AIO/SMX SOFTWARE

Operation Manual

Revised 06-30-00

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GETTING STARTED

1.1 Software Installation

Prior to using the AIO software, it will need to be installed onto the computer.

1.1.1 Software Installation in Windows? 9x

1) Insert the software disk into the floppy drive.
2) Click on the Windows? **START** button. Click on **RUN**. In the command line type "**A:\FIC-SMX.EXE**," and press **ENTER or** use the browse button to find the setup file**.**
3) The setup program will now guide you through the installation process.

1.1.2 Directory Selection

1) While setting up the software you will have the option to change the destination directory to which the software is installed. AMT recommends using the default directory; **C:\FIC-SMX**. Using a different directory will disable the shortcuts and will need to have the shortcuts added manually.
2) After completion of the installation, RESTART your computer.

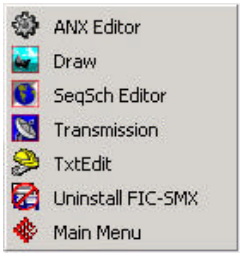
1.2 Starting the Program Main / Menu Options

Whenever you wish to create a new message or graphic, create a schedule, or send a file to the sign, you will need to run the AIO software.

1.2.1 Starting The Program

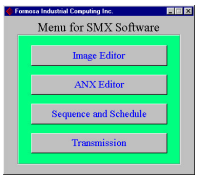
1) Click on the **START** Button
2) Click on **PROGRAMS**
3) Select the **FIC-SMX** program folder

There are several programs within the AIO software that complete different functions.



The ANX Editor creates files composed of text and graphics
DRAW allows for the creation of custom graphics
SeqSch Editor creates sequences and schedules for play
Transmission sends the files and sequences to the sign
TxtEdit creates simple text messages
Uninstall removes the AIO software
Main Menu allows the user to access all programs

4) For advanced users you can select the individual programs within the AIO software. For all others select the **MAIN MENU**



5) The **MAIN MENU** will now appear with 4 different menu options

1.2.2 Main Menu Options

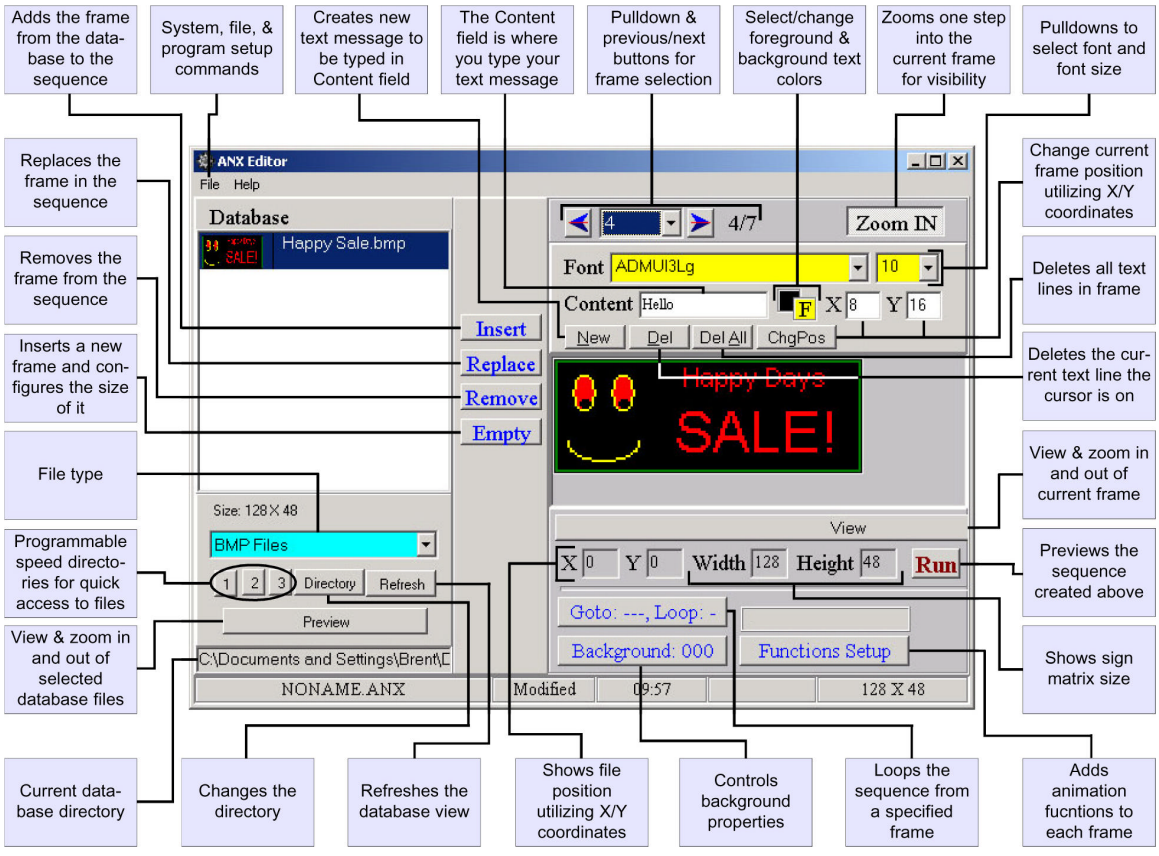
1) The **IMAGE EDITOR** allows you to create and modify custom images.
2) The **ANX** editor is designed to create files composed of text and images.
3) The **SEQUENCE** and **SCHEDULE** option allows you to specify the sequence files are to be played, the time that they are played, and to save this information as a sequence file.
4) The **TRANSMISSION** function allows you to identify which files exist at the sign, send new files to the sign, and remove files from the sign. Within the transmission function you can also create simple text messages.

COMPOSING MESSAGES

2.1 ANX Message Editor

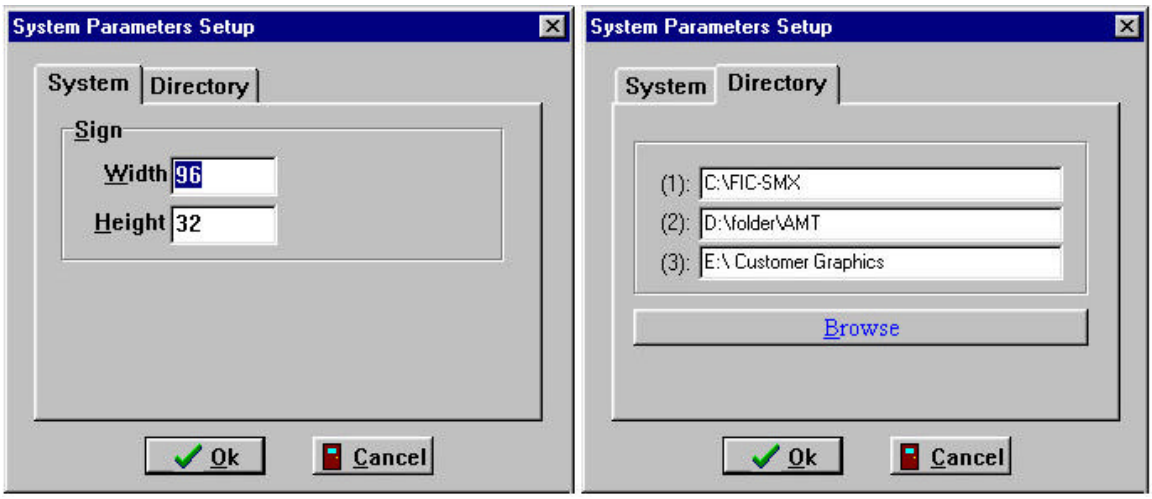
As mentioned previously the **ANX** editor is designed to create files composed of animated text and images. With the help of the editor, you can create dramatic text and animation files. Steps to create these files and software operation are outlined in the following section.

2.1.1 Software Features



2.1.2 System Parameter Setup

The system parameter setup tells the software what type of sign you have. After completing the initial setup it is not necessary to make any further adjustments.



1) Click on the **FILE** menu and select **SYSTEM PARAMETER SETUP**.
2) Under the **SYSTEM** tab select the width and height, or "matrix", of your sign expressed in "pixels". If you are unsure of your sign "matrix" consult the installer that sold you the sign. You can also physically count the number of "pixels", clusters, dots or LED's to find your matrix.
3) The **DIRECTORY** tab allows you to add shortcuts to other folders that you wish to store graphics and animations. These shortcuts are used in the software to switch directories. If you are not familiar with adding shortcuts, it is not necessary to address this function.

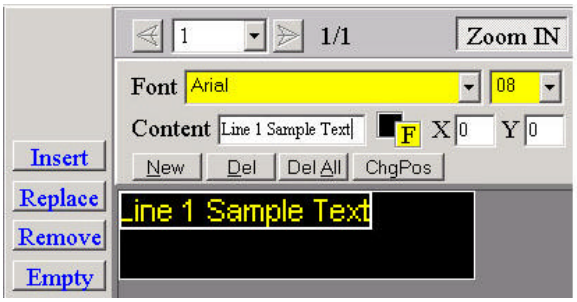
2.2 Text Creation

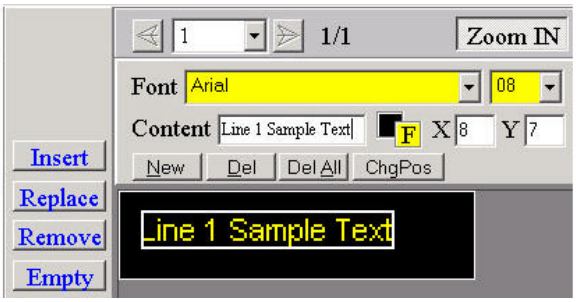
Text can be created in the **ANX Editor** section of the AIO software or in the **TxtEdit** section as well. The main difference between the two is that the ANX section allows the text frame to be animated, and added to an array of frames composed of both text and graphics. The **TxtEdit** section creates simple text frames that are saved independently. The **TxtEdit** section will be addressed at a later point in the manual.

2.2.1 Message Creation

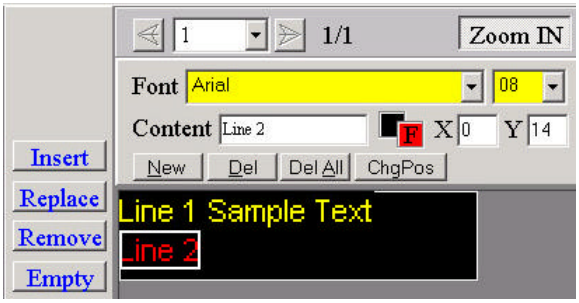
1) The **ANX** screen is divided into the editing portion (right side) and the database portion (left side).
2) Begin by clicking in the **NEW** button. This will add a "frame" to the working area and start a cursor in the content window. A new frame can also be added by clicking on **EMPTY**.
3) Click on the pull-down menu for fonts to select a font such as FIC 6x8cur, 8x8cur, orArial. There are also other fonts available, which vary in their size capabilities.

4) If you have not already clicked on the NEW button please do so. You are now able to type a message.

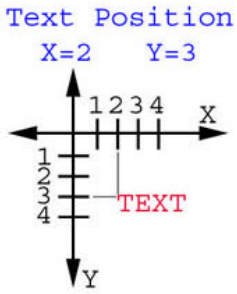


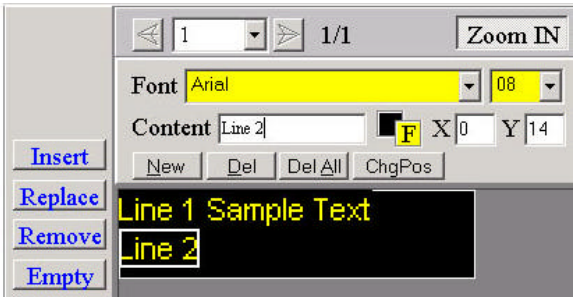


5) As you begin to type the text will appear in both the content box and the frame below.
6) At this point you may wish to click on the **Zoom IN** button to make it easier to read.
7) If you have a multi-color display you may also want to change the text color by pressing "**F**" key.



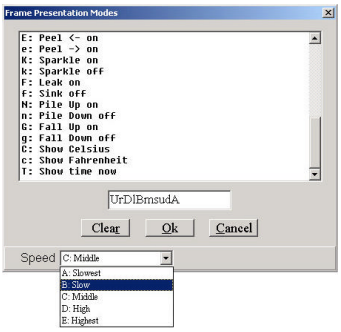
8) To reposition the text, use the mouse pointer to move the text box. Notice how the **X** and **Y** values change. These values are describing where the text box is in relation to the overall area of the sign. You can also define where the text box starts by typing in the coordinates manually and then clicking **ChgPos**. This repositions the text box to the new coordinates.





9) To move to the next line press **ENTER**. Both lines can be repositioned with the use of the mouse.

2.2.2 Adding Animation Functions To The Frame



1) After you have an initial frame created, click on the **FUNCTIONS SETUP** button at the bottom of the screen.
2) A list of the selected functions will appear in the box below. Select several functions by clicking the mouse on each function. A maximum of 10 <u>different</u> functions can be selected with the mouse.
3) At this time you can edit the speed at which these function take place, by the use of the "**Speed**" pull-down menu.
4) After assigning the animation function, the individual frame will follow each function, as specified, and then move to the next frame.

2.2.3 Previewing The File Sequence

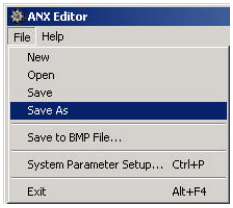
***NOTE: The preview function is available to systems running Windows 95 or 98. Systems running NT or Windows 2000 may not be able to use the preview function.*

After the functions are selected, you are ready to **RUN** a preview of your message. Click on the **RUN** button. The screen will turn black and a preview of your message will appear in the upper left corner of the screen.

**NOTE: If you do not deselect the current frame – the message will not preview.*

2.2.4 Saving Files

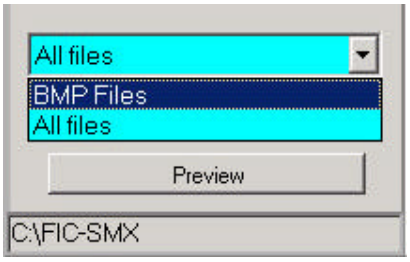
There are two options available for saving files. If you have created a single frame you can save it as a .bmp. This will enable you to add this frame to other files later. The second option is used when you have created multiple frames. Using the "**SAVE**" and "**SAVE AS**" options will assign these multiple frames an ANX file name.



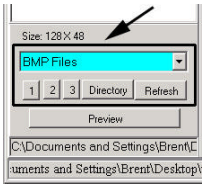
***NOTE Please do not confuse creating a "multiple frames file (.anx)" with a "schedule sequence (.seq)". They are entirely different.*

2.2.5 Refreshing the Database

After your bitmap or sequence of file has been saved click on the **REFRESH** button. If you saved the files in the current directory (C:\fic-smx), they will now appear in the **DATABASE** screen. If you saved a sequence of frames (.anx) you may need to change the viewing option at the bottom of the screen. This will enable you to see more than one type of file such as .anx..

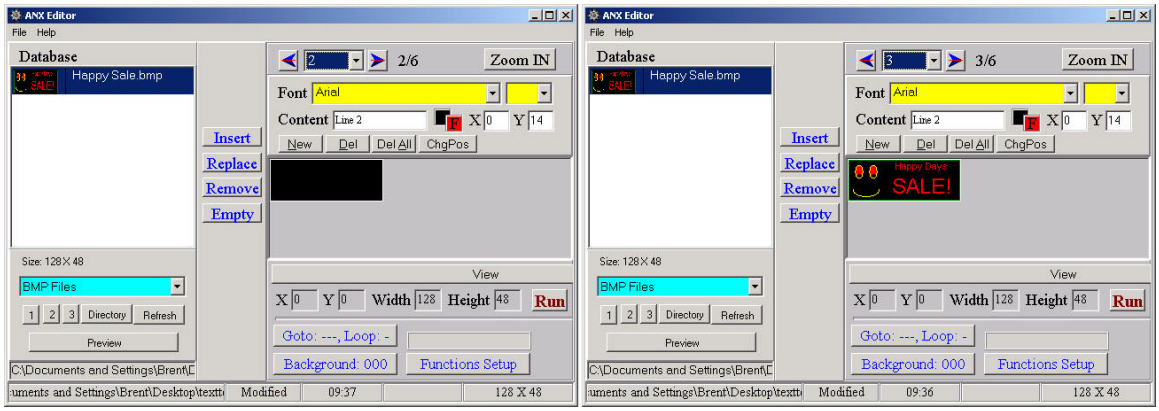


2.3 Inserting Graphics and Animation



Depending on where your graphics or animations are stored you may need to change the directory, or the visible file type at the bottom of the screen to find or see you files. At this time the AIO ANX editor software supports .bmp and .fli extensions.

To insert graphics or animation files into a file sequence (.anx type file), select a graphic or animation from the **DATABASE** window and click **INSERT.** If you inserted a graphic, you can now add animation functions as mentioned above in the text editor portion.



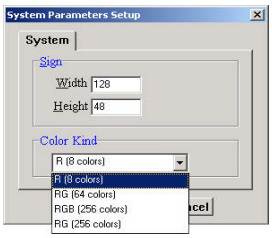
CREATING GRAPHICS / ANIMATIONS

3.1 The Graphics Editor

The graphics editor is designed to create graphics that can be saved as bitmaps (.bmp). While the **IMAGE EDITOR** is capable of generating graphics, you may find it easier to generate graphics and animation via a third party software such as Microsoft Paint? , found on any version of Windows? . For animation, programs such as Autodesk Animator? can generate the .fli files that the ANX text editor can import. These 3rd party programs are alternatives to the basic program that we provide which is designed to create simple .bmp's.

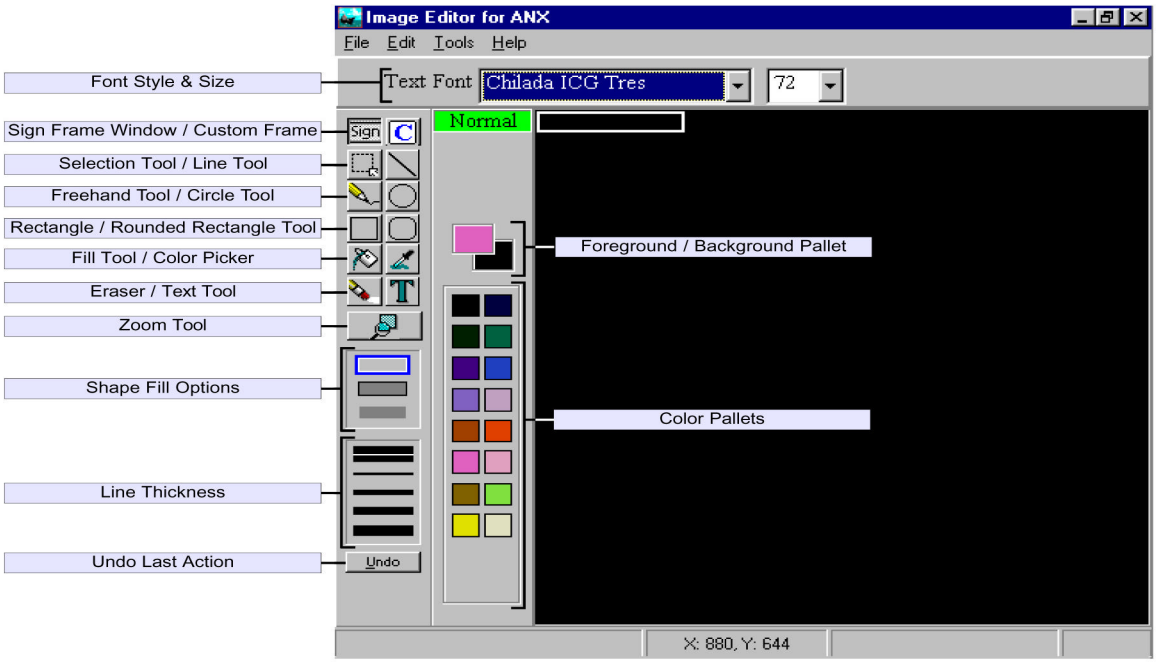
3.2 System Setup

Color options and sign matrixes are addressable under the **FILE** menu under **SYSTEM SETUP**. Please adjust these options to match your specific sign. If you are unaware of your sign matrix and color type please consult your installer. The color options represent the color capabilities of your sign.



3.3 Creating New Graphics / Drawing Tools

To create a new graphic, use the tools to make shapes and words. After the desired graphic has been created click on the SIGN button. Position the sign frame on top of the graphic. This "selects" the area to which the file will be saved. Save the graphic. The next time you open the ANX editor, your new graphic will be available for use.

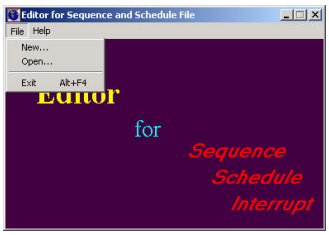


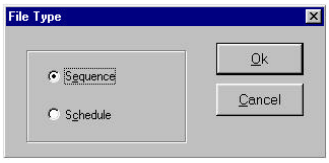
SCHEDULING AND SEQUENCING

**NOTE: Sequences are composed of files such as ".anx", ".bmp", or ".fli." Schedules are composed of (".anx", ".bmp", ".fli.") type files. When creating a sequence or schedule keep in mind the end product (.seq or .sch) is a link to the original files. If you move or rename the files that make up the seq. or sch., the transmission software will not be able to follow the map to the original files. In other words when you attempt to send your seq. or sch. it will create an error, due to the fact that it can't find the original file. To avoid this problem, keep all the created files in the same directory, and try not to rename them.*

4.1 Message Sequence and Scheduling

1) The **SCHEDULING/SEQUENCING** program can be found under the main menu or by going back to the start button, selecting programs/ FIC-SMX/ SeqSch Editor.
2) After the menu screen appears, select **NEW** under the **FILE** menu. There are two options.
3) The first, "**SEQUENCE**", will allow you to create a sequence of files that were composed in the **ANX** Editor, or Image Editor.
4) The second option "**SCHEDULE**" will allow you to associate files, sequences, or images with date, time, and length of play.

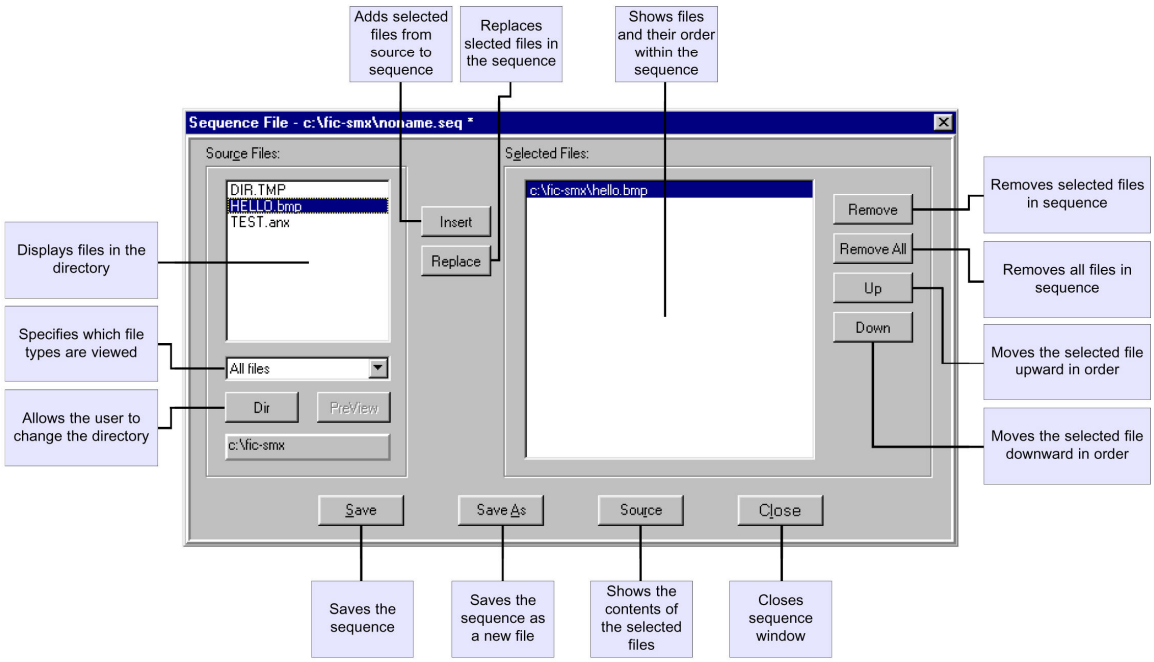




4.2 Creating Schedules and Sequences

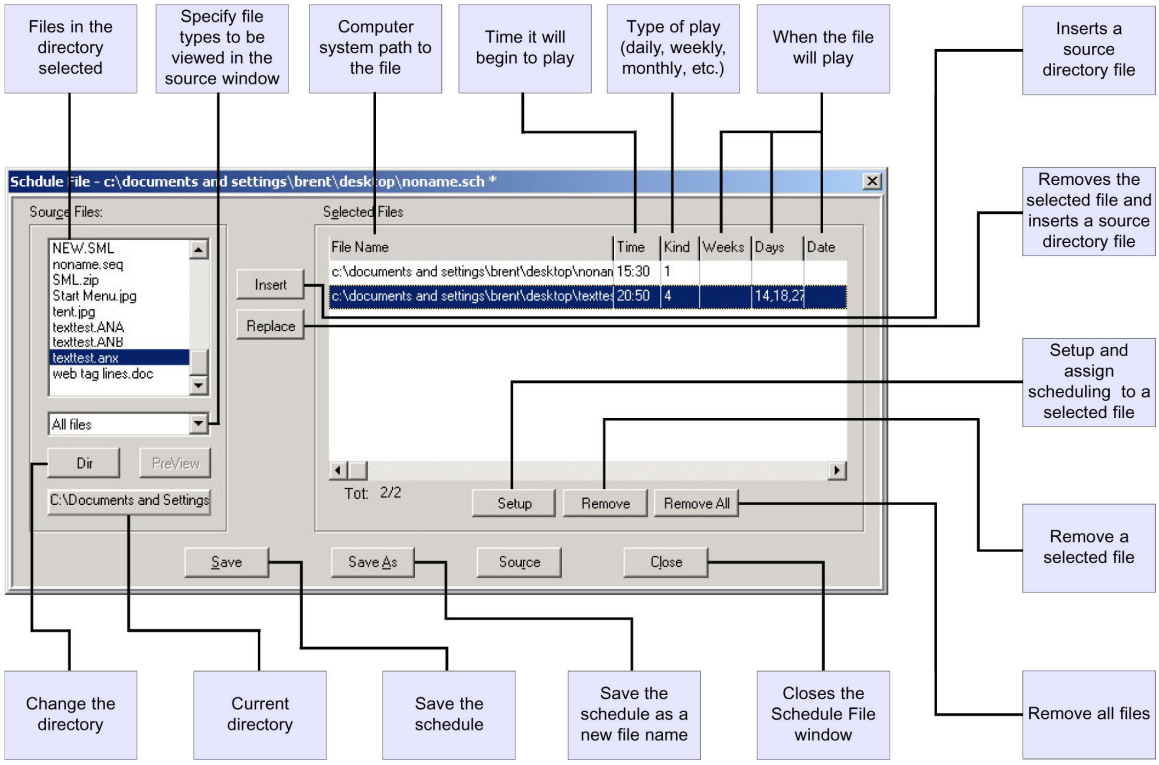
4.2.1 Creating a Sequence

As mentioned above, a "sequence" is composed of files such as ".anx", ".bmp", or ".fli." These files are then grouped together to make a "sequence of files" which can then be transmitted.

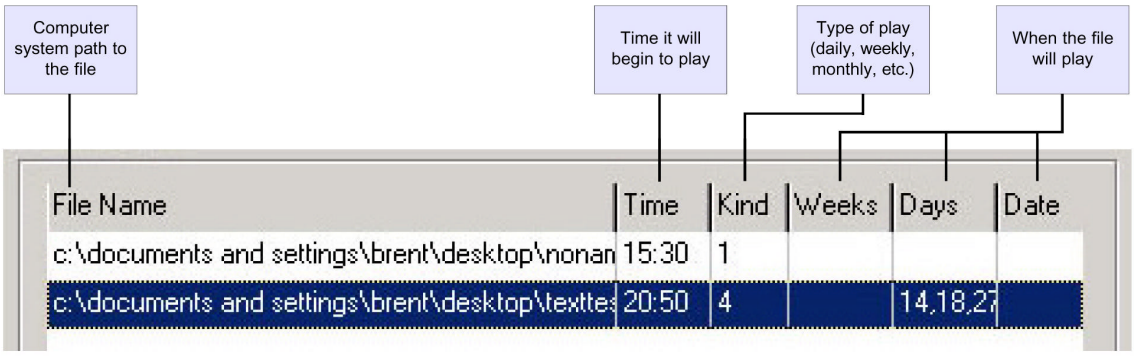


1) After choosing to create a new sequence, select the files you desire from the "**SOURCE FILE**" window, by clicking on the **INSERT** button. You may need to change directories to find the files you desire.
2) After you add all the files you desire to your sequence, save the sequence. This sequence is now available for transmission.

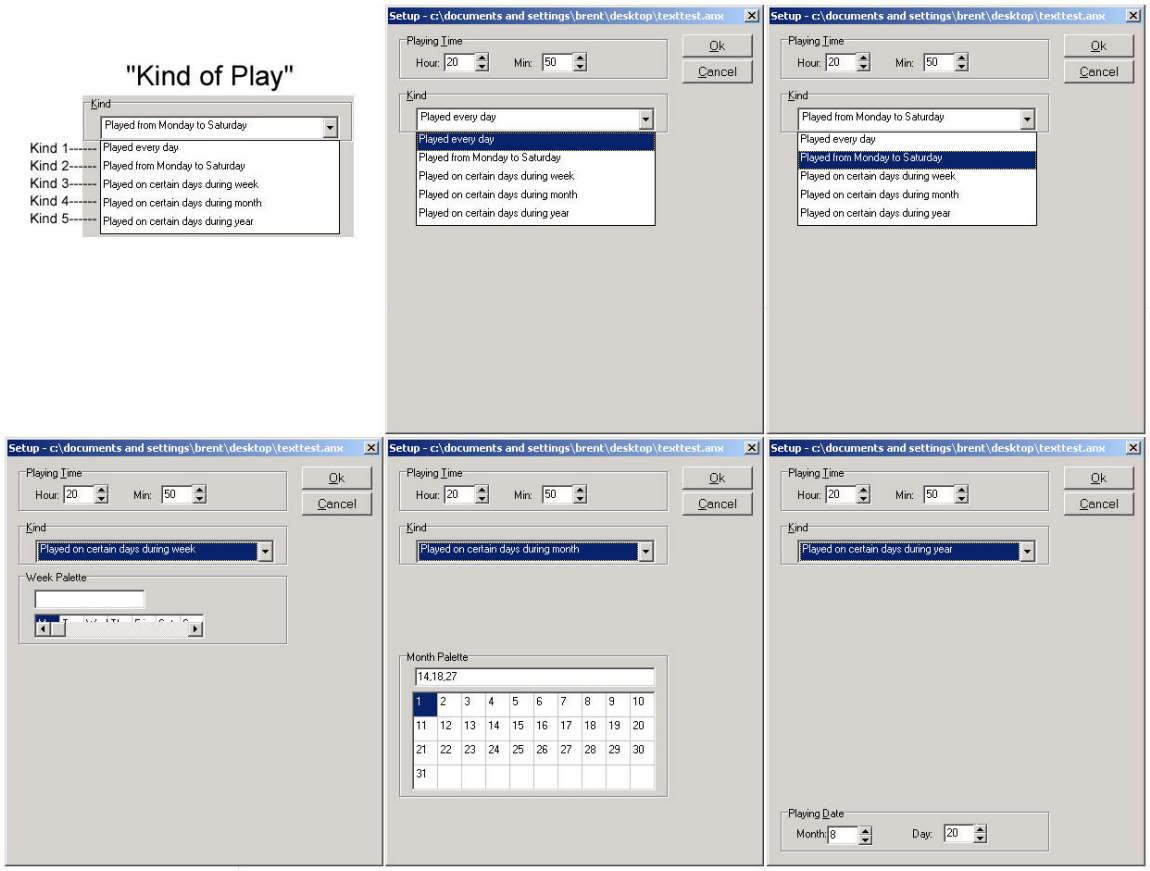
4.2.2 Creating a Schedule



1) Return to the menu window, and select **FILE**, **NEW**, and then **SCHEDULE**.
2) After choosing to create a new schedule, select the files you desire from the "**SOURCE FILE**" window, by clicking on the **INSERT** button. It may be necessary to change directories, or viewing options to find the files you desire.
3) After adding the files they can be scheduled by adding date, time, etc, under the **SETUP** button. The basic functions are outlined below.



Time: This refers to at what time the message will begin to play
Kind: Indicates what type of play it is. IE. Daily, M-F, specific days during the week, specific days during the month, or specific days during the year.
Weeks: What days of the week the message will play. (1=M, 2=T, 3=W, 4=TR, 5=F, 6=SA, 7=SU)
Days: The days during the moth the message will play.
Date: The dates throughout the year the message will play.



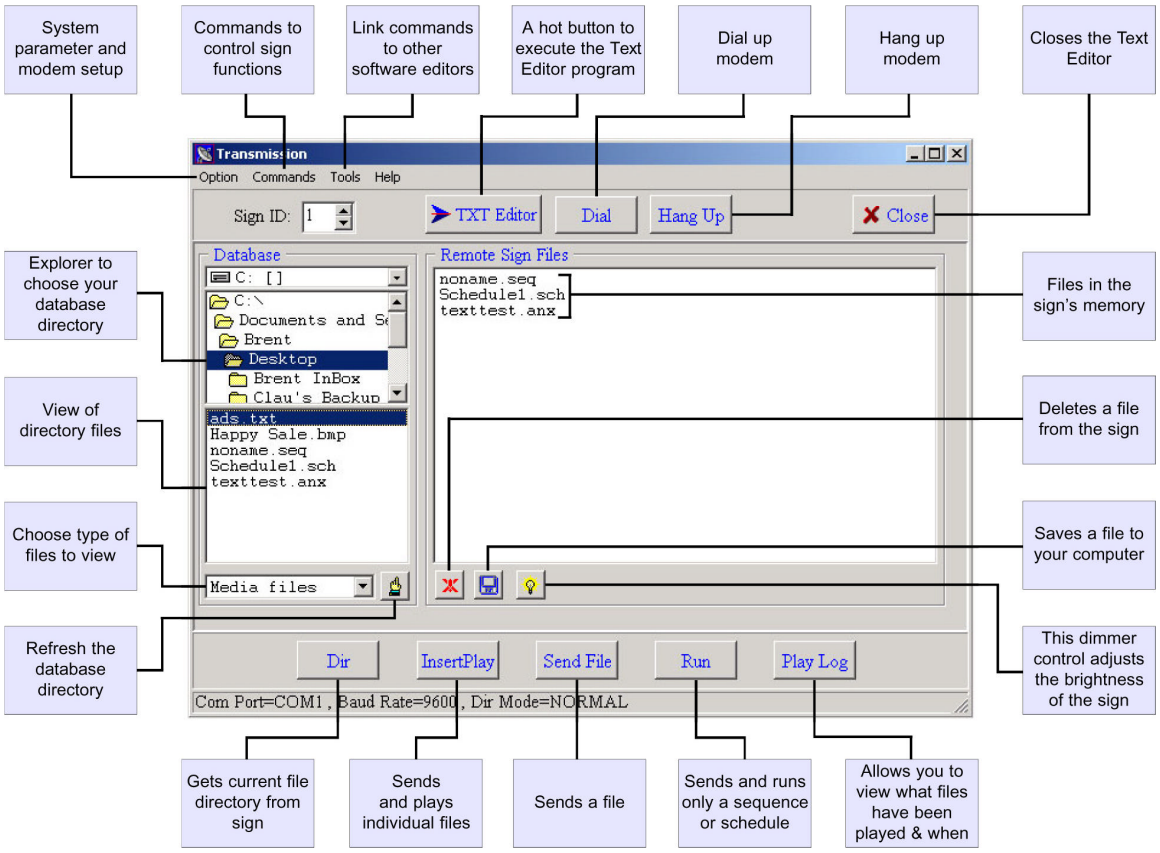
When addressing the play options, Keep in mind the following:

1) Time is represented in “military time” - 1-24 hours not am/pm
2) Days of the week are numbered 1-7. - 1=M, 2=T, 3=W, 4=TR, 5=F, 6=SA, 7=SU
3) Days of month are 1-31
4) Months of the year are 1-12 – January =1 December =12

After you have assigned all the features to the files you desire to play save it as a schedule. This schedule can then be transmitted to the sign in the next section.

DISPLAY COMMUNICATION

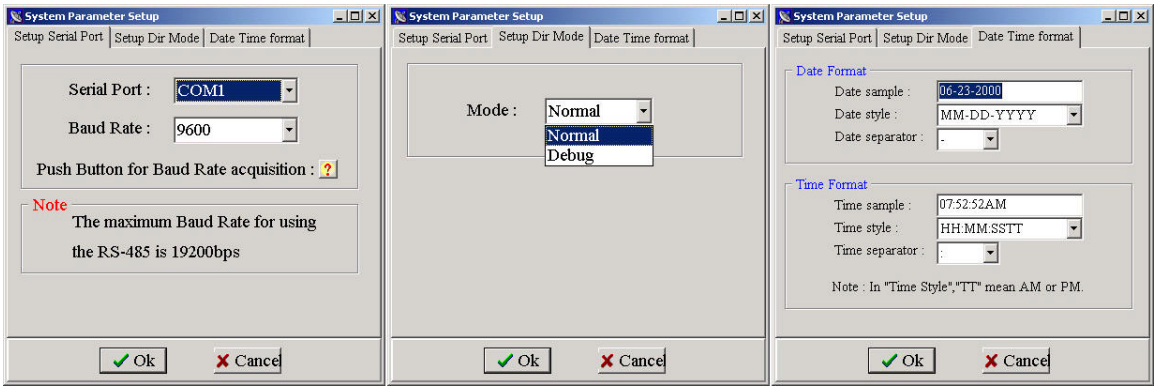
5.1 Software Features



COMMUNICATION CONTROL

5.1.1 System Parameter Setup

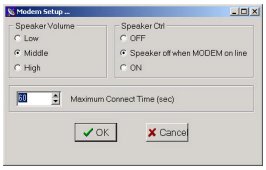
The system parameter setup for the transmission software tells the computer how to send the message files out to the sign. After completing the initial setup it is not necessary to make any further adjustments.



The system parameter setup for the transmission software is composed of 3 separate sections. Most applications do not require any changes to the default setup. If you find that changes do need to be made Click on the **OPTION** menu and select **SYSTEM PARAMETER SETUP**. The most common change is the COM port setup. The default COM port is 1. You may find it necessary to change it to COM2 if your computer is already using COM1.

5.1.2 Modem Setup

The modem setup screen, found under **OPTION**, **MODEM SETUP,** is mainly used to control basic functions of internal modems. Most LED signs are sold with external modems, and do not require this aspect of the transmission setup.

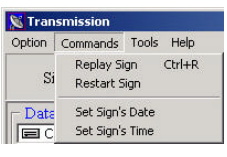


5.1.3 Connecting To The Sign

Depending to the type of connection between the sign and the computer you may need to "connect" to the sign before proceeding. If you have a connection that utilizes modems you will need to connect by clicking on the dial button. This will establish the connection and allow you to communicate with the sign. If you are directly wired to the sign, you will not need to connect, as you already are.

5.1.4 Time and Date Setup

In order for the display to run the schedule files at the appropriate time, the date and time must be set at the sign. Select **Set Signs Date & Time** from the **Commands** Menu.



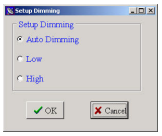
5.1.5 Sign ID Number

If your application consists of multiple signs, you will have several ID #'s. IF the application consists of one or two signs (master/slave configuration), the ID# will most likely be 1. To send different messages to different signs, in a multiple sign environment, you must change the ID# to match the sign you wish to send a message to. If you wish to send the same message to all signs, or "broadcast", change the ID number to 0.

5.1.6 Retrieving and Clearing Previous Messages

1) After communication has been established with the sign, click on the "**DIR**" button. This will retrieve the directory of files, sequences, schedules, and bitmaps currently at the sign. File existing at the sign will appear in the right window.
2) If you desire to save any of the existing files, select the save button; otherwise select the delete button. This will clear each message from the sign.

5.1.7 Dimmer Setup



The dimmer settings control the brightness of the sign. They can either be set manually, or be automatically adjusted with the changing light conditions.

5.1.8 File Hierarchy

Since there are different file types, there is a hierarchy of importance for each file type. An example of the order of importance is listed below.

.Sch Sch and Seq files are of equal importance. If a .sch file exists at the sign the sign **will only play the .sch file**. It will ignore all other file types.

.Seq Sch and Seq files are of equal importance. If a .seq file exists at the sign, sign **will only play the .seq file**. It will ignore all other file types.

.Anx The .anx files are the third most important. They will play before all other file types. Files such as **.bmp**, **.fli**, and **.txt** will follow the .anx files in the order they were input.

5.1.9 File Transmission

To send a file, sequence, schedule, bitmap, etc, insert each message from the DATABASE into the REMOTE SIGN FILES window by highlighting the desired file, and then selecting either **InsertPlay** or **Run**. The software roll through a succession of screens that are transmitting the individual files.

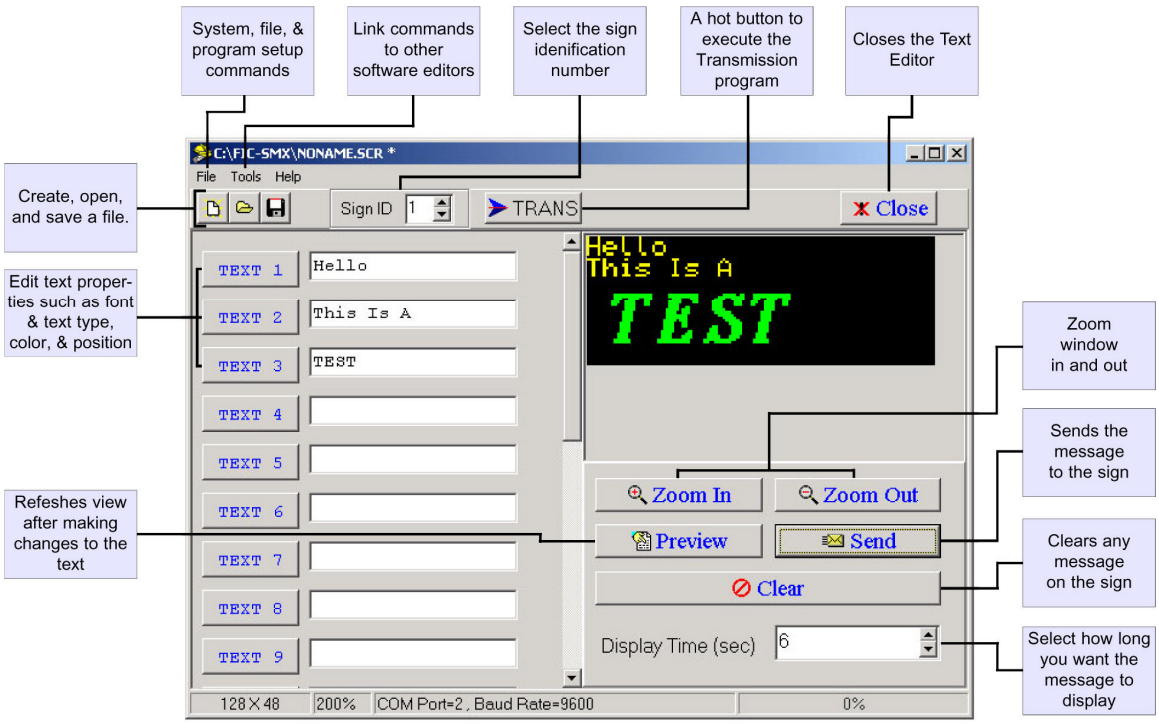
If you need to cancel the transmission, please wait until the files have been sent and then use the delete button on the software to remove the file. Do not interrupt the file transmission process.

TEXT EDITOR

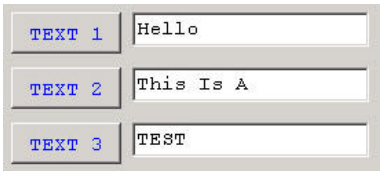
6.1 TXT Editor

The TXT editor is designed as a method of producing quick basic text frames for immediate insertion. To open the TXT editor click on the **TXT Editor** button on the transmission screen.

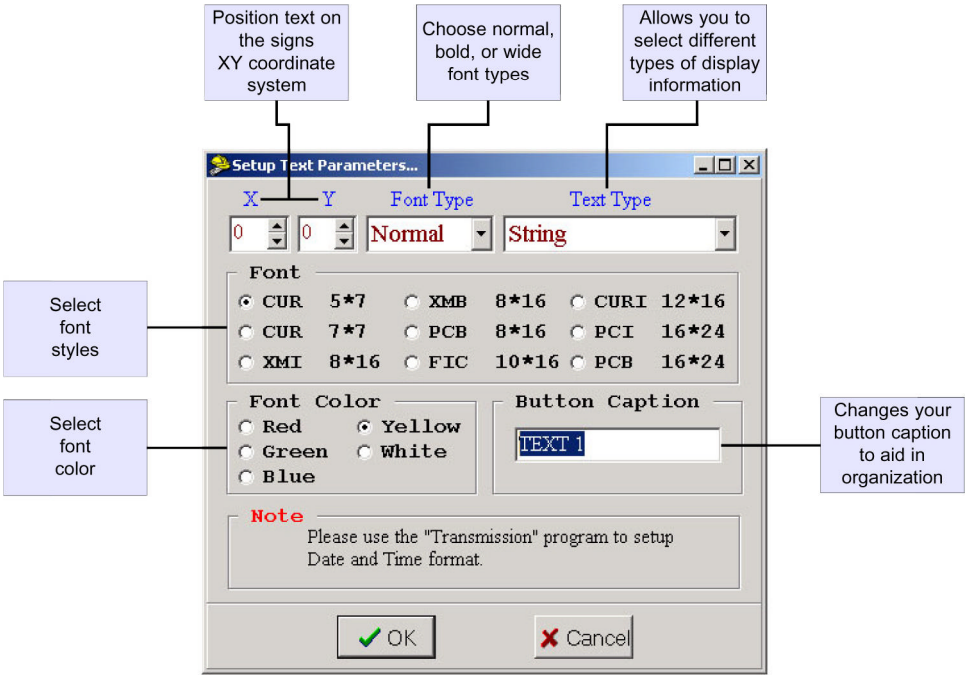
6.1.1 Software Features



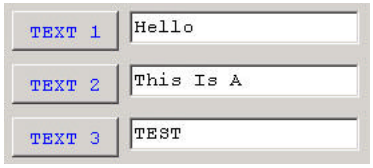
6.1.2 Creating Text Messages



1) You may wish to use the **ZOOM In / Out** buttons to enlarge your work area
2) To create a message, place the cursor in one of the text boxes and type a message.
3) Move to each subsequent line and do the same.
4) When all desired messages have been entered, click on the TEXT button to the left of the text box. This will open a text parameter screen.



5) The text parameter screen controls the font, placement, and color of the text. For this example we selected the following for each line. The end product is shown to the right



X=0 Y=0 Color = Yellow Font = CUR 5*7

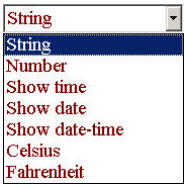
X=0 Y=8 Color = Yellow Font = CUR 5*7

X=8 Y=18 Color = Green Font = PCI 16*24

6) If you are unsure of how to utilize X-Y coordinates, refer back to the ANX editor section for reference.
7) After the initial text color, font, and position has been set, you can edit the text in the text window. To view the new information click on the **Preview** button. This will apply the changes, and allow you to see the new text.
8) In the far bottom right of the screen there is an option to dictate how long the message will display. Adjust this to meet your needs.

6.1.3 Time and Date Functions

To show the current time or date, select the desired function from the pull-down menu. The minimum size of display to show both the time and the date on one line is 128. If your sign is shorter, you may need to divide the date and time into separate lines.



6.1.4 Message Transmission & Saving

When your message is complete, it can either be transmitted or saved for future use. To transmit the message click on the **Send** button. The file will be sent to the display as a .scr file type. When the sign receives the file it will play it once and then erase it from memory.

If you wish to play the file more than once you will need to save it as a .tx2 file. It can then be added to sequences, or directly input via the transmission software.