

CUSTOMER GUIDE: Barcode Features

Overview

FLEETMATE supports a variety of *linear* barcode symbologies. The box to the left provides a list of barcode symbol sets that are supported within the FLEETMATE software. You do not need to use barcode features in order to use FLEETMATE. This is an optional feature.

If you have linear barcode technology already in-use at your business, chances are that FLEETMATE will be able to accommodate your existing barcode type, and your specific scanning definitions.

If you have not used bar coding in the past and want to begin using this technology, you will need to research the various symbologies to determine which one will best fit your business needs. Some barcodes are designed for numeric values only (i.e. Codabar). Some can support alphanumeric (A-Z and 0-9) characters, while others support additional characters in a full character set. Some are also optimized for, or limited to, values of a certain length of characters. We recommend that you adequately research the topic to make the best choice for your business. If you are unsure of the symbology to select, we recommend that you consider Code 39.

2 of 5
Interleaved 2 of 5
Code 39
Codabar
Code 39 Extended
Code 128A
Code 128B
Code 128C
UPC-A
MSI (Plessey)
Code 93
Code 93 Extended
EAN-13
EAN-8
PostNet
ANSI 39
ANSI 39X
Code 128 Auto
UCC EAN-8
UPC-E

Barcode Scanner

FLEETMATE requires a barcode scanner that immediately transmits the scanned code to your PC. Scanners that store scans for off-loading later are not compatible with FLEETMATE.



You can use handheld trigger-type devices, wands, and stationary scanners. We recommend USB type scanners, as those are usually the easiest to hook-up and use.

You may need to set FLEETMATE to use your Start and Stop characters if you are using special values. However, in most cases, standard default scanner settings will require no special adjustment.

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Barcode Fonts

FLEETMATE does not include barcode fonts. If you want to print barcode labels for your stock parts, storage bins, etc., you will need to purchase those fonts separately.

Barcode fonts are often sold in *packs*. Make sure that the pack you choose contains the font for the symbology you plan to use.

There are labels and reports included in FLEETMATE that are designed to accommodate printing barcodes, but you must have the fonts installed on your PC in order for the barcodes to print.

In terms of font selection and point settings, we recommend a Small or Medium Height font that provides human-readable values, and a maximum point size of eight to ten (8-10) points. These settings will work well with most scanners, as well as the reports in FLEETMATE that are designed to support barcodes.



The barcode pictured above is a Code 39, human-readable, Medium Height font at 10 points. The human-readable feature is convenient since it automatically displays the actual value "ABCDEF123456" that the barcode represents.

There are several generic type label formats included with FLEETMATE. However, you can customize things using FLEETMATE Report Designer to support a variety of different label types and printers. This process is covered later in this document.

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Barcode Printers

If you plan to print barcode labels, you will need a printer. You can use a laser printer to print 8.5" x 11" sheet label paper. However, a printer designed specifically to print rolls of labels will be a better choice.

Pictured to the right is a Zebra® TLP 2824, which is a compact, easy to use device that also features *thermal* printing. This printer will accommodate labels up to 2" in width. Wider format label printers are available



To the left is a DYMO® LabelWriter® 450 label printer. This is another example of an inexpensive, compact desktop label printer that is easy to install and use.

We include a label configuration in FLEETMATE for the DYMO® 30252 roll labels, which can be used with this printer.

We also include a label format in FLEETMATE for Brother DK type continuous tape that is 2.4" wide, used in a Brother® QL 720NW. The QL 720NW is another example of an easy to use desktop label printer.

This printer cuts each label automatically at the specified height. The label we provide (2.4" x 1.1") is a general-purpose sized label for labeling parts bins and boxes.

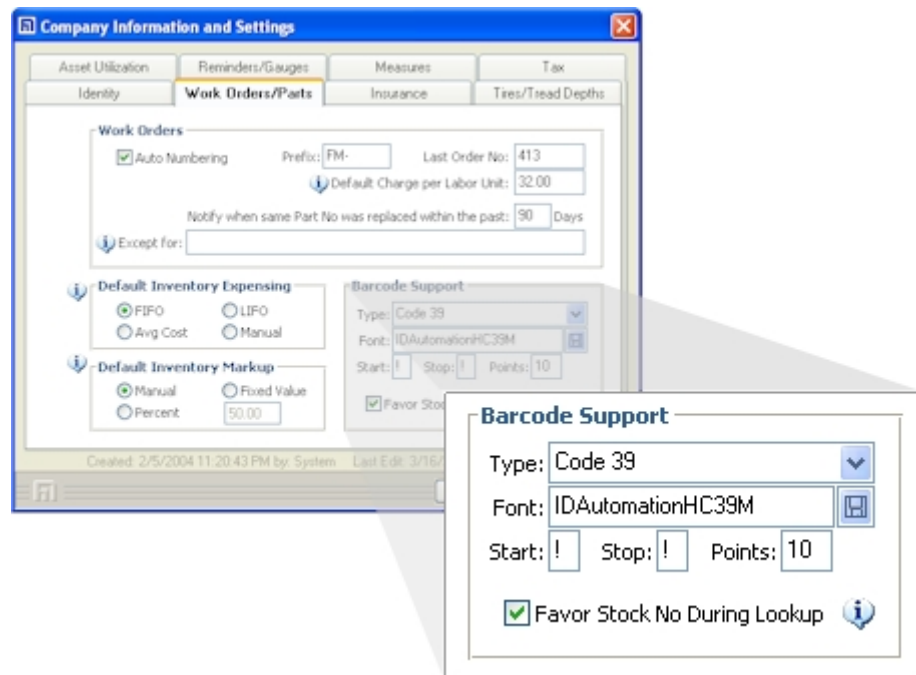


If you plan to use a label printer with FLEETMATE, be sure to carefully follow the step-by-step installation instructions that come with your printer.

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Barcode Set Up

There are several values that you will need to define in order to use the barcode features in FLEETMATE. To setup these values, click the Company Data | Customer Information and Settings... menu option from the main window.



Barcode Settings on the Work Orders/Parts Tab

On this dialog, click the Work Orders tab to define these settings.

- **Type** – the Type of barcode symbology you are using
- **Font** – The Font Name you want to use that is installed on your PC
- **Start** – the Start character indicating the beginning of a bar-coded value
- **Stop** – the Stop character indicating the end of a bar-coded value
- **Points** – the Point Size to use when printing bar-coded reports/labels

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More About Barcode Font Sizes

Many barcode font suppliers will offer the same symbology type (e.g. Code 39, Code 128, etc.) of barcode font in several different sizes, which govern the basic height of the barcode.

Below are some examples of Code 39 fonts from IDAutomation® to illustrate how these fonts are named, and what the names mean. Note that the *Point Size* for all of the barcodes pictured below is set to 10 points. The only difference is in the font name, which identifies the image height. 8 to 10 points should work well.

- 
IDAutomationHC39XS Extra Small **GOOD** ✓
- 
IDAutomationHC39S Small **GOOD** ✓
- 
IDAutomationHC39M Medium **OK** *
- 
IDAutomationHC39L Large *Too High*
- 
IDAutomationHC39XL Extra Large *Too High*

Note how the letter designations (XS, S, M, L, XL) in the font name determine the basic size of the barcode in terms of height. A **small** sized font is recommended for use with FLEETMATE. If you select a barcode font that is too large in terms of height, your barcodes will not appear properly when printed.

* Medium may be fine as long as Stock No values are kept to a maximum length of 7-8 characters.

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Barcode Labels

FLEETMATE includes reports that will print several common-sized barcode labels. For instance, a generic 2" x 1" label format can be found under the "Inventory" report type in FLEETMATE Report Viewer. Likewise, you will find a 2" x 2" label format. If one of the generic label formats works well with your printer and paper type, you're all set.

We also provide the following three (3) specific label formats as follows:

Pictured first is an Able® 1.5-1-TT-77-PB piggyback thermal transfer label with a yellow flood. The label stock is *piggybacked* on a second release liner to allow the label to be applied - the top layer can then be removed and reapplied at a later time. The label pictured was printed with a Zebra TLP2824 desktop printer.



The label pictured to the right is an image of a DYMO® 30252-type label. The dimensions of this label are 1.125" (height) x 3.5" (width). This label was printed with a DYMO LabelWriter® 450 printer.



The next label was printed using a Brother® QL 720NW printer using a 2.4" wide continuous paper tape. The printer cuts the tape following dimensional specs. We provide a 1.1"H x 2.4"W default label format that supports this type of roll paper and QL 720NW printer.



These are three (3) examples of specialized label formats that come included with FLEETMATE.

You can further customize things using FLEETMATE Report Designer to support virtually any type and/or size of label.

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Designing Barcode Labels

As mentioned previously, FLEETMATE includes several label formats that will print several common barcode labels. For instance, a generic 2" x 1" label format can be found under the "Inventory" report type in FLEETMATE Report Viewer.

Beyond the generic label sizes, you can opt to use FLEETMATE Report Designer to create label reports that will support virtually any type of roll label, either die-cut or continuous roll.

When designing a report to support a specific type of label, you will need to know the exact mechanical specifications of your labels.

Knowing the exact label dimensions is essential. The picture to the right shows the three (3) precise measurements that you will need to know:



- **Label Width**
Accommodate for the release liner with a margin, both left and right.
- **Label Height**
Leave some white-space for the top-most and bottom-most data elements.
- **Gap Height (spacing)**
Your label printer may automatically index to the next label. In these cases, you do not need to specify the gap height when designing your label. An example would be when using continuous tape type rolls. Refer to the Owner's Manual that came with your printer for additional information.

Report Designer will enable you to specify measurements in inches, or you may use twips or decimal formats. In most cases, it is a good idea to set a minimal left-margin (e.g., 0.125") to be sure that the left-most character prints properly.

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Troubleshooting Custom Barcode Label Formats

First, read the Owner's Manual that came with your printer so that you know how to adjust printer properties and various other features and settings. Also, make sure that you visit the manufacturer's Website to ensure that you have the latest driver installed for your model printer. Outdated print drivers can be a common source of difficulty.

Developing a custom label format can be tedious work. You will likely need to experiment and make several test runs to make sure everything fits on your label. Also make sure that the printer indexes the next label properly.

Labels are limited in size. You have to consider how much physical space is available, and whether that space will accommodate the data fields you need. Use appropriate font sizes for printing text values on your label.

When specifying dimensions, follow the units of measure recommended in your Owner's Manual for your printer. If they use inches in decimal notation such as 1.125 inches, stick with inches in decimal form and use the double-quote character to tell Report Designer that you are entering the value as inches. Report Designer will automatically convert your inches entry to Twips, which is the native format used by Report Designer (1" = 1440 Twips).

If you get a message from FLEETMATE (or from your printer driver) that the label dimensions and/or paper size is incorrect, close FLEETMATE and follow the steps below:

- 1) Open the Printers applet in Windows Control Panel.
- 2) Right-click on your label printer and choose Preferences or Properties, whichever terminology is offered by the driver.
- 3) Make certain that the Paper Size setting matches the dimensions of the label paper you are using. Otherwise, your labels will not print properly.
- 4) Apply these changes, close Control Panel, restart FLEETMATE, and try once again to print your custom labels.

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Using Barcodes With FLEETMATE

The built-in barcode functionality in FLEETMATE relates primarily to inventory items. The four (4) primary areas that feature barcode functionality are:

- Locating a vehicle record from the main window (VIN, Veh No, or Tag No)
- Issuing inventory items to a work order
- Inventory status
- Receiving inventory into stock

Stock No Values

When defining stock number values for your inventory items in FLEETMATE, we recommend that your Stock No values be at least four (4) characters in length, and no more than 10 characters in length. Stock No values should **not** contain spaces, or any type of punctuation. Further, always using upper-case alphabetic characters is recommended. Some examples are listed below.

- 123  Value is too short
- 123.oil  Contains punctuation and lower-case
- 12345678901234  Value is too long
- !12 3456,78  Contains punctuation and spaces
- 123ABC  **Good**
- 1234567ABC  **Good**

Recommended valid characters to use when defining Stock No values are:

- Numerals 0 – 9.
- Upper-case alphabetic characters A – Z and a hyphen (-).