

Overview

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Processing AFP files that contain documents

The AFP Support feature lets you manipulate the individual documents in an AFP file. For example, you can rearrange their output order or group them according to different envelope size requirements. You can find a specific document by searching for a document property in the AFP file.

You use the AFP Indexer mode of RICOH Visual Workbench to create named page groups and index tags in the original job data. Then you use the Document Property Designer mode of the RICOH Visual Workbench to map the index tags to document properties that you want to use to locate and manipulate documents. You use the AFP Enhancer mode to create barcodes and text and hide areas that contain unwanted content such as obsolete barcodes.

The RICOH Visual Workbench creates a control file containing those mappings.

Steps based on AFP Support step templates extract information about the documents in an AFP file and store that information in a **document properties file**, which is structured like a table. The document properties file lets RICOH ProcessDirector do operations on individual documents rather than only on the job as a whole.

When you create a workflow to receive AFP files, you include a step based on the **IdentifyDocuments** step template. You specify the RICOH Visual Workbench control file that contains the page group definition and any document properties. This step builds a document properties file that represents an inventory of all the documents in the job.

To process individual documents, you can add steps to the Assemble phase of the workflow based on these step templates:

- **GroupDocuments** lets you classify all the documents into groups based on up to six document properties. For example, if you had a file of 5000 insurance policy addenda documents, you could group all of them into all the combinations of policy type (auto or home) and state.
- **SortDocuments** lets you sort documents by up to six document properties. For example, you could alphabetize the policy addenda within each group so you would have all the auto policies in states A-Z followed by all the home policies in states A-Z.
- **SplitDocuments** lets you divide a large job into several smaller jobs based on the number of documents or the number of sheets in the smaller job.

Each of these steps adds or changes information in the document properties file without changing the contents of the original AFP job. The document properties file that was created initially to identify all of the documents has more information added to it, such as the location of each document in the rearranged AFP file.

After you define steps to manipulate the documents into the new grouping and order that you want, you include a step in the Assemble phase of the workflow that builds a new AFP file with the individual documents organized according to that ordering. You use a step based on the **BuildAFPFromDocuments** step template if you want to create a single output job based on the newly ordered documents. If, however, you want to create separate output jobs because you used the **SplitDocuments** step or you want to print each group of documents created by the **GroupDocuments** step separately, you instead use a step based on the **CreateAFPJobsFromDocuments** step template.

To allow for more complicated manipulation of the documents, you can build an *Enhance AFP control file* that defines text or barcode data to be added to each document, or to identify text blocks or areas to be removed from each document. You specify the name of the control file containing these definitions when you create the **BuildAFPFromDocuments** or **CreateAFPJobsFromDocuments** step in the Assemble phase of a workflow.

The remainder of the workflow that processes AFP jobs looks the same as if you did not have AFP Support installed—steps can enable repositioning of the print job in case you need to recover from a paper jam or reprint selected documents, and a step based on the **PrintJobs** step template manages the print processing. Steps in the Complete phase let you retain the job in RICOH ProcessDirector for an interval you specify, and then the job is deleted from the system when that interval expires.

If you want to view the values of document properties in the user interface or to search for a document based on a property value, include a **WriteDocumentsToDatabase** step in your workflow. This step saves document property values to the document database.

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