

NewsRoom
News Creation Utility for BBS SysOps

(A product of LMD Group)

NewsRoom version 2.05

Chapter 1

Introduction

NewsRoom is a utility intended for use by BBS SysOps to create news files for their bulletin board. It was originally designed to be used with PCBoard systems by using the PCB specific color codes. In order to allow flexibility, NewsRoom also produces files with ANSI color codes or plain ASCII text. In response to requests, support has also been included for Wildcat! specific color codes.

NewsRoom keeps all its files in a database. Each news entry is kept separate from the others and may be re-edited at a later date if necessary. Items are included in the end news product based on SysOp selection. Old news items may be deleted if they no longer apply, either manually as the news is created, or based on date criteria. News files may also be generated in unattended processing.

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Chapter 2

Files

The Files selection allows setup of configuration items that are needed by the program. Before doing anything else, you should go through each selection before attempting to use the other functions of the program.

2.1 BBS Options

This selection is used to set up BBS Options that will show up throughout the program.

2.1.1 BBS Name

Enter the Name of the BBS that the news files will be generated for. This name will be placed into each news file entry if the Display BBS option is set to 'Y'.

2.1.2 Special Codes

Valid entries in this field are:

- o A to generate ANSI color and standard ASCII files
- o P to generate PCBoard specific colors in the news files
- o W to generate Wildcat 3.x specific colors in the news files.

Placing an 'A' in this field will cause the program to generate 2 news files--one in plain ASCII format, the other with ANSI colors. Entering a 'P' will cause a single news file to be generated using PCBoard version 14.5 codes. A 'W' will generate the news file using the Wildcat! version 3.x codes. Both the PCBoard and Wildcat! selections will generate the news file using the ASCII file name. Further, selection of the Wildcat! option will force an extension of .BBS on the news file produced.

2.1.3 Date format

The date of news file creation will be entered into the file based on the selection made here. There are six formats that can be used, they are:

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Table 2.1: Date Formats

December 3, 1988	3 Dec 88
12-3-88	12/3/88
3/12/88	12/03/88

Select the format that suits your personal preference.

2.1.4 Time format

You may select one of six formats for the date of the news file creation:

Table 2.2: Time Formats

16:30:57.89	16:30:57
4:30 PM	4:30p
4:30	04:30

The format that you use will be based solely on your personal preference.

2.1.5 Special Codes

2.1.5.1 Send "More"

Send More determines if some kind of "More" or "Pause" prompt is sent as part of the news file. The code will only be put in the ANSI file produced. Valid entries in this field are:

- o Y to place a "More" code after each news item.
- o N to not use "More" codes at all.
- o E to place a "More" code at the end of the news file.

2.1.5.2 "More" code

This is the code used to cause a pause at the end of a news item. if it is left blank, nothing will be sent.

2.1.5.3 Send "Clear"

Send Clear determines if a screen clear code should be included at the beginning of an ANSI/Color news item. Valid entries are:

- o Y to place a clear screen code at the beginning of the news item.
- o N to suppress the clear screen code.

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2.1.5.4 "Clear" code

This is the code that will be inserted in the file to clear the screen. We would imagine that your BBS software will be somewhat particular about what codes go here, so we would suggest checking your documentation (and your spelling).

2.1.6 Expiration

This number is a global number of days that NewsRoom will wait before deleting a news item. If this number is set to 0, the "purge" command line option will not work. Any other number will be taken as a valid number of days to keep items.

2.1.7 Display BBS

This option will determine whether the BBS name will print on news items. If set to 'Y', the name will appear in each news item. If set to 'N', the BBS name will not be printed.

2.1.8 Display SysOp

The Display SysOp option will allow the sysop's name to either be printed or suppressed in a news item, as with the Display BBS option.

2.2 Conference Configuration

This selection will allow you to configure multiple conferences for news generation. Each conference is treated as a separate entity for news generation. The raw news files are kept separated by conference number, and actual files are generated based on information entered here. After the appropriate fields in the conference have been filled in, depressing F10 will save the entries into the database file.

2.2.1 Conference Number

Enter the number of the conference for which you wish to generate news files.

2.2.2 Conference Name

Enter the name of the conference, i.e., Main Board or Science Fiction.

2.2.3 SysOp/Conference Host Name

Enter the name of the conference SysOp or host. If the name is the same as the BBS SysOp it may be left blank. This name will be entered in the news files as "from". If the name is the

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main BBS SysOp, the news will be "From Your SysOp", if a conference-specific name is used, it will be "From Your Host".

2.2.4 News Path

This is the path to the news file--it may be a complete drive/path specification, just a path, or if left blank, the news files will be created in the current directory.

2.2.5 News Format

NewsRoom currently produces four separate formats for news files, they are:

- o Simple (see figure 7.1, page 19)
- o Printer Paper (see figure 7.2, page 20)
- o Header (see figure 7.3, page 20)
- o Modified Header (slight modification to Header)

Each conference may maintain news in a separate format. Formats may be "mixed and matched" for a BBS.

2.2.6 File Names

This is the name that will be used to generate the actual news file. If you have separate ASCII and ANSI files, enter the names used in the appropriate field. One note for PCBoard SysOps: If you use PCB @X color codes for your news, the name entered in the ASCII Name field will be used to generate the news file.

2.3 Colors

Use this function to select the colors that will be used by the ANSI files. Colors may be different for each format of news files.

2.3.1 Simple Format

Select the colors that will be used when generating news using the Simple format. The actual format style and colors will be displayed when using this function, and colors are updated as selections are made.

2.3.1.1 Text Color

This color will be used to generate any nonspecific text in the news file.

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2.3.1.2 BBS Name Color

This color will be used to display the BBS Name.

2.3.1.3 SysOp Name Color

The Sysop's name will be displayed using this color.

2.3.1.4 Title Color

The title of the news file will be displayed using this color.

2.3.1.5 Date/Time Color

Both the date and time fields will be displayed with the color selected here.

2.3.1.6 Seperator Color

If the format using a separator line between news items, it will be shown in this color.

2.3.2 Printer Paper Format

This function will allow selection of colors used when generating the news file in the Printer Paper format. A representation of the printer paper format will be shown in an adjacent window, and the colors will change in the window as selected.

2.3.2.1 Edge Colors

This color will be used on the edges of the printer paper format.

2.3.3 Header Format

This is the function to use to update the Header and Modified Header format news colors. The format will be displayed in a window, and the colors will be updated as selections are made to aid in finalizing your format.

2.4 Screen Colors

This selection will allow you to select screen colors to suit your personal tastes. The various windows presented throughout the program are divided into groups:

- o Menu system

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- o Input system
- o Help System
- o Messages
- o Errors

Each system may use its own colors.

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Chapter 3

Create

Before using the Create function, you should set up BBS and Conference options in the Files function. When you select this function, you will be presented a window with the conferences you have set up listed in it. If you have set up more conferences than what are shown in the window, the window may be scrolled using the up/down arrow keys. Select the conference you want to generate news for.

After selecting the conference, you will be presented with a window asking for the title of this news item and the number of days until expiration for that item.

Enter anything that you wish in the title field. The contents of this field are not forced to mixed case.

The expiration field is used only if you wish to override the global expiration parameter in the options. Leaving a zero in this field will cause the global value to be used (see subsection 2.1.6, page 7 for more on global expiration).

When you have entered a title, the program will open an editor window for you to enter your news item. The size of the news will be limited by available memory. After finishing in the editor, the edit file will be saved if you did a quit and save, or discarded if you do a simple quit.

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Chapter 4

Edit

As with the Create function, you will be presented with a list of conferences to select from. After selecting, you will be shown all of the news file names pertaining to that conference. Select the name of the file you wish to edit, and that file will be put back in the news editor for you to make changes. Before putting the news item into the editor, you will be given the opportunity to change the subject and the days until expiration.

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Chapter 5

Export

Once again, as with Create and Edit, you will be shown a list of conferences. Select the conference that you want to build a news file for. The program will locate all news files produced for that conference, and present them to you in a window in groups of 18. You will be shown the name of the file, and the subject of that file. Preceding the file information will be a one character field that will accept entry of "A" (to add the file to the news), "D" (to delete the file) or "I" to ignore the file on the current export. The export function will completely build the news file(s) each time it is run.

When you have finished selecting files, depressing F10 will terminate the selection process and start building the actual news file.

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Chapter 6

Event Processing

NewsRoom may now be run as part of your event to purge files of old news and generate news bulletins. We've added two command-line parameters specifically for this purpose:

- o -p Purge outdated files
- o -e Export news files

These can be used alone or combined. If combined, the purge will run first followed by the export. Using either of these parameters signals to the program that it is running in unattended mode.

NewsRoom must be run in the directory where its option file and database files are stored.

6.1 Purge Files

The purge feature will go through the files and evaluate each news item based on its date of creation, and either the global number of days to expire in the option record, or the number of days entered when the item was created. As each item is evaluated, a message is output to the screen identifying the item and giving the results of the evaluation--either deletion or retention. When the purge process is complete, the total number of items deleted is put on the screen, and the program pauses for a few seconds.

6.2 Export

The export function will determine which conferences contain active news items, then create new news files for them. During the process, messages identifying the conference and item title will be sent to the screen. When complete, a message will be sent indicating how many items and how many conferences were processed.

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Chapter 7

Support

You can obtain support for newsroom from several areas. The best is LMD Group's support conference (Nr. 18) on the Existentialist BBS. Call (801) 226-8310 (2400 baud) to register. You will be upgraded within 24 hours and be given access to the private line, (801) 226-8315 (USR HST Dual Standard V.32bis v.42bis 14.4k). Your registration includes a a user account on this board. If you need support prior to registering, just call and log on. Join conference 18 and address questions to LMD SUPPORT. ****PLEASE**** do not leave messages for the SysOp, and don't put messages in the main board area

Although not an official support area, the RIME doors conference is monitored, and mail may be sent to LMD SUPPORT and routed to ->EXISTENT.

Another area to obtain support would be on Compuserve where you can send mail to 73750,2626. One word of caution on taking the Compuserve route--the mail is not checked daily.

Bulletin Board News from:

Brought to you by your SysOp: nnnnnnnnnnnnnn at hh:mm:ss on mmmmmm dd,

Subject:

text text text text text text text text

Generated by NewsRoom news manager (C) 1991 LMD Group

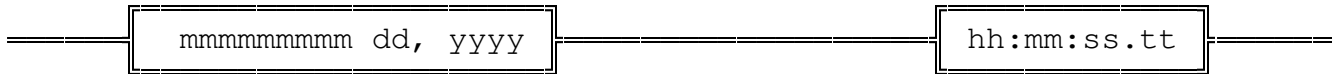
Figure 7.1: Simple News Format

```
0
0 Mmmmmm dd, yyyy                               hh:mm:ss
0 Bulletin Board News from: Your BBS Name
0      Brought to you by your SysOp: A Name
0
0      __News Title__
0
0 text text text text text text text text text text text
0 text text text text text text text text text text text
0
0
0 Generated by NewsRoom news manager (C) 1991 LMD Group
0
0 -----
```

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Figure 7.2: Printer Paper Format

*B 86,Header



Bulletin Board News from:
Issued by: Your (sysop), .

Concerning:

text text text text text text text

Generated by NewsRoom news manager (C) 1991 LMD Group

Figure 7.3: Header News Format

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Appendix A

Program Information

NewsRoom was written specifically for BBS SysOps. Since SysOps are, in our experience, more scrupulous about registering their shareware, we take a markedly different stance with programs aimed at the SysOp market than with other markets. NewsRoom is in no way crippled. Registering will take the "UNREGISTERED DEMO" line out of your news and replace it with a line indicating that it's registered, and do the same thing with the main menu screen. We don't ask you to trust us that the program will work after registration, and we don't put an expiration date on the program.

Please propagate our trust in you by registering your copy of NewsRoom after you've tried it.

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Appendix B

Editing Keys

Table B.1: Cursor Movement

Arrow keys	- cursor movement
Ctrl-LeftArrow	- word left
Ctrl-RightArrow	- word right
Home	- beginning of field
End	- end of line/field
Ctrl-Home	- beginning of first field
Ctrl-End	- end of last field
Tab	- next field
Shift-Tab	- previous field

Table B.2: Inserting and Deleting

Ins	- toggle insert mode
Del	- delete character at cursor
BackSpace	- delete character left
Ctrl-BackSpace	- delete word left
Ctrl-T	- delete word right
Ctrl-U	- delete to end of field
Ctrl-Y	- delete to end of form

Table B.3: Other Editing Keys

Enter	- process current field
Ctrl-Enter	- process all fields
Ctrl-R	- restore field
Esc	- abort data entry

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Appendix C

Quintessential legalities

C.1 The Copyright

This software is the property of the LMD Group. As such, users are granted a limited license for the use of this software. Basically, you are allowed to use the software the same as a book. You are allowed to make archive copies of the software to protect your investment. By saying "book", this means that any number of people may use the software, it may be moved from CPU to CPU, but it may not be used at more than one location on more than a single computer at the same time unless a site license is negotiated.

Along with that, there are a few other restrictions: You may not decompile or reverse engineer the software. You may not modify the program's operation in any way. The key file used by the software is non-transferrable. You may not sell or give away or in any other way transfer a key file to another person without express consent of LMD Group.

C.2 The Disclaimer

This software is not warranted to do anything but take up valuable space on your disk, and possibly make you regret you ever heard of it. Any loss of income or productivity is not our fault, although we will lend a sympathetic ear to such problems.

C.3 The Acknowledgements

We'd like to take a moment here and point out that PCBoard is a product of Clark Development Company and is a registered trademark. Wildcat! is a product of Mustang Software.

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Appendix D

Editor

The editor is an extremely simple text editor. It is brain damage and will allow entry of text, quitting the edit, and quitting and saving the edit. Please do not expect more.

-----Editing Keys-----

Home - Position cursor to column 1
End - Position cursor to last column of current
line
Ins - toggle insert mode
Ctrl K Ctrl K - End and save file
Ctrl K Ctrl Q - End and do not save file
Esc - End and do not save file

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