DIGITAL YACHT

TECHNICAL NOTES

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Article applies to - SmarterTrack Navigation Software

ISSUE: Using Navionics Charts with SmarterTrack 2014

Our popular SmarterTrack navigation software for Windows PCs supports Navionics Charts and with the release of the latest 2014 (Version 7) edition you no longer need a special Navionics Card reader permanently plugged in to the USB port of the PC. Using a commercial, off-the-shelf, 3rd party memory card reader, you can copy* the chart data to the PC's hard drive and use the software with no card reader or dongle connected.

* Note – you need to have an internet connection on the PC whilst copying the charts to the hard drive, so this is probably best done at home or in the office before taking the PC down to the boat.

SOLUTION:

There are generally two types of customers who buy SmarterTrack;

1) Those that already have Navionics charts on an SD or CF Card that they use with their chart plotter and who wish to save buying duplicate charts by using the same Navionics charts on their PC.
2) Customers that do not have Navionics charts yet and need to buy one of the latest Navionics+ cartridges for the area they will be sailing in.

Customers with a Navionics Chart Cartridge

For the last 4-5 years, all Navionics chart cartridges have included an "nTag" file which is a special encrypted file that is unique to that cartridge. As long as you have one of these latest "nTag" chart cards, you will be able to copy the chart data to your PC's hard drive using the copy chart function in SmarterTrack.
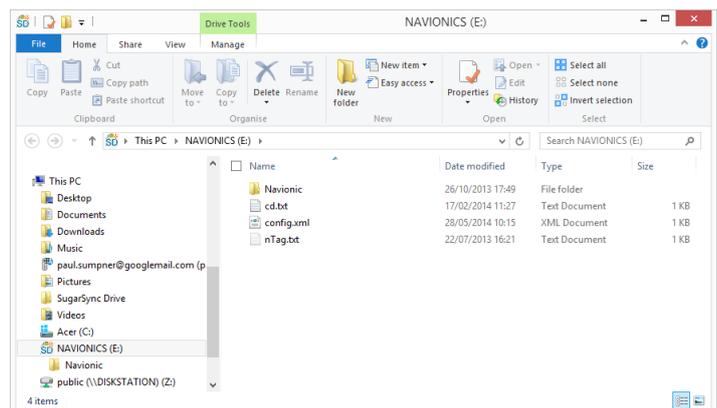
To check your Navionics chart card has the "nTag" file, simply plug the card in to a memory card reader connected to your PC and look at the files on the card. If you see a file called "nTag.txt" as shown above then the data on the chart cartridge can be copied on to your PC's hard drive.

If your chart card does not have this file, then we would recommend purchasing a chart update for the chart cartridge and the new updated chart cartridge will have one of the "nTag" files on it. Navionics normally charge 50% of the full price of a new cartridge for an update, so it is still cheaper to update than buy a new cartridge.

You cannot simply copy the files from the chart cartridge to your PC's hard drive using normal Windows Explorer file copying commands, it is necessary to use the chart copy feature in SmarterTrack to do this.

By clicking on the link below, you can watch a video that we produced that clearly explains the whole chart cartridge copy procedure in SmarterTrack and also explains some of the other Navionics Chart features available in SmarterTrack.

http://youtu.be/arGR-BuSKIc

Customers without a Navionics Chart Cartridge

If you do not already have a Navionics Chart Cartridge, then the new Navionics+ charts are the best solution for most SmarterTrack customers. Navionics+ allows you to purchase a blank chart card and card reader, which you can then use to download the very latest, most up to date charts for the area you select.

A good introductory video on Navionics+ can be viewed by clicking on the link below;

http://youtu.be/f-z5EcFf8_w

The Navionics+ pack retails in the UK for around £199 inc.VAT and this gives you access to charts for the whole of the UK + Holland (includes North France and Benelux).

Once you have purchased the Navionics+ pack, you need to insert the cartridge in to the supplied reader and plug this in to a spare USB port on your computer. Then open your browser and go to….

http://www.navionics.com/en/navionics-plus

Once on the Navionics+ homepage (see next page) click on the "Downloads & Updates" option (top right corner). As a new user you will need to install the Navionics Chart Installer and register, both of which are pretty straight forward.

Registration simply involves entering your name and email address, so that the "nTag" file on the cartridge can be registered to you. Navionics allow a cartridge to be copied to 5 different PCs, so you can have a backup PC with the same charts on and not worry about copying the charts on to a new PC should the old PC need to be replaced.
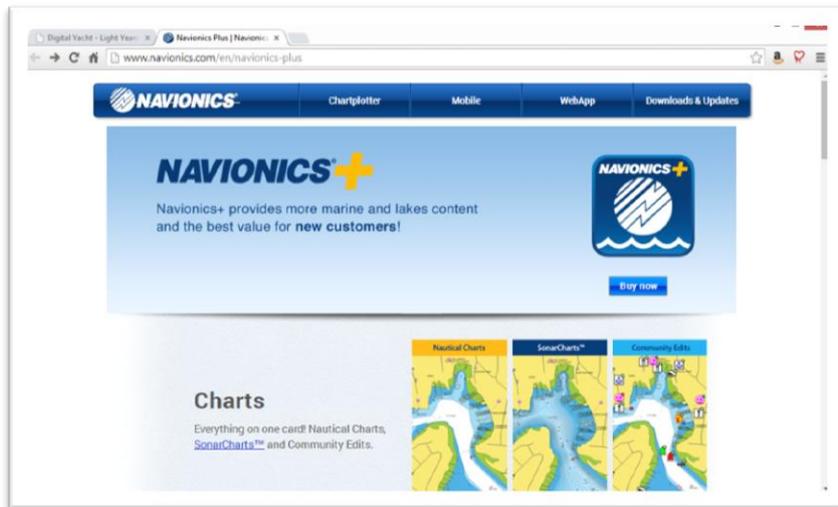
During the registration process you will need to select which system you have; select Digital Yacht (bottom of the manufacturer list) and then select SmarterTrack Version 7.
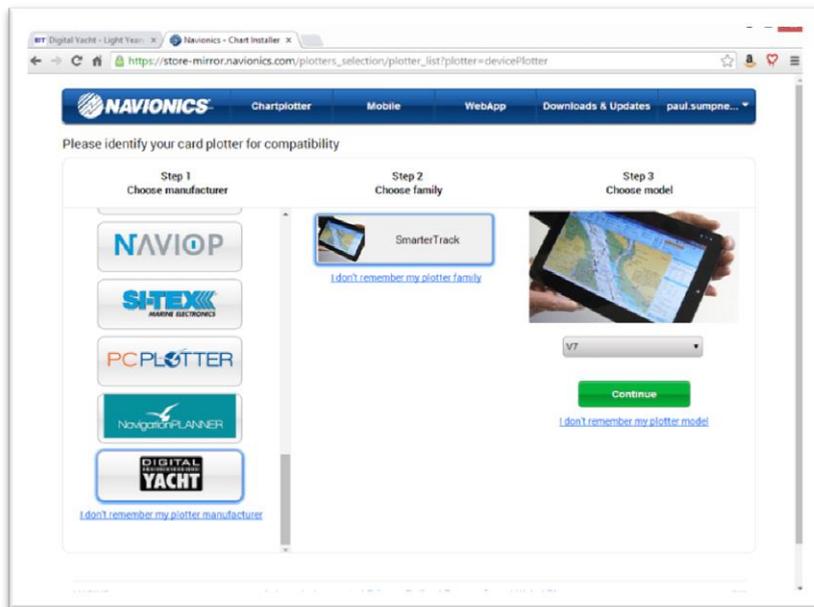
You will then need to select the chart area that you wish to have and this will be selected from the Navionics+ catalogue.
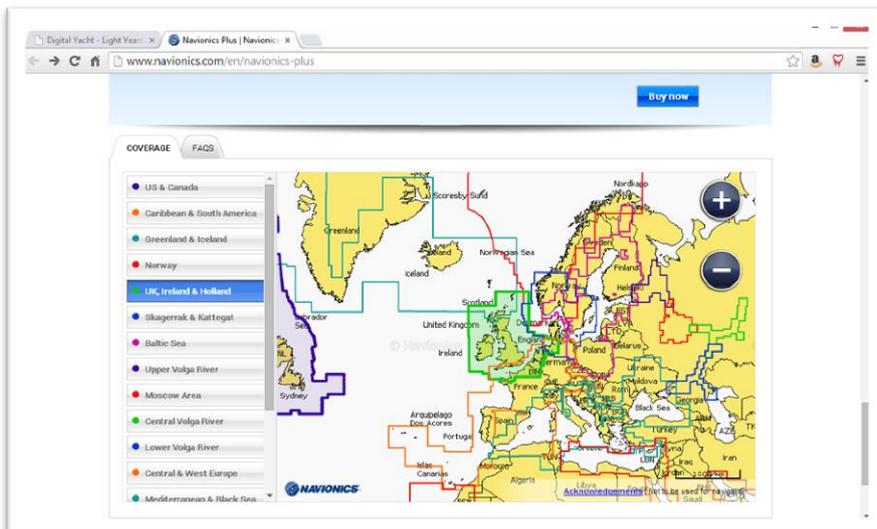
Once you have selected the area that you wish to have, you need to download the latest chart data to your cartridge and you can decide to download all of the area or just a section of it, by drawing a polygon on the web based chart viewer.

For SmarterTrack you can download the normal chart data and the Sonar (bathymetric) charts but we do not currently support the community edits layer.

The chart data can be quite large so a good broadband connection is recommended and the file size and predicted download speed is shown when you select your chart area.
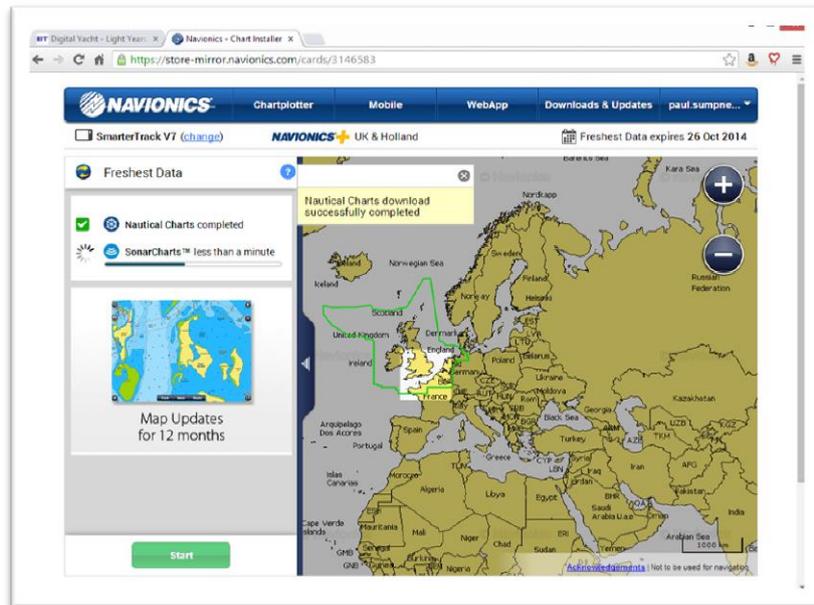
When you purchase the Navionics+ pack you receive 12 months of free chart updates and so you can repeat this download as many times as you want during the 12 month period, to ensure you have the latest data. At the end of the year you can purchase a new 12 month update from Navionics.

Once the new Navionics+ charts are downloaded on to your card, then you can follow the same procedure that we recommend for existing Navionics Cartridge owners, to copy the chart data to your PC's hard drive using the function in SmarterTrack. Click on the link below to watch the video we produced that shows you how to do this.

http://youtu.be/arGR-BuSKIc

Finally, below is a link to a useful video produced by the Navionics US office that shows the whole Navionics+ registration and download process in more detail, albeit with a US inland lakes focus, but the process is the same for the rest of the world.

http://youtu.be/1CEPmK0jmKM