# Automation Engine, Imaging Engine, Pack Proof, Color Pilot and Curve Pilot 26.07 Release Notes

## 1. Introduction

This document gives an overview of the new features and changes in Automation Engine, Imaging Engine, Pack Proof, Color Pilot and Curve Pilot 26.07. It only covers the changes since version 26.03.

If you are updating from version 25.11 or earlier versions, we advise you to read the release notes of all versions between your current version and Automation Engine, Imaging Engine, Pack Proof, Color Pilot and Curve Pilot 26.03. You can find these on the online help page for these versions (or on the product installer media for older versions).

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# 2. Licensing and System Requirements

## 2.1 Licensing

Automation Engine, Imaging Engine, Pack Proof, Color Pilot and Curve Pilot 26.07 require version 26 licenses.

## 2.2 System Requirements

For a complete overview of the System Requirements, see the corresponding product pages on: https://www.esko.com/en/systemrequirements .

# 3. Documentation

In addition to these release notes, the user documentation of the respective products was updated. Find it on https://www.esko.com/en/support/documentation .

Following articles are of interest for this version:

| Article | Description |
|---|---|
| KB341861822 | **Plate ID – Components and versions** |
| KB341862828 | **Bitmap Viewer Mac - Standard user cannot see Seamless View icon** |
| KB288327838 | **Automation Engine – Compatibility with Digital Flexo Suite / PlatePrep** |
| KB288327774 | **Automation Engine – Compatibility with Grapholas** |
| KB288327758 | **Automation Engine - Compatibility with i-cut Production Console** |
| KB185615059 | **FlexProof/E, Pack Proof - How to install and use generic Esko EPL files** |
| KB325882668 | **Pack Proof - How to make a contract proof on an Epson SureColor P75x0 and P95x0 with the CT driver?** |
| KB405022077 | **How to deal with renamed PantoneLIVE ink books?** |
| KB420505660 | **Proof Server: Fiery Hot Folders & Fiery Software Manager are available on Mac after installing Fiery Command Workstation** |
| KB437090783 | **FlexRip / FlexProof - End of Life: Frequently Asked Questions** |
| KB412344753 | **Pack Proof - Supported Content Proofing Devices** |
| KB Flexo+ | **Flexo+ - Installation and Usage** |
| KB285558554 | **Print Control Wizard - How to combine LEN or TIFF files (charts from Print Control Wizard) to add your own images (including workflow for Quartz charts)?** |
| KB Crystal S profile | **Print Control Wizard Crystal S profile - How to compare the FM calibration with the AM calibration and create a profile?** |
| KB Automated Plate Patcher | **Automation Engine - Get access to mounting and carrier sheet files for Automated Plate Patcher** |

# 4. New and changed features

## 4.1 Automation Engine

### 4.1.1 GS1 Digital Link QR

- Support for GS1 Digital Link QR barcode (Sunrise 2027)

### 4.1.2 Find data collectors with merging workflow parameters

- Data collectors that merge workflow parameters can have a negative impact on performance. To easily find those data collectors, the warning panel in the workflow editor now lists all data collectors with merging enabled so that you can easily find those.
- With %BG_PROG_FASTSERVER_V262%\com_win\runperfscan.bat, you can easily find all workflows that have used data collectors with merging enabled.

### 4.1.3 Global cancellation of tasks

- In Configure > Advanced, an administrator can configure the maximum time that a task can run before it gets cancelled automatically. Automatic cancellation at task level overrides the global setting
- The administrator can also configure a list of email addresses to whom a notification is sent when global or local cancellation happens. The notification includes input file, ticket and log file.

### 4.1.4 Download agent log files

- In My Workspace > Admin > Agents, the administrator can download the log files of each agent.

### 4.1.5 Workflow manager events

- The number of Workflow manager events is a metric for the complexity of your workflows.
- In the Pilot > Queue Monitor, the actual number of workflow ‘events’ is shown.
- In the Load History, a graph is added that shows the number of workflow events over time.

### 4.1.6 Printing condition in File Info

- In the File Info dialog in the Pilot and My Workspace, the Printing Condition of a PDF file is shown instead of the document color profile (if available).

### 4.1.7 MSSQLServer 2025

- Automation Engine 26.07 supports Microsoft SQL Server 2025 as database engine.

### 4.1.8 PDF Action lists

- Select object by attribute can now select protected objects.
- Cut on Crosshair action has new option 'Execute Clipping Masks'.
- New action ‘Delete Empty Layers’ was added.

### 4.1.9 Manage Color task

- New Reseparate option was added to the task so that it can cover functionality of the older Manage Color (Classic) task.

### 4.1.10 Improved scalability

- The ‘PDF File Info’ server can run on AE Assistants, so offloading the main server.

### 4.1.11 Step and Repeat CAD task

- To match behavior of the classic S&R task, a “No bleed limit’ option was added to allow bleed to extend without restriction.

## 4.2 Flexo Frond End / Imaging Engine

### 4.2.1 New APPE 7.1

- A new APPE 7.1 version is integrated in Imaging Engine 26.07.

### 4.2.2 Print Control Wizard (Printing Conditions)

- New Quartz Thermal Screen

  Quartz Thermal Screens are Esko's next-generation flexo screening technology, engineered specifically for thermal plate processing to deliver gravure-class print quality on flexible packaging.

### 4.2.3 Curve Pilot, HD Flexo Screens and ScreenManager

- There are no new features for Curve Pilot, HD Flexo Screens and ScreenManager.

## 4.3 Flexo Front End+ (Flexo Engine)

### 4.3.1 Auto Nested Merging

- Automatically nests jobs to the actual cut path rather than the bounding box — fitting more work onto every plate, reducing costly plate waste, and taking the manual effort out of merging.

## 4.4 Bitmap Viewer

There is no new version of Bitmap Viewer.

## 4.5 Pack Proof

There are no new features for Pack Proof.

## 4.6 Color Pilot

### 4.6.1 Equinox Strategy– Output channels & Tolerance

In Equinox strategies the option was added to select the output channels (Generate all channels, Generate preferably CMYK, Generate only CMYK).

Dynamic CMYK versus Extended Gamut output selection based on user-defined ΔE tolerances. Color Pilot automatically determines whether colors require multichannel output or can be reproduced using fewer process colors, helping converters reduce plates, setup time and ink usage while maintaining brand color targets.

### 4.6.2 SCTV Digital Printing & Proofing

In Digital- and proofing-strategies the option was added to Linearizing tints using SCTV.

Support for SCTV-based tint reproduction in Digital Printing and Proofing workflows. This delivers more predictable spotcolor tint behaviour and smoother gradients when complete measurement data is unavailable, improving color consistency between flexographic, digital print and proofing processes.

### 4.6.3 Manage Color – Reseparate

New Reseparate option was added to the Manage Color task so that it can cover functionality of the older Manage Color (Classic) task.

Ink Saving, UCR,GCR options are now available in the NDL workflow, enabling full color management across modern PDF-based workflows.

# 5. Known Limitations & Important Changes

## 5.1 General

### 5.1.1 FlexRip and FlexProof end-of-life

FlexRip and FlexProof are end-of-life. The FlexRip/FlexProof tasks had been marked as 'Soon Outdated' in 23.07 (July 2023). Since **version 25.03, these tasks are marked as 'Outdated' which means they will no longer work.** If you have created task tickets of that task type, you will still see those tickets but notice that you can't use them anymore! During installation of version 26.03 you will be warned if outdated tasks were used (from your Tasks view), guiding you to the Automation Engine manual listing the outdated tasks.

If you have already upgraded to Imaging Engine and are no longer using FlexRip, then you are all set. If your FlexRip is covered by a care plan with Esko, then this will include an upgrade to Imaging Engine software. You can run Imaging Engine in parallel with your FlexRip to get used to the new software and transfer production work to it. In this case, you can update to the previous version 24.11.

To learn more about the differences between FlexRip and Imaging Engine see this knowledge base article that is answers Frequently Asked Questions.

### 5.1.2 ArtPro+ and DeskPack compatibility for AE SaaS

Due to a change in the connection protocol between Automation Engine and its editors, ArtPro+ and DeskPack need to be upgraded to 24.11 or higher to be able to launch workflows on an Automation Engine Saas 25.03.

General note: It is always best practice to have ArtPro+ and DeskPack on the same version as Automation Engine.

### 5.1.3 Editing referenced S2 cloud curves

A local cloud color strategy has integrity issues when editing the referenced cloud curve. The curve must be reselected in the cloud color strategy to solve the integrity issue.

### 5.1.4 Soon outdated ink books

Following ink books have become end-of-life and will be removed in a next Esko Software release:

- Toyo94
- TOYO Color Finder
- PANTONE GoeGuide Coated
- PANTONE GoeGuide Uncoated
- PANTONE Colors Matte

## 5.2 Automation Engine

### 5.2.1 Commercial Print Tasks now declared ‘soon outdated’

As of Automation Engine 26.07, all Commercial Print tasks are declared ‘soon outdated’.

### 5.2.2 Automation Engine SaaS: Syncer compatibility (repeated)

As of Automation Engine 24.07, syncing will fail when trying to open or save a file on a workstation that does not have an ‘Automation Engine Syncer’ version that is equal to or more recent than the Automation Engine server version itself.

Note that the Syncer tool is part of the ‘Desktop Client Applications’. So when updating Pilot, the Syncer is also updated automatically. For users that only work with ‘My Workspace’ or ArtPro+/DeskPack, the Syncer can be updated with the ‘Esko Editor Connection Tools installer’ which can be found in the ‘Apps & Tools’ pages of the AE browser client.

### 5.2.3 Outdated: 32-bit ODBC SmartNames and External Databases

SmartNames of type ‘32-bit ODBC Query’ and External Databases using DBMS Type ‘ODBC Source’ have become outdated.

As an alternative, use Database Query SmartNames and External Databases using DBMS of type ‘Microsoft SQL Server’, ‘Oracle’ or ‘Other’ that use a JDBC driver.

### 5.2.4 ArtPro Action List Editor

The ‘ArtPro Action List Editor’ is still on version 23.11, the version that corresponds with the latest released version of ArtPro.

### 5.2.5 Color & Calibration Data from S2 for Automation Engine SaaS

When switching to ‘Color & Calibration data from S2’, all local color & calibration data will be deleted. Color & calibration data must be uploaded to S2 with Color Pilot before switching.

Some types of color & calibration data are not yet supported on S2. See this page in the user manual for an up-to-date list of all limitations. Customers using unsupported color & calibration data cannot make the switch.

For now, Automation Engine can only use the color & calibration data of one S2 Account. A color strategy uploaded to S2 will be unusable when referring to a color object from another S2 Account.

Such a strategy will be flagged as an issue in Color Pilot’s ‘Check Color and Calibration Database Integrity’ tool. Strategies with an integrity issue will not show up in the list of available strategies in the color task tickets. Existing tickets can still refer to a strategy with integrity issues. No warning will be shown when opening the task ticket, but the task will fail.

### 5.2.6 Automation Engine System Account on Windows Server 2016

When operating Automation Engine 25.07 or higher on Windows Server 2016 (LTSB version 1607), it is strongly recommended not to change the AE System Account anymore after the system was fully configured.

Otherwise, this may lead Automation Engine to automatically regenerate its self-signed SSL certificate, and that in turn could cause unexpected trouble with this older OS trying to pick up that certificate properly again.

Consequently, functionality relying on this self-signed certificate may start to fail ; for example 'Interact with Web Service' tasks reaching out over HTTPS may fail to execute correctly.
At this time of writing, there is no easy workaround or solution to this potential problem other than upgrading to a more recent OS.

### 5.2.7 Flexo Front End+: Automated Plate Patcher

The Split, Mount&Cut and Premount workflows are not supported.

### 5.2.8 RunList Editor

The RunList Editor tool is discontinued.

### 5.2.9 Retry mechanism in the Interact with Web Service task

Workflow managers that have built retries in an AE workflow should remove those and now rely on the retry mechanism of the 'Interact with Web Service' task.

## 5.3 Flexo Front End / Imaging Engine

Using 'Printing Conditions from File' is not yet possible as you cannot create PDFs yet with a printing condition in ArtPro+. This is planned for the next version 26.11.

## 5.4 Print Control Wizard (Printing Conditions)

### 5.4.1 Profile for Crystal S (FM screening)

The profile created by the printing condition is only valid for the Printing AM calibration (Crystal V), not for Stochastic Screening calibration (FM - Crystal S). If required, you can use the 'Create Equinox printing condition' to have a profile specific for Crystal S. See this KB article for more information.

The 'Update curve' functionality is not available yet for the Stochastic Screening (FM) calibration.

## 5.5 Bitmap Viewer

### 5.5.1 No Sonoma & Sequoia support for the Bitmap Viewer

The Bitmap Viewer has no support for macOS Sonoma & Sequoia.

# 6. Solved customer issues

## 6.1 Automation Engine

Following customer reported issues are solved in **Automation Engine 26.07**:

| Case Number | ID | Description |
|---|---|---|
| CS02072305 | AE-32860 | Move Job to Inactive Jobs: support for uploading huge files (>5 GB) to S2. |
| CS02050714 | AE-32750 | Export Nested Layouts task: when using 'Force Nesting' and 'Save to PDFPLA', the number of copies was not added to the output file name. |
| CS02065366 | AE-32699 | My Workspace: fixed issue with percentage fields in public parameters that were not editable. |
| CS02062009 | AE-32698 | PDF+ tasks in AE check for memory usage and don't allow to use too much memory that would kill the server. The definition of "too much memory" is based on the physical RAM of the server and number of AE channels. The default value may not be optimal in all cases and therefore there is a way to change it via CFS. However, in some extreme cases, the maximum was not high enough.<br><br>The new absolute limit was increased to 120 GB per task. It is also possible to allow tasks to use up to 100% of physical RAM. |
| CS02064136 | AE-32691 | The Publish on WebCenter task could fail with the message 'The external file was embedded to support the ink mapping defined in the Normalized PDF'. |
| CS02064094 | AE-32684 | Improved handling of too many incoming connections from AE's 'Workflow Manager' into its 'Jobs data Server'. |
| CS02060897 | AE-32657 | Fixed a condition where some transparent objects became white after exporting to PDF report. |
| CS02061085 | AE-32655 | The Preflight with PitStop task could sometimes generate much larger output files than its input file. |
| CS02061115 | AE-32653 | Importing Enfocus Action Lists or PDF Profiles in the PitStop Profile Editor did not work anymore. |
| CS02060951 | AE-32650 | MFG files with type 99 lines inside hatch sections failed to open in version 26.03, returning a 'Station contours could not be determined' error. They can be opened again because those lines are now ignored. MFG files with type 99 lines in other sections (double knife removal lines) can also still be opened; these lines are still taken into account. |
| CS02060836 | AE-32649 | Dynamic tasks can use formulas in their tickets. |
| CS02059209 | AE-32638 | Keeping more CFS entries at install time. |
| CS02058680 | AE-32626 | Regression issue in DFS code, fixed in latest update. |
| CS02057678 | AE-32599 | Gang Run Printing: the outline of the cut path could be incorrect, leading to misalignment of front to back. |
| CS02055502 | AE-32559 | Color converting tasks will refuse PDF documents when their fonts are not available nor embedded. |
| CS02054465 | AE-32546 | Dynamic tasks can use formulas in their tickets. |

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|---|---|---|
| CS02054911 | AE-32543 | Support to use a ‘Router’ workflow control in the beginning of a workflow. |
| CS02043465 | AE-32528 | Linked files in PDF documents will - if they are used - contain information about the whole DFS path. |
| CS02048578 | AE-32519 | When starting the Pilot from Start Menu > Programs, copying or dropping files into the Files view did not work. |
| CS02050156 | AE-32497 | The ‘Normalize PS/PDF/Illustrator’ task could fail with 'bad allocation' when the width/height ratio is very large. |
| CS02050111 | AE-32487 | My Workspace: Fixed issue with event handling, which resulted in early session termination. |
| CS02046914 | AE-32483 | My Workspace: Fixed issue with event handling, which resulted in early session termination. |
| CS02040346 | AE-32454 | In some rare circumstances, Products could - in the Pilot Products view - appear in Jobs that they were not linked to. |
| CS02044902 | AE-32448 | Unsupported combination of options is now detected and reported with a clear error. |
| CS02043227 | AE-32432 | PDF save fix for Normalized PDF files containing non-90 degree rotated linked images. |
| CS02043457 | AE-32408 | My Workspace: fixed issue with filtering to-dos: to-dos that were added while a search filter was in place, but those to-dos did not match the search filter, didn't appear after clearing the filter. |
| CS02036110 | AE-32404 | ‘Apply Plate ID To LENX’ was not working in case a Plate Type was available on multiple devices and only some have a Plate ID Pattern configured. |
| CS02042377 | AE-32400 | SFTP Access Point and Task: custom configuration settings in CFS were removed by running an ‘Activate Server’. |
| CS02036769 | AE-32331 | When launching a task on a Product with a huge amount of parameters, the list of SmartNames that can be used in the task panel sometimes did not contain the Product parameters in SaaS. |
| CS02037724 | AE-32319 | Pilot > Products view: after about 30 seconds of idle time, the underlying database resources are released. When the user continues scrolling after that, a short delay may be noticeable. |
| CS02016478 | AE-32280 | ‘Submit to HP Production Pro’ task: priority of the task now matches with the priority of the print job on HP Production Pro. |
| CS02034376 | AE-32272 | For Normalized PDF files, improvement of resolving image links with a channel mapping in the case where one or more image channels are mapped to the same separation. |
| CS02035907 | AE-32271 | Automation Engine Products: increased the maximum length of the Product’s Customer's Reference field from 64 to 128 characters. |
| CS02030948 | AE-32216 | Support for logging the amount of time and memory used by the ‘PDF File Info Server’ (DebugLevel >=3). |
| CS02019329 | AE-32097 | Fixed stability issues after Cleaning clipping masks. |
| CS02025208 | AE-32076 | The render engine used by the Pilot on MacOS is set back to OpenGL to avoid rendering artifacts when using the ‘Metal’ render engine. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CS01994619 | AE-31656 | No longer merging similar named Photoshop image channels together as this can limit our Normalized PDF file support when those images are linked. |
| CS01985794 | AE-31493 | Since the more performant handling of linear and radial shadings, less complex files will fail and less memory will be consumed by the "Prepare for Sharing" task, and every task making use of a flatten action. |
| CS01957749 | AE-31118 | Pilot: added keyboard shortcut (Shift-Cmd-I) for opening the Parameter Inspector Dialog. |
| CS01941967 | AE-30872 | Pilot: improve scaling of icons on Windows when display scaling factor is not fractional (like 125%, 150%, ...). |
| CS01871724 | AE-29919 | Automation Engine Viewer (latest viewer technology): support for viewing password protected PDF files. |
| CS01816468 | AE-29241 | Flexo Plate Merger Proposal Editor - Improved waste percentage calculation when overlapping press plates. |
| CS01771977 | AE-28607 | 'Import Picture List' task: while opening picture list files (.picl files), the page boxes of the referenced files were not correctly taken into account. |

## 6.2 Flexo Front End / Imaging Engine

### 6.2.1 Imaging Engine

Following customer reported issues are solved in **Imaging Engine 26.07.**

| Case Number | ID | Description |
|---|---|---|
| CS02061035 | IE-27041 | Imaging Engine Essentials for Offset license does not allow to start Automation Engine. |
| CS01988021 | IE-26211 | Incorrect RIP output on an object which contains an Opacity mask and blend mode Multiply (the cyan was set to Multiply on top of the magenta). |
| CS01966204 | IE-25787 | 1 Pixel Line is added to the LEN files. |
| CS01888297 | IE-25096 | File fails to RIP when ConvertStrokeToFill is enabled. |
| CS01884071 | IE-25061 | Small individual rows of pixels show up where there shouldn't be any. |
| CS01711977 | IE-23738 | RIP'ing S&R File using distortion and Fine Line Rendering is causing 1pixel line. |
| CS01631044 | IE-22931 | RIP times for Global Rasterization "Auto" & "Forced" takes too long. |

### 6.2.2 Print Control Wizard (Printing Conditions)

No customer reported issues were solved in **Print Control Wizard (Color Pilot – Printing Conditions) 26.07.**

### 6.2.3 Curve Pilot, HD Flexo Screens and ScreenManager

Following customer reported issues are solved in **Curve Pilot / PressSync Pilot 26.07.**

| Case Number | ID | Description |
|---|---|---|
| CS02059506 | CAL-14556 | Curve Pilot 25.11 and 26.03 crashes when opening a DGC curve that contains a reference curve which is missing. |

No customer reported issues were solved in **HD Flexo Screens 26.07.**

No customer reported issues were solved in **ScreenManager 26.07**.

## 6.3 Bitmap Viewer

There is no new version of the Bitmap Viewer.

## 6.4 Pack Proof

Following customer reported issues are solved in **Pack Proof 26.07**.

| Case Number | ID | Description |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CS02062117 | IE-27020 | Esko_EPL_Updater.exe connects to an EFI address which is no longer available. |

## 6.5 Color Pilot

Following customer reported issues are solved in **Color Pilot 26.07**:

| Case Number | ID | Description |
|---|---|---|
| CS01991306 | CEP-16756 | Check & Recalibration failure was observed on the Proof Server during Inline Measurement. |