



USER MANUAL



A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, providing a template for text entry.

PPD Prepress Features

Application Logic

When the Logic check-box is ticked, it is ticked by default (top centre of main window), PPD Prepress will attempt to automatically apply various settings. For example, if it detects a large amount of white space (bleed area) around the artwork, it will automatically enter values in the Crop Settings fields to reduce this. Everything that is imposed is recorded. If you open a job with the same or similar name as one imposed before, with the same file dimensions, it will apply the settings used for the previous job. If it was a numbered job, PPD Prepress will replace the number or numbers and even increment the start number. For the majority of jobs, you will only need to open the job and click the Impose Artwork button!

Page Range

Values entered in the page range field will always override the actual page order in any opened document. For example, if a document has three pages and you wish to impose page one as the front and page 3 as the back, simply enter 1,3 in the page range field; to have page 2 as the front and page 1 as the back enter 2,1.

Imposition

Open a job. Click Impose Artwork.

It is automatically imposed on the default SRA3 output sheet. With the Logic check-box ticked, excess bleed is removed automatically. In a multi-page document, each page is duplicated to fill a new imposed sheet.

Proof

Open a job. Tick the Proof radio button.

Click Impose Artwork. It is automatically imposed on the default SRA3 output sheet. With the Logic check-box ticked, excess bleed is removed automatically. This time each page in the original file is imposed one after the other.

Impose to Roll

After ticking the Roll check-box, enter the maximum roll width together with the quantity required. The application logic will determine the best area value depending on the quantity entered, using the roll width as a potential maximum.

Proof & SO (Stacking Options)

When an original file has many pages with a matching front and back, these can be imposed to print in the correct order by clicking the SO button (after Proof has been selected). This is often used in conjunction with the Variable Data module. Separately, when one copy of an A5 booklet is required, the SO options can be used to split it into two halves, imposing one half onto the top of an SRA3 and the remainder onto the bottom. When guillotined, these two halves match exactly.

Booklet

Open a job. Tick the Booklet radio button.

Click Impose Artwork. The output sheet size selected is irrelevant as a new document is created based on the width x2 of the original page. Spine bleed is automatically removed, if it exists.

Advanced Booklet

Open a job. Tick the Booklet radio button. Click the Advanced Booklet button. A new window opens. This includes an option to add creep to the spine based on the paper weight. For 2-Up booklets creep will be added to the spine, regardless of the bleed value on the original document. In addition, crop marks can be added during the imposition process. An option also exists to impose 4-up head-to-head, useful when more advanced finishing machinery is available.

DL

Open a job. Click Impose Artwork. Tick the DL radio button. The output sheet size is irrelevant. A two page PDF is created, a single page's dimension is based on half the number of pages in the original document. For example if you open a 6 page dl job, the first page of the new imposed document will contain pages 5,6,1 and the second page will contain pages 2,3,4. This logic is applied regardless of the size of the original and the number of pages. The original pdf file must have an even number of pages!

Outer Trim Marks

Outer Trim Marks are turned each time you launch the application. These will be added based on the PDFs trim-box, if one exists, otherwise the crop-box will be used. Outer Trim Marks are turned on or off from the Extras Tab, top right.

Bleed Settings

Bleed and crop marks can be added in several ways. If an original has no bleed. Tick the Std Marks check box and the Grow art check box. Crop marks are added based on the original document dimensions at a default 2.1mm offset. The original artwork is grown a little in proportion. If you don't need to add bleed, then do not tick the Grow Art check-box! To add border marks instead, simply tick the border marks check box. The offset is irrelevant as border marks are placed exactly on the border.

Bleed Via the Toolbox

Crop marks and border marks can also be added via the Toolbox under the Marks tab. However, these have slightly different uses. Here crop marks are added based on the PDFs trim box, while the crop marks are added in the main user interface based on the PDFs viewable area, which in fact is the crop box. What this means is that the Toolbox feature can be used to add crop marks to a document with bleed and no marks. The border marks here are also added based on the trim box, so you can open a PDF with standard marks and add border marks also. This can be useful when imposing labels with bleed. You would first add the border marks, impose and print this sheet. Then record these settings and impose and print the sheet without border marks. All crop marks and border marks added in PPD Prepress are 65% black.

Fixed Gutters & No Rotate

The Rotation lock check box is placed next to the Output sheet size combo box. When imposing label sheets, tick this first, then click the FG (Fixed Gutters) button in the Crop Settings area. Here both horizontal and vertical gutters can be selected.

Number

Numbering options are very straightforward, simply choose a start number, quantity required and other options. Then position numbers. The job is automatically imposed based on the output sheet size selected in stacked reversed order.

When a job contains two or more pages, a Standard Back check-box will become visible. Tick this and page 2 in the original pdf will be imposed as the standard back. A page other than page one can be numbered by bringing it into view using the Forward button underneath the Preview area. If a page number is entered in the Page Range field, this choice will override the Page in View. To number page 4 in an original file, enter 4 in the page range field. To use page 1 as the back enter 4,1 in the page range field. To number all pages in a file tick the check box to the right of the Quantity Required field.

Unstacked

There are several options when the un-stacked radio button is selected.

Choices A, B and C start from different positions on the sheet.

Multipart includes choices from 1 - 12. This option is ideal for numbering / imposing multiple docket books with multiple perfed sections on each sheet. For example, to number two A4 docket books, each containing 3 DL dockets, choose Un-stacked, Multipart 2.

To use more than two numbers there are two choices.

- 1.** Number the job as usual, but choose an output sheet size the same size as the original file. For the second pass, tick the check box opposite the quantity required field as outlined above. When all numbers have been placed, use the Proof and SO options as outlined earlier to impose the job onto a larger sheet.
- 2.** The second option, is to open the job as usual, enter the start number quantity required, and then click the VAR DATA button. This passes the number file, normally unseen, to the variable data module, where the user can place an unlimited number of numbers on the pdf by simply clicking and dragging. Custom fonts and colours can be selected for each number placed. Again, when the job is complete, open and impose this pdf using the Proof and SO options as outlined earlier, to complete the imposition.

Buster Numbering

Click the Extras Tab near the top left corner. Three options exist 5, 6 and 7 digits giving 120, 720 and 5040 numbers respectively. These are placed based on the choices under Number Position & Style for the first number. The distance between digits is self explanatory. One or two number sequences can be placed: ideal when one is required on the main ticket and another smaller one on the ticket stub. If the VAR Data button is clicked after selecting the Buster check-box, the data will be passed to the Variable Data module, where it is possible to place an unlimited number of buster number sequences, with custom alignment, fonts and colours.

Barcodes

Click the Barcodes button under the Extras tab to open the Barcode window. Most popular barcodes are available to choose from.

To impose a range of barcodes, import the data file XLS for CSV into the Variable Data module, append _PXBC to the relevant field and choose the barcode type in the bottom left. Choose Merge Sample to ensure it is to the correct proportion, as the barcode is placed based on the rectangle drawn on screen. When happy with the sample, click Merge Records or Marge Reversed depending on your requirements.

QR codes

QR codes are created as with barcodes. This time append _QR to the imported field.

PPD Prepress



Enable Application Logic

Units of measurement

Preview area
Fonts or transparency may not be rendered correctly. This will not affect the final PDF file.

Re Open the original

Close the current Document

Launch Pyxis PDF Toolbox

Open document

Shortcuts are available for common tasks (Ctrl O)

Prevent Rotation Check-Box

Selected output sheet size

Impose to a roll

Enter custom sizes

Bleed Area - add white space around the original document

Add standard crop marks

Enter border marks offset from original document

Add border crop marks

Enter border marks length

Register your application

Your PPD Prepress version number

Enlarge the artwork

Crop the original document by the specified amount equally, or specify values per side.

DL Style Imposition (eg. 5,6,1 and 2,3,4)

User Interface

epress

Dimensions:

Number Buster Extras

Start Number 0

Quantity Required 0

Numeral Width 1

Leading Text

Stacked Un Stacked

1 7
4 10 8
5 11 9
6 12

Var Data

Number Position and Style

From Left 10 From Bottom 10

From Left 50 From Bottom 10

Font TIMES_ROMAN

Font Size 15 Colour BLACK

Preview Number

Open When Imposed

IMPOSE ARTWORK

Standard imposition

Select to number a job

Select to impose a booklet

Head to Head Imposition

Consecutive imposition

Open Fixed Gutters Dialog

Buster Numbering options under this tab

Barcode options under this tab

Enter start number

Enter total numbers required

Number each page in original document

Enter minimum number width, eg. (6 => 000001)

Enter leading text, example: Number:

Choose stacking options

Launch Variable Data Module (A new window will open)

Position the first number this distance from the left

Position the second number this distance from the bottom

Rotate the number in 90 degree increments

Position a second number

Choose a serif or sans-serif font

Choose font colour

Choose font size

Preview the number externally Fonts and transparency should render correctly

Process the job

Reverse document pages

Set Stacking Options

Toolbox

General

Files are added to the file list by clicking the Select File(s) button. Where an action applies to a single file, it will always be the file at the top of the list. File order can be changed via the Move Up button.

Extract

Enter the page number or range in the page range field to extract pages. The same page can be entered multiple times, if necessary.

Combine

All files in the file list are combined into a new pdf

Merge Consecutive

All files are merged together in sequence, one page from the first doc, followed by one page from the second and so on. If the digit 2, for example, is entered in the Range field, then two pages from each doc will be merged in turn.

Explode

Divide an original pdf into single pages, named in order

Insert Blank Page(s)

Blank pages can be inserted anywhere in a document, based on the choices selected. Crop box and trim box will match those in the original page.

Scale

Scale transformations do exactly as described by the radio buttons. However note the bottom choice in the list does not scale the file, but simply removes bleed and crops. All scaling is performed in proportion regardless of the output sheet size selected. You can also create a blank PDF and add a background colour to a PDF from the Scale tab.

Rotation

Pages are rotated in 90 degrees increments. Enter number(s) in the page range field to rotate specific pages. When imposing booklets with a horizontal fold, you will first need to rotate all pages 90 degrees clockwise. Open this rotated file and rotate the last page 180 degrees. Then open this file in the main window and apply the preferred booklet imposition settings.

Marks

Marks are placed based on the Trim box in the original file. If no Trim box exists, the crop box is used instead.

Images

Images of type JPG, PNG, TIF and PSD in both CMYK and RGB can all be converted to single page pdfs or combined into the same file. Multiple images can be selected at the same time. The High setting should provide adequate results for digital printing.

Variable Data

Import View

Note that the first column is a serial number and is always automatically generated. This together with any column can be optionally used.

File Types

CSV and most xls files can be imported into the variable data module. The application attempts to find the separator automatically. If it fails the user can select a field separator manually.

When addresses have blank spaces, click the collapse left check box.

Imported content can be edited directly in this view. Simply double click the relevant cell to select it and edit the text.

Data Sort View

Choose the column you wish to add from the Imported Columns list and click the Add Column >> button to add it to the fields list. The same column can be added multiple times, for example when placing the same number multiple times on a document.

Custom text can be entered via the Custom Value fields and button.

A custom value can be appended to an imported column value, by selecting the Column in the Data Fields view and then adding the custom value. For example when you wish to create a QR code from a url, add the url, select it, enter _QR in the custom field and click the Add Custom. Note: curly brackets placed in the Data Field as these are used internally by the application and will not appear on the pdf.

Variable Data Images

To add an image enter an key (text string), then select a jpg or png image. When the key is found during the merging process, the relevant image is placed. Images are drawn to fill the rectangle drawn on the pdf; or if the Maintain Image proportion option is selected, images will only be placed in proportion from the bottom left corner. If you are merging a lot of records, you should also tick the Reduce Image File Size check-box. Click the Generate Fields . . . bottom right, to convert the Data Fields list into concrete fields that can be drawn onto the PDF. Note that if the Layout View tab is selected and new Data Fields exist, they will be automatically converted to Concrete Fields. Since version 4.7.6.0, PSD, TIF, JPG and PNG images can all be merged.

Layout View

In this view Fields are selected and drawn onto the PDF. Fields can be drawn onto any page in an original multi-page doc. Custom fonts, colours and sizes can all be selected. The Field Control tab can be used to quickly align and equalize field, fonts colours and sizes as necessary. Use the Merge Sample menu item to preview a single merge record. Note that this option will select the longest field from each record. In this way it is easy to determine if fields will fit in the space allocated. Text can be forced to fit the available space by ticking the Force Fit check-box.

Note that a Field can only be drawn on once. If you draw the same Field a second time, it will replace to one drawn earlier. In order to place an imported column multiple times, you must add it to the Data Fields list the number of times required (under the Data Sort View tab).

Fonts

True Type Fonts can be previewed and imported under the Fonts tab. Fonts must be complete. If any required character is missing, an error will occur. The application will try and continue. Note that data can be edited in the Import View, where unusual characters can be removed, for example.

Note that using one of the 'Standard 14' PDF fonts (Helvetica, Times New Roman or Courier, in any style) will help keep file sizes small as subsetting is not required. All PDF viewers / renderers will have these fonts included. When you choose a custom font, a subset of that font is embedded based on the specific characters used.

Colours

Custom colours can be added via the Add Colour button located under the Colours table. Simply move the four sliders to the desired position in the range from 0 - 100% to create a new CMYK colour.

FreeForm

Advanced RIP software, including the Fiery RIP can dynamically merge two PDF files during the ripping / printing process. To get the most value from this feature you will need to create a Master PDF and a Variables PDF. The Master will contain the static content. You can easily create the Variable PDF from the Variable Data Module. After all fields have been placed, choose the Free-Form Export option from the File Menu. If there are multiple pages in your PDF you will be given a further option to export only pages that contain variable content. Then from the Fiery, for example, you can choose the Variable Data tab, select the Master PDF then the Variables PDF and you can assign the relevant Variable page to the Matching Master page. The use of FreeForm will significantly reduce file-sizes, processing time and printing time.

File Size Considerations

To keep processing time and file sizes to a minimum it is a good idea to flatten the original artwork before imposing it. This can be done under Tools -> Print Production in Acrobat Pro. There are three options, Low, Medium & High resolution. Medium is acceptable for most digital print jobs.

If you do not have Acrobat Pro, then save your file as a high resolution image. Use the Image To PDF feature in the PDF Toolbox in this application's Toolbox module to convert the image back to a PDF. Try the Good quality option first and print a sample copy. If this is not satisfactory, try the High quality option. Note that these options range from 72 - 288 dpi in increments of 72.

General Notes

The many features within PPD Prepress provide all kinds of options when imposing artwork for print. Here are answers to some common questions:

To impose two A5 booklets on an SRA3 sheet, first import the job and choose the booklet radio button. Impose the job. Open this imposed booklet. Choose SRA3 as the Output sheet. Tick the Impose radio button and then click IMPOSE ARTWORK.

To impose two types of business cards with a common back, where the back is the third page, there are two options. The first is to choose SRA3 as the Output Sheet. Then enter 1,3,2,3 in the page range field and click the IMPOSE ARTWORK button. This will produce a four page pdf (two sheets when printed).

An alternative option is to choose SRA4 as the output sheet size. Click IMPOSE ARTWORK. This will generate a three page document. Open this imposed document. Choose SRA3 as the output sheet size. Tick the PROOF radio button. Enter 1,2,3,3 in the page range field. Click IMPOSE ARTWORK. Note that you may need to enter a small value in the crop settings area, to ensure the two SRA4s will fit into the SRA3!.

You can use this same idea when imposing multiple sets of business cards, by entering custom value as the output sheet, instead of the SRA4 we selected earlier.

Labels

To impose labels, always tick the check-box next to the Output Sheet size drop down list to prevent the sheet from rotating. Ensure the width and height values are correct, if not, click the Swap button. Custom label sizes can be entered by first ticking the Custom check-box. Note that the size relates to the sheet and not to the individual label!

Next, tick the FG button located in the lower left corner of the Crop Settings area (centre of the user interface). When the window opens, tick the Use Fixed Gutters check-box and enter the desired horizontal and vertical gutters. Then click the Save button. Based on these settings, PPD Prepress may automatically enter values in both in the crop settings and bleed settings fields, depending the bleed, if any, in the original document.

Most issues when imposing labels arise from the label not being the same dimensions as the label on the cut label sheet. The dimensions of the imported label are displayed in the top right corner of the main PPD Prepress window. If the values are incorrect, use the relevant Scale option in the PDF Toolbox to re-size the single label before imposing the job. See also **Bleed Via the Toolbox** (page 4) for additional information when imposing labels.

Saving Click Costs & Lamination Film

If a job has no bleed or does not require bleed, it can be removed via the Toolbox, under the Scale Tab. The bottom option does not Scale the job, but simply removes the crops and bleed. Then open this job in the main user interface, tick the Border Marks check-box in the Bleed Settings area (bottom left). Ensure the Bleed Area field is set to Zero. Impose and print one sheet. Then un-tick the Border Mks check-box and re-impose the job. Print this as the final job. Place the sheet with the border marks on the top to facilitate accurate trimming to size. This procedure will ensure you are fitting the maximum number of units-up on your print sheet, helping to reduce click costs, and laminating time and film costs, when this type of finishing is required.

Since version 4.7.6.4 you can add a background colour to a PDF via the Scale Tab in the PDF Toolbox. So you place artwork with solid colour side by side, no bleed required. After the artwork has been imposed, open this file in the Toolbox; switch to the Scale Tab and select No Change Background Colour Only. Enter the CMYK values of the background colour. Click the Scale PDF button. The PDF will not be scaled, but the selected background colour be added to the entire PDF background. If you need to reduce the background colour area, simply open this file in the Main Window and enter relevant crop values, and re-impose this file back onto an output sheet of the same size.



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