



Type cast

Tim Phillips tackles TrueType fonts, and explains the four variations of embedding technique.

Fonts, fonts, fonts, fonts, marching up and down again" as Rudyard Kipling might have written on his word processor, had he lived in the TrueType age. There seems to be a lot of confusion about TrueType and the differences between TrueType fonts, so here's a quick explanation and glossary of terms.

TrueType is Microsoft's open font format, which was designed to improve on PostScript Type 1 fonts. Because TrueType fonts are supplied with Windows, they have very quickly come to dominate the font scene, and there's no reason why not: they are a good standard and in some ways better than PostScript.

Some history: the first fonts were "bitmap" fonts, drawn as a series of pixels, like colouring in squares in a grid. This was fine at the resolution intended, but once you make a bitmap font bigger, the pixelated appearance makes the shape "blocky".

PostScript changed the rules by describing each letter as a set of mathematical rules, which were represented as bitmaps on screen. PostScript fonts gave the best resolution possible for each device, be it a screen, a printer or a typesetter, without the need to change the font.

The problem is that screen-based fonts are often small, and screens have a terrible resolution — a quarter that of the worst laser printer. When the font is displayed in a small typeface, it can be unreadable, especially with letters that contain a lot of curves. The answer is a

technique called "hinting".

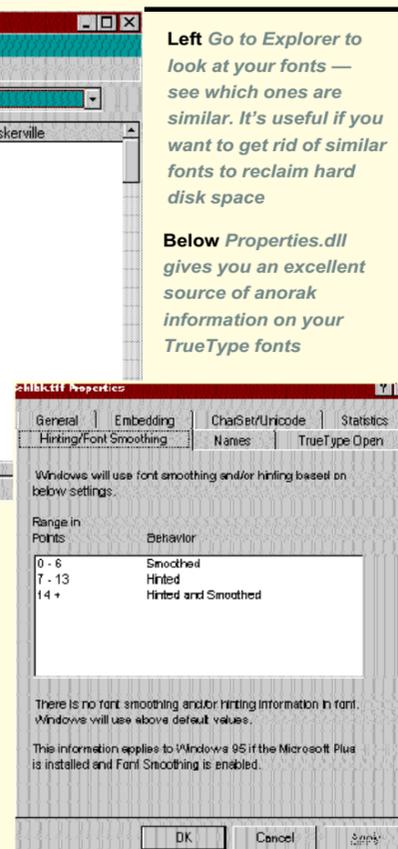
Hinting takes the outline of a small letter and selectively fills in a few more pixels to make it legible. This used to happen in the old days, when fonts were made of lead; small letters used to be heavier and broader. PostScript has hinting, but it is very basic. TrueType's is far better.

Embedding fonts

In order to view a font, you must have it on your system. TrueType fonts are embedded in your document (that's why a word processor document with lots of fonts is so huge). But all embedding is not the same — in fact, there are four types of embedding.

The best is *installable embedding*. That means the font is effectively freeware, is embedded in the document and will install on any other PC that uses the document. The basic Windows fonts like Times New Roman are installable.

Next is *editable embedding*. This means that the recipient can temporarily



Left Go to Explorer to look at your fonts — see which ones are similar. It's useful if you want to get rid of similar fonts to reclaim hard disk space

Below Properties.dll gives you an excellent source of anorak information on your TrueType fonts

install the font on his or her PC while editing the document — it means, for example, that the font can be resized. The font will not install permanently.

Worse is *Print and Preview embedding*, the standard for commercially supplied fonts: for example, those supplied with another word processor. These are embedded in the document but, as the name suggests, are read-only. That means you can change the text that is displayed in the font.

On to a winning streak

A bumper crop of WinWord hints and tips, this time for those of you who have bought Office 95, in response to several of your frequently asked questions (FAQs). Not surprisingly, these frequently asked questions tied up with Microsoft's own list, which you can find on CompuServe or MSN. I make no claims to originality in these solutions, but I have exhaustively translated them from the original Microsoftese dialect. I am also in possession of the Word 6 list, so I'll be matching that with your FAQs next month.

Q. Gosh, it says "Unable to open specified library" and my old add-ins like Internet Assistant and Word Assistant don't work with Word for Windows 95. Why?

A. This is because the old components are 16-bit code and the new ones are 32-bit. "Unable to open specified library" means that the DLL you're accessing is 16-bit. If you're a macro programmer and you use Declare statements to access Windows API functions, you may know this one. You will also get WordBasic errors in Word for Windows 95 by using 16-bit macros with the instructions FileOpen, FileSave, and FileSaveAs. The macros may make invalid 16-bit API calls, or get confused by long filenames.

To stop the problem happening, delete templates and add-ins from the Word Startup folder. Use the Organizer, which is located in the Tools, Macros dialogue box to temporarily rename any FileOpen, FileSave, or FileSaveAs macros. Then rewrite them.

Q. The Open dialogue box is impossible, isn't it?

A. Yes. Action plan: make sure the option to Search Subfolders is not checked. This makes the search take ages and brings up too many files. It's only for use when you search for specific wildcards. Click Advanced and clear the check box. Then use the My Favourites folder and dump frequently-used documents in it. Create shortcuts to documents here. Then learn to use the buttons at the top of the box (see screenshot, below): Details, Properties, and Preview buttons are all useful, especially the preview button, as it is much faster than other wp previews. I leave this as my default. Additionally:

List: filenames listed in columns, from left to right.

Details: more information about the file (size, type, and date the file was last modified).

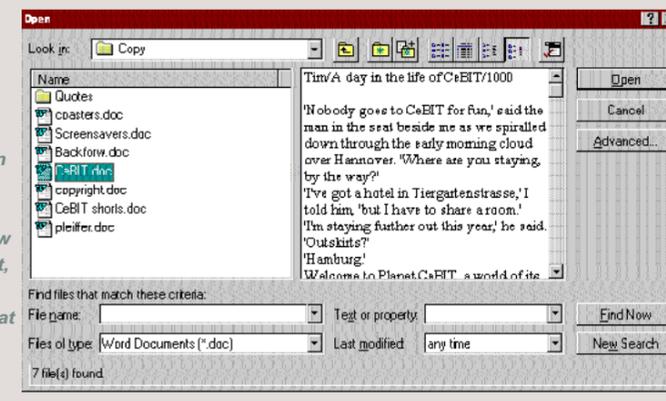
Properties: a two-paned window is displayed that shows filenames and folder tree in the left pane and the document statistics and summary information for the selected file in the right pane.

Q. Oi, where's the Grammar Checker and WordArt gone, then?

A. You installed the default setup, which doesn't include them. I agree with this, especially as I was so rude about grammar checkers in a recent column.

To install WordArt and the Grammar Checker, run Setup again. To start Maintenance Setup, find the Office folder and double-click Setup. Click Add/Remove, and you will find WordArt in Office Tools and the Grammar checker in Microsoft Word Proofing Tools.

The Open dialogue in Winword, showing the preview view. Try it, you'll be surprised at how quick it is



Nastiest of all are the *restricted licence fonts*, which do not embed at all. Use one of these in a document, pass the document on, and the recipient has to install the font separately before it can be viewed.

If you want to know more about your fonts under Windows 95, I suggest you mail me and request a file called Proper-

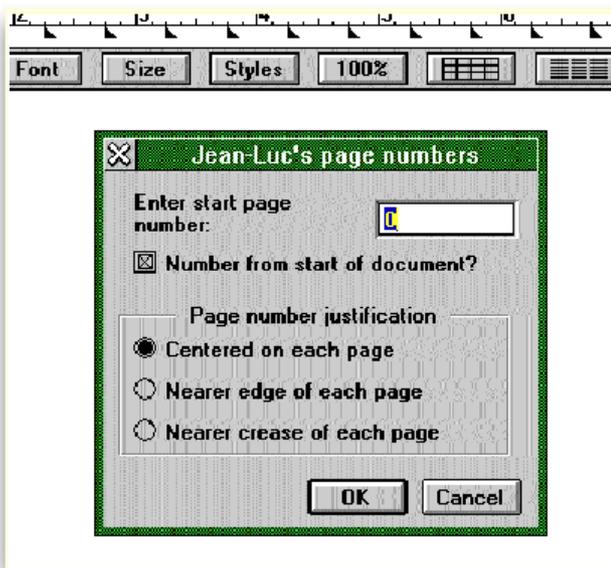
ties.zip. It installs as a .DLL and displays all the information about that font when you right-click on the font icon (in the Fonts directory in Windows). The screenshot (left) shows what it does. It's a little on the nerdy side, but potentially useful nevertheless. There'll be more on the subject of fonts next month.

Tim's incredibly popular macro club

"Go on, you can all come in," he said, door policy not being a phrase in my vocabulary. And you know what else? I'm not only going to pass you a WordPerfect macro, but a really long one, too.

It's so long, in fact, that I've had to put it on this month's cover-mounted CD-ROM. If you are a WordPerfect user and you can't get it off the CD-ROM, I'll mail you a copy.

The macro in question is from the admirable Jean-Luc Addams, who has risen to meet the challenge of writing a macro to publish booklets in Landscape A5 format. It handles justification and a starting page



Jean-Luc Addams' WordPerfect 5.2 macro in operation. Simple, but effective in a time of need for all WordPerfect users

number, and uses a dialogue box to start things off. If you want to save time you can leave out the documentation, but I left it in.

When the macro is running, it will place a number at the bottom of each column of text; at two columns across an A5 landscape page, you have a booklet. (Monsieur Addams has also provided a great initial caps macro, which I'm saving for next month.)

Now, all you so-called WordBasic programmers, get to it.

Finally, just a quick word for the user who asked me how to type in a macro: under Word, select Tools, Macros, New. Under other software it's similar but I recommend you look it up in the manual. If you can't find it, you've got one of those word processors where macros are meaningless.

Under new management

WordPerfect offers some good news for confused users. The free support that used to be a major selling point of the product (and which was discontinued by Novell) will be reinstated. Corel will be selling PerfectOffice as Corel WordPerfect Suite and Corel Office Professional (to be reviewed in PCW soon).

The 32-bit version is now targeted for June delivery, only a year after Microsoft Office became available in a 32-bit ver-

sion, and Corel is promising a whole rash of widget-sized utilities to make the suite more attractive. These include the Sidekick information manager, and Dashboard, a program manager replacement that is largely redundant under Windows 95 and, based on my limited exposure to it, positively irritating.

Corel admits to a seven percent market share: half that of Lotus. The remainder of the applications market is mopped up by you-know-who.

More on those pesky viruses

They might well have pooh-poohed me when I forecast terrible consequences after the first word processor macro virus was created, but I was right: the US-based National Computer Security Association (NCSA) has found the Word "Concept" virus to be the world's most, er, "popular" virus.

For those of you lucky enough not to be familiar with viruses, let's recap. A word processor hosts a virus which lives inside a document. The document contains an auto-execute macro, which spreads the virus when the document is loaded.

Concept was the first of its type and despite Microsoft having tried to label it as a "prank macro", it is still a virus.

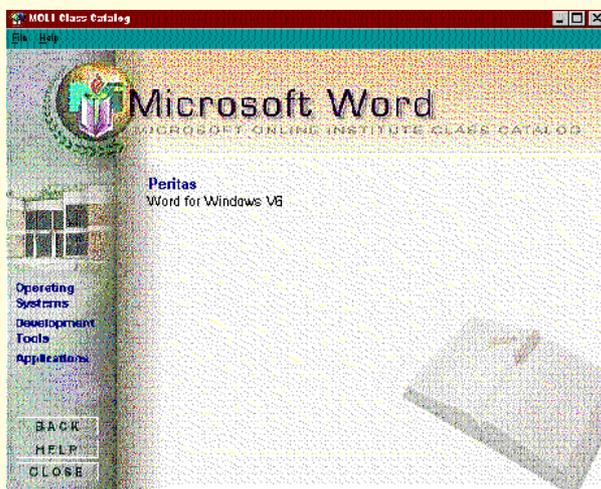
At the NCSA's January conference, 90 percent of attendees had been infected in the past year. Concept is the most prevalent; it spreads quicker than traditional viruses, because more people swap documents than exchange executables.

● If you want to check whether you have Concept, look at Tools/Macros. If you have a macro whose name begins with "aaa", you've got it: so contact Microsoft and get a fix for it, which also inoculates you. It's available from www.microsoft.com as well. ■

Learning online

The Microsoft Network had to be good for something. Although I can't personally vouch for the quality, you might be interested in trying out its online application training conferences. There's only one for Microsoft Word at the moment (unsurprisingly, nothing for any other package) but at \$120 (about £80) it is cheaper than formal training. You have a series of online tutorials and the chance to enter into some chat sessions with other learners.

If anyone has been brave enough to give online learning a try, let me know what it was like and I'll pass on your views.



The solitary Winword course at MSN's Microsoft On-Line Institute

PCW Contacts

Contact **Tim Phillips** by surface or airmail to PCW, otherwise email him at wong@cix.compulink.co.uk and CompuServe 100436,3616