HOTFOLDERS, VIRTUAL PRINTERS, EFI UNIDRIVER AND JOB MONITOR: A COMPARISON
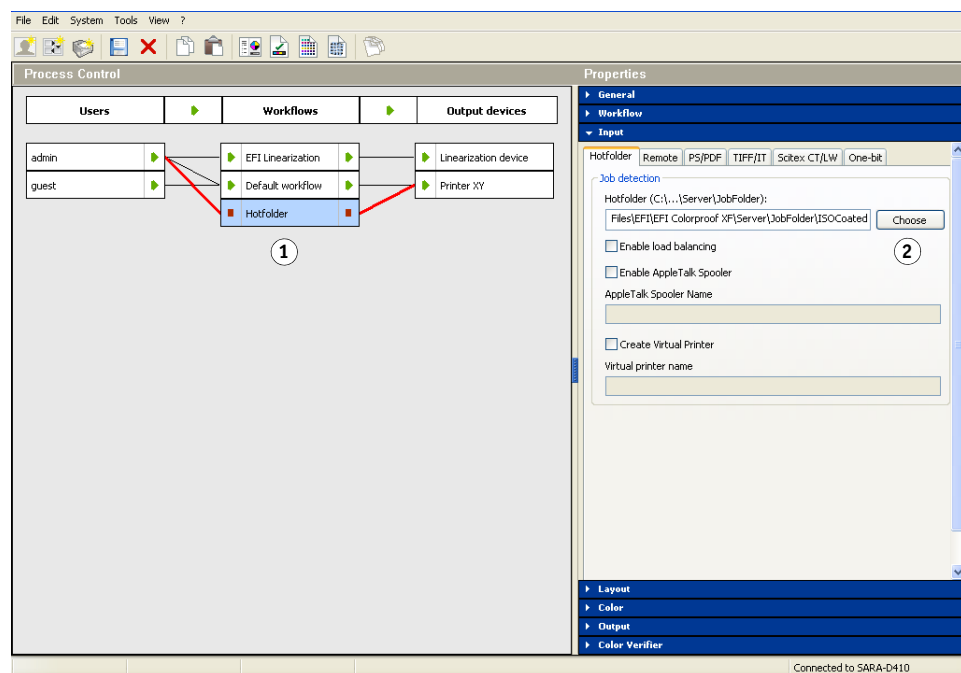
This document provides an overview of the available methods for automatic job loading in EFI XF. It describes the advantages and disadvantages of each and is intended to help you choose which method is best suited to your needs. You will find detailed information on how to set up EFI XF for each particular method in the user manual.

Hotfolders

A hotfolder is an ordinary folder in Windows or on a Macintosh that is assigned to a specific workflow in EFI XF. The hotfolder is monitored at regular intervals and print jobs that have been placed in the folder are automatically loaded into EFI XF.

Setting up a hotfolder

1   Set the workflow offline.
2   Click Choose and navigate to the hotfolder.

Advantages

•   Very easy to set up. Same procedure for all supported platforms and operating systems.

•   Easy handling. Once set up, jobs can be simply copied to the hotfolder. EFI XF loads and processes them according to the workflow settings. No print settings are necessary.
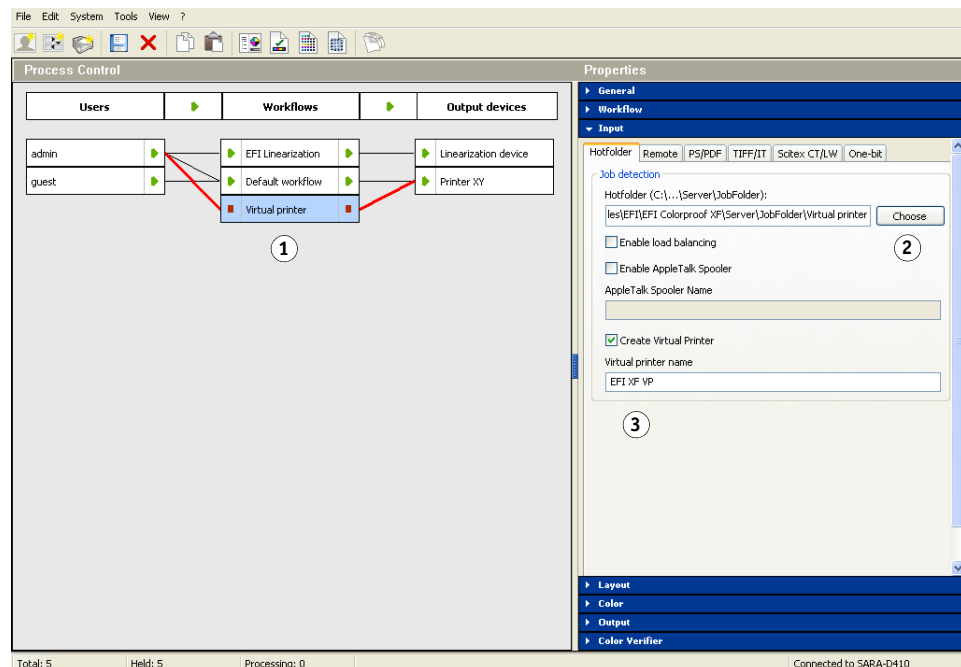
Disadvantages

- No individual job settings possible.

- One hotfolder must be set up for each workflow.

- Only PostScript, EPS, PDF and "open" file formats from Photoshop (TIFF, JPG, PSD) are supported. All other file formats must first be converted to PostScript or PDF. Otherwise they cannot be loaded in EFI XF.

- The EFI XF Server runs as a service. If the hotfolder is located in a Windows network environment, the EFI XF Server must be assigned network access rights. See the user manual for further information.

Virtual printers

A virtual printer is simply a hotfolder which is displayed as a printer in the operating system. It enables you to print directly to a specific EFI XF workflow from any application.

Setting up a virtual printer

1   Set the workflow offline.
2   Click Choose and navigate to the hotfolder.
3   Define a name under which the virtual printer will be visible in the application.

Advantages

- Easy to use. Print jobs can be submitted by selecting EFI XF like a normal printer driver. However, no printer settings, e.g. paper size or orientation, are available. EFI XF loads and processes print jobs according to the workflow settings. No print settings are necessary.

- The virtual printer is a PostScript printer. All files are automatically converted to PostScript format. Therefore, print jobs in any source format are accepted.

- A virtual printer can be shared on the network. You can install it once on the EFI XF Server computer and share it with any number of clients.

- Can be set up for AppleTalk printing.

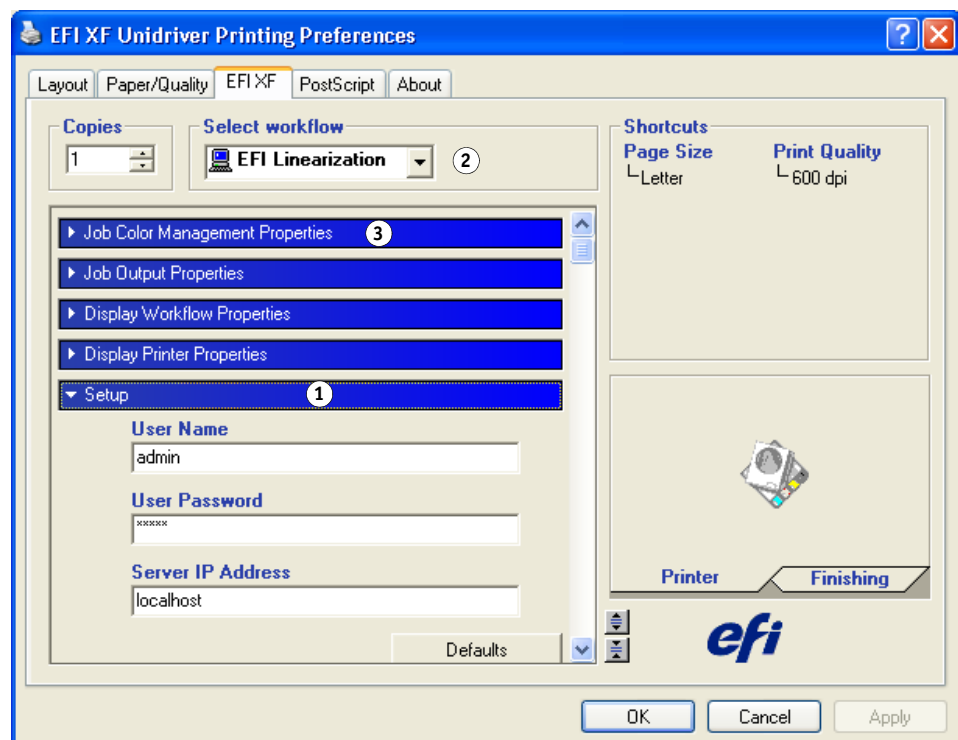- Can be set up as an LPR printer.

Disadvantages

- It can be complicated to set up due to different protocol requirements and different procedures for each operating system. See the user manual for further information.

- No individual job settings possible.

- One virtual printer must be set up for each workflow.

EFI Unidriver

The EFI Unidriver is a proper printer driver, in which you can view workflow settings and also make limited job-specific settings. Program versions for PC and Macintosh are shipped with your product.

Setting up EFI Unidriver
1 **Log on to the EFI XF Server.**
2 **Select a workflow.**
3 **View the workflow settings.**

Advantages

- EFI Unidriver is a PostScript printer. All files are automatically converted to PostScript format. Therefore, print jobs in any source format are accepted.

- EFI Unidriver only needs to be installed once on each Client computer. The logged on user automatically has access to all his workflows.

Disadvantages

- EFI Unidriver cannot be shared on the network. It must be installed on each client computer.

- Users may make settings in EFI Unidriver which may conflict with the settings previously defined in EFI XF for the workflow, e.g. number of copies or page size. It is recommended, therefore, that you make your settings in EFI XF to avoid any problems.

Job Monitor

Job Monitor is provided as a component of EFI XF. It provides users with an easy way to log on to EFI XF and submit print jobs from any computer that does not have the Client software installed.

Managing jobs in Job Monitor
1   User's workflows
2   User's print jobs

Advantages

- Provides an easy way to log on to EFI XF without installing the Client software.

- Easy to load and manage print jobs.

Disadvantages

- No individual job settings possible.

- Only PostScript, PDF and "open" file formats fromPhotoshop (TIFF, JPG, PSD) are supported. All other file formats must first be converted to PostScript or PDF. Otherwise they cannot be loaded in EFI XF.