

## Chapter 6

# The Network Polling Program

The Network Polling program searches a set of directories for print jobs received over a local network or modem. These directories, called target directories, can reside on the PlotWorks computer or on any network drive. When Network Polling finds jobs, it sends them to the Job Queue for automatic processing and printing.



*When using Network Polling, ensure the Job Processor is open. If you do not start the Job Processor first, the job is submitted to the Job Queue but will not print.*

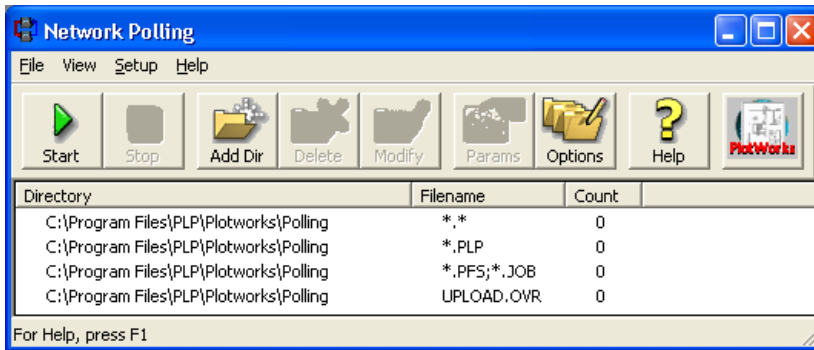
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### Advantages of Network Polling

- Network Polling accepts individual image files with ASCII text order forms, therefore users can submit jobs from any computer without using Repro Desk, the Job Editor or Client.
  - Network Polling offers additional security. Users can submit jobs to a target directory, without directly accessing the Job Queue.
  - Network Polling moves jobs from the target directory, to numbered subdirectories in the Queue Directory. This prevents jobs with the same name from overwriting each other.
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## The Network Polling Window

*Fig 6.1  
Network  
Polling*



### The Network Polling Toolbar



Start

**Start:** Starts polling target directories for incoming jobs.



Stop

**Stop:** Stops the polling process.



Add Dir

**Add Dir:** Is used to add a target directory.



Delete

**Delete:** Deletes the selected target directory.



Modify

**Modify:** Is used to make changes to the selected target directory.



Params

**Params:** Is used to modify printing parameters for the selected target directory.



Options

**Options:** Is used to specify the log file location, PFS editor, and the polling frequency.



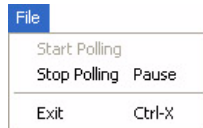
**Help:** Opens the Network Polling Online help file.

## Network Polling Menus

### The File Menu

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*Fig 6.2  
Network  
Polling  
File menu*



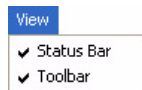
The following options are available under the **File** menu:

- **Start Polling:** Begins polling target directories for incoming jobs.
- **Stop Polling:** Stops the polling process.
- **Exit:** Quits the application.

### The View Menu

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*Fig 6.3  
Network  
Polling  
View menu*



The following viewing options are available here:

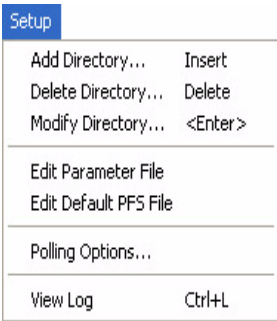
- **Status Bar:** Click here to display or hide the status bar at the bottom of the Network Polling window. A check mark next to this option indicates that the status bar is currently visible.
- **Toolbar:** Click here to display or hide the tool bar. A check mark next to this option indicates that the tool bar is currently visible.

### The Setup Menu

The Setup menu contains options for polling, target directories, the Log file, and default parameters. The following options are available here:

- **Add Directory:** Is used to add a target directory for polling.
  - **Delete Directory:** Is used to delete the selected target directory.
  - **Modify Directory:** Is used to edit options for the selected target directory.
  - **Edit Parameter File:** Is used to edit default printing parameters for the selected target directory.
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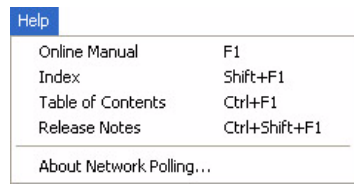
*Fig 6.4*  
*Network*  
*Polling*  
*Setup*  
*menu*



- **Edit Default PFS File:** Is used to modify the master PFS file that is used to create the directory PFS files (also referred to as parameter files).
- **Polling Options:** Is used to specify the location of log file and the PFS Editor, as well as select the polling frequency.
- **View Log:** Displays the file NETPOLL.LOG, that records incoming job information.

### The Help Menu

*Fig 6.5*  
*Network*  
*Polling*  
*Help menu*



The Help menu provides information about the Network Polling Program and how to use it. The following topics are available under the Help menu:

- **Online Manual:** Opens the Network Polling chapter of the manual.
- **Index:** Displays the help index
- **Table of Contents:** Displays the table of contents for the online manual
- **Release Notes:** Displays late-breaking product enhancements and documentation changes.
- **About Network Polling...:** Displays program version and copyright information.

### Columns

The following columns display on the Network Polling window:

- **Directory Column:** Displays the name of the target directory.
- **Filename Column:** Displays the type of files being polled (e.g., job tickets [\*.PLP], PFS files [\*.PFS], or a specific image file format).

- **Count Column:** Displays the number of files detected in the directory.

**To change the width of the columns:**

1. Place your cursor on the right-hand edge of the column you want to resize, next to the column heading. The cursor changes to a vertical bar crossed by a double-headed arrow.
2. Drag the cursor until the column is the desired width. You can also double-click on the right side of the column header to expand the column.

## Setting Up Network Polling

### Set Polling Options

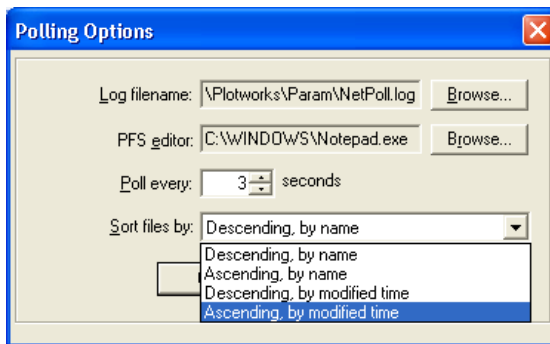


Before you begin polling for print jobs, you need to set up Network Polling.

**To set Network Polling options:**

1. Click **Options**.

*Fig 6.6  
Polling  
Options  
dialog box*



2. Fill in the fields in the Polling Options dialog box as follows:
  - **Log Filename:** The path and name of the log file that Network Polling creates.
  - **PFS Editor:** The path and filename of the application to be used to edit parameter and PFS files (for example; c:\\Winnt\\Notepad.exe).
  - **Poll Every . . . Seconds:** The number of seconds the Network Polling program waits between consecutive polls. Once Network Polling has queried all of the target directories, it waits this amount of time before repeating the process.
  - **Sort files by:** The order in which multiple files are inserted into a single job. The sorting is determined either by name or modified time.
3. Click **OK**.



*Your polling options and directory setups are saved in the registry, not in the netpolling file. You should back up this file periodically to save your program configuration.*

### Add a Target Directory

When polling is started, Network Polling scans target directories for print jobs and sends any found print jobs to the Queue.



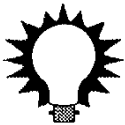
Fig 6.7  
Add  
Directory  
dialog box

### To add a polling directory:

1. If Network Polling is started click the **Stop** button on the Network Polling toolbar.
2. Click **Add Directory**. The Add Directory dialog box opens.

3. Select options from the Add Directory dialog box as follows:
  - **Polling Path:** Enter the path and name of the target directory you wish to add, or click **Browse** to locate it. If the directory does not already exist, the software prompts you to create it.
  - **Files of type:** Enter a value in this field only if you are going to poll the target directory for single image files (Polling Mode 1, *see page 6-9 for more information*). In this case enter the type of image files you wish to search for, using a star (\*) as a wildcard. You can enter up to six file types. Separate each file type with a semicolon: For example:

- to poll for AutoCAD .DWG files only, enter **\*.DWG**.
- to poll for all files, enter **\*.\*** In this case, all incoming files are polled.
- To exclude certain file types from a wildcard search, enter a minus sign before the file type(s) to exclude. For example to poll for all files except for Text and Word files enter: **\*.\*; -\*.txt; -\*.doc**
- to poll for only DWG and TIFF files enter **\*.DWG; \*.TIF**.
- **Default PFS file:** Enter the path and name of the Directory PFS file. This file provides default printing parameters for Mode 1 and Mode 3 target directories.



*By default, Network Polling uses a copy of the Master PFS file (DEFAULT.PFS) for the Directory PFS file. The DEFAULT.PFS file is located in the PARAM subdirectory. To modify the Directory PFS file, stop Network Polling, right-click on the directory and select Edit Parameter File. You can also click the Prams button on the tool bar.*

- **Queue Directory:** Enter the path and directory for the Job Queue the polled files should be sent too. You can also select this directory by clicking on the **Browse** button.
- **Destination Device:** Enter a descriptive name for the output destination (optional).
- **Device #:** Select either **Any** or the number of the printer to send jobs too. This number is defined in the Printer Interface (See “Set General Printing Options” on page 8-10).
- **Maximum Files:** Enter the maximum number of image files to remove from a Mode 1 directory and place in a single job.
- **Age Timeout:** The number of seconds Network Polling should wait before processing a group of files as a job when there are fewer files than the value selected for Maximum Files.

This option is provided so that when a group of files is submitted to a Polling Mode 1 directory the application knows when all of the files have been sent. If Network Polling finds one or more files in a Mode 1 directory, it waits the full Age Timeout period before sending the files to the Queue. If no additional files arrive in the directory during the Age Timeout period, Network Polling considers the job complete and submits the files to the Job Queue. If additional files appear in the directory during the Age Timeout period, Network Polling restarts the count.



- **Priority:** Select a print priority number from **1** (lowest priority) to **10** (highest priority). Jobs with higher priorities are printed first.
- **Enable Polling:** Select this check box to poll the directory when the **Start Polling** button is clicked. This check box is selected by default. When this check box is deselected the directory will not be polled.



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*When Enable Polling is deselected, the stop sign icon displays next to the target directory in the Network Polling window. The stop sign icon also appears if a target directory becomes unavailable while polling. When the directory becomes available the target directory is automatically re-enabled and the stop sign icon disappears. However, if the Stop Polling button is clicked while polling, polling is stopped and the stop sign icon disappears even if the directory is still unavailable. If the directory is still unavailable when Network Polling is started the stop sign icon re-appears. .*

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- **Submit on Hold:** Select this option to place all jobs sent using Network Polling on Hold in the Job Queue. The jobs will not be printed until they are assigned a new priority within the Queue.
  - **Ignore Warnings:** Select this check box if you wish to print the job ignoring any noncritical processing errors that may occur.
  - **Use set memory:** This option is relevant only when printing on the Xerox MAX 200, 8180, or the Océ 9800. Select this option to use the printers set memory option. This may speed up printing.
  - **Convert PFS keywords to INF file:** This option only applies when adding a Mode 3, PFS Polling directory and is mainly used with web applications. Select this option to convert keywords in the PFS file into an INF file and to place macro folding information in the PFS file.
  - **Polling Modes:** Select a Polling mode depending on the type of files that will be submitted. You can use any or all of these Polling modes at the same time for as many target directories as needed. Polled files can be sorted by NT order, time received, or alphabetically.
    - **Mode 1: Simple Polling:** This mode polls target directories for single image files. These images are printed according to a set of default parameters defined at the Control Station. A unique set of printing parameters can be specified for each target directory. The remote user then sends images to the directory that provides the most suitable parameters.
    - **Mode 2: Parameter Files:** This mode is used to poll directories for job tickets created using the PlotWorks Client , Job Editor or the
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DOS-based Remote Module. Use this mode also for PWC, PWJ and ZIP files. Please refer to page 4-114 for more information on PWC and PWJ files. Network Polling Mode 2 automatically decompresses PWC, PWJ, and ZIP files.



*Zip files must be copied into a sub directory of the Mode 2 polling directory. A decompression utility such as PowerArchiver or WinZip is required.*



*If it is necessary to send files that are not compressed to a Network Polling Mode 2 directory, ensure that the image files are copied to the Mode 2 directory before the job ticket.*

- **Mode 3: PFS Polling:** This mode is used to poll directories for PFS files. PFS files are discussed in detail in Appendix D of this user guide.  
 Ensure that the image files are copied to the directory before the PFS file — unless the PFS files are on the same machine or network as the polling directory.  
 A directory-level PFS file can be used to fill in any information that is omitted from the incoming job, or overwrite user specified printing parameters.  
 Network Polling Mode 3 automatically decompresses .zip files. Zip files have to be copied into a sub directory of the Mode 3 poll directory and a decompression utility such as PowerArchiver or WinZip is required.
- **Mode 4: OVR Polling:** This mode is for the old DOS version of PlotWorks. It polls for jobs created with the Remote Module that are submitted by modem. A .PLP file is not required in this mode. The Remote Module creates an .OVR file that is submitted after the job ticket and all the image files.
- **Mode 5: JOB Polling (Repro Desk):** This mode is used to poll directories for Repro Desk JOB files.



*Mode 5 polling is only available if the Repro Desk/Apprentice support is purchased and activated.*

4. Select **Enable processing application** if you have an external third party application set up to work with Mode 3 polling. Third party applications can perform functions like:
  - Modify items in the PFS file on an individual basis before processing the job and placing it in the Job Queue.
  - Calculate and print an invoice or cover sheet.

- Alert the operator of job requirements or instructions.
- Check the job submitters credit status

Enable processing application is only available when **Mode 3** is selected. To set up a processing application enter options in the following fields:

- **Processing application:** Enter the full path to the selected external application in this field or you can click on the **Browse** button and select the EXE file.
- **Command line switches:** Enter command-line switches to customize the external processing application for each directory.
- **Time out (sec):** Enter a time-out interval that is used, if the external processing application “hangs”. The default is 60 seconds. In this case the application is shut down, the operator is alerted and polling for that directory is paused. The operator can then correct the problem and restart polling for the directory.

If the external application encounters an error, the print job is placed in the Job Queue on Commercial Hold. If the external application fails and the “Submit on Hold” check box is selected, the print job is placed in the Job Queue on normal Hold if .

5. Click **OK**.



*See also: “Modify a Polling Directory” or “Delete a Target Directory” below.*

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## Modify a Polling Directory

You can change the parameters for any target directory using the **Modify Directory** dialog box. The fields available on this dialog box are the same as the ones on the Add Directory dialog box.



*Network Polling must be stopped before you can edit a directory.*

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### To modify a target directory:

1. Right-click on the directory and select **Edit** (or click the **Modify** button).
2. Edit the fields in the Modify Directory dialog box.



*See: “Add a Target Directory” on page 6-6 for more information about the fields in the Add/Edit Directory dialog box.*

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## Delete a Target Directory

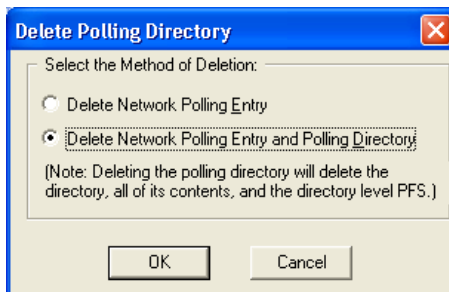
The software offers two options for deleting directory listings from Network Polling. You can delete the entry from the Polling program only, leaving the directory intact. Or, you can delete the directory entirely, including all of its contents.

### To delete a directory from Network Polling:

1. Select the directory you want to delete.
2. Right-click on the directory and select **Delete** (or click the **Delete** button).



Fig 6.8  
Delete  
Polling  
Directory  
dialog box



3. Select one of the two deletion options
  - If you select **Delete Network Polling Entry**, the software removes the directory listing from the Network Polling program but leaves the actual directory intact on your computer or network drive.
  - If you select **Delete Network Polling Entry and Polling Directory**, the software removes the directory listing from the Network Polling program and deletes the directory *and its contents* from your computer or network drive. This deletion includes the directory-level PFS file.



*If you want to stop polling a directory without deleting it, you can put it on hold. To do so, right-click on the directory and select **Disable Polling**.*

## Edit the Directory PFS File

When you add a target directory to the Network Polling utility, the software automatically creates a default parameter file for that directory. This file, called the *directory PFS file*, is used with Polling Modes 1 and 3. In Mode 1, the directory PFS file defines *all* of the printing parameters for the incoming images.

In Mode 3, the directory PFS file fills in any parameters that are omitted from the incoming PFS file. The software also copies the original PFS file into the Job Queue as “Submitted.PFS”.



#### To edit the directory PFS file:

1. Select the directory you want to edit.
2. Right-click on the directory and select **Edit Parameter File** (or click the **Params** button).
3. The PFS file opens into Notepad. Edit the file as desired.
4. Open the Notepad **File** menu and select **Save**.
5. Open the **File** menu again and select **Exit**.



*For more information on PFS files, see Appendix D*

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### Edit the Master PFS File

When you run Network Polling for the first time, the software creates a PARAM subdirectory inside the Polling program directory. This subdirectory contains a file called DEFAULT.PFS. The DEFAULT.PFS file is your master parameter file.

When you create a target directory in Network Polling, a copy of DEFAULT.PFS is created for that directory. In Mode 1, all of the printing parameters will be taken from this file. In Mode 3, any parameters that are missing from the PFS file which was submitted will be taken from this file. The software also copies the original PFS file into the Job Queue as “Submitted.PFS”. The converted PFS file created from the directory-level PFS is saved as “Queue Name”.PFS.

You can edit the PFS file for individual target directories using the **Edit Parameter File** option and saving it to the target directory. You also can edit the original DEFAULT.PFS file in order to reduce the amount of editing that you have to do for each target directory.

#### To edit DEFAULT.PFS:

1. Open the **Setup** menu and select **Edit Default PFS File**. DEFAULT.PFS opens into Notepad.
2. Edit the PFS file as desired.
3. Open the Notepad **File** menu and select **Save**.
4. Open the **File** menu again and select **Exit**.



*For more information on PFS files, see Appendix D: “PFS Files” on page G-1*

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## Polling for Jobs

### Receiving Jobs from a Remote Source

Network Polling can receive jobs sent over a local area network, or over a modem or ISDN connection.

#### Modem Software Requirements

Network Polling can use Dial-up Networking (RAS). Remote clients must use the same modem software that is used at the Print Server to send jobs. In order to set up a modem station using RAS on a Windows 95 computer, you must purchase the Windows 95 Plus Package and install Dial-up Server to receive incoming jobs.

(See “Configuring RAS to Output PlotWorks Job Files” on page G-1



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*If you want to run both RAS or another communications software package at the Control Station, you must set up a dedicated modem for each communications software package. **Do not try to switch between RAS and another communications software package on the same modem!***

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### Receiving Jobs from a Client

The Client is a limited version of the Job Editor software. The Client allows remote users to create job tickets, define printing parameters, and send jobs to the Print Server via network, modem or floppy disk. It is possible for the Client to send jobs directly to a Job Queue, though this is not recommended. Instead, PLP recommends sending jobs to a Network Polling directory or FTP site.

See “Output to FTP” on page 4-125



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*Currently, the software does not provide any network security features for the Job Queue. Therefore, we recommend that you only accept remote jobs through the Network Polling program.*

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### Receiving Jobs from a Remote Module

The Remote Module is a DOS-based program used to create and send job tickets. PlotWorks can print jobs created on the Remote Module as easily as it prints jobs created on the Client.

Remote Module submissions can be received in different ways, depending on the mode of transmission:

- **Jobs submitted over a local network or RAS connection** should be sent to a Mode 2 Network Polling directory.
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- **Jobs submitted on a floppy disk** should be imported directly into the Queue using the **Import DOS Job** command.

## Poll Target Directories

Once you have set up your Network Polling configuration, you can begin to poll your target directories.

To start polling, click **Start**.



To stop polling, click **Stop**.



*You cannot change your Polling configuration once polling is started. You must first stop polling then make your changes.*

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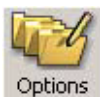
## Polling Status

The color of the directory listings in the Network Polling window indicates their status:

- **Black**: no activity
- **Dark Gold**: on hold (Directories on hold also display a red hold icon.)
- **Red**: processing files

## The Polling Log

Whenever a job is sent to a Network Polling target directory, an entry is added to the Polling log file (NETPOLL.LOG). The location of the Polling log is specified in the Polling Options dialog box.



### To change the location of the Polling log file:

1. Click **Polling Options**.
2. Enter the path and name of the log file in the Log Filename field. Be sure to use the .LOG filename extension. If the log file does not exist, the software creates it automatically.

### To view the Polling Log:

1. Open the **Setup** menu and select **View Log**.
  2. The log file opens in Notepad. You can print the log, if desired, or exit from the Notepad when finished viewing.
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