NinjaTrader 8

Part 1

NINJATRADER, LLC
1422 Delgany Street, Suite 400
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: 312 262-1289
Fax: 312 329-9888
Internet: www.ninjatrader.com

Requirements: Minimum requirements are Windows Vista (SP2) w/platform update, Windows 7, 8, or 10, Windows Server 2008 w/platform update, Windows Server 2008 R2 or later; 1 gigahertz (GHz) or faster 32-bit or 64-bit processor; 2 GB RAM; Microsoft .NET Framework 4.5; screen resolution of 1024x768; DirectX10 compatible graphics card.
Product: Trading platform for active equity, futures, and forex traders.
Price: Always free use for advanced charting, strategy backtesting, and strategy simulation. For live trading in your brokerage account, purchase it for $999 (or four monthly payments of $299); lease it for $600 annually, $330 semi-annually, or $180 quarterly; free through a NinjaTrader brokerage account.

by Jayanthi Gopalakrishnan

NinjaTrader has a dedicated following and for good reason. It is broker independent, the price is attractive, it supports a lot of datafeeds, and it's easy to use. For the benefit of its dedicated followers, NinjaTrader's new release NinjaTrader 8 (NT8) is an evolution of the previous generation. It looks similar to the previous version, which means you don't have to invest a lot of time to learn about its new features, but the technology used to develop it is more powerful than in the previous version, and this is something you'll notice once you start using the product.

The most obvious difference is the user interface has a cleaner look and as you explore the new version you discover there are several improvements that make the trader's experience much richer. And with all the new improvements you still

are able to program and trade in as many ways as you want. It still follows the "open development" model that makes NT unique. You still have the sophisticated trade submission and management tools but with some improvements that make these otherwise tedious tasks even easier. Let's take a look at some of these new features.

INSTALLATION AND DATA

Installation is straightforward. You can download it directly from the Ninja-Trader website. Once you download it you get your login credentials and you're ready to start your trial. The first thing you'll notice about NT8 is that it has free-floating windows so you can arrange them however you want and use as many as you need. It's not a static workspace as you may find in some products. You have the flexibility to customize your workspace with only what is necessary for you to trade.

CONTROL CENTER

One aspect of NT8 that stands out is its simple design, and this is evident from the control center window, which is basically your starting point to access the various features. This is where you connect with a datafeed, monitor your orders, your positions, and various account details.

You have different options when it comes to the datafeed you want to connect with. I used the NinjaTrader

Instrur	Action	Quanti	Price	Time	ID	E/X	Positic	Order I	Name	Comm	Rate	Accoun	Conne
ES 03	Buy	2	2253.0	12/14/.	5ce34	Exit		2a368	Close		1	Sim10	My Nin
ES 03-	Sell	2	2252.7	12/14/.	cb665	Entry	2 S	f6926c			1	Sim10	My Nin
ES 03-	Sell	2	2252.7	12/14/.	2f2e1c	Exit	-	87560	Close		1	Sim10	My Nin
ES 03-	Buy	1	2254.5	12/14/.	41cefc	Entry	2 L	d6f5cb			1	Sim10	My Nin
ES 03-	Buy	1	2254.2	12/14/.	30b3b	Entry	1 L	a5c59			1	Sim10	My Nin

Orders   Executions   Strategies   Positions   Accounts   Log   +

FIGURE 1: CONTROL CENTER WINDOW. Think of this as the heart and lung of NinjaTrader 8. From here you select your datafeed, open windows, place orders, and so on.

Continuum (Demo) option for this review. You'll notice on the control center window in Figure 1 that there are several tabs along the bottom. In NT 8 you have the flexibility to add tabs, remove tabs, and change the location of tabs. In fact, this tabbed interface is something you'll see in most windows in NT8. Just looking at the control center gives you an idea that a lot more flexibility has been added to the new version.

CHARTS

You can bring up charts from the control center, select the instrument you want to view the chart of, and enjoy the several charting features available to you. You have a couple of different options for how you want to place your charts in your workspace. You can have them in your workspace as separate windows or you can create different charts using the tab format feature along the bottom of the chart window. The tab feature helps reduce the amount of space you take up on your desktop.

NinjaTrader allows you to view and place orders directly from the charts. Although this is not a new feature, some enhancements have been made that make placing orders much easier than in the previous version. There are a couple different ways to place orders. One is through the *chart trader* button you see along the top of the chart. If you click on that button, it brings up an order window next to your chart (Figure 2). Here you can add an unlimited number of exit points, set your price targets based on trade size, stop-loss, profit, stop strategy, or any number of trade management strategies you use. It's also easy to monitor your open positions. Once you place an order you'll see a display of the number of positions, average entry price, and P/L of the open position.

Another way to place orders directly

FIGURE 2: CHART TRADER. You can access Chart Trader from the button on the tool bar. You can place your orders through the quick buttons and once an order is placed you can monitor them all from this window.

FIGURE 3: ATTACHING ORDERS TO INDICATORS. Some traders like to place orders using indicators. Here you see an example of how that is done by attaching an exit order on a 15-minute intraday chart of the emini S&P 500 to a 20-period exponential moving average (EMA).

via the charts is by right-clicking on the chart and selecting one of four orders, that is, buy limit, buy market if touched (MIT), sell-stop market, and sell-stop limit. There are some interesting ways to manage your positions. You can place auto breakeven and auto trailing stops. These exit points all appear on your chart. For example, if you wish to place a limit order, it'll display as a horizontal line on your chart. In addition to that, you can place an MIT order, which will show up below the limit order to give you some added protection. Being able to visualize these trades directly on your charts takes your risk manage-

ment to a higher level.

A review of the charting feature in NT8 wouldn't be complete without mentioning the ability to attach your orders to indicators that can be overlaid on a chart. Technical analysts often base their entry and exit decisions on specific indicators. Having the ability to attach your orders to indicators directly on the chart can prove to be helpful for technical analysis enthusiasts. One is that it's easy to visualize and the other is that you can see it in multiple timeframes. Say you enter a trade and want to exit when price hits a 20-period exponential moving average (EMA).
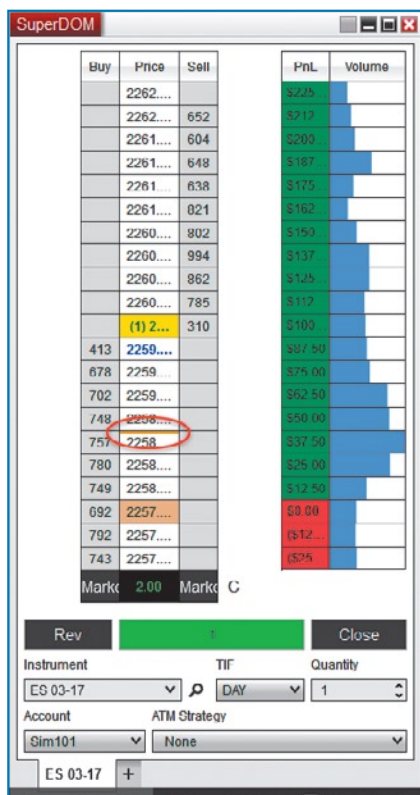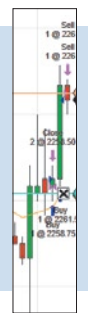
Technical analysts often base their entry and exit decisions on specific indicators, so having the ability to attach your orders to indicators directly on the chart makes it visually easy to see when a certain price hits an indicator.

FIGURE 4: SUPER DOM. Visualize the depth of market (DOM) from this window. You can customize it any way you'd like. Here, the PnL and volume columns were added. The 20-period EMA was attached to the Super DOM, which is identified by the horizontal orange line.

You have the ability to attach that exit to the 20-period EMA (Figure 3). If price hits a moving average, you could enter a trade then. When attaching the order to an indicator you have the option of offsetting the order above or below the indicator, which is helpful for placing trailing orders. There is also an option of enabling *modify toward last price,* which will help to prevent the order from moving too far away from the market price. The nice thing about this is that you gain more control over risk management.

With NT8 you can place a series of charts on a screen and place trades on all charts. For example, on one chart window you could have several instruments or the same instruments with different timeframes on separate tabs.

And let's not forget about the drawing tools. In NT8 you can now attach drawing tools to all charts on the screen—a feature traders will find useful. Since you can link charts, you can add a sup-

port or resistance level to, say, a daily chart of emini S&P futures and attach it to all charts. So if you're looking at a one-minute chart of ES futures, the same support or resistance levels from the daily chart will show up on the one-minute chart.

The charts also have a playback feature, which is a useful tool when it comes to testing strategies. In NT8, you can download the playback data from the control center for whichever instrument you want and go as far back in time as you'd like. You also have the option to download the current day's data up to the current time. You have two options to choose from—*market replay* or *historical*. So if you're sitting there wondering why you may not have achieved expected results on a particular trade, take advantage of the playback feature using historical data and try to figure out why it didn't work.

SUPER DOM
The Super DOM, or depth of market, is one of the most-loved features among NT users. It displays a price ladder with the number of buy and sell orders (Figure 4). Again, you have the flexibility to change the size of the window, move it to wherever you wish, and add as many Super DOMs using the tabbed feature along the bottom of the window.

You can also add as many columns as you'd like and even create your own custom columns using NinjaScript. In Figure 4 the PnL and volume columns were added. The PnL column displays your unrealized profits or losses for each row based on your average entry price. The volume column shows the number of trades at the corresponding price. In NT8, when you resize the DOM, the number of rows on the ladder increases or decreases dynamically. There's no

need to go through a menu system as you did in the previous version.

You can place orders from the Super DOM window and one new feature that has been added to the Super DOM is the ability to attach orders to an indicator. All you have to do is click the order you want to attach to your indicator and hold 'CTRL' to allow attaching to the indicator. If a price level touches the indicator, a horizontal colored line will appear in the DOM window (Figure 4).

THERE'S LOTS MORE
If you're familiar with NinjaTrader, you'll recognize most of these features. In NT8, they've now become much more efficient and user-friendly than in previous versions. Most of the enhancements are behind-the-scenes technology. Other notable features in NT8 include strategy development and advanced order handling. I will discuss those and other features in part 2 of my review of NT8. Stay tuned.

Jayanthi Gopalakrishnan is Editor of STOCKS & COMMODITIES.

FURTHER READING
Gopalakrishnan, Jayanthi [2011]. "Ninja-Trader 7," product review, *Technical Analysis of* STOCKS & COMMODITIES, Volume 29: April.

S&C staff [2013]. "NinjaTrader," product review, *Technical Analysis of* STOCKS & COMMODITIES, Volume 31: May.

‡NinjaTrader

‡*See Editorial Resource Index*