

A stylized, high-contrast graphic in shades of gray and black, depicting a plotter head and carriage. The graphic is oriented diagonally, with the carriage on the left and the plotter head on the right. The plotter head features a square window and a series of parallel lines, suggesting a printing mechanism. The overall style is clean and modern, typical of a technical or professional advertisement.

Plot Station™ 8.0

*Plotting with Speed,
Flexibility, & Power*

Quick Configuration

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Chapter 1

Introducing Plot Station 8.0

Welcome to Plot Station, a Windows application that will improve plotting productivity for your CAD users as well as end-users of CAD drawings. This chapter provides an overview of Plot Station and its functions.

Chapter Contents

This chapter addresses the following questions and topics:

- What is Plot Station?
- How does Plot Station work with PRF Generator?
- Why use Plot Station?
- What's next?

What is Plot Station?

Plot Station is a unique plotting tool that will dramatically increase plotting productivity for your CAD systems. Plot Station is installed on a dedicated computer on the network and allows you to set standards and control plotting. Plot Station consists of three separate tools that perform different functions:

- Plot Configuration (PLCONFIG),
- Plot Control (PLCTRL), and
- Plot Log (PLLOG).

Plot Configuration is the largest module in Plot Station. As administrator, you will use PLCONFIG to create plotting queues, set up plotters, and set default values for plot sources, font libraries, and other graphic and hardware-related sources. You can also control and enforce plotting standards.

Plot Control is the main operating module that produces the actual plotter output. Use PLCTRL to control plot production. Using PLCTRL, you can monitor the queues to which users send their plots. You can set queues to start and stop scanning for plots at certain times and to print to certain plotters. You can also hold, delete, and reprioritize user's jobs.

Plot Log is the recorder for the Plot Station system. Plot Station automatically creates a log of plotting activity for each queue. Use PLLOG to create, view, and purge logs. You can also use PLLOG to define what information you want recorded in the log.

Why Use Plot Station?

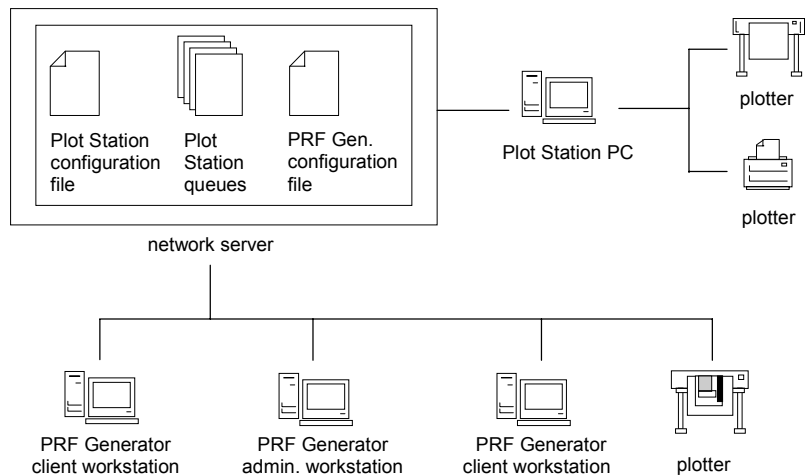
What benefits can Plot Station bring to your CAD environment? Here are some ways Plot Station can improve plotting productivity:

- Plot Station reduces plotting bottlenecks by handling plot processing for all users on your network. Users can submit plot requests in seconds using small-sized PRFs. Plot Station then takes over the processing, freeing up the workstation for other tasks.
- Plot Station accelerates plot submission by allowing users to submit and resubmit PRFs. Users can modify and resize their drawings without entering the CAD environment simply by changing their PRFs.
- Plot Station simplifies your system management by allowing you to easily add and remove new plotters and printers to your network—no matter what the format. You can even add plotters across multiple networks.
- Plot Station can make your plots clearer and easier to understand by providing control and flexibility over plot appearance. Users can easily make changes to line styles, thickness, color, screens, levels, and layers. Users can also generate small-sized plots with the same readability as their full-sized version.

How Does Plot Station Work with PRF Generator?

Plot Station works with PRF Generator to form a complete plotting solution in the form of a client-server system. Plot Station is the server side; PRF Generator is the client side. As system administrator, it is your job to use Plot Station to set up plotting queues to which users submit their plots. Users submit their plots using PRF Generator.

The following diagram illustrates how you could set up a typical network with Plot Station and PRF Generator:



Typical network setup for Plot Station and PRF Generator

Plot Station runs off a dedicated PC attached to the network that contains Plot Station queues and PRF Generator's master configuration file. PRF Generator is installed on each CAD workstation. Users use PRF Generator to create and submit small files that contain all the information needed to plot their drawings. These files are called PRFs.

PRFs

A PRF (Plot Request Form) is a small, plotter-independent file that contains information describing how a CAD drawing should be plotted. When you are ready to plot a drawing, instead of submitting the original drawing to the plotter, you submit the associated PRF to Plot Station.

PRFs can be stored and reused to generate identical plots at any time. These files are small and do not take up much space on the workstation. The same PRFs can be used to generate different plots without altering the original drawing, by making changes to the PRF outside of the CAD environment. If you update the original drawing, the PRF reflects the updates automatically.

Because of their small size, PRFs are processed much more efficiently than CAD drawings. Your computer only takes a few seconds to submit the PRF. Plot Station does the rest of the work.

What's next?

The next chapter describes how to use Quick Configuration to get Plot Station up and running right away. Quick Configuration allows you to define only the most important variables and uses preprogrammed defaults for all other values.

Chapter 2

Quick Configuration

This chapter guides you through the Quick Configuration process. As system administrator, you must set up configurations before users can begin plotting. Once you have your system up and running, read the user's guide for more detailed information about customizing your system to maximize plotting efficiency for your CAD site.

Chapter Contents

This chapter addresses the following questions and topics:

- What is Quick Configuration?
- Starting and Exiting Quick Configuration
- Setting up a Simple Configuration
- What's next?

What is Quick Configuration?

Quick Configuration is a convenient and fast option for configuring plotters and queues. With Quick Configuration, you do not need to define any information other than the plotter, input and output drivers, the output port, and the queue. All other settings are determined automatically for you based on the type of input and output drivers you select. You may wish to use Quick Configuration the first time you set up a plotter and queue.

Quick Configuration also allows you to define optional parameters. These include units and resource information. If you do not specify these settings, Plot Station uses preprogrammed defaults.

The next section explains how to start Quick Configuration.

Starting and Exiting Quick Configuration

Quick Configuration runs from within the Plot Station Configuration program. Start Plot Station Configuration from the Plot Station group in Windows Program Manager.

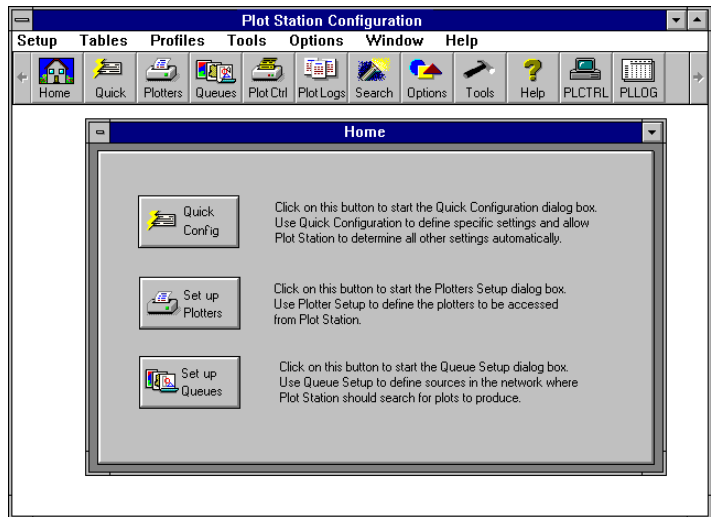
To start Quick Configuration...

Plot Station icon:

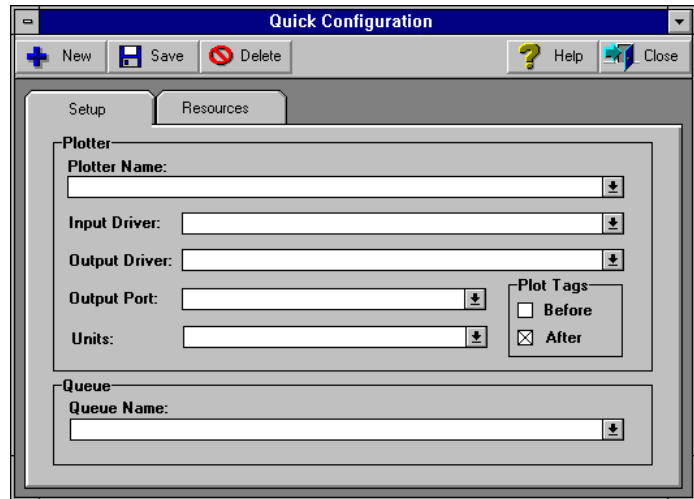


- 1 From Windows, double-click the Plot Station icon to start Plot Station.

The Plot Station Configuration dialog box appears:



- 2 Click the *Quick Config* button on the Home screen.
The Quick Configuration dialog box appears:



You are now ready to enter values for a new configuration.

To save your settings and exit Quick Configuration...

- 1 Click the *Save* button in the toolbar.
Your settings are saved to Plot Station's configuration file. The *Cancel* button on the toolbar changes to *Close*.
- 2 Click *Close*.
Quick Configuration closes.

To exit Quick Configuration without saving...

- Click the *Cancel* button in the toolbar.
Quick Configuration closes without saving your settings.

Setting up a Simple Configuration

Quick Configuration allows you to set up a simple configuration using most of Plot Station's defaults. You only need to define certain variables that Plot Station cannot detect on your system. To set up a simple configuration, define the following settings:

- plotter information,
- queue information, and
- resource information for pen tables and font files.

The following sections explain how to define each setting.

Defining Plotter Information

These steps describe how to set up a logical plotter. The logical plotter is not the actual physical plotter, but a set of information that defines which plotter you are sending to, the drivers you are using, and the port. When you define a logical plotter, you take this set of information and give it a name. This name is also known as a logical name. The logical name can be any ASCII text string.

When users send their plots to Plot Station, they choose one of the logical plotters that you, the system administrator, have set up. Using this, Plot Station automatically knows which plotter the plot is going to and which input driver and port to use.

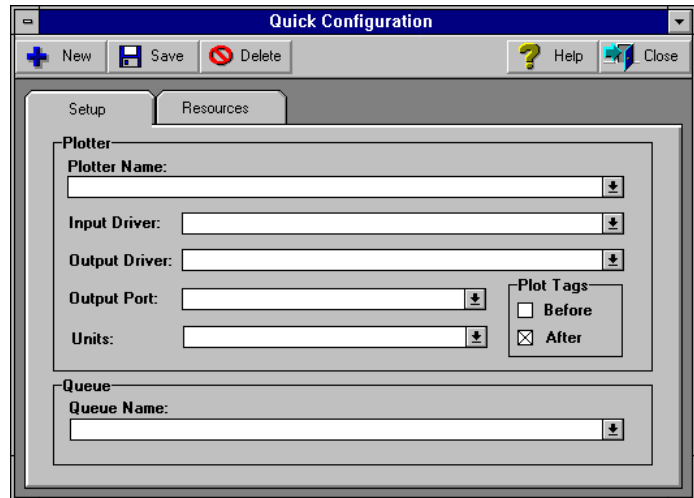
You may set up any number of logical plotters for your actual physical plotter.

Plot Station is delivered to you with some plotters and drivers already configured, so you should always have something to choose from in the drop-down lists.

To define plotter information...

- 1 Start Quick Config.

The Quick Configuration dialog box appears:



- 2 Type in a value in each of the fields in the *Plotter* group, or click the selection arrow to the right of the field for a list of valid values. The following table gives a general explanation of what each field should contain:

For more information...

on individual fields, see the alphabetical list of fields in your *Plot Station Reference Guide*.

This field...

Should contain...

Plotter Name

the name of a logical plotter. A logical plotter consists of default information about how to plot any drawings sent to that plotter.

Input Driver

the name of the input driver that will be used to perform the plot processing for the selected plotter. Input drivers are purchased individually from CADNET.

<i>This field...</i>	<i>Should contain...</i>
<i>Output Driver</i>	the output driver that will process and output data to the plotter. Output drivers are purchased individually from CADNET.
<i>Output Port</i>	the port through which the plot will be sent.
<i>Units</i>	the units you want for your plot. The drop-down list contains all valid units.

- 3 Click the *Before* and *After* check boxes in the *Plot Tags* group to indicate whether you would like tags printed with the plots, and where they should be plotted. You may select one or both check boxes.
- 4 Click *Save* to save your values.
Plot Station saves your values to the configuration file. The *Cancel* button on the toolbar changes to *Close*.
- 5 Follow the next procedure for defining a queue, or click *Close* to exit the Quick Configuration dialog box. Quick Configuration closes.

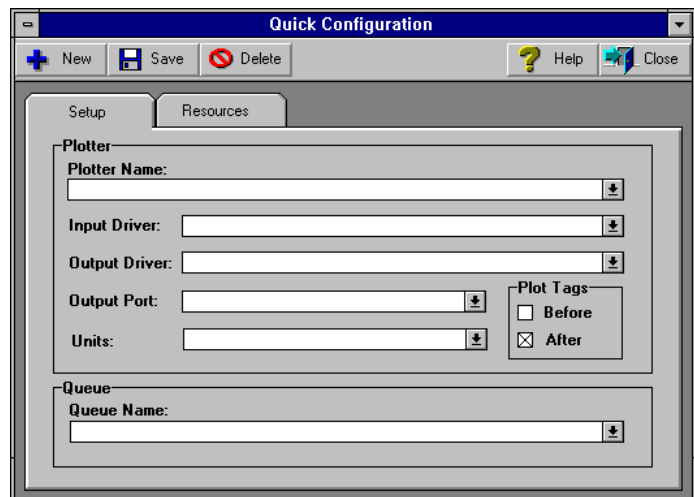
Defining a Queue

Queues act as holding places in the network where Plot Station searches for plots to be produced. Any job you send to the queue has the values you entered in the plotter information fields as the default values for the job.

To define a queue...

- 1 Start Quick Config.

The Quick Configuration dialog box appears:



- 2 Type the name of a new queue in the *Queue Name* field or click the selection arrow to the right of the field to choose from a list of valid queues.

Note If you define a new queue, you must define a plotter before exiting the dialog. The plotter you define is set as the default plotter for the queue. If you do not define a plotter, the new queue cannot be saved.

- 4 Click *Save* to save your setting.

Plot Station saves your values to the configuration file.

- 5 Follow the next procedure for defining resources, or click *Close* to exit the Quick Configuration dialog box.

Quick Configuration closes.

For more information...

on Search Paths, Logicals, and Translation Tables, see the "Search Profiles" section of your *Plot Station User's Guide*.

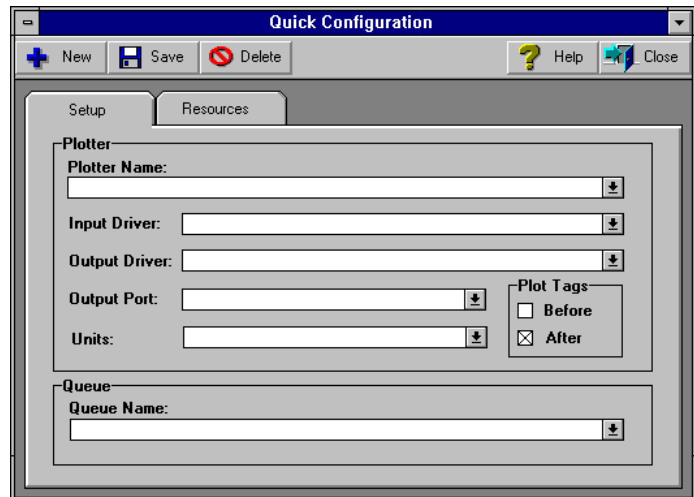
Defining Resources

Resource information lets Plot Station know where to look for pen tables and font libraries. These files are necessary when Plot Station processes jobs containing plot resymbolization or text. If Plot Station cannot find what it is looking for, it uses any defined Search Paths, Logicals, and Translation Tables.

Resource information is optional. If you do not specify any information here, Plot Station uses preprogrammed defaults.

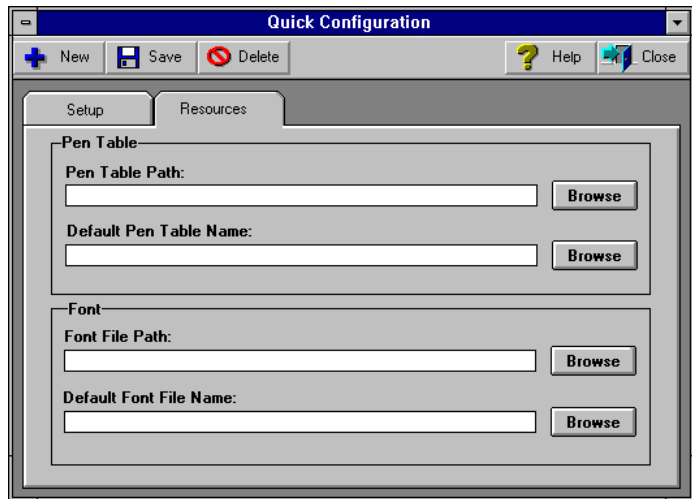
To define resources...**1 Start Quick Config.**

The Quick Configuration dialog box appears:



- 2 Click the *Resources* tab.

The *Resources* tab appears:



- 3 Type in a value in each of the fields, or click the *Browse* button to the right of the field for a file picker. The following table gives a general explanation of what each field should contain:

For more information...

on individual fields, see the alphabetical list of fields in your *Plot Station Reference Guide*.

This field...

Should contain...

Pen Table Path

a DOS path name of where pen tables specified in a PRF or plotter configuration are stored. This field must define a complete path, including the trailing backslash (\).

Default Pen Table File Name

the name of a default pen table program. The pen table you specify is used when the PRF does not specify a pen table, or if the pen table in the PRF cannot be found.

<i>This field...</i>	<i>Should contain...</i>
<i>Font File Path</i>	a DOS path name of where font libraries specified in a PRF or plotter configuration are stored. This field must define a complete path, including the trailing backslash (\).
<i>Default Font File Name</i>	the name of a default font file. This file may be a font, shape file, or a font library. <i>Note</i> This field does not apply to scanned file types, such as RGB, COT, and CIT without PRFs.

- 4 Click *Save* to save your settings.
Plot Station saves your values to the configuration file.
- 5 Click *Close* to exit the Quick Configuration dialog box.
Quick Configuration closes.

What's next?

The next chapter, ***Monitoring Queues***, explains the basics of Plot Control and how to manage plotting queues.

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