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Creating a Poster or Banner

Introduction.
This program was initially created to allow my daughter to generate large posters for use in presentations for her 4-H club.   The posters are text and graphics.   After creating a poster, she prints in double size (4 sheets of paper) and pasts it onto a poster board.   For a typical presentation, she will use six to ten posters.

The program has been enhanced to make it more generally applicable to a broad range of uses - all dealing with printing large posters and signs which are not supported by standard Windows word processors and graphics programs.

Shape.
Select VERTICAL to make a poster that is taller than it is wide.
Select HORIZONTAL to make a poster that is wider than tall.
Select BANNER to make a long, narrow banner.

Editing:
To create a poster or banner simply begin typing in the information. The default font and character size are setup to get you going immediately.   You can use the fonts menu to select other fonts, and the 'text' menu to change the size and other characteristics.

You can edit your poster like any other windows word processor.

Graphics:
You can create graphics in 3 ways:
1. Using OLE and the "Insert Object" command:
Use the "Edit" "Insert Object" command to start an OLE server like Draw, Paintbrush, etc. After you create the object, exit the program; the picture will be pasted into your poster.
2. Pasting from the Windows Clipboard.
Create graphics with 'Draw', 'Paintbrush' or some other program, and then copy them into the windows clipboard.   Then, in the poster program, you can paste them into your poster. You may also use a clipart program, such as Corel Gallery.
3. Import graphics files.
Import bitmap files (*.bmp files) or windows metafiles (*.wmf files). Metafiles are recommended, as they will scale smoothly when enlarged and printed. Bitmaps will generally look jagged when enlarged and printed.

Size:
Each poster can be only 1 page - usually 8 1/2 x 11 inches, when you create it; but when you print it, you scale it up to be as big as you want (up to 9 feet wide or high)!
Each banner can be up to 21 inches wide on the screen, but it prints 5 times bigger, making it 105 inches (almost 9 feet) wide.

Printing:
When you are done, save the poster, and then print it.   You can print it as a single sheet, or up to ten times bigger (which takes 100 sheets of paper).

You then have to paste the sheets together to make a single, big poster or sign.

Support and Registration - version 1.3.

If you have any problems or suggestions, send me a note.   My email address is rfb@sdc.cs.boeing.com.

Registration of this program is encouraged.   There is no fee to register it - simply mail me a note.   If you register, I will keep you informed of bug fixes and enhancements.   This also helps me guage what enhancements or additions should be made to the program.

Bob Bedoll

Printing

General

To print a poster or banner, select Print in the "File" menu.

Posters:

To print a single page exactly as it looks on the screen, select "1 page".

To print a double size poster, which is actually 4 sheets of paper, select the "2X" option.   Everything on the poster, including all the text and all the graphics, will be automatically printed in double size.   This is a good size to use if you are going to paste the poster onto standard size 'poster board'.

The text will be printed with smooth lines.   However, the graphics may look ragged because there is no way to smooth the lines in the picture.

To print bigger posters, select the "3x", "4x", etc. option. Everything on the poster will automatically be scaled up. You can print a poster up to six times as big as a single sheet of paper - this will require 36 sheets of paper.

Banners:

The banner is setup with a default print scale factor of 5x.   This will print a banner that is 7.5 inches high (1 page high) and up to 105 inches wide. This gives a standard banner.

You may select other print sizes to give you different effects.

Preview.
The preview option will show you exactly how the poster will look on the printed page, at the scale you have selected.   Each rectangle corresponds to a printed page.

Margins.
The Poster program assumes that the maximum printable area on a page of standard 8 1/2 x 11 paper is actually 7 1/2 by 10 inches - in other words, it puts a 1/2 inch margin around the entire page.
So, for a 1x poster of standard size, the actually printed size is 7 1/2 x 10 inches.

For a 2x poster, the actual printed size is 15 x 20 inches, and so on.

POSTER determines the size of the paper you are using from the paper selection you make in your Printer Setup. So, if you are using 8 1/2 x 14 inch paper   (legal size) for example, POSTER will automatically take that into account.   POSTER always leaves a 1/2 inch margin all around each page.

Pasting pages together.

Each page will be printed separately, and the pages must be pasted together.   This is true even for a dot-matrix printer.   To help you do this, you can specify 'alignment marks'.

Alignment Marks.

There are two different kinds of alignment marks:
<u>Registration marks</u>: small marks will be printed in each corner of each page. By lining these marks up when pasting the pages together, you can get accurately placed pages.
<u>Cut lines</u>: dotted lines are printed on each edge which must be pasted to another edge.

Custom Sizes.

If you want a poster size other than an even multiple of your page size, you may set a custom size.   The poster will be scaled up as you requested, and printed on as many sheets of paper as necessary to hold the scaled up poster.   (Note that the printable area of each page remains as the size of one sheet of paper, minus a 1/2 inch margin on each side.)

<u>Possible entries:</u>

One of the following can be set, and it causes the other two to automatically be set:

SCALE FACTOR: A decimal number between 1.0 and the maximum indicated on the menu.   This is a multiplier, <u>not</u> a percent. (To make the poster twice as big, use 2.0, not 200).
Example: A scale factor of 5.5 multiplies the page height and width by 5.5, so the standard size poster (7.5 x 10) becomes 41.25 x 55 inches.

WIDTH: A decimal number between 1.0 and 105.0 specifying the width of the poster, in inches.   The height will automatically be set, based on the original size of a single page.

HEIGHT: A decimal number between 1.0 and 105.0, specifying the height of the poster, in inches.   The width will automatically be set, based on the original size of a single page.

Printing Method.

If you are having trouble printing the poster, try the alternate printing methods.   These will cause all text to be sent to the printer as a bitmap graphic, rather than as characters; this seems to help some printer drivers

which loose characters at page edges.

If your printer is dropping characters at the end of pages when you print at 2x or greater, then check one of the alternate printing methods. If you get postscript errors or color errors, try this also.

Method A and B are two different approaches to printing the poster text (graphics are not affected). Each is more successful on different types of printers. Try method A first; if that fails, try B. If they all fail, send me a note.
.
Note: Checking A or B will usually slow down printing.

Color.

POSTER will print in color if your printer and printer driver support it. All graphics, borders, and text will print in the same colors as shown on the screen - within the capabilities of your printer.

Printing Problems.

If you are having problems printing, see the special printer instructions below. If these don't work, try selecting "Method A" or "Method B" in the "Printing Method "box.
Finally, send me some email if neither of these work for you!

Special Printer Instructions.

LASERJET III USERS.
If the posters you print are missing characters at page edges, then do the following:
1. In the PRINT dialog box, check the button marked "Method A".
Also, be sure your printer is set to 300 dpi.

LASERJET 4 USERS.
To successfully print posters, you must configure your printer as follows:
1. From the control panel, select printers, select 'Setup':
2. Set resolution to 300 dpi. (At 600dpi, printing takes a very long time, and may hang the printer.)
3. Select "options".
4. Select "Graphics Mode" = "raster", "Graphics Quality"="high", and
    check "print true-type as graphics".
5. Close the control panel.
6. Start "POSTER".
If posters still do not print properly, then in the PRINT dialog box, check the button marked "Method A". This should always work.

POSTSCRIPT PRINTER USERS.
Poster may be unable to set the printer to horizonal or vertical page orientation. If "Preview" shows that the paper is not properly oriented for your poster, use the "Print Setup" selection to set the Page Orientation manually.

If you get postscript errors, or you are loosing characters at page boundaries:
1. From the control panel, select Printers, then select 'Setup.
2. Select "options", then select "advanced".

3. Select "print true type fonts as" "Bitmap (type 3)".
4. Close the control panel.
5. Start POSTER.
If posters still do not print properly, or print too slow, then in the PRINT dialog box, check the button marked "Method A".

COLOR PRINTER USERS.
If your *.bmp files do NOT print properly in color, use the following workaround:
1. Open the *.bmp file in Paintbrush.
2. Copy it to the windows clipboard (use Edit Copy).
3. Paste it into Poster (use Edit Paste from clipboard).

Changing Fonts.

To change fonts, highlight the desired text and then pull down the "Font" menu and click on the desired text. The font menu is automatically filled with pictures of all the true-type fonts you have installed.   If you have more than 46 fonts, select the "more..." menu item - this will bring up a separate font selection box.

Important: font sizes are always entered relative to a single size, 8 1/2 x 11 page. For example, a 1 inch font would be 1 inch high when printed at 1x, but if you print at 2x (for a 17 x 22 inch poster), your 1 inch fonts will actually be 2 inches high.

You may use the 'custom size' entry in the font menu to make a font of any size, up to the maximum printable size of a single page (usually 7 1/2 x 10 inches).
Again, if you scale the poster up when you print it, your font will scale up in the same manner.

Type-1 fonts, the kind supported by Adobe Type Manager, are not supported. Bitmap fonts and vector fonts (like 'Modern') are also not supported.   (If you really want to see these supported, then let me know).

If you want to use fancy fonts, there are many sources for them.   Most bulletin boards contain many decorative true-type fonts, which can be down-loaded at no cost.   Collections such as "Key Fonts Pro" feature over 1000 fonts for about $20.

Color.

You can select the color to display and print text by using the "Color" menu in the "text" pull-down menu.   The text will be printed in the same color as it is displayed - within the capabilities of your printer.   POSTER retains the color as a full-color (24 bit) value; the display driver and printer driver then interpert this value and come as close to it as they can.

Adding Graphics.

You may add a picture in 3 ways:
1) paste the picture in from the Windows clipboard.
2) Use the "Insert Object" command to start an OLE server like DRAW.
2) import a picture from a *.bmp file or *.wmf file.

You may also import a picture to use as a border or background. See BORDER. To do this, select the "Border..." menu item.

Using the Clipboard.

To add a picture, create it using Draw, Paintbrush or any other windows drawing or painting package. Then, copy the picture to the Clipboard. (If you have a choice of the format for the clipboard, choose 'Picture'). In Poster, put the cursor where you want the picture, then from the "Edit" menu, select "Paste from Clipboard". The picture will be pasted in place.

POSTER supports two types of graphics: Picture (metafile) and Bitmap.

  A PICTURE (metafile) is generated by drawing programs (Draw, Corel Draw, Designer) and some clipart packages (Corel Gallery). A PICTURE is actually a set of instructions to Windows to create a graphic using lines and curves. When a PICTURE is enlarged for printing, it will usually enlarge very smoothly, and generate a high-quality image.

   A BITMAP is generated by painting packages (Paintbrush) and many clipart packages, as well as most scanners. A BITMAP is simply a collection of bits (or pixels). When you print a BITMAP, each bit is enlarged to become multiple bits. Hence, a BITMAP will usually look quite jagged when it is enlarged for printing.

  Pictures (metafiles) are usually preferred to bitmaps because they enlarge better.

Importing a bitmap file or metafile.

To import a graphic in a bitmap (*.bmp) file or metafile (*.wmf), select the 'Import Graphic' from the File menu. A dialog box will appear, allowing you to specify the file containing the graphic. The picture will then be pasted in place at the current cursor position.

The metafile must be a 'placeable metafile', or a file with a 'placeable header'.

NOTE: If the graphic is too big to fit on the poster within the poster margins, the entire graphic will be compressed to make it fit. Often, pictures imported from a file contain a lot of extraneous white space which makes it difficult to use in Poster. To fix this, import the picture into 'Paintbrush', then paste the portion of the picture you want into the Clipboard. Then, in Poster, Paste from Clipboard to insert the picture.

Inserting an OLE Object.

You may use the OLE capabilities of programs like Draw, Paintbrush, WordArt, etc., to easily insert a picture into Poster.   To insert a picture, select "Edit" and "Insert Object".   This starts the OLE server program.   When your picture is created, exit the OLE server, and presto, the picture appears in Poster.
    To Edit the picture, double click on it - this will restart the OLE server with your picture.
    To resize the picture, select it and then select "Edit" "Resize".   Do NOT double click on the object, as this will restart the OLE server.

Manipulating the Picture.

Once it is pasted in place, a graphic is treated like a very big character - the picture will move with the rest of the text in the poster.

Deleting.
To delete a picture, use the DEL or Backspace key, just like deleting text.

Resizing.
To resize the picture, select the picture, then select 'Resize Picture' in the "Edit" menu.   For pictures which are not OLE objects, you may also double-click on the picture. Move the mouse to resize the picture.   You may also reset the picture to its original size using the 'Reset Picture' option.

Displaying.
By default, a dashed rectangle shows the outline of the picture - this box is never printed.   To turn off the box, see the options menu.
Displaying a metafile can take a long time.   You may wish to turn off the display of these graphics - but still print them.   To do so, see the Options menu.

Limits
You may have up to 64 different pictures in one poster.

Creating graphics
Any program which will allow a metafile (picture) or bitmap to be copied into the Windows Clipboard can be used to create a graphic.   If you want to import clipart files in formats such as *.TIF, you must first import them into a program like Paintbrush, Corel Draw,   or Write, and then copy them to the Clipboard.

Saving
When a poster is saved, the pictures are saved along with it.
When a poster is reloaded, the pictures are reloaded with it.
CAUTION: This can make for some very bit 'save' files.

Setting Page Size.

POSTER works with a single page, which is <u>normally</u> a standard size of 7 1/2 x 10 inches, plus a 1/2 inch margin on each edge, giving a total size of 8 1/2 x 11 inches. This is called the SCREEN SIZE. You can use this page either vertically, or horizontally; you select this on the 'PAGE' menu.   POSTER always displays the entire page at once.

When you set font sizes - such as 1 inch, the default - those sizes are relative to the SCREEN SIZE: a single sheet of 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.

When you print the poster, you tell POSTER how big to print it - that is - how big to scale up the "Screen Size". (See <u>Printing a Poster</u>).   This is called the PRINT SIZE. The poster is only enlarged when it is printed.

<u>Margins.</u>

POSTER always leaves a 1/2 inch margin on each side, so the actual printed area is 7 1/2 x 10 inches.   (When you set a custom size, POSTER <u>adds</u> 1/2 inch to each edge)

<u>Custom Page Sizes.</u>

If you don't like the standard 7 1/2 x 10 size (or a multiple of it), you can set a custom page size in the 'PAGE' menu.   This can be any size up to 10 x 10.   This is called the "Screen size", as it controls the size of the poster on the screen.
This effectively changes the *SHAPE* of the poster.   When you print the poster, you can scale it up as big as you like.

Example: If you wanted a printed poster size of 40 x 40, you would set a page size of 10   x 10 inches.   Then, when you printed it, you would print it at 4x, giving 40 x 40.

NOTE: POSTER always adds a 1/2 inch margin along each edge of the page when the poster is printed. (in the above example, the final poster would be 40.5 x 40.5 inches).

<u>Banners.</u>

The "Edit" "Banner" command automatically sets the SCREEN page size to 1.5 inches by 21 inches.   It also sets the print scale to 5x.   When the poster is printed, it will print at 7.5 inches x 105 inches.

You can make the banner narrower by setting "Custom Size" to a size less than 21 inches.   You cannot make the banner wider.

Adding a Border.

You can have POSTER add a simple border or a fancy border to the entire poster.   The border is printed 0.1 inches <u>within</u> the standard poster size, which is 7.5 x 10 inches.   (If you have specified a custom page size, the border is printed 0.1 inches within that size).

Simple borders.

<u>RECTANGLE</u>: A simple rectangle.   You may have 1, 2, or 3 nested rectangles, and the rectangles can be narrow, medium, or wide.   Try experimenting with the different settings.   Text is automatically fit within the smallest rectangle.

<u>ROUNDED RECTANGLE</u>:   Identical to 'RECTANGLE', but the corners of the rectangle are rounded.

Fancy Borders.
Fancy borders are clipart borders which are pasted from the clipboard.   The clipart must be in the windows metafile ("picture") format.   It can be imported from a program like Corel Gallery, or created in a program like Draw.
The border is always expanded to fit the entire screen.
Corel Gallery is recommended as an excellent choice of hundreds of borders (as well as thousands of pieces of clip art) for less than $30.

Color.
Border color is treated similarly to text color.   Your printer will print the border in color if it can. The Color only applies to SIMPLE borders.

Setting Options.

The options are global, and effect any document edited by POSTER.
Options are not saved by SAVE, and are not reloaded by OPEN.

Display Non-Printable characters.
This option displays a paragraph mark whever a carriage return has been
entered. (Sometimes this mark may not be visible if it is off the side of the
page). This is to help you remember where you have hard line breaks.
These marks are NOT printed with the poster is printed.
This optio defaults to OFF.

Display Bounding-box around graphics.
This option displays a dashed line around a graphic which has been pasted
into the document.   The graphic can be resized with the RESIZE option.
The dashed line is NOT displayed when the poster is printed.
This option defaults to ON.

Don't display metafiles.
When set, this option bypasses the display of metafiles on the screen -
however, the bounding box is always displayed.   This option is used if the
redraw of a metafile takes a lot of time.
The metafile is ALWAYS printed when the poster is printed.
This option defaults to OFF.

menu

FILE: File operation menu
    NEW: Create a new poster
    OPEN: Load a previously saved poster created by SAVE or SAVEAS
    SAVE: Save the current poster in current file (default is UNTITLED)
    SAVEAS: Save the current poster in a new file
    IMPORT GRAPHIC   Imports a *.bmp or *.wmf file   at the cursor position.
    PRINT: Print the poster on the printer - see printing
    EXIT: Quit the poster program

EDIT: Editing operations menu
    UNDO: Undo the last major change
    CUT: Copy the selection to POSTER clipboard and then delete
    COPY: Copy the selection to the POSTER clipboard
    PASTE: Insert the POSTER clipboard at the current cursor
       Note: information copied to the POSTER clipboard CANNOT be
       exchanged with other Windows applications.   Use the COPYCLIP
       to copy to the Windows Clipboard to exchange data with other Windows
       applications.
    DELETE: Delete the current selection
    COPYCLIP: Copy to the Windows clipboard
    PASTECLIP: Insert contents of Windows clipboard
       Text - insert at the current cursor: using the current font and size.
       This is equivalent to typing in the text characters.
       Bitmap - paste the picture in at the current cursor position.
       Other - Any other format is ignored.
FONT: Change to specified font
       If no text is selected, this applies to all subsequent characters entered.
       If text is selected, all text in the selection is changed to the specified font,
       but attributes like Bold and Size are not changed.

TEXT: Change the appearance of the text.
       If the text is highlighted, it applies to the highlighted text.
       If the text is not highlighted, it applies to the next characters to be typed.
    NORM: Change to no bold, no italic, no underline
    BOLD: Toggle between bold and non-bold
    ITAL: Toggle between italic and non-italic
    ULINE: Toggle between underlined and not
    CENTER: Center the current line or selected lines
       Only the 1st character of a line is checked for this.
    LEFT: Left align the current or selected lines
       Only the 1st character of a line is checked for this.
    RIGHT: Right align the current or selected lines
       Only the 1st character of a line is checked for this.
    SIZE: Change the   character sizes, but not the fonts or bold and italics.
       These sizes are in inches for a single 8.5 x 11 inch page.
       When the page is printed, the characters scale up by the scale factor.
       So, if you print at '2x', a 1 inch character is printed 2 inches high.

PAGE: Change the appearance of the page
    TOP: Start the text at the top of the poster
    CENTER: Center all text on the poster

BOTTOM: Align last line at the bottom of poster
BORDER: Select the border pattern
VERTICAL: Select Portrait orientation. Poster is taller than it is wide
HORIZONTAL: Select Landscape orientation. Poster is wider than it is tall
CUSTOM SIZE: Sets a page size other than 8.5 x 11.   See 'Setting Page Size'.

HELP: Get Help
    HELP: Bring up help on POSTER
    ABOUT: About the POSTER program

Keyboard help.

The only special keys recognized by Poster are:
F1 - call for Help
ESC - If text is selected, deselect it.
The cursor keys will move the cursor.
Home - move to start of current line.
End - move to end of current line.
PageUp - move to the start of the poster.
PageDown - move to the end of the poster.
Del - delete the next character, or the current selection.