

Understanding Drivers vs Extensions

How Hardware Drivers and Software Extensions Work Together in Your Imaging Workflow

What is a Driver?

A **driver** is software provided by your hardware manufacturer that lets your computer's operating system (Windows) recognize and communicate with the physical device.

- Enables communication between the device and your computer
- Required for the device to function at all
- Must be installed first

Examples: Imaging device driver, printer driver, keyboard or mouse driver



What is an Extension?

An **extension** (sometimes called a plugin) connects your imaging device to our software. It ensures that captured images display correctly and work within our system.

- Translates device output into a format our software understands
- Installed after the driver
- Essential for full software compatibility

Examples: Direct Video Extension, Gendex Extension



Putting it All Together

To get your imaging device working smoothly with our software, you need both a driver and an extension:

1. The driver helps your computer (Windows) recognize and talk to the device.
2. The extension allows our imaging software to communicate with the device and display the images correctly.

Think of it this way:

- The driver is the translator for your computer.
- The extension is the translator for our software.

You need both for a smooth and functional experience.

TWAIN is a separate method that some devices use to connect to imaging software. While it works for basic scanning, it often lacks the full functionality that extensions provide.

Feature/Aspect	Driver	Extension/Plugin	TWAIN
Purpose	Allows Windows to recognize and communicate with the device	Connects the hardware (via driver) to our imaging software	Acts as a universal driver interface for imaging devices
Who Provides it	Hardware manufacturer	Planet DDS or integration team	Device manufacturer (often bundled)
Required For	Windows to detect and use the hardware	Our software to use and control the hardware	Some older devices using TWAIN protocol
Installation Timing	Installed first	Installed after driver	During or after driver setup
Typical Devices	Sensors, pan units	Devices with drivers needing software control	Legacy Scanners, Cameras
Visible to Windows?	Yes; in Device Manager	No; only in Imaging Software	Sometimes; as a Scanning Source
Example	Dexis IXS Driver	Gendex Extension	