
SATO Label Gallery

Label Gallery Drivers

SATO International Pte. Ltd.

English Edition

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1. Getting started

1.1 Introduction

To use your thermal printer in Windows environment, you need Windows printer driver.

When you buy Windows, you automatically receive Windows drivers for hundreds of different printers. Because these printer drivers perform the task of controlling printers, all Windows programs can take full advantage of the capabilities of numerous different printers regardless of how different those printers may be from each other. Unfortunately, a standard Windows doesn't have drivers included for many of the most useful label printers, including thermal printers.

The thermal printer drivers developed by SATO were created to allow any Windows software to use the thermal printers as any normal printer. This means you can use the thermal printer drivers with other Windows programs, such as Corel Draw, PageMaker, and Word for Windows. The only issue is that you have to make sure that you properly specify your "custom" paper size that should be the same size as the labels you use.

General windows programs however don't know how to use all the special functions that thermal printers have. Some of such functions are: automatic incrementing of counters and barcodes, remembering part of label that is constant on many labels, printing barcodes directly, inverting part of some label, use downloaded graphics elements that greatly increase the printing speed...

These functions (and therefore optimal label printing) are only available from special labeling software such as Label Gallery TruePro package.

1.2 Driver installation

Before you begin installing the driver, please check that the printer is properly connected to the computer. Refer to the printer documentation for more information.

To install the printer drivers simply click on the **Add printer** icon from the Printer folder and follow on screen instructions. Printer folder is accessible by clicking on **Start** menu, and selecting **Settings / Printers**.

When the dialog box for printer selection is shown, select the **Have disk** button and provide the correct path to the printer driver. Usually you select the folder with the name that corresponds to the printer manufacturer in the `\drivers` path on the Label Gallery CD-ROM

Then you have to select your printer from the list that is displayed. If your printer is not listed, please check that you have selected the correct folder in the previous step.

Now you must select, how the printer is connected to your computer. Usually you would select LPT1, COM1 or COM2 here. Note that if you don't select the correct connection here, your printer won't work. This is especially true for the serial connection (COM1, COM2). The com ports have special other settings (baud rate, flow control...), that must be set the same way as on the printer. See Configuring serial communication for more information.

Next you must provide the printer name and whether you want this to be your default Windows printer. The default values are usually OK.

When the installation is complete, Windows may ask you if you want to print the test page to see if the printer is installed correctly. You should select NO (don't print the test page). This is because the Windows' test page is of size A4 and therefore won't fit on a vast majority of labels that can be printed on thermal printers. Many printers also don't have enough memory to print such a big page (label). The results are therefore very unpredictable and tell you very little about the right printer connection.

If you use Windows NT the order of the installation is slightly different due to differences in operating system, but the basic procedure is the same.

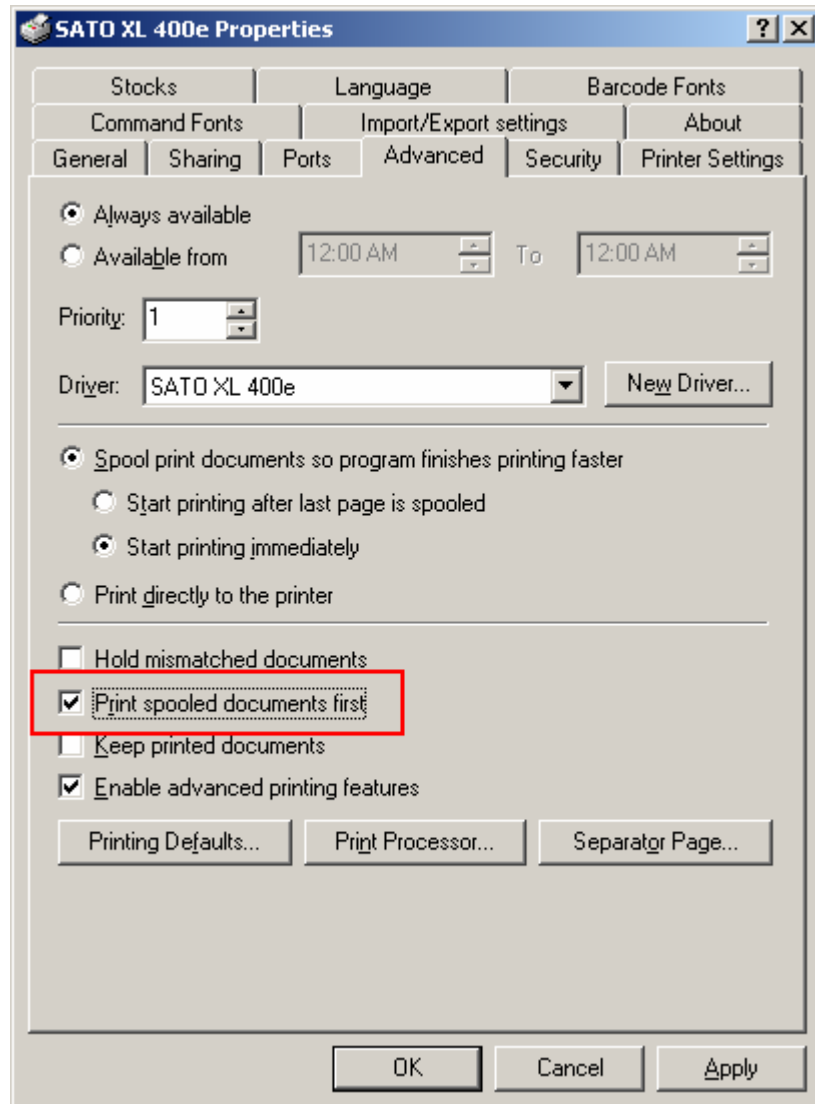
If your printer supports both parallel and serial connection, you should use the parallel connection, because it is much faster.

Don't print the Windows test page!

You can also share the thermal printer over the network just as any other printer in the Windows system. Please see the Windows documentation on how to do that.

Important note!

For users whom have installed printer drivers that were downloaded prior to 1st April 2006, please **enable** the ***Print Spooled Document First*** option located in the driver's properties page if it's not being enabled during the time of installation.



1.3 Configuring serial communication

Thermal printers are now mostly available with parallel ports, which we recommend over serial ports. If you will be printing any kind of Windows graphics or TrueType fonts, your system performance will benefit significantly from the superior throughput of a parallel port. Additionally, because there is only one valid type of parallel cable (as opposed to dozens of different possible serial cables), you never have to worry about buying or making a different type of cable.

However, as some printers come standard with only a serial port, and cost extra with the parallel port option (assuming the option is even available), serial port communication issues often arise. This section covers some of the most common obstacles encountered with serial port communication, and explains how to best configure Windows (and possibly your serial cable) to properly communicate with your printer.

Hint!

If you are having trouble getting Windows to talk through your serial port to your printer, examine the switches and/or the settings on the front (back) panel of your printer that are used to set your printer's communication parameters. Write down the baud rate, data bit count (or "word length"), parity setting, number of stop bits, and type of flow control being used. Also, if you happen to have any other program that you have ever used to talk to your printer, you can examine the menu in the program that is used to specify your communication parameters for comparison. Once you know the desired communication parameters, be sure to set them properly for your printer. The proper way to specify your printer settings will depend on the version of Windows you are using.

Important note!

It is important to keep in mind that your SATO Windows printer driver and the program that you will be printing from do not control the serial communication between your computer and printer. Your mode of serial communications is controlled by:

- The settings in your printer.

- The type of serial cable being used.
- The printer settings specified in Windows.

1.3.1 Why are there sometimes problems printing over the serial port

When printing through a parallel port, there is only one type of cable, so you just hook it up and start printing. There are no switch settings or other communication parameters to worry about. However, there are well over a hundred possible different ways to configure a serial port, and if you don't set the ports on your computer and printer identically, communication will be unreliable, if not impossible. Additionally, there are dozens of ways that serial cables can be wired, and it becomes clear that if you randomly hook up any PC to any printer using just any random serial cable, your chances of establishing proper communication are poor.

Getting your PC's serial port to talk to your printer is not difficult, but it does require that you know how to determine your printer's current settings. It is also helpful (but not mandatory) to know a few things about the type of cable you are using.

Important!

Serial port parameters specified in DOS or by a DOS program do not affect the configuration of your serial ports once you enter Windows. Furthermore, it is not sufficient to specify your serial port settings from inside of Windows by running a DOS program. You must use the **Port settings** button in the *Printer properties* dialog box.

1.3.2 Specifying the serial port settings on printer and in Windows

The serial port settings for your printer will be specified either by "DIP" switch settings (usually on the back of your printer) or through a menu system accessed from the printer's front panel. (Consult your printer manual or dealer if you don't know which method to use.) You need to specify the following parameters:

- Baud Rate
- Data Bits
- Parity Bit

- Stop Bits
- Flow Control

Important!

It is very important, to set the serial port in Windows the same way as they are set on the printer.

Setting the serial port in Windows

You can specify your communication port settings as follows:

1. Click on the Windows **Start** button.
2. Select **Settings** and then **Printers**. The printer folder will be displayed.
3. Click your right mouse button on the printer you wish to change your settings for and select the **Properties** option.
4. Click on the **Details** tab near the top of the dialog, and then click on **Port Settings** button near the bottom right.
5. Adjust your port settings as necessary and select **OK**.

Select **OK** again to exit from the printer's Properties dialog, and then close the Printers dialog.

2. About printing performance

2.1 Factors that affect the printing performance

The data that needs to be printed must somehow be transmitted to printer. This is usually done using the serial or parallel cable. It takes some time, for the printer to receive this data.

When the data is in printer, the printer must process this data and prepare it so, that it can be printed. This also requires some additional time.

Finally, the movement speed of the label roll also limits the printing speed.

By properly setting the configuration parameters, you can minimize the above described times. If however the printer and computer are not set or used properly there may be a great increase in printing time, resulting in slow and inefficient label production.

2.2 Increasing the printing performance

Printing speed depends a lot upon the port type you use, the port settings, and various printer options. Some of the most common issues related to printing speed are listed below.

2.2.1 Serial / Parallel connection issues

Use parallel port whenever possible!

We cannot get into details here, but the general rule to follow is; Use parallel port whenever possible. Parallel port is much faster, easier to use and also more reliable than serial port. The only disadvantage is, that not all printers support it (especially the older printer models).

If however, you are using the serial port, you may try setting the baud rate as high as possible to increase the printing performance.

First make sure, that everything works as expected. This means, that settings on computer and printer must match, and that the proper serial cable is used.

Then you can try increasing the baud rate (if possible). You must set the printer's as well as computer's serial port equally.

Note that increasing the baud rate means also increasing the possibility of an error during data transmission. This is especially true if you use long serial cables. You should try finding a compromise that is suitable for you.

2.2.2 Use printer's internal fonts

Printing TrueType fonts is a very time consuming process (especially if you use the serial cable), because a lot of data needs to be transmitted to the printer. (TrueType fonts are printed as graphics)

If you however use the printer's internal fonts, only the text is transmitted. By using only the printer's internal fonts, you can sometimes increase the printing by more than ten times.

This is also the most common issue for slow printing.

Note!

You can use Gallery MemMaster to download TrueType fonts to printer's memory card and use them as internal fonts.

2.2.3 Set the printing speed to a higher value

You can set the speed at which the labels move across the printing head. You can set the printing speed in printer properties dialog box.

Note that higher printing speed also means lower printing quality. With a little experimenting, you should find a value that is suitable for you.

2.2.4 Use the No. of copies option

If you need to print several equal labels, you can set the *No. of copies* option in *Printer properties* dialog box. If you set this option, the data for the label is sent to printer only once, and printer then prints the specified amount of labels. If you

don't set this option, the data must be sent to printer for each individual label, although they are completely equal.

2.2.5 Minimize the use of graphics on the label

Avoid using graphic objects on the label. Graphic objects take a lot of time to transmit them to printer.

If you need to have a company logo or other graphics on the labels, you should consider using preprinted labels.

3. Troubleshooting

3.1 Overview

This section summarizes the best procedure for solving print-time problems, such as the job not printing and/or a communication error message being output at print-time. We have encountered very few print-time problems like this that are not effectively solved by following guidelines in this chapter.

3.2 Printer does not print at all

When printer doesn't print at all, there is usually something wrong with the communication between computer and printer. See the following topics for more information.

3.2.1 Check serial port communication setting

Most of the printing problems occur because the serial ports on the printer and computer are not configured correctly.

Before you go any further, regardless of how you think these parameters are set, you should double-check your printer and Windows settings for baud rate, data bits, stop bits and parity. For some extra guidance, this simple procedure is described in *Configuring Serial Communications*.

Do not assume that the default printer settings shown in your manual reflect your printer's actual settings. You must directly inspect either the mechanical switches (usually on the back of your printer) or the front panel menu settings before you can be sure how your printer's communications settings are configured.

3.2.2 Check printer connection

Users often mistakenly connect their printer cable to the wrong port on their computer, or mistakenly set Windows to output to the wrong port. To be on the safe side, double-check that all of your cables are properly connected, they are attached to the right port on your computer, and the Windows printer port settings accurately reflect the port to which you are attached.

3.2.3 Resetting the printer after configuration changes

The majority of SATO thermal printers require that you turn them off and then back on again before changes to the communication parameters in the printer will take effect. In this regard, keep in mind that certain SATO printers need to be switched off for about 5 seconds before switching on again. After turning your printer back on, make sure that it has completed its power-on self-test procedure before you start any printing tests. (No lights should be blinking. Additionally, some SATO printers will display the word Ready or display a ready light, usually green.)

Anytime you output a print job that fails, it is possible that the printer may lock-up, leaving part of a received print job in its input buffer. Because this can prevent the reception of subsequent print jobs, to be on the safe side while troubleshooting, it is recommended that you power-cycle (turn off and then back on) your printer after failed print jobs.

3.3 Printer prints something, but the result is incorrect

These type of problems are harder to predict, but can usually be solved by setting the proper option in printer dialog box.

3.3.1 Printer works for some time, but after a while stops

If a print job stalls and/or generates a communication error message after some data has already been successfully transmitted to the printer, you may have a flow control problem.

Please see the Configuring Serial Communications for further information.

3.3.2 Graphics is missing or not printed completely

If all of your TrueType or bitmap graphics print perfectly down to a point and then are cut off cleanly straight across the label, you almost definitely have insufficient memory in your printer to output the amount of graphics you are attempting to print.

If your printer otherwise handled this print job well, and is ready for the next print job, then this makes it even more likely that you need to contact your printer reseller for a printer memory upgrade.

Note that there are printer models that don't print any graphics if the special memory module is not installed. If the internal fonts and barcode print correctly but TrueType fonts and graphics are missing you probably don't have the memory module installed in a printer.

3.3.3 Printer prints across two or more labels

This problem mostly occurs if you set the label size incorrectly (to big).

It is also possible that the distance between top of the label and print head is not set according to real distance or that the sensor for detecting the gaps between the labels is not set correctly.

In either case, you should go to the *Printer properties* dialog box and set the appropriate setting.

3.3.4 Printing doesn't start on top of label

If there appears to be too much white space (top margin) on each label, then you probably didn't correctly set the distance between print head and top of label. You can set this in *Advanced printer options* dialog box.

4. Printer properties dialog box

4.1 Overview

Setting the proper printer options can improve printing performance a lot.

In the *Printer properties* dialog box you can set various printer options (printing speed, darkness, and label size...). By setting these (and other) options you can greatly improve label printing. There may also be occasions when printing doesn't work at all if some options are not set properly.

This dialog box is shown, if you select properties from the printers file menu (with the printer selected). You can also right click on the printer's icon and select properties.

Some portions of this dialog box are also accessible within applications with the **Printer setup**, **Page setup**, **Print**, or similar command. There may be slight variations on how this dialog box looks because not all applications display it the same way. However, all options regarding printer should always be in dialog box, they may just be on different place.

Here we assume that you use Windows 9X and have accessed the *Printer properties* dialog box from the *Printers* folder with the **File-Properties** command.

4.2 Special notes for Windows NT users

If you are using Windows NT, dialogs may look different than described here and there may be other options available, regarding general printer installation under Windows NT (in printer properties dialog box).

But all options that are specific to thermal printers are the same as here (have the same name) and are accessible by selecting **Document defaults** from the **File** or **Pop-up** menu.

These options are described under topics "Options tab" and "Advanced Setup".

4.3 General tab

Please see Windows help for more information.

On the **General tab**, you can set the printer's comment and separator page. The separator page is often used if many people use the printer at the same time via network.

Here you can also start the Windows' printer test, but since the test page size is too big, the results show you little or no information about the printer.

This tab is standard for all Windows' printers and is documented in Windows manual and help.

4.4 Ports / Advanced tab

Please see Windows help for more information.

Here you can set, how the printer is connected to computer, communication ports settings, and print spooler settings, which printer driver to use and some other options.

You will mostly use this tab only to set the serial port if you have printer connected to the computer's serial port.

This tab is standard for all Windows printers and is documented in Windows manual and help.

4.5 Sharing tab

On this tab you can specify that you want to share the printer over the network.

This tab is standard for all Windows printers and is documented in Windows manual and help.

4.6 Options tab

On the **Options tab** you can set options that are general for all thermal printers. Here you can set the label size, printing speed and darkness, printing orientation...

Note that these options can be set in the **Documents defaults** dialog box on the Windows NT system.

You can use the question mark in the upper right corner of dialog box or the F1 key to display more information about specific part of dialog box.

No. of copies

Specify how many identical labels that the you want to print. For example, enter '3', then there will be 3 copies of a label printed for every label that computer sends to the printer. If you need many identical labels, you can improve the printing speed a lot by using this option, because the data is sent to the printer only once.

Speed

Set the printing speed in the units to the right of this list box. That is how fast the labels are moved. Note that greater printing speed also means poorer quality of printing.

Darkness

Controls the temperature of the print head and as a result, how dark the printing is. Selecting larger numbers means darker output. You should adjust this setting according to the used labels.

Paper format

With these options you can set the format of the labels you use. The picture of a page with a big letter 'A' in the middle shows direction of printing.

Cm/Inch/Mm

Select the unit for specifying the label size. You can select centimeters (cm), millimeters (mm) or inches (inch).

Portrait/Landscape

Specifies how text is positioned on the label. **Portrait** orients the label vertically. **Landscape** rotates the label 90 degrees clockwise.

Rotate 180°

Rotates all labels for 180 degrees. This is useful if the labels come out of the printer printed upside down.

Width

Set the width of the labels you use. This is the overall width of the printing area.

Note that you should not include the backing paper in the overall width.

Height

Set the height of the label.

Note that if you use the media sensor, you normally enter here only the true label height (without the gap between the labels).

If, on the other hand, you don't use the media sensor (the sensor that detects the gaps between labels) you must enter the distance from the top of one to the top of next label (you must therefore also include the gap between labels, if any).

Barcodes button

Opens the *Barcode fonts* dialog box. In it you can create new custom printer fonts, that print as barcodes when used.

Memory button

Opens the *Printer memory* dialog box. In it you can set the amount and type of memory installed in your printer.

Advanced button

Opens the *Advanced printer setup* dialog box. Note that this button is available only when you open the printer properties dialog box for the application. Otherwise this dialog is on separate tab.

About button

Displays some information regarding this printer driver (version, copyright information...)

5. Advanced setup

5.1 Overview

In the *Advanced setup* dialog box, you can set the advanced options regarding the printer. Some of these options include the type of sensor used, distance from sensor to the top of the label...

If you accessed the *Printer properties* dialog box from the printer's folder (Windows 95/98 only) then content of this dialog box is located on a separate tab - *Advanced setup* tab.

Please note, depending on your printer model, the layout of this dialog box can vary. For detailed information about these advanced options you should refer to the printer documentation that comes together with your printer.

You can use the question mark in the upper right corner of the dialog box or F1 key to display more information about specific part of a dialog box.

This dialog box is also different for every printer brand.

6. Barcode fonts

6.1 Overview

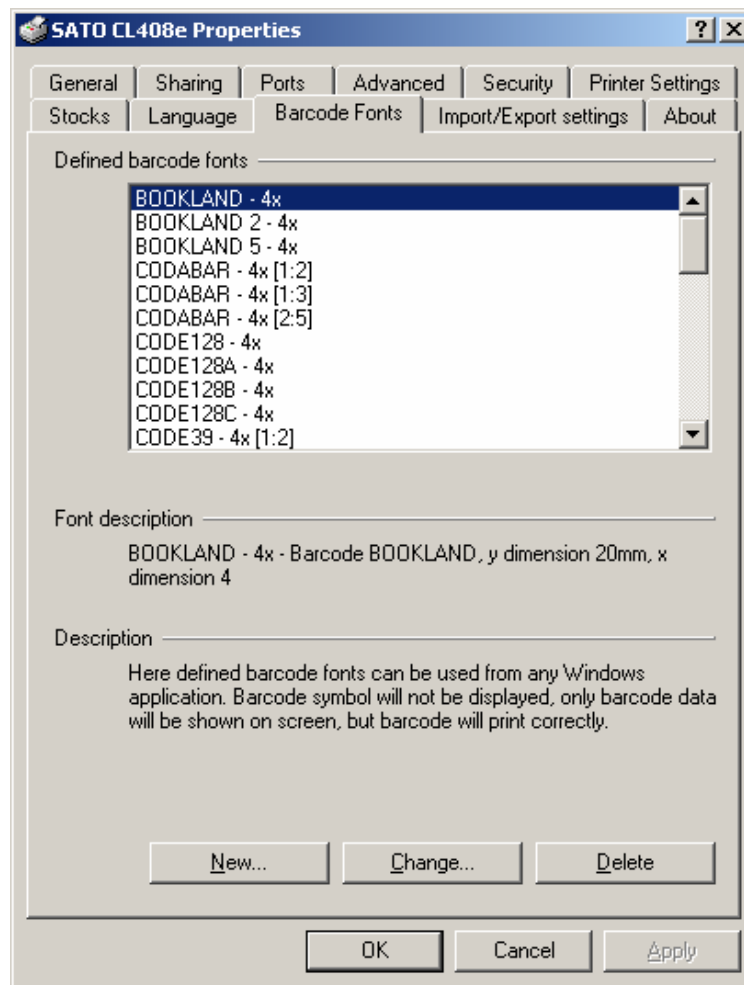
Most thermal printers can print barcodes, but most standard Windows applications (word processors, graphic programs) don't know anything about barcodes.

To allow these applications to print barcodes, special barcode fonts are created within the printer driver. When an application tries to print some numbers (text) in barcode font, these numbers (text) are printed as barcodes.

You must of course provide the proper barcode data otherwise nothing is printed. For example with EAN-13 barcode, you must provide exactly 13 (or 12 if automatic check digit is enabled) digits for the barcode to print correctly.

You can setup barcode fonts in the *Barcode fonts* dialog box.

Note, by using the Label Gallery labeling software you can design and print barcodes in full WYSIWYG manner, so you don't have to use barcode fonts. Label Gallery allows you to use graphics barcode elements directly on the label. They will be automatically printed as internal printer barcodes.

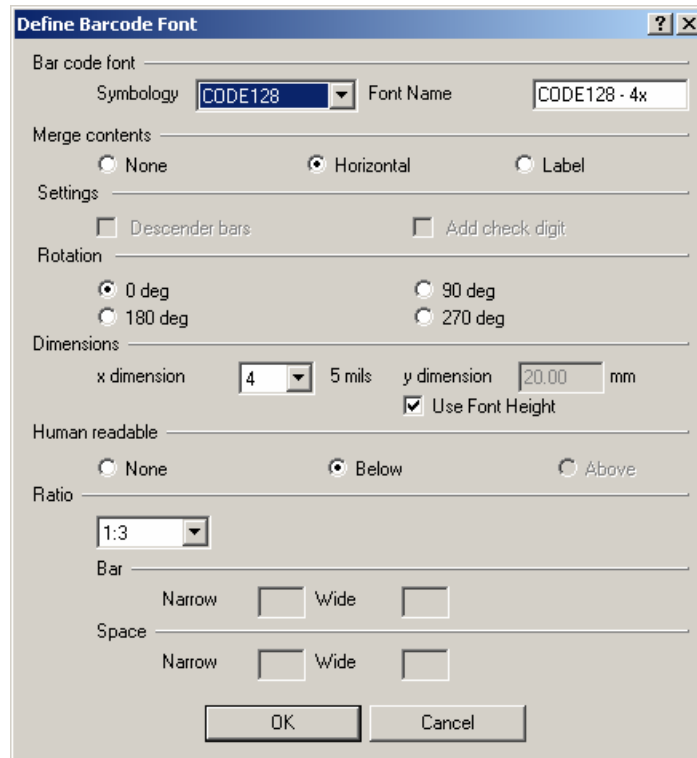


Barcode fonts dialog box

Please see the printer driver's help for additional information about barcode fonts.

Define barcode font

This window comes out whenever you click on the **New** or **Change** button. The options available are settings that will affect the barcode that's being generated.



Defining barcode font dialog box

- **Symbology:** This is the selection of the type of barcode font that you will be using. The font name can also be changed anytime through this option.
- **Merge contents:** This option is for deciding how the data in the application is going to be managed (merged into a barcode). For example, in a Word document, there are some data values that spread over a few lines. You can then choose the **Horizontal** option, which will enable the data values (specifically for that barcode font type) in each horizontal line to be merged into a separate barcode respectively, or the **Label** option, which merges all of the data values (specifically for that barcode font type) in the application into a single barcode. You can also choose not to merge any data into a barcode by choosing the **None** option.
- **Rotation:** The rotation angle (in Degrees) of the barcode font.

- ***Dimensions***: Selection of the expansion width and height of the barcode font.
- ***Ratio***: Size in ratios of the barcode font. Please note that this function is not supported in some barcode fonts.

7. Printer memory

7.1 Overview

For thermal printer to print graphics or TrueType fonts, these graphic objects must first be stored in printer's internal memory.

Memory installed in printer varies a lot between the different printer models and even the same printer model can have different amount of memory, depending on the number and type of memory cards installed.

The printer driver must however know the amount of memory installed in the printer in order to use it.

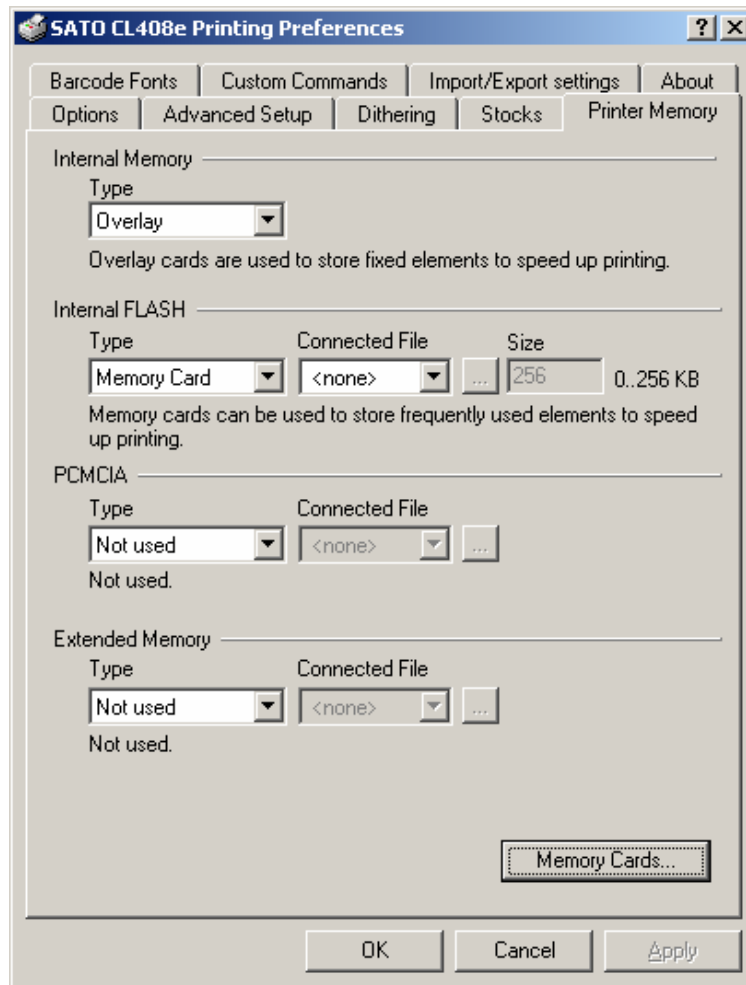
You can specify the amount of memory that your printer has in the **Printer memory** dialog box that is accessible by clicking on the **Memory** button.

7.2 Printer memory dialog box

In this dialog box you can specify the amount and type of memory that is installed in your printer. If you don't provide the correct information here, the printer may not function properly.

Printer memory is located on the special card that you plug into the printer called memory modules. The memory module is plugged into a slot in a printer. Depending from the printer model you may have from zero to four memory slots in which you can insert memory cards.

Note that some printer models have a memory module already installed that cannot be removed. This memory module is however no different than any other (removable) memory module.



Printer memory dialog box

You can use the question mark in the upper right corner of dialog box or the F1 key to display more information about specific part of dialog box.

Type

Every memory module can be configured in many different ways (types). Note that not all printers support all types of memory module configuration. In dialog box, you can only select the configuration supported by your printer.

- **Memory Card (PCMCIA):** You can permanently store graphics and fonts that you use in memory cards. These graphics and fonts then appear as internal printer fonts and remain in the memory card even if the printer is switched off. By using the memory cards you can greatly increase the printing speed if you use a lot of TrueType fonts or graphics on your labels.

- **Overlay:** Overlay cards are used to temporarily store fixed elements to speed up the printing.
- **Extended memory:** Allows the printer to use the memory on this module to store the label data. This means, that larger labels can be printed.
- **None:** Select this if you don't have the memory card installed.

Connected file

If a memory module is configured as a memory card, then you must here select the installed memory card file that describes, what is stored in a memory module.

Browse button (with three dots on it)

Displays the details about the selected memory card file will be displayed.

Size

Enter the size of a memory module. If you don't enter the correct size, your printer may not function properly.

Memory cards

Displays the *Memory cards organizer* dialog box.

7.3 Memory cards organizer dialog box

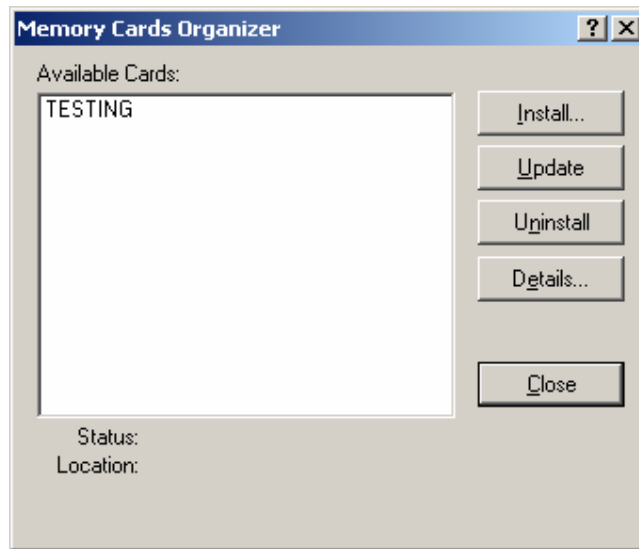
In the Memory card organizer dialog box, you can install, remove or update the memory cards files.

Memory card files are special files created with the Gallery MemMaster program that describe, what has been stored in printer's memory module.

When you create a new memory card file and download it to printer's memory module using the Gallery MemMaster program, the printer driver doesn't know, what has been downloaded yet. You must therefore first **Install** the memory card if you want the driver to be able to use it. If you don't install it, then you won't be able to select it in the *Printer memory* dialog box.

If you change the objects downloaded to printer, you must also **Update** the memory card installation, by clicking the update button.

When you erase the memory card, you should also **Uninstall** the corresponding memory card.



Memory Cards organizer dialog box

You can use the question mark in the upper right corner of dialog box or the F1 key to display more information about specific part of dialog box.

Available cards

Here are displayed all the memory cards, that have already been installed.

Install button

Installs a new memory card. Select the MMF file you created with the Gallery MemMaster program.

Update button

Click this button, if you changed the selected memory card file and therefore the objects downloaded on the printer's memory with the MemMaster program.

Uninstall button

Removes the selected memory card file.

Details button

Displays the details about the selected memory card.

Close button

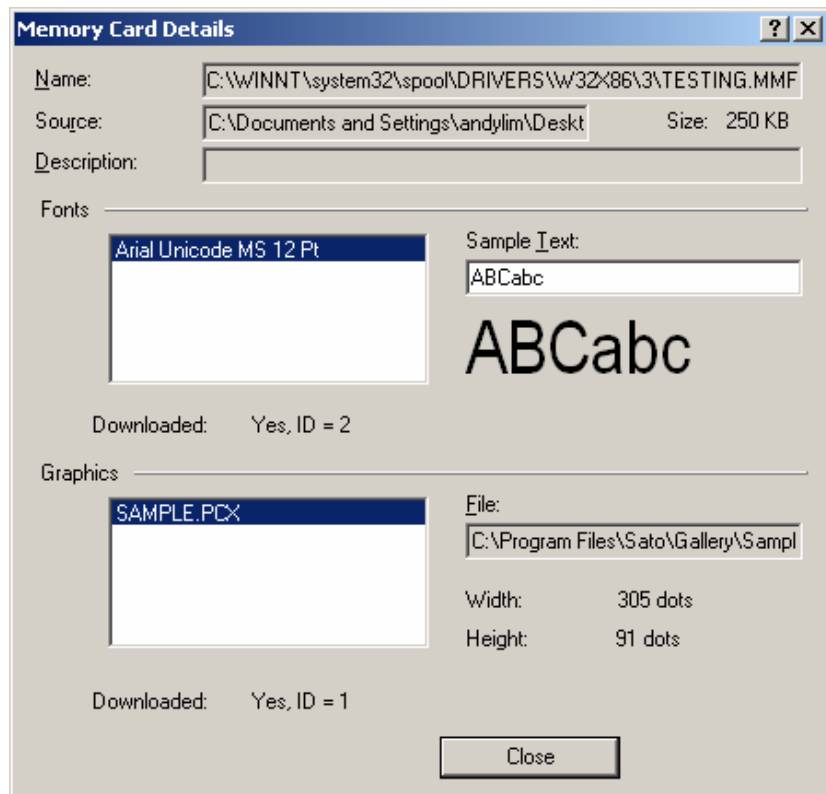
Closes the Memory cards organizer dialog box.

Status

Here is displayed where the memory card file is located and whether it requires updating or not

7.4 Memory card details dialog box

In this dialog box some information about the selected memory card file is displayed.



Memory card details dialog box

These information include name and type of fonts in the memory card file and size of graphics. You can see, what a selected font is like, if you type some text in the *Sample text* edit box.

The *Downloaded* option shows, whether the selected font or graphics has already been downloaded to the printers memory card, or not.

8. Maintenance & Support

8.1 Updating to the latest version of drivers

Label Gallery Drivers for thermal/transfer printers are constantly under development. This means that every couple of months, a new version of drivers is released with new improvements and bug fixes.

When a new version of Label Gallery Drivers is created, it is published on the Label Gallery website, and is available for free download.

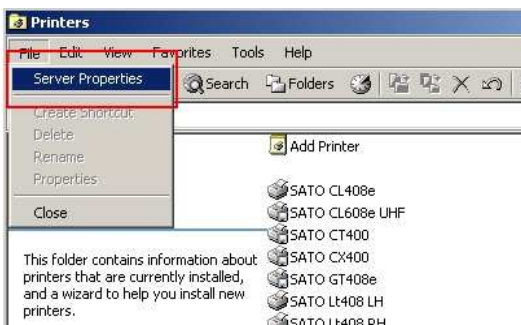
The Label Gallery website can be found at:

<http://www.satoworldwide.com/labelgallery/index.htm>

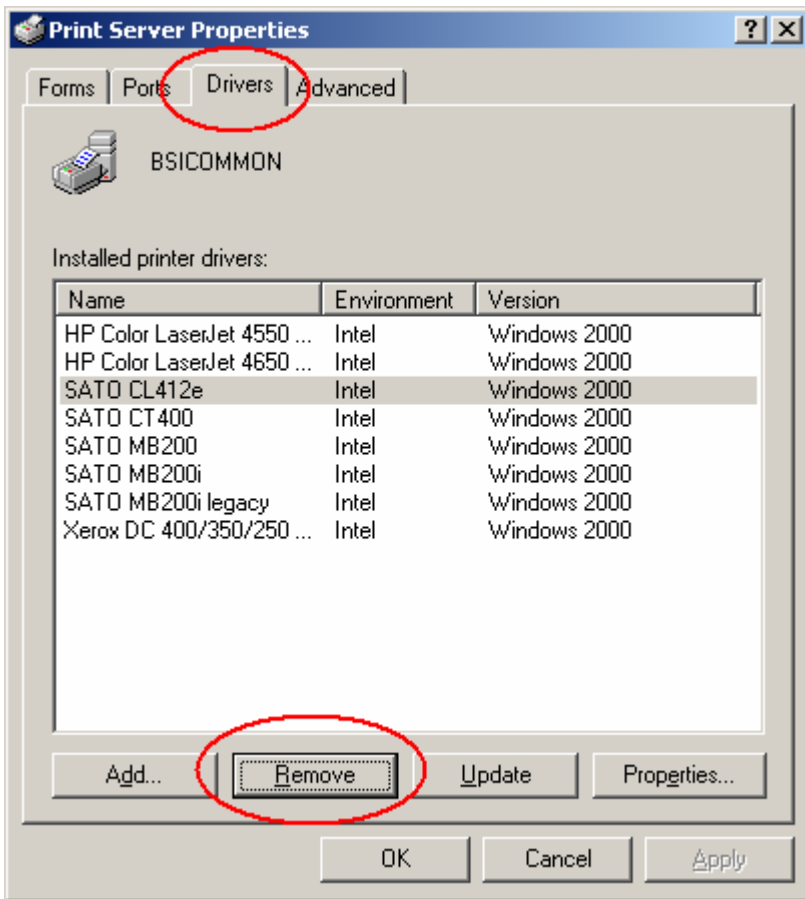
8.2 Proper Removal of Printer Drivers & Printer Ports

Deleting Printer Drivers

After deleting the printer driver from the “**Printers and Faxes**” folder, the driver still exists in the “**Server Properties**” folder. Thus a complete removal is needed.

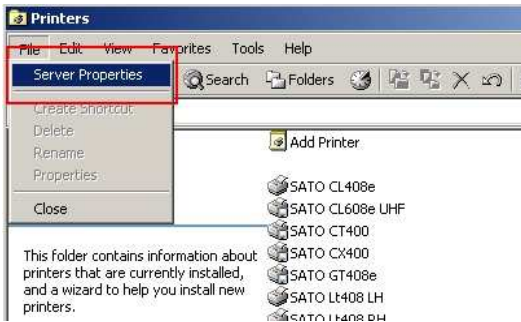


Remove the unwanted driver which is in the “**Driver**” folder

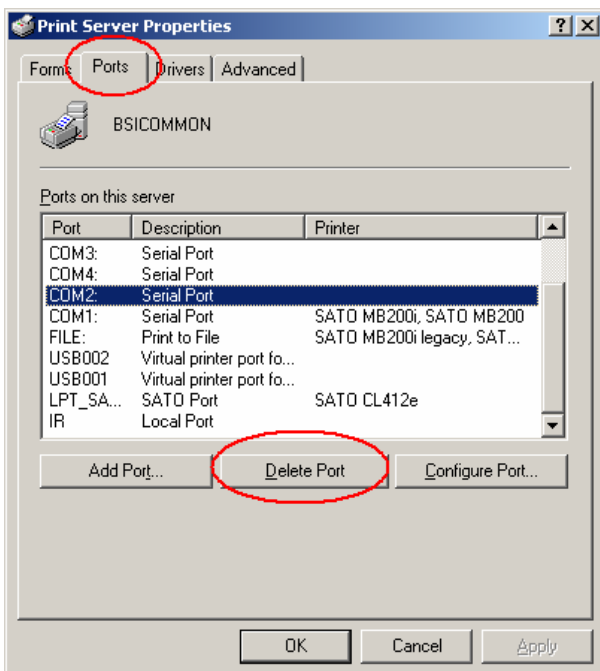


Deleting SATO Ports

Click on the “**Server Properties**” option, and go to the “**Ports**” folder,



Select the unwanted port and click on the “**Delete Port**” to remove it.



8.3 Label Gallery Software

Gallery Drivers are part of the Label Gallery program - The professional labelling software family and are especially designed to allow optimal printing from Label Gallery on most thermal printers. They are also available separately (and freely) and can be used to print from other Windows (9X, ME, NT, 2000 and XP) applications.

Although Gallery Drivers for thermal/transfer work with every Windows application, optimal label production can only be achieved using a special labeling software – Label Gallery. Please see the introduction for more information.

Label Gallery TruePro - The complete barcode label solution:

- Label Gallery Plus, barcode labeling software
- Gallery Drivers, thermal transfer printer drivers
- Gallery Form, custom data-entry form generator
- Gallery Data, database manager
- Gallery Watch, printing from DOS, HOST... applications
- Gallery MemMaster, font and graphics loader

Label Gallery Easy - Fully Wizard driven easy-to-use barcode labeling software

8.4 Technical Support

For more information about thermal printer drivers, driver updates, label-printing software, White papers and much more please visit the Label Gallery website at:

<http://www.satoworldwide.com/labelgallery/index.htm>

If you cannot solve the problem on your own, please contact your local software vendor or SATO representative offices. For more information please refer to:

Support FAQ:

http://www.satoworldwide.com/labelgallery/support_faq_general.htm

8.5 Contact Information

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