



imPRESS Studio

Operator's Manual

Software version: 1.6.0

Platform: Windows 10/11 x64

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1. Introduction

imPRESS Studio is a PDF imposition application for print shops, prepress studios and label production. It takes press-ready PDF files, lays their pages out on press sheets according to the selected binding method, adds printer marks and exports a production-ready file — optionally as PDF/X.

1.1. What imposition is

Imposition is the arrangement of a publication's pages on a press sheet in the order and orientation that yields correct pagination after printing, folding and trimming. In an 8-page saddle-stitched booklet, for example, the first sheet's front carries pages **8 and 1** (not 1 and 2) — the program takes care of that arithmetic for you.

1.2. Typical applications

- **Business cards, flyers, invitations** — N-up ganging with double-sided work,
- **Booklets and catalogues** — saddle-stitch and perfect binding with creep compensation,
- **Folded leaflets** — Z-fold, gatefold, accordion,
- **Labels and stickers** — roll-fed production and step & repeat, Summa OPOS cutter marks,
- **Repeat production** — hot folders and the command-line mode.

2. Installation and license activation

2.1. Requirements

Component	Requirement
Operating system	Windows 10 / 11, 64-bit
Memory	4 GB RAM minimum (8 GB recommended for large formats)
Disk	approx. 400 MB (Ghostscript is bundled)
Privileges	day-to-day use requires no administrator account — user data lives in the user profile

2.2. Installing

1. Run the downloaded `imPress_Studio-x.y.z-Setup.exe`.
2. The installer walks you through the location choice and creates shortcuts.
3. The application starts automatically after installation.

Updates: the application checks GitHub Releases for new versions and can also be updated on demand from the Help menu — the downloaded installer is verified against its published SHA-256 digest before launch.

2.3. Activating the license

Automatic trial (since 1.5.4): on first launch with no license the app starts a **30-day trial by itself** — no form, no clicking. It sends only the *hardware fingerprint* (no personal data) to the license server and saves the returned license. The trial is granted **once per machine**; reinstalling Windows or formatting the disk does not reset it (the record is server-side, keyed on hardware). The first launch needs internet once; afterward the license works offline.

Manual activation (paid license, or when there is no internet on first launch):

1. Open the activation window (it appears automatically when the trial couldn't start).
2. Paste your **activation key** (a long text string) and confirm.
3. The program verifies the key's signature and stores the license in your profile:

`%APPDATA%\imPRESS Studio\licenses\license.json`.

The license is bound to the machine by three components (network adapter, disk, mainboard identifier) — replacing *one* of them does not invalidate the license. The title bar shows the license state (e.g. "Trial · 21 days"); the badge turns to a warning tint 7 days before expiry.

Note: export (GUI, CLI and hot folders) is blocked while the license is invalid. The program also detects system-clock rollback — after such tampering, validation is refused until the correct date is restored.

3. Quick start — your first imposition in 5 steps

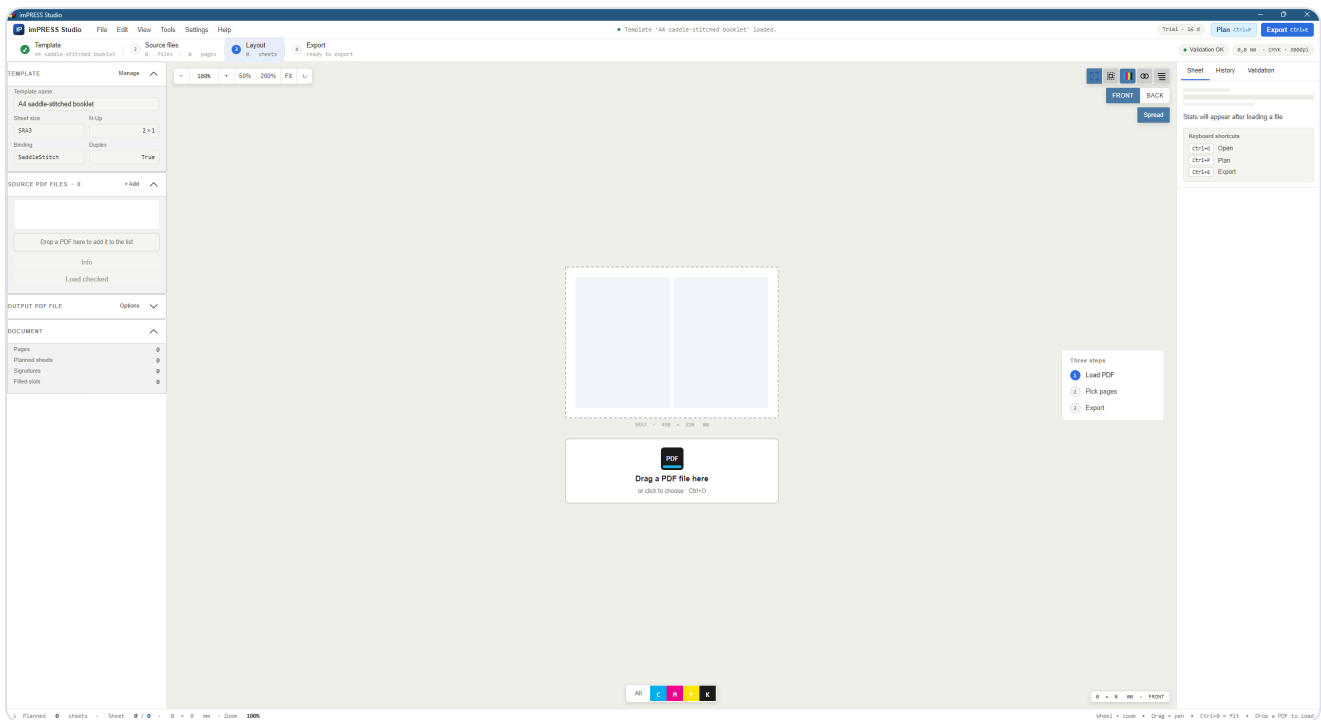


Fig. 3.1. The main window: source file list on the left, preview canvas in the centre, inspector on the right.

1. **Pick or create a template** — click "Manage templates" and choose a ready preset (e.g. "Business cards 6-up SRA3") or build your own (chapter 6).
2. **Add PDF files** — "Add files..." (`Ctrl` + `O`) or drag & drop onto the window. Files are analysed immediately and shown page by page.
3. **Plan the imposition** — "Plan imposition" (`Ctrl` + `P`). The canvas switches from plain pages to finished sheets with marks.
4. **Check the preview and preflight** — browse the sheets (←/→ keys), enable the bleed guides, review the preflight report.
5. **Export** — "Export..." (`Ctrl` + `E`), choose the output file and options (PDF/X, numbering, cutting guide). The finished PDF lands on disk.

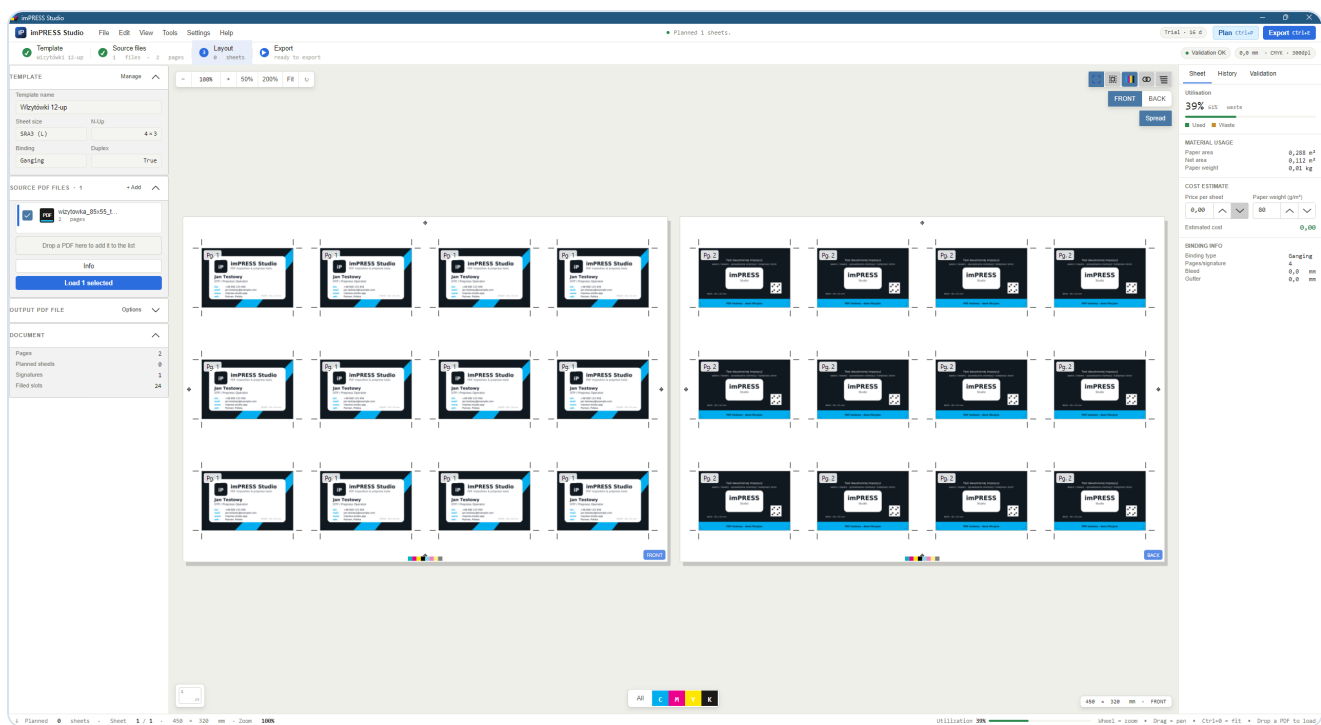


Fig. 3.2. After planning: a sheet with placed pages, printer marks and job information.

4. User interface

4.1. Main window layout

Area	Purpose
Step rail (left edge)	Guides the workflow: Template → Source files → Plan → Export. The active step is highlighted.
Source files panel	Added PDFs with page counts; checkboxes select which files enter the job. Buttons for reordering, merging and removal.
Preview canvas	Interactive preview of pages (before planning) or sheets (after planning), with zoom, pan and inspection tools.
Inspector (right panel)	Active template parameters, job statistics, selected-slot editing, operation history with restore points. Collapsible.
Status bar	Current message, export progress bar, sheet dimensions, license badge.

4.2. Languages and units

- **Interface languages:** Polish and English — switching applies instantly, no restart.
- **Units:** millimetres or inches. All dimension fields and readouts convert automatically; with inches selected, the built-in template presets switch to the US set (Letter, Half-Letter, 3.5×2" business card).

4.3. Keyboard shortcuts

Shortcut	Action
Ctrl + O	Add source files
Ctrl + P	Plan imposition
Ctrl + E	Export
Ctrl + + / Ctrl + -	Zoom in / out
Ctrl + Ø or F	Fit view (reset zoom and pan)
→ / ←	Next / previous sheet
R	Rotate sheet view by 90°
Ctrl + Z / Ctrl + Y	Undo / redo a slot edit (inspector)
F1	Help

5. Source files

5.1. Adding and selecting files

- Add files with the "Add files..." button, `Ctrl + O`, or by dragging PDFs onto the window.
- Every file is analysed on the spot: page count, dimensions, fonts, images, colour spaces.
- **Checkboxes** decide which files enter the job. A single checked file is used directly; several checked files are **merged in list order** (reorder with the $\updownarrow$ buttons).
- "Load checked" builds the job source and shows a plain page preview. Only "Plan imposition" produces sheets.

5.2. Merge to file

The "Merge" button (enabled with ≥ 2 checked files) merges the selection into a PDF on disk without touching the current job — handy for preparing combined material.

5.3. File information

Since 1.5.3 the window is split into tabs (the main-window inspector pattern): **Overview** (file, metadata, properties) / **Validation** / **Colour & PDF/X** (standard, OutputIntent, spot colours, transparency) / **Page content** (boxes, images, fonts) / **Ink coverage** — no more expanders.

The file-info window shows full metadata: PDF version, author, producer, dates, image count, colour spaces, transparency, encryption, and per-page dimensions (MediaBox/TrimBox). At the bottom you will also find the **ink-coverage scan** — since 1.5.0 executed natively by the imPRESS engine (pages rendered by the internal rasterizer, pixels converted to CMYK through the export ICC profile, SWOP fallback; Ghostscript is not needed): average C/M/Y/K coverage of every page with the Σ total — pages above 250% flagged $\triangle$ (a composite page average, not a per-pixel maximum).

Rotated pages (/Rotate): the program works with *visual* dimensions throughout — an A4 page stored portrait with a 90° rotation flag is treated as landscape, exactly as displayed.

6. Imposition templates

A template describes the job's entire geometry: sheet format, trim size, bleed and margins, binding type and marks. Templates are stored as JSON files and can be shared between workstations.

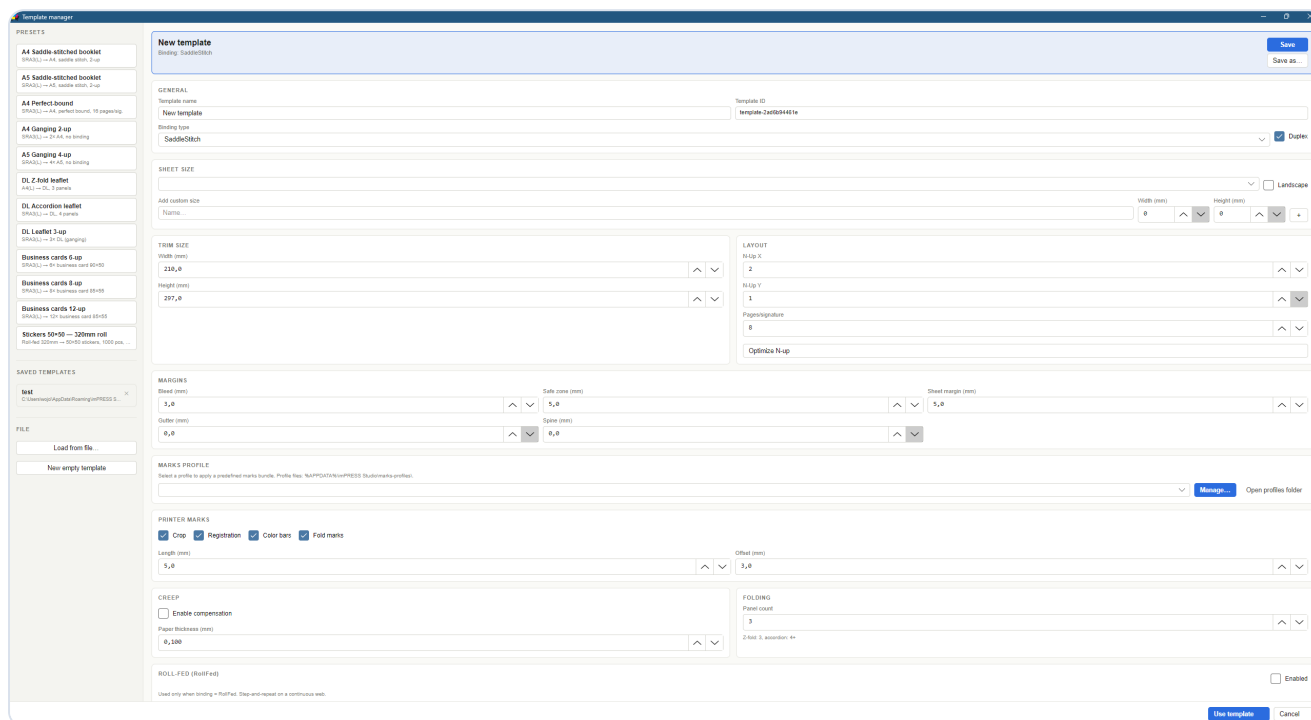


Fig. 6.1. Template manager: library on the left, parameter editing on the right, ready presets at the bottom.

New layout since 1.5.0: the editor is split into tabs — **General** (name, binding, sheet, trim, N-up, margins), **Marks** (mark profiles, classic marks, cutter marks), **Binding & special** and **Extras** (logo overlay, ticket numbering). The "Binding & special" tab shows only the cards the chosen binding actually uses — e.g. the signature layout only for saddle stitch, rotation patterns only for Step & Repeat. A header bar at the top carries the template name, the active binding and the save actions.

6.1. Template parameters

Parameter	Meaning	Typical value
Sheet	Physical paper size; presets (A/B/SRA/RA, Letter, Tabloid, 12×18, 13×19, ANSI) in portrait or landscape, or a custom size	SRA3 320×450 mm
Trim	Size of a <i>single</i> finished page after cutting	e.g. 90×50 mm
Bleed	Artwork allowance past the cut line	3 mm (0.125")
Safe zone	Inset from the cut line that should contain all critical content	3–5 mm
Gutter	Gap between adjacent items on the sheet	0–5 mm
Sheet margin	Clearance from the sheet edge (room for marks and grippers)	10 mm
Spine	Spine width — perfect binding only	per block thickness
N-up X × Y	Item count across and down (grid layouts)	e.g. 3×5
Duplex	Double-sided work — see the binding descriptions	on
Pages per signature	Saddle/perfect binding: section size (multiple of 4; multiple of 8 for the 8-page form)	8 / 16
Creep	Creep compensation: paper thickness in mm — see 7.1	0.1 mm

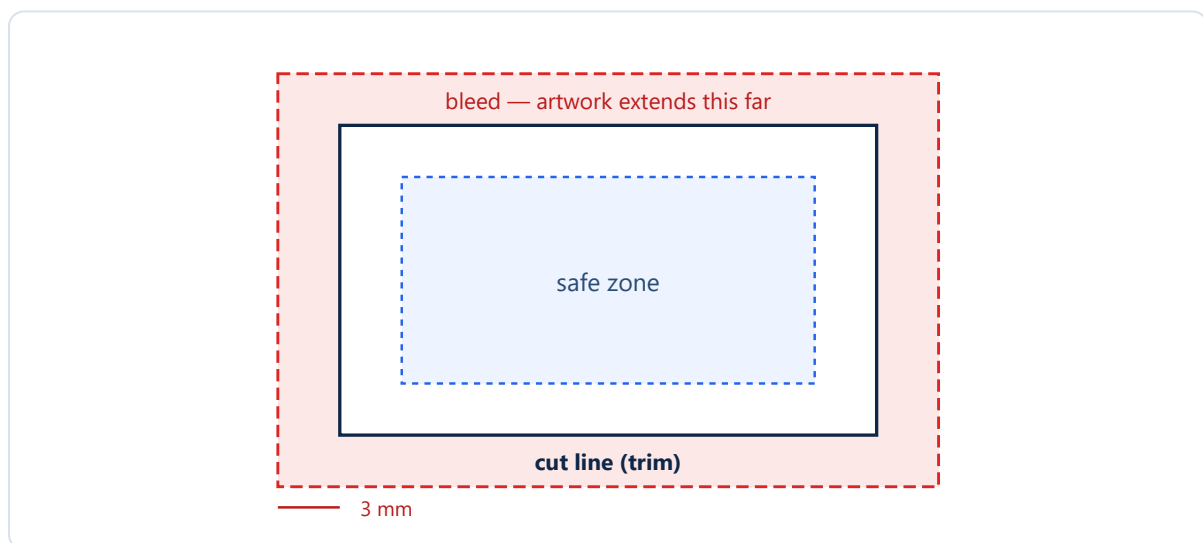


Fig. 6.2. The three zones of an item: bleed outside the cut line, the trim (cut) line, and the safe zone for text.

Bleed in practice: when the source file declares a TrimBox (typical press-ready files), the program maps the *trim area* onto the sheet cell and lets the file's own bleed overflow past the cell — exactly what production requires. A file without bleed is simply centred.

6.2. Built-in presets

The "Ready presets" list ships proven configurations: A4/A5 booklets (saddle, perfect), A4/A5/DL flyer ganging, 6/8/12-up business cards, DL Z-fold and accordion, roll labels and Step & Repeat. With inch

units active the set switches to US formats. Load a preset, adjust it and save under your own name.

6.3. Template suggestions

"Suggest template from PDF..." measures the loaded file's pages and proposes matching products from the library (business card, postcard, flyer, label...), in two tiers:

- **Matched to your sheet** — recalculated for the current template's sheet and margins (you stay on your paper),
- **From the library** — the preset's canonical form (e.g. a label straight onto a roll job).

Each suggestion shows the items-per-sheet count and paper utilisation. Picking one fills the template editor immediately.

The engine also looks at the document's page count: a file of 5+ pages at A4/A5/A6 size additionally gets a *saddle-stitched booklet* proposal, a 49+ page document a *perfect-bound catalogue*, and a document of exactly 5–6 DL pages a *Z-fold leaflet* with ready fold geometry. Their rationale line explains that the page count triggered them; on a dimensional tie the multi-page product ranks above the flat one.

6.4. Layout optimizer and sheet advisor

The optimizer compares the current N-up against the best possible packing for the given sheet, trim, bleed and spacing — including a 90° item rotation. When a denser layout exists, one click applies it.

The "**Compare sheets...**" button opens the *sheet advisor*: a ranking of every paper size by utilisation for the current item (e.g. "SRA3 · 15 pcs · 86% · 3×5"). Top of the list = least waste.

6.5. Ticket numbering (variable data)

The "Ticket numbering" section stamps a **consecutive number on every item** — ideal for tickets, coupons and raffle stubs. Parameters: start number, step, .NET format with the `{0}` token (e.g. No `{0:0000}` → "No 0001"), position (9 anchors), offsets and font size. The sequence runs continuously across all sheets (sheet → slot), on fronts; the preview shows exactly the numbers that land in the PDF.

7. Binding types and layouts

Binding	Use case	How it works
Saddle stitch	booklets, catalogues up to ~64 pp.	Nested spreads stapled at the spine. Page count is padded to the signature size. Modes: classic 2-up, stacked copies (sheet cut into strips before folding), 8-page signature (2×2 grid, top row rotated 180°).
Perfect bound	books, thick catalogues	Sections stacked in sequence and glued; a spine width is reserved between page columns.
Wiro / spiral	calendars, notebooks	Every page printed once, ganged N-up; with duplex, consecutive page pairs share one leaf (verso mirrored about the vertical axis).
Ganging (N-up)	business cards, flyers, invitations	Two slot-filling modes (the <i>Ganging</i> card). RepeatItem (default): an X×Y grid of identical items; duplex pairs pages 1-2 → sheet 1 (front/back), 3-4 → sheet 2, and so on. ConsecutivePages : slots are filled with consecutive document pages (a 5-page document 2-up → 1+2, 3+4, 5); with duplex each slot is its own leaf and the verso is mirrored.
Z-fold	6-page DL leaflets	3 panels folded in a "Z". Sheet front: pages [2·3·4], back: [5·6·1].
Gatefold	invitations, covers	Wings folding inward; 3- or 4-panel variant. Wings are narrowed by a "fold reduction" (1–3 mm) so they do not collide at the centre.
Accordion	maps, price lists	N panels folded alternately; the front carries the odd pages [1·3·5·...].
Roll-fed	labels, stickers	Step-and-repeat on a web: roll width from the template sheet, length computed from the repeat count; optional segment splitting and automatic 90° rotation when it fits more items per row. Duplex: backs mirrored across the web.
Step & Repeat	sheet-fed label production	One page replicated in a grid; rotation patterns (alternate rows / columns / checkerboard at 180°) and centre-to-centre pitch spacing instead of gaps.

7.1. Work-and-turn — both sides from one form

For **Ganging**, duplex has two production modes (a selector next to the Duplex checkbox): classic *Sheetwise* (separate front/back pages in the file) and *WorkAndTurn* — one form carries the fronts on the left half of the grid and the backs on the right, at exactly mirrored positions. The sheet is printed, turned left-to-right and printed again with the same form: **half the plates**, and every cell yields a complete duplex product after cutting. Requires an even N-up X.

7.2. Creep compensation

In saddle-stitched work the inner leaves protrude beyond the outer ones and lose the most paper at the fore-edge trim. To keep margins even, the content of inner leaves shifts **toward the spine** — one paper thickness per nesting level. Just enable creep and enter the paper thickness (e.g. 0.1 mm for 100 gsm offset); the offsets are computed automatically and can be visualised in the preview.

8. Sheet preview

8.1. Navigation

-  /  keys or the thumbnails switch sheets;  +wheel zooms, dragging pans.
- **Spread view** shows a sheet's front and back side by side; the side toggle shows one side at a time.
-  rotates the sheet view by 90° (display only — the job is unchanged).

8.2. Quality-control tools

Tool	Purpose
CMYK channels	Toggle individual process channels on screen (separation simulation).
Overprint simulation	Multiply-blend darkening — a quick look at where inks will overlap.
Eyedropper	Reads the colour under the cursor in RGB and CMYK (indicative values from the preview raster).
Trim/bleed guides	Outlines of the cut line and bleed on every item — instantly shows whether artwork reaches the bleed.
Creep visualisation	Makes the creep-compensation shifts visible across sheets.
Front/back registration	Overlays the back side <i>mirrored</i> (50% opacity) on the front — like holding the sheet against the light; layout misregistration shows instantly.
Mark filters	Hide individual mark types on screen (does not affect export; only marks enabled in the profile are available).

8.3. Slot editing (inspector)

Clicking an item on the canvas selects it; the inspector then shows its X/Y position, size, rotation and source page. You can edit the values, rotate the item by 90°, or **blank the slot** (intentionally empty). Export reproduces exactly what the canvas shows — including manual edits.

Important: after changing *template* parameters, click "Plan imposition" again — export uses the most recently planned (and possibly hand-tuned) sheets.

8.4. History and restore points

Every significant operation (load, plan, export, edits) is logged in the inspector's history. Hovering an entry reveals a restore button that brings back the entire working state from that moment (files, template, layout, export options). Files already written to disk are not touched.

8.5. "Preview" tab — page thumbnails with edits (since 1.5.3)

After a file is loaded the inspector opens the **Preview** tab with thumbnails of every page of the loaded document (for a multi-file load — the whole merge, in canvas order). Page count is **uncapped**: bitmaps

exist only for thumbnails inside a sliding visibility window that follows your scrolling — a 1000-page book costs the same memory as a leaflet.

- **Left click** a thumbnail — shows that page on the main canvas (with an active imposition the canvas switches to the page preview; the plan survives, "Plan" brings the sheets back).
- **Right click** — the edit menu: *rotate 90° CW / CCW / 180°* (lossless /Rotate flip), *grayscale (this page)*, *grayscale (whole file)* and *Revert file edits*. Grayscale runs entirely on the imPRESS engine — no Ghostscript (vectors by luminance, images pixel-by-pixel to DeviceGray).
- **Non-destructive:** every edit produces a temp working copy — the original file is never modified. Analysis, preview, merge, imposition and export automatically use the edited version (a banner above the thumbnails flags active edits).
- **File → Save PDF...** saves the selected file as the preview shows it (edits included) without imposition. An options dialog offers the same choices as export: *format* (plain PDF / PDF/X-1a / X-3 / X-4), *engine* (Auto / imPRESS Export Engine / Ghostscript), *PDF version* (1.4–1.7) and *ICC profile*. Plain save is a copy with edits; PDF/X produces a print-standard file (X-4 natively, X-1a/X-3 via Ghostscript). The original on disk stays untouched.

Page-number badge: the numbering stamp on the canvas shows for 2 seconds after every page/sheet change and fades out — it never permanently covers content. The export prints the stamp at full ink.

9. Printer marks

Marks are configured in **marks profiles** — named bundles assignable to templates. Built-in profiles ship with the program: *Default*, *Offset (coated)*, *Digital print*, *Wide format* and *No marks*; each can be duplicated and customised.

Mark	Description and options
Crop marks	Ticks at every item corner; length (default 5 mm), offset from the cut (3 mm), stroke width, ink: black or registration black (100/100/100/100).
Registration marks	Styles: target, plus, diamond, boxed crosshair (Heidelberg); positions: edge centres, corners or both; size and edge offset.
Control bars	CMYK bar (variants: 4-patch process, 8-patch with tints, GATF 11, Brunner 21) on the first half of the edge + a grayscale K wedge (8 steps of 12.5%) on the second half — neither collides with the centre registration mark.
Fold marks	Dashed ticks on the spine axis (saddle stitch).
Slug line	A text line along an edge with tokens: <code>{filename}</code> , <code>{date}</code> , <code>{date:format}</code> , <code>{sheet}</code> , <code>{sheets}</code> , <code>{side}</code> , <code>{jobid}</code> , <code>{template}</code> .
Summa OPOS markers	Solid black squares at the corners of the cut area for cutting plotters; the OPOS-XY variant adds a sheet label. Size (3 mm) and clearance (5 mm) configurable. Drawn on the front side only.
Barcode / QR	A job-tracking code in the sheet margin (Code 128 or QR) with token-based content as in the slug. The program warns when the code would overlap artwork.

10. Preflight — checking files before print

Preflight runs on two levels: a **quick check** on every export and a **deep prepress analysis** with a report. Findings carry three severities: info, warning, error (errors block the export).

10.1. Key quick checks

Code	Meaning
BLEED_LOW	Template bleed below 3 mm.
TRIM_MISMATCH	A page's TrimBox differs from the template trim (visual dimensions are compared — /Rotate pages do not raise false alarms).
PAGE_COUNT_MISMATCH	File page count differs from the planned job (error).
RGB_ONLY	The file uses RGB colour only — offset work needs conversion (the PDF/X export performs it).
ENCRYPTED	Encrypted file — some workflows reject such PDFs.
X1A_TRANSPARENCY	PDF/X-1a forbids live transparency (error for X-1a export; pick X-4 or flatten the file).
TRIM_ROTATED	Pages match the template trim only after a 90° turn — rotate the template trim or the source pages (one aggregated hint).
SIGNATURE_PADDING	Page count not a multiple of the signature — tells you how many blank pages will be appended to the booklet.
SADDLE_TOO_THICK	Saddle stitch above 64 pages — severe creep and stapling problems; consider perfect binding.
DUPLEX_ODD_PAGES	Duplex ganging with an odd page count — the last sheet will have an empty back.

10.2. Deep prepress analysis

Area	What is checked
Bleed	Missing BleedBox, zero/low/asymmetric bleed; content-level check : does artwork actually reach into the bleed (<code>BLEED_CONTENT_UNUSED</code> = white strips after trimming) and does it overflow the BleedBox.
Images	Effective DPI of every placement: error below the critical threshold, warning below the minimum, info when oversampled.
Fonts	Font embedding (unembedded fonts risk substitution at the RIP).
Colour	RGB in offset work, mixed colour spaces, spot colours.
Transparency	Transparency groups (relevant to PDF/X-1a).
Page geometry	Box consistency (Trim⊂Bleed⊂Media), page-size uniformity, declared PDF/X standard.
Page content	Tiny text below 4 pt (fills in or breaks up on press); registration-black text (C=M=Y=K=100% — 400% ink, coloured fringes; body text should be K-100); hairlines — zero-width strokes that vanish on the platesetter; blank pages (list of pages with no text or images); annotations and forms — comments, stamps and AcroForm fields usually do not print (flatten the file), hyperlinks reported as info.

The report can be reviewed in a summary window before you confirm the export; in batch mode the "strict preflight" option aborts on any finding.

11. Export and PDF/X

11.1. Export options

Option	Effect
Output file	Target PDF path; the write is atomic (temp file first) and an existing file gets a <code>.bak</code> copy.
Sheet range	E.g. <code>1-3,7</code> — which <i>planned sheets</i> to write (reprints of selected sheets). Sheet numbers in the marks keep their original values.
Source page range	E.g. <code>1-16</code> — only a slice of the source file is imposed (applied <i>before</i> planning).
Sheet numbering	An "n / N" stamp in a chosen corner; format uses tokens <code>{0}</code> (number) and <code>{1}</code> (sheet count).
Cutting guide	An extra page at the end of the file: a sheet schematic with numbered guillotine cuts and a position table in mm — see the example in 15.1.

11.2. PDF/X

	PDF/X-1a:2001	PDF/X-3:2003	PDF/X-4:2008
PDF version	1.4	1.4	1.6
Transparency	not allowed (flattened)	not allowed (flattened)	allowed
Colour	CMYK + spot	CMYK + spot + ICC	CMYK + ICC
Typical use	legacy offset workflows	European offset (ECI)	modern standard — recommended

The result is written next to the main export with a `.pdfx1a.pdf`, `.pdfx3.pdf` or `.pdfx4.pdf` suffix. The selected ICC profile (e.g. ISO Coated v2) is embedded as the OutputIntent.

11.3. PDF/X engine and PDF version

- **imPRESS Export Engine (native)** — packages PDF/X-4 without Ghostscript: embeds the ICC profile, XMP metadata, TrimBox and the 1.6 version stamp. It converts to CMYK both *vector RGB* (since 1.5.0) and *RGB images* — JPEG, 8-bit Flate rasters and Indexed palettes (since 1.5.6) — through the selected ICC profile (Windows colour engine, relative colorimetric intent). A two-stage gate (source analysis + a deep scan of the composed file) guarantees no file ever ships with a false conformance claim. With no profile selected the engine falls back to a bundled production profile (PSO Coated v3) and logs the choice.
- **Ghostscript** — flattens transparency and handles exotic colour constructs; required for PDF/X-1a, X-3, JPEG 2000 / 16-bit images and files using /DeviceRGB beyond fills and images (cs/CS operators, shadings).
- **Auto (recommended)** — the native engine when the file qualifies; Ghostscript otherwise.
- **PDF version** — for plain (non-PDF/X) exports you can pick the header version: 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 or 1.7. PDF/X modes enforce their spec versions (X-1a/X-3 → 1.4, X-4 → 1.6).

ICC profiles: the program looks for profiles first in the user folder `%APPDATA%\imPRESS Studio\icc` , then among the bundled ones (`{install dir}\icc`). Drop an `.icc` / `.icm` file into the user folder and it appears in the list.

12. Job statistics

After planning, the inspector shows job statistics:

- **sheet and signature counts**,
- **paper utilisation** — item area vs. sheet area (and the waste percentage),
- **paper cost** — once you enter a per-sheet price,
- **paper weight** — once you enter the grammage (gsm); useful for shipping quotes.

13. Hot folders — automation

A hot folder is a watched directory: every PDF dropped into it is imposed automatically with the assigned template and written to the output directory. Ideal for repeat work.

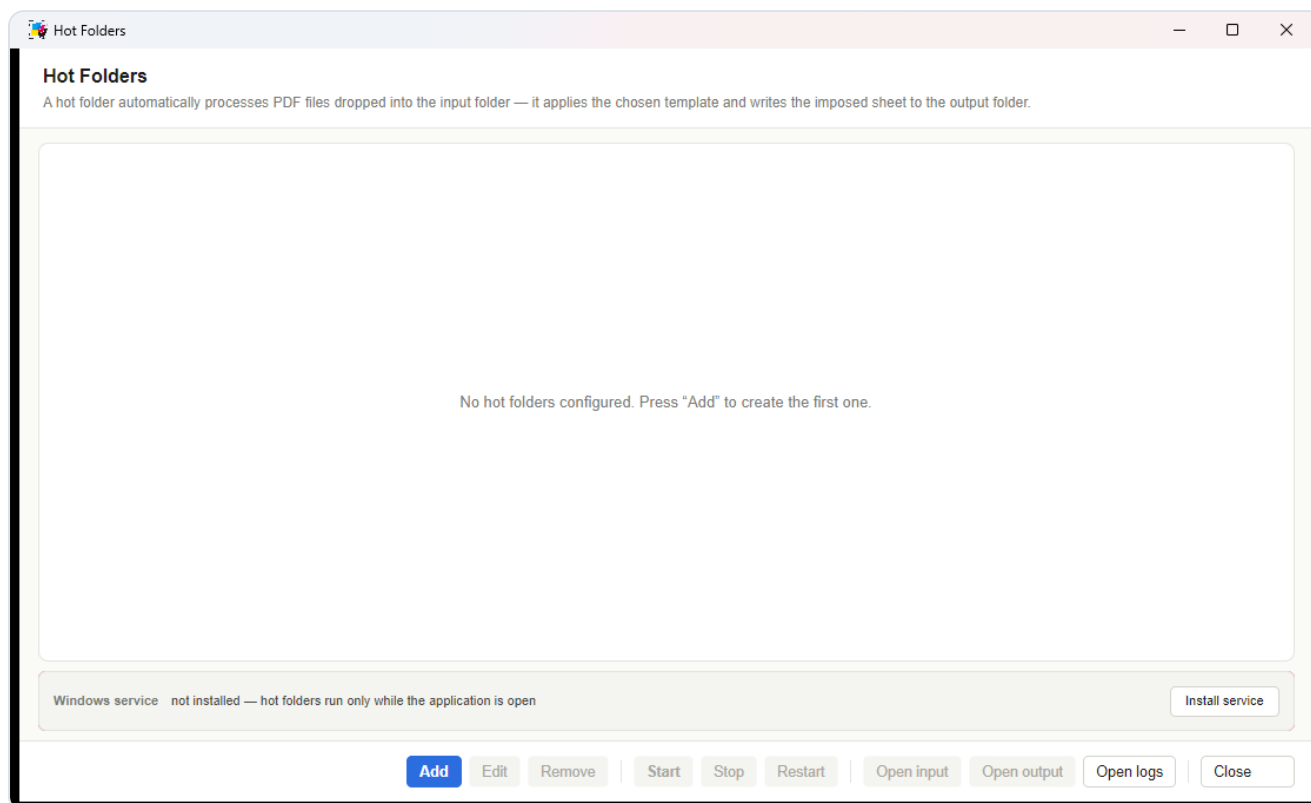


Fig. 13.1. Hot folder manager: folder list with status, counters and recent-job view.

13.1. File flow

1. A file appears in the **input** directory; the program waits until copying finishes (stability probe).
2. The file is moved into the `.work` staging directory (it disappears from input — no double processing).
3. Imposition + export run with the folder's template; the result lands in the **output** directory under a pattern-based name.
4. On success the original is deleted or archived (`.archive`); on failure it moves to `.error` together with an `.error.txt` sidecar describing the cause.

A ledger of processed files (SQLite) guarantees the same file is never exported twice — even across restarts; interrupted jobs are returned to input at startup.

13.2. Folder configuration

Field	Description
Input / output directory	The watched and the target paths (network shares allowed).
Template	Since 1.5.2 picked from the saved-templates list (the same library the template manager uses) or via "From file..." — the path field stays editable.
File pattern	E.g. <code>*.pdf</code> ; optionally recursive — under "Advanced".
Output naming pattern	Tokens: <code>{filename}</code> , <code>{ext}</code> , <code>{template}</code> , <code>{timestamp:format}</code> , <code>{jobid}</code> , <code>{guid}</code> . Default: <code>{filename}_imposed_{timestamp:yyyyMMdd_HH:mmss}{ext}</code> . Name collisions get a <code>_2</code> , <code>_3...</code> suffix (under "Advanced").
On success / on failure	Delete / archive the original; leave in place / move to errors (under "Advanced").
Export options	PDF/X (X-1a/X-3/X-4), PDF/X engine (Auto / imPRESS Export Engine / Ghostscript) , plain-export PDF version (1.4–1.7) , ICC profile, strict preflight, sheet numbering and cutting guide — per folder. The Ghostscript path is optional: when blank, the bundled copy is used.

License: every hot-folder job re-checks the license — once it expires the automation stops exporting and files stay untouched in the input.

ADD HOT FOLDER

BASICS

A hot folder is a watched directory: drop a PDF into the input folder and the app automatically applies the chosen template and writes the imposed sheet to the output folder. Ideal for an "operator drops a file — the ripper picks up the imposed sheet" workflow.

Name *

e.g. Saddle A4 → 4-up

Name is required.

☒ Hot folder enabled

FOLDERS

Input folder *

Browse...

Input folder is required.

Output folder *

Browse...

Output folder is required.

Work / archive / error folders are created automatically inside the input folder (.work / .archive / .error) — change them under Advanced.

TEMPLATE & FILTERS

Imposition template *

— pick a saved template —

From file...

No saved templates — save one in the template manager or point at a JSON file.
or start from a built-in template

Pick a starting point...

The preset is saved as an ordinary template in the templates directory — it appears in the list above and in the template manager, where you can adjust it. An existing file of the same name is left alone.

...or a full path to a template JSON file

Template file is required.

EXPORT

PDF/X mode

PDF/X engine

None (regular PDF)

Auto (recommended)

Save Cancel

Fig. 13.2. Hot folder configuration: a template from the saved list, from the built-in starting points, or by path to a JSON file (1.6.0).

13.3. JDF / XJDF job tickets 1.6.0

If your MIS issues CIP4 tickets, a hot folder can read them instead of guessing from the PDF alone. Tick **Accept JDF / XJDF job tickets** in the folder's filter section.

A ticket is not the work — it describes the work and names the file that is. The program reads the finished size, press sheet, binding and sidedness from it, then imposes the PDF it points at.

1. The MIS writes the **PDF first** and the ticket last — the ticket is the "go" signal. The other way round, the program waits for the artwork anyway.
2. The folder's template stays. A ticket overrides *only* what it states; your bleed, gutters, margins and marks are untouched.

3. Every override appears in the job log with the value before and after — a sheet that came out other than expected can be traced to the ticket that asked for it.
4. Afterwards the ticket and its artwork travel together: both to the archive, or both to the error folder.

Situation	What the program does
The ticket states a different page count than the PDF	Reports the disagreement but counts pages from the PDF. The file decides.
A binding the program does not impose (Ring, Tape, thread sewing)	Keeps the template's binding and logs what the ticket asked for. It never substitutes the "nearest" one — ring binding imposed as saddle stitch is a scrapped run.
Artwork named outside the allowed directories	Refuses the job and says why. The folder's input directory is always allowed; add others in the configuration.
The ticket points at an <code>http</code> / <code>ftp</code> address	Refused. The program fetches local files only.

Ticket dimensions are in points. CIP4 states everything in points of 1/72 inch — 595.276 is A4 width. The program converts them itself; nothing has to change on the MIS side.

13.4. Hot folders as a Windows service 1.6.0

A hot folder run from the program window stops when you log off. Installed as a service it keeps going — across reboots and with nobody logged in. This is the setting for a workstation that has to work overnight.

The easiest route is the **hot folder manager**: the *Windows service* row at the bottom shows the state and offers *Install service*, *Start*, *Stop* and *Remove service*. A User Account Control prompt appears — registering a service needs administrator rights, and the program does not otherwise need them.

Folders on a network drive? Give it a domain account at install time. The service runs as LocalSystem by default, which authenticates as the computer and is usually refused by a file server:

```
hotfolder service install --account DOMAIN\user --password ***
```

- The service reads **the same configuration and licence** as the program — the path is captured at install time.
- After a failure Windows restarts it automatically: three attempts a minute apart.
- Check the state with `hotfolder service status` or in the Windows *Services* window, where it appears as **imPRESS Studio Hot Folders**. Scripts and `sc` / `net start` commands use the key `ImpressStudioHotFolders`.
- Before installing the service, **test the folder from the program window** — a configuration mistake is far easier to spot when a window is showing live status.

14. Command line (CLI)

The program also runs headless — the same engine as the GUI, no window:

```
"imPRESS Studio.exe" impose --source job.pdf --output result.pdf --template template.json
"imPRESS Studio.exe" impose --source job.pdf --output result.pdf --template template.json ^
                        --pdfx x3 --icc "PS0coated_v3" --gs "C:\...\gswin64c.exe" ^
                        --sheet-range 1-3 --page-range 1-16 --numbering --cutting-guide
"imPRESS Studio.exe" license activate --key <KEY>
"imPRESS Studio.exe" license info
"imPRESS Studio.exe" hotfolder run      <- hot-folder daemon in the console (Ctrl+C stops)
"imPRESS Studio.exe" hotfolder list
```

`impose` options: `--pdfx` none|x1a|x3|x4 , `--engine` auto|native|gs (PDF/X engine), `--pdf-version` 14|15|16|17 (plain exports), `--icc` (profile name or absolute path), `--sheet-range` , `--page-range` , `--numbering` ("n / N" stamp), `--strict-preflight` , `--cutting-guide` ; the legacy `--pdfx4` switch still works.

Command	Description
<code>impose</code>	Full imposition: analyse → preflight → plan → compose (+ optional PDF/X-4 and cutting guide).
<code>license</code>	Activation and license information (including the machine fingerprint used to issue a license).
<code>hotfolder</code>	<code>run</code> / <code>list</code> / <code>start <id></code> / <code>stop <id></code> / <code>reload</code> .

15. Worked examples — tutorials

All illustrations in this chapter are genuine program output (rendered pages of exported PDFs).

15.1. Double-sided business cards 90×50 mm, 15-up on SRA3

Material: a 2-page PDF (page 1 = front, page 2 = back), 90×50 mm trim with 3 mm bleed (TrimBox present in the file).

1. Template: **Ganging**, SRA3 sheet 320×450 (portrait), trim 90×50, bleed 3, gutter 4, sheet margin 10, N-up **3×5**, duplex on.
2. Marks: crop marks + registration + control bars (the "Default" profile).
3. Add the card file → "Plan imposition" → check the bleed guides → "Export..." with the **cutting guide** enabled.

Result: 1 sheet, 2 PDF pages (front + back — fronts on the recto, backs on the verso) + the cutting-guide page. 15 cards per pass.

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Fig. 15.1. Sheet front: 15 items with bleed overflowing the cut lines, crop marks at every item, edge-centre registration marks, CMYK bar and grayscale wedge at the bottom.

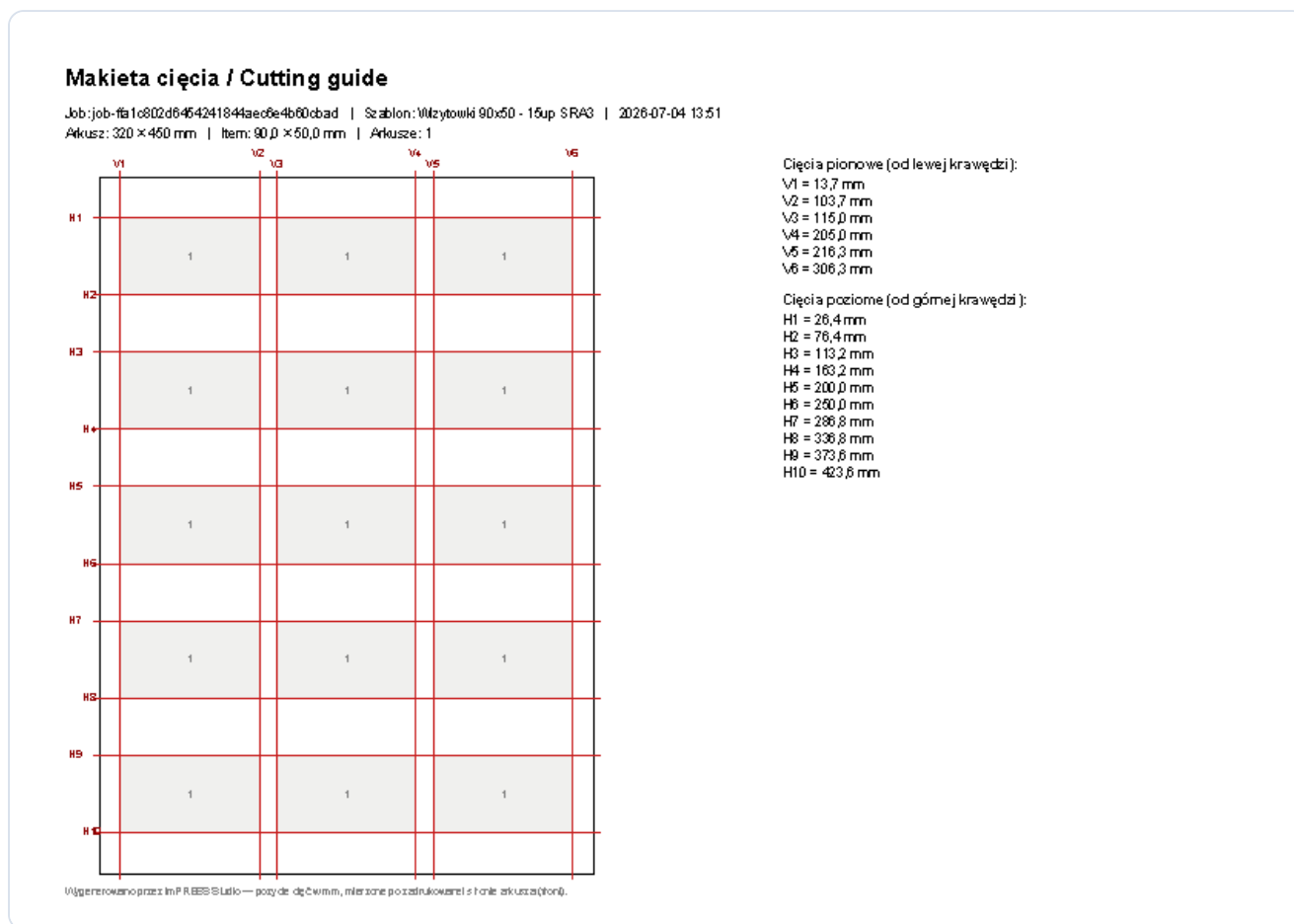


Fig. 15.2. The cutting guide appended to the file: numbered vertical (V) and horizontal (H) cuts with millimetre positions — a ready crib sheet for the guillotine operator.

15.2. A5 booklet, 8 pages, saddle stitch with creep

Material: an 8-page A5 PDF (148×210 mm).

1. Template: **saddle stitch**, SRA3 sheet 450×320 (landscape), trim 148×210, 8 pages per signature, margin 10.
2. Enable **creep** and enter a paper thickness of 0.1 mm.
3. Marks: crop, registration and fold marks.
4. Plan → export. Result: 2 sheets (4 PDF pages).

Page layout: sheet 1 front **[8-1]**, back **[2-7]**; sheet 2 front **[6-3]**, back **[4-5]**. After duplex printing, folding and stapling the pages read 1→8.

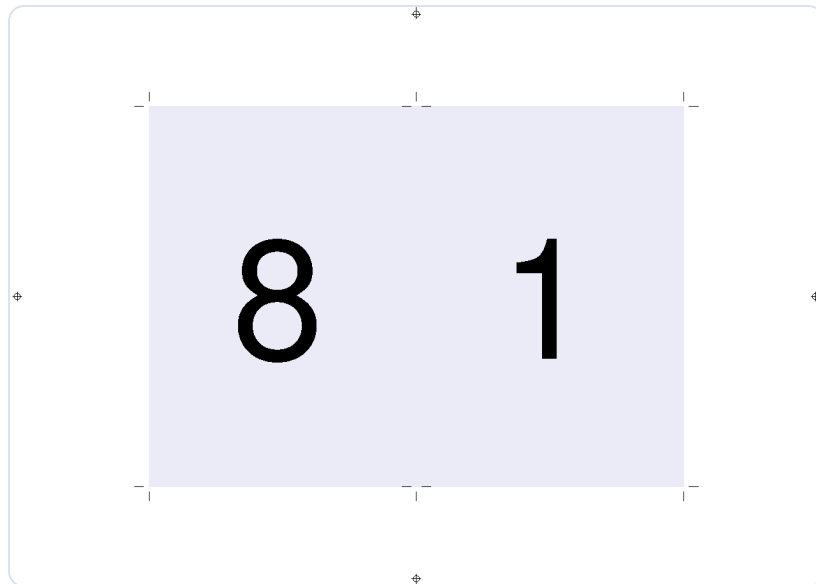


Fig. 15.3. Sheet 1, front: the [8:1] spread with the fold mark on the spine axis.

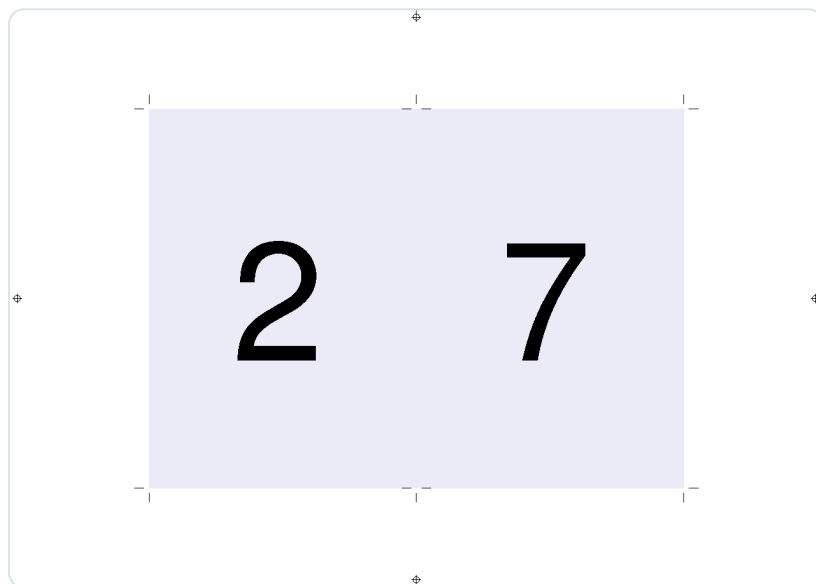


Fig. 15.4. Sheet 1, back: [2:7]. With creep enabled, inner sheets' pages shift toward the spine.

15.3. 100×50 mm labels on a 320 mm roll with auto-rotation

Material: a 1-page PDF with a 100×50 mm label design.

1. Template: **Roll-fed**, "Roll 320" sheet (320 mm web width), trim 100×50, margin 5.
2. Roll section: repeat count (e.g. 100), 2×2 mm gaps, "**Allow rotation**" **enabled** — the program works out that rotating 90° fits 6 instead of 3 labels per row.
3. For a cutting plotter, enable **Summa OPOS** markers in the marks profile.
4. Plan → export. Web segment length is computed automatically; a length limit splits the run into consecutive segments (PDF pages).

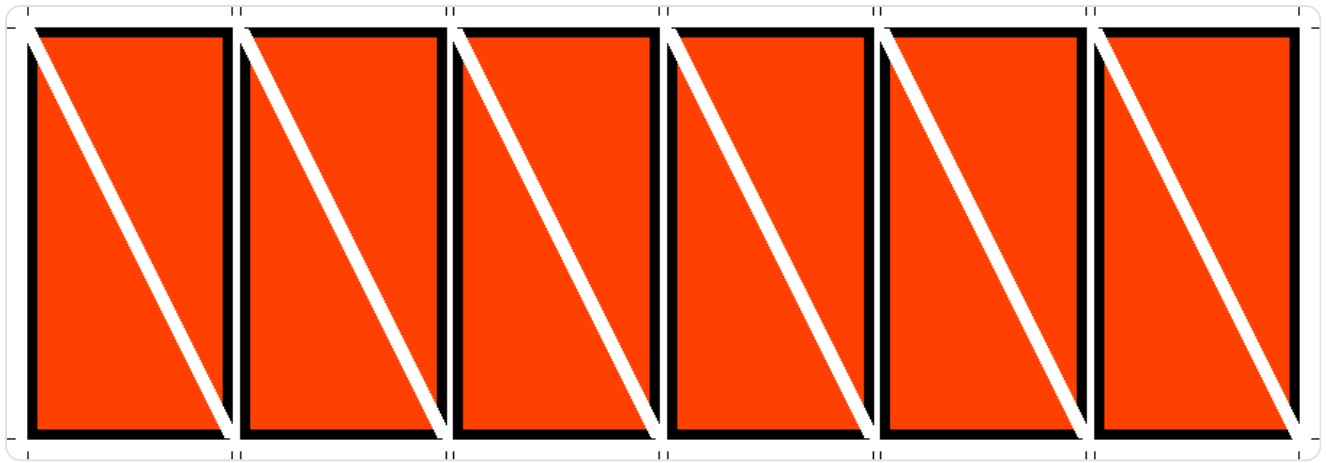


Fig. 15.5. A web fragment: labels rotated 90° fill the full roll width — 6 per row instead of 3, half the web length for the same label count.

15.4. DL leaflet folded in a "Z" (6 pages)

Material: a 6-page PDF with 99×210 mm panels.

1. Template: **Z-fold**, A4 landscape sheet (297×210), trim 99×210, 3 panels, zero margins (panels meet at the fold lines), duplex on.
2. Plan → export. Result: 1 sheet, 2 PDF pages.

The program arranges the panels itself: front **[2·3·4]**, back **[5·6·1]** — folded into a "Z", page 1 becomes the cover and the reader opens panels in order 1→6.

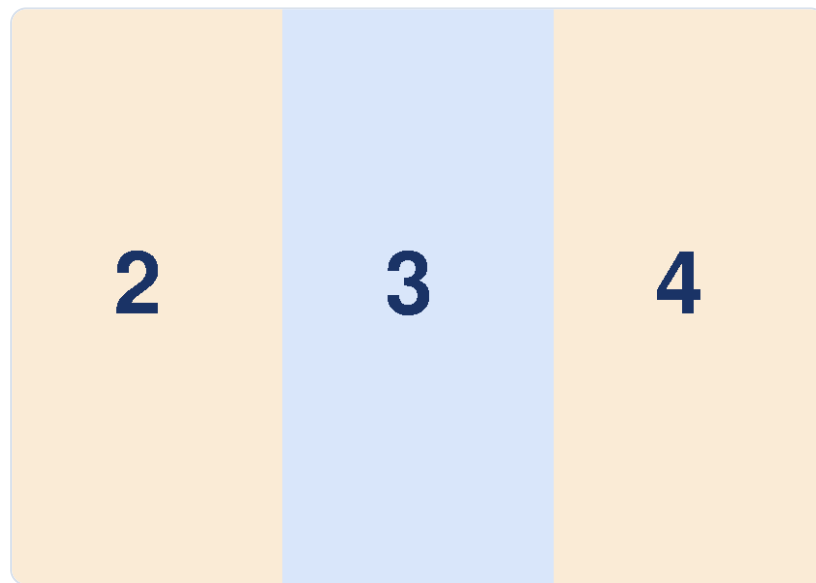


Fig. 15.6. The Z-fold sheet front: panels [2·3·4].

15.5. Automation: a hot folder for business cards

1. Save the template from example 15.1 to a file (e.g. `C:\Shop\templates\cards_15up.json`).
2. In the hot folder manager add a folder: input `C:\Shop\IN\cards`, output `C:\Shop\OUT\cards`, point it at the template.
3. Naming pattern: `{filename}_15up_{timestamp:yyyyMMdd_HH:mm}{ext}`; on success: archive the original.

4. Enable the folder. From now on every PDF dropped into the input directory comes out moments later as a production-ready sheet — without opening the application.

16. Troubleshooting

Symptom / message	Cause and fix
"Required sheet width ... exceeds available ..."	Items plus gaps and margins do not fit the sheet. Reduce the N-up, gaps or margins, pick a larger sheet, or run the layout optimizer.
"Preflight failed with errors"	The report contains an error (e.g. page-count mismatch). Open the preflight report — the code pinpoints the cause (chapter 10).
Export blocked — license	The license expired or the license file was removed. Check "license info" / re-activate (section 2.3).
"Ghostscript ... not found" during PDF/X	Point the export options at <code>gswin64c.exe</code> (Ghostscript ships with the program).
"ICC profile ... not found"	The selected profile does not exist in the profile folders — drop the <code>.icc</code> file into <code>%APPDATA%\imPRESS Studio\icc</code> .
White strips after trimming the print	The artwork does not reach into the bleed (preflight: <code>BLEED_CONTENT_UNUSED</code>). Fix the source file — the program does not invent bleed.
Hot folder does not process files	Check the folder status in the manager (error column), whether the file matches the pattern, and whether it was already processed (dedup ledger — change the file content or name to force a re-run).
Slow preview on very large sheets	The preview caps raster resolution to bound memory — this never affects export (output is vector). For roll work, zoom into fragments.

Application logs: `%LOCALAPPDATA%\imPRESS Studio\logs` — attach the newest file when reporting issues.

17. Glossary

Imposition

Arranging a publication's pages on a press sheet in the correct order and orientation.

Item (trim)

A single finished product on the sheet after cutting (e.g. one business card).

Bleed

Artwork allowance past the cut line (typically 3 mm / 0.125"), compensating cutter tolerance.

Safe zone

The area inside the cut line that should contain all text and logos.

N-up

The number of items placed on one sheet (15-up = 15 copies).

Signature / section

A group of pages printed on one sheet and folded together.

Creep

Outward push of a section's inner leaves; compensated by shifting content toward the spine.

Duplex

Double-sided printing; the sheet's back registers with its front after the sheet is turned.

Registration mark

A colour-registration target printed on every separation.

Slug

A technical job description printed in the sheet margin.

OPOS

Summa's optical positioning system for cutting plotters; solid black squares read by a sensor.

PDF/X

The ISO family of standards for print-exchange PDF files (X-1a, X-4).

TrimBox / MediaBox

PDF page boxes: the net format after trimming / the full page format including allowance.

Hot folder

A watched directory that automatically processes every file dropped into it.