

Printer Drivers

New features for the printer drivers!

Watermark!

With this feature the printer driver can simulate watermarks on printed documents. The user can specify the image file that will be used as watermark. Also the user can specify how the watermark will be printed on the document, for example the watermark image can be stretched to fit the page, stretched to width, or can be tiled on the page. The orientation of the watermark can be Portrait or Landscape. The reason for Portrait and Landscape is that stretching can distort the watermark, and the distortion is more visible when watermarks are stretched to fit landscape oriented pages. The visibility of the watermark on the printed page can be set by the brightness control. The 100% is the original color and less than 100% is lighter than the original color.

Embed Annotation!

The "Embed annotation" feature lets users to define an annotation text that will appear on every page printed with the Black Ice generic printer driver. The text can contain the date and the time when the document was printed and also a user defined text string. The user can specify the position of the annotation on the page, font, size, color of the text and the format of the date and the time. The annotation text can easily be modified on a per document basis, because all the annotation settings are stored in the printer's DEVMODE structure. The modification can be done through the printer driver user interface dialog box and also programmatically through the API, without any user interaction from the printing application

Voice C++: New features are available !

Improvements in the Dialogic ISDN support.

We received several customer reports about problems with detecting "No answer" signal from PSTN using Dialogic boards with ISDN lines. These customers not only could not detect "No answer" but they were not able to cancel the dial command and therefore their application sometimes never returned from a dial command.

After investigating the problem, we found that there are two problems in the Dialogic Global Call API. The first problem is that earlier versions of the Global Call API did not provide a reliable way to cancel a dial command. This problem has been fixed by Dialogic in their latest driver release (SR 5.1.1 SP1). The second problem is that on ISDN lines the Dialogic Global Call API will not report the "No answer" event. This problem was not solved yet by Dialogic.

To provide a solution to our customers, the latest version of the Voice C++ is able to cancel a dial command and when the dial command is canceled, Voice C++ will report "No answer". This way an application can decide how long it wants to wait for the dial operation to be finished and when the time elapsed, it can finish dialing and report no answer.

New dithering method: Threshold!

With the Threshold dithering method the user can select a threshold value that will be compared by the printer driver to the average of the Red, Green and Blue color components of every pixel. If the average of the pixel's color components is greater or equal to the threshold value, the pixel becomes black otherwise the pixel becomes white.

By default, the Black Ice printer drivers use a threshold value of 255. This means that a pixel will be dithered to white only if all the color components of the pixel are 255. If any of the color components are not 255, the pixel will be black.

The Threshold dithering is faster than other dithering methods and it is the best dithering choice for a document that does not contain graphics, pictures and only contains black and white text. Choosing the right dithering method affects the speed of the printing and the quality of the printed image.

Create faxable Image!

To fax an image, the resolution of the image must be 204x196 DPI or 204x98 DPI. To generate an image using FAX DPI you can select the fax DPI setting from the 'Resolution' combo. However, some applications may print distorted images if low and/or not uniform X and Y DPI values (like 204x98 DPI) are selected.

Using the "Create faxable Image" option, the application will print using the DPI value specified in the "Resolution" combo (resulting in high quality images), and the printer driver will convert the image to the required fax resolution.

Black Ice Software continues to invest in the printer driver, fax, and voice technology by enhancing their existing products and adding new features asked for by our customers.

Force Printer DPI feature!

Use the "**Force Printer DPI**" feature to 'force' the resolution of the output image to the value specified in the "Resolution" combo.

Some applications like Word and Excel, save in the printer settings that the document was created with, usually the default printer on the system. The Black Ice printer driver can handle any DPI values between 50 and 1500 DPI. If the Black Ice printer initially is set to print using 600x600 DPI, but the Excel document was created using 200x200 DPI the application (Excel) will send the document to the printer to be printed using 200x200 DPI (the resolution set in the document).

However, if the "Force printer DPI" option is selected, the printer driver will always generate images using the DPI value selected in the "Resolution" combo, ignoring the settings saved by the application.

Redirect printing!

This new feature is available upon request. The print forwarding feature will enable instant document archiving and printed copy (on paper) at the same time. When a document is printed to the Black Ice printer driver, the Black Ice printer generates an image file from the printed document (TIFF, JPEG, PDF, etc.).

If this feature is enabled, the Black Ice printer driver automatically will generate the image file and also will print the document to a physical printer. The physical printer can be a printer attached to the computer or a network printer.

This feature is indispensable for legal or financial institutions. The print forwarding enables document archiving, seamless to the users. Any document printed to the Black Ice printer driver is saved, it cannot be modified, and it can be imported into any Document Management or Archive system.

Voice format selection for voice modems.

The latest version of Voice C++ lets developers modify the voice format selection command sent by Voice C++ to the modem. This way the developer is not limited to one single modem specific voice format anymore and has full control on the voice format parameters used by the application. This feature will have a great impact on users that are using US Robotics and Lucent chipset modems. Earlier versions of the Voice C++ used IMA ADPCM voice files with these modems. The quality of IMA ADPCM voice files was poor. Now the latest US Robotics and Lucent chipset voice modems support PCM encoded voice files and the quality of the PCM files is much better.