



Barcode Labels Feature Focus Series

POSITIVE FOR WINDOWS



Inventory Label Printing	3
PFW System Requirement for Scanners	3
A Note About Barcode Symbologies	4
An Occasional Misunderstanding	4
Label Editing	5
Re-sizing and Moving Fields	6
Deleting a Field	6
Label Layout Set-up	6
Printer Selection Tab	7
Page Setup Tab	8
Common variations	9
Adding fields to the label1	0
Formatting Text Fields1	1
Formatting Barcode Fields1	2
Adding Fields – Some Other Options 1	2
Testing Your Label 1	3
Saving Your Work 1	3
Assigning Inventory to a label 1	4
Assigning one item at a time – 1	4
Assigning to an entire category1	5
The Label List 1	5
Opening the Label List1	6
Adding Items to the Label List 1	6
Changing Label Designs at the Label List1	6
Printing the labels	6
A Neat Idea 1	6

Inventory Label Printing

This tutorial should give you all the essential information you need to successfully print barcode labels in POSitive For Windows (PFW).

In PFW the SKU field is what will be printed as a barcode if you print a label from the software. It is a common misconception that a barcode contains lots of information about the product it represents. For example we are asked all the time if the merchant wants to add a can of Pepsi into inventory can he just scan the barcode to create the inventory definition. Unfortunately it's not that easy. The barcode does not contain detailed product information.

WHAT is a Barcode?

It's simply a number – or alpha characters or a combination of alphanumeric characters represented by the familiar bars of various widths found on many products. When you scan



the barcode the scanner converts the barcode into its characters and sends the converted information to the keyboard port. Scanning a bar code is the SAME as typing the number with the keyboard. Try this experiment if you have a barcode scanner connected to your POS system:

Open Notepad or Word, or other word processor. With that program active, scan a barcode and watch the screen literally type the barcode one character at a time. Once the characters are entered the cursor will move to a new line – that is a Carriage Return that takes it to the new line. The scanner is programmed to add the carriage return at the end of the scanned characters.

Your scanner comes with a book of codes. You MUST NOT lose this book! You will rarely need it. But when you do there is no substitute. The book is full of programming barcodes. If your scanner is adding additional characters or is NOT sending the carriage return the scanner can be reprogrammed using the codes in the book. These codes can also be used to reset the scanner to factory defaults, which generally works well with PFW.

PFW System Requirement for Scanners

The PFW system requirement for scanners is any KEYBOARD WEDGE or USB style scanner. You'll need to specify a DECODED or UNDECODED model and the choice will depend on how it connects to the computer. Check with your dealer or contact

POSitive if you are unsure of what to buy. We do not support SERIAL scanners – they simply will NOT work with PFW.

A Note About Barcode Symbologies

Symbology is a fancy word for "symbol type". More specifically the Symbology represents not only the type but also the rules that must be followed in printing the barcode.

There are three barcode symbologies that allow both numbers and letters (Alpha-Numeric) SKU's. Since PFW allows Alpha-Numeric SKU's we have found that most merchants choose to use them. If you choose to use an Alpha-Numeric SKU you must limit your Barcode type to either:

- Code 128
- Code 3of9 (aka code 39)
- 2.5 Datalogic

Each of the above symbologies has rules to follow. There are illegal characters that will cause your label not to print – or to print without the barcode. Generally don't use the shifted number keys (!@#%%%) punctuation keys ($\{ []|\;;''<>,.?/~`$). It's OK to use a DASH (-). But avoid using the slashes ($\backslash/$). If you find you have an illegal character, simply edit it in your Inventory List.

There are perhaps some other more obscure rules but these cover the typical problems that most people have with barcode symbologies.

An Occasional Misunderstanding

We have sometimes seen a merchant design a new label for each inventory item, "hard-coding" the SKU and description directly into the label. The flaw in this is that you only have 100 labels that you can design. If you make a label for each item then you can only have 100 inventory items.

Instead, you should generally make just ONE label. You use FIELDS like "DESCRIPTION" and "SKU" in the layout. Then you assign the label layout to the inventory item. When you print a label PFW will substitute the FIELD NAME with



<30F9_SKU_With_Text>	
Item_Description	
"Retail:" FStr\$(Price_1,"╡ Tracking_Number "Your Price:" \$\$\$\$\$8	.##")

the corresponding data in the inventory item's definition.

Label Editing.

You can access the label editor several ways but the easiest for now is to go to the FILE MENU: EDITORS: INVENTORY LABELS EDITOR. Select a label and edit it.

TIP: By default all inventory items will be assigned to label design #1. If you design your label for label #1 then it won't be necessary later to re-assign your inventory items to your new design.

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The label editor is flexible enough to accommodate any label size you would care to use. The only real limit you should be aware of is that the smallest label size you should plan to use is at least 1.75 inches long. Alpha Numeric SKU's print larger barcodes than numeric SKU's and a smaller label will "scrunch" the bars too closely together and thus be unreadable if you choose a shorter label.

This is the label layout of a typical barcode label. The boxes are DATA FIELDS that will be filled in by the inventory item when the label prints.



Re-sizing and Moving Fields

You can re-arrange the fields, you can re-size them, and you can change the font style and size. You can add new fields and remove unwanted fields. Notice the <30f9_SKU...> field is highlighted. The hashed line (1) is the "highlighted field" indicator. You can resize the field by grabbing the black dots (2) at the edges. Top and bottom dots allow you to re-size up and down. Those on the left and right edges allow left to right re-sizing. Finally the corners allow you to enlarge or reduce the size both up and down and left to right. Hover your mouse over the dots and when the cursor changes from an "open arrow pointer" to an icon like these (3), you can resize the field. Hover just over the hashed line and the



cursor changes to a four-point arrow (4) and when that happens you can move the field.

Deleting a Field

Delete a field by highlighting it and pressing the delete key on your keyboard.

Label Layout Set-up

Access the Layout screen by Choosing PROJECT MENU: PAGE LAYOUT. Review the printer setting tab and click the CHOICE button. Be sure the correct printer driver and PAPER SIZE is selected. Barcode Printers like the Eltron printers recommended by POSitive will have a variety of label sizes to select in the paper size setting. Inkjets and laser printers will generally want the 8 ¹/_x 11 letter size selected.

Printer Selection Tab

You need to use a Windows Printer to print barcode labels. You'll need to install the correct driver for your printer. See your printer's user guide for details.

PFW supports laser printers, inkjets and dedicated barcode printers. Basically any of them should work. We are most familiar with the Zebra (Formerly Eltron) line of barcode printers.

Inkjets are colorful but it will be expensive to print labels on an inkjet. The most economical are the dedicated Zebras. The label stock costs much less than sheet labels. Since the Zebra printers are thermal printers there are no ink cartridges or toners to buy.



Page Setup Tab

	Horizontal (x):	Vertical (y):
'age:	8.500 in	11.000 in
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ize:	2.618 in	1.000 in
)istance:	0.051 in	0.047 in
lumber:	3	10
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The Page Setup Tab makes it EASY to custom define any label you wish. Grab a ruler and a calculator and lets break this down to its simple form.

First, it's critical that you set up the printer as described in the previous section. Do it now if you haven't already.

Next, look closely at the icons. They describe the measurements the program is asking for.

Offset:

The OFFSET fields want to know:

Y: how far it is from top edge of paper to top edge of first label.

X: how far it is from left edge of paper to left edge of first label.

TIP: Take your ruler and measure the distance from the top of the label sheet to the top of the first label. ¹/anch (1 divided by 2) would be expressed as .500. 5/8 (5 divided by 8) would be .625. (PFW 2.2 beta 12 and later will accept 3 decimal points – earlier versions require you to round off.) The main thing to remember is

you are converting the ruler measurement to a decimal number. Generally, if you are converting a fraction you divide the top number by the bottom number.

Size: The SIZE fields want to know:

Y: how tall is the label?

X: how wide is the label?

Distance:

The DISTANCE fields want to know the distance between labels.

Finally the NUMBER fields want to know how many labels across the page by how many labels down the page.

Once you have these settings entered click the OK button to save and close the window.

Common variations

If you are creating labels on an inkjet or laser printer the most common labels are 3 across by 10 down - 30 labels to a sheet of labels. So in this case the NUMBER fields would be X=3, Y=10

If you are setting up labels on an Eltron Label printer use these settings:

	Х	Y
Offset	0	0
Size	(Measure Width)	(Measure Height)
Distance	0	0
Number	1	1

Here's a fraction to decimal conversion chart for your convenience

1/4	0.25	1/8	0.125	1/16	.063
3/4	0.75	3/8	0.375	3/16	.188
		5/8	0.625	5/16	.313
		7/8	0.875	7/16	.438
				9/16	.563
				11/16	.688
				13/16	.813
				15/16	.938

Adding fields to the label

In brief review you should now understand how to move fields around in the label layout, how to define your Page Setup including printer setting, paper size, and label page setup. If not, review the previous sections.

In the Label Editor you can add fields to a layout in a couple of ways. The main way to add a database field from PFW is to go to the VIEW MENU: WINDOWS: POPUP VARIABLES: Click on the VARIABLES folder.

Here you have all the data fields available to put into a label. To add a field into the layout just DRAG and DROP it into the layout. Then resize it and move it where you want it.



Formatting Text Fields

You can control the text size, justification, font, and more. To edit the text just double click the field. The following screen appears giving you incredible formatting control from one screen.

ext Properties				×
Paragraphs:		🖱 😭 🕽	< 🐰 🖻 🛍	+ +
Item_Description				
Font Style	Add a li	ne		
	Text Color]	Font Size	
Paragraph Properties	bject Properties			
Times New Roman	22:		Western	_
✓ Blank Optimization ✓ Permanent	Ĭ	Paragraph spa	cing: 0	pt
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2	,		ок 🖌	Cancel

Formatting Barcode Fields

Simply double click on the barcode field to edit the details. Remember that Alpha Numeric SKU's will require 3OF9 (Code 3 of 9), CODE128, or 2.5DATALOGIC symbologies.

Barcode-Properti	es 🔰 🚺	K
Data Source — O <u>I</u> ext O <u>F</u> ormula I v <u>a</u> riable	Font Settings ✓ Text: UPCA_SKU_Without_Text ✓ ✓ UPCA_Serial_Number_With_Text ✓ ✓ UPCA_Serial_Number_With_Text ✓ ✓ UPCA_Serial_Number_With_Text ✓ ✓ UPCA_Tracking_Number_With_Text ✓ ✓ UPCA_Weight_With_Text Barcode Symbology UPCE_SKU_Without_Text Selection ✓ UPCE_Serial_Number_With_Text Barcode Symbology UPCE_Serial_Number_With_Text Display ✓ UPCE_Serial_Number_With_Text UPCE_Tracking_Number_Without_Text Orientation UPCE_Weight_With_Text ✓ ✓ UPCE_Weight_With_Text ✓ ✓	
Format(s): Allowed charact	any rrs: [A-Z], [0-9], [/\$%+*] mbology Rules	

Adding Fields – Some Other Options

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The Tool Bar gives you other options for adding Text, Lines, Squares, Circles, Pictures, and Barcodes. Just click the icon in the Tool Bar and draw a square in the design layout. Double click the field and edit as necessary.

Add some "hard coded" text (That is to say text that is NOT a data field which will be replaced by data from the software) by clicking the Aa icon and drawing a box in the layout. The box will be empty. Now Double click the box. A BLANK text Properties screen appears. Double Click the "---"Add a line icon.

Click the TEXT tab. The next screen shows the process. Edit the text size and move the text field into place.

Ideas for this hard-coded text field include... Store name and City/State, a Slogan, The word "PRICE:" just before a field that fills in the price. "Our Price", "Your Price"

ype Text Here then click the Insert Button	. The text fills interthe bot	tom area - then click the OK	Button
I Linefeed I ab		3	
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Testing Your Label

FILE MENU: PRINT SAMPLE -

- "Without frames" for roll label printers (Eltron).
- If you are printing on a laser or Inkjet printer choose "with frames" to show a reference frame on plain paper. Hold the test page over a label sheet to see that the data lines up correctly on the labels.

Saving Your Work

When you exit the label layout program be sure to save your work. Of course you can always go to the file menu and choose SAVE every 5 or 10 minutes.

Assigning Inventory to a label

Now that the label is defined you can assign the label design to any or all of your inventory items.

Assigning one item at a time -

In PFW, edit an inventory item. Choose the OPTIONS [F7] Tab. The following screen gives you a "Label Form" field. Type it in or choose it from a list.

🚈 Inventory Detail		×
Change Dept/Catg [F3]	🔁 Vendors (F5)	Send Item To Order List
Department: POSitive Sol	ftware Category: WINDOWS S	OFTWARE Tax Category: Merchandise
Description: 9 PI	N CABLE	Primary SKU: SDPE8745 [F4] SKU
 ☐ Ask For ☐ Ask For ☑ Ask For ☑ Allow D ☑ Add To ☐ Prompt ☑ Calculat 	Price Quantity iscounts Label List When Received To Read Scale te Quantity From Price	Sell By: EACH Purchase By: EACH Default Sell Quantity: 1.00 Commission %: 0.00 Fixed Commission: 0.00 Warranty Code: Label Form: 1
8		✔ OK (F10 🕺 Cancel

Assigning to an entire category

In PFW, choose UTILITIES: CATEGORIES - Highlight a category and click the DEFAULTS button.

7	Default Values For Category: COMDEX	SPECIALS
. (General [F8] AutoSKU Setup [F9]	
))))))	 Track Stock Quantities Track Serial Numbers Allow Discounts Ask For Quantity When Selling Ask For Price When Selling Post To Internet Prompt To Read Scale Calculate Quantity From Price Add Vendor When Adding Inventory Vendor ID: [F2] Warranty Code: [F3] 	Stock By: EACH Order By: EACH Stock/Order: 1.00 Commission%: 25.00 Default Sell Quantity: 1.00 Add To Label List When Received Label ID: 1 [F4]
	Reset Inventory	🗸 OK [F10] 🕺 Cancel

Edit the Label ID number and choose whether to add this item to the list of labels to be printed when the item is received on a PO.

Finally you can re-assign all products in this category to the new label style by clicking the RESET INVENTORY button in the lower left corner.

Inventory Labels

Repeat for each category to re-assign.

The Label List

Now that your labels are defined and your inventory has been assigned to a label design you can add your inventory items to a list to be printed. There are several ways to access the label list and to add items to the list:

SKU		Qnty	Туре
JUNI	BARIO IN WONDERLAND		Standard
Serial Number	🔺 📐 Iag/Untag	🍊 Add	🛛 ấ E dit 🛛 <u>S</u> Delete
	Tag <u>All</u> → UntagAll	D Veri	e-Assign Label Type
🕻 Add	Delete Print	Promo F	view Labels Pricing Price Level: 1 🚍
🐉 Import Promos	🎁 Import Items 🛛 🔁 Item Propert	ties 🐆 Purg	ge List 🛛 デ Edit Labels

X

Opening the Label List

- Inventory: Label List
- Manager Console Purchasing: 6 Print Labels
- Help Inventory Tool Bar Click the Labels Icon

Adding Items to the Label List

- From the Inventory list right click an item and choose "Send to label list" from the pop-up menu
- With the Inventory tool bar exposed (Help Menu) drag items from the inventory list and drop on the Labels Icon
- From the opened label list, click the add button

Changing Label Designs at the Label List

Perhaps you have just designed your label and have not had time to re-assign your inventory. No problem! From the label list simply RE-ASSIGN the items to a different label. The change is not permanent but the process can be repeated over and over as often as you like.

- Tag the item(s) to re-assign
- Click the "Re-Assign Label Type" button
- Choose the label
- Click "Select" button

Printing the labels

Simply tag the items you want to print and click the Print Labels button. Confirm the label design to be printed.

A Neat Idea

Now that you have printed inventory labels, how about printing Talk Cards to display on your products. Here's an example

Set up to print on a Laser or Inkjet printer $-8\frac{1}{2}$ 11. Here's the setup

	Horizontal X	Vertical Y
Page	8.5	11.0
Offset	.500	.500
Size	3.188	4.438
Distance	1.0	1.0
Number	2	2

Category

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This example shows the Category field, an enlarged Item Description (LINE BREAK option is ON which will word wrap

the description). The Item Notes field, and PRICE_1 and PRICE_2 fields are also used in this label. (Your Price is Price 2 – Retail is Price 1

A graphic was placed in the background. The barcode was placed on top of a white box to prevent the background from interfering with a scan of the barcode.

This label can be edited over and over again by simply replacing the background graphic, say with a Winter Holiday background or Flag Theme or Fireworks or a Pumpkin, or a Holiday Turkey. Now you have a THEME tag to use throughout the store to "talk" to your customers about your product. The resulting Tag is 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$

The finished Talk Card on the right demonstrates the complete power you have to go far beyond basic labeling techniques.

Now, you know as much as we do about printing labels in POSitive! Good Luck and have fun labeling your inventory!

