

Developing Zebra Rule Sets in the Design Tool

The problem with using the designer to create Zebra rule set, is that it generates a PDF for previewing. The only way to use the designer for drivers like Zebra is to use the test print option or use the Zebra printer for browser previews of labels. (See bottom of this document for an explanation of this.

The main reason Zebra rule sets are not compatible with PDF, as PCL and Postscript are, is that it uses a different barcode command and different fonts.

At SDSI, we use the following method to utilize the design tool to create Zebra rule sets.

1. Create a rule set with the following sections:
 - a. [zebra label rule set]
 - b. Document properties, e.g.
 - i. detect
 - ii. cols, rows, page (for # of input lines per page when no form feeds)
 - iii. paper size, etc.
 - c. Code blocks, usually just a prepage for loading and preparing fields for printing
 - d. Local constants to be used, e.g.
 - i. local HFONT=univers,10# for use in PDF execution
 - ii. #local HFONT=font 0,10# for use in Zebra execution; swap the # when switching drivers
 - e. Now sectionalize the label printing, e.g. suppose 3 sections of text/barcode separated by horizontal lines
 - i. Section 1 including text commands and barcode command in a top-down order ending with the cbox command
 - ii. Section 2 including text commands and barcode command in a top-down order ending with the cbox command
 - iii. Section 3 including text commands and barcode command in a top-down order
 - iv. Please note that you should be creating 2 barcode commands; 1 for PDF and 1 for Zebra commenting out the Zebra barcode command
2. Now test the PDF version of the label. Tweak the commands to get a PDF version of the label that closely resembles what you want.
3. So what you have accomplished is a neatly formatted rule set that is easy to work with.
4. Now comment the PDF constant and barcode commands and uncomment the Zebra constant and barcode commands
5. Use test print, either from the Preview menu or the printer icon on the preview window tool bar, to test and tweak the Zebra label. Just point test print to the Zebra printer.

Note: font 0 is the only fully scalable Zebra font that we have found.

As mentioned above, there is a Zebra Label Preview built-in to Zebra print servers. So if your Zebra printer is a network printer and uses Zebra's internal or external print server, you can use your browser to generate label previews. Use this link from your browser:

<https://km.zebra.com/kb/index?page=content&id=SO8374&actp=LIST>.

Using the design tool, you can output to a file and then open the file and copy the ZPL code to the preview edit window at the above link, and choose preview label. This can sure save a lot of labels.