

Vprt: a euphoria based virtual printer port

version 2.3

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Purpose:

Vprt2.exe provides a command line configured raw TCP print device for directing print jobs into files. It can run in batch termination mode or remain active to service additional print jobs. You can have multiple vprt instances actively listening for connections by specifying a different tcp port for each data channel. By default VPRT serializes filenames into the form

[path and prefix][sequence number]_[month][day][extension]

the sequence number is 4 digits with leading zero's.

command line parameters

VPRT2.EXE *[Path and prefix] [extension] [TCP PORT] [OPTIONS] [optional post command]*

Path and prefix "C:\spooled\report" : the filename will start with "report" under spooled

"\\MYSERVER\myshare\$\report" : the UNC format for a windows share

Extension : ".txt" or whatever you want. The files are always written in Binary mode.

TCP PORT : Any available to bind to. 9100 is typical for HPJet direct. The Lantronix MSS100

serial device server uses 3001

OPTIONS: Stacked together in a delimited string.

(run mode) END : on closing report VPRT exits with return code 0
NOEND : waits for next connection. increments sequence number for next report

(File mode) APPEND : (explicit). append new info at end of file if rollon is not specified

OVERWRITE: (implicit) replace the file if rollon is not specified

(Serialization) ROLLON: if file ####_mmdd exists already, roll to the next available #

STATIC: don't add serialization between the prefix and extension

REUSE : (Implicit) if file #1 exists it will be overwritten or appended.

(DISPLAY) SILENT: no standard output will be sent, thus no console window POPUP.

(Events) POST: notifies VPRT that the following command line string contains a command to execute after a

report file has been written. VPRT will wait for this command to complete.

PRIOR: notifies VPRT that the following command line string contains a command to execute before a

report file has been written. VPRT will not wait for this command to complete.

Optional post print command String;

- Enclose the command string in double quotes.
- Use '!' to denote the file that was just created by VPRT as an argument to a command.
- The command to execute can be an executable or batch file, but not a builtin DOS command like "echo".
- VPRT will wait for the command to complete before it processes the next connection.

- Redirection via pipes is not supported in the command string. Do this in a batch file instead.
You can have spaces between the command line arguments but not spaces within those arguments (such as for a file path).
- The filename substitution character ! also cannot resolve to a folder path with spaces.
- Even with double quoting you cannot execute with spaces in filenames. Place all this in a batch file instead.
- If the silent option is specified then console output will be suppressed after the command completes.

examples:

`vpert2 "c:\spool\r" ".txt" "9105" "END-APPEND-SILENT"`
creates `r0001_mmdd.txt` or adds to it if the file was already present. Terminates when the report is done.

`VPRT2 "C:\SPOOL\" ".PRN" "9106" "noend & ROLLON"`
creates `0001_mmdd.prn` unless it already exists, in which case it tries `0002`, `0003`, etc... then wait for the next report

`VPRT2 C:\SPOOL\MYFILE .TXT 9107 end-APPEND-static-SILENT`
create `myfile.txt` or keep adding to it. terminate when the report is done.

`VPRT2 "C:\spool\m" ".txt" "9100" "noend-rollon-post" "findstr fred !"`
creates file `m0001_mmdd.txt` or the next iteration, then looks for occurrence of the word 'fred' in that.

`VPRT2 \\Myserver\myprinter\ .txt 9100 noend`
routes any print jobs, such as from an AIX queue to the designated Windows printer queue. These will be titled "Remote downlevel document" and owned by the user running the VPRT process. a cheap form of LPR.

employment:

VPRT works generally with anything that supports a raw TCP device. You can't use it with anything that attempts bidirectional communication. It doesn't work with HP Universal print driver, for example, but handles well with postscript drivers, AIX queues. For Mckesson Star 2000 I've used it to capture console log print, detailed bills, & audit service messages.

You can make VPRT the receiver for a Shared printer queue, you can also point the output back to a UNC path of a print queue.
You can start it from a batch or a scheduled task. In reality VPRT is just a very generic TCP capture utility. You could use it to set traps, receive messages, activate triggers, and so on.

to use with a DOS application you must first create a printer device using local/standard TCP port monitor
with custom settings for the TCP/IP port # and disabling SMTP options , then create a share name for the print device,
assign permissions , and then map the printer with the "net use" command i.e
`"net use LPT1: \\computername\myvpert"`

caveats:

VPRT does not provide a timeout for listening connections. it will wait indefinitely.
To cancel VPRT hit `ctrl+c` at the console window. If you specified silent mode in the options string then you must kill it from task manager in the processes tab as there is no windowed application, or use the `taskkill` command.

Only one VPRT process can actively use a given TCP port.

VPRT does not give SMTP responses an actual printer would , such as "Low toner" or "out of paper". It is always either on or off/busy.

What type of driver should you use? VPRT doesn't care. It depends on what you need to do with the data.
Generic/text would likely be called for. You can also print text and graphics with a postscript driver
then use ghostscript's ps2pdf function to convert the postscript file to a PDF document.