

FEDEZ 1.3

What is FedEZ?

FedEZ is a Microsoft *Windows 3.x* compatible application which allows you to create, store, and print Federal Express Airbills on a dot-matrix printer. You can create templates for applications which require only a few changes, or start from scratch and build a new form. You can optionally save the form for future use.

What do I need to run FedEZ?

You will need an IBM-PC/AT compatible computer running *Windows 3.x* (Standard or 386-Enhanced modes only), a dot-matrix printer that is supported by *Windows* (must be able to set a 5.5" page length), and a supply of Federal Express Airbills. This program has been tested with Airbills with revision dates of 1/91, 4/91, and 6/91. These revisions changed the placement of some of the Services fields, and earlier versions of the Airbill will not line up correctly when printed. *However, if you still have some earlier versions of the Airbill, you can still use **FedEZ** to fill in the other supported sections of the document. You'll have to fill in the Services box by hand.* Future revisions of the Airbill may or may not be compatible, depending on whether or not the locations of the checkboxes, etc are moved.

If you can dedicate a dot-matrix printer solely to printing FedEx forms, you will be much happier. That way, you can leave the Airbills correctly installed and aligned without having to remove and reinstall them each time you want to print an Airbill. If you have ever tried to align forms (of any kind) in a dot-matrix printer, you will know what I am talking about...

How do I install FedEZ?

You may install **FedEZ** into any directory you wish.

In addition, there are two other files that need to be located in the same directory in which you installed *Windows*. These files are **VBRUN100.DLL** (not included in this archive), and **CMDIALOG.VBX** (included in this archive). The reason I did not include **VBRUN100.DLL** in this archive is due to its size. It is about 270K, and is also needed by any other Visual Basic application, increasing the odds that most users already have it. If you do not have the file **VBRUN100.DLL**, it may be obtained from CompuServe in the **MSBASIC** forum, or on many BBS systems. If you do not have access to CompuServe, I will mail it to you provided that you send me a self-addressed, stamped diskette mailer and a blank diskette.

You can either use the File, Run menu from Program Manager to execute the

program, or for convenience, you may add it to a Program Manager group. To do this, select the Program Manager group that you wish to add **FedEZ** to, click File, New, Program Item. Use the Browse button to select the subdirectory into which you installed the **FedEZ** files, and click OK when you have selected the **FEDEZ.EXE** file. Now all you have to do is double-click the **FedEZ** icon, and you're in.

Configuring FedEZ:

Before using the program for the first time, please configure it by choosing File, Page Setup from the main menu. You will be prompted for the Left Margin Offset, the Top Margin Offset, Number of Copies, and the font name to be used when printing. An explanation is in order:

Left Margin Offset: If the default margin settings print too far to the right or left on the Airbill, you can add a correction factor here. For example, if the printout is 1/4" too far to the left on the form, you can type .25 in this box to shift the printout 1/4" to the right. You can enter a negative number to shift it to the left. You may need to experiment a few times to get this just right. Offset values may be between -1 and +2 inches. If it still won't line up, try adjusting the paper-feed sprockets to move the forms to the proper position.

Top Margin Offset: Similar to the Left Margin Offset, but adjusts the alignment vertically. The higher the number, the further down the printer will advance before printing. Allowable values in this field are 0 to +1 inches.

Copies: Determines how many copies of the form will be printed. You may enter a number between 1-50 in this field.

Font: You may select any font from this box. I have had good luck using the font Arial (provided with *Windows 3.1*). Due to a bug in Microsoft's **CMDIALOG.VBX**, this dialog box *will not show you any internal printer fonts*. I apologize for this, but until Microsoft fixes this, there is no other option. The True Type fonts seem to work nicely, although a bit slower than the printer's own fonts.

These settings are applied to all forms, and may be changed at any time. *If you change the number of copies to be printed using the scroll bars on the main form, those changes are temporary, and will not be saved unless you use this menu screen again to save them.*

Configuring the printer:

FedEZ now allows you to configure the printer from within **FedEZ**, instead of having to run Control Panel. Select File, Printer Setup, and then choose your dot-matrix printer. Your dot-matrix printer must be the default printer in order for **FedEZ** to print to it.

Before printing, ***make sure your dot matrix printer is the default printer***, and make sure your paper height is set to 5.5". If your print driver doesn't support a 5.5" paper height, this program will not work for you. Set the paper width to more than 8.5" if available, since the Airbill is quite wide. Printing may be erratic if you use an 8.5" paper width. I have had good luck with using an 11" paper width. With *Windows 3.0*, the page lengths were listed as pre-defined lengths, and most dot-matrix drivers I checked listed a 5.5" paper length. The *Windows 3.1* drivers have what is called a ***User Defined Size***. This is in place of the pre-defined choices of the *Windows 3.0* drivers. This allows you to enter your own paper dimensions. If you are using a *Windows 3.1* driver, set a width value of 900 or more and a length value of 550 (with the unit measurement set to 0.01 inch).

Using the FedEZ program:

Once you're in the **FedEZ** program, the screen defaults to a new form with the prompts filled in for each blank. As you move from field to field with the TAB key, the text in the next field will become highlighted. To replace the text that's already in that field, just start typing, and the existing text will be deleted. If you wish to edit the text that's already in that field, use the arrow keys to move the cursor to the correction point, and type from there. The Insert and Delete keys will work here as well. If there are fields with prompts in them, those prompts will print unless you blank them out. Once you're familiar with the prompts and know what information goes into each one, you can use the File, New menu, and tell it NO when it asks if it should provide prompts in the fields.

The date field is a special field. When you tab to it, and if it is blank, the current system date will be inserted into that field. This is fine for those forms you only want to print once. However, if you save that form and want to use it again in the future, the old date will be saved along with the rest of the form's information. To avoid this, type the word **AUTO** in the date field, and the current system date will be used any time the form is printed. The next time you load up the form, it will still say AUTO in the field, but when printed it will update with the your system's date.

To select a payment method, or a service option, simply click the option with the mouse, and the indicator will light up in that option. If you do not have a mouse, you can also press and hold the ALT key, then press the underlined letter of the option you want. For example, to select "Bill 3rd Party", you can press and hold the ALT key, and then press "3". If you want to leave either the payment method

section or service options section blank, select the Leave Blank option in the appropriate section.

When you have filled in all the information you need, you can save the form by using the File, Save or File, Save As options. If you do not specify an extension to the filename, FDX will be used by default. You can print the form by either using the PRINT buttons on the form screen, or by using the File, Print option from the main menu. There are two **PRINT** buttons on the main screen. The first button always says "**PRINT 1**". This is handy for those occasions when you want to line up the printer, but only want to print one form to make sure everything is lined up correctly. Pressing the "**PRINT 1**" button will only print one copy of the Airbill, regardless of how many copies you have told **FedEZ** to print using Page Setup or with the scroll bars. The second button will vary with the number of copies that you have entered under Page Setup. You may also change the number of copies to be printed with this button by clicking on the scroll bars to change the quantity of printed forms desired. Clicking the arrows at either end of the scroll bar will change the number of copies to print by one; clicking in the interior area of the scroll bar will change the number of copies to print by five. When you are certain that the Airbills are lined up correctly, you can press the second print button to obtain the desired quantity of Airbills.

In the event that you need to cancel the print job before it has finished, simply click on the **Print Status** button (this button is only visible while the program is printing, and appears underneath the scroll bar.) Be patient, as it may take several seconds for the system to process the **cancel printing** command after clicking the button. A word of caution: while the program is printing, it will respond to mouse clicks in the text fields, or to the menu. Although this probably won't cause any problems, it would be best to refrain from clicking anything but the **cancel printing** button while **FedEZ** is printing.

FedEZ uses the default extension .FDX when saving your forms. You may also use the Delete option from the File menu to delete a form if it is no longer needed. If you would like to have a form load automatically each time you start **FedEZ**, save your special form with the name **AUTOLOAD. FDX**. If **FedEZ** sees this file in the default directory when it first starts up, it will load it automatically for you.

About this program:

This program started out as an experiment in programming with Microsoft's Visual Basic, and turned into a pet project of mine. This program has been a learning experience, to say the least, and has consumed many hours of programming time.

Registering FedEZ:

I am releasing this program under the "Shareware" concept. You may distribute this program freely as long as you include this document and distribute the program unmodified. However, I do retain the Copyright on this and any future version of the software. The software is provided for your use to determine if it fits your needs. If after a reasonable period of time, you are still using this software, it must be providing some benefit to you. If this is the case, you must register this software. When you register the software, I will provide you with the latest version of the software on disk (which also has the opening screen disabled), and a printed copy of the documentation. To register the software, send \$15 (U.S. funds, please) to:

John Fischer
3020-H W. Prentice Avenue
Littleton, CO 80123

Please indicate which disk size you require (5¼ or 3½)

Warranty

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