send dummy data for it, change the VI to handle a change in the size of the data stream while running, or to disallow adding/removing RN1100 units while the VI is running. The first and last choices will be the easier ones to implement.

Compile and Run BL2600_VI_02.C

Compile the program and run it as you normally would. See the “Getting Started” section of the *BL2600 User’s Manual* if you have not done this yet.

The VI

The Zip file accompanying this document contains the LabVIEW file, BL2600_VI_02.VI. This file is the VI and is modifiable with LabVIEW. The Zip file also contains an EXE version of the VI that runs stand-alone (after installing LabVIEW support) and cannot be modified with LabVIEW. The software needed to create EXE files from VI files is not part of the basic LabVIEW package and must be purchased separately from National Instruments.

You can run either version of the VI, BL2600_VI_02.VI or BL2600_VI_02.EXE.

Running BL2600_VI_02.VI

Double click on the file, BL2600_VI_02.VI. You must have LabVIEW version 7.1 or later installed to open this VI file. Now, click the Run Continuously button (Figure 3) on the LabVIEW control bar.



Figure 3.

When you start the VI, it will loop waiting for you to click the Start button. But, before pressing the Start button, you must enter a password and user ID. The IP address and the user ID are stored in the Windows registry and will be filled in automatically, but the password must be entered each time the program is stopped and restarted.

“BL2600” is a default for both user ID and password programmed into the BL2600. Now, press the Start button within the VI, and once the password is accepted, you can adjust the analog slide controls and flip toggle switches to control output while you view input.

Running BL2600_VI_02.EXE

Before you can run the stand-alone VI, BL2600_VI_02.EXE, you must already have LabVIEW or LabVIEW support installed, or you need to run the LabVIEW client installation in the /install folder - the installation program there is SETUP.EXE. Once you have run the installation, you can run BL2600_VI_02.EXE by double clicking on it; then, click the Run Continuously button (Figure 3) so that it appears black.

As described above, when you start the VI, it will loop waiting for you to press the Start button. After you press the Start button, and once the password is accepted, you can adjust the analog slide controls and flip toggle switches to control output.

How It Works

This section describes details of both the LabVIEW VI and the program running on the BL2600

LabVIEW VI

The LabVIEW program is laid out as a large “flat sequence” structure. The operation is very similar to the AN407 VI, so we will focus on the functional changes and additions here. Within LabVIEW, you can look at the block diagram for BL2600_VI_02.VI. You can toggle between the block diagram and the front panel by using the keyboard shortcut, Ctrl+E.

The VI discussed here uses some trickier LabVIEW techniques to convert binary data to panel indicator data. It uses “clusters” of indicators and controls so that each indicator and control does not have to be wired on the diagram individually, as in the AN407 VI.

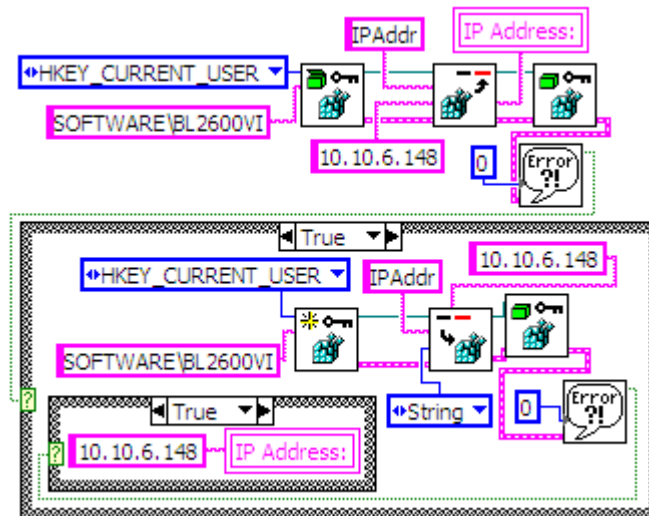
Initialization

As with the AN407 VI, the first five frames of the block diagram perform fairly self-explanatory initialization and password verification. The labeling facilities of LabVIEW were heavily used to describe what happens. The new elements are:

- Windows registry storage of the panel-entered user ID and IP address - these values are automatically put in the text entry boxes on the next run of the program.
- Some encoding is done on the password so it doesn't get sent in clear text

Frame 2, shown in [Figure 4](#), defines how the stored IP address is retrieved. If there is an error reading the registry, it is assumed that it has not been created yet and the entry is then created with default values written to it. Writing to the Windows registry is shown in the larger True block in [Figure 4](#); the default IP address is 10.10.6.148. If this fails, the default IP address is assigned to the appropriate variable, shown in the small True block located within the larger one, and execution continues.

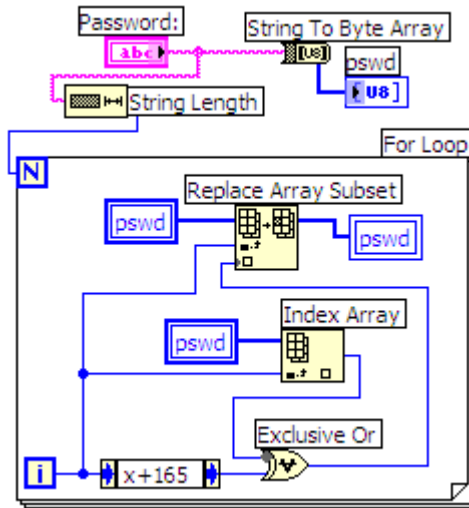
Figure 4. Getting the IP address from the registry (Frame 2)



After the Start button has been clicked, whatever was entered for the IP address on the VI panel is written to the Windows registry. This is done in Frame 5 using the same method we just saw in the True block from Frame 2. Writing the user ID to the registry is also done using this same method.

The password encoding is done in Frame 4. The relevant portion of Frame 4 is shown in Figure 5. Each byte is XOR'ed with its index position added to an arbitrary number. (Not completely arbitrary, a value is chosen such that the high bit will always be set for encrypted alpha numeric characters thus preventing a string-terminating zero from appearing prematurely in the encrypted string, since the password/user ID is sent in ASCII mode.) The rectangle with “x + 165” is a LabVIEW Expression node. The input is the For loop variable i (which is created automatically when a For loop structure is created), so the output is i + 165 for each loop iteration.

Figure 5. Encryption algorithm in the VI (Frame 4)



The properties of the XOR operation allow the exact same method to decode the encoded text on the BL2600 side to check the password (which is appended to the front of the array userid):

```
// Quick & dirty decoding
for (j=0; j<strlen(users[i].pw); j++) {
    userid[j] = (165+j) ^ userid[j];
}
```

Main Processing Loop

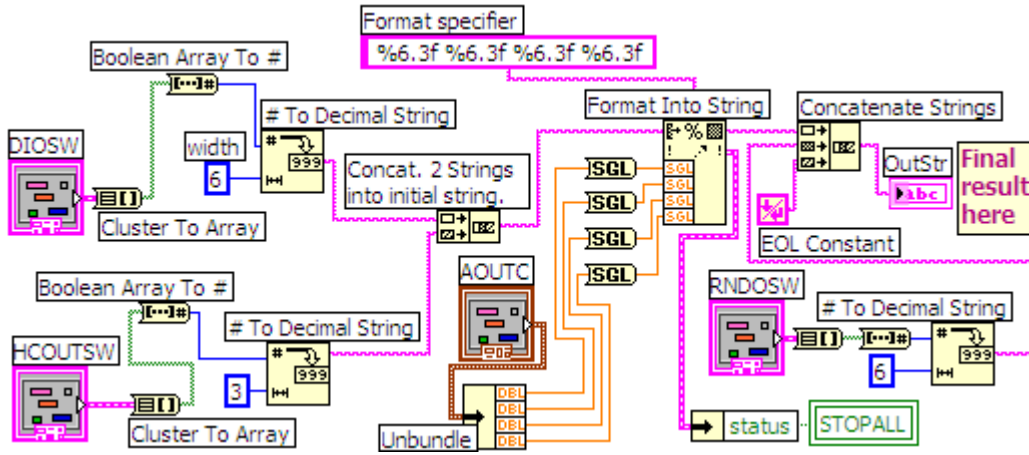
Frame 7 is the main processing frame. The frame's processing is a While loop that executes as long as the Stop button is not hit, and the boolean variable STOPALL is false. It is set to true when a TCP or other error occurs. The overall operation is like Frame 6 in the AN407 VI, but here we process data in binary format sent from the BL2600; ASCII mode must still be used to send data to the BL2600, because LabVIEW Express has no TCP/IP socket write binary mode. We also make use of LabVIEW's "clusters" of indicators and controls to avoid wiring each channel individually in the block diagram.

As with the AN407 VI, the default case is a non-ACK'ed password or TCP/IP error, which causes a dialog error message to display on the VI, and the While loop to exit. An iteration variable is created automatically at the lower left when a While loop is created, and here we hook the variable to a VI display indicator to show the number of iterations.

The next nested structure is a Case structure with a true and a false case - the LabVIEW equivalent of an if-else construct. The case for no TCP/IP error and an ACK'ed password (output of the string match function equals 5) contains a nested flat sequence structure. The first frame in the sequence, shown in Figure 6, reads the VI inputs and forms them into a string. First, the digital input toggle switch clusters are converted

to boolean arrays to integers and finally to two text strings which are concatenated to form the initial string input for the “Format into string” function. The format string function with the “%6.3f %6.3f %6.3f %6.3f” format specifier will look familiar to C programmers. It is used to format the analog output control floating point values. Finally, the RN1100 digital output toggle switches are converted to an ASCII integer and appended to the output string. Again, the use of clusters here makes for a much simpler diagram than if each element had to be wired one at a time.

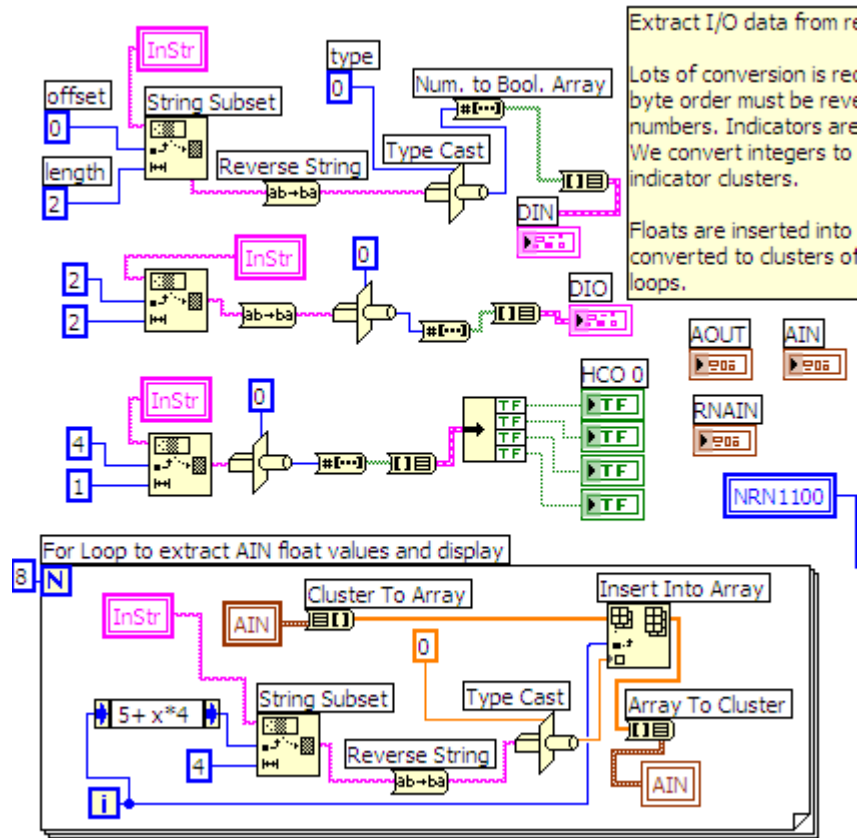
Figure 6. Forming the output data string



The second frame in the nested flat sequence sends the output string to the BL2600 with a TCP/IP socket write, and the third frame receives a data packet from the BL2600.

The third frame in the nested flat sequence receives a binary data string containing both input data and shadow output data from the BL2600 and RN1100. Figure 7 shows a part of the conversion from binary data to VI panel output in the fourth frame.

Figure 7. Converting binary data to VI panel output



The conversion for digital values requires extracting the correct number of bytes from the correct offset in the data packet, reversing the byte order if it is a multi-byte value, converting to an unsigned integer of the right size, then to a boolean array which is fed to a cluster of panel indicators. Note that a numeric constant is used to define the type and size of the output of the Type Cast function. The value of the constant is meaningless, the constant's data type and size are set in the properties dialog of the constant. For analog values, For-loop structures are used to extract one 4-byte floating point value at a time from the data packet and insert it into an array of floating point values which are fed to a cluster of VI panel indicators.

More on the BL2600 Program

The high-level operation for the BL2600 application is described in the following pseudocode. The structure of the actual code differs somewhat because the LabVIEW Communication task is implemented with a Dynamic C costatement. The If statements shown at the top of the task are actually “waitfor” statements in the code. See the Dynamic C manual for a discussion of multitasking with costatements.

```
BEGIN:
  IF (FIRST RUN)  WRITE ALL PROGRAM PARAMETERS TO FLASH
  READ ALL PROGRAM PARAMETERS FROM FLASH
  INITIALIZE BOARD AND I/O
  IF (RN1100 PRESENT)  INITIALIZE RN1100
  SET BL2600&RN1100 OUTPUTS AND SHADOW DATA TO INIT. VALUES
  READ BL2600 & RN1100 INPUTS
  INITIALIZE ETHERNET AND TCP/IP STACK
  INITIALIZE HTTP SERVER
  DEFINE USER AND ADMIN HTTP ACCESSES

  WHILE (1)
  [
    LABVIEW COMMUNICATION TASK
    [
      IF (ETHERNET NOT READY)  EXIT TASK
      IF (VI CLIENT HASN'T OPENED SOCKET)  EXIT TASK
      INITIALIZE LABVIEW VI SOCKET
      SET VI SOCKET TO ASCII MODE
      READ USERID & PASSWORD FROM VI SOCKET
      VERIFY USERID & PASSWORD
      IF (ACCESS GRANTED)
      [
        WHILE (VI SOCKET ACTIVE)
        [
          READ VI PANEL DATA FROM SOCKET
          PARSE RECEIVED DATA AND SET OUTPUT SHADOW DATA
          FORM DATA FOR VI FROM LAST INPUT VALUES AND SHADOW OUTPUT DATA
          WRITE DATA TO SOCKET
          YIELD TIME TO BACKGROUND PROCESSING
        ]
      ] // END IF
    ] // END OF LABVIEW TASK

    //**** BACKGROUND PROCESSING ****
    READ BL2600 AND RN1100 DATA
    IF (ALARM CONDITION)  SEND ALARM EMAIL(S)
    HTTP SERVER TICK CALL
    IF (MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM BROWSER INTERFACE)
      HANDLE CONFIGURATION CHANGES
    WRITE TO BL2600 AND RN1100 OUTPUTS FROM SHADOW DATA
  ] // END WHILE
```

E-Mail Alarms

From the page shown in Figure 2, click on the link titled “Configure E-Mail Alarms” to go to the page shown in Figure 8. As you can see, it is easy to configure an e-mail alarm for any of the I/O channels. The BL2600 will send an e-mail to all of the addresses listed whenever an alarm condition is true. To repeatedly send e-mails while the alarm condition remains true, type a value other than 0 in the textbox labeled “Interval.” The unit of measure is 15 minutes, so a value of 4 causes an e-mail to be sent every 60 minutes.

Figure 8.

Address <http://69.104.38.49:8148/admin/almcfg.zhtml> Go

BL2600 Alarm Configuration

Set Digital Inputs to If 1 to generate e-mail alarm if an input is 1. Set to If 0 generate alarm when input is 0. For analog inputs, "If in range" means send alarms if the input is between Min and Max, "If out" means send alarms if input is outside that range. Alarms will be sent to each defined e-mail address at the interval specified in 15 minute units if the input condition still exists. An interval of 0 means send only once.

E-mail Addresses Interval:

Configurable Digital I/O

Ch.	Off	If1	If0
0	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Digital Input

Ch.	Off	If1	If0
0	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Analog Input

Ch.	Off	If in range	If out	Min	Max
0	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>
1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>
2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>
3	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>	<input type="text" value="0.00000"/>

Powered By... [Back to main page](#)

Multiple Users and Their Access

From the page shown in [Figure 2](#), click on the link titled “Configure Access” to go to the page shown in [Figure 9](#). This configuration page allows you to make runtime changes to the IP addresses, as well as the list of users. By checking the “Admin rights” box when adding a user to the list you can allow additional access to that user. This has some security concerns which are discussed in the section titled, “[Security.](#)”

Figure 9.

Address <http://69.104.38.49:8148/admin/access.zhtml>

User Access and IP Settings

Communication Settings

IP Address: : : :

SMTP Server Address: : : :

LabVIEW Port:

New IP Address requires BL2600 reset to take effect. Connection will be lost while BL2600 restarts.

Add/Delete User or Change User Info

To delete a user submit a blank form for that user.

You cannot delete the Administrator or remove administration rights from the Administrator.

You cannot use users' IDs for their passwords

Passwords and IDs must be between 6 and 15 characters long.

Select User: Admin rights

User ID:

Password: Confirm PW:

User added successfully.

User List

A = admin rights

Admin : admin1 A
User 1 : user01
User 2 : BL2600
User 3 :
User 4 :
User 5 :
User 6 :
User 7 :
User 8 :
User 9 :
User 10 :
User 11 :
User 12 :
User 13 :
User 14 :
User 15 :

[Back to main page](#)

Powered By...

Flash Storage of Configuration Parameters

As mentioned previously in the section titled, “[Defining the Default Configurations,](#)” configuration parameters are stored in the User block. This is an area on the primary flash that is accessed with the API functions found in the library `IDBLOCK.LIB`. To examine the code that handles the configuration parameters, look in `BL2600_VI_02.C` at the function `InitializeAll()`.

Security

Configuration pages in the web interface are password protected. Up to 16 users may be defined with usernames and passwords that are used for both the web configuration and the VI front panel access. Only users with administration rights may change configurations via the browser interface. The default administrator username and password are both admin1. Two additional default username/passwords are provided without administration rights, BL2600/BL2600 and user01/user01. When you change user accesses at run-time, you will not be able to use the same word for username and password. Other rules and instructions for changing user information and other parameters are shown in the configuration web pages. Whenever security might be an issue, it is advisable to change all the user passwords at compile time or at run-time before deploying.

The password protection for the configuration web pages uses digest authentication. It could be modified to use SSL with the purchase of the Dynamic C SSL module. Transmission security for access to the BL2600 through the VI panel is achieved by a quick-and-dirty encoding of the password that would be no challenge to a serious hacker. If more security is desired for TCP/IP within LabVIEW, developers will have to explore what is available from National Instruments or third parties. LabVIEW Express 7.1 has nothing available for enhanced TCP/IP security short of implementing security protocols by hand.

If high security is important, disallow users with admin rights use of the VI interface so that admin passwords are not habitually sent with weak encoding from the VI. The following commented-out line is included in the source code to disallow users with admin rights from using the VI:

```
// Use this if test instead to prevent administrator from
//   using the LabVIEW VI
// if(!strcmp(userid, inbuffer) && users[i].group != admin)
```

Allowing only viewing of data in the VI so that dedicated hackers could not change outputs on the BL2600 remotely is another possible security measure.

Distributed VIs can have the block diagram password protected for no write access without a correct password, no read or write access without a password, or no password protection at all. This is done on the LabVIEW file menu.

More Information

- Z-World: www.zworld.com
- Rabbit Semiconductor: www.rabbitsemiconductor.com
- National Instruments: www.ni.com

Z-World, Inc.

2900 Spafford Street
Davis, California 95616-6800
USA

Telephone: (530) 757-3737
Fax: (530) 757-3792

www.zworld.com

Rabbit Semiconductor

2932 Spafford Street
Davis, California 95616-6800
USA

Telephone: (530) 757-8400
Fax: (530) 757-8402

www.rabbitsemiconductor.com