



Technical Bulletin

Number: 05-009

July 29, 2005

Incorrect Ink Key Settings with QMDI Plug-in

Under certain circumstances, it is possible for the Xitron QMDI plug-in to appear to send incorrect ink key data to the QMDI. In reality, the ink key data is correct, but the positioning for the output device is probably offset.

The solution to this problem is to make sure that the image going to the QMDI is always the proper size for the plate, including any "empty space" required to fill the imageable area. This can be done in one of the following ways.

1. Always create files that are the size of the full imageable area of the plate.

Examples:

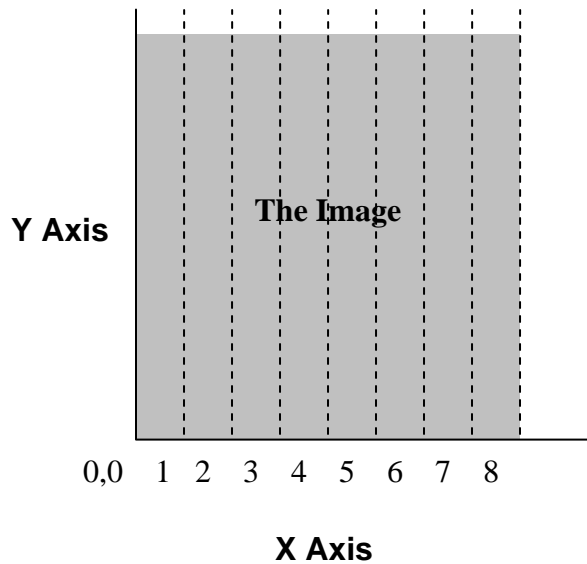
- a. When printing, always set the media size or paper size settings in Quark, InDesign or other layout programs to the size of the imageable area of the press.
 - b. When using imposition software, always set the plate size settings in the imposition software to the proper imageable area of the press.
2. If the above options are not feasible, activate the auto centering option within the Xitron RIP or Xitron Raster Blaster software. Refer to the proper software Users Manual for instructions on setting horizontal auto centering.

Causes

Xitron's QMDI plug-in creates ink key settings based on the RIPPed (bitmap) image data sent to the press. The plug-in reviews, for each color, image and density information of the job and separates the data based on the number of ink key zones selected in the plug-in.

Using a coordinate system similar to the X,Y graph shown on the next page, the plug-in begins calculating at the X,Y coordinate represented as 0,0.

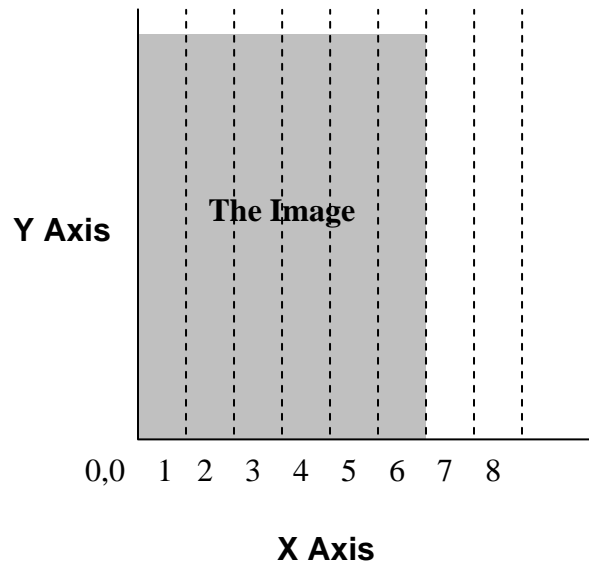
In this example, the gray area represents the entire printable area of the press and the words, "The Image" represent copy within the printable area. The ink keys are positioned across the X Axis as shown by the dotted lines and numbered 1-8 from left to right.



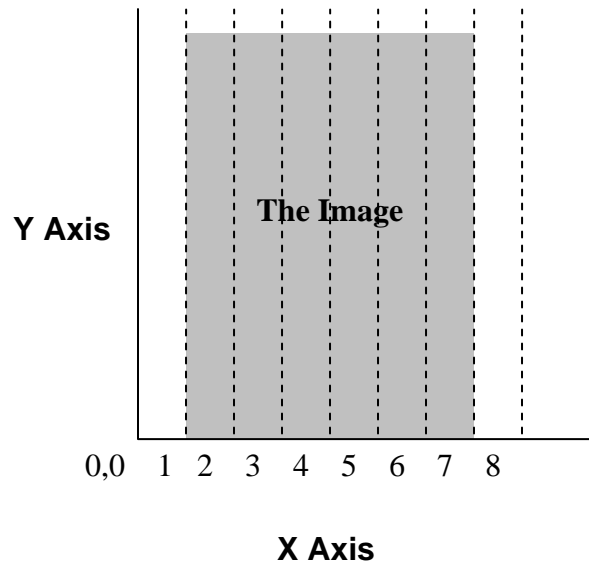
In this example, the plug-in will send ink key data of 0 for ink keys 1, 2, 7 and 8 because no ink is necessary in those zones. However, while the Xitron plug-in positions image data at the 0,0 point when calculating ink key settings, the control software for many QMDI presses may center the image data across the imageable area. This is not a problem if the image data and the imageable area of the plate are the same, but if they differ the ink key settings will be incorrect.

In the two examples on the following page, the plug-in and the press receive an image that is smaller than the imageable area of the plate. Note how the plug-in positions the image at the 0,0 point for ink key setting generation but the QMDI centers the image.

Plug-in:



QMDI:



In this example the ink keys will be incorrect. The plug-in sets keys 1, 6, 7, and 8 to 0 (or off) but on press the setting should be 1, 2, 7 and 8 off.

As stated earlier, the solution to this problem is to make sure that the image going to the QMDI is always the proper size for the plate, including any "empty space" required to fill the imageable area.