

Ripping EPS Files without Placing Them in a Page Layout Program

Xitron Navigator Technical Note

February 18, 2001

Although it is not widely known, it is possible to RIP and image an EPS file without placing it in Quark, or PageMaker or some similar page layout program first. There is a minor difference between an EPS file and a "PostScript" file (the file that is created when you print to a RIP). EPS stands for Encapsulated PostScript, basically this means that the EPS file is to be placed within another file before it can be printed. It is to be "encapsulated" in another PostScript file. Important imaging information such as the output page size and positioning will be supplied by the PostScript file containing the EPS.

OK, that aside, one of the main things missing from an EPS file is a "showpage" command. This is the command that tells a RIP that it is supposed to actually image the file that it has just interpreted. What all this means is that you can force a RIP to image an EPS file by adding the "showpage" command at the end of a file if it is missing. However, other information will still be missing, such as the page size that the image belongs on. This missing information can be supplied using the "page layout" settings in the RIP's pagesetup dialogue, or by using a page feature called "Bounding Box."

To force the imaging of EPS files, follow the procedure below:

Go to the "pagesetup" dialogue and choose "options."

Turn on "Add showpage at end of job if necessary . . ."

Make sure that a suitable page size is set in the Page Layout dialogue or that the Bounding Box Page Feature is selected in the pagesetup.

Save the pagesetup and associate it with an appropriate input in the input manager (review the RIP manual if you need assistance with this process)

Now you have to get the EPS files to the RIP. If you have associated the pagesetup with a spool folder input, all you need to do is copy the EPS files into the folder that the RIP is spooling from and they will be ripped and imaged. If you are using appletalk you will have to use a downloader to move the files to the rip. You can also use the desktop printer icons that are a part of LaserWriter 8.4 (or better) on the Mac, to send EPS files to an appletalk input on the RIP. Simply drag and drop the EPS files onto the desktop printer icon and they will be sent down to the RIP.

By using the above techniques you should be able to create a very smooth and efficient workflow for imaging large numbers of EPS files.

If you are using DCS files you must use specific drop folders for the files and specialty page features found in the secure area of the Xitron Web Site, www.xitron.com.