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Label Design Tutorial

# Label Design Tutorial

Introduction

This tutorial walks you through the process of creating two different sample label designs. The steps covered in this chapter introduce some of the most frequently used features and functions of the label design software.

- *Designing a Product Label (Beginner)* provides step-by-step instructions for selecting a printer, completing your label setup, and adding several different types of fields including text, bar code, and picture fields. We will also add a line, a date stamp, and a pick list field that allows you to select from a list at print time.

- *Designing an Inventory Label (Advanced)* covers more advanced features available only in the mid-range and high-end editions of the label design software. In this tutorial you will add text, bar code, and picture fields that get their values from a database. We will also add a hidden field, an incrementing serial file field, and a linked field that combines text with an existing field on the label.

Designing a Product Label (Beginner)

In this section we will create a basic product label. The label is intended for use on a package of coffee, and includes product specific information such as product name, flavor, picture, and sell by date, as well as a UPC bar code.

The following is a sample of the product label we will create.
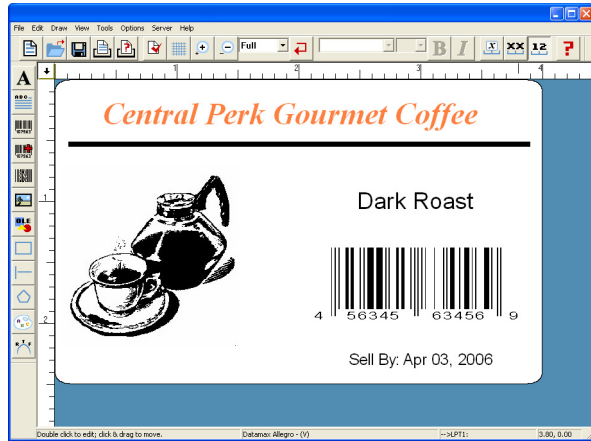
Figure 1 Product Label

This type of label would typically be printed using a thermal or thermal transfer label printer; even if you do not have this type of printer or label stock size available, you can still go through the basic label design steps covered in this tutorial.

Selecting a Printer

The first step to designing a label is to select the printer you will use for printing. The printer model selected determines what options are available as well as the label's size limitations.

▶ **To select a printer for your label design:**

1 Start the label design software.

2 On the **File** menu, click **Select Printer**.

The **Select Printer** dialog box appears.
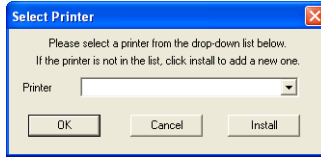
Figure 2 Select Printer

3 Do one of the following:

- If you previously installed a thermal/thermal transfer printer driver for use with this label design program, click the **Printer** drop-down arrow and select your printer from the list of installed printers.

- If you have not yet installed a thermal/thermal trans-fer printer driver for use with this label design pro-gram, click **Install**, select your printer's manufacturer and model, and again click **Install**. The new printer will be copied to the **Installed Printers** list. Click **Close**.

4 Click **OK**.

Label Setup   When you start the program, a default label appears ready for you to design. The label width, height, margins, and other general setup options can be changed using the tabs on the **Label Setup** dialog box.

▶ **To set the units of measure for the label:**

1 On the **Options** menu, click **Configuration**, and then click the **Display** tab.

2 In the **Units** box, click **inches**.

3 Click **OK**.

▶ **To set up the label:**

1 On the **Edit** menu, click **Label Setup**.

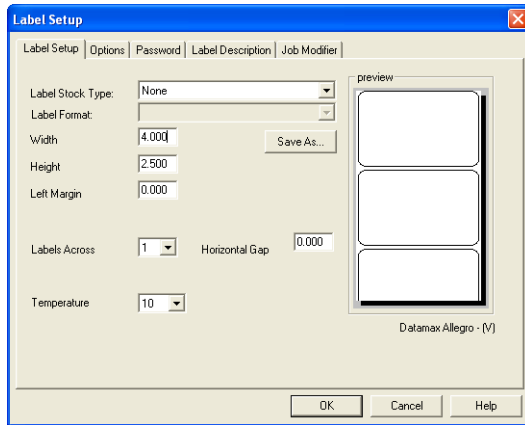The **Label Setup** dialog box appears.

Figure 3 Label Setup

The settings appearing on the **Label Setup** tab will vary depending on the type of printer selected for this label design.

2 On the **Label Setup** tab, set the following label properties:

Width: **4.0**

Height: **2.5**

Left Margin: **0**

Labels Across: **1**

3 Leave the other label setup settings at their defaults.

4 Click **OK**.

Adding Text

1 Do one of the following:

• On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

• Click **Add Text** $\mathbf{A}$ on the **Drawtools Bar**.

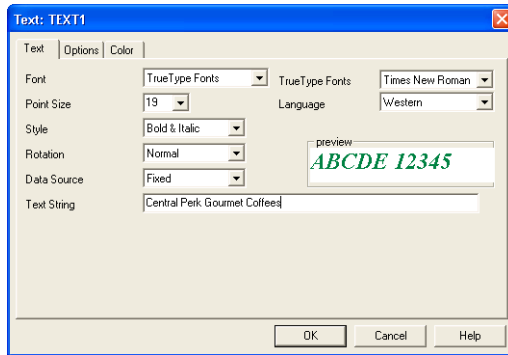The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

Figure 4 Text Properties

| Note | The settings available on the **Text** tab will vary depending on whether you are using a printer-resident font or a TrueType font. |

2 In the **Font** box, click **TrueType Fonts**.

3 On the **Text** tab, set the following properties for this text field:

TrueType Font: **Times New Roman**

Point Size: **18**

Language: **Western**

Style: **Bold & Italic**

Width %: **100**

Rotation: **Normal**

Data Source: **Fixed**

Text String: **Central Perk Gourmet Coffee**

4 Click the **Options** tab and in the **Field Name** box, type **Brand**.

5 Click the **Color** tab, click the color box drop-down arrow and select a color for the text. (Note: If you do not have a color printer, colors have no effect on the output.)

6 Click **OK**.

7   Use the mouse to position the text field near the top edge of the label and click once to place the text (you do not need to worry about precise field positioning at this time).

8   On the **File** menu, click **Save As**. Browse to save the label to your desktop or a temporary folder and enter a file name (like **beginner.lbl**), and then click **Save**.

Adding a Line

1   Do one of the following:

- On the **Draw** menu, click **Line**.

- Click **Add Line** |— on the **Drawtools Bar**.

Your cursor appears as a crosshair in the design window.

2   Click below the **Central Perk Gourmet Coffees** text and draw a horizontal line.

3   Right-click the line, and click **Edit**.

The **Line** dialog box appears.

4   In the **Width** box, enter **3.80**.

5   In the **Height** (thickness) box, enter **.05**.

6   Click **OK**.

**Positioning Objects on the Label**

We will now use the **Float Bar** tool buttons to precisely position the text and line fields on the label.

1   Click the **View** menu and ensure that a checkmark appears next to the **Float Bar** toolbar option.

2   On the label design, hold down the SHIFT key while clicking on the **Central Perk Gourmet Coffees** text and on the horizontal line, and then click the **Center Horizontally** 🔳 button on the **Float Bar**.

3   On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a Picture

1   Do one of the following:

- On the **Draw** menu, click **Picture**.

- Click **Add Picture** 🖼 on the **Drawtools Bar**.

The **Picture** properties dialog box appears.
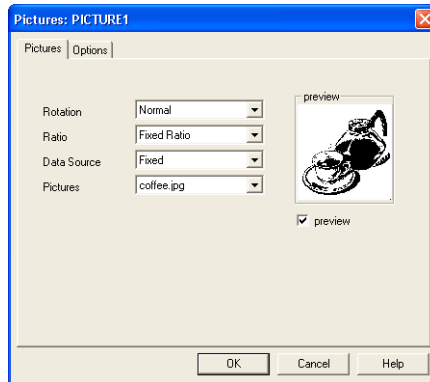
Figure 5 Picture Properties

2 On the **Pictures** tab, set the following properties for this picture field:

Rotation: **Normal**

Ratio: **Fixed Ratio**

Data Source: **Fixed**

Pictures: **coffee.jpg**

3 Select the **preview** check box to display the selected picture.

4 Click **OK** and then click in the lower left corner of the label to place the picture.

5 If the picture appears to be too small for the label, you can easily size the picture while keeping the aspect ratio of the height and width the same. To do this, click on one of the four corners of the object handles (so the cursor is at a diagonal) and drag to increase the size.

At this point, your label should look something like this:
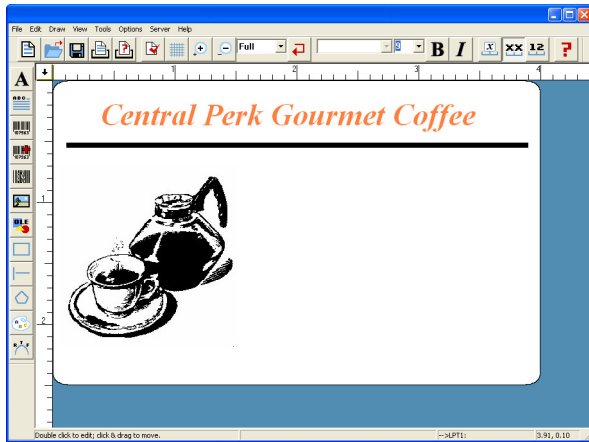
Figure 6 Unfinished Label

6 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a Pick List Field A pick list file contains values from which you can select at print time. We will create a pick list file that contains three different coffee flavors. At print time, you can then simply click the drop-list and select the appropriate flavor to print on the label.
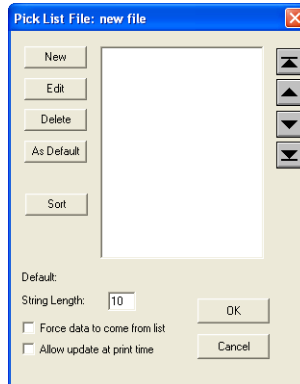
▶ **To create a pick list file:**

1 On the **Options** menu, click **Pick List Setup**.

The **Pick List Setup** dialog box appears.

2 Click **New**.

The **Pick List File: new file** dialog box appears.

Figure 7 New Pick List File

3 Click **New**, type **Dark Roast**, and click **OK**.

The value is added to the pick list.

4 Add the **Espresso** and **Colombian** values to the pick list.

5 Click **Dark Roast**, and then click **As Default**.

6 Click **Sort**.

7 Click the **Force data to come from list** check box, and click **OK**.

The **File Name** dialog box appears.

8 Type **flavors.pkl**, click **OK**, and then click **Exit** to return to the design window.

9 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

▶ **To add a field with a Pick List data source:**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

2 Select these font properties:
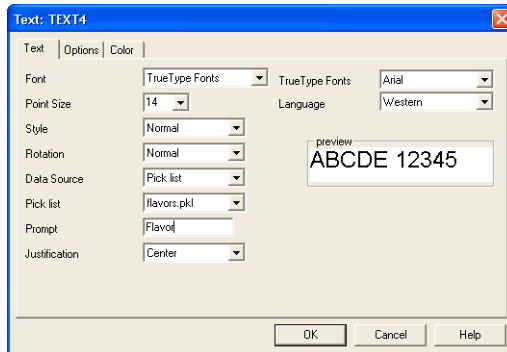Font: **TrueType Fonts**
TrueType Font: **Arial**
Point Size: **14**

Style: **Normal**

Rotation: **Normal**

3 In the **Data Source** box, click **Pick List**.

4 In the **Pick List** box, click **flavors.pkl**.

5 In the **Prompt** box, type **Flavor**.

Figure 8 Pick List Data Source

6 Click the **Options** tab.

7 In the **Required** box, click **Yes** to prevent users from printing without entering a value for this field.

8 In the **Clear After Print** box, click **Yes** to restore the field to its default after printing.

9 Click **OK**, and place the field on the right side of the label, below the horizontal line.
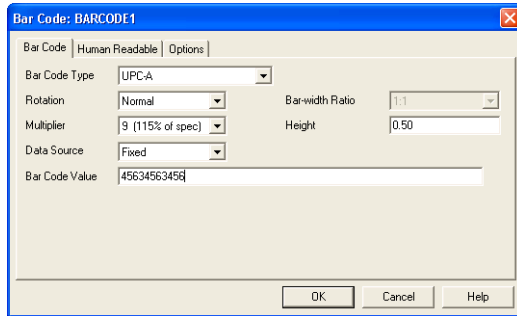
Because its data source is a pick list file accessed at print time, placeholder text (letters A-J) will display on the label for this field.

10 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a Bar Code 1 Do one of the following:

- On the **Draw** menu, click **Bar Code**.

- Click **Add Bar Code** ▊▊▊ on the **Drawtools Bar**.

  The **Bar Code** properties dialog box appears.

Figure 9 Bar Code Properties

The default values and properties appearing on the **Bar Code** tab will differ depending on the type of bar code that you select.

2 On the **Bar Code** tab, set the following properties for this field:

Bar Code Type: **UPC-A**

Data Source: **Fixed**

Bar Code Value: **45634563456**

3 Leave the other bar code settings at their defaults.

4 Click the **Human Readable** tab.

5 In the **Human Readable** box, click **Yes**.

6 Click the **Options** tab.

7 In the **Field Name** box, type **UPC**.

8 Click **OK** and then click on the right side of the label to place the bar code below the pick list field.

**9** On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a Date Stamp

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

   The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

2 Select these font properties:
   Font: **TrueType Fonts**
   TrueType Font: **Arial**
   Point Size: **9**
   Style: **Normal**
   Rotation: **Normal**

3 In the **Data Source** box, click **Date stamp**.

4 In the **Date Format** box, click **mmm dd, yyyy**.

5 In the **Date Offset** box, type **6**.

6 In the **Offset Unit** box, click **Months**.

7 Click the **Options** tab and in the **Field Name** box, type **SellDate** (no spaces).

8 Click the **Color** tab, click the color box drop-down arrow and select a color for the text.

9 Click **OK**, and place the field in the lower right corner of the label.

   The date appears, offset by 6 months.

10 Now to add "Sell By:" in front of the date, on the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

   The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

11 Select these font properties:
   Font: **TrueType Fonts**
   TrueType Font: **Arial**
   Point Size: **9**
   Style: **Normal**
   Rotation: **Normal**
   Data Source: **Fixed**
   Text String: **Sell By:**

12 Click the **Color** tab, and select the same color you chose previously for the date stamp.

13 Click **OK**, and place the field to the left of the date stamp field.

14 Hold down the SHIFT key while clicking on the **Sell By:** text and on the date stamp field, and then click the **Align Top** ⊤ button on the **Float Bar**.

15 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Printing the Label 1 On the **File** menu, click **Print**.

The **Quick Printing** dialog box appears.
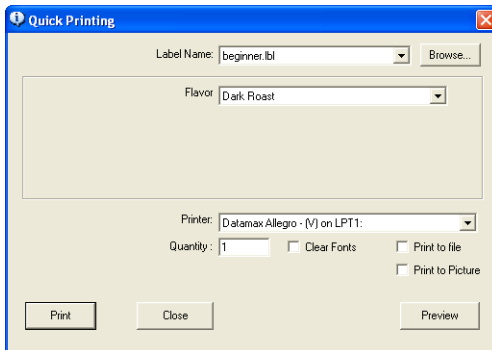
Figure 10 Quick Printing Dialog Box

2 In the **Flavor** box, click **Espresso**, and then click **Print**.

The label is printed.

3 Click **Close** to return to the design window.

Designing an Inventory Label (Advanced)

Many of the features used in this tutorial are available only in the mid-range and high-end editions of the label design software.

In this section we will create a slightly more advanced parts inventory label. The label is intended to be used as a shelf label, and includes information such as the part description, part number, and picture, as well as a bar coded stocking number.

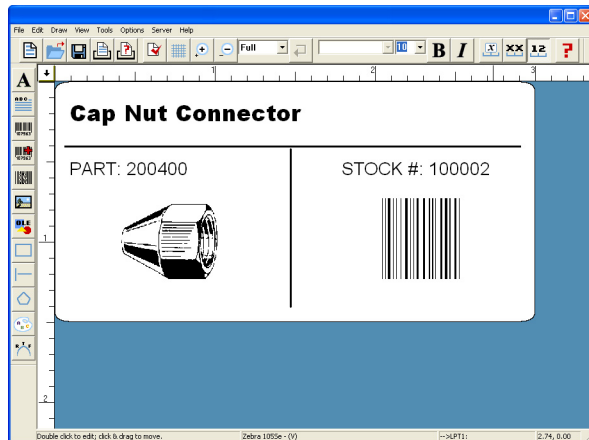The following is a sample of the parts inventory label we will create.

Figure 11 Inventory Label

Note This type of label would typically be printed using a thermal or thermal transfer label printer; even if you do not have this type of printer or label stock size available, you can still go through the basic label design steps covered in this tutorial.

▶ **To set up the label:**

1 Close any open label design files.

2 Right-click on the blank label design area and select **Label Setup**.

The **Label Setup** dialog box appears.

3 On the **Label Setup** tab, set the following label properties:

Width: **3.0**

Height: **1.5**

Left Margin: **0.0**

Labels Across: **1**

Horizontal Gap: **0.0**

4 Leave the other label setup settings at their defaults.

5 Click **OK**.

6 On the **Style Bar** toolbar (above the design area), click the **Zoom factor** drop-down list and click **Full** to design the label using a magnified display.

To see the actual size of the label we'll be designing, click **100%**.

Adding a dBase Text Field

Before retrieving data from a dBase database, you must provide the label design software with the location of your database files. For purposes of this example, we will be using the **fittings.dbf** sample database file that is installed with the program.

▶ **To add a field that uses a .dbf database:**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

Note

You can use the dBase data source for text, paragraphs, bar codes, 2D bar codes, and pictures.

2 Select these font properties:

   Font: **TrueType Fonts**

   TrueType Font: **Arial Black**

   Point Size: **10**

   Style: **Normal**

   Rotation: **Normal**

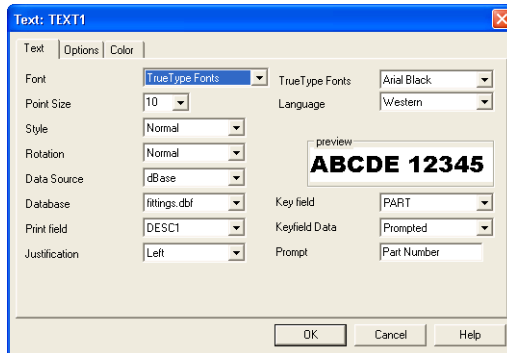**3** In the **Data Source** box, click **dBase**.

Figure 12 dBase Data Source

4 In the **Database** box, click **fittings.dbf**.

   Fittings.dbf is a sample dBase file that installs with the program.

5 In the **Key field** box, click **PART**.

   The key field is the database field that allows you to locate the desired record.

6 In the **Print field** box, click **DESC1**.

   The print field is the database field that contains the data you want to print on the label. It can be the same as the key field, or another field in the database.

7 In the **Keyfield Data** box, click **Prompted**.

The keyfield data defines the source of the key field (either prompted at print time or linked to another field on the label).

8   In the **Prompt** box, type **Part Number**.

9   Click the **Options** tab, and set the following properties for this field:

Increment: **1**

Copies: **1**

Reset after each record: **No**

Clear After Print: **No**

Field Name: **PartDesc**

10 Leave the other **Options** tab settings at their defaults.

11 Click **OK**, and place the field in the top left corner of the label.

12 On the **Style** bar, click the ![button] button to display the name of the field (Name Mode), click the ![button] button to display the field length (XXX Mode), and finally, click the ![button] button to display the value of the first record in the database (Value Mode). Leave the field display in Value Mode.

13 On the **File** menu, click **Save As**. Browse to save the label to your desktop or a temporary folder and enter a file name (like **advanced.lbl**), and then click **Save**.

Adding a Hidden Field

The second dBase field we will add to the label will be set up as a *hidden* field. This means that it will be available to use to create other linked fields, but it will not print on the label. Later in this section we will add a field that links to this hidden field.

▶ **To add a hidden text field:**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

2 In the **Data Source** box, click **dBase**.

3 In the **Database** box, click **fittings.dbf**.

4 In the **Print field** box, click **PART**.

5 Click the **Options** tab, and set the following properties for this field:

Increment: **1**

Copies: **1**

Reset after each record: **No**

Field Name: **PartNo**

Hidden: **Yes**

6 Leave the other **Options** tab settings at their defaults.

7 Click **OK**, and place the field in the top right corner of the label.

The field appears in red to indicate that it is a hidden field. It displays on the label for placement purposes, but will not print on the label.

8 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding Lines   In the following steps we will add a horizontal line and a vertical line, as shown in the following figure.
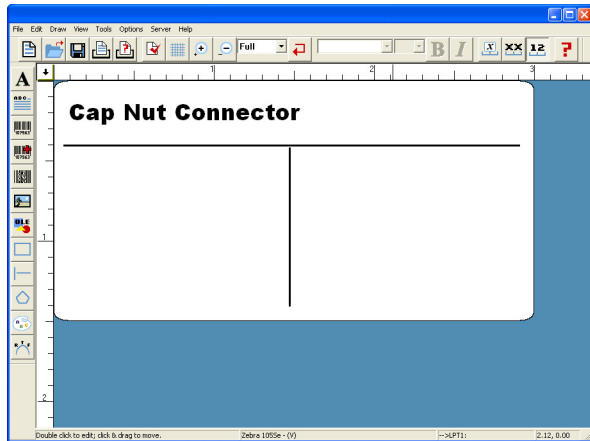

Figure 13 Horizontal and Vertical Lines

1   On the **Draw** menu, click **Line**.

   Your cursor appears as a crosshair in the design window.

2   Click on the left side of the label below the two dBase text fields, and draw a horizontal line across the entire label as shown in the figure above.

3   Right-click the line, and click **Edit**.

   The **Line** dialog box appears.

4   In the **Width** box, enter **2.86**.

5   In the **Height** (thickness) box, enter **.02**.

6   Click **OK**.

7   On the **Draw** menu, click **Line** again and this time add a vertical line in the middle of the label, as shown in the figure.

8   Right-click the line, and click **Edit**.

   The **Line** dialog box appears.

9 In the **Width** box, enter **.02**.

10 In the **Height** (thickness) box, enter **1.0**.

11 Click **OK**.

12 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a Serial Number

To set up an incrementing serial number you must specify **Serial file** as the data source and link the field to a serial file. The serial file allows the program to track the last serial number printed and start the next print job with the next number in the series.

In order to set up a serial number field, you first need to create a serial file. The serial file contains the starting value for the counter; that is, the first number to be printed.

▶ **To create a serial file:**

1 On the **Options** menu, click **Serial Files.**

The **Serial files** dialog box appears.

2 Click **New**.

3 The **Serial file: Untitled** dialog box appears prompting you to enter the starting value for the counter; that is, the first serial number to be printed.
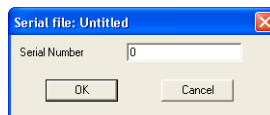

Figure 14 Serial Number Starting Value

4 In the **Serial Number** box, type **100001**, and click **OK**.

5 The **Save Serial Files** dialog box appears prompting you to name the serial file.

6 In the **Serial file** box, type **stockno.srl**, click **OK**, and then click **Exit** to return to the design window.

▶ **To add a serial number (link to the serial file):**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Bar Code**.

The **Bar Code** properties dialog box appears.

2 Select these bar code properties:

Bar Code Type: **Interleaved 2 of 5**

Rotation: **Normal**

Multiplier: **2 (10 mils)**

Bar-width Ratio: **2:1**

Height: **0.50**

3 In the **Data Source** box, click **Serial file**.

4 In the **Serial file** box, click **stockno.srl**.

5 Click the **Human Readable** tab and click **No** for the **Human Readable** setting.

6 Click the **Options** tab and set the following properties:

Increment: **1**

Copies: **1**

Reset after each record: **No**

Field Name: **StockNo**

7 Leave the other **Options** tab settings at their defaults.

8 Click **OK**, and place the field in the lower right part of the label.

9 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding Linked Fields

You can use the **Linked** data source to combine text and fields (or to combine two fields) into one field on the label.

▶ **To combine text with a dBase field:**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

Note

You can use the **Linked** data source for text, bar codes, 2D bar codes, pictures and TextArt objects.

2   Select these font properties:

Font: **TrueType Fonts**

TrueType Font: **Arial**

Point Size: **8**

Style: **Normal**

Rotation: **Normal**

3   In the **Data Source** box, click **Linked**.

4   In the **Linked Fields** box, type the following:
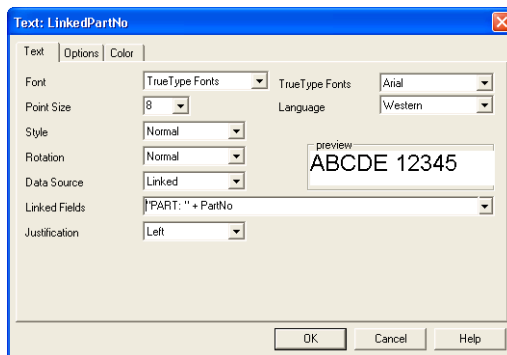
"PART: " + PartNo

Figure 15 Linked Field

5   Click the **Options** tab, and in the **Field Name** box, type **LinkedPartNo**.

6   Leave the other **Options** tab settings at their defaults.

7   Click **OK**, and place the field on the left side of the label, slightly below the horizontal line.

Note   Because its data is being accessed from a dBase file at print time, the PartNo portion of the linked expression will not display while in Value Mode.

▶ **To combine text with a Serial File field:**

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Text**.

The **Text** properties dialog box appears.

2 Select these font properties:

Font: **TrueType Fonts**

TrueType Font: **Arial**

Point Size: **8**

Style: **Normal**

Rotation: **Normal**

3 In the **Data Source** box, click **Linked**.

4 In the **Linked Fields** box, type the following:

"STOCK #: " + StockNo

5 Click the **Options** tab, and in the **Field Name** box, type **LinkedStockNo**.

6 Leave the other **Options** tab settings at their defaults.

7 Click **OK**, and place the field on the right side of the label, above the bar code field.

8 On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Adding a dBase Picture Field

In order to automatically include the correct picture on each label, we will access the name of the picture file from a database at print time using the dBase data source. The picture to be printed on each label is determined by a graphic file name in the database.

1 On the **Draw** menu, click **Picture**.

2 Set the following properties for the picture field:

Rotation: **Normal**

Ratio: **Fixed Ratio**

Data Source: **dBase**

Database: **fittings.dbf**

Print field: **PICTURE**

3 Click **OK**, and place the picture field on the left side of the label, below the LinkedPartNo field.

Because its value will be accessed from a dBase file at print time, the picture field appears on the label as a double-bordered frame. The correct picture will print on the label, however, based on the corresponding graphic file name in the database.

4   On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

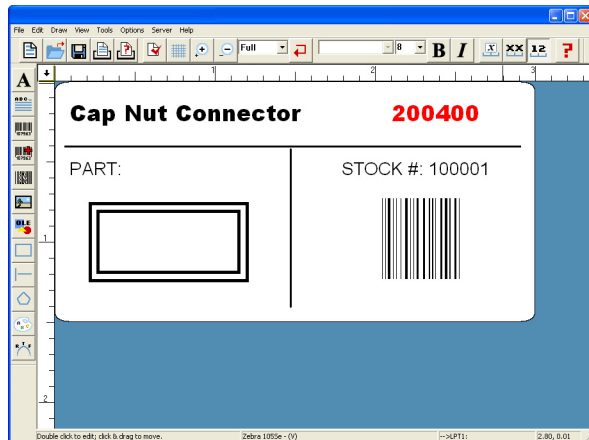Your label design should now look similar to the label below.

Figure 16 Label with Picture Field

Positioning Objects on the Label

We will now use the **Float Bar** tool buttons to position objects on the label in relation to each other.

1   Click the **View** menu and ensure that a checkmark appears next to the **Float Bar** toolbar option.

2   On the label design, click the horizontal line to select it, and then click the **Center Horizontally** ⊞ button on the **Float Bar**.

3   Click the vertical line and then click the **Center Horizontally** ⊞ button.

4 Hold down the SHIFT key while clicking on the **PartDesc** and **LinkedPartNo** fields, and then click the **Align Left**

   ![] button.

5 Hold down the SHIFT key while clicking on the **Linked PartNo** and **LinkedStockNo** fields, and then click the

   Align Top ![] button.

**6** On the **File** menu, click **Save** to save your changes.

Printing the Label Labels that contain fields populated by a database can require user input at print time if the **Key Field Data** property is set to **Prompted**.

If set to **Prompted**, then a ![] button appears at print time for displaying the database records in a grid. The database grid allows you to select, scroll to, and search for the records you want to print.

▶ **To print a label that uses a database field:**

1 On the **File** menu, click **Print**.

   The **Quick Printing** dialog box appears.
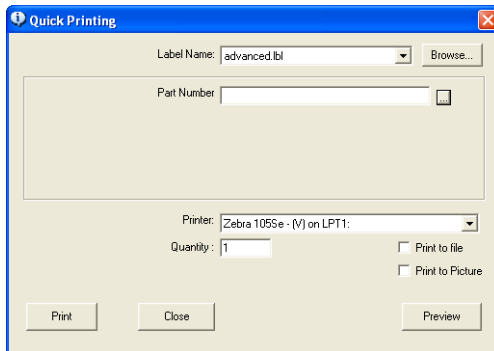
Figure 17 Quick Printing Dialog Box

2 Click ![] located to the right of the **PART** box.

   The **fittings.dbf** database file appears in the database grid.

Figure 18 Database Grid

3 Hold down the CTRL key while you click on the **Cap Nut Connector**, **Hex Nut**, **Bronze Faucet**, and **Clamp** records (rows) to select them, and then click **Select**.

4 Click **OK** to close the database grid and return to the **Quick Printing** dialog box.

5 Click **Print**.

Labels are printed for each of the selected records according to the print quantities you selected.

Verify that the stock number increments by 1 with each label printed (i.e., 100001, 100002, etc.).

6 Click **Close** to return to the design window.

Setting the Standard
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