



Labels From Heaven

I'm pretty sure everyone at one time or another either owned a Dymo handheld LabelMaker—or wished they did. Dymo's been in the label business for over 40 years! Remember those good old days when we had colored plastic labels with raised white lettering identifying some dear possession? The contraption probably resembled something like the picture below.



Well get with the times people! Dymo's slogan "Makes life a little bit easier" will surely ring true for those of you in need of creating professional quality labels directly from your PC. Dymo now calls them "LabelWriters." The current best selling crop of three are the Dymo LabelWriter 315, 330, and 330Turbo. All three connect via USB and work great with Windows or Macintosh. I decided on the 330 because it handles all 40 standard Dymo labels (and they make labels for everything...CD's to badges), sharp graphics, and prints up to 2.3" wide. The only difference between the 330 and 330Turbo is speed. The LabelWriter 330 is plenty fast for me at about 4 seconds per label. The Turbo model ups the ante at a speedy 2 seconds per label—for folks who really crank out plenty of labels.

The Dymo LabelWriter 330—Up Close and Personal

The black and silver egg shaped 330 has a curvaceous exterior with a charcoal tinted window. Set-up is a snap following the step-by-step instructions in the Quick Start User Guide. The 330 LabelWriter package is a classy one which includes cables (USB & Network), software, and even a generous Starter Roll of 100 white shipping labels. Sorry, but we need to talk a bit techy to explain the print technology. I'll be easy on you. Dymo utilized what is called Direct Thermal printing to produce labels. The upshot of this technology is you will never need to replace ink, toner, or ribbons. Thermal printing is based on the principle of heat transfer from the thermal print head inside the Dymo LabelWriter. A row of miniature heating elements on the print head is pressed against the thermal labels. As a specific element generates heat, a thermal reaction takes place at that point on the label and the label becomes discolored. Yes, you must use specially treated thermal labels and Dymo sells all kinds (from about \$10 to \$20 you get hundreds of labels per roll). It prints at a high quality 300 dpi. One limitation of this technology is no color printing...but, you can buy color and custom labels from Dymo ☺. The warranty is one year parts and labor with a life expectancy of 500,000 address labels! The street price of the 330 is about \$150-\$180.

Labels to the People

Time to discuss creating labels—after all, that’s the prime function of this device. To create great looking labels like the one below, you’ll need to be adept at using the Dymo LabelWriter Software. If you’ve ever used Publisher or similar programs you’ll feel right at home with Dymo’s software. In “Label Designer” mode, your creativity has free reign to control type style, import your own graphics (convert to black & white for best results), and add lines/borders. Don’t worry because the 40 built-in templates for most labels will get you going. I highly recommend you skim over the included PDF Software User’s Guide to maximize your knowledge.



The user guide could be more “User Friendly.” I noticed several instructions which could have been clearer. Just the same, it’s definitely a good reference. The on-screen help icon on the left side lets you drill down for instant guidance should you need it. Overall, the software is very easy to understand which makes label creation a joy. Saving any label you create, as well as being able to specify a default label should you use one style frequently is very convenient.

Dymo is Dynamite!

Dymo added a lot of functionality into this package. One sweet feature is called the Address Fixer. No, it’s not something you do to your pets. Rather, this amazing utility automatically ensures all your addresses are valid. How does it do it? Address Fixer takes any address and compares it against a comprehensive online database of U.S. addresses. Address mistakes are automatically corrected and verified, the 9-digit ZIP code is added, and formatting is perfectly adjusted to Post Office standards. Did I mention you can download postage from the Internet such as Stamps.com and print the official postage labels simultaneously while printing the address? Also included are plug-ins for Microsoft Word, Outlook, Act (version 6 or later), and Palm. A free plug-in is also available for QuickBooks at the Dymo site. After installed, the Dymo icon is added to the apps toolbar. Dymo also makes an SDK toolkit upon request to add label making functionality for most Windows applications.

Go Get One

The 330 LabelWriter would make a great addition to any business or home office. To learn more about the LabelWriter line or any of Dymo's other quality products, visit www.dymo.com. The system requirements are Windows 98, 2000, Me, or XP.