

## Set a custom page size

**Source:** <http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/VB/microsoft.public.vb.winapi/2005-02/0175.html>

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Here is the infrastructure:

A network with either Win98 and WinXP machines, and printers attached to the network (it may be through a computer (W98 or WXP) or directly to the network). A fact is that I can't control where the printer will be connected to and from what computer the user will print an invoice.

What I want:

Print an invoice with 1/3 of a Letter height in a dot matrix printer from any computer with win98 or winXP to any computer with win98 and winXP. Not always the user will print that invoice in a certain printer, so I want the program to automatically set the page size, print, and back, without changing the defaults printer preferences of the computer where the printing occurred.

What I did:

Under WinXP, you must create a page form (like A4, Letter, etc.) in order to use it. Actually, I create a page form with the dimensions 219cms width and 93cms (this is the 3rd part of the total height of a Letter page) height, and print perfect either in an Epson LX-300 and Epson LX-300+ (I mean, it stops exactly at 93cms height, and if I send another print action, it continues exactly where it stopped... It fits perfect the invoice draws with a lot of printings). The creation of the page form works almost perfect when is in the local computer, but if you want to print in another WinXP machine, it has to have the page form respectively in order to use it. So, if there isn't the page form, it has to be created, and for this you have to get the "rights" to do it on that remote machine. To do this is a lot of headache.

In the other hand, under Win98, you only set the Printer.Height and Printer.Width to the preferred values and should be all. The printer object works with the printer driver, so it's values depends directly on the printer driver. The problem here is that when I set Printer.Height = 5280, VB (or the driver) sets it to another number, like 5270 (this is the nearest number I obtained).

There's a difference between WinXP and Win98 in the way that each one prints out a page on a printer. WinXP uses (as I note) a page form resident on the remote machine, it means, it uses the remote drivers. Win98 uses the local drivers to do the print job, even if the printer resides in a WinXP

machine.

My test cases:

1. From WinXP to WinXP: Perfect, except if the page form doesn't exist in the remote computer.
2. From Win98 to Win98: Unperfect. The height isn't what I specify. VB (or the local driver) reset it.
3. From Win98 to WinXP: Unperfect. Exactly the "From Win98 to Win98" case.
4. From WinXP to Win98: Perfect. Unexplainable. My code, theoretically creates a Page Form on the printer server (in this case is a Win98 system) and print the invoice with the exact dimensions.

The problem, obviously, is under Win98. I think that IF I can print from WinXP to Win98 almost perfect, AND (note the caps) I can print from Win98 WITH HIS OWN DRIVERS in a WinXP computer, THEN there must be a way to either use a local driver and print remotely (Cases 2. and 3.), and set an exact dimensions to the page size to the printer, no matter where it is connected (Cases 1. and 4.).

So, the printer can do it! I just have to know how to communicate with the printer with the actual tools, and I think that it can be done with api calls.

I hope there's a brilliant mind out there :)