Manual

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ELECTRONIC DISPLAYS, INC.

Tri-color Scrolling System Documents

Tri-Color Editor Double-Line Version

TRI-COLOR SCROLLING SYSTEM DOCUMENTS

Tri-Color Editor Double-Line Version

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Overview

Welcome to the Scrolling System, designed by Electronic Displays, Inc.

Here are some of the features of the Scrolling System:

- Tri-Color bright LED technology (red, green, and yellow).
- Sign capable of single-line 4" high characters or double-line 2" high characters
- Simple serial interface controlled from a PC.
- Support for effects, such as Up, Down, Wipe, and others.
- Support for the scroll speed, and flash rate.
- Support for an internal scheduler to activate messages at a day and time.
- Windows software to control the scrolling sign.

To setup the system, you will need to follow the hook-up instructions, and install the software.

Requirements

You will need at least the following to run the software:

- 486 or higher IBM compatible computer.
- Windows 3.1 or Windows 95.
- Mouse
- VGA color monitor
- A serial port not in use.

Installation

To install all of the Scrolling software, insert the distribution disk into the floppy drive. Click File|Run and type **a:\setup** (for Windows 95, click on Start|Run). Follow the on-screen instructions.

When installation is complete, there will be a new program group called **Tricolor** which contains the following applications:

- Editor - Application that allows you to create and control several scrolling displays.
- Uninstall - Utility to un-install the tri-color applications.

Operation

The Tri-Color sign is a multiplexed sign. Each sign has a unique address that is used to appropriately display the correct information coming from the PC. From the factory, each sign is set as a default to Address #1, and a baud rate of 1200 baud.

The operation of the sign is simple. Communications (serially, via RS-422 interface) comes in from the PC telling the sign what lights to turn on. This communications comes in at a speed (usually 1200 baud).

Overview

Each message that you create will contain several "blocks". These blocks are simply the text you want to display, and how to display it (by some effect). The text for each block can also be made into different colors (red, yellow, and green) and also can flash. You can also add pauses to the end of each block (to hold the message on the sign for a period of time).

Each block has a limit of 20 or 40 (depending on your sign length and whether or not to display 2" or 4" high characters) characters, except the Scrolling block, which has a limit of 200 characters.

You can chain long Scrolling blocks to create one long message.

The total size of the message cannot be larger than 16,000 characters.

There is a total of 32 messages that can be stored in the sign, each with a unique number from 1 to 32. You send the message number along with the message to the sign. Each message can hold up to 500 characters. If more characters are sent than 500, the message will overflow into the next message area. For example: You are sending a 700 character message to message #2. Since this message is over 500 characters, the last 200 will be stored at message #3's area, but the whole message will be referred as #2. In this case, you would not use message #3. (If you did, you would overwrite the last part of message #2.)

The following blocks, and what they do are as follows:

- Scrolling block, scrolls text from right to left on the display. Many of these blocks together will create one long scrolling block.

- Open block, starts the text from the middle of the display outward, horizontally.
- Wipe block,. starts the text from the left wiping on to the right.
- Up block, starts the text from the bottom scrolling up.
- Down block, starts the text from the top scrolling down.
- Jump block, displays the text instantly.
- Blink block, starts the text from the middle of display going outward, vertically.
- Double scroll block, scrolls two lines of characters from the right to the left on the display.
- Double open block, same as Open block, except shows two lines of characters.
- Double up block, same as Up block, except shows two lines of characters.
- Double down block, same as Down block, except shows two lines of characters.
- Double jump block, same as Jump block, except shows two lines of characters.

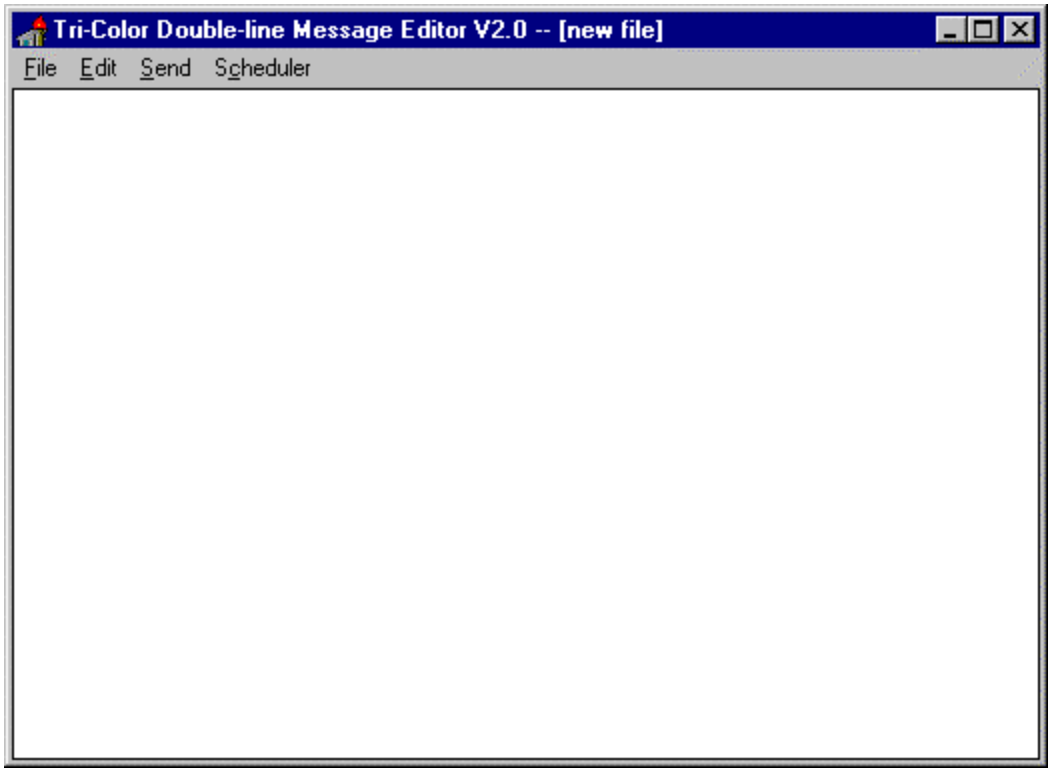
Note: due to memory limitations, there is no Double wipe or Double blink block.

Each block can have pauses added after it. Every block (except the Scrolling and Double scroll) has a built in ½ second pause. Each additional pause will add ½ second to the total.

Each block can also be centered or left-justified (except the Scrolling and Double scroll block).

Step 1: Starting the Editor

Double-click on the Tri-Color editor icon in the Tricolor group. For Windows 95, click on start, then Tricolor, then Tricolor editor. The following window will be shown:



As you can see, there are four menu lists at the top. In the middle is a list of the blocks your message contains (right now it is blank since nothing is in this message yet).

Step 2:Configuring the Editor

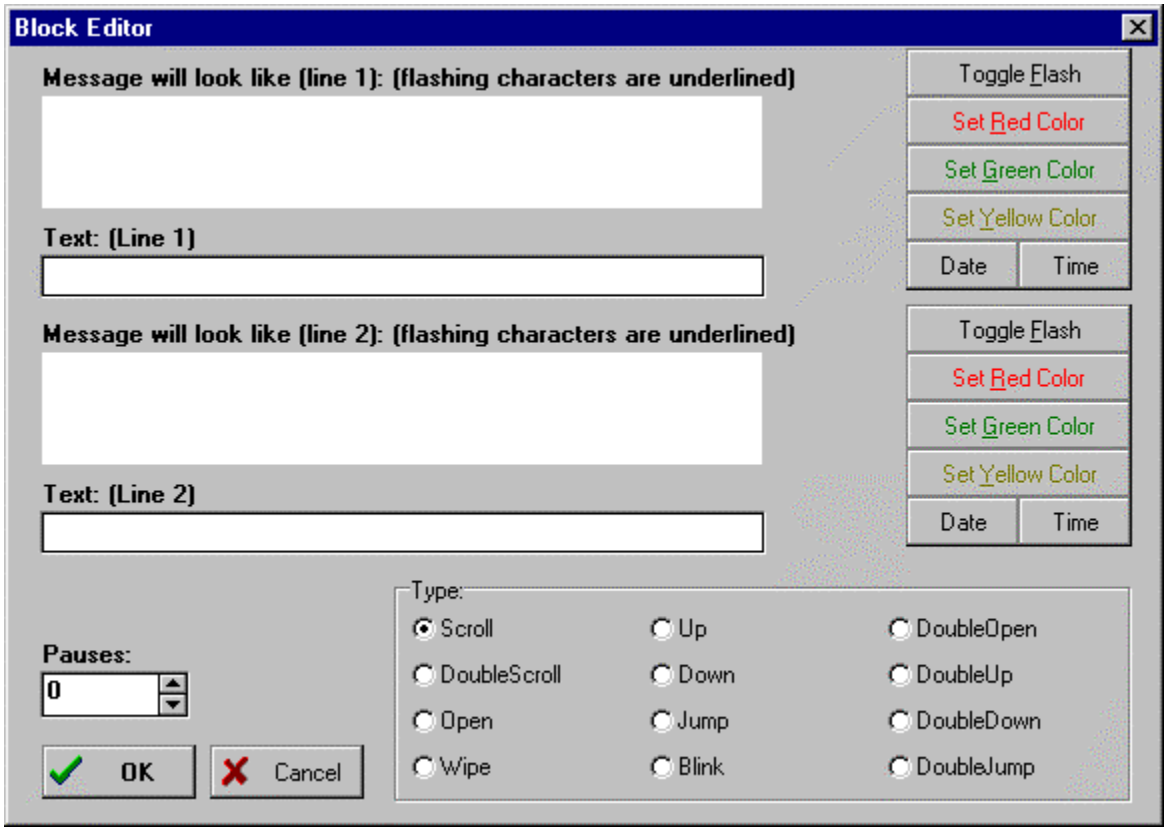
You must now setup the editor for proper communications from your PC.

Click on Send|Configuration. The communications dialog will pop up. Click on the settings that match your PC and the sign. Usually, 1200 baud and com port 2, are the correct values.

Click on OK to save the configuration.

Step 3:Creating A Message

You will now create a simple message that you can test on your sign. This message will scroll "RedGreenYellow" in each of the colors.



1. Click on Edit|Add New and the block dialog box will appear (as shown above). Notice that the window shows two lines of information. When working with one line (for the single block commands), you will only enter data at the "Text: (Line 1)" location.

2. Type the word "Red". Notice that the top of the dialog box shows the word "Red" in the color red.

3. Click on the "Set Green Color" button. Notice that the editor has inserted a code into your text at the bottom. (This code will not be displayed in your message.)

4. Type the word "Green". Notice that the top of the dialog shows the text "RedGreen" with "Red" in red, and "Green" in green.

5. Click on the "Set Yellow Color" button. Once again, a code has been inserted into your text.

6. Type the word "Yellow". Notice that "yellow" follows the "RedGreen" text at the top of the dialog box, and is shown in yellow.

7. Click on the Scroll type selection, and make sure the pauses are zero.

8. Click the OK button. This will save the block into your message.

9. You will now be asked for another block. For now, click Cancel.

10. Now you should see the main screen with your first block shown. Your entire message is shown here, and can be scrolled, if needed.

11. Save your work. Click on File|Save. Enter the filename "test" and click OK.

12. Send your messsage. Click on Send|Send Message. You will be asked for the Address number of the sign, and the message number to send to.. You can now select an individual sign (if you have many), select an Address of 0 to send the message to all the signs. Select a message number of 1. Click OK The message should start running on the sign.

13. Follow through with additional commands as listed below. We have included a demo message that you can load and send. (The filename is demo.m3c).

File|New Command (Ctrl-N)

Clicking on this will create a new file for you to work with (a new message). If you have not saved your previous message, you will be prompted to do so.

File|Open Command (Ctrl-O)

This will allow you to open an existing message. If you have not saved your current message, you will be prompted to do so, if you wish.

File|Save Command (Ctrl-S)

This saves your current message. If your message is not named yet, you will be prompted for a name.

File|Save As Command (Ctrl-A)

This will save your current message under a new name.

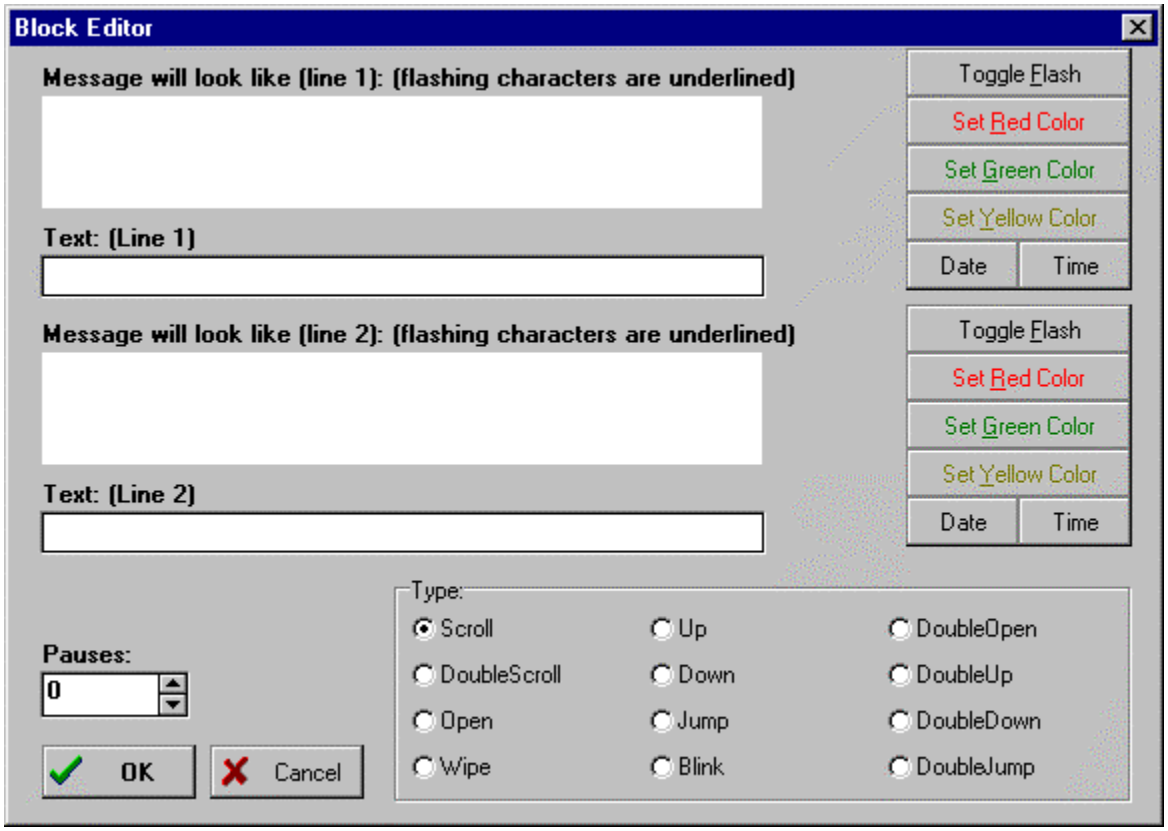
File|Print Command (Ctrl-P)

This will print your message out to the currently selected printer.

File|Printer Setup Command

This will allow you to change printers for printing messages.

Edit|Edit Selection Command (Ctrl-E)



You must click on a block in your message before you can edit it. Once you that, clicking this command will bring up the block editor (as shown above). In this editor, you can select the new type (or effect), select whether or not it is to be centered, and how many pauses are to follow. You can edit the text for each line (only the top line is used for the "Single" line effects) in the "Text" area. You can also change the colors by placing the cursor before the text you want to change color, and click on one of the "Set Color" buttons. This will insert a code into the text. You can also do this with the flashing button. You can also insert the date and/or time into the message by clicking on the Date and Time buttons. Your text, as it will appear on the sign, will be shown at the top of the dialog box. Any flashing characters will be underlined. Any time or date insertions will be shown as |TIME| and |DATE| respectively.

Edit | Delete Selection Command (Del)

This will delete the highlighted block in your message.

Edit|Insert New Command (Ins)

This will insert new blocks before the selected block in your message. You will be shown the block editor as in "Edit Selection" above. Click on the cancel button once you have inserted all of the new blocks.

Edit|Add New Command

This will add new blocks to the end of your message. You will be shown the block editor as in "Edit Selection" above. Click on the cancel button once you have added all of the new blocks.

Send|Configuration Command

This allows you to change the communications port and the baud rate. The communications port must match the one used on the PC for the sign. The baud rate must match the baud rate on the sign. Click OK when finished.

Send|Send Message Command (F9)

This command will send the current message out to the sign. You will be asked for the address of the sign to send to. Enter the address or enter 0 to send to all. Then click OK.

Send|Setup Flash Rate Command

This command will change the flashing rate of any flashing characters in your message. Select which address of the sign to change (0 for all), click on the speed, and click OK.

NOTE: You must send a new message for the new speed to take effect.

Send|Setup Scroll Speed Command

This command will change the scrolling speed of any scrolling blocks in your message. Select which address of the sign to change (0 for all), click on the speed, and click OK.

NOTE: You must send a new message for the new speed to take effect.

Send|Send Date and Time

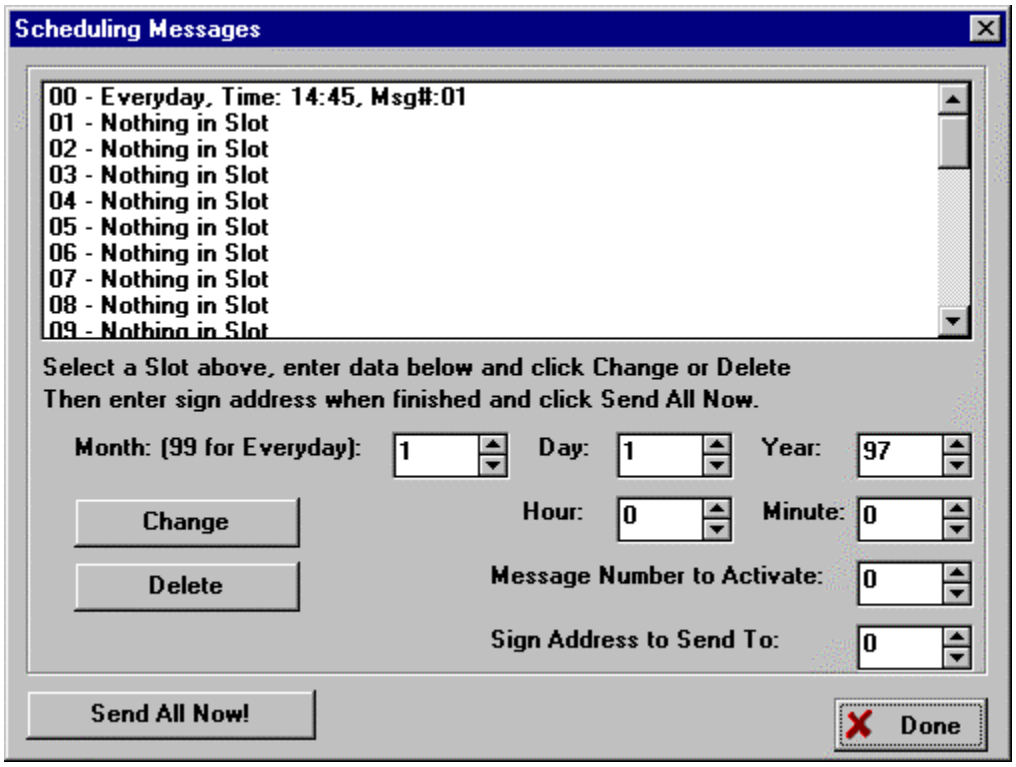
This command will send the current date and time that is set on the PC to all displays hooked up to the PC. If you need to send a different time, change it by going to the Windows control panel. This feature allows you to have the correct date and time in the sign for use with the scheduler.

Scheduler

This command allows you to send "schedules" to the sign. Each sign can have up to 32 schedules. A schedule identifies when the message is to display (either at a certain day and time, or everyday at a certain time) and what message number to show. Before using the scheduler, you should send each desired message to an appropriate message number. Save this number for use here.

Once you click on the scheduler, you will be prompted for a name to save the schedules to or to open up. Enter an existing name, or enter a new name to create it.

After you enter the name, the following window will appear:

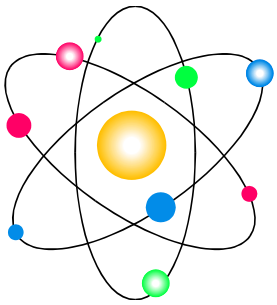


To enter a new schedule: Select a blank spot in the list above (a slot that says "Nothing in Slot"). Enter the desired date and time for the activation. Then enter the message number to show. You can enter 99 for the month to make the activation happen every day at the specified time. The hour for the activation MUST be in

24-hour format. When finished, click on the Change button, and your schedule should be shown in the list. Please note that it has not been sent to the sign yet.

To edit or delete an existing schedule: Select the desired schedule from the list. Change the date, time, and message number. When finished, click on Change to change it, or Delete to remove it from the list.

When you are finished: If you wish to send the schedule to the sign now, enter a sign address in the field shown above, and click on Send All Now. The schedules will be sent only to that sign address. They will also be saved in the file name you gave at the beginning. If you do not wish to send the schedule now, click on Done, and your schedules will be saved on the PC, but not sent to the sign.



Support

We fully support our product. If you have any questions or comments about this system, please do not hesitate to call us.

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1-800-367-6056