

Technical paper 7

Composition printer driver



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1.1 Why the composition printer driver?

In Windows, before a program draws something, either on screen or on paper via a printer, the program has to provide a “device context”. A device context is like a canvas or a sheet of paper which has particular characteristics and a specified finite size. Perversely, Windows provides no way for a program to create a device context, all it can do is request a device context from a “device driver”, typically the screen’s video driver or a printer driver.

In Map Maker the intention is that the user should be able to create maps larger than the paper size of the current printer. This is so that you can print images on multiple sheets or send maps to other people with large format printers. Thus Map Maker needs to be able to create a device context that is larger than the current printer paper size. The way to do this is to provide a large format printer driver even if the actual printer is not physically present.

So if you need to produce large maps ensure that you have a large format printer driver installed. To do this go to Windows control panel – Printers – Add printer and choose a large format printer, such as the HP DesignJet 350C (E/A0). Alternatively download a driver from www.hp.com.