OPERATOR INTERFACE PRODUCTS
APPLICATION NOTE

Description: Usage of Printer Control Codes w/SoftScreen Reports

Most printers provide for signals to be sent to them to change their behavior. There are codes that may be sent to change fonts, character pitch, underline, bold print, backspace and many other functions. These codes are commonly referred to as "Control Codes". These control codes are found in the manual for your printer and may be different from printer to printer.

To enter a control code during the report development, you select the text object and place it onto the screen work area for your report. With the cursor flashing now at that line and character location, hold the ALT key and on the numeric keypad, on the right side of the keyboard, enter the decimal number of the character or attribute you would like to enable. Holding ALT and entering 08 will cause a backspace (most printers recognize 08 to be a backspace command).

Examples:

Numbers greater than 5 digits on reports.

This is a requirement of many users to have numbers that are greater than the range supported by SoftScreen (32767 to -32768). The requirement would be to have a single register for each of the digits of the number to print. The method would be to place on the report the first data object and configure it for only one digit on display and for the range of 0 to 9. Enter the register you would like it to represent and they okay out of the configuration form.

Following this object, to the right, in the next character location place a text object. With the cursor flashing at that location, hold down the ALT key and on the numeric keypad type 08 (the backspace control character), release the ALT key and press enter. This character is not printable so an asterisk (*) will display.

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In the next character location to the right, place another data object and configure it as you did in the first digit. Enter the register that you wish to assign to this digit and then okay the configuration.

Continue this procedure alternating the data object with the text (backspace) object. You may add commas (,) or demimals as needed for formatting the number.

The need of backspace printer control is due to the data object format. SoftScreen data objects have as the first character the sign + or -. If you set the data objects side by side without the backspace control, the report would print spaces between each number. By placing the backspace control character between each of the data objects, each number is moved to the left and places the space (sign character) over the previous digit.

Extended Functions:

The printer you are using may provide many functions in the control codes to decorate your reports from SoftScreen.