

JDF



Job Definition Format

A new standard for the graphic arts

Agfa's strategic role originating the Job Definition Format (JDF) is just the latest proof of Agfa's commitment to developing key standards for the graphic arts industry. Agfa's commitment to open standards stretches back to the origins of digital prepress and continues today. JDF offers many opportunities for streamlining the entire printing process—from creation to final delivery. This important, wide-ranging specification provides an open approach to exchanging job and process control information between workflow systems. And JDF brings next-generation capabilities that take your production workflow to new levels of efficiency.

Learning about JDF, an emerging new industry standard

As with implementing any new standard, it's important to learn about JDF and explore its potential first, before you make it part of your operation. This brochure provides an overview of JDF, its benefits, Agfa's role in its creation, and the current status of this key standard.

Agfa and JDF: An overview

Since its announcement at Seybold Boston 2000, JDF has been attracting a great deal of industry interest and publicity. After creating the initial JDF standard, the four key vendors involved in creating JDF—Agfa, Adobe, MAN Roland, and Heidelberg—submitted this standard for governance to the CIP4 consortium, which is dedicated to encouraging computer-based integration of graphic arts processes. In particular, CIP4 is active in the specification of standards, such as the emerging Job Definition Format.

Now that an initial version of the JDF standard has been finalized, a wide range of vendors are making JDF part of their solutions, benefiting from its ability to streamline the workflow. Early JDF-compliant products are already entering the marketplace. For example, Apogee Series3—the newest generation of Agfa's industry-leading PDF workflow solution—is JDF-compliant and enables users to generate and define job processes up front within a Management Information Systems (MIS). This information is communicated via JDF to Apogee Series3, which serves as a complete, PDF-based workflow solution.

Agfa and JDF

Agfa's leadership in the creation of JDF enables us to bring solutions to the market that are JDF-compliant today, and able to leverage the full power of JDF far into the future. We are proud of our participation in the creation of this influential open standard, which reflects our ongoing commitment to standards. And we are confident of the strong benefits that JDF brings to our customers. In the end, the entire graphic arts industry—as well as the customers it serves—benefits from JDF.

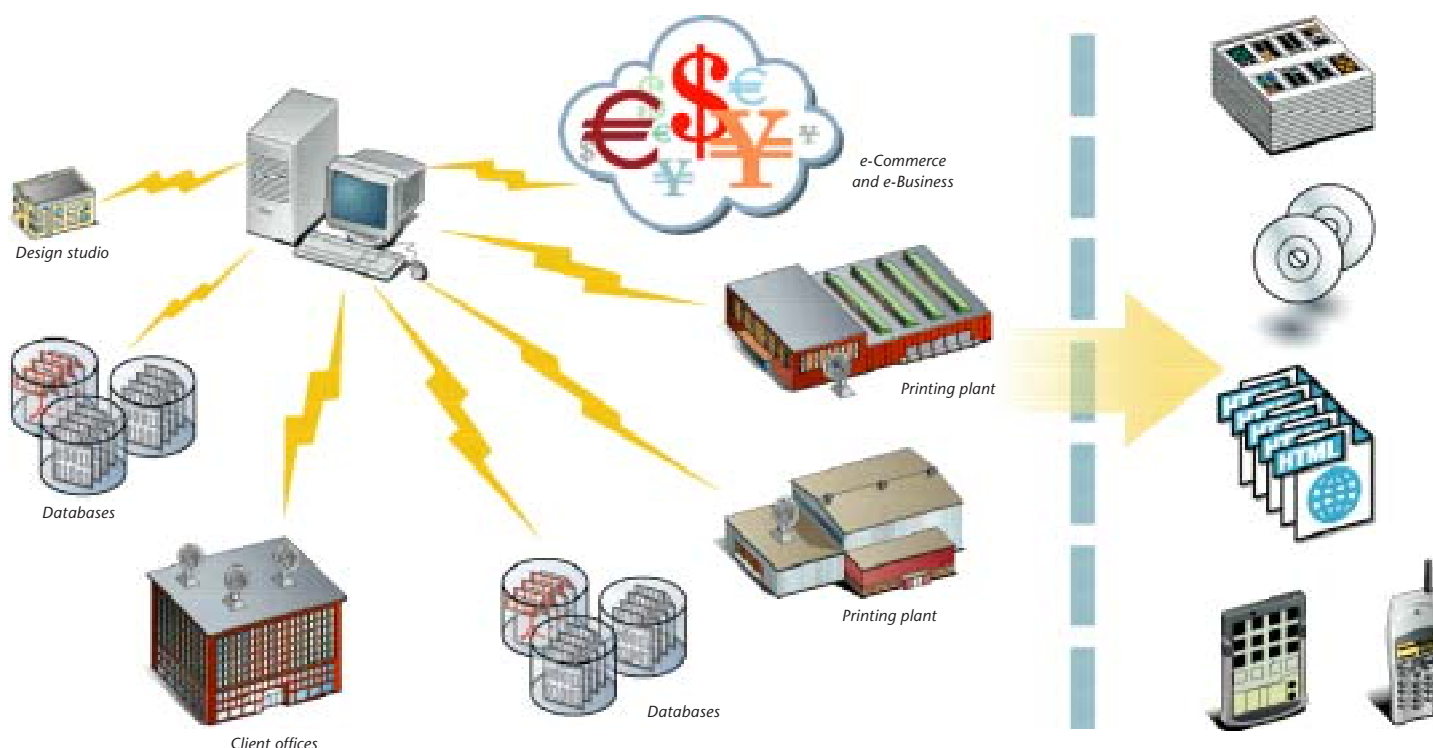
JDF is an XML-based set of metadata tags that are frequently used to describe product (job) and process control terms. JDF enables computers and other devices to communicate using an open, published standard language that is vendor-independent yet vendor- and customer-supported.

The JDF standard lets you streamline and expand the development, production, and distribution of content to multiple printing plants, e-commerce systems, data warehouses, and more. JDF also makes it easier to repurpose content for multiple products—including print, CD/DVD, the Web, and wireless devices. In short, JDF expands the vision of communication and lets you leverage more power from your content.

JDF lets you tap the full potential of your content

Streamlining content creation and production

Maximizing the content



Getting to know JDF: The next-generation open standard

The advantages of open standards are clear. Open standards ensure interoperability of the wide range of multi-vendor devices and software involved in a complete production environment. They reflect the broad-based thinking and expertise of industry leaders, rather than the inherently narrower vision reflected in one vendor's proprietary system. And they aid the ongoing effort to increase automation, efficiency, and connectivity in the graphic arts. In an era when shorter run lengths and more complex jobs are the norm, open standards help achieve a fully automated workflow that is more productive, more flexible, and more profitable.



Agfa Apogee Series3 and JDF

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That said, most printing organizations in the early 21st century still spend a great deal of time struggling to make other systems work together accurately and predictably. And while they may have achieved automation in some areas of their workflow, other systems remain disconnected. JDF addresses these issues and many more.

A next-generation solution

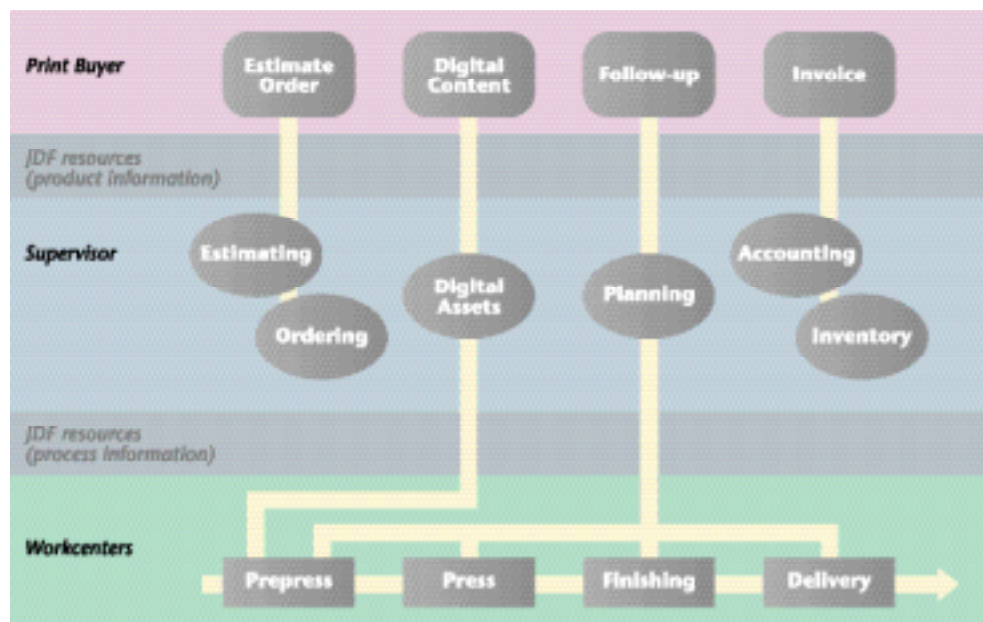
The demand for automation resulted in electronic job tickets—digital files that contain key job information. These job tickets serve the same role as job jackets did during the manual era of printing—they contain all of the information about how a job is to be created and produced

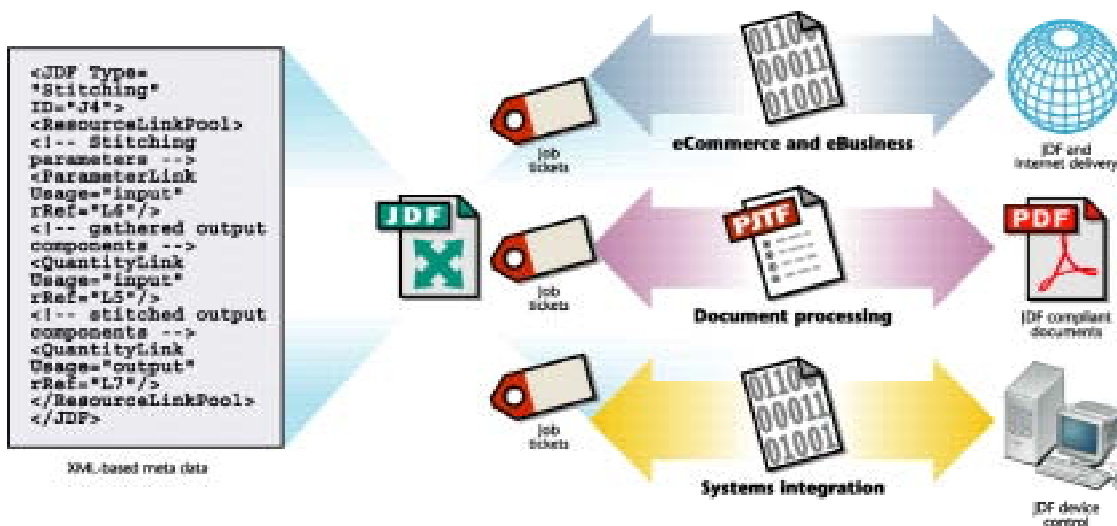
so as to best meet the needs of the customer. Job ticket formats such as Adobe's Portable Job Ticket Format (PJTF) introduced a new method of capturing specific settings in the prepress process—including imposition, trapping, and RIPing. JDF adds dynamic, realtime messaging between devices. It also includes a straightforward method of extending the format when new devices and features are introduced into the market.

JDF—a definition

JDF is a set of process control definitions for the prepress and print industry that create a flexible, comprehensive solution for monitoring and managing the entire workflow—from the

JDF helps streamline the potentially complicated process of creating print materials. It serves as a set of process control definitions that bring new standardization to the entire process.





time a customer places an order to the delivery of the final printed materials. JDF is an extensible, flexible format based on the XML (extensible mark-up language) definition—providing a more complete and powerful solution than any previous format for job tickets. It links job management (i.e., accounting or customer service groups) with the print production services area like never before. JDF is an extremely flexible solution that can adapt to organizations of any size—no matter what system architecture is already in place, and no matter what tools are being used to complete the job.

The origins of JDF

JDF is the initiative of four graphic arts leaders—Agfa, Adobe, MAN Roland, and Heidelberg—who joined together to create an open, multi-vendor solution for all individuals and companies that create, manage, and produce printed materials. JDF builds on other standards, including CIP3's Print Production Format (PPF) and Adobe's Portable Job Ticket Format (PJTf).

These four companies developed the first draft of JDF, which was then submitted to the CIP4, a worldwide operating standards consortium. In this way, JDF is a truly impartial solution—one that favors no one vendor over another.

Meeting the challenges of printing in the 21st century

JDF grew out of this group's recognition that there was a missing link in the prepress and printing process. Workflow means more than a flow of PDF-based jobs through the prepress department. Workflow means more than a press management system that manages your printing operation. Workflow is a much more all-encompassing concept, one that starts with the customer, ends with final printed materials, and ties in everything in between. While PostScript, PDF, PJTF and CIP3 enabled vendors to implement bridges between workflow systems, there was no one open standard for the entire workflow. Now JDF changes all that and provides our industry with a stable solution that is flexible enough to describe the ever-changing workflows of the printing industry.

Maximizing the potential of content

JDF establishes an XML-based messaging architecture that keeps the MIS system and the controllers within devices used in the production environment communicating throughout the prepress and printing process. JDF links these groups and systems, providing realtime updates of prepress, press, and post-press activities. Notifications, queries, and commands provide differing levels of communication and collaboration capabilities, enabling users to establish the method that best suits their workflow. In this area and many others, JDF is a very flexible standard, giving users many options for how they can use it.

Since JDF is an XML-based standard, it allows compatibility with Internet-based workflows, and enables e-commerce. XML is media-neutral, so it allows seamless sharing of information and maximizes the potential of any content.

The main goal of JDF is to enable the automation of the whole workflow process—from order to delivery. It does this by unifying the various process parameters of each individual production area and by describing process requirements in terms of the final product.



CIP4 is a worldwide operating standards consortium that serves as an impartial resource for developing, approving, and implementing standards in the prepress and printing industries.

The CIP4 Consortium, which represents major players in the industry, has selected JDF as the standard for prepress, printing, post-press, and process control. JDF's XML-based approach ensures a high degree of openness and access. JDF incorporates several key technologies and uses each to do what it does best. Its strict rules define JDF via a series of predefined tags that add up to the full JDF specification.

PDF and JDF: Different standards for different purposes

It's important to differentiate these key standards, which perform different functions in a digital workflow. Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF) is a file format that allows the exact representation of page content to be rendered for display or final output. JDF is an XML-based standard that establishes a common way of describing, monitoring, and managing the entire workflow. In short, PDF describes documents, while JDF describes the process.

Together, these two standards can unambiguously specify what to print and how to print it— independently of where the document originated and where it will be printed.

The benefits of JDF

The key benefits of JDF to printers and others in the graphic arts are clear and compelling, and are driving the overwhelming interest in (and eventual acceptance of) the JDF standard:

- **A comprehensive solution**

JDF enables users to plan and monitor jobs from start to finish, providing a more complete vision of workflow than ever before. It replaces isolated islands within the workflow where automation applies only to specific areas, such as prepress and printing. Instead, JDF brings the entire workflow together. Now any JDF-compliant system can be part of the workflow. JDF provides consistent, automated, and effective communication between all elements of the printing workflow—from job initiation to pre-press, press, post-press, and final delivery. In the past, jobs disappeared from the MIS system once they entered the prepress workflow.

- **More communication**

JDF streamlines information exchange between different applications and systems, allowing them to "talk" like never before. This capability makes realtime job monitoring possible, since communication is essential throughout a JDF-based workflow.

- **More control**

JDF brings new control to the entire workflow, ensuring higher quality and better feedback. JDF lets you monitor processes and costs, enabling you to determine the status of every job. Now you can complete the loop, establishing new ways to estimate each job more accurately, based on real-world facts and measurements.

- **More automation**

JDF brings more automation to the workflow, allowing operations to complete more jobs in less time with less user intervention—raising efficiency.

- **More connections**

In the Internet era, JDF recognizes the importance of e-commerce and e-business, enabling printers to share jobs and job data among multiple locations, partners, and customers. XML enables this high degree of Internet readiness.

JDF enables the entire industry—including design groups, graphic arts professionals, on-demand printers, commercial printers, and e-commerce groups to implement efficient workflow solutions. It also brings commercial and planning applications into the prepress workflow.

Printers and other graphic arts professionals are not the only groups to benefit from JDF. Their customers also benefit. JDF ensures higher-quality results by giving printers more control. It allows printers to include customers in the workflow, providing a flexible but reliable method to exchange updates and other key information. And it lets printers turn to more value-added, customer-focused work, rather than working on integrating systems.



Prepress and JDF

JDF streamlines the prepress process and lets printers plan and monitor jobs from start to finish—incorporating commercial and planning applications into the prepress workflow like never before.



Press and JDF

JDF enables prepress, press control, and postpress systems to communicate directly—ensuring the highest level of automation, integration and distributive processing.



JDF and beyond

The scope of JDF is significant—enabling the entire prepress and printing industries to communicate and collaborate at Internet speed.

JDF—the latest innovation from an industry leader

JDF feature	Benefits
A comprehensive solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JDF covers all aspects of the entire workflow—from the creation of content to the setup of all required process parameters to the description of the final results.
More communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JDF fosters advanced communication and collaboration throughout the workflow—getting key information to the people who need it most.
More control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JDF gives groups within the prepress and printing workflow more control over how jobs are completed—ensuring higher customer satisfaction.
More automation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By breaking down barriers between groups, JDF fosters a new level of automation, enabling the process of creating documents to move ahead in a streamlined, automated fashion.
More connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JDF expands the definition of workflow by linking all of the different areas and key individuals responsible for creating materials—including MIS, prepress, press, post-press, the print buyer, the customer, and more. With JDF, everyone can communicate and collaborate more efficiently—all while ensuring excellent final results.

To find out more about JDF or Apogee Series3—Agfa’s JDF-compliant workflow solution—and our other solutions for the graphic arts industry, contact your local Agfa representative, or go to www.agfa.com.



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