W3A/P – WWW Applets/Printer drivers API

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Printer drivers are used to add support for making print-outs of certain document formats. They are much like viewers, except that their output is supposed to go to a hardcopy device instead of to the screen.

Printer drivers are characterized by:

1. one or more MIME types (the types they know how to print)
2. a list of object files
3. a suffix (referred to as `XXX` below)

The exported functions of printer drivers are almost the same as for viewers, that is:

- `Bool initXXX(char ***mime_types, int *nrtypes)`

  Initializes private variables and returns the list of formats that the applet accepts. (`XXX` is replaced with the unique suffix.) When an error occurs, the function sets the `errno` variable and returns `FALSE`.

- `Bool openXXX(const W3ADocumentInfo info, long id)`

  Directs the printer driver to start a new print job of the type indicated in `info`. The ID is theID used in subsequent calls to `writeXXX` and `closeXXX`. The function returns `FALSE` in case of an error and sets *errno* to the **error code**.

> **Question:** *Is it useful to have a* `flags` *argument, so that non-blocking I/ O can be specified?*

- `int writeXXX(long id, const char *buf, const unsigned int nchars)`

  Sends characters to the printer driver. It is not necessary (like it is with viewers) to make a call with `nchars = 0`, to indicate that the end of the data is reached. `W3AcloseXXX` may be called immediately. The return value is equal to *`nchars`* or -1 in case of an error.

- `Bool closeXXX(long id)`

  Signals the end of the data. The printer driver should invalidate (destroy) the *`self`* object.