

NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, August 18, 2022

Trimble Connect: Topics

Dear Trimble Connect User,

Greetings from the Trimble Connect team! We have a very important and exciting announcement to share with you. We are pleased to share that the Industry standard BCF topics are now available as a Public Beta functionality in Trimble Connect.

Please join the [Connect community](#) and [Connect Product Updates](#) to engage in a conversation around this functionality where you will also find [introductory videos](#). If you have not joined the Connect community yet, please take a few minutes to do so and you can find instructions [here](#) and all you need is a Trimble Identity (TID). Also, please reach out to our [support](#) to report any issues. Please keep in mind that this functionality has been introduced as a beta and therefore we will be collecting feedback on issues and our turn around time will be different than normal.

Finally, please see below some frequently asked questions we have received in anticipation of this release.

We look forward to working with you in enabling your workflows and making Trimble Connect a part of that journey.

Regards,

Trimble Connect Team

COMMUNITY POST

[Link to the community post with the training video.](#)

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Introducing Trimble Connect BCF Topics Beta



[Jari Juntunen](#)

Today, we are introducing Trimble Connect BCF Topics BETA. It is an early access beta version for collecting feedback.

To learn more about the Trimble Connect BCF Topics BETA feature and how to try it, please watch the attached short video.

Attachment(s)



[Trimble Connect BCF Topics BETA Training Video FINAL.mp4](#)

129.81 MB

1 version

Uploaded - 08-15-2022

Successfully uploaded!

Download

FAQ around Topics : External

General

1. How do I report issues that I encounter around this and what should my expectation be around fixing issues?

Please reach out to our [support](#) to report any issues and since this is beta related functionality, please expect delays in the turn around in fixing the issues.

2. What are some of the out of the box functionalities that are not supported as part of Beta release?

The following are some of the functionalities that are not supported as part of the beta launch-

- a. Ability for users to get email notifications of Topics (e.g. when a Topic gets assigned to you)
 - b. Ability for Connect activity stream to list Topics related events
 - c. Ability for Connect project level search to find Topics
 - d. Support for BCF standard 3.0
 - e. Ability to export Topics as PDF
3. Is there a timeline for when some of the identified functionalities listed above will be supported in Topics?

The nature of the feedback we receive from users as part of our beta combined with these functionalities will determine when we are able to support some of these and therefore, we are not comfortable sharing a timeline at this time.

4. Is there a timeline for when Topics will go into production level support?

The nature of the feedback we receive will be a factor that will determine when Topics will go into production level and therefore, we are not comfortable sharing a timeline at this time.

5. What buildingSMART BCF standard versions are supported?

Trimble Connect BCF Topics API supports [BCF-API](#) standard v2.1.

Trimble Connect BCF Topics Export feature exports [BCF-XML](#) standard v2.1 compatible files (file format extension .BCF)

Trimble Connect BCF Topics Import feature supports [BCF-XML](#) standard v2.1 (file format extension .BCF) and v2.0 (file format extension .BCFZIP).

Integrations with other Non Trimble Products

6. Is there a way to get issues/Topics created in other non Trimble products (Solibri, Revit, BIM Collab) into Trimble Connect?

Yes, either by using the Trimble Connect BCF Topics API or the Import & Export feature in the TC for Browser application.

7. I use a Non Trimble product <eg Solibri> and have created issues there that I am trying to get into Trimble Connect using the Beta Topics functionality, but I am running into problems. What do I do next?

First, for BCF Topics, this depends on the 3rd party application features. Some applications offer “BCF Live Connections” that send the data directly to a BCF compatible API. In other applications the user must first export the Topics into a BCF file from the 3rd party application and then import to Trimble Connect. Check if the error is happening during the export stage, if yes, contact the 3rd party application support channel. However, if the error is happening during the import stage, contact the [Trimble Connect Support](#)

8. I use a Non Trimble product <eg Revit>. Is there a Plugin that has been created to get that out of Revit?

There is a Trimble Connect for Revit add-in available for download in the Trimble Connect apps page. The add-in allows uploading models directly from the Revit application into Trimble Connect.

For BCF Topics, this depends on the 3rd party application features. Some applications offer “BCF Live Connections” that send the data directly to a BCF compatible API. In other applications the user must first export the Topics into a BCF file from the 3rd party application and then import to Trimble Connect.

9. I am a technical integrator and I would like to learn more about the BCF Topics service?

You can learn more about the BCF Topics service API [here](#).

10. The product I work on is a desktop product. What capabilities are there that I can leverage to use the BCF Topics in my product?

The Topics API can be utilized by all integrators regardless of application type via the [Connect Topics REST API](#) or the [Connect .NET SDK](#).

11. Does the new BCF Topics service enable synchronizing my topics with other BCF servers?

The open [BCF-API](#) v2.1 standard which Connect BCF Topics now implements is not well-suited for server-to-server integrations, as it lacks proper support for incremental synchronization, change notifications, and non-user-context authorization.

We are working with buildingSmart's [BCF-API](#) group to get these features into the standard, currently this type of issue synchronization would require proprietary point-to-point integrations beyond the standard's capabilities.

BCF Topics vs. To-Dos

12. I see that BCF Topics is very similar to To-Dos. Does this mean To-Dos will stop being supported immediately or what is the future of To-dos?

Thank you for this question.

- First, some background and context - The Trimble Connect team introduced To-Dos as the way to support model coordination. Since its introduction, the To-Dos have taken on a life of its own and have been used in ways and support use cases that we currently do not have a clear understanding about. However, since the launch of ToDos, we have since seen an industry need and adoption of Industry standard such as BCF Topics and it has remained one of the most sought after and requested functionality. As we evolve our Platform strategy centered around adopting open industry standards and also In order to meet that demand, the Connect team has introduced this Topics functionality.
- Second, our “strategy” - Our strategy in this case is an evolving one meaning, we would like your help to either validate or negate our hypothesis (see below).
- Third, our “hypothesis”- We believe that the BCF Topics will be able to support all the To-do functionalities and use cases and over time we will be able to deprecate use of To-Dos.
- Fourth, our ask - We need all our integrators to do proof of concept to help us validate or negate our hypothesis and help us learn more about what we don't know. This will dictate and inform our strategy around if and how we support transition of to-dos into Topics.
- Fifth - if you are supporting a new use case for an existing workflow and or existing product, our request is that you try out the Topics functionality. We are pushing everyone to try the new (BCF Topics) over the old (To-Dos). Simply put we do not have plans to add new functionality to To-Dos.

- Sixth: if and when we decide to retire the ToDos, the timeline will be considered in close collaboration with the divisions and our external integrators/customers who have created ToDo based workflows by integrating to the Connect ToDo API. We understand that some of the application / product versions may have longer life cycles and moving away from the ToDos API may take a while and we will share that plan when we are ready.

13. I see that there is no overlap between BCF Topics and To-Dos. Does this mean that there is no data share happening between these two?

Topics and ToDos are separate capabilities- they don't synchronize data (comments, views, etc.) with each other and they never will. As stated in answer 14, we will use the feedback to identify if and how to migrate to-dos into topics and bring them together. Please note that this will take time.