
AutoPrint

User Manual



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What AutoPrint does

The main purpose of AutoPrint is automatic batch printing of PDF, text or bitmap image files in many particular layouts and types for your personal use cases. The file processing is done without any user interaction and supports your workflow in many different ways.

PDF documents and any **BMP, JPG, JPEG, GIF, PNG, TIF, TIFF** (including multi-page) bitmap image files are processed without the need of external applications. You can address any installed Windows printer, including LAN or WAN attached printers. **TXT, LOG**, or other native text files are transferred through a Windows canvas and thereby can be printed the way you define. Optionally add **watermarks** and **header** or **footer** text lines, including page numbers, file names and more.

Multiple page layout setups can be pre-defined for each accessible printer. After the successful output the input-files are deleted automatically or moved to any user defined folders. These also contain local sync-folders created by cloud services, e.g. Dropbox and OneDrive, which allow you to save your documents in your favorite cloud space after printing them.

AutoPrint runs as a desktop application, visible or minimized to the system tray or as an unattended Windows32 **service** (*Professional license*).

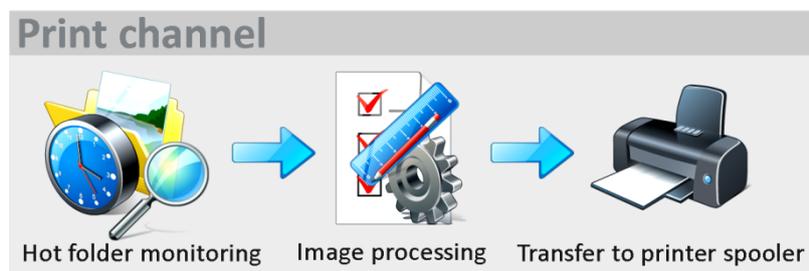
How AutoPrint works

In order to understand the basic operating principle and to get the most of all below described features, please carefully read this short paragraph.

AutoPrint continuously monitors **pre-defined file input** folders, local or remote, for printable files, locks them for **processing** and sends their contents to **corresponding printers**. Finally, the input files are deleted or stored into a separate folder. If the storing destination leads to another input folder the files are passed to a next printer and so on.

Print channel

The combination of a file input folder, an optional set of individual image processing parameters and an assigned printer spooler setup is called a **print channel**.



Setup of a print channel

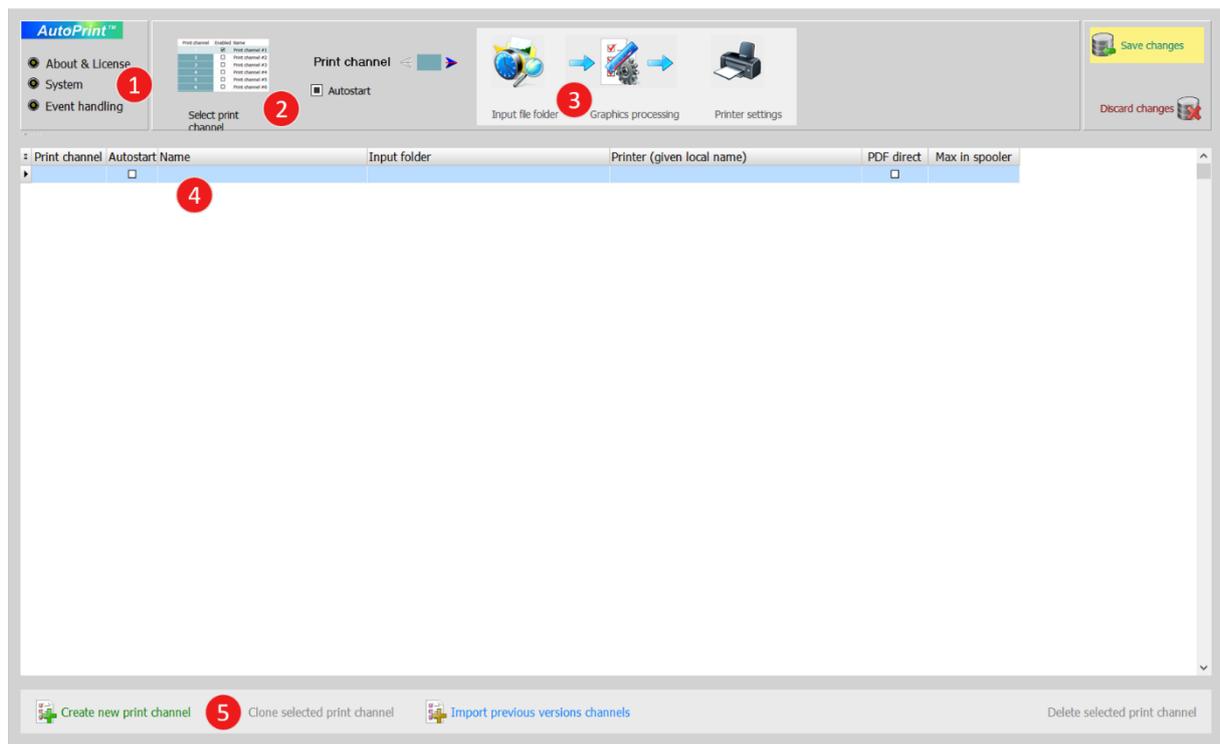
Each print channel allows a bunch of individual printer and page settings, scheduling, and final file handling definitions. Depending on the license version you may define as many print channels as you need.

Fast Lane

Congratulations! You successfully installed AutoPrint, and you already have started the application.

Initially your screen should look like this now. In this chapter, we'll throw you right into the action and let you create your first functional print channel. You will find detailed explanations for everything further down in this handbook.

On this page five of the most important items are numbered and explained here. In the following chapters the focus will lay on the many features of AutoPrint.



- (1) This is the setup and administration area. We will cover this in the detailed guide later. The system is ready to work without the need to interact with these settings.
- (2) Hovering over or clicking this field will always lead back to the list of your print channels shown in (4).
- (3) By hovering over one of these fields, you can switch between the three main print channel option groups. Best Practice here would be following the arrows from left to right. Create a new print channel with the button (5).

Let's start this little tutorial by hovering over *Input file* and diving directly into Step 1.

Step 1: Input File Folder

The screenshot shows the AutoPrint configuration window. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Input file folder' highlighted. Below it, the 'Input folder' section is active, showing a text box with the path 'C:\AutoPrintFiles\Printer' and a green status indicator 'Folder location and access privileges verified'. A red circle with the number '1' is placed over the folder selection icon. The 'Scheduler' section below it shows a weekly schedule grid with all days checked and times set to 00:00. A red circle with the number '2' is placed over the scheduler icon. The 'Before processing' section shows a spin box set to '0' for the 'max. number of pending jobs in printer spooler'. A red circle with the number '3' is placed over the spin box. The 'After print' section shows the option '...delete the file' selected. A red circle with the number '4' is placed over the radio button. The path 'C:\Temp' is entered in the archive folder text box. A red circle with the number '4' is placed over the radio button.

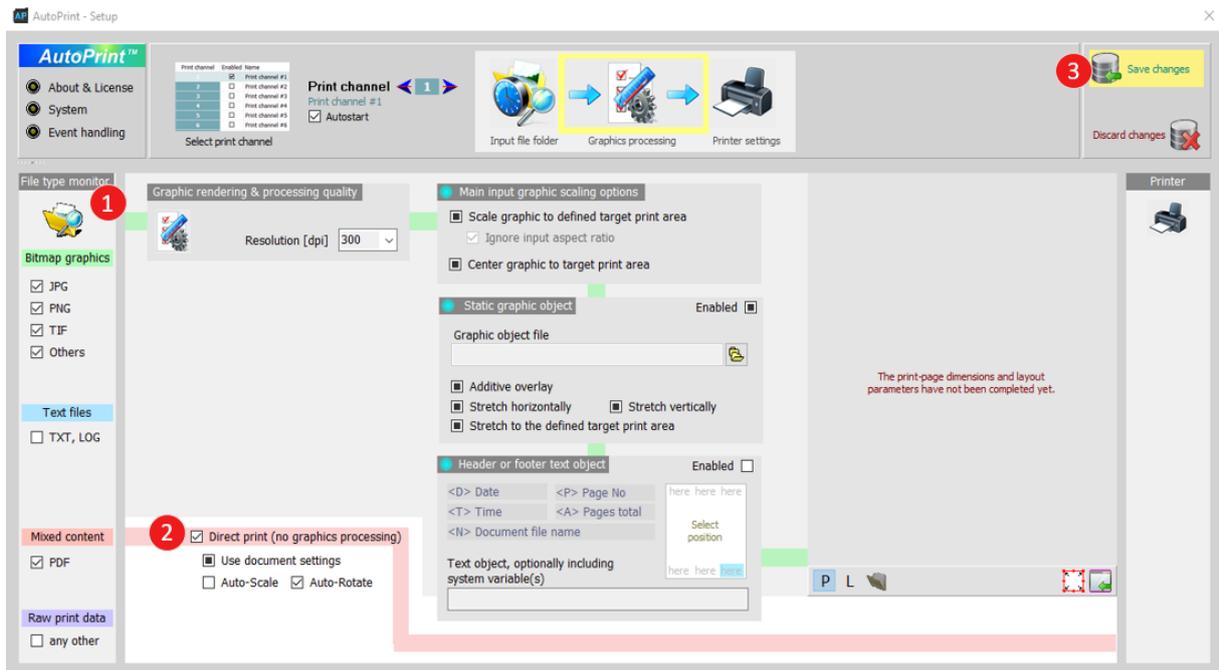
(1) We start by selecting an *Input folder*. This will be the place where AutoPrint is looking for new input files for printing.

(2) The scheduler is optional. It lets you preconfigure on which days and times you may want the program to process your print channel. We will leave this as is for now.

(3) To avoid overloading your printer spooler, you can set a maximum number of jobs to be pending. Setting this to zero disables this functionality. If your maximum amount is reached, AutoPrint will pause for a while. For the beginning we will leave this on zero (default), too.

(4) Finally tell AutoPrint what to do with the printed file? Keep or delete? You decide. Now, please go ahead and hover over *Graphics processing* in the top bar.

Step 2: Graphics processing



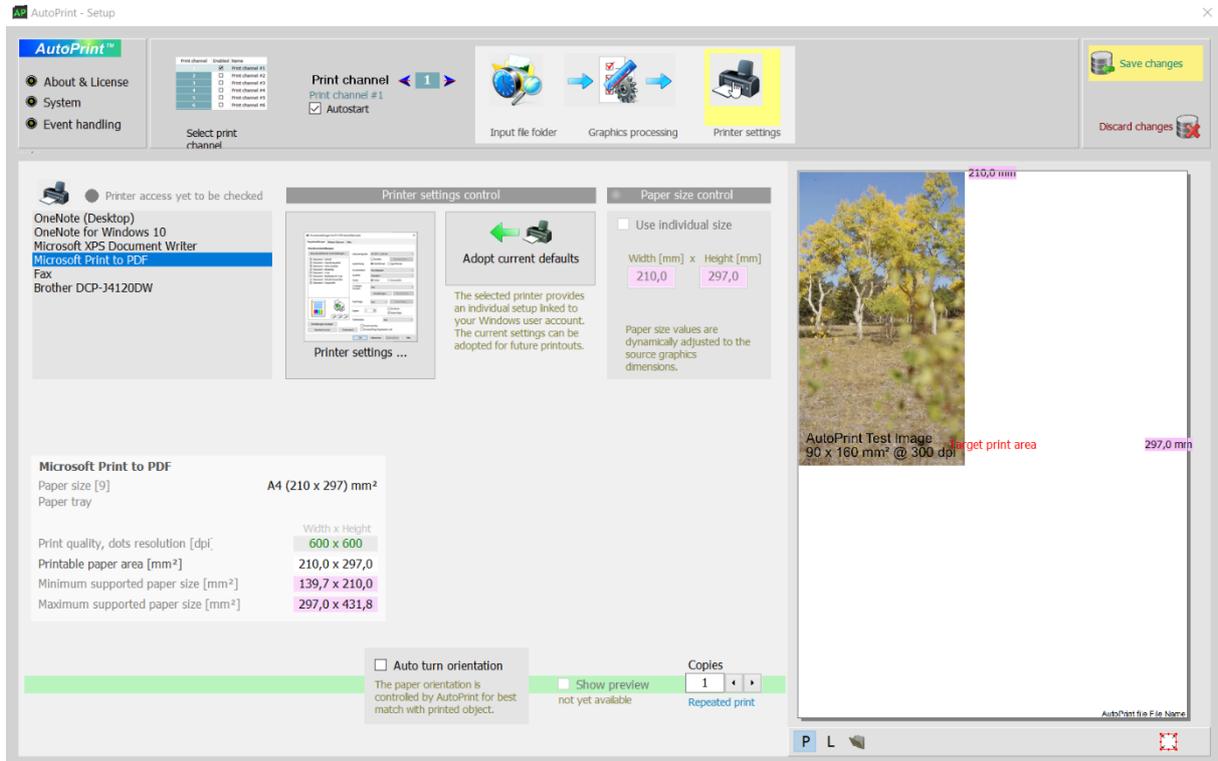
This view visualizes the process and is to be seen from left to right.

(1) Start by defining which file types AutoPrint should react to. While in the Fast Lane, we do not care about the specific options in the middle of this view.

(2) Please choose one or more input file formats you want to try AutoPrint out with. Assuming that we are printing PDF files as well, leave the default *Direct print* option active.

(3) *Save changes* made so far.

Step 3: Printer settings



(1) A final step almost completes fast lane: just choose one of your printers from the list for output. You could also adjust all printer driver settings in detail here. But for now, we do not need that and finally want to see the first page coming out of the printer, right? :)

(2) Let us round this up by pressing *Save changes* in the top right corner and go back to the *Select Print Channel* menu.

Step 4: Finally print something with the new print channel

After creating the first default print channel to start with, you should see something like this, based on your input data from steps one to three.

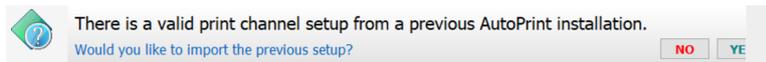
Print channel	Autostart	Name	Input folder	Printer (given local name)	PDF direct	Max in spooler
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Print channel #1	C:\AutoPrintFiles\Printer	Microsoft Print to PDF	<input type="checkbox"/>	0

Now find a file with the file type you specified in step two and copy it into the *Input folder* you chose in step one.

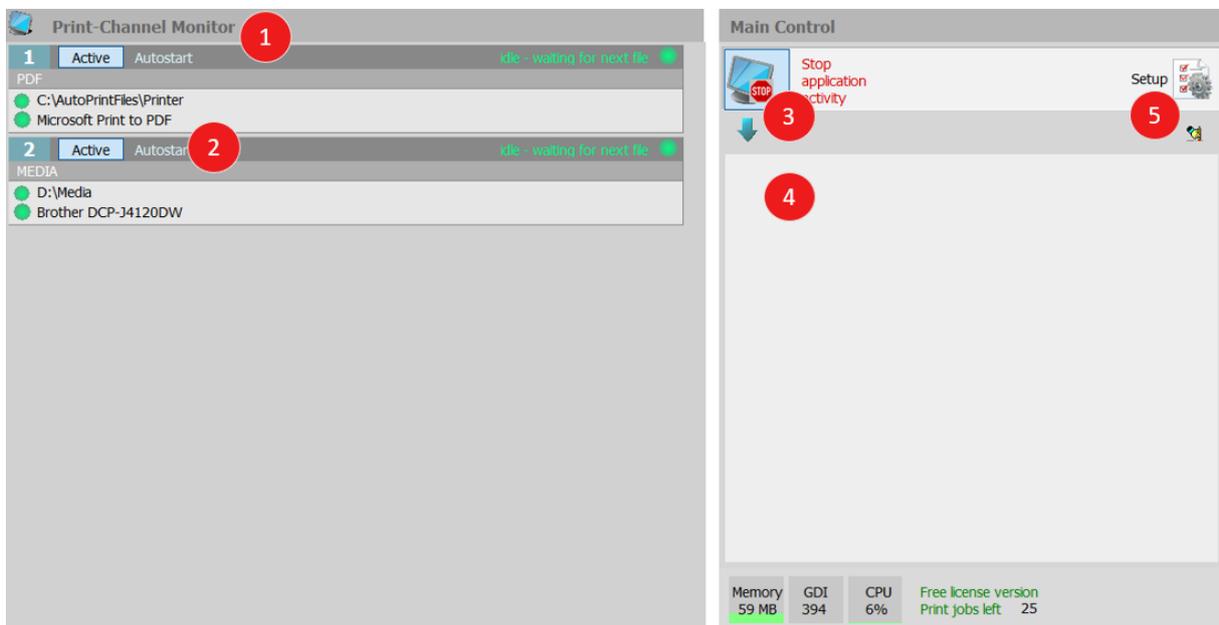
AutoPrint complete guide

Whether you've taken the Fast Lane or not, here we explain AutoPrint down to the smallest detail.

If you had previous versions 6 or 7 of AutoPrint installed (welcome back!) you will be asked if you would like to import your former setup. Clicking Yes will import your former print channels and their corresponding settings. The former version will not be affected by this step, you may continue using it. Just take care that both versions, the former and the new one, are not going to process the same input folders at the same time.



This is your AutoPrint application window. You can get back here anytime while AutoPrint is running, by clicking the AutoPrint Icon in your Windows trace bar.



(1) In the *Print Channel Monitor* on the left, each successfully created and running print channel will be looking like this.



(2) Clicking on the *Active* button within the channels top bar will manually start or stop the individual print channels activity.

(3) Clicking on *Start/Stop application activity* button will manually start or stop all print channels activity. While these are turned off, nothing will be printed automatically.

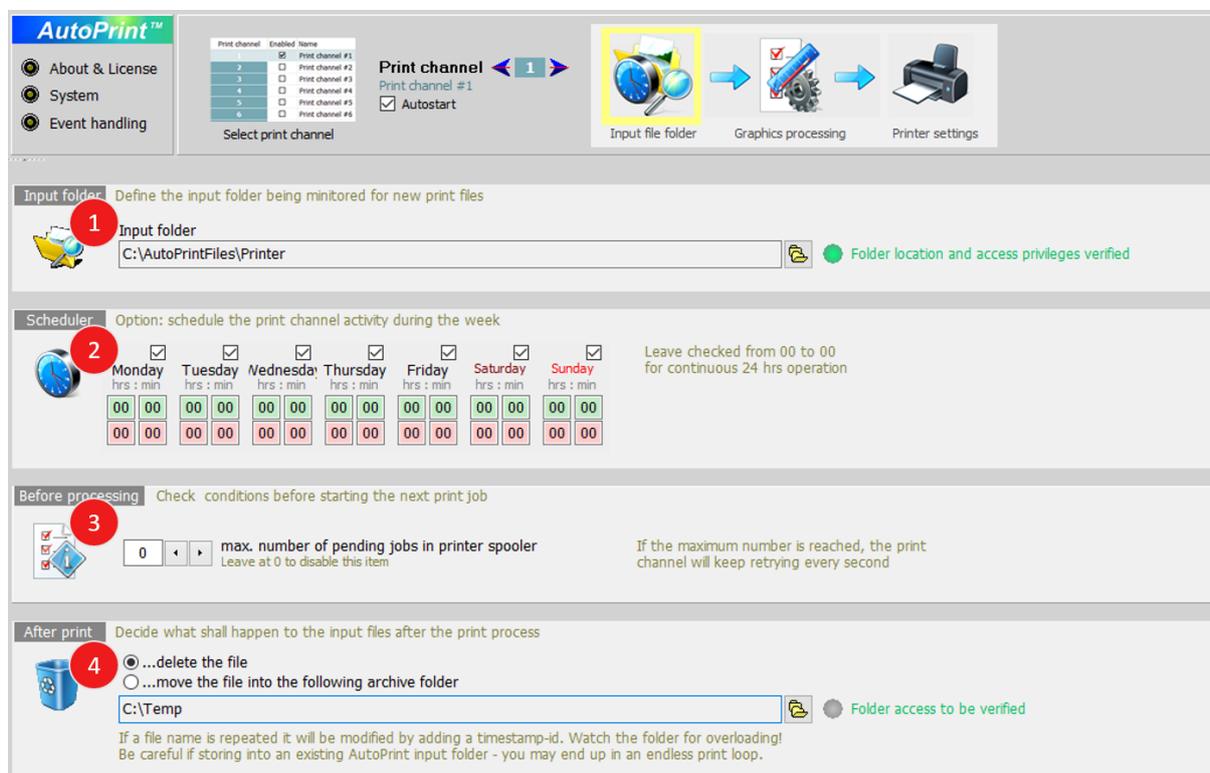
(4) Logging information is written here when your print channels are running and can help you or the support team if there arise any questions.

(5) The *Setup* Button leads to the heart of AutoPrint. Here all necessary settings are made. In the opposite to former versions, you can leave AutoPrint running active while doing the setup work. Only the modified print channels are being restarted after saving the parameters.

We will cover the whole setup secret in the next steps.

Setting up AutoPrint in detail

Input File Folder



This is the AutoPrint setup area. We will point out the details here, in the order they usually occur during a print channels creation process. The top navigation bar will guide you through the print channel setup process from left to right. A print channel starts with an input file folder which is observed by the AutoPrint application or service.

(1) So which folder is to be observed is the first decision to make. You can of course leave it default (if any) or choose an existing or new file path of your liking.

(2) Do you want AutoPrint to process files around the clock, or only between the morning / evening hours? Here you can define exactly when you want your prints to be scheduled.

(3) If your printer is a busy worker, you might want to limit your printer cue. If you change the value from 0 (default), AutoPrint will wait until the cue is below your defined limit until it processes the print job. However, if you choose to leave the default value, AutoPrint will pile up as much as stuffed into the print channels folder.

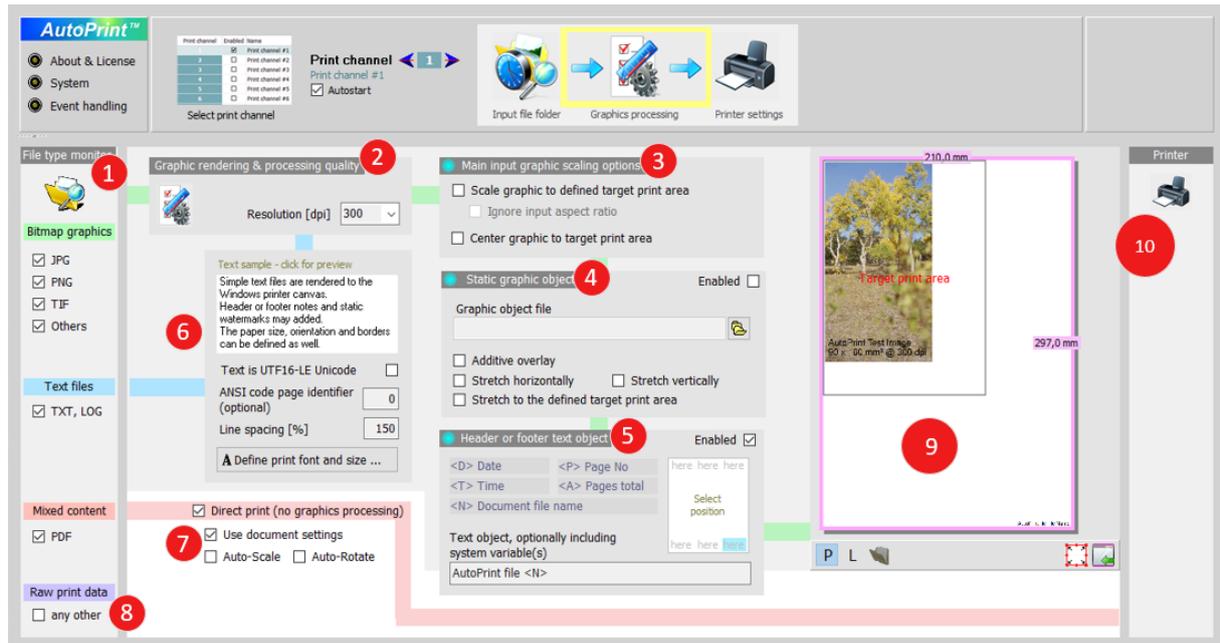
(4) Do you want to archive or review your file after it is printed? Here you can choose where to move the file after the job is done or simply remove the file completely.

Next step is the graphics processing. You can get there by choosing it in the navigation bar in the middle between the blue arrows.

Graphics processing

Presumed that your input files are containing bitmap graphic objects, the following items will directly control how these objects are being processed and adjusted in order to best fit to your output page layout. Even native text files or PDF files are first being converted into bitmap graphics internally, unless you uncheck this option (see below).

Like the navigation bar, this screen follows a left to right manner. The processing information is configured in the order they are needed during the print automation process.



(1) So, let's start with the *File type monitor*. When you configured an input folder location, you might have stumbled upon the question, if everything in this folder is considered for printing. May be the destination where a different process, program or persons store their data which should be ignored during the print channel observation.

Here you can choose which file types AutoPrint should react to.

(2) Next would be the *Graphic rendering & processing quality*. You can choose whatever your printer is capable of, in the unit dpi (dots per inch). Just be aware, that a value higher than the needed result quality, will increase memory usage and processing time by square. Make sure that your computer is equipped with the sufficient amount of random memory. A dpi value in the range of 300 ... 600 has turned out as a very good compromise between demands and results in nearly all use cases.

(3) In the *Main input graphic scaling options*, you decide if and how your input file should be scaled in any way, or by not ticking anything, not influencing it in this perspective.

(4) *Static graphic object*. Do you want to add a watermark, a company logo, or any other graphic of your choice? Here you can select a file and stretch it depending on your use case.

(5) By using the *Header or footer text object* you can print additional information like time and date or document information somewhere on your page.

(6) *Text files printing*

Native text files, encoded as ANSI or Unicode, are being converted to an internal bitmap graphic prior to printing. Several basic parameters can be setup here.

(7) *Mixed content* (PDF files)

PDF files can hold a variety of different printable objects, mainly text, vector and/or bitmap graphics.

Depending on the use case you may want to fine-tune some layout parameters prior to printing. In this case you will uncheck the *Direct print* option and let AutoPrint render the PDF content to an internal graphic screen and let it flow into the normal graphic process as described in (2,3,4,5) and in (9).

Otherwise, if no processing is needed, you may activate the *Direct print* option (default).

As most printers support PDF-input data, the content will be sent more or less directly to the printer spooler. The advantage in speed can be about 10:1 with only low memory usage.

(8) *Raw print data - any other*

If this option is checked, files that are not included in the row of file-types shown above are being handled as raw print files and being sent directly to the printer spooler. Make sure that only real print files would reach the defined input folder.

(9) *Preview panel*

The panel not only shows the live-results during your graphical fine-tuning work as a small preview. It also allows the final positioning and scaling. In order to get it alive you may first need to choose a printer on the next tab and then come back here. This is necessary to receive a valid set of real target paper dimensions.

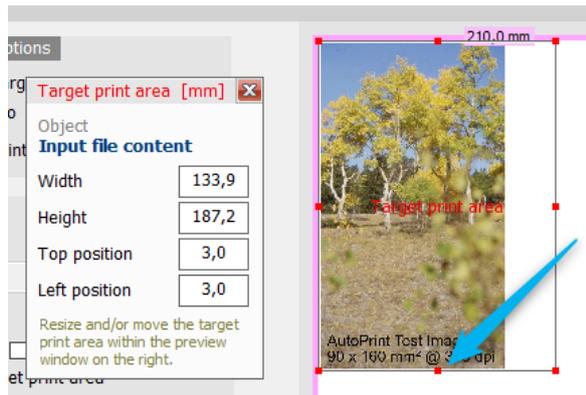
P - Selects a portrait sample input file.

L - Selects a landscape sample input file.

Folder - Opens a dialogue for selecting a user defined sample file.



The bottom right button moves the preview panel to a separate scalable window.



If the former settings allow any *scaling of the graphic objects to a defined target area*, AutoPrint will render the graphic objects into this target print area.

Clicking into this area will bring the black frame into focus stating *Target print area*. It is moveable and sizable within the complete printer page scope and represents the actual print area on the real-world piece of paper.

The purple outer border indicates the non-printable area as reported by the printer driver.

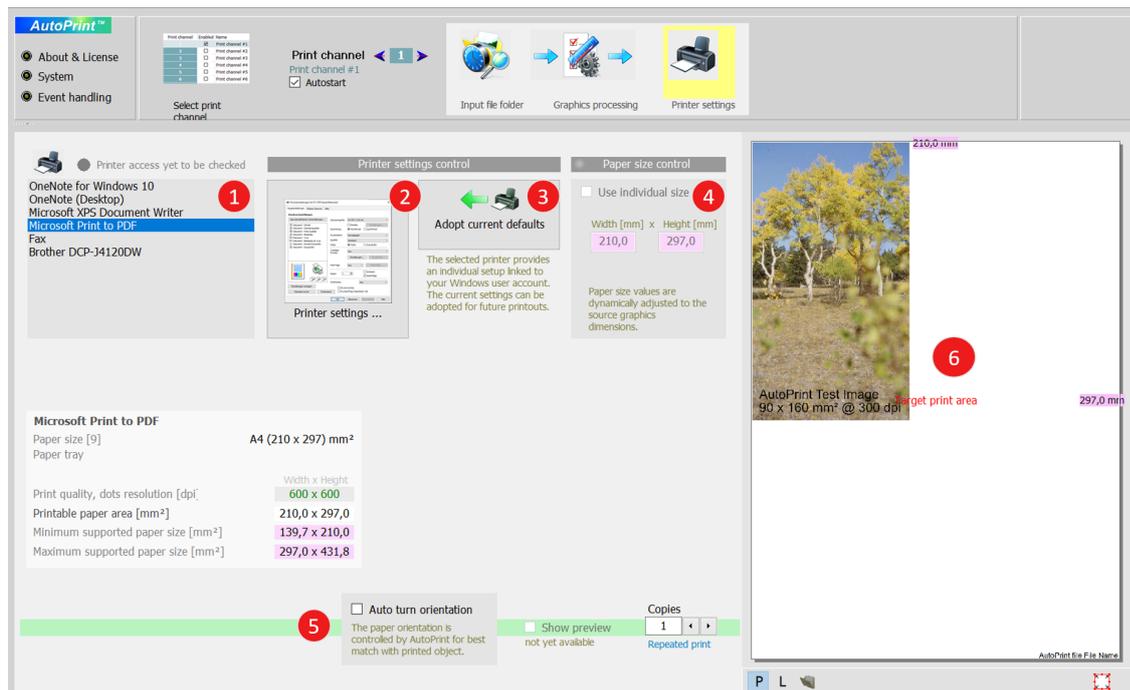
You might already have noticed a new window popping up: *Target print area [mm]*.

If you have a very clear requirement, you can simply enter it here in 'mm', so you do not have to do all the precision work with the dragging tool.

(10) Reserved for a future version: the *Printer* column will provide some basic information on the selected printer.

Finally, you are able to configure the printer itself. Just navigate one tab further in the top navigation bar and choose *Printer Settings*

Printer Settings



(1) Let's start by choosing the printer on the left we are going to use. The green light indicates if printer access is verified. This is necessary to be sure, if a printer will be available / reachable over the network and accepting our request.

(2) This button will open the standard Windows printer driver settings. Here you can configure all options which your printer driver offers to Windows. It is recommended having a local instance of each remote printer installed as a spooler on the machine, where AutoPrint is working. In contrast to former AutoPrint versions, it is no more necessary to provide elevated access privileges to the printer settings.

(3) Adopting current defaults will copy the current printers default setup which is linked to your windows user account. This can be edited after if you want to make any adjustments.

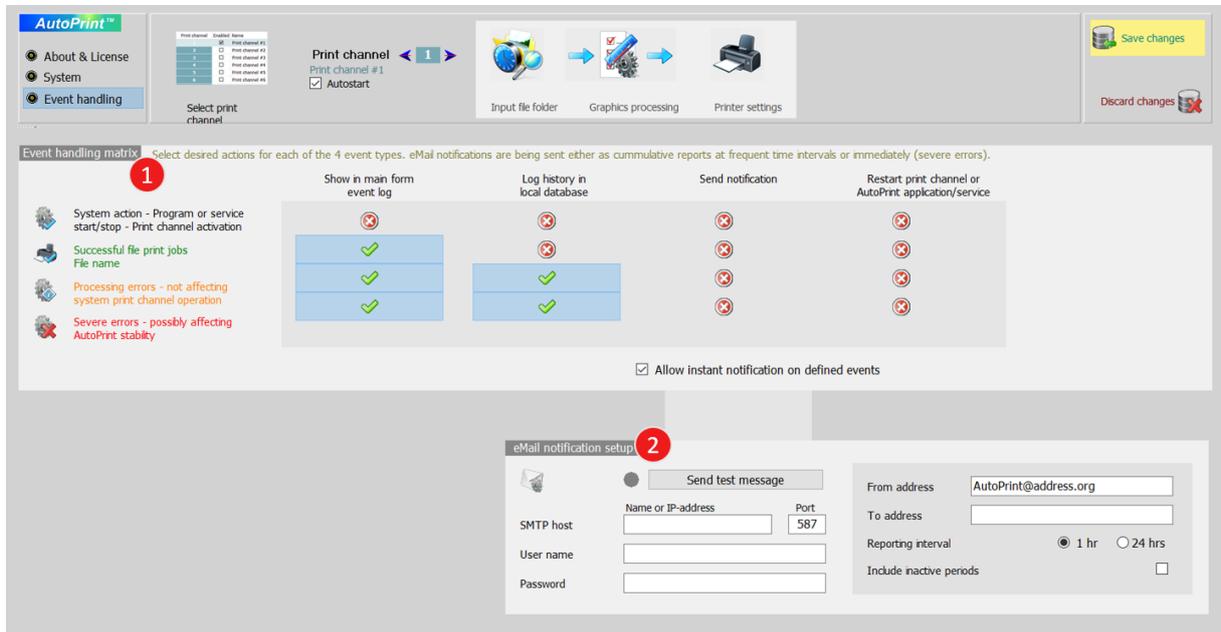
(4) The paper size control is only available if supported by the printer driver. Usually, you will select a kind of *User defined paper* size during the standard Windows printer setup (2) to unlock this feature. You can opt-in to use an individual paper size, again measured in mm.

(5) The green bar is to be seen as the continued path out of the *Graphics processing*. You may choose to automatically turn the orientation of your print file and how many copies you expect to come out at the end. The number of copies can be alternatively set within the above-mentioned *Printer settings* (2), eventually including further options.

(6) In this preview area you may make some last adjustments to the graphical positioning and scaling analog to point (9) above during setting-up the graphic processing options.

Event Handling

The event handling is reached via the top navigation bar in the square on the most left.



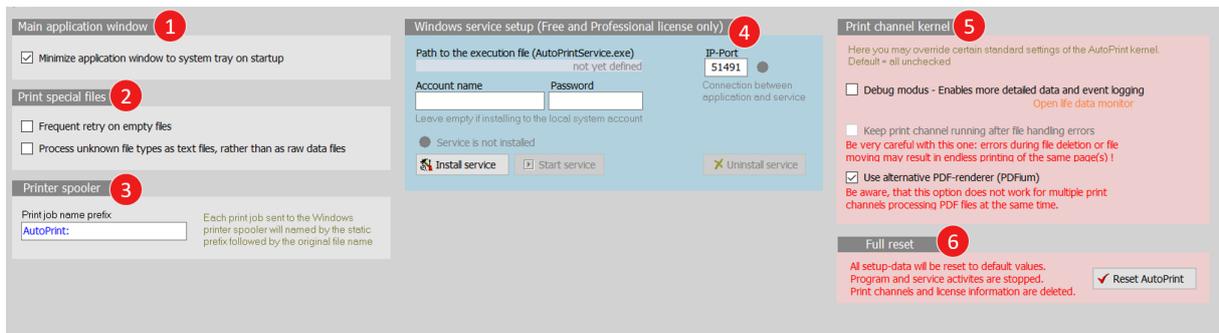
- (1) The table in the upper half is the *Event handling matrix*. We are going to decide
- what is displayed in the main form event log
 - if an event shall be stored historically in the local AutoPrint database
 - if a notification should be sent out triggered by an event
 - if your print channel or even the AutoPrint application/service should restart itself

The matrix consists of green ticks and red cross icons which represent the current status. Clicking any of them will invert this option.

(2) If you choose to send out a notification, you can set up your e-mail account SMTP details here. To make sure everything is working just fine, you can send out a test message right away. The information necessary for this process can be given to you by your administrator or your e-mail service provider.

System Settings

The system settings are again reached via the menu bar on top of the screen on the left side. Many of these options must be handled with care. If you do not know what a certain option is doing, please ask your system administrator or research these topics before you make any changes.



(1) Main application window

This is an easy one. When you start AutoPrint on your device, do you wish it to be displayed until you minimize it, or do you want it to be started minimized directly?

(2) Print special files

Frequent retry on empty files

If the input file supplying process or the transport channel is rather slow it can happen, that Windows reports a zero file length to AutoPrint. Frequent retrying can be helpful here but may temporarily block other files.

Unknown file types

If you throw 'unknown' file types into the print channel, the text file form is sometimes better for the outcome than raw print data files.

(3) Printer spooler

To keep AutoPrint print jobs in your printer spooler separate, you can think of a naming convention (for example different in every AutoPrint installation) which appear in the print spooler.

(4) Windows service setup

These options can only be accessed if you started AutoPrint with administrator privileges. If you would rather run AutoPrint as a service than as an application, you can prepare this here.

It is highly recommended setting-up and thoroughly testing all print channels in the desktop mode in before unleashing the service mode. For more information see also the detailed paragraphs down in chapter AutoPrint as a service

(5) *Print channel kernel*

This is a critical setup area. Please read all the red warnings before making any changes. This area is not relevant in normal AutoPrint operation. You should only alter these options when AutoPrint staff is recommending it in some special circumstances

(6) *Full reset*

If you want to start all over and pretend you just installed AutoPrint you can launch a factory-reset right here. Be clear you want to do that as all previous settings and print channels you made are then gone. Nevertheless, for manual restoring the former setup you may save the *AutoPrint.db* file, which is located in the hidden Windows folder C:\ProgramData\AutoPrint8

About and Licensing

If you want to register your license you can do this by selecting *About & Licensing* in your top menu bar on the most left.

The screenshot displays the AutoPrint software interface. At the top left, the 'About & License' menu item is selected. Below it, a 'Print channel' section shows a table with columns for 'Print channel' and 'Enabled Name'. A 'Print channel #1' is selected, and the 'Autostart' checkbox is checked. A central diagram illustrates the workflow: 'Input file folder' leads to 'Graphics processing', which leads to 'Printer settings'. The main content area is divided into two panes. The left pane displays the 'AutoPrint Version 8.1 FR1 20210724 Free License' information, including support links and a 'Confirm and accept licence agreement on the right' button. The right pane shows the 'License agreement' and 'Update information' sections. A red circle with the number '1' highlights the 'AutoPrint license registration' form in the bottom left pane, which contains fields for '1st Name (Company Part 1)', 'Last Name (Company Part 2)', and 'Registration code', along with a 'Confirm and accept licence agreement on the right' button.

(1) Enter the 3-lines code-set you have received after the online license purchasing process.

By confirming your license credentials, you accept the license agreements of AutoPrint which are displayed in the other half of the screen.

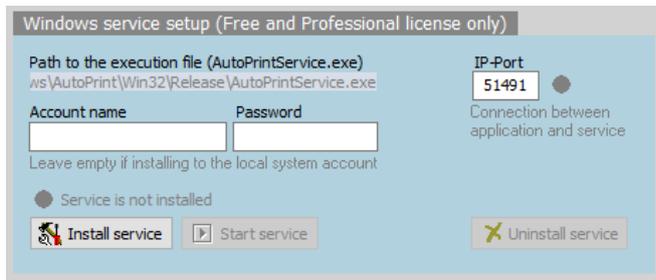
If anything should go wrong throughout the licensing process, just reach out to us and we are sure to find a solution.

AutoPrint as a service

If you intend to run AutoPrint on an unattended Windows or Windows Server system you can setup AutoPrint for working as a Windows32 service. You may test this mode without any time limitation using your free license version and later decide to upgrade to a professional license for unlimited number of print channels and print operations.

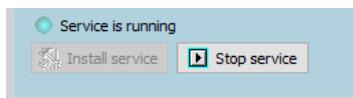
The following paragraphs will lead you through 4 simple steps up to a running service.

- (1) Create, setup and test all needed print channels with AutoPrint normally working as a desktop application.
- (2) Close and restart AutoPrint with the 'run as administrator' call.
- (3) Open the *Setup* window and go to the *System* page.



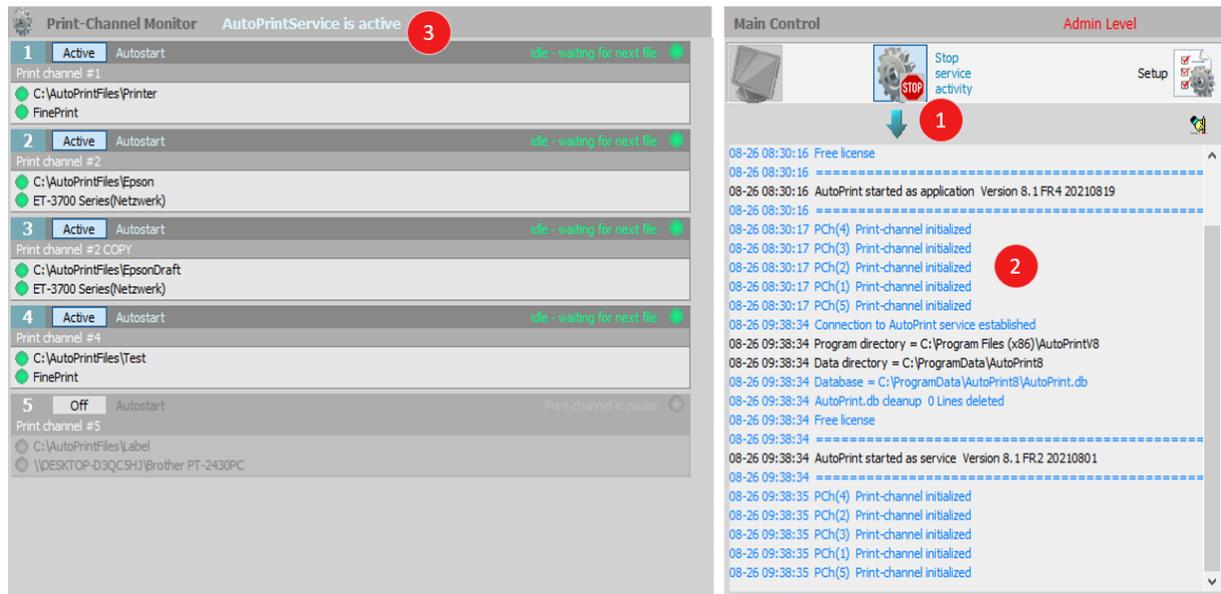
Here just check whether the shown default *IP-Port* is not in use by another application and then click on *Install service* and *Start service* to complete. The LED at the IP-Port should be turn green soon. If you prefer running the service under a given user account rather than the System account, you may enter the relevant credentials before the install action.

The AutoPrint service has now started and all print channels are ready for operation.



You can now close the *Setup* window and go back the *Main Control* window.

Monitoring and maintaining the service



With the running service the AutoPrint main screen has changed a little, providing helpful information about what is going around in the background.

The desktop applications normal print channel activity has been stopped and deactivated.

(1) A new button on the top right bar allows starting and stopping the running service.

(2) The log panel informs about nearly all service activities like those you have been receiving from the desktop application

(3) The *Print Channel Monitor* on left area turned to a read-only channel activity monitor. It provides the same live-information as known from the desktop-application mode.

Maintaining the print channels

Still or again running in the admin mode, all print channels settings can be modified on-the-fly by just entering the relevant *Setup* panels. There is no need to stop & restart the AutoPrint service. Once an individual print channels setup has been modified and saved the associated service print channel will restart as soon as possible, i.e. right after completion of all pending activities.