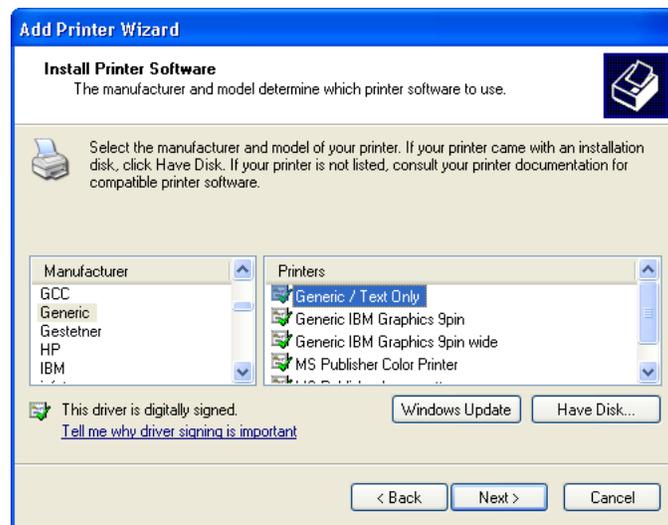# The Microsoft Generic Text Only Driver & IPSpool

Included with the normal printer drivers in Windows is a special type of driver called a "Generic Text Only Driver" which isn't for any specific model of printer but instead allows you to output plain text files or even enter your own printer control codes. There are a number of reasons you may want to use this driver instead of more typical printer driver:

- Impact printers are generally much faster when you use this driver. Most drivers for traditional impact printers create the output as a raster image telling the printer which dots to print where. Most of the time this results in poor quality output and very slow printing. Switching to the generic driver will speed up the printing considerably and can even improve output quality.
- If you have an old printer without any driver support in the current versions of Windows you can often get some output using the Generic Text driver. Usually you will need a little information on the printer escape sequences and you will be limited to fixed pitch fonts but it is an alternative to dumping that old hardware.

Next, we will show you how to configure the Generic Text driver in Windows XP, the procedure is similar for earlier versions of Windows. We will start by installing the Generic Text driver using the normal "Add Printer" wizard in Windows, select Generic in the list of manufacturers and "Generic / Text Only" in the list of printers.
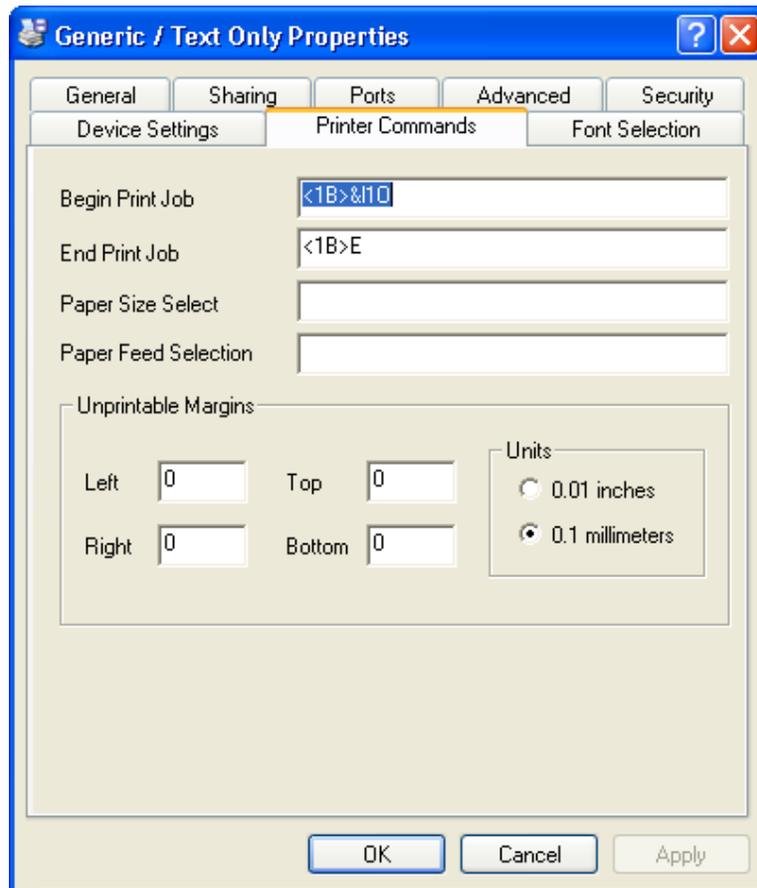

 We now need to move on to configuring the driver for you specific printer or application, start by right clicking on the printer in the printers folder and selecting "Printer Properties." The first choice you have to make is what sort of paper feed you are using, this table shows the three options in the Device Settings tab:

Cont feed no break	ALWAYS SELECT THIS OPTION FOR USE WITH FreePOS
Cut sheet	Select this if you want a Form Feed character added after every page, usually this is the option you would use for a laser or ink jet printer.
Cont feed with break	Select this if you are using continuous rule paper and need a gap on either side of the perforation

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The next tab in the printer properties allows you to setup a hand full of printer escape sequences. To configure this you will need some information from the manufacturer of your printer on the printers language. Usually printer commands start with an escape character (ASCII 27), you can enter this character using the sequence <1B> instead. 1B hexadecimal = 27 decimal.

Finally the "Font Selection" tab allows you to enter the sequences to select the various font widths available and the character set. As you do not have the facility to enter font widths the only choices available to you when using this driver are fixed pitch fonts.

For ESC/POS (Epson Compatible) Printers, put these codes in:

Begin Print Job: <1B><21><10>   Make print LARGE
End Print Job: <1D><56><42><00>   Trigger Auto-Cutter
                        <1B><21><00>   Make print NORMAL SIZE

* For some printers, you must add <0D> onto the end of each sequence above.