Handy Label

Barcode Label Printing Software for PalmOS

Users Guide

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Introduction

Handy Label is an application which allows you to print barcode labels to a variety of barcode printers from a PalmOS handheld device. With a barcode-equipped device such as the Symbol SPT 15xx, SPT17xx, SPT18xx, or a Palm OS 4.1 or higher device equipped with a Socket Communications SDIO scanner, you can scan an existing barcode and then print copies of it, but this isn't required. Using any PalmOS handheld device, you can simply hand-enter the barcode to be printed, and then print it. While **Handy Label** doesn't offer the kind of complete "label design" options that are available from desktop barcode label printing programs, it does provide some basic options which should allow you to generate satisfactory labels for a wide variety of purposes, without being tethered to a desktop computer. **Handy Label** requires one of two printing programs available from Stevens Creek Software to do its actual printing; **SCS Print Server** which lets you print labels from Handy Label, and **PalmPrint**, the "full-featured" printing software, which also allows you to print other information on your Palm such as Memos, Addresses, Schedules, ToDo lists, Emails, and Expense reports. As far as **Handy Label** is concerned, the two are equivalent.

PLEASE NOTE: There are many barcode label printers, types of barcodes, configuration options, etc. **Handy Label** is very much a "work in progress." If you are purchasing a copy of the software, you MUST evaluate it first to make sure it works with the printer you are using, and produces the kind of labels you want, because all features of the software do not work with all printers. The software is provided in a fully functional trial mode precisely for this purpose. In addition, if there is a barcode label printer you are interested in but that isn't supported by **Handy Label**, please drop an email to development@stevenscreek.com and let us know; if we can get a printer and a programming manual for the printer, there is every liklihood that we will add support in a future version of the software.

Installation

Windows:

Double-click on the file **HandyLabel.prc**. A window labelled **Install Tool** should appear, with a UserName selection box with the name of one or more Palm handheld units. Select the one you wish to install the software in, and click on **OK**. A second **Install Tool** window will appear, showing **Handy Label** in a list of programs to be installed. Click on **Done**, and another window will appear informing you that **Handy Label** will be installed in your Palm the next time you do a HotSync. Perform a HotSync and the software will be installed.

Macintosh:

Select **Install Handheld Files** from the **HotSync** menu. Make sure the User is set to the handheld unit in which you want to install the software, and drag the **HandyLabel.prc** file into the large box in the window (or use the **Add To List** button to select the file). Close the window, performa HotSync, and the software will be installed.

Running Handy Label

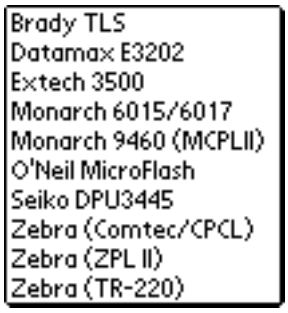
From the main "Home" screen of your handheld unit, look for the icon labelled **HandyLabel**:

Tap on it and **Handy Label** will start.

Configuring the Label

When the application starts you'll see this screen:

Printer lets you select from a variety of supported barcode label printers:



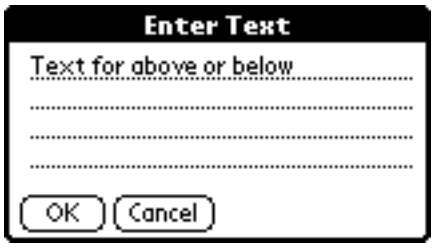
If the printer you are using isn't on this list, it may not be supported, but if it is closely related to one of the ones shown, feel free to try that choice. Note that these choices SUPERCEDE any choice made in PalmPrint/SCS Print Server, that is, **Handy Label** overrides any printer setting you make there.

Label lets you specify the size of the label itself (height and width in inches), and also lets you specify a number of labels to print and, if the number of labels is greater than 1, whether the number on the label should be automatically incremented (as would be used for printing out a series of asset tag barcode labels, for example), and whether or not the label is rotated 90 degrees.

Text lets you specify text that will be printed above or below the barcode. There are a number of choices provided:

None prints no text. **As Entered**, when selected, brings up a new screen which

lets you manually enter text to be printed in that location:



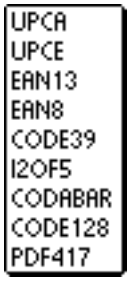
To change the "as entered" text, simply re-select **As Entered** from the list (even if it is already selected) to display this screen again.

Barcode prints the barcode again as text either above or below the graphic barcode. As you'll read in a few paragraphs, there is another setting (the **Readable** setting) which also specifies printing a "human readable" barcode above or below the graphic barcode. This latter setting controls the barcode printer's "built-in" human-readable printing. Some barcode printers do not provide this feature however, or may provide it only for some barcode types (like UPC) and not others, while other barcode printers which do print the human readable barcode may use type too small (or too large) for your taste (the size for the built-in printing is fixed). Selecting **Barcode** here lets you print the human-readable form of the barcode above or below the graphic, in a font size of your choosing (see below), on any barcode printer.

On Hand Name, **On Hand Note**, and **On Hand Name/Note** are used to look up information in the database maintained by Stevens Creek Software's **On Hand** inventory software - either the name (description) of the item, the note, or both. Similarly, **Take An Order Name**, **Take An Order Price**, and **TAO** [Take An Order] **Name/Price** look up information in the catalog maintained by Stevens Creek Software's **Take An Order!** point of sale software. Needless to say, these choices will be meaningless if the corresponding software is not installed on the handheld unit.

Some additional aspects of the text printout are controlled by the **Configure->Fonts** menu, described in the next section.

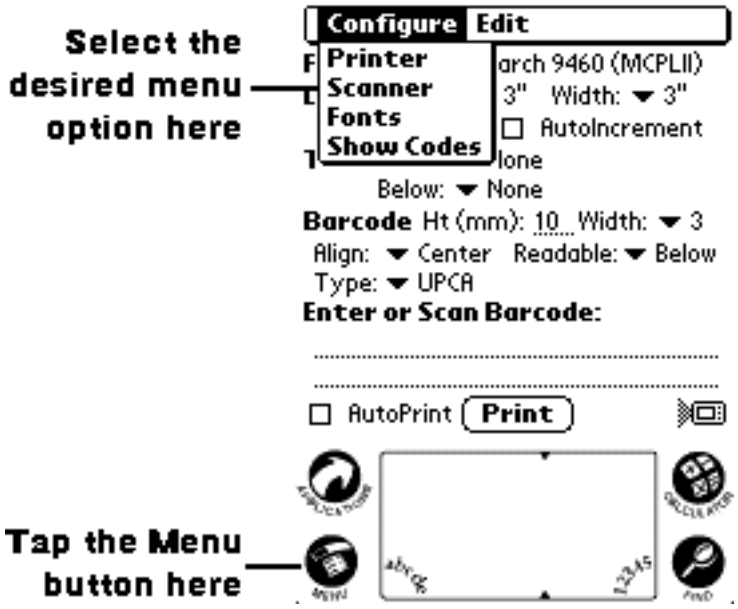
Barcode lets you specify five different aspects of the barcode itself. The **Height** of the barcode is specified in millimeters (mm). The **Width** of the barcode is specified in arbitrary units from 1 to 3; 1 providing the narrowest barcode and 3 the widest. You should adjust this empirically. **Align** lets you choose between Left, Center, and Right-justified position of the barcode. **Readable** is used to print (or not) a "human-readable" representation of the barcode above, below (the "typical" situation), or both above and below the barcode itself. Note that not all barcode printers support all of these choices. And finally, the **Type** of barcode lets you choose between a variety of commonly used barcodes:



Again, not all barcode printers are configured to print all of these barcode types.

Other Configuration Options

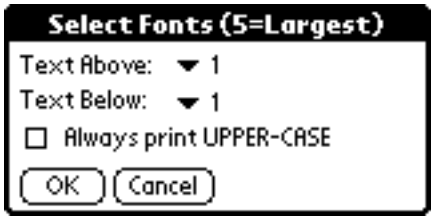
There are a number of special options which are available using the **Configure** menu. To select one of these options, first tap the **Menu** button on the lower left-hand corner of the screen to cause the menu to appear; then tap the desired menu option.



Configure Printer transfers you to **SCS Print Server** or **PalmPrint**, whichever is installed, to let you configure the printer parameters. **Handy Label** is essentially self-contained in that it sets almost all parameters itself, so that the only thing you need to set correctly is the baud rate (the serial baud rate, e.g., 9600, 19200, etc., or else "Infrared" for IrDA printing) and, if you are printing via serial, whether or not "CTS Flow Control" should be used. When you are done, return to **Handy Label**.

Configure Scanner transfers you to **ScanConfig**, if it is installed. **ScanConfig** is a program which lets you configure the barcode scanner for parameters such as whether or not check digits are scanned, etc. When you are finished, tap **Done** and you'll be returned to **Handy Label** .

Configure Fonts will display a separate screen which lets you configure some aspects of text printing on your label:



For the text above the barcode label and the text below (if you are in fact displaying those things), you can select five different fonts, ranging from 1 (the smallest) to 5 (the largest). These fonts are selected from the various fonts which are available on the different supported printers. Some printers do not provide such a range of font support, and these settings will have no effect. Also, if you check the **Always print "UPPER-CASE" box**, then whatever text is to be printed on the label will be automatically converted to upper case letters before printing.

Show Codes will "go through the motions" of printing a label, except at the end, instead of

sending the information to the printer, it will be displayed on the screen AND copied to the Palm "clipboard". These codes can then be transferred to, for example, a memo in the Palm MemoPad application, where you can adjust "by hand" some of the parameters (for example, the font) if **Handy Label** isn't producing exactly the label you want. This will require a familiarity with the specific codes required by your printer, and will also require a copy of PalmPrint (rather than SCS Print Server) if you want to print the memo after modifying it.

Scanning Barcodes

Barcodes can be entered "by hand" (using Palm's Graffiti or the "pop-up keyboard", as you prefer) into the barcode field, or, if you have a barcode-enabled PalmOS handheld, you can also scan the barcode. If you have a Palm with the Socket Communications SDIO scanner, tapping on the small scanner icon on the lower-right-hand corner of the screen, or pushing the physical MemoPad button which lies immediately below the on-screen button, will trigger the scanner.

When you do scan a barcode, the barcode type is automatically set (assuming that the type of the barcode that is scanned corresponds to one of the supported types), so you won't need to set the type if you are entering barcodes by scanning.

Printing Labels

The **Print** button prints one or more labels corresponding to the entered barcode and your settings. When you enter barcodes by scanning, there is one additional option controlled by the **AutoPrint** checkbox. If this box is checked, then immediately after you scan a barcode, the label(s) will print without requiring you to tap the **Print** button.

Printer Connectivity

Most barcode printers have either serial or infrared (IrDA) connectivity; beginning in early 2002, some printers with Bluetooth connectivity are also beginning to appear. The current version of **PalmPrint/SCS Print Server**, which **Handy Label** relies on for the actual printing (**Handy Label** essentially just prepares the label for printing), supports both serial and IrDA output; Bluetooth should be added during 2002. IrDA is fairly straightforward, just point your handheld at the printer before tapping the "Print" button and don't stop doing so until you see "Done!" displayed on the screen. Remember that on an SPT17xx or SPT18xx, the IrDA port is on the back of the handheld unit, and that on a Handspring Visor, it's on the side of the top; that's probably the trickiest aspect of IrDA printing. Serial printing is also extremely straightforward once you solve the cabling issue. Some barcode printers have 9-pin connectors, others have RJ (phone-type) connectors. Some may require "null-modem" connectivity, others not. On the handheld end, there are different connectors on Palm III/Symbol SPT15xx's, Palm m50x's, Symbol SPT17xx/18xx's, etc. Some printer manufacturers provide cables that will connect some of the above devices to their printers. In some cases, you can use a "HotSync cable" ending with a 9-pin connector, and then either connect that directly to the printer (with or without a null modem and/or gender changer), or possibly via some kind of adapter. In any case it is a problem which we have to leave to the end-user to solve.

Appendix I: Notes on the Socket Communications SDIO Scanner

There are several special things to note about the use of **Handy Label** in conjunction with the Socket Communications SDIO scanner.

Requirements

The SDIO scanner works on all Palm OS 4.1 and higher devices (through 5.x; not including the as-yet-unreleased PalmOS 6.x at this time). It requires a Palm handheld device with an SDIO slot, which include (as of this writing) the following Palm devices: Zire 31, Zire 71, Zire 72, Tungsten C, Tungsten E, Tungsten T, Tungsten T2, Tungsten T3, Tungsten W, Treo 600, m125, m130, m500, m505, m515, and i705. Some of these devices (e.g., the m-Series) were originally released with PalmOS 4.0; they must be upgraded to PalmOS 4.1 before attempting to use the SDIO scanner (this update is available at no charge from Palm).

Insertion of the Scanner

Different Palm devices have differing orientations of the SDIO slot. In the newer devices, like the Tungsten T3 shown below on the left, the slot is "normal", and the SDIO scanner is inserted as shown in the picture, with the word "Socket" facing the user. Some of the older devices, like the m505 shown below on the right, have a "reversed" slot, so the SDIO scanner must be inserted with the word "Socket" facing *away* from the user. Also, depending on the physical characteristics of the individual device, it will be preferable on some (as shown on the T3 below left) to include the rubber "collar" on the SDIO scanner; on others, as on the m505 shown below right, it is essential to *remove* the collar, because with it in place the scanner will not fully insert into the slot.

Left: Tungsten T3 with Socket Communications SDIO scanner inserted in the "normal" configuration
Right: Palm m505 with SDIO scanner inserted as required in the "reverse" configuration

Scanning Tips

Here are some tips provided by Socket for obtaining the best scanning performance from the SDIO Scanner. Note in particular the non-intuitive suggestion #4.

1. The SDIO scanner is not a laser, it's a camera. While users of laser scanner are used to sweeping the laser beam across the bar code, the red aiming beam of the SDIO ISC must be held reasonably steady on the target for a short period of time while the camera focuses and captures a clear image. This time should not be more than a quarter to a half of a second.

2. The red light from the SDIO scanner is simply an aiming beam - it doesn't add any auxiliary

lighting to the the target bar code. Like any camera, the target must be fairly well lighted by ambient lighting in order to get a clear picture. The SDIO ISC works better when the target bar code is well lighted.

3. Like all cameras, the SDIO ISC has a "focal length" (minimum and maximum distance from the target) where the captured image will be clearer. While the focal length of the laser is quite large, the focal length of the SDIO scanner is pretty small by comparison. For best results scanning 'normal' sized bar codes, the SDIO scanner should be held from about 4 to 7 inches (10 to 18 cm) from the target.

4. Just like the laser scanner, the SDIO scanner should **NOT** be positioned at exactly 90 degrees (perpendicular) from the target bar code, but at least 15 degrees above or below the target.

Configuring the Scanner

As of this writing, our **ScanConfig** program does not work with the Socket SDIO scanner. However, Socket provides a somewhat similar program (with more limited functionality) called **SocketScan**.The configuration you set up with **SocketScan** will remain in effect when **Handy Label** is operating. Note, however, that regardless of the "scan trigger" you select in **SocketScan**, **Handy Label** will override that choice, because it is "hard-coded" so that the MemoPad button is used to trigger the scan (you can also tap the on-screen button if you prefer).

Technical Support

If you need technical support for **Handy Label**, you should first check our support web page, `http://www.stevenscreek.com/palm/support.html`, where we have tried to assemble answers to all the most commonly encountered problems with downloading, installing, and using our software. If that doesn't solve your problem, we encourage you to do so by email at `support@stevenscreek.com`. We provide phone support for our "regular" software (like **On Hand**, **CatScan**, and **Take An Order!**), but we provide email support ONLY for **Handy Label**.