

Header.eps - SmartFieldPalette™

SmartFieldPalette was written by Objective Technologies, Inc. Objective Technologies was the first company to develop commercially-available custom object palettes for the NeXT. They are one of the premier developers of NeXT software. They can be contacted at:

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SmartFieldPalette is a text formatting package. It supplies data input fields that automatically restrict input, format data, and report errors and changes. It also provides extensive validation of the application user's input with very little programming effort. SmartFieldPalette can dramatically reduce the time required to develop applications that require information to be a specific data type, format, or from a specific set of valid values. It is an application that every developer will find extremely useful.

SmartFieldFeatures:

Input Restrictions: Input can be restricted to a specific data type including:

- Digits
- Floating point numbers
- Regular text
- Regular expressions
- Integers
- Alphabetic characters
- Dates

Field Formatting:

- Text field input can be automatically formatted into upper or lower cases
- Date fields can be translated into a wide variety of date formats
- Numeric fields can be formatted using commas, periods, or a developer specified characteristic
- Field width maximums and minimums can be set.

Value Validation: Values entered into an OTSmartField can be validated using:

- Lists of explicit values
- Ranges of valid values
- Regular expression patterns

The developer can dictate the behavior of the OTSmartField when an error is found, or

when the contents of a field change. For example, bad input can be announced using alert panels and sounds and changes can be announced with visual alerts.

SmartFieldPalette was reviewed in the March 1992 issue of NeXTWatch. The following is an excerpt from that review.

"The SmartFields palette seems very well rounded. Except for the absence of a way to specify valid filenames, the SmartFields palette is an easy way of ensuring valid data. Unlike implementing a chooser without the ChooserPalette, doing error checking on input isn't that difficult, but doing it rigourously does take a lot of time and a lot of code which tends to clutter up other code. If you have a lot of text fields and are sick of doing input checking and would rather do real programming, take a look at the SmartFields palette. It is an excellent way to have a well-behaved and user-friendly application."

Objective Technologies has developed a new version of SmartFieldPalette that has increased functionality. This version will be shipping after the NeXTSTEP 3.0 operating system is released. The new functionality of SmartFieldPalette includes:

- An all-new inspector with an easier to use panel "browser"

- Support for custom inspectors
- More robust validation and alert options
- Date fields: flexible format specs, month name formats (e.g., January 1, 1992), julian date functions
- Numeric fields: New options, including "prefix" (for use in representing money values)
- String fields: More flexible specification for valid characters, length restrictions & validation
- Lighter weight: On average, the objects in SmartFieldPalette 3.0 require less memory per field.

The release version of SmartFieldPalette runs under the 2.0 version of NeXTSTEP. A beta version of the software that operates with NeXTSTEP 3.0 is available. A release version of the software that runs with the 3.0 operating system will be available to everyone shortly after NeXT releases the 3.0 operating system. This will be distributed free of charge to all customers who own the version compatible with the 2.0 operating system.

Detailed documentation is included with the software.

Price: SmartFieldPalette single license and software: \$ 769

Purchasing a single license allows up to five machines to share SmartFieldPalette over a

network. There are no run-time fees for the applications developed using these objects. Educational institutions receive a 50% discount. Contact Objective Technologies, Inc. for site license information.

For additional information on this or any of the other products produced by OTI, phone 1-800-3OBJECT, send e-mail to: info_palettes@object.com, or write to:

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Installation Directions

SmartFieldPalette consists of a loadable Interface Builder palette (SmartField.palette), a library containing the compiled SmartFieldPalette objects (libSmartField.a), interface (".h") files describing the palette's objects, and documentation describing the objects and how they are used. The Installer application installs these files as follows:

<u>File Type</u>	<u>Directory</u>
Palette	/LocalPalettes
Library	/usr/lib
Interface Files	/usr/include/otikit
Documentation	/LocalLibrary/Documentation/OTI

Follow these steps to install SmartFieldPalette on your NeXT computer using NeXT's Installer application.

- Login to your computer as "root". If you do not have access to "root", then your system administrator must install the palette.
- If this is the first Objective Technologies palette you are installing, you will need to create the /LocalPalettes directory. To do this, double click on the "Start" script. The script will work even if /LocalPalettes already exists on your disk.
- Double click on the file named "SFPalette.pkg"; this is the palette's package file. It will launch the Installer application.

- When the Installer application's window appears, click the Install button in the upper left-hand corner of the window.
- A panel will appear asking you if you wish to continue with the installation of the palette into the "/LocalPalettes" directory. Click on "Install".
- The Installer application will notify you when the installation is complete. Once it is complete, repeat the last four steps with each of the SFHeaders.pkg, SFLib.pkg and SFDoc.pkg packages.

After the installation is complete, the SmartFieldPalette library, libSmartField.a, must be updated in order to link the SmartFieldPalette objects. The following steps will update your installed library:

- Double click on "UpdateLibrary" file which you will find in /LocalLibrary/Documentation/OTI/SmartFieldPalette.

Using SmartFieldPalette

You may now use SmartFieldPalette. A tutorial which describes how to use the SmartFieldPalette objects is provided with the SmartFieldPalette. The tutorial is called UsingSmartFields.rtf and is in the directory

/LocalLibrary/Documentation/OTI/SFPalette/OT_Support.

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