

Chapter 3

Using the Client

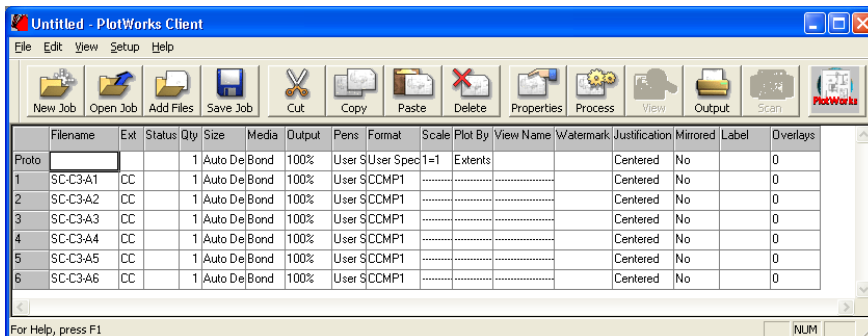
Configure the Client

This section takes you through the basic steps required to configure and use the PlotWorks Client.

The Client lets you create and send electronic order forms called job tickets. Job tickets list the images in your print job and tell PlotWorks how you want them printed. You can create, edit and send job tickets using the Client. Once you create a job ticket, you can save it for later print-on-demand.

1. From the Windows **Start** menu, click **Programs** then select **Plotworks**. Select **Client** to display the Client window, shown below.

Fig 3.1
PlotWorks
Client
Window



If you would like to create a Windows shortcut from which to start the Client, please see “Take a Shortcut” on page Appendix A-1.

2. Select **Preferences** from the **Setup** menu. The Preferences dialog box displays.
3. Click the **General** tab to display basic information. This dialog box is used to set general information that does not change from job to job — unless a job comes along that requires different parameters.

On the General sheet, select the desired units of measure for paper and pens (the defaults are **Inches** for media and **Mils** for pens).

If desired, you can also set up your finishing (folding) and nesting options at this time.

It is not necessary to change the default number of sets or enter the location (unless you are going to output finished jobs via a modem connection).

4. Click **OK**. The information is saved to your configuration file (conf.plp) and used as the default for any new job tickets you create.
5. Close the dialog box.
6. Select **Configure Destinations** from the **Setup** menu. Select the desired destination and click **Done**. See “Process Image Files” on page 4-75 for more information.
7. Next, set up some defaults to use as prototypes when adding images. New images added to the job ticket take on the prototype parameters.
8. Click the **Properties** button to display the Detail property sheet. The fields here correspond to the fields on the grid. Any changes made here are automatically made on the grid. See “Set up the Prototype row” on page 3-3 for more information.
9. Once you have the basic parameters configured to your satisfaction, select **Save Configuration** from the **File** menu. This saves job-wide settings, such as final output scale, to the configuration file (conf.plp). These settings also apply when you start new job tickets.
10. You are ready to begin adding image files to the job ticket. You can go directly to “Add Files to a Print Job” on page 3-3 or continue reading from here.

Create a New Job Ticket

Now that you have set basic parameters for the Client, you are ready to create a print job. When you open the Client, it is already in **New File** mode and you can begin adding files. For this guide, however, we will step through the process of creating a new file from the beginning.

To create a job ticket:



1. Click **New Job** (shown at left), or select **New** from the **File** menu (default file name is “Untitled.plp”).

If you want to open an existing job ticket:



1. Click **Open Job**.
2. Select the directory of the desired file in the **Look In:** field.
3. Select the desired file in the window under the **Look In:** field.
4. Click **Open**.

Set up the Prototype row

The first thing to do when setting up a new print job is to configure the Prototype (Proto) row in the Client. When you create a new job ticket, the parameter fields are set to default, or prototype, values. These are displayed on the Proto line, which is the first row across the grid. You can edit the Proto line at any time. Any new images that you add to the job ticket assume the new Proto parameters.

This is useful when you have several images with similar parameters, all going to the same service bureau. Once you set up the Proto row, you can add all the images and they will all take on the Proto parameters. This is much better than having to edit the parameters for each image.

To change the prototype parameters:

1. Edit the fields on the Prototype row of the grid as desired. Or, use the **Copy Row to Prototype** command to copy the parameters of a specific image into the Prototype row.



Notice that the Main Property Sheet contains most of the fields on the grid. You can edit the settings on either the Main property sheet or on the Proto row itself.

2. Open the **File** menu and select **Save Configuration**. This saves your prototype values as the default for later job tickets you might create.



Changing the Proto line affects the parameters for any files you enter thereafter, but will not change the parameters of files that already have been processed. You can always edit the parameters for individual images, regardless of the prototype parameters.

Add Files to a Print Job

Now that you have the job parameters configured in the Proto line, you can begin adding files to the job. Once added, the file names appear on the grid. Notice that the files take on the Proto parameters as they are added.



To add images to a job ticket:

1. Click **Add Files**.
2. In the **Look In** field of the dialog box that displays, choose the directory that contains your image file(s). This dialog box works the same way as any Windows dialog box.



PlotWorks supports the Windows “drag-and-drop” method of adding files. Simply drag the image files from the Windows NT Explorer window and drop them onto the Client grid.

3. Select the file(s) you want to add and click OK. PlotWorks autodetects the file formats as the image files are added. If it does not recognize the format of a file, you receive an error message that allows you to skip the file or add it to the job with a format value of User Specified (the format can be manually set in the Data Format property sheet or in the grid by clicking on the Format cell).



If you are sending files to a service bureau that uses DOS PlotWorks, it is recommended that you not add image files with long file names.

When you add images to a job ticket, they automatically take on the parameters assigned in the Prototype row. You can change these parameters at any time.

Save the Job Ticket (optional)

Now is a good time to save your job ticket. This allows the job ticket to be stored for future use, should you wish to edit (which you will do in the next section) or reprint the job.

Adding DWF Files to the Job Editor

DWG files can be manually added or imported from AutoDesk. Manually add a DWG files the same way way you add other other files to the job grid. When a multiple sheet DWG file is added, each sheet appears as a seperate line item in the job grid with the sheet name appended to the file name.

If the DWF file is password protected, the Missing or Invalid Password dialog box appears. Enter the password and then click **OK**.

To save a job ticket:



1. Click **Save Job**.

If you have not previously saved the file, you will be prompted to enter a filename. Type the name of the new file in the **Filename** field.

2. In the **Save In:** field, select a directory in which to save the file.



Always save your job ticket in the same directory as the source files you added into the job.

3. Click **Save**.

When you use the **Save Job As** command, the old document still exists under its original name. The new document becomes the active window.

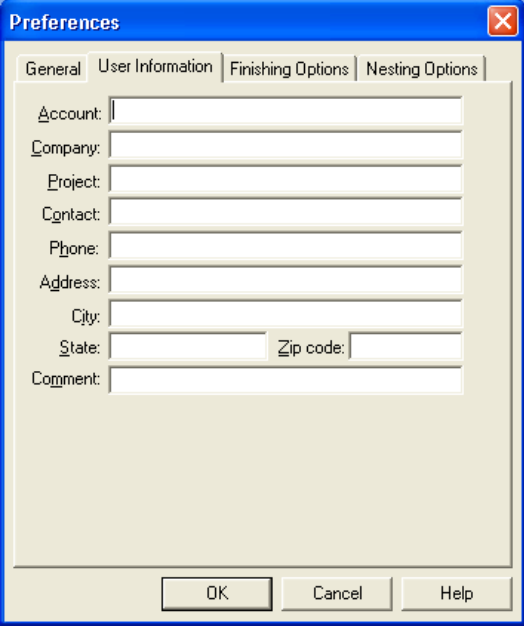
Set Job Preferences

Now that you have added images to your print job, you can set additional job-wide preferences and record administrative data in your job ticket. You looked briefly at one of the Preferences dialogs when you configured the basic parameters. Now we will configure preferences and parameters for this specific job.

Set account information for the job:

1. Open the **Setup** menu and select **Preferences**.
2. Select the **User Information** sheet by clicking on its tab. The User Information Preferences sheet lets you set job-specific data and options. The text fields let you enter information that can be used for job tracking and accounting through the Advanced Reporting Utility (ARU).

Fig 3.2
User
Information
tab

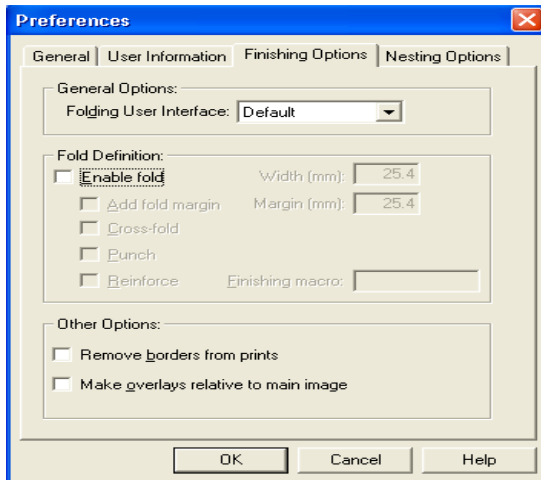
The image shows a Windows-style dialog box titled "Preferences" with a blue title bar and a close button (X) in the top right corner. The dialog has four tabs: "General", "User Information", "Finishing Options", and "Nesting Options". The "User Information" tab is currently selected. Below the tabs, there are several text input fields arranged vertically: "Account:", "Company:", "Project:", "Contact:", "Phone:", "Address:", "City:", "State:", "Zip code:", and "Comment:". Each field has a small cursor icon at the end. At the bottom of the dialog, there are three buttons: "OK", "Cancel", and "Help".

3. Enter the information for this job in the appropriate fields, as desired. See “Data Format Tabbed Dialog Box” on page 4-24 for more detailed information.

Set finishing options for the job:

1. Click the **Finishing Options** tab. The Finishing Options sheet lets you set folding parameters and allows you to remove borders from images, reverse the printing order, and make overlay images relative to a main image.

Fig 3.3
Finishing
Options
Sheet

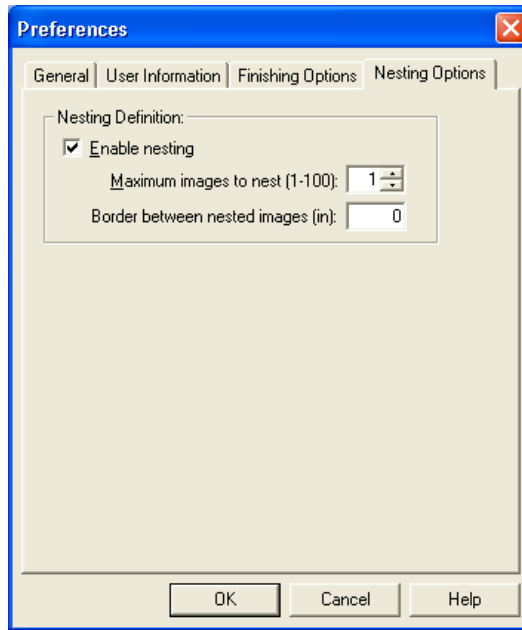


2. If you want the service bureau to fold this job, check **Enable Fold**. You must select this box in order to use any other folding options. See “Finishing Options” on page 4-65 for more details.
3. Enter the fold width in the **Width** field, using the units of measure specified on the General Preferences sheet. This will be the width of the first fold.
4. Click **Add Fold Margin** to leave a margin on folded sheets. You must select this box to use the Punch and Reinforce options.
5. If you are adding a fold margin, enter the desired width of the fold margin in the **Margin** field, using the units of measure specified on the General Preferences sheet.
6. Select other Finishing options as appropriate for this job.

Set nesting options, if required:

1. Click the **Nesting Options** tab. The Nesting Options sheet displays.

Fig 3.4
Nesting
Options



2. Click **Enable Nesting**.
3. Enter the **Maximum images to nest** (up to 100). This tells PlotWorks when to start a new nested job.
4. In the **Border between nested images** field, enter the amount of margin space you want to have between nested images.
5. Click **OK**. When this job is printed, the images will be nested on the designated medium size. For more information on nesting, please see “Example of a nested print job” on page 4-67.

Fine-Tuning the Parameters

A set of nine tabbed dialog boxes (property sheets), and the **Setup** menu options are used to further enhance or adjust the final printed image. The property sheets allow you to enter and edit parameters for **individual** image files. The Main property sheet, discussed earlier, contains the basic parameter fields shown on the grid (other property sheets allow you to customize the parameters for several of these main fields).

The following steps take you through the basic function of each sheet or menu item. For more information, refer to the suggested section.

To set parameters on the property sheets:

1. Select an image(s) on the grid by clicking on its row number.
2. Choose the property sheet you want by clicking on its tab.
3. Enter or edit your parameters in the fields on the property sheet.

Specified Size Property Sheet

The Specified Size property sheet lets you define custom (User Specified) values for the Specified Size field. Whenever you select User Specified as the Specified Size on the grid or the Main property sheet, you must define custom values on this property sheet. See “Specified Size tabbed dialog box” on page 4-19 for detailed information about the options on this property sheet.



You can use the PlotWorks Image Viewer to specify the area you wish to print. The Specified Size data will be automatically updated.

Output Setup Property Sheet

The Output Setup property sheet lets you define custom (User Specified) values for the Output Size field. Whenever you select User Specified as the Output Size on the grid or the Main property sheet, you must define custom values on this property sheet. See “The Bottom edge option is useful when you plan to collate or fold scanned images and you want to make sure they all face the same direction. For example, the Bay folder requires the title block to enter the folder last in order to get a properly folded package. Other folders require the title block to enter the folder first.” on page 4-21 for detailed information about the options on this property sheet.

Data Format Property Sheet

This property sheet contains information specific to the file format of the selected image. PlotWorks automatically detects this information when you use the **Add Files** command. See “Data Format Tabbed Dialog Box” on page 4-24 for detailed information about the options on this property sheet.

Pens Property Sheet

The Pens property sheet lets you define custom (User Specified) pen sets for your images. When the Pens field on the grid or Main property sheet is set to User Specified, you can define a pen set on this property sheet or import a previously defined pen set. See “Added RTL Raster Resolution: This drop down list appears if an HP-GL/2 file is detected. In this case select a print resolution. Choices are:” on page 4-28 for detailed information about the options on this property sheet.

Overlays Property Sheet

This property sheet lets you layer up to four raster and/or vector images on top of a base print. Typical applications include placing a title block or logo onto several sheets of a set, or overlaying a replica of an approval stamp. For more information, please see “Pen/Print Options Tabbed Dialog Box” on page 4-36.

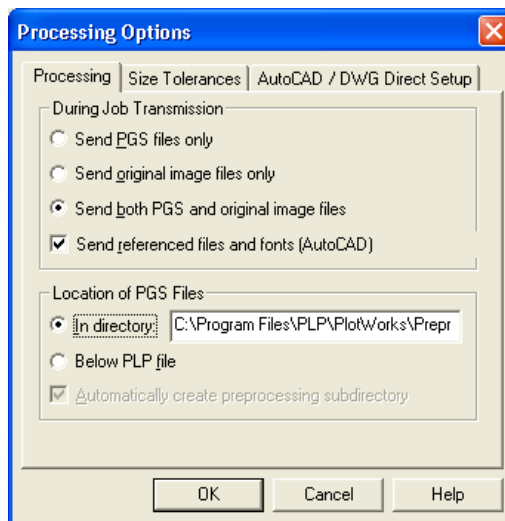


See also: “Overlaying Images” on page 4-44.

Set Processing Options

The Processing Options dialog box lets you determine how to process AutoCAD files, how to deal with processing errors, and what to do with files after they have been processed.

Fig 3.5
Processing
Options
Dialog
Box



Processing Options Sheet

PlotWorks saves processed images in a special file format called Performance Graphics Standard (PGS). The Processing Options sheet tells PlotWorks what to do with the PGS files when it outputs the job.

Size Tolerances Options Sheet

This options sheet lets you specify a range of error within which Error Free Printing corrects size and origin problems automatically. If a discrepancy exceeds the allowable range, PlotWorks warns the operator that attention is required before printing. For more information, please see “Size Tolerances Sheet” on page 4-72.

AutoCAD/DWG Direct Setup Options Sheet

PlotWorks processes AutoCAD files using a special program called DWG Direct. The AutoCAD/DWG Direct Setup options sheet tells PlotWorks how to run DWG Direct processing. If you are not printing AutoCAD images, disregard this sheet. For more information, please see “AutoCAD/DWG Direct Setup Sheet” on page 4-73.

Configure an Output Destination

If you are sending jobs over a local network or modem, or if you are sending jobs to a Queue directory from the Print Server, you must specify your destination and mode of transmission. See “Process Image Files” on page 4-75.

Send Jobs to the Printer

Now you are ready to output your jobs to the selected destination where the service bureau will pick them up and print them. A print “job” can consist of 1 copy (set) of one file, multiple copies of one file, one copy of multiple files, or multiple copies of multiple files.

Process Image Files

The Client automatically processes files when it outputs a job *only* if the Client is processing the files. (If **Send Original Image Files** is selected, the files will be processed by the Service hub.) If it encounters any errors, it will display a warning, and you will hear an audible beep. You can choose to fix the error, skip the image with errors, or go ahead and output the image.

Send a Special Instruction File

The TEMPLATE.INF file is a customizable form that lets you attach additional information and instructions to your print job. The TEMPLATE.INF file is particularly useful in the service bureau settings where many customers with different requirements are submitting jobs. See “Send a Special Instruction File” on page 4-86 for more information.

Output the Job

You have added images to the job, set parameters for the job and each individual image, as needed, and saved the job as a job ticket. You are now ready to send the job to the service bureau. Your service bureau might be in-house, where you can deliver the print job by diskette or by sending it to a network queue. Or, it could be across town or in another city. To get files to a remote service bureau, you can send them via modem to the remote queue.

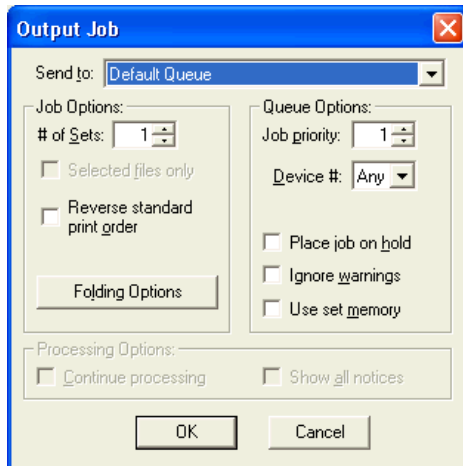
The **Output Job** command lets you send your job ticket, image files, and information file (template.inf) to the service bureau’s Job Queue for processing and printing, whether you output the job to diskette, network queue, or via modem.

To output a job:

1. Click **Output Job**. The Output Job dialog box displays.

The basic requirements are mentioned here. For more information about outputting jobs to a printer or other destination, please refer to Chapter 4, “Output Jobs” on page 4-89.

Fig 3.6
Output
Job dialog
box



2. Make your desired selections in the **Output Job** dialog box.
 - **Send to:** Select a destination for the job.
 - **# of sets:** Enter the number of sets you wish to print.
 - **Selected files only:** Select this box to print only the selected files.
 - **Continue processing:** Select this option to continue processing the job and ignore warnings that have already been okayed.
 - **Show all notices:** Select this option to process the job and show all warnings, even if they have been okayed.
 - **Job priority:** Enter a number between 1 and 10, with 10 being the highest priority. This value determines the order in which jobs are printed.
 - **Device #:** Select the printer's device number. This number is defined by the service bureau.
 - **Place job on hold:** Select this to send the job to the Queue with a Hold priority. The job will not print until you change its priority in the Queue.

- **Ignore warnings:** Select this to print the job regardless of processing warnings. Warnings are ignored only by the Job Processor. If the Client processes the files, all warnings display.

3. Click **OK** to send your job.

The Client begins to preprocess the job. If it is a long job, the user will be able to see the status and activity of the job only if **Send Original and PGS** processing option is selected. If the Client is sending **Original Image Files Only**, the user can select the **Process** tab and it will process the file and give the user the desired information.

If preprocessing encounters any errors, like undefined pens, etc., it pops up a warning screen that lists the errors. You can fix the errors, skip the file, or output the file anyway.

That is how to set up print jobs, customize printing parameters, and output those jobs to your service bureau.

Additional Reading

See **Chapter 4** for an in-depth discussion of the PlotWorks Client features, property sheets, menus, and toolbars — and for a description of the PlotWorks Image Viewer.

See **Appendix A** for instructions on creating a Windows shortcut for launching the Client.

See **Appendix B** for information on processing AutoCAD files.

See **Appendix C** for information on processing MicroStation files.
