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What Ghost Writer Does

Ghost Writer is a ProComm Plus for Windows ASPECT script designed to enhance and complement Ghost BBS by automating many functions associated with the maintenance of the various Support Files used by Ghost BBS. Various files including, but not limited to, DNL, MNU, NUF, and NWS files are used by Ghost BBS in its operation. Ghost Writer is designed to maintain and coordinate the use of many of these files. Ghost Writer is freely distributable, and you may use it for free for 30 and only 30 days. After this time period, you may continue to use the program if you pay the \$10 registration fee to the author.

Registration Form

Ghost Writer 1.0 (c) 1994, Carl Mellesmoen, all rights reserved

Registration of Ghost Writer implies acceptance of the licencing conditions as specified in the documentation accompanying the Ghost Writer software, contained in the archive "GWriter.Zip". Ghost Writer may be used free for 30 days before registration is required. Registered users will be sent a letter containing their validation number upon receipt of the registration fee of \$10 by the author.

Please print out this form by choosing "File...Print Topic", or print out the form "GWReg.wri" or "GWReg.txt" as supplied in the archive in which Ghost Writer is distributed. Fill in the information as requested below, and send it, along with a cheque or money order for \$10, to this address:

Carl Mellesmoen
238 - 4th St. East
Saskatoon, SK, Canada
S7H 1J1

NAME (FIRST & LAST): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PROVINCE/STATE: _____ COUNTRY: _____

TELEPHONE (Optional): _____

BBS/DATA/FAX NUMBER (indicate which - optional): _____

Fidonet address (optional): _____

WWIV-type Network address (optional): _____

How did you hear about, and/or where did you obtain Ghost Writer from?

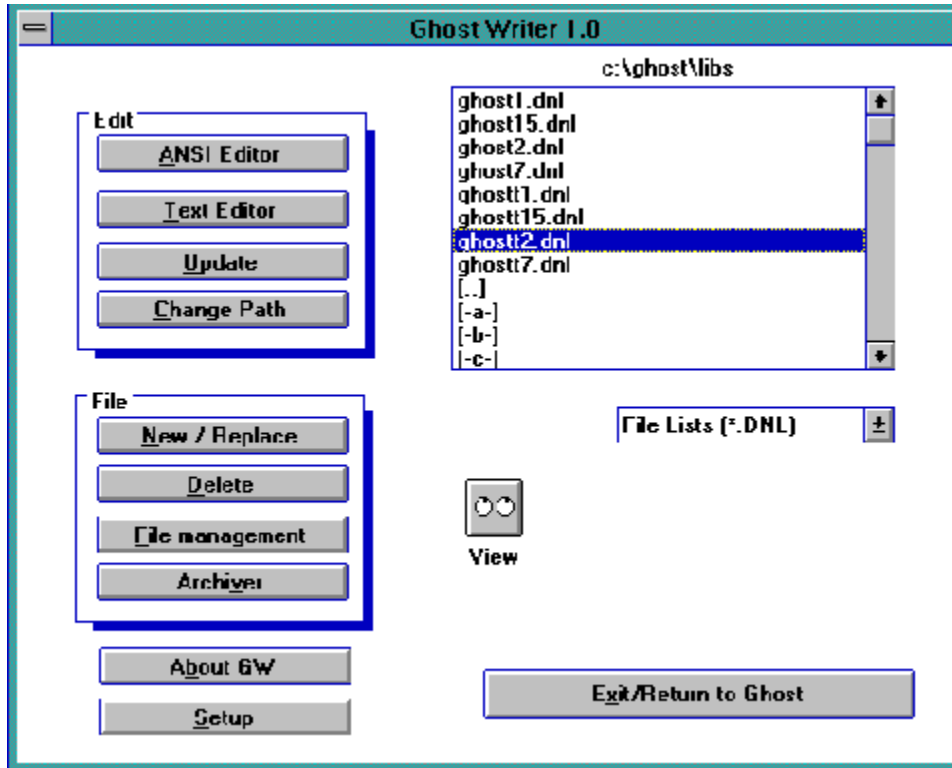
Please add any further comments below:

Licencing Agreement

Ghost Writer is supplied on an "as is" basis and the author is not liable for any problems encountered while using it, either by direct or indirect cause. Users of this software, registered or not, assume all risk associated with its use. Anyone may use this software for free without registering it for 30 days, and 30 days only. After this period, they must either send the \$10 registration fee to the author (as outlined in the Registration Form), along with their name and mailing address, or discontinue their use of the Ghost Writer software. Registration entitles the user to use the Ghost Writer software on one or more computers (one at a time), or for multiple users to use the software on a single workstation. Any additional use requires additional registration(s). The Ghost Writer software may be freely distributed in its original form, but may not be in any way altered or reverse-engineered.

The licencing agreement is to be governed by the laws of the province of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Main Menu Options



Related Topics:

- [ANSI Editor](#)
- [Text Editor](#)
- [File Management](#)
- [Archiver](#)
- [Update DNL](#)
- [Change Path](#)
- [New/Replace](#)
- [Delete](#)
- [Setup](#)
- [View](#)
- [About GW](#)
- [Exit/Return to Ghost](#)

ANSI Editor

Selecting this option from the Main Menu will launch the file you have designated as your external ANSI editor, or, if you have not yet designated one, you will be prompted to do so. An external ANSI editor is invaluable for viewing and editing your ANSI DNL, NWS, MNU, and NUF files. Launching an ANSI editor from Ghost Writer will also open any file you may have selected. If no file has been selected, the ANSI editor will launch without opening a file. An example of an ANSI editor is TheDraw (DOS). Note: The selected file will only be opened by programs that accept filenames as parameters - if your chosen ANSI editor does not, it may not run properly, or as described here. You may change your selection of ANSI editor from the Ghost Writer Setup menu. See DOS vs Windows.

Text Editor

Selecting this option from the Main Menu will launch the text editor you have previously configured as your default editor for ProComm Plus for Windows (eg. MS Windows Notepad). If you select a file from the directory listing before selecting this option, your default editor will launch and open the selected file. See your ProComm Plus for Windows user manual for details on changing your default editor.

File Management

Selecting this option from the Main Menu will prompt you to choose an external file management utility (eg. MS Windows File Manager) to manage files, if you have not yet chosen one in this manner, and then launch the chosen program. If you have previously chosen a file management utility, selecting this option will simply launch it. See DOS vs Windows.

Archiver

Selecting this option from the Main Menu will launch your choice of an external Archive Program which manages compressed files, unless you have not yet chosen one, in which case you will be prompted to do so. You may also select or change your choice of archive program within Ghost Writer's Setup dialog. See DOS vs Windows.

Update DNL

To update the DNL file listings, first choose a DNL file from the directory listing in the Ghost Writer main menu, and select "Update DNL" from the Main Menu. You will then be presented with the options: To Add or remove a file from the listing, change DNL or NWS Colours, perform a File Scan to add any new files in the DNL directory, Save changes to the DNL, and View the DNL. There are checkboxes for using Upper-Case FILENAMES in your listings, for using FILE_ID.DIZ descriptions when available, and for adding new entries to the top of a DNL.

Change Path

Under the Main Menu, you may use this option to change the File Path to the subdirectory containing the files to be used for a particular DNL. You will be asked to supply the new path in a dialog that prompts you with the name of the current path (if there is one) for the DNL. If you don't wish to change the path after all, you may select "Cancel", or "OK", if the current directory is listed. If you enter a new path, this option will offer to create the new subdirectory, if it doesn't exist, and record the path to the subdirectory in the appropriate place in your Ghost.INI file. This option is also accessible in Ghost Writer's Setup dialog.

New/Replace

Use this option from the Main Menu to create a new DNL or NWS file. If you have selected one of these, it will be the default for the create/replace procedure, but you may change the number of the DNL or NWS before doing the creating/replacing. Under the "create file" dialog, you will be prompted for a bulletin number for the DNL or NWS file. The dialog will inform you of the numeric range that is possible, and the numeric range of the private bulletins. If you enter a number which is already in use, you will be asked if you wish to replace it, and you may cancel at that time. Otherwise, you will be brought to the Header dialog box (unless the new DNL does not have an associated File Path, which you will be prompted for as well). Once there, you can assign various parameters for the creation of a new DNL or NWS file.

Delete

When you select a file of any sort and choose this option under the Main Menu, Ghost Writer will display the file in a window. From there, you can confirm or cancel the deletion, or View the file. Note that deletion of DNL or NWS files is automatically performed when you choose "New / Replace" and specify a file number which is already in use.

Setup

From here you can access various Ghost Writer setup options. On leaving the setup dialog box, Ghost Writer will ask you whether you want to Save your changes, if you haven't already. Simply select "Yes" to save the changes or "No" to exit setup without saving them.

View

Selecting a file and choosing the "View" option will display the selected file in your ProComm Plus for Windows terminal window, in a fashion somewhat similar to the "capture file" playback feature in ProComm Plus for Windows, and even more similar to the way files are displayed locally and to a remote user by Ghost BBS. The display will pause after each "screenful" of your file is displayed. Then you will be prompted with "- More - (S)top - ". You may then press "S" to return to Ghost Writer, or any other key to view the next "screenful" of information. Once the end of the file has been reached, you may hit "ALT-P" to scroll back and view previous screens, or simply hit any other key to return to Ghost Writer. If you choose to scroll back, you must hit "ALT-P" again to exit the scroll back procedure, and then any other key to return to Ghost Writer.

About GW

Selecting this option from the Main Menu will display information about Ghost Writer - the version number, build date, user's name, and copyright information. If your copy of Ghost Writer is not registered, the dialog will allow you to access information about how to register Ghost Writer.

Exit/Return to Ghost

This option, from the Main Menu, will exit Ghost Writer and return to Ghost, if Ghost Writer was launched from within Ghost, or will return you to ProComm Plus for Windows otherwise.

Setup Options

Ghost Writer Setup...

Change

File Utility d:\win\winfile.exe

Archiver d:\winzip\winzip.exe

ANSI Editor d:\thedraw\thedraw.exe

DNL

ghost.dnl
ghost15.dnl
ghost2.dnl

Current Path: c:\ghost\dl

Save

Exit

Colours

DNL Files

Centre Add new entries to top of list **Maximum # of libraries:** 15

Time, Date **Maximum # of Private Libraries:** 5

24-hour Time **ASCII Fill Character:** >

Upper case FILENAMES **ANSI Fill Character:** Å

Use FILE_ID.DIZ (PKUNZIP must be in path!)

NWS Files **Maximum # of bulletins:** 15

Centre **Maximum # of private bulletins:** 5

Time, Date **ASCII Fill Character:** - **ANSI Fill Character:** Å

24 hour Time

Screen Width: 78 [Set to a value between 50 and 79]

Subdirectory for temporary files: C:\TEMP

Related Topics:

- [Colours](#)
- [File Utility, Archiver, ANSI Editor](#)
- [Centre](#)
- [Time/Date Stamp](#)
- [Maximum #](#)
- [Fill Characters](#)
- [Change Path](#)
- [Adding New Entries to Top of DNL](#)
- [Using FILE_ID.DIZ](#)
- [Upper-Case Filenames](#)
- [Screen Width](#)
- [Temporary Subdirectory](#)
- [Save](#)
- [Exit](#)

Colours

Selecting this option allows you to change or configure the colours of ANSI NWS and DNL files, including the header lines and text, and the file name, size, date, and descriptions for DNL files, and the text colour for NWS files. Simply select an option from the drop-down list box and select the foreground and background colours for that option, and save the new colour combination. If you do not wish to have ANSI colours used at all, select the "No ANSI!" checkbox. The first time you select your colours, the "No ANSI!" checkbox will be selected, and you will need to disable it in order to make a colour selection.

File Utility, Archiver, ANSI Editor

You can designate any windows or DOS program you wish to launch from Ghost Writer as an external file utility, archive manager, or ANSI editor by selecting the appropriate button in the "change" section of GW Setup. A standard dialog box will appear, prompting you to select an executable file. Once you select a file and save the change, Ghost Writer will attempt to launch the chosen program when the corresponding button is selected from the main menu.

Centre

When this option is enabled, the header(s) for DNL and NWS files will be centred. This can also be changed from the DNL editing dialog, and when creating a new DNL or NWS, in the "header" dialog.

Time/Date Stamp

When this option is enabled, new DNL and NWS files will include the date and time of creation, updated NWS and DNL files will display the date of last modification (except when an entry is removed from a DNL). Enabling the "24-Hour time" checkbox will cause the time stamped on a DNL (if the *time/date stamp* option is enabled) to be in 24-hour (or "military") format.

Maximum

These are options for the maximum *total* number of libraries (file areas/listings) and NWS bulletins, and the maximum number of *private* file libraries and bulletins. Ghost BBS allows for a maximum of 32,767 file libraries and NWS bulletins, but it is strongly recommended that a much lower number are used (30 or less of each). Private file libraries and bulletins are accessible to users of level 3 access or higher -- see your Ghost BBS documentation for further explanation.

Fill Characters

These characters will be used by Ghost Writer to create lines as part of the headers for DNL and NWS files. The specified characters will be used to "fill" an entire line by being repeated until the specified screen width is met. Both the ASCII and ANSI fill characters are actually ASCII characters (getting confused?), but the ones specified as "ASCII" will be used in the "plain" text versions of DNL and NWS files, while the "ANSI" counterparts will be used in the "ANSI" versions. Any ASCII character can be used, but you may wish to avoid the use of "high ASCII" characters in your "plain" text files. Your *Procomm Plus for Windows User Manual* contains a chart of ASCII characters that are possible (you may need to hold down the "ALT" key while entering the ASCII decimal value -- for instance, "0196" for an unbroken horizontal line).

Change Path

Under the "change" section of GW Setup, you can view the subdirectory corresponding to a particular DNL by selecting that DNL. To change the subdirectory, enter the name of the new subdirectory. When you save the change, the new subdirectory will be adopted for the DNL, if that subdirectory exists. If it does not, Ghost Writer will ask if you wish to create the subdirectory.

Adding New Entries to Top of DNL

If you want to add new file listings to the top of your DNL file so that your callers will see your "newest" files listed first, make sure that the "Add new entries to top" checkbox is enabled in the DNL editing window. This option can also be configured from within Ghost Writer setup. When this option is enabled, Ghost Writer will insert each new entry you add at the top of the DNL list (if you want to have your files listed in a particular order, for instance file 1 of a series listed above file 2, you will have to add them in the order opposite you wish them to appear). If this option is disabled, Ghost Writer will add new entries to the bottom of the listing. You can change this option between different entries, for instance when you wish to add one file to the top of the list, and add another to the bottom.

Using FILE_ID.DIZ

The inclusion of a short description of a compressed archive by the use of a text file called "FILE_ID.DIZ" is becoming quite common. Its popularity is undoubtedly related to the ability to automate the use of such a description by BBS utilities. Ghost Writer allows for extracting FILE_ID.DIZ descriptions for insertion into DNL files, as long as there is a valid temporary directory specified under Ghost Writer setup, and the directory containing PKUNZIP.EXE is either specified in your DOS path, or you have a PIF named "PKUNZIP.PIF" which specifies the path to PKUNZIP.EXE. At present, Ghost Writer will only work with ZIP format archives for this feature, and will attempt to extract FILE_ID.DIZ for a file regardless of its extension, if the option is enabled. If you do not wish to have Ghost Writer attempt to do this for a particular file, disable the option before adding the file entry.

Upper-Case Filenames

When this option is enabled, the names of files added to a DNL will be displayed in upper-case letters. If disabled, the option will cause the file names to be displayed entirely in lower-case.

Screen Width

The "width" of a NWS or DNL file, which can be set anywhere between 50 and 79 characters.

Temporary Subdirectory

If the option of using FILE_ID.DIZ descriptions is enabled, a valid subdirectory must be specified here, in order that it can be used to temporarily decompress the actual FILE_ID.DIZ files.

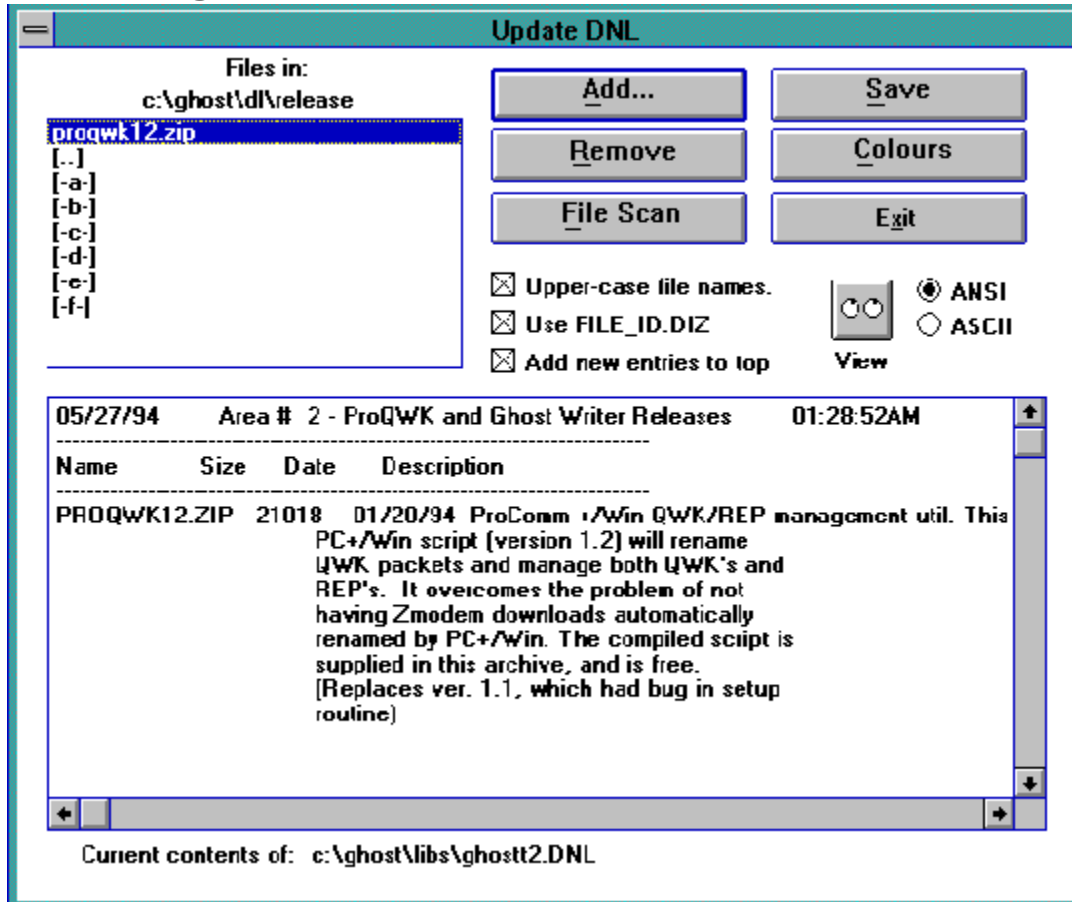
Save

Saves your changes to GW.INI file. This may take some time, since it saves *all* settings.

Exit

Exits setup routine, prompting you to save the settings if you have made any changes.

Updating a DNL File



Related Topics:

- [Directory Listing](#)
- [Adding a New Entry](#)
- [Removing an Entry](#)
- [File Scanning](#)
- [Save](#)
- [Colours](#)
- [Exit](#)
- [View](#)
- [File Display Window](#)
- [File Name](#)

Directory Listing

Shows the files present in the directory corresponding to the DNL being edited. A file may be selected for addition to the DNL, or for removal from the DNL.

Adding a New Entry

When a file is selected from the directory listing, it may be added to the DNL by selecting "Add". If it is already listed in the DNL, you will be asked whether you wish to replace the previous entry, simply add a second entry for the same file name, or cancel the new entry. If the file is not yet listed in the DNL, or you choose to replace the original or simply add another entry, you will be presented with a dialog box prompting you to enter a file description, or, if the option of using FILE_ID.DIZ descriptions is enabled, and the FILE_ID.DIZ file exists and the extraction is successful, Ghost Writer will display the dialog with the contents of FILE_ID.DIZ, which can then be edited further, if you so desire. Once you have the description you want, select the "OK" button. Ghost Writer will then update the DNL, inserting the name of the file, as well as the date and size of the file, and the description. (See: Ghost Writer Text Considerations)

Removing an Entry

This option will remove a file from a DNL listing, if it is present in the listing. It can be invoked with or without a file being selected from the directory listing, and you will be offered a chance to specify or edit the name of the file to remove.

File Scanning

Selecting this option will cause Ghost Writer to scan the current DNL file to see which files from the DNL subdirectory that it does not contain. For each unlisted file encountered, you will be give the opportunity to save the file to the DNL listing.

Save

Saves the changes to the DNL listing.

Colours

Allows you to access the dialog for changing Ghost Writer colours.

Exit

Returns to the main menu, prompting user to save changes to the DNL, if any have been made.

View

Displays the designated (ANSI or ASCII) DNL file in the terminal screen for previewing.

File Display Window

Shows the DNL file (ASCII version only) to facilitate editing. This window is for display only. For direct editing, you will have to use an external ANSI or text editor.

File Name

Shows the name of the DNL file being edited.

Editing Headers for DNL and NWS Files

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Header" with a teal title bar. Inside, the text "DNL number 2" is centered. Below it are two input fields: "ASCII fill character:" with a blue cursor in a box, and "ANSI fill character:" with the character "Ä" in a box. The label "Header:" is centered above a text box containing "Area # 2 - ProQWK and Ghost Writer Releases". Below this are three checked checkboxes: "Centre", "Date, Time Stamp", and "24-hour Time". To the right of these checkboxes are three buttons: "OK", "Cancel", and "Colours". A "Date/Time" label is positioned above the checkboxes.

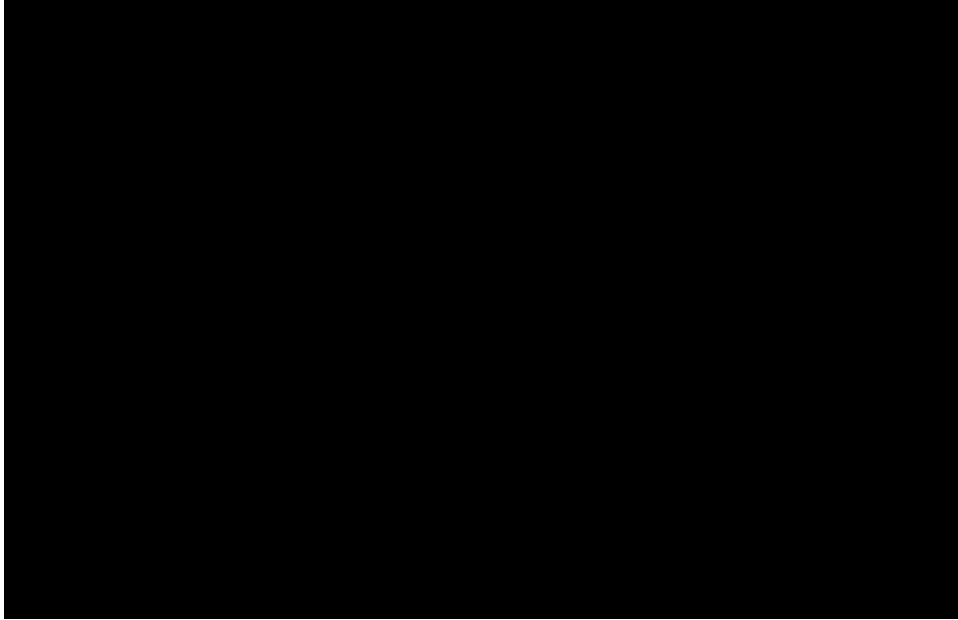
Related Topics:

[Header](#)

Header

Whatever you place in this space will end up in your DNL title, or in your NWS update title (It will appear at the top of the DNL, and at the top of the update for the NWS file. Each update to an NWS file will insert a new header.)

Updating a NWS File



Related Topics:

[What happens?](#)

[Entering Text](#)

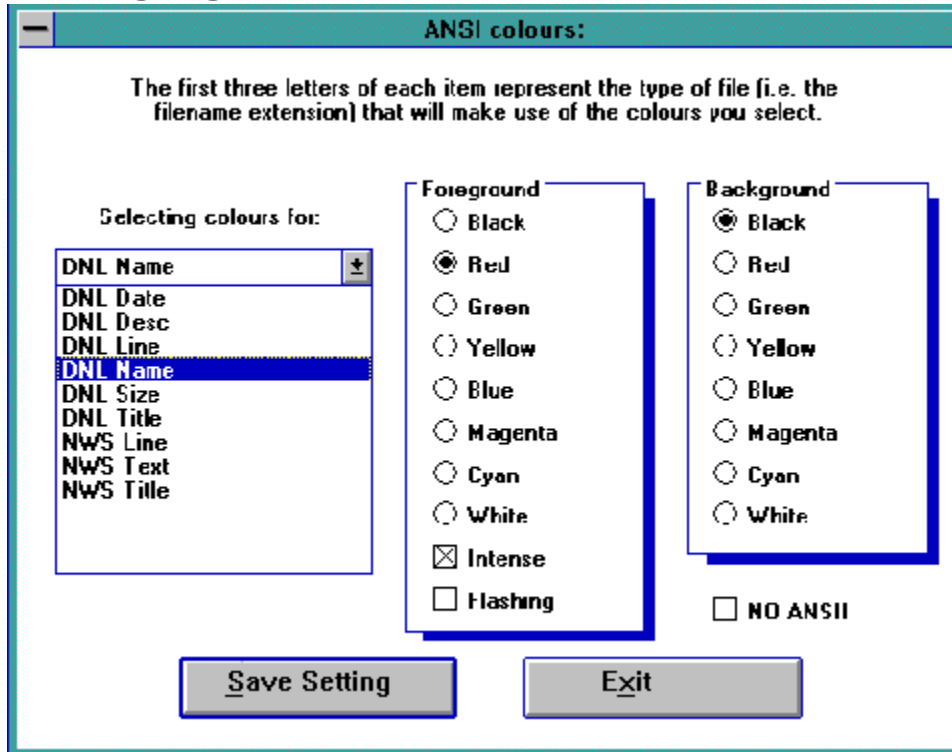
What happens?

When a NWS is updated, the new header and text will be *added* to the top of the NWS file, so that new information will appear before older information in each bulletin. If you wish to use *only* the new information, choose "New/Replace" from the main menu, rather than "Update".

Entering Text

The text for the NWS file should be entered here, with a carriage return every now and then (at *least* every 255 characters, if not more often).

Changing Colours



Related Topics:

[Where are the colours going?](#)

[Foreground](#)

[Background](#)

[Intense/Flashing](#)

[Save Setting](#)

Where are the colours going?

The DNL options are as follows: **Date** - the file dates as they will appear in the DNL files; **Desc** - the description of the file as it will appear in the DNL; **Line** - the colour of the lines that will appear above and below the headings for the DNL (which contains "File Name" "Date" "Size" and "Description"); **Name** - the file name; **Size** - the file size in bytes; and **Title** - the name assigned to the file area or the DNL listing (eg. "File Area #1 - General", or "Windows Files").

For NWS files, colour options include: **Line** - the line framing the header title; **Text** - the actual text of the NWS file; and **Title** - the header title for the NWS file or update.

Foreground

This determines the colour of the actual characters.

Background

This determines the background colour for the characters.

Intense/Flashing

If checked, the options will cause the foreground colour to be intense (brighter) or to flash.

Save Setting

This must be pressed for each colour item that you wish to reconfigure, in order to save the new colour(s).

Glossary of Terms

ANSI

DNL

FILE_ID.DIZ

Ghost BBS

Ghost Writer

MNU

NUF

NWS

PIF

PKUNZIP.EXE

ANSI

ANSI colours are special characters (escape codes) that enable colours to be embedded in text files that can be transmitted from a BBS (such as Ghost BBS) to a remote user who can see the colours at their terminal, if they have it set up to interpret such ANSI escape sequences (although this is not their only use). See your DOS and comm program manual(s) for more information.

DNL

A DNL file is the type of file Ghost BBS searches for and uses as a file listing, eg "c:\prowin\aspect\ghost\listing\ghost1.dnl". It should generally contain a listing of all the files in a particular download subdirectory. Ghost Writer will automatically create and go about Updating DNL Files for you. See your Ghost BBS documentation for more information regarding DNL files.

FILE_ID.DIZ

A text file included in many distribution archives, which describes the programs or files within the archive. The name is a standard, enabling automated processing of compressed archives.

Ghost BBS

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Portions Copyright (c) 1992 Toby Simkin - All Rights Reserved

Portions Copyright (c) 1992 Datastorm Technologies, Inc. - All Rights Reserved

RingMonitor Portions Copyright (c) 1992 Bob Blow - All rights reserved

Ghost Writer

Ghost Writer 1.0 beta

(c) 1994 Carl Mellesmoen, all rights reserved.

Fidonet address: 1:140/38

WWIVLink: #4 @ 13602

WWIVNet: #4 @ 13602

WW4Net: #4 @ 4171

Icenet:_ #4 @ 3602

MNU

These are the default menu files, with the extension "MNU", for Ghost BBS. While you may change their names & instruct Ghost BBS to use files with other extensions (and therefore file names), it is recommended that you use the default MNU file names, since Ghost Writer will find them automatically when you select "Menus - *.MNU" as the file specification under the Main Menu. See your Ghost BBS documentation for more information regarding MNU files.

NUF

NUF - New User Files for Ghost BBS - bulletins to display to new users. See your Ghost BBS documentation for details.

NWS

A Ghost news bulletin file - eg "c:\prowin\aspect\ghost\bulletins\ghost2.nws".- containing information to display to your users when they log on to your Ghost BBS system (if the NWS file has been modified since their last logon), or by being chosen from the bulletin menu while online. See your Ghost BBS documentation for more information regarding NWS files.

PIF

A Windows Program Information File that contains information and settings for running non-Windows programs from within Windows. See your MS Windows documentation for details.

PKUNZIP.EXE

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