

The *PCLModify* tool

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1 Introduction

To develop an own printer driver is very complicated and cost expensive.

PCLModify allows you to change the output of a standard PCL printer driver. You can modify the PCL to play with things your OS does not support. For example it is possible to change *duplex settings* inside a document or you can select a different *paper source* for every page of your document.

PCLModify uses a very simple configuration file syntax that allows you to add PCL commands at the beginning of a page. There exists a \LaTeX style file to automate paper source selection with Kyocera printers. You can use this style file as example for other tasks.

1.1 How does it work?

PCLModify will parse the output of a PCL printer driver. It tries to find out where pages starts (or ends). Depending on the input of a very simple control file it inserts strings to the PCL file at page starts (or page ends). So you can insert control strings for duplex settings or select a page source.

A more technical note: *PCLModify* assumes that a page starts after the last printer reset (`\eE`) or after the last occurrence of character 12 (Ctrl-L). A page ends before the next occurrence of character 12 (Control-L). Binary data for graphics or fonts is skipped while parsing the PCL.

2 Usage

2.1 Command line for *PCLModify*

The *PCLModify* command line for Windows usually looks like:

```
C:\>pclmodify control.txt test.prn >lptX:
```

'C:\>' is the prompt of your OS. `control.txt` contains the control informations for *PCLModify* described later. `test.prn` is the output generated by a PCL printer driver (eg. Laserjet). You can create this file for example using Adobe Acrobat if you select print dialog and check on the "Print to file" checkbox. Acrobat will ask you where to save the output. The phrase '>lptX:' controls where to output the results of the *PCLModify*-run. On Windows 'lptX:' means the parallel port your printer uses. You can find this in your printers configuration dialog.

On Linux or other Unix-like systems the command line would look like:

```
someone@computer:~>pclmodify control.txt test.prn | lpr -Praw
```

'someone@computer:~>' again is the prompt of the OS. The phrase '| lpr -Praw' passes the output of *PCLModify* to the command `lpr`. The switch `-P...` controls which printer will be used to print the results. You should make sure to use a 'raw'-printer queue that directly passes the binary data to the printer.

You can also drive the printer directly if it is attached to a local device. This is usually good for debugging only. Instead of '| lpr -P...' you could write something like '> /dev/lpX', where 'lpX' represents the parallel port your printer uses.

Before you use *PCLModify*: Please make sure your printer understands your modifications to the PCL. Please refer to the printers programming manual to see what can be done with the control sequences. It's possible to put the printer in strange states (eg. 'hang' the printers interpreter). It's also possible to destroy hardware components if you do not know what you are doing.

2.2 The syntax of the control file

3 Tricks for Kyocera printers

3.1 'Prescribe' to control your printer

3.2 Change the source of paper

3.3 Usage of \LaTeX and `papersource.sty`