Production Automation and Process Management

Automation Engine

Automation Engine is Esko's workflow server. It automates prepress tasks, which speeds up the process, but also reduces the error rate and the need for operator intervention.

Automation Engine is an intelligent system that takes prepress production to a new level by integrating with business systems as well as web front ends.

Automation Engine ensures increased efficiency and throughput and saves time and money. It is, by all standards, an exceptional answer to the daily challenges of prepress and print professionals who need to increase quality, reduce errors and drive cost out of the processes.

At the heart of your prepress

Automation Engine serves as the heart of any size prepress production operation. It enables unparalleled workflow automation with rock-solid quality control. Automation Engine comes with extensive business system integration capabilities and is highly scalable. Through Mac or PC based clients, prepress operators or administration departments can easily interact with the workflow, and with its extensive conditional automation capabilities through a transparent user interface.

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Cut cost, time and errors

More jobs a day

Automation Engine features easy to use workflow editing and monitoring tools. These come with a visual and intuitive workflow design tool that makes any workflow easy to set up.

Throughput and efficiency is increased by means of the conditional automation tools. These tools reduce operator intervention, hand-offs and allow for automated decisions and routing in the workflow. The result: more jobs get done at the end of the day.

On time

Any activity on output devices is automatically registered. And Automation Engine has even a bi-directional link with devices such as Esko's CDI and digital presses driven by an Esko Digital Front End (DFE). This information is used for planning and scheduling. The info collected by Automation Engine provides a graphical dashboard on the entire production flow and allows the customers to consult the status of their orders online. The result: no surprises and a job flow that delivers as planned, on time

Zero tolerance for errors

Automation Engine offers extensive quality assurance tools. Prepress operators or admin staff are able to detect errors early in the workflow.

The unique Automation Engine Viewer handles all common prepress formats, images and RIP data. Extensive measuring and QA tools provide sophisticated means to check whether the file is ready for print. Check separations, trim and media sizes, even compare differences between design files and production files, or easily check whether all corrections have been applied.

Automated compare tools are available in the workflow to streamline comparison of larger batches of files. The result: a secure prepress flows with accurate quality.

Typical spread of benefit areas after MIS-prepress integration

ADMIN	PRESS	PREPRESS	MIS-USERS
Error & waste reduction	Increase in up-time due to better planning	No double entry -automated data mgt - huge automation	Instant access to better information improved planning

Advanced packaging and publishing functionality

Job organization and data management

A 'Job' in Automation Engine represents a production order that organizes the data storage for the job and its metadata, link to order ID, due date, customer info, Customer Service Representative contacts... A Job can also contain graphical specifications like barcode, inks, RIP options... This information can be used in any workflow to take advantage of all the data that is already there, avoiding double entries.

3D mockups and Reports in seconds

The Reporting & 3D module in Automation Engine generates "report cards" in seconds. These report cards are based on templates and use details that can be extracted from the database (customer information, like ink coverage, barcode specs...).
3D PDF files can be generated from the Job's structural data. They can be merged with the graphical data giving a comprehensive view of how the actual job will look like.

Automate artwork creation

Automation Engine is the first workflow server to offer automatic processes for artwork creation in line with brand guidelines. Artwork creation used to be a lengthy, laborious and error prone. Today, the smart scripting facilities in Automation Engine fully automate this process. Automation Engine communicates with the full Adobe Suite. Creating new SKU's is now fast, easy and error-free.

Automated Imposition and Step-and-Repeat

Automation Engine features automated imposition and step-and-repeat. The advanced job management that is available for "page production" environments offers a comprehensive overview of the entire prepress department in relation to pages, proofs, sheets and plates status. This gives better control and easier job flow management.
Imposition (JDF Layout) or step-and-repeat data can even be acquired from an external database or Imposition software to further automate the overall job processing.

Integrate with your business system

Integration between a workflow and business systems is an obvious next step.

Imagine having a highly automated prepress department but you still use paper to communicate with it. Or you reenter customer names or barcodes... These actions have no added value and some are even dangerous.

To streamline the complete process and to avoid introducing errors, it makes perfect sense to connect the MIS/ERP to the prepress department. And Automation Engine will provide digital and instant feedback.

For some companies, this kind of integration is even a necessity: digital presses typically have short run jobs. That means that spending 1.5 hour in order management and prepress will eat away at the margins… The obvious step is to start integrating all the systems.

Quickly produce short run packaging variations: integrate the prepress workflow with your business system.

Where can we further automate the packaging supply chain?

Conceptual Design	Panel Design	360° Design	Artwork creation	Pre-production
Ideation Colors Emotion	Front panel Color Scheme Vector Illustrations		Follow brand guidelines Small print Ingredient panels Legal Symbols Other flavors, languages Adapt to CAD file Separations …	Trapping Barcode Min-dots QA …

Higher level of integration with JDF/JMF

All business systems export the simple XML necessary for integration, the formatting doesn't even matter. Some of our MIS partners offer an even higher level of integration using JDF/JMF.

Esko Solution Architects assist you to analyze, design and implement your integration needs.

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