Adding objects to your forms

To add an object to your form, click on one of the buttons on the upper right side of the screen (See above).   When the desired button is down, click on the page approximately where you want the object to be placed.

Once an object has been placed, you can then drag it, size it, or change its properties.   The properties (located in the lower half of the screen) of the selected object are always shown.   Notice that even the page has its own set of properties.

You will probably encounter a situation where one object is "hidden" beneath another.   To get to the hidden object, first select the object on top, and click the property option SendToBack.   This will allow you to now select the hidden object.

Although there are only 4 basic objects, a wide variety of forms can be designed by modifying the objects properties.   It is a good idea to experiment a little with the properties before getting serious.

Changing Properties

Changing properties of objects

Frame	Top 41	Height 100	Thick:	Frame: Black ▾	Inside: White ▾	To Front
	Left 366	Width 150	1 ▲▼	☐ Clear ☑ Solid ☐ Dash ☐ Dot	☑ Clear ☐ Solid ☐ Diag ☐ Hash	To Back Apply

Properties are the key to making your objects behave like you want them to.   Each object has a unique set of properties.   You can change the way an object appears, and also its size and position.

Most Properties will show immediate results as you change them. Feel free to experiment until you achieve the effect you desire.

RealForms Form Designer

Realforms is a complete form design and data-filling system.   Although it was not designed as a reporting tool, a form-based report generator is definitely possible using the system.   Realforms supports several pages sizes, and orientations for forms.   Forms are designed as sets of lines, frames, check boxes and text.   We are continually updating the program with features and additions.
Custom Delphi components for form filling are provided to incorporate forms into your own applications.

Realforms Reference
Registering the Shareware version

Creating new forms

To begin designing new forms, first start RealForms within Windows by selecting RUN and REALFORM.EXE.

A blank form will be ready for you to use.   Before adding anything to the form, you should select the page size, either Letter or Legal.   You can also decide to have a border around the page or not.

You must keep in mind that the form is usually much bigger that the screen.   You should design forms in the biggest screen resolution you feel comfortable with.   You can Scroll the screen around to get a feel for its dimensions.

Adding Objects

Field Objects

Field Objects should only be added to your form if you wish to store print positions of fields for the Delphi form filler to read.   To create the special Field file, select File | Export | Fields List.   You can choose to hide the fields in the Preferences menu.   You can also delete all fields by choosing Edit | Delete Fields.

Field Objects must each have a unique NAME without spaces.   Font information and Format types will be stored in the export file.

Most people prefer instead to add fields once in Delphi as they can be connected to database fields at design-time.   If you need to adjust field label positions often, these Field Objects may be for you.

Hints for better forms

Good forms are always well planned out.   If you use these steps as a guideline, your forms will be better:

1) Avoid using redundant objects (i.e. overlapping lines or frames).   By keeping the number of objects smaller and
   their size smaller will generate faster, more efficient forms.

2) Use "Pale" (kind-of yellow) as your shading color instead of other colors.   The other colors look okay on the screen, but they usually print very dark! (Unless, of course you want them to print dark)

3) To create independent shaded areas, use a shaded frame with a CLEAR border.

4) Always use TRUE-TYPE fonts for your text.   Non- true-type fonts do not scale properly on the screen OR on the printer

5) Frequently use the Print Preview option to see what your form really looks like all together.   it may not be a bad idea to print a hardcopy, either.

RealForms Designer

Registering the Shareware version

The program and components (with source) are $40.00 US.
You will receive all future updates and support after registration.

To order on Compuserve, type GO SWREG # 12706, or send E-mail to dan@realsoftdev.com.
Updates can also be found at www.realsoftdev.com or on Compuserve.
We can be reached by phone at (714) 831-7879.

Saving forms

You should always save your forms using FILE|SAVE, or FILE|SAVE AS.   This will create a file with an extension .RFM that can be loaded by RealForms again.

If you only EXPORT your file as a BMP of MetaFile, RealForms CANNOT re-edit the file!

Using forms in other programs

When you have your final form complete, first save it (as an RFM file), and then choose FILE|EXPORT You can then choose to export you form as a MetaFile or Bitmap.   A Metafile is the preferred format, as it is much smaller than a bitmap, and will scale much better.

Once in Metafile or bitmap format, your form can be used in almost any application such as Microsoft Word, Excel, or even your own programs.

For Delphi Programmers, you can use our RFMImage component set to create applications that use your forms.   The RFMImage can access the .RFM files directly without exporting.