

ArcBI TS Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Slave Printing	1
Faxing	1
PCL Printers	2
Preparedness	2
Smart Phone?	2

ArcSys Hot Tip

If you have a fax printer assigned to your workstation, you can access it by typing in the letter F at the “Which printer” prompt. This will bring up the printer-specific dialogue for entering the fax phone directory. Remember to use the font of None whenever you are faxing.

Slave Printing

Trivia Moment: Back in the 70s, a dumb terminal weighed 50 pounds, cost \$1200, and was monochrome. It had two cable ports on the back. One cable went to the 30MB server, and the other cable went to a dot-matrix printer that could print at the rate of 30 characters per second. If you pressed the key labeled “Prt” then anything that was displayed on the terminal (master) was also sent to the printer (slave). Hence, the name “slave printing” was born and has stuck with the MegaWest and Red Planet software ever since.

Fast Forward: When pcs came along, they usually had a printer tied to them, too. As pcs became networked, this opened the door to allowing one pc to send a print job to the pc across the room, building, county, or state.

Current Conditions: Trying to keep one foot in the past for the sake of compatibility and one in the future for flexibility, is a bit of a challenge.

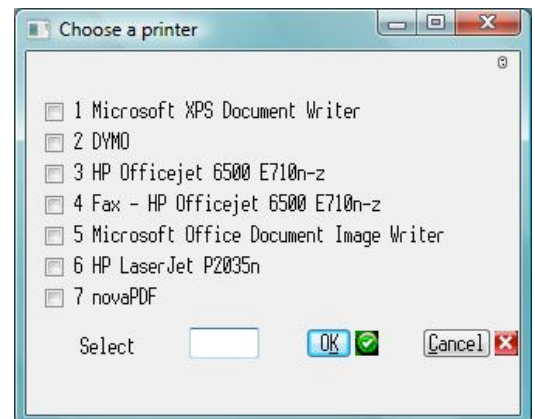
Let’s review the various options that are available. Within the Red Planet model there are two classes of printers: System and Slave. System printers are the PF0, PF1,

PF2, etc., printers. In the old days, these printers were physically wired to the server. Nowadays, these printers are network printers as seen from the server. Slave printers, on the other hand, are network printers as seen from the workstation.

Whenever you are in a pop-up screen where the prompt says “Which printer”, you can enter

PFn select system printer “n”
 S select the current slave terminal, 80 characters wide
 T terminal, 80 characters wide
 L terminal, 132 characters
 N display network printers
 F select the fax printer

Choosing N would display a screen similar to the following:



Once a printer is selected, this will become Red Planet’s default slave printer until you select an alternate.





Printer Fonts

The Red Planet model is designed around “PCL” (Printer Control Language) class printers. This is a standard created by Hewlett Packard in the 80s and provides for a compact way of sending print data to a printer. Since the primary job of a practice management system is to generate massive reports, compact print files are a must.

Where available, a prompt screen will ask for a font of Arial, Times Roman, Courier, None, or Adobe. If you know that your printer is a PCL, then you can use Arial, Times Roman, or Courier. If you are *unsure*, always use a font of None.

Where available, a prompt screen will ask for a font of Mixed or Plain. If you know that your printer is a PCL, then you can use Mixed. If you are *unsure*, always use a font of Plain.

Where a font of Adobe is offered, this will give you the option of generating printer-independent print jobs. It takes a little more computer time, but does provide you with the ability of saving your print job in folders of your choosing.

If you select a font and your printer is not a PCL, then your print job may not print or may get jammed in that printer’s Window queue. If the latter happens, you will need to open the printer from the Control Panel and delete the print job.

If you toggle back and forth between printers extensively and don’t know what slave printer you are sending to, just choose printer N and select the desired printer.

Over the decades, we have written numerous custom programs which are designed for specific printers. Even though the prompt “Which printer” may appear, the underlying program may be assuming you only have a PCL printer.

Preparedness

The recent Hurricane Sandy that devastated New York and New Jersey taught some pretty hard lessons about being prepared for emergencies. A major hospital which solely relied on electronic medical records AND had backup generators was totally shut down when seawater flooded the basement. All the patients had to be relocated to another hospital without any written documentation regarding their condition. The life-threatening situations could have been disastrous except for people who went above and beyond the call of duty.

If you haven’t done it yet, it is a good time to review what your steps are for handling an emergency. A utility crew could accidentally knock out your power or Internet access for a day. A simple, but effective, solution is to print on paper the last visit note, problem list, and medications the night before the visit. A variation is to “print” them to a laptop computer. A dry test run would then help your staff feel some comfort that they could work and handle patients.

Tale of the Smart Phone

The other day I was in a meeting. Someone asked if they knew the phone number of a certain individual. This one man, a few years older than myself, reached into his suit pocket, pulled out a stack of 3 x 5 cards which were held together by a rubber band, thumbed through them and within 2 seconds was reading off the phone number.

“Hmm”, I thought. It would have taken me 20 seconds: Take out **smart** phone. Turn on power. Tap in passcode. Tap Ok. Tap on button to bring up menu. Tap on Contacts button. Tap on box to type in name. Tap on keyboard to spell part of name. Oops, made a mistake. Backspace. Grrr.

“Yea,” he went on to say, “I use different colored cards to help me categorize things.” I slowly put my phone back in my pocket, slumped in my chair, and started to turn green with envy.