

# ***ELECTRONIC DISPLAYS INC.***

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# **MessagePro**

Version 2.50

Windows® Based Software to Control *Electronic Displays Inc.* Message Marquees

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# 1.0 Welcome and Features

Welcome to the MessagePro Control Center for Windows! This program is an excellent tool for designing and sending messages to Message Signs designed by Electronic Displays, Inc.

The following features are provided:

- Creating and editing of messages
- Sending messages, one at a time, or as a batch.
- Previewing messages before sending them.
- Setting scroll speed and flash rate of signs
- Setting time and date (if provided on sign)
- Full-featured Scheduler, to activate messages at certain times

This manual is divided into 2 sections, one is a tutorial, and the other is a reference. It is suggested that you read the tutorial first. An additional manual is provided for the Scheduler. If problems do occur, please consult the Troubleshooting portion of the Reference section.

## 1.1 Installation

The following items are required for operation of MessagePro for Windows:

- Microsoft Windows Version 3.1/95/98/00/NT/XP.
- 386 or greater computer with 4MB of Ram
- VGA monitor.
- Mouse.
- Available serial communications port
- Message Sign made by Electronic Displays, Inc.

Installing MessagePro Windows is easy, just follow these steps:

1. Insert the distribution diskette into your floppy drive.
2. From Program Manager, click on File/Run.
3. Type a:\install (or the appropriate disc drive) and press return ↵.
4. When the installer asks for a source directory, just press return ↵.
5. When asked for a destination, press return ↵, or type a new destination path. (It is suggested that you install to the \MessagePro directory).
6. When installation is complete, the installer will create a new Program Group called MessagePro Program Group with two new items, MessagePro for Windows, and the Scheduler.

## 1.2 Running the Programs

To run MessagePro for windows, double-click on the MessagePro for Windows icon in the MessagePro Program Group.

To run the Scheduler, double-click on the Scheduler icon. For more information on the Scheduler, see the supplied manual.

Note: It is important that you configure MessagePro before trying to send messages. See the next section on how to configure MessagePro for your sign(s).

## 1.3 Configuration

## Hardware Configuration

Note: A detailed document is included with the message sign. This portion is just an overview of connections.

MessagePro for Windows communicates to your sign(s) via a communications port that is attached to your computer. Although many different types of ports exist on different computers, this portion outlines the most common type.

On the back side of the computer, there will be two sub-d male plugs. One will be a 9-pin type (which is used mostly for your mouse). This is usually Com Port Number 1. Another plug exists which is a 25-pin type (which is usually not used). This is Com Port 2. In this application, you would want to connect the message sign(s) to this port. The data wire would connect to pin 3, and the data ground wire would connect to pin 7.

## Software Configuration

These are the steps to configure your sign to work with MessagePro:

1. Run MessagePro (double-click on the MessagePro icon).
2. Take note of the following information of your sign(s):

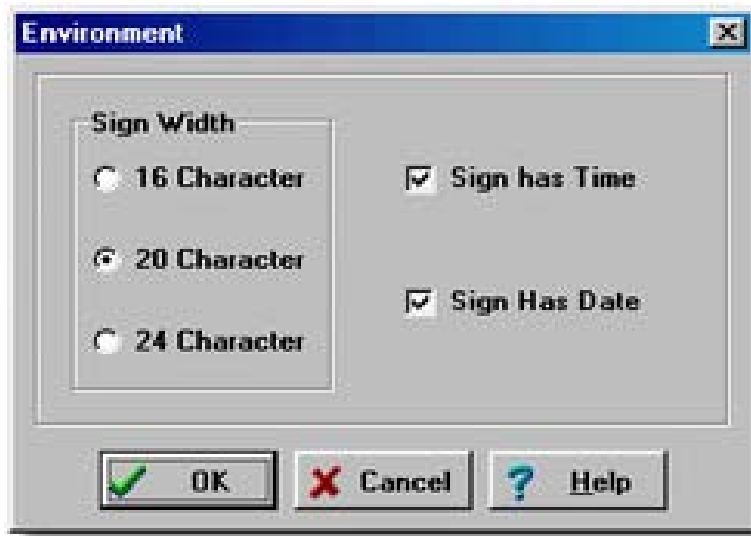
Com Port Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Baud Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

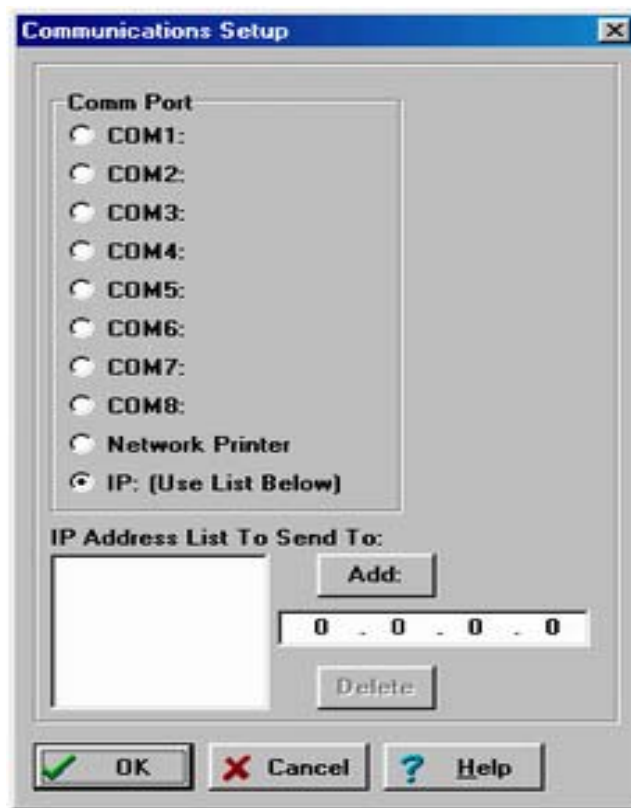
Sign Width (in characters): \_\_\_\_\_

Does sign have time/date capabilities? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Click on Options/Environment, and the following will appear:



4. Click on the Sign Width, and the Date/Time checkboxes as per your sign in #2 above and click OK.
5. Click on Options/Communications Setup, and the following will appear:





6. Click on the Com Port and Baud Rate as per your sign in #2 above and click OK.
7. Double-click on the upper left-hand corner box to close and save your configuration.

That's it! Now you can proceed to the tutorial section for a step-by-step guide to creating messages, or go directly to the reference section and experiment.

## **Tutorial Section**

### **2.0 Messages and Message Blocks**

#### Messages

Messages contain the characters that tell the sign what to display. Specifically, they contain Message Blocks. Message blocks are items that tell the sign exactly what to do in a message (such as Scroll, Pause, and others). Messages are stored in two locations:

1. On your computer by filename (using the MessagePro program).
2. On the sign by message number.

When you send a message, you actually load the sign up with a message from the computer into a specific message number on the sign.

The sign can only show one message number at a time, so to show a certain message that is stored in the sign, you must activate a message to show it. The MessagePro program and the Scheduler can activate messages.

The standard sign has a capability of storing 32 messages, numbered 1 to 32. Each message can hold 200 characters. The MessagePro program can tell you how many characters of storage a message requires (by using Message/Character Count)

### Message Blocks

Message blocks are the building blocks of messages. There are 9 types of message blocks you can define, and they are as follows:

#### Scroll Block

Causes text to scroll from right to left on the sign

#### Jump Block

Causes text to appear instantly on the sign, from left to right.

#### Up Block

Causes text to appear from the bottom to the top.

#### Down Block

Causes text to appear from the top to the bottom.

#### Blink Block

Causes text to appear from the middle outward to the top and bottom.

#### Open Block

Causes text to appear from the middle outward to the left and right

#### Wipe Block

Causes text to appear slowly from the left to the right.

You can apply wide text and /or flashing text also to the above blocks. For the Jump, Up, Down, Blink, Open, and Wipe blocks, they also pause for 2 seconds then the text disappears. For these blocks you can specify the text to be centered on the sign. For all above blocks you can specify a “freeze” option, in which the text will appear or scroll, then the sign freezes until you activate a message on the sign.

### Pause Block

Causes the display to pause from 2 to 98 seconds. If used after a Scroll block, causes text to scroll on, pause then scroll off. If used after other blocks, it will extend the two-second pause for an additional time.

### Comment Block

This allows comments in your messages, takes up no space and does nothing when sent to a sign.

### Embedded Text Options

There are two embedded options that you can place in any text for a block. They are | Time | and | Date |. When the sign encounters these, it will display the time and date in the sign respectively (if sign is capable).

### Example Message

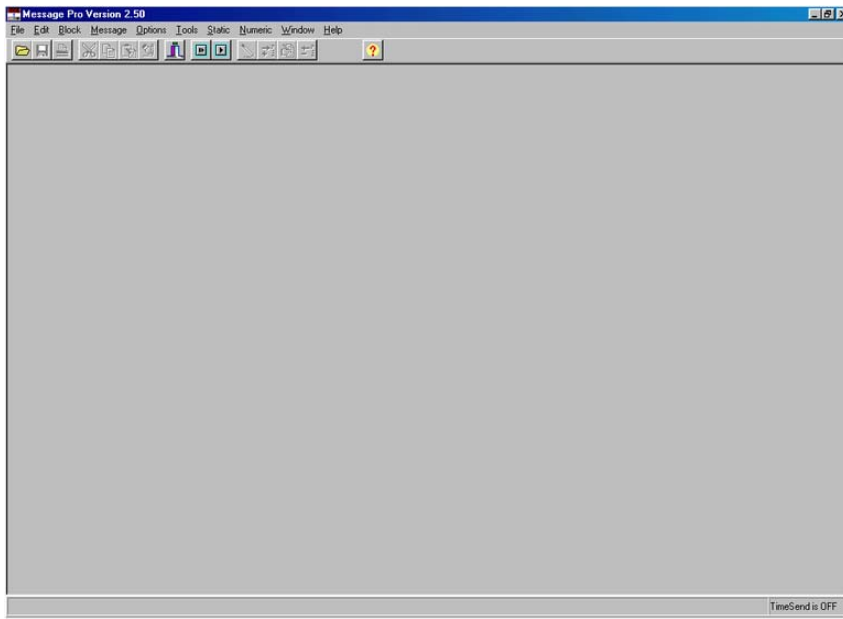
The following is an example message and what it will show:

```
Scroll wide \Hello World, this is a test\  
Down \This is Down!  
Pause for 6 seconds.
```

This will cause the sign to scroll “**Hello World, this is a test!**”, then the display will show “**This is Down!**” from top to bottom, and hold there for a total of 8 seconds. Then the whole message will repeat.

## 2.1 MessagePro Main Window

Introduce yourself to MessagePro, simply double-click on the “MessagePro” icon in the MessagePro program group. The following Window will appear:



Note: It is important that you configure MessagePro before using it. See the section on Configuration in previous pages.

As you can see, the main window consists of a menu bar, a speed bar (just below the menu bar), and a status bar (bottom).

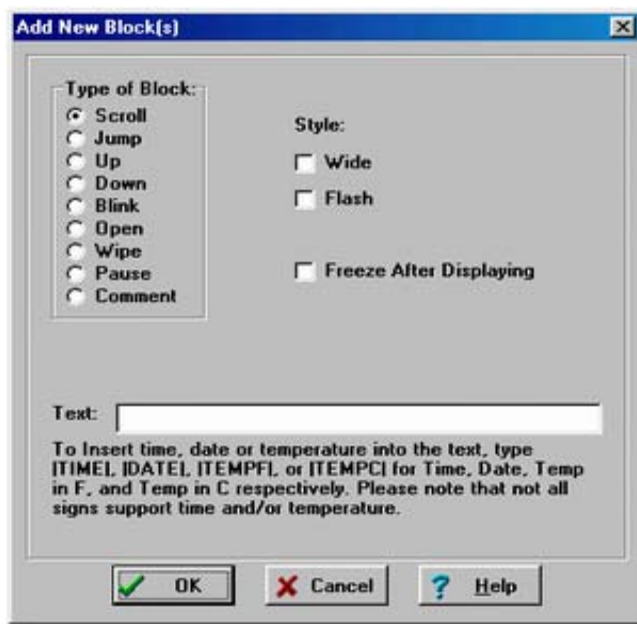
The speed bar contains many icons, and here are shortcuts for some of the menu commands. In order from left to right they are: File | Open, File | Save, File | Print, Edit | Cut, Edit | Copy, Edit | Paste, Edit | Paste Add, File | Exit, Message | Send, Message | Activate, Block | Add, Block | Insert, Block | Edit, Block | Delete, and Help | Contents. Notice as you hold your mouse pointer over these buttons, they will show you a hint of what the button does.

As you open and create messages, the middle area will fill up with smaller windows, called “**Document Windows**”. Only one of these windows can be active at a time, and all menu commands work with this active window only. You can control the display of these windows by using the Window menu command.

## 2.2 Creating Your First Message

It’s easy to create your first message. Follow these steps:

1. Click on File | New. This will create a document window with the title NONAME0.1MSG.
2. Add a new message block. Click on Block | Add Block. The following dialog box will appear:



3. Click on the Scroll button (if it is not already clicked). This tells MessagePro that we want to add a Scroll block.
4. Click on the Wide checkbox. This tells MessagePro that we want this to display with wide characters.
5. Click on the Text box and type. This is my first message.
6. Click on OK (or press return ↵).
7. The same dialog box will show again, ready for your next block. Repeat steps 3 to 6 and add the following blocks:

Up block, no wide characters, flashing characters, centered, with the text This is Up!

Pause block, with a 6 second pause (Click on the up/down arrows for pause time within the dialog box.)

8. After entering all the blocks, Click on cancel (or press ESC). You should see your message in the document window, and it should look like this:

Scroll, Wide, \This is my first message\, Up, Flashing, Centered, \This is Up! \ Pause for 6 seconds.

If your message does not look like this, click on the line that is wrong. It will highlight in black. Then click on Block | Edit Block to change this block. Correct the errors and click OK

9. Save your message. Click on File | Save (or use the speed bar). Type in the filename first and click OK (or press return ↵).
10. Congratulations! You have just created your first message!

## 2.3 Previewing and Sending Your Message

These are the steps to follow to preview and then send your message:

1. Preview your message. Click on Message | Preview and the following window will appear:



2. Click on start and watch your message run. You can adjust the delay (if it runs too fast) by clicking on the up and down arrows for Delay.
3. Your message will stop at the end. You can now either start it again, or click on cancel to get back to the main window.
4. Once you click on cancel, click on Message | Send Message. The following dialog box will appear:



5. Each sign has a unique address. Select the sign address by using the up and down arrows next to Sign Address.(If you do not know the address, leave it at 0. This will send it to all signs connected to the computer).
6. Select message number 1 by using up and down arrows next to Message Number
7. Click OK. If all goes well, the sign should be displaying your message. (If you get a Comm. Error, recheck your configuration or see the Troubleshooting portion of the Reference Section.)

That's all there is to it. Now you can experiment and check out all of the other features located in the Reference Section.



# **Reference Section**

## 3.0 Mapping Messages

In order to keep track of messages stored on disk and in the sign, it is recommended that you keep a “Mapping Log.” In this log, you should write down the sign address, sign location, and what messages are stored in the sign. This will make easier use of the Batch Editor and Scheduler. An example form is provided on the next page. You can also use the Comment block to add a comment to a message to state what sign it goes to, and the message number.

# Mapping Log

Sign Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Message #1	Filename: _____
Message #2	Filename: _____
Message #3	Filename: _____
Message #4	Filename: _____
Message #5	Filename: _____
Message #6	Filename: _____
Message #7	Filename: _____
Message #8	Filename: _____
Message #9	Filename: _____
Message #10	Filename: _____
Message #11	Filename: _____
Message #12	Filename: _____
Message #13	Filename: _____
Message #14	Filename: _____
Message #15	Filename: _____
Message #16	Filename: _____
Message #17	Filename: _____
Message #18	Filename: _____
Message #19	Filename: _____
Message #20	Filename: _____
Message #21	Filename: _____
Message #22	Filename: _____
Message #23	Filename: _____
Message #24	Filename: _____
Message #25	Filename: _____
Message #26	Filename: _____
Message #27	Filename: _____
Message #28	Filename: _____
Message #29	Filename: _____
Message #30	Filename: _____
Message #31	Filename: _____
Message #32	Filename: _____

## 3.1 File Commands

### 3.1.1 File | New

This command will create a new document window, to create new messages.

### 3.1.2 File | Open (or Speedbar)

This command will open a document window and load a specified message into that window. The default extension is “msg”.

### 3.1.3 File | Close

This command will close the active document window. If this window has been changed, you will be prompted if you wish to save it

### 3.1.4 File | Save (or Speedbar)

This command will save the active document window. If the name for this window has not been defined (created under File | New), you will be prompted for a filename.

### 3.1.5 File | Save As

This command will save the active document window under a different name. You will be prompted for the new name. The default extension is .msg.

### 3.1.6 File | Print (or Speedbar)

This command will print the active document window. It will print using the same font (if possible) that is used to display the window. To change the font, use Options | Font. You can also setup your printer from this command.

### 3.1.7 File | Printer Setup

This command will allow you to setup the current printer configuration for printing of messages.

### 3.1.8 File | Exit (or Speedbar)

This command will exit out of MessagePro, thereby closing all document windows. If any of the windows have changed, you will be prompted if you wish to save them.

## 3.2 Edit Commands

### 3.2.1 Edit | Cut (or Speedbar)

This command will cut the selected message blocks and place them in the Clipboard. To select message blocks, click on the first block, hold down the Shift key, and drag to the last block. The selected blocks are highlighted in black.

### 3.2.2 Edit | Copy (or Speedbar)

This command will copy the selected message blocks and place them in the Clipboard. To select message blocks, click on the first block, hold down the Shift key, and drag to the last block. The selected blocks are highlighted in black.

### 3.2.3 Edit | Paste (or Speedbar)

This command will insert blocks from the Clipboard to the location before the selected block. Only one block should be selected. To select a block to insert before, click once on the block.

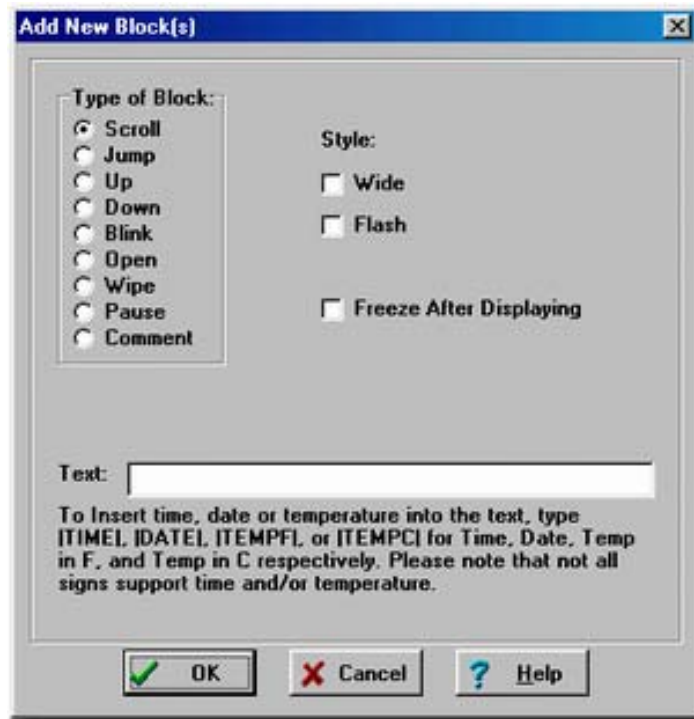
### 3.2.4 Edit | Paste Add (or Speedbar)

This command will add blocks to the end of your message from the Clipboard.

## 3.3 Block Commands

### 3.3.1 Block | Add Block (or Speedbar)

This command will add blocks that you specify. The following dialog box will appear:



Select the type of block, and any styles you wish to have. When using the Pause block, you will be asked for a pause delay. You can use the up and down arrows to change this. Clicking OK will save the block and ask you for another. To exit from this dialog box, click cancel.

### 3.3.2      Block | Insert Block    (or Speedbar)

This command will insert a new block before the selected block. Only one block should be selected. To select a block, click once on that block. You will be prompted for the block to Insert. Select the block as in Block | Add Block.

### 3.3.3      Block | Edit Block        (or Speedbar)

This command will edit the selected block. Only one block should be selected. To select a block, click once on that block. You will be shown the block in the dialog box as in Block | Add Block. Select the new block and click OK. A shortcut to editing blocks is to double-click on a block.

### 3.3.4      Block | Delete Block(s)    (or Speedbar)

This command will delete the selected block(s). To select message blocks, click on the first block, hold down the Shift key, and drag to the last block. The selected blocks are highlighted in black. You will be confirmed for this command.

## 3.4            Message Commands

### 3.4.1        Message | Send Message    (or Speedbar)

This command will send the active document window to the display. If there are no active windows, you will be prompted for a file to send. The message will be stored in

the sign under a message number. It will also be activated and will run on the sign. After selecting this command, the following dialog box will appear:



Select the sign address and message number using the up and down arrows next to each field. A sign address of 0 will cause the message to be stored in ALL signs attached to the computer. A message number of 0 will cause the message to be stored under the currently running message number.

## 3.4.2 Message | Activate Message (or Speedbar)

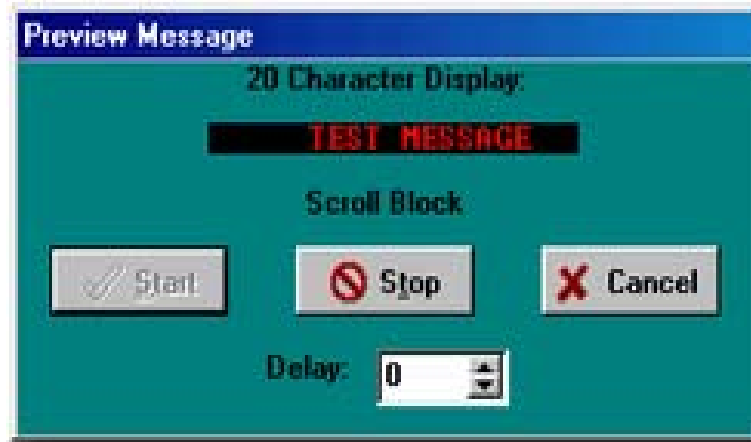
This command will activate a message on a selected sign. A dialog box will appear as in Message | Send Message. The selected message number will be activated.

Note: This does not change any messages stored in the sign. It simply changes the currently running message.



### 3.4.3 Message | Preview Message

This command will display the active window's message on the screen. You can use this to see what the message will look like before sending. After selecting this command, the following window will appear.



To start the message running, click on start. You can stop the message prematurely by clicking stop. Clicking on cancel will send you back to the main window. If the display seems to run too fast, you can adjust the delay by using up and down arrows located next to the Delay field.

### 3.4.4 Message | Pre-Check Message

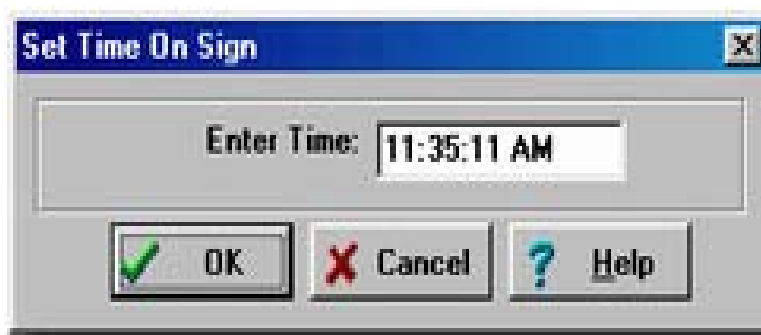
This command pre-checks a message for any errors in it. The only reason to use this command is if the message file was created with another program (such as NotePad). This will flag any blocks with errors in it as "ERROR". You can then use the Block | Edit Block to the change the invalid block.

### 3.4.5 Message | Character Count

This command will count the number of characters required for the message to be stored in the sign. The standard sign has 32 messages with up to 200 characters per message.

### 3.4.6 Message | Set Time On Sign

This command allows you to set the time on the sign. The sign must be capable of time and date. This command is enabled | disabled per the options in Options | Environment. The following dialog box will appear:

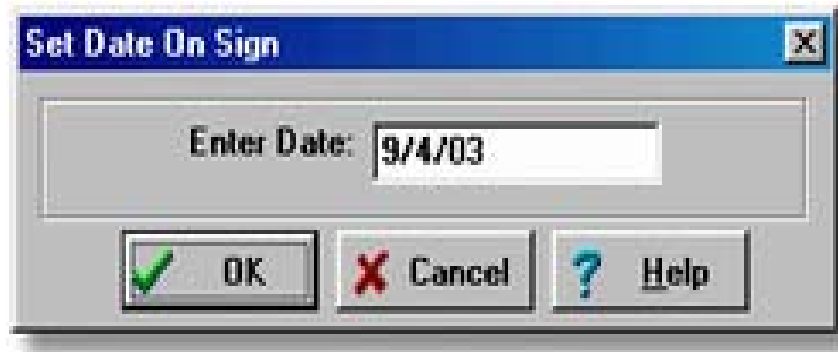


The current computers time will be displayed as a default. Entry of a new time must be in one of this formats:

HH:MM:SS am/pm (for 12-hour format) or  
HH:MM:SS (for 24-hour format)

### 3.4.7 Message | Set Date On Sign

This command allows you to set the date on the sign. The sign must be capable of time and date. This command is enabled | disabled per the options in Options | Environment. The following dialog box will appear:

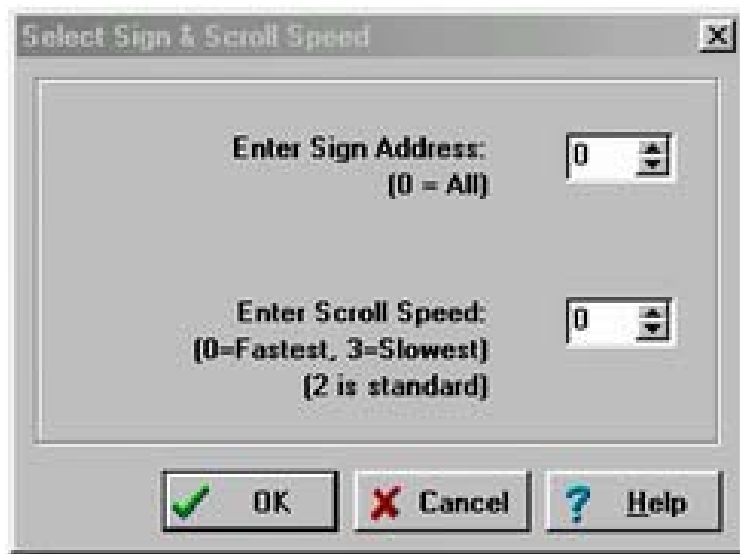


The current computers date will be displayed as a default. Entry of a new date must be this format:

MM/DD/YY

### 3.4.8 Message | Set Scroll Speed On Sign

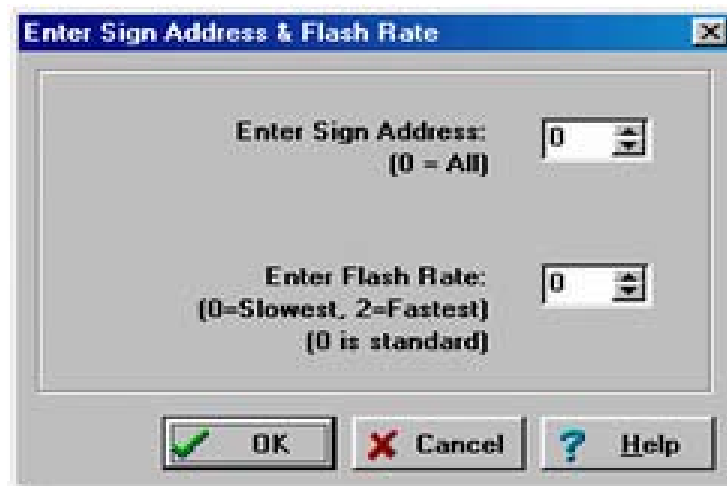
This command allows you to control how fast scroll blocks will scroll on the display, After selecting this command, you will be shown this dialog:



Select the sign address by using the up and down arrows next to the Sing Address field. Set it to 0 for ALL signs connected to the computer. Select the scroll speed rate by using the up and down arrows next to that field. Selecting 0 is the slowest speed, while 3 is the fastest. Signs normally are set at 0.

### 3.4.9 Message | Set Flash Rate On Sign

This command allows you to set the rate of flashing characters on the sign when displayed. Flashing characters are used when a block has the flashing style checked. After selecting this command, the following will appear:



Select the sign address by using the up and down arrows next to the Sing Address field. Set it to 0 for ALL signs connected to the computer. Select the flash rate by using the up and down arrows next to that field. Selecting 0 is the slowest speed, while 9 is the fastest. Signs normally are set at 7.

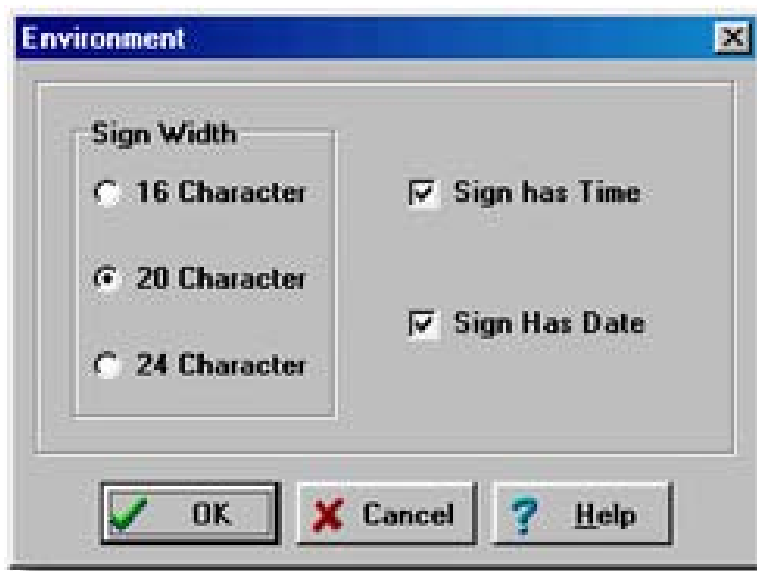
## 3.5 Option Commands

### 3.5.1 Options | Font

This command allows you to select the font for displaying messages in the document windows. The same font is also used for printing. Select your font and size in the dialog box. This font will apply to all current and future document windows.

### 3.5.2 Options | Environment

This command allows you to change some of the configurations. When you select this command, the following dialog box will appear:

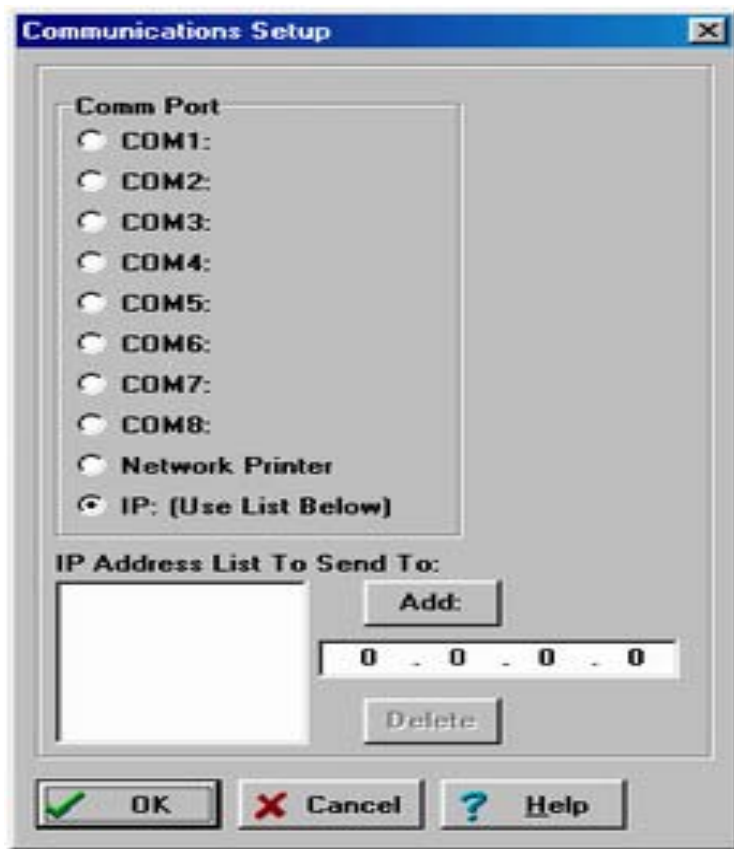


Select the size and capabilities of the sign and click OK.

Note: If multiple signs with different widths are connected to the computer, you will need to select the proper width for each sign when sending messages. Invalid messages could be sent if not set up properly.

### 3.5.3 Options | Communications Setup

This command allows you to setup the communications port and baud rate for the signs attached to your computer. The following dialog will be shown:



Select your port and baud rate, then click OK. The default setup for most computers and signs are COM2: and 1200 baud.

## 3.6 Tools Commands

## 3.6.1 Tools | Scheduler

This command allows you to run the scheduler. If this command is checked, the scheduler is already running. Use shift-tab to switch to the scheduler. You may need to maximize the scheduler.

Documentation for the Scheduler is included in a separate manual.

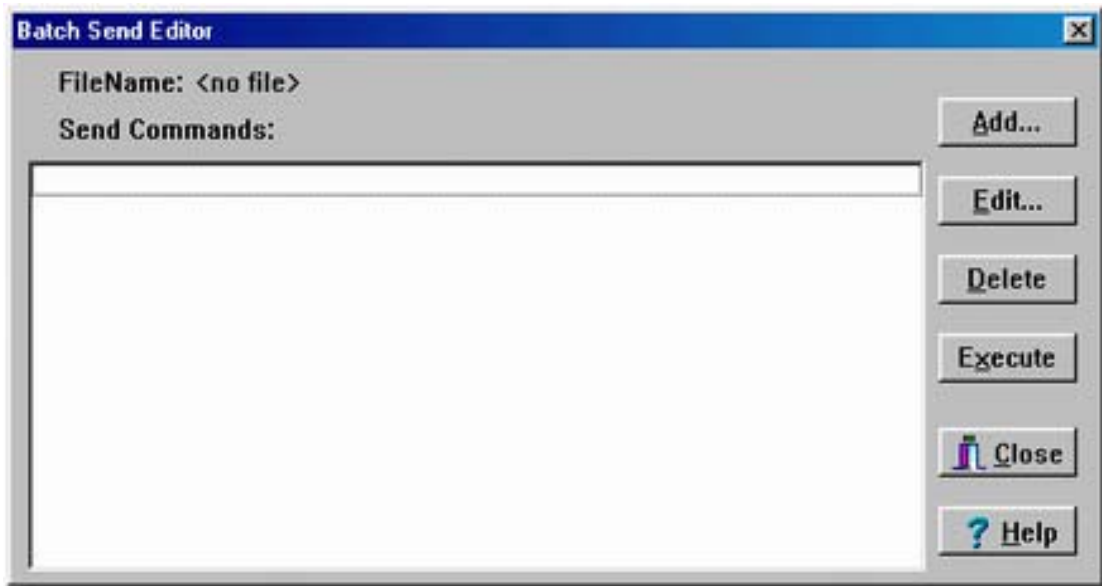
## 3.6.2 Tools | Terminal Assist

This command is for use under the direction of support. It allows you to directly communicate to the sign.

## 3.6.3 Tools | Batch Send Editor

This command will run the Batch Send Editor. The “batch send” editor is a utility to allow you to send multiple messages in one shot. This is useful in that if another sign is connected to the computer at a later time, you can load up that sign instantly with all of the messages needed.

When you activate this command, you will be prompted for a filename. Enter an existing batch editor file, or enter a new name to create one. Once you do this, the following window will appear:



From this window, you can do the following options:

- Add: Adds a new message to send to the list. You will be prompted for the message filename, and what address/message number to send it to.
- Edit: Edits the selected items in the list. To select an item, click once on the specific item.
- Delete: Deletes the selected item.
- Execute: Sends out the entire list of messages.
- Close: Closes and saves the list in the filename specified.

## 3.7 Window Commands

### 3.7.1 Window | Cascade

This command will cascade all document windows, where just the titles are visible until you activate (click) a window.



## 3.7.2 Window | Tile

This command will Tile all document windows, making them entirely visible in the main window.

## 3.7.3 Window | Arrange Icons

This command will arrange all minimized document window icons in an appealing order.

## 3.7.4 Window | Minimize All

This command will cause all document windows to be minimized into icons.

## 3.8 Help Commands

### 3.8.1 Help | Contents (or Speedbar)

This command will run the Window Help program with the MessagePro help file.

## 3.8.2 Help | About

This command will display an about box showing the current revision and other notices.

## 3.9 Troubleshooting

“I keep sending messages, but nothing happens on the sign”

- A. Sign may not be hooked up properly. Check the connections to the serial port on the computer.
  
- B. Setup may be wrong. Check the setup under Options | Communications Setup. Verify that it is setup to the proper communications port and the proper speed.
  
- C. Sign may be configured for 422 communication. If this is the case, you will need to get a 232 to 422 converter to communicate with sign.
  
- D. Sign may be faulty.

“Every time I send a message, the computer says ‘Com Port error. May be in use by another task’”

This is an error in opening the Com Port.

- A. Setup may be wrong. Check the setup under Options | Communications Setup. Verify that it is setup to the proper Com Port.
- B. Com Port may be in use by another application (such as Terminal). Close such applications and try again. If no other applications are running, try restarting windows.

“Every time I try changing the Date and/or Time, I get an error ”

- A. The date and time are in incorrect formats. Re-enter using the correct format listed in the reference manual.
- B. You may have the international settings configured to another format of date and time. Enter your date and/or time in this format instead of the format listed in the reference manual, or you can modify the settings for the United States by running Control Panel | International.

## 3.10 Other Information

MessagePro is a standard windows application that should work normally under all Windows operating systems.

If you have any problems, questions, or comments about this application, please contact Electronic Displays, Inc.

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# MessagePro for Windows Scheduler

Updated: January 9, 200

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# 1.0 Welcome and Features

Welcome to the MessagePro Scheduler! It is a versatile application that will automatically activate messages at certain times.

You should read the MessagePro manual before proceeding with this manual.

The following features are provided with the scheduler:

- Scheduling of one-time events at a day and time.
- Scheduling of repeating events that can happen many times during the week.
- Automatic activation of messages when above events occur
- Event log, to verify messages were activated.

## 1.1 Installation

The scheduler is automatically installed when you install MessagePro for windows.

## 1.2 Configuration

When the scheduler is executed, configuration of the serial ports is loaded from the MessagePro program. Due to the nature of this action, any changes in the communication setup in MessagePro will require you to close the scheduler and execute it again.

## 1.3 Running the Scheduler

## 1.3.1 TOOLS | SCHEDULER

This command will run the scheduler.

**Scheduling Messages**

00 - Nothing in Slot  
01 - Nothing in Slot  
02 - Nothing in Slot  
03 - Nothing in Slot  
04 - Nothing in Slot  
05 - Nothing in Slot  
06 - Nothing in Slot  
07 - Nothing in Slot  
08 - Nothing in Slot  
09 - Nothing in Slot

Select a Slot above, enter data below and click Change or Delete  
Then enter sign address when finished and click Send All Now.

Month: (99 for Everyday): 1 Day: 1 Year: 97

Change Hour: 2 Minute: 1

Delete Message Number to Activate: 2

Sign Address to Send To: 2

Send All Now! Done

To run the scheduler, double-click on the scheduler icon in the MessagePro Program group.

The scheduler normally runs minimized. To change events in the scheduler you will need to activate the scheduler by double-clicking on the icon on the desktop, or using the Switch To... command from the system menu.

When the scheduler is running minimized, it will handle all of the events automatically. However, when it is the active window, no events are processed. So when you are finished adding events, you should click on the Minimize menu command.

When the scheduler is active, the following window will appear.



In this window there is a menu bar with two commands on it, Minimize and Help. At the bottom of the window there are three folder tabs labeled “One-Time Events”, “Repeated Events”, and “Event Log”. Clicking on these will bring up the appropriate page of events.

The one-time and repeated event pages are similar, they both have the Add, Edit, and Delete buttons. The event log will have only one button labeled Clear Log.

## 2.0 Menu Commands

### 2.0.1 Minimize Command

This command will minimize the scheduler, allowing events to be processed. To work with the events again, double-click on the Scheduler icon on the desktop or use the Switch To command from the system menu (by using Alt-Space).

### 2.0.2 Help Command

This command will open up Windows help with the Scheduler help file.

## 3.0 Modifying One-Time Events

This next section explains on how to add, edit and delete one-time events. One-time events are events that only occur once. After they are activated, they are automatically deleted from the list. To work with one-time events, click on the “One-Time Events” tab at the bottom of the window.

## 3.1 Adding One-Time Events

To add an event, click on Add and the following will appear:

Select the sign address and message number to activate. Also enter the date and time you wish this message to activate.

Date must be in the following format:

MM/DD/YY

Time must be in the following format:

HH:MM am/pm (the seconds are optional and not used)

Click OK to save this event.

## 3.2 Editing One-Time Events

Click on Edit to edit the selected event. To select an event, click once on the event in the list. A dialog box will appear as in adding one-time events. Change the fields you wish and click OK.

## 3.3 Deleting One-Time Events

Click on Delete to delete the selected event. To select an event, click once on the event in the list. You will be confirmed for this operation.

## 4.0 Modifying Repeated Events

This next section explains on how to add, edit and delete repeated events.

Repeated events are those that happen several times a week. Repeated events can only be deleted by the user . To work with Repeated Events, click on the “Repeated Events” tab at the bottom of the window.

## 4.1 Adding Repeated Events

To add an event, click on Add and the following will appear:

Select the sign address and message number to activate. Also select the time of activation and which days of the week to activate it on.

Time must be in the following format:

HH:MM am/pm (seconds can be used, but are ignored)

Click OK to save the event.

## 4.2 Editing Repeated Events

Click on Edit to edit the selected event. To select an event, click once on the event in the list. A dialog box will appear as in adding repeated events. Change the fields you wish and click OK.

## 4.3 Deleting Repeated Events

Click on Delete to delete the selected event. To select an event, click once on the event in the list. You will be confirmed for this operation.

## 5.0 The Event Log

The event log records all activated events that are stored in the scheduler. It will also show if there was a Communications Error. If there is one, you should check your configuration through MessagePro and see if another application is using the Com Port (such as terminal).

The event log stores the 100 previous activations.

The event log can be cleared by clicking on Clear Log.

## 6.0 Other Information

All events are activated within 1 minute of the scheduled time. If you run the scheduler and there are past one-time events, they will be activated immediately. However, if repeated events are past, they will not be activated.

Due to the nature of timing in Windows, repeated events may actually be activated 3 times within the 1minute of activation time. This will not hurt the sign at all.

Remember, for the scheduler to handle events, it must be minimized.

This program should be compatible with Windows 95. However, it has not been tested for Windows 95 at the time of this printing.

# **MessagePro for Windows Version 2.5 (11)**

## **USER ADDENDUM**

Several new features have been implemented in this release of the Windows Application. This manual outlines these features.

### **Using the Scheduler**

The scheduler is now integrated directly in the sign. There is no need to have the computer running all of the time to change messages. For this reason, no scheduler will be installed. Please ignore any references to the scheduler application in the manual.

When you click on Tools | Scheduler, you will be asked for a filename of a scheduling file to store your schedules. Enter a name and click OK.

Next you will see a list of 32 “slots”. These slots represent different time and dates to activate messages.

To add an activation to the list, select an empty slot, enter the date, time, and message number of the activation and click Change. If you wish to repeat an activation, set the month to 99.

To delete an activation from the list, select it and click Delete.

Once you are finished, you will need to send these “slots” to the specific sign. To do this, enter the sign address and click Send all Now.

When you are finished sending, click Done to save your file.

NOTE: These activations are not saved during a power failure.

### **Configuring the sign**

You now have the capability of changing the sign’s address and baud rate without ever opening up a cabinet.

To do this, select Option | Sign Configuration.

Select the existing address, the new address, and the new baud rate and click OK.

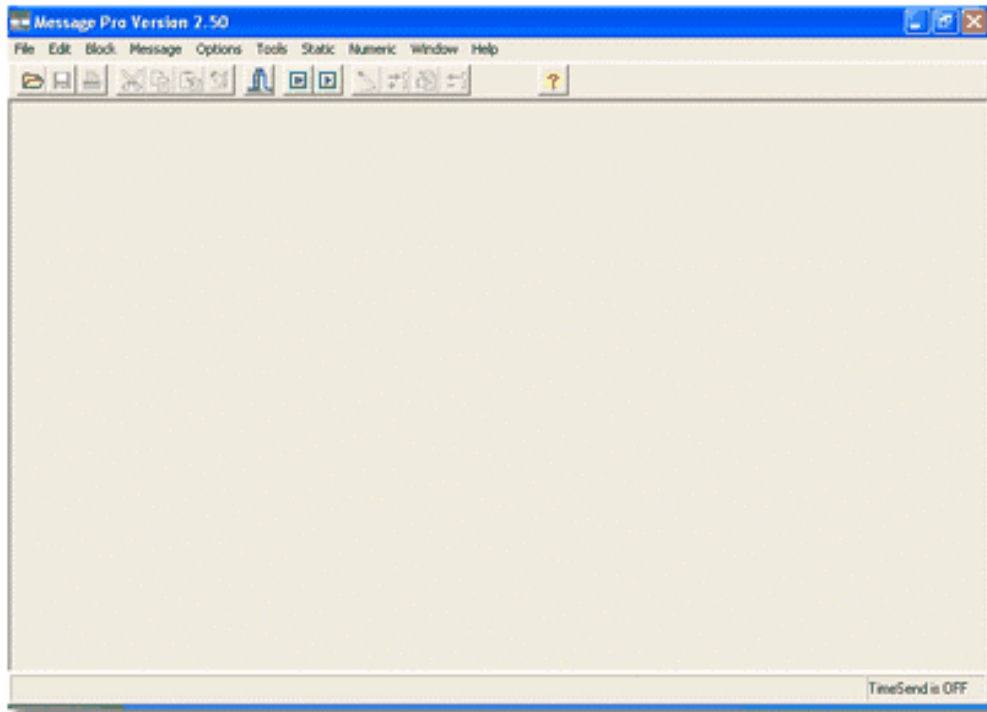
NOTE: Once you change the configuration, you will need to cycle power on the sign for it to take effect. Also, do not change the sign width unless the hardware has changed.

# Message Pro 2.XX operation:

## *Message Pro v. 2.XX Communications Setup:*

The **Message Pro** software included with the unit has a communications setup allowing you to set up the correct communications for your display. The PC will transmit these data characters to the display(s) using an RS232 (standard PC output) or by using RS422 (an RS232-RS422 data converter is required) two-wire transmission.

All communication is one-way. Verify in “**SETUP – COMMUNICATIONS**” that the Baud Rate is **1200** and the correct serial port from your PC is activated (normally **COM 1** on a desktop and laptop). See the display’s default configuration message to verify settings.

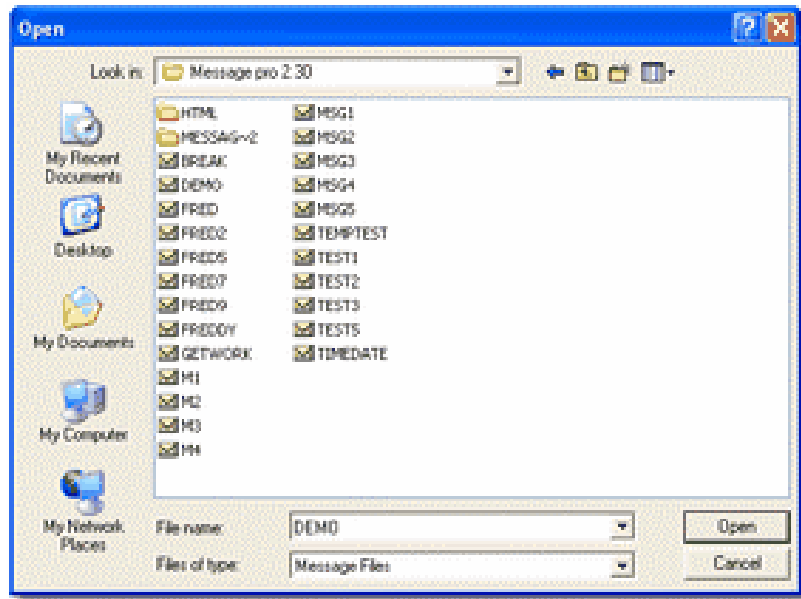


MESSAGEPRO MAIN SCREEN



## OPENING A MESSAGE

On the main screen click “Message” then “Send Message”. A screen will prompt you to load a previously created message. To create and save a message see the “CREATING MESSAGES” on page 4.



You will get the “Select Address and Message” screen asking you for the sign address and a message number. If one sign is attached to the PC, address “0” can be used as a default.



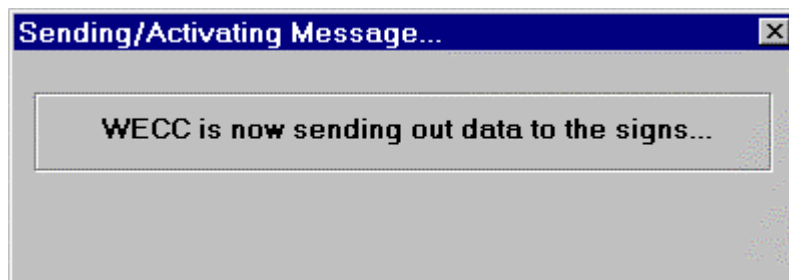
**NOTE:** To send a message other than the default configuration message, use number 1 or greater. Using message number 0 will cause the display to show its default configuration message.

## PREVIEW MESSAGES

A message can be previewed before sending to the sign. After creating and saving the message, click on “MESSAGE” – “PREVIEW MESSAGE” and click “START”. The message will then appear in a text box on your PC. This is ideal for spell checks and block functions.

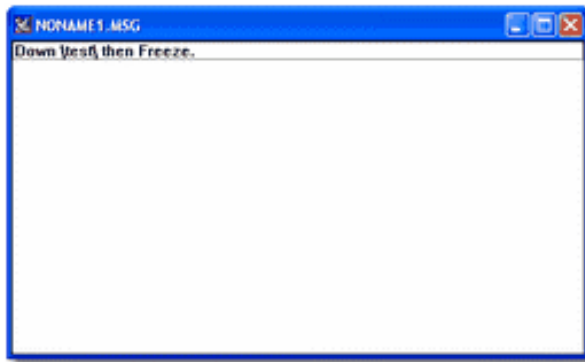


After the OK button is pressed, you will see this screen and the data should appear on the display.

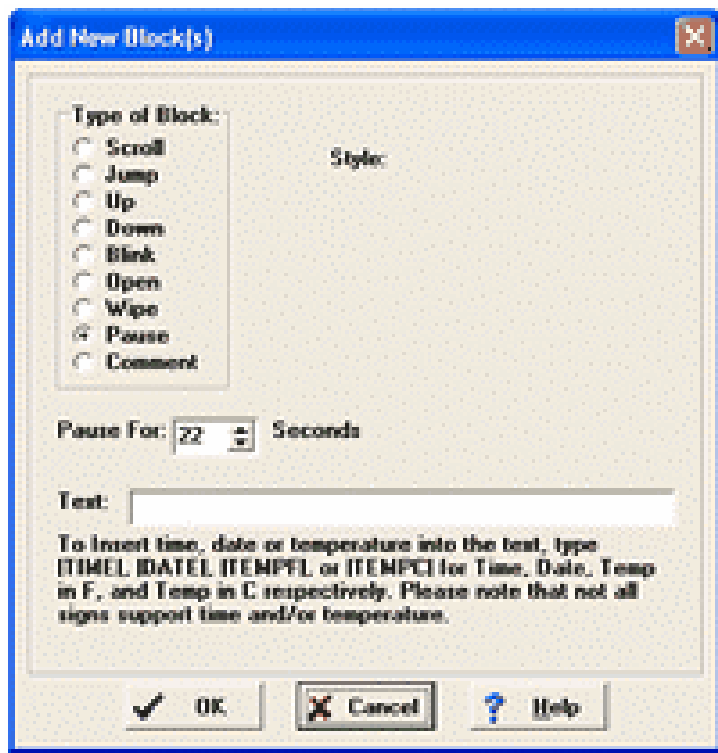


### **CREATING MESSAGES:**

Go to “FILE” - “NEW”. Select a name for your file and save it on your PC.



Then “BLOCK” – “ADD BLOCK”. Click on the block (function) for the message and type the text you want displayed in the “TEXT” field. When done, “SAVE” the message on your PC.



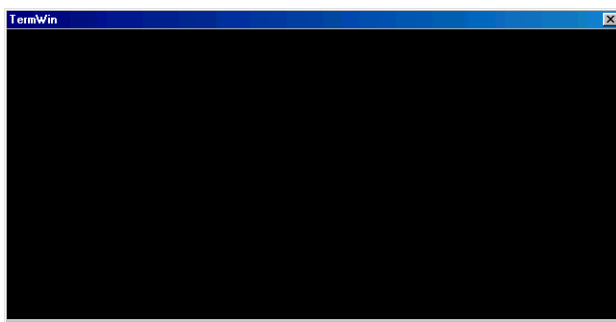
The blocks enable the message to “SCROLL”, “OPEN”, “BLINK” among others seen below. The “PAUSE” command allows the user to hold the message on the screen for a given time. When selected, a “PAUSE FOR:” tab will open enabling the user to select the pause time.

You can also select the “STYLE” that you want the message to have. “WIDE” character font, “FLASH” the message. “CENTER” the message on the display field. “FREEZE AFTER DISPLAYING” allows for pausing the message.

You will see a screen that you can type in the text and have the message display. When done with editing the message, click “CANCEL”. Close the message box and you will be prompted to “SAVE”.

## Terminal Window for Testing Communication

This screen is used to test display units with the software and communication devices. In the main screen of **MessagePro**, select “**TOOLS**” and “**TERMINAL WINDOW**”.



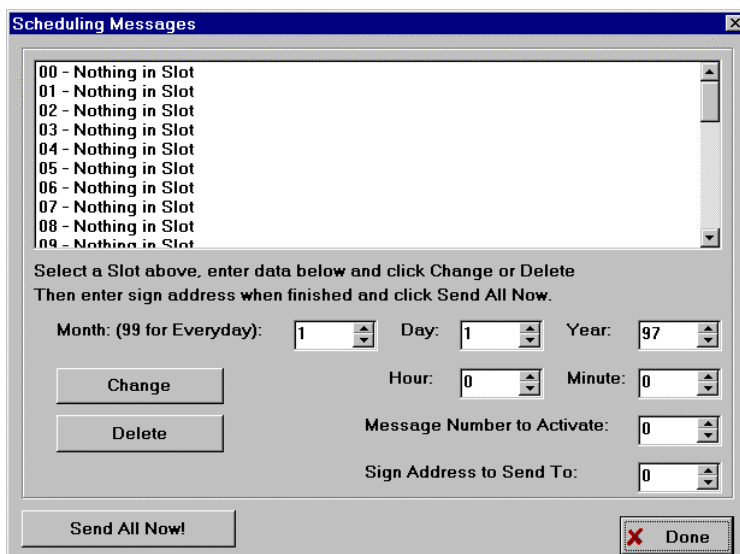
This screen allows the user to enter the protocol to preset the display. Type the following to get the required information to the sign. Please make sure the data Connection is made between the PC and display, the right COM port is used and Baud Rate transmission is 1200BPS.

### **Other options for Message Pro:**

One option is the Scheduler where you can set up certain times and dates that you want messages to activate. The program must be running in the background of your PC. The Scheduler program takes your PC's time and send out messages from this.

**Scheduler Operation:** Send out the messages normally remembering which message numbers they are stored in. Go to Tools then Scheduler. You can name the scheduler session to whatever you would like. Select the date, time, address of display, and the message number you want to see displayed in the scheduler. The times must be entered in 24 hour format. Once complete, click “**Send All Now!**” then Done.

**NOTE: All messages must be created and sent to the display prior to running the Scheduler. The messages can be sent manually or by using the Batch send editor. The batch send editor downloads all messages at one time. The Date and Time must also be sent to the display for accurate date and time scheduling.**



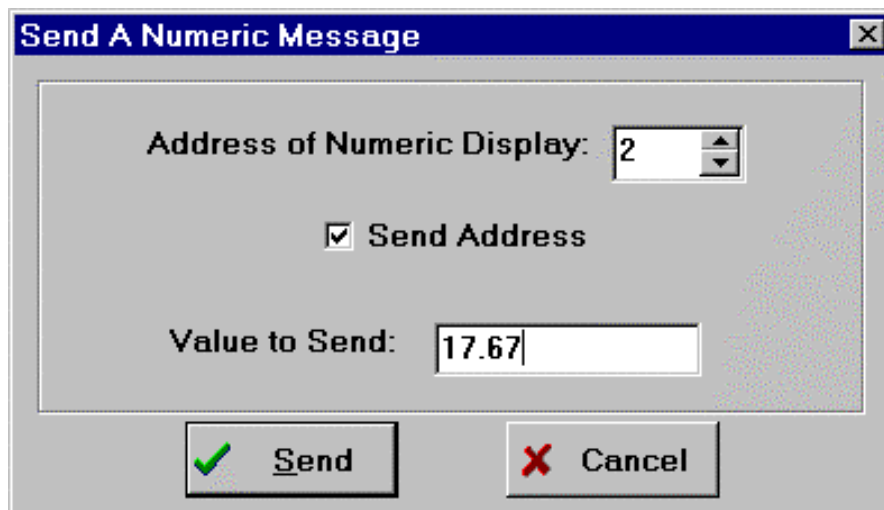
## **MessagePro Numeric Option\*:**

Another Option for MessagePro is the ability to enter numeric information into various LED display fields. This option will allow you to communicate to our standard bar segment and dot matrix displays. This option is ideal for multiple LED fields where different data needs to be displayed.

A unique two-digit address is supplied for each display field.

A “00” send-to-all address can be used to send the same data to all fields on your model.

- Click on the “**Numeric**” tab – “**Serial Only...**”.
- Select the address of the LED display field.
- Click the “**Send Address**” field.
- Enter the “**Value to Send**”.
- Click on “**Send**”.



**Numeric Display Window**

\*NOTE: This option is only intended for our numeric displays.

## Static (Fixed) Message Sign Option:

Also you can communicate to our standard static displays using the Static window option. For a three-line sign with address of 01, the configuration should look like this.

Send A Static Message

Starting Address of Static Display: [01]

Number of Lines to Send:

1    3    5    7  
 2    4    6    8

Address:	Text to send:
1	Hello
2	Welcome
3	Test Message

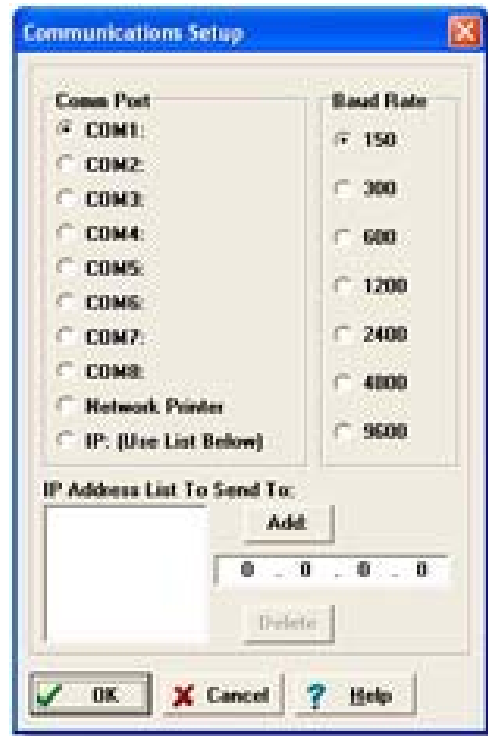
Send    Cancel

**NOTE: This option is not intended for the moving message marquees – only for static (fixed messages).**

## MessagePro Ethernet Option:

MessagePro allows the user to communicate serially using a LAN. The program is designed to communicate uni-directional through a 10BaseT Ethernet. There is no limit to the number of LED displays that can be connected using the Ethernet option.

- Open the “Options” tab at the top of the screen.
- A drop down menu will appear.
- Go to the “Communications setup” and select IP, then type in the IP address. The IP address of the unit is located on the display.



## Ethernet Specifications

- The interface is a 10baseT Ethernet. It can hook up to 10/100 port hubs if they are setup to auto-detect 10 or 100.
- Our Ethernet device listens on TCP port 23 (telnet) for incoming connections.
- Once a connection is established, the master side (pc) sends 8 bytes of data every second or so.
- As far as traffic bandwidth, it is very minimal. Most of it is actually the TCP handshaking to establish and maintain the connection. Once the connection is established, the traffic bandwidth is .0002 Mbps (if you count the TCP overhead).
- The Ethernet device can only handle one connection at a time.

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## **MessagePro Serial Data Options:**

**Ethernet:** Allows the user to communicate to a display(s) on a LAN.

**Serial Interface :** RS232 – DISTANCES up to 100' from the PC.

**Serial Interface :** RS422 / RS485 – DISTANCES up to 1000' from the PC .

**For Rs422/485:** TX+ on PC to RX+ on display  
TX- on PC to RX- on display

**For technical assistance, please call (800)-367-6056 or email: [support@electronicdisplays.com](mailto:support@electronicdisplays.com).**

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