

pdq 4 Epson Pro

User Manual

Table of contents	Page
Introduction	3
Installation	4
System Requirements	4
Setup	5
Interface	6
Menu Bar	7
Settings Window	7
System Settings	11
Nesting	11
Color Management	13
Hot Folder	14
Adding Jobs	15
Rotating jobs	15
Duplicate Jobs	15
Crop+	16
Tiling	16
Edge	17
Droplets	18
Start Button	19
Additional information.	20
About Custom Profiling	20
Future MacOS versions and drivers	20

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing pdq 4 Epson Pro. With this App, you will be able to produce prints in an easier way than with the Epson driver only, avoid printing different from what you intended and save on ink & paper. Epson offers high quality drivers for MacOS, often with better quality than costly third party Raster Image Processor (RIP) applications. But using the Epson driver can be daunting and confusing; there are many unexplained settings, and previews often do not match actual output. This leads to many prints coming out different from what you intended and ends up costing you both time and expensive ink & paper.

AppForce.One developed pdq to overcome these issues, by offering you a RIP like application that shows exactly what will be printed, both on sheets and rolls. By combining the high quality of the Epson driver as a print engine and an intuitive interface with a color engine, nesting capabilities and more, users can unlock more printing power in a very affordable way. You are very likely to save on ink & media by using pdq to easily make up for the investment.

INSTALLATION

pdq is purchased from the Mac AppStore and was developed to support up to and including MacOS 10.15 Catalina. Installation is as easy as any Mac AppStore App; you simply click purchase and within seconds, the application is installed. After purchase, you will find pdq in your Applications folder.

System Requirements

Prior to using pdq you have to make sure your setup is compatible. There are three requirements;

1) You need to have a compatible Epson Printer. Currently these Epson models are supported;

SC-P400
SC-P600
SC-P800
SC-P7000
SC-P7500
SC-P8000
SC-P9000
SC-P9500
SC-P10000
3880
4450
4800
4880
4900
5500
7000
7500
7600
7700
7800
7880
7890
7900
9000
9500
9600
9700
9800
9880
9890
9900
11880

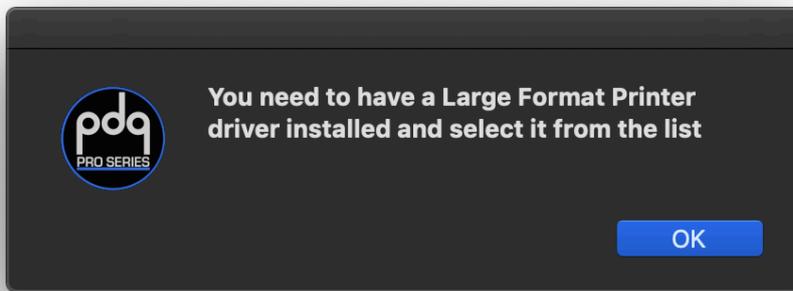
2) You need to install the Epson Printer driver (Downloaded from Epson)

There is a specific driver for each version of MacOS, so ensure you download and install the correct one.

3) You need to add a printer on your MacOS that connects to your printer using a network connection, wired or wireless. USB connected printers are currently not supported. All current compatible Epson printers are equipped with a network interface. The advantage over USB is that you can print from anywhere in your network to the printer, including wireless connected Macs.

SETUP

When you first launch pdq, you will be prompted to select a printer:



it will show a list of available Epson Printers on your network. If you see no printers there, check if you have a printer driver installed and if not, add one using Bonjour.



Select the Epson printer listed that you want to print to continue. If no printers are listed, add them using the Mac Printer menu in preferences and click the Refresh button once done. The newly added printer will then show.

INTERFACE

After selecting a printer, the Main window is showing the name of the printer at the bottom left, followed by the status. The status of your printer is refreshed on a regular interval.

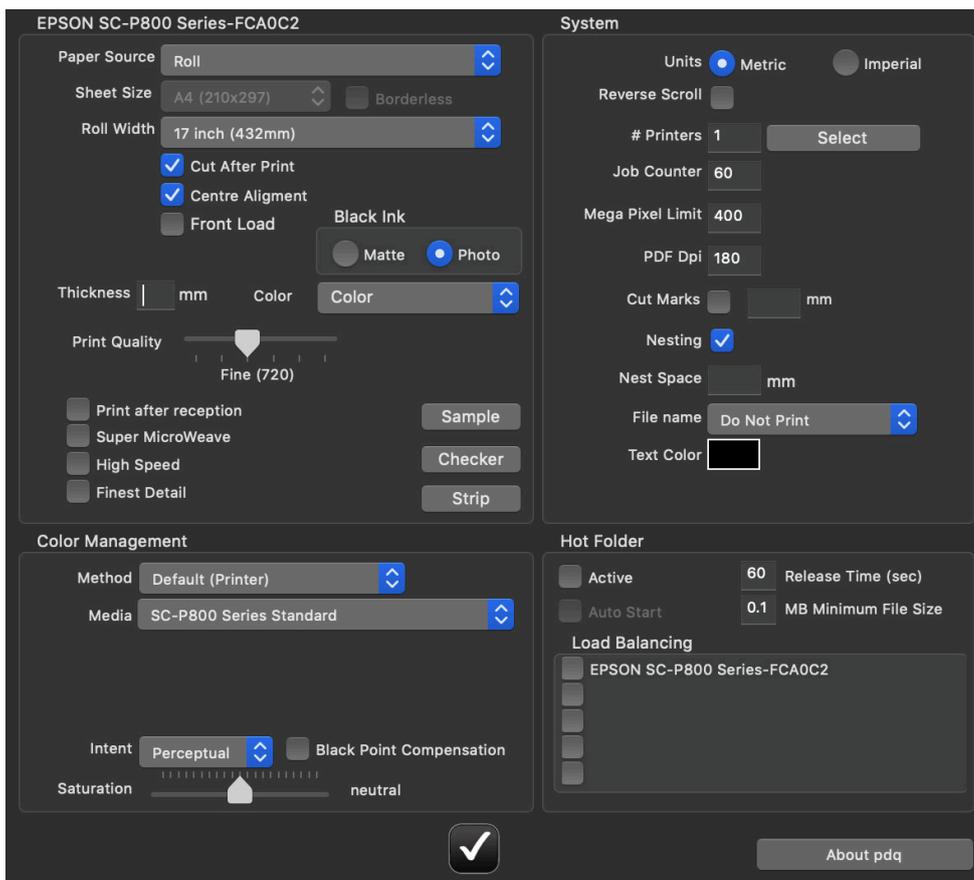


The ink and maintenance cartridge status is also always shown, so you never run out unexpectedly. When a cartridge drops below 10%, a red line will appear indicating you should prepare to replace that cartridge soon.

At the top left, you can see the Menu bar, with buttons for various options. Below that is a list of loaded jobs. Once jobs are loaded, they will be shown on the Preview Area at the right hand side of the window. Note that you can resize the Window to show more items of the list, or even take pdq to full screen mode. The 14 Droplets are shown next to the Preview. Each interface part is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

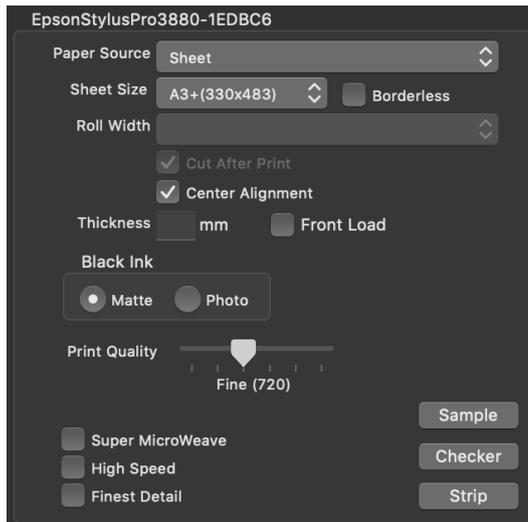
MENU BAR

The Menu bar has eight buttons that control pdq. The first one is the settings button. Clicking this button will open up the Settings Window:



Although this may seem a little daunting at first, you will only need to change settings occasionally, and everything you select is stored when you click the OK checkmark button.

There are four sections in the Settings window:



At the top left, you see the selected printer, and the current settings for media and Print Quality. The Paper Source can be set to sheet or roll (if your printer has a roll option).

Depending on the paper source, either the Sheet size or Roll Width menu is enabled. If you are printing on sheets, this is where you enter the size of the loaded sheet. If you are using a roll, you select the roll width.

pdq will take care of page size from here on, based on this selection. You can concentrate on the print job dimensions and the preview will show you how it will print.

Below the media selection are some other printer settings;

Cut After Print

This checkbox determines if the printer should cut your printjobs from the roll (if available) or not.

Center Alignment

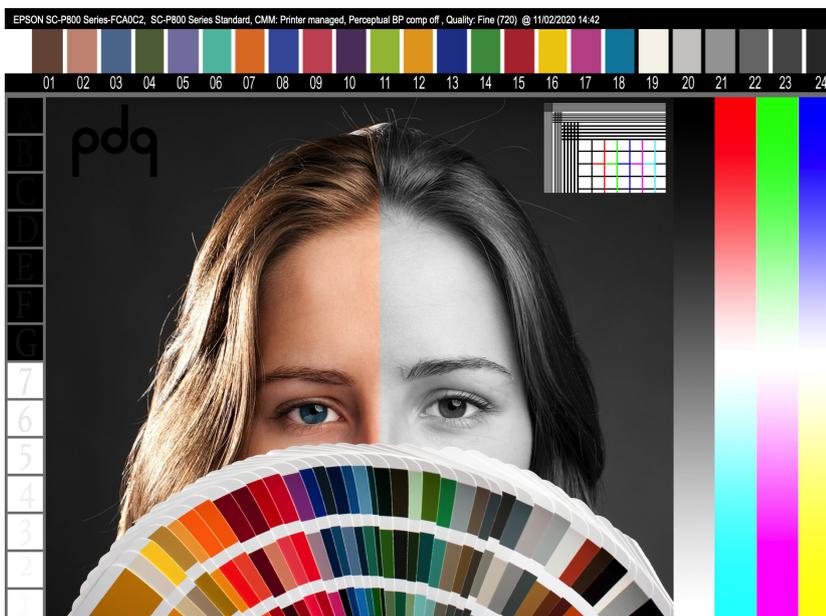
This checkbox determines if the jobs are center horizontally (in roll mode) or centered on the sheet or not.

Front Load

Some printers offer a front load option. Select that to allow loading heavier media from the front tray. Normal media is loaded from the sheetfeeder (or roll).

Black Ink

Your Epson printer has a specific ink for Matte and Satin/Gloss black. Select the correct Black before starting your prints.



Thickness

For loading thick media, you can enter the thickness in mm

Color

Your Epson printer has a special mode for Color, Advanced Black & White and Black

Print Quality

The slider for print quality has six quality levels. Depending on the loaded media, the wanted level can be selected here.

Super MicroWeave

This option enables the Super MicroWeave mode

High Speed

Selecting this mode speeds up printing

Finest detail

The Finest detail mode increases the print quality.

Sample Button

When you click the Sample button, a sample job is added to the list, with the current settings printed on the top of the sample job;

This sample can be printed as a reference for later on, to verify the quality of the printer. The sample contains specific items for quality control. At the top, you will see a text line which describes the settings used for this sample. Below that is a ColorChecker strip. Using AppForce.Once ColorChecker (also available in the Mac AppStore) you can measure this strip with a (not included) X-Rite i1Pro. This will enable you to verify if the print passes quality control in terms of color accuracy.

At the left hand side are seven black and seven white squares. Inside the black boxes there are letters printed, ranging from A to G. In proper lighting, you should be able to distinguish the last few letters. On the best quality media, you should be able to see all letters from B. This pattern ensures you have details in dark areas of your print. The pdq icon to the right of the black boxes should also be visible.

If not, check the ColorManagement section in this manual.

Inside the white boxes, you will see numbers listed from 7 to 1. You should be able to see all numbers.

The left side of the woman is in color and should show natural skin tones. The right side should be neutral black and white, and show detail in the shadow parts of her hair.

The Color bars should all be smooth and saturated at the ends. Make sure that all nozzles are functioning before making a Sample Print. Store the sample print for future use; when you want to verify the printer is working correctly, make a new print and compare it to the stored one.

Checker Button

The Checker button adds a job that is compatible to the visual color checker from X-Rite (not included). **YOU PLACE THE X-RITE COLORCHECKER VER A CHECK PRINT FROM PDQ TO VISUALLY INSPECT THE COLORS. THERE SHOULD BE NO GREAT VISUAL COLOR DIFFERENCE NOTICE-ABLE.**



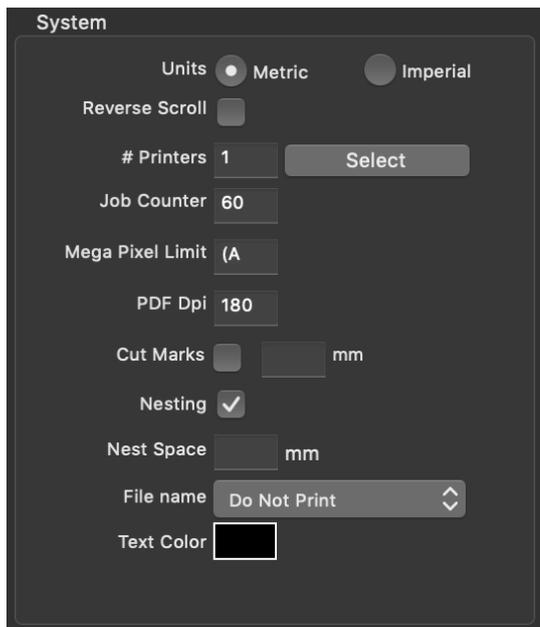
EpsonStylusPro3880-1ED8C6, Epson Stylus Pro 3880_3885_3890 EnhancedMattPaper, CMM: Vendor managed, ., Quality: High @ 08/02/2020 13:40

Strip



Like the ColorCheckers strip in the sample button, this small job can be added to any other set of jobs, to print a control strip which you can measure with the (not included) ColorChecker App and (not included) i1Pro Spectrophotometer.

SYSTEM SETTINGS



Units

In system settings you can change other preferences. By default, pdq opens up using the Units defined by your Mac Setup (goto Advanced menu in your Mac's Language and Region to change).

You can overrule this setting manually by clicking either Metric (mm/meter) or Imperial (inches/feet).

Reverse Scroll

The preview area can be scrolled through using the trackpad or mouse scroll function. If you like the direction to reverse, check Reverse Scroll.

#Printers

pdq can drive up to 5 printers. Set the number of printers you want to use here.

MegaPixel Limit

pdq supports files up to 400.000.000 pixels (400 MP) by default. Depending on your Mac's specifications, you might be able to handle bigger files by increasing this number, but you are not recommended to do so; 400 MP is larger than any image that currently can be produced normally.

PDF Dpi

As pdq can handle PDF files, you can define in which resolution pdq renders them before printing. It is recommended to use a resolution that is a multiple of 180, so 180, 360 or 720, as Epson has those resolutions as a print resolution. Note that you do not need to set it to 360 to get sharp prints; one pixel is printed by a matrix of dots, so you never need the same resolution as your printer. But using a value of 180 or 360 makes scaling your rendered images easier and therefore sharper.

Nesting

Nesting allows pdq to put subsequent jobs next to each other on the sheet or roll. This can greatly reduce the costs of printing. pdq uses a fairly simple row and column method for nesting; placing the next job next to the previous one, then adding a new row when needed, and in sheet mode, a new sheet when needed.

You control the nesting by either rotating a job using the Rotate button, or drag a job in the list. To see which job in the list you need to drag, click on that job in the print preview. The related job will then be highlighted in the list. You can also edit the number of copies, or use the Crop+ button to alter the dimensions of the job, or type in a new width or height in the list.

Nest Space

With nesting mode on, each job is spaced with the value set here. By default the Epson edge margins are 3 mm, so if you want to match these inbetween nested jobs, select 3 mm here also. Any change to the Nest Space will be shown in the preview.

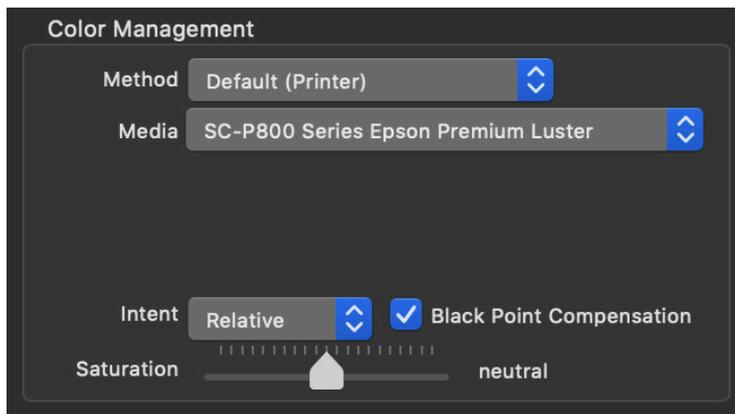
FileName

By default, the name of the file is not printed. But in some cases, it can be handy to add the name of the job to the print itself, by choosing Lower left, Centered Bottom, Lower right or Upper left.

Text Color

The Filename will be superimposed on the selected position in the color you choose here. Choose a different color to make the name stand out more or less.

COLOR MANAGEMENT SECTION



One of the big advantages of pdq is that it can use Vendor ICC profiles that come with your printer, just like the printer driver does. This ensures out of the box support for all Epson media. By default, pdq uses these vendor ICC profiles. But as pdq has a built in color engine, you can also create and use your own ICC profiles. When you select None in the Method menu, you can enter a name for the media you want to profile, and add an email address. Then you click on Target, which adds a target print to the queue. Make sure you print that without changing the settings, and either measure the ICC target yourself using X-Rite i1Publish (not included) or send it in to be measured for you and converted to an ICC profile.

With a custom ICC profile, you select the Application Method, and then load your custom ICC Profile that was measured from the Target print created with pdq.

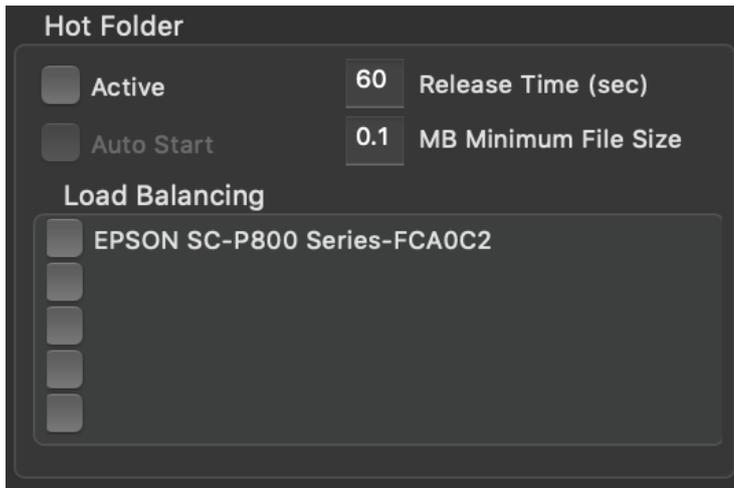
Intent

All four rendering intents are supported; Perceptual, Relative, Saturation and Absolute. We recommend using relative for all higher quality media types. If you are using a low quality paper, you might get a more lively (but not more accurate) print if using Perceptual. When using Relative, we recommend you use Black Point Compensation. This scales only the black to the density range of your printer-ink-media combination, and prevents loss of details in dark areas,

The Saturation mode is intended for business graphics to print lively colors and should not be used for photographic prints.

The Absolute mode is intended for proofing, and will compensate the paper color; white might not stay unprinted in this mode, as the color white of the paper is often not 100% neutral white.

HOT FOLDER



The Hotfolder section offers the capability of automatically processing files from certain folders (hotfolder) in a specific way. These jobs are processed according to the Droplet setting (see Droplets section in this manual)

Active Checkbox

With the Active checkbox on, pdq will monitor the set hotfolders and process jobs when they arrive.

Auto Start

Once Active is checked, the Auto start checkbox controls is jobs are printed automatically. When checked, any job that arrives in a defined hotfolder will be processed and printed automatically.

The Release Time and Minimum files size control when processing starts, usefull for slow incoming jobs.

Load Balancing

When you want to produce as fast as possible or spread the print load over multiple printers, you can check load Balancing for each of the printers you wish to use. The least busy printer will get the next print job.

OK Checkmark button

Once all settings are completed, click this button to return to the main window.

ADDING JOBS

There are three ways of adding jobs to pdq.

1) + Add Button

This opens up a file requester in which you can choose compatible files. (JPG, TIFE, PDF)
All chosen files will be added to the list with a thumbnail, dimensions, resolution, copies, printer and ICC profile.

2) Drag

You can also drag files from the finder to either the window, or a specific droplet (see Droplet Section for more information) to add them to the list.

3) Hotfolder

For fully automatic printing, you can use the hotfolders defined in Droplets (see Droplet section for more information)

ROTATING JOBS

The Rotate button rotates the selected job in the list by 90 degrees counter clockwise. To rotate 180 or 270 degrees, simply press the button again.

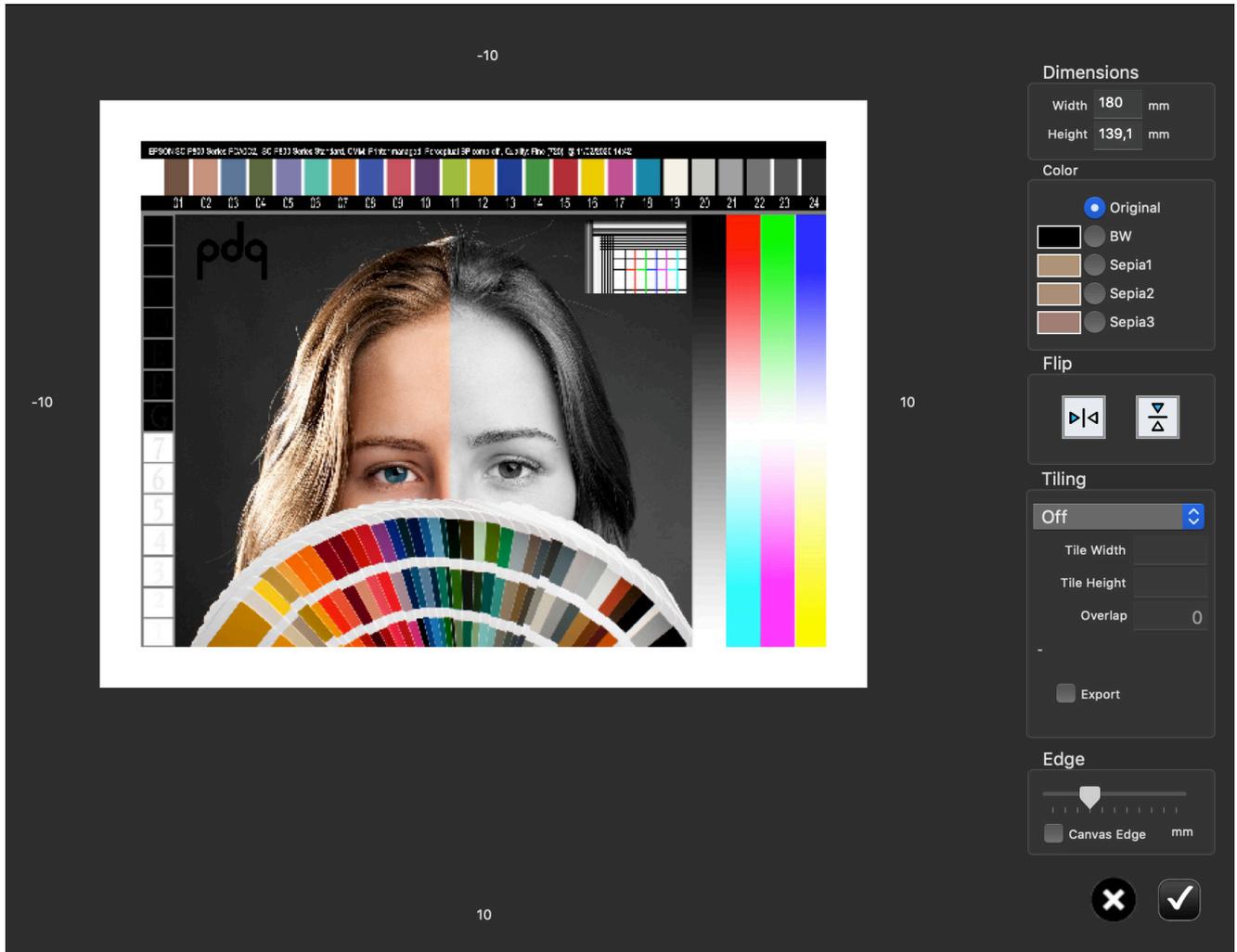
Duplicate Jobs

When you need multiple prints from the same file, but in different dimensions, you can duplicate a job by selecting it and clicking the duplicate button. This will add a duplicate to the job list, which you then can change in terms of dimensions or orientation

CROP+

The Crop+ button enables the user to edit the job in more advanced ways. Select a job in the joblist and click on the Crop+ button.

This will open up a new Window:



Dimensions

When you make any changes, the new dimensions will be displayed here.

Color

You can convert an image to Black and White, Sepia or a custom duotone by selecting the color radio buttons. To change the color, click on the square to the left of the radio buttons.

Flip

Flip an image horizontally, vertically or both using the flip buttons.

Tiling

This features, usually only found in expensive RIP software, you can easily make prints that are larger than your printer by tiling the image into several smaller jobs, that together form a larger one. You can select either Horizontal or Vertical tiling or both, and enter the dimensions of the tiles you want. The overlap setting determines how much of the previous image is to overlap on the next one, which is usefull for wallpaper.

The Export checkbox will export the files to the desktop rather than the pdq job list.

Edge

Here you can add a white margin to a job, using the Edge slider. By checking the Canvas Edge checkbox, you can create canvas edges that allow canvas prints to be mounted.

Delete Button

Select a job in the job list and click the Delete button to remove them from the list.
To quickly remove multiple items, keep clicking delete.

DROPLETS

Droplets are useful for specific jobs that require specific settings, such as a borderless (bleed) print of 10x15 (4x6"). They can be activated in two ways; either by clicking on the droplet icon itself, or by dragging a file from the finder to the droplet icon. By default, pdq starts with a set of droplets specific to either metric or imperial units. The following example shows the Metric Droplets window, which can be activated by pressing the Droplets button in the menu bar.

Drop...	Active	Name	Width	Height	Method	Media	Ink	icc	Color	Hot Folder	Prn
01	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10x15	95	146	crop	Epson Stylus Pro 3880_3885_3890 PremiumLusterPhotoPaper	Photo			Macintosh HD:Users:bkrijg...	1
02	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13x18	121	172	crop	Epson Stylus Pro 3880_3885_3890 PremiumSemilossPhotoPaper	Photo				1
03	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A4	204	291	crop	Epson Stylus Pro 3880_3885_3890 UltraSmoothFineArtPaper	Matte				1
04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3	291	414	crop						1
05	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3+	323	476	crop						1
06	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A2	414	588	crop						1
07	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cust	200	200	fit						1
08	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10x15 B	102	152	crop						1
09	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13x18 B	127	178	crop						1
10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A4 B	210	297	crop						1
11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3 B	297	420	crop						1
12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A3+ B	329	483	crop						1
13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MaxW B	432		crop						1
14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cust	200	200	fit						1

Original

Stretch

Crop

Fit

You can define up to 14 Droplets, each with their own behavior. The Active button determines if a droplet is active (and visible) or not. The Name is shown on the droplet icon in the main interface. Width and Height determine the dimensions of the job. You can either specify Width, Height or both. If an image does not have the same aspect ratio (width : height) then the Method determines how the image is placed; Stretch will stretch the job to the set dimensions, after rotating if that gives a better fit. Crop is the normal method for borderless printing; any part that does not fit when scaling up the image to fill the selected dimensions will be cropped off. Fit will shrink the image until both width and height fit within the defined dimensions. You will see white edges in this case unless the file aspect ratio matches the droplet.

The Media column will show a menu of available media types for the active printer.

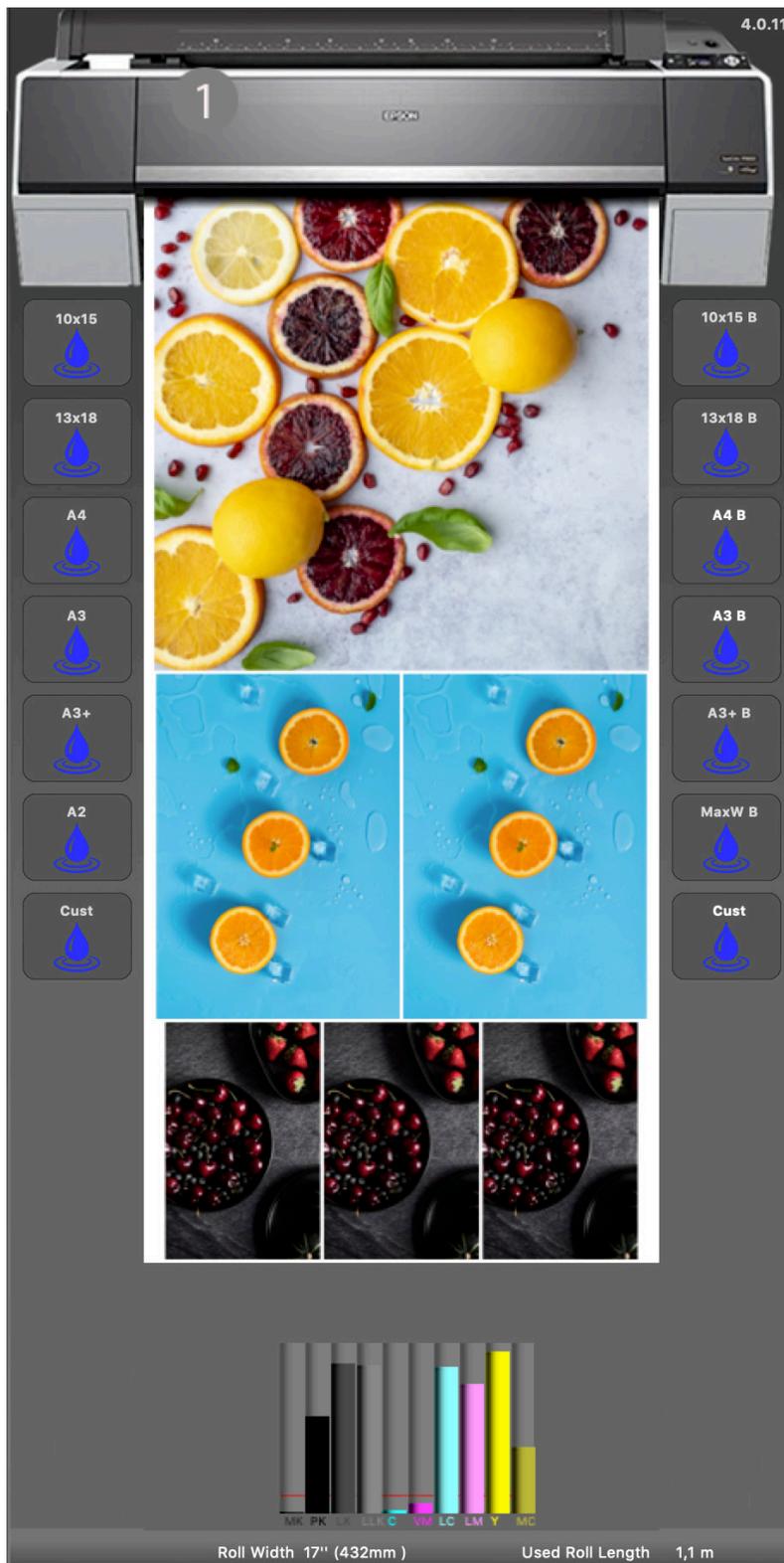
The ink setting determines the ink to be used for this job. Only jobs with matching ink settings will start. The ICC setting allows a custom profile to be linked to the hotfolder. Color allows the user to select a color they like for the droplets. The hotfolder setting can be used to link a folder to this droplet. The PRN number is the printer number to which jobs are to be set.

START BUTTON

The Start button will only be enabled when there are valid jobs waiting and no invalid jobs in the job list. Invalid jobs will show on the preview with a red X and an exclamation mark, indicating that they are too large to print on the selected media. Either decrease the dimensions or change the loaded media size.

Once you click start, pdq will show some popups to confirm that the active settings are correct, and provide possible warnings when settings are not ideal.

Before starting it is recommend to scroll through the preview if the preview contains multiple pages or a long roll. this will show you if you can save on media by rotating or changing the job order by dragging jobs in the loblist.



Note that the preview shows how the printer will produce the jobs you selected and shows the selected paper size in relation to the printer and the jobs.

Roll Width/Sheet size

At the bottom right of the Main window, you will see the currently selected media. To the right of that, pdq will show you how many sheets, of how much roll length is needed to print all jobs.

This is useful to see if your printer has enough media left, and helps when you try out saving media by nesting differently; each time you change the joblist, the preview will update and show the length (or sheets) used

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

For frequently asked questions., please visit AppForce.One. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us by email using support@appforce.one or the feedback form on AppForce.One.

About PDF handling.

PDF files are rendered into pages in RGB mode. Eventhough PDF's that contain CMYK or PMS colors will be rendered, we are not claiming that pdq is a proofing RIP and produces pantone colors and handles CMYK 100% accurately. It is intended for generic printing of PDF only. PDF files created for printing should ideally be created for sRGB, which will produce the best result in most cases.

About Custom Profiling

Eventhough pdq has built in Vendor ICC support, it may be possible that you can obtain higher color accuracy when profiling your specific printer-ink-media combination using either the built in target, or your own target. Please note that Epson drivers are RGB based, so all profiles are also RGB based and cannot be accurately created from CMYK ICC targets. Contact us if you have specific profiling issues or questions.

Future MacOS versions and drivers

AppForce.One cannot guarantee that pdq will work on not yet released versions of MacOS or in combination with new drivers. If you do have an issue with a specific Epson driver, please contact us and we will see if we can add your driver as a supported model. As we use the MacOS driver as a gateway to the printer, adding support for a printer can sometimes be easy.

