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Fastgraph(tm) is a trademark of Ted Gruber Software.

What is FGFF?

Fastgraph Font Factory is a utility that converts TrueType fonts to a format that can be used by Ted Gruber Software's FASTGRAPH/Fonts. If you don't have FASTGRAPH/Fonts, FGFF will be of little use to you.

FGFF provides you with a great deal of control over the conversion of TrueType fonts. You can adjust the positioning of the font set at the pixel level, strip-off intercharacter spacing for your own kerning, and finally you can rotate the characters at any orientation.

As with most Windows products, the use of the program is very visual and very easy.

Installation

The shareware version of FGFF does NOT ship with VBRUN300.DLL. This is a required file. If you do not have a copy of VBRUN300.DLL, it can be downloaded from most Bulletin Board Systems, including the Dust Devil. It can also be downloaded from Compuserve - just GO MSBASIC and download the file.

The following steps will install FGFF onto your Windows desktop -

- 1 Create a sub directory for FGFF and copy all of the files in the distribution package into this sub directory.
- 2 From Window's PROGRAM MANAGER, open or create a group folder.
- 3 From Window's PROGRAM MANAGER, press ALT-F, and select NEW. When prompted, select NEW ITEM. Use the BROWSE button to find FGFF.EXE and install the program.

Your installation process may be different if you are using something other than Program Manager.

Product Support

If you encounter problems or have questions about FGFF, please contact the author at any of the following addresses -

Tim Kilgore
2601 S. Providence #40
Columbia, MO 65203

Compuserve: 72760, 1022

Voice: 314-442-5776

What is Shareware?

Shareware is a relatively new way of marketing software that is advantageous to both the author and the consumer. Unlike typical store-bought software, the author releases the program into shareware distribution channels and encourages the end user to share the program with his friends by either giving them a copy directly or by providing a copy of the program to a BBS or an online service such as CompuServe.

This is a great advantage to you, the potential consumer, because you get a chance to evaluate the software without spending any money. It is also great for authors because distribution costs are low and as a result products can be written for very small niche markets.

After the end user has had an opportunity to evaluate the program, he is expected to pay for the product if he finds it useful. As a reward for his honesty, the end user typically gets a version of the program that is more powerful (a Pro version) or gets a copy of the program that is free of "registration incentives" such as limitations or shareware notices.

Limitations of the Shareware Version

The shareware version of Fastgraph Font Factory can only edit fonts with font names starting with A, B, or C. If you want more than the ABC's, you'll need to register the program.

Registration Information

Registration Has It's Benefits

Registration of FGFF has both tangible and intangible benefits. The most obvious benefit is that you'll be able to convert ALL fonts, not just those starting with A, B or C.

You'll also get free updates to the most current version of the program. We post patch updates of the registered version of FGFF on the DUST DEVIL (the TGS support BBS).

Registered users receive in-depth, long term technical support. The author is an ex-technical support specialist for a major telecommunications software company and knows how to provide professional, accurate support.

While it is a little less tangible, registration also sponsors the growth of the product. Would you be willing to improve and invest both time and money into a product that wasn't making money?

What's It Going to Cost Me?

FGFF is \$15.00 (US) plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling.

How to Register

There are two ways to do this. First, you can select ORDER FORM (below) and send it to your printer. Or you can print and fill-out ORDER.FRM, a text file that should have accompanied this archive.

[Order Form](#)

FGFF 1.3 Order Form

The unit cost for FGFF is \$15 + \$2.50 shipping & handling (orders outside the US or Canada should include \$5 for shipping & handling).

Please make your check or money order payable to:

TIM KILGORE
2601 S Providence
Columbia, MO 65203

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Comments: _____
(if any) _____

Did you already have VBRUN300? YES NO (circle one)

Where did you download this program from?

FGFF Tutorial

Overview

Before you can really use FGFF, you need to understand what it does. In a nutshell, it makes a picture that can eventually be used by TGS's MAKEFONT utility. FGFF is NOT a true conversion program.

FGFF's weakness is that it cannot save the resulting image in anything but BMP format. This means that you must convert the BMP image into a PCX which is then used by MAKEFONT. (If enough interest is shown in FGFF, direct PCX support is a definite possibility.)

Select a Font

The first step is to load a font that you want to convert. Press FONT SELECT and choose a TrueType font from the picklist. Be sure to change the point size (14 to 24 being a good range) before leaving the font selection dialog.

Adjust the Font

At your option, you may want to rotate the font. To do this, relect ROTATION from the menu bar and then select the ROTATE sub item. Use the Rotation Panel to adjust the angle of rotation.

Once the font has been selected and (optionally) rotated, you will want to align the font. You do this by using the Text Rocker to move the text in 1 pixel (mouse) or 4 pixel (requires the keyboard - SHIFT-arrowkey) increments. Heavily rotated text will require a LOT of realigning, so be sure to use the keyboard when you can.

When aligning the text, you want to make sure that the text is inside of the cells, each one being marked with blue lines. Furthermore, you want to get the text as close to the bottom of the cell as possible. FGFF does a good job of this with un-rotated text, and usually only one or two downward shifts with the text rocker is all that it takes to get the text properly aligned. Rotated text takes a lot more work to align properly as FGFF takes no steps to correct for the rotation of the text.

Save/Clip the Image

Once the text is aligned to your liking, it is time to save the image. You can save the image to a BMP file, or copy the image to clipboard and import it into a third party utility for subsequent conversion to PCX format. The latter method is highly recommended.

Using Paint Shop Pro with FGFF

Paint Shop Pro, a highly rated shareware program by JASC, Inc, makes image conversion a snap. If you have or can get Paint Shop Pro, here are the steps involved in creating a PCX file usable by MAKEFONT.EXE

- 1 In FGFF, copy the image to the clipboard (CTRL-C).
- 2 Switch to or start Paint Shop Pro
- 3 Select EDIT, Paste (SHIFT-INSERT).
- 4 Select COLORS, Decrease Color Depth, 16 colors.
- 5 Set the palette to OPTIMIZED and set the Reduction Method to NEAREST color. Select OK. Paint Shop Pro will now convert the image.
- 6 Save the file as a type 5 PCX file.

If you keep both FGFF and Paint Shop Pro open, you can toggle back and forth between the two applications by pressing ALT-TAB.

The Preview Window

The Preview Window allows you to see how all the characters in the current font set will be aligned. There are several things that you will want to insure by examining this window.

No Broken Lines

Make sure that none of the blue lines are broken by the white characters. Those blue lines mark the cells that MAKEFONT.EXE (a part of FGFonts) uses.

Remember to Flush Before You Finish

Try to make the characters get as close to the baseline as possible. The fontset will be larger and take more memory if you fail to do this.

A Helping Hand

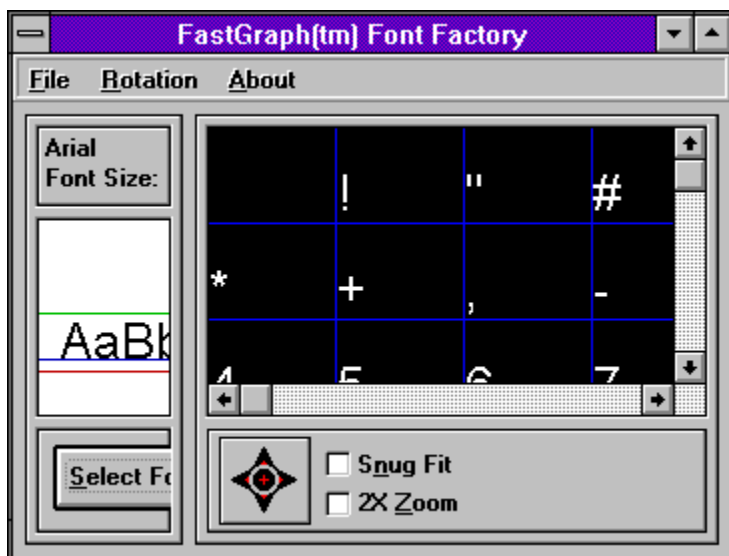
The Preview Window can be easily scrolled by clicking the left mouse button and holding it down in the center of the Preview Window. The cursor will change into a small, but very helpful hand.

Use 2X Zoom

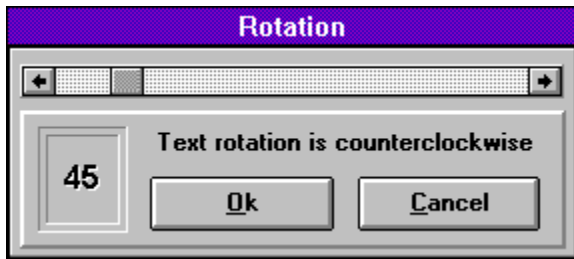
The 2X Zoom isn't there for looks. Use it and it will make examining the characters and the blue lines much, much easier.

Maximize Your Display

You can steal space for the Preview Windows by using the hidden splitter bar that is located between the Font Info and Preview Windows. The screen looks something like the image below after using the splitter bar -



The Rotation Panel



This panel is opened from the ROTATE menu of the main window.

At the top is a slider bar which controls the angle of rotation for the text. If you click on the bar itself, the degrees of rotation will change in increments of 15 degrees. This makes it easy to get to 90 or 180 degrees without too much effort.

The rotation of the text is counterclockwise. You may want to experiment with turning ITALICS on with rotated text. The text is often smoother looking after italics have been turned on.

The Text Rocker Control



The Text Rocker allows you to shift the x/y alignment of the text on the pixel level. The Text Rocker allows movement in all 8 cardinal directions and as such must not be used like a push button.

Clicking on the center of the Text Rocker will reset both the x & y offsets, allowing you to return the alignment of the text to the default position.

Because the Text Rocker shifts in 1 pixel increments, it can be a very slow process to align the text, especially rotated text. If the Text Rocker has the focus (a broken box will appear around the control), you can press SHIFT plus an arrow key to rock the text in 4 pixel increments.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Here is a list of all the keyboard shortcuts unique to FGFF -

Control-S	Opens the SAVE AS window
Control-C	Copy image to clipboard
Control-X	Exit FGFF
Control-N	Normalize rotation (0 degrees)
Control-R	Open Rotation Panel

Bold

Placing a mark in this checkbox will change the font style to BOLD

Textmetrics Display

This window shows a sample of the current font and provides visual guidelines about (top to bottom) the height, baseline, and descender length of the current font.

Font Information

This shows what font you are using and displays the point size.

Italic

Putting a mark in this check box will activate italic print

Preview Window

This window provides a preview of alignment of the current font set. To easily scroll this window, left click and hold the mouse button until the cursor changes into a helping hand.

Text Rocker

The Text Rocker allows you to move the text 1 pixel in the direction that you specify when clicking on the Rocker. Clicking on the center of the Rocker will reset the alignment of the text to default. The Rocker can move the text on both the x & y axis by clicking in the corners of the control.

If the Rocker has the focus (a broken box will be around the Rocker), you can press SHIFT-(arrow key) to advance the shift by 4 pixels at a time.

Font Selection

Clicking this button will summon the Font Selection common dialogue. Be sure to select a TrueType font (those fonts marked with the TT icon), or advanced features such as text rotation will not work.

Snug Fit

TrueType fonts have their own built-in intercharacter spacing. Clicking on Snug Fit removes this spacing, allowing you to use your own kerning values when building the font.

2X Zoom

This will zoom the Preview Window by a factor of 2. This is useful for careful examination of the alignment of the font set (i.e. making sure that none of the blue lines are broken).

