

Installing and Using LabelTrace Print Manager V1.4.1.7

Introduction

LabelTrace Print Manager (LTPM) is designed allow users of LabelTrace or QuickTrace to share a local or remote label printer. It is also employed when operating in a Terminal Services environment where direct printing may not be possible. The mechanism employed is essentially that users print labels to a file in a shared folder instead of directly sending the print data to a printer. LTPM continuously monitors this shared folder and whenever it detects that a file has been created by a user, it sends this file to a locally connected label printer. The label printer is therefore shared without being visible as a network printer which ensures other users do not print standard documents to it by mistake. In addition, it is possible to accumulate files for later printing if, for example, LTPM is suspended while changing the label roll.

Note that network security and permissions must allow a user to create files in the "store folder" and also permit the LTPM program to delete them.

Installing LTPM

LTPM may be installed either from a CD or from an installer copied previously to the server. In either case, ensure that you are logged on as Administrator then browse to the install folder and double click SETUP.EXE to begin installation.

You are prompted first to confirm that you want to share the install folder with the default "Yes". Normally accept this by clicking Next.

You are now prompted for the folder into which to install LabelTrace system files. This defaults to C:\LTPRTMGR. Use the Browse button to specify an alternate location, if required. Click Next to continue.

Installation will now commence and on completion, you are asked to confirm whether to run LTPM immediately.

De-installing LabelTrace Print Manager

To de-install LTPM, ensure that you are logged on as Administrator. Select Start/Settings/Control Panel/Add_Remove Programs option. Select LabelTrace Print Manager from the list of software which can be removed and click "Add/Remove". Click OK to confirm and the deinstallation process will remove all components.

Running LTPM

LTPM is installed with a shortcut in the Startup group so it will always run automatically when the PC is restarted. If required you may start it manually by selecting Start/Programs/LabelTrace Print Manager. When LTPM is started up, it checks whether there are formats to be printed already in the shared folder. If this is the case, the user is prompted "There are N labels to print - do you want to start printing Y/N?". Responding Y starts printing of the formats. Responding N suspends printing - thus allowing the formats to be inspected then deleted or printed.

Configuring LTPM

Use the File/Preferences option to select the port to which the printer is attached: COM1-8 and LPT1-8 are supported. Note that when COM ports are in use, the port setting is 96,N,8,1 (printer default settings).

The folder used as the store for label print data is normally C:\LTPRTMGR. If you wish to select an alternative folder, ensure it is also accessible by any PCs where users may wish to print in this mode. While LTPM is running, the folder currently selected is confirmed in the bar at the bottom of the LTPM window as eg "Watching C:\LTPRTMGR".

Using LTPM

Normally there is no user action required to run LTPM, However, in certain circumstances you may wish to use the Start/Stop button to suspend then restart printing, for example to change the label roll. The status of the printer is indicated as "OK" or "Printing Stopped" and in addition, if the printer is switched off, the lid opened, the labels need replenished or the communications cable is disconnected - the status will change to "Disconnected" (also shown in the bar at the bottom of the LTPM window).

LTPM may be minimised and continue to run on the task bar by selecting the File/Minimise option. To close it completely, select the File/Shutdown option. If LTPM is minimised, you may bring it back to normal display by simply clicking on the LTPM icon in the task bar.

When label data files are created they are listed in the order of creation with the file name based on the name of the workstation from which they originate and the date and time submitted. When this data file has been sent to the printer, the entry is deleted from the list. If formats are created while LTPM is closed or suspended, the user may right click on a format then choose to View, Delete or Print the specified format. the View option simply presents the text file of data as it will be sent to the printer which allows the relevant data to be inspected, as well as providing date and time of creation of the file. The View window also provides an option to delete or print the format. Note that selecting Print in these circumstances will only print the specified format, reverting to Suspend mode. There is also a Delete All option.

Configuring LabelTrace to Print via LTPM

In the Preferences option in LabelTrace (or in Tracing Preferences in QuickTrace), select "File" as the port and then use the browse option (button with three dots at the right hand end of the folder entry box) to select the folder being monitored by LTPM on the relevant PC (eg "\\workstationname\LTPRTMGR" or alternative folder selected in LTPM).

When printing in this mode, each time a file has been created in the LTPM shared folder the user sees a yellow box flash on screen and the PC beeps. This is to provide helpful feedback for the user to confirm successful creation of the data file

If the printer which LTPM is driving is off-line or If LTPM has been shutdown, a user attempting to print will receive a warning message and be asked to confirm whether the label data should be transmitted for later printing by LTPM.