

a:control
Merge Functionality



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Note:

All screenshots and images (screen captures) of the application in this document are to be considered exemplary and are subject to the copyright of Diagraph GmbH.

System requirements:

PC-Hardware	Requirements
Processor	2.0GHz or higher
RAM	min. 2 GB (Recommended: 4 GB)
HDD	150 MB available in the hard disk + space for formats
Mouse, Keyboard, Monitor or Touch-Screen	Monitor resolution min. 800x600, 16 bit color
Networkcard	Ethernet
RS232 / COM Ports	One COM-port for each serial connected printer
USB- Ports	USB A for data exchange via USB-device
Software	Windows 7 or higher Microsoft .NET Framework 4.8

The software may also run on other system configurations without issues. However, performance may be impacted on lower-spec hardware. Having sufficient free RAM and disk space is especially crucial for stable operation.

Printer-Hardware	Requirements
Printer model	NGT-Series: NGT2, NGT2+, NGT4, NGT4+, NGT6, NGT6E, NGT8, NGT8E
Firmware	NGT-Series: Current printer firmware >= Version N.9.0
Connectivity	Serial, Ethernet

2. Merge

To use the merge procedure, you must create a subfolder named **“Merge”** in the format path. Place the templates used for merging into this directory. Be sure to follow the naming convention described below.

Example directory structure:

sql

KopierenBearbeiten

C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Local\Diagraph\<aControl>\Formats\Merge

+-- [Your templates, e.g. 1.labelname.txt, 2.labelname.acc]

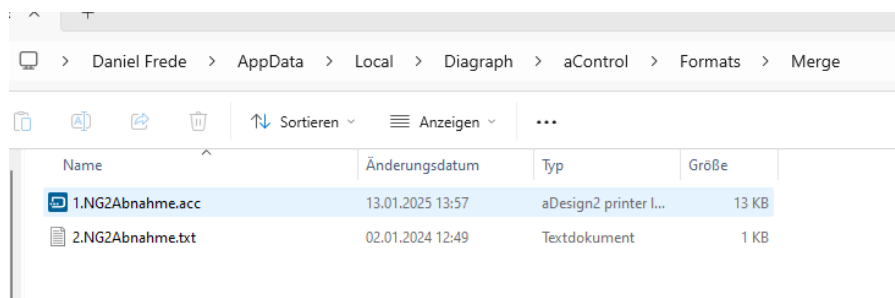
Placing Files in the Fileparser Directory

The print formats or files to be printed can either be:

- copied directly into the corresponding Fileparser directory, or
- sent via TCP/IP to a configured port.

Example:

You can configure the a:control system to watch specific ports or directories as described below.



Settings in a:control

- Enable the Merge function.
- Copy your templates into the “Merge” directory located in the print format path.
- Press the corresponding button in the UI.
- Assign one or more printers to use the merge procedure.
- Specify the port on which a:control should listen for incoming data.
The NGT Windows printer driver should be configured to use this port.
- Open the “PortManager” to view the local IP address and the ports of the Windows printer drivers (tab: “Ports”).
You can then enter or redirect this data in your Windows printer driver configuration.
- If the checkbox “Port per printer +1” is enabled, a separate port is assigned to each printer.
Ports are allocated in the sort order shown in the list and are incremented accordingly.
You can change the sort order in the printer management section (left button bar).

Note:

The print image files can either be:

- directly copied to the corresponding Fileparser directory, or
- sent via TCP/IP to a designated port.

The settings for this are made in the a:control configuration:

You may also enter the **loopback address 127.0.0.1** to avoid IP changes due to DHCP.

Settings

SYSTEMPROGRAMMSFILEPARSERMERGESERVER

..

Merge with template

1

Inaktiv

2

Aktiv

Please copy your template(s) to: C:\Users\id.trede\AppData\Local\Diagraph\Control\formats\Merge

NGT (COM1)
XL5000 (192.168.173.85)
NGT (192.168.173.80)

3

>>
<<

TCP port valid for the following printers:

NGT2 (192.168.173.130)
NGT4 (192.168.173.131)
NGT8 (192.168.173.132)

Port Manager

5

☒ One port per printer +1

6

TCP-Port

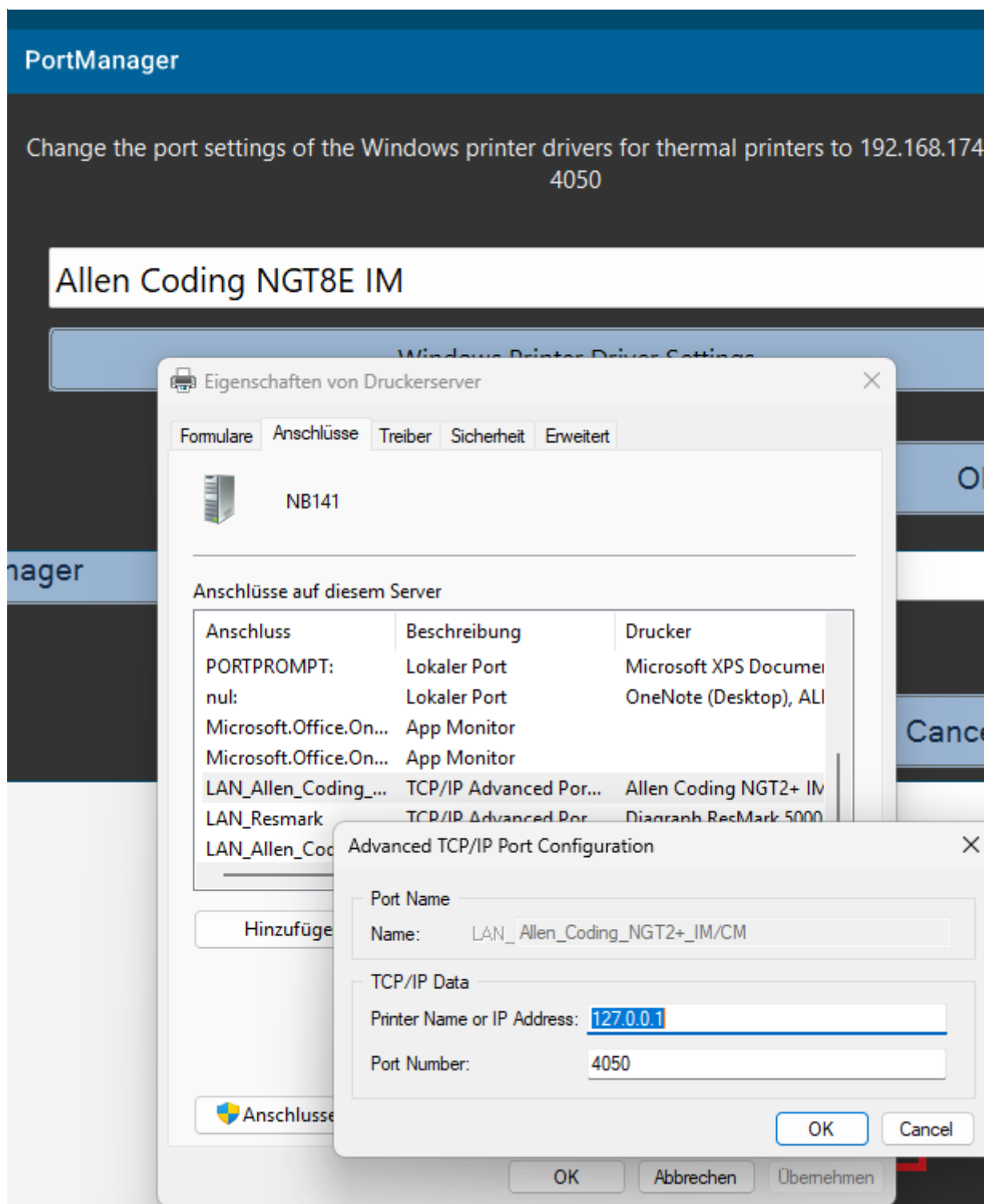
4050

4

OK

Cancel

Apply



File Naming in the Merge Directory

For the merge process to function correctly, files in the Merge directory must follow specific naming conventions.

1. General Naming Scheme

<Order>.<LabelName>.<Extension>

Reihenfolge: Eine Zahl (z. B. 1, 2, 3), die angibt, in welcher Reihenfolge die Dateien eingelesen werden.

- **Order:** A number (e.g., 1, 2, 3) that determines the sequence in which files are processed.
- **LabelName:** Refers to the name of the label the file should be linked to. This ensures the correct label is used.
- **Extension:** Indicates the file format. Possible values:
 - o .txt (text-based files)
 - o .acc (ACC format)

Examples:

1.labelname.txt

2.labelname.acc

2. Effect of Naming

- **Processing Order:**
Files with a lower order number (e.g., 1.) are processed first.
Variables and print elements from these files are integrated into the main label.
Files loaded later (e.g., 2.) may overwrite values set earlier.
- **LabelName:**
The LabelName in the filename (e.g., labelname in 1.labelname.txt) ensures that the file is only used for a label with the matching name.

Example:

If the main label is called etikett, only 1.etikett.txt will be processed.

A file like 1.other.txt will be ignored.

If no matching template is found, merging will not take place (or a fallback will be used, depending on the configuration).

3. Recommendations

- Use clear numbering (1, 2, 3...) to define the order unambiguously.
- Ensure that the LabelName in the filename exactly matches the target label.
- Use the correct file extension (.txt or .acc) so the file is processed correctly.

Following this approach ensures that the merge process runs properly and predictably.

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Additional Notes:

If the merge function is enabled, it also applies to the Fileparser integrated in a:control.

a:control automatically creates a separate Fileparser directory for each printer. By default, this directory is located at:
C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Local\Diagraph\AControl\FileParser

You can access this path in Windows by using:

%appdata%\..\..\AppData\Local\Diagraph\AControl

Process Overview

Der Prozess läuft folgendermaßen ab:

1. All print image files placed in the respective Fileparser directory are automatically sent to the assigned printer.
2. If the merge function is enabled:
 - o The data is combined using the template files located in the **Merge** directory.
 - o All variables defined in the templates are included in the merge process and replaced accordingly.

× +				
> > AppData > Local > Diagraph > aControl > FileParser >				
				
Name	Änderungsdatum	Typ	Größe	
Druckerguppe2	10.01.2025 09:47	Dateiordner		
NGT192.168.1.245	15.01.2025 16:31	Dateiordner		
NGT192.168.173.130	16.01.2025 14:25	Dateiordner		
Printergroup2	10.01.2025 09:47	Dateiordner		