Rolodesk DA

By Tim Endres

ICE Engineering, Inc.
8840 Main Street
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

time@ice.com
uupsi!tbomb!time
CompuServe: 71410, 1120

Rolodesk DA is a very simple desk accessory designed to give you the features found in the famous Rolodex® product. A simple, fast access to brief cards of textual information. In the Rolodesk DA, these cards are presented to you in the DA's window, one card at a time. Rolodesk DA provides functions for adding and deleting cards, as well as searching cards for text. It is also fully integrated with the Macintosh environment, allowing you to move information to and from the cards and other Macintosh applications.

The history of Rolodesk DA is interesting. I started the project after seeing the QuickCard application written by Bill Atkinson back in 1985. This apparently was some of his first hacking on HyperCard. Having seen the usefulness of the application, I decided that this usefulness was pre-empted by virtue of the inconvenience of entering and leaving the application under Finder (remember, this is 1985). Thus, I decided that I would write the Rolodesk DA. This was mostly for my tremendous need for exactly this functionality. After four days, I had Rolodesk DA 1.0! After enjoying using it for a while, I decided to upload the DA to CompuServe to see if others found it useful. It was downloaded over 600 times within four days! A hit. Since that time, I have received calls and letters from users all over the world thanking me for this simple utility. I have even received letters from Japan!

The DA was originally distributed as shareware. To my surprise, many people sent me the requested $5 check. Thanks to all of those who mailed me. It was very inspiring. But, after I realized that cashing lots of $5 checks was tedious, and I am too lazy to do it, I decided to simply make the DA public domain, and distribute it freely. I still enjoy letters though!

I am a hack. Spending hours in front of computers most would consider obsessive, and some pathological. I started programming the Lisa back in 1983, while trying to deal with going to work at a PL/I mainframe shop. That affair was very short. Since then, I have been happily hacking Mac's and Unix in Ann Arbor, Michigan. I have created many more little pieces of Macintosh wizardry. They are listed in the back of the manual.

You basically have the following functionality on each card in the Rolodesk.

- Full Macintosh Cut/Copy/Paste functionality on the text in both the card and find fields.

- Search facility for any text string. Case sensitive and non-case sensitive searches provided.

- Printing of card.

- Copy of card text to and from the clipboard and other applications.

- Setting of text font and size in the card on a file by file basis.

- Setting of card size on a file by file basis.

The last two features allow you to customize each Rolodesk file according to the data contained within.

To get started with Rolodesk DA, you must first install it. Most people will receive Rolodesk DA, along with the manual, in a BinHex-ed StuffIt file. This file must in turn be un-BinHex-ed, then unstuffed. If you are reading this document, it is highly probable that you have successfully performed these operations.

To install the Rolodesk DA, you use the Font/DA Mover application provided by Apple with your system disks. This is the one with the little truck icon --> . Either launch the Font/DA Mover application, and open the Rolodesk DA file, or double click the Rolodesk DA file to launch the Font/DA Mover, then open the System file on your startup disk. Then copy the Rolodesk DA into the System file using the *Copy* button.
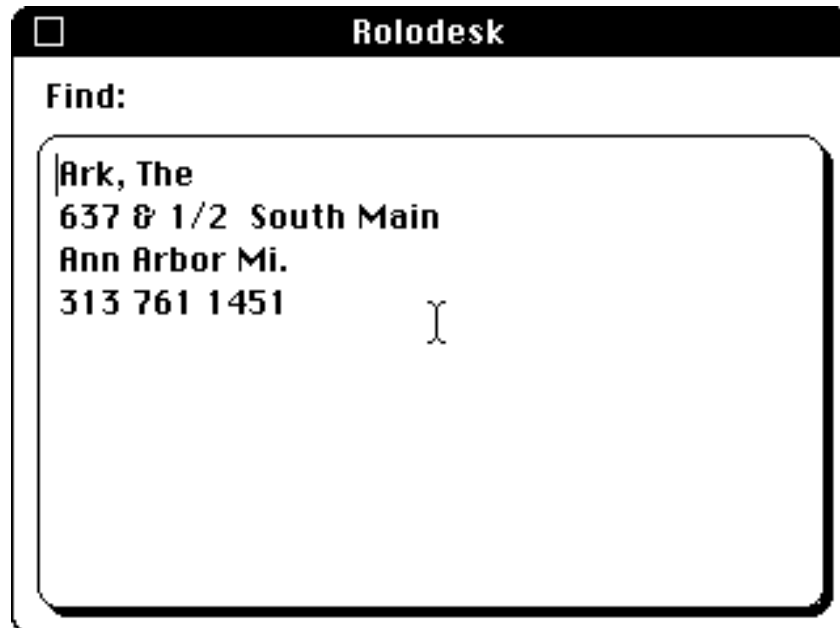
Quit the Font/DA Mover application, and if you are running MultiFinder, reboot the Macintosh. You will now find the Rolodesk DA in the Apple menu.

You open the Rolodesk DA the same as any other desk accessory. Select the Rolodesk DA's name from the list of desk accessories in the Apple menu. This will open the Rolodesk DA window, shown in the next section.

In this Rolodesk window, you will be presented with an empty Rolodesk file, containing a single card. You may now start entering data into the Rolodesk DA file.

Rolodesk DA works on *files* of *cards*. If you like, this is similar to HyperCard's 'stacks'. In each Rolodesk file is a number of Rolodesk cards. Each card contains textual information, such as addresses and phone numbers. Rolodesk DA allows you to display one file of Rolodesk cards in the Rolodesk DA window, one card at a time.

The Rolodesk DA presents a single file of cards, one card at a time, in the Rolodesk DA window. The window looks like this:

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ■            Rolodesk                      │
├──────────────────────────────────────────┤
│ Find:                                      │
│   ╭──────────────────────────────────╮    │
│   │Ark, The                          │    │
│   │637 & 1/2  South Main             │    │
│   │Ann Arbor Mi.                     │    │
│   │313 761 1451           I          │    │
│   │                                  │    │
│   │                                  │    │
│   │                                  │    │
│   ╰──────────────────────────────────╯    │
└──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

There are basically two distinct areas in the Rolodesk DA window. The *Find Field* is the area to the right of the "Find:" text. This is an area in which you can enter a text string to search for in the Rolodesk file. The other area is the *Card*. This is the area in which you will type the textual data of each card in the Rolodesk file.

You can move the text cursor between the find field and the card one of two ways. If you press the Tab key, the text cursor will move from one area to the other. Otherwise, you can press the mouse button while the mouse cursor is in either area, and the text cursor will be placed in that area.

The *First Card*, *Last Card*, *Next Card*, and *Prev Card* commands in the Rolodesk DA menu operate identically to the way they do in HyperCard. That is, you got the first card, last card, next card, or previous card of the current Rolodesk file, respectively.

The *Delete Card* command deletes the currently displayed card from the Rolodesk file. This command **can not be undone.** The only way to recover from a delete card command that you didn't wish for, is to close the Rolodesk file and *trash*, or not save, the file contents when you are asked what to do with the changes. Unfortunately, this would also entail losing all of your other changes since the last save.

The *Insert Card* command inserts a new Rolodesk card immediately **after** the card that is currently displayed. This unfortunately means there is no convenient mechanism for inserting a card in front of the very first card in the Rolodesk. The way I get around this is to simply copy the first card's text to another card, then paste the desired text into the first card.

When you are presented with a new card, via the insert command, or any other time that you change the data of a Rolodesk card, you must be sure to save your changes. You do this by pressing the Enter key. This is not the same key as the Return key. When you press the Enter key to save changes to a new card created by the insert command, you will be presented with a new empty card. This is the *fast entry* mode of Rolodesk DA. Each new card will be inserted immediately after the previous one. This is very convenient for entering the initial data. When you make changes to a card that already existed, you will not get a new card when you press Enter.

To search for text within a Rolodesk DA file, simply enter the text into the find field, then press the Return key. This will cause the Rolodesk DA to begin scanning cards for this text.

If the text is found on any card, that card will be selected and shown in the card area. If you repeatedly hit the Return key, you will be presented with each card that contains the desired text.

The searching will wrap around from the end to the beginning. Thus, if you repeatedly hit Return enough times, you will begin to see the same cards over and over.

If you wish for the search to be case sensitive, you need to place a diamond mark next to the *Case Sensitive* item in the Rolodesk DA menu. Case sensitive searching means that the letters searched for must have the same upper and lower case letters.

If you wish to use non-case sensitive searching, then remove the diamond mark next to the *Case Sensitive* menu item. Adding and removing the diamond mark is accomplished by simply selecting the item in the menu according to the standard Macintosh interface guidelines.

When your text cursor is in the find area, you can still index through the Rolodesk file using the next,. prev, first, and last card commands. You can also step forward one card at a time by pressing the Enter key. Holding down the Shift Key, while pressing the Enter key will cause the stepping to go backwards. Remember, if you press the Enter key while the text cursor is in the card area, and the card has been changed, then the card will be saved.

You can change the size of the Rolodesk DA window, and therefore, the size of the Rolodesk DA card. The size of the window is stored in each individual Rolodesk file. I keep my addresses on a card that is small and easy to read, while I keep my recipes on a large, tall card.
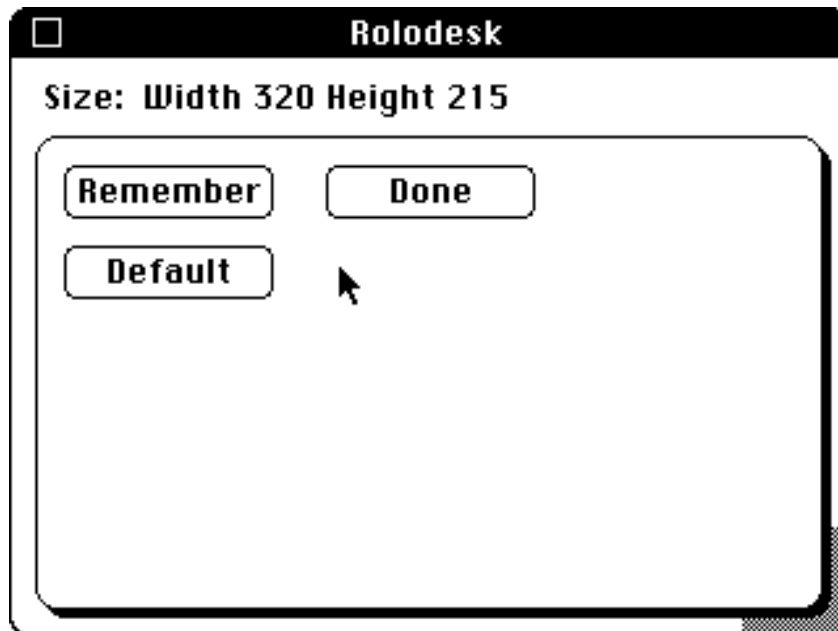
The window sizing function is very sloppy, and that is my fault. The reason for this sloppiness is simple. One day I received a call from a person named Bruce. Bruce was complimenting Rolodesk and wished to express one desired addition, namely, the ability to resize the card. His enthusiasm simply overwhelmed me with the feelings I had the first time I fired up a Lisa, and watched it restore itself to the virtual state I had powered down with.

Well, I finished talking to him, after asking for his phone number, and proceeded to whip together the interface you see today. A little rough around the edges, but I was able to get him a version that day. Modems are truly wonderful.

So, someday I will probably just make the card scrollable, and give the window a resize box to allow the most flexibility. For now…

To resize the Rolodesk DA window, you have to go into resize mode. This accomplished with the *Resize Window* command in the *Misc* submenu of the Rolodesk DA menu. When you select the resize window command, the Rolodesk card and field areas will disappear, and you will be presented with the *resize window*.

The resize window looks something like this:

The window's size is displayed where the find field used to be. Here, you are presented with the window's width and height in pixels. The three buttons in the card provide the resize control. The small gray region in the lower right corner of the window is the resize *grab* area.

To resize the window, you click and drag the mouse in the gray area in the lower right corner, the same way you would click and drag in the resize box of a normal Macintosh document window. As you drag the mouse, the window's outline will be resized, while the size information is updated to reflect the resizing.

Once you have sized the Rolodesk window to the desired size, you can save that size in the current Rolodesk file by selecting the *Remember* button. This will simply save the size in the file.

The *Default* button causes the window to be resized to the default. The default is stored in the Rolodesk DA as a WIND resource. Thus, for those familiar with the ResEdit application, the WIND resource can be resized to any desired default size. The default function is debatable in terms of value, but at some time I thought it might be nice to be able to resize to some constant size for consistency. You be the judge...

When you are finished with the resize mode, select the *Done* button. This will take you back to the standard Rolodesk DA window.

Note that if you try to resize a new Rolodesk file that you have not saved to a named file yet, you will get a complaint that the window size can not be saved. Believe this complaint. You must first save the Rolodesk to a specific file before you can save the resize of the Rolodesk window. As I said above, the code is somewhat sloppy, I apologize.

Also note that if you resize a Rolodesk DA window, and select the *Done* button, without selecting the *Remember* button, you effectively achieve a temporary resize. This convenient for what some users call *quick views*. For example, some people keep the address and phone number of people in the first four lines of the card, and more detailed information below. In the rare cases where the detailed info is needed, for example to print the entire card, the window is temporarily resized to show the entire card.

Changing Font and Font Size

To change the font or font size of the Rolodesk card, use the *Font* and *Size* submenus of the Rolodesk DA menu. When you change the font or size of the Rolodesk card, this change is saved immediately in the Rolodesk file. Thus, there is no temporary font changes as in the window resize.

Note, as with the window size, you can only save the font and font size if you have specified the file the the Rolodesk is saved to. Thus, when you change the font or font size in a new Rolodesk, you will get a warning message to this affect.

Statistics

The *Statistics* menu command in the *Misc* submenu provides a quick overview of the Rolodesk file. It shows the name of the Rolodesk file, the number of cards in the Rolodesk file, and the total number of bytes contained in the Rolodesk file.

Default Rolodesk File

When you launch the Rolodesk DA, you are normally presented with an empty Rolodesk file, and then have to open the desired file using the open command. However, if you place a Rolodesk file into the System Folder (or startup folder containing System and Finder files), and name the file "Rolodesk", then Rolodesk DA will open that file automatically when it is opened.

For instance, on my machine, I have a folder of named Rolodesk files, but one Rolodesk file in the System Folder that I use for my addresses. Anytime I wish to change the default Rolodesk file, I save the Rolodesk file from the System Folder into the Rolodesk folder, then copy the desired file in the System Folder and rename it to be "Rolodesk".

Rolodesk File Format

Rolodesk files are really stored as simple text files. In the text file, cards are separated from each other by single lines containing one ^ character. Thus, the following text is what a Rolodesk file containing two cards might look like:

```
This is card one.
This is line two on card one.
^
This is card two.
This is line two on card two.
```

This means that you can open a Rolodesk file in any of your favorite text editing applications, and directly manipulate the Rolodesk cards. This can be useful for integrating Rolodesk data into your database applications, or creating mailing list input files for your word processing applications. It also allows you to run other tools against the Rolodesk cards, and then used again with the Rolodesk DA. For example, you may wish to use an editor to sort the cards, since Rolodesk does not provide a sorting operation. Furthermore, you could have other programs automatically generate files to be read by Rolodesk for quick access. Like providing a quick reference of a subset of data for a much larger database.

As I stated above, I have created some more pieces of Macintosh utility. You can obtain any of them via the means listed below.

• Rolodesk DA   Free •123•

A Macintosh desk accessory that implements the functionality of the famous Rolodex®. This DA will run on any Macintosh that has the Hierarchical File System and implements Hierarchical menus. Most Macintosh Plus computers and beyond, with recent system software, will work.

• Snap DA   Free •123•

A Macintosh desk accessory that allows you to make screen dumps. This DA has the unique feature of setting a timer for the dump, so that you can get screen dumps of holding down menus! You can actually get a screen dump of the Finder's dialog box displayed when copying files! This DA handles large screens, but is monochrome only currently.

• Utilities DA   Free •123•

A Macintosh desk accessory that implements many useful utility functions. This DA was created for the pre-MultiFinder days, but still has many uses. Most importantly, it allows you to change the Finder information for files, provides mouse coordinate measurements, and provides useful tables. A must for advanced Macintosh users and programmers.

• UMail   Commercial •34•

A Macintosh application that implements a full suite of uucp/mail functionality utilizing Apple's new Communications Toolbox. This application allows you to have unix mail and UseNet news delivered right to your Macintosh. It also supports the high speed Telebit modems. Terminal emulation and communications support is provided, along with file transfer utilities for XMODEM, and eventually ZMODEM. The application includes a real Macintosh interface for reading and managing you mail. If you dislike reading your unix mail with HoneyDanber and motf, then this application is for you!

• Konnect FAST!   Commercial •14•

A Macintosh application that provides a high speed modem connection directly to Number One Graphics, and other commercial typesetting shops. Transferring information via phone has never been easier, and rarely faster. This service allows for overnight typesetting service across the country, as well as same day service in some cases. A simple menu based order sheet allows you to specify all of the details to ensure the job is set correctly, and full shipping information is tagged with the job for easy and fast turn around.

This product is packaged for both end users and type-setting shops! We welcome calls from service bureaus.

• IGES•*PS*   Commercial •4•

A Macintosh application that translates IGES files into PostScript and Encapsulated PostScript files. This allows you to typeset all of you CAD drawings. You have never seen resolution like you will from your CAD drawings, when they are translated to PostScript. The on screen preview function, and IGES file editor functions, make this application a must for anyone who works with IGES files on a frequent basis.

Obtaining Software

•1•   CompuServe

I attempt to keep up to date versions of my public domain software on CompuServe. Login in and search for the key word "ICE". I usually place this keyword in the description.

You can mail me at 71410, 1120, but I do not read my CompuServe mail very often (in fact, about twice a year).

•2•   Number One Graphics BBS, Lansing MI

Modem access 24 hours a day. 300-2400, Hayes V42, and Telebit PEP support. Number One Graphics is a Typesetting service bureau, specializing in electronic services with modem. Number One has graciously donated these services to provide a reliable pick up point for those without CompuServe access.

300-2400 Support (517) 332 2022   8 Data Bits, No Parity, 1 Stop Bit
Telebit PEP Support (517) 332 2549   8 Data Bits, No Parity, 1 Stop Bit

Number One Graphics is also the primary sales outlet for the Konnect FAST! software, and services.

•3•   UseNet

I attempt to post my public domain software on UseNet news, usually to comp.binaries.mac. You can also try and email me at the following addresses.

Internet   time@oxtrap.aa.ox.com
       -or-   time%oxtrap.aa.ox.com@umix.umich.edu

UUCP   umich!oxtrap!time
       -or-   uunet!umich!oxtrap!time

ICE Engineering is the commercial entity that sells my commercial software. You can contact them via US mail or phone to order software. Sorry, VISA orders not currently possible. Phone or mail the following:

(313) 449 8288

ICE Engineering
8840 Main Street
Whitmore Lake MI 48189

Also keep an eye on the many Macintosh mail order catalogs, as we are working on getting the software listed in thesein these publications.