

HP Indigo Labels and Packaging powered by EskoArtwork StepX Plug-in

User Guide



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StepX Plug-in User Guide

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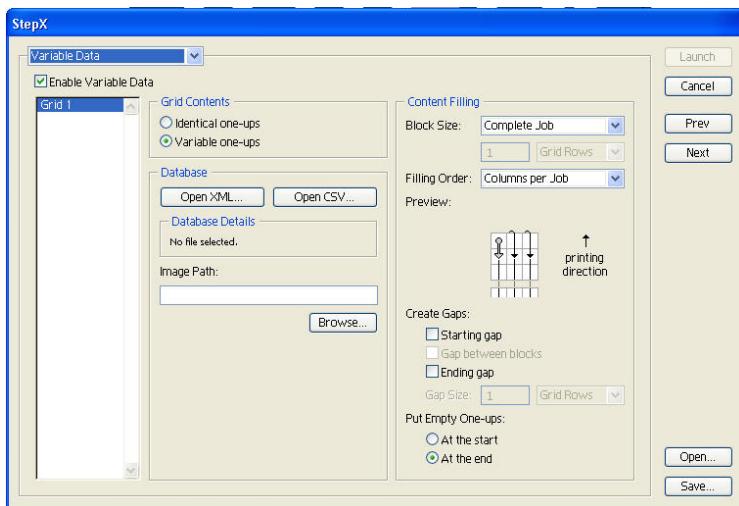
Introduction

StepX offers an easy to use interface to the tabular step and repeat task running on the server. It is has preview panels, it works with multiple documents and it can create a number of output types.

Step/X is part of the VDP Pack for HP indigo Labels and Packaging Server powered by Esko.

In this manual the basic functions of Step/X are explained for non-variable jobs. You can disable the 'Enable Variable Data' tabsheet for non-variable jobs.

The Step/X menu is accessed via Window, Esko, Step/X.



When you want to enable variable data, you can switch on the 'Enable Variable Data' tabsheet. For your convenience, please then refer to the VDP manuals:

- HP Indigo Labels and Packaging powered by EskoArtwork VDP Tools user guide
- Basic Pack User Guide for HP Indigo Labels and Packaging powered by EskoArtwork

Preparing your stepX output

First, open all documents you want to include as one-ups in your final stepped output file. By opening the documents, you will also be assured that all used fonts and images are present on the system. If you get warnings or errors while opening these documents, you should solve these issues before proceeding with the stepX output.

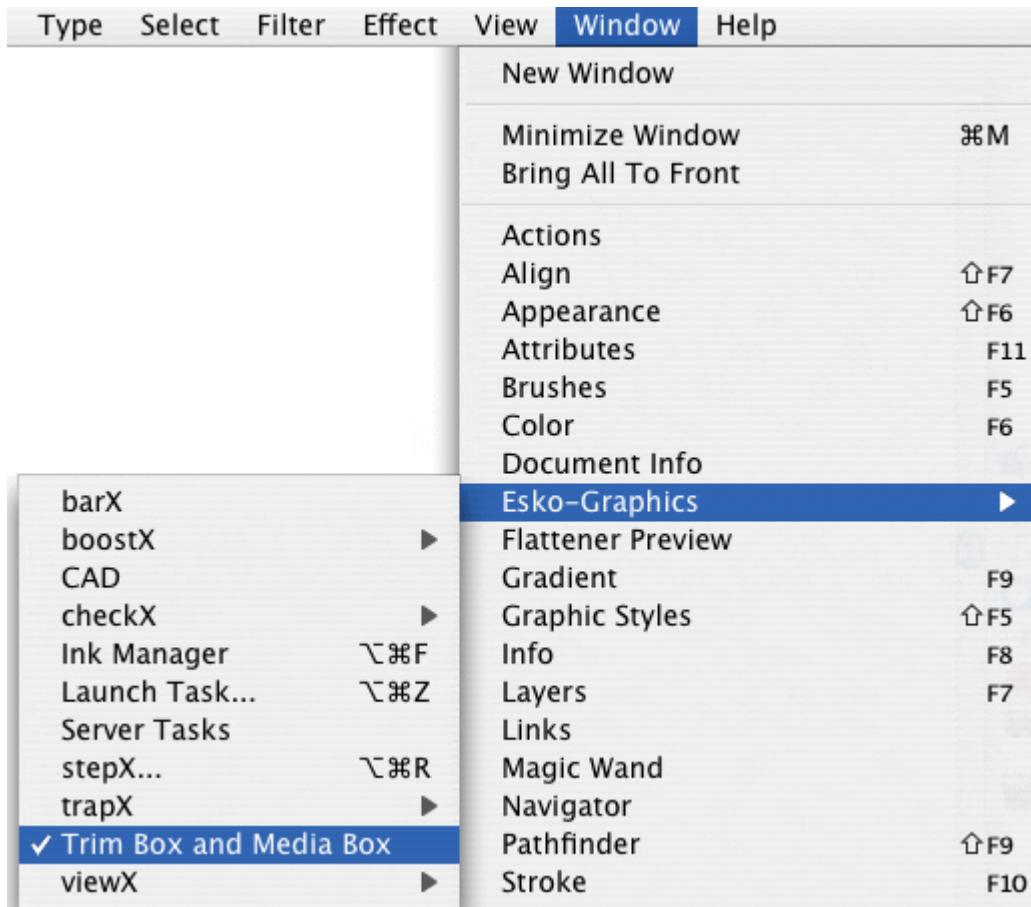
To define the size that stepX will use for each of your one-ups, you must use set the trim box and media box.

Trim Box and Media Box

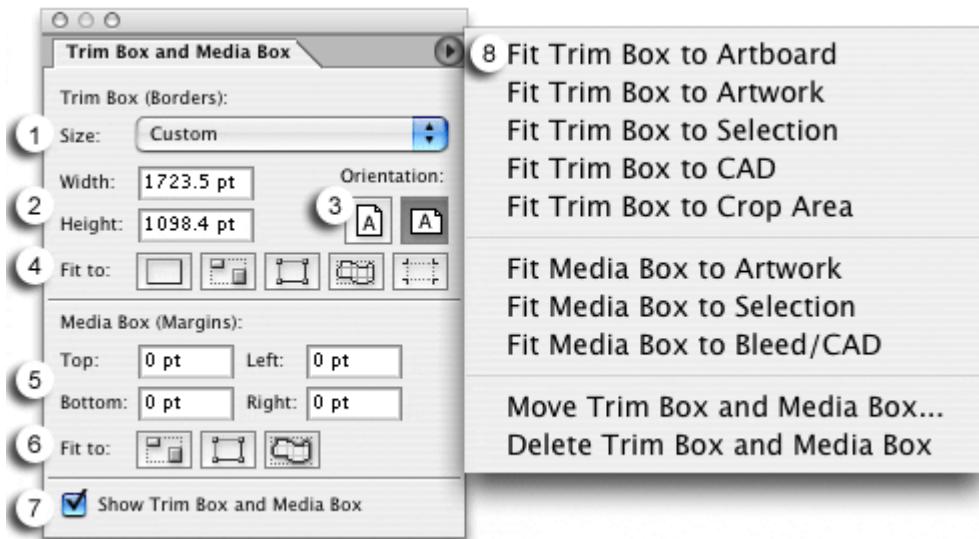
Trim Box and Media Box are used to define the outside borders and margins of your document.

Media Box & Trim Box definitions are saved as part of the Illustrator file used by stepX.

Media Box & Trim Box are not taken into account when printing directly from Adobe Illustrator, nor when you export to ps, pdf or eps. They do not appear as objects in the Layers palette.

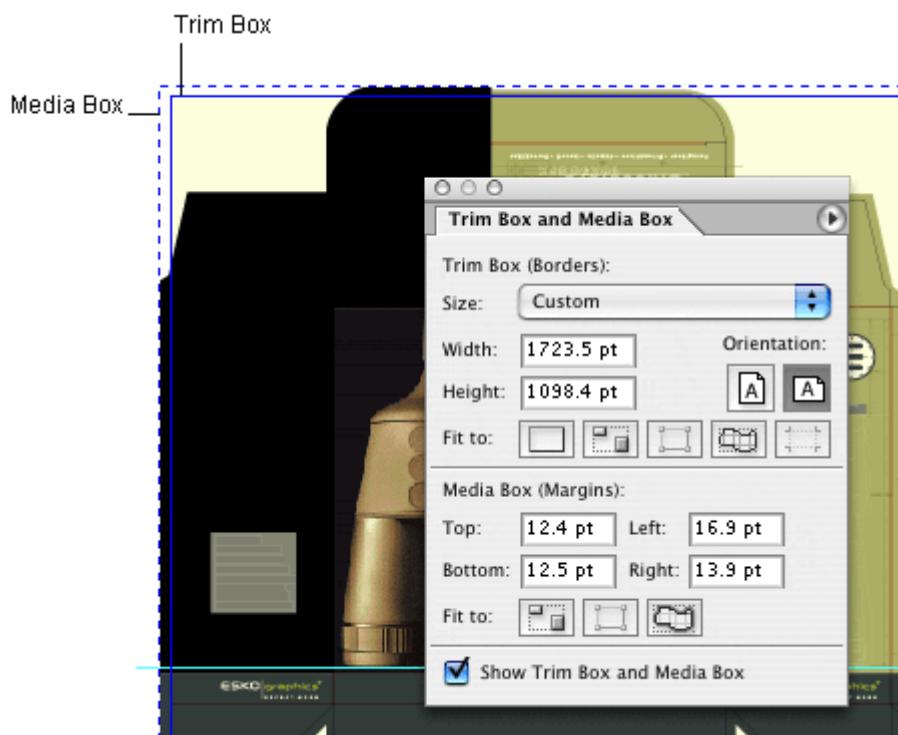


The Trim Box and Media Box window



1. **Trim Box Size:** Select the size from the dropdown list.
2. **Trim Box Width/Length:** Enter the Width/Length if you want a custom size.
The units are defined in the Illustrator preferences.
3. **Trim Box Orientation:** Select the orientation: portrait/landscape.
When the Trim Box is being dragged or Width or Height editboxes edited, the radio buttons Portrait/Landscape flip automatically so that Landscape is active whenever Width > Height and Portrait whenever Width < Height.
4. **Fit Trim Box to**
 - Fit Trim Box to Artboard
 - Fit Trim Box to Artwork
 - Fit Trim Box to Selection
 - Fit Trim Box to CAD
 - Fit Trim Box to Crop Area
5. **Media Box (Margins)** enter the top, bottom, left and right values.
The units are defined in the Illustrator preferences.
6. **Fit Media Box to**
 - Fit Media Box to Artwork
 - Fit Media Box to Selection
 - Fit Media Box to Bleed / CAD (when no bleed was defined the cad will be taken as reference)
7. **Show Trim Box and Media Box:** To display or hide the trim Box and Media Box, use this toggle.
8. **Trim Box and Media Box dropdown menu**
 - Fit Trim Box to Artboard

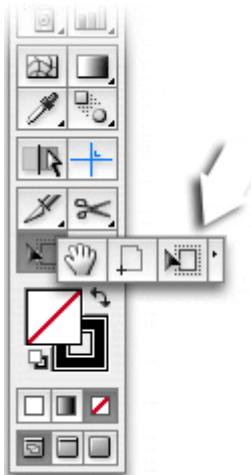
- Fit Trim Box to Artwork
- Fit Trim Box to Selection
- Fit Trim Box to CAD
- Fit Trim Box to Crop Area
- Fit Media Box to Artwork
- Fit Media Box to Selection
- Fit Media Box to Bleed / CAD (when no bleed was defined the CAD will be taken as reference)
- Move Trim Box and Media Box ... open the 'Move Trim Box and Media Box' interface
- Delete Trim Box and Media Box



Moving and Scaling Trim Box and Media Box

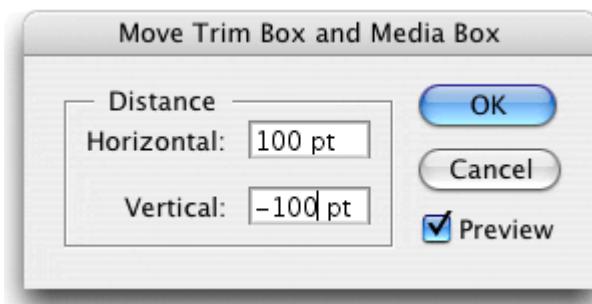
To move or change the size of the Trim and Media Boxes, you can either

- Select the Trim and Media Box Tool from the AI tool palette.
Use the Trim and Media Box to click and drag the Trim and Media Box.
- Select the Trim and Media Box Tool from the AI tool palette.
ALT +drag = scale from the center out
SHIFT + drag = constrained scaling
ALT + SHIFT + drag = constrained scaling from the center out



OR

- Select a preset from the drop down menu. *OR*
- Use the numeric input field. The numeric input field appears when you select 'Move Trim Box and Media Box' in the dropdown menu.

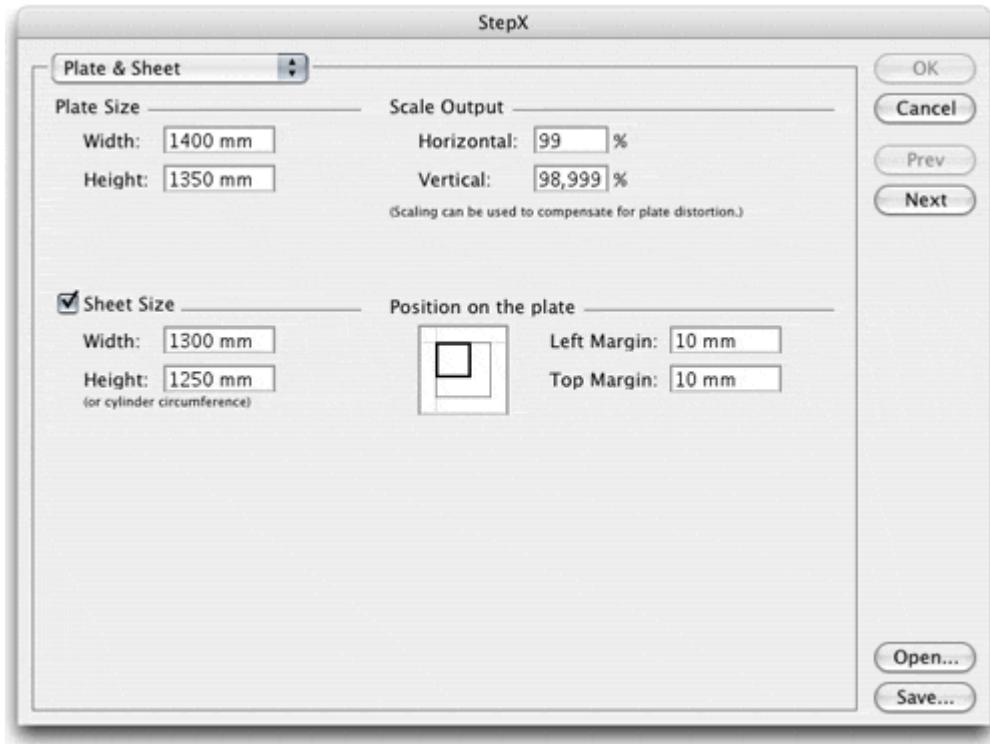


Tip: The units are defined in the Illustrator preferences.

Tip: Double-clicking Trim and Media Box tool in toolpalette opens the 'Move Trim Box and Media Box' dialog.

OR You could use one of the "fit to" options (to Artboard, artwork, selection, cad or crop area).

Plate and Sheet settings



Open the stepX palette from the Windows... Esko-Graphics... dropdown list.

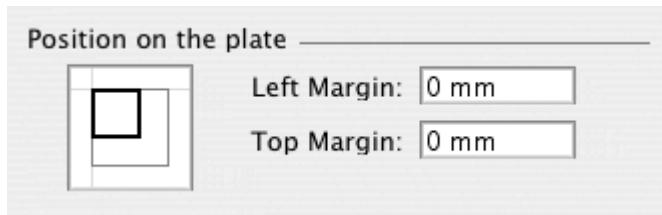
The first panel of the stepX dialog shows the Plate and Sheet settings of your final output file. The sheet size will be the area where your one-up grids will be positioned. Plate and sheet size are used in a traditional press environment, where there is a difference between these two sizes. In a HP Indigo environment, sheet size is usually no different than plate size. Therefore we suggest to disable the Sheet size . You then only specify one size.

Scale Output

Scale Output is used to compensate for Plate distortion later in the output process. This option is usually of no importance when sending to an HP Indigo press.

Position of the Plate

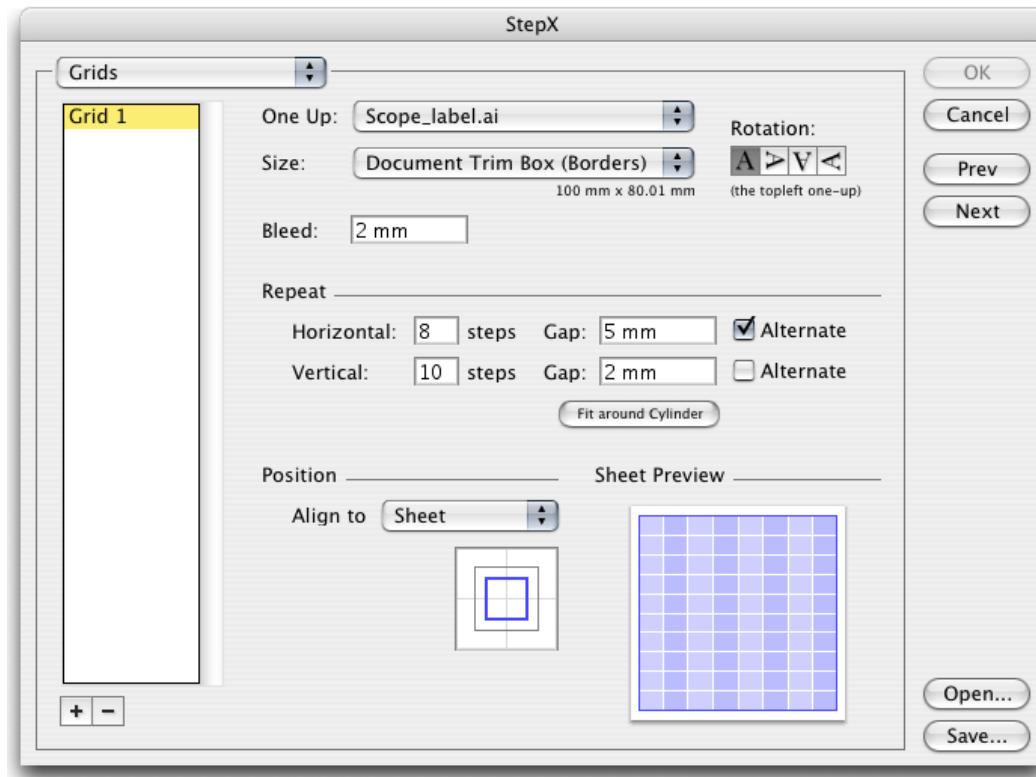
Mind that, as you will have disabled the sheet size option, this option is not applicable, and will be greyed out, as you will have defined only one size for plate and sheet!



The preview icon where you see the Sheet Position on the Plate can be changed by clicking it. Click a corner to snap the sheet to the Plate corner. Click in the middle to center. This way, all alignment options are available just by clicking a snap point. Depending on the snapping position of the sheet icon, different Margin options will be available to finetune the position.

Grid Settings

Click the Next button, or choose Grids from the dropdown menu.



In the Grid Settings panel, you will construct the layout of your step and repeat file. Before you do this, you should have an idea of how and which documents you want to use, and how many repeats you need for each document.

One-up

Start by selecting the document you want to use as first one-up file in the one-up dropdown list. All currently open documents are listed here, plus an extra placeholder option if you do not want to select a specific one-up yet. Use the placeholder to make template step and repeat schemes for later use.

Size

Choose between Document Trim Box (borders) and Artwork Bounding box. You can adjust the Document Trim Box (borders) with the Esko-Graphics Trim box and Media Box plug in.

Bleed

If you have chosen to use Cropmarks as your one-up size, you can specify a bleed distance. On the stepX output, your one-up will be extended with the bleed distance. All the objects outside the cropmarks + bleed distance area will be masked out.

Rotation

Select a rotation for your one-up. If you choose to alternate the one-ups (see below) the chosen rotation will apply to the top-left one-up.

Repeat

Choose a repeat number and the gap between the one-ups, horizontal and vertical. The gap is specified between the one-ups without the bleed. On the stepX output, if you have specified a bleed distance, the gap will be smaller than what you have entered here as gap. Note that the bleeds of two adjoining one-ups will never overlap. If necessary, the bleed distance will be smaller than what you have specified.

Alternate

If you choose the alternate option, every second row, be it horizontal or vertical, will have the one-ups 180 degrees rotated. Use this option to get head-to-head repeats. The alternate option will be visible in the little preview pane of the final step& repeat scheme as a darker blue representation color for the rotated one-ups.

Fit around cylinder – for Continuous Printing

If you click the Fit around cylinder action button, the appropriate gap will be filled in automatically to fit the specified number of steps around the cylinder. Enter the cylinder circumference as the sheet height.

Position

The Position dropdown list for the first grid you make only contains the Align to Sheet option. When an extra grid is made, all previously defined grids will also be available in the Align to... list. So start with the grid that is the easiest one to align to the sheet.

The icon showing the 'Align to' position can be clicked. You will notice that there are several alignment options: top-left, middle-left, middle, bottom-right, etc... which are all visualized clearly in this alignment icon. Starting from this position you can get extra positioning options to shift the grid, depending on what alignment you choose in the Alignment icon.

Add/Remove Grid icons

At the bottom of the grid list on the left of the stepX palette, you notice two buttons with a plus and a minus icon.

Click the plus icon to define a second grid. You can use the same one-up input document to stagger it, or you can choose a different open document as the one-up.

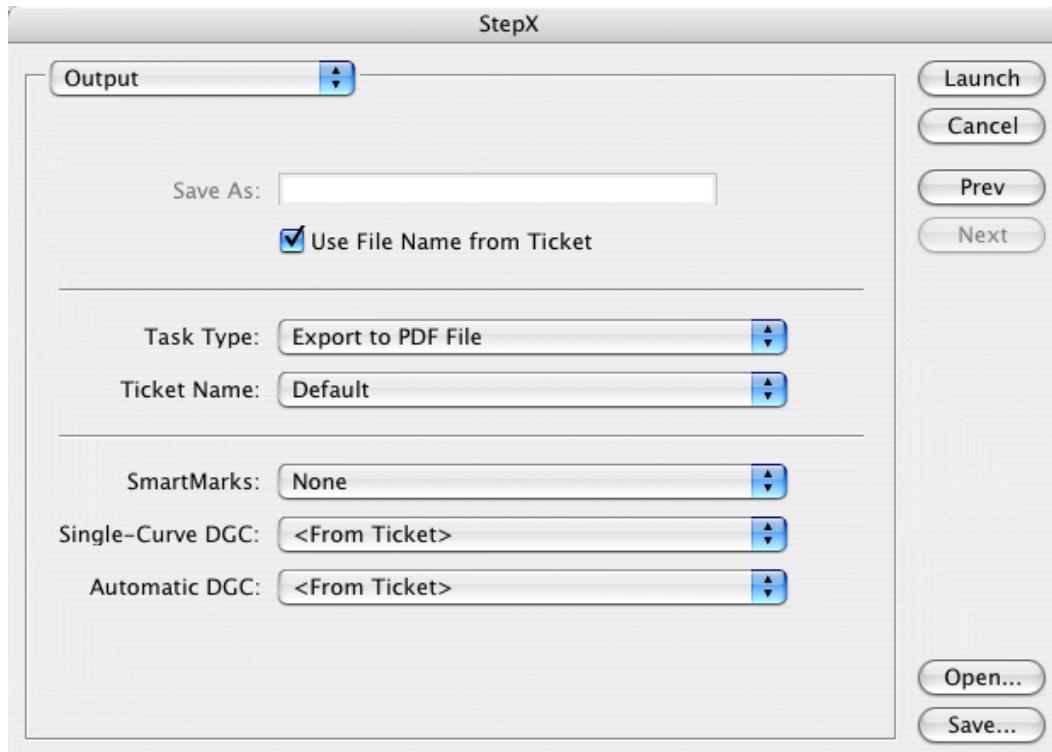
The default position of the new grid will be centered to the sheet size. Change this position anytime in the Position icon and 'Align to' drop down list.

Tip: To align the grid you are working on to a previously defined grid, ALT-Click the target grid in the grids preview pane. The 'Align to' dropdown will jump to the clicked grid.

Click the minus icon to delete the grid you are working on. If other grids where aligned to the grid you are removing, their alignment will now be to the sheet.

Output Settings

Click the Next button. In the Output Settings panel you choose the output format, an output ticket and if necessary the SmartMark set for the final output file.



Task Type

The choice you get in the Output Type dropdown list depends on the current licenses available on the BackStage. For your workflow, you will find more info in the User manual for HP Indigo Labels and Packaging Server, or the VDP user manuals.

Ticket Name

The Output ticket depends on the Output type you have chosen. All corresponding tickets for that type which reside on the server will be shown. A default set is always available, and extra tickets can be made with the Pilot application.

SmartMark Set

A default set of smartmarks is installed on the BackStage. If you want to have any custom created SmartMarks, contact your local HP Indigo representative.

You can always review your settings using the Previous button or the dropdown menu at the top of the stepX palette.

Open / save stepX settings

If you want to open a previously saved template file, click on the Open button. All the settings saved in the template file will be filled in. There is one exception: the one-up box in the grid settings will be put on “placeholder”. After opening a template you will have to define which one-up file to use for each of the grids by replacing the “placeholder” with the name of the appropriate one-up. StepX will issue a warning if the size of the selected one-up document differs from the size of the document that was used to create the template. This warning may be ignored. In that case the grids will be updated to reflect the size of the selected output file.

You can save your stepX settings for later use by clicking on the Save button. This opens the save dialog. The directory immediately jumps to the Settings > stepX directory on the BackStage. This is the preferred place for saving your template files.

Launching the stepX task

Click the OK button to launch the stepX task. A check will be performed to see if all grids have a one-up assigned to them. If this is not the case, a warning will appear:

Some grids do not have a one-up assigned to them. These grids will not be included in the output. Do you want to continue?

If you select no, you can go back to the grid Settings and change the Placeholder in the one-up box to the name of the one-up that you want to use. If you select yes, then those grids that have no one-up assigned to them, will be deleted from the output.

If the size of the one-up you choose is different than the size of the placeholder, a warning will pop up:

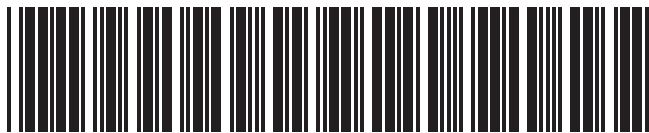
The document has a different size than the placeholder. Do you want to continue?

If you click yes, the grids in the sheet preview window will change to accommodate the new size.

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