

NEWS RELEASE

Ghent Workgroup releases Processing Steps Test Suite

GHENT, BELGIUM – May 16, 2025 – Today, the Ghent Workgroup (GWG) is proud to announce the immediate availability of the Processing Steps Test Suite v1. It can be downloaded for free from the GWG website [using this link](#). The GWG initiated development of the Processing Steps standard, and later transferred it to the International Standards Organization (ISO), where it became ISO standard 19593-1:2018. The new test suite allows implementors and users of the Processing Steps standard to validate their implementation and PDF files.

“During the integration of Processing Steps in our PACKZ and Cloudflow products, we noticed a lack of tools to verify the correctness of our implementation.” comments Frank Vyncke, Development manager at HYBRID Software, and co-chair of the GWG packaging subcommittee: “For any standard, it is essential that all vendors implement it in exactly the same way. Hence this initiative by the Ghent Workgroup to create a Processing Steps test suite, along the lines of the Ghent Workgroup Output Suite. I and HYBRID Software are proud to bring this development to conclusion with the release of the first version of the test suite. This will certainly help accelerate progress in the industry with Processing Steps.”

The Processing Steps standard

The idea behind the Processing Steps standard is to use metadata in PDF files to identify data that belongs to specific steps a printed product needs to go through. An easy example would be a label, where Processing Steps metadata is used to identify the cut contour of the final product. While the Processing Steps standard is intended to be generic, it is, at the moment, primarily targeting packaging and labelling workflows. Processing Steps metadata allows identifying structural information (such as cutting, creasing, and folding lines), the location of bar codes and matrix codes, varnish and undercolor white layers, product legends and much more.

The Processing Steps Test Suite v1

Years ago, the Ghent Workgroup began developing the Ghent Output Suite, and that is now used to test PDF-based workflows and output devices around the world. The concept of the suite is straightforward: it consists of a collection of test patches that get processed. If the workflow or RIP is not compliant with an aspect of the PDF standard, the corresponding patch shows a distinctive error mark after processing. This makes it easy to see where problems exist.

The Processing Steps Test Suite was built using the same principles, but targeted specifically toward compliance with the Processing Steps ISO standard. A collection of test patches allows inspecting compliance with various rules in the Processing Steps standard. Scoring is as easy as with the Ghent Output Suite. “During the development of this test suite,” continues Frank Vyncke: “The participating vendors already found minor issues with their implementations, as did we. This underlies once more the importance of having a test suite supported by a neutral body such as the Ghent Workgroup.”

Availability

As of today, the “Processing Steps Test Suite V1.0” can be downloaded from [the Ghent Workgroup website](https://www.gwg.org).

The downloadable archive contains a set of test patches and associated documentation on the interpretation of the test results. This allows anyone to use the patches for testing either in an interactive application or in a workflow, and check whether the application is compliant with the specifications.

Webinar

This important milestone on the verification of Processing Steps deserves a little more background information.

On June 19th 2025, Frank Vyncke will present a webinar to highlight the importance and use cases of this test suite, and the general usage of Processing Steps.

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About Ghent Workgroup

The Ghent Workgroup, formed in June 2002, is an international assembly of industry associations, suppliers, educators, and industry members from around the globe. The Ghent Workgroup aims to establish and disseminate process specifications for best practices in graphic arts workflows.

Since its inception almost 20 years ago, the organization has consistently produced numerous process specifications for PDF exchange, developing practical tools for automating processes and testing and establishing consistent PDFs for print, publishing, and packaging production – all free at www.gwg.org.

Members are comprised of graphic arts associations, including CIP4, Fespa, Medibel+, Printing United Alliance and VIGC. Vendor members include callas software, Canon, DALIM Software, Dataline, ECO3, Enfocus, Esko, Heidelberg, HYBRID Software, PageProof, Ricoh, Taktiful Software Solutions, Tech Research (TagG) and Ultimate Tech. Industry members are CAPT, Direct Mailers, JP/Politikenshus, Lab9Pro and RRD Communications. Educational members are CEC Latam, Future Schoolz, GIPT, Hochschule der Medien, RIPT, Rochester Institute of Technology,

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