

# Printing to printers in PHP

Asked 7 years, 10 months ago  
Active 5 years, 5 months ago  
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I'm trying to set up a CLI PHP application to print a set of web pages to a default or specified printer. I'm on a Windows 7 machine with PHP 5.2.11 running in a CLI. To test the print functionality I've loaded PHP\_printer.dll and I'm printing to Onenote, a print to file option, using the exact printer name given in PRINTER\_ENUM\_LOCAL.

**Update:** Here's the latest code:

```
$handle = printer_open("Send To OneNote 2010");
printer_start_doc($handle, "My Document");
printer_start_page($handle);

$filename='index.html';
$handle=fopen($filename, "r");
$content = fread($handle, filesize($filename));
fclose($handle);

printer_set_option($handle, PRINTER_MODE, "RAW");
printer_write($handle,$content);


printer_end_page($handle);
printer_end_doc($handle);
printer_close($handle);
```

I've gotten this code to print a blank page to the correct printer, but I'm unable to print the strings I pass to printer\_write. I confirmed that \$content is properly filled with the contents of my test html file. No matter what I provide as the second arg (string to be printed) I get a blank page. Is there something I'm missing to at least allow me to print some text onto a page?

Alternately is there a better way to do this (using PHP/javascript files)? What I am trying to do is print web pages as they appear (CSS included) via a CLI app, the web sites written in PHP and I'm trying to minimize complexity. If there is a better way to print these (converting to PDF and printing is an option apparently) I'm open but it sounded like this was the simplest/de facto method in PHP.


[php](#) [windows](#) [printing](#) [command-line-interface](#)

edited Mar 12 '14 at 21:19

 **Jens A. Koch**

28.2k ● 6 ● 88 ● 104

asked Oct 20 '11 at 20:17

 **Ben Brocka**

1,135 ● 4 ● 28 ● 46

## 2 Answers

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I messed around with printer.dll for ages and got sick of it.

not sure if its much use, but I purchased this application <http://www.coolutils.com/TotalPDFPrinter>


and it lets me print pdf files from the cmd line from php, which worked well for me, but it does have a popup screen which you can only get rid of if you purchase the server version (which you will need if your apache is running as a service). obviously the non-popup version is way more expensive.

one thing I struggled with, was getting a list of printers available, so I wrote this little app in C# that spits out a list of printers as plain text, and then use php to call that and put them into a drop list on my web forms.

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Text;
using System.Drawing.Printing;

namespace PrinterList
{
    class Program
    {
        static void Main(string[] args)
        {
            foreach (String printer in PrinterSettings.InstalledPrinters)
            {
                Console.WriteLine(printer.ToString());
            }
        }
    }
}
```

answered Oct 20 '11 at 21:25

 **bumporbox**

8,344 ● 4 ● 35 ● 60

Thanks for the tip, that's a no-go though, we'd have to get the server version as it's an automated process. – [Ben Brocka](#) Oct 20 '11 at 21:32

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As far as I know, you should use `php_printer.dll`. Check [here](#). Then, add the `php_printer.dll` extension to your `php.ini`. If you have done that, then...

If you qualify and put clearly the ip/route in where the printer is installed, it should do the trick. Something like `printer_open("\\\xx.x.xx.xx\_\_printername_\_");`. (Local printers wouldn't need to add the server manually, afaiK)

To check for printers, try something like `printer_list(PRINTER_ENUM_LOCAL | PRINTER_ENUM_SHARED)`. There is something like a `printer.default_printer` directive on `php.ini`, if I recall ok. Tested this quite some time ago on a php 5.x installation. Good luck.

answered Oct 20 '11 at 20:35

 **AleksanderKseniya**

292 ● 2 ● 11

I've gotten that part working now (sorry I was a bit hasty in writing the question), I've updated it to my current situation. I can print a blank page to the right printer but nothing else. – [Ben Brocka](#) Oct 20 '11 at 20:55

`printer_write` will print a string, therefore that updated code should work. Try using `fopen()`, `fread()` and `fclose()` for a test with an external php/text file. If it still doesn't work, considering that that `printer_open` is correctly defined for your local(?) printer, we should have to look somewhere else. – [AleksanderKseniya](#) Oct 20 '11 at 22:00

Just tried that and I get the text out of the file just fine but the page is still blank. I updated my code in my question. In addition OneNote complains that it can't read the "filetype" being printed, but every screen/paper printer I print to has given me a blank page. I wanted to get this to work but it's looking like it will be best to alter a VB app of ours to print instead, if you have more ideas I'll certainly try them though. – [Ben Brocka](#) Oct 21 '11 at 13:55

Maybe that happens because you aren't opening it as a binary file. On the `$handle=fopen($filename, "r");` instead of read mode, use read binary: `$handle=fopen($filename, "rb");` (Same goes for all the rest modes, check [here](#) for a quick reference. If that doesn't work, come back and we'll find some other way. – [AleksanderKseniya](#) Oct 24 '11 at 7:55

