

AlphaNET™

version 3.0

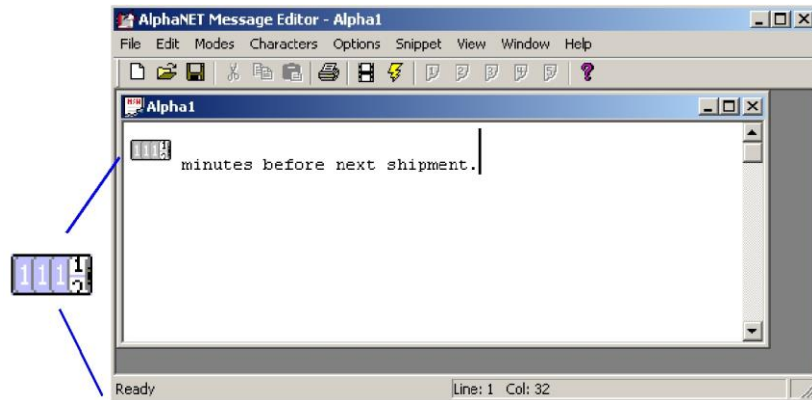
User Manual Counters

How to edit a counter file

What is a counter file?

A counter file sets up from 1 to 5 numerical counters (counter 1 through counter 5), which can be used for either or both of the following:

- ▶ **Display information in minutes, hours, or days on a sign.**



A counter can be placed inside a message.
(This one is counting down from 60 minutes.)



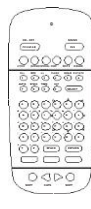
- ▶ **Display special messages (target files) on a sign after a set amount of time has passed.**



After 50 days, the counter included in the top message (which counts up from 0 to 50) is set up to display the target message below:

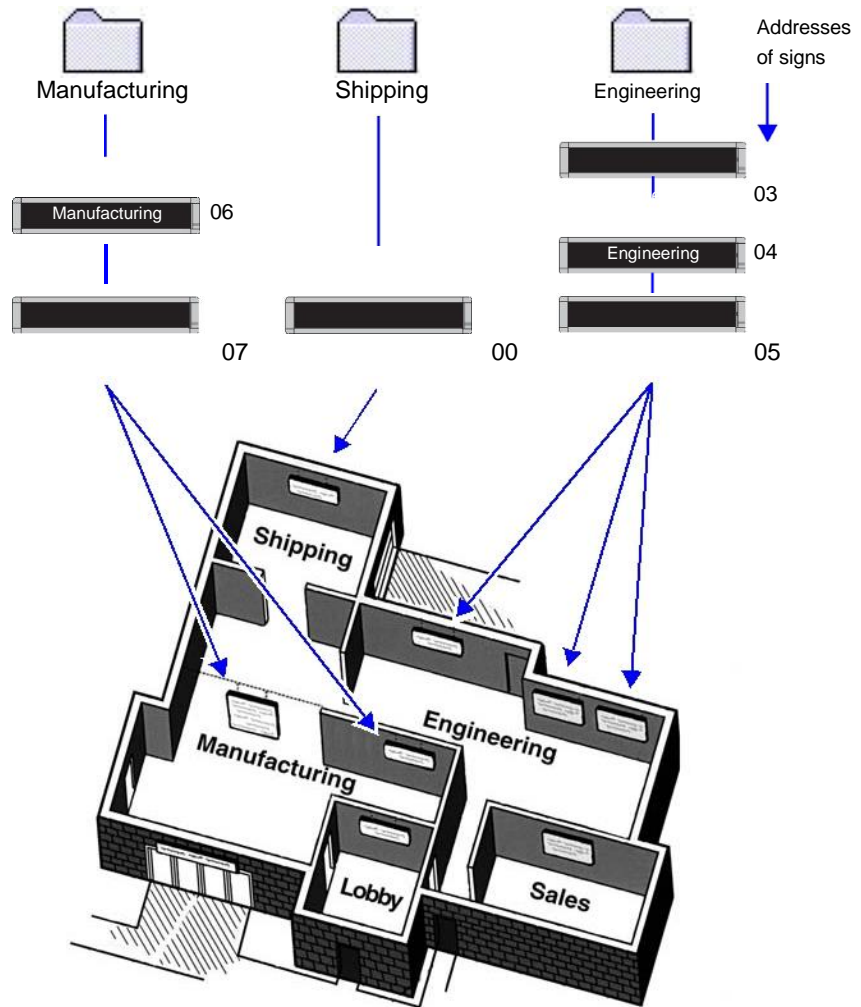


NOTE: The software necessary to use a counter file is included in the standard Alpha® firmware for signs and allows you to program a counter file from your computer. However, the standard Alpha® firmware does not allow you to program a counter file using an infrared remote control (left).



Three examples of how to use counter files

In these examples, we discuss three basic ways of using counters on signs:



- **Example 1** — Using a counter in a message on the Shipping sign. Counter 1 will be used to show a message that counts down hours.
- **Example 2** — Using a counter in a message and displaying a target file message on the Manufacturing signs. Counter 2 will be used to show a message that counts up days and display a target message when it reaches 50.
- **Example 3** — Using a counter to display a target message on the Engineering signs. Counter 2 will be used from Example 2.

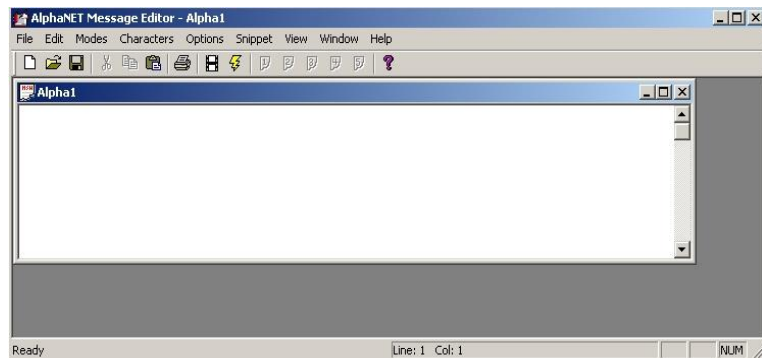
Example 1 — Using a counter in a message

In this example, we will end up with a message on the Shipping sign that counts down from 60 minutes over and over again:

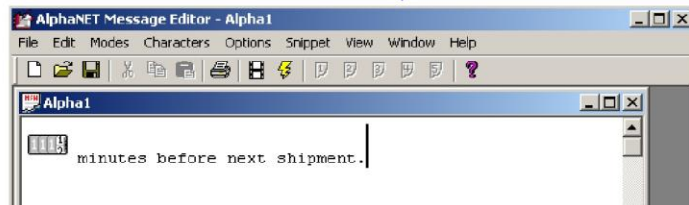
NOTE: The Shipping sign can still display other messages.



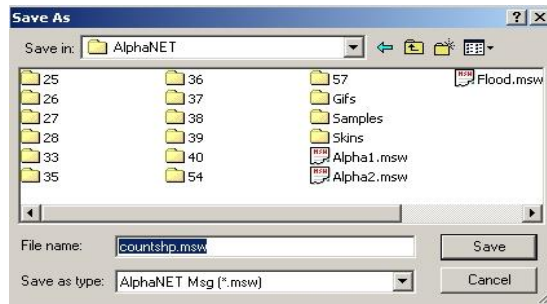
1. Open *Message Editor* and create a new message:



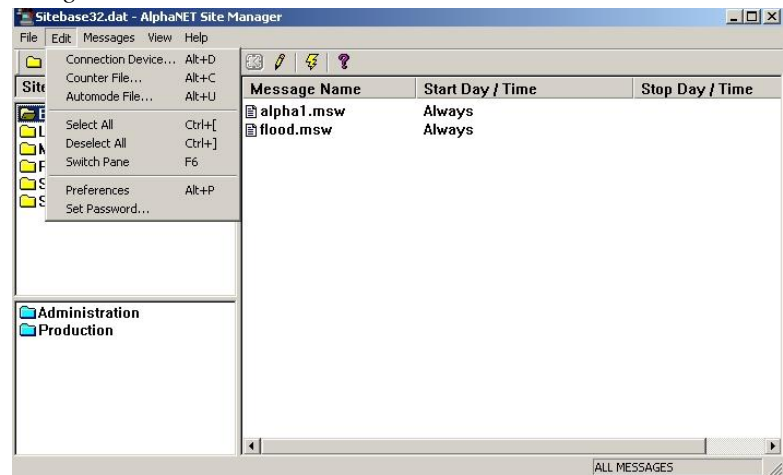
2. Add a counter to the message by selecting *Options >Counter* and then *Counter 1*. Then, after the counter icon, type a space followed by *minutes before next shipment*:



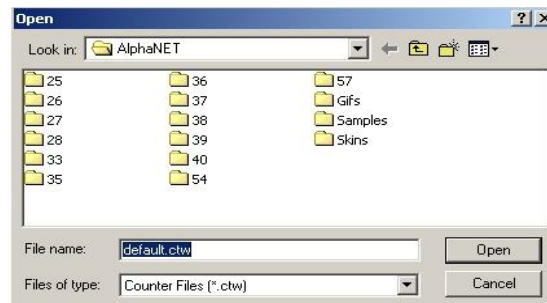
3. Save this counter message as *countshp.msw*:



4. After saving the message, close *Message Editor*. Open *Site Manager* and select *Edit>Counter File*:



5. Next, either open an existing counter file (like the default file shown below) or type a new file name (such as *shipping.ctw*):

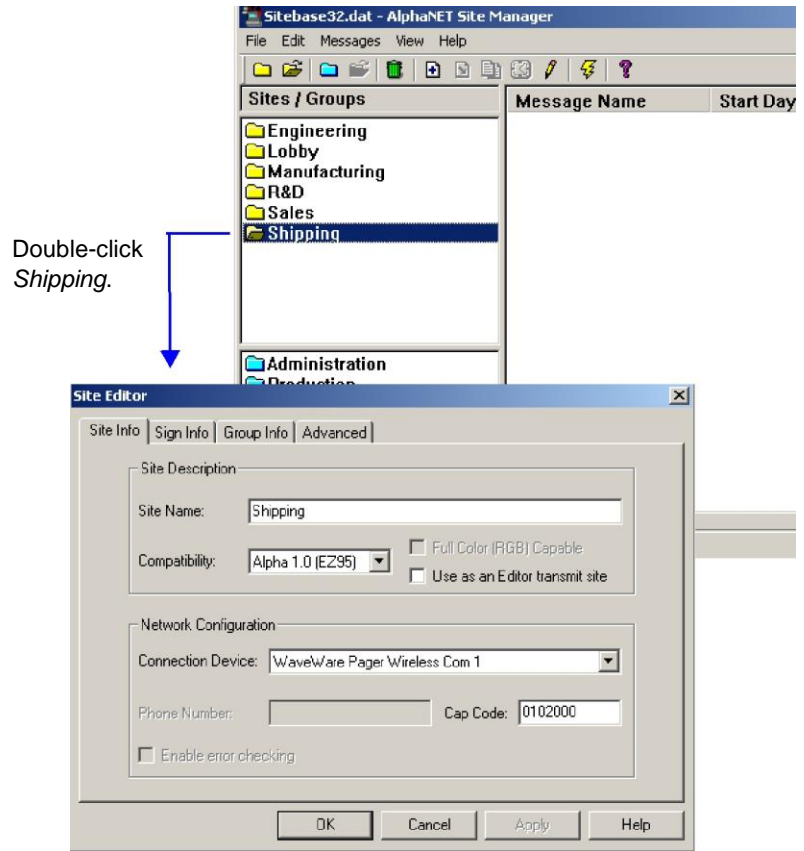


6. When the *Counter Setup* window appears, select the *Counter 1* tab. Then type in the values as shown below:

Table 15: Counter Example 1 — Counter 1 setup

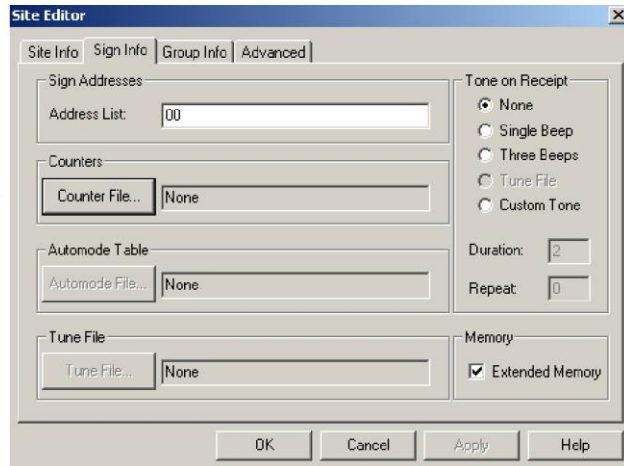
Item	Name	Directions	
A	Counter 1–5	Select <i>Counter 1</i> tab.	
	Target Files	This is where a message is assigned to a target file. One to five messages can be displayed on a sign when counter 1 reaches its target value. (No target files are used in this example.)	
B	Counter On	Make sure this box is checked for this example.	
	Increment/Decrement	In this example, select <i>Decrement</i> because we want counter 1 to count down, not up.	
	Minutes/Hours/Days	Select <i>Minutes</i> because we want counter 1 to count in units of minutes.	
C	Counter Values	Start	Enter <i>60</i> because we want counter 1 to start at 60 minutes and then count down to 0.
		Target	Enter <i>0</i> .
		Dec	Enter <i>1</i> because we want counter 1 to count down 1 minute at a time—60, 59, 58, and so on.
	Target Files	One–Five	This is where you would select which target file messages to display when counter 1 reaches its target value. (No target files are used in this example, so none are checked.)
	Counter Run Time	Start Time/Stop Time	In this example, <i>Always</i> is selected because we want counter 1 running continuously. Since <i>Always</i> is selected, <i>Stop Time</i> is not available.
D	On Weekends	Since we do not need our counter running on weekends, this is unchecked.	
	Auto Reload	This box is checked because we want our counter to count down continuously. If this box was not checked, counter 1 would count down from 60 to 0 just once.	

7. Select *OK* after entering the setup information. Double-click the *Shipping* site to open the *Site Editor* window:

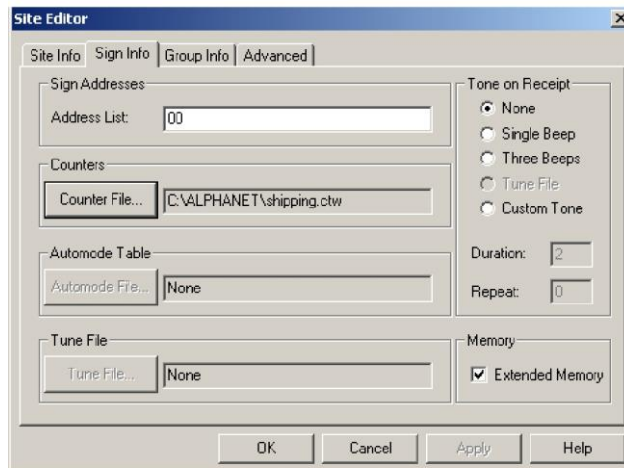
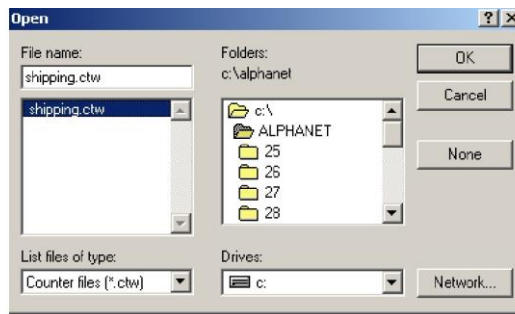


8. Next, select the *Sign Info* tab and attach the counter file you just created to the Shipping site:

Deleting a counter file
 If you want to delete a counter file from a sign, click *Counter File*, click *None*, and then click *OK*.

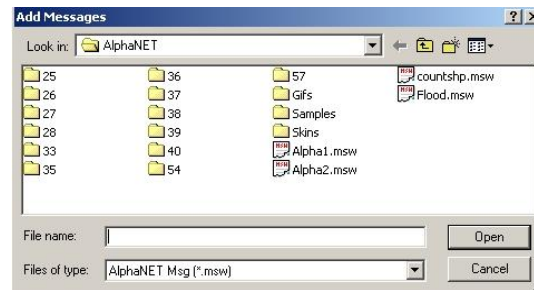
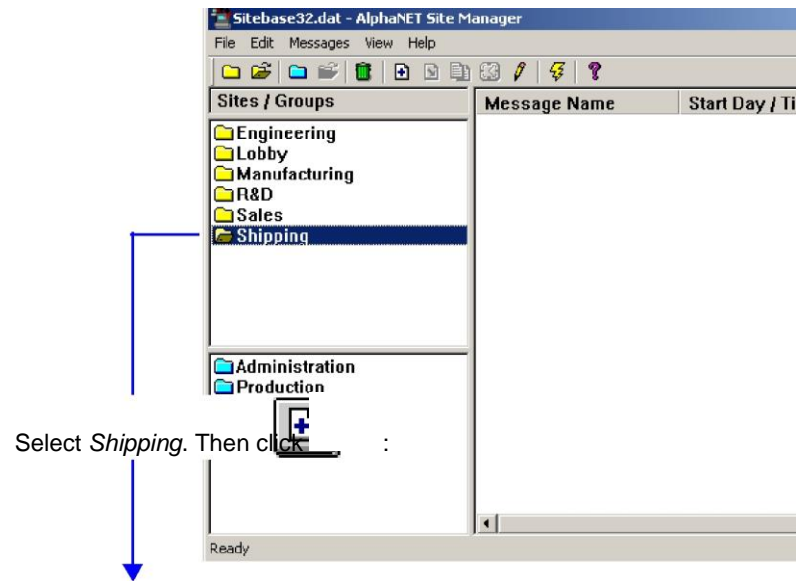


After clicking *Counter File*, select the counter file you just edited (in this case, *shipping.ctw*). Then select *OK*.



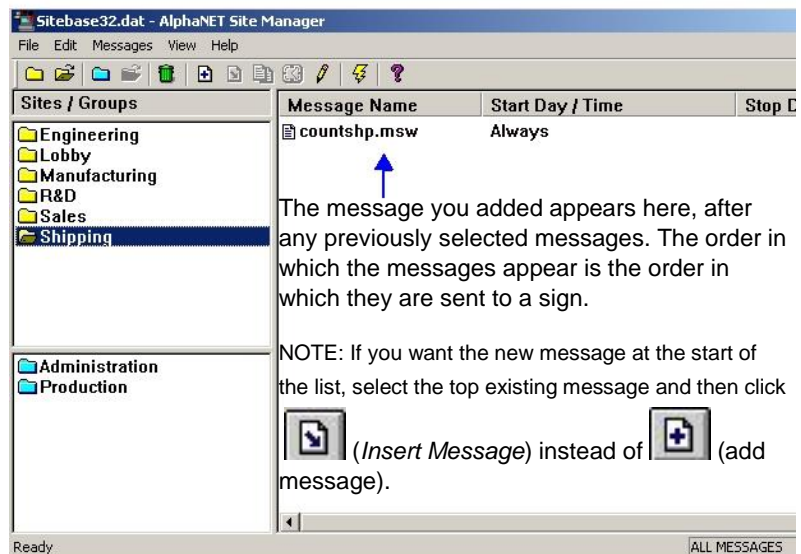
Select *OK*.

9. Add the message that contains counter 1 to the Shipping site:

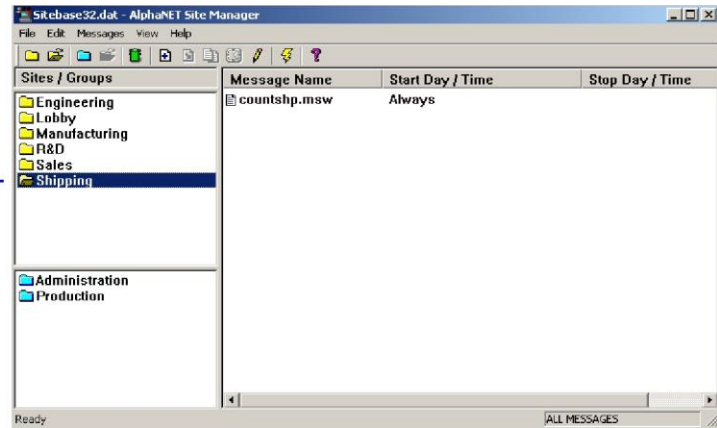


Select the message that contains counter 1 (*countshp.msw*).

Click OK.



10. Finally, in order to display the message you just added to the Shipping sign, the message must be transmitted. To do this, select the Shipping site and then the transmit icon:



Select *Shipping* because this is the only site to which we want messages sent.

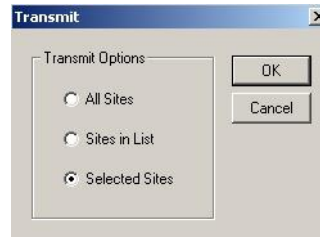


Click the Transmit icon.

Resetting a counter

If you are prompted to reset a sign counter, select *Yes* to reset the counter to its start value.

Otherwise, select *No* to leave the sign's current value intact.



Click *Selected Sites* and then *OK*.

All the messages will be sent to the Shipping site sign.



Example 2 — Using a counter in a message and displaying a target file message

In this example, we will end up with a message on the Manufacturing signs that keeps track of the number of days without an accident.

Also, when 50 days is reached, a message appears on the Manufacturing signs that reads *Another 50 days without an accident!* (this is called a target message.)

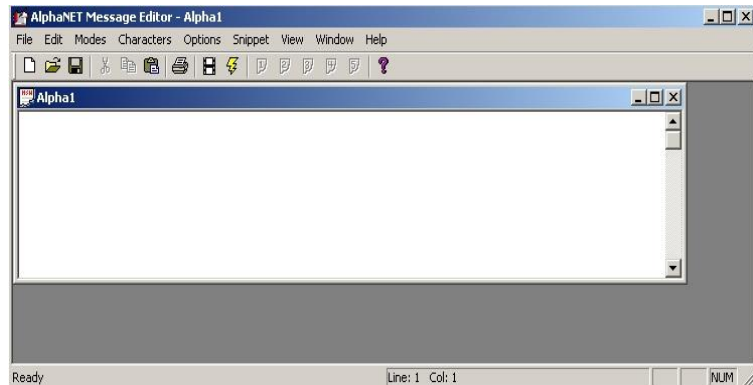
NOTE: The Manufacturing signs can still display other messages.



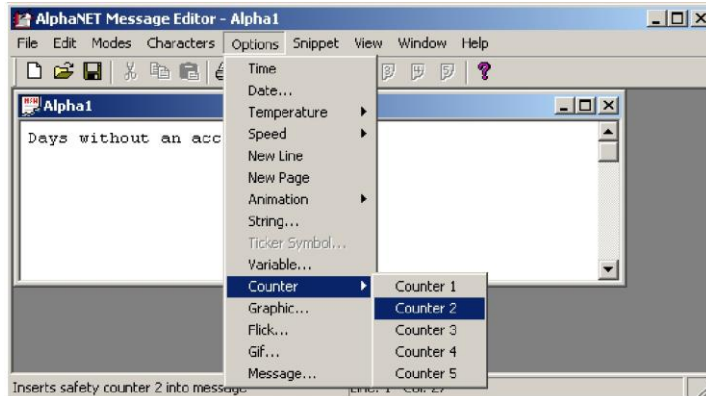
After 50 days, the counter included in the top message (which counts up from 0 to 50) is set up to display the target message below:



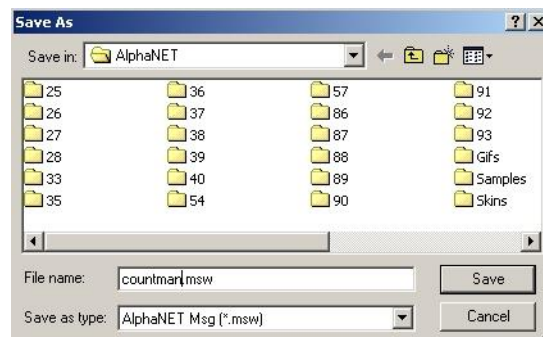
1. Open *Message Editor* and create a new message:



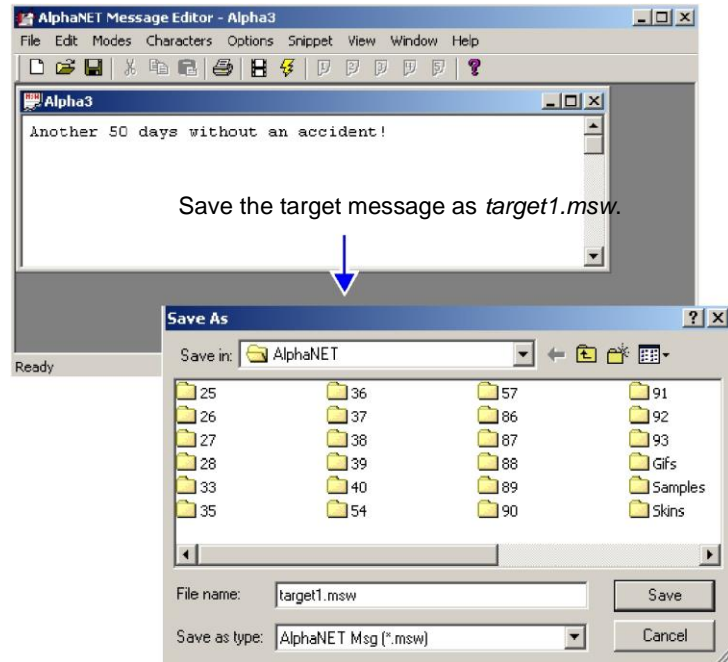
- In the message window, type *Days without an accident:* and a space. Then add a counter to the message by selecting *Options>Counter>Counter 2:*



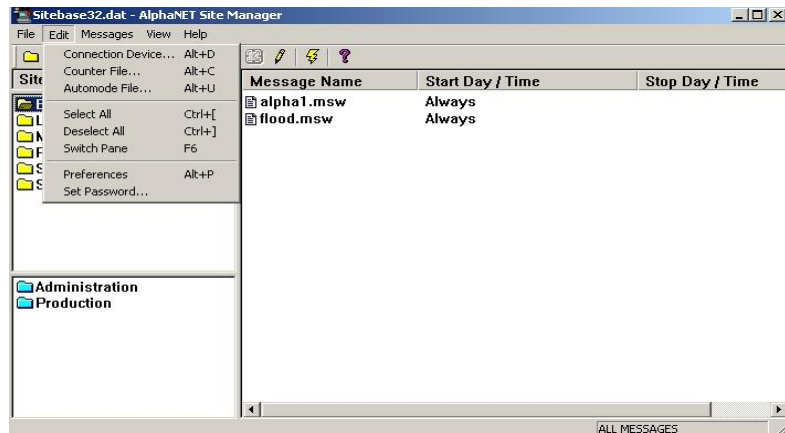
- Save this counter message as *countmar.msw* and close the message:



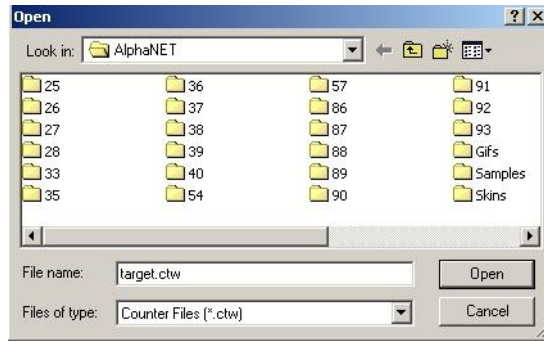
4. Next, create the target message — the message that will appear when counter 2 reaches 50 days. Then save this message as *target1.msw*:



5. Close *Message Editor*. Open *Site Manager* and select *Edit>Counter File*:

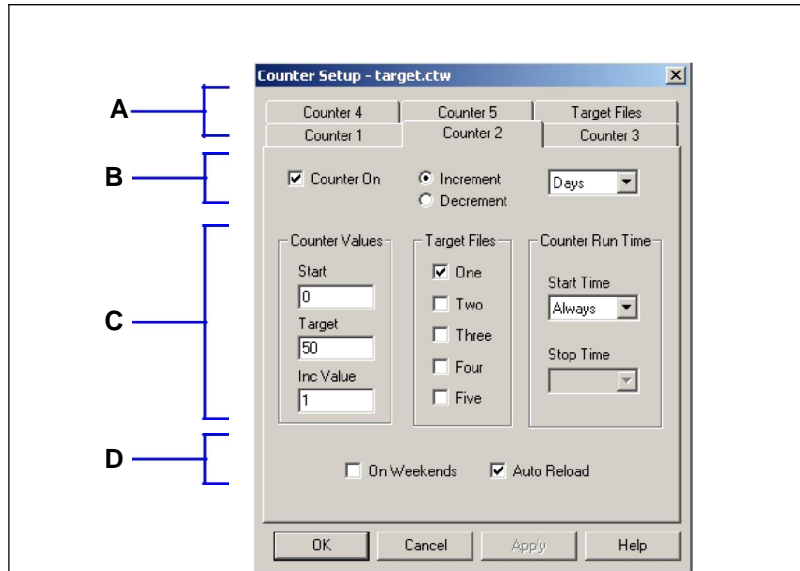


6. Next, either open an existing counter file or type a new file name (such as *target.ctw*) and click *Open*:



7. When the *Counter Setup* window appears, select the *Counter 2* tab and enter the values shown below:

Table 16: Counter Example 2 — Counter 2 setup

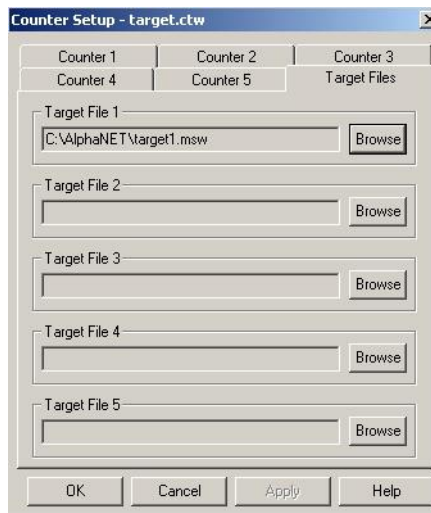


Item	Name	Directions
A	Counter 1–5	Select the <i>Counter 2</i> tab.
	Target Files	This is where a message is assigned to a target file. One to five messages can be displayed on a sign when counter 2 reaches its target value. The largest file runs indefinitely. Send a new message to delete it.
B	Counter On	Make sure this box is checked for this example.
	Increment Decrement	In this example select <i>Increment</i> because we want counter 2 to count up, not down.
	Minutes Hours Days	Select <i>Days</i> because we want counter 2 to count in units of days.

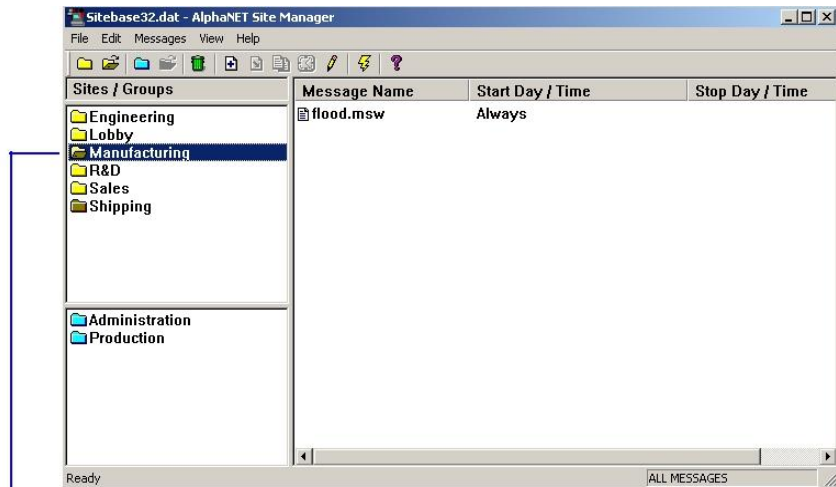
Table 16: Counter Example 2 — Counter 2 setup

C	<i>Counter Values</i>	Start	Enter <i>0</i> because we want counter 2 to start at 0 days and then count up to 50.
		Target	Enter <i>50</i> .
		Inc	Enter <i>1</i> because we want counter 2 to count up 1 day at a time — 1, 2, 3, and so on.
	<i>Target Files</i>	One–Five	Check <i>One</i> . This means that one message will appear on the sign after counter 2 has reached its target value.
D	<i>Counter Run Time</i>	Start Time Stop Time	In this example, <i>Always</i> is selected because we want counter 2 running continuously.
	<i>On Weekends</i>		Since we do not need our counter running on weekends, leave this unchecked.
		<i>Auto Reload</i>	This box is checked because we want our counter to count continuously. If this box was not checked, counter 2 would count up to 50 just once.

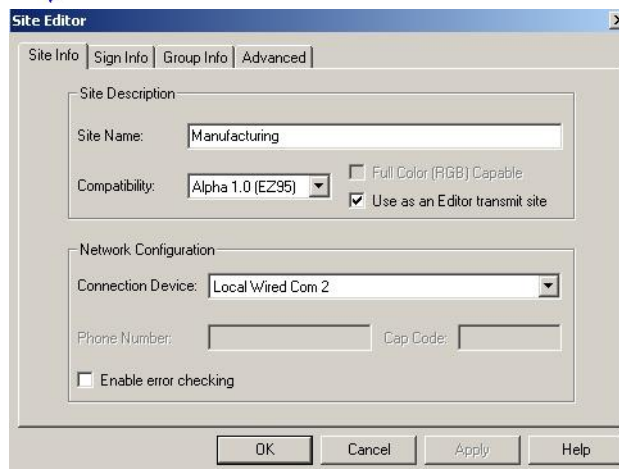
- 8.** Next, select the *Target Files* tab and for *Target File 1*, select *Browse* and then the file you created (*target1.msw*):



9. After selecting the target file, click *Open*, and then *OK* to close the *Counter Setup* window. Then double-click the Manufacturing site to access the *Site Editor* window:

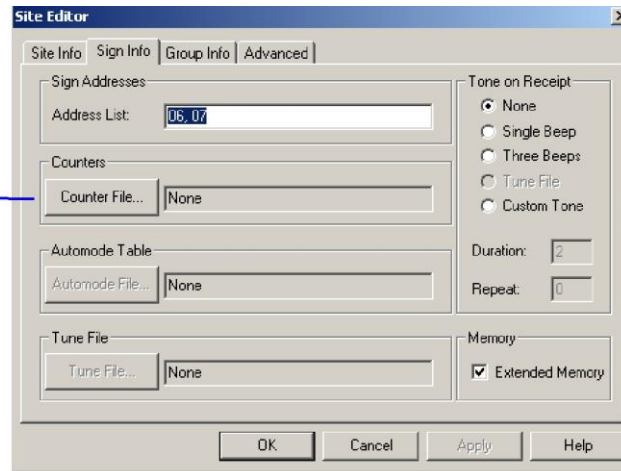


Double-click *Manufacturing*.

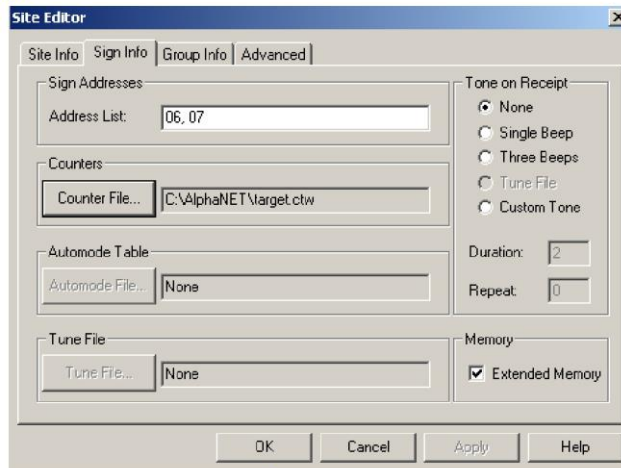
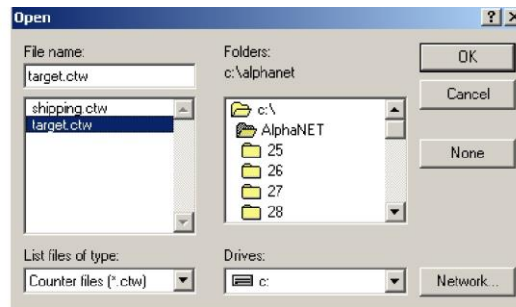


- Next, select the *Sign Info* tab and attach the counter file you just created to the Manufacturing site:

Deleting a counter file
If you want to delete a counter file from a sign, click *Counter File*, click *None*, and then click *OK*.

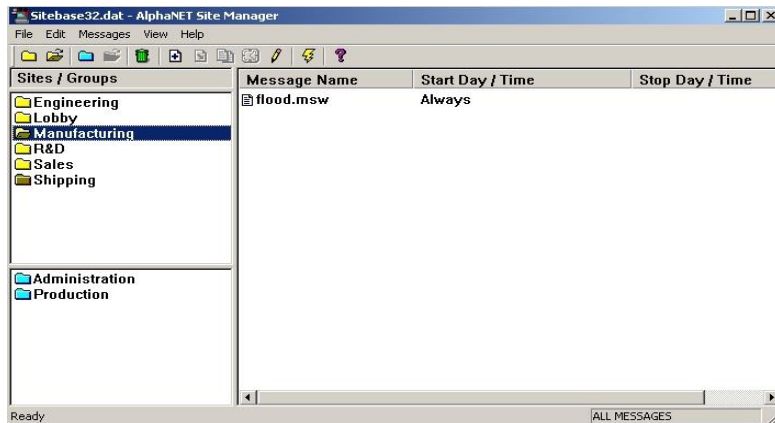



After clicking *Counter File*, select the counter file you just edited (in this case, *target.ctw*.) Then select *OK*.

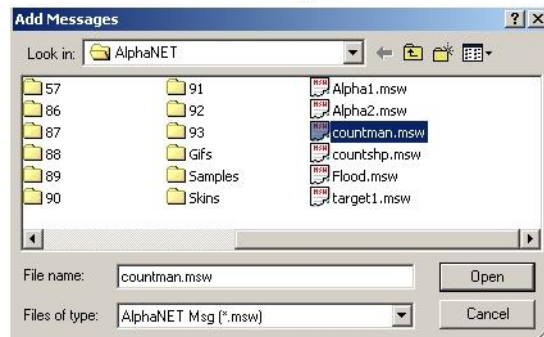


Select *OK*.

11. Add the message that contains counter 2 to the Manufacturing site:

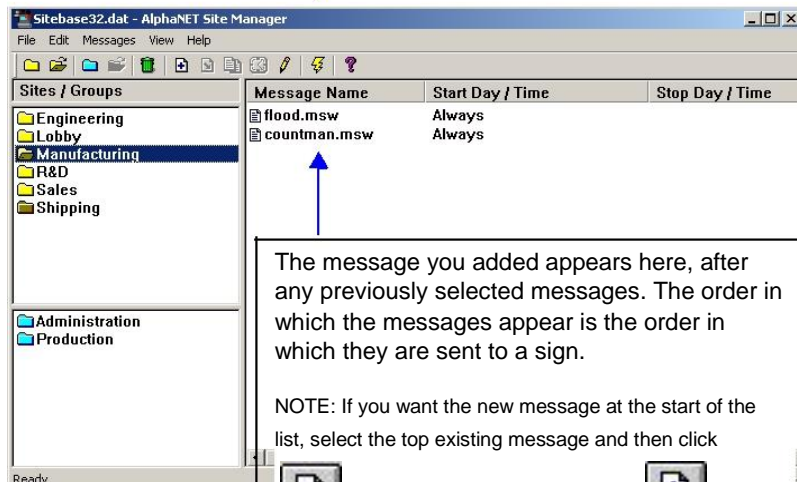


Select *Manufacturing*. Then select  :





Select the message that contains counter 2 (*countman.msw*).

Click *Open*.

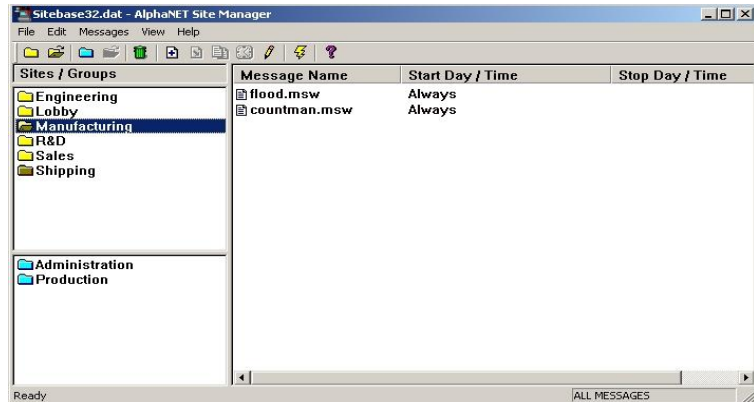


The message you added appears here, after any previously selected messages. The order in which the messages appear is the order in which they are sent to a sign.

NOTE: If you want the new message at the start of the list, select the top existing message and then click

 (*Insert Message*) instead of  (*add message*).

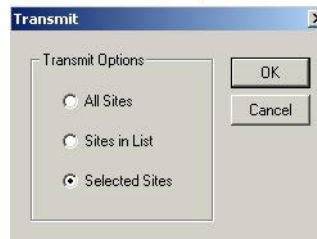
12. Finally, in order to display the message you just added, it must be transmitted to the Manufacturing signs. To do this, select the Manufacturing site and then the Transmit icon:



Select *Manufacturing* because this is the only site to which we want messages sent.



Click the Transmit icon.



Click *Selected Sites* and then *OK*.

Resetting a counter
If you are prompted to reset a sign counter, select *Yes* to reset the counter to its start value.
Otherwise, select *No* to leave the sign's current value intact.

All the messages will be sent to the Manufacturing site signs.



After 50 days, the counter included in the top message (which counts up from 0 to 50) will display the target message below:



Example 3 — Using a counter to display just a target message

HINT

This example is nearly identical to Example 2.

In Example 2, the counter was displayed as well as a target message.

In Example 3, only the target message will be displayed. The counter will just count.

In this example, we will use one of the five counters (in this case, counter 3) to display the message *Another 100 hours of safe operation!* When counter 3 reaches 100 hours, the message will appear on all the signs in the Engineering site. (This site was created in the previous section “How to change a sign’s serial address” on page 15.)

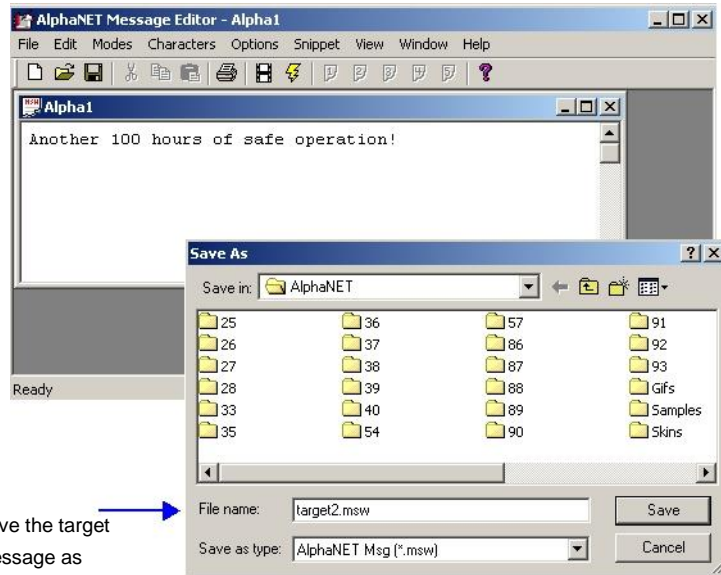
NOTE: The Engineering signs can still display other messages.



1. Open *Message Editor* and create a new message:



2. Next, create the target message — the message that will appear when counter 3 reaches 100 hours. Then save this message as *target2.msw*:

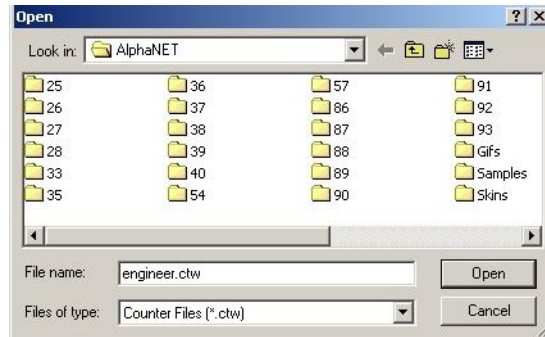


Save the target message as *target2.msw*.

3. After saving the target message, close *Message Editor*. Open *Site Manager* and select *Edit>Counter File*:

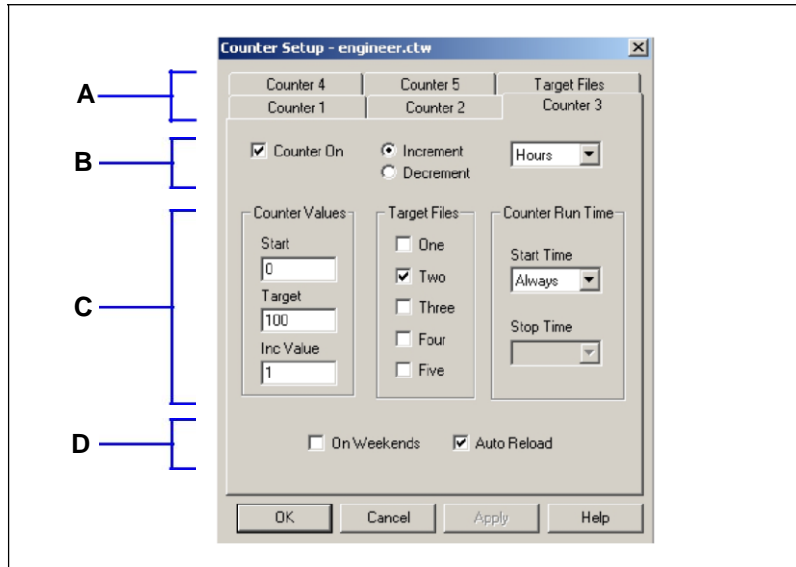


4. Next, either open an existing counter file (like the default file shown below) or type a new file name (like *engineer.ctw*):



5. When the *Counter Setup* window appears, select the *Counter 3* tab and enter the values shown below:

Table 17: Counter Example 3 — Counter 3 setup

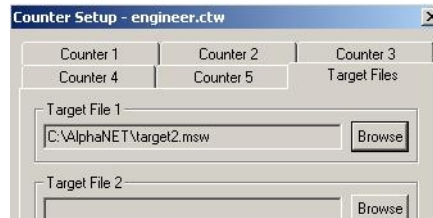


Item	Name	Directions
A	Counter 1–5	Select the <i>Counter 3</i> tab.
	Target Files	This is where a message is assigned to a target file. One to five messages can be displayed on a sign when counter 3 reaches its target value. The largest file runs indefinitely. Send a new message to delete it.
B	Counter On	Make sure this box is checked for this example.
	Increment Decrement	In this example, select <i>Increment</i> because we want counter 3 to count up, not down.
	Minutes Hours Days	Select <i>Hours</i> because we want counter 3 to count in units of hours.

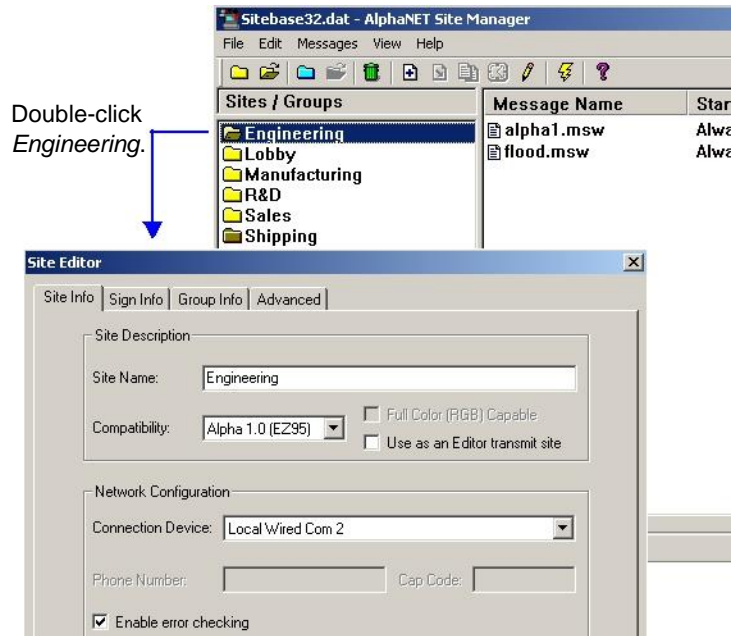
Table 17: Counter Example 3 — Counter 3 setup

C	<i>Counter Values</i>	<i>Start</i>	Enter 0 because we want counter 3 to start at 0 hours and then count up to 100.
		<i>Target</i>	Enter 100.
		<i>Inc</i>	Enter 1 because we want counter 3 to count up 1 hour at a time—1, 2, 3, and so on.
	<i>Target Files</i>	<i>One–Five</i>	Check <i>Two</i> . This means that one message will appear on the sign after counter 3 has reached its target value.
	<i>Counter Run Time</i>	<i>Start Time</i> <i>Stop Time</i>	In this example, <i>Always</i> is selected because we want counter 3 running continuously.
D	<i>On Weekends</i>		Since we do not need our counter running on weekends, leave this unchecked.
	<i>Auto Reload</i>		This box is checked because we want our counter to count down continuously. If this box was not checked, counter 3 would count up to 100 just once.

6. Next, select *Target Files*. For *Target File 1*, select *Browse* and then select the file you created called *target2.msw*:

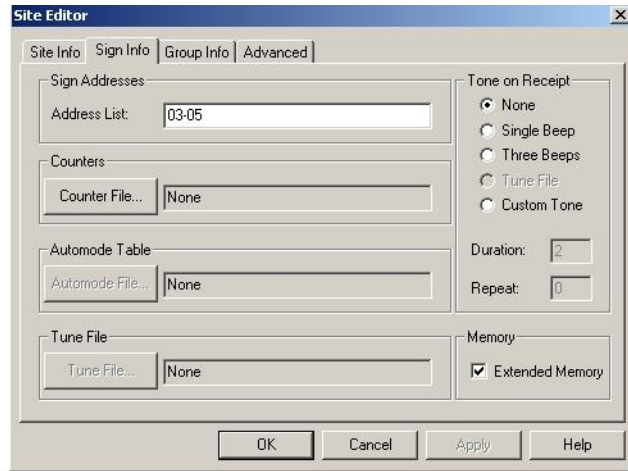


7. After selecting the target file, click *OK*. Then double-click the *Engineering* site to access the *Site Editor* window:

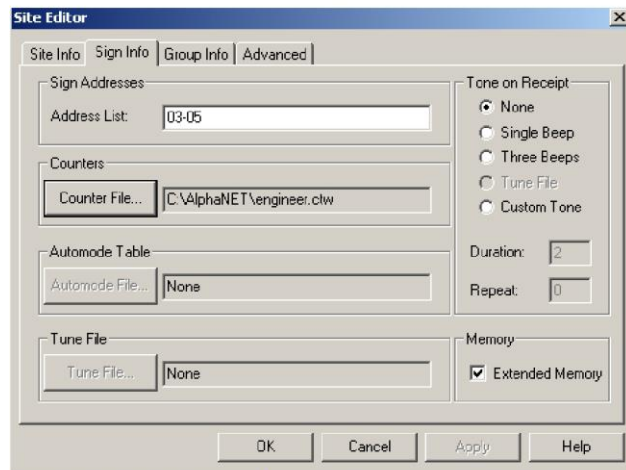
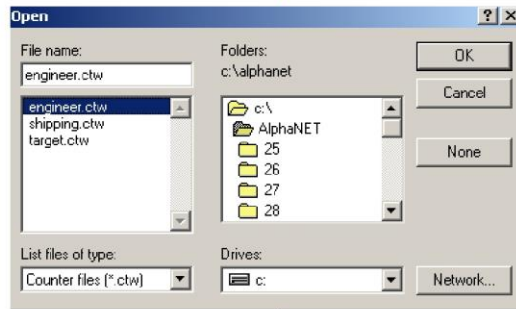


8. Next, select *Sign Info* and attach the counter file you just created to the Engineering site:

Deleting a counter file
If you want to delete a counter file from a sign, click *Counter File*, click *None*, and then click *OK*.



After clicking *Counter File*, select the counter file you just edited (in this case, *engineer.ctw*). Then select *OK*.



Select *OK*.

