

Xitron XProofer Plugin

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Overview

The Xitron Xproofer plugin will output black and white raster data to PCL 5 printers for use in basic proofing. The plugin writes the raster or bitmap data to the Windows spooler or to disk where post-processing takes place. Normally this post-processing would involve outputting the bitmap page to a local or network printer.

Installation

The Proofer plugin is installed using Xitron's plugin installer. Make sure that you direct the installer to a valid RIP path, i.e. c:\Xitron\Navigator531r4a. The installer will install the Proofer plugin "Xproofer.i32" as well as a small PostScript file in a sub-directory named "Setups" underneath the plugin directory.

Passwords

During the installation process you will be prompted for a 20-character password. This will have shipped to you on a sheet labeled "PCL Passcodes" or "PCL Restricted Dongle Passcodes". If you do not enter this password, or enter it wrong, the Xproofer plugin won't appear in the RIP when it is started.

If the RIP that you purchased is a low resolution or protected RIP, you will need to enter an additional password. This is done after starting the RIP by selecting Configure RIP->Extras from the Navigator menu item. This is shown in Figure 1. Scroll to the bottom of this list and you will see an entry like "Xproofer, Xproofer". Highlight this entry and click on the "Add" button. Enter your 7-digit passcode there.

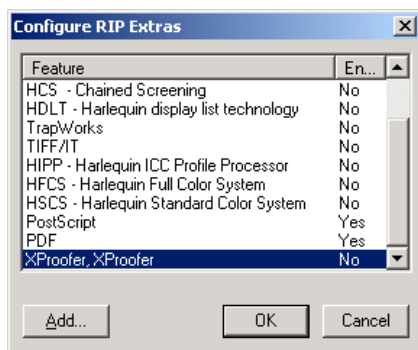


Figure 1. Configure RIP Extras dialog

Configuration Method 1: Direct Output to a Spooler

The Xproofer plugin's preferred method of output to a Windows print spooler. This is done through the device type "PCL5 Proofer Direct". This method is simple to configure and involves the following two step process:

1. Create a Windows printer for the printer and connect to that printer. Before proceeding, make sure that you can print to the target printer. This can be using the Windows test page, a text file from Notepad, or a web page.
2. Select that Windows printer from the plugin.

Using this method means that the configuration of the PCL5 plugin is not directly related to connecting to the printer itself. Until you can get the Windows test sheet out of the printer, there is no point in configuring the PCL5 Proofer plugin. The following configuration dialog is for the PCL5 Proofer Direct:

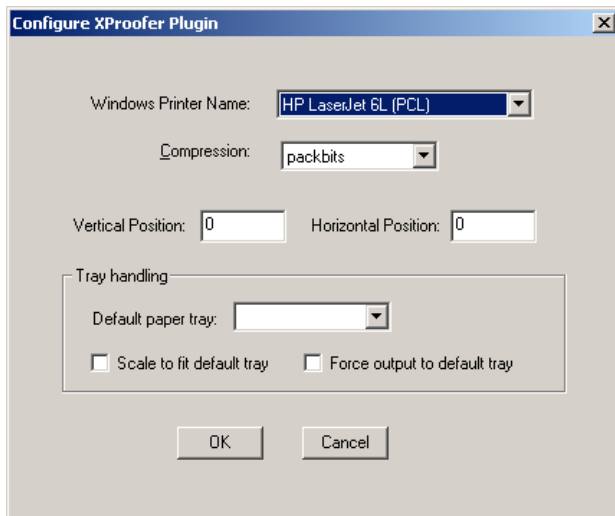


Figure 2. PCL5 Proofer Direct

The configuration options are as follows:

- **Windows Printer Name:** This listbox will contain all the connected printers for the computer on which the RIP is installed. This will include network printers and local printers.
- **Compression:** Select the compression method. The choices are none and “Packbits”, the default. Packbits is normally a good choice.
- **Vertical/Horizontal Position:** Numbers entered here shift the image in units of pixels. Positive numbers move the image down/right; negative numbers, up/left. For example if –100 were entered in the Horizontal Position field, the image would be shifted left 1/6 of an inch at 600 dpi.
- **Tray handling:** This feature allows you to have the output of a job scaled down to a smaller paper size. Also, output may be forced to a particular tray selection, even if the image is a different size. Please see the section titled “Tray Handling and Scaling” for a complete description.

Configuration Method 2: File Output

The configuration of the plugin involves the following basic steps:

1. Allocate an area in which the plugin can write PCL files.
2. Configure the naming convention.
3. Configure the post-processing. Optional.
4. Configure the tray-matching/scaling. Optional.

The plugin supports two additional device types: “PCL5 Proofer Direct”, “PCL5 Proofer” and “PCL5 Proofer Advanced”. The following are the configuration dialogs for these devices respectively:

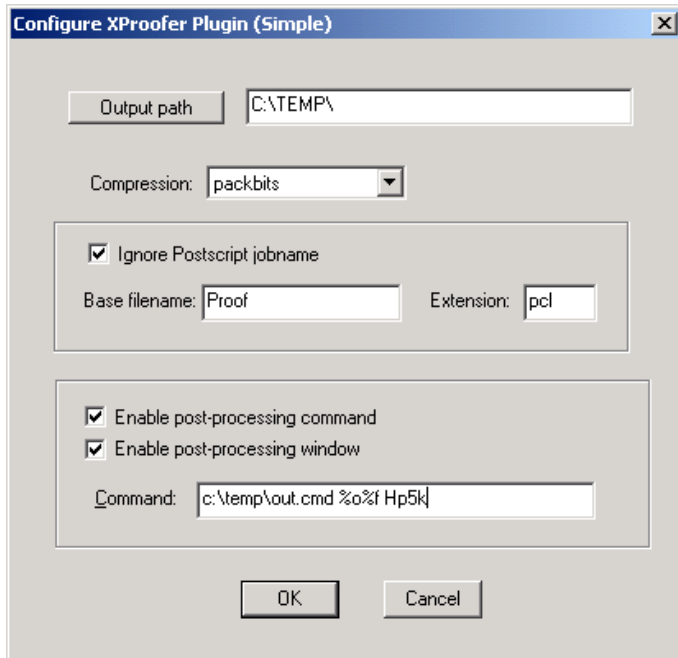


Figure 3. PCL5 Proofer configuration dialog

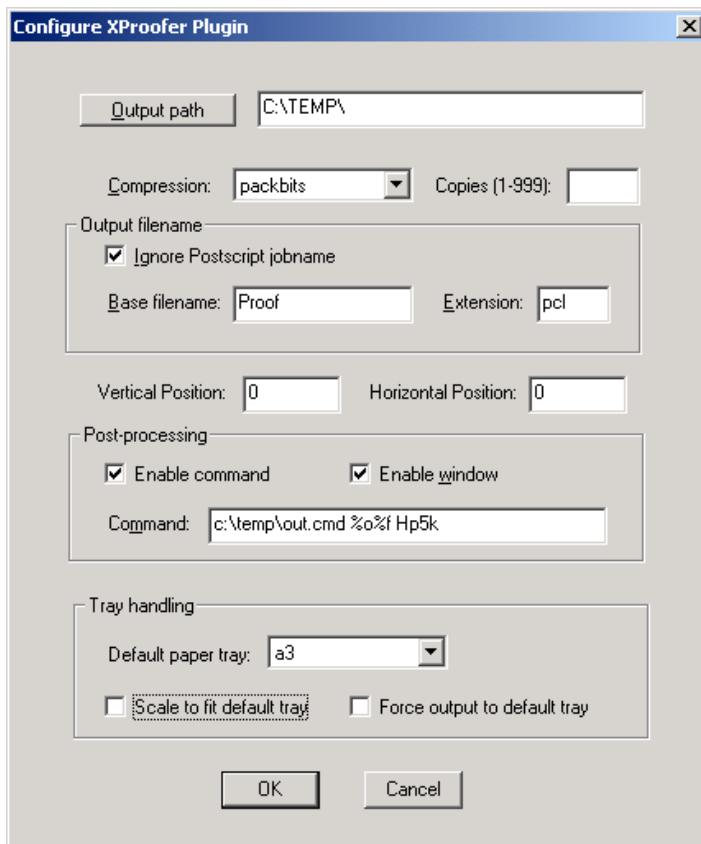


Figure 4. PCL5 Proofer Advanced configuration dialog.

The configuration options for these printers are the same except for the additional positioning and tray controls in the advanced plugin, so they will be discussed together.

- **Output path:** This is the path where the PCL raster file is written.
- **Compression:** Select the compression method. The choices are none and “Packbits”, the default. Packbits is normally a good choice.
- **Copies:** A number entered in this box, causes that number of *additional* copies to be generated.
- **Output filename:** This selection determines how the PCL filenames are generated. You can choose to have the filename based on the PostScript jobname or select the base of the name. If you choose to ignore the PostScript jobname, the Base filename entry will be used with 5 digits appended to the end to ensure uniqueness. You may also choose the filename extension to add when “ignoring” the PostScript jobname.
- **Vertical/Horizontal Position:** Numbers entered here shift the image in units of pixels. Positive numbers move the image down/right; negative numbers, up/left. For example if –100 were entered in the Horizontal Position field, the image would be shifted left 1/6 of an inch at 600 dpi.
- **Post-processing:** This feature allows an external command or application to be invoked after the PCL file has been written to the path specified in “Output path”. Typically, this would be used to invoke a batch or command file to copy the PCL raster file to a printer. It could also be used to copy the file to another server or invoke an application to pick the file up. There are a number of substitution options for use in building the command line. See the section on Post-processing for these details. Note that the checkbox “Enable command” must be checked to enable post-processing. For debugging the command, the checkbox “Enable window” (especially with “pause’s” sprinkled liberally through your script file.
- **Tray handling:** This feature allows you to have the output of a job scaled down to a smaller paper size. Also, output may be forced to a particular tray selection, even if the image is a different size. Please see the section titled “Tray Handling and Scaling” for a complete description.

Post-processing

Outputting jobs using the post-processing is more flexible, but harder to configure, than the direct print option. For the average person this will entail two steps: writing a DOS batch file (or NT command script – same thing), and invoking it through the “post-processing” command with the proper command line parameters.

A simple example should help:

1. Create a script in the C:\TEMP directory named “out.cmd”. Place in it one line:
copy %1 \\AMACHINENAME\%2
2. Use the following line in the “command” box under post-processing:
c:\temp\out.cmd %o%f Hp2k

This has the effect of invoking out.cmd with two parameters: the PCL bitmap filename (built using %o%f) and the name of a shared printer you want to send the file to on the machine \\AMACHINENAME..

There are many variations, in fact “out.cmd” could contain a single line:

copy %1 %2

and the configuration in post-processing could be

c:\temp\out.cmd %o%f \\AMACHINENAME\Hp2k

The following substitution parameters are available:

Parameter	Description
%j	the current job name
%n	the current Scriptworks job number
%p	the current page number within job

Parameter	Description
%h	the job number
%r	the job resolution
%e	the job exposure
%c	the current separation color
%d	the current date YYMMDD
%t	the current time HHMMSS
%l	the RIP SW folder path
%z	the current file name stem
%x	the current file name suffix
%f	the output file name (last component)
%o	the output folder path (ending in dir-delimiter),
%w	the state of the debug window (1 = set),
%*	the number of copies requested.

Tray Handling and Scaling

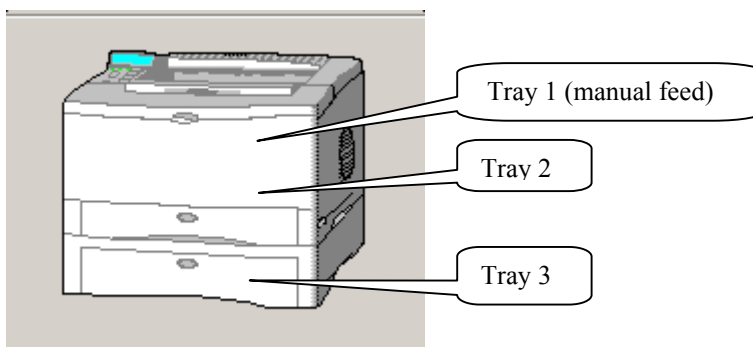
The PCL Proofer Advanced has the additional ability to force the selection of a tray and to scale pages to fit that tray and paper size. Normally the PCL Proofer plugin informs the printer of the tray selection based on the size of the bitmap that is generated. If you print an a4 page, the PCL proofer plugin recognizes that the bitmap is a4 in size and places a command in the job for the printer to use the a4 tray.

Typically you do not need to configure the output tray size. However, there are three cases where this might not work. The first case is where you know that a job does not fit one of the known tray sizes on your PCL printer. If the PCL Proofer plugin sees that the size of the bitmap does not match one of the pre-defined PCL paper sizes, then it will set the tray size to the one you select in “Default paper tray”.

The second reason for choosing a particular tray is if you have a job that matches a tray size, but you want the output on another size tray. Perhaps you have a letter job and you’d like it output on the ledger tray.

You may also want to scale jobs that are larger than your available paper trays. Checking “Scale to fit default tray” allows you scale a page to the size of the tray selected in “Default tray”. Perhaps you have a PCL printer with only a letter tray and you have a ledger job. This feature allows you to output your ledger job scaled down to letter paper.

Finally if want to point at a particular tray, select one of the tray entries at the end of the list. The definitions of what the tray numbers actually mean in PCL varies slightly, but as a rule of thumb you can use the descriptions in the table below. They are from the Hewlett Packard documentation. You may notice that the numbers are also embossed on the front of the printer. The following diagram may help:



The following table lists the pre-defined PCL paper tray sizes:

Tray Name	Tray Size/Description
Letter	8.5"x11"
Legal	8.5"x14"
Ledger	11"x17"
A3	297mm x 420mm
A4	210mm x 297mm
Tray 1 (manual feed)	"Manual (Top/Rear) Feed"
Tray 2	"Main (front) Paper Source" (normally the first cassette)
Tray 3	"Optional Source" (typically a second cassette)
Default Tray	"Default source"