# Label and bar code printers

11.03.2024

There are many manufacturers of label printers. So there is a huge variety of methods how to control such printers.

The RoeTest software supports two different control modes:

	1. Printers with EPL/ZPL control language	2. Windows label printers
Printer example:	Zebra-Printer	Many models of Brother printers
Printer control:	Textual commands (print the letter X using fontat position)	Graphical commands (print a pixel at position)
Advantage:	<ul> <li>Low amount of data transfer (fast)</li> <li>Printer built in features can be used (e.g. generating bar codes)</li> <li>more comfortable</li> <li>mostly professional printers</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>All installed Windows fonts can be used</li> <li>Low cost printers available</li> </ul>
Editor	Zebradesigner	Simple label editor built into the RoeTest software
Label file extension	,prn'	,lab'

Alongside the many manufacturers have created still more control methods that are not supported by the RoeTest software (e.g. storing of patterns/templates inside the printer).

1. Printers with EPL/ZPL printer language (zebra printers)



#### First:

The RoeTest software supports label printing. You can then put these labels on tube boxes. Many printers also allow you to print bar codes that can be read and processed using commercially available bar code scanners. This may be of interest for tube collectors and tube sellers.

Label printing can also be enabled in batch processing so labels are printed automatically as tubes are tested.

## System requirements:

You'll need a label printer that supports a common label printer control language such as ZPL or EPL. These printers are not controlled using a Windows driver but they receive commands as supported by the printer control language, in the same way earlier DOS printers worked.

Examples are the Zebra thermal transfer label printers which are available in industrial versions (with prices to match, obviously) and that are also available in simpler versions.

#### Labels:

You can design these any way you want. Most of the label printers come with editors that allow you to design your labels. Zebra printers come with "Zebradesigner" software, that can also be downloaded from the internet (don't pick the pro-demo version but look for the regular version without "pro").

#### Design of an example label using Zebradesigner:

Start Zebradesigner and select new label (I'm assuming that you have already installed Zebradesigner and the appropriate drivers for your label printer). The following pictures are from Zebradesigner 2. In the meantime the V3 is available.

¥ X

Begrüßungsassistent	8 X
Neues Etikett Wählen Sie das Etikett welches erstellt oder gedruckt werden soll.	
Ein neues Etikett erstellen     Das zuletzt verwendetes Etikett öffnen     C.\Vabels\RoeTest klein ibi     C.\Vabels\SAMPLE.LBL     C.\Vabels\SAMPLE.LBL     C.\Vabels\Sample3.Ibi     C.\Vabels\sample3.Ibi     C.\Vabels\sample3.Ibi     C.\Vabels\sample3.Ibi	
Hilfe Abbrechen < Zurück Weiter >	Beenden

Select the printer and label size:

Etiketteneinrichtungsassiste	nt		S X
Wählen Sie eine Vorla Vordefinierte Etiketten/ beschleunigen.	<b>ge</b> ormate (Vorlagen) könne	en die Etikettenerstellung	
Wählen Sie die Etikett Wenn Sie die Etikette Schlatfläche Weiter ur	envorlage. ndimensionen selbst besl n diesen Schritt zu übers	timmen möchten, klicken S pringen.	ie auf die
Vorlagentyp:	Trans Matte 2000	•	
Vorlagenname:	72289	-	
🔲 Verbunden mit Vor	age		
Vorlageninformationen	:		
Etikettenabmessunge 4 x 2 Zoll	n:	<u>,</u>	
4		Þ	
Hilfe	Abbrechen	< Zurück Weiter	> Beenden

## Select portrait or landscape layout:

Etiketteneinrichtungsassistent	8 23
<b>Etiketten Layout</b> Wählen Sie das Layout das	A4-210X297m           Innen zusagt.
Ausrichtung:	Druckrichtung:
Bildschirm -	Drucker Layout:
Hilfe	Abbrechen <zurück weiter=""> Beenden</zurück>

Enter text, bar codes or other graphics on the screen:

🧱 ZebraDesigner - [Mein Etikett.]	bl]		
<u>File Edit View O</u> bject To	o <u>l</u> s <u>W</u> indow <u>H</u> elp		_ # ×
: 🗅 👌 🖶 I 🛦 🔓 📴 🛛	💁   🗞 Print 🔹 🔎 Zoom 🔹 View	- 0	
ZEBRA 0 - 🖻 没	14,0 • A A B 7 U		□ - ⊿
Select ▲ Text		, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
IIII Bar code	Text V	Vizard	8 22
Picture		avt Object	-
		Define the contents and style of the text object.	
O Ellipse	VDESIGN/		
Market Inverse	#MD	Content	
I GS1 (EAN.UCC)		Fixed text	
💷 Linear 🔹 📕		VDESIGNATION	*
🕲 2D 🔹 📩			
🐨 GS1 DataBar Linear 🔹		*	*
mi GS1 DataBar Composite -			
-	www.roehren	Font	
		ZEBRA 0 14.0 Pt	Select
2		Inverse	
-		Help Cancel < Back	Next > Finish
Text: ZEBRA 0 14Pt	X: 1.00 Y: 0.29	ZDesigner GK420t	n <zuü< td=""></zuü<>

Always use **fixed text**, never variable text, including for values to be printed by the RoeTest software. For these values, define variables simply by using variable names. A list of supported variable names follows.

You can also print bar codes. Variable names can also be used here:

Bar Code Wizard	23 V
Bar Code Object Define the contents and s	tyle of the bar code object.
Bar code data	ta 💿 Variable bar code data
VDESIGNATION#VI	D
Bar code type: Code-93	Define
Help	Cancel < Back Next > Finish

When using bar codes only use bar code types supported by your printer. You can't print bar codes as straight graphics.

		8 23
an Readable Details		
Symbol height:	0,5 incł	1
Narrow bar width	3 🔺 (dol	i)
D-K-		
Ratio	3,0	
Base object width (mils):	15	
Print bar code as a graphic		_
Think bai code as a graphic		Enable preview
	ОК	Cancel Help
	an Readable Details Symbol height: Narrow bar width Ratio Base object width (mils): 1 mil = 1/1000 inch Print bar code as a graphic	an Readable Details Symbol height: Narrow bar width Ratio Base object width (mils): 1 mil = 1/1000 inch Print bar code as a graphic OK

This is an example label that I've saved as "Mein Etikett.Ibl" (my label.Ibl): it uses the variables ,VDESIGNATION' and ,VID' that can also be inserted in the bar code. As bar code type I selected ,code93' because that supports all characters including German umlauts and so on.



To enable the RoeTest software to use the label, you have to save it as a file:

rint			L'é	23
Quantity:			1	<b>^</b>
Print to file				
🔽 Close after print				
Print	Preview	Clos	:e ] [	Help

Here's what the print window in Zebra Designer V3 looks like:

S		
Starten	🖶 Drucken	
Neu		
Öffnen	ZDesigner GX420t	•
	Geschwindigkeit ("/s): 4	
Speichern	Temperatur: 20 🔻	
Speichern unter	✓ Drucke in Datei	
Drucken	Druckereinstellungen	
Ablegen	Menge	
, lone gen	Anzahl von Etiketten	1 荣
Schließen	🔿 Anzahl Seiten	×
	O Alle Etiketten drucken (unbegrenzt)	
Optionen		<u>mehr</u>

Use informative and meaningful names. For this example I used "Mein Etikett.prn".

Let's take a look at the "Mein Etikett.prn" file. Open the file in your Windows editor and what you see should look like the example below (the exact commands depend on the printer and the printer command language you use). **In any case, the variable names that you used should be plainly visible:** 

Mein Etikett.prn - Editor
Datei Bearbeiten Format Ansicht ?
<pre>^XA~TA000~JSN^LT0^MNW^MTT^PON^PMN^LH0,0^JMA^PR5,5^MD10^JUS^LRN^CI0^XZ ^XA ^MMT ^LL0406 ^PW812 ^LS0 ^FT32,80^A0N,39,38^FH\^FDVDESIGNATION^FS ^FT35,119^A0N,28,28^FH\^FD#VID^FS ^FT30,375^A0N,28,28^FH\^FDWWW.roehrentest.de^FS ^BY3,3,102^FT33,271^BAN,,N,N ^FDVDESIGNATION#VID^FS ^PQ1,0,1,Y^XZ</pre>

→ This looks good. This label can now be used.

Of course you can make your labels more complex and add as much data as you want – this is just an example.

Tip: Zebra-Designer also stores the basic printer settings. In general these are specifically for the printer model you selected (for example print quality, label type etc). You'll need to modify the label data before you can use another printer and or label type.

Hint: The Zebradesigner 2 stores the layout files with file extension 'lbl'. The Zebradesigner 3 stores the layout files with file extension 'nlbl'. The Zebradesigner 3 can also open the old format.

# Variable names:

You can use the following variable names (always use upper case):

VDESIGNATION VDESIG VDESIGNATIONORIG <b>VDESIGORIG</b> (favored variable for tube name)	Tube type/name as printed on the tube Short Form (stops at first blank space) Reference tube name (in case you loaded reference tube data to compare)	Röhrendaten:       PL504         PL504       0 a         PL504       0 a         Ubiteregenues BB:       0 37         Tip: you can also change the tube type here:         Röhrendaten:         Röhrenname:       PL504         PL504       0 a         Jubiteregenues BB:       0 37		
VID	ID number (eve	rv tube has a different ID)		
VPREFIX	Prefix (e.G. orde	er no)		
VDB_MANUFACT VDB_COND VDB_CAT	Manufacturer Condition Category			
VTYPE1 VTYPE2 VTYPE3	Function (Diode	, Triode…) (System 1-3)		
VTY1 VTY2 VTY3 VDB_TY4	Tube function ac	cronym (as used in database)		
VUh VIh VTh VTh1 VTh2 VTh3	Measured heate Measured heate Heater time [s] f Heater time (Sys	r voltage [V] r current [mA] or the first heated system stem 1-3)		
<vth1> <vth2> <vth3></vth3></vth2></vth1>	this is printed as printed.	, "Th(n)=xx s". If there is no value, nothing is		
VA1 VA2 VA3	mA Anode/plate	(System 1-3)		
<va1> <va2> <va3></va3></va2></va1>	this is printed as "la=xx mA". If there is no value, nothing is printed.			
VS1 VS2 VS3	mA Screen (Sys	tem 1-3)		
<vs1> <vs2> <vs3></vs3></vs2></vs1>	this is printed as printed.	"Ig2=xx mA". If there is no value, nothing is		
VP1 VP2 VP3	% (System 1-4)			

VDB_VP4						
<vp1></vp1>	this is printed as "%=xx". If there is no value, nothing is printed.					
<vp2></vp2>						
<vp3></vp3>						
<vdb_vp4></vdb_vp4>						
VB1	Symbol in	dicating %	-value as ir	dicated bel	ow:	
VB2	0%	1%-39%	40-59%	60-74%	75-89%	>=90%
VB3	0	-	?	+	++	+++
VT1	transcond	luctance m	a/V (Syster	n 1-3)		
VT2				-		
VT3						
<vt1></vt1>	This is pri	nted as "S	=xx mA/V".	If there is n	o value, no	othing is
<vt2></vt2>	printed.					J. J
<vt3></vt3>	•					
VMu1	Gain/Mu					
VMu2						
VMu3	This is pri	nted as "m	u=xx". If the	ere is no val	lue, nothing	g is
<vmu1></vmu1>	printed.					-
<vmu2></vmu2>	•					
<vmu3></vmu3>						
VRI1	Ri (Syster	m 1-3)				
VRI2		,				
VRI3						
<vri1></vri1>	This is pri	nted as "R	i=xx k". If th	ere is no va	alue, nothin	ig is
<vri2></vri2>	printed.				,	0
<vri3></vri3>	•					
Vlg1	Grid curre	ent_in µA (	System 1-3	)		
Vlg2			-			
VIg3						
<vlg1></vlg1>	This is printed as " $Ig=xx \mu A$ ". If there is no value, nothing is					
<vlg2></vlg2>	printed.					
<vlg3></vlg3>	•					
Vlg1n	The same	e, but la in	nA with one	decimal pla	ace	
Vlg2n				·		
Vlg3n						
<vla1n></vla1n>						
<vla2n></vla2n>						
<vlg3n></vlg3n>						
VIS	Istab					
VUS	Ustab					
VUZ	Uignition					
	for stabiliz	zers				
VREMARKS	Remarks	field – Tip:	you can pri	int additiona	al data for t	ubes with
	more ther	1 3 function	s here			

	status heater testing for shorts static data vacuum curves remarks
	remarks about measured tube:
	ID: # <sup>0</sup>
	(Remarks and id will be saved in the data file for measured values and printed on the test protocol)
VDB_REMARKS	Remarks field from tubestock database
VDATE	Current date and time
VTIME	
VDB_DAT	Date from tubestock.dbf
VSOFTWARE VFIRMWARE	The RoeTest software and firmware versions

Remark: If printing from roetest.exe: All fields are available. If printing from roetestdatabase.exe: Only the saved data fields in the tubestock.dbf are available.

Notes	
V	Data comes from the measurement software. You can also load previous saved measurement data. If you load from 'tubestock.dbf' and no measurement data attachment exists, then the %-values from the 'tubestock.dbf' are used. Tip: With the 'F2' key you can quickly load data from 'tubestock.dbf.'
VDB	Data comes from the tubestock database. This data is only available if the tube ID and data are stored in the database and the data is manually entered. You can recognize these because the variable names for this type of data starts with VDB

#### Conditional printing - tags:

Data between the start symbol <n> and end symbol </n> is not printed when the tube function is not available. N indicates the tube function. You can use this functionality to only print specific data for types that support specific functions e.g. only print transconductance for triodes or pentodes.

Example:

Bla bla bla<2>whatever text</2>bla bla bla

If the tube doesn't support function 2, then "whatever text" is not printed. This also works for bar codes.

2. Windows label printers (Printing is done as graphics using a standard Windows printer driver)



<sup>(</sup>Example: Brother QL-570)

## System Requirements:

You'll need a label printer that can be controlled as a standard Windows printer (e.g. from Word, Excel or arbitrary other applications). There is a vast number of printers available from different manufacturers (e.g. many printers from Brother like the QL-570, that I have tested).

## Labels:

The labels can be designed freely. However it is not possible to use printer built in features e.g. bar code creation, as the printer data are transferred as graphical data; therefore the printer built in options for bar code generation cannot be used.

For this type of printer control there is a simple editor built into the RoeTest software.

Variables:

The same variables as described in the above section for ZPL-printers can be used.

# Using the label editor:

The editor is accessible from the printer menu:

	RoeTest - professional tube-testing-system	emDrucken			23
	drucken				
	Druckumfang:				
		drucken	FreePDF		
	Prüfprotokoll komplett	<b>V</b>			
	alle Grafiken auf eine Seite		Papier: A4	210 mm x 297 mm	
	G1-Kennlinie System 1				
	G1-Kennlinie System 2				
<u>D</u> aten akt. Röhre	G1-Kennlinie System 3			Drucker <u>e</u> instellunger	1
Detenbenken	A/G2-Kennlinie System 1				
Datenbarken	A/G2-Kennlinie System 2			drucken	
Fadentest	A/G2-Kennlinie System 3				
Lagomost	Erläuterung (Arcobat Reader erforderlich)				
Kurzschlusstest	Kurzprotokoll				
<u>s</u> tatische Messung	Rid av Kussertekell bisaufürse				
<u>K</u> ennlinien	Blad zu Kurzprotokoli ninzurugen		Röhrenname	<b>▼</b> #ID	
Schnelltest		er 'lab'=Window	s Grafik Etikette	endrucker)	
<u>d</u> rucken	Drucker:			Drucker auswählen	
Kennlinien auswerten	WWeigNPCL6 Driver for Universal Print Etikett:			ZPL-Etikett auswähle	n
St <u>a</u> pelverarbeitung 🕂	C:\CBuilder5\Projects\RoeTest\Label 40 x 21 m	Grafik(lab)-Etikett			
manuell				Drucken	
_			[	<u>a</u> bbrechen	
Info					

<u>VDE SIGORIG</u> √TY1:VP1 % <b>#VID</b> <2>VTY2:VP2 ¥Ø₽₽_COND <3>VTY3:VP3 ¥₽₽₽_MANUFACT <4>VD8_TY4:VD8_VP4 %> 4	prev	view - Vo	orschau								
dd texts/variables, positi	on (mm) ar	nd style o	of fonts to	the table							
dd texts/variables, positi ier Texte/Variablen, derei	on (mm) ar n Position (	nd style o (in mm) u	of fonts to Ind die So	the table hriftart erfas:	sen			siz	e of labe	el + offs	set
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#### Note:

As the variable names are often longer than the size of the text, the label's draft is displayed different compared to the printout (the variables names are replaced with the shorter variables contents when printing from the RoeTest software).

Druckeinstellungen f ür Brother QL-570 ×					
Druckmedium Grafiken Optioner	Support Pri	nter setup in Windows System			
	Format:	Normalformat			
	Bandbreite:	62mm			
25,0mm	Länge:	Min: 12,7 Max: 1000,0 25,0 mm			
↓ k→→ 62mm	Bandvorschub:	Min: 3,0 Max: 127,0 3,0 mm ▲			
	Ausrichtung:	C Querformat			
	Exemplare:	Hochformat     Sortiert     Umgekehrte Reihenfolge			
	Qualität:	Oer Druckgeschwindigkeit Vorrang geben			
		O Der Druckqualität Vorrang geben			
<u>sy</u>	Auflösung:	○ 300 x 300 dpi			
		O 300 X 600 api			
		Def.Etikettenformat Standard			
		OK Abbrechen Übernehmen			

Note: You must select printer specific data like strip width, length, orientation etc. in the associated printer driver settings, as the RoeTest does not supply these data when printing the labels.

## Label printing using the RoeTest software:

The print screen has the following options as shown below::

### 1. ZPL-Printer

Etiketten Drucker ('prn'=ZPL-Drucker oder 'lab'=Windows ( Drucker:	Grafik Etikettendrucker)	
ZDesigner GX420t	• ZPL C graphic/lab	Drucker auswählen
Etikett:		
Standard: C:\CBuilder5\Projects\RoeTest\RoeTestEtikettHelmut 40x22.prn		ZPL-Etikett
Stabi: C:\CBuilder5\Projects\RoeTest\RoeTestEtikettStabi 40x22.prn		ZPL-Etikett Stabi
Etikettenanzahl: 1		drucken

### 2. Windows Graphics Printer

Eti	iketten Drucker ('prn'=ZPL-Drucker oder 'lab'=Windo	ws Grafik Etiket	tendrucker)	
F	reePDF	C ZPL	graphic/lab	Drucker auswählen
E	tikett:			
S C	Standard: C\CBuilder5\Projects\RoeTest\Label 62 x 25 mm endlos QL5	70.lab		Etiketteneditor (graphik/lab)
S	Stabi: C\CBuilder5\Projects\RoeTest\Label Stabi 62 x 25 mm endlos	s QL570.lab		Etiketteneditor (graphik/lab)
Eti	kettenanzahl:			drucken

Note: The file type (extension) must match the selected printer type:

Label type:	Printer type:
File extension ,prn'	Select ZPL-label printer
File extension ,lab'	Select Windows label printer
File extension ,lab'	Select Windows label printer

It does not make sense to send a ,prn'-file to a Windows printer neither to send a ,lab'-file to a ZPL-printer!

Select the label type (prn file). Select the number of labels to print.

Your selections are saved.

Use the print button to print the label using the currently loaded measurement data.

Label printing can also be included in the Roetest batch processing function.

Starting with software version 8.2.0.0 labels can also be printed from the tube stock database. However only fields saved to the tube stock data base are available for printing.

Starting with software version 8.3.0.0 for stabis are extra labels useable.

sample label with Zebra printer:



sample label with Windows graphic label printer (Brother QL-570):

