User Manual

Updated for Version 1.3

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Table of Contents

1

QuickStart *NeoPack/Professional*

This guide is a quick-start for those wanting to become quickly acquainted with *NeoPack/Professional*. This guide assumes that the application has been successfully installed, and that you are familiar with Microsoft Windows applications.

Sample files

The *NeoPack/Professional* installer places several sample files and images into the \Program Files\Timestone Software\ directory. These directories are:

`\Program Files\Timestone Software\Example Files`
(contains a sample *NeoPack/Professional* job file)

`\Program Files\Timestone Software\Sample Images`
(contains sample images required by the sample job file and the tutorial)

`\Program Files\Timestone Software\Templates\Professional`
(contains sample templates)

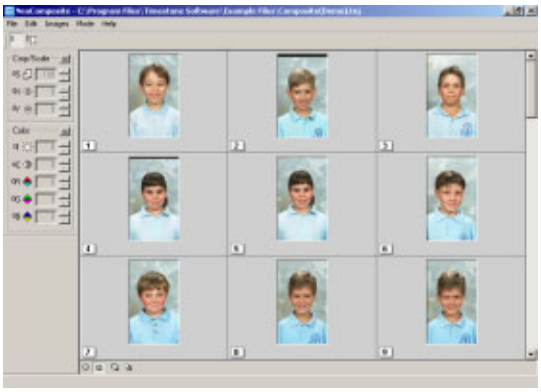
Note: The file does not include the original high resolution images, and so you will not be able to print any pages from the example file. The example file is intended only to give a quick overview of *NeoPack/Professional*'s features.

Getting to know *NeoPack/Professional*

Open the sample file

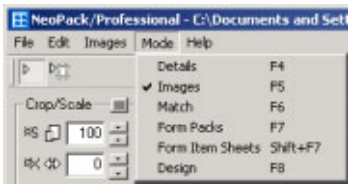
Start *NeoPack/Professional* by choosing **Start > Program Files > Timestone Software > *NeoPack/Professional***.
NeoPack/Professional launches.

Choose **File, Open**, then navigate to the \Program Files\Timestone Software\Example Files directory, and open the file, **PackPro(Demo).tnj**. The example file opens.



Modes

There are 6 modes of operation in *NeoPack/Professional*:



- **Details mode** – import and edit job name and other details information
- **Images mode** – import crop and color correct the portrait images
- **Match mode** – match images to names
- **Form Packs mode** – form the finished pages
- **Form Item Sheets mode** – create sheets with multiple subjects (for proof sheets, ID cards etc)
- **Design mode** – create the templates to be used for the pages

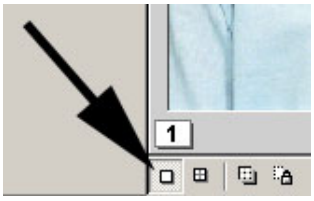
You'll be in Images mode the first time you enter *NeoPack/Professional*. Switch between the modes by choosing the **Mode** menu, then the mode you want, or by using the shortcut keys (**F4** – **F8** pictured above).

Images mode

Images mode is used to import and prepare images for use in *NeoPack/Professional* pages. There are several controls that let you change the number of images displayed on the screen at once.

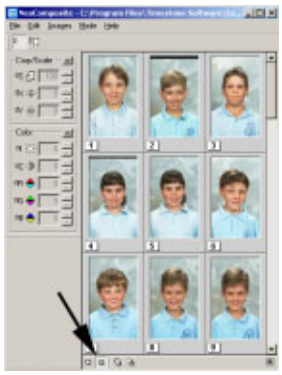
Single Image mode

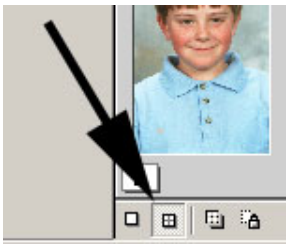
Click the **Single Image** mode button. The display changes to show one single image.



Multi Image mode

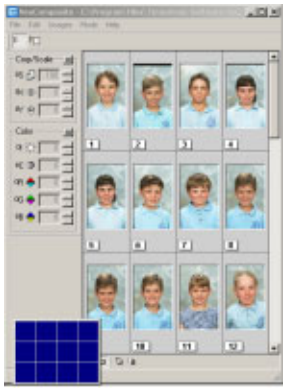
Click the **Multiple Image** mode button. The display changes to show multiple images on-screen.

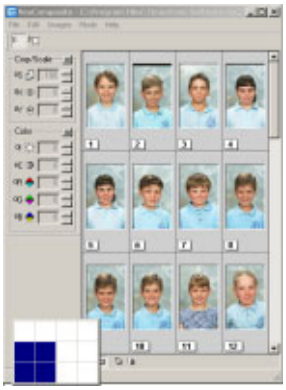


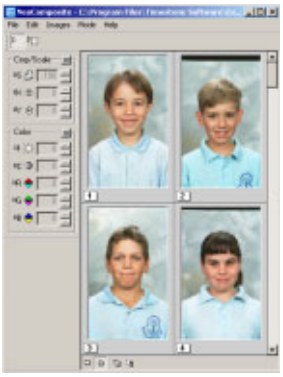


Change the number of images displayed

You can control the number of images displayed using the **Images** button. Click the button, then pull the grid that opens to select the number of images you want. Click the mouse and the screen re-draws for the selected number of images.

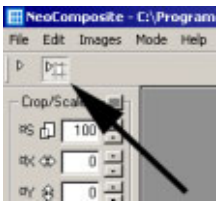




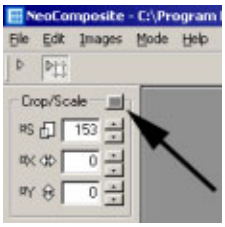


Cropping Images

Switch to **Single Image** mode, then click the image displayed. Note that it highlights darker grey. Switch to **Image Crop** mode by clicking the **Crop** button in the toolbar. Note that several lines now appear over the portrait image. These lines indicate 2 aspect ratios, 2:3 and 4:5.



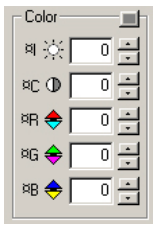
Click the image and drag the mouse whilst still holding down the mouse button. The image will move on-screen. You can also hold the **Ctrl** down, then the **Arrow** keys to crop the image.



To reset the position of the image, click the **Reset crop** button in the **Crop** sidebar. Now, hold the **Shift** key down on the keyboard and move the mouse up and down in a vertical direction. You will see the portrait image zoom up and down as you drag the mouse. You can also hold the **Ctrl** key down, then press the **Page Up** and **Page Dn** keys to zoom the image.

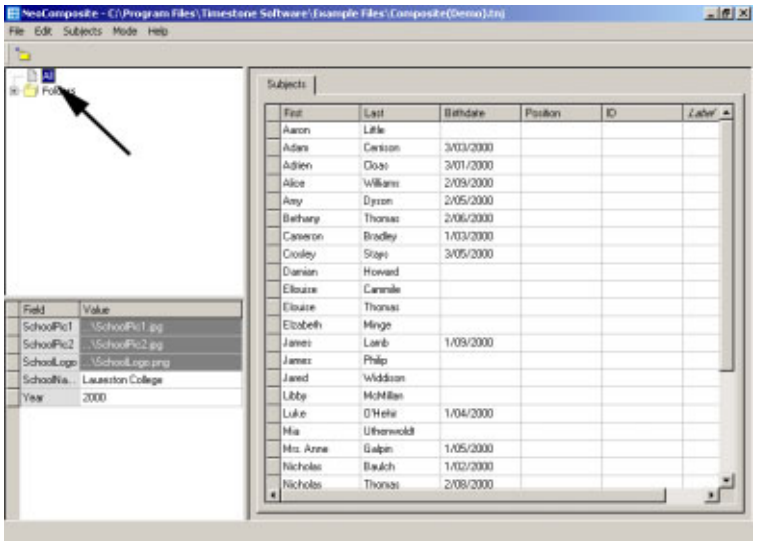
Color correction

You can correct the color, density and contrast of an image using the **Color Controls** sidebar. To correct an image, click it, then choose the color you want to adjust. Enter an amount, or use the **Up Arrow** or **Down Arrow** keys to adjust the value.

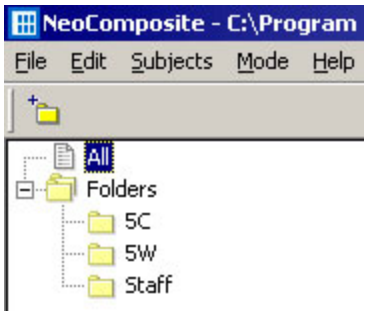


Details mode

Choose **Mode, Details** to enter **Details** mode. You will see a number of folders and name details. Details are usually imported from a text file or manually entered from order bags. Click **All** in the folder list to view all the names attached to this job.

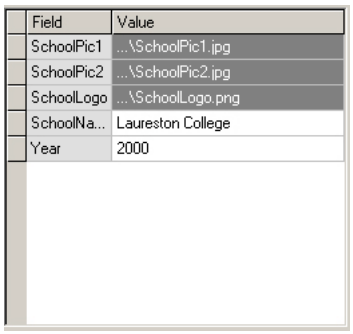


Click the **+** next to the folder to expand all the groups for this job. Click each of the groups under the folder to see the names belonging to that folder group.



Entering Global details

The templates used in this example use several images of the school, its logo and some text to form the final pages. These details are 'attached' at the **Details** screen. The area below the Folder list contains various fields and their values. Fields can contain either text or graphic images. In this example, there are 3 graphic fields that contain images of the school, the logo image and two fields that contain the school name and year.

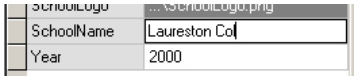


Graphic Details

The graphic images are allocated by double-clicking the **Value** entry. The **Graphic Value** dialog opens. To allocate an image, choose **Select file…** a **File Open** dialog opens. Navigate to `\Program Files\Timestone Software\Sample Images` and choose the file SchoolPic1.jpg. The image loads to the dialog. Choose **OK** to complete the allocation process. Any reference in a template to the field SchoolPic1 will use the image `SchoolPic1.jpg`.

Text Details

To enter a text detail, click in the field **Value** then type the text for that field.



Match mode

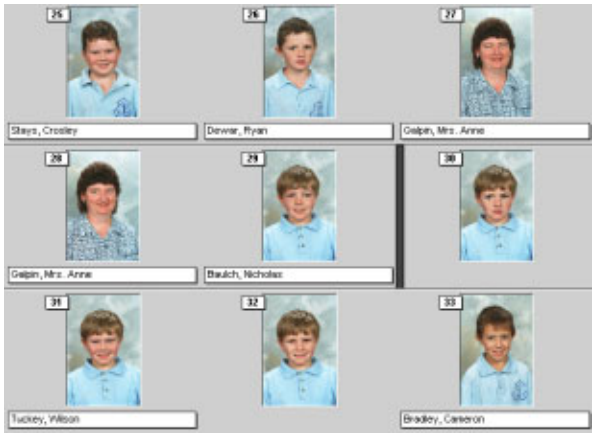
Match mode is used to match the images to names. The exact process you will use usually varies on your lab's current procedures. There are two ways of matching images to names.

- Import pre-matched data
- Match the images using your shoot list data

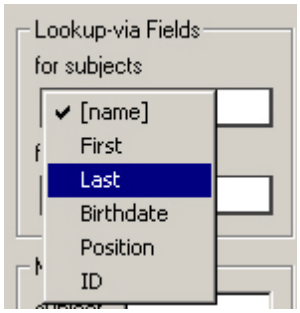
If you have a third party matching application, you can import the pre-matched data and match it to the data on import.

Matching names

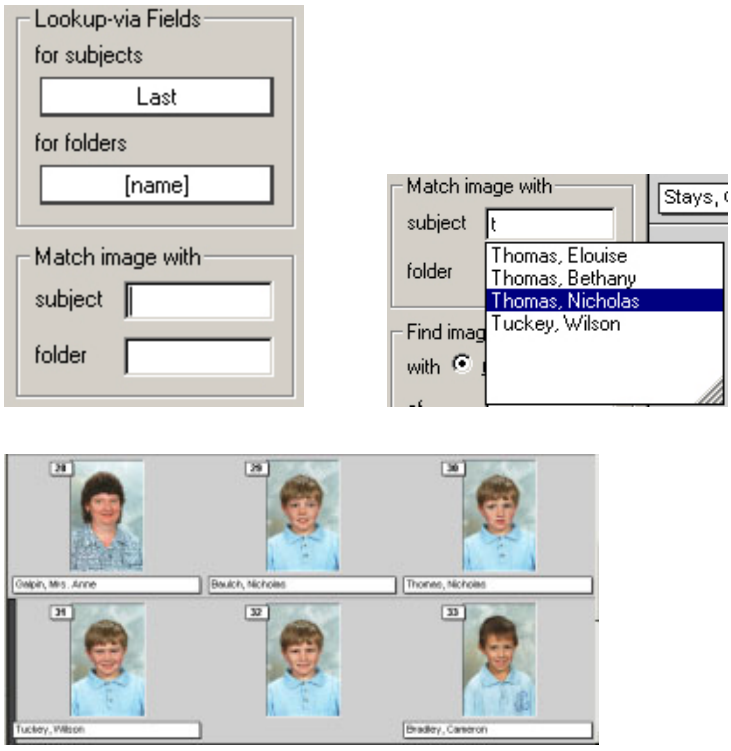
Usually, you will use the matching mode to match the names and images by searching for the last name, or reading a barcoded card with an embedded ID number. The example file has been pre-matched with the exception of a few images. Find image 30 by scrolling through the images. Click the image, and note the **Match** bar appears to its left.



To the left of the images is the **Match** sidebar. At the top of the sidebar is the **Lookup-via Fields.** Click the **for subjects** drop-down and select **Last** from the list. This means that you will be searching for the last name from the list of names. You could use the ID field to search for, and use a barcode reader to automate the matching process.



With **Last** selected as the search criteria, find the **Match image with** entry box and click in **subject**. Now, type **t** and a list of last names beginning with **t** are displayed. You can continue to type the last name you're looking for to refine the list, or use the **arrow keys** to select the required name. Select the name `Thomas Nicholas` and press the **Enter** key. The current image is matched to `Nicholas Thomas` name, and the **Match** bar advances to the next image.

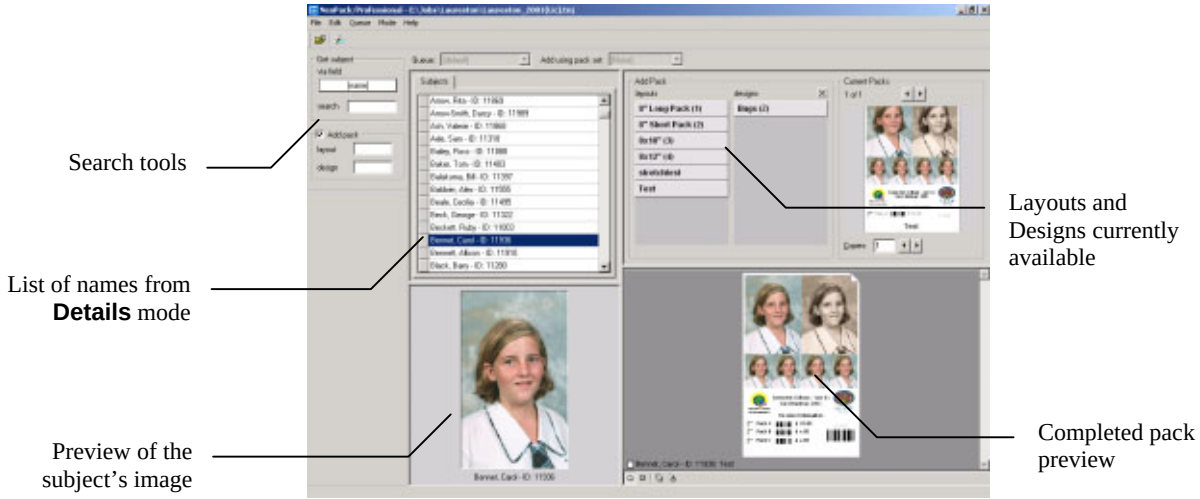


Other matching procedures

There are many other matching procedures and functions. However the scope of this introduction is to give you a general overview of *NeoPack/Professional*. If you need more detailed information on matching, please see Chapter 10, **Matching images and names**.

Form Packs mode

Creating and printing the final *NeoPack/Professional* jobs is done in **Form Packs** mode. Here, you can choose the names to print, apply templates and actually print the jobs.



Packs are created by choosing a subject's entry in the list, then the pack layout and (optionally) design from those available. The subject's image is placed into the pack, along with any other graphic objects and text defined by the templates being used. Various tools are provided to make pack generation progressively more automated.

Form Item Sheets mode

Form Item Sheets mode can be used to create proof sheets or to satisfy any requirement for multiple subjects on a single page. In this manual we'll use the example of ID cards.

Sheets use pre-existing template pack items – provided they're fixed size. You have a tremendous amount of control over what is included on any given sheet, such as:

- portrait or landscape printing
- arrange subjects across or down the page
- multiple instances of a subject on the same page
- multiple instances of a subject on separate pages
- exclude particular subjects (e.g. folder or shoot card matches)
- automatically calculate page size or set an explicit size
- margins and gaps

See Chapter 13, **Form Item Sheets mode** for further details.

Design Mode

NeoPack/Professional uses **templates** to create all its jobs. There are two different types of template that can be used:

- Pack Layouts – Defines prints or packs
- Pack Item – Defines a design that is placed into a Pack Layout

A *NeoPack/Professional* job consists of a chosen image or images being placed into a Pack Layout. The Pack Layout defines the print size or package ordered, and so is essential to create a job. Pack Items are optional. When a Pack Item is chosen, the selected image is placed into the Pack Item design, then the combined image is placed into the Pack Layout.

See Chapter 11, **Design mode**, for a full explanation of all the options available to you as a template designer.

2

Before you Begin…

Scope and audience

This manual covers both operation and technical aspects required to use *NeoPack/Professional*. The manual is divided into several chapters – see the **Table of Contents** at the start for a broad summary. Alternatively, consult the **Index** for specific procedures.

If you're planning to have multiple users using *NeoPack/Professional* in a networked environment, you'll need to look at Chapter 4, **License Server**, for info on how the license system works and where to put that hardlock/dongle we sent you!

Getting more help

More help is available for *NeoPack/Professional* from the following places:

- Related documents such as our *Color Management Guide* and the *Bitmap Compare Utility Guide*.
- Help pages from our WWW site, **http://www.timestone.com.au**
- Technical support as noted at the end of this chapter

Pre-installation requirements

You will need to following resources and information before you start installing *NeoPack/Professional*:

- *NeoPack/Professional* software installation CD-Rom
- *NeoPack/Professional* software User Manual (you're reading it)
- Hardware protection device (a 'hardlock' or 'dongle')
- 'Unlock' code supplied by Timestone Software
- Your computer complies with the hardware and software specifications as outlined in Chapter 3, **Installing *NeoPack/Professional*.**

Learning *NeoPack/Professional*

Included on the *NeoPack/Professional* CD-Rom are contained the following resources:

- Installation files
- *NeoPack/Professional* User Manual – the document you are currently reading

Getting help from Technical Support

We offer many different methods of support. However, we strongly encourage you to use e-mail as your primary support mechanism.

Telephone support

Telephone support is available by calling Timestone Software during our business hours. These hours are:

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Australian Eastern time

The telephone numbers is:

Voice: + 61 3 9570 9899

Fax support

You can fax us with questions or queries. Please address your fax queries to Technical Support. The fax number is:

Fax: + 61 3 9570 9855

E-mail and WWW support

There are support pages that include links to the newest versions of the software, as well as user documentation, and 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

Our WWW and e-mail contacts are:

WWW: http://www.timestone.com.au
E-mail: support@timestone.com.au

Hardware requirements

The following hardware requirements are required as a minimum configuration to run *NeoPack/Professional*. You should always attempt to exceed these requirements.

If you have a choice in areas in which you can afford to exceed these requirements, do so in the following order:

- Memory
- CPU class (Pentium II, Pentium III)
- CPU Speed
- Hard disk speed (Ultra, Ultra Wide, RAID)
- Other

Minimum requirements

- Intel Pentium II processor at 350 Mhz

- 100 Mhz system motherboard (Bx class)
- 128 Mb RAM
- 4Mb Video card (1024 x 768 @ 24 bit – see note)
- 9Gb Hard Disk (see note)
- 10 / 100 Ethernet card
- 33.6k Modem
- High quality (Sony, Apple) 17" color monitor
- Windows NT 4.0, Service Pack 3
- Mouse *with mouse wheel* (Microsoft, Logitec)

Optional Extras

- 6 x 9cm Graphics Tablet with pressure sensitive stylus (Wacom)
- CD-R or DVD RAM drive for data backup

Notes

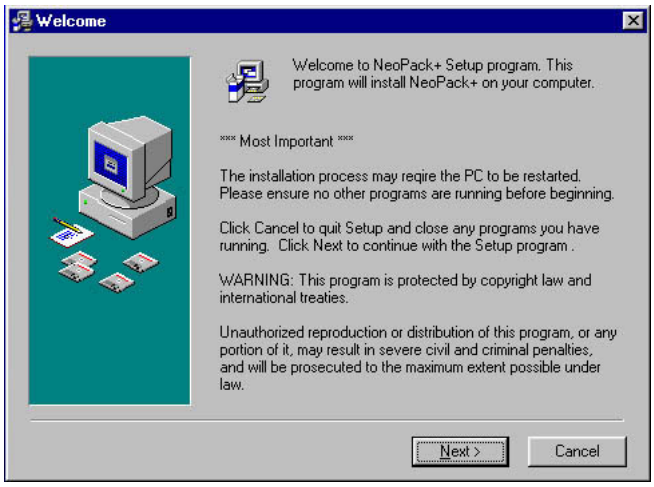
Video Card: It is most important to use a high quality video card. In particular, you should use video cards that support monitor calibration in some manner. Typically, manufacturers such as ATI or Video Seven have such products.

Hard disk: If you are using *NeoPack/Professional* on a single workstation, you should realise that *very quickly* you will use 9Gb of data storage, just with the images you scan to create your packs. If your requirements are low volume, you could consider a single 9Gb hard disk, and continually move images that are finished onto a CD-Rom or DVD-RAM disk. However, if you are producing just an average number of packages, you *will* want to use a number of drives. Fortunately, hard disk drive costs are relatively low today.

3

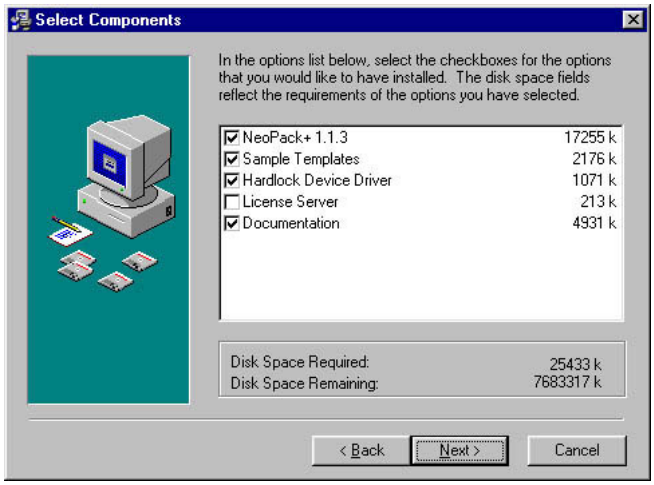
Installing *NeoPack/Professional*

Open the CD-ROM in Windows Explorer or My Computer, and double-click the file, Install *NeoPack/Professional*. The installer screen appears.



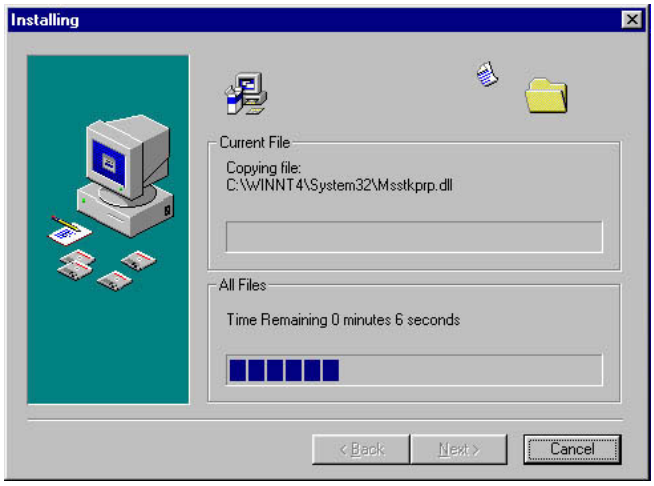
The installation process may require a restart mid-way through the process. If the installer requests you to restart the PC, please do so, as the installation is not able to complete without the restart.

- Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Read the contents of the **ReadMe** screen. It contains timely information that may be required for the installation. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Choose the location for the program files to be installed to. Unless you have a particular reason for changing the default path setting, we recommend you leave it as is. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Allow the program to create backup files for the installation. Choose **Next** to proceed.



- Choose the components to install. If this machine is to house the hardlock, install the License Server component.
- Documentation and tutorial files are installed to the same directory as the program files.
- Choose **Next** to proceed.

- Select the name of the Program Manager group to add the icons to. Choose **Next** to proceed.
- Once you're happy with all the settings, choose **Next** to proceed, or choose **Back** to change any of your settings.
- The program files are installed.
- Once all the files have been installed, the **Complete** screen is shown. Choose **Finish** to complete the installation.



Installing the Adobe Acrobat Reader

If you want to view the application documentation, you will need to have Adobe Acrobat installed. If you don't have the software on your system, use the installer on the CD.

Note: If you've installed 'over the top' of a demo version, you'll find that the documentation on the CD is likely to be a much larger file than the one you downloaded. Although the manual is the same, the version on the CD has images saved at a higher resolution. You won't notice much difference viewing the manual on screen, but you will certainly notice a difference if you print it.

4

License Server

Timestone Software's *Neo* applications are protected from unauthorised use by a license server. The license server runs as a Windows NT service, and is installed as a component of the installer. It consists of several components:

- A hardlock or dongle that is connected to the Server PC's Parallel port
- The License server, installed only to the server PC
- The License Manager which is installed to the Server, or can be used on a workstation connected to the network
- Several support files

Understanding the License Server

When a *Neo* application is licensed from Timestone Software, we issue your site with a hardlock or dongle. This hardlock contains a unique Key code that is specific to your installation. Without the hardlock, it is not possible to use the *Neo* application.

It is possible to purchase single or multi-user licenses for *Neo* applications. When the license is issued, it is 'added' to the license server. You are then able to use the number of applications you have licenses for.

When a *Neo* application is started, it asks the License Server if there is a license available to use. If there is, the application will launch and 'use' a license.

If there are insufficient licenses available for that application, an error message will be given and the program will quit. You will not be able to launch the application until a license becomes available, either by adding more licenses, or by one of the users quits their running Neo application.

Installing the License Server

When installing the *Neo* application, choose the **License Server** component. The License Server service will be installed.

It is not necessary to install the License Server on any machine other than the one that will host the hardlock.

You will be required to re-start the PC. Do so.

Once the PC has been re-started, you will notice several things:

- A new control panel **License Server** has been added to the Windows Control Panel
- A new service, **Timestone License Server** has been added to the **Services** list
- A new program, **License Manager** has been added to the **Start, Timestone Software** menu.

Configuring and testing the license server

The hardlock can be connected to the parallel port of any machine on the local area network. This machine doesn't have to have a *Neo* application installed to act as a hardlock server, but the workstations that *do* have *Neo* applications installed must be able to 'see' the machine that has the hardlock.

Hardlock and License Server installation

First, make sure the hardlock is plugged into the hardlock server's parallel port. Run the *Neo* application installer, and make sure that the **License Server** and **Support Files** components are chosen. It is not necessary to choose the *Neo* application component if this machine will not run the application. Allow the installer to re-start the PC as required.

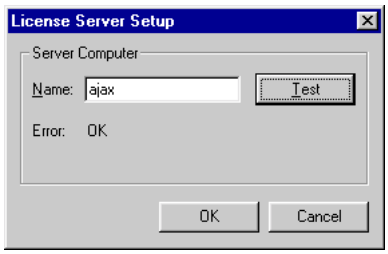
License Server configuration

Open the Windows **Control Panel**. Locate the **License Server** icon, and double-click it. The **License Server** control panel opens.

Enter the computer name for the hardlock server, and press **Test**. The License Server will then check to confirm the presence of the hardlock on the PC. If the hardlock is correctly detected, the control panel will report **OK.** If an error is displayed, confirm the following:

- Check you have entered the computer's name correctly
- The hardlock is connected to the PC's Parallel port
- The parallel port is functioning correctly
- Both the **License Server** and **Support Files** components have been installed

If an error is still given, contact Timestone Software or your distributor for support.



Enabling your licenses

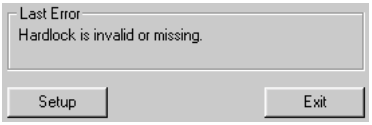
When you purchase a *Neo* application, you will receive a number of user licenses. Timestone Software will supply a number of enable codes that will add licenses to the license server. These files are supplied either as an e-mail to your system administrator, or on a CD-Rom. The enable codes are shipped to you separate from the hardlock for security reasons.

Adding the licenses to the license server

Ensure that the hardlock and server software has been installed and successfully configured.

From the **Start** menu, choose, **Timestone Software > License Manager**. The License Manager will open.

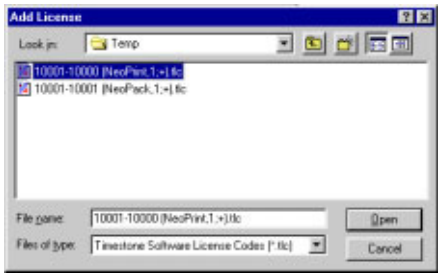
Pay particular attention to any errors displayed in the **Last Error** section. Before any configuration has been carried out, it may display **Missing/empty license code table file.** This error will disappear once valid licenses have been installed. If the error reads **Hardlock is invalid or missing**, review the installation of the hardlock and License Server.

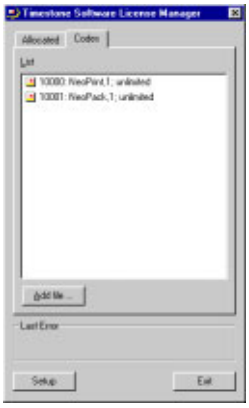


If you need to open the **License Server setup** control panel, click the **Setup** button at the bottom of the **License Manager**. The **License Server setup** control panel will open.

Choose the **Codes** tab. If licenses have not yet been added, this list will be empty. Any previously entered license codes will be displayed in this list.

To add new licenses, click the **Add file…** button. A **File Open** dialog is displayed. Locate the license code files that have been supplied to you, and choose it in the list, then **Open**. After a brief pause, the new license appears in the list of added licenses and are available for use.





Each license in the list will note:

- The name of the licenses application
- The version number licenses
- The number of licensed users

If you have more licenses to add, do so until you are finished.

Configuring workstations to run

Once the license server is installed and licenses added, each of the workstations of the LAN need to be configured. When the *Neo* application was installed, the **License Server**

setup control panel was also installed. On each workstation that will use a *Neo* application license, open the *Windows Control Panel*, and start the **License Server setup** control panel.

Enter the computer name of the PC that is hosting the hardlock, and press **Test**. If the computer is found over the network, and its License Server is running correctly, **OK** will be displayed in the **Last Error** area. If an error is displayed, ensure that:

- The license server PC is switched on, and the License Server is configured and running
- It is connected to the network
- The workstation you are configuring can browse the network, and 'see' the License server PC

Close the control panel. The *Neo* application will now be able to launch, as long as a valid license is found on the License Server.

Backing up your license server configuration

If you want to back up your license server configuration, there is a single file to archive. This file is found in the **License Server** sub-directory of the main installation directory. Usually, this will mean a directory path of:

C:\Program Files\Timestone Software\License Server\

- Back up the file **TsLServer.lct**

5

Understanding *NeoPack/Professional*

NeoPack/Professional is a comprehensive production environment for creating package prints, or service items like magazine covers, sports trader cards, etc. It has several different modes of operation that focus on the various production tasks required to create the pages. These modes are:

- Details – import , edit and allocate various attributes to the job names
- Images mode – import, crop and color correct images
- Match – match images to names
- Form Pages – create the finished packs
- Design – create the templates for use with the finished pages

The use of the various modes lets you spread the production tasks amongst your staff. Staff used to using spreadsheets and handling data prepare the name data in Details mode. Your skilled graphic designers create the templates in Adobe Photoshop, then compile the elements into a *NeoPack/Professional* template. Your lab production staff handle the images and finally compile and print the jobs.

Because *NeoPack/Professional* divides the production tasks into distinct categories, the workflow is clearly divided into 3 main tasks:

- Creating the templates
- Creating the job files, importing or entering the name data and allocating referenced objects (such as the logo)
- Importing and preparing images, creating the composite pages and printing

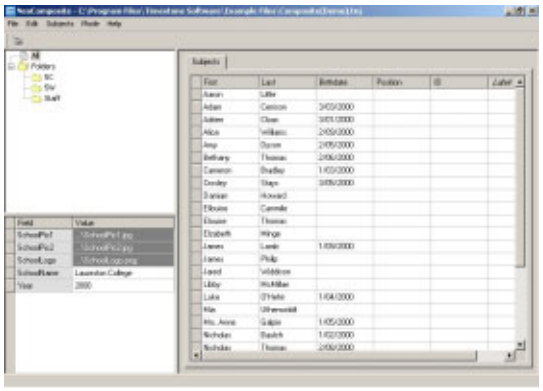
Details

NeoPack/Professional uses an integrated **Details** editor to import group, name and other job specific information. Groups are divided into a series of folders that contain the name and other information required for each subject in a group.

Fields are easily defined and customised to match your production needs, and fall into several categories:

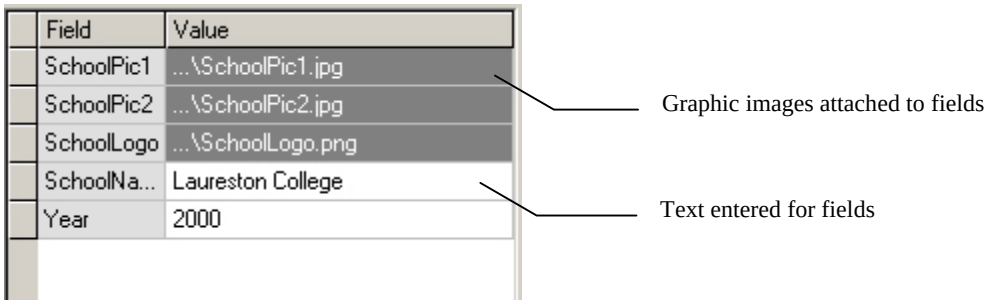
- File fields – information for the entire job such as school name, logo etc.
- Folder fields – information for a specific group like the class mascot etc.

- Subject fields – information for an subject like name, ID etc.



Fields can contain either text or graphic information, letting you attach things like a logo image to a field. For example, you might define a **File field**, '`SchoolName`' and another '`SchoolLogo`'. Your production staff enter the school name, then attach the graphic file for the logo. When the pages are formed, if a template references the `SchoolLogo` or `SchoolName` fields, the text and graphic logo are automatically placed into the finished page.

This makes the production workflow very quick as your lab staff don't have to attach specific graphic objects for each page or job they create.



Images

Any images that are used in a composite page are imported from the hard disk. The images can come from a film scanner, digital camera or any other quality source. If special numbers – such as the shoot number – are embedded in the file name, *NeoPack/Professional* can retain this information for use when matching the images to names.

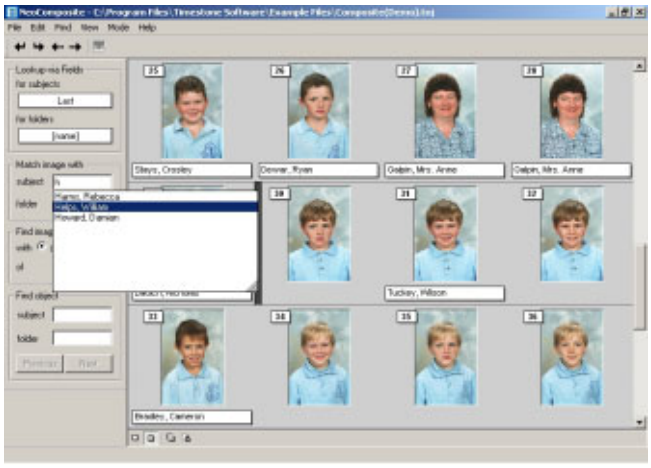
When an image is imported, a sub-sampled version is created and stored in the job file. This means images are displayed and handled very quickly.

Once imported, images can be corrected for color, density and contrast as well as being zoomed and cropped. Images can be viewed individually or as a group on-screen.

Matching

Composite pages rely on images being matched to an subject's record in a database, allowing placing the name and other information with the portrait. Matching is the process of joining all the images from the school – which are hopefully in shoot order – to the names entered in the database.

Your lab will most likely have a process that gathers this information, and *NeoPack/Professional* has many tools that let you continue to use or enhance the process. Fundamentally, on photography day, you will have some method of creating a shoot list. This list is the order in which each student was photographed and how many times. Back in the lab, the shoot list is matched to the digital images in the matching process.

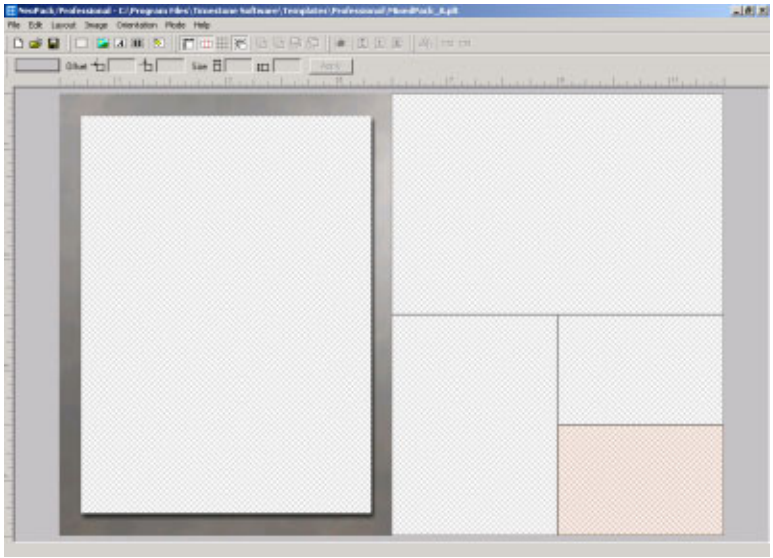


NeoPack/Professional's matching process is highly visual, and so is easily understood by your operators.

If you import images first, followed by the names that go with them, it's possible to match automatically, so that all you need to do in Match mode is check that everything is OK.

Templates

NeoPack/Professional uses **templates** extensively to form **packs**. Your graphic design staff create the templates that contain references to graphic and text objects such as a logo and other images. During the production process, these elements are added to the database for the job. When a template that calls for the elements is used, *NeoPack/Professional* automatically fetches the graphic or text and places it automatically into the design. This means that creating the pages is a simple matter of choosing the groups to use, the sort order and template to use.



NeoPack/Professional templates are a powerful combination of graphic, text and various replaceable objects. The templates are created with the integrated template editor by placing and

positioning the various elements. The template editor itself has no creation tools, meaning that it must be used in conjunction with an image editor such as *Adobe Photoshop* or *Corel Draw*.

There are 2 types of template:

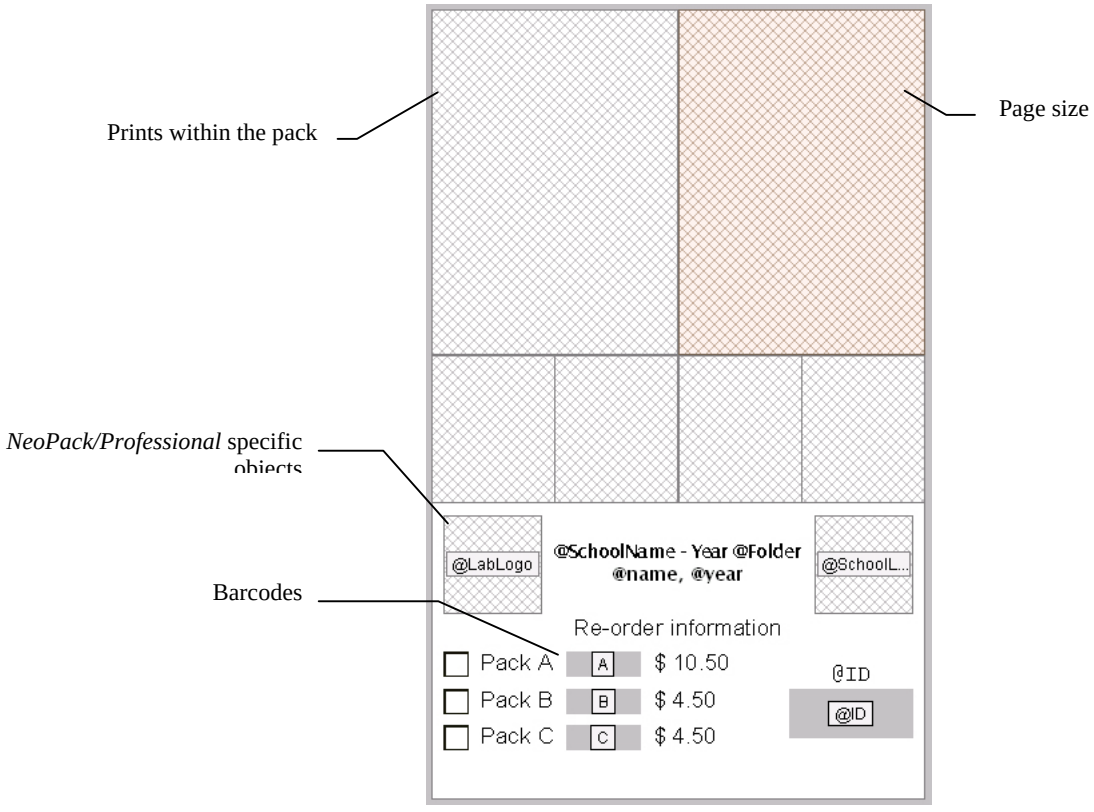
- Layout – the finished package layout
- Item – a graphic frame that can be superimposed on a print in a layout

Page Layouts

A Layout template determines the size, position and content of each print in the completed package. It contains a variety of graphic, text and other *NeoPack/Professional*-specific objects that complete the finished design.

You can of course specify the size of the finished page. You can also place several types of objects onto a page layout:

- Fixed text or graphics – text or graphic images that will not change for the whole production, such as a background image
- Variable text or graphics – text or graphic images that will change according to the job or subject (logo, special information like 'Class Captain' or 'Position')
- *NeoPack/Professional* specific objects – objects that define things like the portrait position etc.
- Barcodes – add bar-coded information



Pack Items

Pack Items are graphic or text objects that can be super-imposed over images. When creating a pack item, you place the various graphic or text objects, as well as a 'hole'. The hole determines where the image you want to frame will appear inside the item.

To use an item, you first select the pack layout, then the item you wish to apply. The image is placed into the item, and into all the print sizes defined by the layout.

Pack items can be **sizeable** or **fixed size**, and must be specified as one or the other when created. Sizeable pack items will be scaled to fit within the 'hole' on the layout. 'Fixed size' items exist to cater for things like barcodes, which cannot be sizeable – as a barcode relies on a certain number of lines per inch to be read correctly.

Prints within a pack layout can be set to either include or ignore a Pack Item if it is selected. This allows some complex items to be created with very little effort.

Production workflow

Usually, the production workflow will happen in this order:

- Template preparation – before the season selling period, prepare the templates that you will use for the coming year's production
- Pre-production – before photography, import and prepare the data as much as possible. This may include the production of 'shoot cards' that help establish the shoot order on photography
- Photography – capturing the images and shoot order
- Image scanning / importing – bring the images into the *NeoPack/Professional* job file, then correcting and cropping the images
- Matching – Match the images and names
- Final data entry – enter any final details such as logo information
- Final production – form and print the packs

Integration with other *'Neo'* applications

NeoPack/Professional is a member of the *'Neo'* family of applications. This means that it shares data with the other family members. For example, *NeoPack/Professional* uses the same portrait images, corrections, cropping and subject details. Once an image has been corrected in one of the applications, the corrections flow through all the others.

Using *NeoPack/Professional's* interface

Once *NeoPack/Professional* has been installed, choose *NeoPack/Professional* from the **Start menu > Program Files > Timestone Software**. *NeoPack/Professional* will start. If you are asked for an unlock code, or told that the software protection device is not present, please review Chapter 3, **Installing *NeoPack/Professional*.**

The *NeoPack/Professional* main window is displayed.

NeoPack/Professional requires a minimum screen resolution of 800x600 @ 24 bit color. If your monitor is set to 640x480, you will not be able to use the application correctly. You can adjust screen resolution via Windows' Control Panel's **Display** option.

Using toolbars

Each of the *NeoPack/Professional* toolbars features tooltips, and docking capabilities.

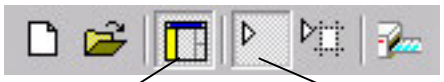
Toolbar docking

You can tear away a toolbar from a 'docked' position to create a floating toolbar. This toolbar can then be placed anywhere convenient on the screen. To do this, place the mouse pointer anywhere near the edge of the toolbar, click and drag. The toolbar will tear away.

Selecting a tool or operation mode.

You can choose different program functions and modes by choosing a toolbar button. The current mode of operation is indicated by which button is 'pressed in' in the main toolbar.

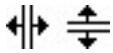
In the below example, several buttons appear 'pressed in', indicating that mode is currently active, or that window is currently open.



This window is currently open

The program is currently in 'Image preview' mode.

Resizing pane windows

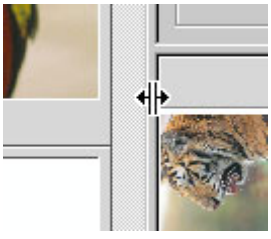


The three main pane windows can be resized freely. You can open a pane so it takes up the whole program space, or close it completely to allow space for other operations.

Passing the mouse over the edge of the three panes will change the cursor to the pane move cursor.

Click and drag the mouse – the pane will resize as you drag.

Opening, closing and maximizing panes



Panes can be opened completely to take up all the available program space, or closed completely.

Opening or closing panes

Panes can be opened or closed by choosing the pane name from the View menu. If the chosen pane is currently visible, choosing it from the View menu will close it and vice versa. If

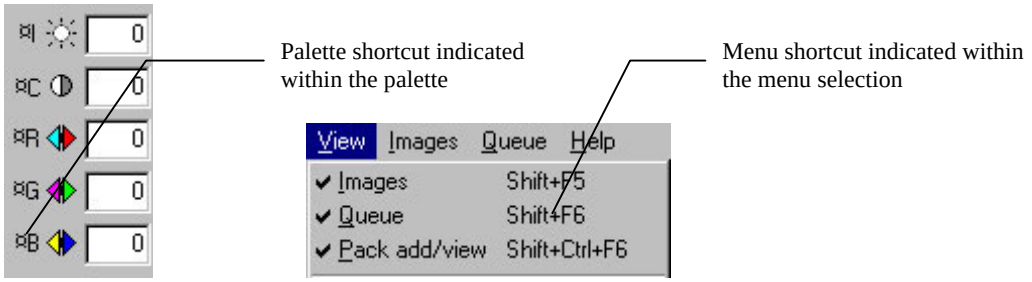
a pane is currently visible, there will be a checkmark next to its name in the View menu.

Resizing a pane using the mouse can also open or close a pane. Each pane has a minimum size – if you use the mouse to resize a pane past its minimum size, it will close. It is possible to open a closed pane by grabbing the closed pane edge, and dragging to open it.

Shortcut keys

There are many shortcut keys that allow quick selection of program options. These shortcuts are either indicated within a menu selection, or within the palette being used.

For example, if you wish to adjust the image contrast, press and hold the **Control** key, then the **C** key. The value in the **Contrast** adjustment is highlighted ready for use.



6

Configuring *NeoPack/Professional*

Setting the Program defaults

There are a number of program defaults that need to be set to ensure *NeoPack/Professional* is most useful to you. Things such as the location of various files, default fields need to be set for your lab.

Open the **Options** dialog by choosing **File, Options**.

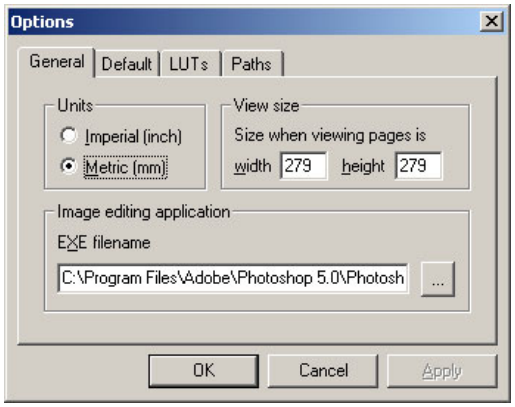


Figure 1: Options dialog

Measurement units

From the **Options** panel, choose the **General** tab. Select your preferred measurement units, then choose OK.

Image Editor

NeoPack/Professional allows editing of images via an external image editor (such as *Adobe Photoshop*.) In the dialog shown above, specify the image editor to use by either entering the path (including the program EXE) in the **EXE filename** field, or clicking the **Browse** button, locating and choosing the Image editor's EXE file, and click **Open**. The Image Editor is chosen.

Tip: Most program files are located in the Program Files folder. For example, the default location for *Adobe Photoshop* is **C:\Program Files\Adobe\Photoshop**

Aspect ratios

The aspect ratio of the image determines how tall and wide a portrait will be. There are several common aspect ratios used in the photographic world, but you may like to define some that are specific to your needs. The aspect ratio here should match those you design for your Subject blocks. For example, if you design your portrait blocks to have a 4:5 aspect, define this aspect here.

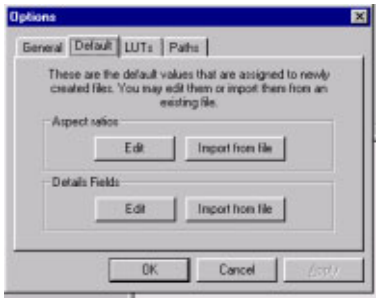
The cropping set here also follows through to other *Neo* applications. For ease of production, you should use a similar aspect ratio as your other *Neo* production such as the package prints etc.

Default Aspect Ratios

Aspect ratios can be stored as a program default, or added to an image collection. New files will automatically contain the default aspect ratios which can then be added to. Any aspect ratios that you add to an individual file (via **Edit, Aspect ratios…**) are available only to that file.

Program default Aspect Ratios

From the **File** menu, choose **Options**. The Options dialog is displayed. Choose the **Default** tab.



Choose **Aspect ratios, Edit**. The Aspect ratio editor is displayed. Any Aspect ratios defined here are available each time a new *NeoPack/Professional* file is created.

Defining Aspect Ratios

Choose **Edit, Aspect Ratios…** the Aspect Ratio definition dialog is displayed.

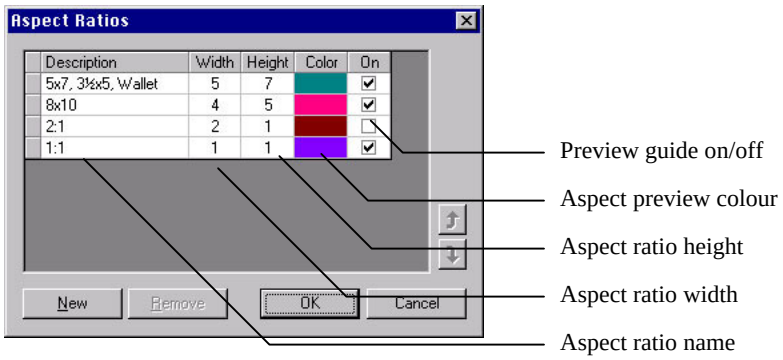
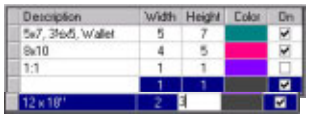


Figure 2: The Aspect Ratio dialog

Create a new Aspect Ratio



- Choose **New** from the Aspect Ratio dialog. A new Aspect Ratio is added to the list.
- Click inside the **Description** field, and type the description of the Aspect you are defining.

- Click inside the **Width** field and enter the width, then **Height** to enter the height amount.
- Click the **color** swatch. The color palette appears. Choose the color you wish the aspect ratio line to appear in the image preview.
- Click the **On** checkbox to display the aspect ratio in the cropping image preview. If this is checked, a line indicating this aspect ratio will appear in the image cropping window. If this is not checked, the aspect ratio will not appear.

Import existing Aspect Ratios

Aspect Ratios can be imported from existing *NeoPack/Professional* files. Choose **Import from File** from the **Default** options tab. An **Open File** dialog appears. Locate the file that contains the Aspect Ratios, choose it and click **Open**. The Aspect Ratios are imported as a program default.

Change the list order

The order Aspect Ratios is listed can be changed using the ordering arrows.

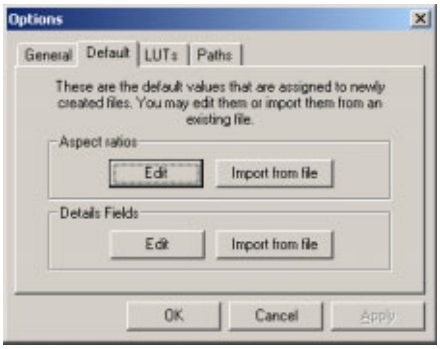
Displaying an Aspect Ratio

Once the default Aspect Ratios have been defined, any files created will contain these settings. To display the aspect ratio indicators, choose 'Crop Image' mode by choosing **Images**, **Select crop & scale image tool**, or clicking the 'Crop Image Tool' button on the toolbar.

Default fields

Various information fields are used in *NeoPack/Professional*. Certain of these fields are best set as program defaults, so that when you create a new job file, it will inherit these default values and you won't have to spend time re-configuring *NeoPack/Professional* to work the way it did with your previous job file.

Once you're familiar with how these fields are used, you can set the program defaults.



Adding default fields

Choose **File, Options** then choose the **Default** tab.

Click the **Details Fields, Edit** button. The **Data Fields** dialog is displayed. Note there are three tabs – **Subject fields**, **Folder fields** and **File fields.**

Field type	Purpose…
Subject fields	…contain information about each subject appearing as a name in the shoot list or data to be imported to match against images
Folder fields	are objects that are allocated to a particular folder, or a parent folder of a sub folder. Useful fields include the campus name for a school campus, or a year's mascot.
File fields	…are objects that are common to all the groups involved in the current job. Things like the school name, school logo and the like are good examples of File fields.

The Subject Fields tab

The **Subjects Field** tab contains fields that pertain to each subject appearing as a name in a row list. Please see Chapter 8, **Details Mode** for more information.

Adding a new field

Click **Add**. A new line appears. Click the cursor in the **Name** entry area, and type the field name.

Fields are case sensitive. If you define a field 'Name', but place and @ code '@name' in a template, the text will not be correctly substituted.

Assigning special attributes

A field can be assigned a special attribute that identifies it for special use within the program. Attributes such as first, last or whole name identify a particular field. To assign a field attribute, choose the field, then click the **Special** drop-down list for that field. A list of available attributes is displayed.

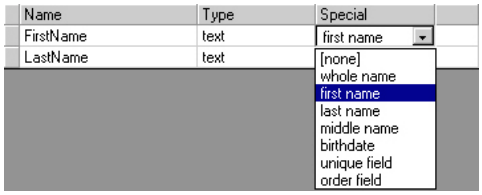


Figure 3: Assigning a Field Attribute

There are several special fields that are built-in to *NeoPack/Professional* that are always identified as a special field. For the **Subject Fields**, these special fields are:

Field Name	**Identified as…**
FirstName	Identified as a subject's first name
LastName	Identified as a subject's last name
WholeName	Identified as the subject's whole name

Defining the Image file location

NeoPack/Professional imports the images used for your production in two different ways. The original high-res image file can be imported to the job file, meaning that the external files are no longer required by *NeoPack/Professional*. Alternately, images can be imported with a reference to the high resolution image. When importing images this way, a smaller screen resolution version of the image is created for use on-screen, and all corrections are saved as instructions to be applied to the original hi-res images when the jobs are printed.

If you accept the default import setting and reference the hi-res originals rather than fully importing them, *NeoPack/Professional* can record the exact location of the files when they are imported, or you can direct it to look for the files in specific locations on your hard disk, or over the network.

Record the original import location

If you import images using the **Remember the actual path** option, there is no need to define any default paths. See Chapter 6, **Configuring *NeoPack/Professional*** for details.

Creating an Image directory

In larger labs, it is useful to set up a base image directory to store the image files. There are several ways *NeoPack/Professional* can locate the required image files -

- Image Root directory
- Same directory as job file
- Sub-directory from job file

Image Root directory

Using an **image root directory** allows all images belonging to a job be stored under a single directory in its own folder. For example, you might set up a single image server named **ImageServer**. This server has a drive shared as **Data**, and all images are stored in folders under the \Images folder.

UNC naming allows this exact directory be specified from any workstation within the network, without using drive letters. This avoids configuration errors. The UNC name for a shared directory is **\\Server\Share\Path**.

You may set your images up on this server as follows:

\Images\Job1
\Images\Job2
\Images\Job3

Only the root folder is required. In this case, The root folder is \Images. So, the UNC name for the path would be:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images

Finally, we need to specify the final search directory to find the source images. Using the **@+** code, *NeoPack/Professional* adds the name of the .TNJ file to the search path as the final part of the path statement. In the above case, each of the .TNJ files would be named **Job1**, **Job2** and **Job3**.

So, if the path is entered as:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images\@+

and the file currently open is called **Job2**, *NeoPack/Professional* will search for the original source images in:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images\Job2\

Same directory as job file

If the path statement is entered as:

.

NeoPack/Professional will search for the source images in the same directory as the .TNJ file.

Sub-directory from job file

Images can be stored in a sub-directory of the folder that contains the job file. For example, if the job file is stored in a folder \Images\Job1, and the images belonging to that job in \Images\Job1\Source. If the path statement is entered as:

\Source

NeoPack/Professional will search for the source images in the \Source subdirectory.

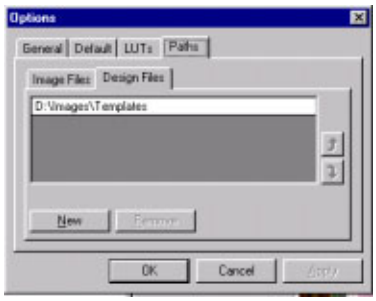
Defining the Design File location

Templates can be stored in various places within your local area. The location of the templates must be defined before *NeoPack/Professional* will ‘see’ them, ready for you to use.

Adding a Design file location

Choose **File, Options** then choose the **Paths, Design Files** tab. Now, choose **New**. A new line appears in the list box. Enter the whole path for the location of the design files you want to use. You can use UNC (\\ComputerName\ShareName\…) or mapped drive letters as a valid path.

After entering a new path, *NeoPack/Professional* must be re-started before it will recognise the new entries and so see any templates in the new location.



Monitor calibration

If you wish to use the built-in monitor calibration, ensure **Enable monitor LUT** is checked. If this option is enabled, the monitor calibration wizard must be run. See Chapter 15, **Calibration & Color Management** for more information regarding monitor calibration.

7

Job files

Job files are self-contained files that contain the various bits of information used to create all the pages for a job. When a file is created by choosing **File, New**, it inherits default settings made in the **Options** panel (see the previous chapter). You can add or modify these settings once the file has been created. There are several settings that can be made specific to the job file.

Image import options

NeoPack/Professional needs to import the images you wish to use to a job file. The import process creates the small on-screen preview that is used when you are preforming all tasks within *NeoPack/Professional*. The preview image is stored using JPEG compression in the job file.

Creating a new *NeoPack/Professional* file

Start the *NeoPack/Professional* application, then choose **File, New**, or click the New Document button in the toolbar. The **New File** dialog is displayed. Choose the desired location, give the file a name and choose **Save**. The file is saved, and an empty job file is displayed.

Specify the preview image size

The size of the preview image can be changed from the **Options** menu. The default size of 512k is usually sufficient for most operations, but you might like to increase the size to improve the appearance of the preview. The larger the image preview, the larger the job file. It is also possible that the program may slow if the preview image is set too high. The preview size must be set for each file you create, before images have been imported.

To change the preview size, choose **File, Properties**. The Properties dialog is displayed. Choose the **Bitmap sizes** tab, and make the desired setting in the **Stored size of bitmap used for previewing**.

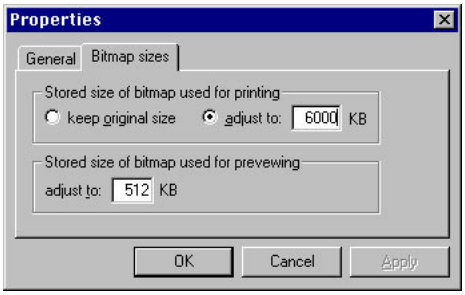


Image importing types

There are two ways images can be imported into a job file:

- Importing the complete image data
- Importing the image preview only

Importing the complete image data

When importing the image data completely, not only is the on-screen preview image stored in the job file, but the high resolution image is also copied and stored as well. The benefit of this is that the original image files are no longer required as the job file has all the required information to create and print jobs. However, importing images in this way results in very large job files, as well as taking longer to import the images.

Import the preview only

When importing the preview only, the original image data is sampled and a preview image stored in the job file. This allows you to create all the jobs, but you cannot print them without the original high resolution images. Importing images this way results in a much smaller job file, as well as shorter import times than importing the whole image data.

Original image file location

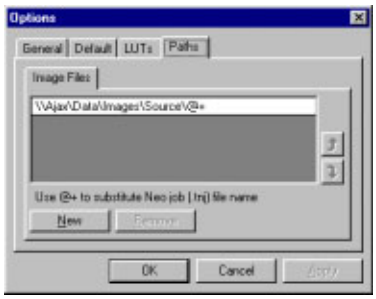
If you import the preview only, you need to make sure the original image files are available to *NeoPack/Professional* when you output jobs or images. The options are:

- Pre-defined locations set as a program default
- Remember the original image file location

You should choose the method that suits your lab best.

Configuring pre-defined locations for the image files

The pre-defined locations are set by choosing **File, Options** and choose the **Paths** tab.



There are three types of pre-defined locations available:

- Image Root directory
- Same directory as job file
- Sub-directory from job file

Image Root directory

Using an **image root directory** allows all images belonging to a job be stored under a single directory in its own folder. For example, you might set up a single image server named **ImageServer**. This server has a drive shared as **Data**, and all images are stored in folders under the \Images folder.

UNC naming allows this exact directory be specified from any workstation within the network, without using drive letters. This avoids configuration errors. The UNC name for a shared directory is **\\Server\Share\Path**.

You may set your images up on this server as follows:

\Images\Job1
\Images\Job2
\Images\Job3

Only the root folder is required. In this case, The root folder is \Images. So, the UNC name for the path would be:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images

Finally, we need to specify the final search directory to find the source images. Using the **@+** code, *NeoPack/Professional* adds the name of the .TNJ file to the search path as the final part of the path statement. In the above case, each of the .TNJ files would be named **Job1**, **Job2** and **Job3**.

So, if the path is entered as:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images\@+

and the file currently open is called **Job2**, *NeoPack/Professional* will search for the original source images in:

\\ImageServer\Data\Images\Job2\

Same directory as job file

If the path statement is entered as:

.

NeoPack/Professional will search for the images in the same directory as the .TNJ file.

Sub-directory from job file

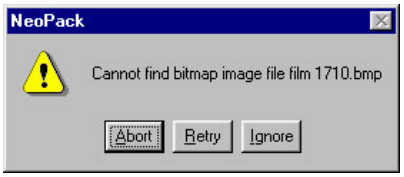
Images can be stored in a sub-directory of the folder that contains the job file. For example, the job file is stored in a folder \Images\Job1, and the images belonging to that job in \Images\Job1\Source. If the path statement is entered as:

\Source

NeoPack/Professional will search for the source images in the \Source subdirectory.

Missing image files

If the original image files are not available when printing or exporting the images, an error is shown.



Either fix the problem and choose **Retry** to retry the job, or **Abort** to abort the current operation.

Image numbering – indexed or sequential

Many labs using large numbers of images have various systems of tracking the images. This can mean that the image files that are imported can have a unique and important name or number embedded in their filename. These uniquely named files are called *indexed* images. Images that don't include such information in their filenames are imported in sequential order.

Sequential images

When importing sequential images, it is only important to retain the same image order as was on the original film. In this case, the image files should be named in shoot order (i.e. 0001 – 9999). When *NeoPack/Professional* imports them, the order is retained.

Indexed images

Many labs use cameras or film editors that can allocate unique numbers to a particular negative or image. This number can then be used to record various data within other management systems in the lab. For example, the Lucht 'Shooter File' records pack order, color corrections and other essential information that is used to create the required prints.

When importing images to *NeoPack/Professional* that have come from such a system, it is possible to retain the essential index number and so create the packs in the same manner as would be normal in this workflow.

Sequential vs Indexed images

The following screen shots show an indexed and sequentially numbered file. Note the difference in image numbers.

Figure 4: An indexed image set

Figure 5: A sequentially numbered image set

Image Tags

When images are imported, regardless of whether a file is indexed or sequentially numbered, the original filename is imported along with the image data. This information can be viewed once images have been imported by choosing **Image, Show tags**. With this option enabled, the original filename is displayed next to the image number.

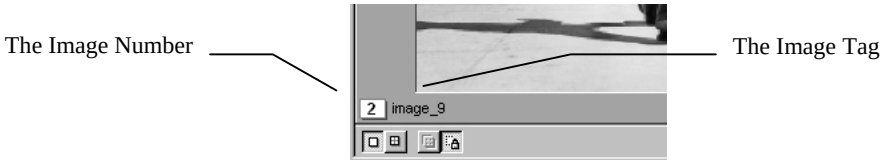
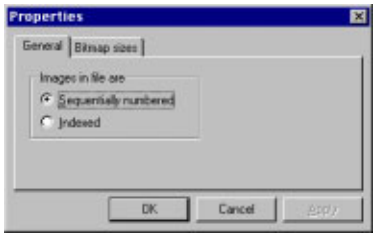


Image numbering

Once you know what numbering system you use, and *before* any images are imported to the new *NeoPack/Professional* file, choose **File, Properties**. The file properties dialog is displayed. Choose if the images to be imported are sequential or indexed.

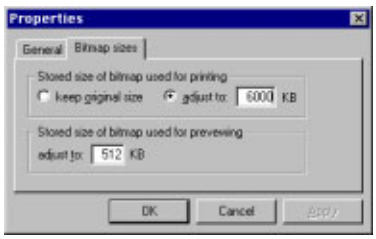
It is possible to change the file properties from *sequential* to *indexed* and vice versa. However, if an indexed file is changed to a sequential one, the unique index numbers are lost, and so cannot be switched back successfully.



Specify the image file size

When importing the complete image data to a job file, it is possible to adjust the size of the image as it is imported. This is useful if the image files are larger than they need to be. This option only has an effect if you import the complete image data – if you import the preview image only, the option is ignored.

Once the new file has been created, but *before* importing any images, choose **File, Properties...** Then, choose the **Bitmap sizes** tab from the properties dialog. Enter the desired file size in the **Adjust to** entry box.



NeoPack/Professional jobs consist of a series of portrait images laid out with the subject's name under each portrait. In order for the names to be placed with the image, the name and group data needs to be entered. This is done in **Details** mode, along with forming the structure of all the groups and allocating other important details such as the school name, year and the likes.

It is important to get the structure of the subject groups correct in Details mode, as many of the various pieces of information are determined by the position of a group in the structure. For example, your templates might place the school type (Junior School, Senior School) into the centre board. Classes that belong to the senior school need to be nested under the Senior School folder, and junior school classes under the Junior School folder.

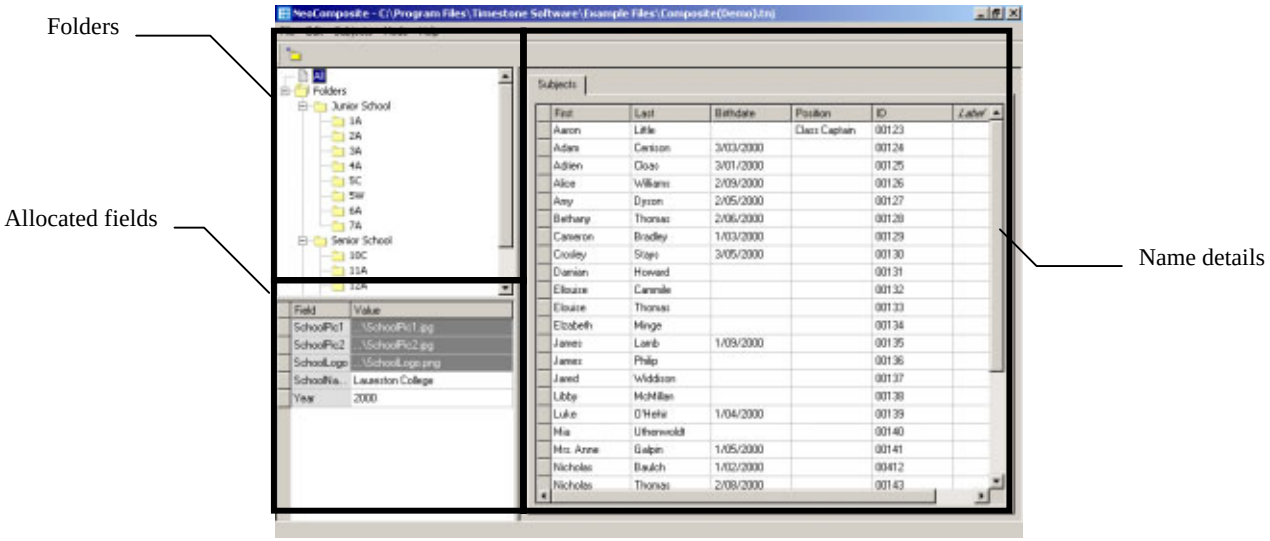
8

Details mode

Entering Details mode

After starting the program, create or open a *NeoPack/Professional* file by choosing **File, New** or **File, Open**. Now, choose, **Mode, Details** or press **F4** on the keyboard. The **Details** screen is divided into 3 major sections:

- Folders
- Name details
- @ code data



Defining the fields

The fields displayed in these panes are program defaults. These may be changed just for this job file, or you can create new settings which will then become the defaults for future job files (see Chapter 6, **Configuring *NeoPack/Professional***, for information on modifying these settings).

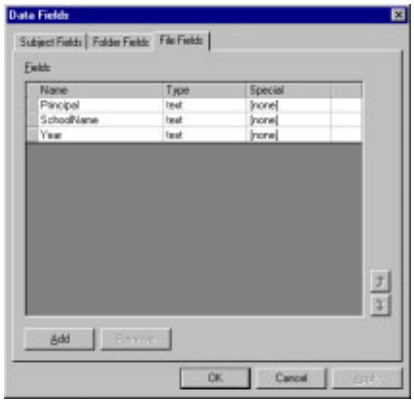
There are three different types of fields:

- File fields
- Folder fields
- Subject fields

File fields

File fields are objects that are common to all the groups involved in the current job, for example School name or school logo.

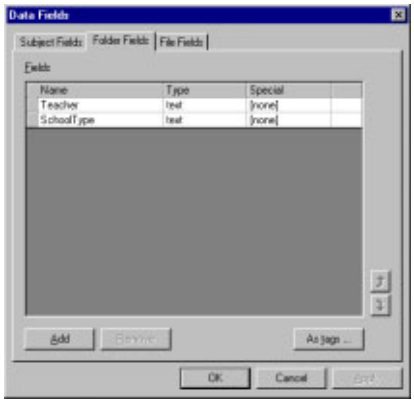
To add a default File field, choose **File, Options**, then choose the **Default** tab. Now, click the **Details Fields, Edit** button. The **Data Fields** dialog is shown. Choose the **File Fields** tab and choose **Add**. A new line is added to the list of fields. Enter the name of the new field you want to use, then choose **OK**.



Folder Fields

Folder fields are objects that are allocated to a particular folder, or a parent folder of a sub folder. Useful fields include the campus name for a school campus, or a year's mascot.

To add a default Folder field, choose **File, Options**, then choose the **Default** tab. Now, click the **Details Fields > Edit** button. The **Data Fields** dialog is shown. Choose the **Folder Fields** tab and choose **Add**. A new line is added to the list of fields. Enter the name of the new field you want to use, then choose **OK**.



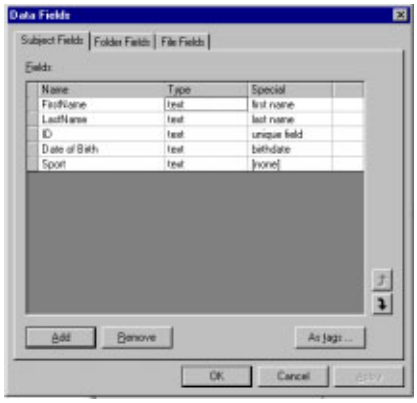
Subject Fields

Subject fields are that details you want to define for each individual person in the group photographs. Details such as the first and last names, ID, date of birth etc. If you have data that includes information that you don't need to use in a group job, it is still recommended that you import the data, as it may be useful for other 'Neo' jobs. In this case, you should define the 'extra' fields such as Date of Birth, ID, Sport etc. in addition to the *NeoPack/Professional* essentials of First Name and Last Name.

When defining subject fields, you can identify a field type by clicking the **Special** drop-down and choosing from the types available. The current selection includes:

Type	**Explanation**
Whole name	The subject's entire name – no discrimination of first, last etc.
First name	The first name
Last name	The last name
Middle name	The middle name
Birthdate	The date of birth
Unique field	Not currently used
Order field	Not currently used

To add a default Subject field, choose **File, Options**, then choose the **Default** tab. Now, click the **Details Fields > Edit** button. The **Data Fields** dialog is shown. Choose the **Subject Fields** tab and choose **Add**. A new line is added to the list of fields. Enter the name of the new field you want to use, then choose **OK**.



Creating a folder structure

If you are importing name data, the folder structure will be created for you from this data. It is possible to add, move or delete folders once they have been created, and you might do this to better mirror the structure of the school you're working on. For example, you might want to move all the junior school classes into a 'Junior School' folder.

If you don't have data to import, you can create folders and enter data manually.

Creating new folders

When creating folders, you should first consider the school you are working on. If there are several campuses involved, you might want to add these campuses to your folder structure, and nest the classes under the campus folder. This becomes especially important if you are attaching a specific logo or using the campus name in your templates.

To create a new folder, click the parent folder, and choose **Folders, New**. A new folder is created, ready to be named. Type the folder name and press **Enter**.

Moving, deleting or renaming folders

Folders can be moved, renamed or deleted. To move a folder, click and drag it to the place you wish to move. To re-name a folder, click the folder and choose **Folders, Rename**. Type the new name. To delete a folder, choose the folder you want to delete then choose **Edit, Delete**. You are asked to confirm the deletion. If you choose **Yes**, the folder is deleted.

If you delete a folder that contains names, the names are not deleted, but added to the **Unallocated** list. Any folder details attached to the deleted folder are lost.

Importing name data

It's recommended that you import the images *before* importing the corresponding data. By doing this, you can have *NeoPack/Professional* **match** the data to the existing images, and the work you need to do in Match mode is just checking and perhaps making a couple of adjustments, rather than matching each image manually, which can of course be quite time-consuming. Make sure you see the section titled Matching the Images

The other time-saver that can be achieved at the data import stage is that the required folders can be automatically created by the import process. Ideally, you'll end up with a separate folder for each class or group level. This can all be done on import by following the correct setup options.

The file to be imported should be a text file, whether delimited or fixed length. Ideally, each record should contain:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Group
- ID (optional)

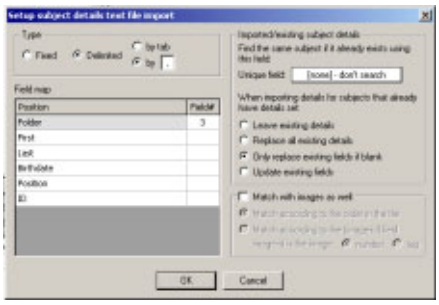
A typical text file might contain records similar to this:

```
"Amy","Batchelor","Year 7"
"William","Brownlee","Year 7"
"Tom","Carr","Year 7"
"Amy","Coad","Year 7"
"James","Cristofaro","Year 7"
"Catherine","Hodge","Year 7"
"Mandy","Hooper","Year 7"
```

Prepare the import process

Open the job file you wish to import the data to, or create a new job file (via **File**, **New**.) Make sure you're in **Details** mode by choosing **Mode, Details** or pressing **F4** on your keyboard. Choose **Subjects, Import text file…** The **Text file to import details** dialog is displayed. Locate and select the text file that contains the data.

The contents of the file being imported needs to be specified. Choose **Setup** from the **Text file to import details** dialog – the **Setup subject details text file import** dialog is shown.



Specify the import type

Choose whether the file being imported is a Fixed or Delimited file. If you are importing a delimited file, specify the delimiter – either choose **by tab** or **by** and enter the delimiter character.

Map the fields

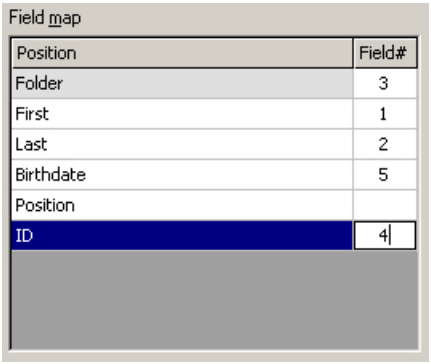
Specify which field matches your data. You might have a file that has a number of records that look similar to:

```
"Amy","Batchelor","Year 7",”15568”,”260172”
```

The fields in this record are:

Record	Field	Field #
Amy	FirstName	1
Batchelor	LastName	2
Year 7	Folder	3
15568	ID	4
260172	Date of Birth	5

Enter the relevant field number for each available field.



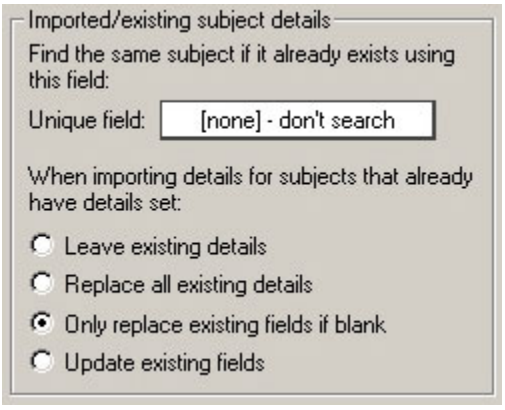
Updating existing data

If you have already imported some details, it is possible to update the imported data in various ways. In order to update existing information, you need to specify a unique field that *NeoPack/Professional* will use to identify the record to update. You would want to use an absolutely unique field such as an ID number to match on.

Choose the unique field by choosing from the **Unique field** drop-down.

Now, choose how the data is to be updated from the list available. When *NeoPack/Professional* finds a record that it can update, it can:

Option	**Description**
Leave existing details	The record will not be updated with the new data in any way
Always replace existing details	A matching record will be replaced completely with the new data. If the new data contains a blank field for a record, the old record's field will be replaced with the new blank field
Replace existing details only if blank	A matching record will be updated with the new data only if it is empty
Update existing details	A matching record will be updated with the new data. If the new data contains a blank field, the old record's field will retain its current information



Import the name data

Once you are happy with the settings, choose **OK** to dismiss the **Setup subject details text file import** dialog. Now, confirm the text file has been selected and choose **Open**. The data is imported.

Importing Shoot List data

If you have the name data in shoot order, you can import the names and match them to images later. The data you are importing must contain additionally:

- A unique ID number for each subject
- Either – the image number each record matches
  or – each record is in the correct shoot order

As it is possible for a single subject to appear several times in a shoot order file, you must have the unique ID number to identify subjects. You will not be able to import the data successfully without this unique field.

Inspecting the data to import

The data you wish to import might look similar to this:

```
"Amy","Batchelor","Year 7",”00125”,”0012258.jpg”
"Amy","Batchelor","Year 7",”00125”,”0012259.jpg”
"Amy","Batchelor","Year 7",”00125”,”0012260.jpg”
"William","Brownlee","Year 7",”00127”,”0012261.jpg”
"Tom","Carr","Year 7",”00131”,”0012262.jpg”
"Amy","Coad","Year 7",”00142”,”0012263.jpg”
"Amy","Coad","Year 7",”00142”,”0012264.jpg”
"Amy","Coad","Year 7",”00142”,”0012265.jpg”
"James","Cristofaro","Year 7",”00194”,”0012266.jpg”
"Catherine","Hodge","Year 7",”00167”,”0012267.jpg”
"Mandy","Hooper","Year 7",”00111”,”0012268.jpg”
```

In this example, the fields are set out as:

First, Last, Group, Unique ID, Image number, Image filename

You will notice that the names **Amy Batchelor** and **Amy Coad** both appear 3 times in the text file, indicating that these subjects were each photographed 3 times.

In this case, the unique identifier is the ‘ID’ field # 4. By specifying this field, *NeoPack/Professional* will import the multiple entries and place them only once into the Details. Without this identifier, names that appear multiple times in the imported file would appear incorrectly multiple times in the group details.

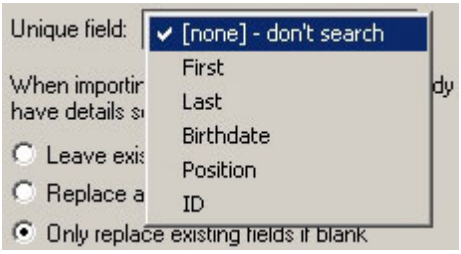
By specifying a unique field, *NeoPack/Professional* can identify which name entries are for the same subject.

Specify the unique field

In the **Setup** dialog, locate the **Imported/existing subject details** panel. This panel controls how data will be imported or merged.

Unique field

Specify which (if any) of the fields is unique from those available in the drop-down. This will vary according to the fields available in the file.



Matching the images

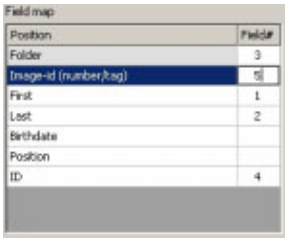
If the data file being imported contains ID data, you can match the names to images when importing the images. You need to identify certain matching parameters for the match to occur correctly. To enable matching on import, check **Match with images as well** and make the relevant settings.

Set the match parameters

If the names in the text file being imported are listed in shoot order, choose **Match according to the order in the file**. When this option is enabled, a 1 to 1 relationship is assumed to exist between the images and names in the list.

If each record contains an ID and image number, choose **Match according to the (image-id) field**. There are 2 options – **image-id is the image**:

- **Number** – when images are imported they are allocated an image number. This number is either a sequential or indexed number. Choose this option if the images are numbered in this fashion.
- **Tag** – each image imported has an image tag – the original file name. If the match is referenced to the original file name, use this tag.

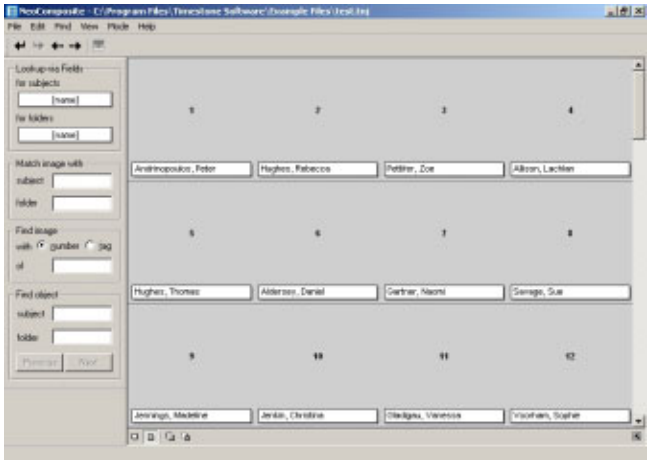


Importing the details

Once all the settings have been made, choose **OK** to dismiss the dialog. Choose the file to import in the **Text file to import details** dialog, then choose **Open**. The details are imported. Check this by expanding the folder tree in the leftmost pane. A list of class groups should now be available under **Folders**, click one to view the names in the group.

Checking the match

The procedure of matching images to names is covered in Chapter 10, **Matching images and names**. After the names have been imported and **matched as well**, you can view the raw match by choosing **Mode, Match.** If you have not yet imported images, you will see a display that indicates the image number that each name has been matched to, ready for the images to be imported.



If images have already been imported, you will see the images matched to the names.

Special fields

Certain fields are automatically recognised by *NeoPack/Professional* when imported. If a field contains:

- Blink
- Slate
- Miscellaneous

They are specifically identified as a miscellaneous entry and marked as such.

Editing the details and folders

Often you will find that the data you import will not completely suit your needs for *NeoPack/Professional*. For example, you might want to sort the folders created by the import into senior and junior school groups.

After the import has been completed, you can add, edit or move the folders to suit your needs. You can add, rename or move folders by clicking, dragging and dropping them as you normally do in Windows Explorer.

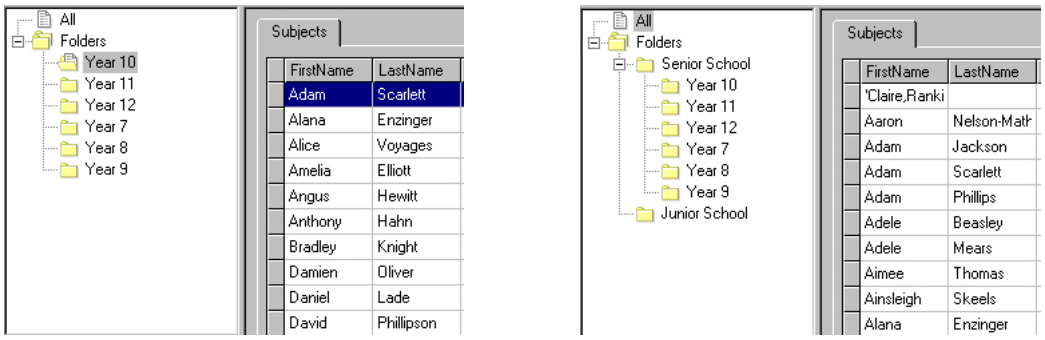


Figure 6: Folders after importing data, then after editing the folder structure

'Home' folders and 'copied' names

Sometimes you will want to copy an subject from one folder to another to create custom groups. For example, you might want to add a class teacher from the staff folder to their class. Do this by locating the name of the subject you wish to copy, then hold down the **Ctrl** key. Now, with the key still pressed, drag and drop the subject's name to the new folder. Note that while you do this, the mouse pointer will show a **+** indicating a copy operation. Once copied, the person is a member of both groups and so can appear in both.

Setting a 'home' folder

When a name is imported or first entered to Details, the folder in which it exists is automatically set as the 'Home' folder. If a name is copied to a different folder, it exists in both folders. You can change an subject's home folder by choosing it in the new home folder, then choosing **Subjects, Set home folder**.

Identifying a copied entry

You can tell if a name in a group is the original or a copy by inspecting the side bar next to each name in the **Subjects tab (**in **Details mode)**. A copied name will have a **+** in the sidebar.

+ indicates this name is a copy of the original

Editing copied names

If you edit a copied name in either of the folders – home or attached – the changes will be reflected for both the original folder and the copy. To edit the entry, choose the name and field to be changed, then type the new information. The changes will flow through any other instances of the name in other folders.

Deleting names

If you choose to delete a name, click the name in the list, then press **Delete** on the keyboard. Confirmation will be requested.

When deleting a name from a folder, you delete it for *that folder only*. If you want to permanently delete a name, choose **All** in the folder list, then locate the name in the name list. Press **Delete** – confirmation of the operation is requested. When a name is deleted from **All** it will be completely removed from any other folders.

Exporting Details

Details can be exported to a text file for use in other applications. To export the details, open the job file you wish to export, then choose **Subjects, Export to text file…** The **Text file to export details** dialog opens.

Figure 7: Text file to export dialog

Of course, you'll want to specify exactly what you're exporting, and you can do so by clicking the **Setup** button. In the resulting dialog box, you can specify exactly which fields you wish to export, as well as how you want the export file delimited, and whether you want duplicate names exported. By default, the export file will be comma-delimited and will *not* contain duplicate names, but you can change these settings here.

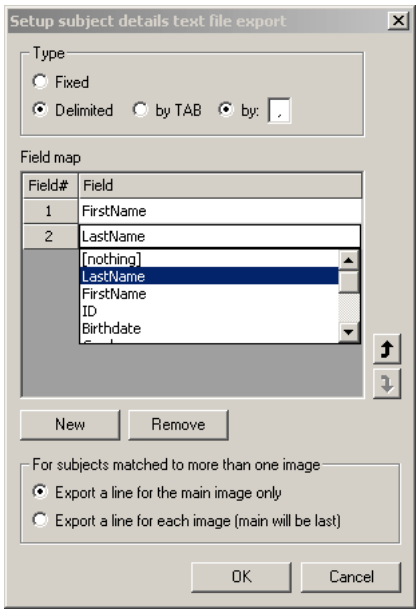


Figure 8: Text file export setup

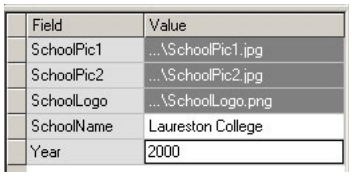
When you've specified the fields to be exported (by clicking the **New** button then selecting field names from the drop-down list, as shown), click the **OK** button. This will return you to the **Text file to export details** dialog box, where you can enter a filename and a location for the export file, if you haven't already done so.

Allocating details to Folders

As previously discussed, it is possible to enter special details to the whole file, or to individual folders in a file. This data is used when the template is 'filled in' when finishing jobs. The details are entered by choosing the file or folder, then typing the data into the field.

Adding File details

File details are a global property. Things such as the school's name, the year of photography, or perhaps the school's logo are File details. To allocate File details, choose **All** in the folder tree listing. Note that the fields available in the **Field / Value** section change to match those defined for this file. Choose the field you wish to name, and enter the data.

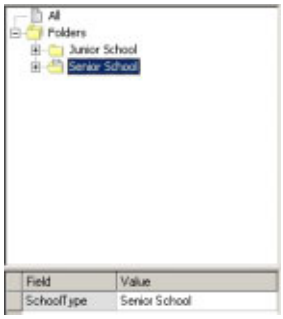


Adding Folder details

Folder details can apply at several levels. For example, you might have a folder ‘Senior School’ that contains all the senior groups. You might want to use ‘Senior School’ as a part of the final group image (the board might read ‘Providence High School – Senior School – Year 10A’). Rather than create a template that contains ‘Senior School’ written as plain text, you can include a special code that instructs *NeoPack/Professional* to look for the text it should insert. So, your template could be used for the Junior School, as well as the Senior School without changing it.

NeoPack/Professional uses a ‘searching’ mechanism that allows you to specify information that belongs to a number of groups, as well as information for an individual group. In the below example, Year 10A is a member of the Year 10 folder, which is a member of the Senior School folder. Clicking on the ‘Senior School’ folder reveals that the field ‘SchoolType’ is available. In the case of the ‘Senior School’ folder, click in ‘SchoolType’ and enter the name that will appear in the template. When the job is run, *NeoPack/Professional* will place ‘Senior School’ into the template for all the Senior School groups.

To enter the information, click the folder, and then the **Value** for the field you need. Type the data.



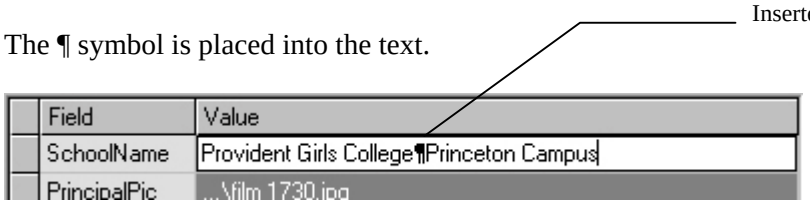
Multi-line Value entries

Field values can contain a carriage return, allowing a single value to be spread over several lines. This is done by entering a special code in the Value field.

To enter a carriage return, type the first line, then either:

- Press **<Control> <Enter>**
- Press the **Numeric Keypad <Enter>** key

The ¶ symbol is placed into the text.



Labeled Holders

NeoPack/Professional templates can include referenced images that are placed into the final design. These referenced images are created in **Design mode** for either the entire file, or individual folders. This is especially useful if your template designs include a school logo – you can include a labeled holder into the template that references the logo image which you specify here.

Creating a Labeled Holder

To include labeled graphics into a template, you must first create a special 'Graphic' field to contain the images. It is best to set these fields as a program default. Choose **File, Options**, then choose the **Default** tab, and click **Data fields > Edit**. The **Data Fields** dialog is displayed.

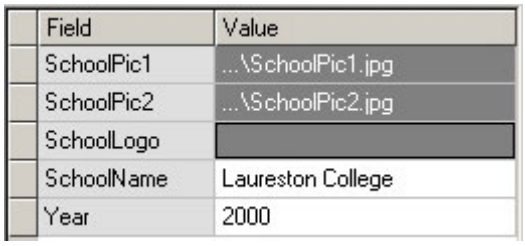
Choose the tab you wish to use – either **Folder** or **File**. See the earlier discussion about the difference between these fields. We will use the example of a School's logo for this example.

Creating a File graphic field

Choose the **File** tab, then click **Add**. A new line is inserted to the list of fields. Type the name of the graphic field. In this example, type **SchoolLogo**. Now, click the **Type** drop-down and choose **Graphic** from the list. Choose **OK**. The graphic field is now available.

Adding a graphic to a graphic field

Once the graphic field has been set as a program default, choose **File, New** to create a new file with this field, or add it to the file by entering **Details mode**, then choosing **Edit, Fields…** and adding the graphic as before. You will see the new field in the list of available fields when **All** is chosen.



Double-click inside the **Value** for **SchoolLogo**. The **Open Graphic** dialog is displayed. Navigate through and find the graphic file you wish to import.

Import the graphic

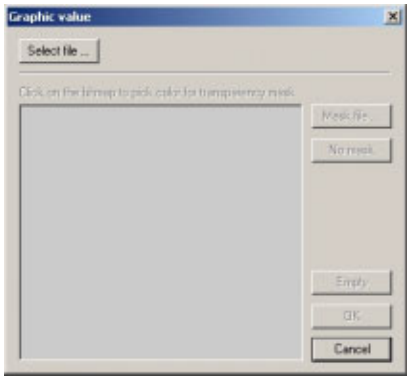
Graphics for labeled holders are imported in a similar way as normal images. When the graphic is imported, a smaller screen resolution image is generated for use on-screen. As

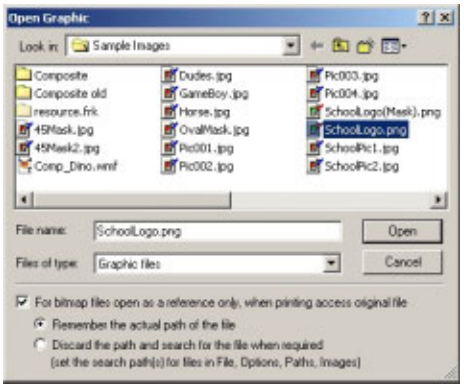
with normal portrait images, there are several options you can set to allow *NeoPack/Professional* to find the high resolution images for printing.

- Remember the actual path of the file – remembers the original location
- Discard the path – use the file searching options discussed in Chapter 9, **Images mode**.

Load the graphic image

Choose the import option you wish to use, then choose **Select file…** In the File dialog, choose the image file, the reference options, then Open. The graphic is displayed.





Choosing the transparent area

You can specify two types of mask that allow transparent areas in the logo.

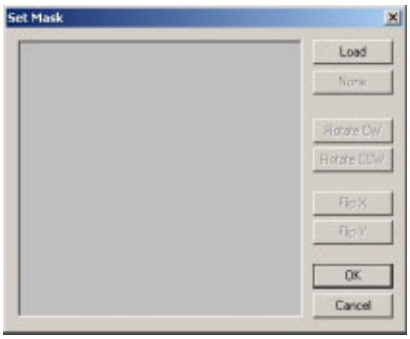
Simple transparency mask

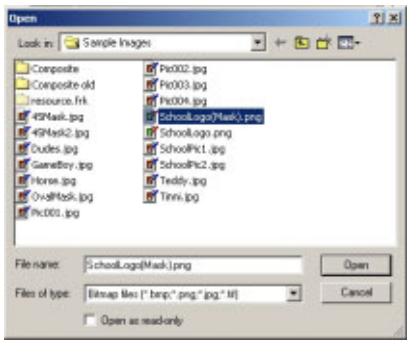
If the logo has areas you would like to be transparent as a single color, click it in the preview. Note the hashed area indicating transparency. To clear the set transparency, click **No mask.**

Make sure you design your logo graphics carefully. Any area that is the same as the color you click will appear as transparent in your design. Pay careful attention to the edges of the logo as grey edges around the logo can appear as a light halo on the finished page. Don't save the logo file in JPG format, as you might also see a halo due to the image compression. Choose a lossless compression file type like PNG or similar.

Using a transparency mask

More complex 8-bit masks allows more complex effects like soft edged blends etc. To set the 8 bit mask, click **Mask file…** the **Set Mask** dialog opens. Choose **Load**, then find the transparency mask file and click **Open**. The mask is loaded and displayed. If you need to adjust the orientation of the mask, choose from the rotate or flip options in the **Set Mask** dialog.





Once you are happy with the settings, choose **OK**. The dialog is dismissed, and the graphic object now is named in the field value in **Details mode** tree view.

Allocate graphic objects in the same manner for Folders. The graphic object is now available for use in a *NeoPack/Professional* template.

Field	Value
SchoolPic1	...\SchoolPic1.jpg
SchoolPic2	...\SchoolPic2.jpg
SchoolLogo	...\SchoolLogo.png
SchoolName	Laureston College
Year	2000

9

Images mode

Once imported, images can be zoomed, cropped, and adjusted for color, density or image contrast. These operations are carried out in **Image mode**.

After starting *NeoPack/Professional*, create or open a job file by choosing **File, New** or **File Open**. Now, choose, **Mode, Image.** If you've created a new job file, you'll need to import images that you want to use with *NeoPack/Professional*. The Import process creates a smaller versions of the high-res images used when creating the job packs.

The Import process offers several options to give you the maximum control over the way you'd like to work. These options are detailed in the next few pages. As a rule, you should import images *before* importing the data that accompanies them.

Either way, **Image mode** allows you to crop, color correct or sharpen imported images.

The **Image** screen is divided into 2 major areas:

- Corrections palette
- Image preview area

Figure 9: Images mode

Importing images

Images you wish to use for group images need to be imported to the *NeoPack/Professional* job file you're working on. There are a number of operations that can be applied to images as they are imported.

Adjusting the Image Preview quality

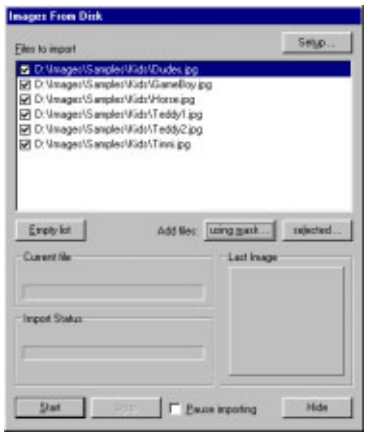
When an image is imported to the *NeoPack/Professional* file, the high-resolution image is sub-sampled for display purposes. If you want a higher quality preview image, you can adjust the size of the preview image created, like this:

With a file open, choose **File, Properties.** Choose the **Bitmap sizes** tab, and enter the desired preview size in the **Stored size of bitmap used for previewing** entry box.

Adjusting this amount will not change preview images already created. You must re-import the images to see the changed setting.

Import the images

Once the various file options have been set, you can import images to the job file. With the job file open, choose **Images, Import from disk**. The **Images From Disk** dialog is shown.



Configuring the import

There are a number of options that are available to you when importing images.

- Choose the files to be imported
- Specify a range of files to import
- Rotate and flip images as they are imported
- Apply a LUT correction
- Apply image sharpening

Set the import options

From the **Images from disk...** dialog, click the **Setup** button. The **Setup** dialog opens. Click **Setup**. The **Images From Disk Setup** dialog opens. The dialog is divided into 4 main areas that control the various options available to you.

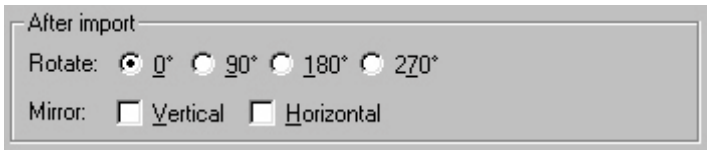
If you accept the default options, you'll be leaving the original images where they are, and creating sub-sampled preview equivalents for inclusion in the *NeoPack/Professional* job file. *NeoPack/Professional* will remember the exact path of each original image file. Any corrections made to the images in *NeoPack/Professional* are stored in a database and applied to the originals only at the time of output, whether in the process of forming packs or via exporting.

Import method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Import preview only (leave original hi-res images where they are, with actual path remembered) **(default setting)**	Small job file, thus making it possible to send it and work on it away from the hi-res images	Job file must always exist in the same location relative to the path of the original hi-res images
Import preview only (leave original hi-res images where they are, with actual path discarded)	Small job file, original images can be moved after import and *NeoPack/Professional* will still find them	Path of original hi-res images must be listed in File, Options, Paths, Images in order for *NeoPack/Professional* to find them when it needs them to output packs or export
Import hi-res images **(uncheck default setting)**	Job file is self contained, it has everything it needs to output packs	Large job file, and the original hi-res images now become "duplicates" that take up disk space

Set the image rotation / flip

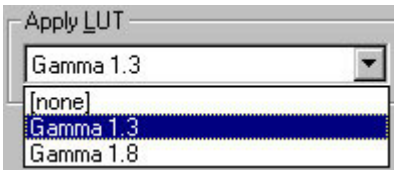
If the images you are importing need to be rotated or flipped, choose the rotation here.

If you import images by preview only, choosing an option here will cause slightly longer print times, as the original hi-res images will be rotated or flipped at print time (the originals are in fact never modified – any corrections happen only to the output itself). If you desire the shortest possible print times, you should ensure images are in the correct orientation *before* importing.



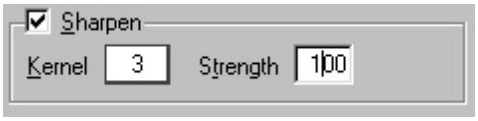
Set the image LUT

Images can be corrected using the built-in LUT editor. Choose the LUT you want to use from those defined in the drop-down list. For information on making a LUT, see Chapter 15, **Calibration & Color Management**.



Set the image sharpening

Images can be sharpened as they are imported. *NeoPack/Professional* uses an **un-sharp mask** algorithm, allowing good quality sharpening.



The setting range is:

Kernel: 3, 5 or 7
Strength: 10 - 600

Generally, the larger the kernel size, the stronger the sharpening effect. Likewise, the higher the strength, the stronger the sharpness. The higher the kernel value, the longer it will take to apply the sharpening effect.

There is no 'correct' sharpness value – the ideal values will depend on how sharp the original hi-res images are. You should try importing a sample image with different sharpening settings to find the correct value for any given batch of images. It goes without saying that too much sharpening can result in harsh and unpleasant images!

Whenever you apply a correction such as image sharpening, you will increase the time taken to print the image at the eventual output phase. If your scanner or scanning software supports image sharpening, you may want to use these controls rather than applying sharpening with *NeoPack/Professional*.

Once all the settings have been made, choose **OK**. You are returned to the Import dialog.

Choose the files to import

There are two ways to choose the images to import to a *NeoPack/Professional* job file:

- Import images using a mask
- Import selected images

Import images using a mask

If you have a range of images to import, *NeoPack/Professional* can choose the images to import, as well as identifying any important information embedded in the filename using the **Import From Disk Masked** dialog.

From the main **Images from Disk** dialog, click **Using mask…** The **Import From Disk Masked** dialog opens.

Choose the image directory

Enter the path to the image files you want to import. You can click the **Browse** button to open a **Browse** dialog.

Specify the file range to import

NeoPack/Professional can use a mask to select the files to import, as well as identify important information embedded in a filename.

For example, a set of files might be named:

Image 1	Image001exp.tif
Image 2	Image002exp.tif
Image 3	Image003exp.tif
…	Imagexxxexp.tif

These filenames consist of a prefix, the unique number, then a 'postfix':

- prefix: img
- number: 001 – xxx, 3 digits long
- postfix: exp
- extension: tif

The important information can be imported along with the image data by specifying the location of the data within the filename. In this case, you would enter:

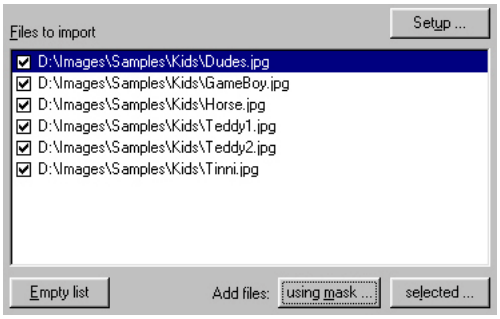
- 'Image' as the **pre** entry
- 3 as the **no-width** entry
- 'exp' as the **post** entry
- 'tif' as the **ext** entry

With these settings made, any files that don't conform to this filename mask will be ignored. If the pre, no-width and post fields are left blank, any eligible .tif files found in the specified directory will be imported.

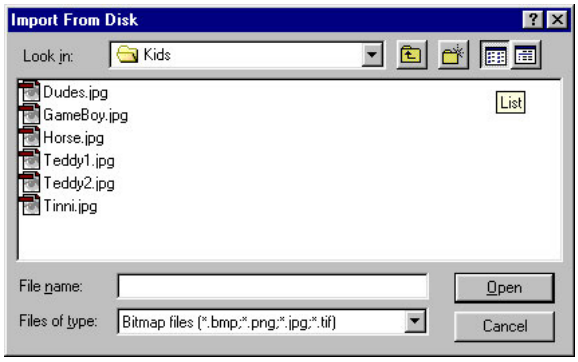
Specify a file range limit

You can choose to import a range of images from the valid range. For example, if you want to import image 20 to 40 out of 100 valid image files, you would enter 20 and 40 in the **Limit from image no… to image no** boxes. Image files 20 through 40 will be imported.

Once you have made all the settings, choose **OK**. The **Images From Disk Masked** dialog is dismissed. Note that in the main **Images From Disk** dialog, you will now see a list of the files that will be imported according to the entries made.



Import selected images



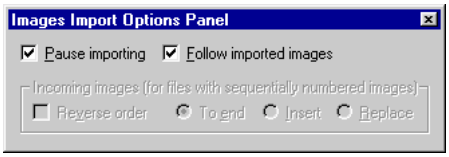
If you want to import a number of selected image files, you can choose the files to import using the **selected...** dialog. Click **Selected**. The **Import From Disk** dialog opens. Choose the files you want to import. You can use the standard Windows modifier keys to select the various file ranges. These modifiers are:

- **<Shift> click** first then last file in a range – selects a block of files.
- **<CTRL> click** each file you wish to import – selects the files to import individually

Choose the range of files to and choose **OK.**

Specify the image import order

Open the **Import Options panel** by choosing **Images, Import options panel...** Note the status of the **Incoming images** section of the **Import Options**. If the file currently open is indexed, the options will be unavailable. If the file currently open is sequential, the options will be available.



Unavailable Image options for an indexed file

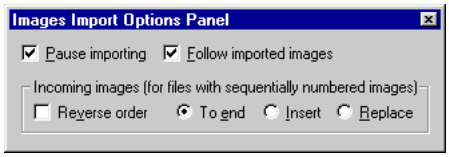
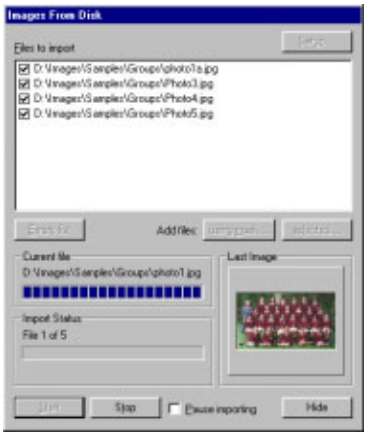


Image options available for a sequential file

Images imported to a sequential file are numbered internally with a sequential number. The images are imported in order according to the parameters set in the **Import options panel** dialog.

Once images are imported to a sequential file, they will have numbers allocated from 1 to however many images are in the file (1, 2, 3, 4…)

Various import options are available:



- Reverse order: Imports images in reverse numeric order (999 first, to 001)
- To end: Appends all new images to the end of existing images. If **Reverse order** is selected, images are appended before the first image (if it exists).
- Insert: Inserts imported files from the currently selected image (only available if images have already been imported).
- Replace: Imported files overwrite existing images from the one currently selected (only available if images have already been imported).

If **Insert** is selected as the import option, images are inserted from the point of the image currently selected. If you select a new image during the import, the insertion position is retained. If you want to specify a new insertion point for imported images, pause the import by choosing **Pause import**, the new insertion point, then click **Insert** once again in the **Import options panel**. The new insertion point is set.

Start the import

Once all the various settings have been made, choose **Start**. You'll be able to see the images as they are imported, while the **Import Status** section of the **Images from Disk** dialog will keep you informed of the progress. Choosing **Stop** during the import process will stop the import after the current image. The **Import Options** dialog can be hidden by choosing **Hide**. The images will continue to be imported until the last eligible file has been processed, or the import process is paused or stopped.

Pausing the import

If you wish to pause the images as they are imported, check **Pause import**. The image import is paused until the checkbox is unchecked.

What If they're not the right images?

If you notice immediately that you've started to import the wrong images, you can always **Stop** the import and then manually delete the images by selecting them with the mouse (use the Shift key to select a range, or the Alt key to select additional images one at a time) and then choosing **Edit**, **Delete**.

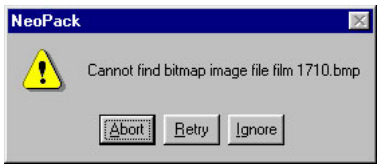
Using referenced-import job files

Once images have been referenced-imported to the job file, the original hi-res images are not required until the jobs are printed or exported to the hard disk. It is now possible to edit images with an image editor directly from *NeoPack/Professional* when using referenced images, but if you can live without this facility, the inherently-smaller .TNJ file

can be sent anywhere without the source images for image color correction, cropping and pack creation. Only when the time comes to edit the original hi-res images (which of course may never be necessary), or print or export the job is it critical that the .TNJ file is returned to its original location.

Missing image files

If the original image files are not available when attempting to edit, print or export the images, an error is shown. Either fix the problem and choose **Retry** to retry the job, or **Abort** to abort the current operation. Fix the problem and try again.

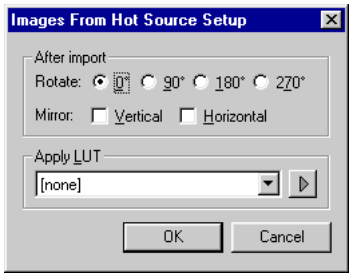


Other import sources

NeoPack/Professional also allows images to be imported from several other image sources. The import panel can be hidden after starting the import by choosing **Hide**. Any eligible images will continue to be imported until importing is paused or the source unchecked.

Setting up the import

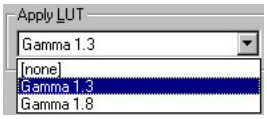
In Images mode, from the Images menu, choose the **Import from Hot Source** option. The **Setup** dialog is displayed. As with importing from disk, hot source images can be rotated and flipped on import. These options are discussed earlier in this manual.



Correcting images on import

NeoPack/Professional allows image corrections to be applied as images are imported. For example, if you know that a particular source of images needs to be brightened, the correction can be applied to those images as they are imported.

Choose the LUT that you need from the **Apply LUT** drop-down. For information on making a LUT, please see Chapter 15, **Calibration & Color Management**.



Importing from the Windows clipboard

If your have an application or scanner that can place the images into the Windows clipboard, *NeoPack/Professional* can import these images directly.

Choose **Images, Import from hot source…** The Import from hot source dialog opens. Make sure **Clipboard** is checked, and **Pause importing** is unchecked. Any images that appear in the Windows clipboard will be inserted to the currently open file. The images are inserted according to the options set in the **Options panel** as previously discussed.

Importing from Kinetic bitmap devices

Some other imaging applications use this method as an image interchange. If your device is compatible, images will be inserted automatically according to the settings made in the **Options panel**. If you're not sure if your device is compatible, check with Timestone Software.

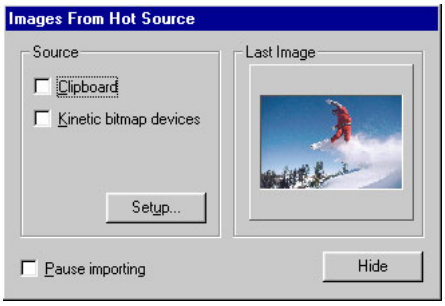


Figure 10: The Images from hot source panel

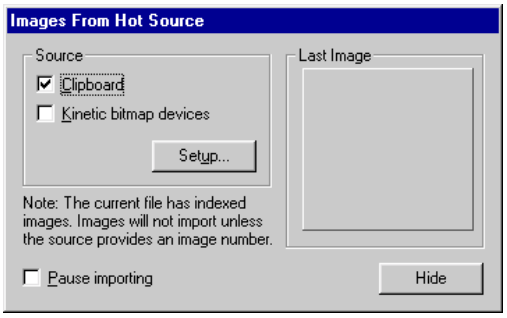


Figure 11: Import panel with indexed images

Editing images while importing

As mentioned earlier, it is possible to have certain operations performed on images **while** they are being imported. You can't zoom or crop while importing, but you can sharpen, rotate and color correct (using a pre-existing LUT) while images are being imported. During the import operation, the editing operation is not as responsive as it would normally be, and we recommend that you use the keyboard to perform the edits.

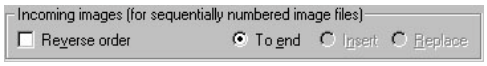
The image import can still be controlled, even though you may have hidden the main image import dialog by choosing the **Hide** button. Open the Import options panel by choosing **Images, Import options panel…**. This small panel can be positioned on the screen so the image import can be paused or restarted.

Adding images

Images can be added to a file, or can over-write existing images within a file. Images are added by using the **Images, Import from Disk** dialog. The options available vary according to whether a file is indexed or sequentially numbered.

Add new files to the end of an existing file

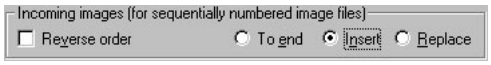
Choose **Images, Import options panel…** The **Images Options Panel** opens. Choose **To end** as the **Incoming images** selection. Specify the files to be imported as previously discussed. Images will be appended to the end of the file.



Insert or replace files within a file

To add images somewhere in the middle of an existing file, first choose the image where the new images are to be inserted or replaced, then choose **Images, Import options panel…** The **Images Options Panel** is shown. Note that the options **Insert** and **Replace** are available.

Images that are imported with **Insert** selected will be added from the selected image. Images imported with the **Replace** option selected will overwrite existing images from the selected image.



Deleting images

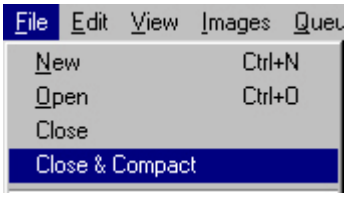
To delete images, select the image or images you wish to delete, then press the **Del** key, or choose **Edit, Delete**. A confirmation of the deletion is requested, then the images are removed. Choose **OK** – the selected images are deleted. Any groups that used deleted images will not be removed. Bear in mind that if you have already matched images to names (and this may have happened automatically if you have already imported the data), the action of deleting an image may have created an unmatched name in **Match** mode, and it's probably a good idea to check to see what effect the deletion has had. You'll probably find you can resolve the problem by selecting **Edit, Remove matched object**, but you may need to 'Move' and 'Slide'.

Closing and compacting files

Close a file by choosing **File > Close**. The current file is saved and closed. There's no way to close a job file without saving it.

Images are stored in *NeoPack/Professional*'s database type file. As images are deleted in the program, they are not physically removed from the file, although they are no longer available. One result of this is that the file size will remain the same, even if images are deleted from the file.

The deleted image space can be 'freed up' by choosing **File, Close & Compact**. This process may take a little time to perform, and also requires some hard disk space (at least as much as the new file's size). Once done, the file will only contain the essential image data, and be as small as possible.



It is recommended that a file is compacted after many images have been deleted, or before being archived.

Correcting, editing and displaying images

After the images have been imported, you can correct them using *NeoPack/Professional's* zoom, crop, color density and contrast controls. You can also control how the images are displayed on-screen while you perform these operations.

If you have specified an external image editor via **File, Options** (see Chapter 6, **Configuring *NeoPack/Professional***), you can also open individual images in another application and perform edits such as taking out spots that may have been introduced in the scanning process (or exist for any other reason!)

You can do this whether you imported the original high-res images into the *NeoPack/Professional* job file or simply imported preview versions, referencing the high-res originals but not actually including them in the job file (see **Images, importing**, for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of doing either).

The editing process is much the same either way, but there are a couple of subtle differences.

Image editing

To edit an image, you must be in **Images** mode, and you must have **one** image selected. If you have none or multiple selected, the menu option will be unavailable.

Choose **Images, Edit image**. The application you specified in **File, Options** will load, with the high-res version of the image loaded.

- If you imported the original high-res images into the *NeoPack/Professional* job file, the file will appear as a **.tif** file, no matter what the original file format was. The TIF format, of course, is an uncompressed format, so you can make as many edits as you want and save as many times as you wish without degrading the image. If you were to do this with a **.jpg** image file, it would degrade slightly each time you saved it.
- If you imported preview versions, referencing the high-res originals but not actually including them in the job file, the original file will load, whatever format that happened to be. Thus, if it's a **.jpg** file, bear in mind that each save will degrade the image slightly. If you're likely to be saving the image more than a couple of times, we recommend saving it as a TIF or 24-bit BMP file while editing. If you do this, don't forget to save it back to its original file type when you're finished, as this is the only version of the file that *NeoPack/Professional* will recognise.

Back in *NeoPack/Professional*, you'll see the following message:

Clicking the **Continue** button is *NeoPack/Professional's* signal to create and display a new preview image based on the original you've just modified. You should notice a change in the preview image as soon as you click that **Continue** button.

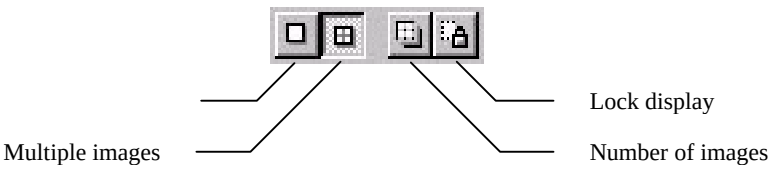
Changing the number of images displayed

You can control the number of images displayed on-screen using the image pane controls. These are located at the bottom of the image preview pane.

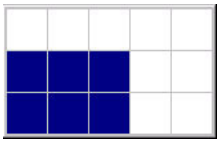
Image set controls

Choose the number of images you wish to display using the controls:

- Choosing **Single Image** changes the image display to a single image.
- Choosing **Multiple Images** changes the image display to the image table.



Clicking the **Number of images** button (the third one of the four) pops up a sizeable grid. Moving the mouse increases or decreases the number of images displayed in the image table. The grid will reflect whatever is currently displayed and you can increase or decrease this by holding down the left mouse button and moving the mouse. Whatever the grid displays when you release the mouse button will be what you end up with, but of course you can change it at any time. Or you can effect no change by pressing the **ESC** key before releasing the mouse button.



Correcting Images

Once images have been imported to *NeoPack/Professional*, they can be corrected in various ways:

- Zoom
- Jog (x-y movement)
- Color, density and contrast corrections
- Image editing via an external image editor

There are many shortcuts available to achieve the various corrections, as are there many different ways to change the size and number of images being displayed.

Selecting images

It is fast and convenient to select and navigate through images in the image table. First, choose an image by clicking on it with the mouse.

Action	**Keyboard**
Select the first image	Press the **Home** key
Select the last image	Press the **End** key
Show the next screen of images	Press the **Page Down** key
Show the next screen of images	Press the **Page Down** key
Move to the Left image	Press the **Left** arrow key
Move to the Right image	Press the **Right** arrow key
Move to the image above	Press the **Up** arrow key
Move to the image below	Press the **Down** arrow key

Images can be moved and re-sized to create the best cropping for various aspect ratio prints. When in cropping mode, *NeoPack/Professional* displays any enabled aspect ratios. Positioning should be adjusted so that images will appear pleasingly cropped at each of the different aspect ratios.

There are many different ways to zoom and crop images. Zoom and crop values are displayed in the **Image Corrections** palette. If the **Image Corrections** palette isn't currently open, choose **View, Image Corrections**. Choose the image crop editing mode by choosing **Images, Select crop & scale image tool**.

Note that all images displayed in the image table now show the enabled aspect ratios.

Cropping images

Choose an image. The image can be moved by:

Action	Keyboard	Mouse	Image Correction palette
Move an image left	Hold the **Control** key and press the ➔ key	Click and drag the mouse	Click inside the 'X' value box, or Press <Control><X>. Decrease the value or press the ↓ key
Move an image right	Hold the **Control** key and press the ← key	Click and drag the mouse	Click inside the 'X' value box, or Press <Control><X>. Increase the value or press the ↑ key
Move an image up	Hold the **Control** key and press the ↑ key	Click and drag the mouse	Click inside the 'Y' value box, or Press <Control><Y>. Decrease the value or press the ↓ key
Move an image down	Hold the **Control** key and press the ↓ key	Click and drag the mouse	Click inside the 'X' value box, or Press <Control><Y>. Increase the value or press the ↑ key

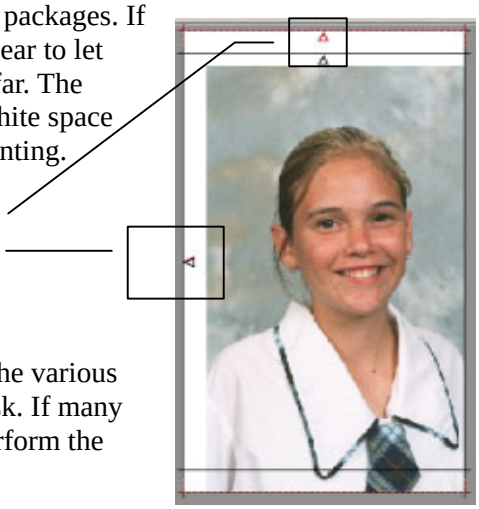
Zooming images

Choose an image. The image can be zoomed by:

Action	Keyboard	Mouse	Image Correction palette
Make the image larger	Hold the **Control** key and press the **Page Down** key	Hold **Control** key and turn the scroll wheel or, hold the **Shift** key down and move the mouse up	Click inside the 'S' value box, or Press <Control> <S>. Decrease the value or press the ↓ key
Make the image smaller	Hold the **Control** key and press the **Page Up** key	Hold **Control** key and turn the scroll wheel or, Hold **Shift** key down and move the mouse down	Click inside the 'S' value box, or Press <Control> <S>. Increase the value or press the ↑ key

Moving images outside the image area

It is possible to move the images outside the image area. This might cause white borders in the finished packages. If you move an image too far, indicators will appear to let you know that the image has been moved too far. The effect of this is that you will have unwanted white space around the image when you form packs for printing.



Zooming and jogging in practice

Adjusting the size and position of images for the various print sizes to be printed is a most important task. If many images are to be adjusted, it is important to perform the task as quickly and accurately as possible.

In practice, some operators will prefer to use the keyboard to make these adjustments, others will prefer to use the mouse and keyboard.

Using the mouse and keyboard

- Select the image to be corrected
- Hold the **Control** key down and use the scroll wheel to zoom the image.
- Release the **Control** key, click and drag the mouse to adjust the image position.
- Click the next image and repeat the operation.
- When you need to see the next screen of images, turn the scroll wheel.

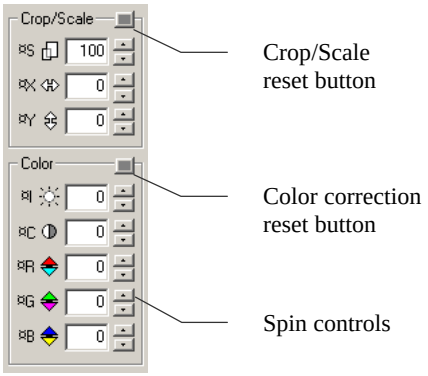
✍ Note that the control panels associated with scrolling mice often allow the scroll wheel to move a certain number of lines ‘per click’. You should set it to suit your needs. If the scroll wheel is set to ‘1 line’, the image table is moved 1 row per ‘click’. If it is set to 3 lines, the image table is moved by 3 rows per ‘click’.

Using the keyboard

- Select the first image by pressing the **Home** key.
- Choose the image to be adjusted with the **Arrow** keys.
- Hold the **Control** key down and use the **Arrow** keys to move the image.
- Hold the **Control** key down and use the **Page Up** or **Page Down** keys to zoom the image.
- Use the **Arrow** keys to choose the next image to be edited.
- Use the **Page Up** or **Page Down** keys to see the next or previous page of images.

Adjusting the image color, density and contrast

Image color, density and contrast can be changed using the image density controls. The corrections can be applied across a group of images, or individually. It all depends whether you have one image selected, or multiple.



The Image correction palette can be operated with the mouse by clicking in the desired field, then using the 'spin' controls next to each field to increment the values. If you want to reset values to zero, there are two reset buttons, one for the crop/scale settings and another for the color settings, as shown at right.

If you find it cumbersome using the mouse in this situation, there are a number of shortcut keys available:

Action	**Keyboard shortcut**
Increase brightness	Type <**Control><I>** and press the ↑ key. The 'I' value increases
Decrease brightness	Type <**Control><I>** and press the ↓ key. The 'I' value decreases
Increase contrast	Type <**Control><C>** and press the ↑ key. The 'C' value increases
Decrease density	Type <**Control><C>** and press the ↓ key. The 'C value decreases
More red	Type <**Control><R>** and press the ↑ key. The 'R' value increases
More cyan	Type <**Control><R>** and press the ↓ key. The 'R' value decreases
More green	Type <**Control><G>** and press the ↑ key. The 'G' value increases
More magenta	Type <**Control><G>** and press the ↓ key. The 'G' value decreases
More blue	Type <**Control><B>** and press the ↑ key. The 'B' value increases
More yellow	Type <**Control><B>** and press the ↓ key. The 'B' value decreases

Exporting images

You can export images from *NeoPack/Professional* and thus make them available to other applications or for other purposes – for example, you might need to supply the images to the printer who has been commissioned to publish a yearbook which features all the subjects in a particular job file.

NeoPack/Professional gives you control over the following parameters of the export:

- If the subjects in your job file are arranged into folders, you can use these folder names to create directories for the export so that exported images are divided neatly into a directory structure. Alternatively, you can use the existing folder names in the filenames which are created during the export process.
- Subjects in a *NeoPack/Professional* job file have fields associated with them (names, ID numbers etc) and you can use any existing field in the filenames which are created during the export process
- You can apply an LUT to the whole batch of images you are exporting.
- You can apply sharpening to the whole batch of images you are exporting.

- You can resample each image in the whole batch to different size
- …and, of course, you can export in any of the most commonly-used file formats, JPG, BMP, PNG, TIF, TGA, PCX or PCT.

To export images, make sure you're in Image mode, then choose **Images, Export**. The Export images dialog box appears – all you can do here is specify a path and start the process. Not much will happen, however, unless you first click the **Setup** button and specify how you want the filenames created during the export.

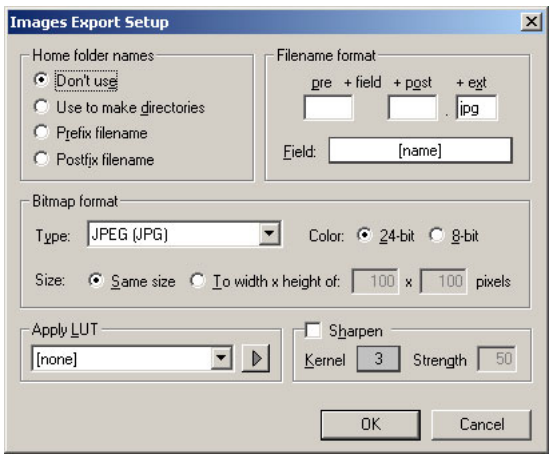


Figure 12: Export images setup dialog

Shown above are the defaults, which will create filenames using each subject's full name, so you will end up with a bunch of files with names like:

`Bradley, Brad.jpg`

It's probably a lot better to have the class or grade level built into the filename, like this:

`8A, Bradley, Brad.jpg`

and to have the images sorted into grade levels anyway. You can do all of this and more in the Images Export Setup dialog.

Note: If you change the file format from the default of .jpg, make sure you change the extension (in the Filename format area of the dialog) to match. This doesn't happen automatically, and if you don't change it you may end up with BMP files that all have .jpg extensions.

10

Matching images and names

A product created with *NeoPack/Professional* generally consists of a portrait matched to a name. But of course we're talking about multiple instances here, which means **multiple** portraits matched to **multiple** names. For this reason, it is necessary to go through a matching process to match the names to the images.

This process is done in **Match** mode, although it's possible that you won't need to do any matching because it will already have been done automatically when you imported the data (assuming you imported the images first, i.e. the images were already there). This way, all you need to use **Match** mode for is to check through the names and images to make sure that there are no inconsistencies.

Using Match mode

To reach *NeoPack/Professional's* **Match** screen, choose **Mode**, **Match**.

The **Match** screen is divided to several sections:

- The image/match preview area
- Look-up tools
- Search tools
- Match toolbar

Figure 13: Match mode

Matching – overview

The process of matching images and names can be done in several ways – depending on your particular system and usual method of working.

Timestone CapturePost digital capture module

If you use Timestone's *CapturePost*, all the images will be pre-matched before they reach the lab. No matching is required aside from confirming the data.

Pre-matched data

You might have an external system that matches images and names. This data can be imported and checked in the **Match**.

Matching via 'Camera cards'

If you have a system where ID numbers are super-imposed onto the images, you can match manually using this information. *NeoPack/Professional* provides a facility to enlarge the lower quarter of the image (where this information is likely to be), thus making it easier to match each image against the corresponding data. Simply select **View, Camera Cards** and then follow the steps as per Matching manually, below.

Matching via shoot cards

If you have the name data before photography day, you might create Shoot cards with barcodes printed on them. Each subject is handed their card, and as they are photographed, the card is collected. If the subject is photographed several times, the card is marked with that number. Back in the lab, the shoot cards (which are in shoot order) are read with a barcode reader to insert them to the **Match** table.

Matching manually

If you collect the shoot order from the order bags – which are collected in shoot order and marked with the number of times a subject was photographed – you can manually match. Choose the image, start typing the name and then select the name from the list.

As discussed in Chapter 8, **Details mode**, name data can be imported, and if match information (i.e. an ID number) is included in the data, the names can be matched to images on import, assuming you've already imported the images.

There are two types of data you can import or enter:

- Name and group data – no matching information
- Name, Data and match – the shoot order has been captured at photography time

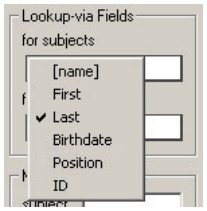
You should consult Chapter 8, **Details mode**, for further information. Once the data has been imported, it will either be broadly matched (i.e. requiring some adjustments), or there will be no matching at all.

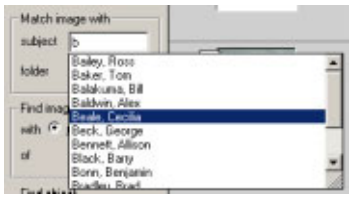
Matching from Shoot cards or order bags

When matching from shoot cards or order bags, you are entering the shoot order to match the imported images – which are also in shoot order. Whether you use shoot cards with a barcode or type the name, the procedure is fundamentally the same.

Using the Match tools

The **Match** interface is divided into several sections. The **Look-up** section lets you search for names and match them to the current image.





The **Find** section lets you find a particular image number or name.

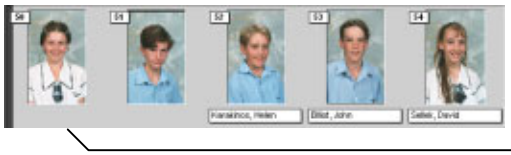
The **Match** toolbar lets you adjust the positions and jog the images and names in a match.

Move / Move / Slide / Slide

Difference between Move and Slide

The difference between the **Move** and **Slide** tools is that **Move** will move the image currently under the cursor, whereas the **Slide** tool will always slide the matched names – assuming there are unlocked images in the table. For example, in this row, if we slide or move the match up by a couple of images, the result is very similar – the names from the insertion point are moved up.

Now, move the match **Down** – note that the matched is not moved, but the cursor does. Try the same thing with **Slide Down** – note that the matched names slide down, unlike the **Move**.



The result of a **Move** – the cursor moves leaving the names behind

The result of a **Slide** – the names slide down with the cursor

Types of match

You can match an image either to a folder (indicating the start of a particular group (e.g. Class 8A) or to a subject (i.e. a name). The Folder match is useful to help identify where matches are correct and identify problem areas (such as missing images etc.)

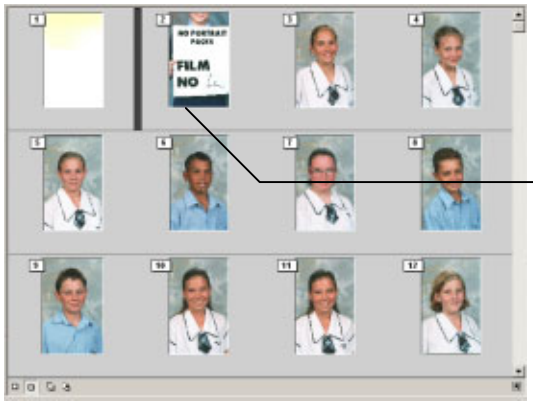
Match the images

Once the details have been imported or entered, and principal photography has been completed, you can start to enter the match data. It is not necessary to have the images imported to do a 'preliminary match', but both images and details must be present to finally match.

In this example, we'll search on last name to enter the match. If you are using a barcode reader, you could just as easily search on ID and read the barcode to match.

Match the first image

Generally, the first image in a run is an identifying slate. The slate usually indicates the beginning of a class. Within a class, there may also be other identifying slates. Click the image you want to match – note the highlight block between the two images.



Click the image to match

The first image is a slate, indicating the beginning of class 8A. We will match the slate to the 8A folder.

Note: This 'preliminary match' is only for convenience and assisting identifying problems in the match. You should always start by matching slates to miscellaneous items (like slates) – preferably matching to a folder.

Make sure that the **Lookup-via Fields for folders** option (top left, just under the toolbar) is set to **name**, then click in the **Match image with folder** entry box and start typing the name of the group. As you type, the matching items are displayed. Choose the correct item and press the **Enter** key. The image is matched to that folder and the **Match** cursor advances to the next image.

Match the next image

The next image belongs to **Sandra McAlister**. In the **for subjects** drop-down, select **Lastname** as the **Look-up** field (or **ID** if you're using a barcode reader). Start typing the last name. Note that as you type more characters for the name the list of choices is refined. Click on the desired name (or highlight it and press **Enter**) to match the name with the currently-selected image – the match is displayed and the **Match** bar advances to the next image.

Coping with errors

You may find that the match gets out of synch sometimes. You might notice that you are matching a male name to an image that is obviously a female, or have too many bags to match to too few images. This usually happens if images are missing, or the shoot order is somehow incorrect. If you notice that you are incorrectly matching, return to the last known correctly-matched image – usually a slate.

Lock a match

If you can locate a match that you *know* is correct, you can lock the match. When you lock an image, any matches *before* the match will stay unaltered if you 'Move' or 'Slide'. You can lock an image by choosing the image to lock, then choose **Edit, Lock/unlock match** or type **Ctrl-L** or click the **Lock/unlock** button in the toolbar. The image will be locked to the current match.

The **Lock** bar indicating the match is locked

Adjusting a match

You might find that your raw match has a number of errors. In the following example, the film scanner has scanned a number of extra images, and a slate that isn't included in the match. Each of these problem images has been matched to a subject, meaning that the match will be wrong from this point on. *NeoPack/Professional* lets you adjust the match using a 'Move' and 'Slide' of the names and images. If you move an image, you move the current image up or down while the names stay put. If you slide the names, you slide all the names up and down while the images stay put.

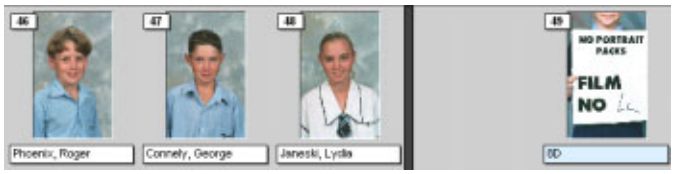
Note: The names and images are both really just sequential lists, irrespective of whether they are displayed in three rows of four, or six rows of five, etc. It might help if you bear this in mind when moving images or names!

How the names and images move depends on what has been locked previously.

Moving and sliding an unlocked table

Moving or sliding the match has very different effects on the match table. Think of the move as an overall 'bump' that will bump things up or down. Sliding will only slide the names up or down.

Clicking the **Move Down** button moves or bumps the match down, exposing a blank.



Moving the match down reveals a blank

Clicking the **Slide Down** button moves the matched names down

Sliding the match down slides the names table down

Move the match

When a match is moved, all matches are shifted up or down. The order of the match is not changed at all – it is simply shifted up or down. If a match has been locked, this might mean an image becomes un-matched, or a blank image may be inserted to maintain the relative match. In this example, we need to move the names below the problem images down to meet the correct image.

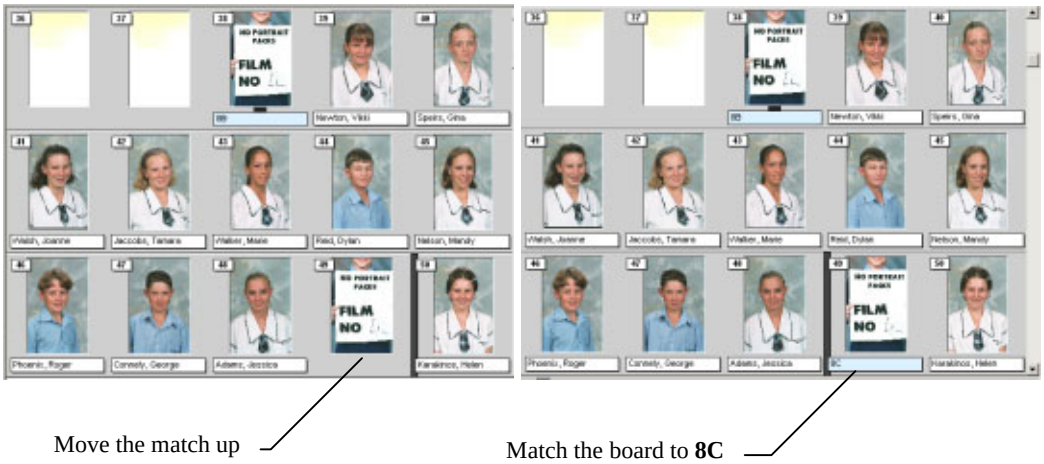
Choose **Edit, Move up from selected**, or type **Ctrl <Right Arrow>** or click **Move Up** in the toolbar 3 times. Note that the names are moved up from the selected point. Match the exposed board to folder 8B.

Move the match – effect on locked matches

If you have locked a match, and need to slide or move the match, the result may be a blank image is inserted to the match table – perhaps an image is missing. In the figure below, note that the first board has been locked and a new board must be matched and locked.

Move the match

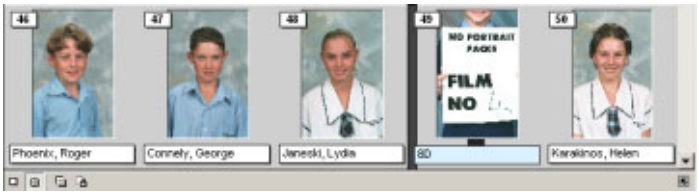
Click the board to be matched. It is currently matched to a name. Choose **Edit, Move up from selected** or type **Ctrl + Shift + <Right Arrow>** or click the **Move up** button. The current name is moved up leaving a blank name. You can now match the Board to the 8C folder.



Shift the match – unlocked table

We have realise that one of the matches here is incorrect. Image 48, has been matched to the subject, '`Helen Karakinos`'. But let's say Helen Karakinos is actually image 50. To repair the match, click on image 48, and choose **Edit, Move up from selected** or press **Ctrl-<Right Arrow>** or press the **Move up** button in the toolbar twice. Note that the names move up, leaving several images un-named.

With the incorrectly matched images now revealed, you can now match the missing subject and board.



Shift the match – locked table

The above match now has the first and last image of the matched section locked. This means that the first and last match will not be changed by moving or sliding the match. In this case, if you do move or slide the match, it will introduce blank images somewhere in the table. Click in the matched images and choose **Edit, Move up from selected** or press **Ctrl-<Right Arrow>** or press the **Move up** button in the toolbar. Note that a matched blank is introduced and an image left un-matched.

11

Design mode

NeoPack/Professional uses **templates** to create all its jobs. There are two different types of templates:

- Pack Layouts – Defines prints or packs
- Pack Item – a design that is placed into a Pack Layout

A *NeoPack/Professional* job consists of a chosen image or images being placed into a Pack Layout. The Pack Layout defines the print size or package ordered, and so is essential to create a job. A Pack Item is an optional item. When a Pack Item is chosen, the selected image is placed into the Pack Item design, then the combined image is placed into the Pack Layout.

Understanding layouts and items

It is important to understand the difference between Pack Layouts and Pack Items.

Pack Layouts

A Pack layout is a single or collection of print sizes that forms a final print. Layouts can contain simple print sizes alone, as well as background images, graphic, text and barcode objects.

To use a layout, select an image, then choose the layout. You'll see the image appear in the layout, with no further requirement to make another choice to print the job.

Pack Items

A Pack Item is a graphic or text object that can be super-imposed over an image. When designing a pack item, you place the various graphic or text objects, as well as an 'image hole'. The hole determines where the image you want to frame will appear inside the design.

To use a Pack Item, you first select the layout, then the item you wish to apply. The image is placed into the item, and into all the print sizes defined by the layout.

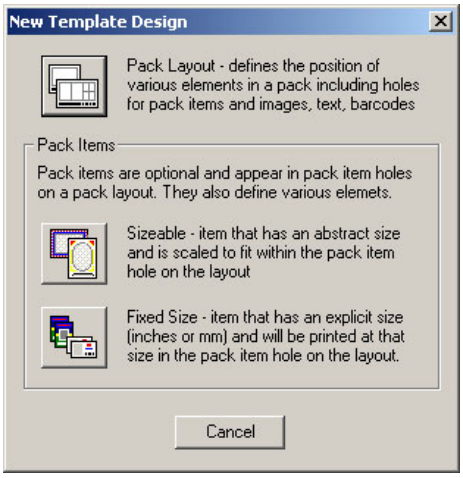
Pack items can be **sizeable** or **fixed size**, and must be specified as one or the other when created. Sizeable pack items will be scaled to fit within the 'hole' on the layout. 'Fixed size' items exist to cater for things like barcodes, which cannot be sizeable – as a barcode relies on a certain number of lines per inch to be read correctly.

Image holes can be selected to use or not to use Pack Items. In addition, you can choose images to be black and white or sepia. This allows great flexibility when creating your packs, creating very complex jobs with a single mouse click.

Using the template designer

The Template Designer is integrated with *NeoPack/Professional*. To use it, start the program, then choose **Mode, Design**.

Note that many of the options are initially dimmed and unavailable.



Create a new Template

Switch to **Design** mode by choosing **Mode, Design** or pressing F8 on your keyboard. Choose **File, New**. The **New Template Design** dialog opens.

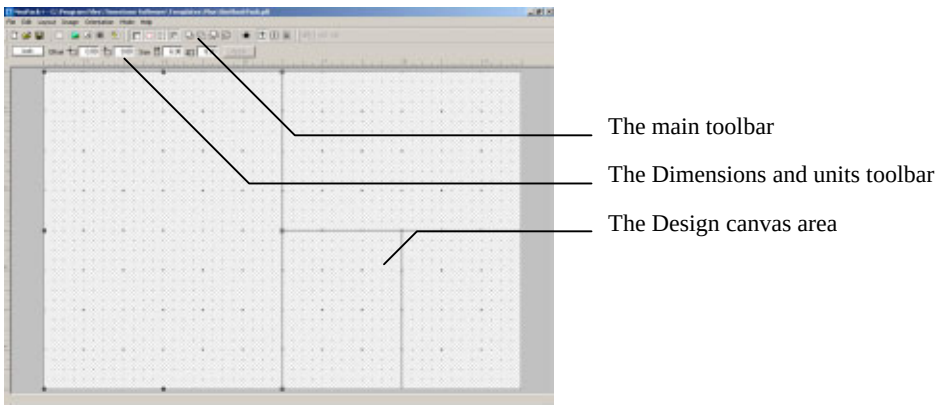
For now, click **Pack Layout** to create a new pack layout.

The Template Designer

The designer is divided into several main areas:

- The main toolbar
- The dimensions and units toolbar
- The design canvas area

Depending whether you are creating a layout or a design, some of the buttons in the toolbar may not be available for use.

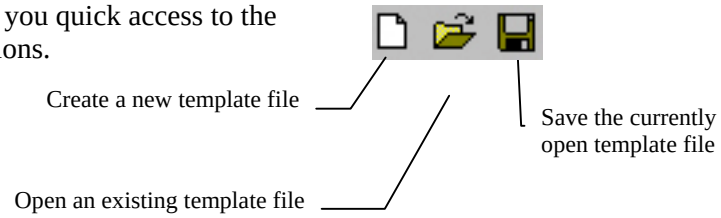


The designer toolbars

There are a number of toolbars that allow you to set various options when designing templates.

The File toolbar

The file toolbar gives you quick access to the normal **File** menu options.



The Place Object toolbar

The Place Object toolbar allows you to place the various objects you wish to use in the template. There are 5 objects that can be placed into a template:

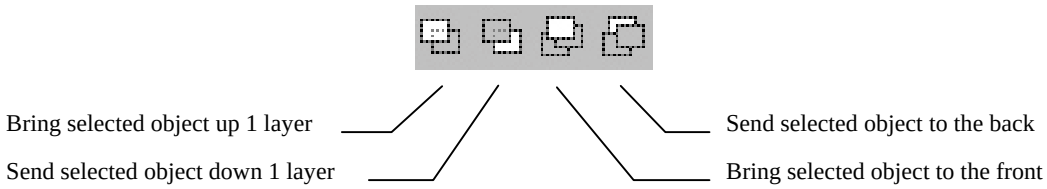
Image Object	Defines where the images you import in the main application will appear in the template. Images appear behind, on top of or inside other objects in a design.
Graphic Object	Defines where various graphic elements will appear in the template. Graphic objects created with this tool are static. Graphic objects can be bitmap, WMF or EMF type
Text Object	Defines where text will appear in the template. Text can be static, or contain a special variable '@' codes. Text automatically scales to fill the defined text box.
Barcode Object	Defines where a barcode will appear in a Layout. Note that the barcode object is not available when creating a sizeable pack item – the item must be a fixed size item
Labeled holder	Places a box that will be replaced by an image, e.g. a logo

To place an object, click the desired button, click inside the template canvas area and drag the mouse. The object will be placed into the template ready to be accurately sized and positioned.

The Object Layer toolbar

Objects placed into a template can be positioned in layers, making it possible to make the various objects appear behind or in front of each other.

To change the layer order of an object, select it, then choose the desired layer order button. (You can also do this without using the toolbar – see Changing the Layer Order, later in this chapter.)



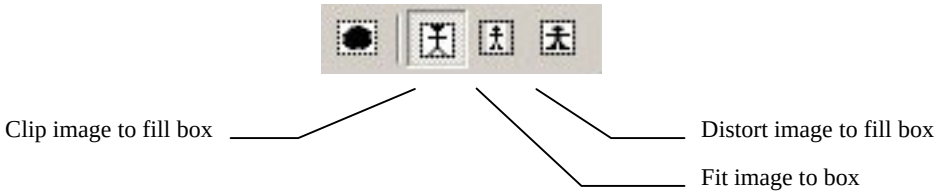
The Scaling options toolbar

When placing image objects into a template, you can control how the graphic is scaled within the object box. This is useful if you need to ensure that an image is completely displayed, and is not distorted.

There are three scaling options available:

- Clip the image to fill the box maintain aspect ratio)
- Fit the whole image in the box (maintain aspect ratio)
- Fill the image in the box (distort the aspect ratio)

The options are set using the **Scaling options** toolbar.



Changing the scaling option

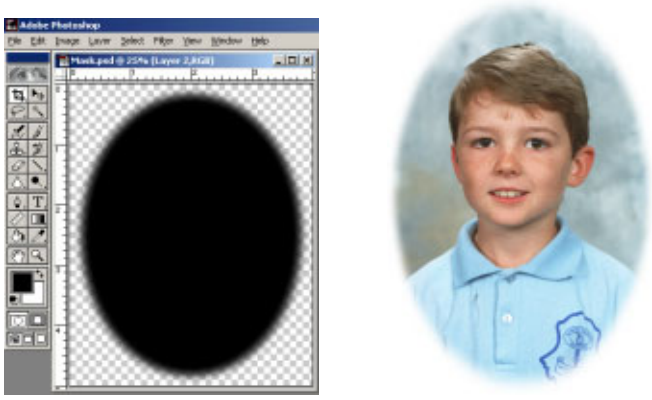
After placing a graphic object, select it, then click the appropriate scaling button in the **Scaling options** toolbar.

Choosing	**Scales the image…**
Clip the image to fill the box maintain aspect ratio) 	
Fit the whole image in the box (maintain aspect ratio) 	
Fill the image in the box (distort the aspect ratio) 	

Applying an 8 bit mask

8 bit masks are image files (jpeg, tiff, bmp etc) that you create in an image editing program that allows you to create image transparency in the finished prints. These files

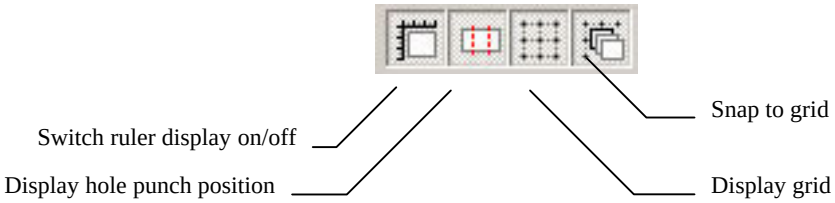
allow more complex transparency effects such as a soft-edged blend or a semi-transparent overlay. You can apply an 8 bit mask to any graphic object placed in a template.



Object snap and grid settings

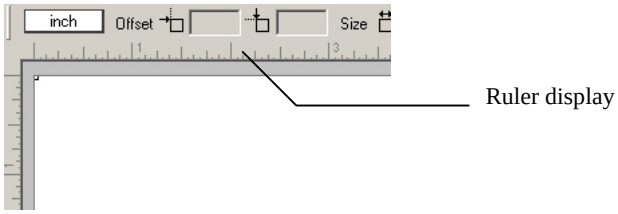
There are a number of useful display and snap options available to make designing templates easier. These options are available from the Display / Snap toolbar. The options include:

- Display or hide rulers
- Display or hide hole punch positions
- Display or hide the grid
- Switch object snap on or off



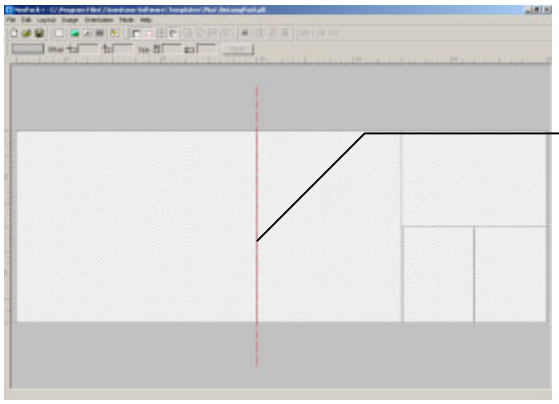
Rulers

Clicking the **Switch ruler display** button will display or hide the ruler.



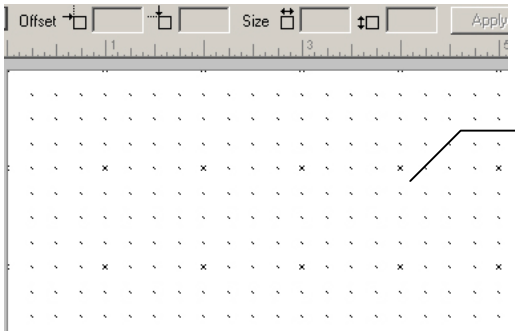
Hole punch display

Templates can contain hole punch positions. Clicking the **Display hole punch position** button toggles the punch position display.



Grid display

A grid can be positioned over the template canvas making positioning objects easier. Click the **Display grid** button to toggle the grid display.



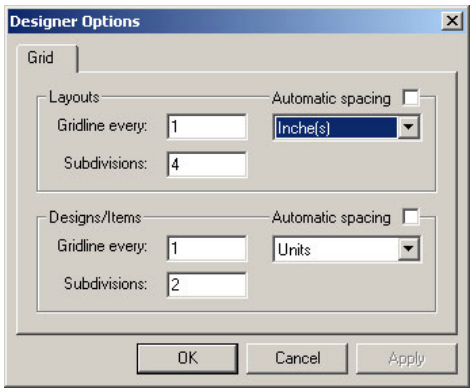
Grid snapping

Placing objects is made much easier with grid snapping. Once enabled, objects will snap to the template grid.

Setting Design options

The grid display can be configured by choosing **File, Designer options** while in **Design** mode.

The gridline spacing and sub-divisions can be set for both a Layout and Item template. Choosing **Automatic spacing** will set an automatic setting. If you want specific settings, un-check **Automatic spacing** and enter the values you want.



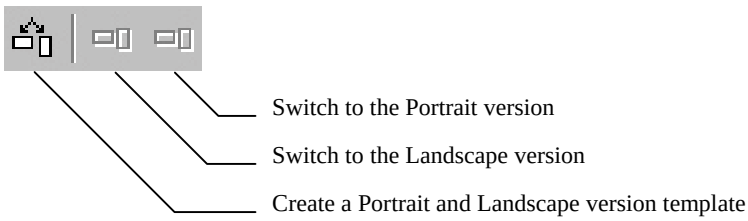
The Template Orientation toolbar

When designing graphic backgrounds for use within *NeoPack/Professional*, you can create both Portrait and Landscape versions of the same template. This is to ensure that the templates you design are suitable for both portrait and landscape images imported.

When designing the different orientations, you must of course have background graphics that been designed for the portrait and landscape images. In the below example, a landscape image has been placed into a design created for a portrait image. Note how the image is impossible to crop correctly for this design.

Using the Template Orientation toolbar, you can create both portrait and landscape versions of the same design within a single template file. *NeoPack/Professional* will automatically select the correct orientation for a portrait or landscape image when selected.

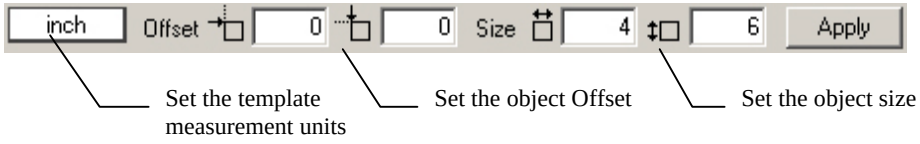
More detailed information about using the template orientations is given later in this chapter.



The Object Dimensions toolbar

Objects placed into a template can be positioned and sized exactly using the Objects Dimensions toolbar. To set the size and position of an object, select it, then enter the desired values to the toolbar. Once done, click the **Apply** button to set the values.

The Offset values set the position of an object's top left corner.



Creating Templates

When creating your templates, you must first make sure that you have all the elements that are required by the design. The template designer has no built-in graphic creation tools. Instead, it places images you have created in other design tools such as *CorelDraw* or *Adobe Photoshop*.

Create a Pack Layout template

A Pack Layout template is a single print size, or a group of print sizes that will form a package. To create a new Pack Layout Template, switch to Design mode by choosing **Mode, Design**. The Template Designer is shown. Choose **File, New**, then choose **Pack Layout** from the selection. A blank template is created.

Set the page size

The first step when designing a layout is to set the page size required for your layout. If you are creating a single print size, this is the size of that print. If you are designing a package, it is the size of the completed pack.

Set the page size by clicking on the background page. Note that the page handles become active, and the **Size** entry area becomes active. First, ensure that you have the correct units selected by clicking the units drop-down. Now, enter the page size you wish to use, then **Apply**. The page size changes.

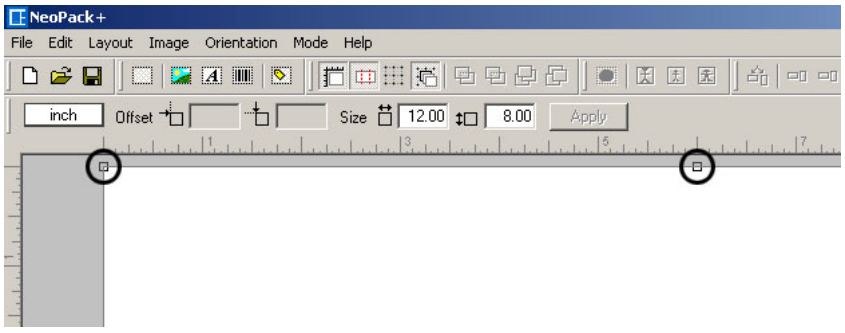


Figure 14: Selected background page with handles

Placing objects

The various objects used in a template are placed in a similar fashion:

- Choose the object to place by clicking the icon in the toolbar
- Click and drag the object area onto the template canvas
- Set the object options
- Set the object size

Using the Grid and Snapping

The template designer has several useful options to help size and position objects in a template:

- A ruler
- Grid
- Grid snap

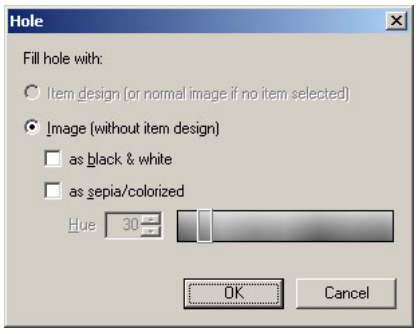
The ruler and grid are visual aids for sizing and positioning objects in a template. Enabling **snapping** assists further by snapping the object to gridlines or other objects on the page. As you size or move an object in the template, it will snap from one gridline to another, ensuring accurate size and position.

Create a single print size layout

The images that you import appear in 'holes' that you place into a *NeoPack/Professional* template. You can place as many holes into a template as you need. Holes can be different sizes and orientations. *NeoPack/Professional* automatically scales and rotates the image as each individual hole requires.

To create a single image hole, click the **Place Image Hole** button.  . The cursor changes to the **Place Object** cursor.

Position the mouse over the area on the page where you want the hole to appear. Click and drag a box over the page. It is not important to be accurate at this point. The **Image Properties** dialog is displayed



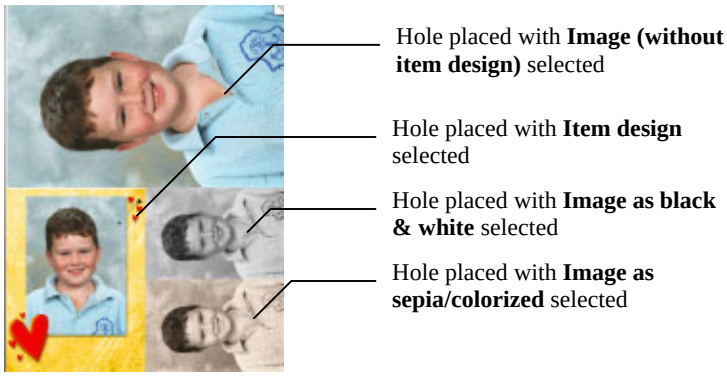
There are a number of options available when placing an image hole:

- Item design – if a pack item is selected, it will be placed into this hole

- Image – a simple image will be placed into the hole, regardless of whether an item has been selected
- As black and white – creates a black and white version of the image
- As sepia/colorized – creates a tinted version of the image

ⓘ Item designs and image frames are discussed fully later in this manual. If you choose **Item design** as the option here, a frame will be placed over the image. If you choose **Image** only, the portrait image will be placed into the pack, regardless of whether you choose a frame.

Choose the type of image you want, then click **OK**.



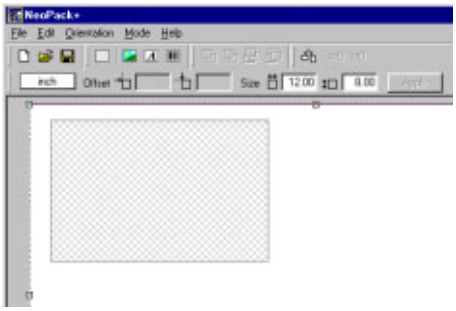


Figure 15: An Image Object positioned in a Layout

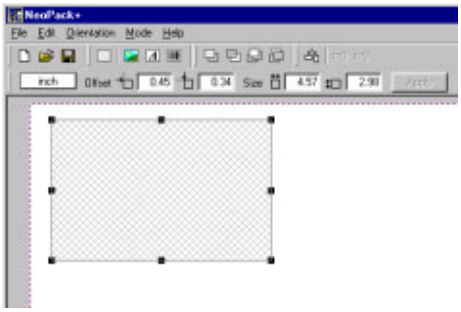


Figure 16: A selected object

Positioning and sizing the object

All objects can be positioned and sized using the mouse, or more accurately with the Object Dimensions entries on the toolbar. Choose the object by clicking it. Note that handles are displayed to confirm that the object is selected.

Sizing and positioning objects with the mouse

To re-size the object with the mouse, click one of the handles and drag it in the desired direction. To move the object, click and drag inside the selected object. The object moves as you drag the mouse.

Sizing and positioning objects with the toolbar

Exact size and position for an object can be specified using the Object Dimensions toolbar. Choose the object you wish to edit, then click the value you want to adjust. Pressing the **Tab** key switches to the next entry area. Once all the required changes have been made, click **Apply**.

Note that the measurement units can be changed by clicking the **Units** drop down.

Figure 17: The Object Dimensions toolbar

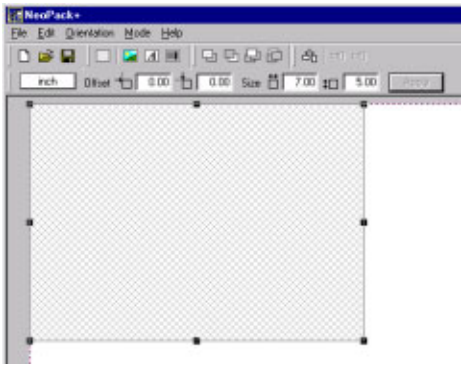


Figure 18: An Image Object after re-sizing

In the case that you want to create a layout that is a single 5x7" print in portrait orientation, set the **X** and **Y Offset** to **0, 0** and the Size to **5, 7**. The Image Hole object is placed in the top left corner, and set to 5" wide and 7" high.

Create a package print layout

By positioning more than one image hole onto the layout canvas, you can create a package print template. When this layout is selected in the main program, the image is placed into each of the image holes automatically scaled and rotated to fit the hole.

To create the Pack Layout, set the page size large enough so that all the required prints can be contained on the canvas as discussed earlier. Place the first print size as previously, Now, place another Image Hole object. Select it, and set the offset value and size so that it is correctly positioned in the layout. Continue placing Image Holes until the pack layout is complete.

Creating a Package print layout: an example

We want to create a simple package print, consisting of 1 x 10x8" print and 2 x 5x7" prints.

Step 1: Set the Page size

Create a new Layout. Click the Page background. Note that the **Size** values become available, but not the **Offset**. Set the page size to **15, 10** to allow for all the required print sizes to be placed onto the canvas.

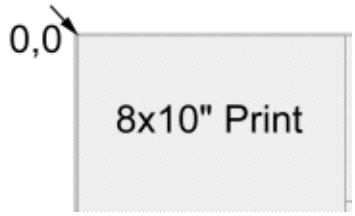
Step 2: Place the 10x8" hole

Choose the **Image Hole** button, then click and drag the mouse over the template canvas area. A new Image Hole object is placed onto the canvas. It is not important to be accurate in the placement or sizing of the hole at this point.

Step 3: Size and position the hole

Select the image hole by clicking it. Note that the object handles appear indicating it is selected, and that the **Object Dimensions** entry boxes in the toolbar become available to edit.

The **Offset** values represent the top left corner of the object. In this example, we want the top left corner of the hole to be positioned in the absolute top left of the layout. Enter the values **0,0** for the Offset. Now enter the print size of **8, 10** then click Apply. The hole is positioned in the top left corner and sized to 8x10".

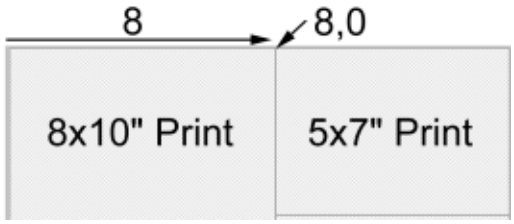


Step 4: Place the first 5x7" hole

After the 10x8" hole has been placed, click the **Image Hole** button again, click and drag another Image Hole onto the layout canvas. Again, it is not important to be accurate. After placing the second hole, select it by clicking it with the mouse.

Step 5: Size and position the hole

With this print, we want the top left corner to be positioned at the top right corner of the 10x8" print. This means that the 5x7" print origin is **8,0**. Enter these values in the **Offset** values of the toolbar. Now, enter the width and height to the **Size** entry boxes. The correct size is **7, 5**. Click **Apply**. The second hole is positioned and sized as shown.

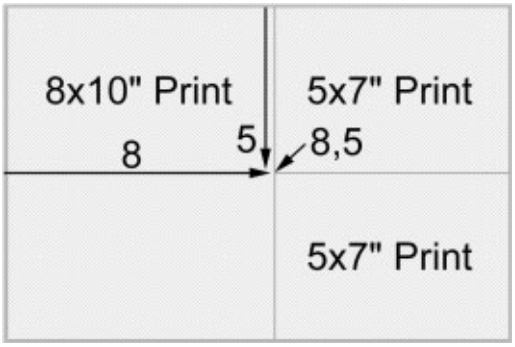


Step 4: Place the second 5x7" hole

After the 5x7" hole has been placed, click the **Image Hole** button again, click and drag another Image Hole onto the layout canvas. Again, it is not important to be accurate. After placing the second hole, select it by clicking it with the mouse.

Step 5: Size and position the hole

With this print, we want the top left corner to be positioned at the bottom left corner of the first 5x7" print. This means that the second 5x7" print origin is **8,5**. Enter these values in the **Offset** values of the toolbar. Now, enter the width and height to the **Size** entry boxes. The correct size is **7, 5**. Click **Apply**. The second hole is positioned and sized as shown.



Saving the Template

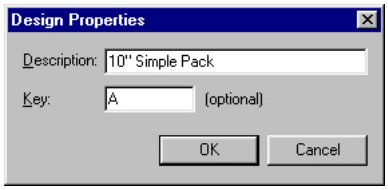
After you have completed the layout, you must save it in order to use it with *NeoPack/Professional*. There are several attributes that you can set for each template to help identify it when using the program.

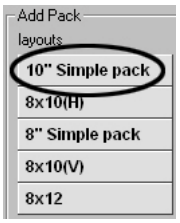
Setting the Template Properties

You can specify both the name and a special quick key for each template that you design. The name you specify is the name that is displayed within the application for that template. A quick key is a special key that when pressed will automatically apply the template. For example, if you specify the Quick Key ‘A’ for the layout created previously, when ‘A’ is pressed in the Form Packs mode, that layout will be applied to the currently selected image.

To set these attributes, choose **File, Properties**. The Template Properties are shown.

Enter the name that you wish to display within the main application for this template, and the Quick Key you want to use.





If you don't set the template file properties, the name displayed in the main program is the file name you use to save the template.

Save the Template

Once the Properties have been set, you can save the template to the hard disk. The template must be saved into the directory defined earlier as the **Template file** path. See Chapter 6, **Configuring *NeoPack/Professional*** for more details.

Choose **File, Save**. A **Save File** dialog is shown. Navigate to the template directory, give the file a name, then choose **Save**. The template is saved.

You must quit and re-start *NeoPack/Professional* before you can use the new template. This is because *NeoPack/Professional* will only use the templates present in the template directory when it first starts.

Use the new template

After you have saved the template and re-started the program, open a file that has some images. You will see the new layout is now available for use. Click an image, then the layout button. The image is placed into the pack.

Using graphics and text with layout templates

NeoPack/Professional layouts allow graphic objects (such as a logo or background image), text objects – including fixed or variable text, and barcode objects to be placed into the design. Using these objects within a layout – as opposed to a design – allows a complex print layout of an absolute size to be designed. Choosing an image, then the complex layout results in a finished print layout, complete with the graphic, text and barcode objects.

By contrast, a Pack Item template must be placed onto a Layout before a job is formed.

If you always use common complex layouts or want to use a barcode object, you should design your Layout templates to include the various graphic objects.

Information on placing and using graphic and text objects is included later in this chapter.

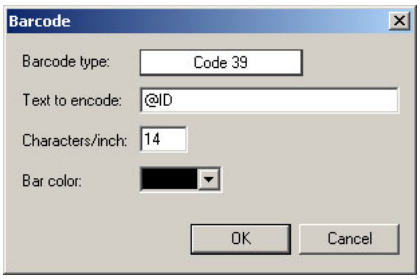
Using a Barcode object

Barcode objects can only be placed into a Layout style template. This is because a barcode must have a specific size and characters per inch in order to be

correctly read. Only a Layout template can offer these specific size requirements.

To place a barcode into your Layout template, click the **Barcode Object** button in the toolbar. Click and drag where you want the barcode to appear. The **Edit Barcode** dialog appears.

Specify the barcode type by choosing from the **Barcode type** drop-down list. The types available include:

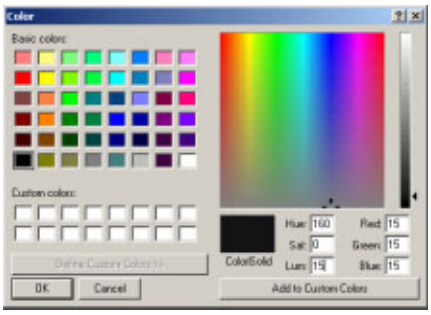


- Code 39
- Extended Code 39
- Code 128

Now, enter the text to code. This is the information entered for each image that needs a barcode. You can either enter some fixed text, or use a variable '@' code. For example, you may have defined a field, 'ID' that will contain the ID information for each image. Entering the text **@ID** as the **Text to encode** will cause the ID information entered to be placed into the barcode. Enter the **Characters/inch** required by your reader.

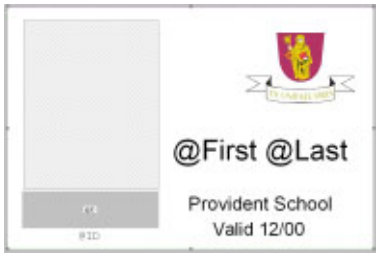
You will need to determine which settings work for particular your reader. This is particularly true for the characters per inch setting.

You can set the color used for the barcode. This is especially useful if you are printing to a CRT based printer. These printers tend to bleed if solid black is used, making the barcodes very difficult to read. Set the color by clicking the **Bar color** drop-down. Choose the color you want, or click **More colors**. The standard Windows color picker is displayed.



Set the color as desired. You may need to test the printed barcode to determine the optimum setting, for example, you may need to set the luminosity to a higher value than zero to avoid bleeding with CRT-based printers.

After setting all the required parameters, choose **OK**. The barcode object is placed into the Layout. In the template example at right, note the use of normal text @ codes, as well as the barcode object that uses an @ID code.



Using and defining Hole Punches

NeoPack/Professional offers extensive support for hole punches your printer might support. There are two broad types of printers that are supported:

- Roll to roll printers with either mid image or end/start of image punches
- Cut sheet printers without any punching system

For printers that support hole punches, you can define a number of cut mark positions within a pack. With our Windows NT Printer Drivers, the cut mark information is sent to the printer with the page being printed.

If your printer doesn't support mid-image punching but has start or end of print punches, or is a cut-sheet printer, you can use cut marks to split the packs being printed. In this case, you can define a position to split the long pack. When the pack is printed, it will be sent to the printer split into a number of separate images. The result is either a punch at the beginning or end of each unit, or each unit will be printed individually.

Punch and printer types

There are several types of digital printer available today:

- Cut-sheet feed
- Long-roll, short length feed
- Long-roll, long length feed

A cut-sheet feed printer typically has a maximum paper advance. A good example is the Sienna FotoPrint range that typically has a maximum output size of 8x12" or 12x18" depending on the model.

A long-roll, short length feed printer is a roll to roll printer with easel mask. Again, these machines have a maximum possible paper advance. A good example is the Kodak MultiPrinter that has a maximum print size of 12x18".

A long-roll, long length feed printer is a roll to roll printer that has no maximum paper advance (aside from the paper roll length). This style of printer can create very long prints, in theory as long as the installed paper roll. A good example of this printer is the Gretag Mileca.

Cut-sheet or punching printers

Cut-sheet printers typically don't have a hole punching system built-in. Instead, they cut each individual print and process it immediately.

Punching printers are roll to roll style that usually punch either the beginning or end of a print. Once the roll of paper is processed, the prints are cut by your lab's cutter into a stack of prints.

Additionally, some printers are able to punch the paper within a single print. You might be printing a series of packs that comprise 4 units per pack. This style printer can place a punch at the beginning of each unit in a pack as well as at print start / end.

Hard and soft cut marks

NeoPack/Professional supports 2 types of cut mark:

- Soft cut mark – the pack will be punched by the printer at the defined position
- Hard cut mark – *NeoPack/Professional* will split the pack into separate pages at the defined position

In order to use soft cut marks, you must use a Timestone Software printer driver with a printer that supports mid-image punches.

Any printer can use Hard cut marks.

Using Hard cut marks

Hard cut marks are a very powerful tool, and can be used in a variety of ways. Firstly, if you have a short-advance printer, you can define a series of hard cuts in a long pack. This makes long packs easily printable by most of the digital printers available today.

Secondly, you can tune your production into manageable ‘chunks’. Digital high-speed printers need large volumes of image data delivered in a continual stream in order to keep the printer busy. Images sent to the printer need to be delivered fast enough to keep up with it. This is much easier if the file sizes being sent to the printer are a certain ‘sweet’ size. Files larger than this ‘sweet size’ can cause the printer to pause while the large file is being sent.

For example, the Gretag Mileca ‘likes’ to have image files around 22Mb delivered to keep it busy. If you send it a series of image files, each 22Mb in size, it will keep up easily. If you send images that are 60Mb in size, it takes longer to send the larger file to the printer. In this case, the Mileca will have finished printing the first print before the next is available, and have to stop the paper transport. The result is a white slug between the prints, wasting paper.

You can use hard cut marks to separate long packs into chunks that are more manageable sizes. For example, you might design your packs to be a number of 10x8" units. By defining a hard cut mark at the beginning of each unit, the pack will be split into chunks that will keep the Mileca printing without stopping.

Defining Hole Punches

Hole punches are defined in a Layout template. You can define as many punch positions within a pack, but the printer must be able to use the information for the pack to be finally punched or printed correctly. This means that you must be mindful of the minimum punch distance or paper advance your printer supports.

Setting the punch position

Decide where you need the punch to be positioned within the pack being designed. Choose **Edit, Cut Marks**. The **Cut Marks** dialog is displayed.

Adding a punch

Choose **New**. A new line appears in the entry box. Choose if you want a vertical or horizontal cut position. Choose the position of the punch in the pack.

Choose the punch type

If you want a cut mark to be hard, check the **Hard** checkbox next to the punch position. Otherwise, the Cut mark type is always soft. If you choose a soft cut mark, but your printer doesn’t support mid-image punches, the cut mark is ignored.

Adding additional cut marks

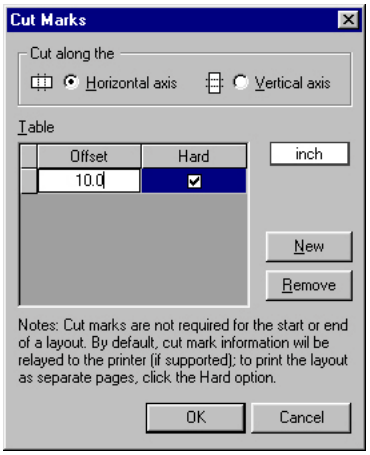
If you need to add additional cut marks, choose **Add**. A new line is added to the **Cut Marks** table. Make the required settings.

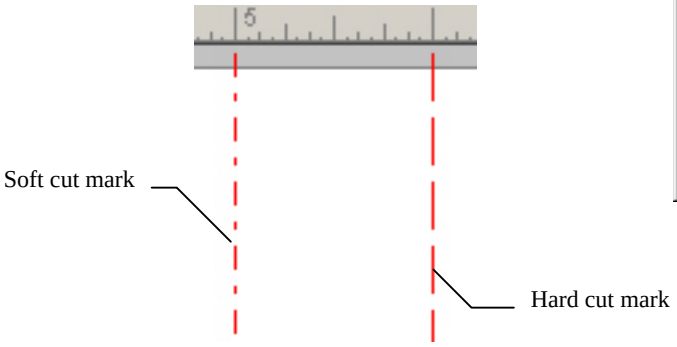
Once you have added all the cut marks necessary, choose **OK**.

Displaying cut marks

You can display a cut mark by clicking the **Cut Mark** button in the **Display Options** toolbar.

Any cut marks defined will be displayed. The different cutmarks are displayed using different dash lines.





Pack Item templates

A Pack Item template is a group of graphic and text objects that must be placed into a Layout template to form a final job. A Pack Item template will be fitted into the Pack Layout chosen, meaning that it is possible that it will be cropped. For example, you might create a Pack Item template that can fit on either a 8x12" or 8x10" print. When the 8x12" Layout is selected, the entire design is placed onto the page. When an 8x10" Layout is used, the Pack Item is cropped top and bottom to fit into the shorter page.

A Pack Item Template can contain multiple Image Holes of different sizes and orientations. Images are automatically scaled and rotated to fit into the holes placed in the design.

Pack Item templates can contain various graphic elements including bitmap images from image editing applications like Adobe Photoshop, and WMF vector graphics created in applications like CorelDraw. The templates also support image transparency, meaning you can define a specific color in your design that will appear as transparent. An Image Hole placed behind a transparent area will show ‘through’ the transparent area, merging the two elements together.

In the example, note that the same design has been placed into an 8x10" and 8x12" page. The same design has been used. Note also that the teddy bear appears on top of the image, indicating that image transparency has been used.

Creating a Pack Item template

To create a new Pack Item Template, switch to Template Design mode by choosing **Mode, Design**. The Template Designer is shown. Choose **File, New**, then choose **Pack Item** from the selection. A blank Pack Item template is created.

Set the Pack Item size

As a Pack Item is placed into a layout to create the final print size, it doesn't have a fixed size or aspect ratio. Even so, it is useful to allocate a page size for a Pack Item to make it easier to create the design in the first place.

Set the page size by clicking on the background page. Note that the page handles become active, and the **Size** entry area becomes active. Now, enter the page size you wish to use, then **Apply**. The page size changes. Note that unlike a Layout Template, you need not specify the page units. The **Units** drop-down is fixed to **abstract** as the measurement units.

Figure 19: Selected background page with handles

Preparing and using graphic images

There are several steps involved when creating and placing graphic objects.

- Designing the graphic object in an image editor
- Placing the graphic into a *NeoPack/Professional* template
- Define any transparent areas in the graphic

There are a number of important things you need to keep in mind when designing graphic images for use in a template.

Bitmap or Vector?

There are two quite distinct types of graphic images that can be used in a *NeoPack/Professional* template:

- Vector graphics from applications like *CorelDraw*
- Bitmap images from applications like *Adobe Photoshop*

The two types are completely different in both the way that they are created, and also in the look of the final printed image. A vector graphic is formed by drawing a series of lines, then applying blocks of color to the objects drawn. The result is a graphic that is well suited to many logos and other design elements, but that has a cartoonish appearance when drawing real-life images.

On the other hand, a bitmap image can create realistic images for use in a template.

The big difference between a vector and bitmap graphic is that a vector is very small and quick to print, whilst a bitmap can be very large and slower to print.

In the example below, the image on the right is using a bitmap image as the background, whilst the one on the left is using vector style graphics. The file size of the bitmap graphic used for the background was 20.4Mb, whilst for the vector, it was 2Mb. Printing the bitmap background took 45 minutes, whilst the vector style took 8 minutes.

Bitmap file size

If you want to use a bitmap background, you can optimise printing time by using the smallest background image possible. If your background has a lot of very fine detail – such as a fine texture – you will need to use a larger file. If the background has many abstract objects, or if image clarity is not particularly important, use a smaller file size. In general, you can use the following guide as a good starting point to determine your quality requirements.

These recommendations assume a maximum print size of 8x12" @ 300dpi

Background detail	**Use this file size**
Detail not important at all	2 – 4Mb
Detail somewhat important	4 – 6Mb
Detail important	6 – 8Mb
Detail very important	10 – 20Mb – requires testing.

Bitmap file format

NeoPack/Professional offers 1 bit transparency support to blend images. This means that a single color in the bitmap image can be defined as transparent in a template. For example, you might design the areas that are to be transparent to be white – R = 255 G = 255 B = 255. Any pixels in the design that have this value will become transparent.

When saving the background image, you must use a file format that does not change this value relationship. For example, JPEG format will distort the white pixels close to a darker area in the image, resulting in 'flecks' through the merged image. Use either PNG format for compressed images, or un-compressed TIFF or TARGA images for your backgrounds.

Do not use JPEG format for background images.

Transparent areas in the background

The 1 bit transparency support means that you must carefully build-in a color that will appear as transparent in your background images. First, choose a color that you will use to indicate transparency – perhaps white or R=255 G=255 B=255.

When designing the image, make sure that *only* transparent areas use this color. For example, select the areas that are not to be transparent, and use the Photoshop (or similar) Levels command to limit the maximum pixel value for these areas to say R=250 G=250 B=250. These areas will not be considered as transparent.

It is also important to carefully prepare the edges of the transparent areas in your design. Many image editors use anti-aliasing when placing selections. Anti-aliasing is a process that softens the edge of a selection, making it blend well into the image. However, this anti-aliasing means that the edges of your design can appear as a halo when used in *NeoPack/Professional*. Likewise, a drop shadow effect that falls onto the transparent area will be seen as a halo.

When finishing off your designs, check the edge of the transparent areas, and clean up any anti-aliased or other stylised areas.

8-bit masks

NeoPack/Professional allows 8 bit transparency masks to be applied to graphic images placed into a template. This allows creative effects like soft-edged blends and transparent graphic objects all applied from a template. You must first have the transparency mask image file available. Use an image editor like Adobe Photoshop to create these masks.

Any graphic object placed into a *NeoPack/Professional* template can have an 8 bit transparency mask applied. This allows attractive and complex graphic effects with all the convenience of *NeoPack/Professional* templates.

Holes in Vector graphics

A Vector graphic can contain an area that is a hole as a native part of the design. *NeoPack/Professional* will reflect the hole in the design, allowing you to create transparent areas in a vector graphic as well as a bitmap.

How a hole is created in a vector depends on the drawing application you are using. For example, with *CorelDraw*, draw two objects of different color, and place them one on top of the other. Choose **Arrange, Combine** to combine the two objects. One of the objects will form a hole in the other.

Consult your applications user manual for more detailed information regarding combining objects for this effect.

Placing objects in the Pack Item Template

Pack Item Templates can contain Graphic, Image Hole and Text objects within a single design. A single template can also contain both portrait and landscape versions of the same design. The correct orientation design for a portrait or landscape image is automatically selected when the template is chosen in the main application.

Objects are placed onto the template canvas by choosing the appropriate button from the **Place object** toolbar, then clicking and dragging the mouse. Objects are placed into stackable layers, allowing them to be placed in front of or behind one another.

Placing and using Image Hole objects

The images that you import appear in 'holes' that you place into a *NeoPack/Professional* template. You can place as many holes into a template as you need. Holes can be different sizes and orientations. *NeoPack/Professional* automatically scales and rotates the image as each individual hole requires.

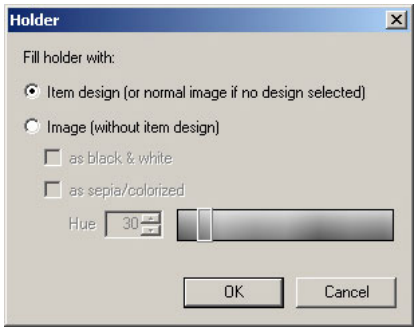
To create a single image hole, click the **Place Image Hole** button  . The cursor changes to the **Place Object** cursor.

Position the mouse over the area on the page where you want the hole to appear. Click and drag a box over the page. It is not important to be accurate at this point. The **Image hole properties** dialog is displayed.

Set an Item design hole

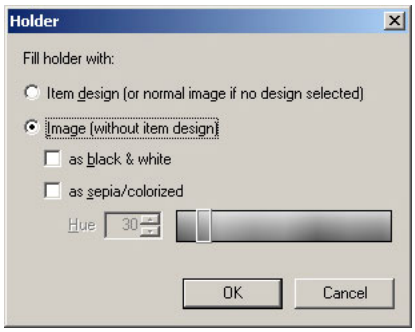
As previously mentioned, there are several different options available when placing an image hole. The control allows you to create complex packs, allowing you to create jobs that previously would require several separate units to be ordered to complete.

When an image hole is placed onto a page layout, by default it will be overlayed with an Item design if one is selected. You can explicitly set this by ensuring the option, **Item design (or normal image if no design selected)** is set.



Set an image hole

An image hole is an area in a layout where an image only will appear. You can design a pack layout that has several prints, then decide which will contain a design overlay. Do this by choosing **Image (without item design)** as the selection when placing a hole you don't want the design to appear in.



Set a colorized image

You can choose to make prints B/W or tinted by selecting **as black & white** or **as sepia/colorized**. This particular image in a layout will be as selected. If you want a particular tint color, choose **as sepia/colorized** then slide the slider to select a color.

Once you have made your selection, choose OK, and the hole is placed into the template.

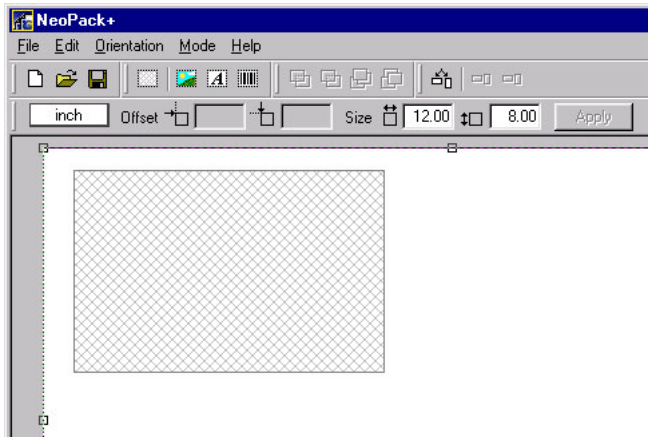


Figure 20: An Image Object positioned in a Layout

Position and size the object

All objects can be positioned and sized using the mouse, or very accurately with the Object Dimensions entries on the toolbar. Choose the object by clicking it. Note it highlights by showing handles.

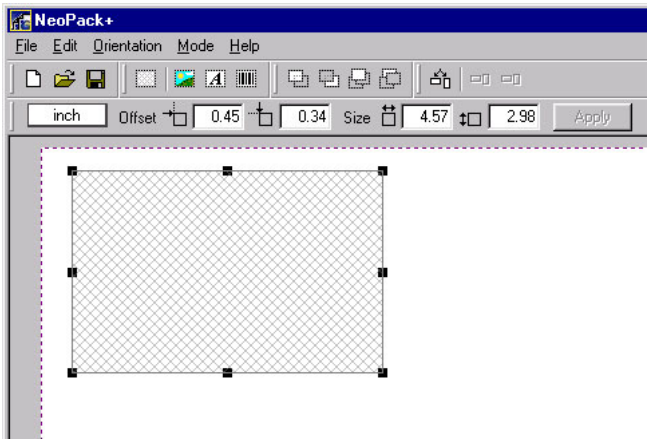


Figure 21: A selected object

Sizing and positioning objects with the mouse

To re-size the object with the mouse, click one of the handles and drag it in the desired direction. To move the object, click and drag inside the selected object. The object moves as you drag the mouse.

Sizing and positioning objects with the toolbar

Exact size and position for an object can be specified using the Object Dimensions toolbar. Choose the object you wish to edit, then click the value you want to adjust. Pressing the **Tab** key switches to the next entry area. Once all the required changes have been made, click **Apply**.

Note that the measurement units can be changed by clicking the **Units** drop down.

Figure 22: The Object Dimensions toolbar

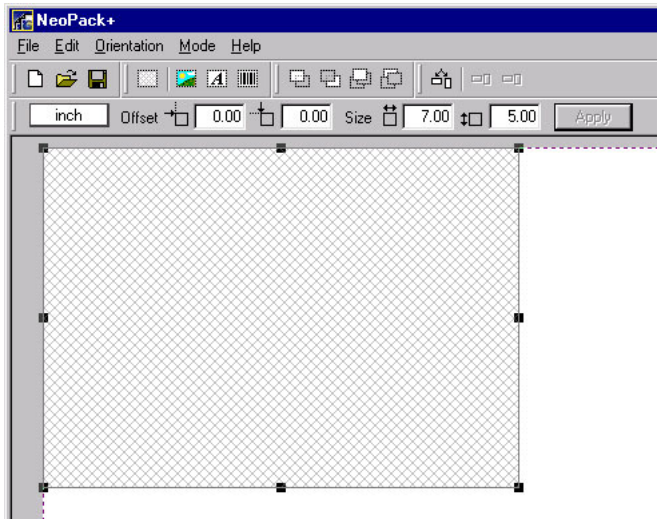


Figure 23: An Image Object after re-sizing

As discussed earlier in this chapter, you can place more than one image hole into a template. For more detail on constructing a multi-hole Item Pack, check earlier in this chapter.

Placing and using graphic objects

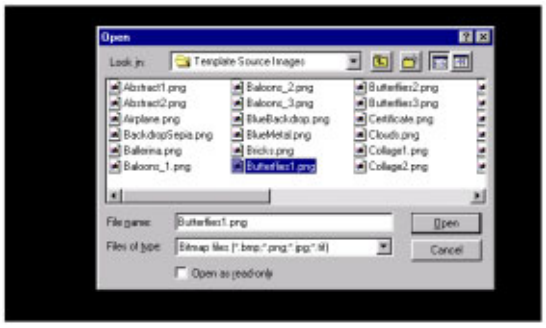
Several graphic objects can be placed into a *NeoPack/Professional* template. There are several steps when importing these objects.

Placing a graphic object

Create a new template – either a Layout or a Design. Set the page size to match the template you're designing. Click the **Place Graphic Object** button.  . The mouse pointer turns to the **Place Object** pointer.

Click and drag the mouse in the template. It is not important to be accurate at this point. A **File Open** dialog is displayed. Choose the file you wish to place and choose **Open**.

The file is read, and the object appears in the template. Now, the **Set Bitmap Mask** dialog appears. Click the color you wish to appear as transparent. In this case, we will click the centre white area of the Life Saver. If you don't want to set a transparent area for the graphic, press **Cancel**. The graphic will still be placed, but no transparent areas will be set.



If you make a mistake, press **Reset** to reset the selected color.

Once the transparent area has been set, you will see the transparent area indicated by the grid pattern:

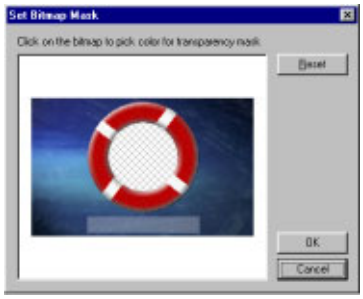


Figure 24: A placed graphic object

Positioning and sizing an object

Click the object. Hold the **CTRL** key down if necessary (if several objects have already been placed).

Either click and drag one of the handles, or drag the object to scale and position of the object with the mouse. If you need more accurate placement, click the object, then enter an absolute origin and size in the **Object Dimensions** toolbar, then choose **Apply**. The object is positioned and sized exactly.

Choosing objects in other layers

When several objects are placed within a template, you can cycle between objects using a keyboard modifier with the mouse. For example, if you want to select the background page that is completely covered with objects (perhaps to adjust its size), click any object on in the template. That object is highlighted. Now, hold the **CTRL** key on the keyboard. Note that the mouse pointer changes to the **Object Cycle** tool. Click the object again, and note that the object in the next layer below it is highlighted.

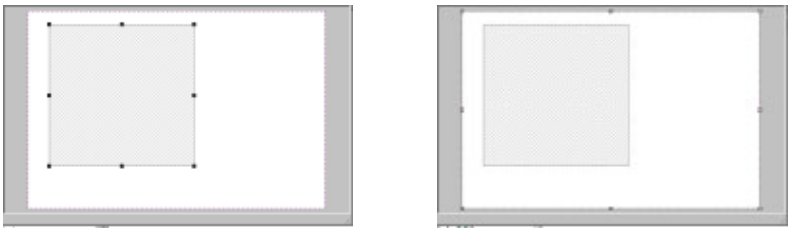
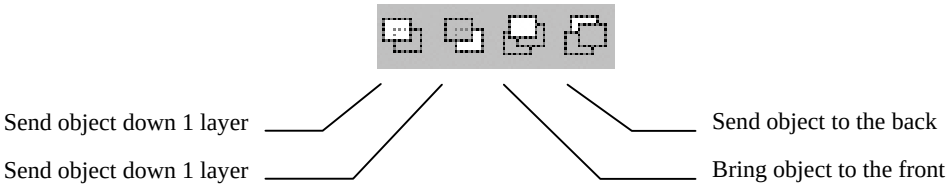


Figure 25: Cycling between layer objects

Changing the layer order

Objects can be positioned in front or behind each other. The order of the objects can be changed with the **Object Order** toolbar. The layer order of an object can be changed by selecting the object, then choosing a layer order tool in the toolbar.



Place two Image Objects on the page, making sure that they overlap each other.

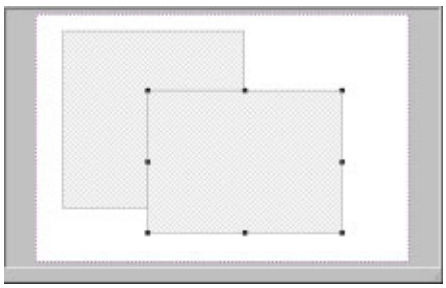


Figure 26: The selected object in the top layer

Click the **Send down 1 layer** tool. The selected object is sent down 1 layer, and will now appear behind the other in the finished print.

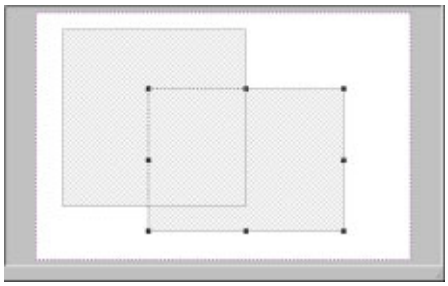


Figure 27: The selected object, 1 layer lower

Merging images: defining an image hole

The area in your design where the images you import are to appear is called a 'hole'. As mentioned before, this area is defined by coloring the areas of the graphic a specific color. In this example, the area has been defined by pixels that are R=255 G=255 and B=255. After the graphic has been placed and positioned, click the **Image Object** button. The mouse pointer changes the **Place Object** pointer. Click and drag the mouse over the template where you want the image to appear. It is not important to be accurate at this point.

When the object is placed, it will be sitting over the top of the background.

Figure 28: The Image Object placed over a Graphic Object

With the Image Object selected (the handles are visible), click the **Send down 1 layer** button. The Image Object is moved down 1 layer, and is now behind the transparent area of the Graphic Object. Note in the picture below that it is possible to see the full design.

Figure 29: The Image Object placed behind the graphic object's transparent area

When this design is applied to an image, the two areas are merged.

Figure 30: The finished print

Placing additional graphic objects

As many graphic objects as you need can be placed into a template. To add a further object, repeat the above process.

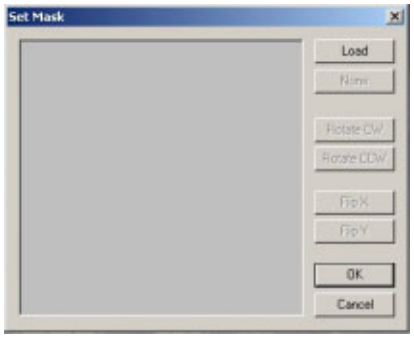
Note: If a graphic object that is placed over the top a hole has the transparent color, it will be merged is described above. Be sure that for objects that you don't want to merge, you choose **Cancel** at the **Set Bitmap Mask** dialog.

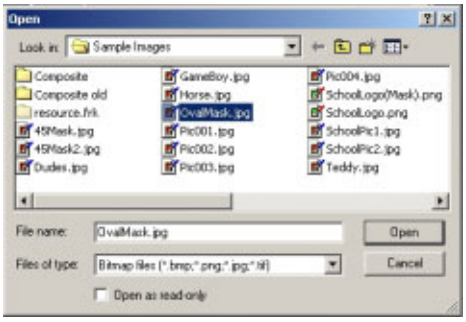
8-bit masks

NeoPack/Professional allows 8 bit transparency masks to be applied to graphic images placed into a template. This allows creative effects like soft-edged blends and transparent graphic objects all applied from a template. You must first have the transparency mask image file available. Use an image editor like Adobe Photoshop to create these masks.

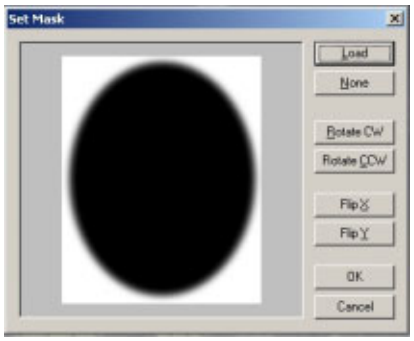
Set an 8 bit mask for an image hole

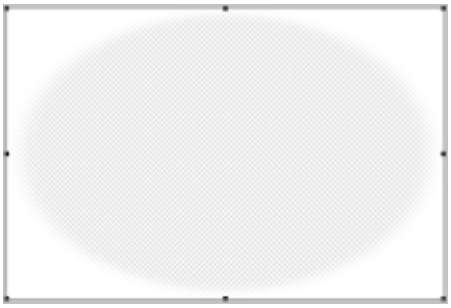
After an image hole has been placed onto the template canvas, select it – **apply 8 bit mask** button becomes available in the toolbar. Click the button,  and the **apply mask** dialog is displayed. Choose **Load** – a **File Browse** dialog appears. Locate and open the mask file. It is opened and a preview shown. Click the **Load** button. A **File, Open** dialog opens. Locate and choose the mask file. Press **Open**.





A preview of the mask is shown. You can flip or rotate the mask if required. After you're happy with the settings, choose **OK**. A preview of the masked image is shown. If you want to remove the mask file, click the **Reset** button. The mask is removed. Choose **OK**.





Portrait and landscape templates

The images that you use with *NeoPack/Professional* may be in either portrait or landscape orientations. The templates that you design contain an image hole where the imported

images will appear, and this hole must also be in a portrait or landscape orientation. When the imported image orientation matches the hole orientation, you will see a pleasant result. However, if you try to place a landscape image into a template designed for a portrait one, you will see the image cropped badly.

The solution to this is to design both portrait and landscape versions of the Pack Item within a single template. When you choose an image, the correct version of the template is automatically selected, ensuring the best possible result for your job.

Preparing the graphic images

In your image or vector editor, create the necessary images for both the portrait and landscape versions of the Pack Item templates. Save the various components to the hard disk.

Creating a Landscape and Portrait version

Open *NeoPack/Professional* and switch to the Template Designer. Create a new file, and choose to create a new Pack Item. Click the **Create Portrait/Landscape** button in the toolbar. Note that the **Switch Orientation** buttons become available. Click each of the **Switch Orientation** buttons and note that the page orientation changes. Each of these different orientations can contain a complete set of images, text and @ codes for use within *NeoPack/Professional*.

Design the orientation versions

Choose one of the orientations, and place all the required objects in the template. After all the objects have been placed, switch to the other orientation by clicking the **Switch Orientation** button. The completed template is replaced by a blank page. Add all the components required by this new template.

Once you have completed both templates, switch between the two by clicking the **Switch Orientation** button.

Save the file

Once the design is completed, assign a name for the template by choosing **File, Properties**. Save the file to your Templates directory, then quit the program and restart it. The new template will now be available to *NeoPack/Professional*.

Using the Pack Item

Open a job file that contains, or import some images that are both in portrait and landscape orientation. Choose a portrait image, then a print layout, then the new template. Note that the portrait image will be placed into the portrait orientation Pack Item. Now, choose the landscape image and do the same. The landscape Pack Item is used.

Using text objects

Text can be added to your templates as a fixed text message or as a variable code. Variable codes use information entered for each imported image as the source for the text placed into the job. Text can be formatted and stylised with font, alignment and color style.

NeoPack/Professional allows text information to be associated with images you import, and to place this information into templates. This allows each template design to be customised to include things like the subject's name, personal messages etc.

Fixed and variable text

There are two types of text that can be placed in a template:

- Fixed: The text appears the same in each job
- Variable: The text changes for each image according to information entered for the image.

Variable text is defined using an '@' symbol at the beginning of the text placed into the template. When *NeoPack/Professional* sees the '@' symbol, it looks to see if it has the necessary information for that image, and uses it if it does. If no information is available for the image, the '@' code is ignored.

Placing text objects

Create a new template – either a Layout or a Design. Choose the **Text Object** tool  from the toolbar. Click and drag over the template where you want the text to appear. The text entry dialog opens. Enter the text you want to appear in the template.

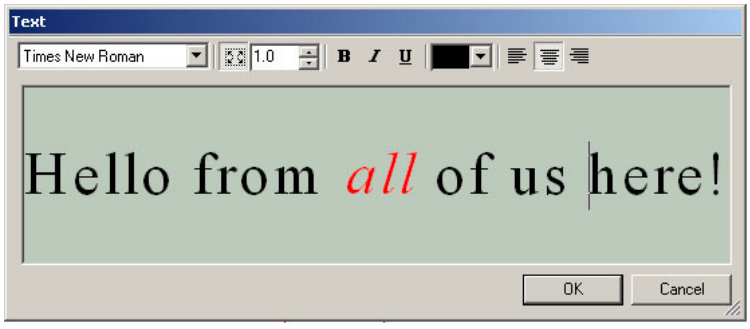


Figure 31: Text entry dialog box

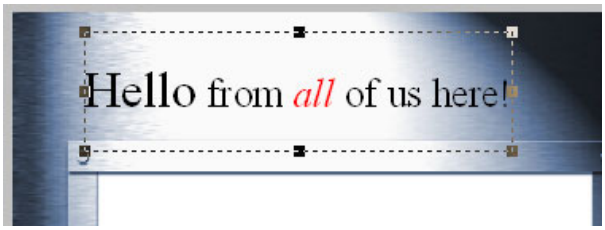


Figure 32: Text placed into a template

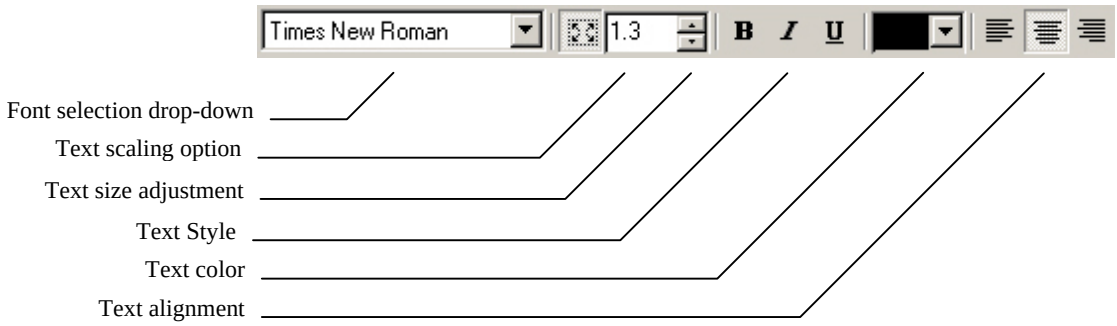


Figure 33: Text formatting toolbar

Set the font

Choose the text you wish to format, then choose the font from the drop-down dialog.

Set the style

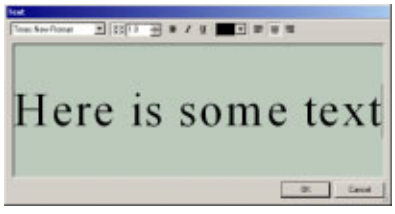
Choose the text you wish to format, then choose the font style from the available styles.

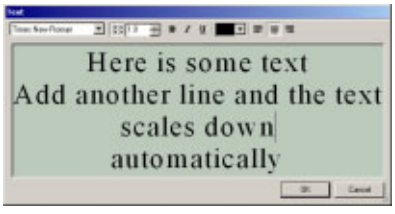
Set the alignment

Choose the text you wish to format, then choose the alignment.

Controlling the text size

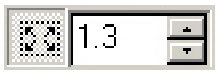
By default, text will scale to fill the box you draw on the template. This ensures that any text that appears in a text box will never be clipped because it is too big. As you enter more text, the font size will reduce automatically.

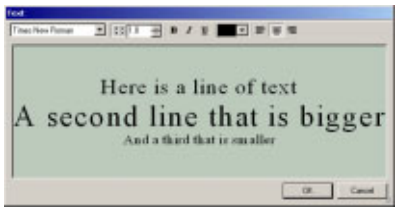




Relative font size

You can control the relative size of the text using the **Relative scaling** control. If you want some text to be bigger than the rest, select it, then click the **Up** or **Down** buttons in the **Relative size** entry box.





Creating variable text

NeoPack/Professional templates feature special '@' codes that allow you to customise every job printed. For example, you might be printing a series of photographs that has a person's name and a personal message.

The process of automatically replacing the text is controlled by placing the special @ code into your template design, then entering the matching information in the Main program for each image. It is also possible to import the text data from an external source, as long as the data has been pre-matched to each image.

For the following example, make sure that you can see the 4 main *NeoPack/Professional* panes as shown below.

Creating and using @ codes

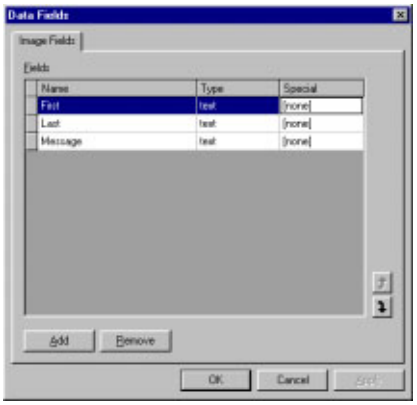
An @ code is simply a text object that starts with the '@' character. You can define any @ code you like. As long as a matching Field in the Main application has some information entered, that text will be placed into the final print.

In the following example, we will create a simple page that places an image, along with their first and last name, and a personal message onto a page.

Define the Details fields

As previously discussed in Chapter 6, **Configuring *NeoPack/Professional***, you can define various fields to use as an @ code. You should define the fields you will commonly use as a program default so all the files you create contain these fields.

If you haven't yet defined any default fields, you can add them to the current file by choosing **Edit, Fields…** The **Data Fields** dialog is displayed. Add the fields you wish to use as described in Chapter 6. For this example, create the fields:



- First
- Last
- Message

Choose **OK.** The fields you have defined will appear in the **Fields** column of the **Details** pane.

Create the template

To create the @ code, place a text object as described previously, then enter the '@' symbol followed by the Field name.

In the template, you need to place the following '@' codes:

- @First – to place the first name
- @Last – to place the last name
- @Message – to place the personal message

Create the @ code

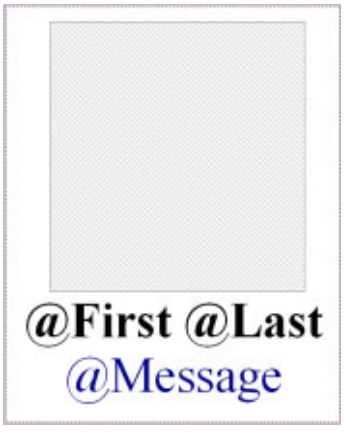
Switch to the **Template designer** by choosing **Mode, Design**. Open or create a new template – either a Pack layout or a Pack Item.

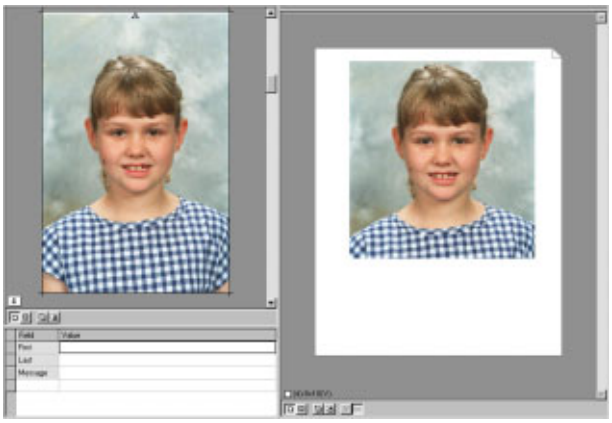
Click the **Place Text object** button, and drag a text box onto the canvas template. The **Edit Text** dialog opens. Enter the following text:

Choose **OK.** The text is placed into the template. Add an image hole in the design, and any other objects you need. Save the template and re-start *NeoPack/Professional*.

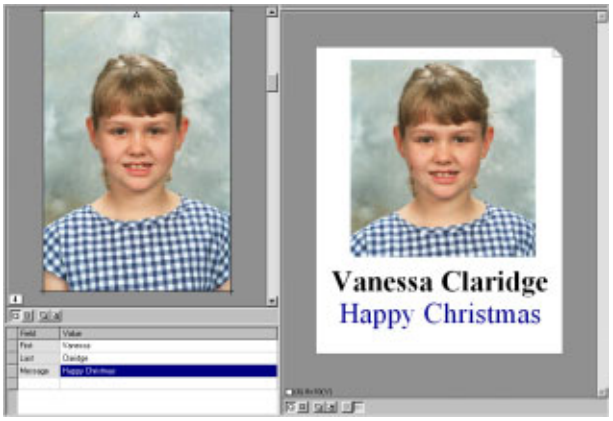
Using the @ code

Open a file that contains some imported images. Now, choose the template you have created. Choose a Layout if necessary. The image is placed into the hole in the template, but no text is yet visible – as none has been entered yet. Note in the below example that the **field values** are empty.





Click the image you wish to add the text to ensure it is selected. Now, click in the **First** value and enter a first name. Press Enter. The text will appear in the page preview. Continue entering some text for the **Last** and **Message** fields.

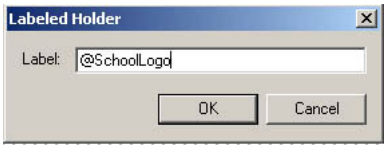


Labeled holders

When you design your templates, you can place a 'Labeled' holder to simplify your production workflow. When creating the template, you might want a logo graphic to appear in the final image. Rather than re-designing your templates to include each logo, you can place a special box with a reference to the logo file. When you are creating the work for a particular job, you import the logo to the **Details**. When the job is run, the logo is positioned in the design as specified by the template.

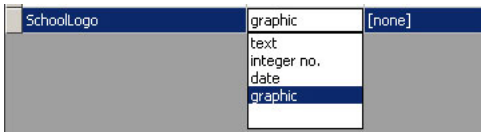
Creating and positioning a labeled holder

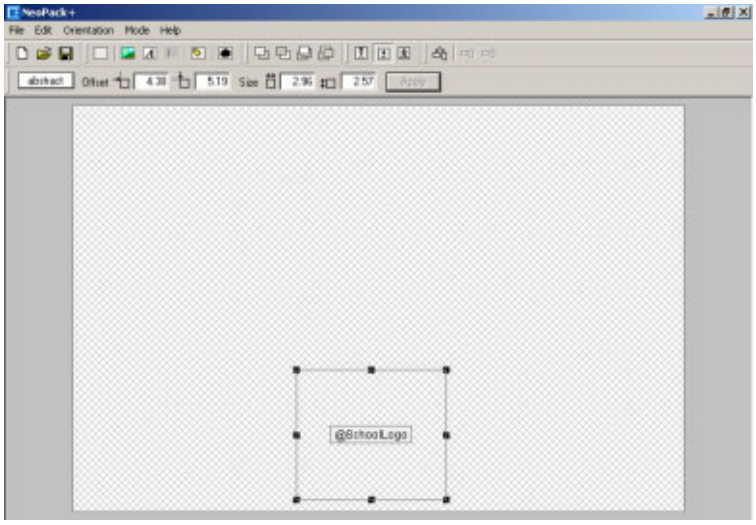
To place a labeled holder, open the template you wish to use, then choose the **Labeled holder** button in the toolbar  . Click and drag the mouse in the template where you want the object to appear. It is not necessary to be 100% accurate at this stage. The **Labeled holder** dialog is shown.



Entering the @ code

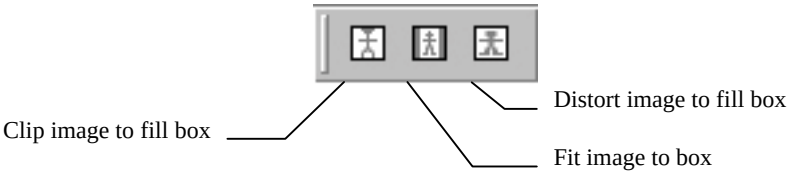
Depending on how you create the jobs, you will have defined some default fields in the **Main** mode – in this example, a field **SchoolLogo** has been created that will reference the logo file. Labeled holders need to have the same '@' code as the field in **Main**. Choose **OK** and the labeled object is placed.





Controlling Labeled holder scaling

Images placed into a labeled holder can be scaled exactly as for a normally placed graphic. Choose the scaling you want to use by choosing the appropriate scaling from the toolbar.

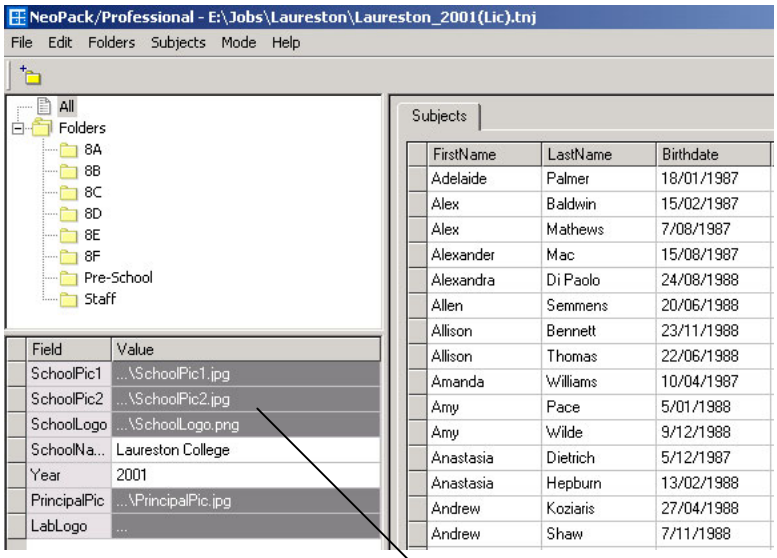


Using the labeled graphic

Labeled holders are fetched from **Details** mode. As discussed in the **Details** mode chapter, you can allocate various special graphic and text details:

- File details – fields that are common to every folder and subject in the job. For example – a logo that is common for every group in the current job
- Folder details – fields that are specific to a group or sub-grouping. For example, each class may have a mascot picture to be included, or a large school may be divided into 'Junior' and 'Senior' campuses.

In the following example, we are allocating a school logo. The logo is common to every group, and so is a **File** detail. Allocate the graphic by clicking **All** in the folder view. The defined **File** fields are displayed. Click the field and allocate the graphic object as described previously.



Allocating the Logo Image for the **SchoolLogo** field…

Superimposes the logo over the portrait.

12

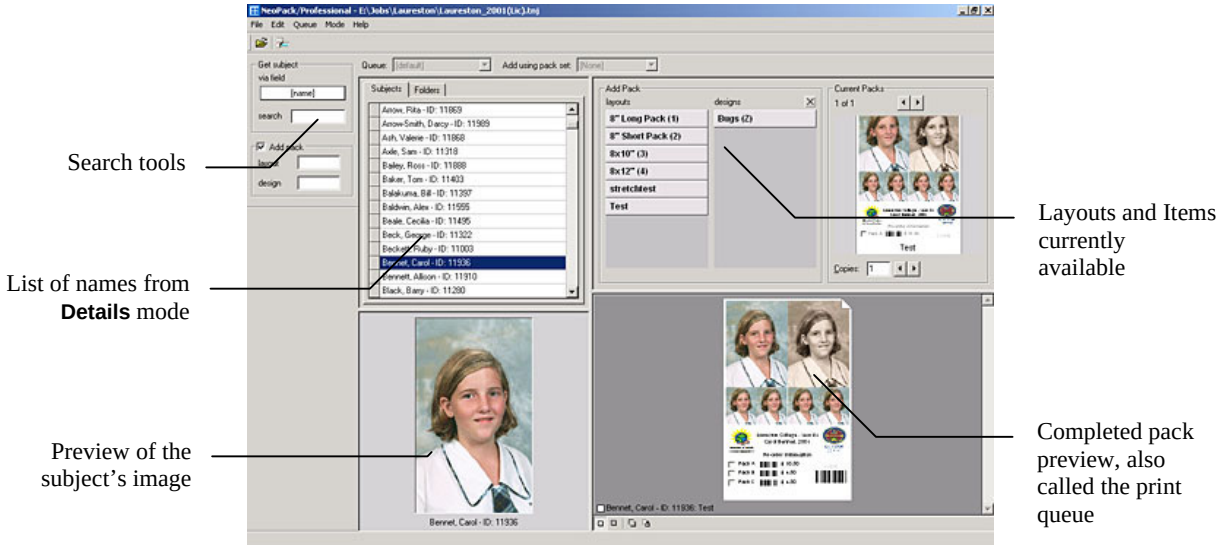
Form Packs mode

Creating and printing the final *NeoPack/Professional* jobs is done in **Form packs** mode. Here, you can choose the names to print, apply templates and actually print the jobs.

Form Packs interface

When you're in **Form packs** mode, the screen is divided into five panes:

- A list of names / folders
- A preview of the image
- The available templates
- The completed packs in the current queue
- Search tools



Creating packs – overview

Packs are created by choosing an subject's entry in the list, then the pack layout and (optionally) design from the layouts available. The subject's image is placed into the pack, along with any other graphic objects and text defined by the templates being used.

Alternatively, you can create packs by folder. There are various tools provided to make pack generation progressively more automated.

There are effectively four ways to create a print queue:

- Look at a sheet of paper which tells you who ordered what, and create the packs manually, by selecting subject names one-by-one, then clicking the desired pack layout name for each subject
- If a whole grade or group requires the same pack, you can select a folder, then click the desired pack layout name – this will create one pack for each subject name listed in the folder
- Import a text file which identifies each subject and what they have ordered
- Scan barcodes which identify each subject and what they have ordered

More information about these options is available later in this chapter, under the heading **Creating Packs**, beginning on page 122.

Packs, shortcut keys and pack sets

Your production may run across several different paper widths, or customer types. One client may use Sports type images, another may be corporate. Each of these customer types will probably use completely different pack styles. *NeoPack/Professional* allows templates to be gathered together into pack sets, allowing you to simplify the pack order entry. Choose the Pack set, and only those layouts relevant to this job are displayed.

Shortcut keys

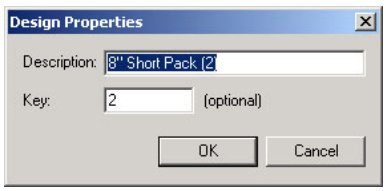
Shortcut keys are a key you define that when pressed will choose a Pack Layout or Design. Shortcut keys are very important as they are used to automate the pack order process, whatever entry method you use. Pack shortcut keys can be defined in two places:

- As a Template property
- As a Pack set property (only for Pack layouts)

Setting a template property shortcut key

A template property shortcut key is set within the template itself. To define the shortcut key, switch to **Design** mode and open the template. Choose **File, Properties**. The **Design Properties** dialog opens. Type a name for this design, then the shortcut key to use.

It is most important that the shortcut key you define is unique. If there are two templates with the same shortcut key defined, no pack will be selected when the shortcut key is pressed.



Shortcut keys can also be defined as a pack set property. If you define a shortcut key as both a template and pack set property, the pack set shortcut over-rides the template defined shortcut. See the next section for information regarding setting pack set shortcuts. Shortcut keys can contain more than one character if required.

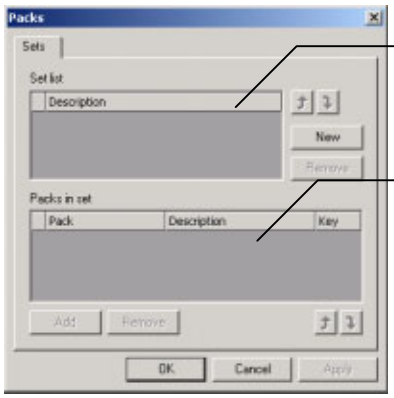
Tip: Add the shortcut key to the description of each item for easier manual key entry.

Pack sets

Pack layouts can be gathered together into sets which your operator can then select. Only the layouts that belong to that set are displayed.

The Pack set dialog

To define a pack set, choose **Edit, Pack sets…** the **Packs** dialog opens. The dialog allows you to define sets, and then the pack layouts that belong to the set.



Defined pack sets

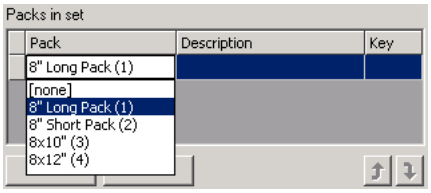
The pack layouts that belong to the set

Create a new Pack set

To create a pack set, click **New** – a new entry is created in the list. Type the name for this set:

Add layouts to the Pack set

After naming the set, click **Add**. A new entry is placed into the **Packs in set** list. Choose the pack layout you want to include:



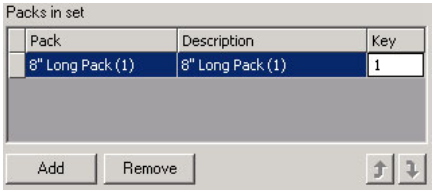
Name the layout

Type a description for the pack. This is the description displayed on the pack layout buttons on the **Form Packs** screen.

Choose a shortcut key

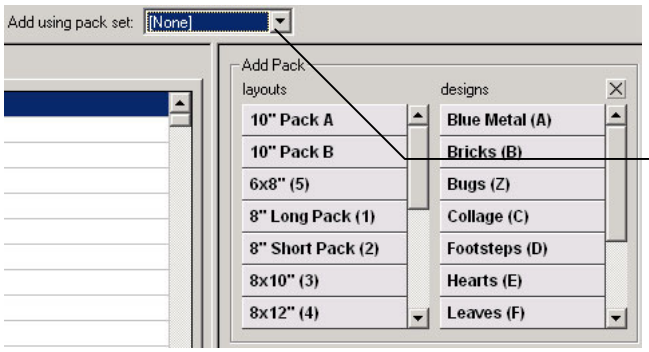
As previously mentioned, shortcut keys are very important when automating the order entry process. If a shortcut key is not defined, you cannot automate the process. Also most important is that a shortcut key for each set is unique. If two templates – Layout or Item – have the same shortcut key, neither will be selected if the shortcut key is pressed. Shortcut keys can contain more that one character if required.

Tip: Add the shortcut key to the description of each layout for easier manual key entry.



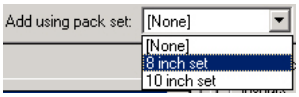
Choosing a pack set

By default, no pack set is selected, and all the available Layout templates are displayed.

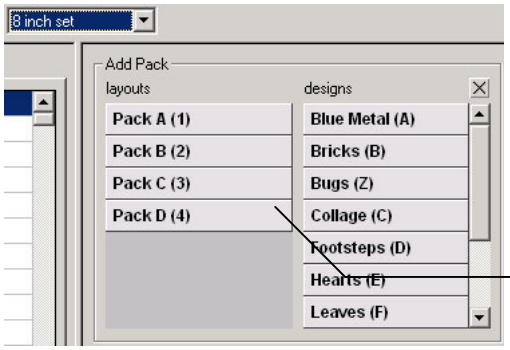


By default [None] is selected as the pack set, and all available layouts are displayed

Once pack sets have been defined, they can be selected from the **Form Packs** interface. To select a different pack set, click the **Sets** button and select the set to use.



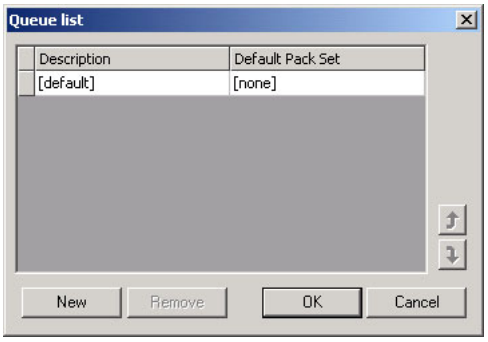
When a pack set is selected, the layouts available change to those defined in the set.



With the 8 inch set selected, only the 8 inch layouts are displayed

Queues

When a pack is created in *NeoPack/Professional*, it is added to a queue ready to be printed. You can create any number of queues to help separate your production workflows. For example you might run 8" and 10" production. Separating the packs into 8" and 10" sets allows the production to be printed more easily.



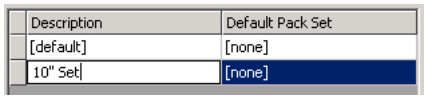
Queues can also have a default pack set, meaning that if you create an 8" queue, selecting it can also automatically select the 8" pack set.

Creating a Queue

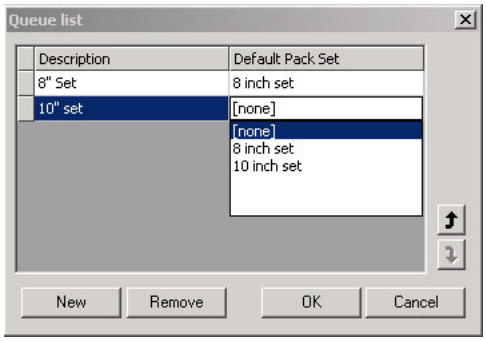
To create a new printer queue, choose **Edit, Queues…** the **Queue list** dialog opens.

Adding a new queue

Click **New** – a new entry is placed into the list. Type the name for the queue.

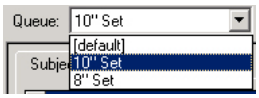


Once named, click [none] and choose the pack set to use with this queue. Once done, choose **OK**. The queue is available for selection.



Selecting a queue

To select a queue, click the **Queue** drop-down and choose the queue to use from the list. If a default pack set has been defined, it is automatically selected with the queue.

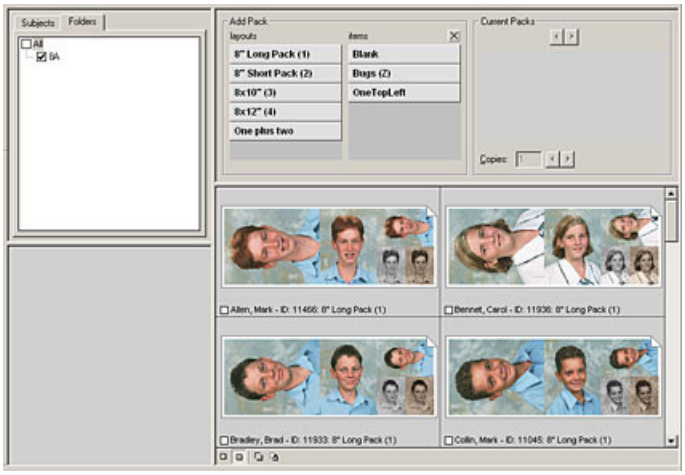


Creating packs

Packs are created in *NeoPack/Professional* by choosing a name entry in the list, a pack layout and then optionally a pack design. *NeoPack/Professional* creates the finished packs based on the templates selected. It the templates call for graphic or text objects, they are automatically placed into the finished page, based on the data and graphic objects entered in **Details** mode.

Creating packs with *NeoPack/Professional* can be achieved in several ways:

- Folder entry
- Manual entry
- Barcode reader assisted entry
- Automated generation by importing data



Folder entry

Packs for a group of subjects can be created in quick time by selecting the Folder tab and placing a check box next to the appropriate folder, then selecting the desired layout, as shown:

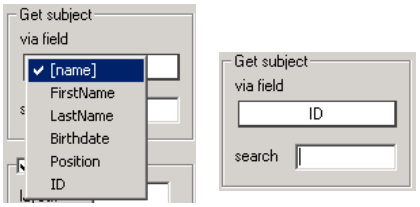
Manual entry

Packs can be created by choosing a name in the Subjects list, then clicking a Pack layout name. *NeoPack/Professional* applies the layout to the image and presents a preview of it in the queue section (bottom right of the screen). If a pack item is required for this pack, click it and it is placed onto the layout.

Note: If you want *more than one* pack for a particular subject, use the **Shift** key. If you simply click another layout, you'll replace the previous one. But if you hold down the **Shift** key while clicking, the second pack will be added to the queue.

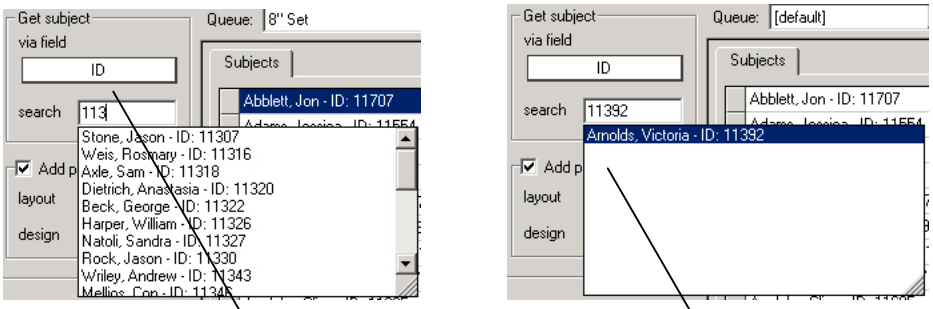
Choose the Field to search

You can quickly locate the subject by typing the name or other identifying text into the **Search** entry box. Choose the field to search on by clicking the **Get subject via field** drop-down. A list of the available fields is displayed. Choose the field to search on. Typically, you should use a unique field like an ID number.



Enter the query

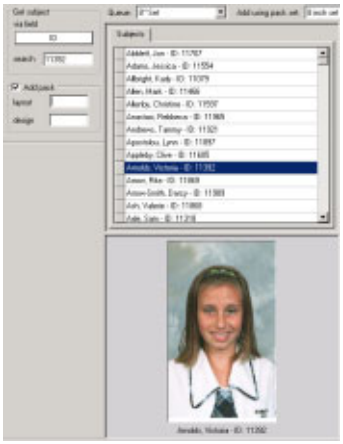
Once the field has been selected, click inside the **Search** entry box. As you type, a list of matching fields is displayed. As you type more details, a more accurate selection is given. Either select the correct entry from the list when it appears, or complete typing the field.



As more of the field is typed…

…the more accurate the list displayed

Once the field has been selected, press **Enter** – the subject is selected in the list. The chosen subject is then selected and the portrait displayed.



Choose the layout

Ensure that the option, **Add pack** is checked. After the subject has been selected, the cursor is automatically placed into the **layout** entry box. Type the shortcut key of the layout required, then press **Enter**. The selected layout is selected and the cursor advances to the **design** box.

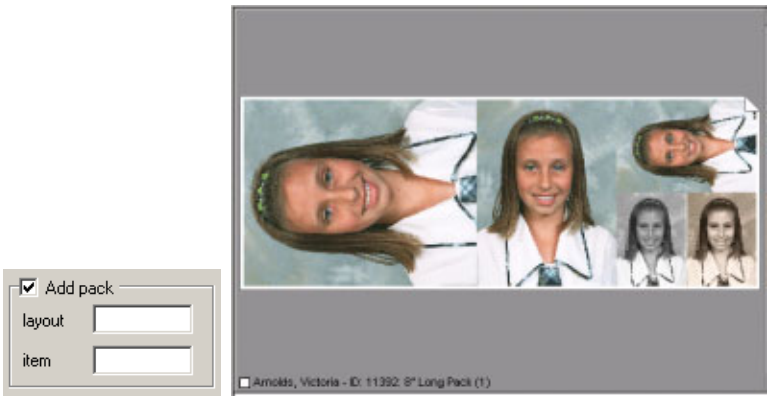


Figure 34: Pack layout created

Choose the design

If a pack item is required, type the shortcut key in the **item** box and press **Enter**. The design with that shortcut key is selected and the cursor returns to the **search** box ready for the next pack.

Figure 35: Item included in pack

Barcode reader assisted entry

Pack order entry can be greatly accelerated if information can be read with barcode readers. This entry method relies on several pieces of information being available as a barcode:

- The subject's ID
- The Packs required
- The Designs required

Typically, this information is available if your lab uses pre-printed shoot cards or order bags with an ID number and order information embedded in barcodes. When entering the order information, scan the ID barcode, then the order information. The packs required are automatically generated.

The procedure to follow is virtually identical to the previous procedure:

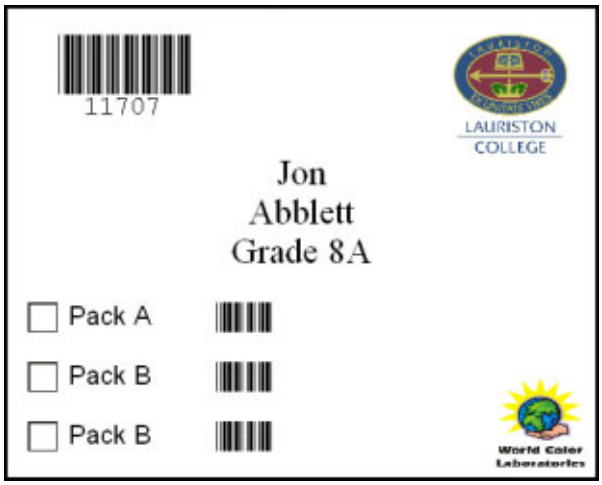
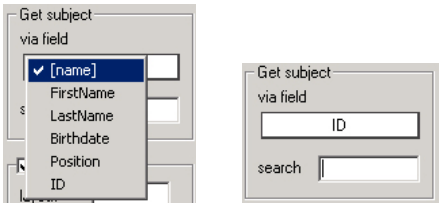


Figure 36: Sample shoot card

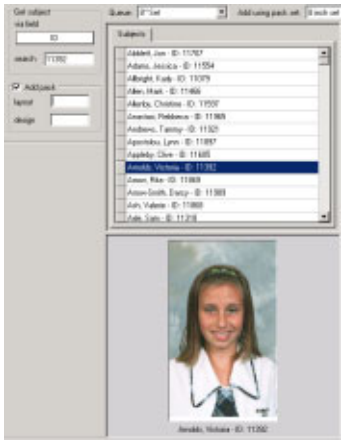
Choose the Field to search

You can quickly locate the subject by typing the name or other identifying text into the **Search** entry box. Choose the field to search on by clicking the **Get subject via field** drop-down. A list of the available fields is displayed. Choose the field to search on. You should use the same field that is coded on the shoot card or bag (usually the ID number).



Enter the search data

With the cursor in the **Search** box, read the ID barcode. The ID number is entered and the subject selected.



Enter the layout

After the subject has been selected, the cursor will automatically advance to the **layout** entry box. Read the barcode with the layout information – the layout is selected.

Enter the design

After the layout has been selected, the cursor will automatically advance to the **item** entry box. Read the barcode with the design information – the item is selected and the cursor returns to the **search** box ready for the next pack.

Create the queue from an external text file

If the order information is entered in a third party application, it can be imported using a text file that contains the order information.

A text file that can be imported should contain:

- A field to search for the subject
- The layout required
- The item required
- The quantity required

In the example below, the following data has been included:

LastName, FirstName, ID, Date of Birth, Group, Design, Layout, Quantity

```
McAlister,Sandra,11575,15/07/87,8A,a,1,1
Williams,Amanda,11622,10/04/87,8A,a,1,2
```

When importing Queue data, the important fields are:

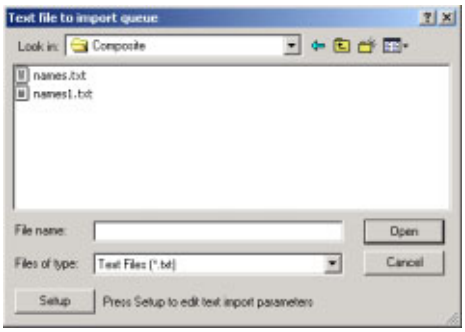
- ID
- Design
- Layout
- Quantity

Note: As before, it is important that the shortcut keys allocated to both the layout and design are unique. If two templates are allocated the same shortcut, nothing will be selected when that shortcut key is used.

Import the queue

The information contained in the data file can be imported by choosing **Queue, Import text file…** the **Text file to import queue** dialog opens.

Choose **Setup**. The **Setup queue text file import** dialog opens:

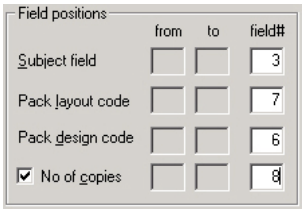


Choose the Import Type

The text file being imported can be in several formats. The most common format is comma delimited. Select the type.

Specify the field positions

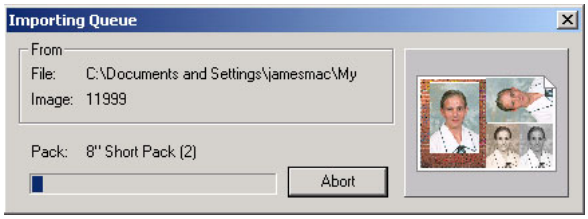
The text file being imported must contain fields to identify the subject and packs required. Specify these fields in the **Field positions** entry boxes, for example:



You must also specify which field is being used to match. In this case, the **ID** field is being matched. Click the

Subject field to match on drop down and choose the field from the list.

The queue is now ready to be imported. Choose **OK**. Locate the file to import then choose **Open**. The queue is imported.



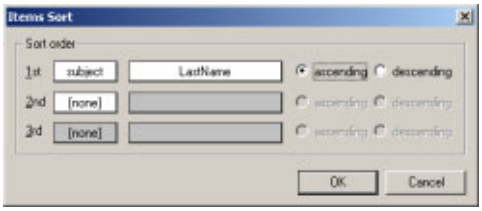
Queue control and status information

As packages are created, they are allocated a printer status. The status of a particular package is indicated at the lower left of the pack preview.

Action	Set by	Indicated by
Create or reprint a package	Add the pack or choose **Queue, Reprint selected packs**	☐
Print a pack or pack range	Choose the **File, Print** command	◪
Hold a pack or pack range	Choose **Queue, Hold selected packs**	☒
Release a held pack or pack range	Choose **Queue, Release selected packs**	☒ ➔ ☐

Sorting the print queue

Packs displayed in the print queue can be sorted by subject or folder. If sorted by subject, the sort can be ascending or descending. To sort the print queue, choose **Queue, Sort**. The following dialog box appears:



The default setting is none, but you can implement a 3-level sort. The above example will sort the queue by last name, in ascending order.

Removing packs from a queue

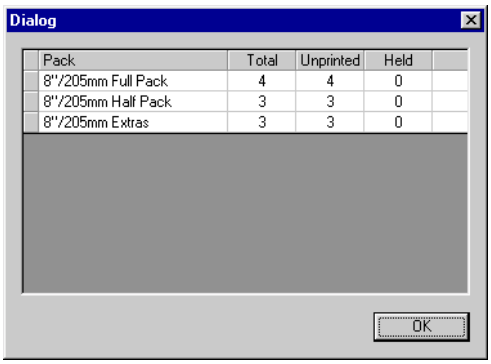
Packs can be deleted from the queue by selecting them, then pressing the **Delete** key or choosing **Edit, Delete**.

A range of packs can be selected by either:

- Holding the **Shift** key down, and clicking the first and last pack in the desired range or
- Holding the **Ctrl** key down and clicking individual packs.

Print Queue Statistics

Various statistics are available for a printer queue. To view these statistics, choose **Queue, Statistics**. The Statistics for that particular queue are displayed.



13

Form Item Sheets mode

NeoPack/Professional's newest feature provides the ability to output sheets – in other words, pages with more than one subject. These could serve as proof sheets (say, to send back to the school so they can verify that all the names and images match, thus saving you from printing reprints at your own expense), or other purposes such as ID cards or anything which serves the school, club or group, rather than the individual subject as purchaser.

Figure 37: Sample Sheet

You'll notice that the above image shows four different subjects, printed twice each. Number of subjects is just one of the options you can control in **Sheets** mode.

To create sheets, you need at least one fixed-size Pack Item (see Chapter 11, **Design mode** for more information about fixed-size Pack Items). We've supplied the one you see above, which is called 'id'.

From the **Mode** menu, choose **Form Item Sheets**. Then, from the **Edit** menu, choose **New…** You are now presented with a dialog box called **Subjects to include** – which should offer you the existing folders from **Details** mode. Check the checkbox of the desired folder, notice that the description field acquires the name of the folder. If you want to give the sheet a more descriptive name, now is the time to do it.

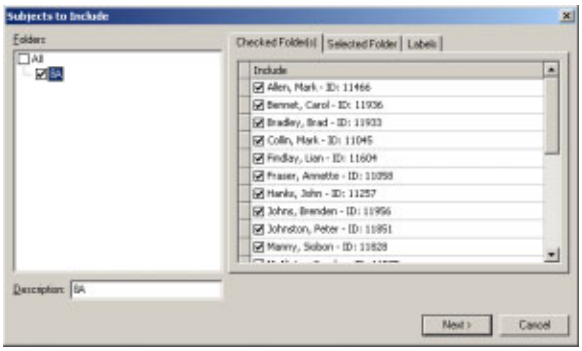


Figure 38: Subjects to include dialog

When you click a folder in the Folders pane, the Checked folders pane will default to a listing of all subjects in that folder, with each subject checked for inclusion on the sheet you're about to produce. You can uncheck any that you don't want included (you have an opportunity to do this later so it doesn't matter if you don't do anything with the names at this point).

Click the **Next** button to move to the **Subjects to Include** dialog.

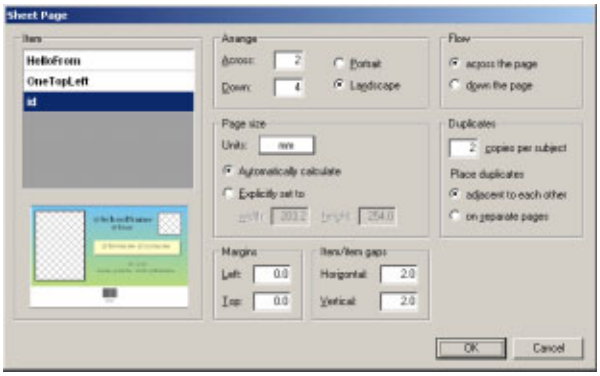


Figure 39: Sheet page dialog

The items listed at left are the items you have previously defined, or were installed with *NeoPack/Professional*. When you select one, a preview appears beneath the list.

At this point you can specify:

- portrait or landscape printing
- arrange subjects across or down the page
- multiple instances of a subject on the same page
- multiple instances of a subject on separate pages
- exclude particular subjects (e.g. folder or shoot card matches)
- automatically calculate page size or set an explicit size
- margins and gaps

Click the **Finish** button and a preview of your sheet is rendered on the screen. Of course, the 'sheet' may be several pages long, and you may wish to scroll through the various pages. You can do this by clicking the navigation buttons under the preview:

You can make changes to the settings by choosing **Edit, Subjects to include**, or **Edit, Templates**, and you can also modify the sort order by choosing **Edit, Settings**, or by using the equivalent toolbar buttons:

Menu option	button
Subjects to include …	
Templates …	
Settings …	

Saving sheets

There's no need to save sheets – they're saved automatically when you exit *NeoPack/Professional* and will be there again when you next open the job file.

Multiple sheets

You can have multiple sheets in Form Item Sheets mode, and you can add and delete them as follows:

Menu option	button
New …	
Remove	

Printing sheets

Print options for sheets are slightly different from print options for packs. Some options are the same, such as printing to a bitmap file rather than to a printer.

However, when printing sheets you can also control which pages are printed and how many copies of each page, by checking the appropriate boxes, as shown at right.

14

Printing

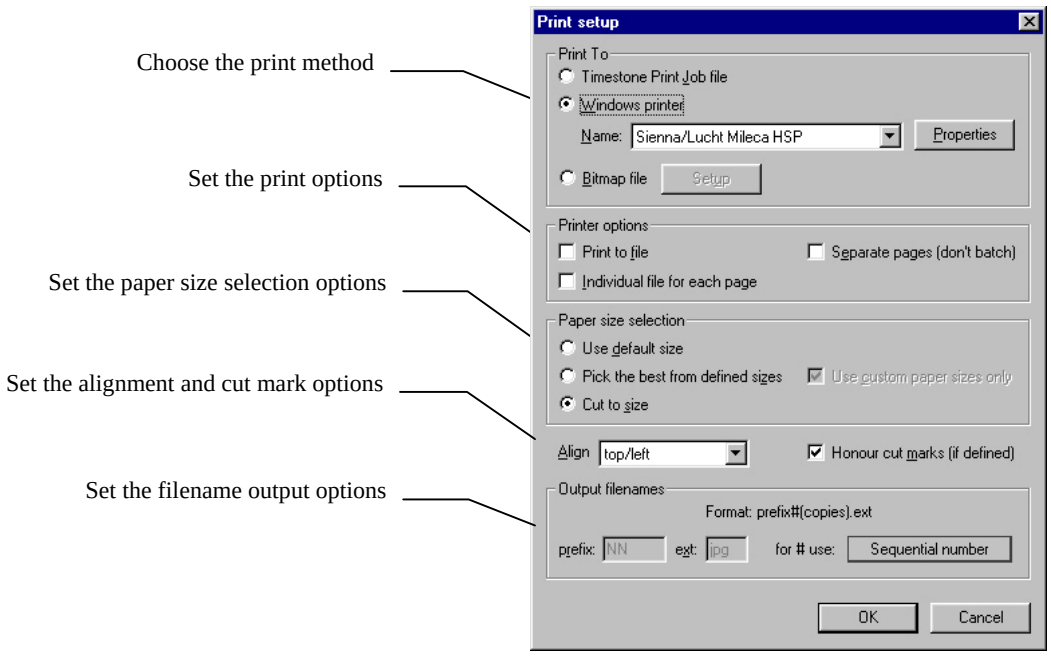
NeoPack/Professional offers a wide variety of printing options. You can choose to print to a standard Windows NT printer driver, output bitmap files or 'print' to a Timestone Print Job file. Timestone Software has produced a number of Windows NT printer drivers for some of the more popular digital photographic printers, and *NeoPack/Professional* can take advantage of the special features built into these drivers

If a printer driver isn't available for your printer, you can output bitmap image files to submit to the printer using your normal printing software.

Printing to a Timestone Print Job file allows *NeoPack/Professional* to participate in our Distributed Print Architecture. This is a system than minimises the time your operators wait while a job is printed, as well as ensuring there are enough prepared jobs ready to be printed by your high-speed digital printer.

Selecting the printer

Before printing a job, set the print options in the **Printer Setup** dialog. Open this dialog by opening a job file you want to print, then choosing **File, Print setup**.



Choose the Print method

There are three main options that can be used when printing from *NeoPack/Professional*:

- Printing to a standard Windows printer
- Printing to a 'bitmap' file
- Printing to a Timestone Print Job file

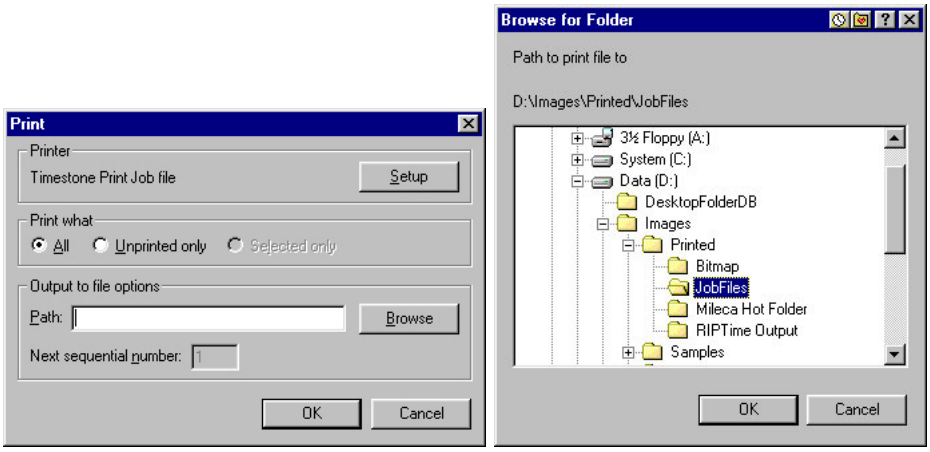
Choose the method you want to print to.

Print to a Timestone Print Job file

There are few options to set when printing to a Timestone Print Job file aside from the output path. Choosing this option will dim all other options except the **Align** option. See later for information about the **Align** option.

Once chosen, choose **OK**. The **Printer setup** dialog is dismissed. To print the job to a Timestone Print Job file, choose **File, Print**. Choose the range to print (see later). Because the result of this print operation is a file, you must choose an output path. Either enter the output path, or click **Browse**. A **File Browse** dialog opens. Choose the folder you want to use, then choose OK..

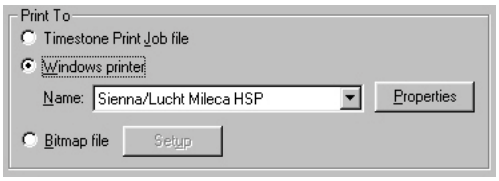
Choose **OK** to print the Print Job file.



Print to a Standard Windows NT printer driver

You can use a standard Windows NT printer driver to print from *NeoPack/Professional*. There are a number of special features built into *NeoPack/Professional* that automate paper size selection and a number of other options.

To choose a Windows NT printer, choose **Windows printer** as the **Print to** option, then choose the printer you wish to use by clicking the **Printer** drop-down and selecting it from the list. Set any printer specific options by choosing **Properties**. For information on the options to set, consult your printer's documentation.



Print to a bitmap file

NeoPack/Professional can output bitmap files directly by choosing **Bitmap file** as the **Print to** option. Once selected, the **Setup** button becomes active. Click it to set the various options.

Note: When printing to bitmap files, any hard cut marks set in a template will be honored, and a number of files will be created for the split pack.

Set the output resolution and format

Choose the output resolution by clicking the **DPI** drop-down. You can choose from a variety of output file types by clicking the **Format** drop-down and selecting the desired format.

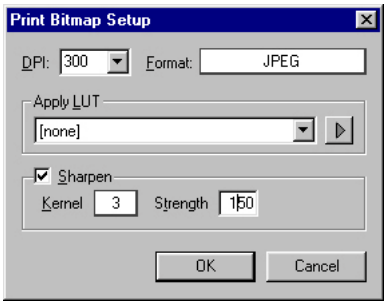
Set color correction

Choose an output LUT from those available by clicking the **Apply LUT** drop-down and choosing from the list. For more information on creating LUTs see Chapter 15, **Calibration & Color Management**.

Set the sharpness

You can apply a sharpness correction by checking the **Sharpen** checkbox. Choose the Kernel size and strength.

Generally, you should leave the Kernel at 3. You will have to test the sharpness strength for your system.



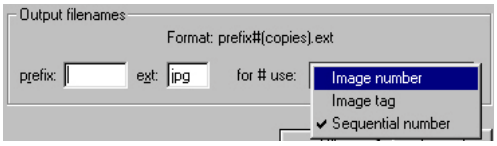
Set the filename option

There are a number of file naming options when printing to bitmap files. Once you choose **Bitmap file** as the **Print to**, the **Output filenames** panel becomes active.

Files printed are named:

[Prefix][Number][Copies].[ext]

- [Prefix] – each printed file will begin with the text entered
- [Number] – the main filename given to each printed file
- [Copies] – the number of copies requested in the print dialog
- [ext] – the filename extension



You can specify the main name used for the filename by clicking **for # use** and selecting from the choices available. The choices are:

Option	Description
Image No.	*NeoPack/Professional* uses the image number – either the sequential or indexed number to name the file. If multiple packages are created, a sequential number is appended for each pack with the same image number.
Original image tag	*NeoPack/Professional* uses the special image tag, if used when importing the images, to name the files. If multiple packages are created, a sequential number is appended for each pack with the same image number.
Sequential no.	*NeoPack/Professional* creates its own sequential number to name the files. Different packs from the same image are gathered together sequentially, but will be named different one to the other.

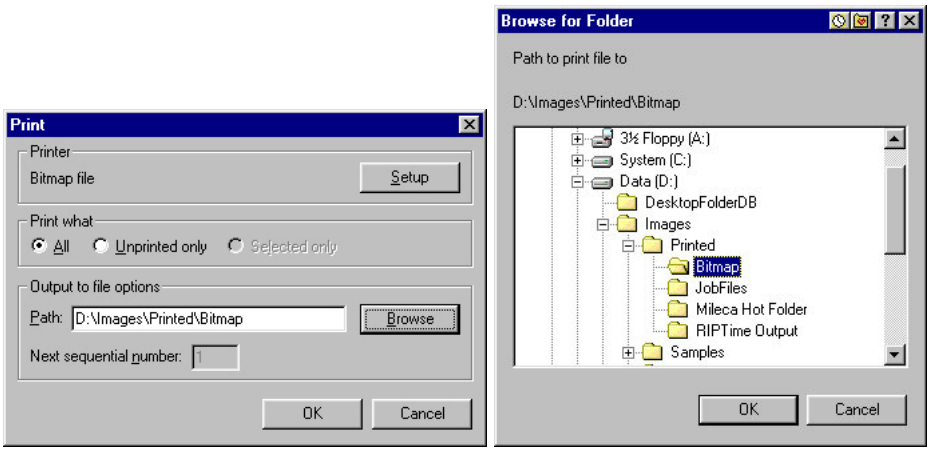
Once all the options have been set, choose **OK**.

Set the output path

To print the job to Bitmap files, choose **File, Print**. Choose the range to print (see later). Because the result of this print operation is a file, you must choose an output path. Either enter the output path, or click **Browse**. A **File Browse** dialog opens. Choose the folder you want to use, then choose OK..

Choose **OK** to print the bitmap files.

If **Sequential number** has been selected as the **for # use** option, you will be able to enter the first sequential number to use. Enter the starting number in the **Next sequential number** entry box.



Printing to a standard Windows printer driver

There are a number of options that can help automate your printing when using *NeoPack/Professional*. The main options are:

- Printer Properties – configure printer specific options
- Printer output options – choose whether to output to a file, or to the printer
- Paper size selection – paper size automation functions
- Alignment and cut marks – how the printed image is aligned and if cut marks are on or off

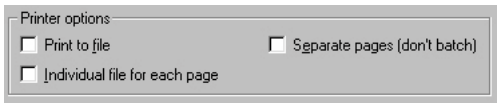
Set the printer properties

After selecting the printer to use, you can configure the various printer properties by choosing **Properties** from the **Print setup** dialog. The options displayed here are dependent on your printer's driver software, and you should consult the driver software documentation for further information when setting these options.

Set the output options

There are a number of options to choose from when printing to a Windows NT printer.

- Print to file – creates a Windows .PRN file for later use
- Individual file for each page – for use only when using Zenographics SuperPrint bitmap driver
- Separate pages (don't batch) – when printing a multi-page document, printing won't start until the whole job has been prepared. By choosing **Separate pages** each page is sent individually to the printer. This means each page will begin printing as soon as it is ready. When printing this way, it is possible for jobs to be mixed together if a number of people are printing to the printer at one time.



Automatic paper size selection

NeoPack/Professional can automatically choose the most appropriate page size for an image being printed. Within a particular print job, there may be a number of different page sizes required by the printer queue. Pack A might require a page size of 8 x 20.5", whilst Pack B might need 8 x 11.5". Printing these packages on a single page size is wasteful of paper. *NeoPack/Professional* can automatically choose from the available paper sizes from most Windows printer drivers, or automatically generate the exact paper size when using a Timestone Software Windows printer driver.

Timestone Software printer drivers automatically control the photographic printer to create the exact paper size required.

Use default size

When selected, the paper size chosen in the **Printer Properties** dialog will be used.

Pick the best from defined sizes

Choose **File, Print setup…** The **Print setup** dialog is shown. Enable best paper size selection by choosing **Pick best paper size** from the **Printer options** section. With this option enabled, *NeoPack/Professional* will check all the available paper sizes, and chooses the closest match for the page currently being printed. This check is performed for each job, meaning that a queue can contain different size prints – the best paper size will be selected for each page being printed.

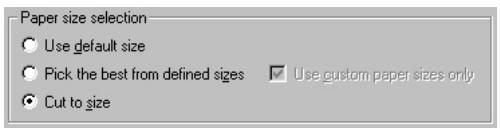
Use custom paper sizes only

Most print sizes *NeoPack/Professional* is required to create are not standard (A4, Letter) sizes. Printer drivers that support the specifying of custom paper sizes allow you to design sizes that are exactly correct for *NeoPack/Professional* prints In this case, it is not desirable to allow *NeoPack/Professional* to automatically choose a standard paper size, as it may not be exactly correct.

Choose **Use custom paper sizes only**. *NeoPack/Professional* will only consider custom paper sizes when automatically choosing the one to be used.

Cut to size

When using a Timestone Software printer driver, choosing **Cut to size** will automatically create and use exactly the correct paper size required by the job. You don't need to define the paper size, as *NeoPack/Professional* works together with our printer driver to do this for you.



Alignment and Cut marks

You can choose to print the *NeoPack/Professional* jobs onto a paper size larger than the job image. In this case, you can choose how the image will be aligned on the oversize page. You can also enable or disable cut mark support.

Align

You can control how the image is positioned on a page using the **Align** setting. This is only useful if the page being used is larger than the image being printed. Click the **Align** drop-down, and choose the image placement.

Honor cut marks

If the templates you are using have cut marks defined, you can choose to use or ignore these by checking or un-checking **Honor cut marks**. Checking this box causes the cut marks to be used, un-checking causes them to be ignored.

Print the pages

Once all the various options have been set, choose **File, Print**. The print dialog opens. The images to be printed can be chosen using the **Print what** section.

Choosing	Prints…
All	Prints all the created packages
Un-printed only	Prints any packages that haven't yet been printed
Selected only	Prints the range of prints currently selected in the printer queue

If printing to a file or a bitmap printer driver, specify the output path for the file. The next sequence number can be specified if desired by entering a number in the **Next sequential number** box.

15

Calibration & Color Management

Note: Timestone Software's ***Neo*** family of products use the ICC color management system that Microsoft has built into **Windows 2000**. If you are using **Windows 2000**, you should use the ICM-2 color management system in preference to taking the steps described in previous versions of this manual.

ICC color management involves creating 'color profiles' for every display or output device on your system, and is considerably more sophisticated than the previous method.

However, the 'calibration' method of color management, and the creation of LUTs (Look-Up Tables) to achieve consistent color correction is still valid if you have not yet upgraded to **Windows 2000**, and both methods are now described in our separate **Color Management Guide**, which should be available on the same CD-ROM that this manual was on – or you can download it from our website at: http://www.timestone.com.au

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Index