

## **Printer's Apprentice 2.10**

by

### ***Lose Your Mind Software***

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### **IMPORTANT!**

The release of Printer's Apprentice 2.0 signals an end to the free distribution of this program. Printer's Apprentice is now a copyrighted piece of software distributed via the shareware system. As many of you know, users of shareware products are obligated to make a donation to the author of any software they use on a regular basis. If you use Printer's Apprentice 2.0 to examine ATM fonts from BBS systems, catalog those you already have, print ANSI sheets by the dozen, or simply keep it as an on-line viewing font utility, please consider sending a \$15 check to the author, Bryan T. Kinkel at the address above. A registration sheet may be printed by simply pulling the "Print Registration Sheet" menu item under the "help" menu. Please use this form when registering, it helps me keep track of everything!

Registration will entitle you to an official registration certificate, mail upgrades of new Printer's Apprentice versions (as they become available and weeks before distribution via BBS systems!), and a guilt free concious. Your registered version of Printer's Apprentice will feature no "nasty notes" on spec pages, an about box customized with your name and registration number, and no 'please register' screens. Future updates of the software *\*will\** include features available *\*only\** in the registered versions. The donation will help me make Printer's Apprentice a far better utility through the addition of a help facility, a more "graphical" interface, speed tweaks, and even more printing options. I feel a \$15 donation is reasonable for a utility of this type (no pun intended!). Please be considerate and help make the shareware system work!

### **INTRODUCTION**

Printer's Apprentice is a general screen & printer font viewing utility for Microsoft Windows 3.0. It features a sharp looking, NeXT like interface, access to all of your fonts, ANSI charts, character sample sheets, batch printing, the ability to call the Windows & Adobe Type Manager control panels, color support, viewing of all ANSI characters, symbols, dingbats, etc..., point size display from 1 to 99 points, and all attribute options (bold, italic, etc...) I believe Printer's Apprentice 2.0 is the BEST program in its class!!

Printer's Apprentice fills a void in the Windows utility arena. It is not simply an ANSI / ASCII chart, it allows you to view every character in a font set with a true WYSIWYG display.. How many of you keep Windows Write on hand just so you can preview a new ATM font you just pulled off of a bulletin board system? I know I do!

Printer's Apprentice is my first true Windows application. The original release (v. 1.0) was programmed in a matter of evenings after receiving Microsoft's Visual Basic

programming environment. Working with VB has been nothing short of a pleasure. VB has enabled me to write programs I never thought I would be able to. Printer's Apprentice is a very simple program. However, I do not like to think of the C code (and the \$\$ for the SDK!) that would be required to grind out Printer's Apprentice.

#### USE OF THE PRINTER'S APPRENTICE

The screen is divided into three main sections. On the left is a true, WYSIWYG display. This is where the current sample character is displayed. Below the character window are two scroll bars. One allows the user to change the point size in one point increments. The ANSI scroll bar ranges from 1 through 255. Any character in the font set may be viewed by manipulating this scroll bar. The right side contains a control panel that allows the user to switch fonts, point sizes, and a variety of other options. Selecting a font is as easy as clicking on the combo box and scrolling to the desired font. The point size box contains a listing of standard sizes, but custom sizes (up to 99 points) may be typed directly in the box. Point size may also be selected using the scroll bar below the sample character. Along the bottom edge of the window is the button row. Currently, this only contains About... & Exit buttons. In the future, this may contain more animated icons for various printing and program options. (suggestions?)

Along the top of the window is the standard menu bar. Each menu item is detailed below. \*NOTE\* Some menu items are dimmed and cannot be selected. This menu items have not yet had the program code placed behind them and will not do anything! Look for these items in a later version!

#### **File Menu**

**Print Single Character Sample** - prints the current character in a variety of point size. Useful for a quick look at how your printer handles the current font.

**Print Spec Sheet** - A spec sheet is a complete look at the current typeface. Included is a small chart with both the lower and uppercase alphabet, number, and common punctuation marks. The typeface is also displayed in several type sizes below the chart. A simple sentence below the point sizes shows default letter spacing. This page is very useful when kept in a file folder next to the workstation.

**Print ANSI Chart** - What character number is the pen nib in the dingbats font? How about a big bullet? True quotes? These questions may be answered with an ANSI chart. This option will print every character in the current face with the character number. To enter the publishing quotes in Microsoft Word for Windows, hold down the alt key and press 0 plus the three numbers listed in the chart for the quotes, release the alt key. A reference file with an ANSI chart for each face can be an indispensable aid.

**All Sheets** - This is simply a batch printing aid for generating the above three sheets at once for the current font. More comprehensive batch printing is available in the batch menu.

**Batch Printing** - Need to print ANSI charts for each of your 200+ fonts? No problem! Opening the batch option reveals a very simple window. At the top is a drop down box with the possible printing operations. Choose one. On the left is a list of your fonts, and on the right an empty list of fonts to print. Simple use the four buttons to add

and delete fonts to the printing list. Press Go! and take a coffee break!

**Print Inventory** - This option looks at your entire collection of fonts and sends a listing to the printer. Each face name is printed in its own typeface. For dingbat faces (Carta, Symbol, etc) the font name will be a string of pictures.

**Exit Apprentice...** - Quits Printer's Apprentice. Does not save options to the PA.INI file.

### Edit Menu

**Copy** - Copies the current character in Text, OEM Text, & Link format. See note on link format below... No formatting codes are sent!

**Copy to WinWord** - This option opens a direct DDE link to a running copy of Microsoft Word for Windows. The current character and formatting commands are then dumped to the last location of the cursor. This is a very handy option!

### Options Menu

**Specimen Character** - Instead of using the ANSI scroll bar to find a character, you can enter it directly using this dialog box. You may only type in one character. Pressing enter or hitting the OK button with no character or more than one character will result in an annoying beep.

**Specimen ANSI value** - Any number from 1 through 255 may be entered here to find the character associated with the ANSI value.

**Color** - change the display colors of the sample character. Color printing is not [yet] supported!

**Save Options** - Printer's Apprentice maintains its own PA.INI file. This file is stored in the windows directory (C:\WINDOWS, C:\WIN3, D:\WIN, whatever) and maintained through calls to the Windows API. The layout is as follows:

```
[PA]
Font = Helv
FontColor = 0
PointSize = 30
ANSI = 65
    Name = Bryan Kinkel
```

The PA.INI file is created upon first running Printer's Apprentice and stores the defaults for the program. If you wish to change the default font etc, just select the options in Printer's Apprentice and then click on Save Options.

**User Text Window** - Many users have mentioned the fact that they would like an area in PA where any text may be viewed in the current font. I did not want to completely restructure the main window, I want to keep PA simple. Choosing this option will make a "floating" window appear. In this text box, any text string may be entered and viewed in the current font. Any changes made to the attributes of the current font will also affect the user text window. Version 2.5 of Printer's

Apprentice will support direct printing of this text. This text box can be moved around the screen or minimized. Users of 600 x 800 monitors should be able to squeeze both windows on the screen at the same time with no overlapping.

**Control Panel** - This will start up the Windows Control Panel. It is assumed to be on your path. If not, an error will result.

**ATM Control Panel**- Starts up the Adobe Type Manager Control Panel. This is also expected to be on your path. Other font management packages will soon be supported!

**Clipboard** - Opens the Windows clipboard for viewing.

### Help Menu

**Print Registration Form** - prints a handy form to send to the author when registering your copy of Printer's Apprentice!

**Registration Info** - a quick guide to registration...

No help options (with the exception of the About panel!) are yet implemented!

### SOME TECHNICAL NOTES

#### Testing environment:

Zeos 386sx 16Mhz, Standard VGA, Toshiba P321 Dot Matrix  
Compuadd 386 20 Mhz, Standard VGA, HP LaserJet III

#### Batch Printing

Visual Basic can generate some HUGE temporary files for use by the spooler. It is recommend that you do not print a ridiculous number of font sheets or ANSI sheets at one time unless you have a ridiculously large hard drive.

#### Link Format

When the Copy menu item is selected, the sample character is sent out in both text formats and a link format. Try this: Open WinWord and a new document. Make sure field codes are NOT shown. Open Printer's Apprentice and choose some weird font, maybe a dingbat font. Choose Copy. Open the clipboard and look at the formats menu. Link should be there, but dimmed. Now jump to WinWord and choose paste link, check the auto update box. Click ok. A new character should be on the document. Format this character as the same as in Printer's Apprentice. Now arrange your desktop so PA & Winword are both visible. Jump to PA and start pressing the ANSI scroll bar. The character in WinWord should also be changing! Neat trick, but I have not figured out a good use for it. When Paste Link is chosen, WinWord places a DDE field code in the document. Turn field codes on to see the format. If anyone has a decent suggestion for this feature, let me know!

#### Fonts

Printer's Apprentice has been tested with a huge variety of public domain ATM fonts. Although most worked without a hitch, I cannot guarantee the same for every font. Some fonts, particularly the various dingbats fonts and Adobe's Carta, caused users problems. The most common problem was a mysterious error 6 code. The source of that error has been found and corrected. Some fonts still may cause problems due to any number of reasons. If you find a font that does not like Printer's Apprentice, please let me know!

## ATM Users

The Helvetica font included with ATM and the Helv font included in the Windows package are a bit different. When printing ANSI charts, it is recommended that the Use Resident or Prebuilt Bitmap fonts option in the ATM control panel be ON.

## 1024x768 Users

Hi-Res monitors, such as those of the 1024x768 variety, have given Printer's Apprentice pre 2.10 some problems. A few users noted that the sculpted background would shrink towards the upper left corner of the font windows. The reason for this problem is simple. (but not so simple or the author would have known about it before releasing PA!) The backgrounds are simply bitmaps from PaintBrush. Bitmaps are resolution dependent and therefore look smaller on higher resolution monitors. They also eat up a lot of space in the EXE file. Printer's Apprentice should now work on any monitor. I have programmed the interface into VB using device independent drawing routines and modules. The EXE file has also shrunk considerably!

## THE FUTURE

I am always looking for ways to improve Printer's Apprentice. I would much rather hear user suggestions than go around checking out every other font program available. I want PA to be the best of the bunch!

I still have a lot of features in mind for Printer's Apprentice. However, I will not mention them lest my ideas get swiped! Please note, many new features will end up in the \*registered users only\* version of Printer's Apprentice. Please, register your copy!

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT VISUAL BASIC

Visual Basic is a new programming environment for Windows from the folks up in Redmond, Washington. It may be one of the most important software releases in the past few years (not counting Windows 3.0 release!). With VB, users can simply draw controls on forms and then write the code for events, procedures, and change the properties of the controls. The programming language is still a form of BASIC, but it has been both trimmed down and beefed up for the Windows environment. It is NOT instant programming! It is NOT another ToolBook! Look into it, it is HIGHLY recommended.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Bryan T. Kinkel, aka Lose Your Mind Software will not be liable for ANY damages resulting from the use of this software. The author makes no guarantees that this software will do anything other than what is outlined in the manual. If you can run Windows, you should be able to run Printer's Apprentice!

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