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Navigator Plate Controller

Quick Start Guide

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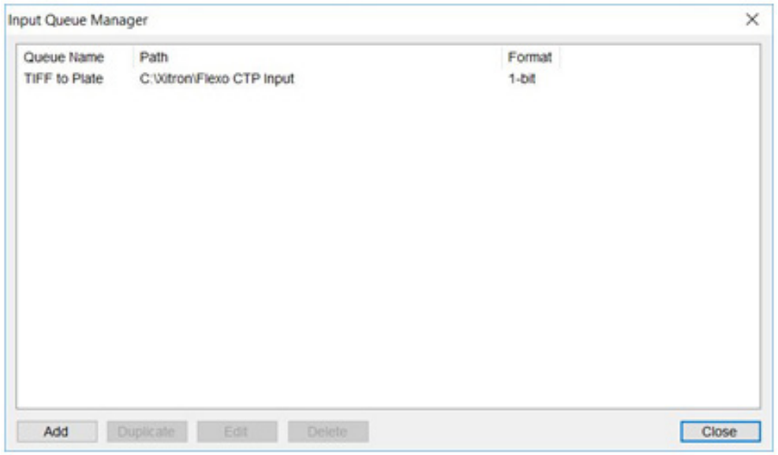
Quick Start Guide

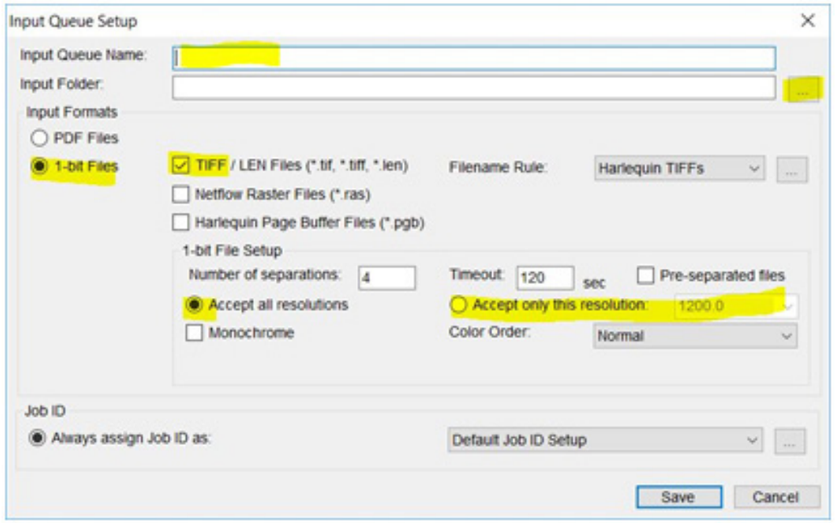
Navigator Plate Controller is designed to assemble multiple jobs and s eparations onto a single one-bit TIFF file for imaging on a flexographic CTP device. The purpose is to use as much of the plate area as possible to eliminate waste. While there are many advanced features within Navigator Plate Controller, this guide will focus on the basics of input, placement, and output.

Create an Input Queue

An input queue is location to which 1-bit TIFF files will be delivered either from the RIP or screening module. To create input queues, go to the **“Advanced”** menu and pull down to **“Input Queues.”** The following window will appear:

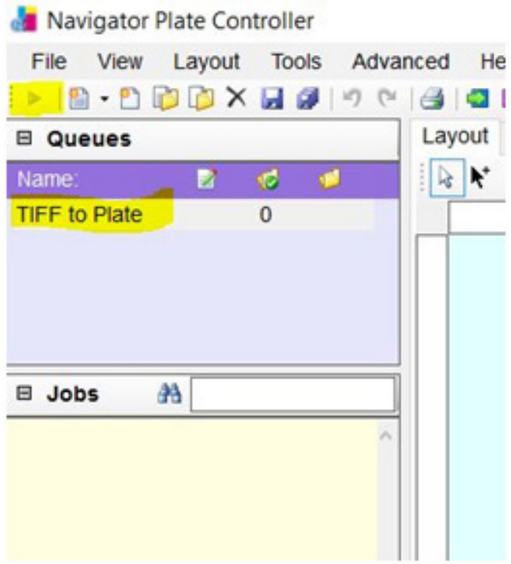


Click, **“Add”** to create a folder that Plate Controller will scan for incoming files.



Enter the Queue name, select the designated input folder, and ensure it is set for the proper file types. Click, **“Save.”** The named queue will appear in the upper left corner of the main plate controller window under **“Queues.”**

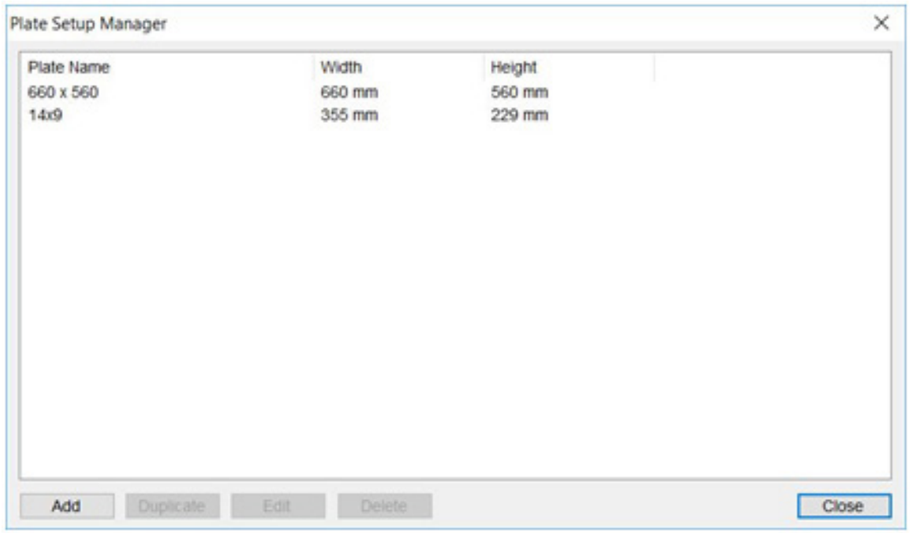
To activate the queue and start receiving input files, highlight the desired queue and click the green **“Play”** button as shown below:



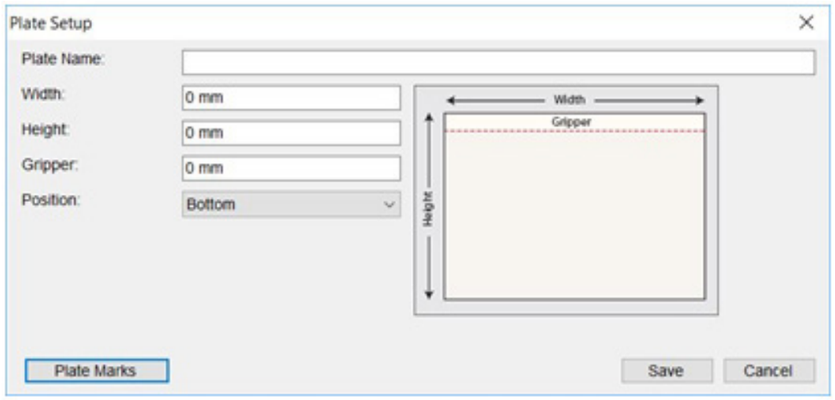
As TIFF files come into the folder, the number indicator will increase and thumbnails will appear under the **“Jobs”** heading.

Creating a Plate

Standard plate sizes can be created and then quickly selected for use and output. To create a plate size, go to the **“Advanced”** menu and draw down to **“Plates.”** The following Plate Setup Manager window will appear:



Click **“Add”** to create a new plate size.

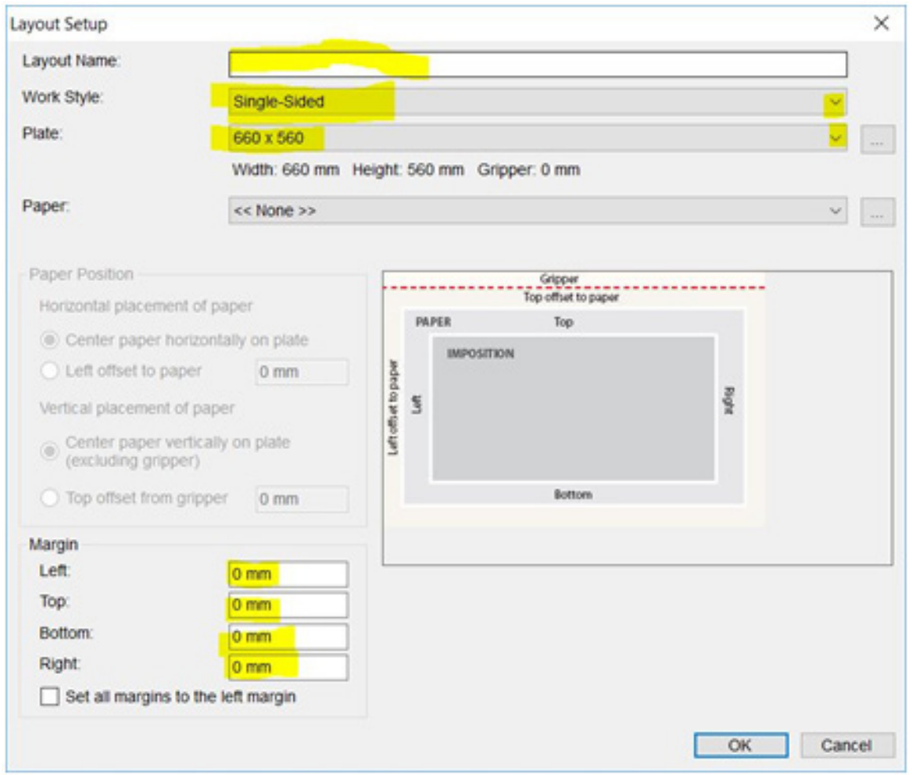


Give the plate a name (usually the dimensions), enter the desired width and height, and click, **“Save.”**

Usually you will not require a gripper entry.

Creating an Output Layout

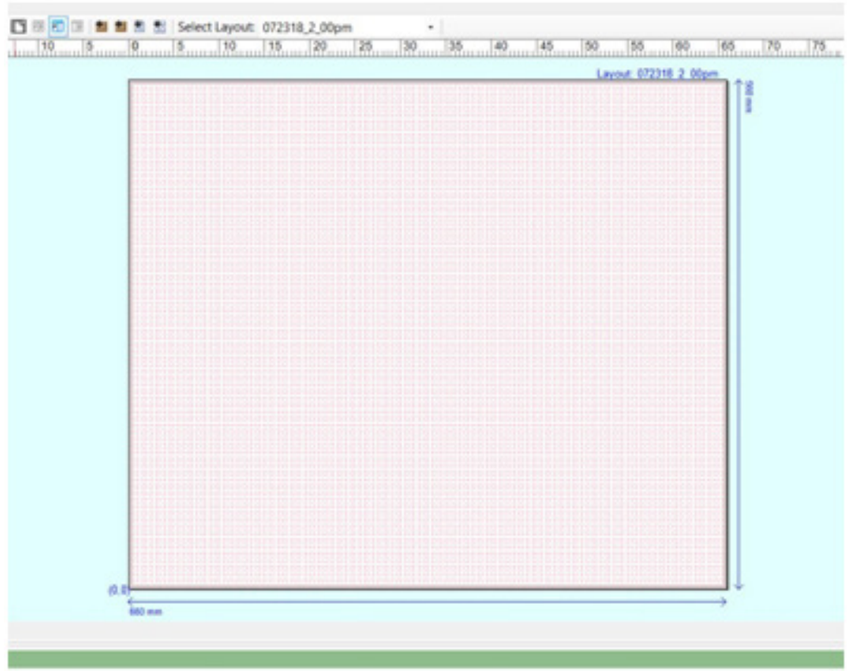
To begin populating a plate for output, you must start with a layout. From the **File** menu, draw down to **“New Layout.”** The following Layout Setup window will appear:



Enter a name for the layout. It could be a date and time reference for production or it could correlate to a particular customer. Whatever it is, it should be relevant to the jobs being ganged.

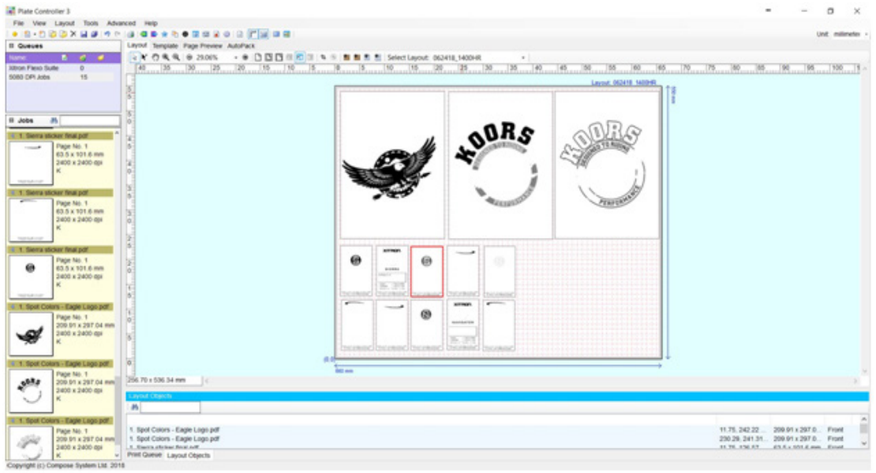
For “**Work Style**,” choose Single-Sided. Choose the “**Plate**” that was created in the previous section. Leave “**Paper**” set to “**None**.” Add overall plate margins if required. Click “**OK**.”

The main window will now display the plate, ready for populating as shown below:

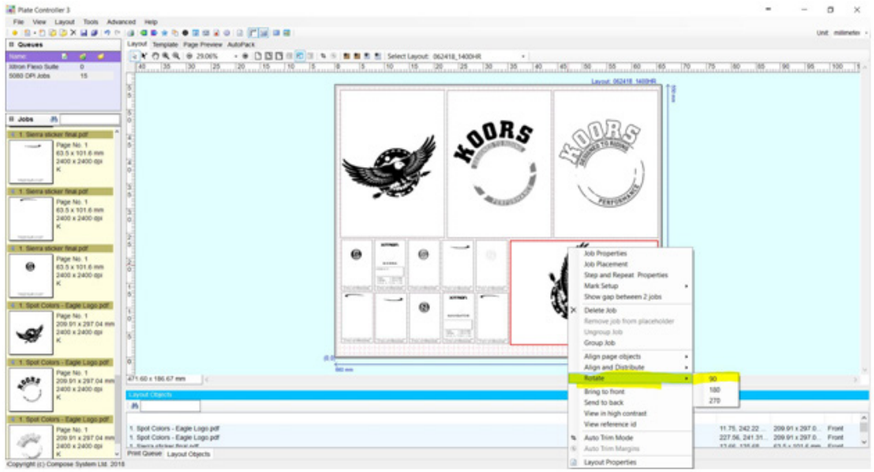


Populating the Plate

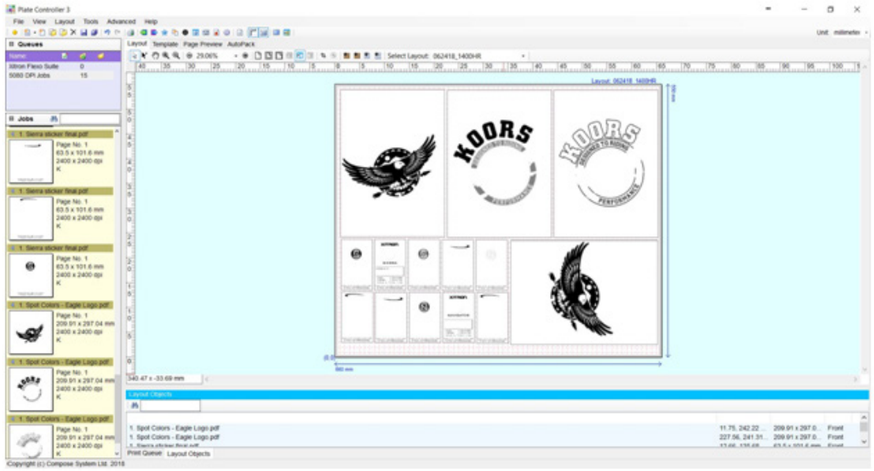
To begin populating the plate with jobs and separations, simply select them from the left side of the window and drag them to the plate. You can position them however and wherever you like to achieve the best fit. The window below shows partial plate population:



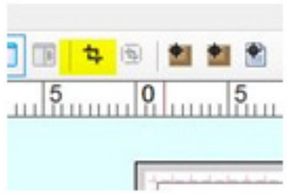
Any separation can be rotated in order to fit the area available. To rotate a job, drag it to the plate area, right-click it, then drag down to "**Rotate**." Select the degree of rotation desired as shown in the window below:



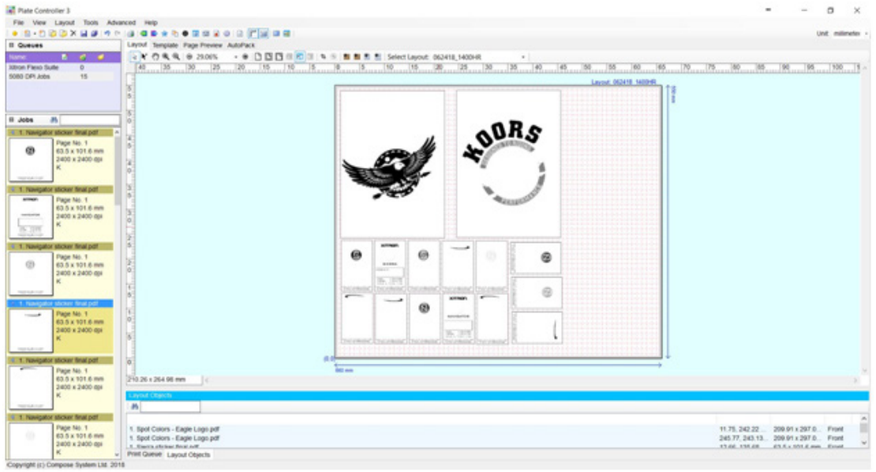
After selecting the rotation, continue to drag the job into the empty area of the plate. The window below shows a fully populated plate after rotating one of the jobs:



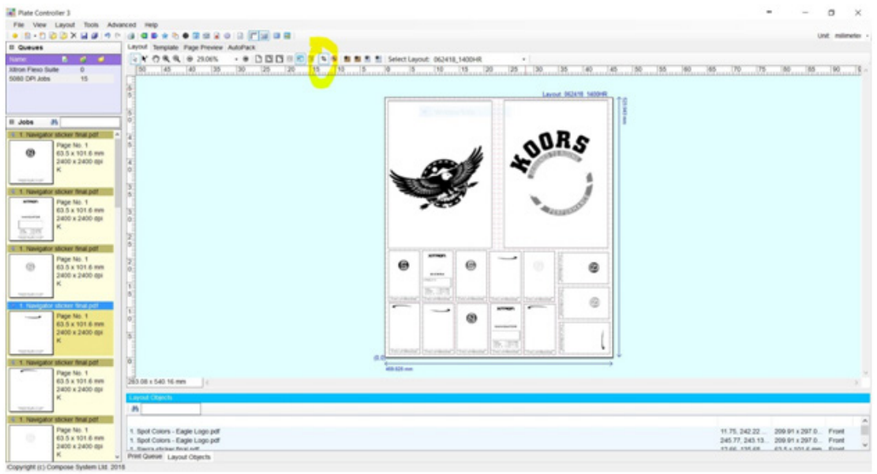
There may be times when the jobs available will not fully populate a particular plate size. In these instances, Navigator Plate Controller can automatically trim the final 1-bit TIFF based on the left over space. To use **Auto-Trim**, simply click the **Auto-Trim** button in the tool bar shown below:



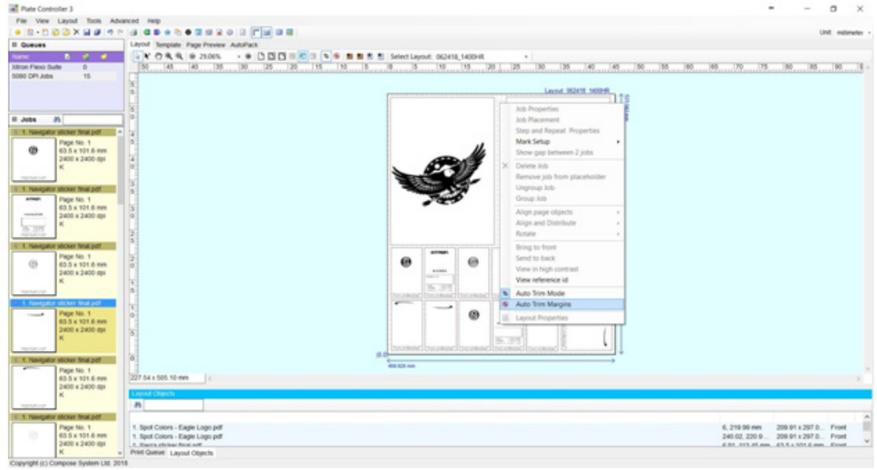
In this example, there is still un-populated plate area on the right side, but all the available jobs have been placed.



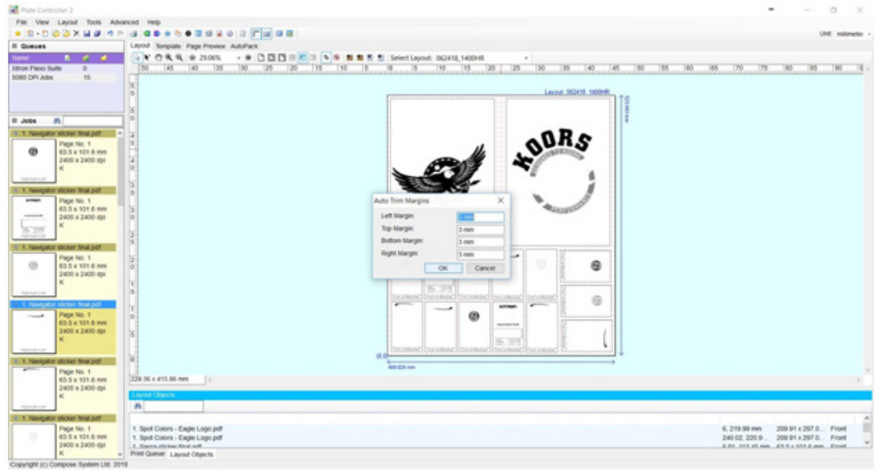
Instead of creating a one-bit TIFF for the platesetter that will needlessly expose wasted plate material, the operator can click the **Auto Trim** button with the following results:



Auto Trim margins can also be added by right-clicking the plate and drawing down to **"Auto Trim Margins."**

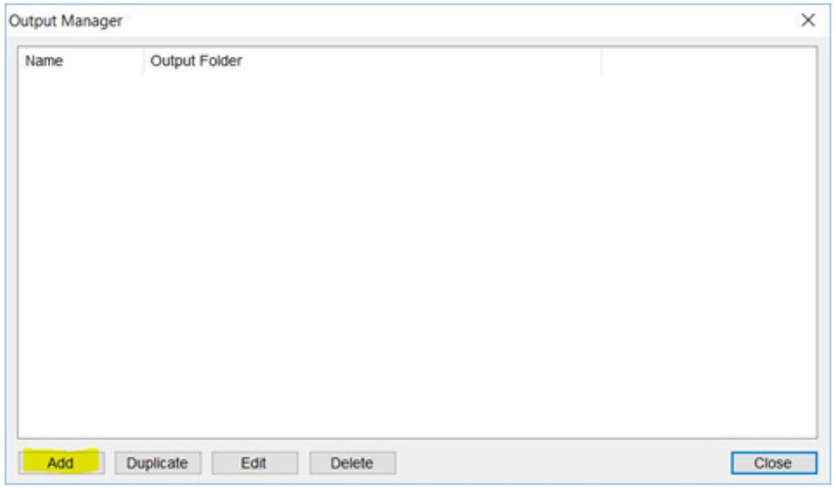


This will bring up a second window allowing the entry of whatever margin amount is desired:

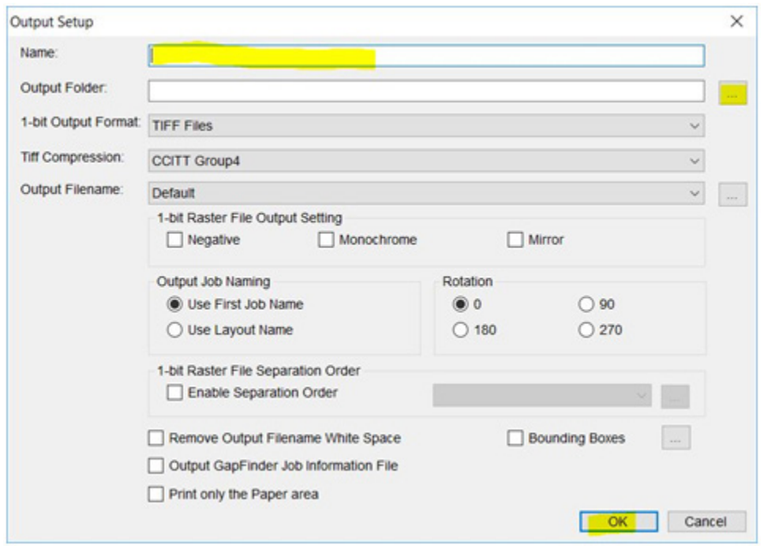


Output Queues

Once a plate has been populated, the final one-bit TIFF file can be written to any directory. This could be the input directory for the CTP engine, or an archive location on the network. Begin by selecting **"Output Queues"** under the **Advanced** Menu. The following Output Manager window appears:



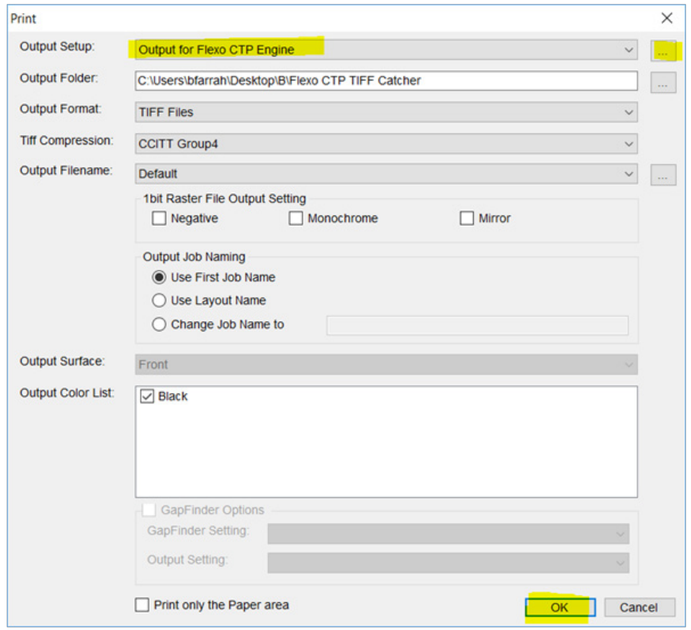
Click “**Add**.” The Output Setup window will appear.



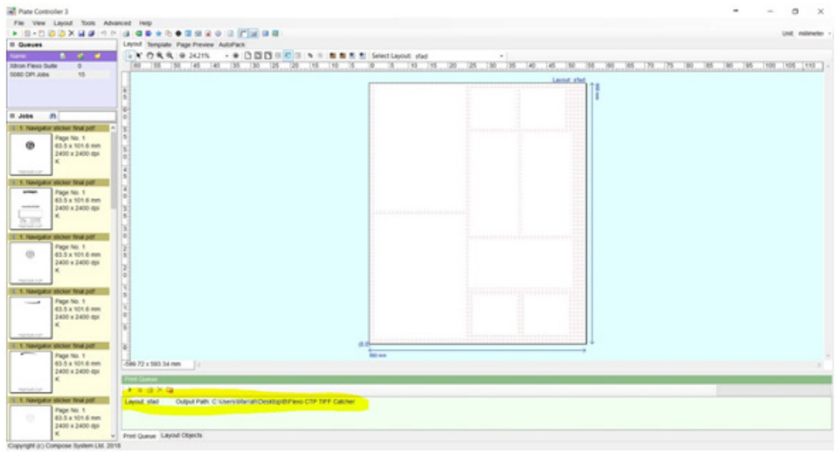
Give the setup a name relative to the function. Locate the desired output folder and select it. Make any other changes (such as TIFF compression specific to the output device) and then click, “**OK**.” Your output queue will now appear in the Output Manager window. Click, “**Close**.”

Final Output

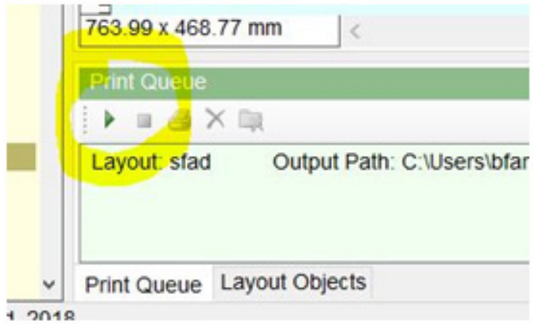
To output your fully populated layout, simply select “**Print**” under the **File** Menu. The following window will appear:



The Output Setup will display according to what you entered on the previous setup window. If you have multiple setups, they are selectable by clicking the “…” button on the right. If all the settings are correct, click, “**Print**.” You will be able to see the request in the Print Queue window at the bottom of the screen as shown below:

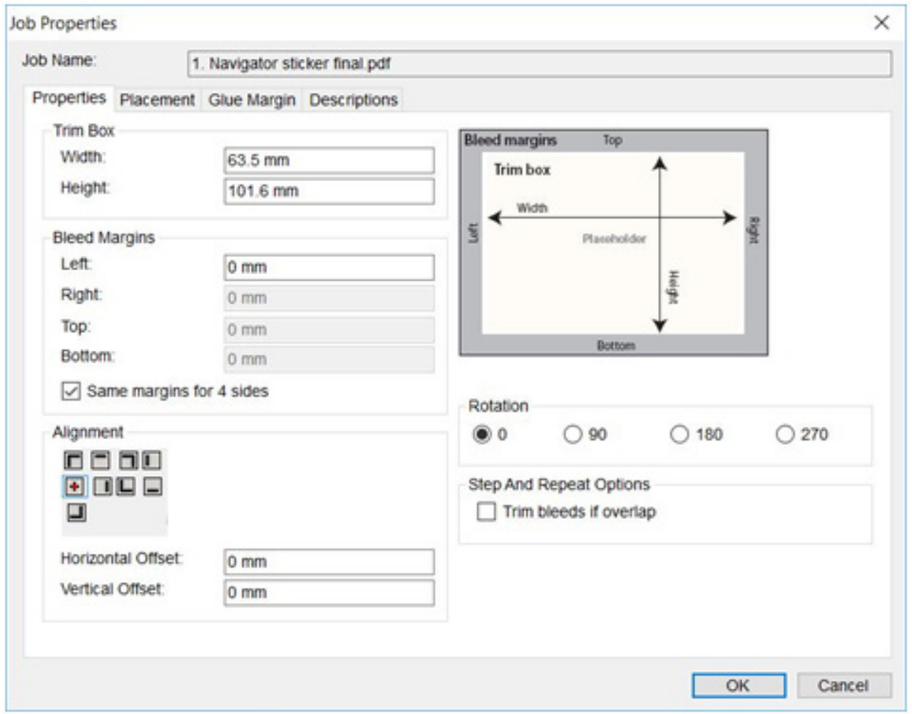


Click the green “**Play**” button to complete the process.

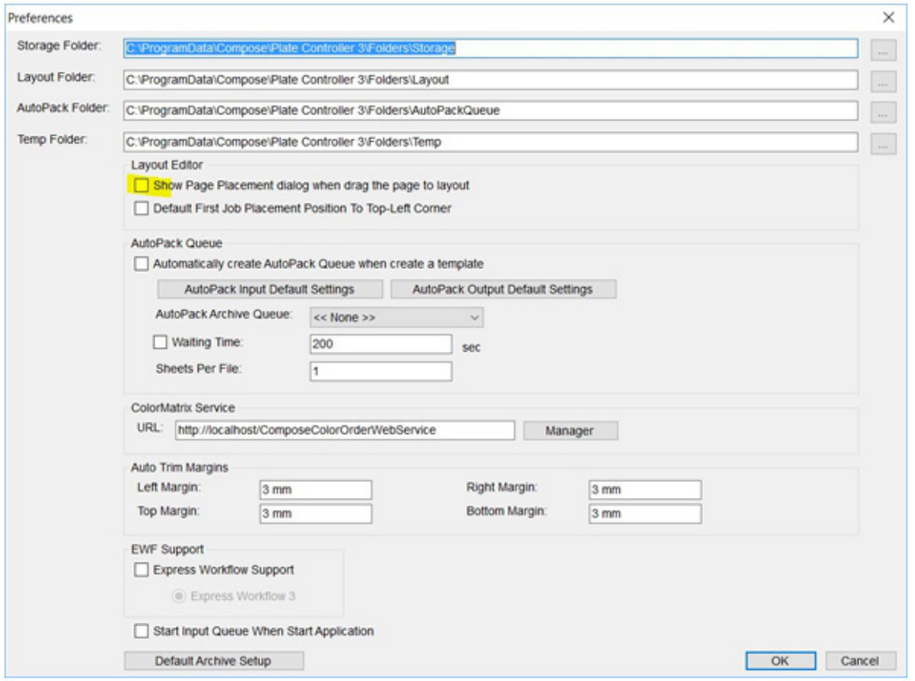


As mentioned earlier, there is much more functionality built into Navigator Plate Controller that will allow the operator to pre-set and automate much of the process. This includes using grid lines in the layout window, “snap-to” placement settings, and preferences that change the behavior of certain windows.

For example, unless changed in the Preferences located under the Advanced menu, dragging a job into the layout will always cause the Job Properties window to display and await action from the operator. An example is shown below:



The two relevant tabs are, “**Properties**” and “**Placement**.” However, they may only require occasional changes depending on the layout so this window may prove cumbersome once all setups have been managed. To turn this function off, go to the Advanced menu and select Preferences. The Preferences window shown below will appear.



To change this behavior, click, “**Show Page Placement dialog . . .**” and click, “**OK**.”

Should you need to change the attributes of any job placed in the layout, simply right-click the job and select, “**Job Placement**” or “**Job Properties**” from the drop-down menu.