NetCenter

User Manual

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datamax-o'neil

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Conditions

Thank you for choosing this product for your printer monitoring and configuration needs.

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1. Introduction

Datamax-O'Neil NetCenter is the perfect tool for finding, managing and supervising Datamax-O'Neil printers connected to the same local area network (LAN). All printers are automatically detected and displayed in a list in the intuitive graphical user interface. The list shows network settings, firmware version, serial number and current status for each printer. This makes it easy to see which printers are online and ready, when paper or ribbon needs to be changed, to configure printer network settings and manage firmware upgrades. From the list of printers NetCenter also provides easy access to each printer by the use of the most common network protocols.

NetCenter is intended for network administrators who manage Datamax-O'Neil printers on a LAN.

2. Installation

This section describes how to install and set up Datamax-O'Neil NetCenter once the minimum requirements have been complied.

2.1 Minimum Requirements

To be able to use NetCenter the following computer configuration is needed (mainly dependent on the requirements for the Microsoft .NET Framework).

Processor	Intel Pentium class, 90 MHz or higher.
Operating System	Microsoft Windows XP/2000/NT4/ME/98 (Note: Windows NT 4.0 Terminal Server is not supported).
RAM Memory	32 MB (96MB or more recommended).
Hard Disk	5 MB of free space.
Additional Software	Microsoft .NET Framework version 1.0 or later.
Target Environment	Datamax-O'Neil Nova and Compact printers using processor board with CPU-5 or later and printer firmware version 5.1.0 or later.

The recommended way to download the Microsoft .NET Framework is by using *Windows Update* located at http://www.windowsupdate.com.

Visit http://www.microsoft.com/net/basics/framework.asp for more information about the .NET Framework.

2.2 Installation Process

The distribution of NetCenter consists of a single executable file. Simply run it and follow the instructions shown by the setup wizard. By default, the software is installed on the same drive as the operating system with its program files located in the *Program Files/Imaje/NetCenter* directory. A different path can be specified if required.

3. Getting Started

This section explains the Datamax-O'Neil NetCenter user interface.

3.1 Graphical User Interface

The graphical user interface of NetCenter consists of a window displaying all MP-Class Datamax-O'Neil printers in a list and a toolbar containing the available operations for each printer in that list. The available operations can also be accessed through the NetCenter program menu. At the bottom of the NetCenter window there is a status field, which shows how many printers that are connected, total number of printers and the number of printers currently non-operational (e.g. out of paper). See figure 1 for an overview of the graphical user interface.

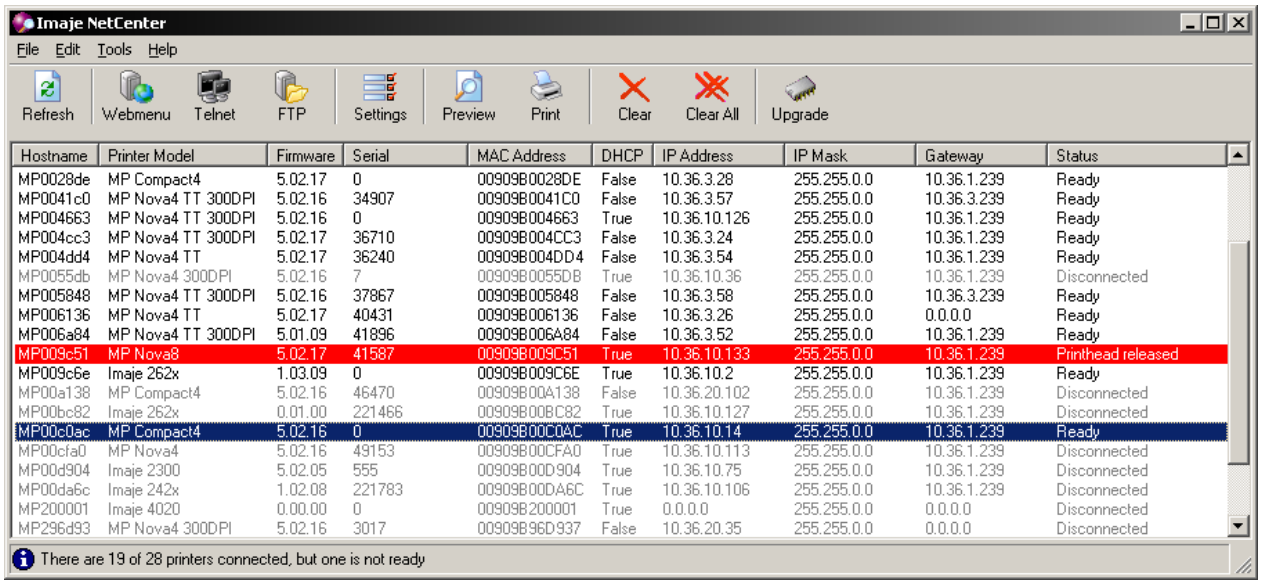


Figure 1. Screenshot of NetCenter.

From this view it is easy to select a printer and perform any of the available operations, as described in section 4 - *Operation.*

3.1.1 First Start

The first time NetCenter is started the list of printers is empty and a broadcast requesting printer information is sent to the network. All Datamax-O'Neil printers supporting NetCenter will then answer this broadcast and their network properties are stored in the list. It should only take a few seconds for the list to be populated.

Note : Compact and Nova models using Printcore version 5.1.7 or older requires a valid IP address to be set before NetCenter can find it.

3.1.2 Column Customization

The size and order of the columns can be customized to fit your needs. To change the size of a column, simply click and drag the separator line between the column headers to a suitable position and release the mouse button. The order of the columns can be changed in the same way, simply click on a column header and drag it to a suitable position and release the mouse button.

3.1.3 List Sorting

NetCenter adds new entries at the bottom of the displayed printer list and thus the list is originally sorted by how fast each printer responds. The sorting order can, however, be changed by clicking on the column headers at the top of the list. The column is sorted either by number or alphabetically, depending on column content. The sorting order of the column changes for each click on the column header, e.g. from ascending to descending and vice versa. A small arrow is displayed in the column header to indicate the current sorting order.

3.2 File Storage

The list of printers found is stored in a file called *printerlist* when NetCenter exits. The *printerlist* file follows the XML v1.0 standard, which makes it easy to import and use it in any third-party software for displaying the list of Datamax-O'Neil printers found in your network.

The next time NetCenter starts, the displayed list of printers will be read from the *printerlist* file to be able to determine if a printer is disconnected, that is, exists in the file but is currently not responding. New printers added to the LAN will automatically be detected and added to the displayed list, then stored among the rest of the printers in the *printerlist* file when NetCenter exits.

The *printerlist* file is located in *Isolated Storage* in order to comply with the new Microsoft guideline. This will also automatically grant proper access rights to the file and make future NetCenter upgrades very convenient. The path to the *printerlist* file depends on the operating system used.

See the Microsoft website http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/en-us/cpguide/html/cpconintroductiontoisolatedstorage.asp for more information on *Isolated Storage*.

3. Getting Started

3.3 Printer Information

For each printer in the displayed list, the following information is available:

- Host name
- Printer model
- Firmware version
- Serial number
- MAC address
- DHCP setting
- IP Address
- IP Mask
- Gateway
- Status

3.4 Printer Status

The list of printers changes its appearance depending on the current status of each printer. This makes it easy to find a printer not operating or disconnected. The following list displays all possible status states that might occur.

Ready	Printer connected and operational
Printer restarted	Printer restarted, will change status at next broadcast. See *options* for more details about broadcast settings.
Disconnected	Printer disconnected. The printer has stopped answering to broadcast calls.
Upgrading…	Printer firmware is being upgraded. See *operations* for more information about printer firmware upgrading.
Error states	All other states are regarded as error states (by NetCenter). Refer to the *Labelpoint* manual for more information about the system status that can occur for each printer model.

During normal operation, when a printer is connected and ready or restarted, the list entry is displayed in default text colour on a default window background colour (e.g. black text on white background when using Windows default settings). Printer offline is displayed in inactive text colour on a default window background.

3. Getting Started

Note that NetCenter uses system default colour settings, which may vary depending on the current colour theme used on your computer. Since there is no ‘alarm’ colour or such defined among Windows default colours, the only exception from using Windows default colours is the printer error states, which always are displayed as white text on a red background.

4. Operation

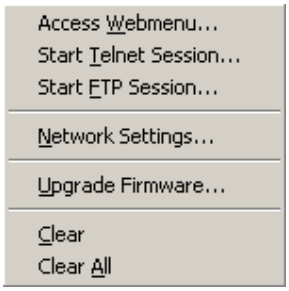
This section explains all operations that can be made on a selected printer in the list. The available operations can be accessed in three different ways, as shown below.

Note : Some of the operations might be disabled, the available operations depend on the status of the selected printer or printers.

1) By using *Edit* and *Tools* from the program menu

2) by pressing the toolbar icons

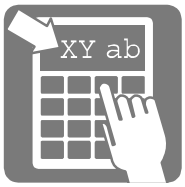
3) or by selecting from the context menu, which appears when right-clicking in the list.



The following sections will describe in detail how each of the available operations work.

4.1 Webmenu

Opens your system's default web browser and automatically connects to the selected printer's web server. The webmenu will automatically be displayed in your web browser when the connection has been made to the printer. Refer to the *Labelpoint* manual for more information about how to use the webmenu.



4. Operation

4.2 Telnet

Opens the standard Windows Telnet client and connects to the selected printer on its Telnet port (port 23). From here it is possible to send *Labelpoint* commands.

If the selected printer already is using another port to receive *Labelpoint* commands then the printer will not listen on the Telnet port for *Labelpoint* commands until the *Labelpoint* command "*!C*" is sent to the already active port. Refer to the *Labelpoint* manual for more information about port handling and *Labelpoint* commands.

4.3 FTP

This will open your system's default FTP client and automatically connect to the selected printer's FTP server. Refer to the *Labelpoint* manual for more information about file management.

Note : The embedded FTP server in the printers does not support *passive* mode. Be sure to use *active* mode when accessing the FTP server.

4. Operation

4.4 Network Settings

Opens a dialog window containing all network related printer settings. A screenshot of the dialog window is shown in figure 2.

Tip : The network settings can easily be accessed by double clicking in the printer list.

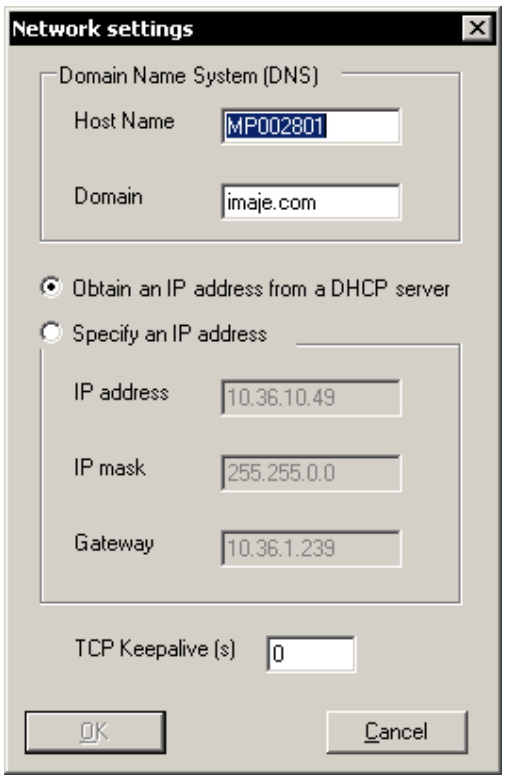


Figure 2. Network settings dialog

From the dialog window it is easy to change the current settings for host name, domain, TCP keepalive, DHCP and IP settings. When finished, press the 'OK' button. The changes will then be sent to the printer and a message box will appear asking if you want to restart the printer.

Note : The new settings will not be applied until the printer is restarted.

4.5 Options

NetCenter options can only be accessed through the program menu and will open a small dialog window as shown in figure 3.

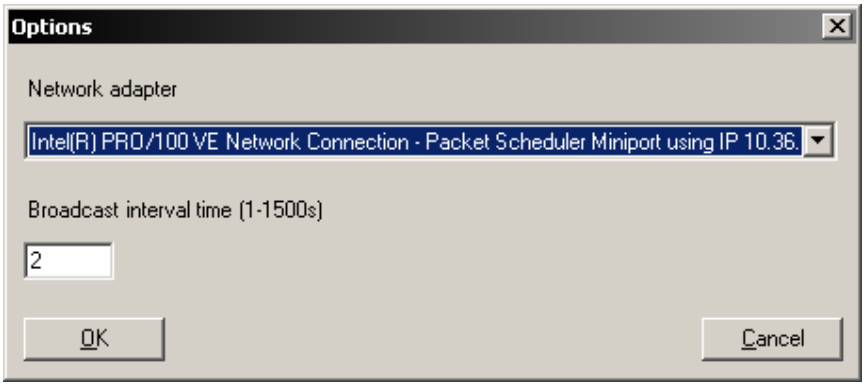


Figure 3. Options dialog

There are two available options; network adapter and broadcast interval time.

4.5.1 Network Adapter

If a computer is equipped with more than one network adapter this option makes it possible to select the preferred one from a list of available adapters. The adapters are found automatically and displayed in the list along with its IP address to make it easier to know what adapter to choose. Note that a restart of NetCenter is required if the network adapter is changed.

4.5.2 Broadcast Interval Time

The broadcast interval time decides how often a broadcast is made from the NetCenter PC to the LAN to check for Datamax-O'Neil printers. If many printers are connected to the same LAN a low value might create unnecessary network traffic. As a hint to determine a good value it can be mentioned that both the broadcast and response packets fit inside a single Ethernet frame, so the traffic load generated is actually quite small and increases linearly with the number of printers on the LAN. The default interval time is two seconds.

Note : The list of printers can always be updated manually by pressing the *Refresh* button located on the toolbar. This is especially useful when a high interval value is used.

4.6 Clear

Removes the selected printer(s) from the list.

4.7 Clear All

Removes all printers from the list, no selection can be made.

4.8 Upgrade

Opens a dialog window where a printer firmware configuration file can be selected, see figure 4. To be able to upgrade any printer(s) two requirements must be fulfilled. First, a NetCenter firmware bundle is needed, which can be downloaded from the Datamax-O'Neil website at www.datamax-oneil.com. Second, all printers selected must be connected and have a valid IP address.

Note : The option to upgrade printer firmware is supported by Compact and Nova printers using Printcore 5.1.19 or later.

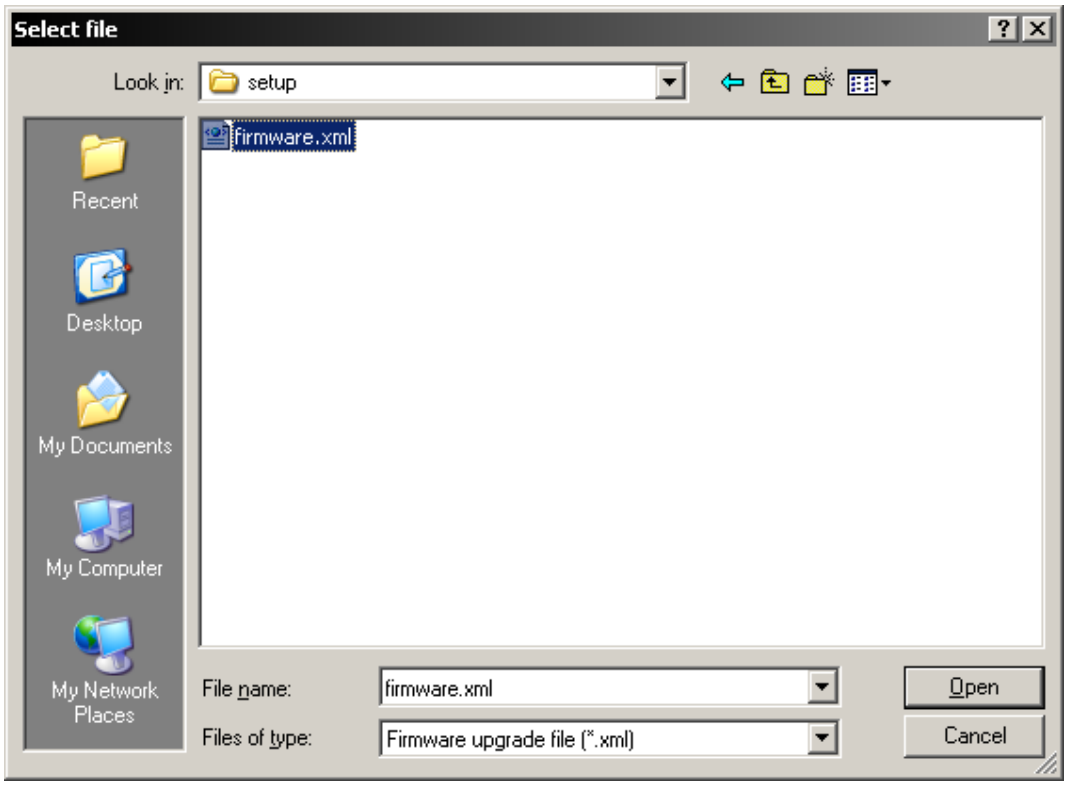
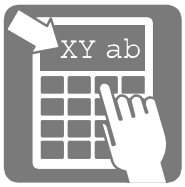


Figure 4. Firmware file dialog

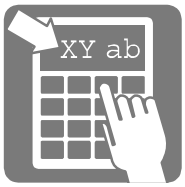


4. Operation

The default file to select in the file dialog is *firmware.xml*. When opened, NetCenter automatically selects the matching binary file(s) from the fimware bundle for the printer(s) selected. It is thus possible to select any combination of printers and upgrade them simultaneously as long as the printer firmware exists in the firmware bundle. Before starting the actual upgrade NetCenter will prompt the user to inform that an upgrade is about to take place.

During upgrade it is very important not to turn off the power to the printer(s) since an interrupted upgrade might corrupt the printer firmware.

After an upgrade all selected printers are automatically restarted.



5. Program Menu

This section explains all available options in the NetCenter program menu.

5.1 File

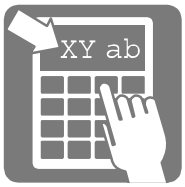
The *File* menu contains options for printing the list of printers currently found. The information on the printout is the same as described in section 3.2 - *Printer Information* except for printer status, which is not shown.

Print	Opens a print dialog
Print Preview	Opens a print preview dialog.
Page Setup	Opens a page setup dialog. Note that page orientation is set to landscape to be able to fit all printer information.
Exit	Exits NetCenter

5.2 Edit

The *Edit* menu contains options for changing the settings of a selected printer and for removing items from the list.

Network Settings	Opens a new dialog containing the selected printer's network settings. See section 4.4 – *Network Settings* for more information.
Clear	Removes selected printer from list
Clear All	Removes all printers from the list



5. Program Menu

5.3 Tools

From this menu all operations are accessed.

Access Webmenu	See section 4.1 - *Webmenu* for more information.
Start Telnet Session	See section 4.2 - *Telnet* for more information.
Start FTP Serssion	See section 4.3 - *FTP* for more information.
Upgrade Firmware	See section 4.8 – *Upgrade* for more information.
Options	Opens a new dialog with NetCenter options. See section 4.5 - *Options* for more information.

5.4 Help

Contains only the *About* option.

About	Opens a new dialog containing information about current NetCenter version and contact information to Datamax-O'Neil.