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Overview

FREECARD lets you create customized, multimedia greeting cards on your IBM PC or compatible computer running MS-Windows. Your greeting cards can contain text, animated pictures, and sound (MIDI music and WAVE sound).

You create the cards as executable files. When you send them to another PC, they expand, are displayed, and disappear automatically.

The minimum system requirements for running FREECARD or playing cards made by the FREECARD are:



- .IBM PC or compatible computer with a 386 or higher processor running Windows 3.1x or Windows 95.
- .1M byte of free disk space.
- .VGA or better graphics.
- .Windows compatible sound card*.

*Note: If the PC playing the greeting card does not have a sound card, the picture and text on the greeting card will still be displayed.

The FREECARD 1.0 is a freeware program. You may make and distribute the greeting cards you created freely. You also are free to copy and distribute the unaltered, complete FREECARD 1.0 packages.

The greeting cards created by FREECARD are powered by the SLIM SHOW interactive multimedia engine. SLIM SHOW is a full-featured multimedia program maker that supports various multimedia components and a text-to-speech synthesizer. To find out more about SLIM SHOW please visit: "<http://www.pcwww.com>".


Define Graphics

To select the graphic files you want to use in a greeting card, click the  or  button. The names of the selected files will appear in the Edit Boxes attached to the right of the buttons.

The graphic files you select for the FREECARD 1.0 program must be standard Windows bitmap (.BMP) files. The bitmap dimension should be 300-pixels wide by 300-pixels long. If you use bitmap files of different dimensions, they may not appear correctly on the card because of tiling. (Tiling is the process of cutting the bitmap image into small squares and painting them back to the screen in a certain order to generate animation effects.)


Select the animation style of each graphic with the Combo Box attached to the right of the file name Edit Box.

Define Music

To select a MIDI music file to play in the background on your card, click the  button. The name of the selected file will appear in the Edit Box attached to the right of the button.

To adjust the volume, use the music slider attached to the right of the Edit Box.


Define Sound

To select a WAVE sound file to play, click the  button.

To adjust the volume, use the sound slider attached to the right of the Edit Box.

Record Sound

FREECARD includes a sound recorder so you can record sound and save it to a WAVE file for use in your card. The maximum recording time is thirty seconds.

To bring up the Sound Recorder Dialog window, click the  button.

To record:

- .To select the recording rate and resolution, use the "Sampling rate" and the "Quality" radio buttons.
- .To start recording, click the "Record" button.
- .To stop record, use the "Stop" button.

To listen to what you have recorded:

- .To play back the recorded sound, click the "Play" button.
- .To stop the playback, use the "Stop" button.

To save what you have recorded:

- .To save the recorded sound into a WAVE file, click the "Save" button.

Define Background Color

To select a background color for your card, you must first bring up the Color Dialog window by clicking the button.



To select a color:

1. Choose a color from the forty-eight displayed in the "Basic colors" template or the sixteen displayed in the "Custom colors" template.
2. Click the "OK" button to accept the color.

To define custom colors:

1. Click and highlight one of the sixteen user-defined color boxes from the "Custom colors" template.
2. Press the "Define Custom Colors" button to bring up the color definition template.
3. Move the cursor inside the color refiner box and drag the arrow beside the luminosity bar to define your color. You can also create a color by typing numbers in the Red, Green, and Blue boxes, or the Hue, Sat (saturation), and Lum (luminosity) boxes. Click the up and down arrows to change the numbers.
4. Press the "Add to custom colors" button to accept the color.

Define Text

There are two areas for displaying text. The area on top can display one row of up to 30 characters; the font size changes automatically so the text will fit in the display area. The bottom text area can display up to 12 rows of text, with each row holding around 30 characters. The font size in the bottom display area is fixed.

To enter text to the areas, move the mouse cursor to the Edit Boxes and type. You can also copy text to them from the Clipboard by pressing <Ctrl>v.

Rehearse

To see what your card looks like, click the "RUN" button.

To stop the rehearsal, either press the <Esc> key at any time or wait for the "Exit" button to appear on the card, then click it.

Make Card

To make the greeting card into a Windows executable file, click on the "MAKE" button. The executable file is named "card.exe" and is created in the directory where you have the FREECARD program installed. This ("card.exe") is the only file you will need in order to play your greeting card. You can copy the file to a floppy diskette or attach it to an e-mail for distribution.

Be aware that the newly created file will replace any existing file with the name "card.exe" in that directory without asking.

Play the Made Card

The "card.exe" is a Windows executable file that runs on PCs with Windows 3.1x or Windows 95. When executed from the Windows system, it will start to play the card automatically.

You can stop playing the card at any time by pressing the <Esc> key or by clicking the "Exit" button when it appears at the end of the playing. When the playing stops, it automatically cleans up all the temporary files it created in the computer and then exits.

