

FontPrinter

By Mark J. Anderson

Version 3.0

Changes in Version 3.0

- Completely rewritten using THINK C rather than THINK Pascal
- Preferences file is automatically created in the Preferences folder the first time FontPrinter is launched
- All settings are saved in the preferences file so FontPrinter should work correctly from locked volumes such as floppies, servers, and CD-ROMs
- Added Open Suitcases which gives FontPrinter access to fonts in suitcases that are not installed in the system file and not loaded by other means (i.e. Suitcase, MasterJuggler, or CarpetBag)
- Added Font Options which provides the following features:
 - Easy selection of CAPS only fonts without requiring ResEdit modifications
 - Easy selection of fonts to exclude without requiring removal from system
 - Easy identification of which fonts are new to the system
 - Small font sample can be displayed simply by clicking on a font name
- Added support for larger monitors via dialog box centering and expansion
- Added Preview which provides very basic, single page print preview capabilities
- Added support for printing in up to eight equally spaced columns
- Added error checking in Page Options to prevent the user from inputting any invalid values
- Page statistics window is now updated immediately as relevant setup values are changed

Introduction

The main reason that I wrote this program was for my own use, but then I thought that some other Mac users might find it useful also. My first problem was that I found myself accumulating a large number of public domain TrueType fonts and then I would forget what each one looked like. It was also inconvenient for other people to use my computer for their own projects because they didn't know what the fonts looked like either. My first solution to these problems was to use a word processor and type in a sample of each font onto a page. While this worked for a little while, it was extremely slow and tedious to add in new fonts and change old ones.

That's where FontPrinter comes in, all you have to do is run the program and click the mouse a few times. It will then generate a document containing all of your fonts in their own typeface and in whatever format that you specify.

Starting Up

The first thing that appears after launching FontPrinter is the information dialog. This contains my mailing address and e-mail address if you would like to get in touch with me or just have a comment about the program. Just click the mouse button to dismiss it and continue with the program. If you are running FontPrinter for the first time, it will take a second to create a new preferences file, otherwise it will search the installed fonts and check for any new ones. After this process has completed, the statistics window will be displayed. Here FontPrinter shows you the number of fonts you have selected for printing along with the total number of installed fonts, how many of those fonts are new, how many fonts will be printed on each page, and how many pages will be needed using the current options.



External Font Suitcases

After choosing Open Suitcases from the File menu, the standard file dialog box will appear. From this dialog you can select font suitcases to load one by one and after each selection, FontPrinter will scan that file for valid fonts and add them to the list. When you are done loading suitcases, just click the Cancel button.

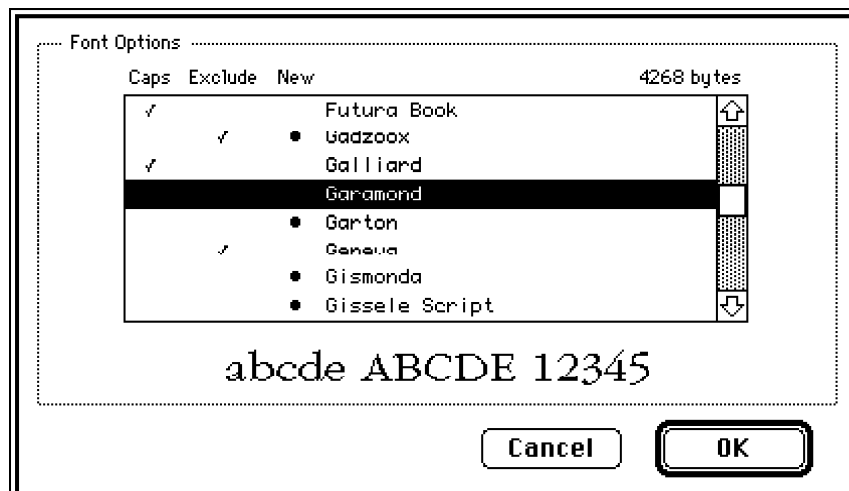
Since this is my first attempt, however, there are some limitations. The first is that any fonts that are loaded using this method are only available while FontPrinter is running. If you quit the program and then restart it, those fonts will be gone and you will have to reload them. The other limitation is that this method will only work for bitmap and TrueType fonts. Users that have ATM will have problems because the system software expects to find the laser font files in only one location inside the system folder. Since those files will probably be with their respective bitmap files (outside the system folder) the system won't find them and you will get bitmap only output from the printer.

Print Preview

Another new feature of FontPrinter 3.0 is that ability to display a simplified, single page print preview screen. The main purpose of this preview screen is to give you a basic idea of what the final printout will look like based on the setup options that you have chosen. It is not meant to be an exact representation of the printed output, therefore each font is not displayed in its own typeface, but rather in Geneva. This keeps the screen drawing time low and still allows you to see the affects of any changes that you make in the page settings.

Font Characteristics

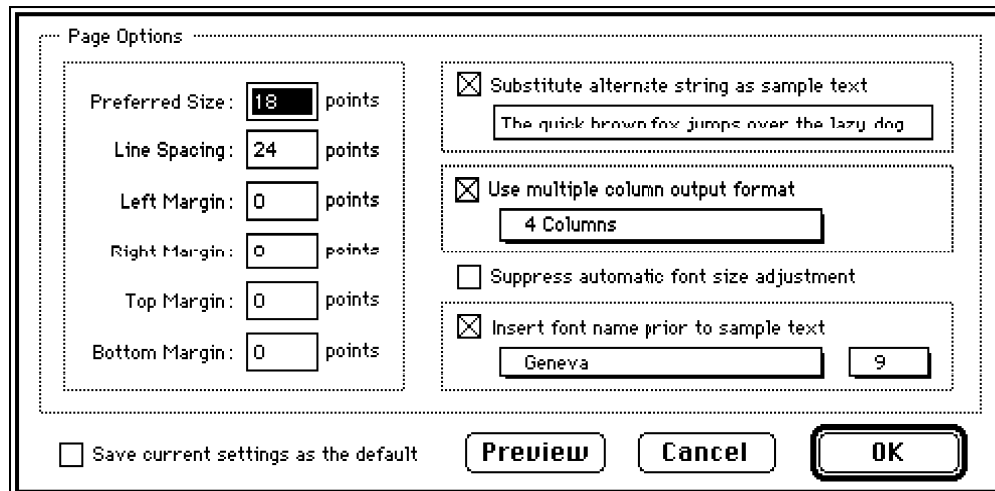
FontPrinter now allows you to set two characteristics for each font that is installed in your system. To modify these settings, choose Font Options from the File menu. After the following dialog appears, you can toggle the checkmarks simply by clicking in the appropriate column next to a font name. You can also scroll to a certain position in the list by typing the first letter of a font name. The dialog also displays a small sample of the currently selected font to help you decide if that font should be printed in all CAPS or if it should be excluded.



The first characteristic that you can set via this dialog is whether or not a font should be printed in all capital letters. A fair amount of public domain fonts that you find are not complete and are often missing the lower case letters. When these fonts are printed out, you get missing character boxes where those letters should be. By setting this field, you eliminate those boxes and you get a better representation of these fonts. The other characteristic is whether or not a font should be totally excluded from the printout. This is useful for eliminating system fonts and/or bitmap only fonts from your sample sheets. The final field in the list just helps you easily identify which fonts are new to the system.

Configuring Output

FontPrinter allows you to alter many of the variables that will affect the appearance of the final printout by using the Page Setup option in the File menu. When you choose this item, you will be presented with the following dialog:



The dialog box is titled "Page Options". It contains several input fields and checkboxes. On the left, there are six input fields for "Preferred Size" (18 points), "Line Spacing" (24 points), "Left Margin" (0 points), "Right Margin" (0 points), "Top Margin" (0 points), and "Bottom Margin" (0 points). On the right, there are three checkboxes: "Substitute alternate string as sample text" (checked), "Use multiple column output format" (checked), and "Suppress automatic font size adjustment" (unchecked). Below the "Substitute alternate string" checkbox is a text field containing "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog". Below the "Use multiple column output format" checkbox is a text field containing "4 Columns". Below the "Suppress automatic font size adjustment" checkbox is a text field containing "Geneva" and a small input field containing "9". At the bottom left is a checkbox for "Save current settings as the default". At the bottom right are three buttons: "Preview", "Cancel", and "OK".

This dialog allows you to set the preferred font size for printing, the spacing between each line of samples, and all page margin values. Margins are based on the printable page for the currently selected output device, so leaving all margin values at zero will cause FontPrinter to use the largest possible page area for printing. From here you can also set several other printing options to suit your own preferences.

The first option allows you to change the text string that FontPrinter uses as the sample on the printout. As the default, it only uses the name of the font so if you would like something different, just enable the checkbox and type in your own text.

The next option allows you to format the output in either a single column that uses the entire page or in up to eight equally spaced ones. To use multiple columns, just enable the checkbox and then select the number of columns that you want from the pop-up menu.

The third option allows you to disable the automatic size adjustment feature that FontPrinter normally applies. By default, the program will decrease the font size until the entire sample text string will fit in whatever space is available. If you want the preferred font size to be maintained no matter what, just enable this checkbox (this may cause some characters to be truncated.)

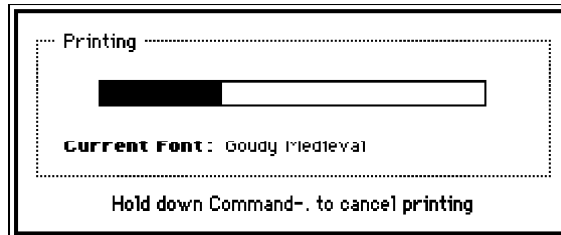
The last option allows you to insert the name of each font prior to the sample text. This is especially useful if you entered your own sample text, but would still like to print the name of each font for reference. To use this feature, just enable the checkbox and select the font and size that should be used for the font name from the pop-up menus.

Printing

FontPrinter now offers two printing options, Print All Fonts and Print New Fonts. I thought it was kind of a waste to have to re-print the entire document whenever I added new fonts so I added this second option. Now the program creates a data file the first time it is run and stores the names of all the fonts in that file. Then on subsequent launches, it checks the currently installed fonts against the names stored in that file. Any that aren't in that file are considered new and can be printed out separately via Print New Fonts.

If you choose Print All Fonts, then the existing data file is overwritten, after printing has completed successfully, with a list of all the fonts that were just printed. Print New Fonts, however, just appends the names of the newly printed fonts to the data file.

When you choose one of the print options from the File menu, the standard Print Job dialog box will appear. Then when you press the OK button the following dialog will appear and the page creation and printing process will begin:



As FontPrinter draws each font on the page it will let you know what the current font is and approximately how far it has to go via the progress bar. You can stop this process at any time by holding down Command-. until the dialog box disappears.

NOTE: If you are using a laser printer, you should choose Page Setup from the File menu and use the Options button to turn on the 'Unlimited Downloadable Fonts' checkbox, otherwise your printer might run out of memory part way through the printing process.

While this version has gone through more testing than previous versions, by me and other people on the internet, it may still have problems with certain software/hardware combinations. Therefore I make no guarantees that it will work with all of these combinations and take no responsibility for any problems that may arise from them.

If you find this program useful I would appreciate it if you would send \$7.50 to:

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Or send me some mail saying what kind of system you have (i.e. computer, printer, virtual memory? 32-bit addressing?) and whether or not my program worked for you. Any suggestions for future versions, general comments, and/or bug reports are also welcome via e-mail to andersm@prism.cs.orst.edu.