Dell Precision Optimizer
Owner's Manual

Notes, cautions, and warnings

NOTE: A NOTE indicates important information that helps you make better use of your product.

CAUTION: A CAUTION indicates either potential damage to hardware or loss of data and tells you how to avoid the problem.

WARNING: A WARNING indicates a potential for property damage, personal injury, or death.

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1

Dell Precision Optimizer

Dell Precision Optimizer contains a powerful engine that allows you to dynamically configure your system settings to optimize the performance of your system. It also keeps you informed of any available software updates and applies them when configured to do so. Further, it contains a tracking subsystem that can gather extensive data about your system and help identify potential problems.

In summary, Dell Precision Optimizer consists of the following components:

- Optimization Profiles
- Dell System Updates
- Analysis

Each of the above components is accessible as a separate tab on the application's home page. This is the page that is seen when you launch the application by double-clicking the following icon on the Desktop.

On Windows 7, the application may also be launched from **Start > Program Files > Dell > Dell Precision Optimizer**. This page depicts the current and past recorded resource utilization values of your system. Further, this page also displays the active profiles along with available system updates.

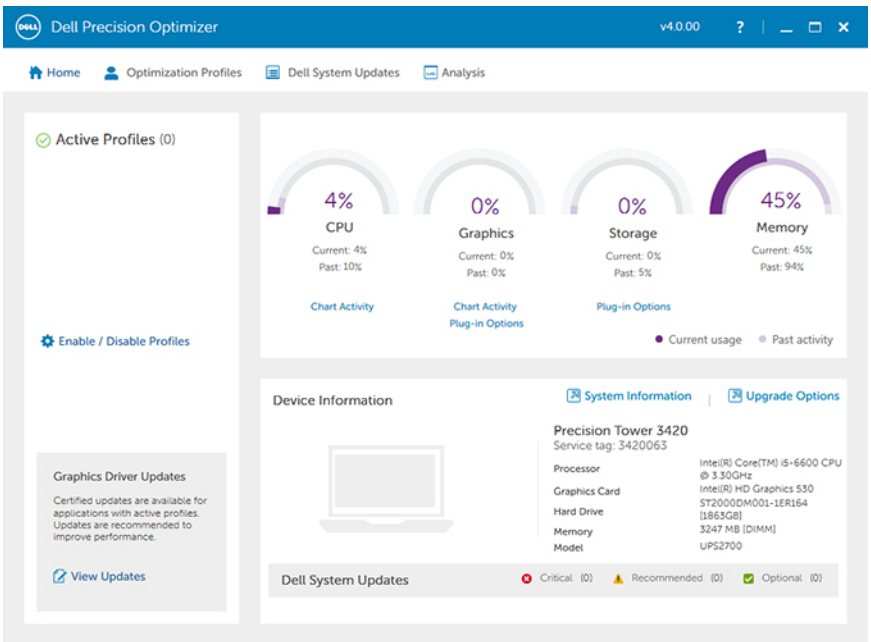


Table 1. Icons on the top right corner of all windows

Option	Function
-	Minimizes the application.
□	Maximizes the application.
X	Closes the application.

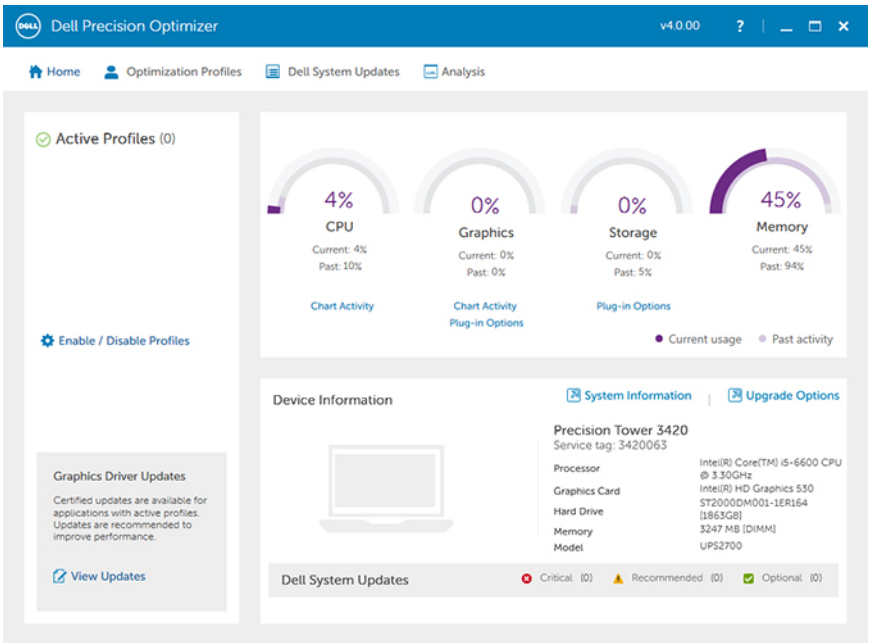
Table 2. Icons on the menu bar on all screens

Option	Function
?	Brings up this help document, the About page, Feedback link, and Improve DPO setting.

Resource Utilization

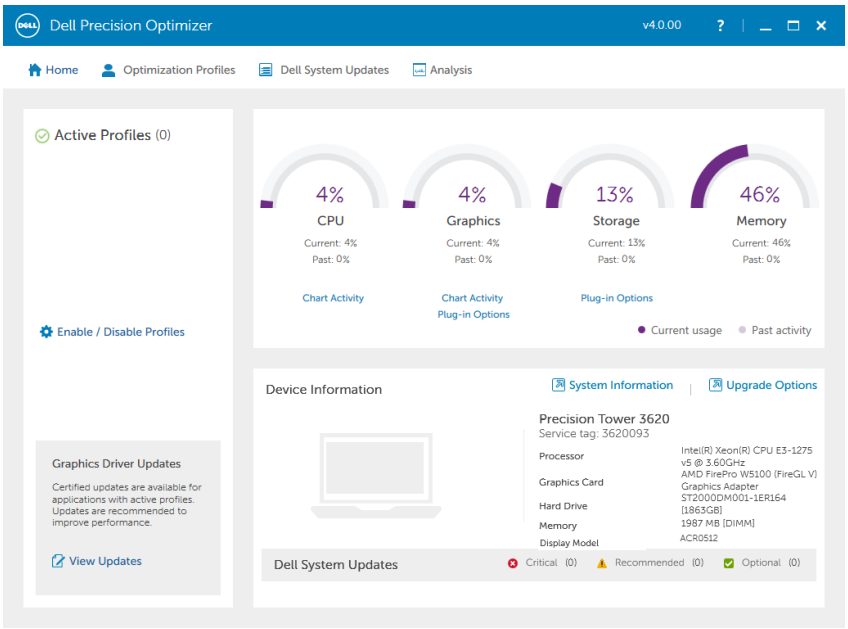
The home page displays the utilizations of the following resources:

- CPU
- Graphics
- Memory
- Storage



The value inside the dial shows the current utilization of CPU, graphics, storage, and memory. This data is refreshed every 2 seconds. If Dell System Analysis had been enabled on this system in the past, you may also see a past activity percentage value on the dial. This part percentage value (if present) represents the previous utilization average read from the last Dell System Analysis report; if the Average Memory Utilization (previously recorded) was 38%, then the past percentage value will be 38% in the fourth dial.

Profiles



The left side of the home page displays the currently active and inactive profiles for select applications. A **profile** is a collection of system settings that are grouped together to optimize the Dell Precision workstation's performance for your application. You can activate or de-activate a profile. Multiple profiles may be active at the same time. Even after you exit the Dell Precision Optimizer application, the selected profile(s) remain active.

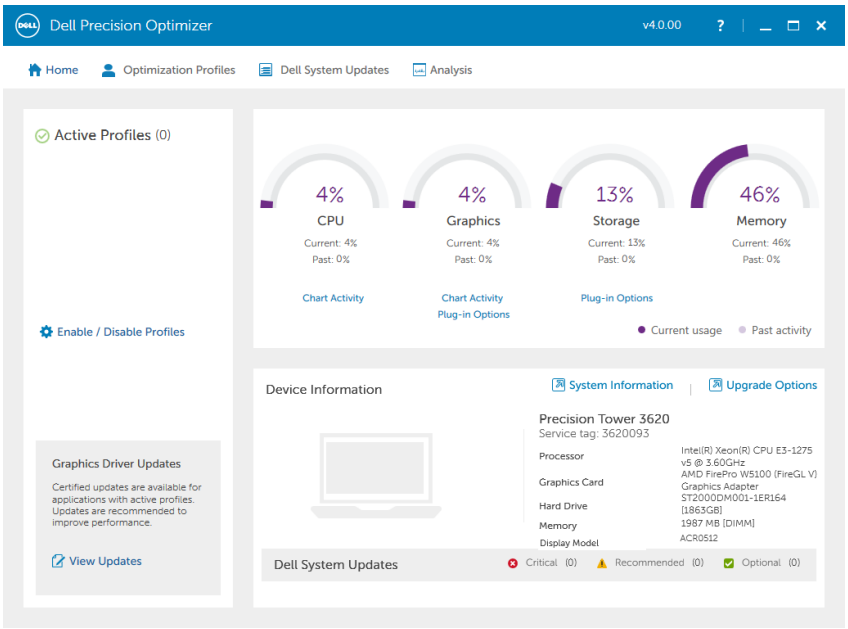
Dell Precision Optimizer has several application specific profiles to help enhance your experience. These profiles are disabled by default. You may have to enable the profile for your given application (if available in Dell Precision Optimizer) to see its benefits. Use the "Enable/Disable Profile" link which takes you to the Optimization Profiles page where you can enable/disable individual profiles.

New application profiles will be made available via Optimizer system updates available in the **System Maintenance** module or **Check New Profiles** from the Optimization Profiles page.

System Updates

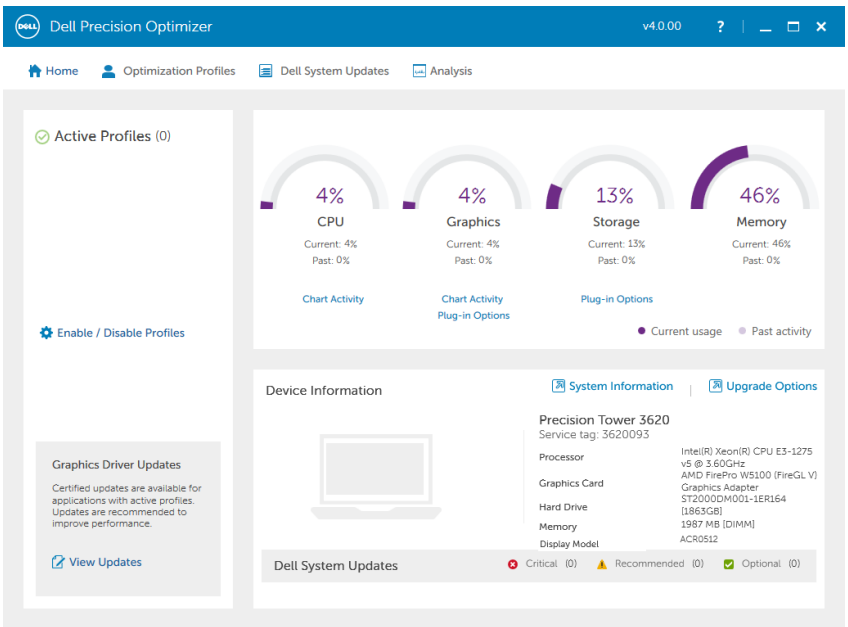
The bottom right of the home page displays the number of software updates available for your system. Dell System Updates are specific to Dell Precision Optimizer and your system's hardware and software configuration. Windows Updates are available within your operating system. The updates are grouped into three categories:

- Critical
- Recommended
- Optional

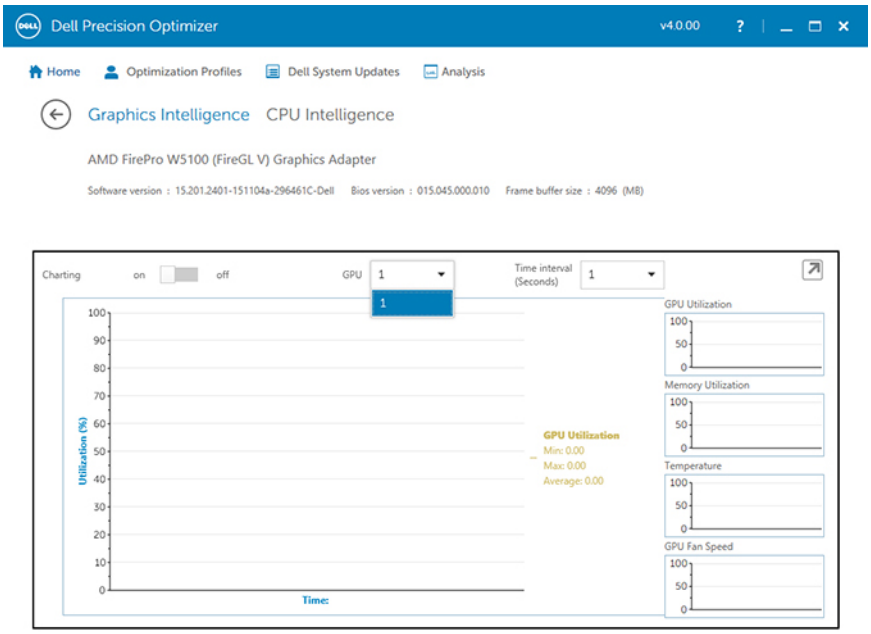


CPU and Graphics Intelligence

You can review CPU or graphics sub-system details by clicking the **Chart Activity** links in the CPU or graphics dials on the home page.

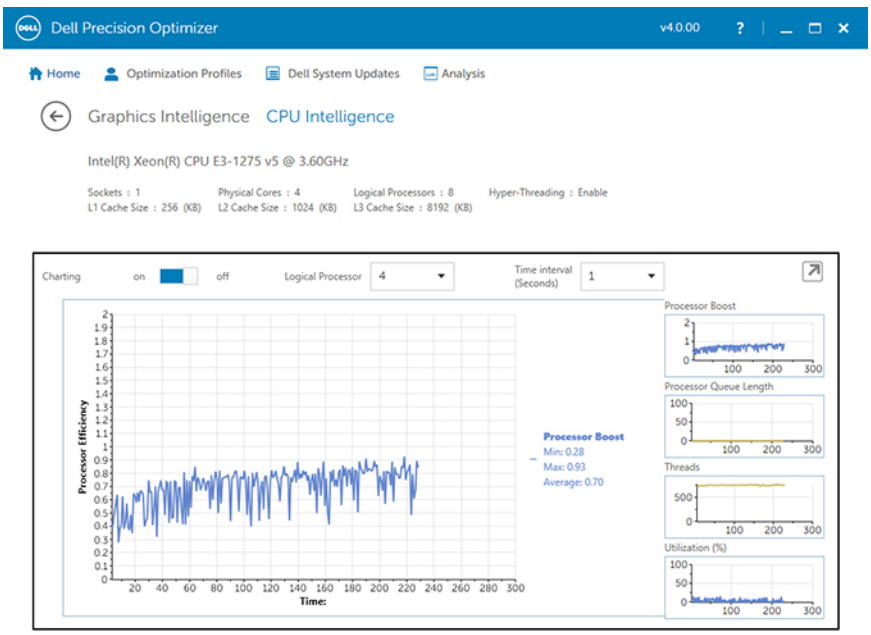


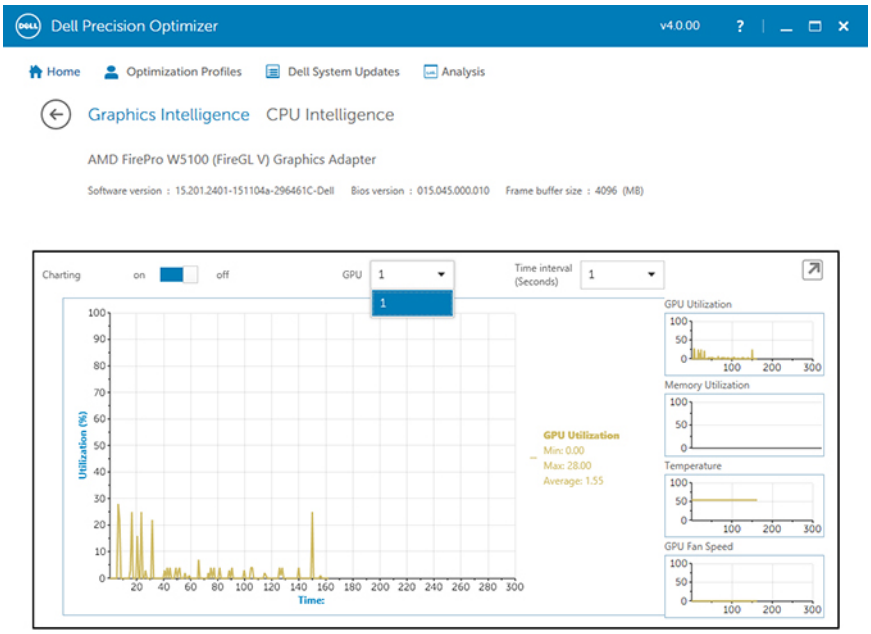
This page allows you to view the current processor and graphics sub-system utilizations. You can view the detail of your processor and graphics configurations.



To enable the collection and display of various processor or graphics data elements, toggle the **Charting** button from Off to On.

Once charting is enabled for CPU data, the user interface will start CPU data collection and display it for all logical processors in the system. Similarly, when you enable the Charting for Graphics sub-system, the user interface will start collection and display data for all graphics processors found in the system.



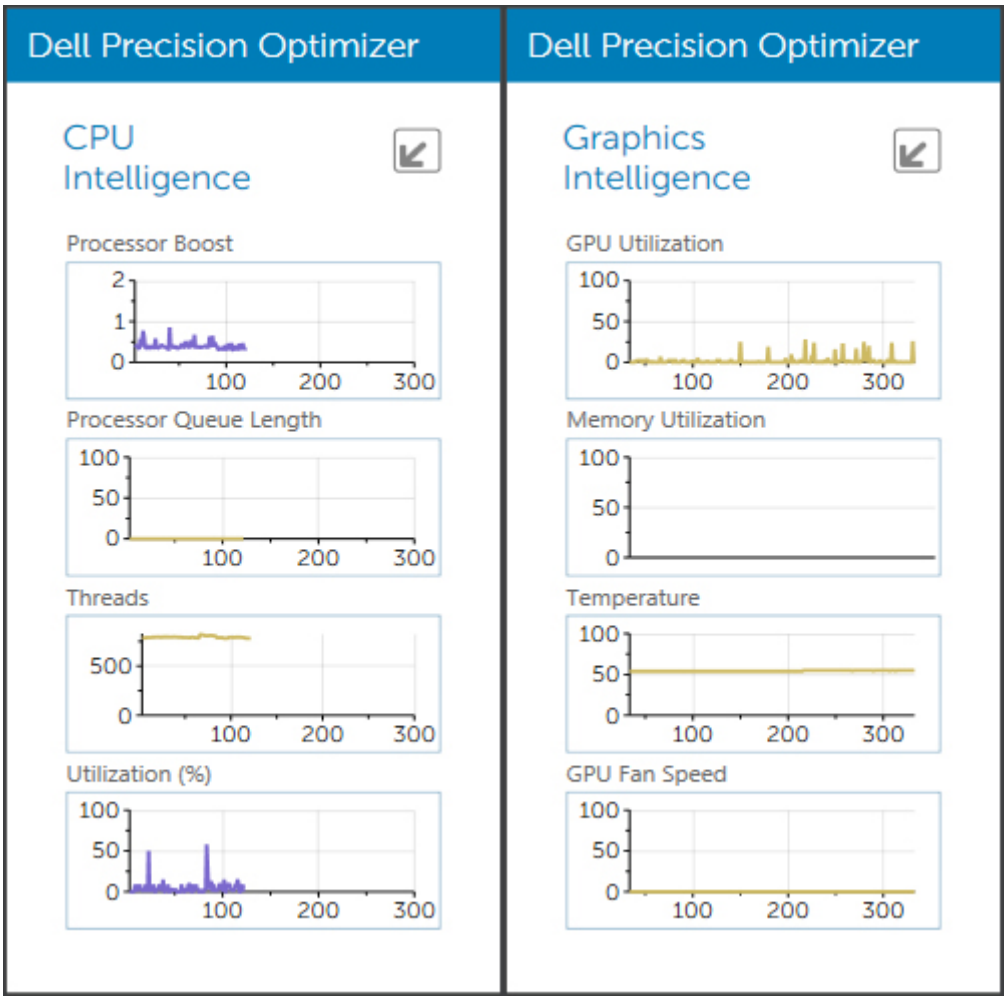


NOTE: Graphics data collection is supported for Nvidia and ATI graphics adapters running the latest drivers. Furthermore, if you have Switchable Graphics enabled in the system BIOS, then running a graphics application may not actually run your task on Nvidia/ATI controller. Therefore, you may not see any change in your GPU utilizations.

NOTE: Graphics data only displays the name and driver information for the first active graphics adapter found in the system. If you have more than one graphics adapter (but different models), only the name/driver/version of the first one is displayed. However, the performance data (utilization, temperature etc.) for all active adapters is displayed in the user interface.

Detach

When you click , the widget that displays the charts is undocked from the main user interface and hides the main user interface. This allows you to monitor the efficiency of your system while you run your task or workload. You can resize the widget when it is undocked, or move it around using the mouse left-click on the header bar.

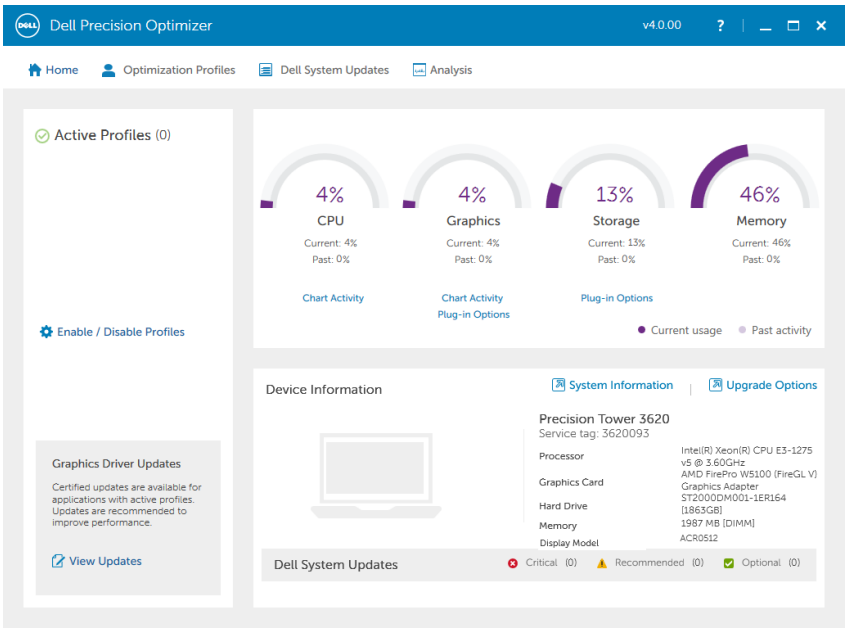


Attach

When you click , the widget is docked back to the main user interface and also displays the main user interface.

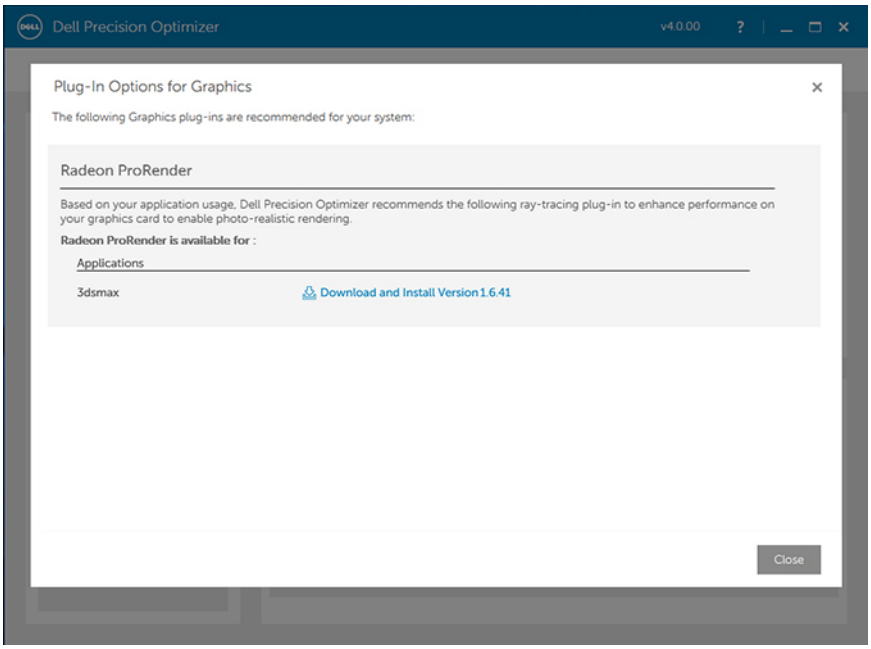
Graphics Plug-in Options

You can view graphics plug-in options for your system by clicking **Plug-in Options** in the graphics dial on the home page.



This page allows you to view Radeon ProRender plug-ins that are available for your system for various ISV applications. You may choose to download and install them on your system if you have the corresponding ISV applications installed. Once a plugin is installed, you can uninstall it at a later time using Window's **Programs and Features** page, accessible through the Control Panel.

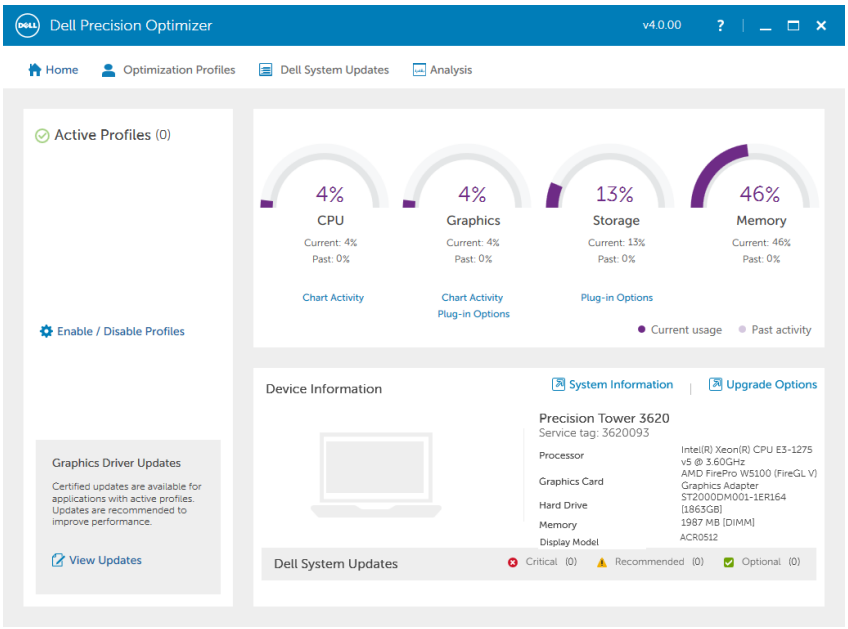
The **Graphics Plug-in Options** page will also inform you if a newer version of an installed Radeon ProRender plug-in is available. You may then select the newer version to download and install.



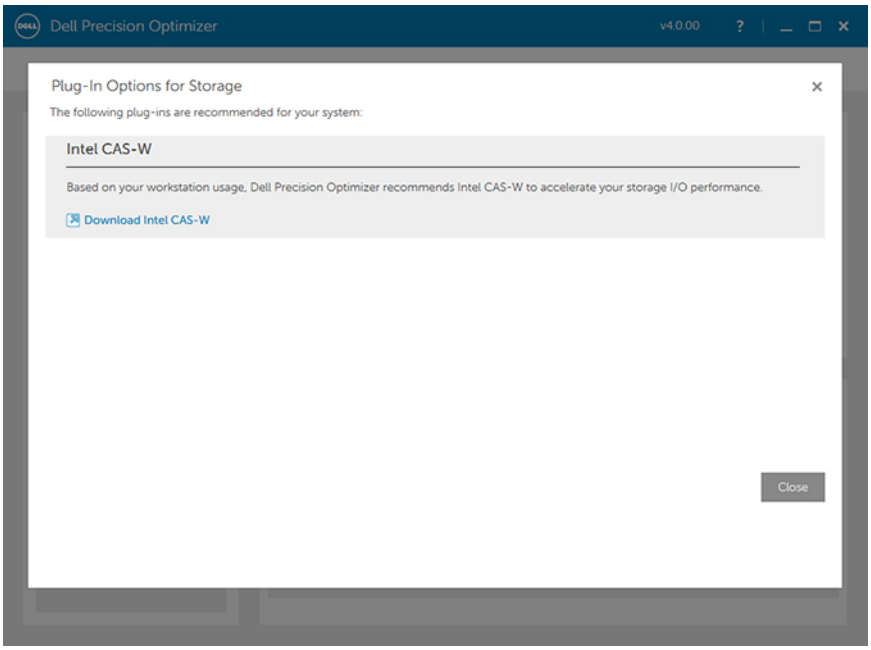
NOTE: You can exit the application once download and installation has started. These operations will continue in the background as long as you do not log off or reboot the system.

Storage Plug-in Options

You can view Storage plug-in options for your system by clicking on the "Plug-in Options" links in the Storage dial on the home page.



This page provides you with a link to purchase the Intel Cache Accelerating (CAS-W) software bundle for your system. This option is only available for Dell Precision Tower and Rack systems. For other Precision systems or systems which already have Intel CAS-W installed, this option is not displayed.



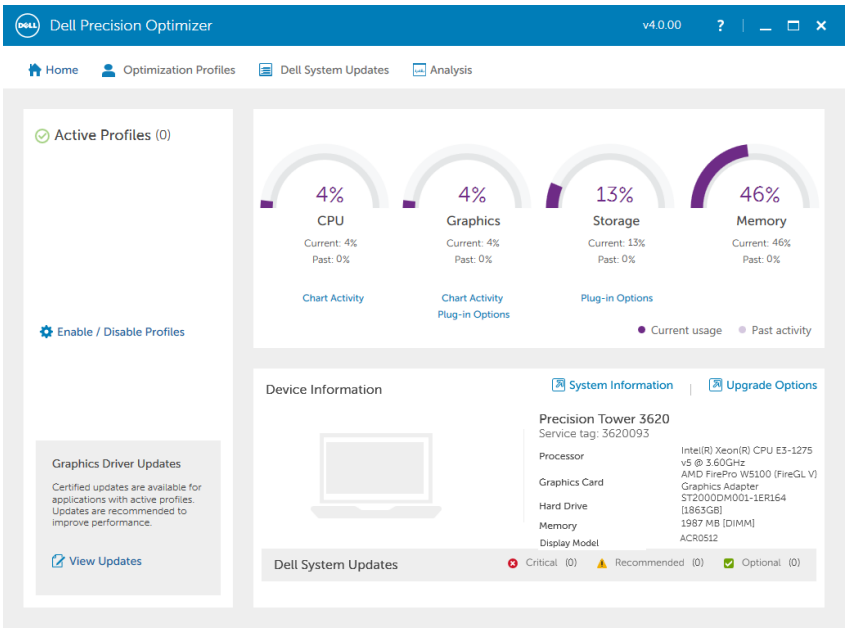
NOTE: Dell Precision Optimizer will not show this link if it detects that a Solid State Disk (SSD) is already installed. However, this detection may not work on all configurations.

Improve Dell Precision Optimizer

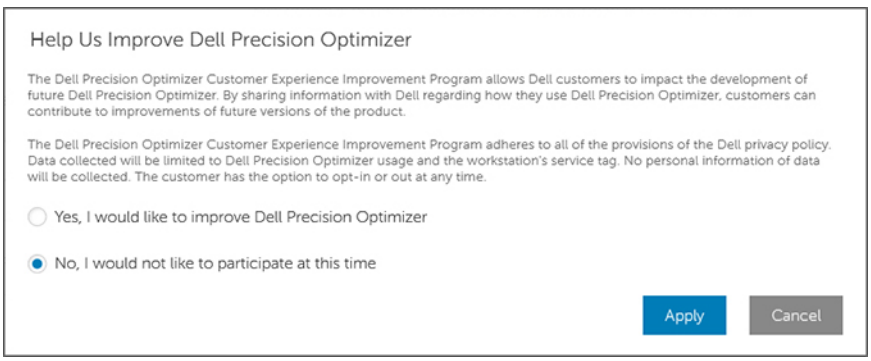
The Dell Precision Optimizer Customer Experience Improvement Program allows Dell customers to impact the development of future releases of Dell Precision Optimizer. By sharing information with Dell regarding how you use Dell Precision Optimizer, you can contribute to improvements of future versions of the product.

The Dell Precision Optimizer Customer Experience Improvement Program adheres to all of the provisions of the Dell privacy policy. Data collected will be limited to Dell Precision Optimizer usage and your workstation's service tag. No personal information or data will be collected. You have the option to opt-in or out at any time.

To opt-in or opt-out of this program, select **?** → **Improve DPO**from the upper right of the screen:

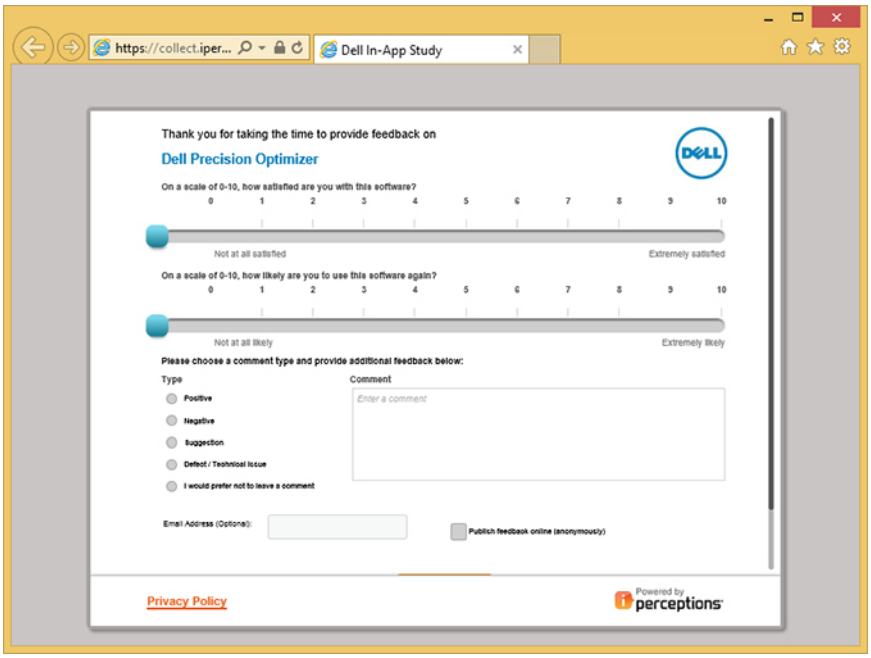


Then select the radio button that corresponds to the desired selection, and click **Apply**.



Feedback

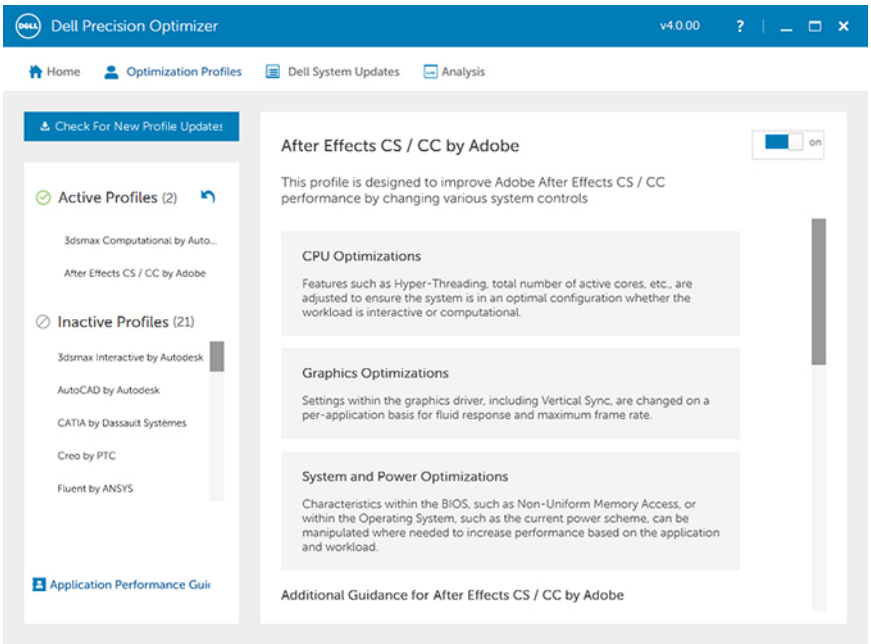
Use this option to send your comments and feature requests to Dell. Your feedback enables Dell's product team to improve and enhance the Dell Precision Optimizer. This option will take you to a Dell feedback web page. Your system must be connected to the internet for this feature to work.


https://collect.iper...
Dell In-App Study
Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback on
Dell Precision Optimizer
On a scale of 0-10, how satisfied are you with this software?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not at all satisfied
Extremely satisfied
On a scale of 0-10, how likely are you to use this software again?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not at all likely
Extremely likely
Please choose a comment type and provide additional feedback below:
Type
Positive
Negative
Suggestion
Defect / Technical Issue
I would prefer not to leave a comment
Comment
Enter a comment
Email Address (Optional):
Publish feedback online (anonymously)
Privacy Policy
Powered by perceptions

2

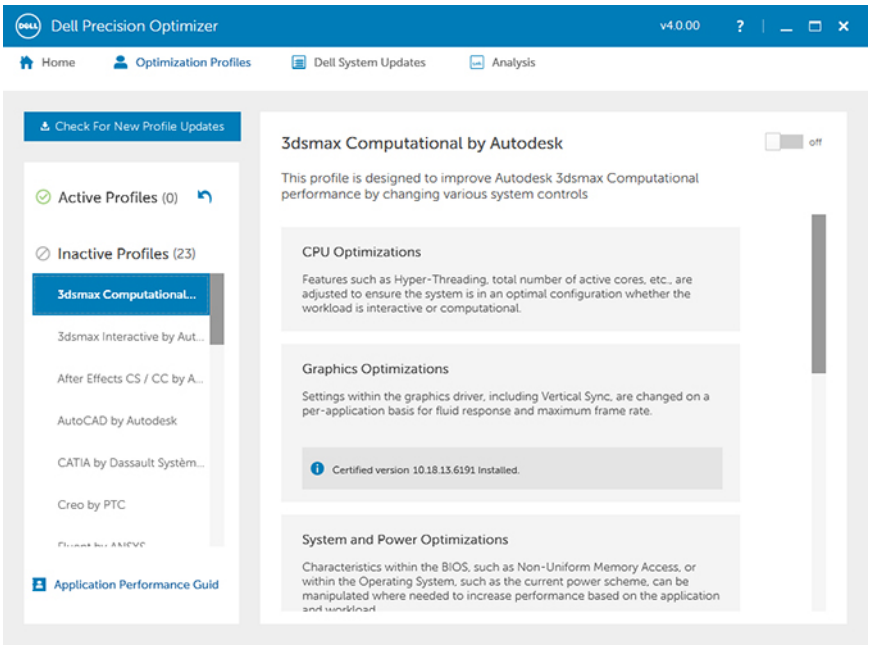
Optimization Profiles

This page lists all the policies in a selected profile. The name of the selected profile appears on top of the right panel. The names and descriptions of policies appear below it, followed by additional guidance, if available, for the selected profile.



New application profiles will be made available via Dell Precision Optimizer updates available in the System Maintenance module or **Check New Profile Updates**.

If your system has any ISV certified graphics drivers that correspond to any of the ISV applications for which Dell Precision Optimizer has profiles, then the certified driver information and a link to download and install that driver is displayed in the **Graphics Optimization** section of the profile's detail page.



Check For New Profile Update

When this button is clicked, the application checks if there are any new profiles that are available on the server. New profiles are downloaded, obsolete profiles may be deleted, and some profiles may be updated from the server. This feature functions when the machine is connected to the internet.

Active Profiles

This section lists the profiles that are currently active on your system. A profile is considered active if it is enabled and its policies are started every time the system starts. You can click on any of these profiles to see the details of the selected profile. You can also disable an active profile or enable an inactive profile using the ON/OFF switch on the right pane

Inactive Profiles

A profile that is not currently active is called an inactive profile. These are profiles that have been disabled by the user.

NOTE: The software may come with special profiles that can be activated when no other profile is active. Once activated, such profiles will automatically be deactivated by the software once they have executed. The *Dell Factory Settings* profile is a hidden profile, activated when you click . It can be used to restore certain system parameters that may be changed by Dell Precision Optimizer back to their factory defaults. If you select this option, then all currently active profiles will be disabled. Once default settings have been applied, you must re-activate the profiles that were disabled.

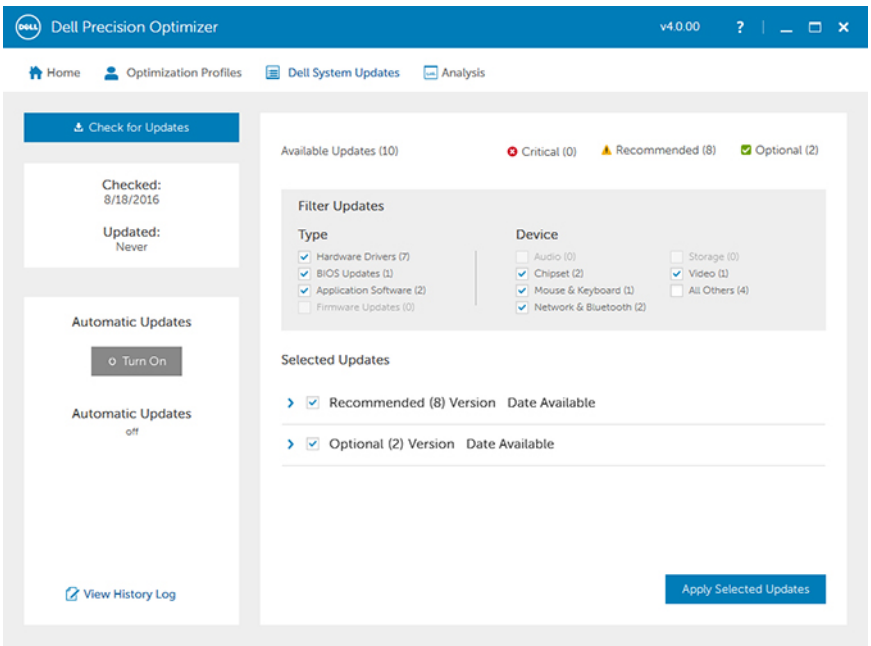
3

Dell System Updates

NOTE: This feature is available only if you have Dell Command Update version 2.0 or higher installed on your system.

This page lists the available software updates for your system.

Dell System Updates are specific to Dell Precision Optimizer and your system's hardware and software configuration. Windows Updates are available within your operating system and are not available through this module.



Update Filters

All software updates are categorized based on three criteria:

- **Criticality** (Critical/Recommended/Optional)
- **Type** (Hardware Drivers/BIOS Updates/Application Software/Firmware Updates)
- **Device Category** (Audio/Mouse and Keyboard/Storage/Chipset/Network and Bluetooth/Video/All others)

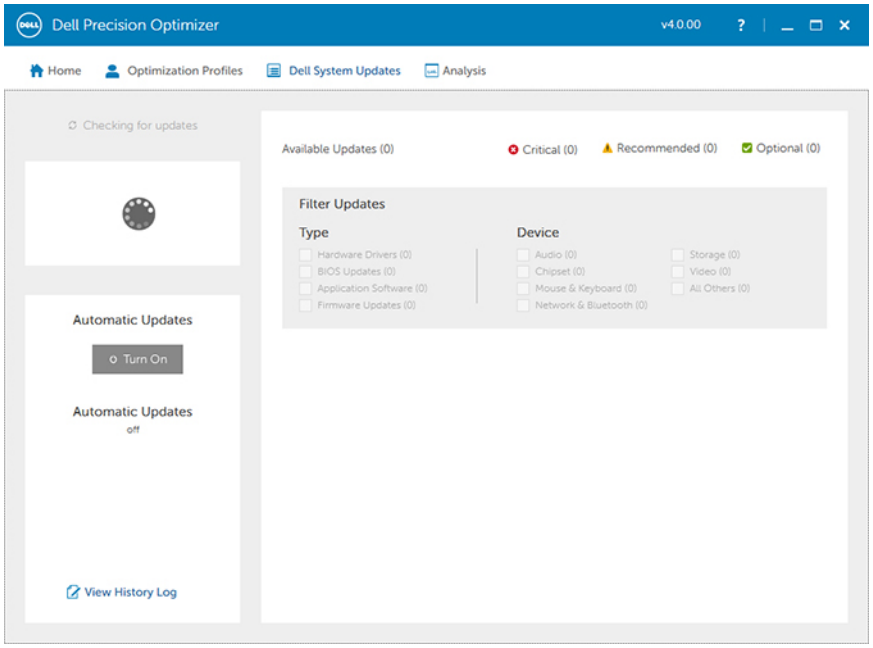
This page contains three sets of check boxes – one set for each of the above – allowing you to select/deselect updates based on their Criticality, Type, and Device Category. Selected updates have a check mark before their names. It is not possible to select or deselect individual updates by name.

This page contains the following buttons:

Table 3. List of buttons and functions

Option	Function
Check for Updates	Click this button to check for available updates. **This operation may take a few minutes to complete**. Once the operation completes, the list of all available updates is displayed in the right pane and all updates are

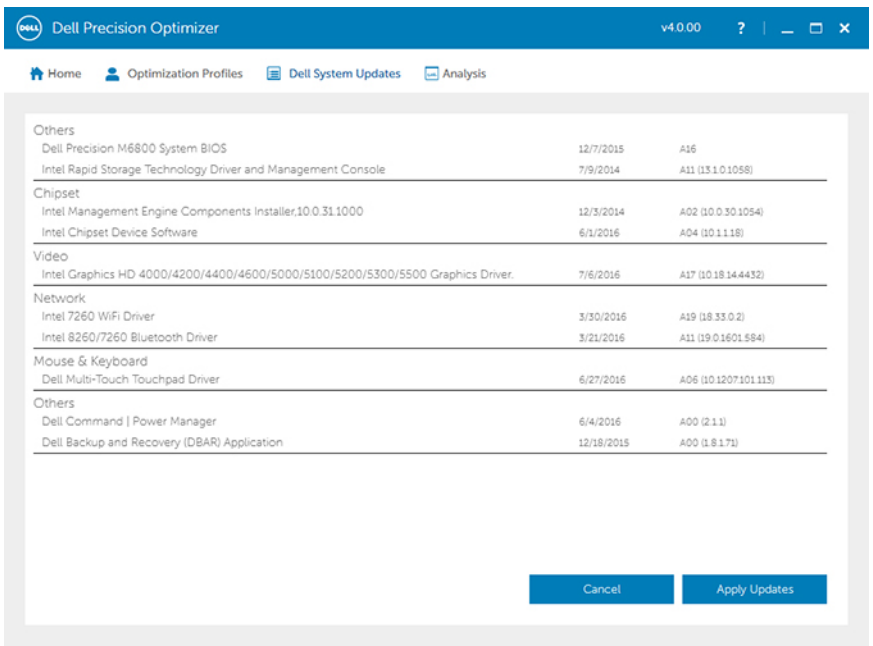
Option	Function
	selected by default. Individual updates are grouped based on their criticality, and the appropriate criticality icon is also displayed before each group.



The date/time when the last check for updates was performed (either manually or by Dell Precision Optimizer automatic updates) is displayed under this button.

Apply Selected Updates

Click this button to go to a confirmation page and apply the updates.



Apply Updates

Click the Apply Update button on the confirmation window to download currently selected updates and install them on your system.

NOTE: Dell recommends that you create a system restore point and close all running applications before applying any updates.

Option	Function
	Ensure that you have selected the appropriate filters before clicking this button. To filter out the updates that you do not want to apply, you must uncheck the appropriate Criticality, Type and Device Category check boxes on this screen. **This operation may take a few minutes to complete**. A reboot may be required once the operation completes. Restart your system when notified by Dell Precision Optimizer.
View History Log	Click the link to display the logs containing detailed information of previous Update History.
Turn On	Click this button to schedule automatic updates and select options and filters that must be applied.

The list of available updates are displayed on this tab. The tab further displays detailed information including the Version and Release Date.

- Check/Uncheck **TYPE** (Hardware Drivers, BIOS Updates, Application software, Firmware Updates) check boxes to select or de-select the corresponding updates from the selection.
- Check/Uncheck criticality (**Critical/Recommended/Optional**) check boxes to select or de-select the corresponding updates from the selection.
- Click **Apply Update** button to install the current selection of updates.

The software can check the Dell server to retrieve the list of updates available for your specific system and/or download and install certain updates upon your request. Updates can be configured so that they are done either manually or periodically. The updates are classified as Critical, Recommended or Optional.

All updates belong to one of the following four types:

- Hardware Drivers
- BIOS Updates
- Application Software
- Firmware Updates

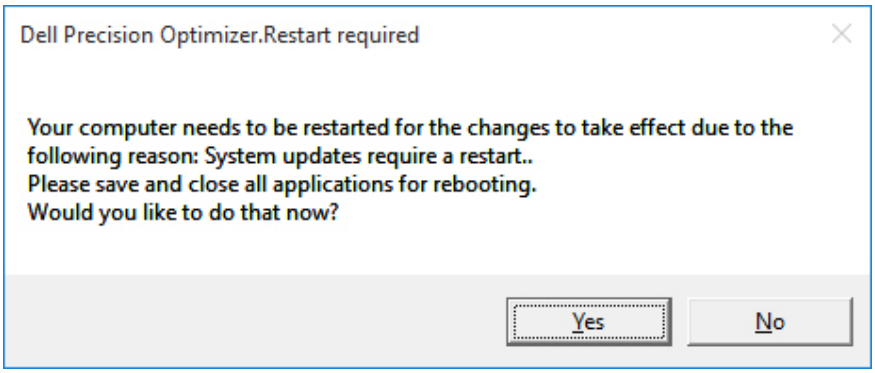
In addition the following seven categories exist for updates:

- Audio
- Chipset
- Mouse and Keyboard
- Network and Bluetooth
- Storage
- Video
- All others

If the software is configured to **Check** or **Install Update** periodically, then the above filters are used to determine which updates are displayed to the user, or which will be downloaded and installed on the system. For example, if the user selects only Critical Updates, all 4 types and 7 categories, then if the Dell Server has one Recommended BIOS Update or one Optional Video Driver update for your system, then these two updates will not be displayed or installed.

Notifications

The application may give notifications to the user using pop-up dialog boxes to inform the user if some problem occurred during a check for updates, or if a system reboot is required for an installed update to work correctly. You may see a dialog offering the following options:

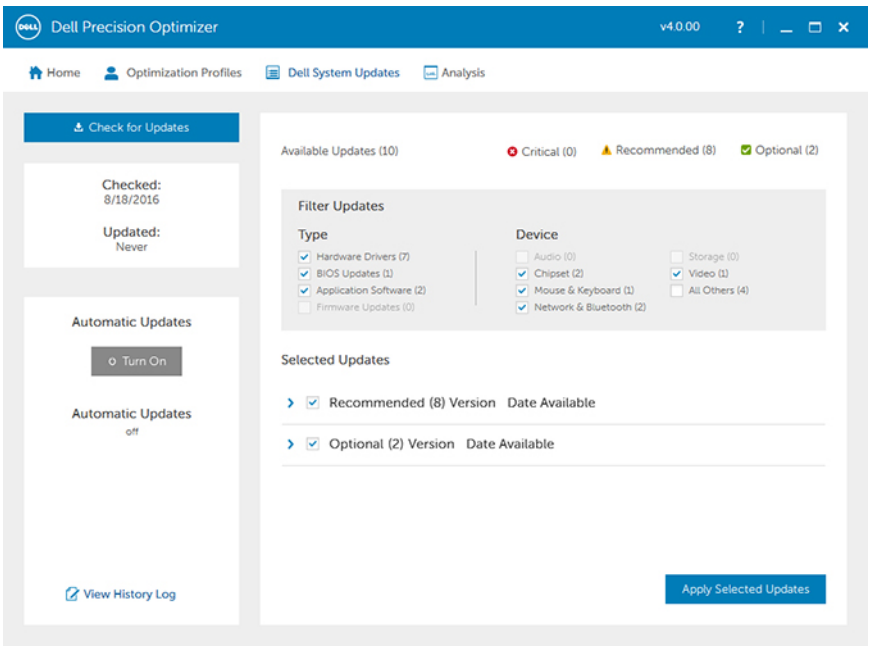


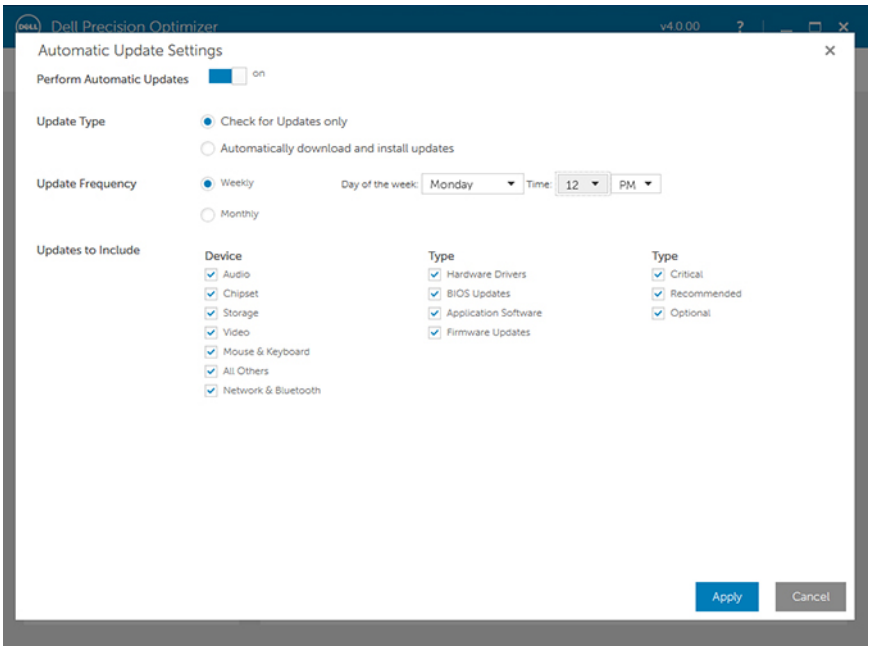
- To start the reboot process, click **Yes**. Ensure that you close all other applications and save your data before proceeding.
- To halt the update installation process, click **No**.

.

Settings

Click **Turn On** to configure automatic updates.





Update Frequency

This selection can be used to schedule weekly or monthly updates.

Weekly	Select this option to allow the application to perform weekly update operations based on other filters selected on this page. Select the day of the week (Monday - Sunday), and then select the time of the day (AM/PM) when the operation is scheduled.
Monthly	Select this option to allow the application to perform monthly update operations based on other filters selected on this page. Select the day of the month (1-28), and then select the time of the day (AM/PM) when the operation is scheduled.

Update Type

This selection identifies the action to be performed in the automatic mode.

Check for Updates only	The application notifies you if any updates (based on your filter selection) are available. Updates will not be downloaded to the local system, nor will they be automatically installed.
Automatically download and install updates	The application downloads and installs any available updates (based on your filter selection) before notifying you.

Updates to Include

This page also contains three sets of check boxes allowing you to filter scheduled updates based on their Criticality, Type, and Device Category. The check boxes on this page are applicable to scheduled updates only.

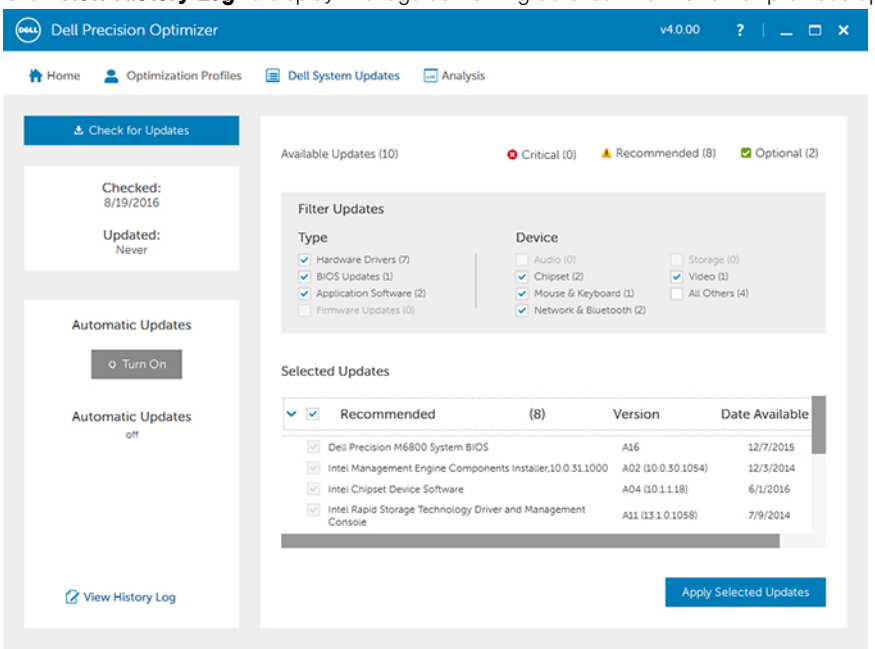
- **Criticality** (Critical/Recommended/Optional)
- **Type** (Hardware Drivers/BIOS Updates/Application Software/Firmware Updates)
- **Device Category** (Audio/Mouse and Keyboard/Storage/Chipset/Network and Bluetooth/Video/All others)

The following options appear on this page:

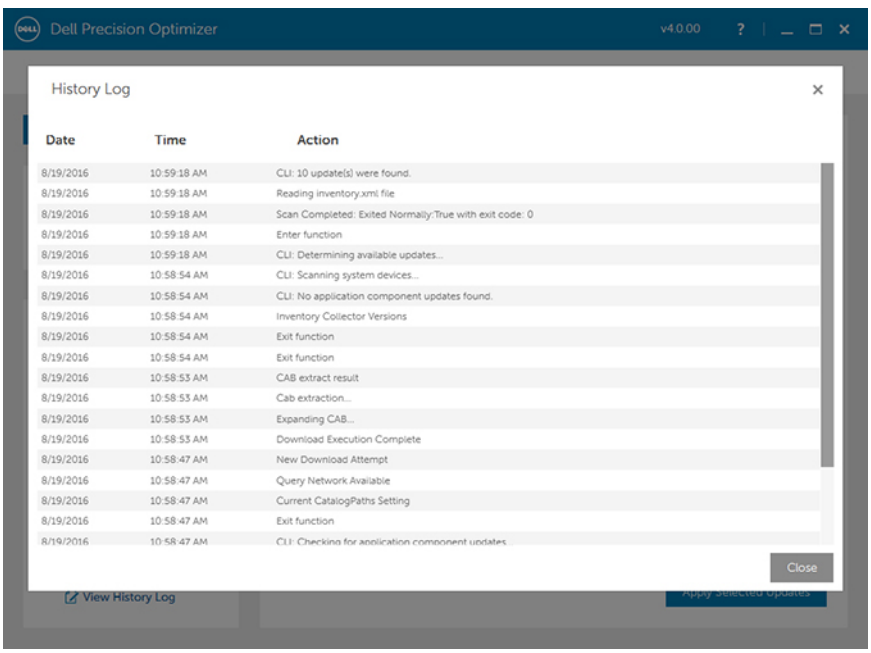
Option	Function
Cancel	Click **Cancel** to exit the settings page without saving any changes.
Apply	Click **Apply** to save your changes (if any).

History Log

Click **View History Log** to display the logs containing detailed information of previous updates.

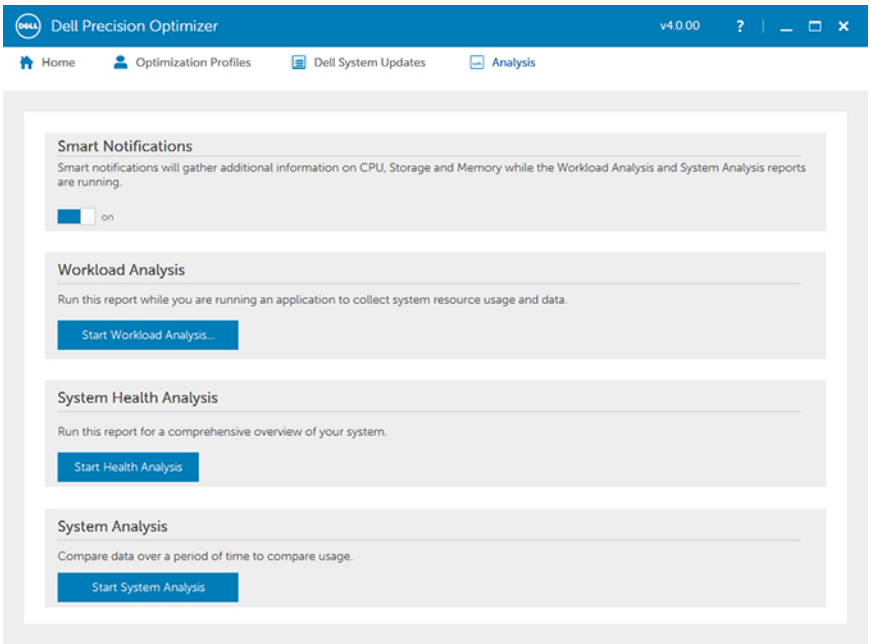


After viewing the history logs, click **Close** to return to the previous page.



4

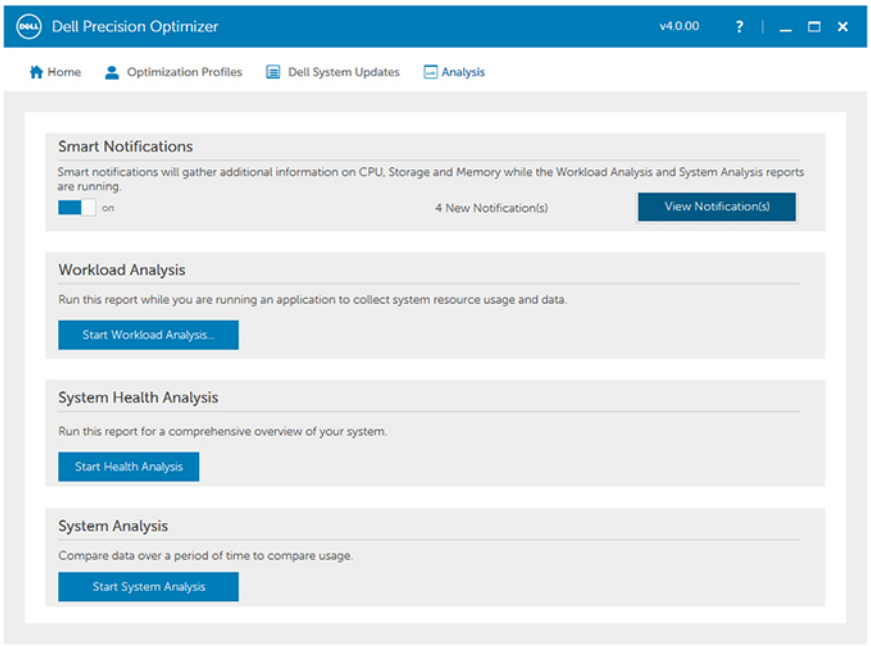
Analysis



The following features are accessible from the Analysis page:

System Analysis	When enabled, this feature runs for the specified period and collects system configuration and subsystem usage data. This data is collected in the background and is compiled in the form of a System Analysis Report at the end of the period.
View System Analysis reports	Click **View Reports** to view any system analysis reports that have been generated.
Workload Analysis	This option allows you to track system resource ultilization (CPU, Memory, Graphics, and Disk) while you run your specific work load. Once the report is ready, click **View** to display the report.
Smart notifications	This option allows you to track and view any smart notifications generated by Dell Precision Optimizer. These notifications are generated only when either System Analysis or Workload Analysis is running, and when high CPU, memory, or disk usage is detected.
System Health report	This option allows you to generate and view full system health and diagnostic reports for your system.

System Analysis



Enable System Analysis

This page allows you to enable/disable the Dell System Analysis feature by clicking **Start System Analysis**. When enabled, System Analysis runs for the specified period and collects system configuration and sub-system usage data. This data is collected in the background and is compiled in the form of a System Analysis Report at the end of the specified period.

System Analysis reports contain data such as fan speed, thermal data, battery usage, and processor utilization. These reports can help you understand the behavior of your system under the operating environment that was present when the report was running. You can configure the following options that control the operation of System Analysis.

Report Duration

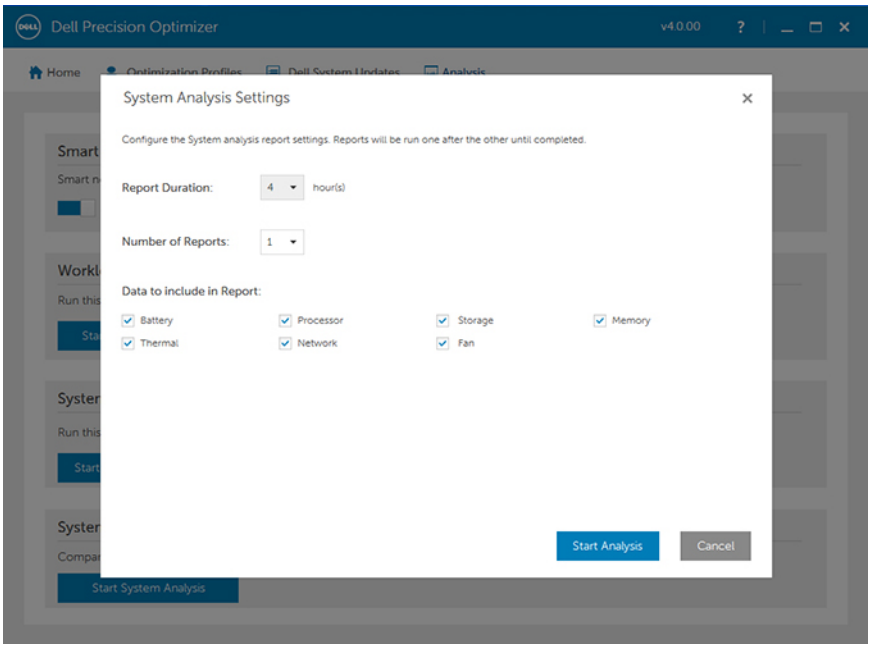
This setting controls how often reports are generated. Daily reports are generated whenever the system date changes, which may be a period less than 24 hours. The report frequency period does not include the time your system spends in Sleep/Hibernate/ Shutdown states.

Number of Reports

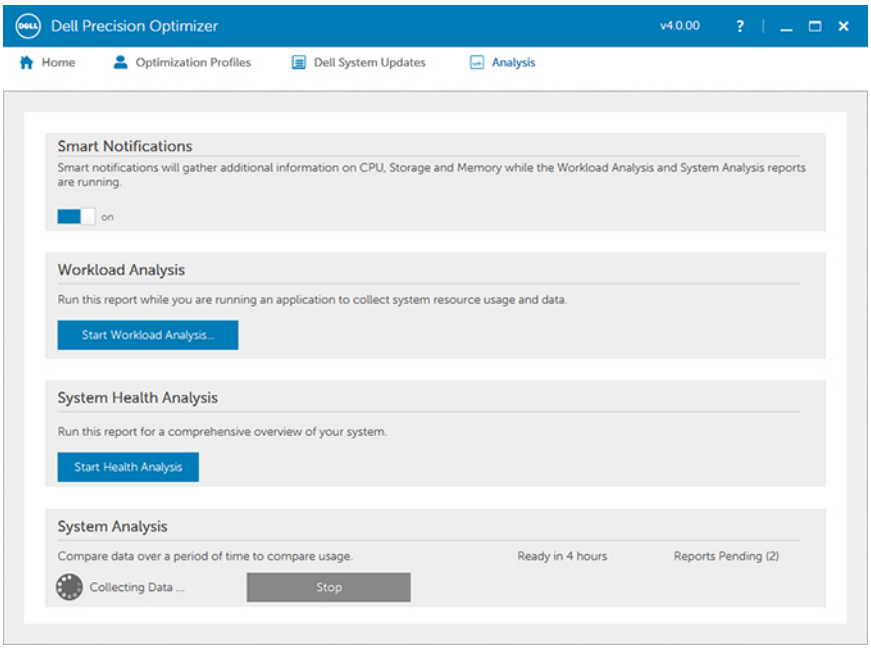
This setting controls how many reports are generated before System Tracking feature gets disabled automatically. For example, if you configure the system with a Report Duration of 10 hours and a Number of Reports of 3 reports, then you should expect to see your first report after 10 hours. Two new reports should be seen every 10 hours after the first one. Smart Tracking feature should stop after three reports are generated.

Data to include in report

This set of check boxes allows you to choose the sub-systems from which System Analysis collects data. By default all sub-systems are selected.

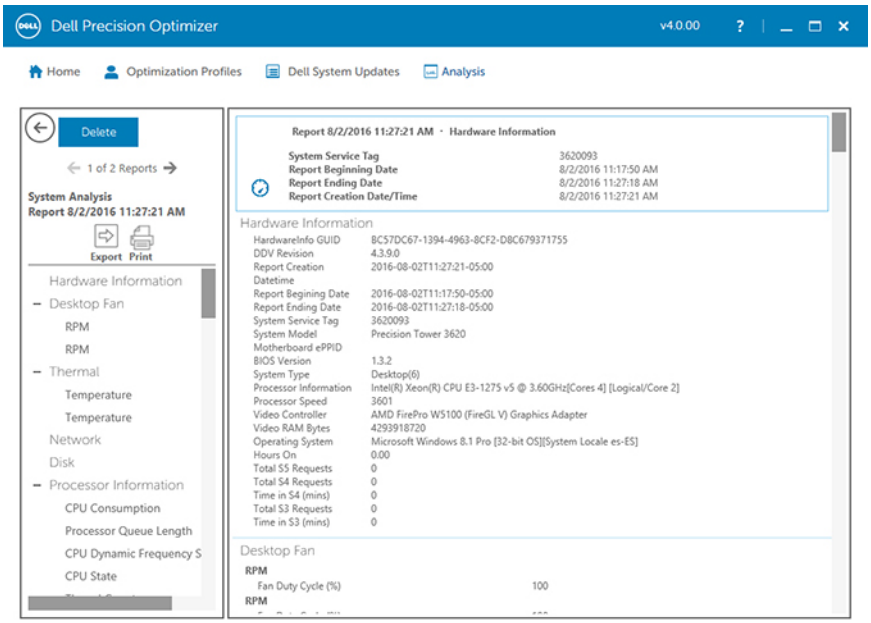


The following screen shot shows how the screen will look once you have enabled System Analysis to generate one report after 4 hours.

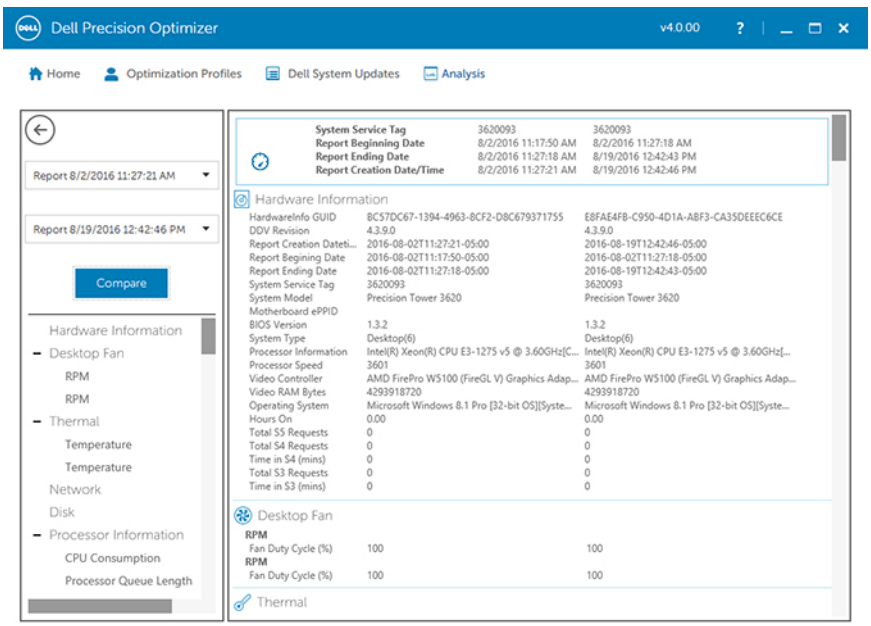


View Reports

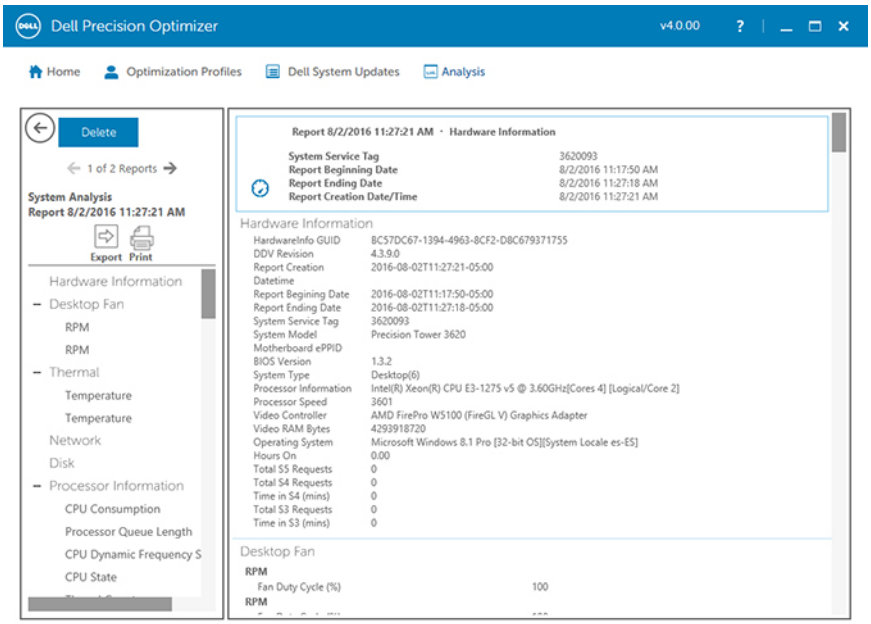
This page also shows you the number of previously completed System Analysis Reports ready for viewing. To view these reports, click **View Reports**.



If two or more reports are available, you may compare two reports side by side by selecting the reports using the drop down menu and then clicking **Compare**.



System Analysis Reports



Select/View a Report

If multiple reports are ready to view on your system, you can select a report to view by clicking the left and right arrows on the left side of the page. The right side of the page displays detailed information and graphs from the selected report. The bottom left side of the page displays a tree view of the report. Clicking on any of the nodes of the tree takes you directly to the corresponding section of the report.

Reading a Graph

All graphs on the X-axis show the range of data or specific value collected for the given system parameter. The Y-axis displays the percentage of time the given range (or specific value) was found during the report interval. For example, in the above report for ***Temperature*** (Location Memory), the graph shows the range of temperature in degrees Celsius on the X-axis whereas the Y-axis shows the percentage of time the temperature was found to be in the range, say 30-40 C.

Export/Print a Report

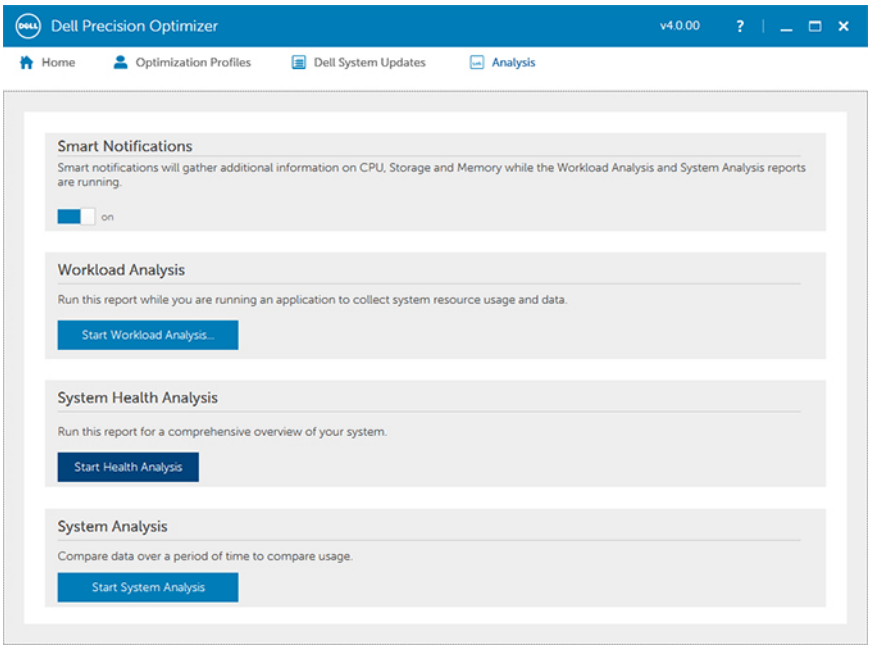
Click to save the selected report in an XML format.

Click to save the selected report in a PDF format.

Delete a Report

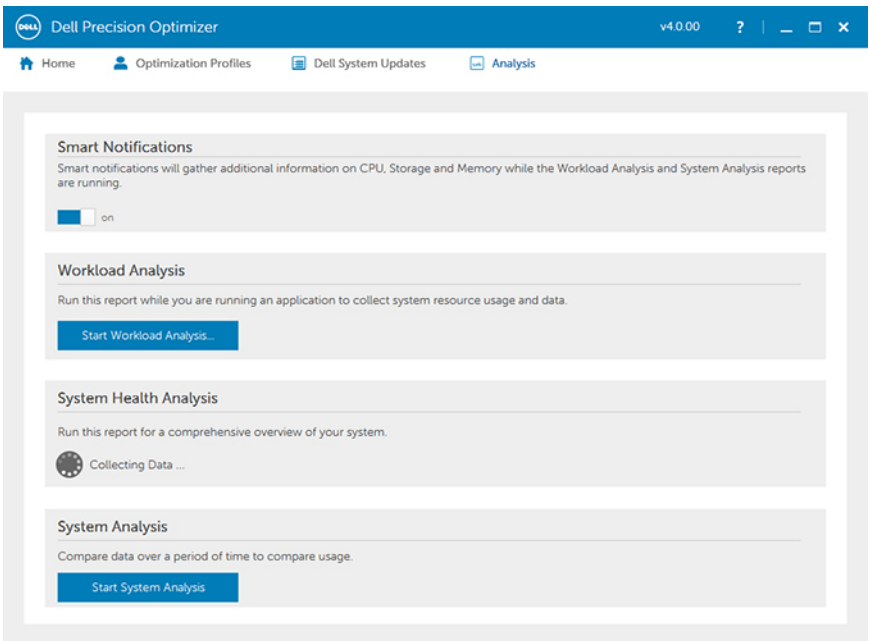
Click **Delete** to delete the currently selected report.

System Health Report



System Health Report

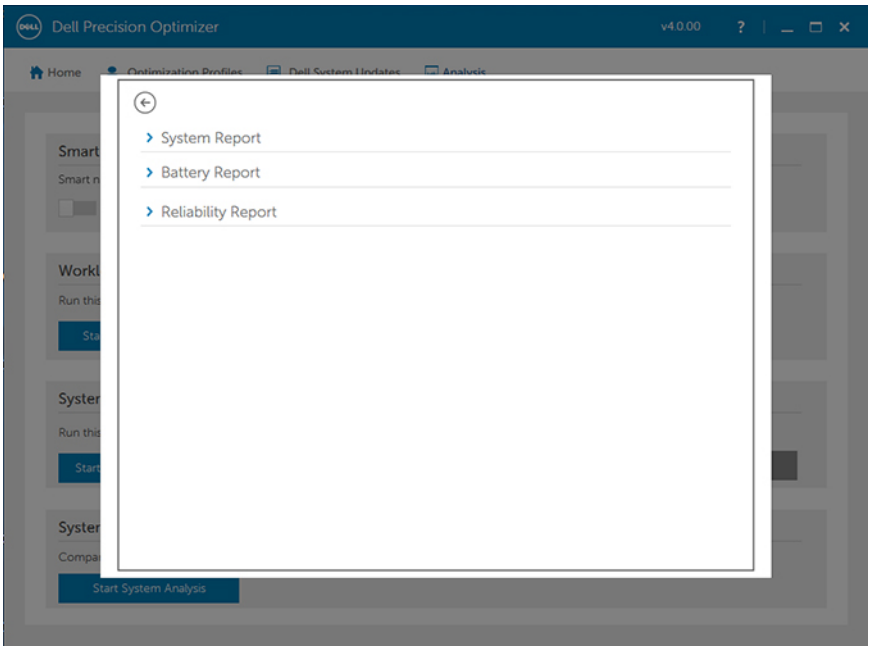
To generate a full system health and diagnostic report, click **System Health Report**. To view the report, click **View Last Report**. Generating the report may take a few seconds.



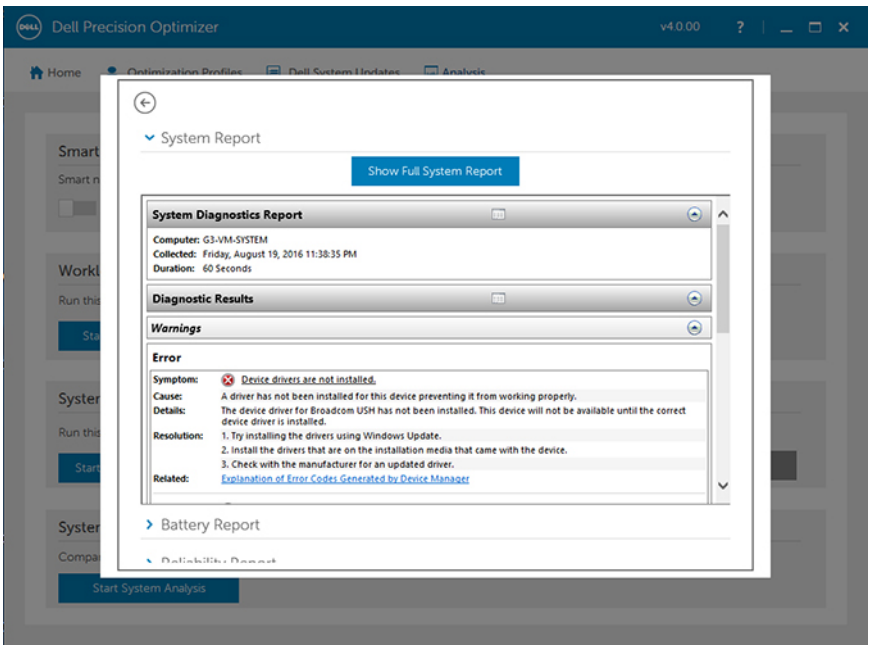
View Last Report

This button is greyed out when no System Health Report has been generated. Once a report has been generated, click **View Last Report** to view the following:

- System Report
- Reliability Report
- Battery Report (*This report is available on Windows 8 and above only*)



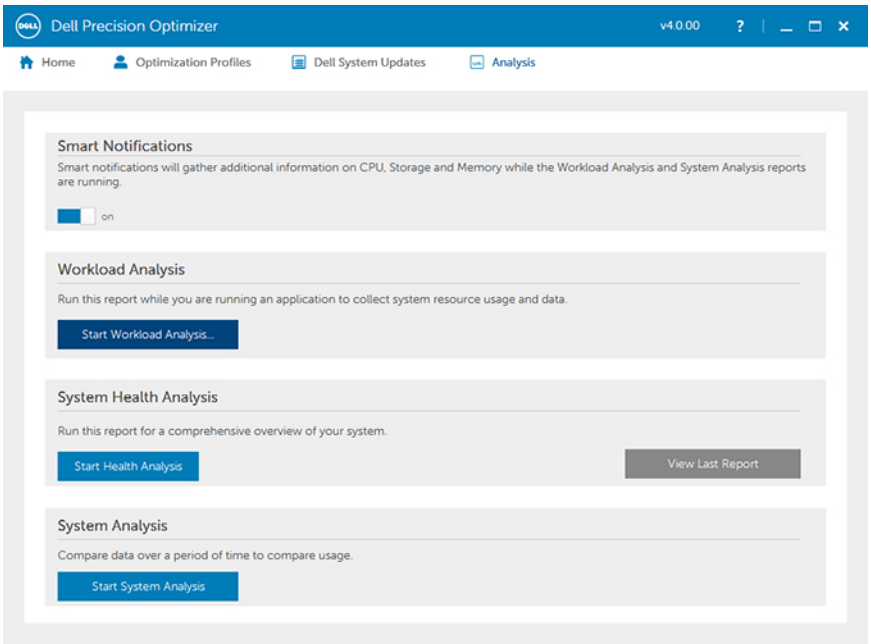
The default behavior is to show only the diagnostic part of the Full System Report. To view the full system report, click **Show Full System Report** at the top of the System Report window pane.



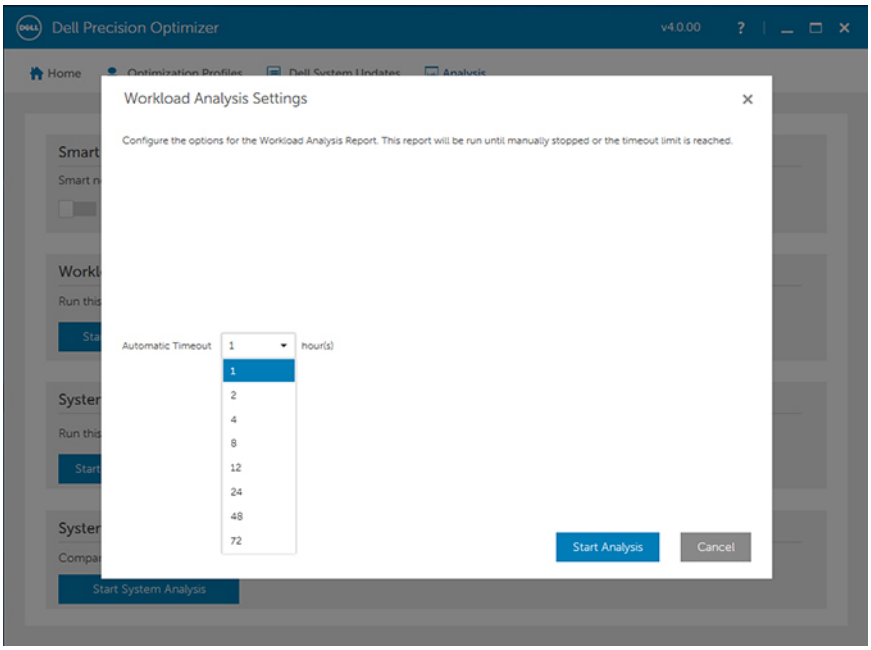
Workload Analysis

To start tracking of system resource utilization (CPU, memory, graphics, and storage) while a specific workload is executing, click the Workload Analysis switch to the **ON** position. To turn off tracking once the work has completed, click **STOP**.

NOTE: The report will automatically turn off if you shut down or reboot the system.

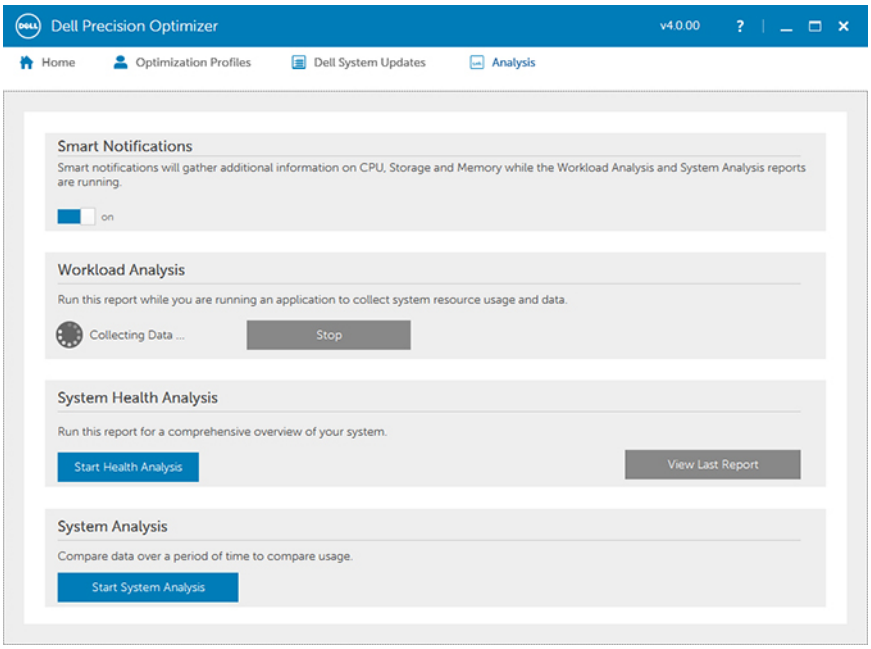


Setting the **Automatic Timeout** feature prevents the report from running indefinitely should you forget to turn off workload analysis tracking.



Once the report is ready, click the **View** button to see the report.

NOTE: It may take a few minutes to prepare the report after you click View.



View Report

To view the report generated upon the previous activation of the Analyze Workload switch, click View Report. You can print this report or send it to your IT Administrator for analysis.

To go to the Dell Parts and Services page, click **Upgrade Options**. Your system must be connected to the internet in order to use this feature.

You may select or deselect any of the 4 categories of graphs. This will allows you to just see the graphs in which you are interested.

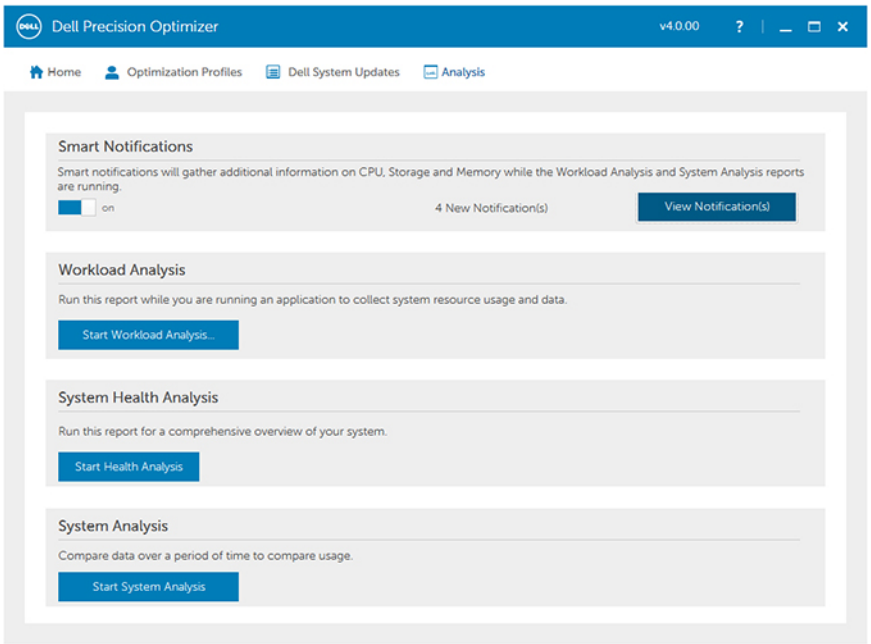
To zoom into any area of the graph, left-click on the corner of the rectangle, and then, while keeping the left-button down, drag the mouse to the other end of the area into which you want to zoom in. You can also scale the graph up and down by pressing the CTRL key, and while the CTRL key is pressed move the mouse away from the origin (scale up) or towards the origin (scale down). Once the graph is zoomed in, if you want to move the graph around, you can press the SHIFT key and while the SHIFT key is down, move the mouse to move the visible portion of the graph.

Finally, to zoom out to the original graph, press the **ZOOM OUT** button.

Smart Notifications

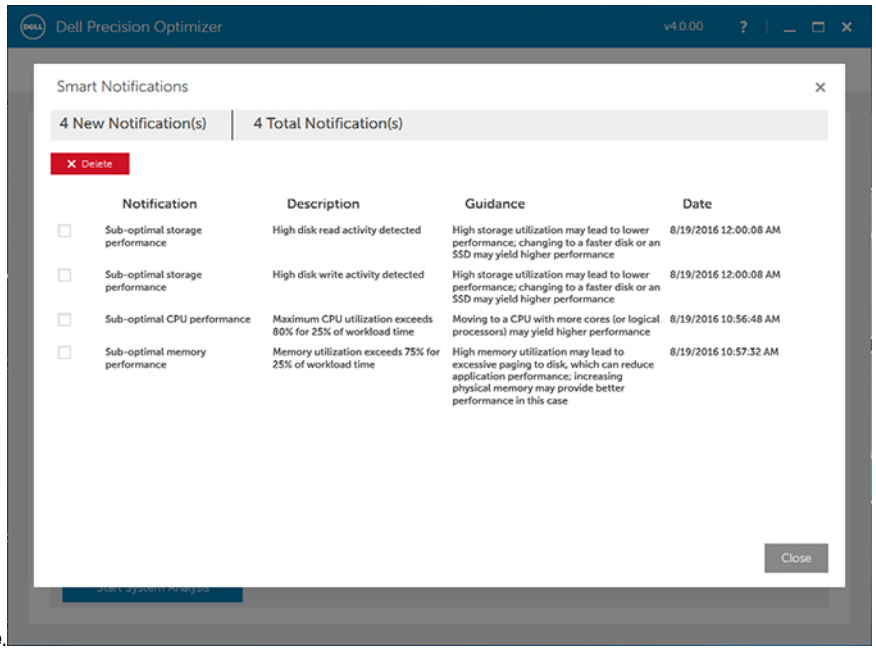
Enabling this switch allows you to track and view any Smart Notifications generated by the Dell Precision Optimizer. These notifications are generated only when either System Analysis or Workload Analysis is running and when either high CPU, Memory, or Disk utilization is detected by Dell Precision Optimizer.

To view any existing notifications, click **View Notification(s)**.



Notifications

This page shows you all current notications. Delete any of these notifications by first selecting the notification that you want to remove, and then clicking **Delete**.

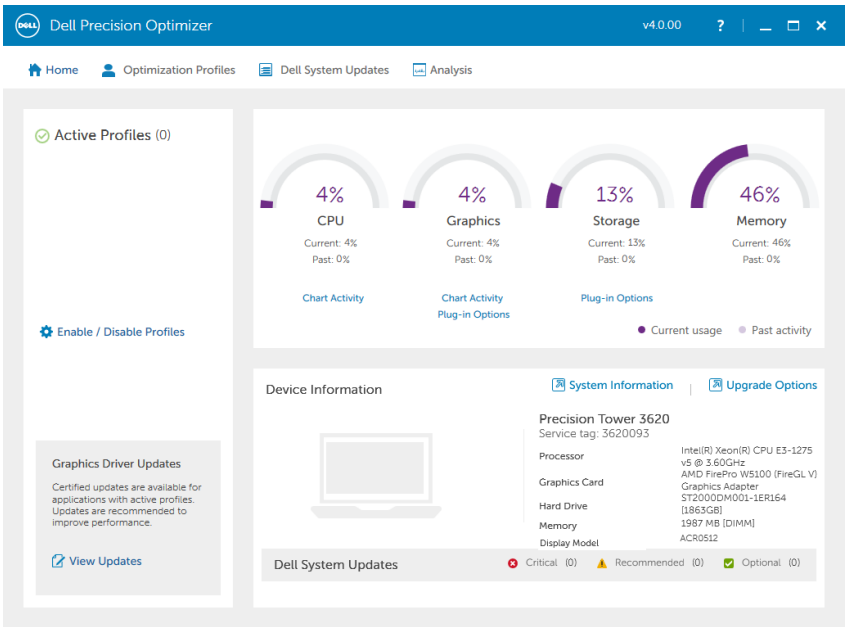


5

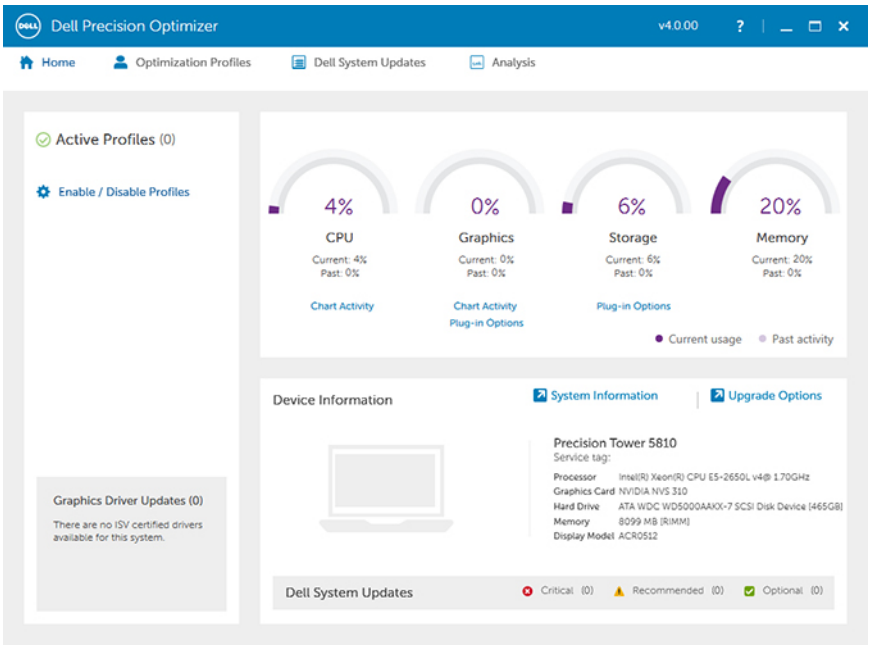
ISV Certified Graphics Drivers

NOTE: This feature is available only if you have Dell Command Update version 2.3 or higher installed on your system.

Dell Precision Optmizer allows you to install graphics drivers that are certified for some ISV applications which you may be using on your system. To find out whether Dell provides any certified graphics drivers for your specific system, click**View Updates** on the lower left corner of the Home page.



If no ISV certified drivers are available for your system, the following message is displayed:

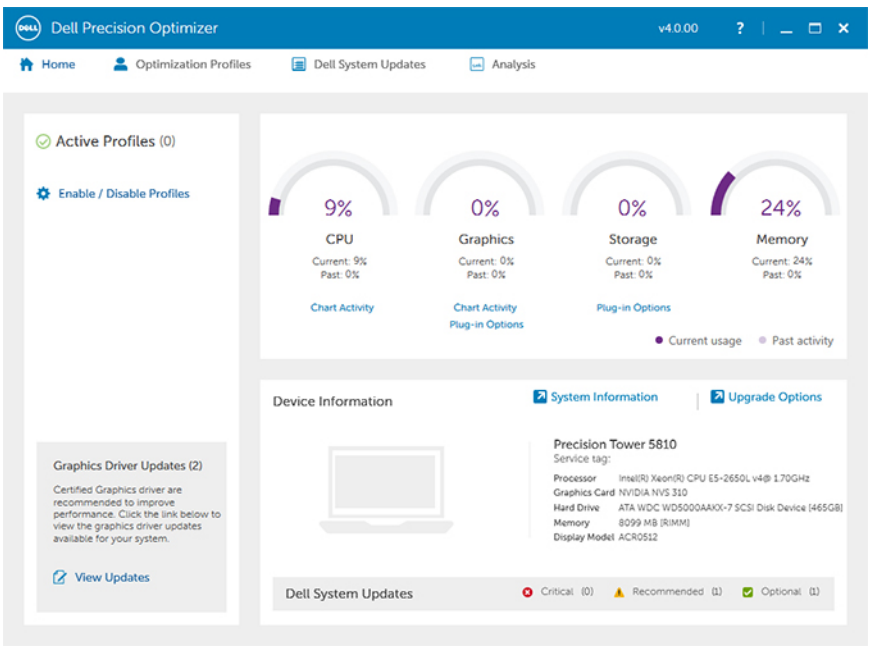


The certified driver that you download and install may be an older version than the lastest available from the Dell support site for your system. If you need to switch back to the latest graphics driver (which may or may not be certified), use the Dell System Updates page.

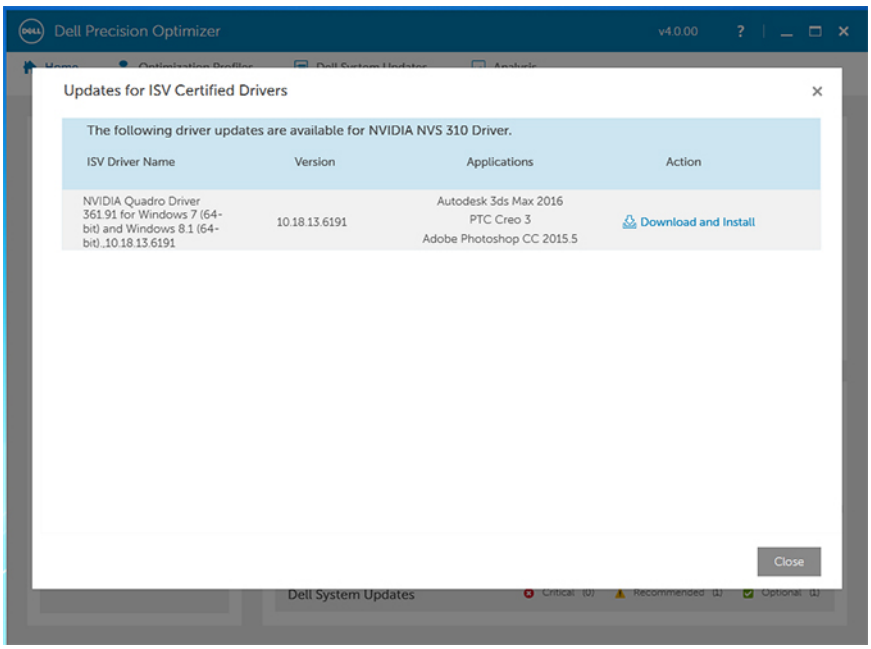
ISV Certified Graphics Drivers

Click **View Updates**on the lower left corner of the Home page to view available ISV Certified Graphics drivers. This link is disabled if the Dell Precision Optimizer did not find any available certified drivers for your system or you have not run **Check for Updates** from the Dell System Updates page even once.

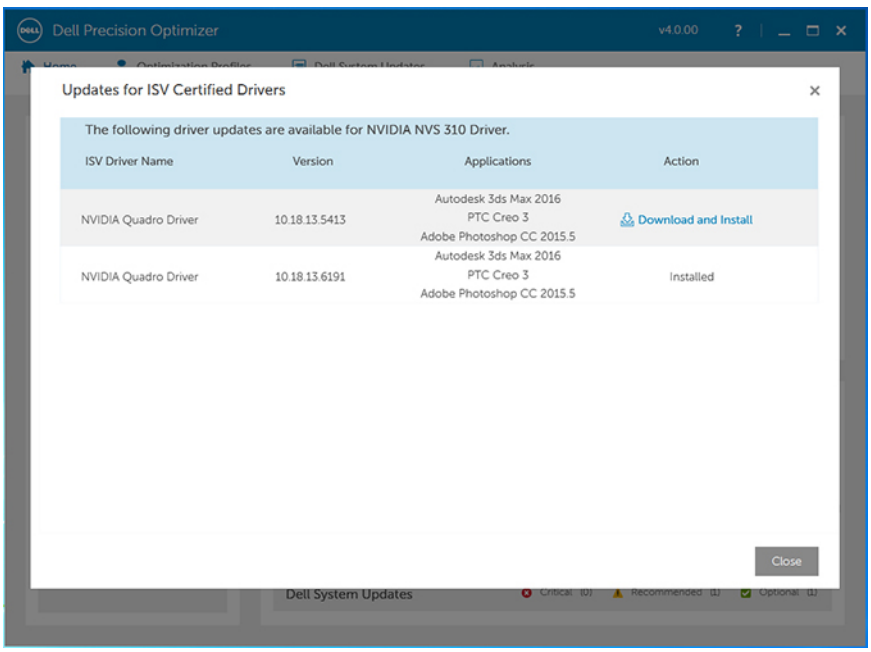
NOTE: Dell Precision Optimizer will check for available certified drivers when you either run Check for Updates manually or run it periodically in auto mode.



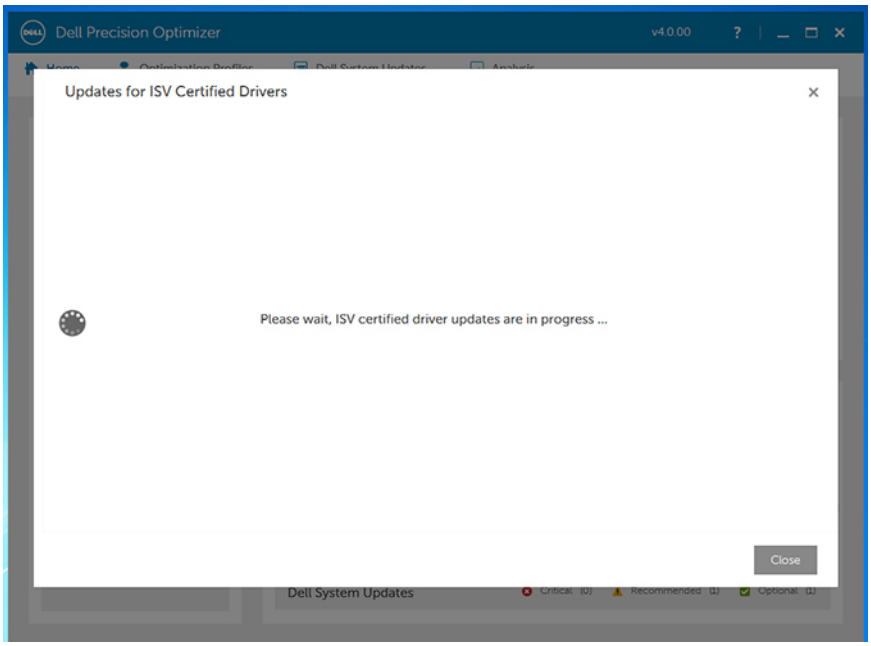
The following page lists all the available certified drivers, their version, and a corresponding list of ISV applications for which they have been certified by Dell. If that specific driver version is not already installed, an option to **Download and Install** is displayed.



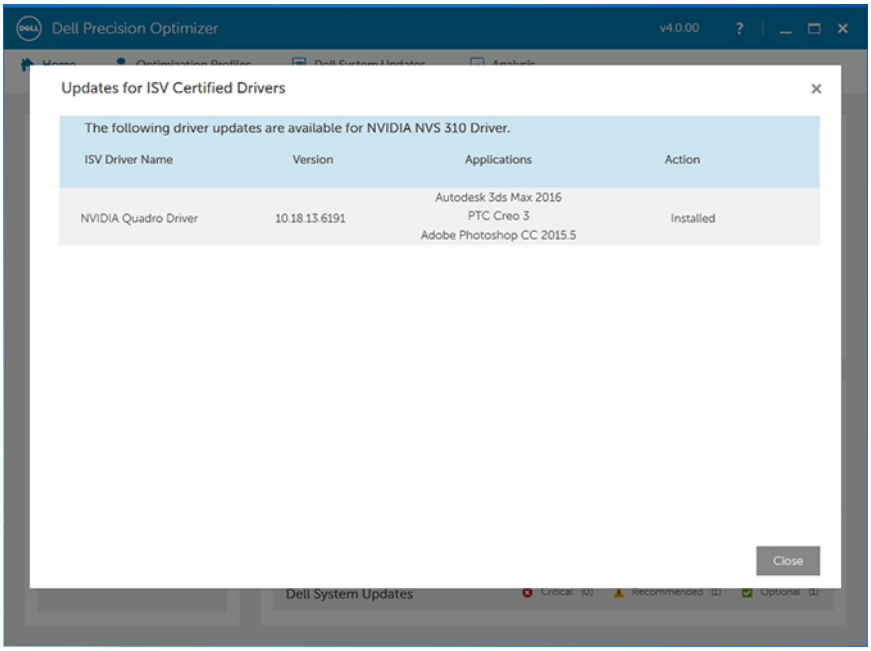
The page will also show whether or not one of these certified drivers is already installed on your system.



Once you start to download and install a certified driver from this page, the following screen appears. While this operation is in progress you would not be able to either check for updates, nor apply any updates.



Once the update is complete, a window similar to one below appears.



NOTE: The certified driver that you download and install may be an older version than the lastest available from the Dell support site for your system. If you need to switch back to the latest graphics driver (which may or may not be certified), use the Dell System Updates screen.

6

Troubleshooting

Table 4. Installation Issues

Issue	Solution
Can I use Dell Precision Optimizer on my non-Dell laptop or desktop?	No. Dell Precision Optimizer software has been especially designed to optimize the performance of your Dell machine. Dell Precision Optimizer will not run on any non-Dell system.
Why does Dell Precision Optimizer installer fail with a message saying my system is not supported?	Dell Precision Optimizer will not install on operating systems other than Windows 7, Windows 8 or Windows 10. Windows Vista or earlier versions are not supported.

Table 5. Home Page

Issue	Solution
Why don't I see the Graphics Utilization bar on the home page of Dell Precision Optimizer application?	This is not a cause for concern. Graphics utilization is not available on some Dell systems. Based on the configuration of your system, this data may not be available. In some cases, even if the graphics adapter is supported by Dell Precision Optimizer, the graphics driver may not be compatible OR the current active display may not be via the supported graphics adapter. This may happen later if Switchable Graphics is enabled on the system.

Table 6. Profiles

Issue	Solution
Why do I see "**Policy needs reboot**" message?	Some of the Dell Precision Optimizer policies change system attributes that require a reboot before the changes can take effect. When this happens the user is informed and given an opportunity to reboot the system. You can decide to reboot later but the changes applied to your system will become effective only after you reboot. Some examples of policies that require reboot are those that change Processor Hyper-Threading, Processor Cores etc.
Why do I see "**Policy needs application restart**" message?	Some of the Dell Precision Optimizer policies change system attributes that require the ISV application to be restarted before the changes can take effect. When this happens the user is informed and given an opportunity to restart the ISV application. You can decide to continue using the application but the changes applied to your system will become effective only the next time the application is started. Some examples of policies that require application restart are those that change Nvidia settings.
Why do I see "**Policy conflict occurred**" message?	You may have two different active profiles that contain policies that change the same system attribute to different values. When such a situation is detected by Dell Precision Optimizer, one of the policies is aborted and the user is notified. Dell Precision Optimizer determines a policy conflict at application runtime, not policy selection.

Issue	Solution
	To avoid such a situation, you must not activate conflicting policies at the same time. Such policies are meant to be enabled one at a time to optimize the system for ISV applications running in different modes. If you get a policy conflict message, disable one of the profiles.

Table 7. Dell System Updates

Issue	Solution
Why does "**Check for Updates**" or "**Apply Updates**" fail?	Check for Updates or Apply Updates may fail if you do not have an internet connection or if the Dell server is not reachable. Check your network connection and try again after some time. You may also see this failure because of a conflict with some other application that updates your system such as Dell Client System Update software. If this happens, please retry the operation after closing other applications and associated update schedulers.
Why do I see "**Update requires reboot**" message sometimes?	Not all software updates require the system to be rebooted. If you get this message, it means that the software update that was just applied can only become effective once your system is rebooted. Save all your data and close all running applications before rebooting your system.
Why do I see the same list of available updates even after I apply some updates?	The list of available updates is not updated automatically after you apply some updates until you run Check For Updates again.

Table 8. Analysis

Issue	Solution
Will enabling Dell System Analysis or Workload Analysis impact my system's performance?	Dell System/Workload Analysis is a very powerful tool and has been extensively tested to ensure that it does not adversely impact your system's performance or battery life. However, bear in mind that it is a tracking tool meant to be used as needed. You need not keep it enabled at all times.
Why do I see System Analysis reports still in the running state in the user interface even though the reports should have completed?	The System Analysis report status is not updated automatically in the user interface. Exit and run the application again to view the updated status in the user interface.
Why do I see a blank Workload Analysis report?	You may encounter this problem on some systems the first time you run a Workload Analysis report. Run the report again to resolve this issue.

Table 9. CPU and Graphics Intelligence

Issue	Solution
Will enabling CPU or Graphics Intelligence graphs impact my system's performance?	As with Dell System/Workload Analysis tools, this tool is meant to be used as needed. You need not keep it enabled at all times.

Contacting Dell

NOTE: If you do not have an active Internet connection, you can find contact information on your purchase invoice, packing slip, bill, or Dell product catalog.

Dell provides several online and telephone-based support and service options. Availability varies by country and product, and some services may not be available in your area. To contact Dell for sales, technical support, or customer service issues:

1. Visit **dell.com/support**.
2. Select your support category.
3. Verify your country or region in the Choose a Country/Region drop-down menu at the top of page.
4. Select the appropriate service or support link based on your need.