

## Overview of connectivity in NiceLabel Suite

Most of the time labeling jobs throughout the IT enterprise is performed using data that has already been collected and stored somewhere in your information system. NiceLabel Suite offers many methods of connectivity to your data. The application is always installed on a computer or server running the Windows operating system, but data can be acquired from most possible sources. If your computer has a supported driver installed for your type of database, NiceLabel can use it for labeling. The last resort is always the usage of data in plain text files.

NiceLabel Suite offers a complete custom-designed labeling software solution system with completely unattended and automated label printing. Labeling can be integrated directly into your custom applications or you can use NiceWatch, automated print server that enables real-time, on-demand label printing from Windows and even non-Windows information systems. NiceWatch is an add-on available in NiceLabel Suite package. NiceLabel Suite is also the perfect tool for integrating label printing into your SAP R/3 system through its capability of exporting a label template directly to an ITF file. The ITF is a standard file format used by SAP R/3 to output forms.

NiceLabel allows you to import data from almost any type of database and add it to your labels. A large number of users already use NiceLabel to read important data from Access, Oracle, MS SQL Server, DB2 and other databases. Advanced users can write their own SQL statements and use them to perform customized queries and actions from their databases.

Sometimes, the data on HOST computers cannot be accessed directly; however, almost every operating system available offers options for exporting data to an ASCII text file. NiceLabel software can easily use this format. Moreover, the Database Manager, included in NiceLabel Suite, can convert such text files to a true database, create an index on selected fields and enable NiceLabel to make advanced queries to this data.

### Automated printing

Label printing will often require at least two applications: the company's information system and a labeling program to interact. The question frequently arises: is it possible to join both programs so that the user can work with only one application and yet output labels and take advantage of the power of a labeling software, such as NiceLabel? The answer is: YES. In general, the process of automating label printing can be divided into two groups, depending on the information system used and the architecture of the application:

- Print Engine
- Centralized Print Server

### Print Engine

Windows operating systems offers different ways of communication between applications. NiceLabel takes advantage of all Windows features, including ActiveX Automation and

Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE) and other mechanisms that allow other applications to take full control of NiceLabel. A user will always work with the application that was intended to be the user-interface. In this case NiceLabel will only be used first for label template design then, NiceLabel will act as a print engine that will print any type of label on any type of printer. The end user is practically unaware of the labeling application running beneath the host application.

### Centralized Print Server

In many organizations, information systems such as ERP, WMS, etc. often run on HOST or other computers. These systems may or may not use the Windows operating system or are designed in a fashion that computing on the system is distributed. NiceLabel Suite offers a centralized print server application to automate label production on such systems where the *print engine* approach is not appropriate.

Today, IT environments spread very quickly. Large enterprises may have their facilities located all over the world; and the easiest way to send information from one part of the world to the other is using Internet technologies such as TCP/IP and e-mail.

NiceWatch -as part of NiceLabel Suite- can monitor a directory or folder for a certain file that has been created or changed which will automatically start label production. NiceWatch can trigger a print job from any device that can "drop" a file to a directory or folder, any device that can send a data stream to a TCP/IP port on the NiceWatch server (mobile wireless data collection terminals), devices that can be connected to a COM port (bar code scanners, weight scales), or through an email that contains label data in the body of the message. Using a plain text email eliminates firewall concerns that are included with other web-based solutions.

The ability of any application or device that is IP enabled allows it to connect to the NiceWatch TCP/IP socket server for a synchronous connection between the application or device and NiceWatch. Whether the data is coming from across the globe or within the wireless Local Area Network, NiceWatch can be triggered to print.

NiceWatch can also print labels with the variable data parsed and mapped from the trigger input data.

The bottom line is, NiceWatch provides a true real-time, on-demand, automated label printing system for any IT environment.

### Use the network

Thanks to its internal architecture that is compliant with the Windows environment and to its true Windows drivers --which support all major thermal transfer printer manufacturers and models-- NiceLabel is the right choice for label production within a network environment. If you have the need to print labels to printers in different locations, yet with a central point of data collection, you can use Window's capability to connect a

printer to an arbitrary workstation and share this printer on the network for use from the central computer. Only a few labeling solutions on the market allow printer sharing and printing over the network, and NiceLabel is the leading program among them. Should it be required, labeling administrators can always protect the access to label printing applications, defining their own user lists with different user rights. And to enable creation of label printing process reports, a customizable print logging facility is available as well.

### **Support for Stand-Alone Printing and Other System Platforms (Windows CE, Linux)**

In addition to the existing integration possibilities, NiceLabel can also be used as a label design tool for many stand-alone printing solutions, which do not require an active PC computer present at print time. The label templates must be designed and prepared in advance. When they are transferred to the devices with stand-alone capability, the complete label printing process runs autonomously.

Expanding Windows support to the limits, Pocket NiceLabel will enable mobile label printing from any Pocket PC (Windows CE) computer. Users can design their own data-entry applications and label templates.

With NiceLabel for Linux label printing is expanded to non-Windows platforms.

Combination of data-entry forms and data-detection module (supporting file, serial port and TCP/IP port monitoring) presents a complete Linux-based printing solution.

### **Direct support for SAP R/3**

NiceLabel has a direct support for printing labels from SAP R/3 creating label templates specific to the desired printer to be printed to and preparing the output to be used with SAP Script. During label design, a user can select which SAP variables will be used for a certain variable field on the label. The ITF file, which is the format that is created, is then uploaded to the SAP R/3 system, which will use it together with the data from the SAP R/3 application to print labels directly to a thermal printer.

For every system integrator who has ever worked with the SAP R/3 system and wanted to print labels on a thermal printer, you will be glad to hear that there exists a solution for the problem, which has up till now seemed too hard to solve.

More information for SAP can be found in the separate white paper titled **Printing labels to thermal printers from SAP R/3 using NiceLabel**.

### **More information**

See the additional White Papers available on NiceLabel website <http://www.nicelabel.com>

- Pocket NiceLabel for Windows CE and Pocket PC
- Programmer's Guide to Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE) and ActiveX Interface
- NiceLabel for Linux
- Printing labels to thermal printers from SAP R/3 using NiceLabel

**For additional info on NiceLabel novelties contact Euro Plus sales team or visit NiceLabel web page at <http://www.nicelabel.com>.**