



Print Solutions from Atac

Newsletter for Asia Pacific Region

Fourth Quarter, 2023

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Output Manager “Closed-Loop” Reprinting

Output Manager has the ability to provide a “closed-loop” reprint environment, where spoils are automatically requested by the Inserter equipment and automatically re-generated by Output Manager in response, with no operator intervention required.

Print files are produced by Output Manager with accompanying MRDF information files, detailing each individual mailpiece’s start and end page positions within a job, as well as info required for the Inserter equipment to prepare a Spoils request file for any mailpiece(s) not correctly inserted into an envelope.

The Inserter equipment maintains a list drawn from the MRDF file of mailpieces and checks them off as each envelope has appropriate pages correctly inserted for despatch. A Spoils request file is sent back to Output Manager for any missing or spoiled documents. Output Manager reprints just the requested mailpiece(s), which contain the original barcode with matching MRDF info.

The Inserter equipment processes the Reprint files from Output Manager, reading the barcode(s) and crossing each off the MRDF list until every mailpiece is guaranteed to have been inserted into an envelope correctly. If the Spoils files themselves have Spoils, another Spoils request file is sent to Output Manager and a new reprint file is prepared and processed by the Inserter equipment, etc. etc.

This automated “closed-loop” process can iterate as many times as required until all Spoils have been regenerated by Output Manager and the Inserter equipment has crossed them all off its MRDF list.

“Closed-loop” reprinting is an essential part of an Automated Document Factory (ADF) processing workflow and provides customer certainty that their documents will be processed and despatched without error. It’s a great selling feature and ensures print-shop confidence in the Output Manager system’s ability to guarantee mailpiece delivery into envelopes for despatch.

Contact Atac today to discuss how Output Manager “closed-loop” reprinting can provide confidence and certainty in the “print and mail” process, for customers and outsourcers alike.

More information at...

<https://www.atac.com.au>

Email David Kirk

or call +61 (419) 962 386

BHCS Enhanced (Remote) Spool Window

The BHCS Remote Spool Window (RSW) is also known as the Enhanced Spool Window. The RSW can connect to any BHCS system reachable across your network, so it's a great tool for managing multiple machines from a single location. The RSW is available in BHCS versions 7.2.2.35 and higher. One free RSW licence is provided with every BHCS system, with more available for purchase.

BHCS supports multiple RSW connections, in addition to the standard Spool Window, so you can manage and monitor multiple BHCS Spool systems remotely, while operators continue to print files. This is great for Data Centres managing multiple BHCS machines, sometimes running in a "lights-out" environment.

RSW provides a secure connection with assignable rights for each user, and most of the functionality provided by the BHCS Spool and Retain Windows. This means BHCS can be supported and operated from anywhere on your network, without exposing the whole BHCS machine, as Remote Desktop does.

The RSW is written using the latest window and control programming libraries, giving it an "Office 365" look and feel. There's a "hide-able" Ribbon and a customisable Quick Access Toolbar, providing easy addition of commonly used functions. Almost every BHCS configuration option is no more than two clicks away.

The RSW itself is full of useful information including the Barr Services' status and licencing info at a glance. Different Spool Views can be defined with each having its own multi-level Sort and Filter criteria. Views can be selected with just a single click, providing unparalleled ease-of-use and the ability to easily manage large numbers of Spool files.

The Admin Config selection brings up a single dialogue from which virtually every configurable option is available. Configuration of Printers, SQL-based Accounting, Notifications, User Rights/Permissions, Licencing, File-input, RJE, NJE, TCP/IP and Channel-Input is all at your fingertips, providing you have appropriate permissions of course.

Access to the Operator Console Log, Diagnostics and the ability to Backup and Restore configuration settings are also present in the new and powerful "BHCS Configuration Tools" interface, provided as part of the RSW. It's great to have all the config items in one location and not have to hunt through various menus to find the exact one you need.

Contact Atac to get your free upgrade to BHCS 7.2.2.35+ and take control of your BHCS systems.

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BHCS Architecture

Barr Systems' Host Communications Suite (BHCS) runs on any Windows machine (workstation or server). It's designed to run without any human intervention, so it's Service-based. This means the main components start automatically when Windows starts, without you even logging in.

The main component is the Barr SpoolCore Service, which does most of the work routing jobs in and out of Spool. It achieves this through a number of other specialised Barr Services, such as:

- RJE – Mainframe connectivity
- LPD – Unix / Mainframe-IP connectivity
- Print/Channel – Channel printer emulation
- Print Utility – Polls files in from disk locations

Operators use the SpoolUI (Spool Window) to view activity and intervene when circumstances arise. The Spool Window is also the starting point to configure the various Services which feed Spool:

- RJE – connection parameters, number of PRinters, PUnches and ReaDers, default attributes
- LPD – LPD Queues emulated, data types accepted, default attributes
- Print/Channel – Channel Addresses serviced, printer emulations, Banner recognition
- Print/Utility – folders polled, data types expected, default attributes.

The Spool Window is used to setup the various output devices ("printers") to which files are routed. Output can be to DISK, LPR, LAN or Local printers; all appear in the top section of the Spool Window, with various columns alongside. Any information in any white column next to a "printer" must match identical info next to print jobs in the bottom section in order for the job to print (be "routed" to the destination).

Carefully identifying input jobs' attributes and assigning them to output devices can automate the routing so jobs arrive and flow out to matching devices without intervention. Jobs can be set to arrive in READY state and output devices can also be set to startup in READY mode. Matching jobs will flow in and straight out of Spool, with no operator intervention.

So, when the BHCS machine starts, the Services start and jobs can flow in and out automatically based on routing criteria. The Spool Window doesn't need to be open for this to occur and you need not even be logged in.

You can prove this by sending a large print job to a destination manually in Spool, then close Spool and logout. The job continues to print. Log back in and start the Spool Window and you will see the job is still chugging away, uninterrupted.

As the Spool Window starts, a message is logged which says "Starting Spool data transfer from SpoolCore". The Spool Window is retrieving all the info from SpoolCore (jobs in Spool and Retain, jobs currently printing, current routing info etc.) necessary to populate the Spool Window and show us what's going on "under the bonnet".

Any changes made via the Spool Window to job attributes, routing info etc. are sent to the SpoolCore Service which actually does the work. SpoolCore sends back micro-updates to allow the Spool Window to update output progress, jobs in Spool/Retain, jobs arriving etc.

Remember, it's the SpoolCore Service which does all the work, not the Spool Window. The more you can setup your routing so jobs flow in and out automatically, the less time you need to sit in front of the Spool Window doing it manually.

Contact Atac for assistance setting up your BHCS system to do most, if not all, of the day to day routing of jobs in and out of Spool.

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Q & A

Q. What is the process for us to move our Output Manager (OM) license to new hardware?

A. Supply us with the new IP address and we'll send you a temporary OM license with the same options as current. We'll also send you a document to complete when the cut-over is complete. Once received, we'll supply you with a permanent OM license for the new machine.

Q. Our BHCS Server gave the following message and stopped printing jobs:

“Print Accounting Error: [DBNETLIB][ConnectionWrite (send()).]General network error. Check your network documentation.”

What does it mean, and why did printing stop?

A. BHCS print Accounting is being written to a SQL Server database on another machine, but it cannot contact the SQL Server machine to do so. Optionally, printing will cease if the Accounting info cannot be written, so no Accounting info is lost. Correct the network issue and re-establish communications to the SQL Server machine and printing will resume.

Q. We have a new printer and are getting errors with our VIPP print. We've tried sending the VIPP file both as a BINARY and as an ASCII file with no success. What's going on?

A. VIPP is a Postscript variant with Xerox extensions. The new printer is handling the VIPP data differently and doesn't handle the old Custom Media Type as the old one does. Change the CIPP coding to use mediacolour instead and setup the tray with custom media colour. Additionally, the new printer expects “%!” at the job start, with “%XRX” changed to “%%AP DSC” (Document Structure Conventions).

Unfortunately, VIPP support on some newer printers is simply not compatible with older models.

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