



OPC Data Logger Case Study

Logging Data to Microsoft Excel

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Introduction

Intended Audience

This document is intended for people who need to log OPC data to **Microsoft Excel**. Plain and simple.

Purpose of this document

This document is intended to provoke design decisions prior to implementation.

This document is intended to help facilitate the easiest possible OPC Data Logger configuration, while realizing the limitations associated with Microsoft Excel, which will result in:

- Allowing all data to be logged
- Preventing the spreadsheet from over-filled

This document will outline a simple data logging scenario along with step-by-step instructions that will accomplish a solution.



Data Logging Scenario

Let's begin by listing our requirements:

1. We have several items/tags that we want to log.
2. We want to analyze the logged data later (not in real time)
3. We want to see the data logged in a table format, showing the data between time-frames.
4. We want to see if any data was questionable/bad during a specific time-frame.

Data Format

We will log our data to a single table, as in the following table:

Item_Name	Item_Value	Item_Quality	Item_Timestamp
Channel1.device.1.Tag1	10	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01
Channel1.device.1.Tag1	20	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01
Channel1.device.1.Tag2	30	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01
Channel1.device.1.Tag1	40	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01
Channel1.device.1.Tag1	50	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01
Channel1.device.1.Tag3	60	192	1/1/2008 12:01:01



Configuring the OPC Data Logger

Configuration Process

The process for configuring the OPC Data Logger to solve our needs is as follows:

1. Create a connection to our OPC Server.
2. Import/add the Items/Tags that we want to log and specify HOW we want them to be collected.
3. Configure the File for loading within Microsoft Excel.
4. Putting it all together.

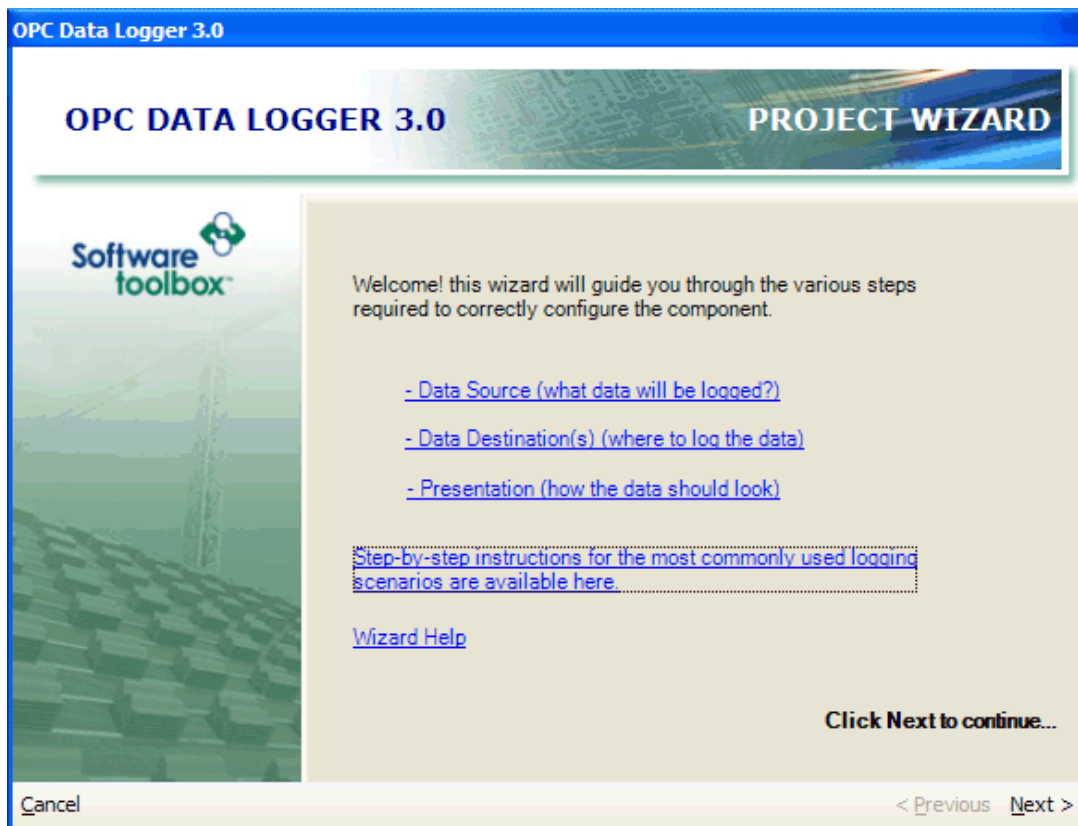
We will make this as painless as possible as we will simply use the Wizards.



Creating a connection to the OPC Server

Open the OPC Data Logger. If this is the first time you have launched the application, the **Project Wizard** will automatically launch. Otherwise, let's create a new configuration by choosing **New** from the **File** menu.

1. The following steps assume that you are already sat at the **Project Wizard** main-page:



Click the **Next** button.



2. You can give the *Project* a name, which is not important at this point so hit **Next**:

OPC Data Logger 3.0

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **PROJECT WIZARD**

Enter a name and description for the new Project.

Name

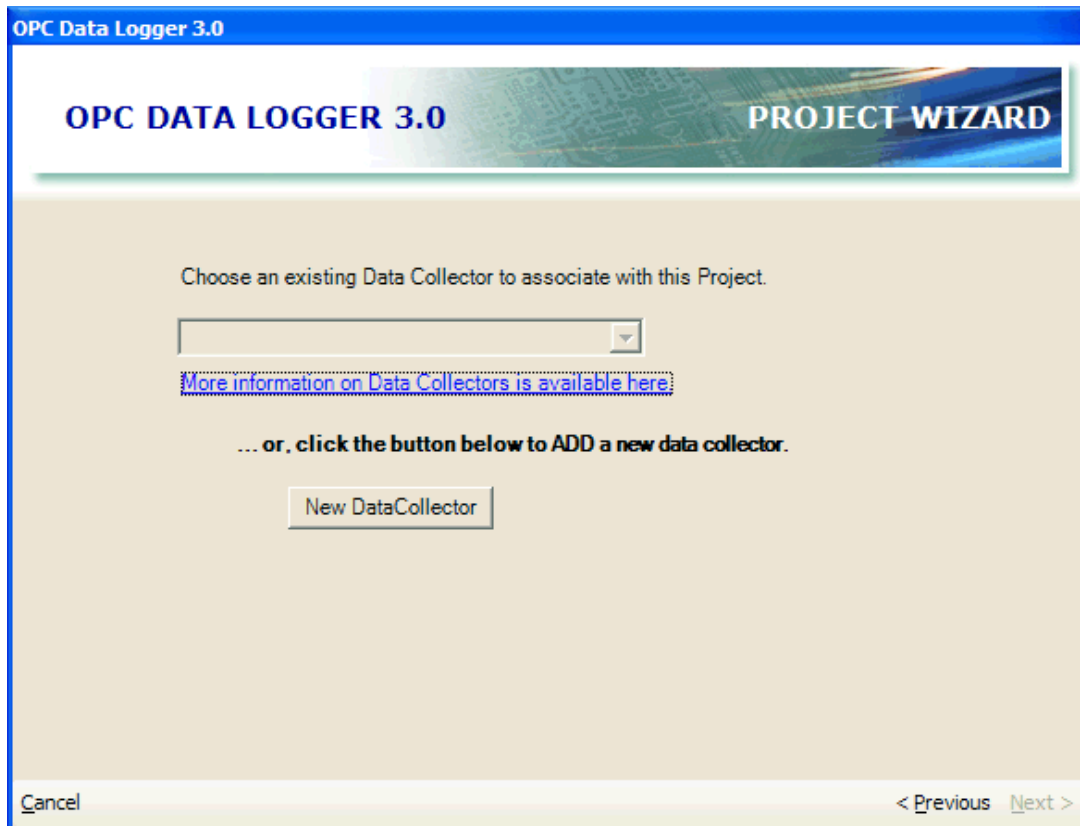
Description

Description is optional, but can be useful to describe what the project is used for/by etc.

Cancel < Previous Next >



3. Creating a **Data Collector** is how you specify the source of your data. In this case we need to create a new collector that points to an OPC Server:



Click the **New DataCollector** button.



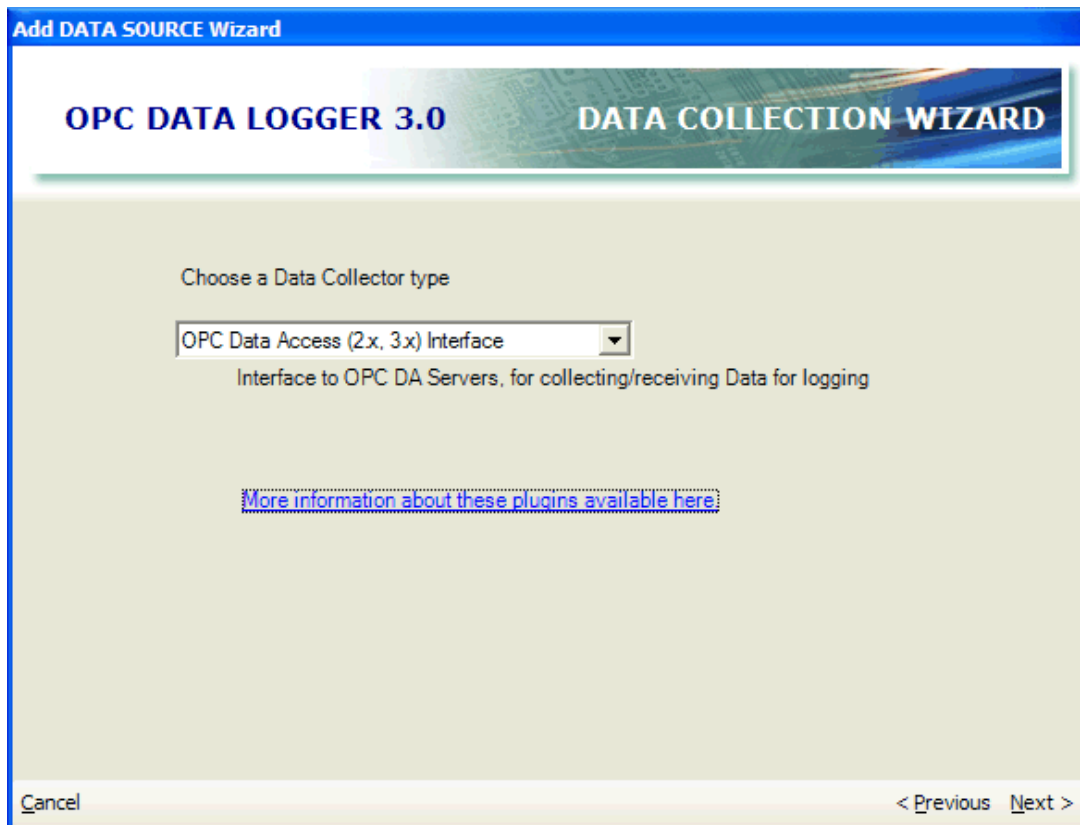
4. The Data Collection Wizard will open:



Click the **Next** button.



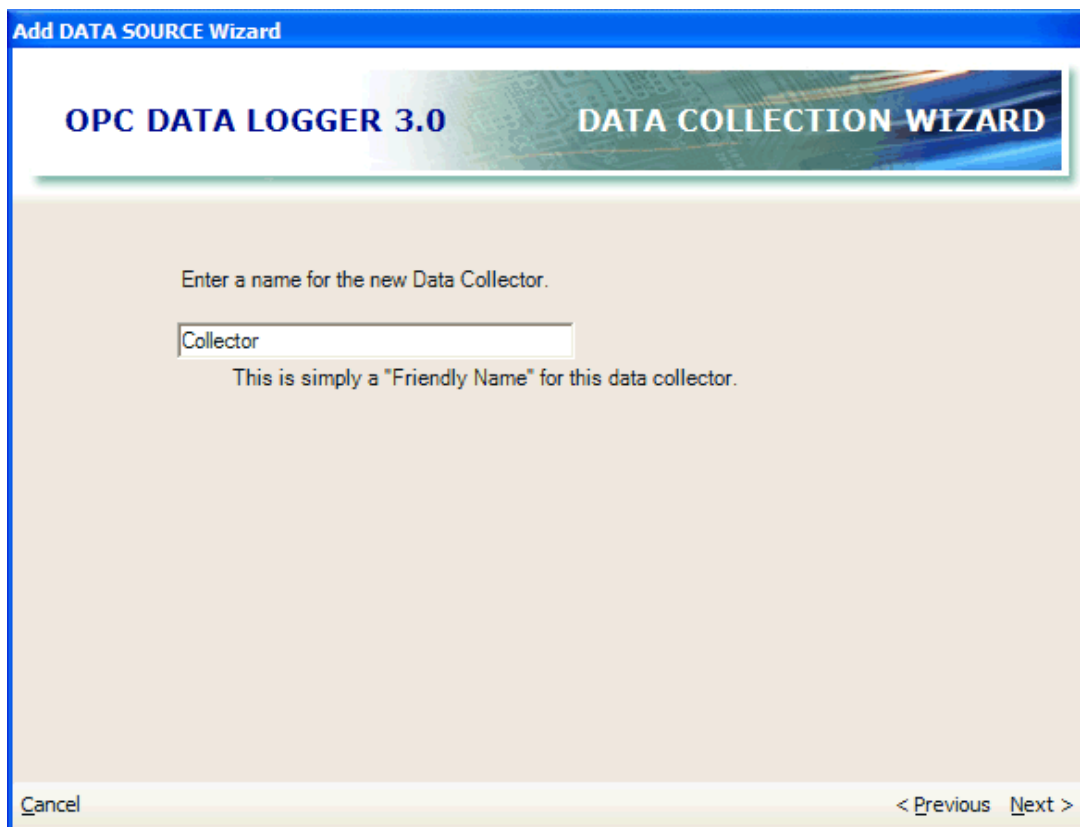
5. Now you can choose the *Plugin/driver* for the data collection:



Choose **OPC Data Access (2.x, 3.x) Interface** and click **Next**.



6. Now you can name this collector:

A screenshot of the "Add DATA SOURCE Wizard" window for OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0. The window has a blue title bar and a header area with a circuit board background. The main area is light beige and contains the text "Enter a name for the new Data Collector." followed by a text input field containing the word "Collector". Below the input field, it says "This is simply a 'Friendly Name' for this data collector." At the bottom, there is a "Cancel" button on the left and "< Previous" and "Next >" buttons on the right.

Add DATA SOURCE Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **DATA COLLECTION WIZARD**

Enter a name for the new Data Collector.

Collector

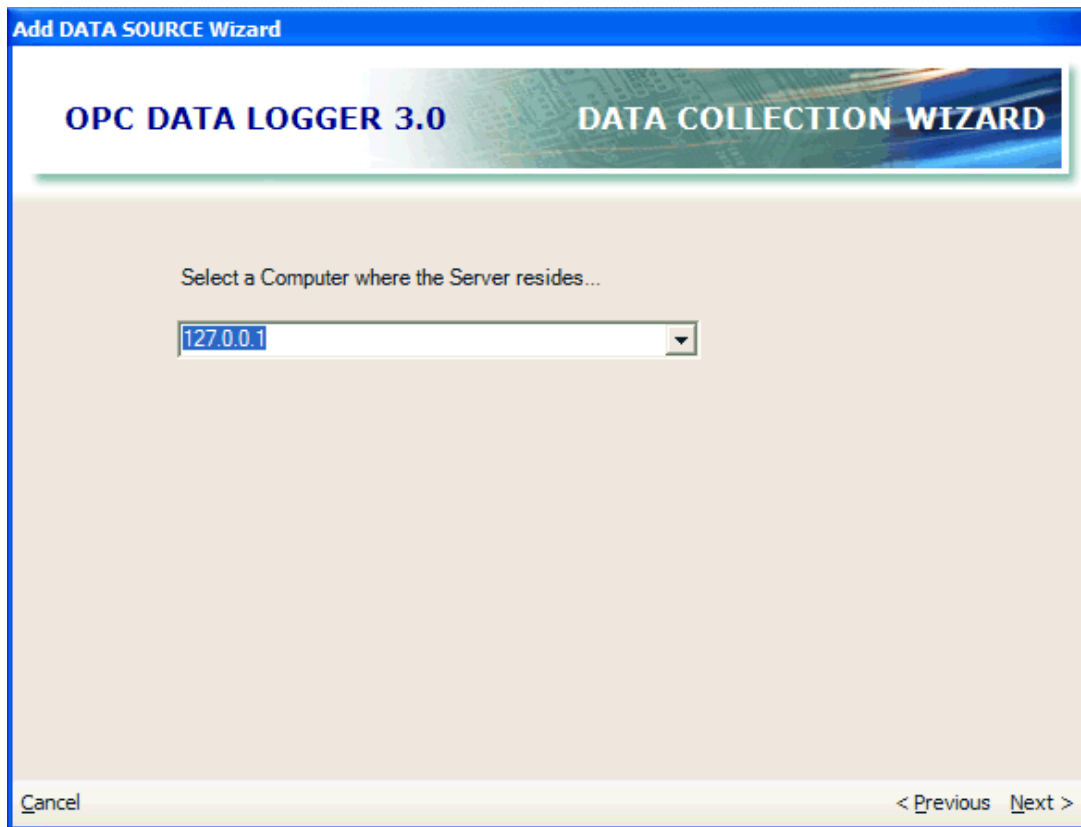
This is simply a "Friendly Name" for this data collector.

Cancel < Previous Next >

This is not too important, so we can accept the name and click **Next**.



7. Now we will choose the computer where the OPC Server resides:



Add DATA SOURCE Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 DATA COLLECTION WIZARD

Select a Computer where the Server resides...

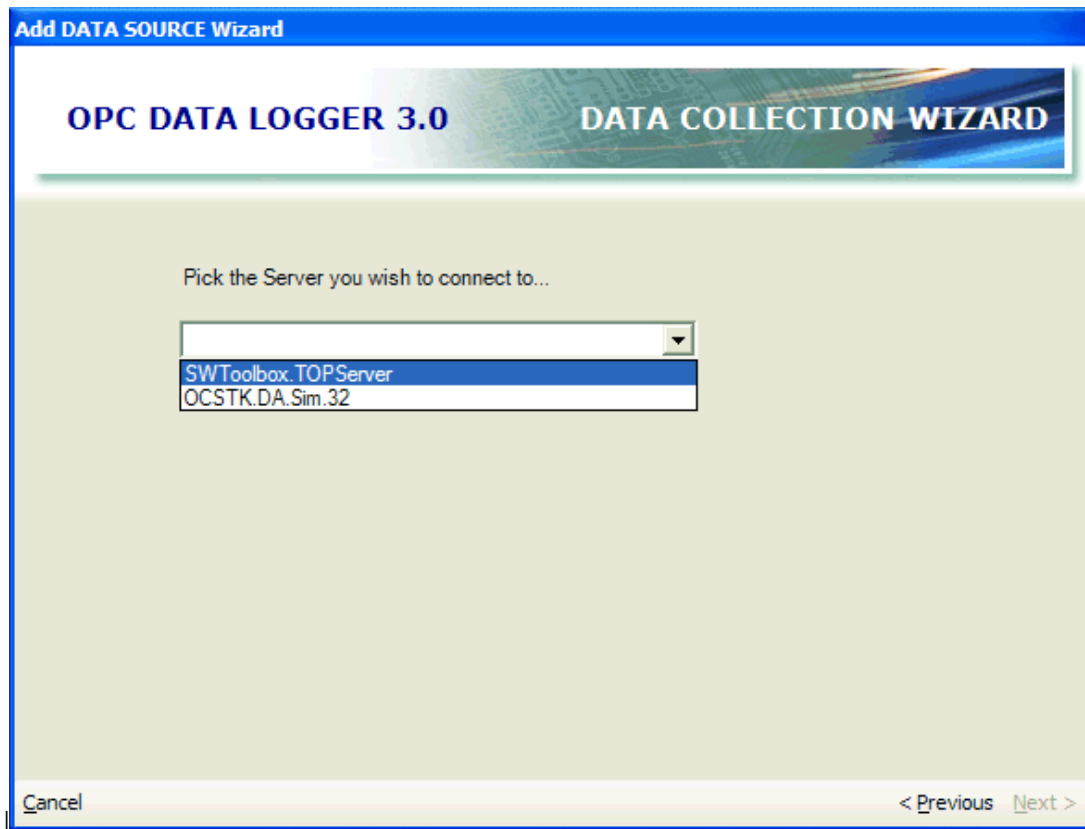
127.0.0.1

Cancel < Previous Next >

Pick the computer from the dropdown box and then click **Next**.



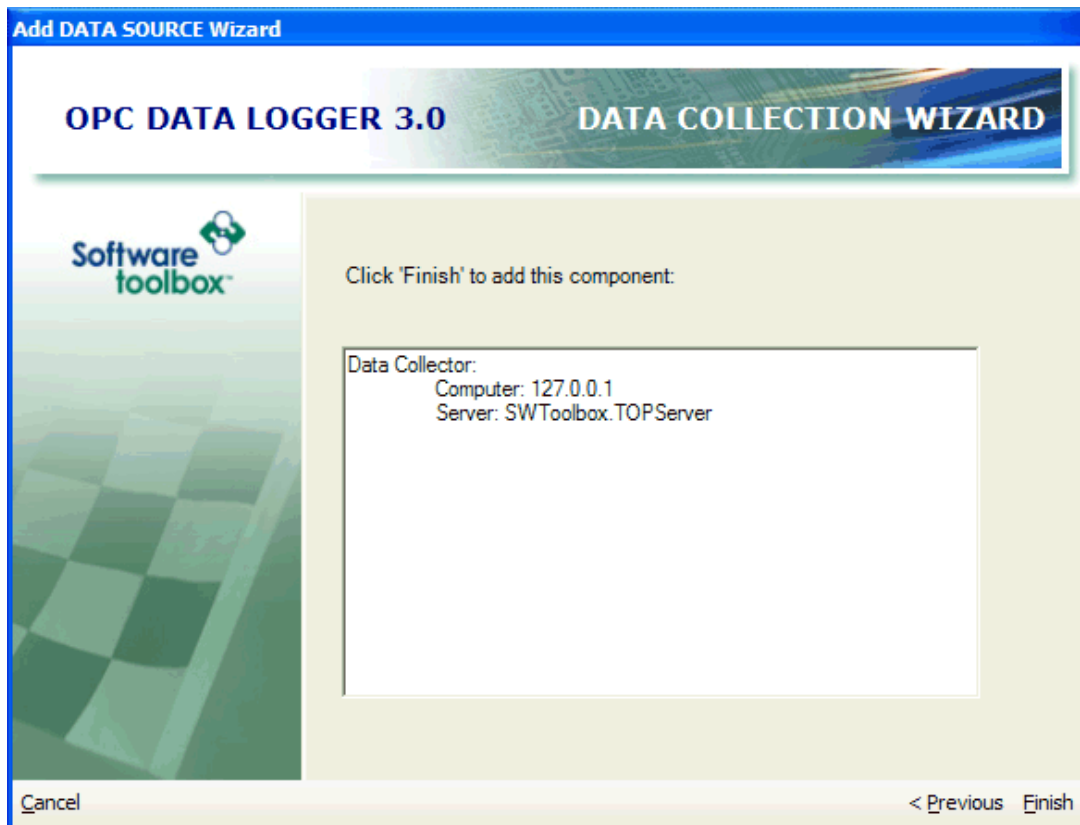
8. Now we pick the OPC Server available on the computer:



Click the **Next** button to continue.



9. Now finish the wizard:

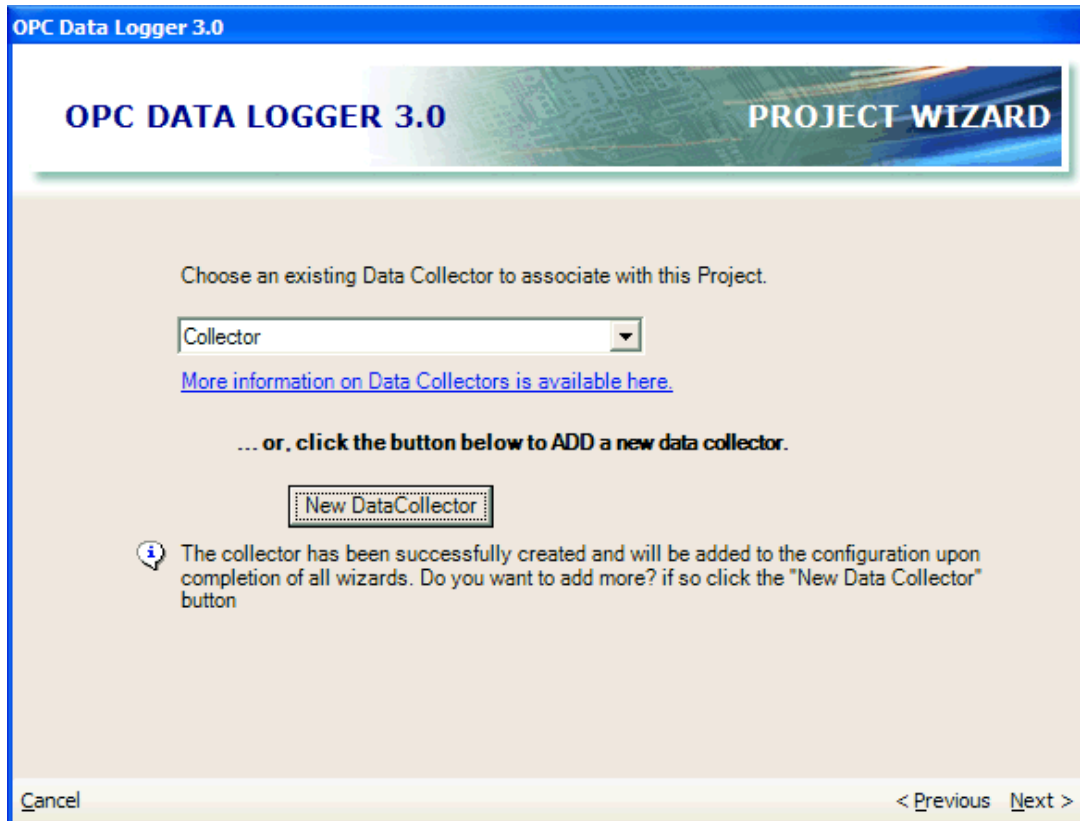


10. An OPC Data Collector has now been defined.



Importing the Items/Tags

1. After completing the **Data Collection Wizard** you should now be looking at the **Project Wizard** again:



OPC Data Logger 3.0

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **PROJECT WIZARD**


Choose an existing Data Collector to associate with this Project.

Collector

[More information on Data Collectors is available here.](#)

... or, click the button below to **ADD** a new data collector.

New DataCollector

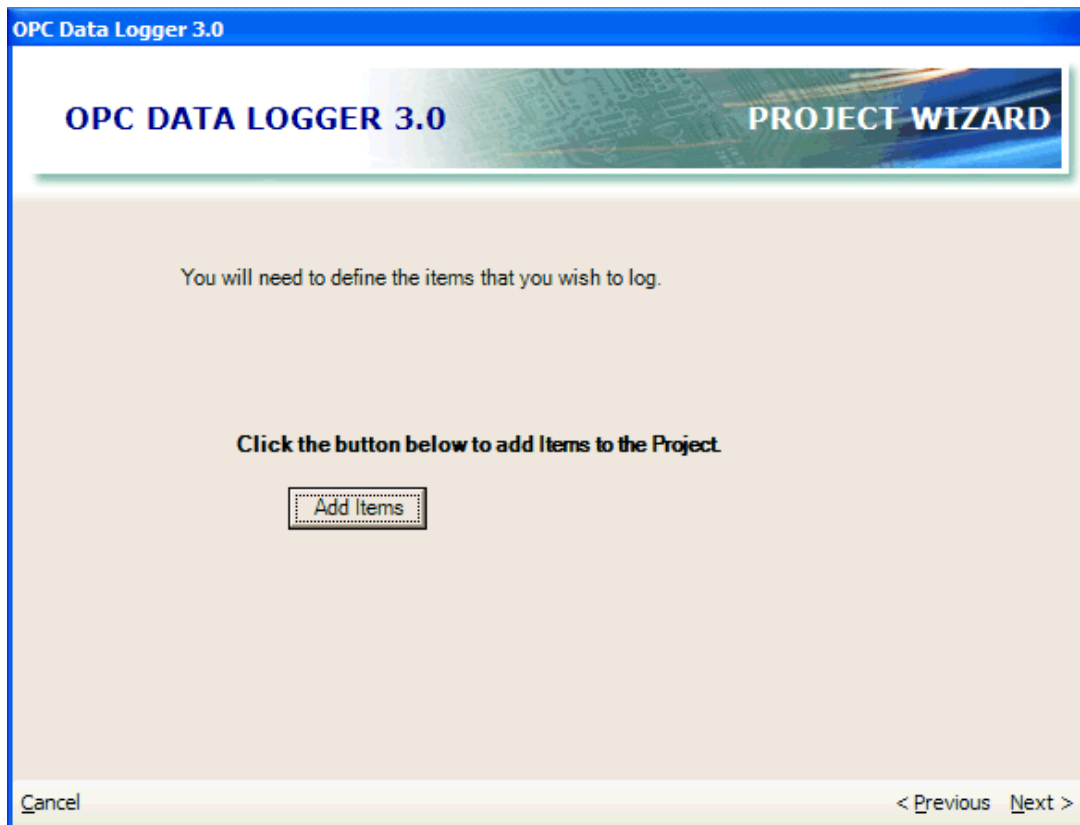
 The collector has been successfully created and will be added to the configuration upon completion of all wizards. Do you want to add more? if so click the "New Data Collector" button

Cancel < Previous Next >

The Data Collector you just added should now be visible and selected in the dropdown. Click **Next**.



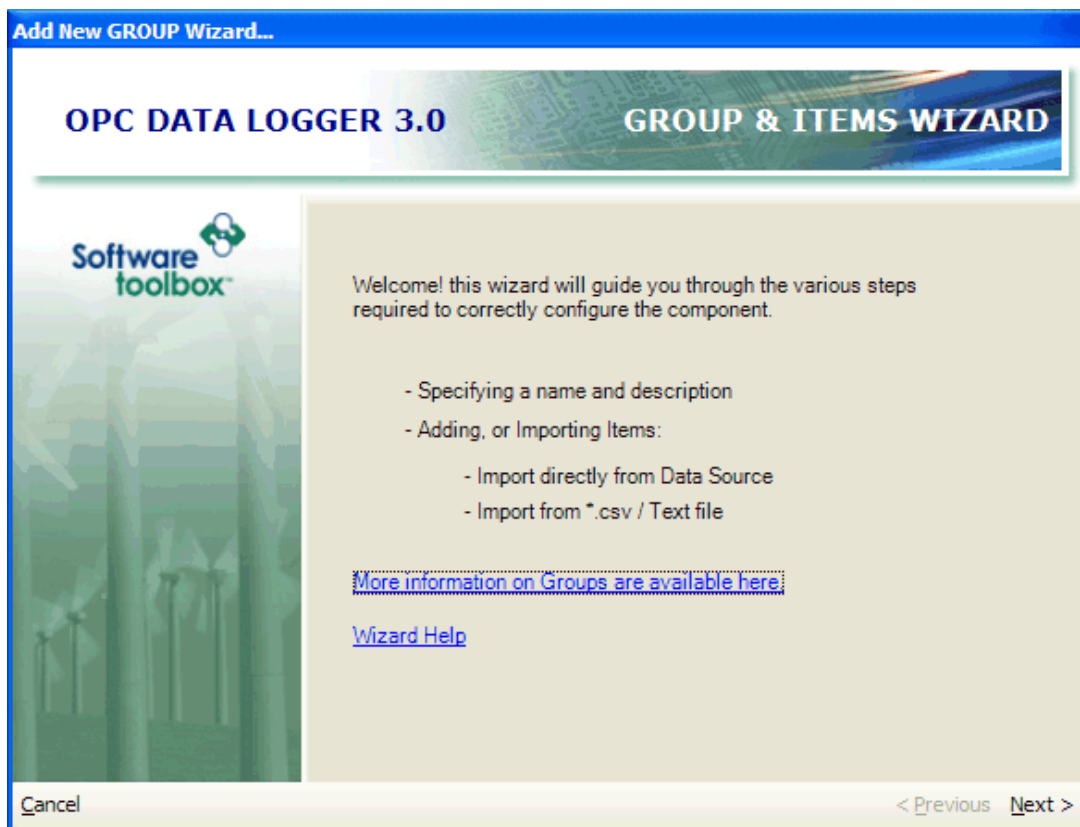
2. Now we will import our Items:



Click the **Add Items** button.



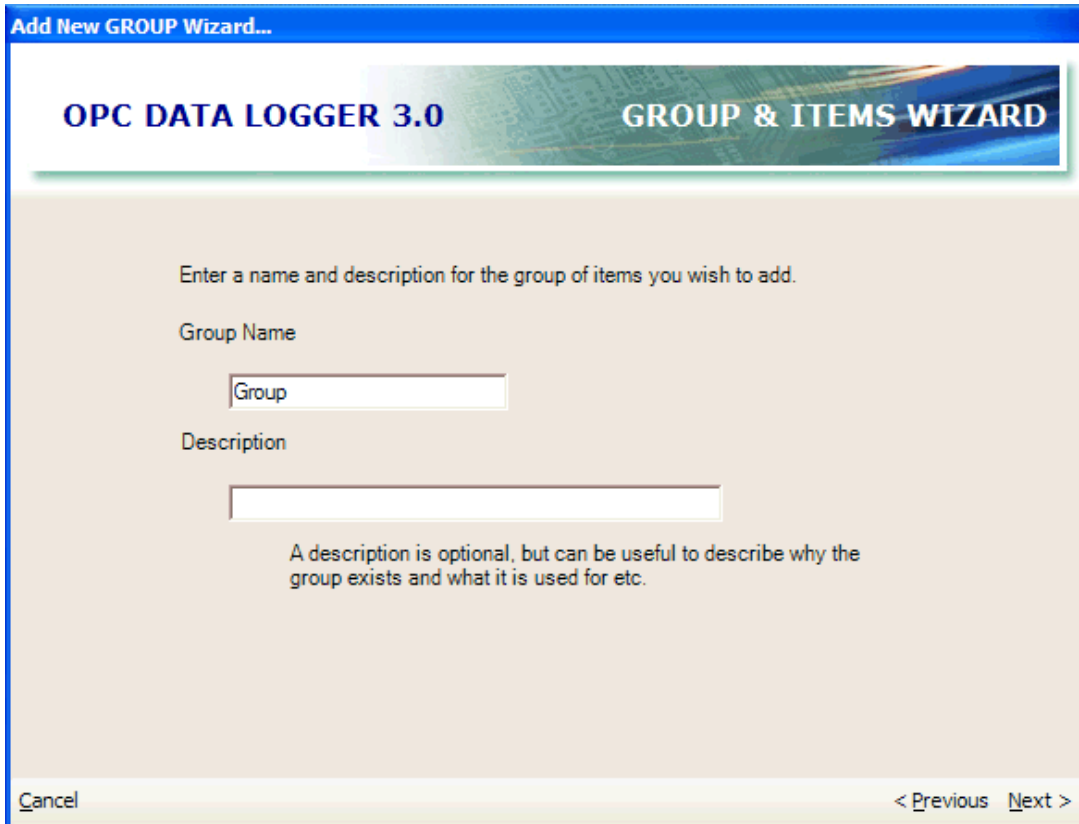
3. The Group & Items Wizard will open:



Click **Next**.



4. The *Items* will be added to a *Group* and the following step allows you to define the name of this group:



Add New GROUP Wizard...

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **GROUP & ITEMS WIZARD**

Enter a name and description for the group of items you wish to add.

Group Name

Group

Description

A description is optional, but can be useful to describe why the group exists and what it is used for etc.

Cancel < Previous Next >

The group name is not important at this time, so click **Next**.



5. Now we will specify **HOW** we will read the values of these Items:

Add New GROUP Wizard...

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 GROUP & ITEMS WIZARD

How, and how frequently do you want the Items to be read from the Data Source?

Interval msec

☒ **Subscription Based Reads**
 (recommended)

☐ Timer Based Reads

☐ Triggered Reads

Behavior

☒ Synchronous

☐ Asynchronous

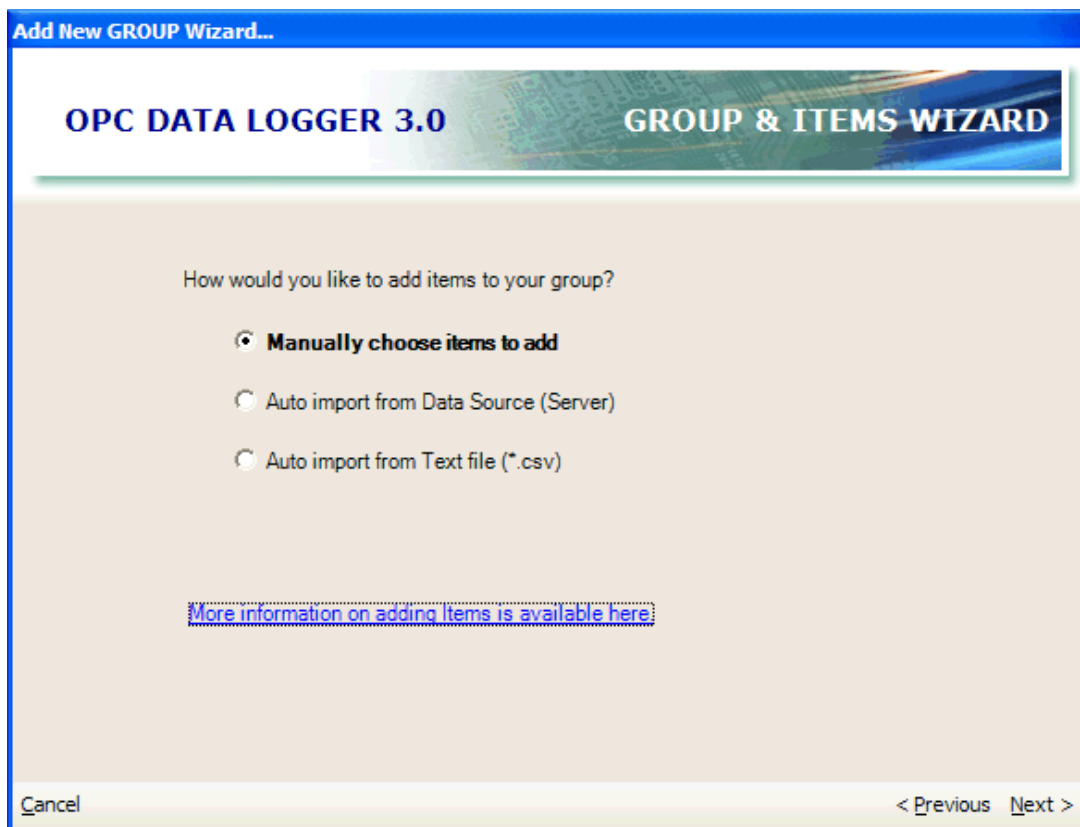
[More information on the Read Methods are available here.](#)

Cancel < Previous Next >

Pick the method that best suits your needs, which is typically the **Subscription Based Reads** option. Click **Next**.



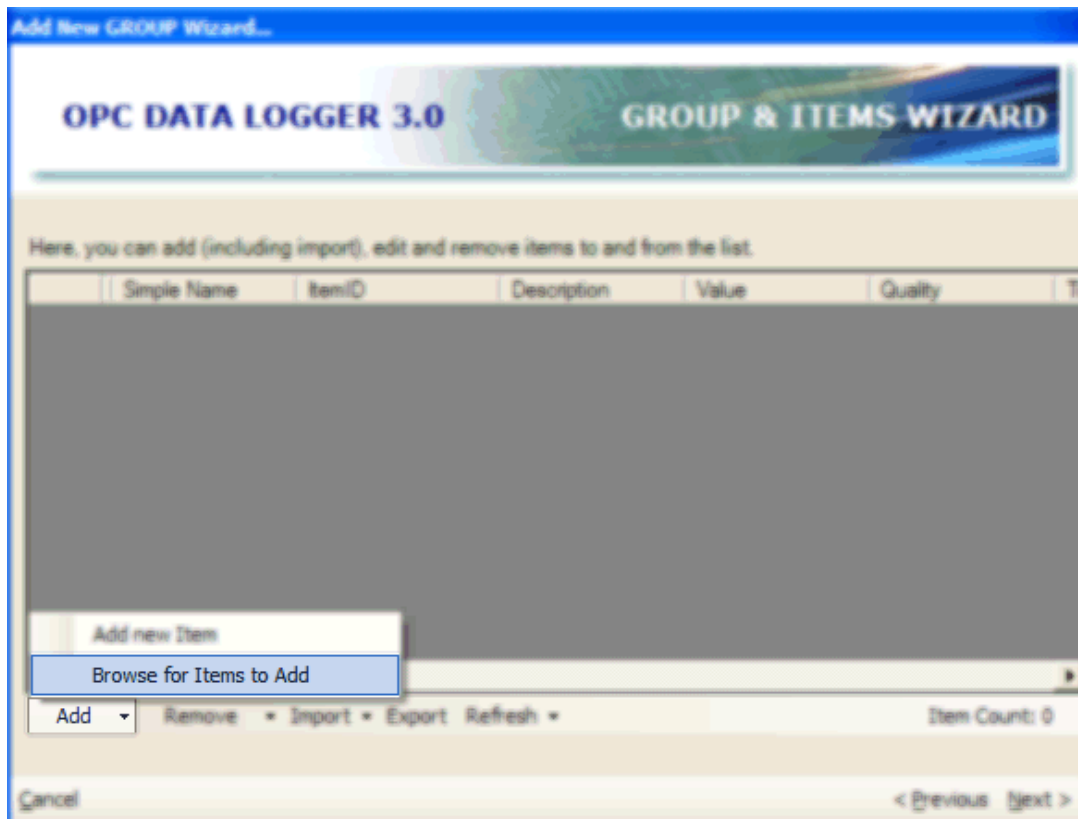
6. Next we can specify how we want to specify the items to log:



If you want to log all of the Items available in the OPC Server then press the **Auto import from Data Source (Server)** option, otherwise choose **Manually choose items to add**. Click **Next**.



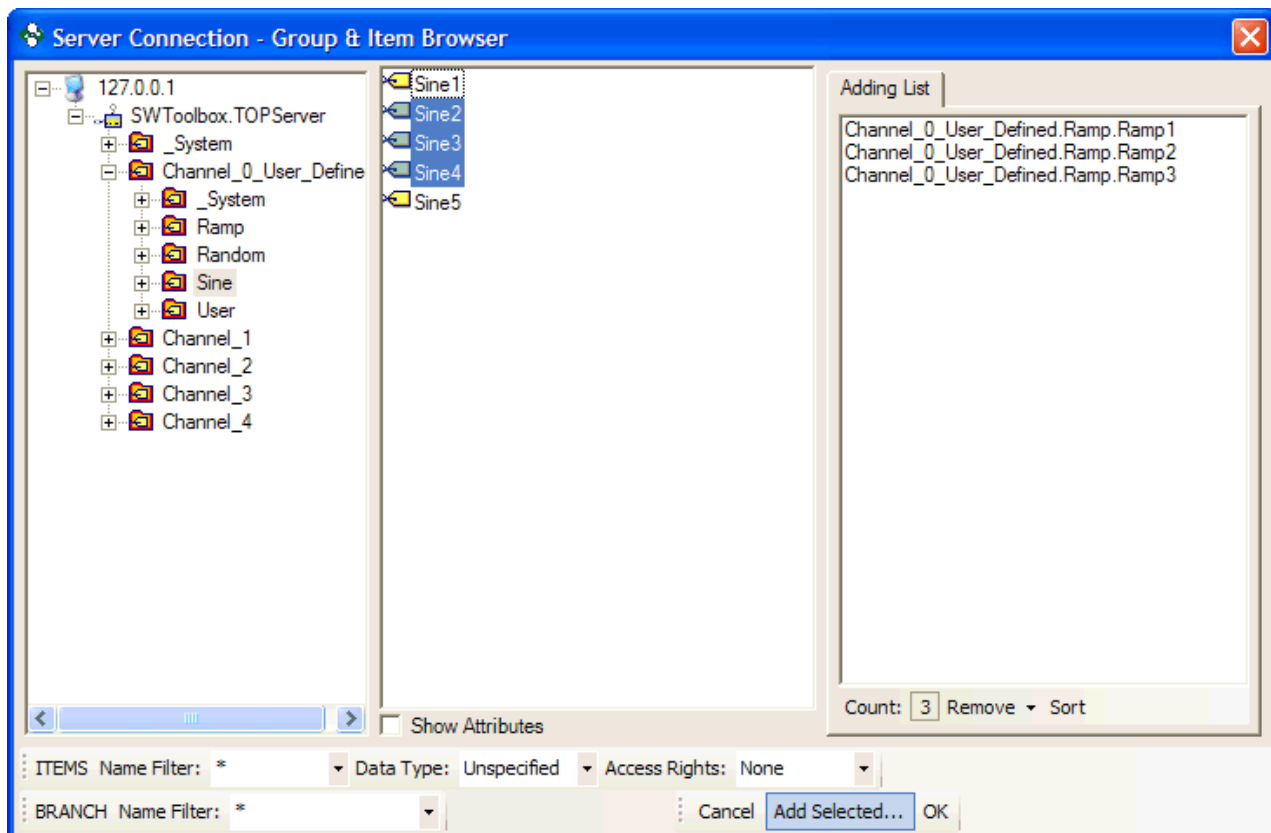
7. The Items list window will open which is where lists the items to log. The list will be empty:



Click the **Add** button at the bottom of the dialog and choose **Browse for Items to Add**.



8. Item **Group & Item Browser** dialog will open allowing you to browse the available items within your OPC Server:



Simply highlight the items you want to log and press the **Add Selected** button at the bottom. This will store these items in a list. You can continue browsing adding more items to this list. When finished simply click the **OK** button.



9. The items will be returned into the previous wizard page:

Add New GROUP Wizard...

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **GROUP & ITEMS WIZARD**

Here, you can add (including import), edit and remove items to and from the list.

	Simple Name	ItemID	Description	Value	Quality
▶		Channel_0_User_...		0	0
><		Channel_0_User_...		0	0
><		Channel_0_User_...		0	0
><		Channel_0_User_...		0	0
><		Channel_0_User_...		0	0
><		Channel_0_User_...		0	0

◀ ▶

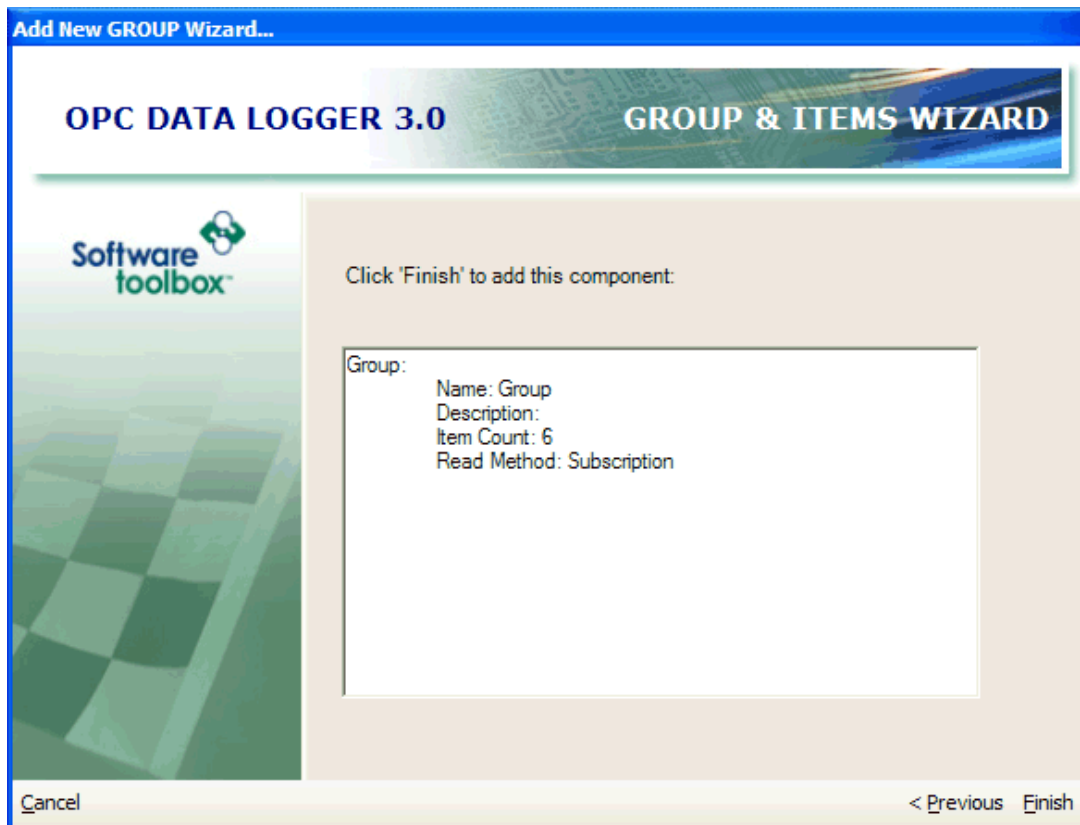
Add ▼ Remove ▼ Import ▼ Export Refresh ▼ Item Count: 6

Cancel < Previous Next >

Click **Next**.



10. The wizard summary page will be displayed.



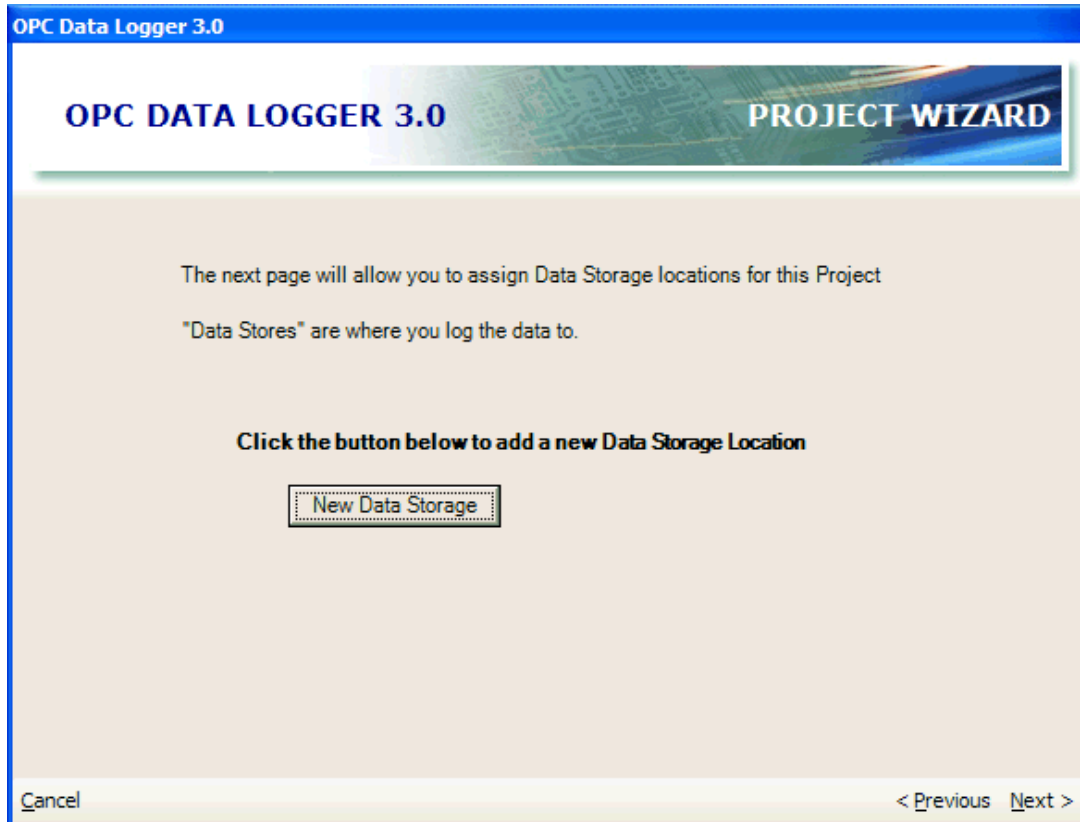
Click **Finish**.

11. The group and items have now been added.



Configuring the Data & File for use with Microsoft Excel

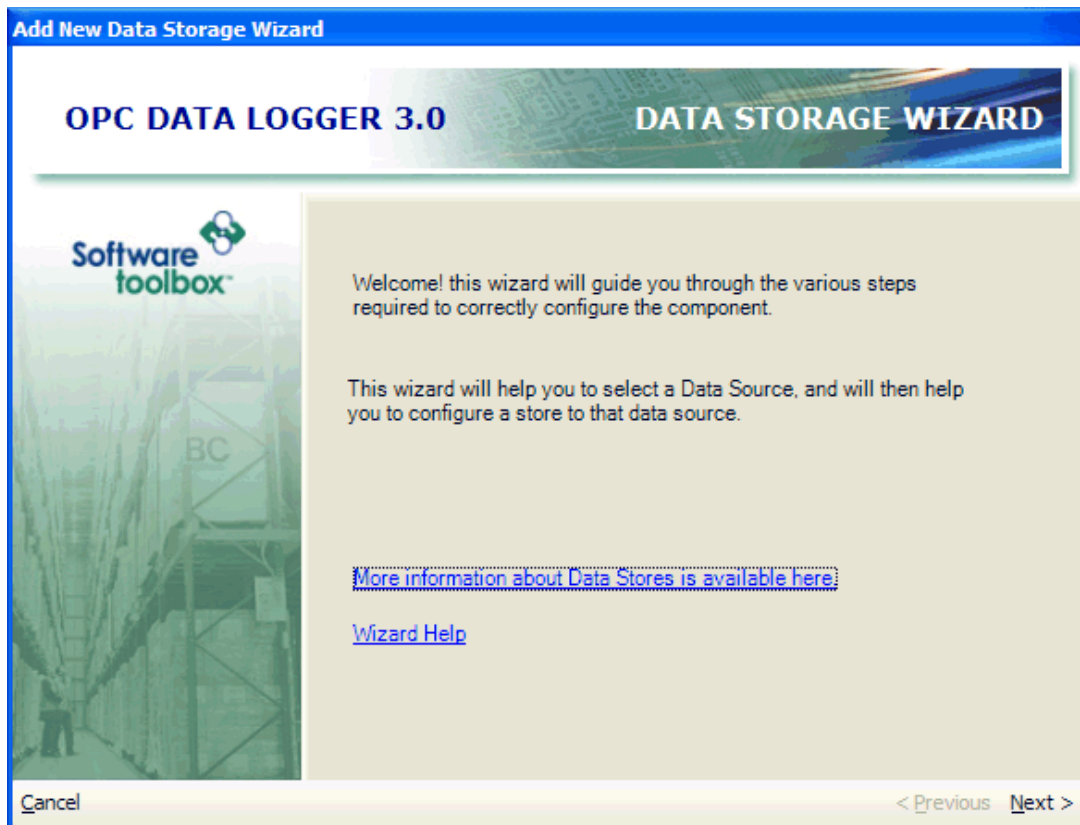
1. Once the **Group & Items** wizard closes you will be returned back to the **Project Wizard** page where you configure the items. Click **Next**.
2. We will now configure our **Data Storage**, which in this case will be our file for Microsoft Excel.



Click the **New Data Storage** button.



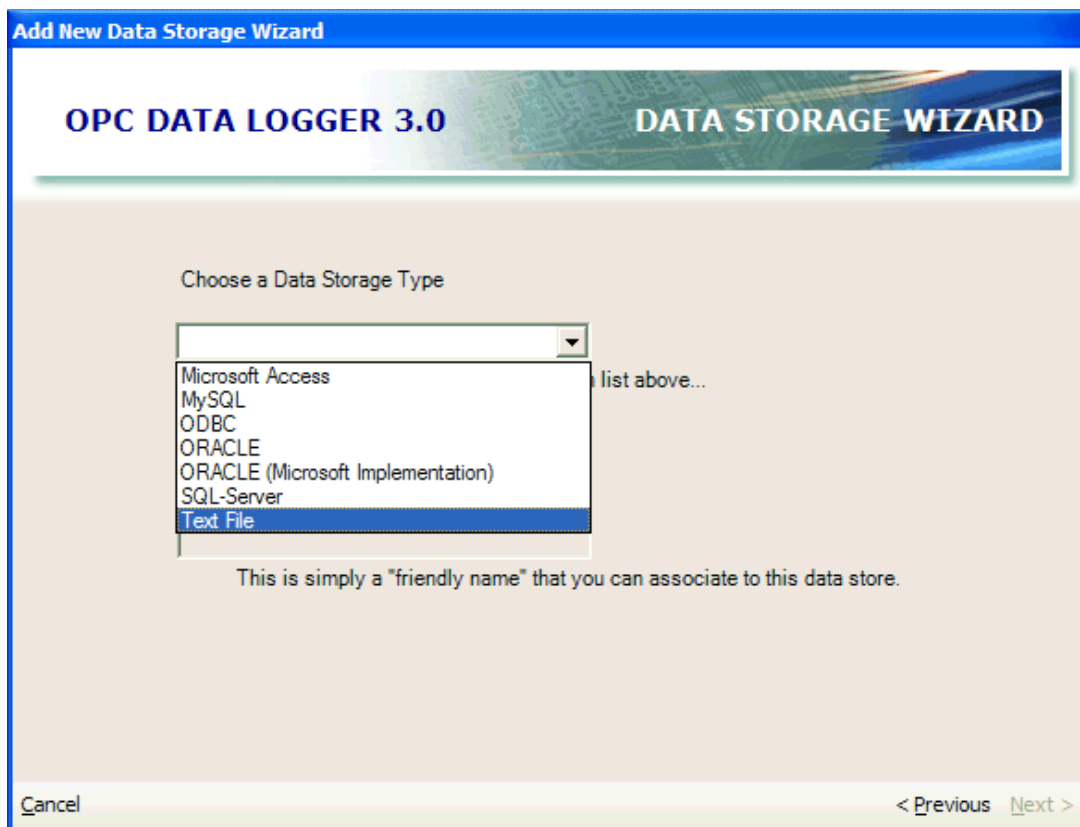
3. The Data Storage Wizard will open:



Click **Next**.



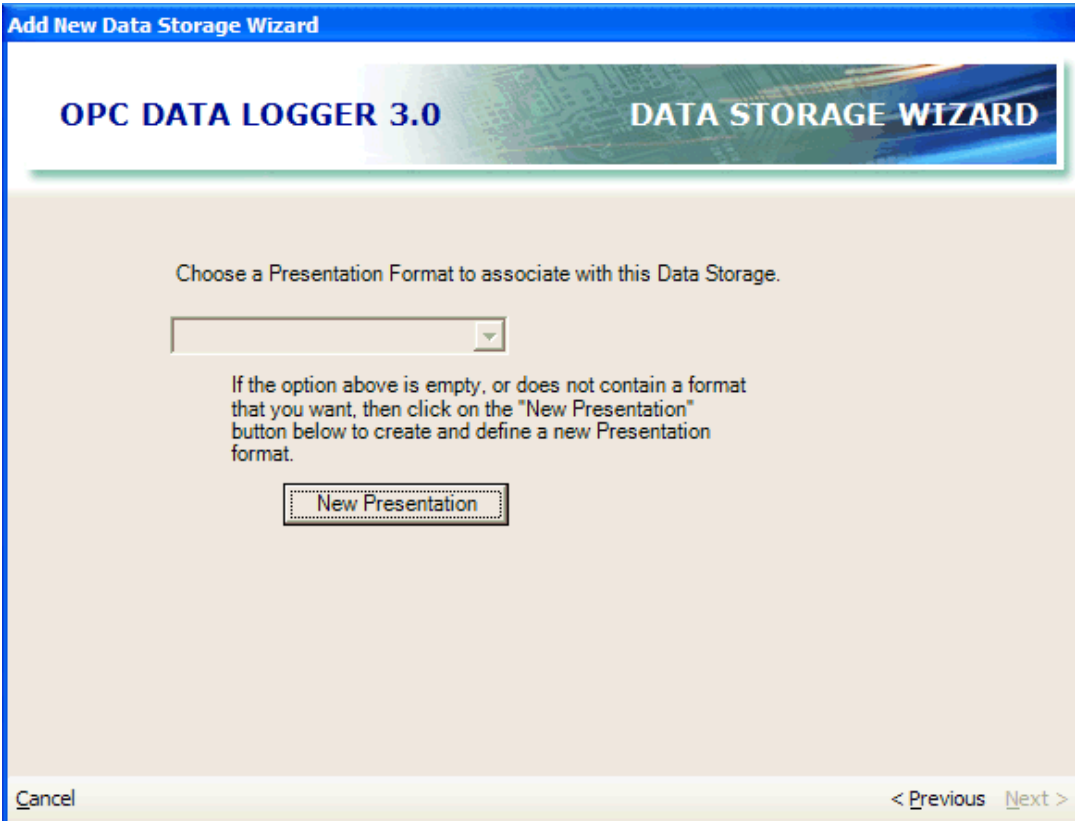
4. We can now pick where to log our data to, we will log to a **Text File**:



Click the **Next** button.



5. We will now configure *How* the data should look within the file:



Add New Data Storage Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 **DATA STORAGE WIZARD**

Choose a Presentation Format to associate with this Data Storage.

If the option above is empty, or does not contain a format that you want, then click on the "New Presentation" button below to create and define a new Presentation format.

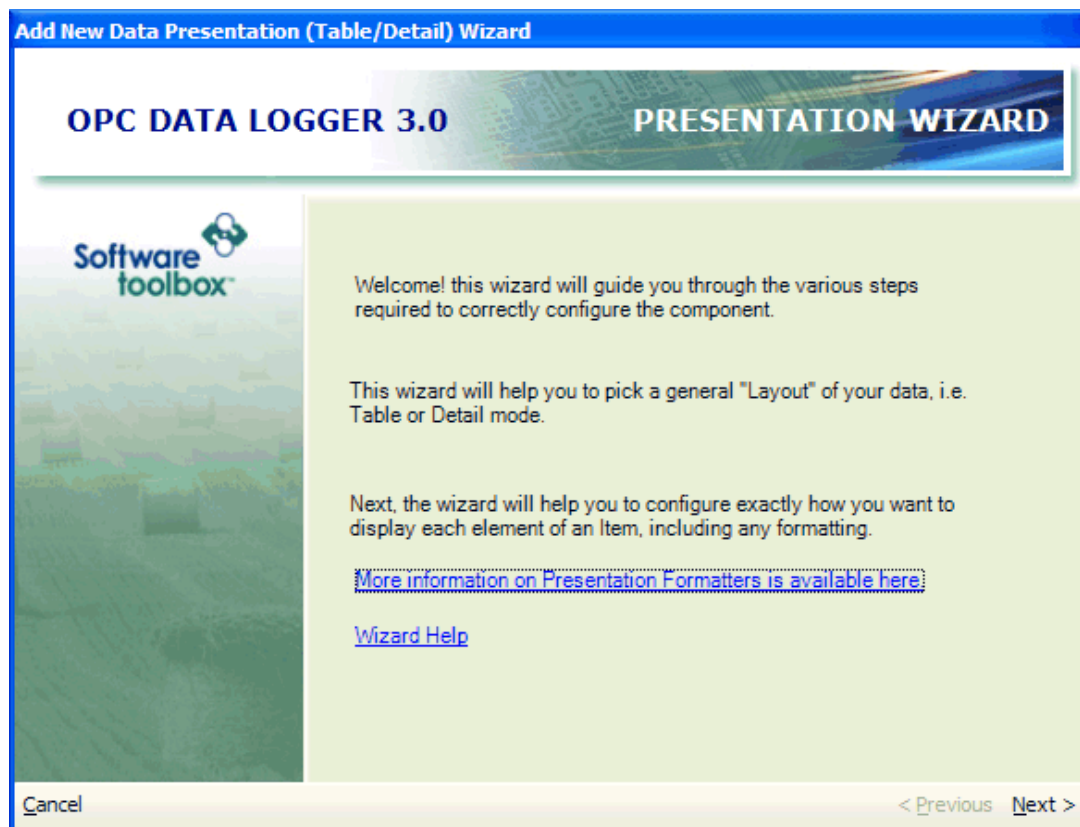
New Presentation

Cancel < Previous Next >

Click the **New Presentation** button.



6. The **Presentation Wizard** will open:



Click **Next**.



7. You can choose between *Table* and *Detail*. Let's choose **Detail**:

Add New Data Presentation (Table/Detail) Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 PRESENTATION WIZARD

How do you want your data to be presented?

Choose a Presentation style

☐ **Table**
[More Info.](#)

Timestamp	MyTag1	MyTag2	MyTag3	MyTag4
9:00am 1/1/01	1	10	100	1000
9:01 am 1/1/01	2	20	200	2000
9:02 am 1/1/01	3	30	300	3000

☒ **Detail**
[More Info.](#)

Tag	Value	Quality	Timestamp
MyTag1	1	Good	9:00am 1/1/01
MyTag2	2	Good	9:01 am 1/1/01
MyTag3	3	Bad	9:01 am 1/1/01

[Cancel](#) [< Previous](#) [Next >](#)

Click the **Next** button.



8. You can now give the *Presentation* formatter a name:

Add New Data Presentation (Table/Detail) Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 PRESENTATION WIZARD

Enter a name and description for the new Presentation.

Name

Description

[Cancel](#) [< Previous](#) [Next >](#)

This is not important at this stage, so click the **Next** button.



9. The wizard will prompt to automatically add the columns shown in picture. These columns are highly recommended for logging:

Add New Data Presentation (Table/Detail) Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 PRESENTATION WIZARD

The next page will allow you to choose which columns will be logged.

Tag	Value	Quality	Timestamp
MyTag1	1	Good	9:00am 1/1/01
MyTag2	2	Good	9:01 am 1/1/01
MyTag3	3	Bad	9:01 am 1/1/01

The above example contains Value, Quality, and Timestamp for each item.

☒ **Automatically add the pictured columns**

Cancel < Previous Next >

Leave the **Automatically add the pictured columns** checked and click **Next**.



10. The item *Attributes* that we will log are now displayed where they can added, modify and removed:

Add New Data Presentation (Table/Detail) Wizard

OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 PRESENTATION WIZARD

Here, you can add, edit, remove and reposition the "Attributes" you wish to log.

	Enabled	Attribute	FormatString	Description
▶	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Timestamp	yyyy/MM/dd hh:mm:ss....	Timestamp
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ItemID		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Value		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quality		
*	<input type="checkbox"/>			

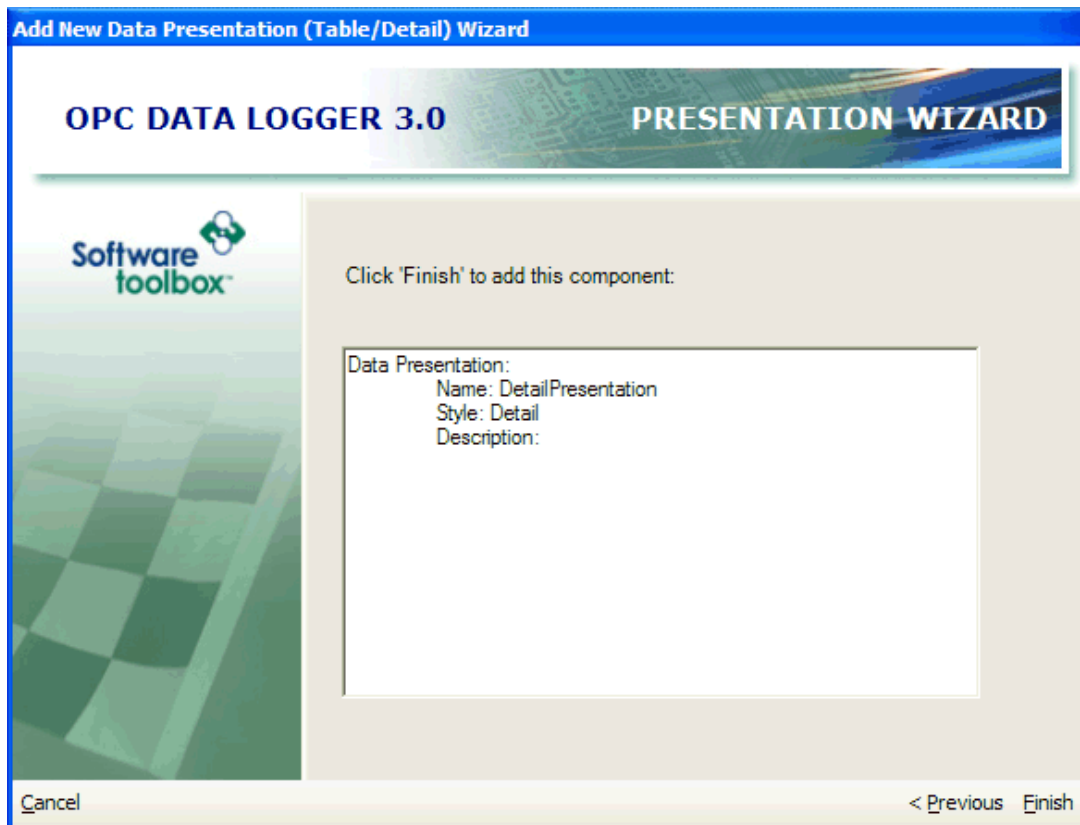
Add Remove ▼

Cancel < Previous Next >

Simply click **Next**.



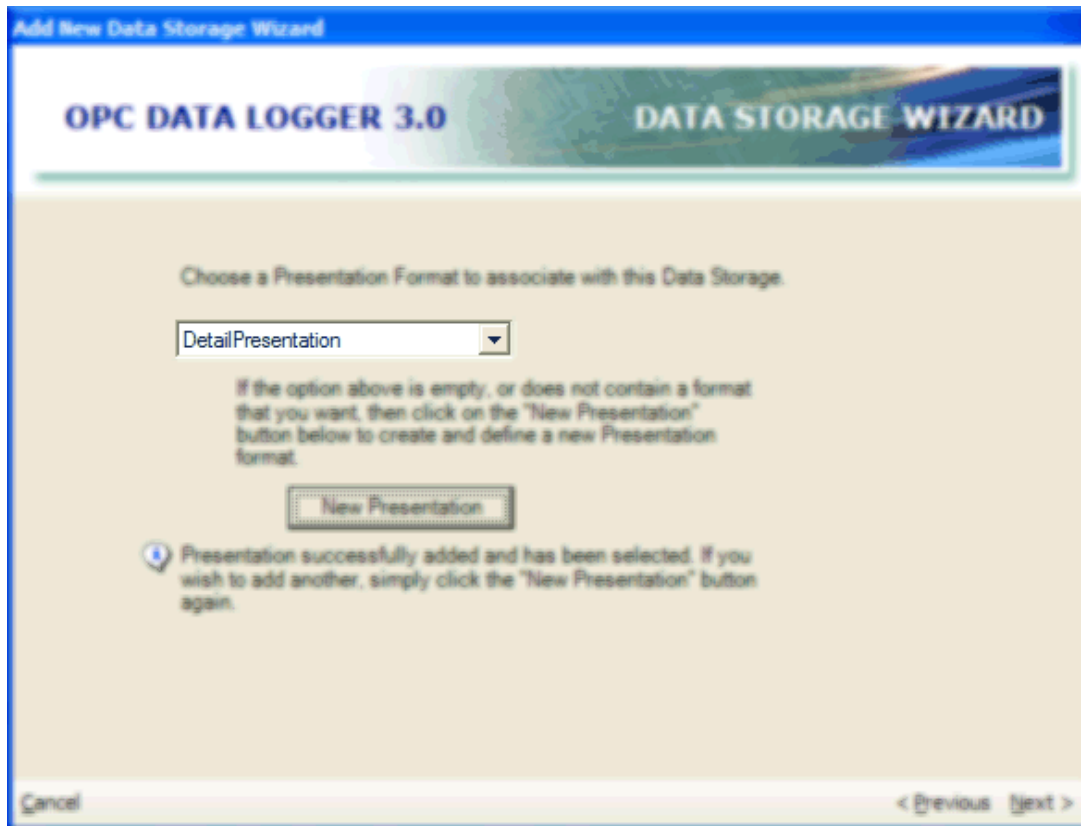
11. The summary page will be shown:



Click **Finish**.



12. We will now return to the **Data Storage Wizard** but this time the *Detail* presentation format we just added will be automatically selected in the dropdown:



Click **Next** to proceed.



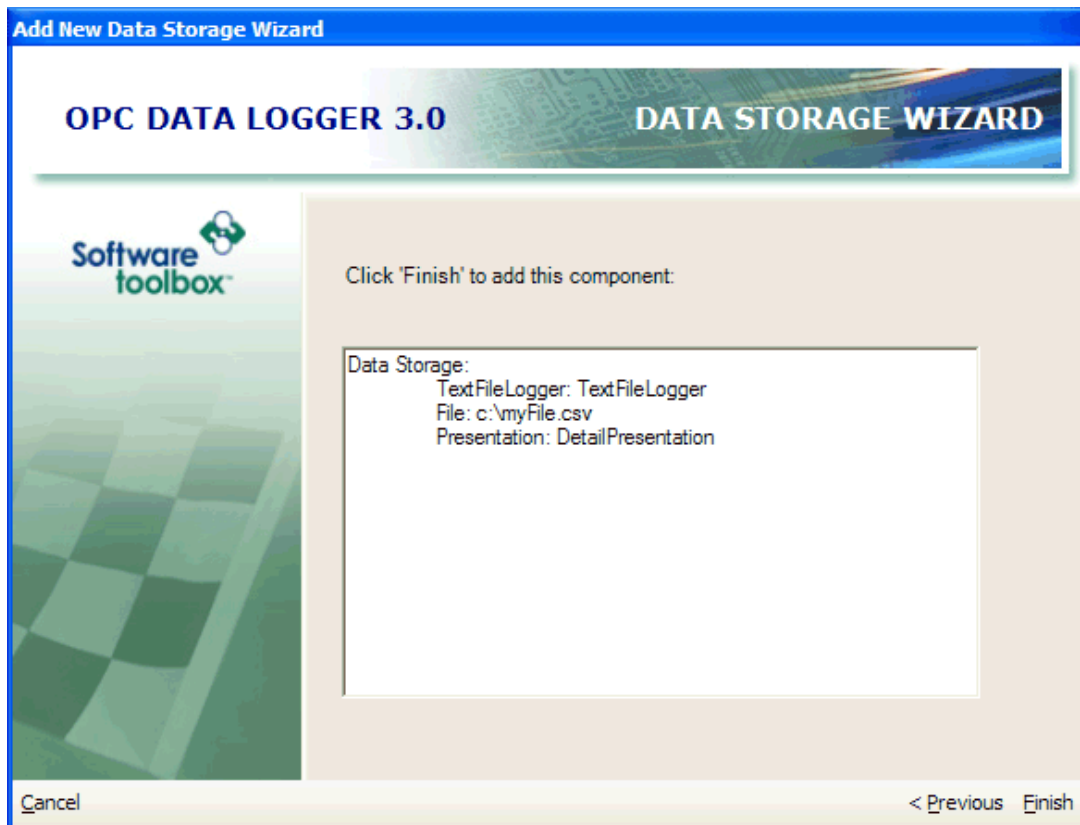
13. We can now specify the file for use with **Microsoft Excel**:

The screenshot shows the 'OPC DATA LOGGER 3.0 DATA STORAGE WIZARD' dialog box. The 'Filename' field is set to 'c:\myFile.csv'. The 'Open File in Shared Mode' checkbox is checked. In the 'File Mode' section, 'Append' is selected. In the 'Formatting' section, the 'Column Separator' is set to 'Comma \', \''.

- a. Make sure that the filename ends with **CSV**.
- b. **Open File in Shared Mode** should be checked. This will allow you to log data to the file while also allowing Microsoft Excel to open the file in a read-only mode.
- c. **Column Separator** needs to be **Comma**.
- d. Click **Next**.



14. The summary page will be displayed:

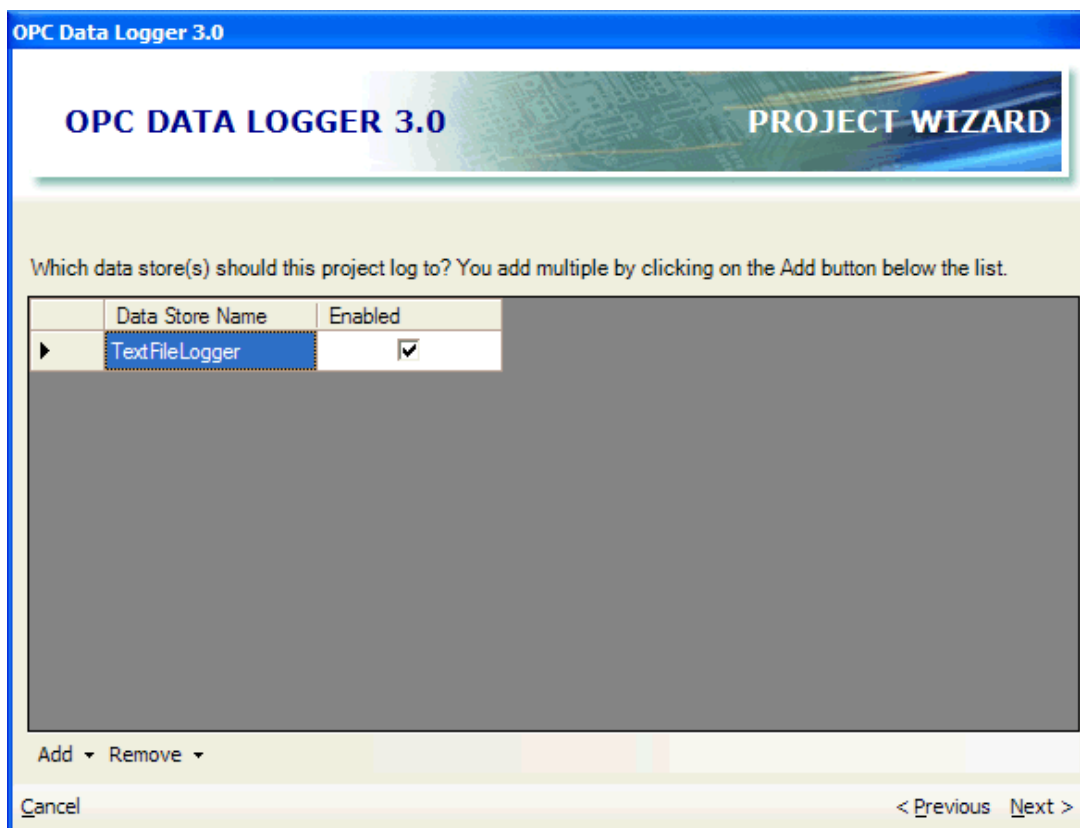


Click **Finish**.



Putting it all together

1. When the **Data Storage Wizard** closes you will be returned to the **Project Wizard**. Simply click the **Next** button.
2. We will now specify that this configuration will log data to just the **Microsoft Excel** file we have previously created:



OPC Data Logger 3.0

PROJECT WIZARD

Which data store(s) should this project log to? You add multiple by clicking on the Add button below the list.

Data Store Name	Enabled
TextFileLogger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Add Remove

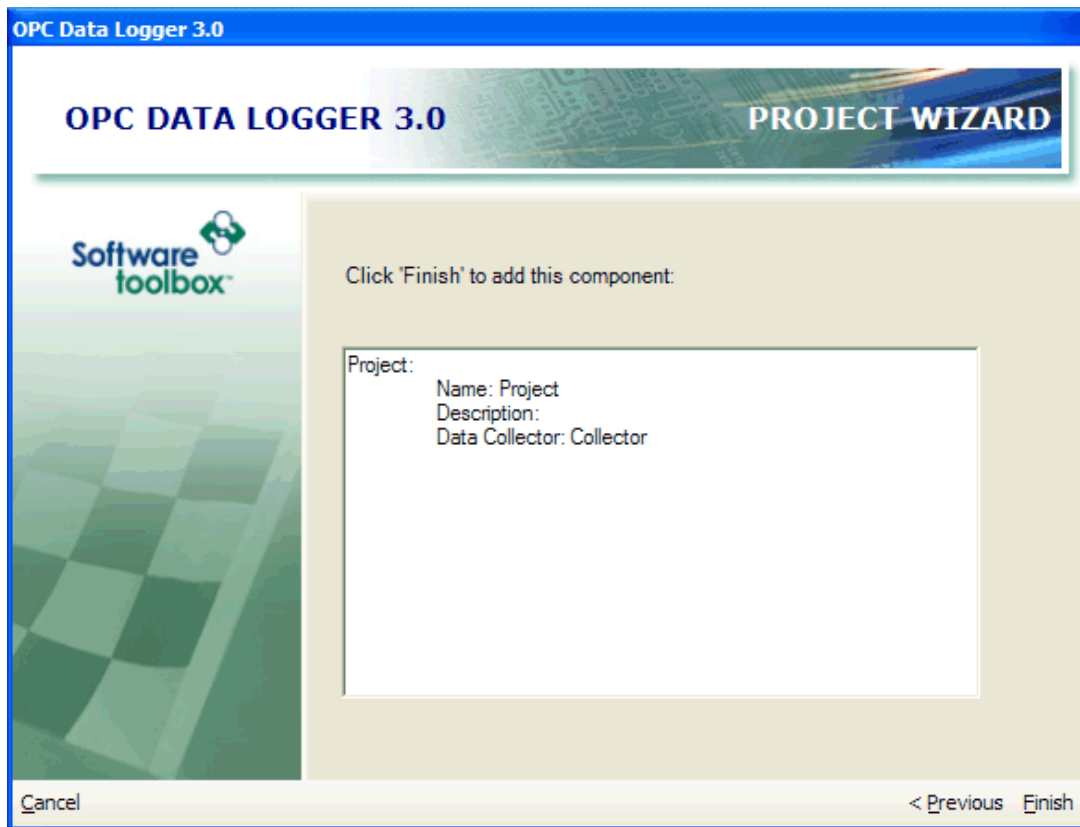
Cancel < Previous Next >

NOTE: You could also log to other places too, such as other files and/or databases and you would simply list them in this window.

Click the **Next** button to continue.

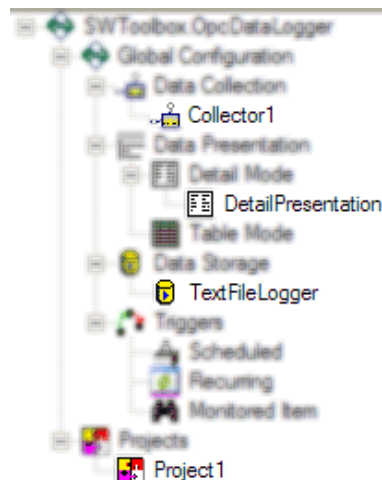


3. The summary page will be displayed:



Click **Finish**.

The OPC Data Logger has now been configured and each of the components the various wizards added will be shown in the configuration tree on the left-side of the window:

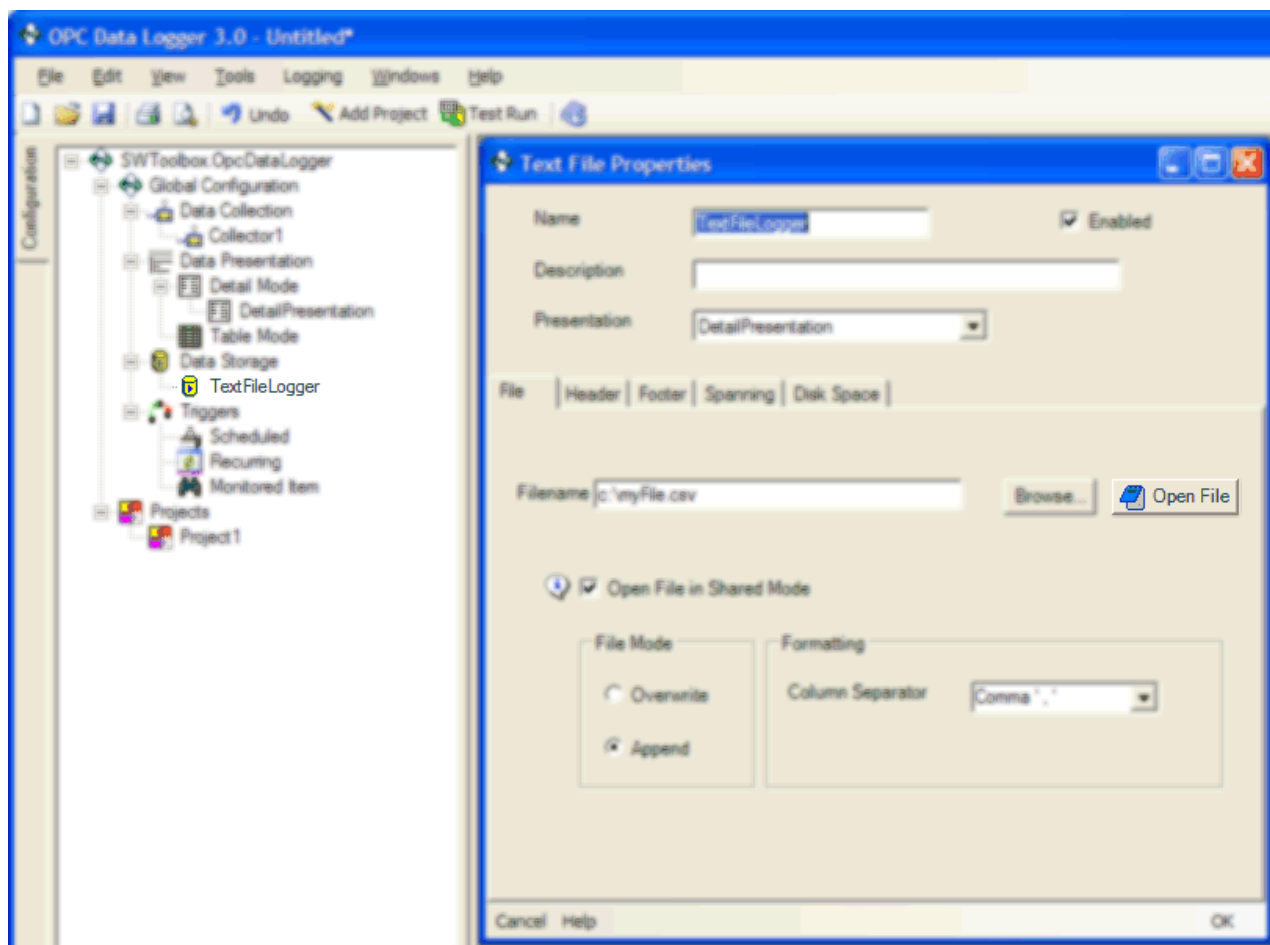


Logging Data and Loading into Microsoft Excel

To test the configuration, simply click on the **Test Run** icon on the toolbar.

Likewise, you can actually start logging the data by choosing **Start Logging** from the **Logging** menu. This will cause the **OPC Data Logger Service** to start logging the data full-time.

After a short while you can open the file within Excel. The quickest and easiest method is to simply open the properties of the text file by right clicking on it from the configuration treeview:



Within the **Text File Properties** screen you can click on the **Open File** button. This should cause the file to open directly within **Microsoft Excel**.



Alternatively, open Microsoft Excel first and then use the **Open** option within the **File** menu and then locate the *.CSV file being used by the OPC Data Logger.

