Timestone software

User Manual

Updated for Version 1.1

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- Hardlock device means the hardware device used to enable the Software to function.

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Table of Contents

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Before you Begin…

Scope and audience

This manual covers both operation and technical aspects required to use *RIPTime*. The manual is divided into several chapters – see the **Table of Contents** at the start for a broad summary. Alternatively, consult the **Index** for specific procedures.

Getting more help

More help is available for *RIPTime* from the following places:

- The *PrintTime* user manual
- Help pages from our WWW site, **http://www.timestone.com.au**
- Technical support as noted at the end of this chapter

Pre-installation requirements

You will need to following resources and information before you start installing *RIPTime*:

- *RIPTime* software installation CD-ROM
- *RIPTime* software User Manual (the document you are reading now)
- Hardware protection device
- 'Unlock' code supplied by Timestone Software
- A computer that complies with the hardware and software specifications as outlined in Chapter 3, **Installing *RIPTime***.

Learning *RIPTime*

Included on the *RIPTime* CD-ROM are contained the following resources:

- Installation files
- *RIPTime* user manual – the document you are currently reading
- Tutorial files

We strongly recommend that you read the major sections of this manual before using the software. The tutorial covers all aspects of *RIPTime's* operation, and you should also complete the tutorial.

Getting help from Technical Support

We offer many different methods of support. However, we strongly encourage you to use e-mail as your primary support mechanism.

Telephone support

Telephone support is available by calling Timestone Software during our business hours. These hours are:

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Australian Eastern Standard Time

The telephone numbers are:

Voice: + 61 3 9570 9899

Fax support

You can fax us with questions or queries. Please address your fax queries to Technical Support. The fax number is:

Fax: + 61 3 9570 9855

E-mail and WWW support

There are support pages that include links to the newest versions of the software, as well as user documentation, and 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

http://

Our WWW and e-mail contacts are:

WWW: **http://www.timestone.com.au**
E-mail: support@timestone.com.au

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System Requirements

Hardware requirements

The following hardware requirements are required as a minimum configuration to run *RIPTime*. You should always attempt to exceed these requirements.

If you have a choice in areas that you can afford to exceed these requirements – do this in the following order:

- Memory
- CPU class (Pentium II, Pentium III)
- CPU clock speed
- Hard disk speed (Ultra, Ultra Wide, RAID)
- Other

Minimum requirements

- Intel Pentium II processor at 350 Mhz
- 100 Mhz system motherboard (Bx class)
- 128 Mb RAM
- 4Mb Video card (1024 x 768 @ 24 bit – see note)
- 9Gb Hard Disk (see note)
- 10 / 100 Ethernet card
- 33.6k Modem
- High quality (Sony, Apple) 17" color monitor
- Windows NT 4.0, Service Pack 3
- Mouse *with mouse wheel* (Microsoft, Logitec)

Optional Extras

- 6 x 9cm Graphics Tablet with pressure sensitive stylus (Wacom)
- CD-R or DVD RAM drive for data backup

Notes

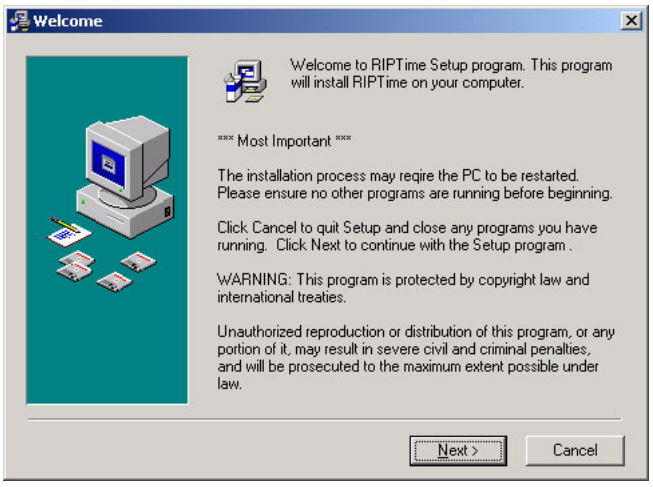
Video Card: It is most important to use a high quality video card. In particular, you should use video cards that support monitor calibration in some manner. Typically, manufacturers such as ATI or Video Seven have such products.

Hard disk: If you are using *Neo* applications on a single workstation, you should realise that *very quickly* you will use 9Gb of data storage, just with the images you scan to create your products. If your requirements are low volume, you could consider a single 9Gb hard, and continually move images that are finished onto a CD-Rom or DVD-RAM disk. However, if you are producing just an average number of packages, you *will* want to use a number of drives. Fortunately, hard disk drive costs are relatively low today.

3

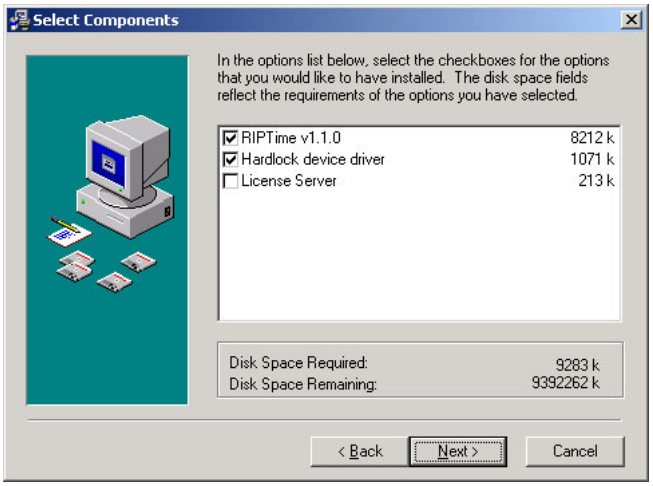
Installing *RIPTime*

Open the CD-ROM in Windows Explorer or My Computer, and double-click the file, Install *NeoGroup*. The installer screen appears.

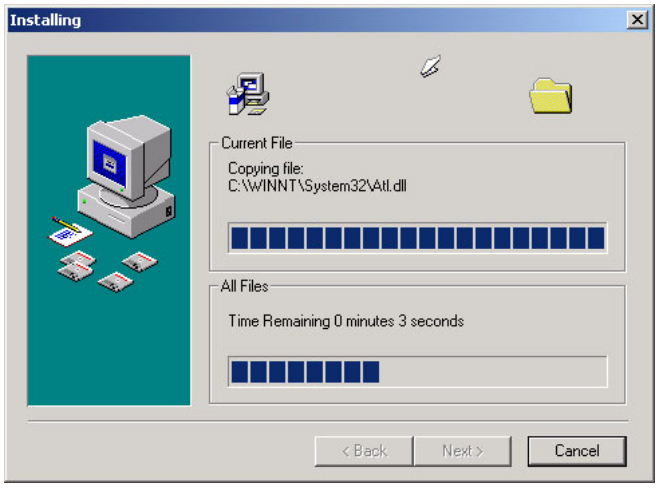


The installation process may require a restart mid-way through the process. If the installer requests you to restart the PC, please do so, as the installation is not able to complete without the restart.

- Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Read the contents of the **ReadMe** screen. It contains timely information that may be required for the installation. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Choose the location for the program files to be installed to. Unless you have a particular reason for changing the default path setting, we recommend you leave it as is. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Allow the program to create backup files for the installation. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Choose the components to install. If this machine is to house the hardlock, install the License Server component.
- Documentation and tutorial files are installed to the same directory as the program files.



- Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Select the name of the Program Manager group to add the icons to. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Once you're happy with all the settings, choose **Next** to proceed, or choose **Back** to change any of your settings.
- The program files are installed.
- Once all the files have been installed, the **Complete** screen is shown. Choose **Finish** to complete the installation.



Installing the Adobe Acrobat Reader

If you want to view the application documentation, you will need to have Adobe Acrobat installed. If you don't have the software on your system, use the installer on the CD.

Note: If you've installed 'over the top' of a demo version, you'll find that the documentation on the CD is likely to be a much larger file than the one you downloaded. Although the manual is the same, the version on the CD has images saved at a higher resolution. You won't notice much difference viewing the manual on screen, but you will certainly notice a difference if you print it.

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Understanding *RIPTime*

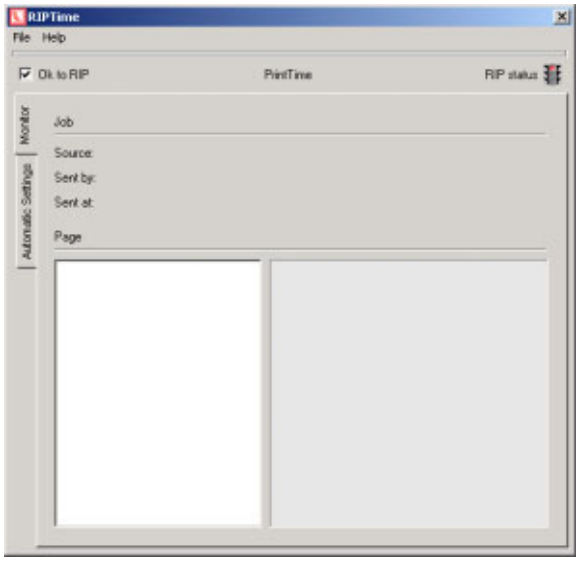
RIPTime is stand-alone rendering engine that helps you keep high-speed digital printers busy printing images. Jobs created by our *Neo* family of applications can take some time to print. This is an unavoidable process called *rendering* a page. When you create a page in a *Neo* application, they consist of a series of instructions that can't be understood by a printer. When a job is printed, these instruction are converted to something that can be printed by a printer – the rendering process.

The rendering process is CPU-, memory- and disk-intensive, meaning that a machine that will print images needs to be very powerful to ensure the quickest print times possible.

Whether or not the machine being used is powerful or not, some significant time will be taken by the rendering process. When your operator chooses **File > Print** they will not be able to continue to the next job until the print process is complete.

An alternate approach is to off-load the intensive rendering process to un-attended workstations. These workstations process the pages without inconveniencing the operator, improving efficiency.

RIPTime is a stand-alone rendering application that allows *Neo* jobs to be processed in this way. Your operators still choose **File > Print** but they 'print' to intermediate files called a 'Timestone Print Job' file. These files contain the job's pages in a raw form and still must be rendered before they can be printed. *RIPTime* renders the pages contained in the Print Job file, and saves it in a printer ready format, ready to be sent directly to the printer. The result is that the jobs are 'printed' quickly from the *Neo* workstation, and a number of *RIPTime* stations can work together to keep your high-speed printer busy printing jobs.



RIPTime configuration overview

RIPTime is a simple application that works together with *PrintTime*, our printer management tool to form a funnel for rendered jobs to your printer. The following diagram shows a job through the *RIPTime* based workflow.

Step 1 – Creating the Print Job files

Your operators can work on any number of *Neo* workstations creating jobs. When it is time to print a job, they choose **File > Print**. Instead of printing directly to a printer, they print to a **Timestone Print Job file**. The print job file is sent to a folder somewhere in the local area network.

Step 2 – RIPTime configuration

RIPTime's job is to render the Print Job files to a printer ready format. In order to do this, it needs to understand how the printer is configured. *PrintTime* is used to communicate and submit jobs finally to the printer, and so it understands the printer configuration (details such as the resolution of the device, paper width installed, color profiles selected etc). Each *RIPTime* station installed communicates with the *PrintTime* connected to the printer, and determines the condition of the printer. Because of this, the jobs will be rendered correctly for the printer.

Step 3 – RIPTime processing

Once activated, the *RIPTime* stations all monitor hot folders on the network. When your operators print a job, the Print Job file arrives in a hot folder. An idle *RIPTime* station will see the job arrive and begin to process the job.

Step 4 – RIPTime output

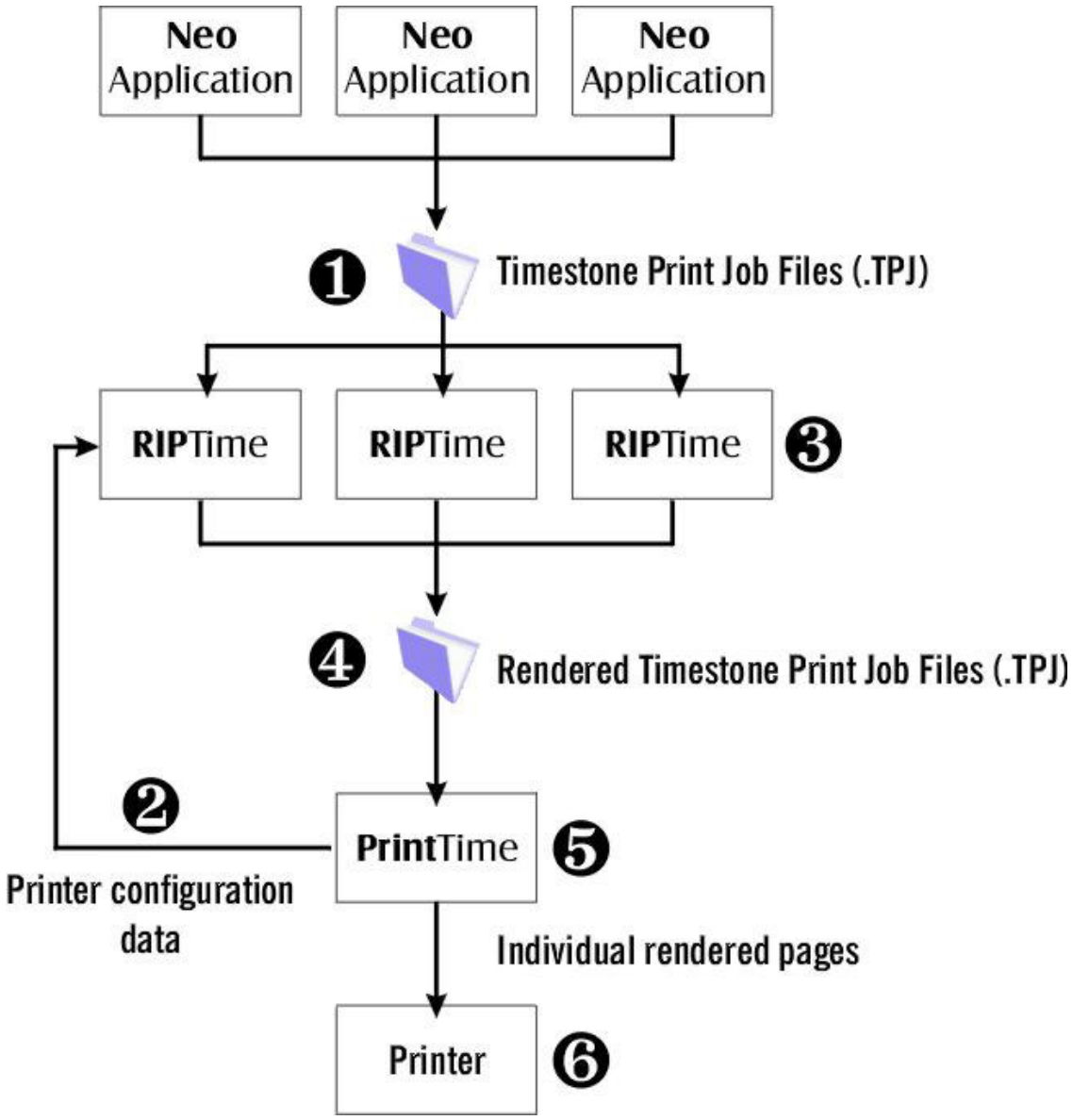
As a job is processed by a *RIPTime* station, the rendered pages are stored to a rendered Print Job file. This is a single file that contains all the pages of the job in sequential order. This way, it is not possible to print out of order. During the *RIPTime* rendering process, any sharpening, color corrections or ICC color management corrections are applied. This means that the pages are completely ready to be sent to the printer without any further image processing.

Step 5 – PrintTime submission

PrintTime is a printer management tool that allows jobs to be submitted to the printer. The *RIPTime* output is sent to a particular folder on the network, where *PrintTime* can either automatically submit the job, or an operator can manually select, preview and then send the job.

Step 6 – Submitting the pages

Once a job is released to the printer, the individual pages stored in the Rendered Print Job file are split up to the individual pages and sent to the printer. As the pages are in a printer ready format, no further image processing is required, and so the printer is saturated with pages, ensuring it is kept busy.


Neo Application
Neo Application
Neo Application
1
Timestone Print Job Files (.TPJ)
RIPTime
RIPTime
RIPTime
3
4
Rendered Timestone Print Job Files (.TPJ)
2
PrintTime
5
Printer configuration data
Individual rendered pages
Printer
6

5

Configuring *RIPTime*

RIPTime is quite simple to configure. The following is required before the configuration can be completed:

- The Print Job File hot folder needs to be created and shared across the network
- The *RIPTime* output folder needs to be created and shared across the network
- *PrintTime* needs to be installed and running on a workstation that is connected to the network

Creating the folders

There are two folders that must be created before *RIPTime* can be configured.

Create the Print Job File hot folder

The Print Job file hot folder should be created on a machine that is visible on the network to both the *Neo* applications and *RIPTime* stations. It is recommended (but not obligatory) that this machine is used *only* to host the Print Job file hot folder to minimise network traffic.

Create a folder on a large hard drive, and share it over the network.

Create the RIPTime output folder

The *RIPTime* output folder will host the output from the *RIPTime* stations. Generally, this folder will reside on the *PrintTime* workstation. It is very important that this workstation be fitted with large and very fast hard drives. In particular, you should consider RAID drives due to the high volumes to data both stored and transferred to and from this workstation.

Create a folder and share it over the network.

Start and configure *PrintTime*

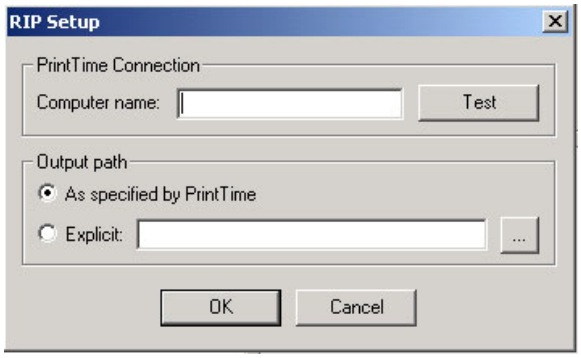
On the *PrintTime* workstation, start and check the configuration of both *PrintTime* and the printer driver. Check the *PrintTime* and printer driver documentation for details.

The *RIPTime* workflow will only function with printer drivers written by Timestone Software.

Setting the Program defaults

Once the hot folders have been created, *PrintTime* and the printer driver have been correctly configured, you can begin configuring *RIPTime*. Start the *RIPTime* application. Note that before the application is configured that the title bar simply says **RIPTime**.

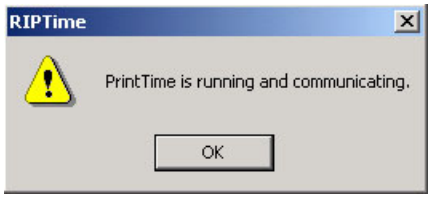
Choose **File > Setup RIP...** The setup dialog opens.



Specify the PrintTime computer

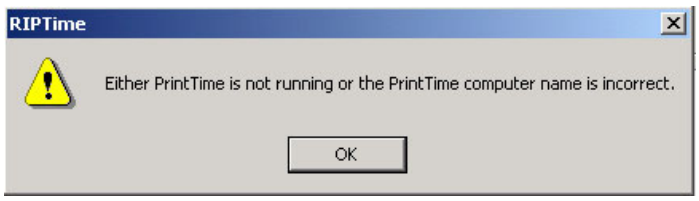
RIPTime needs to communicate with the *PrintTime* machine connected to the target printer. On this machine, ensure *PrintTime* is running and correctly configured. If you haven't yet configured *PrintTime* and the printer driver, do so now.

Enter the *PrintTime* workstation computer name and press **Test**. If *PrintTime* is running, a message is displayed noting that *RIPTime* is communicating correctly with *PrintTime*.



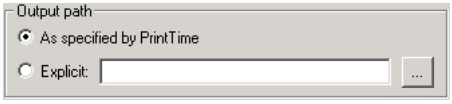
If an error is given that *RIPTime* cannot communicate with *PrintTime*, check that:

- *PrintTime* is running
- The *PrintTime* workstation computer name you entered is correct
- The *PrintTime* workstation is accessible across the network

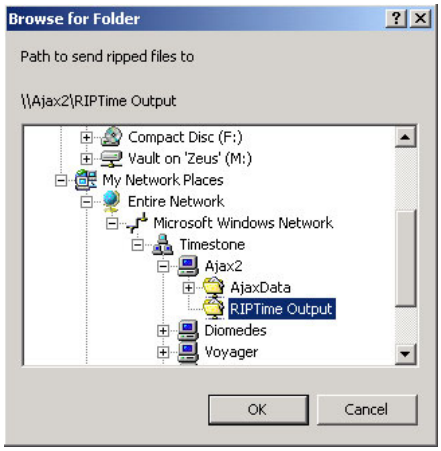


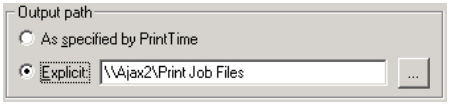
Specify the RIPTime output folder

RIPTime needs to know where to deposit the rendered pages. In the **Output path** entry panel, choose **Explicit**, then either type the path to the output folder, or click the **Browse** button. A **Folder Browse** dialog opens.

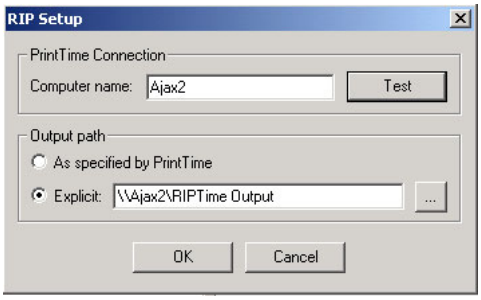


Browse to the output folder, choose it, then click **OK**. The path is entered.



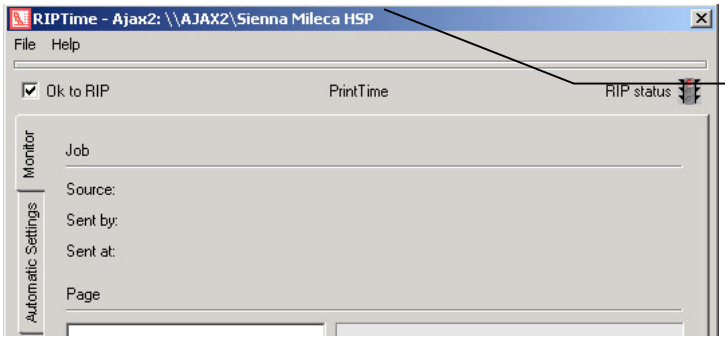


Once these details have been entered, the **Setup** dialog will appear:



Confirming the configuration

After successfully configuring these details, choose **OK**. Check the *RIPTime* title bar. It will now contain the configuration information, confirming it is ready to receive jobs.



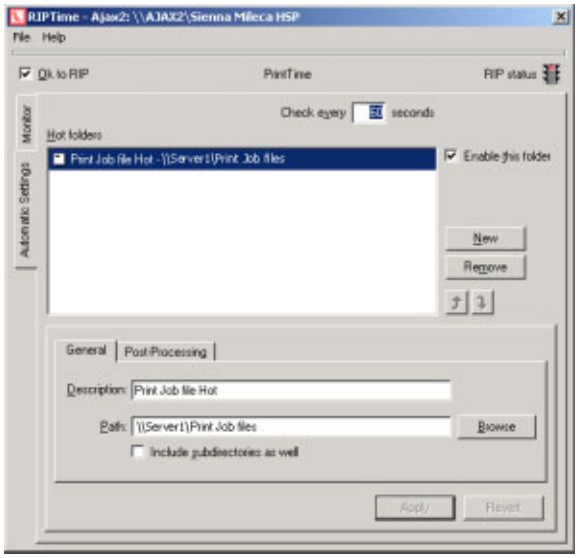
Note the configuration information now appears in the title bar.

Setting the input Hot Folders

Jobs are sent to *RIPTime* via hot folders you define somewhere in your network. Each *Neo* application will send print job files to this hot folder, where it can be picked up by the *RIPTime* stations.

You can define as many hot folders as you wish, but it is recommended (for simplicity of administering the system) that you only define one.

Hot folders are defined by choosing the **Automatic Settings** tab.



Create a new hot folder

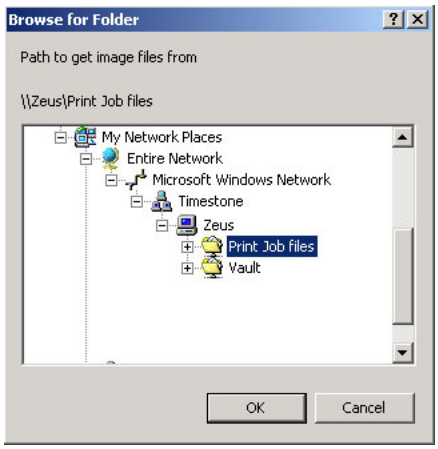
Click **New** in the **Automatic Settings** tab. A new, un-named entry appears in the list of hot folders.

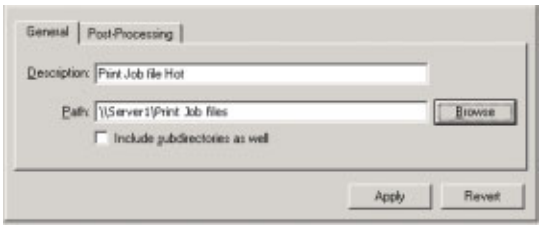
Name the Hot Folder

Click inside the **Description** entry box and type a name for this hot folder.

Specify the Hot Folder location

Either type the path to the hot folder, or click the **Browse** button. A **Folder Browse** dialog opens. Browse to the hot folder location then choose **OK**. The path is entered to the box. If you want the hot folder subdirectories to be monitored as well, check **Include subdirectories as well**.

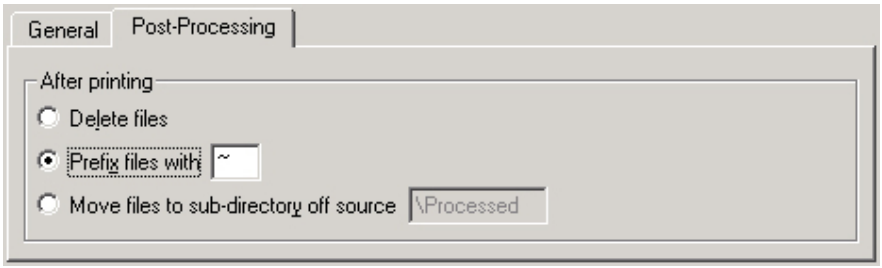




Once these details have been entered, click **Apply**. Note that the settings are saved and the hot folder in the list named.

Post-processing

After a file Print Job file has been processed, you can perform several post-processing actions on it. To set these options, choose the **Post-processing** tab.



Delete the files

If you want the original Print Job files to be deleted after they have been processed, choose **Delete files**. The files will be deleted after *RIPTime* has processed them.

Prefix files with

After processing, files can be prefixed with a character. This prefix will prevent the files from being re-processed by *RIPTime*, but you will have to remove the prefix to re-submit the job if necessary.

Move to a sub-directory off-source

After processing, you can move the print job file to a directory off-source. This will prevent the file from being processed again by *RIPTime*, but makes re-submitting it again a simple matter of moving the file back into the hot folder.

Once you have made the necessary settings, choose **Apply**.

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Using *RIPTime*

Once configured, *RIPTime* is ready to be used. A normal configuration for *RIPTime* would 2 or more *RIPTime* stations, each monitoring a number (possibly the same) hot folders for Timestone Print Job files. These files are created by any of the *Neo* applications.

Creating Timestone Print Job files

Neo applications can print to a number of different target 'printers':

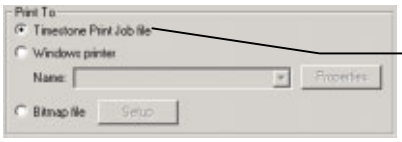
- Standard Windows NT / Windows 2000 printer drivers
- Bitmap image files
- Timestone Print Job files

Choosing and printing a Timestone Print Job file

To print to a Timestone Print Job file, open the job file you wish to print. In a *Neo* application choose **File > Print Setup**. The **Print Setup** dialog opens.

Print Setup

Because a Timestone Print Job file is a self-contained file, there are few settings you need to make in the **Print Setup** dialog. Simply choose to print to a **Timestone Print Job file**. Note that most of the options are greyed out when you make the selection. Choose **OK** – the dialog is dismissed.

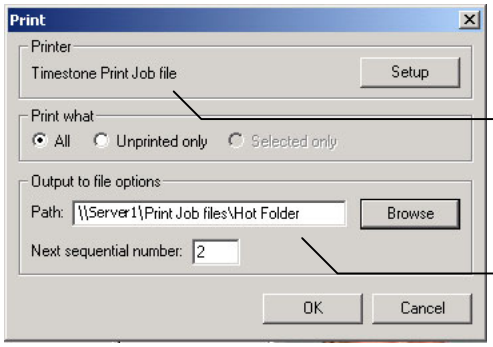


Choose the Timestone Print Job option to print to

Printing to a Timestone Print Job file

When you are ready to print the job, choose **File > Print** or click the **Print** button in the toolbar. The **Print** dialog opens. Choose which jobs you want to print as you would normally do.

Next, enter the **Output to file options** path. Either type the path or click the **Browse** button. Browse to the *RIPTime* hot folder.

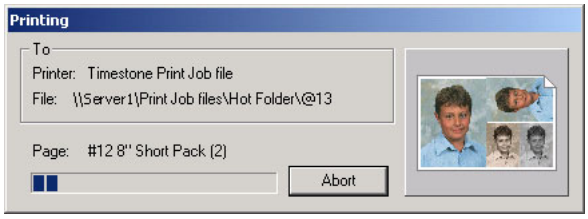


Note that Timestone Print Job is selected as the target printer

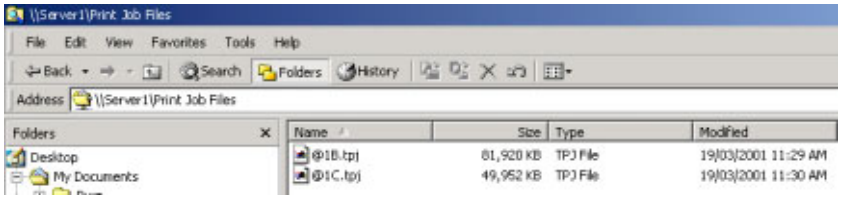
Choose the Timestone Print Job folder as the target folder

Create the Timestone Print Job file

To create the Timestone Print Job file, choose **OK** in the **Print** dialog. The Timestone Print Job file is created and saved to the hot folder.



After the file has been printed, you will see a .TPJ in the specified folder. This is the file that will be processed by *RIPTime*.



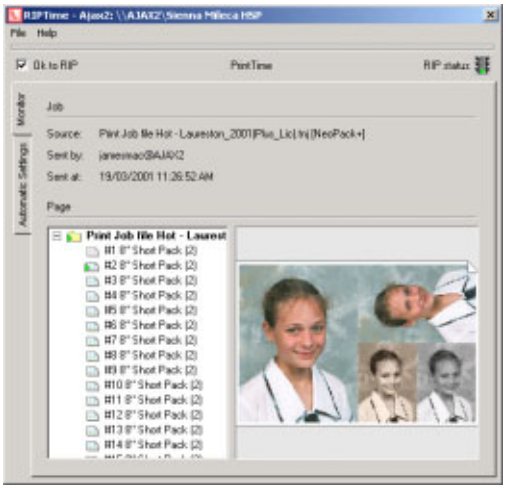
The TPJ files deposited to the *RIPTime* hot folder

RIPping job files

Once the Timestone Print Job files have been created, they can be processed by *RIPTime*.

Starting *RIPTime*

Launch *PrintTime* on the *PrintTime* workstation, and then *RIPTime* on all the *RIPTime* stations. Make sure each of the *RIPTime* workstations are set to **OK to RIP**. The *RIPTime* stations will pick up the Timestone Print Job files and begin processing the jobs. As the jobs are processed, the rendered pages will be saved to a rendered Timestone Print Job file in the output folder specified earlier.



Information displayed

Various pieces of information are displayed while the Timestone Print Job files are processed by *RIPTime*.

Job source

The source of the job is displayed, including:

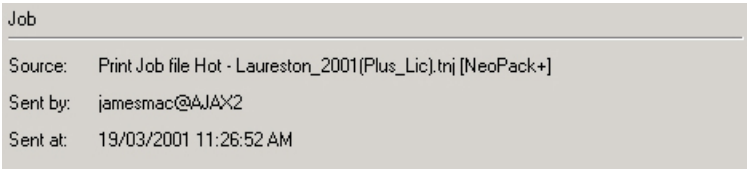
- The type of job being processed
- The name of the originating file

Sent by

- The operator who created the file being processed

Sent at

- The date and time the job was printed from the *Neo* application



Rendered Timestone Print Job file

Once completed, *RIPTime* will have created a rendered Timestone Print Job file in the output folder defined earlier. This file is ready to be sent to the printer by *PrintTime*.

Continuing processing

Once the Timestone Print Job file has been processed by *RIPTime*, it will continue monitoring the hot folder until another file arrives. This file will also be picked up and processed in the same way.

Sending the job with *PrintTime*

Once *RIPTime* has finished processing the job, it can be sent to the printer using *PrintTime*.

✍ For more detailed information regarding using *PrintTime*, please see the *PrintTime* user documentation.

Sending the jobs

PrintTime can be configured to send jobs either automatically or manually. Automatic operation is achieved by setting up hot folders, while manual operation relies on an operator choosing and submitting jobs or individual pages manually.

Automatic submission

PrintTime can be configured to monitor hot folders in a similar fashion to *RIPTime*. When a rendered Timestone Print Job file arrives in the hot folder after being processed by *RIPTime*, it will be added to the printer queue and sent to the printer.

✍ Please see the *PrintTime* documentation for information regarding setting up and configuring *PrintTime* hot folders.

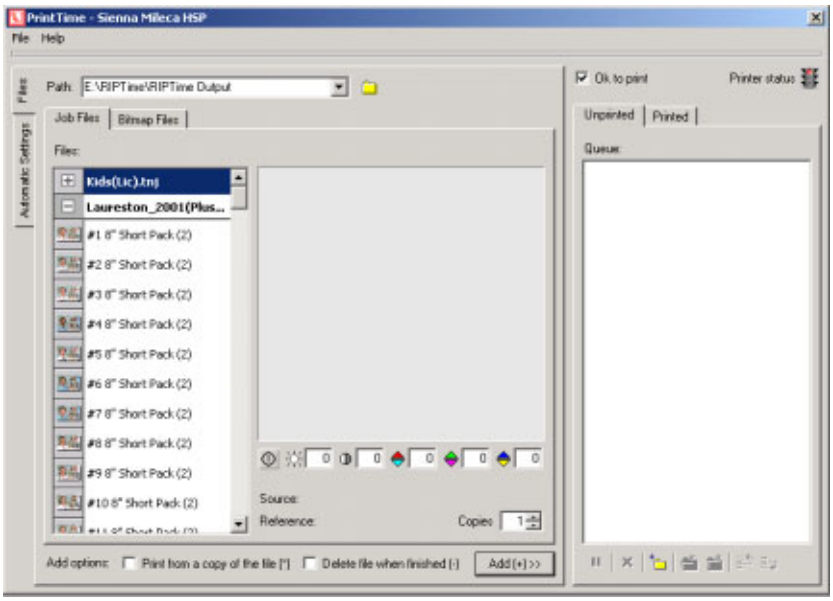
Manual submission

Jobs can be manually selected and added to the *PrintTime* queue in the normal way. Please consult the *PrintTime* documentation for these procedures.

Sending a job

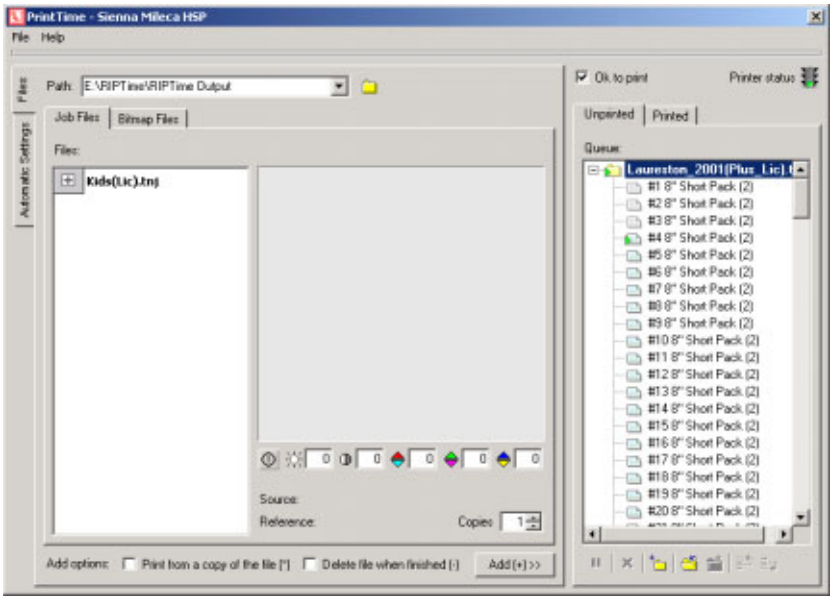
Whether a job is added automatically or manually to the *PrintTime* queue, once it has been added, and *PrintTime* is set to **OK to print**, the rendered Timestone Print Job file will be sent directly to the printer. You can monitor the progress of the job as it is submitted to the printer in two places:

- *PrintTime*
- The Windows Printer queue



Monitoring the job in PrintTime

As a job is sent to the printer, you can monitor its progress in the **Unprinted** tab. As each page is sent, it will be dimmed and the green arrow will progress to the next page.



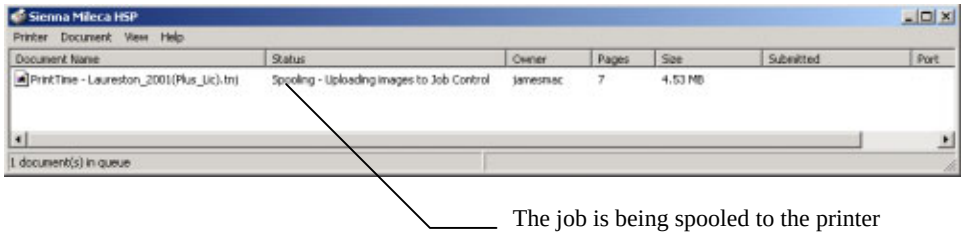
Monitoring the job in the Windows printer queue

Each job submitted to a Windows NT printer driver will appear in the normal Windows NT printer queue. You can monitor the job by opening the Windows printer queue. Do this by:

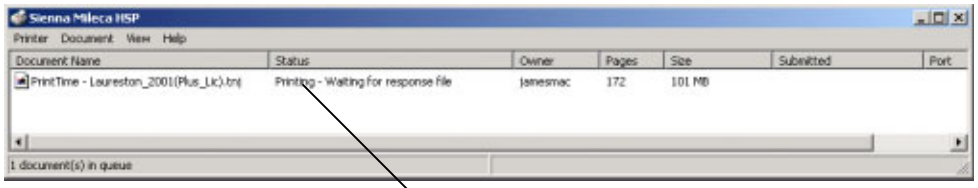
- Double-clicking the printer icon in the system tray
- Open the Printers folder and double-clicking the printer.

The printer queue opens. There are two phases to jobs being submitted to the printer queue:

- Spooling – sending the job to the printer
- Printing – the printer is printing the job



The job is being spooled to the printer



The job has been processed and is waiting for the printer to finish printing

Testing a job

Individual pages in a rendered Timestone Print Job file can be sent to the printer to test the job before it is completely sent to the printer.

Choose the pages to test

Expand the pages in *PrintTime* and select the pages to test. Add them to the queue.

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