Frequently Asked Questions: Packaging Layout Automation Software for KODAK PRINERGY Workflow

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What is Packaging Layout Automation?

Packaging Layout Automation (PLA) Software for KODAK PRINERGY Workflow enables you to automate the creation of packaging layouts. It is a Kodak PRINERGY Workflow software feature that works in conjunction with Rules-Based Automation software. With PLA, you can enter information in a fully customizable layout ticket to quickly and efficiently create layouts. You can set up validation rules to catch common errors that operators typically make. For example, you can set up a rule to ensure that the die fits on a web of a given width or on a specific offset press sheet.

Is Packaging Layout Automation a replacement for KODAK PANDORA Step-and-Repeat Software?

No, PLA is designed to be a simple interface for creating layouts and for automating the creation of packaging layouts from XML data that comes from a management information system (MIS) or from a KODAK INSITE Prepress Portal system. Unlike the Pandora software that has a comprehensive user interface, PLA is purely parameter driven. In PLA, after you enter information such as the sheet size and the location of the die and artworks files, the system creates the layout automatically and imports it into a Prinergy job via Rules-Based Automation. Internally, PLA uses the Pandora layout engine to create layouts; however, PLA does not support all the features of Pandora. The product is intended to be a simple automated tool for initial layout creation and is not designed to replace all the functionality of Pandora.

If Packaging Layout Automation generates layouts automatically, is Pandora still required?

In some cases, Pandora is still necessary. For example, PLA cannot automatically resolve non-rectangular bleed overlaps from die files. To resolve such overlaps, you must open Pandora. Pandora is still required to place certain types of lap data marks or station numbers on folding carton layouts that have been created by Packaging Layout Automation.

Can a management information system drive Packaging Layout Automation?

Yes, everything that can be done from within the PLA user interface can be driven by writing an XML file in the PLA schema format and dragging it to an RBA hot folder. You can also create an XSLT translation file that will transform an XML file in the schema of your MIS or ticketing system to the internal schema of PLA.

In theory, any MIS that writes XML can be used with PLA; however, Kodak cannot guarantee that every MIS that writes XML can be fully integrated with PLA. A Kodak support representative must analyze your MIS schema and set up the system, because every MIS is different, as are customer requirements.

Can Packaging Layout Automation be driven from InSite Prepress Portal?

Yes, InSite Prepress Portal can drive PLA. However, because customer requirements differ from case to case, a Kodak support representative must set up this workflow.

What workflows does Packaging Layout Automation support?

Die-based workflow

Specify a die, sheet size, and job name, and PLA will create a layout. You can also specify artwork file locations, smart marks, a bleed amount, a layout name, and distortion compensation. In addition, PLA can automatically size your sheet based on the size of the die and the specified margins.

PLA does not automatically resolve bleed overlap areas for die-based layouts. Therefore, you must either use dies that have enough gap between the die stations to accommodate bleed or open the layout in Pandora to manually resolve bleed overlap areas. PLA-created layouts are fully compatible with Pandora.

Step–and-repeat-based workflow

PLA will create a layout for you when you specify the number of artworks across and around the sheet size, artwork size, or artwork file location; and a job name. Similarly, you can specify smart marks, a layout name, a bleed amount, and any step-and-repeat parameter that Pandora supports. You can also have PLA automatically specify your sheet based on the size of the step-and-repeat layout and the specified margins. Multiple step-and-repeat layouts are also supported in PLA.

PLA does not automatically place marks, such as microdots, that require content analysis to determine the appropriate position. You must open the layout in Pandora to manually place these marks on their layout. PLA layouts are fully compatible with Pandora.

Template-based workflow

Specify a Pandora PND, PJTF, JT, or TPL file, and PLA can create a layout. You can also specify new artwork or bleed paths previously resolved in Pandora.

Does Packaging Layout Automation automatically resolve all bleed overlap regions?

No, resolving complex non-rectangular bleed overlap regions must be done in Pandora. Layouts created in PLA are fully compatible with Pandora, so a layout can be created in PLA and opened in Pandora to resolve bleed overlap regions.

You can set up PLA to use a new artwork but keep the bleed from an existing Pandora PND, PJTF, JT, or TPL file. PLA can automatically resolve bleed overlap regions that result from the creation of step-and-repeat layouts by splitting the rectangular bleed overlap region in half.

Can my existing Pandora marks and ShopMap resources be used in Packaging Layout Automation?

Yes, both Pandora SmartMarks and Pandora ShopMap resources can be imported into PLA. Of the marks that Pandora supports, only SmartMarks can be used in PLA. Other types of Pandora marks, such as label marks, cannot be used in PLA.

Which version of Prinergy is required for Packaging Layout Automation?

PRINERGY Workflow software version 8.0 or later is required to run PLA. KODAK PRINERGY EVO Workflow does not support PLA.

Both a Rules-Based Automation and a Packaging Layout Automation license are required to use PLA. The PLA software must be installed on the PRINERGY Workflow primary server.

Which versions of Mac OS or Windows are required for the Packaging Layout Automation client software?

The PLA client software runs on the latest Mac and Windows operating systems.