

Using the Serial Console with Programs Written in QuickBASIC

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Introduction

This document explains how to write programs in Microsoft's QuickBASIC that will correctly display output using the serial console feature of Technologic Systems Embedded PCs.

Background Information

Technologic Systems Embedded PCs are able to redirect the console (keyboard input and display output) over a serial port, greatly simplifying development and debugging of software. This feature is only available from programs that use the standard BIOS routines for display and keyboard. Most common compilers (Turbo C/C++ for example) produce executables that use the BIOS routines correctly.

Unfortunately, executables compiled by Microsoft QuickBASIC appear to access the video hardware directly, defeating the serial console feature.

Fortunately, there is a simple fix for this non-feature of QuickBASIC.

Details

To display text using the BIOS functions in QuickBASIC (enabling the serial console), you just open and print to the `CONS:` device. You do not need to close the device – this is done automatically when the program exits.

Example code:

```
OPEN "CONS:" FOR OUTPUT AS #5  
PRINT #5, "This is a test."
```



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