General Information and Background

In this chapter you will learn

- which **tasks** can be illustrated with the VDP Editor,
- which **background knowledge** is required for using the VDP Editor,
- which **differences** are on hand in comparison to the VDP implementation in **Adobe Illustrator** and
- which **advantages** result from the browser-based implementation.

1. Introduction

With the **VDP Editor** static as well as variable content can be placed on or behind a Print Item. Thereby, the content is then put in the desired order for output in the Impose Editor. Whether the content is *text, images, barcodes* or merely colored *objects* is irrelevant. Static content can be entered by the user, serial numbers can be generated automatically, or variable content can be used to generate variable elements based on control files.

The **VDP Editor** is an integrated web application in the Workflow which illustrates the entire range of functions for creating variable elements. These elements were available until in the *Adobe Illustrator* Workflow plugin up to version 1.13.0. The underlying technology for creating variable elements in the background remains the same.

The **advantage** of a web application is that you do not have to use an external application to create variable data. Licensing costs as well as confusion due to permanent switching between applications, can be reduced to a minimum. Through a web application, orders with variable data can be made available in editors of e-commerce solutions, even for laypeople, since neither application-specific know-how nor licenses are required.

2. Range of Function

Illustrate the following operations with the **VDP Editor:**

- Create **Serial Numbers** within a validity range in ascending, descending or random order.
- Create variable **Barcodes** as well as **QR Codes** in defined size and color as well as with code specifications.
- Create variable **Images** in any size, orientation as well as with size adaption.

- Create variable **Texts** in the selected font, font style, font size, color, spacing (change of run width) as well as certain effects.
- Creation of variable **Texts** as well as Serial Numbers inside or outside a freely defined path with curves and corners.
- Create n**ested variable text elements** combining information from a control file, static content, and dynamically generated serial numbers.
- Creating variable **colored Outlines** and/or **areas** on predefined objects (the object shape cannot change).
- Create **stacks of objects** in which content changes variably, resulting in a corresponding effect.
- Create **design effect**s that can change from Print Item to Print Item.
- Create **barcodes / QR codes with static content.**
- Create **any number of variable elements on a Print Item,** where the content can be taken from one or from specific areas in the control file.
- Once created, **VDP specifications** - this primarily describes the positioning as well as the content of the variable elements - can be assigned to other Print Items.
- Create variable output PDFs in the form of a **multi-page PDF** in order to also enable processing by other RIP.

3. Background knowledge

The VDP Editor is an application that is used in the browser by the user to create the variable elements. Hence, web technologies are used in the background when creating the output PDF. Read on for the necessary background knowledge when creating VDP elements as well as for the output.

- Any number of variable elements can be placed on a **Print Item**. This means that a created VDP specification is assigned to a Print Item in the workflow.
- For this reason, a **Production Job** which is to be filled with variable content can only contain one **Print Item.**
- If the variable content is to be used across Print Items, these individual **Print Items** must be combined into one Print Item in advance. **Fixups** as well as the **Impose Editor** provide corresponding options for illustration in the Workflow.
- To define the content, a control file must be provided in the form of a **CSV file**. The creation of the control file cannot be illustrated in the Workflow. However, the formatting of the control file can be addressed.
- Web applications can only handle certain **file formats**, such as *PNG, JPEG, SVG* and *PDF*. Keep this in mind when preparing a VDP job.
- Variable elements can only be created and processed in the **foreground** or the **background** of a **Print Item.** The option to insert variable elements in the object hierarchy of a print file is currently not available.
- Variable elements become PDF objects only during the creation of the output PDF. Until then, VDP elements are fully preserved in the VDP specification.

- The output PDF is created in optimized form for the integrated HHR RIP with regard to the processing speed during ripping. The creation of optimized multi-page PDFs for other RIPs can only take place based on ISO standard.

> ⓘ **Separate license required**
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> Note that the possibility to create variable data in the Workflow, as well as imposing and ripping created variable jobs depends on the availability of the VDP license, which is available in two versions.
>
> Please enquire your specialist contact person about the availability of this license.

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