

Xitron Plugin Manual



Trendsetter

Aug. 21, 2003

Background Information

Always start the Trendsetter and allow it perform its start-up routine BEFORE you start your Xitron RIP or Xitron Raster Blaster computer. It is necessary for the computer to “see” the Trendsetter during start-up for it to properly configure the drivers.

The utility “TrendsetterMon” opens automatically when you start your system. This utility must be running, and the trendsetter must be on, BEFORE the RIP or Raster Blaster program is run. The TrendsetterMon program will determine the setup of the Trendsetter (available resolutions, supported media, etc.) and convey that information to the RIP or Raster Blaster.

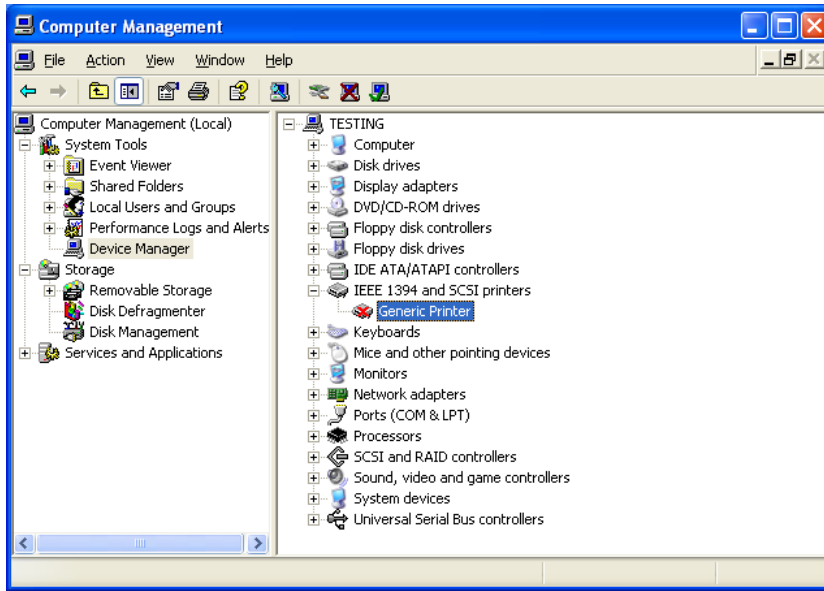
Installation

Begin by installing the Xitron software and the Trendsetter plugin as instructed in the Software Installation Manual. It is necessary to complete some preparatory steps in the Windows Operating System before you configure the Trendsetter plugin or attempt to output images to the Trendsetter.

Windows 2000 and Windows XP Operating Systems will attempt to load drivers for any devices connected to the computer. In most cases this is a positive thing, as you will not have to locate drivers and load software for any current and new devices added in the future. Unfortunately, if the Operating System recognizes that there is a SCSI output device connected to the computer, but can not determine the type of output device, it will load a “Generic SCSI Printer” driver. This driver will conflict with the Xitron Trendsetter plugin’s communications. It will be necessary to disable this generic driver in order for the Trendsetter plugin to output properly. Carefully follow the instructions below to properly disable the generic SCSI printer driver in Windows 2000 and Windows XP.

If you have not done so, turn off both the computer and the imagesetter. Attach both the SCSI cable and the Serial (RS232) cable to the imagesetter and the PC driving the Trendsetter. The serial cable should be conncted to a COM port on the computer, usually COM1. After these connections have been made and you have double-checked that they are tight and solid, start the Trendsetter first and then the PC.

After you have restarted the computer, locate the Device Manager window in the Windows Operating System. Determine if there are is a “Generic Printer” driver loaded (see illustration on Page 2). If there is not a Generic Printer skip to the next section of this Plugin Manual.



If you locate a “Generic Printer,” place the mouse over the Generic Printer icon and press the right mouse button. Choose “Disable.” DO NOT delete the driver as Windows will just reload it when you start the computer again. After you have disabled the driver your Device Manager window should appear exactly like the one shown above. That is, there should be a red X over the Generic Printer icon.

Once you have performed this task, restart your computer. You may now proceed with configuration of the RIP or Raster Blaster.

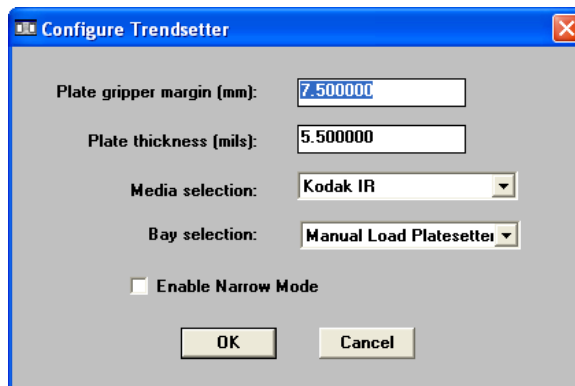
Configuring the Trendsetter

Xitron supports the following Trendsetter recorders:

- Trendsetter 3230, 3244

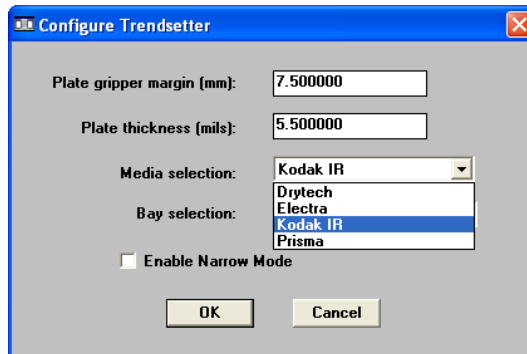
After installing the Trendsetter plugin, you will be able to create Page Setups using the plugin. Select the appropriate resolution from the Page Setup Window. You should also configure the options specific to the Trendsetter plugin. Click “Configure Device” under the Device list box. The following dialog box will appear:

For Raster Blaster, see the Raster Blaster manual section on *Creating New Devices*.

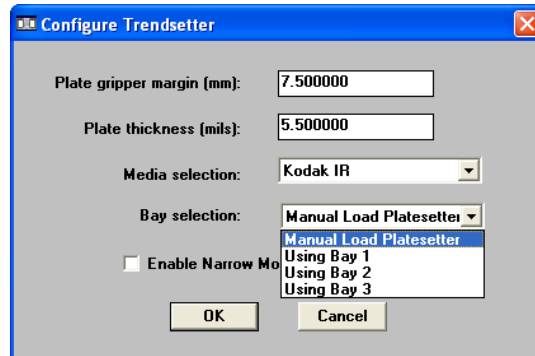


From this dialog box you can configure the following options:

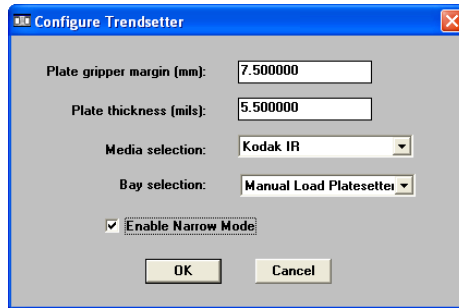
- Plate gripper margin:** This value is used to set a plate gripper margin. Values must be entered in millimeters and will cause the output to be moved to the RIGHT on the plate. Please see the image position and plate orientation diagram later in this document for clarification of directions on the plate.
- Plate thickness:** This value is used to set the plate thickness. Values must be entered in mils (thousandths of an inch). As an example a plate with a thickness of .0055 inches would need a value of 5.5 under “Plate thickness” to image correctly. An error will be generated if you attempt to image a job when the plate thickness value is incorrect.
- Media selection:** This value will change depending on the supported media information in the Trendsetter itself. Be sure to choose the correct media as proper exposure values (controlled in the Trendsetter) will be dependent on this choice.



- Bay selection:** If you are loading plates manually you will choose the Manual Load Platesetter option. If you have an autoloader choose “Using Bay 1.” Do not use any of the other options.



•**Enable Narrow Mode:** Turning this option on will increase the quality of the image but will slow the imaging time on the Trendsetter. Normally this selection should be off. It may be necessary to turn it on if you are imaging very high line screens or stochastic dots.



Media Size and Image Placement

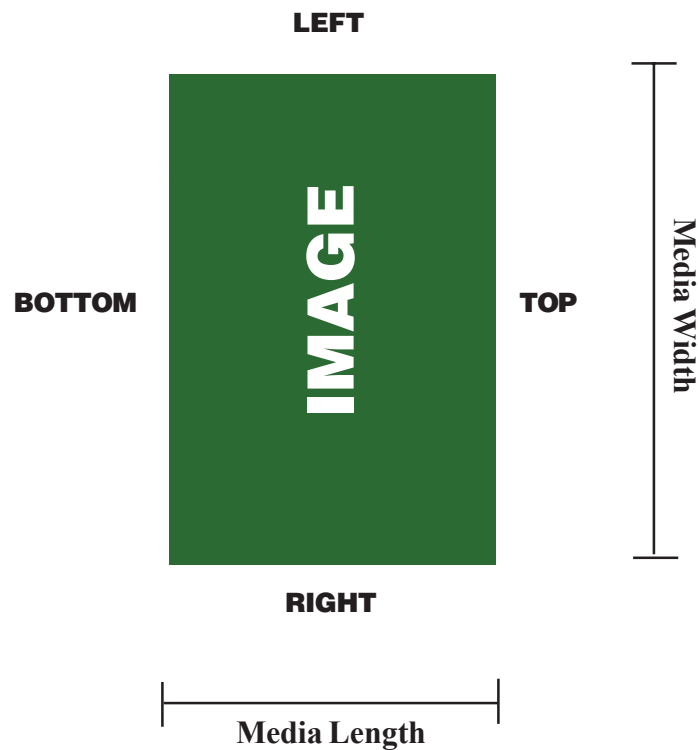
It is important to understand the way that the Trendsetter driver and the Trendsetter view the media being used. An incorrectly specified media size will create errors when imaging, while an incorrect understanding of image position and orientation will make it difficult to position your output correctly on the plate.

Plate and Image Orientation

When a plate is placed in the platesetter it is actually turned on its side with regard to the laser travel but not image placement. For example the top of the plate, to the operator, is actually the left side of the plate when the image is placed on it. The diagram below represents a plate being placed in the Trendsetter and specifies its orientation.

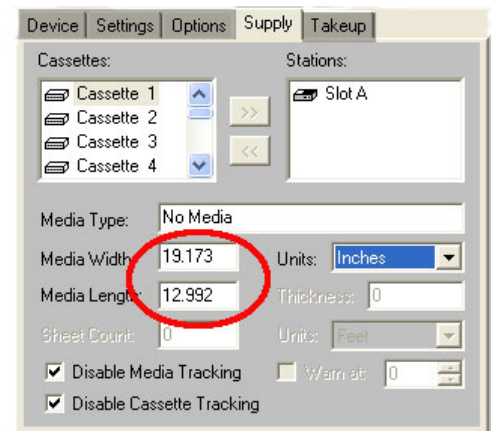
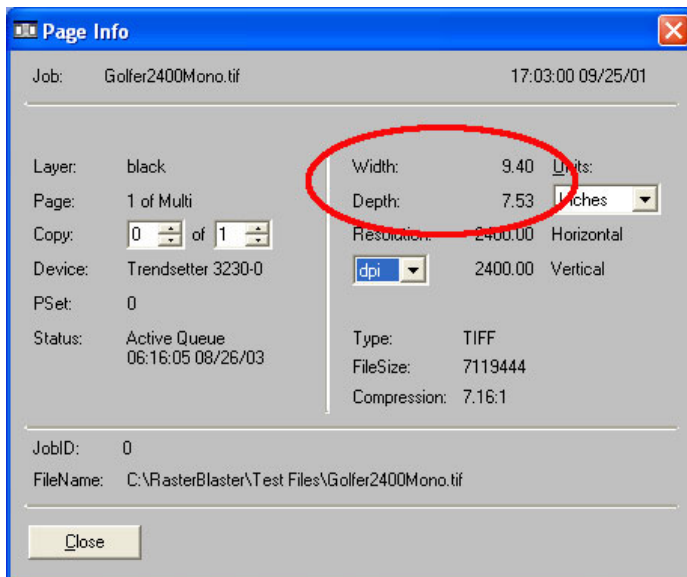


From this example we can see that plate is seen “sideways” by the Trendsetter. Assuming that it is being loaded into the Trendsetter as illustrated above, a graphic representation of the plate and image orientation is found below. It may be necessary to experiment with the rotation and right-reading/wrong-reading settings in the RIP (never use rotation or orientation options in the Raster Blaster) to achieve the desired orientation on the plate.



When positioning the image on the plate, use the “Center on Media Width” and “Center on Media Length” check boxes found in the RIP or Raster Blaster. Additional position adjustments can be made by using the Plate gripper margin mentioned on the previous page of this document.

Important Note: Make sure that your actual image size (as seen in the image information window below) is not larger than your media size as set in the in the Device Configuration window in RasterBlaster and the PageLayout window in the Navigator RIP. Keep in mind that the Image Width corresponds to the Media Length.

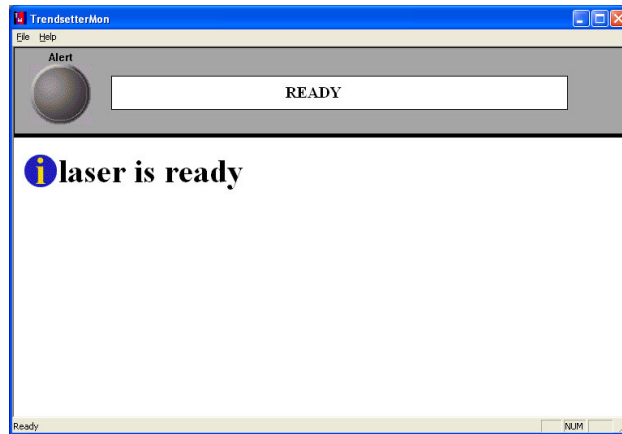


TrendsetterMon

The TrendsetterMon utility is a direct communications link to the Trendsetter. In many cases, it will be possible to run the device with only the TrendsetterMon window visible. The RIP or Raster Blaster window can be minimized and instructions in the TrendsetterMon window will tell the operator what to do next.

Important: TrendsetterMon MUST be running at all times. If it is not running the Raster Blaster or RIP will abort any image sent to the platesetter.

Below is an example of the TrendsetterMon window.



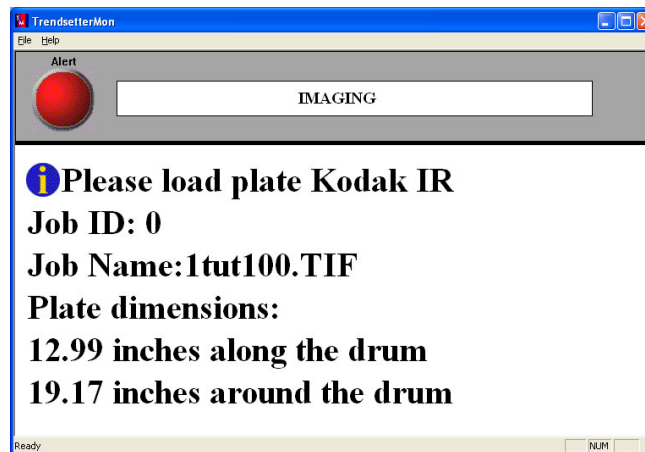
Selecting a COM Port

TrendsetterMon can be configured to use various COM ports for serial communications to the Trendsetter. To adjust this setting, verify which COM port is connected to the trendsetter via the RS232 cable. From the TrendsetterMon “configure” menu choose “select COM port.” Choose the correct com port.

Selecting a Measurement Preference

The measurement system used for reporting in TrendsetterMon can be set to inches or centimeters. From the TrendsetterMon “configure” menu choose “set units of measure.” Select from “English” or “Metric.”

When the Trendsetter is sent an image from the RIP or Raster Blaster the TrendsetterMon window will change. The example below shows the TrendsetterMon window when an image has been sent to the Trendsetter and it is waiting for the proper plate to be loaded.



This covers the basic operation of the Trendsetter Plugin (driver) and the TrendsetterMon Utility. More in-depth information about the Xitron RIP or the Raster Blaster can be found in their respective Users Manuals.