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Printer utility doesn't stick to printing

By **Craig Crossman**
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Small office / Home office
End-user software products are usually either applications or utilities.

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Applications are mostly designed to perform a specific productivity task, and individual applications are often combined into a suite of products that can do many things.

Utilities, on the other hand, tend to be more specialized, although we're seeing more utility suites appear as well. Internet security suites, for example, typically include anti-virus, firewall, spyware detection and anti-spam protection utilities.

Suites are great, but finding a single utility that does many different things is a bit more rare.

To that end, I recently discovered an interesting printer utility that does a lot more than just enhance your printer's output: **ePrint IV** from Lead Technologies (www.eprintdriver.com) is technically a printer utility in that it operates from within the way Windows lets you print something.

If the application you are using has the ability to send something to a printer, you can use the power of ePrint to do many different things. For starters, it lets you enhance your printing options. From the print dialog you can print 2, 4 or 8 pages on a single sheet.

ePrint lets you add watermarks to identify and protect your work. You have full control of the watermark's opacity, font, alignment and page position.

It can create photo contact sheets from full to wallet size. It can format your print job into a booklet. If a document contains embedded images, ePrint can eliminate them and print only the text. Plus you can adjust margins, gutters, headers, footers and borders on the fly.

There's more, but actually that's just the enhanced printing ability of this utility. Now it begins to get interesting.

ePrint lets you do file conversions. From any print dialog, you can convert the document to be printed into any one of more than 140 file formats. For example, you can export your .doc file as a PDF file in MS Word or save your text files to TIFF files in Notepad. When it comes to converting PDF files, you can control your PDF output with

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features such as font embedding, watermarks, compression options, Unicode support, bookmarks, security options and more. Normally you would need a PDF application such as Adobe Acrobat to create these kinds of PDF files.

You can combine four or five multiple documents into one single PDF file or combine a number of JPEG image files into one single multiple-page TIFF file. E-mail options include being able to configure your settings to redirect your print job to an email attachment. The print job is saved as an image, and you can then send it to multiple recipients.

If you're on a network, a real time saver is ePrint's broadcasting ability. With one command, you can send your pages to more than one printer. Once you set things up, you can print to every specified printer or to just one specific one.

And here's the kicker: You can perform those file conversions at the moment of printing so that you can send the documents to each person on the broadcast list in the file format of your choosing. That way, you know each person will receive the file in the format he or she prefers.

Finally, ePrint has a screen-capture ability. This is actually a separate utility but is designed to work directly with the ePrint driver and can be used as an Explorer toolbar or as a stand-alone application.

This is one super printing utility and certainly worth the \$99. ePrint IV requires Windows.

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