User Manual

Updated for version 1.6

SOFTWARE LICENSE AGREEMENT

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Definitions and Interpretation

- Software means the Program modules enabled and authorised for use for your installation.
- Hardlock device means the hardware device used to enable the Software to function.
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Table of Contents

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Before you Begin…

Scope and audience

This manual covers both operation and technical aspects required to use *NeoGroup*. 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 *NeoGroup* 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 *NeoGroup* 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 *NeoGroup*:

- *NeoGroup* software installation CD-ROM
- *NeoGroup* software user's guide
- Hardware protection device
- 'Unlock' code supplied by Timestone Software
- Your computer complies with the hardware and software specifications as outlined in Chapter 3, **Installing *NeoGroup***.

Learning *NeoGroup*

Included on the *NeoGroup* CD-ROM are contained the following resources:

- Installation files
- *NeoGroup* 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 are:

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 Problems'.

Our WWW and e-mail contacts are:

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

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System Requirements

Hardware requirements

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

If you have a choice in areas that you can afford to exceed these requirements – do this 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" colour 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 *NeoGroup* 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 products. If your requirements are low volume, you could consider a single 9Gb hard, 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.

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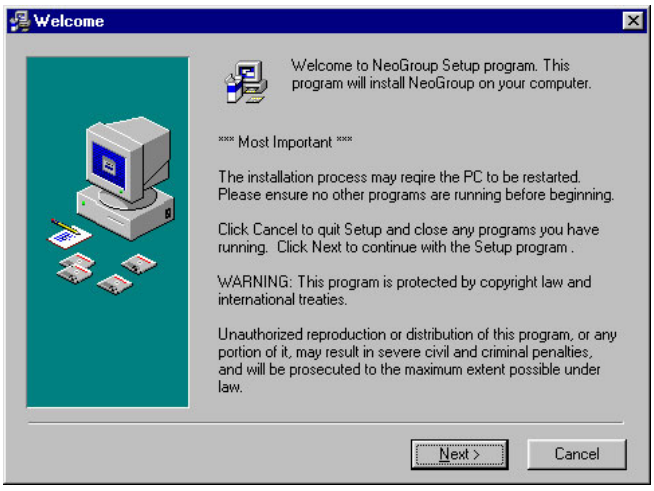
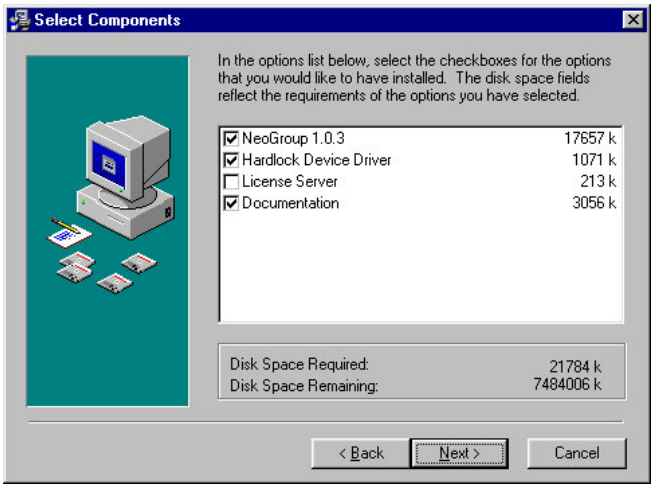
Installing *NeoGroup*

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

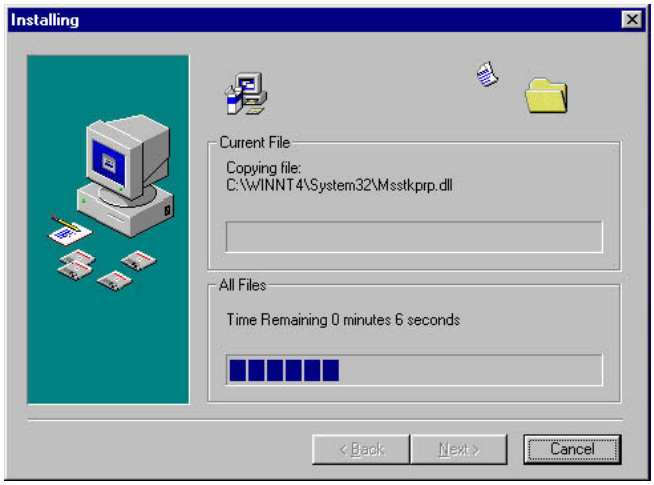


The installation process may require a restart mid-way through the process. If the installer requests you to restart the PC, please do so, as the installation is not able to complete without the restart.

- 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.

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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 will then be 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 no 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.

Connect the hardlock to the License Server's parallel port.

Configuring and testing the license server

The hardlock can be connected to any machine in the local area network. This machine doesn't have to have a *Neo* application installed to act as a hardlock server.

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 app. Allow the installer to re-start the PC as required.

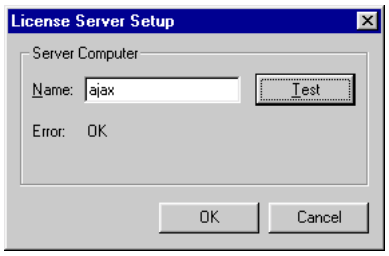
License Server configuration

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 the *Neo* applications you will purchase 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.

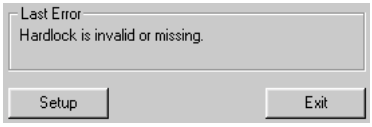
Adding the licenses to the license server

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.

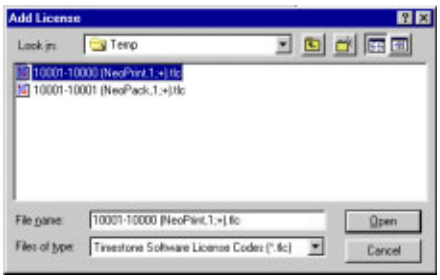
Pay particular attention to any errors displayed in the **Last Error** section. Before any configuration has been carried out, it may display **Missing/empty license code table file.** This error will disappear once valid licenses have been installed. If the error reads **Hardlock is invalid or missing**,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

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Understanding *NeoGroup*

NeoGroup is a highly automated creation tool for labs wanting to create traditional group images digitally. It offers tight integration with other *Neo* applications, sharing name and other data with these. There are many different ways *NeoGroup* can be used to create the group jobs, each method offering additional automation and labour saving.

When creating a group image, name data is either imported or manually entered, the groups created, then the row lists are constructed. When production is ready to be run, the group is chosen, then a template selected. The template contains all the graphic elements required to create the final group, as well as special replaceable '@' codes. This means that you can design a series of templates at the beginning of your season, include special text codes in the name board, as well as tagged graphic objects that represent the school logo, or perhaps the principal's photograph.

When the template is selected, the necessary data – such as the school name, class teacher, the school logo graphic and other variable objects is placed into the design. The result is a finished and attractive traditional group image, created with a minimum of effort.

NeoGroup's main features

Image Handling

Images imported to *NeoGroup* can be cropped, zoomed, and correct for colour, density and contrast. The aspect ratios involved in your production is previewed on-screen by super-imposing lines indicating the aspects. Images can be corrected quickly using either the mouse or keyboard.

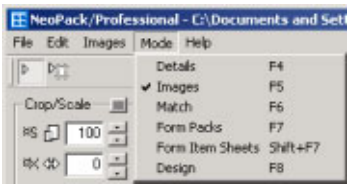
Name Data and Group structure

Names can be either imported via a text file, or manually entered. Upon entry or import, the names are gathered into the relevant group lists for later use constructing the row lists. The data and images are gathered together as 'Folders' and 'Groups'. Folders can contain more folders, allowing a natural data structure be created (The 'Year 3' folder is a sub folder of the 'Junior School' folder), as well as the groups themselves.

Folders have special properties such as the 'School Name', or 'Principal Name' that allows the templates to gather the required data together for a particular group automatically.

Template based design

NeoGroup uses a template to create the designs used for production. The templates can contain both fixed and variable objects, which are placed into layers in a template. Layers can be positioned in front or behind one another. Layers can contain bitmap or Vector (WMF) graphics, as well as text objects.



Templates also support 1 bit image transparency, allowing images be placed 'into' another image.

Variable objects

NeoGroup templates allow special variable objects be placed into a design. These variable objects can be either text or graphic types, and allow a single template be designed and used for many different schools. For example, you might place an object into a design that represents the school logo. The logo bitmap is imported and identified as 'Logo' for this particular job. Once printed, *NeoGroup* fetches all the necessary variable objects, and places them automatically.

Name entry

Row lists can be constructed using pre-entered or imported name data for quick entry, or manually typed. If the name data is available, entry is done by typing a few characters of either the first or last name – or even an ID number. The names that match the characters entered are displayed for quick entry in the row list.

If names have not been entered previously, the row lists can be constructed manually by entering the names.

Job creation

Jobs are finally created by choosing the group, then applying a template from those available. Groups can be created singly or as a group.

Using *NeoGroup*'s interface

Once *NeoGroup* has been installed, choose *NeoGroup* from the **Start menu > Program Files > Timestone Software**. *NeoGroup* 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 *NeoGroup***.

There are 5 distinct modes of operation for *NeoGroup*. Depending on which mode you are in, the screen contents will appear quite different. Switch modes by choosing **Mode >** then the desired mode. The 5 modes are:

- **Details mode** – import and edit job name and other details
- **Images mode** – import crop and color correct the portrait images
- **Names mode** – add names to row lists
- **Form Packs mode** – form the finished pages
- **Design mode** – create the templates to be used for the pages

Image Mode

Images are imported, cropped, corrected, then allocated to groups.

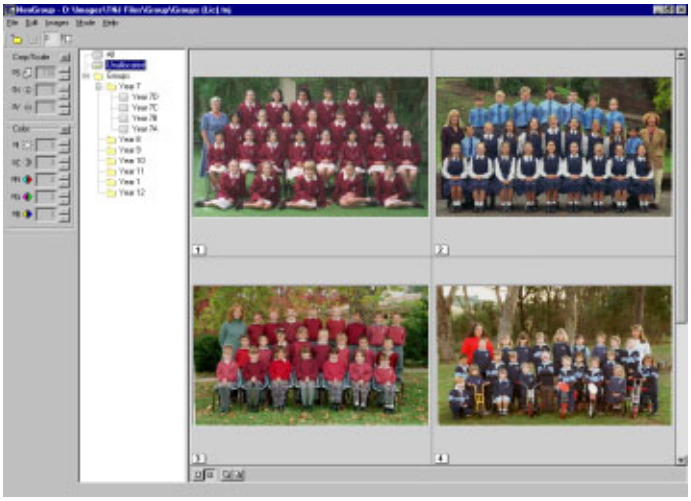


Figure 1: Image Mode

Details Mode

Folders are created and manipulated, name data entered or imported.

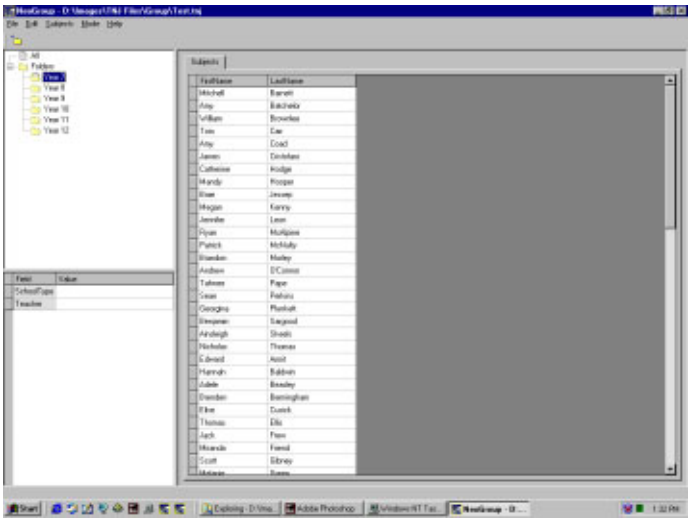


Figure 2: Details mode

Names Mode

The row lists for each group are constructed.

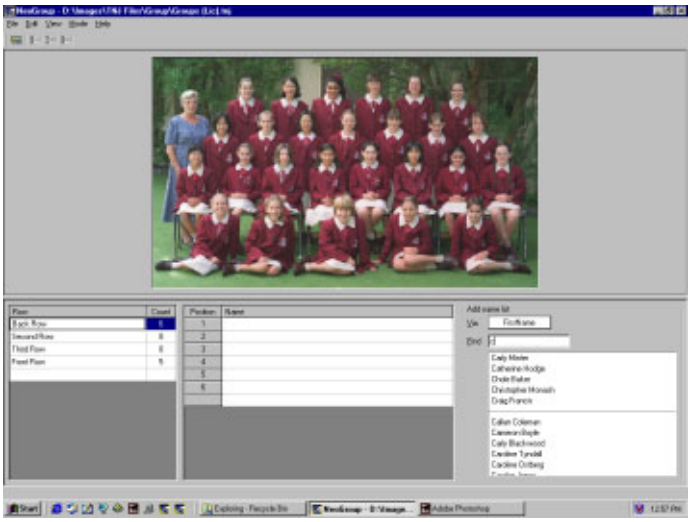


Figure 3: Names Mode

Design Mode

Design templates for use with your group images.

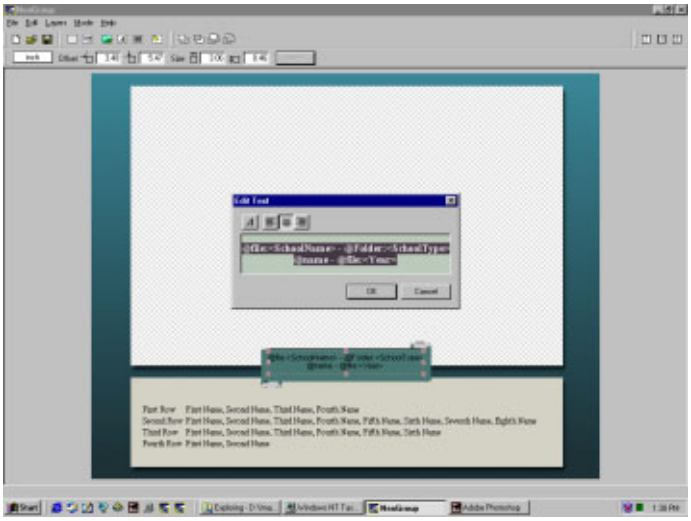


Figure 4: Design Mode

Form Pages mode

Where the jobs are finally created, ready to be printed.

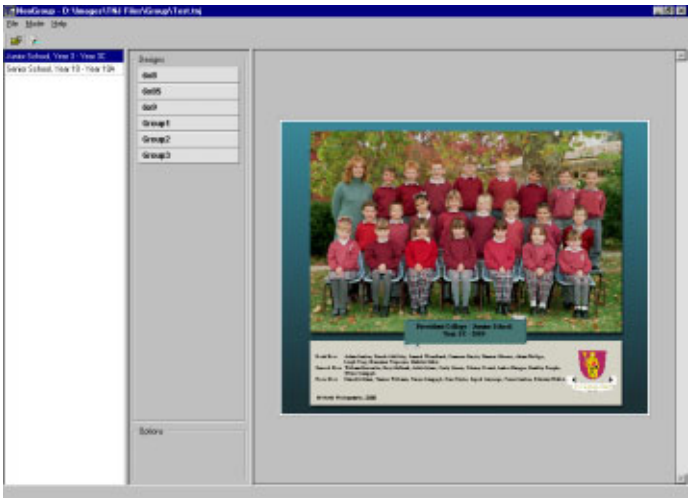


Figure 5: Form Page mode

Common interface elements

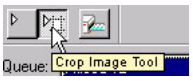
Regardless of the mode currently selected, there are several common elements you will see when using *NeoGroup*.

Using toolbars

Each of the *NeoGroup* toolbars features tooltips, and docking.

Tooltips

You can get a brief description of a toolbar button by pointing the mouse at a button for a second. A tooltip will appear, giving a brief description of the button.



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.

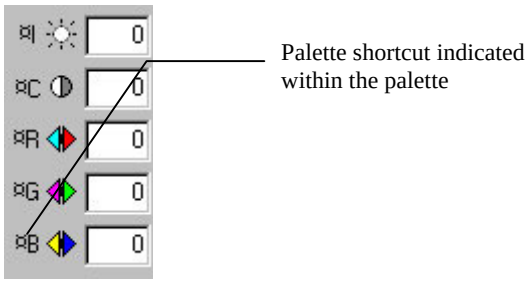
Figure 6: Resizing a pane

Each of the panes has a minimum size. If you drag the pane past its minimum size, it will completely close, and the other windows will expand to take its place.

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 hilighted ready for use.



6

Configuring *NeoGroup*

Setting the Program defaults

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

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

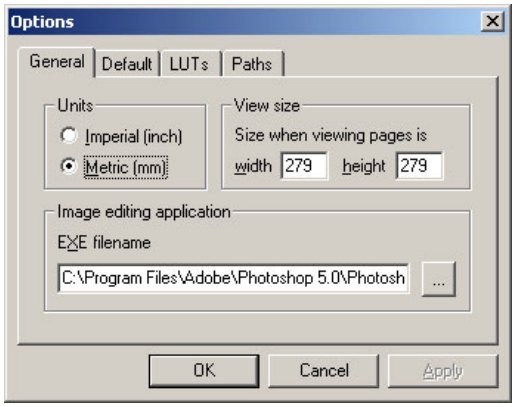


Figure 7: Options dialog

Measurement units

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

View size

When displaying a pack preview, the display is relative to the size set here. For example, if a pack is 8 x 8", and the **View size** is set to a width and height of 20", the pack will appear quite small when previewed. Conversely, if a pack is 8 x 16", and the **View size** is set to 10 x 10", the pack will be clipped in the preview window.

Figure 8: The same group with the View setting set to 20x20 (right), and 12x12 (left)

Image Editor

NeoGroup 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

Aspect ratios in *NeoGroup* are particularly important. Due to the nature of Traditional Group photography, a single job can involve a number of different print sizes, even in a single roll of film.

This means that you will probably use several different print sizes when printing your Traditional Groups conventionally. When using *NeoGroup* to create your work, you need to allow for this possibility as well. Often, this means that you will have several different versions of the same template, each one containing a different print size.

The aspect ratios you use within *NeoGroup* than should reflect exactly the print sizes involved in your group prints. For example, you might use the following print sizes to cover all possible prints in your production:

- 6x9"
- 6x8.5"
- 6x8

You would then define these aspects within *NeoGroup*.

Determining the ideal crop

Once defined, the aspect ratios are displayed super-imposed over the top of the group image.

Figure 9: Cropping image showing 3 different aspect ratios

As discussed later, you can jog an image by zooming the image, or moving it around. Using these controls, you can position and size the image so that it is cropped optimally for all the different aspect ratios.

Defining 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.

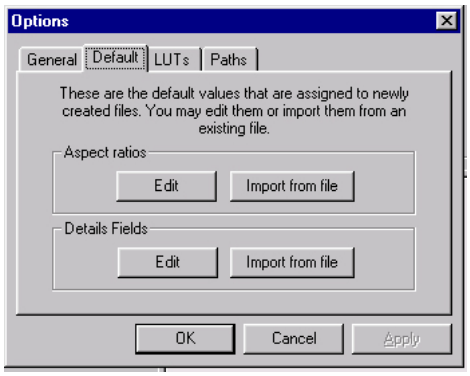


Figure 10: The Options Default tab

Choose **Aspect ratios > Edit**. The Aspect ratio editor is displayed. Any Aspect ratios defined here are available each time a new *NeoGroup* file is created.

Defining Aspect Ratios

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

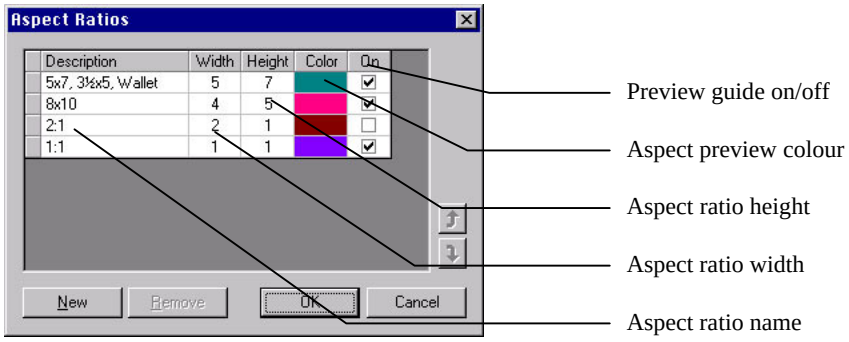
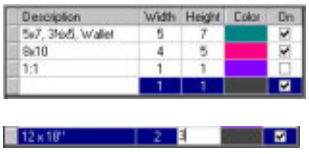


Figure 11: The Aspect Ratio dialog

You will notice that the first time you open this dialog, there may be some aspect ratios already defined. These are the program default aspect ratios discussed in the previous point.

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.

You can only use whole numbers to define a **Width** or **Height**. If your print size is 6x8.5, multiply both values by 2, and enter 12 and 17 as the values.

Import existing Aspect Ratios

Aspect Ratios can be imported from existing *NeoGroup* files. Choose **Import from File** from the **Default** options tab. A 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.

Active aspect ratios are now overlayed on the images.

Figure 12: Image showing Aspect Ratio indicators

Using the Aspect Ratio indicators

The aspect ratio indicators show the edge of the various print sizes, allowing the best crop for the various aspect ratios being prepared to be decided. For information on zoom and crop operations, see Chapter 9, **Images mode**.

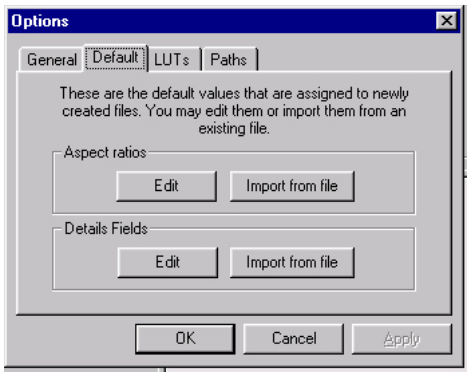
Defining default Fields

There are various information fields that are used in *NeoGroup*. Certain fields are best set as program defaults. Each time a new file is created, it will inherit the default values. You should review the later chapters in the manual regarding these fields before changing the settings here.

Once you're familiar with the usage of these fields, you can set the program defaults.

Adding default fields

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



Click the **Details Fields > Edit** button. The default **Data** Fields dialog is displayed. Note there are three tabs. Each of these tabs allows global, major item and individual data fields to be set.

The Subject Fields tab

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

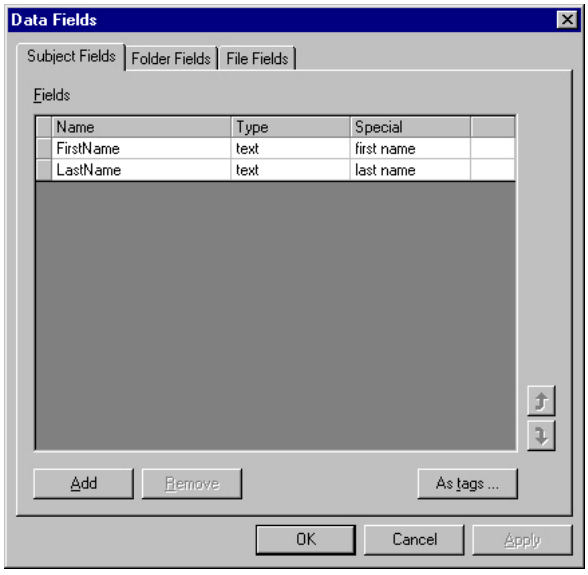


Figure 13: The Subject Fields tab

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 a special attribute

Fields can be assigned a special attribute that identify 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 cluck the **Special** drop-down for that field. A list of available attributes is displayed.

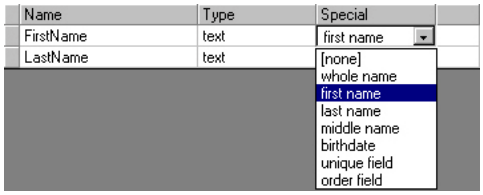


Figure 14: Assigning a Field Attribute

There are several special fields that are built-in to *NeoGroup* 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

The Folder Fields tab

You can define default folder fields in this tab.

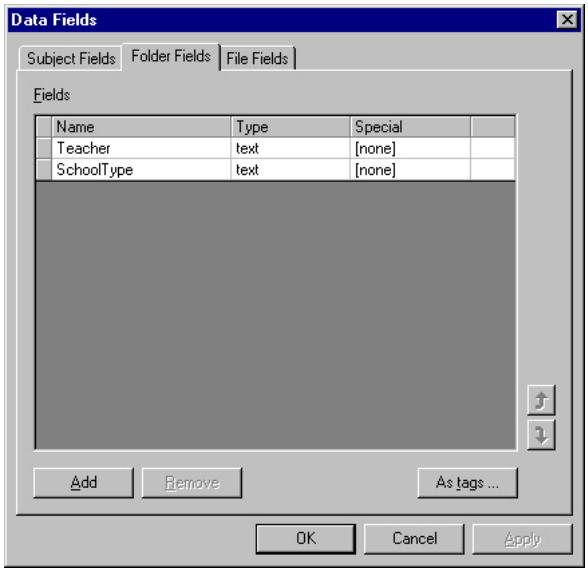


Figure 15: The Folder Fields tab

The File Fields tab

You can define default folder fields in this tab.

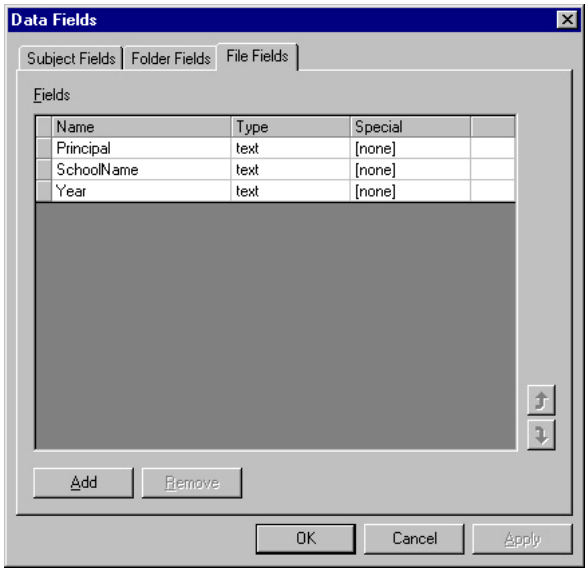


Figure 16: The File Fields tab

Once you have set the desired fields, choose **OK.**

Monitor calibration

NeoGroup allows your monitor to be standardised using the **Monitor Calibration Wizard**. To enable and run the wizard, choose the **LUTs** tab and ensure **Enable monitor LUT** is checked. If this option is enabled, the monitor calibration wizard must be run. See Chapter 13 for more information regarding calibration.

Defining the High Resolution image and Design File locations

Images can be imported with a reference to a high resolution image. In order to print with the high resolution data, *NeoGroup* must be told where to find these files.

The way you set up *NeoGroup* to find the files can be done in several ways. It is recommended that you think how the image data will flow around your lab. For example, if you are a smaller lab, you might keep all the image data on the same machine that you create and print the jobs from. Alternately, you might be a larger lab who has several workstations sharing both jobs and the high-resolution images and templates.

NeoGroup can also use the original location of the image files as the source. If the original files are moved to another location, then original link is invalid. *NeoGroup* will fall back to the path searching described next to try to locate the files.

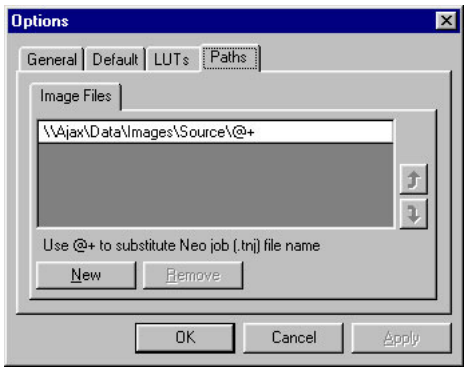
If you ask *NeoGroup* to use the original file location to locate the image files, be sure that you still put the files in a predictable place. We strongly recommend you keep the high-resolution image files in an ‘Images’ directory, and each job’s files

are stored in a folder named with some identifier – perhaps the school name or booking reference.

Setting the file locations

To set the default image file paths, choose **File > Options** and choose the **Paths** tab, then the **Image Files** tab. Choose **New**, then enter the desired path. It is recommended that you use UNC (Universal Naming Convention) to specify the path. This avoids configuration errors when drive letters change un-expectedly. See a description of UNC naming later in this chapter.

Once all the desired paths have been entered, choose **OK.**



Specifying a path.

There are several different ways a path can be 'filled in' by *NeoGroup*. They are:

Path 'Fill in' type	**Usage**
Same directory as job file	*NeoGroup* will look for the high resolution images in the same directory as the job file. Best for smaller labs.
Sub-directory from job file	*NeoGroup* looks for the high resolution images in the named sub-directory from that where the job file is in. Good for small or large labs
Image root directory	*NeoGroup* looks for the high resolution in a sub-directory named the same as the job file. Best for large labs
Absolute path	*NeoGroup* looks for the files in the exact path as entered. This is not a recommended method.

You should choose the method that best suits your lab's workflow. It is possible to specify more than one path statement, although it is recommended that you choose and use one method only.

Same directory as job file

If the path statement is entered as:

.

NeoGroup 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, 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

NeoGroup will search for the source images in the \Images\Job1\Source subdirectory.

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 **Ajax**. 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:

\\Ajax\Data\Images

Finally, we need to specify the final search directory to find the source images. Using the **@+** code, *NeoGroup* 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:

\\Ajax\Data\Images\@+

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

\\Ajax\Data\Images\Job2\

Absolute path

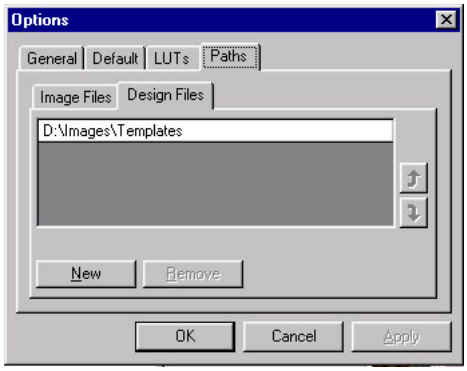
Enter a path statement that points directly to the images. *NeoGroup* will look to this directory to find the images. Not a recommended method, as it is completely in-flexible.

Adding a Design file location

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

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 (\\Zeus\Vault\…) or mapped drive letters as a valid path.

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



7

Using *NeoGroup* – Overview

NeoGroup can be configured for use in several ways. If your lab has access to name and other data to use to construct the row lists, the construction process is very quick and easy. You might like to configure it to use automated templates, or design a template for each school. Using *NeoGroup* all of *NeoGroup*'s automation features means that you will need to spend a little more time setting up a particular job, but overall the automation means that your production time and hassle levels will be lower.

If you don't want to use the automation features, or don't have the row lists available as a data file, *NeoGroup* still allows you to create your Traditional Group jobs quickly and effectively.

Understanding a *NeoGroup* job

A *NeoGroup* job can start in several different places, depending wether photography has been done, and the scanned images are available, or if you have the name data as a text file. However the job starts, you will need to set up the file to reflect the structure of the groups being photographed.

A *NeoGroup* job consists of various folders that contain the group images, matching name data (if available) and other variable objects such as the school name, logo image etc.

NeoGroup presents these folders and groups in a similar manner to Windows Explorer. In the example below, we are working on a school, 'Provident School'. This school has two major campuses, 'Junior School' and 'Senior School'. Years 1 to 7 belong to the Junior School, and share a common Head Teacher, who has no relationship to the 'Senior School'. Years 8 to 12 belong to the 'Senior School', and they have their own Head Teacher.

Both the Junior and Senior school share the same Principal, School Colours and Logo.

Figure 17: An Image attached to a group

Once a group has been created, it can be dropped into a Year folder and associated with a particular folder. Now, that group inherits all the special attributes of that folder, and those upstream from it. For example, in the above image, we are viewing the ‘Year 1B’ group. Year 1B is a member of the ‘Year 1’ folder. Upstream from the Year 1 folder, we see the ‘Junior School’ folder, then the ‘Provident School’ folder, and finally the ‘Groups’ folder.

Any information dropped into the ‘Year 1’ folder is available for use for groups in that folder. Similarly, and information dropped into the ‘Junior School’ folder is also available to the Year 1 thru 7 groups. However, any information dropped into the ‘Junior School’ folder is not available for use by ‘Senior School’ groups.

Using this folder structure, it is possible to define data, text or graphic objects that can be available for a specific group only, to a major gathering of groups like the ‘Junior School’ folder. Likewise, you can define global properties that belong to all groups being created by this file.

How to structure a job

Generally, you will structure your files in two ways, depending how automated you want your production to become.

Full automation

If you want to use all the automation functionality *NeoGroup* offers, you will need to set up a folder structure that exactly mirrors the structure of the groups you are photographing.

Figure 18: A tightly structured *NeoGroup* file

Loose automation

You will always need to use some automation features when using *NeoGroup*. For example, the group name printed in the final product is always taken from the group name. However, if you don't need automatically placed objects, and don't need complex board name information, you can place groups loose under the 'Groups' main folder.

Figure 19: A loosely structured *NeoGroup* file

However, the automation features add so many possibilities, you'll want to use them.

Using Templates

NeoGroup jobs are formed by applying a template to a group. A template contains all the graphic objects, text and the various placed objects, and so determines how the final job looks. The various images and text objects are placed in the designer, and saved as a file.

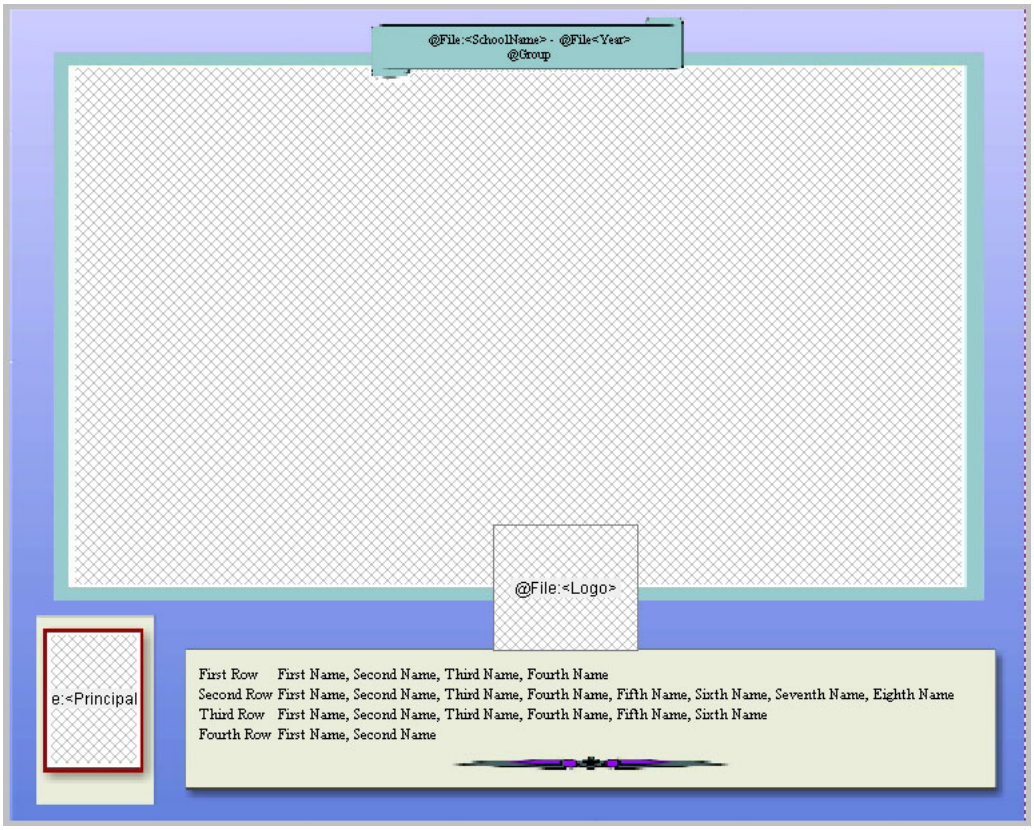
When a group is ready to be printed, the template is applied to the group image, and any of the necessary objects are automatically gathered together and placed on the image.

Variable objects can be placed into a template, allowing the automation functionality of *NeoGroup*. The sorts of variable objects that can be placed include:

Variable object	Description
Text or graphic object – File	Text or graphic information that is common to all the groups. For example, the school name, or school's logo.
Text or graphic object - Folder	Text or graphic information that belongs to a sub-group of the whole job. For example, a year grouping (Year 7), or a school campus (Junior School). Folder graphic objects might include a Year's mascot, or the photograph of the 'Senior School' head teacher.
Text object – Group	Text or graphic information belonging to a group. For example, the group name (Year 7A) or the name and photo of the group's teacher.

In the following example, you can see several placed objects, both text and graphics:

The template that creates this image might appear like this:



Benefits of using templates

Using templates to form the Group images offers great speed and flexibility for your lab. Design your templates at the beginning of the season, create the row lists with the photography data, then apply a template.

Importing Name data

NeoGroup allows existing name data be imported and used to construct the lists. If you don't have this data, it is possible to enter the names manually. However, the task is much easier and quicker if the name data is available from some other data source. Even if the data source is not completely up to date, you should attempt to use such a source.

Data sources

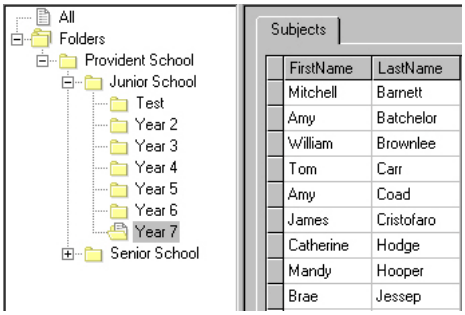
Most schools around the world have some name information available in digital format that you can use with *NeoGroup*. It is possible to import name data from a text file, either delimited or fixed length.

Typically, the data file would contain the first and last name, group and perhaps an ID number. Importing the text file creates all the necessary folders and places the member names into those folders.

A portion of a typical file would look like:

```
"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"
```

After the names have been imported, the following folder structure is created in *NeoGroup*:



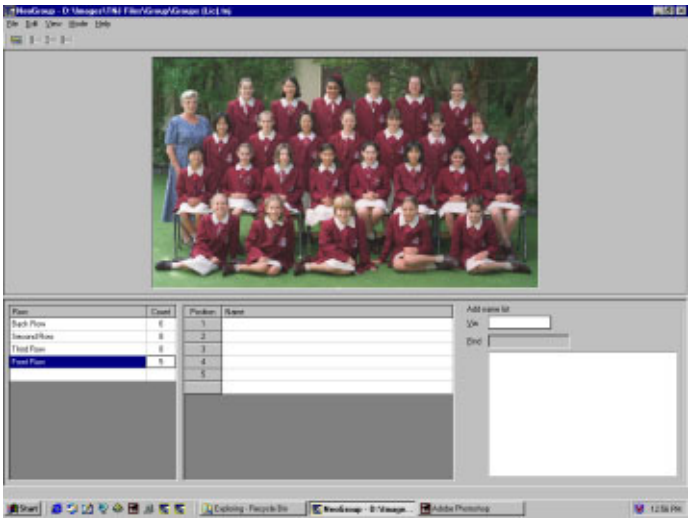
The names are now available for selection when constructing the row lists. If you don't have a data source for the row lists, it is possible to enter the names manually either in the **Details** mode, or in the **Names** mode.

Constructing the Row Lists

Once the groups have been photographed, and you have received the row lists, it is possible to begin constructing the rows.

Constructing Row Lists from imported data

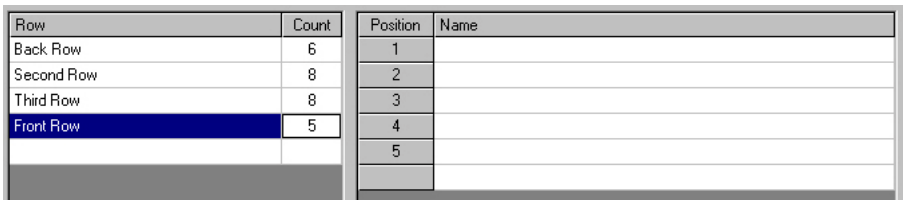
If name data is available, constructing the row lists is a quick operation. After choosing **Name** mode, the group you wish to work on is selected. The group image is displayed, along with the name entry panels.



Specify the rows

The first task is to specify the number of rows involved in the group image, and the number of people in each row. In the above example, there are 4 rows, with 6 people in

the back, 8 in the second, 8 in the third and 5 in the front rows. As each row is named, the number of people in the row is entered, and the necessary number of row positions is created, ready to receive names.



Adding names – automatic

If the names are available from the database, click in the position where the name is to appear. Decide how to search for the name. In this case, we are using the last name as the search field.

As the last name is typed, names matching the entered characters are displayed. The more characters you enter, the more accurate the names displayed are. When you see the name you need, choose it and press **Enter**. The name is added to the list, and you can go on to add the next name immediately.

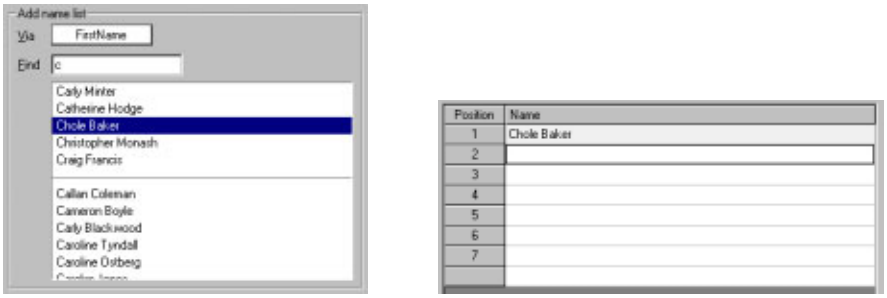
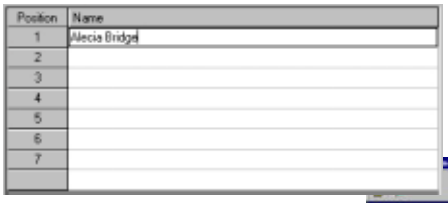


Figure 20: Adding names from the database. Choosing the name from a list, and the name added

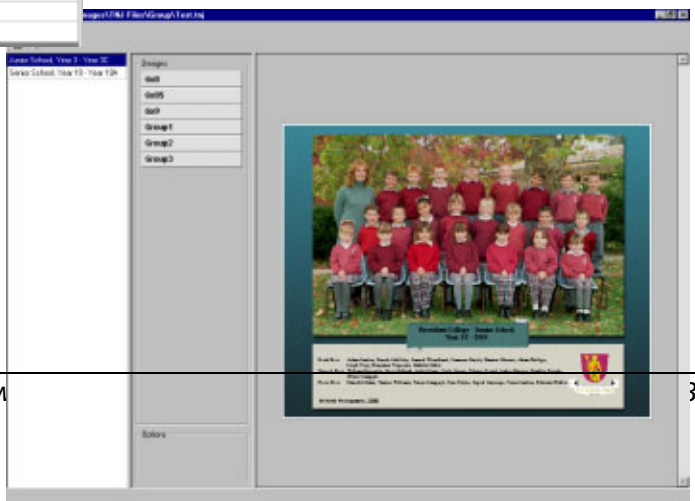
Adding names – manual

Entering names manually starts in the same manner as the automatic method. Instead of choosing from the list of available names, the name is directly typed in.



Forming Pages

With the name lists constructed, it is possible now to create the final



group image. This is done in **Form Pages** mode. Here a list of the available groups is displayed, along with the templates. Creating the group is a matter of choosing the group or groups, then the required template. All the necessary pieces are automatically assembled, and the image is ready to be printed.

Figure 21: A group image completed and ready to print

The *NeoGroup* workflow

Having seen broadly the pieces involved when using *NeoGroup*, it is useful to understand how the workflow is structured.

Pre-season

Before you start the season, design the templates you will want to use during the year. If the templates are well thought-out, there should be no reason to change the templates over your whole season. However, it is possible that you will do some fine-tuning of the templates as you proceed through the season. Things such as customising the background colours to mirror a school's colours, add another logo and such.

Pre-production

Get whatever name data you can from the school and import it. This will construct the folder structure, making image allocation easier. Enter any of the variable data such as the school and principal's, place any variable graphics such as the school logo.

Actual production

After the images have been scanned, or the digital camera files are available, import them to a *NeoGroup* job file. Allocate the images to and name each group. Construct the row lists using the imported data or manual keyboard entry.

Crop and correct the group images, then apply templates. The jobs are ready to be proofed. After proofing, enter any corrections required and print the jobs.

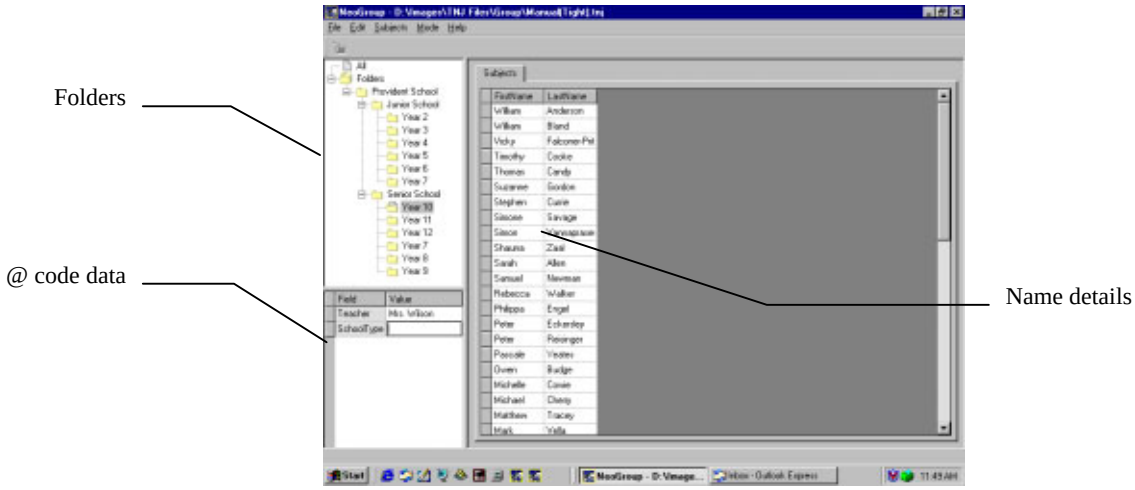
8

Details mode

In **Details** mode, the basic structure of the name data is laid out, and various special pieces of information relevant to the job are entered. If you have name data to import, or want to manually enter the data as a database, the process is done in **Details** mode.

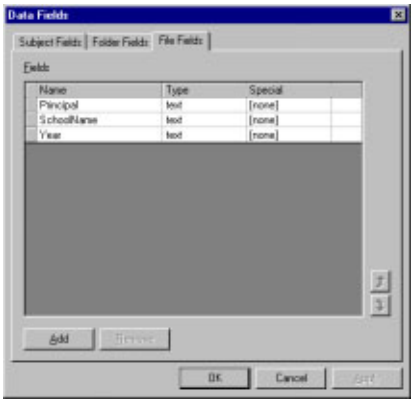
After starting the program, create or open a *NeoGroup* file by choosing **File > New** or **File > Open**. Now, choose, **Mode > Details** or press **F4** on the keyboard.

The **Details** screen is divided into 3 major sections:



Defining the fields

The fields displayed in these panes are defined as a program default, or for each individual file. There are three different types of field groups:



- File fields
- Folder fields
- Subject Fields

File fields

File fields are objects that are common to all the groups involved in the current job. Things like the

school name, the Principal's name, and the school logo are good examples of File fields.

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, a group teacher's name, 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**.

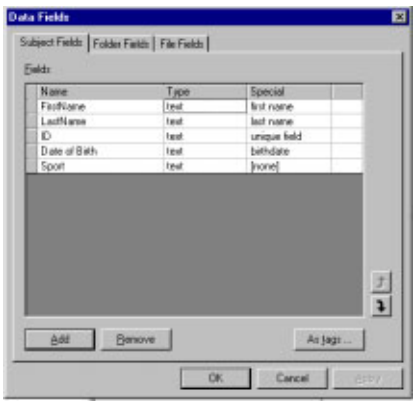
Subject Fields

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 *NeoGroup* 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 – do 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

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 **Edit > Create new folder**. 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 **Edit > 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 that have been attached to the deleted folder are lost.

Importing name data

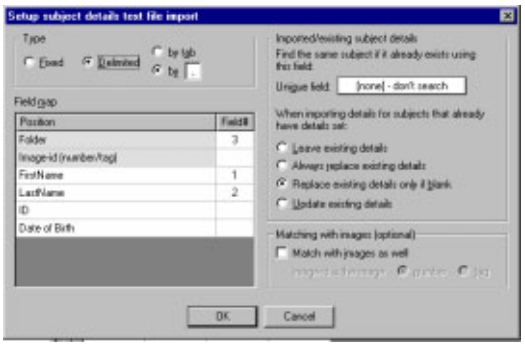
If you have name data to import, the required folders will be automatically created by the import process. The file to be imported should be a text file, wither delimited or fixed length. Ideally, each record should contain:

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

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



Create a new file, or open the file you wish to import the data to. Choose **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 choose 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 wether 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

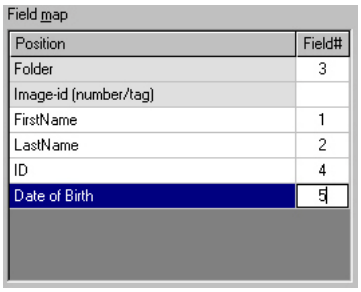
Specify which field matches your data. You might have a file that looks similar to:

```
"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.



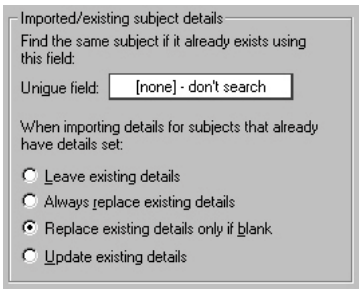
Updating existing data

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 *NeoGroup* 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 *NeoGroup* finds a record that it can update, it can:

Choice	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're happy with the settings, choose **OK** to dismiss the **Setup subject details text file import** dialog, then select the text file and choose **Open**. The data is imported.

Editing the details and folders

Often you will find that the data you import will not completely suit your needs for *NeoGroup*. 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.

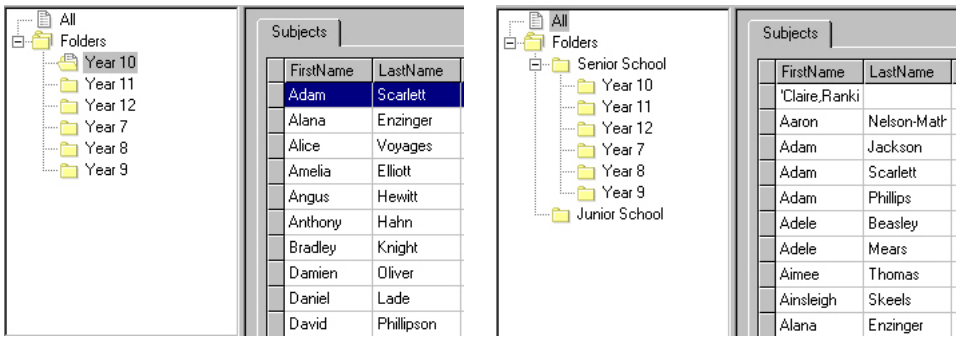


Figure 22: Folders after importing data, then after editing the folder structure

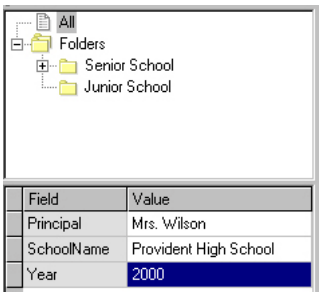
Allocating File and Folder details

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 ‘Provident 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 *NeoGroup* 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.

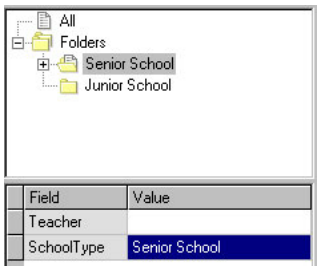
Similarly, a year group could include the teacher’s name for inclusion in the final image.

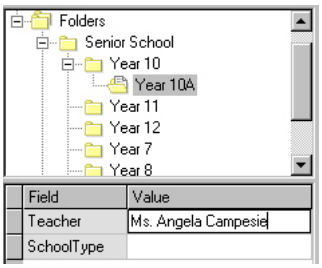
NeoGroup uses a ‘searching’ mechanism that allows you to specify information that belongs to a number of groups, as well as information for an individual group. In the below example, Year 10A is a member of the Year 10 folder, which is a member of the Senior School folder. Clicking on the ‘Senior School’ folder reveals that the fields, ‘Teacher’ and ‘SchoolType’ are available. In the case of the ‘Senior School’ folder, click in ‘SchoolType’ and enter the name that will appear in the template.

Now, for an individual group, we want the teacher’s name to appear. Choose the individual year group, and enter the teacher’s name.

When the job is run, *NeoGroup* will place ‘Senior School’ into the template for all the Senior School groups, and the teacher’s name for each individual group.

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





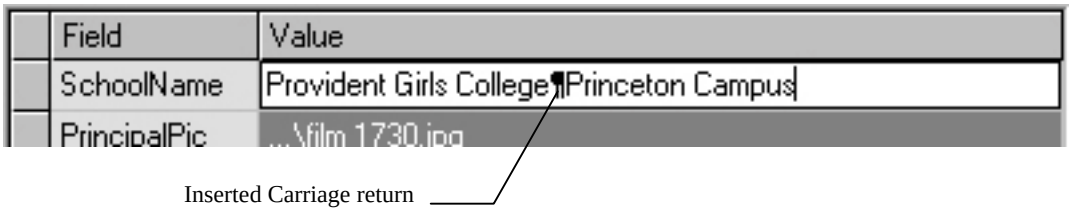
Multi-line Value entries

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 carriage return symbol is placed into the text.



Tagged graphic objects

NeoGroup 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 tagged object in the template that references the logo image which you place here.

Creating a Tagged object field

To include tagged 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

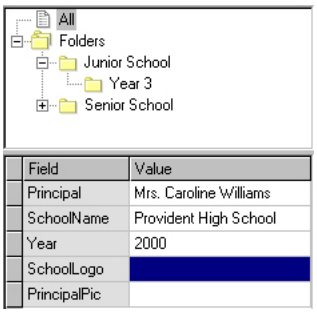
Choose the **File** tab, then click **Add**. A new line is inserted to the list of fields. Type the name of the graphic field. In this example, type **SchoolLogo**. Now, click the **Type** drop-down and choose **Graphic** from the list.

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.

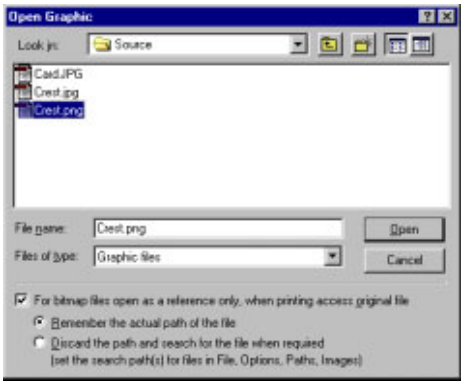


Double-click inside the **Value** for **SchoolLogo**. The **Open Graphic** dialog is displayed. Navigate through and find the graphic file you wish to import.

Set the import options

As when you normally import images to use within *NeoGroup*, you must import the tagged graphic objects in order to use them. There are several options available to you when importing the objects that allow *NeoGroup* to find the high-resolution images when they need to be printed. For information about this, please consult the following chapter, **Image mode**.

Choose the import option you wish to use, then choose **Open**. The file is read, and the **Graphic value** dialog is displayed.



If you wish to use a transparent background for your logo, you will be able to specify a colour that will be transparent. When designing your logo graphics, you must be very careful how the image is prepared to avoid halos or other un-wanted artefacts within the image. In particular, you must *not* use images that have been JPEG compressed. JPEG compression will introduce artefacts at the edges of your logo. We recommend you use PNG compression instead.

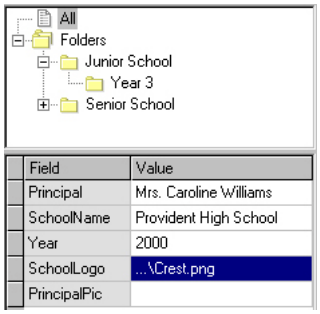
Choosing the transparent area

Once the graphic is displayed, you can choose the area to be transparent. In this example, we want the background white area to appear as transparent. Using the mouse pointer, click the white area. The transparency is indicated by the hashed area. If you have previously set a colour to be transparent, but then don't want to use a transparency mask, click **No mask.**

Make sure you design your logo graphics carefully. Any area that is the same colour as you click will appear as transparent in your design. In this example, if the colour of the banner ribbon was also white, it would appear transparent in the final job.

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 *NeoGroup* template.



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Images mode

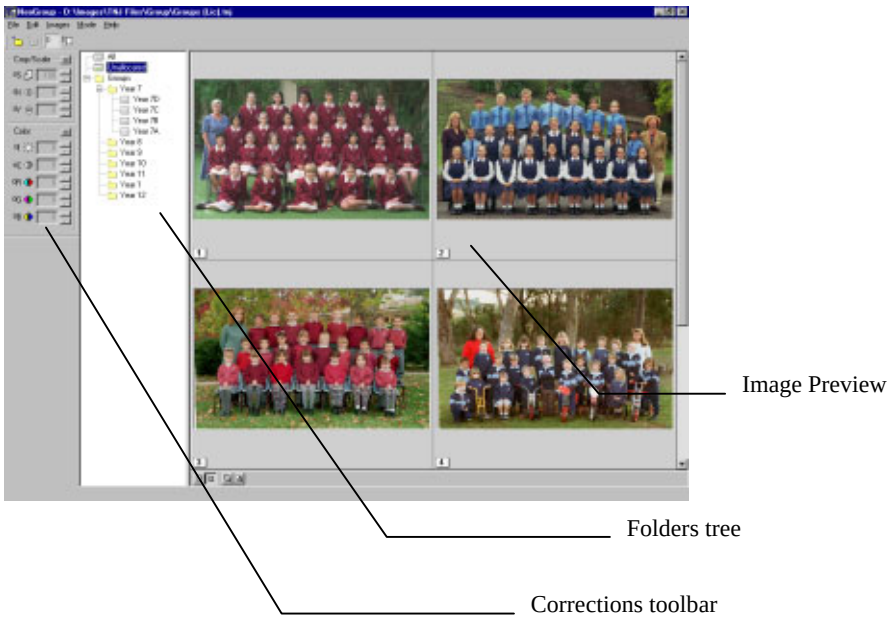
Once imported, Group images can be zoomed, cropped, and adjusted for colour, density or image contrast. Images are also ‘dropped’ into groups for use in a group image. These operations are carried out in **Image mode**.

Entering Image mode

After starting the program, create or open a *NeoGroup* file by choosing **File > New** or **File >** Images that you want to use with *NeoGroup* need to be imported to a job file. This process creates a smaller version of the high-resolution image that is used when creating the *NeoGroup* jobs.

There are several ways images can be used by *NeoGroup*. Either create a link to loose images on a hard disk, or import the images to a single image file. Once the images have been imported to *NeoGroup*, they can be cropped, jogged, the colour or density corrected, and then added to a package queue.

Open. Now, choose, **Mode > Image** or press **F5** on the keyboard. The **Image** screen is divided into 3 major areas:



Importing images

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

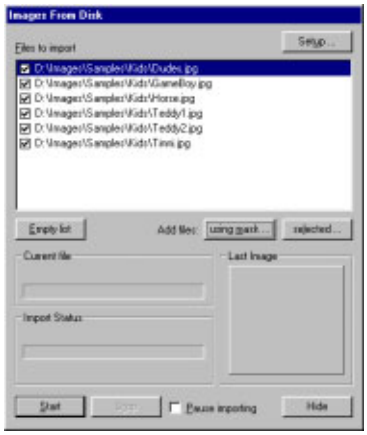
Adjusting the Image Preview quality

When an image is imported to the *NeoGroup* 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.

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 > Images 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
- Specific 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

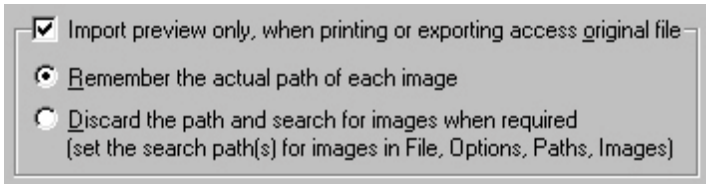
From the **Images from disk...** dialog, click the **Setup** button. The **Setup** dialog opens. Click **Setup**. The **Images From Disk Setup** dialog opens. The dialog is divided into 4 main areas that control the various options available to you.

Set the import type

Decide wether you want to import the preview only, or the whole image data. If you want to import the preview only, make sure the **Import preview only** checkbox is checked. Now, choose from the two options to specify how *NeoGroup* will locate the original image files when printing or exporting images.

- **Remember the actual path of each image** – *NeoGroup* remembers the original location of the high resolution images
- **Discard the path…** – *NeoGroup* uses the image search path specified as a program option to locate the high resolution images

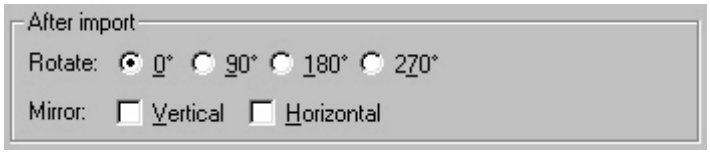
For more information regarding these options, refer earlier in this chapter.



Set the image rotation / flip

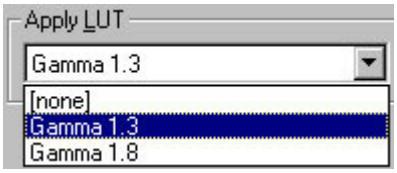
If the images you are importing need to be rotated or flipped, choose the rotation here.

Note: If you import images by preview only, choosing an option here will cause longer print times as the image will be rotated or flipped at print time. To ensure the shortest possible print times, ensure the images are in the correct orientation before they are imported.



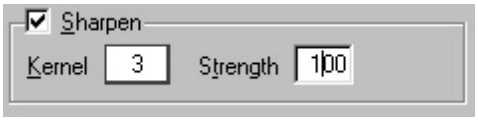
Set the image LUT

Images can be corrected using the built-in LUT editor. For information on using the LUT editor, see later in this chapter. Choose the LUT you want to use from those defined in the drop-down list. For information in making a LUT, please see Chapter 10, Calibration.



Set the image sharpening

Images can be sharpened as they are imported. The algorithm used is 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 values you will use depend on how sharp the original images are. You should try importing a sample image with different sharpening settings to find the correct value for you. Be aware that increasing the sharpness of an image too much can result in harsh and unpleasant images.

Whenever you apply a correction such as image sharpening, you will increase the time taken to print an image. If your scanner or scanning software supports image sharpening, you should try to use these controls rather than applying a sharpening amount within *NeoGroup*.

Once all the settings have been made, choose **OK**. The dialog is dismissed.

Choose the files to import

There are two ways to choose the images to import to a *NeoGroup* job file:

- Import images using a mask
- Import selected images

Import images using a mask

If you have a range of images to import, *NeoGroup* 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

NeoGroup 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:

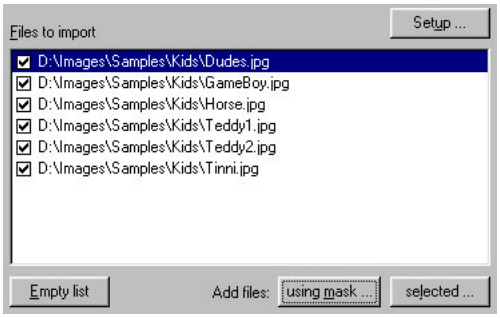
- ‘Image’ as the **pre** entry
- 3 as the **no-width** entry
- ‘exp’ as the **post** entry
- ‘tif’ as the **ext** entry

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 bitmap 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.

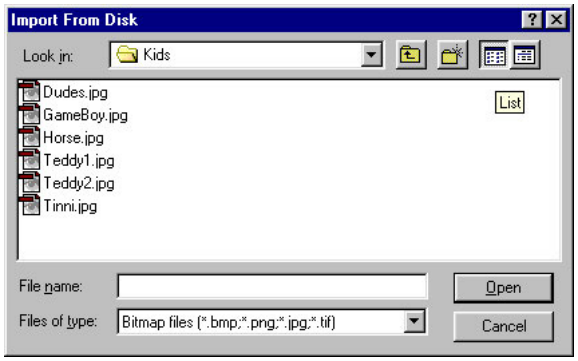


Import selected images

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:

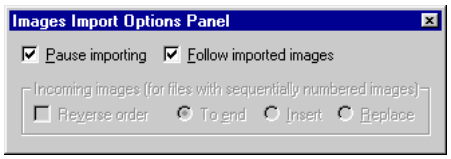
- **<Shift> click** first then last file in a range – selects a block of files.
- **<CTRL> click** each file you wish to import – selects the files to import individually

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



Specify the image import order

Open the Import Options panel by choosing **Image > 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

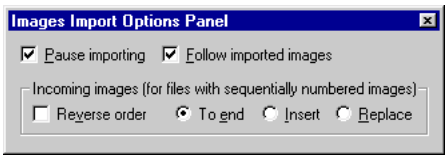


Image options available for a sequential file

Bitmaps 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…)

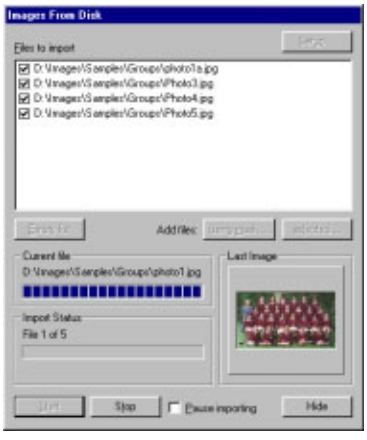
There are various import options that available:

- 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**. The images are imported. Choosing **Stop** during the import process will stop the import after the current file. 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 cancelled.



Pausing the import

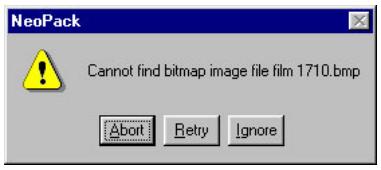
If you wish to pause the images as they are imported, check **Pause import**. The image import is paused until the checkbox is unchecked.

Using linked job files

Once images have been link-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 not possible to edit images with an image editor directly from *NeoGroup* when using linked files. This means that the smaller .TNJ file can be sent anywhere without the source images for image colour correction, cropping and pack creation.

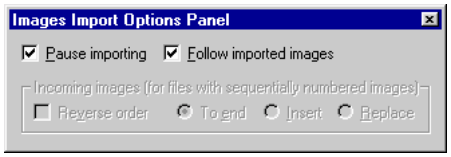
Missing image files

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. Fix the problem and try again.



Specify the image import order

Open the Import Options panel by choosing **Image > 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

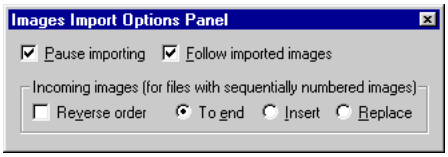


Image options available for a sequential file

Bitmaps 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…)

There are various import options that 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).

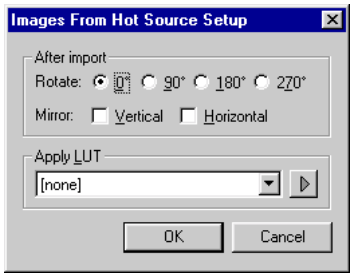
If **Insert** is selected as the import option, images are inserted from the point of the image currently selected. If you select a new image during the import, the insertion position is retained. If you want to specify a new insertion point for imported images, pause the import by choosing **Pause import**,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

Other import sources

NeoGroup 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

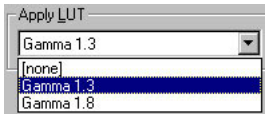
Choose **Setup** from the **Images From Hot Source** dialog. The setup dialog is displayed. Images can be rotated and flipped as with importing images from the specified source. These settings are discussed earlier in this manual.



Specify a LUT

NeoGroup 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 as it is imported.

Choose the LUT that you need from the **Apply LUT** drop-down. For information in making a LUT, please see Chapter 10, Calibration.



Importing from the Windows clipboard

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

Choose **Image > 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.

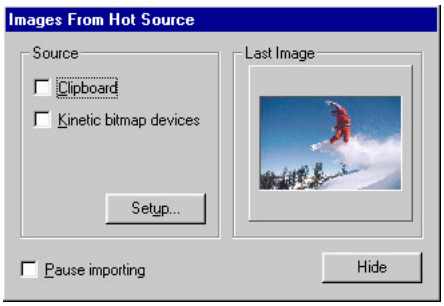


Figure 23: The Images from hot source panel.

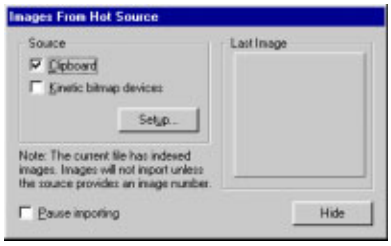


Figure 24: Import panel with indexed images

Editing images while importing

It is possible to edit (zoom, crop and colour correct) images whilst 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.

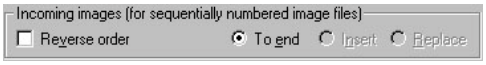
The image import can still be controlled, even though you may have hidden the main image import dialog by choosing the **Hide** button. Open the Import options panel by choosing **Images > Import options panel…**. This small panel can be positioned on the screen so the image import can paused or restarted.

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 wether a file is indexed or sequentially numbered

Add new files to the end of an existing file

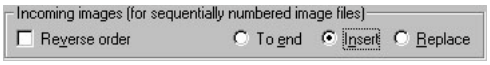
Choose **Images > Import options panel…** The **Images Options Panel** opens. Choose **To end** as the **Incoming images** selection. Specify the files to be imported as previously discussed. Images will be appended to the end of the file.



Insert or replace files within a file

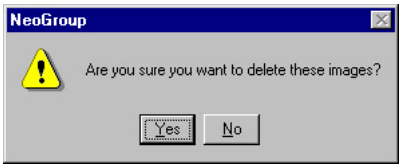
To add images somewhere in the middle of an existing file, first choose the image where the new images are to be inserted or replaced, then choose **Images > Import options panel…** The **Images Options Panel** is shown. Note that the options **Insert** and **Replace** are available.

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, you must first choose **All** in the tree view. After selecting **All**, choose the image 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 image is deleted. Any groups that used deleted images will not be removed

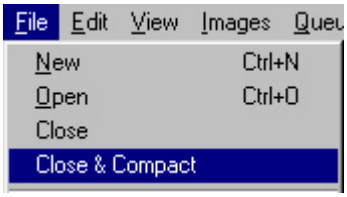


Closing and compacting files

Close a file by choosing **File > Close**, or by clicking the File Close button in the toolbar. The current file is closed.

Images are stored in *NeoGroup*'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 all the images are deleted from the file.



The deleted image space is 'freed up' by choosing **File > Close & Compact**. This process takes 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.

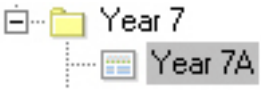
Allocating images and creating groups

Once images have been imported, they are allocated to the various groups and folders for use with the group images. This is done by dragging and dropping un-allocated images to the required group.

How you identify images to be allocated will depend on your circumstance. In many cases, the group images will have a board in the photograph, aiding identification. You may also have a shoot order that will serve as a key to the group. By choosing **Images > Show Tags**, *NeoGroup* will display the original image filename that was imported, making this match process easier.

NeoGroup 'Groups'

A Group in *NeoGroup* is a very important object. As we have seen, Folders can be created by importing name data, or manually creating them. A folder needs to have a group created within it in order to produce a group job. You can think of the folder as the container that holds all the necessary components (the names, the group image…) that will finally form a group image. Groups can be created by either manually creating a group, or by dragging and dropping a group photograph onto a folder.

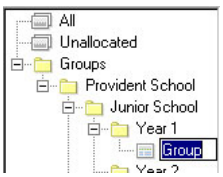


The group's name

The name you give a group when it is created is most important. The name typed here is the name that will appear in the centre board in the final *NeoGroup* job. For example, if you name a group 'Grade 7A', this is what will appear in the centre board if called for.

Manual creation of groups

If the image file to be used in a group is not yet available (the film may be being used elsewhere), you can create a group manually, and fill out row lists.



To create a group manually, choose the folder that will contain the group, then choose **Edit > Create new group**, or click the **New Group** icon in the toolbar. A new group is created. Type the group's name, then press **Enter.**

Drag-drop creation of groups

After images have been imported, they can be allocated to folders by drag and drop. Click **Unallocated** in the tree view to see all the images that have yet to be allocated to a folder or group. Choose the image you want to allocate to a particular folder or group, click it, and hold the mouse button down. Now, move the mouse to hilight the folder or group required and release the mouse button. The image is dropped into the folder or group selected.

If you dropped the image onto a folder, a new group is created ready to be named. If you dropped the image onto an existing group (perhaps created manually as discussed before), the image is added to that group.

If you have more than one image of a particular group (perhaps one with identifying name tags, the other the actual group photpgraph), drop all the images belonging to the single group onto the same group photograph. You can choose which image you wish to use later.

Note that after the drag and drop operation, the selected image is moved from the **Unallocated** group at the top of the tree view to the group you created. Choosing **Unallocated** will show that the image is no longer available to be allocated.

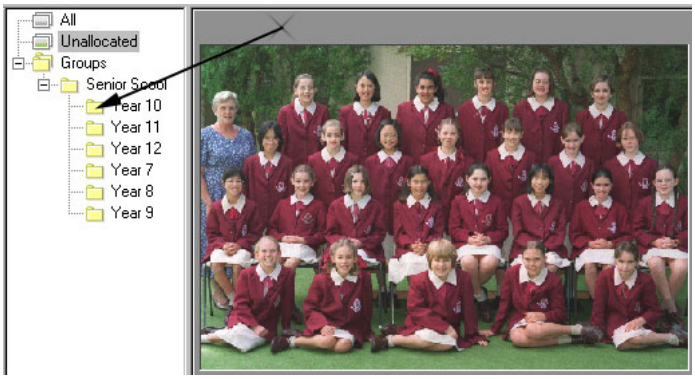


Figure 25: Click the image, drag and drop it onto a folder or existing group

Figure 26: After the drag and drop, name the group

Allocating multiple images

You may have several images that belong to a single group. Perhaps one image has each person holding up a name tag, with the other the actual group shot. You can allocate several images by dragging and dropping them into a folder or onto a group.

Allocating multiple images to a folder

To allocate several images to a single new group, select the images required, then drag and drop them to the folder. The images are allocated to a single new group. Type the group name and press **Enter**.

Allocating multiple images to an existing group.

To allocate several images to an existing group, first make sure you can see the target group in the tree view. Do this by clicking the **+** icon next to the containing folder. Now, select the images required, then drag and drop them to the folder. The images are added to the existing group.

Setting the default image

When several images are allocated to a group, you can set one image to be the default. The default image will always appear first when viewing of the images, and will always be printed. When editing the images, you would always choose the best image to be the default.

Choose the group that has several images. Either double click the image you want to be the dafault, or choose **Images > Make the selected image primary**. The selected image is moved to the first position in the list view.

Editing and displaying images

After the group images have been imported, you can edit them for zoom, crop, colour density and contrast. You can also control how the images are displayed on-screen for convenient image editing.

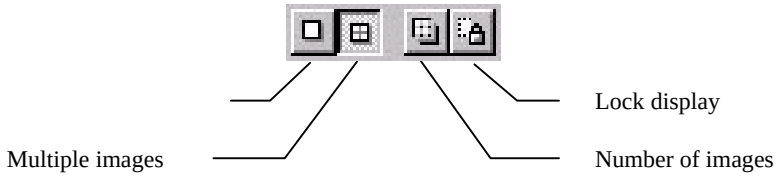
Changing the image display

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.



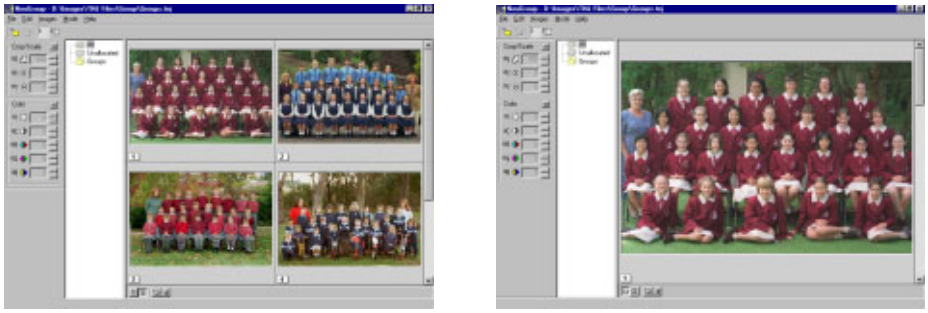
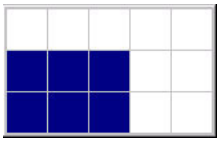


Figure 27: Image preview in single and multi image modes

Changing the number of images displayed

Clicking the Number of images button pops up a sizeable grid. Moving the mouse increases or decreases the number of images displayed in the image table.



Editing Images

Once images have been imported to *NeoGroup*, they can be changed 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

Zoom and jogging images

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

There are many different ways to zoom and crop images. Zoom and crop values ultimately 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 cropped 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, you will see indicators. The indicators show where the image has been incorrectly moved.

Out of image area indicators

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, whilst 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 colour, density and contrast

Image colour, density and contrast can be changed using the image density controls. The corrections can be applied across a group of images, or individually.

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 *NeoGroup* 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 images in a particular job file.

NeoGroup 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 *NeoGroup* 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 images exported:

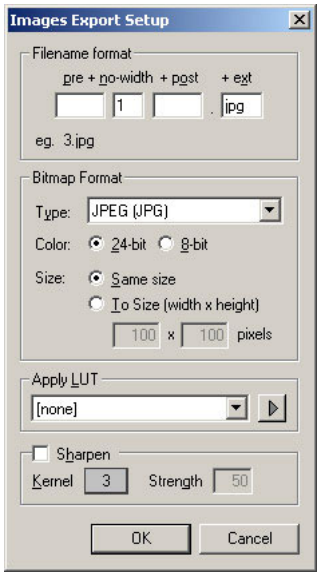


Figure 28: Images Export Setup dialog

Shown above are the default settings.

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

Names mode

Construction of the name row lists is done in **Name mode**. After groups have been created, names can be allocated to a row. Groups don't have to have images allocated to construct the rows, nor do you need to have imported name data.

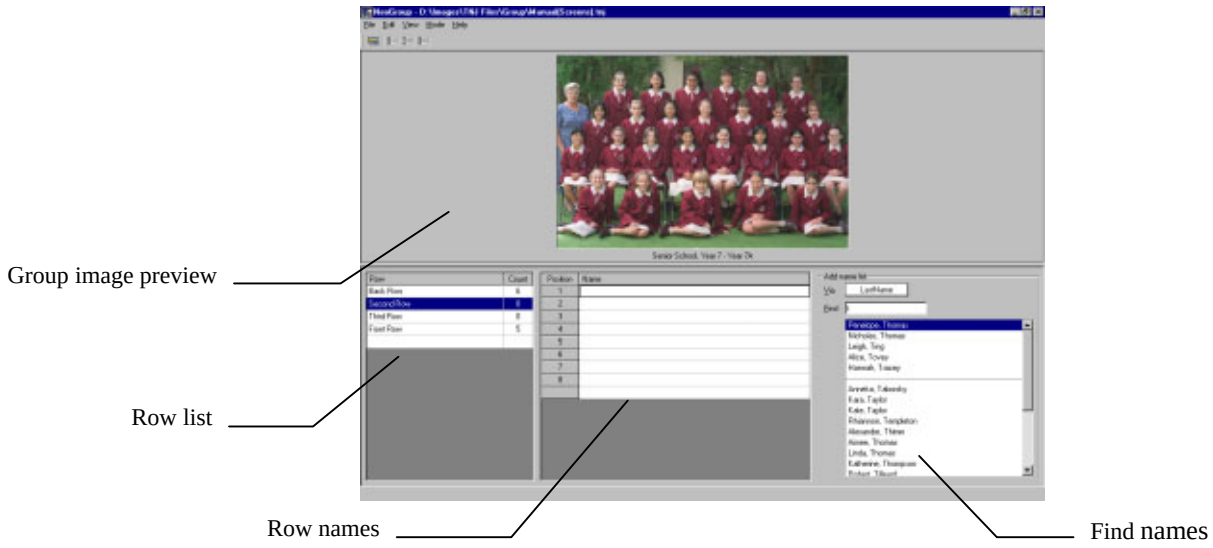
However, you must have created a group in **Images mode** in order to create the row lists.

Creating the row lists is done by either manually entering each name in the row, or by selection from the names entered in the database.

If you want to create group images without names, you don't have to define any of the row lists. To create 'no-names' groups, check the next chapters, **Printing** and **Creating Templates**.

The Names mode interface

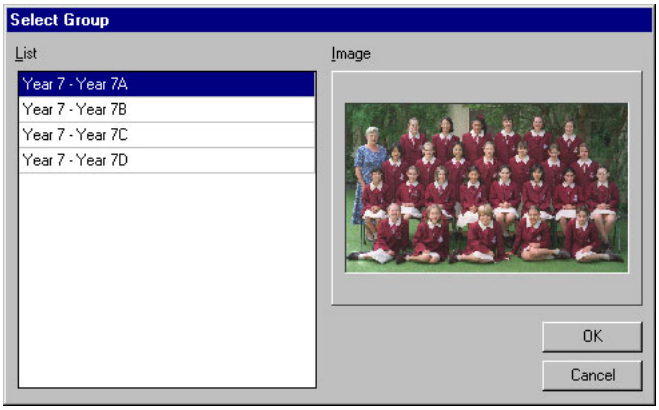
Enter **Names mode** by choosing **Mode > Names**. The names mode window is shown. The window is divided into 4 areas:



Selecting the group

The first step when creating the row lists is to choose the required group. Click the **Select Group** icon in the toolbar. The **Select Group** dialog is displayed.

Click the group you wish to use and choose **OK**.



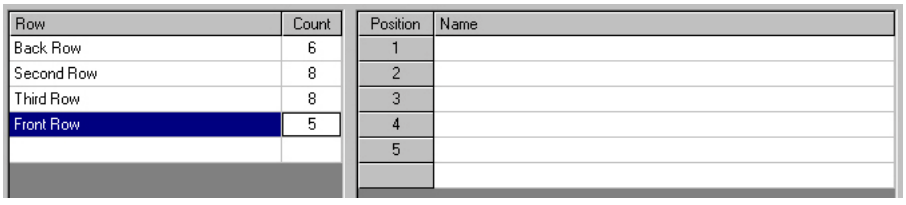
Creating the rows

After selecting the group, the first step in creating the row list is to define the number of rows. Then, the number of people in each row is defined, then the names inserted to the correct position.

Define a row

Click the cursor inside the first entry in the **Row** pane. Type the name for the row. Now, count the number of people in the row from the preview image and insert this number in the **Count** box. The required number of positions is created ready to insert names. Continue entering rows until they are completed.

You don't have to enter the number of positions in a row. As names are entered to a roe list, the count will automatically increment. However, it serves as a good check when entering names that the correct number of names has been entered.



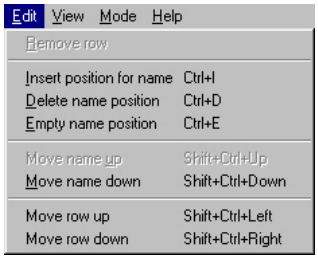
Adding absentee or other special rows

If you want to create an Absent or other special list, create and name a row appropriately. Whatever is entered for **Row** is the text that will appear as the Row label. These special rows can be handled exactly as if they are a normal row.

Moving the row position

After a row has been created, you can change its position by moving it up or down in the list. This can be important if you have created the rows in a mixed order.

To move a row, select it, then choose **Edit > Move row up** or **Move row down**. You can also use the short-cut keys:



- Move a row up – **Shift + Ctrl + Left arrow**
- Move a row down – **Shift + Ctrl + Right arrow**

Inserting names

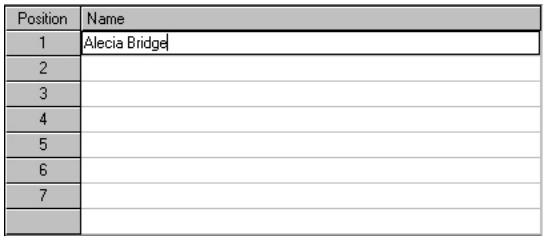
Names can be inserted to a row position by either typing the name manually, or by selecting them from the database. A single row list can contain manually typed names, or those selected from the database. This means it is possible to enter names to a list that don't appear in the database if necessary.

Manually entering names

If you don't have access to a database of names, you can enter them manually to a row position by clicking in the position, then typing the name.

Names that have been entered manually are displayed as black text on a white background. Names inserted from the database are displayed as black text on a grey background.

If possible, you should use imported data, or enter the names in **Details mode**. This makes the names entered available to other *Neo* applications, as well as for further use within *NeoGroup*. Any names entered manually to a row position can only be used for that position. If a particular individual appears in several different group images – perhaps a sports picture as well as a class photograph – the name must be typed in for each group.



Inserting names from the database

When names are available from the database, they can be quickly located and inserted to a row position. The insertion is done by starting to type the name into the **Find** box. *NeoGroup* searches the list of available names and displays a filtered list of names that match the characters entered. Choosing the name with the arrow keys, then pressing **Enter** adds the name to the current position.

It is also possible to search using a unique ID number, meaning you can use a bar-code reader to create the lists. This is useful for some third party applications that construct the row lists, and can print a sheet in row order, along with the barcoded ID number.

Setting the name display

By default, when the results of a name search is displayed, all the fields defined in **Details mode** are shown. If you have many fields defined, this can mean un-necessary detail is displayed.

You can control how the find results and row positions are displayed by editing the program defaults.

Choose **Edit > Options > Default tab > Edit Details Fields** if you want to make a global setting, or switch to **Details mode**, then choose **Edit > Fields** if you want to change the settings for this file only.

The **Data fields** dialog is displayed. Choose **As tags…** The **Details tag text** dialog is shown.

You can control exactly what details for each name are displayed in **Names** mode by entering the field and order in the box here. Fields must be prefixed by the '@' symbol.

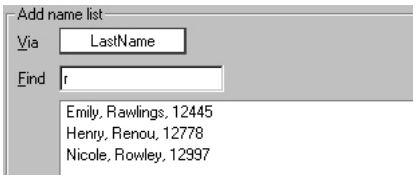
For example, a job file has the following fields available:

- FirstName
- LastName
- ID
- DateOfBirth
- Allergy

Without a specific entry in the **Details tag text** dialog, each name displayed will show all 5 data fields. However, this is too much detail, and can be confusing to the operators when selecting the names. By entering:

- @FirstName @LastName, @ID

in the **Details tag text box**, the display is refined to contain only these three fields.

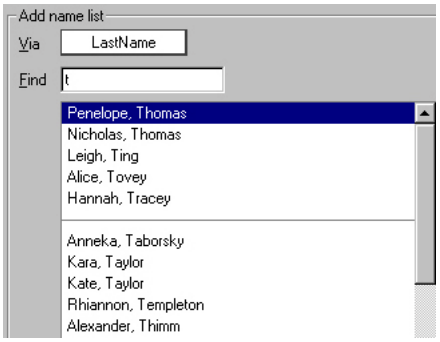


After making the settings, choose **OK** and return to **Names mode** if necessary.

If you made these settings to the **Edit > Options** dialog, you will also need to change the same options for this file in **Details mode > Edit > Fields…** Any new files created will inherit the settings from the **Default** dialog.

Finding a name

When you are ready to insert a name from the database, click the row required, then the position. Now, choose which field you want to use to search with from the drop-down box. Click in the **Find** entry box. Type the first character of the find field. You will notice two lists of names are displayed – those above a line, and those below a line.

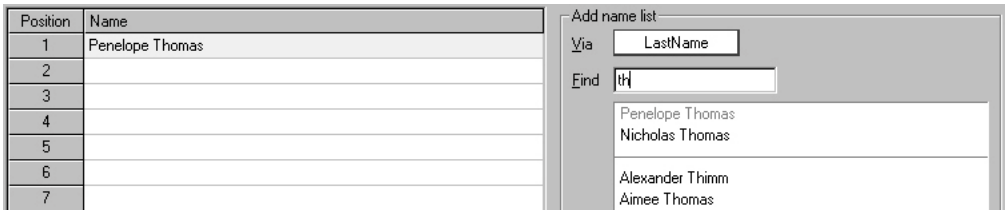


Those names above the line indicate names that belong to the current group folder. Those below the line are the rest of the names entered in the database.

For example, if you are working on a Year 7 group, all the names above the line have been entered in the **Details mode** Year 7 Folder. The names below the line are all the other names. As you enter more characters of the name, the more accurate the list of names displayed.

Inserting the name

Once you have entered enough characters to find the correct name, use the **Up** or **Down** arrow key to select the name and press **Enter**. The name is inserted to the row position. Note that nthe inserted name is displayed in a light grey background. This indicates the name is from the database.



Continue entering names until all the positions for this row are filled. Now, choose the next row and continue adding names.

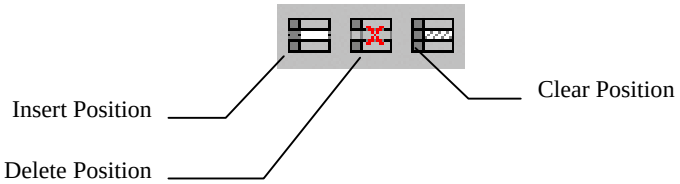
Duplicate names, adding or deleting rows or inserted names

If the same name is added to a group several times, the fact is indicated by the PC beeping, and the name is displayed in Red. If you see a red name, check your row list source and correct the problem by inserting the correct name.

Position	Name
1	Ainsleigh Skeels
2	Jacqueline Clingan
3	Penelope Thomas
4	Miranda Friend
5	Melanie Green
6	Louise Helleren

You can add, clear or delete name positions by choosing the position, and choosing the appropriate action:

To…	Then…
Add a position to the list	Click where you want to add the position, and choose **Edit > Insert position for name**, or type **Control-I**, or click the **Insert Position** icon on the toolbar.
Delete a position from the list	Click the position you want to delete, then choose **Edit > Delete name position**, or type **Control-D**, or click the Delete Position icon on the toolbar
Clear a name entered in a position	Click the name you want to clear, and choose **Edit > Empty name position**, or type **Control-E**, or click the **Empty Position** icon in the toolbar.

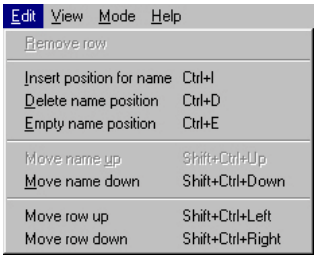


Moving the name position

After a row has been created, you can change its position by moving it up or down in the list. This can be important if you have created the rows in a mixed order.

To move a row, select it, then choose **Edit > Move name up** or **Move name down**. You can also use the short-cut keys:

- Move a name up – **Shift + Ctrl + Up arrow**
- Move a name down – **Shift + Ctrl + Down arrow**



Choosing the image displayed

If you have allocated more than one image to a group, you might like to switch between the images whilst you're adding the names. For example, you might have one image with the subjects holding up a name banner acting as the key for the name row lists.

Switch between the images

Choose the group you want to use, then choose **View > Next group image** (**Control-<Pg Down>**) or **Previous group image.** (**Control-<Pg Up>**).

Regardless of the image selected here, the final printed group uses the **Primary image** defined in **Image mode.**

11

Design mode

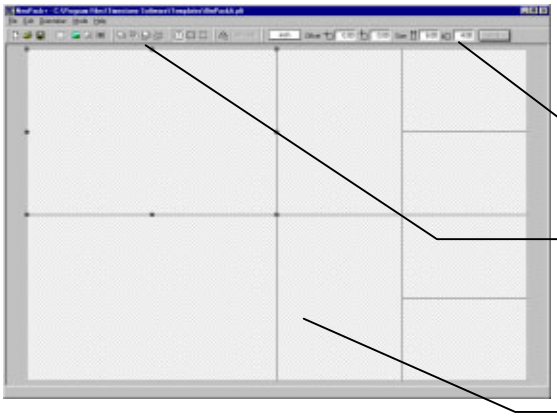
NeoGroup uses templates to create its jobs. A template is a collection of graphic, text and other objects that you place into a design. When the template is chosen in the main application, the design is recalled, the group image placed into the design along with any other text and graphic objects that may be required by the template.

Many of the objects you can place into a *NeoGroup* template are referenced to various images and text for a particular job. For example, a template can contain a graphic object that is the school's logo, the Princiipal's photograph as well as a text object that fetches the school campus name. When the job is run, the template fetches the school logo and Principal images, then the campus name for this particular job. All these elements are placed onto the page automatically. The result is that you can design a standard set of templates at the beginning of your season and use them for all your production.

Using the template designer

The template designer is a tool that allows you to place the various text and graphic objects into a design. There are no built-in graphic creation tools, meaning you must create all the graphics you want to use in another application like Adobe Photoshop or CorelDraw.

The designer is integrated with *NeoGroup*. To use it, start the program, then choose **Mode > Design**. The template designer is displayed. Note that most of the available options are dimmed and un-available. Choose **File > New** to create a new template design and gain access to the tools.

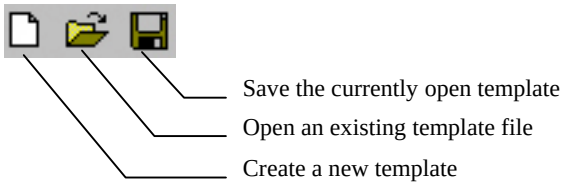


The designer toolbars

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.



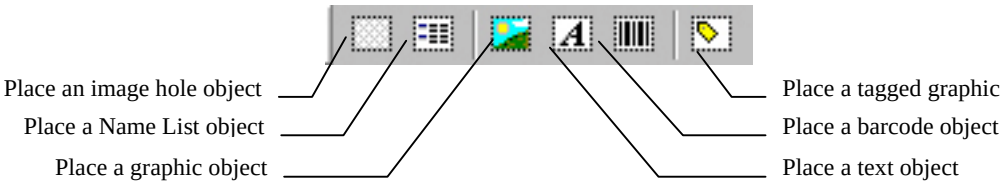
The Place Object toolbar

The Place Object toolbar allows you to place the various objects you wish to use in the template. There are 4 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.
Name List object	Defines where the name list will appear
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 Design template.

All objects, with the exception of the Barcode Object can be used in either a Layout or a Design template.

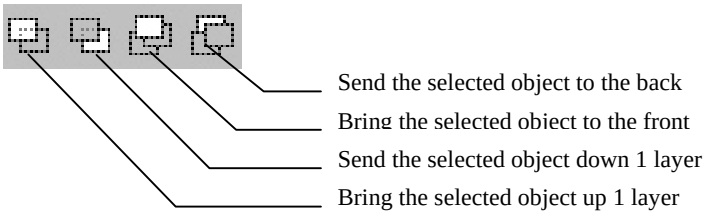
To place an object, click the desired button, click inside the template canvas area and drag the mouse. The object will be placed into the template ready to be accurately sized and positioned.



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.



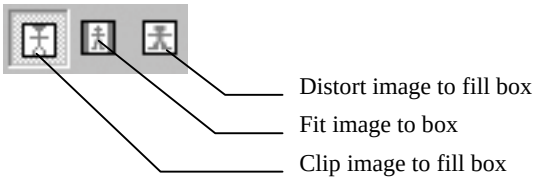
The Graphic Scaling toolbar

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.



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 *NeoGroup* 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 *NeoGroup* 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 colour 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.

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.

Image file format

NeoGroup offers 1 bit transparency support to blend images. This means that a single colour 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.

Merging images

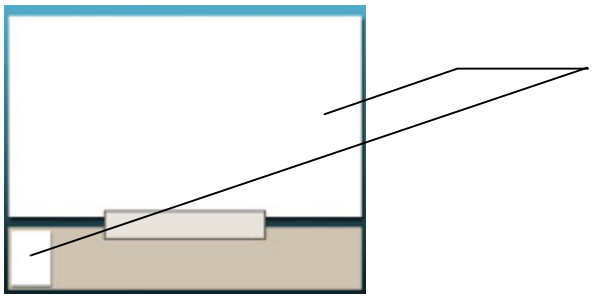
NeoGroup allows the images you import to be placed into a design by allowing transparency in the background images. You design a colour that will be transparent in the

background image, then define that colour when the background is imported. You can use either bitmap or vector style graphics. Both formats allow image merging.

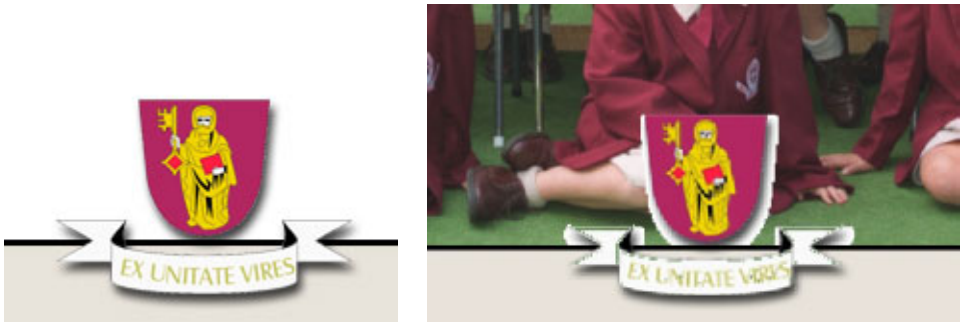
Transparent areas in bitmap images

The 1 bit transparency support means that you must carefully build-in a colour that will appear as transparent in your background images. First, choose a colour 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 colour. 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 *NeoGroup*. Likewise, a drop shadow effect that falls onto the transparent area will be seen as a halo. In the below example, a designer has created an attractive effect by placing a drop-shadow under a logo. This drop shadow results in a halo appearing around the logo in the finally formed page.



Transparent areas in Vector graphics

Vector graphics can contain areas that are a hole as a native part of their design. *NeoGroup* 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 colour, and place them one on top

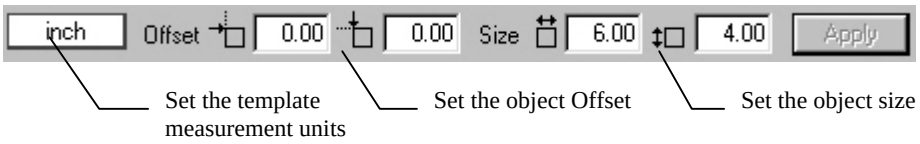
of the other. Choose **Arrange > Combine** to combine the two objects. One of the objects will form a hole in the other.

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

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

Once you have all the various components, you can design a new template. Start *NeoGroup*, and choose **Mode > Design**. The template designer is displayed. Now, choose **File > New** to create a new template.

Placing objects

Once the new layout screen is displayed, click on the background page. Note that the page handles become active.

When designing a layout, the actual final print size is being specified, so it is important to enter the correct page size. Note when the page is chosen, 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.

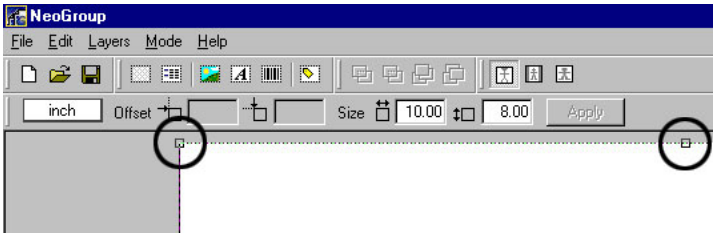


Figure 29: Selected background page with handles

Placing an image

Images can be placed anywhere in the template, and in layers. This allows you to place images behind and if front of one another, allowing complex and attractive images to be created. When an image is placed into the template, you can define the transparent area, as well as the size, position and image scaling options applied to the image.

Choose the **Place graphic object** button in the toolbar  . 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. A **File Open** dialog is displayed. Choose the file you wish to place and choose **Open**.

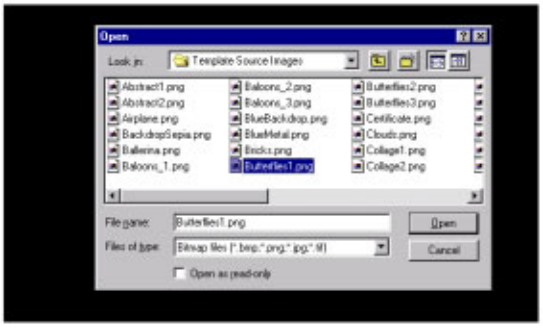
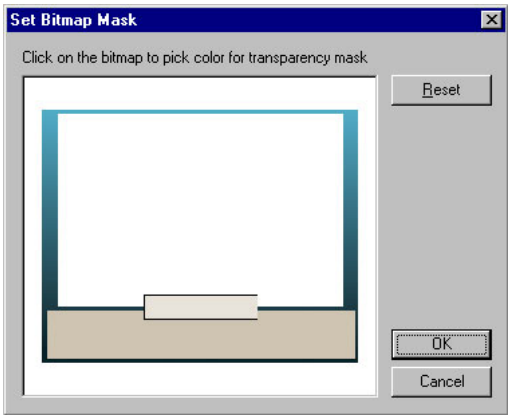


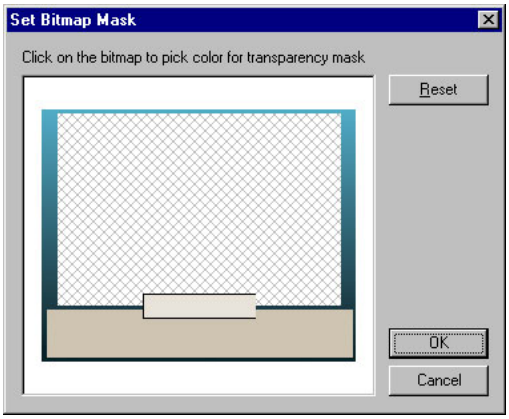
Figure 30: The file Open dialog to place a graphic object

The file is read, and the object appears in the template. Now, the **Set Bitmap Mask** dialog appears. Click the colour you wish to appear as transparent. In this case, we will click the centre white area of the background. 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 colour.

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



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.

Defining the 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 colouring the areas of the graphic a specific colour. 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.

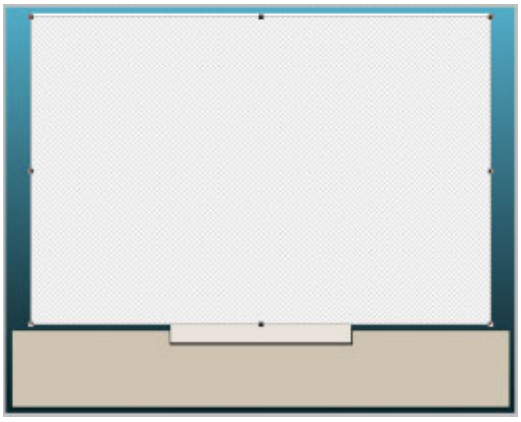


Figure 31: The Image Object placed over a Graphic Object

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, along with the whole name board.

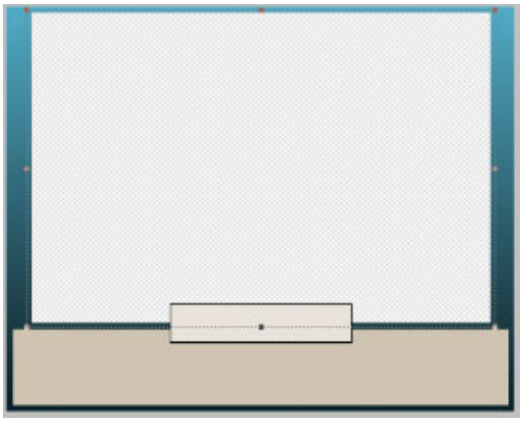


Figure 32: The Image Object placed behind the graphic object's transparent area

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.

If a graphic object that is placed over the top a hole has the transparent colour, 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.

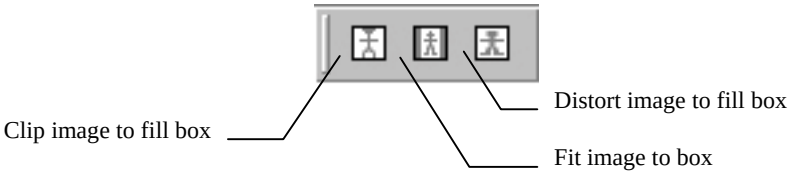
Controlling image scaling

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.



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 hilights by showing handles.

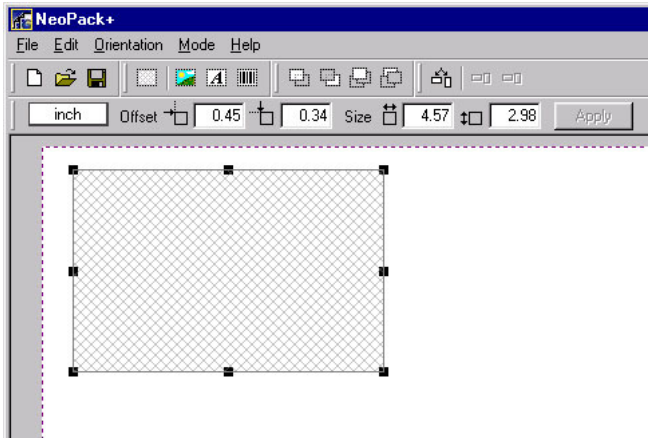


Figure 33: A selected object

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 34: The Object Dimensions toolbar

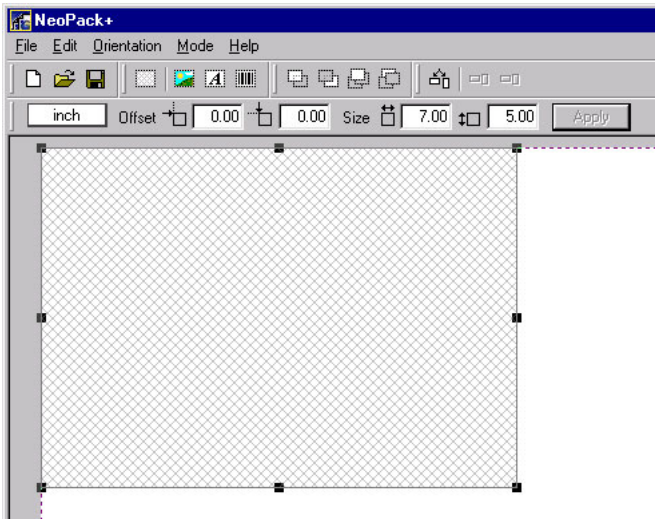


Figure 35: An Image Object after re-sizing

Placing multiple objects in a Template

Templates can contain multiple objects. This means that products from simple packages to complex designs that include multiple graphic, text and barcode objects.

Place several objects

Create a new template by choosing **Mode > Design** then **File > New**. A new design is created.

Place and size the first image

Click the **Image Object** tool in the toolbar. Click and drag the object on the page. It is not important to be accurate at this point. Choose the object with the mouse, and enter the print size and position in the Object Dimensions. Click **Apply**.

Place the second object

A second object can be added by following the previous instructions. You can also copy and paste an object by selecting it, then choosing **Edit > Copy**, then **Edit > Paste**. The object is duplicated.

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 hilighted. 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 hilighted.

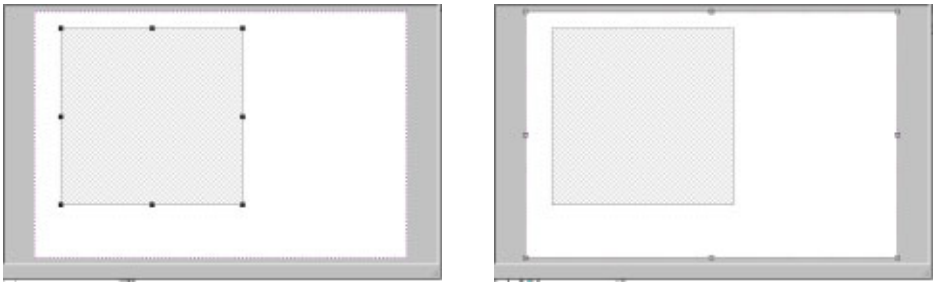
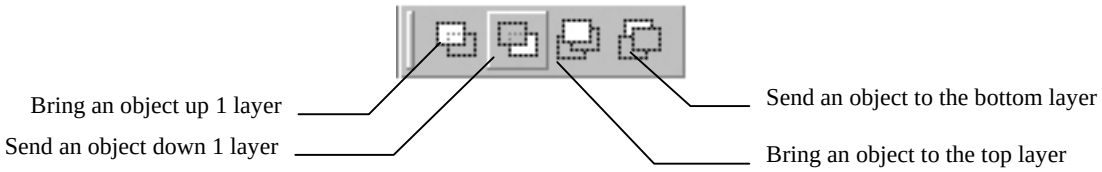


Figure 36: Cycling between layer objects

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, and make sure that they overlap each other.

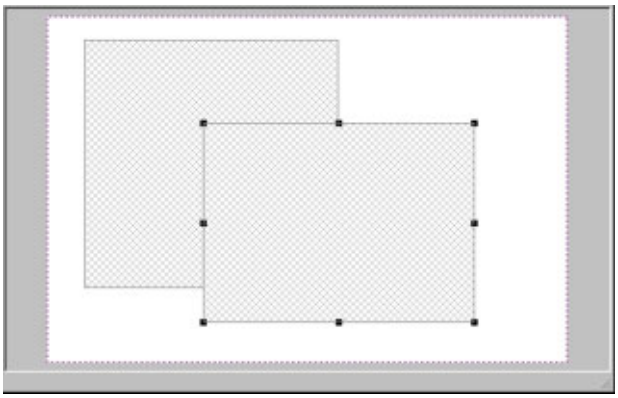


Figure 37: The selected object in the top layer

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.

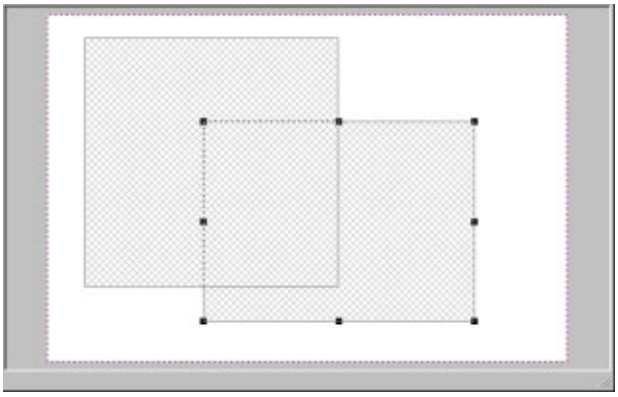


Figure 38: The selected object 1 layer lower

Using text objects

Text objects in *NeoGroup* are a very powerful tool. Fixed text can be entered and stylised with font, style and colour, appearing always the same in the final printed result. Text can also contain variable codes, allowing a template to pick data from the job file and automatically adding it to the printed job. This means that you can design templates that can be used for all your jobs, and have them customised automatically for each client. For example, a template might include a reference to the school's name, principal name, and even an individual group teacher's name. When the job is run, the data is fetched from the database and placed automatically into the printed job.

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 *NeoGroup* 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.

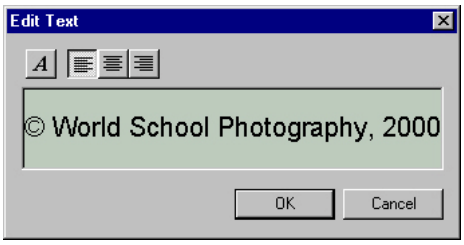


Figure 39: Text entry dialog box

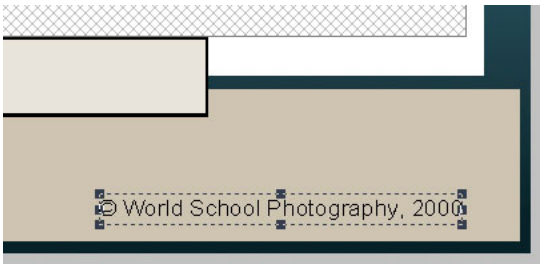
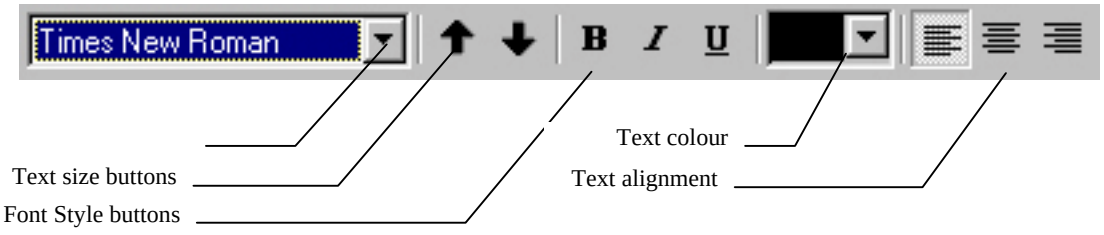


Figure 40: Text placed into a template

Controlling text formatting

Text – wether fixed or variable – can be stylised using font, colour and style. To apply some text styling, choose the text you want to stylise, then choose the Font, size, style colour or alignment from the **Style Text** toolbar.



Variable text objects

NeoGroup allows various data fields be defined for the various groups in your job. For example, there are some things that are common to a whole school such as the school name, principal and so on. It is then possible to gather the school's groups into sub-categories. For example, the school might have a senior and junior campus. Years 1 – 7 belong to the junior school, 8 – 12 to the senior school. You can allocate a name to both the campuses, and have the correct campus name inserted to the name board for each particular year group.

Detail types

As discussed in the previous chapters, **Details mode** and **Image mode**, it is possible to define and allocate various data fields to the folders in a job. There are three major details groupings:

- 'File' details – global information such as the school name, principal name etc.
- 'Folder' details – information specific to a folder or sub-folder such as the campus name, group teacher name etc.
- 'Built-in' details – built-in information that are pre-defined in *NeoGroup*. These include the group name etc.

In order to place the correct code into a template, It is important to understand how these codes are used.

Creating a variable code

Variable codes are inserted to a template using a special '@' code. The '@' code is inserted as normal text, including text style and colour, but contains special characters that identify it as text to replace to *NeoGroup*.

The special code takes the form:

- @Type:'<Field>'

Where 'Type' is either 'File' or 'Folder', and Fields is any of the field names you have defined in **Details mode**. The *NeoGroup* built-in codes take the form:

- @code

Where 'code' is the specified code as listed later.

Using 'File' details

'File' details are pieces of information that are common to every group in the current job. A File detail is set by choosing **Mode > Details**, then clicking **All** in the tree view. At the bottom of the **Details** screen, the available fields are displayed. Consult the **Details mode** chapter on information defining these fields.

In our example, we created several fields:

- SchoolName – the name of the school

- Principal – the name of the principal
- Year – The year of photography

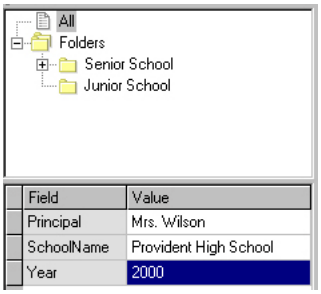
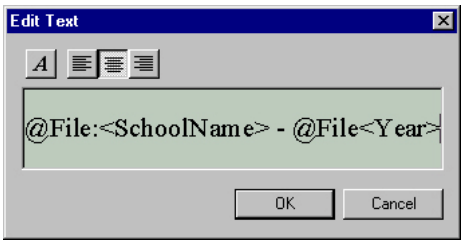


Figure 41: 'File' details set in Details mode

We want to create a template that will place the text ‘SchoolName – Year’ in the name board. The details ‘SchoolName’ and ‘Year’ are global details, and so are a ‘File’ detail. The codes you would enter to the template would be:

- @File:<SchoolName> - @File:<Year>



In the above example, the printed job would contain the text:

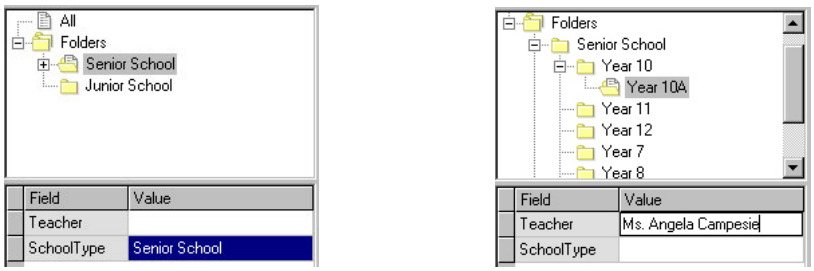
Provident High School – 2000

Using Folder details

‘Folder’ details are pieces of information that are specific to a folder, or sub-folder in a job. Sub-folders of a main folder (Year 8 – 12 folders of the Senior School campus for example) inherit any fields defined in the parent folder. For example, you can define folder fields:

- SchoolType – The campus name
- Teacher – A group’s teacher

In **Details mode**, choose the ‘Senior School’ folder, and enter the name of the campus. Now, move all the Year 8 – 12 groups into the Senior School folder. Each of the years 8 – 12 are now a part of the Senior School, and so will inherit the information typed in for the Senior School folder.

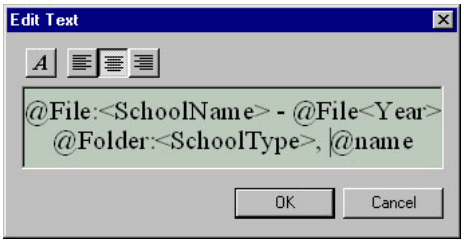


So, the group folder 'Year 10A' has the following details:

- Teacher - 'Ms. Angela Campesie' from the 'Year 10A' folder
- SchoolType – 'Senior School' from the 'Senior School' folder

In our previous example, we placed the school name and year of photography into a template. Now, we want to add the campus and group name. By adding the codes:

- @File:<SchoolName> - @File:<Year> - @Folder:<SchoolType>, @name



In the above example, the printed job would contain the text:

Provident High School – 2000

Senior Campus, Year 10A

Using Built-in details

There are a number if pre-defined codes that are always available within *NeoGroup*. In **Image mode** we created a number of named groups. The name that is given a group here is the text that is used in the final job when using the @name code.

Available built-in @ codes

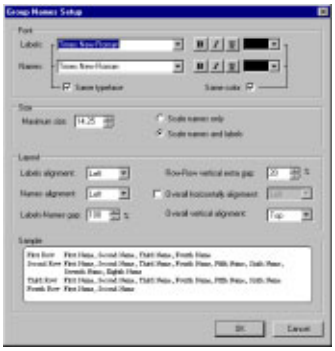
The following built-in @ codes are available:

@ Code	Description
Name	The name of a group entered in **Image mode**

Name list object

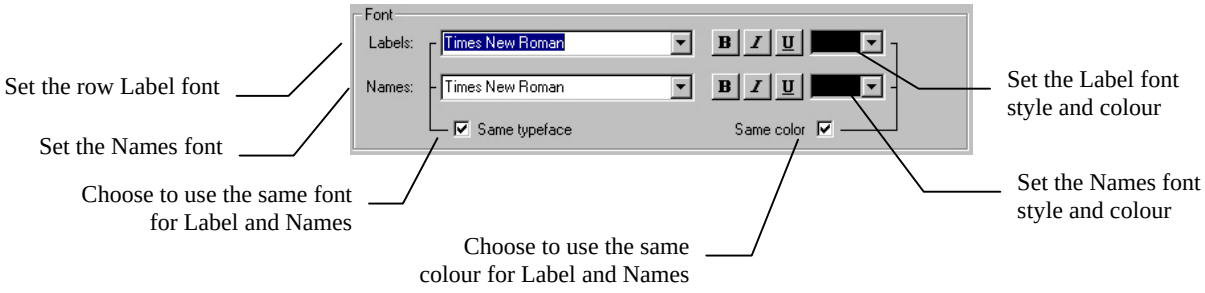
Names are placed into the template with the name list object tool in the toolbar  . To place a name list object, click the button in the toolbar, then click and drag where you want the names to appear. It is not important to be accurate at this point. Release the mouse button, and the **Group Names Setup** dialog is displayed.

At the bottom of the dialog, note the sample text. This text will reflect the changes you make, and uses real data.



Setting the Font

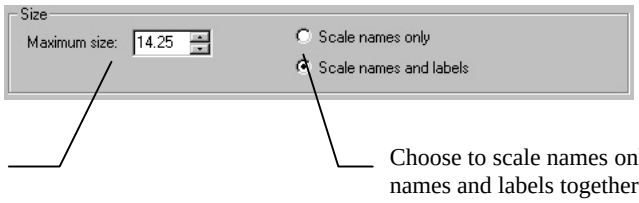
Font settings are available for both the Row list Labels, and names. Choose the font, style and colour for both the label and names. You can choose to use the same font and colour for both if desirable.



Setting the maximum font size

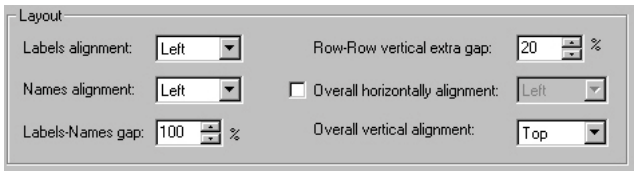
NeoGroup automatically scales text to ensure all the names are displayed, regardless of each row's length. You can define the maximum size a font will appear in the name row

list by setting a size in the **Maximum size** box. You can also choose to scale only the names, or both names and labels.



Setting the Layout

You can set many aspects of the name row list layout. Take note of the sample text as you make adjustments.



Control	Effect
Labels alignment	Changes the alignment of the label from left, centre or right aligned.
Names alignment	Changes the alignment of the names from left, centre or right aligned.
Labels – Names gap	Changes the size of gap between the Label and Names lists
Row-Row vertical extra gap	Adjust the gap between rows
Overall horizontal alignment	Adjusts the alignment of the entire list of rows horizontally
Overall vertical alignment	Adjusts the alignment of the entire list of rows vertically

If you want to create a group image without any names, design a template that doesn't include a Name list object. It is still possible to include @ codes to format the centre board. A group that uses this template will print without any names.

Using barcode objects

NeoGroup has powerful support for barcodes, making it a very flexible and powerful tool. Information to be encoded is included as you place the barcode as an '@' code. Any information entered for that particular @ code will be coded into the barcode.

For example, you might place a barcode using '@ID'. The fields you have set up for the images you import would include 'ID'. Any information entered to the ID field will appear in the barcode.

Placing a barcode object

Choose the **Barcode Object** button in toolbar. The cursor changes to the **Place Object** icon. Click and drag the mouse over the area in the template where you want the barcode to appear. The **Edit Barcode** dialog appears.

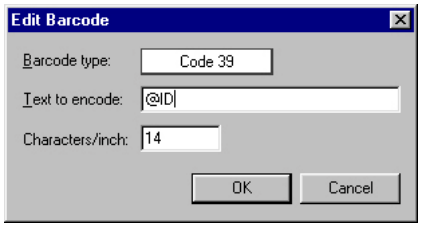


Figure 42: The Edit Barcode dialog

There are several different styles of barcode that are supported:

- Code 39
- Extended Code 39
- Code 128

The Characters per inch can also be set.

You will need to consult with the people who will be reading the barcodes as to how to set these values.

Enter the text you wish to appear in the barcode in the **Text to encode** field. You can include fixed text by entering the text directly. If you want to include variable text to encode, add an '@' code here. For example, '@ID' to code the 'ID' data entered for an image.

Tagged graphic objects

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

Creating and positioning a tagged object

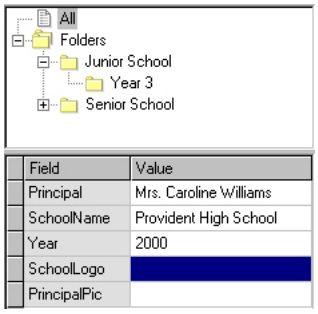
To place a tagged object, open the template you wish to use, then choose the **Tagged object** button in the toolbar . Click and drag the mouse in the template where you want the object to appear. It is not necessary to be accurate. The **Edit Attribute** dialog is shown.

Entering the @ code

Depending on how you create the jobs, you will have defined some default items in **Details mode**. In the previous example, we created graphic objects for the school logo, and the group teacher's photographs. The '@' Code is decided by the fieldname entered here. For example, '@SchoolLogo' references the School's logo, and '@TeacherPic' references a group's Teacher picture.

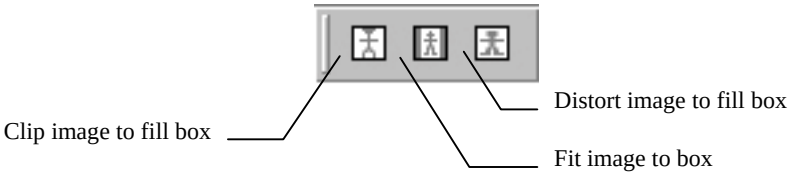
Tagged graphics use the same naming as discussed in the **Variable text objects** section earlier in this chapter. Considering this naming procedure, the correct code for both these objects would be:

Object	Code
SchoolLogo	@File:<SchoolLogo>
TeacherPic	@Folder:<TeacherPic>



Controlling Tagged graphic object scaling

Images placed into a tagged graphic 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 Tagged graphic

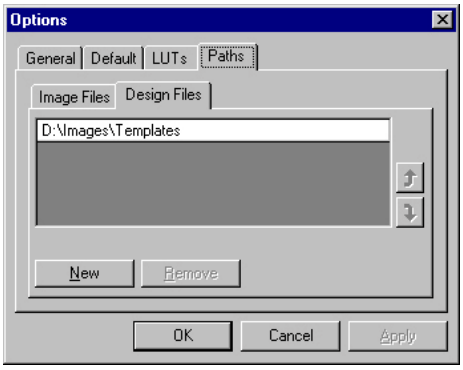
Once the codes have been entered to your template, and images associated to the relevant fields, the graphic objects will be placed into the final job created in **Form Pages mode**.

Saving templates

Once you have designed the template, you must save it to the templates directory on the hard disk. The templates directory is set as a program default. Choose **File > Options** and choose the **Paths** tab. Now, choose the **Design files** tab. Enter the path to the directory that

will hold the templates you design. You can define more than one location for the templates if required.

Any valid template files stored in this directory will be available to use with group images.



If you are designing new templates, you must quit and re-start the program before the new files are available to the program.

12

Form Pages mode

Creating and printing the final *NeoGroup* jobs is done in **Form pages** mode. Here, you can choose the groups to print, apply templates and actually print the jobs.

Form Page interface

The **Form page** user interface consists of three main panes:

- The groups available to print
- The templates available for use
- A preview of the finished page

Creating a page

Creating a page is done by first choosing the group or groups, then choosing the template required. The pages are automatically formed, ready to be printed.

If you wan to select more than one group, use the usual Windows key combinations of **Shift** and **Ctrl** to select blocks of groups.

Printing the pages

Once all the pages have been formed, they can be printed. Choose **File > Print Setup**. The **Print Setup** dialog opens.

NeoGroup uses standard Windows printer drivers to create the package bitmaps. *NeoGroup* also allows the packages to be rendered on a different workstation to allow the operator to continue creating packages without having to wait for the longer rendering process.

When printing to a Timestone Software printer that supports long-roll paper, *NeoGroup* also automatically sets and configures the page size, meaning effective automation of the production process.

Configuring printers

Printer setup is done from the print setup dialog. Open this dialog by choosing **File > Print setup**.

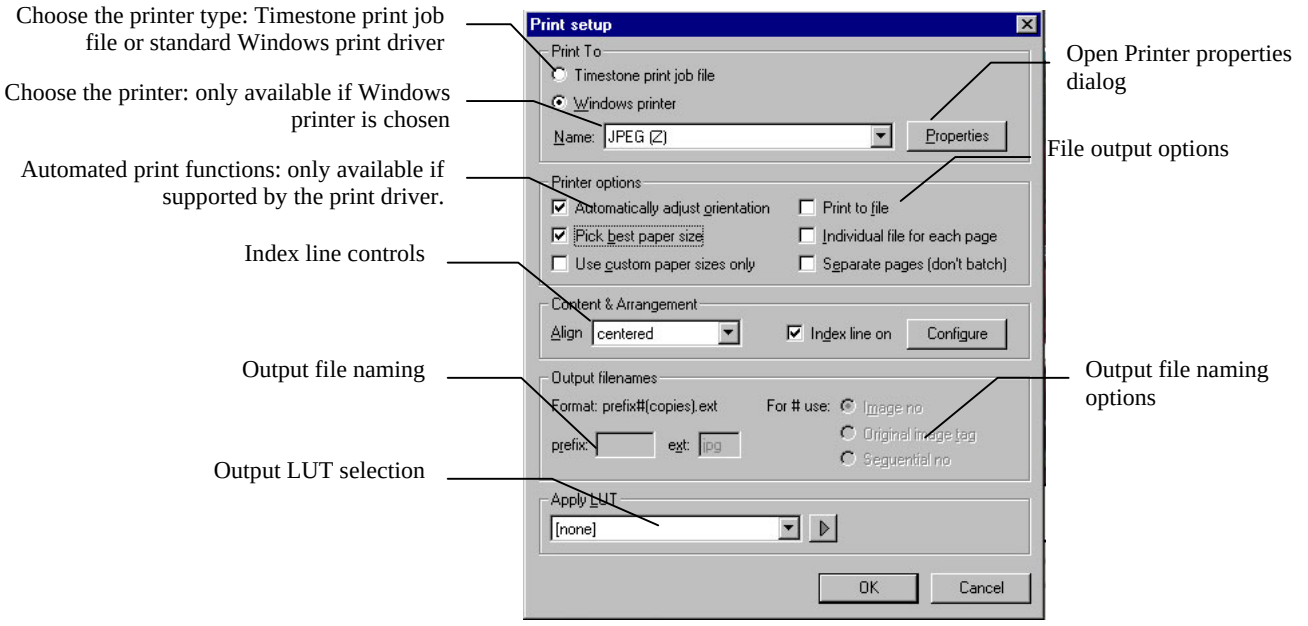


Figure 43: The Print setup dialog

There are three main options that can be used when printing from *NeoGroup*:

- Printing to a standard Windows printer
- Printing to a 'bitmap' style printer such as Zenographics SuperPrint
- Printing to a Timestone Print Job file

Printing to a standard Windows printer driver

When using a standard Windows print driver, *NeoGroup* behaves in the standard way you would expect.

Choosing the printer

To choose the Windows printer driver, choose **Windows printer** from the **Print to** section of the dialog. Choose the desired printer by clicking the arrow in the **Name** drop-down, then choose the printer from the list.

Set the printer properties

The Windows printer properties can be set by choosing **Properties** from the print setup dialog. Once the printer properties dialog opens, follow the manufacturer's instructions to set the necessary parameters.

In particular, ensure that the page size is able to print the packages you have designed.

When using most printer drivers, the option **Pick best paper size** will be available. In this case, it is not necessary to choose a paper size, as this is controlled by *NeoGroup*. This feature requires some configuration to function correctly. See later in this manual.

Printing to a file

If you wish to create a Windows .prn file instead of printing to the printer, choose **Print to file**. A file will be created for the job instead of printed directly to the printer. This file can be submitted to the printer at a later time. See your Windows documentation for this procedure.

Printing to bitmaps

The option **Individual file for each page** is used when printing to bitmaps instead of to a printer. See the following pages for more information.

Automatic paper orientation

When printing to a 'normal' printer, *NeoGroup* will automatically adjust the orientation of the printer's paper to match the package being printed. Enable this option by choosing **Automatically adjust orientation**.

Automatic orientation of a 'bitmap' printer

As discussed previously, *NeoGroup* allows you to 'print' to many new digital photographic printers by printing its jobs to bitmap files. These files are then submitted to the digital photographic printer by a server software. These printers often require that the image be presented in a particular orientation (portrait or landscape), meaning that the orientation of the printed bitmap must be changed as required.

When printing to Zenographics SuperPrint drivers, *NeoGroup* will print the file in the orientation the bitmap driver is currently set. For example, if the packages have been designed in a landscape orientation, but the printer driver is set to portrait, *NeoGroup* will print the image in a portrait orientation to match the driver.

This rotation can take a number of seconds to perform, depending on the size of the final print. To avoid this time, make sure you design your packages in the correct orientation for the printer.

Automatic paper size selection

NeoGroup can automatically choose the most appropriate page size for an image being printed. If you have different size group images within a single file, choosing this option will cause the most suitable paper size be selected when printing the job. You muse ensure that the correct paper size is available to work exactly.

When using standard Windows printer drivers, the physical printer must of course be able to automatically change the paper size to use this feature. In the main, this feature is best used with Zenographics SuperPrint bitmap drivers to send to a photographic style digital printer that can automatically vary the paper size.

Using best paper sizes

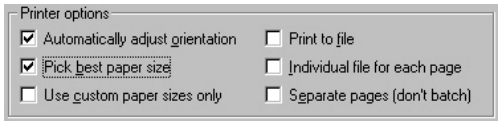
Choose **File > Print setup…** The **Print setup** dialog is shown. Enable best paper size selection by choosing **Pick best paper size** from the **Printer options** section. With this option enabled, *NeoGroup* will check all the available paper sizes, and chooses the closest match for the page currently 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 *NeoGroup* is required to create are not standard (A4, Letter) sizes. Printer drivers that allow custom paper sizes to be created allow you to design sizes that are exactly correct for *Neo*Print prints. In this case, it is not desirable to allow *Neo*Print to automatically choose a standard paper size, as it may not be exactly correct.

Choose **Use custom paper sizes only**. *Neo*Print will only consider custom paper sizes when automatically choosing the one to be used.

When using this feature with the Index line enabled, be sure to allow enough room for the index line when defining the paper size dimensions. If the paper size is too small to include the index line, the next larger size will be chosen, resulting in un-predictable results.



Using printer corrections

NeoGroup allows printer corrections by applying a **LUT** to the image as it is printed. This is especially useful if you have more than one printer in use, and you switch between them. It is also useful to calibrate your printer to the computer's monitor.

To choose a correction, click the **Apply LUT** drop-down box, and choose from the available corrections.

See chapter 11 for more information regarding using and constructing corrections for use.

Print the pages

Once all the various options have been set, choose **File > Print**. The print dialog opens. *NeoGroup* presents you with a list of available jobs that can be printed, and options for the print quantity selected.

Choose the groups you want to print, the quantity options, then **Print**. *NeoGroup* starts printing the job.

Setting the print quantity options

NeoGroup automatically determines the number of prints to make based on the number of names entered for that group. You can make standard adjustments of the quantity selected, or you can enter your own quantity. The options are:

Choosing	**Prints…**
Copies	The automatically determined quantity. Type your own number here to manually over-ride the selection
One only	Prints one only of the page
As indicated	When enabled, the print quantity is the automatically determined number, plus and additional number of prints that you enter here.

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.

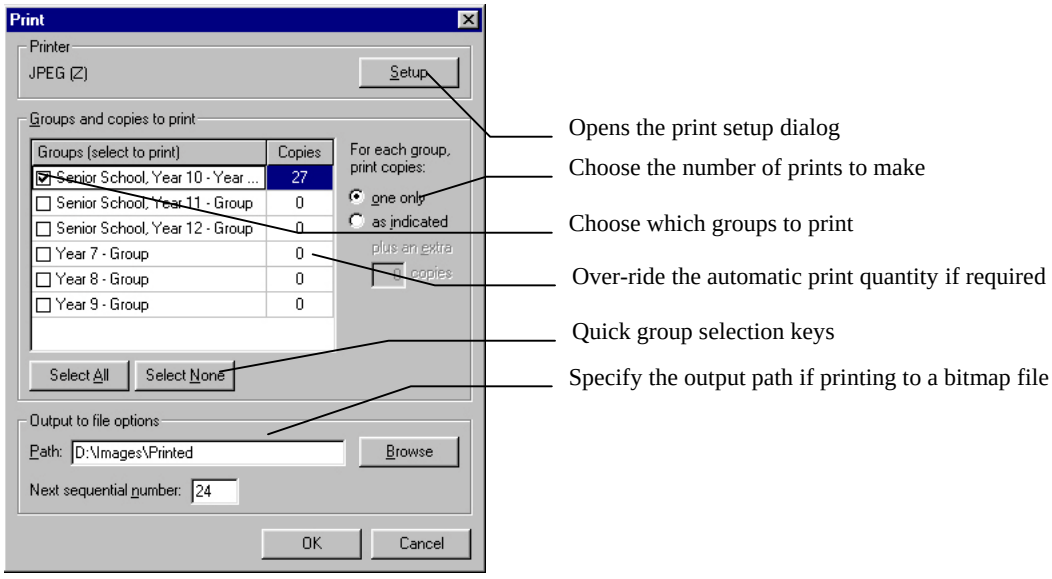


Figure 44: The Print dialog

Printing to a bitmap file

Normally, an application uses a standard Windows print driver to print a page. However, some of the newer photographic digital printers will only image bitmap files. Most of these printers don't have Windows printer drivers available at all.

If your printer is in this category, it is possible to 'print' to a bitmap file using printer drivers such as Zenographics SuperPrint™. These are a set of Windows printer drivers that create bitmap files instead of printing to a physical printer. These bitmaps can then be submitted to your printer.

Timestone Software has also developed a number of Windows printer drivers for some of these photographic digital printers.

Configuring a bitmap printer driver

If you're using a bitmap style driver like SuperPrint to print to your printer, you need to understand how your printer needs to receive the final printed bitmap files. This involves understanding the desired page size, and the resolution (dpi) that the printer is set to.

SuperPrint also has some useful image enhancement features when imaging the resulting files to a photographic style printer. Fore more information on configuring SuperPrint, see chapter 11.

Making general print settings

Most of the settings required are identical to those already discussed. However, when printing to a bitmap file, choose **Individual file for each page** in the **Printer options** section of the **Print setup** dialog. With this option checked, the **Output filenames** settings become available.

Setting the output filename options

Choose the bitmap driver you wish to use, and check the option **Individual file for each page** is enabled.

When printing with these settings, each page is printed to an individual file. There are various options available to control the filename allocated for each page.

There are three options to choose from:

- A prefix: characters always at the beginning of the filenames
- An image identifier: information that identifies each printed file
- Number of copies: the number of copies requested
- File extension: the image file extension

Prefix

The prefix is the first characters of each filename created. Each file created for a particular job will start with whatever is entered here.

Identifier

There are several options available that control the image identifier within the filename.

Option	Description
Image No.	*NeoGroup* 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	*NeoGroup* 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.	*NeoGroup* 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.

Copies

The chosen number of copies is automatically entered.

Extension

The characters used as the file extension.

Using printer corrections

NeoGroup allows printer corrections by applying a **LUT** to the image as it is printed. This is especially useful if you have more than one printer in use, and you switch between them. It is also useful to calibrate your printer to the computer's monitor.

To choose a correction, click the **Apply LUT** drop-down box, and choose from the available corrections.

See chapter 11 for more information regarding using and constructing corrections for use.

Timestone print job files

NeoGroup can print to a special file that contains only the instructions required to create the pack. This means that print times for the operator creating the job is very short. The print job files can then be sent across the network to another workstation, where Timestone Software's PrintTime product is running. is printer queuing software, and can open these files directly. Once open in PrintTime, the packs can be colour corrected, the final quantity adjusted, and then printed. This means that the time-consuming task of rendering the packages can be off-loaded to an un-attended workstation whilst the operators continue to create packages.

Creating a Print Job file

Open the printer setup dialog by choosing **File > print setup**. Choose **Timestone print job** as the target printer. The file naming options discussed previously are still valid. Please review the previous section for this information. Once all the settings have been made, choose **Ok.**

If an Index line or printer LUT corrections are chosen when creating the TIS file, these settings will be applied when the file is finally printed from PrintTime. The Index line can be overridden, but not the LUT corrections. For this reason, be very careful when creating TIS files with LUT corrections.

Create the Print job file

Choose **File > Print**. The Print dialog opens. Choose the range of packs to be printed as previously discussed. Specify the output path for the script file. This can be a network path. Choose **Ok**. The packages are printed. Please consult the PrintTime manual for further information regarding finally creating the print from these script files.

When the TIS file is created, a matching .TIB file is also created in the same directory as the .TIS files. The .TIB file contains batch information for the job being printed. This file is used in hot folder operation, and will automatically add files to a batch when it is seen completed in a hot folder.

Print Index Lines

NeoGroup allows creating a page Index Line that can be positioned at a particular position on each page printed. The Index Line can contain information such as the source file, corrections, image number, and a number of other options.

Figure 45: A page Index Line

Printing Index Lines

Enabling Index Line printing

Choose **File > Print setup.** The Printer setup dialog is shown. Enable Index lines by choosing **Index line on** in this dialog.

Image alignment

Normally, if the paper size chosen is bigger than required, the alignment of the printed image on the page can vary according to how the printer driver handles the mismatch. Using the **Align** setting, the image can be aligned to a specific position on the page.

Choose the desired alignment by clicking the **Align** drop-down, then choosing from the available alignments.

Configuring the Index line

Click the **Configure** button. The **Index Line** setup dialog is displayed.

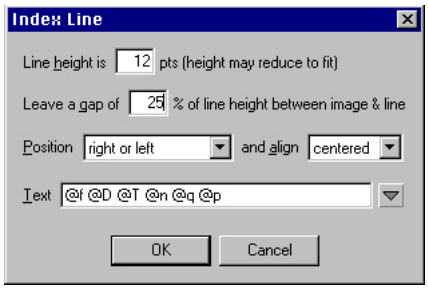


Figure 46: The Index Line options panel

Setting the Index Line options

Setting the Height

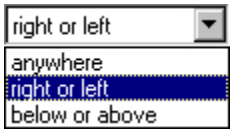
Choose the height of the Image Line in Points. The Image Line text will be automatically scaled to fit within the height.

Specify the gap to the Index Line

Specify the gap amount to leave between the Package print and Index Line. This amount is specified as a percentage of the Index Line height.

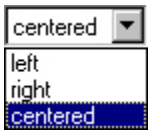
Set the Index Line position

Choose the position for the Index Line to appear. Choosing **Anywhere** allows *NeoGroup* to automatically choose the most appropriate position for the Index Line.



Set the text alignment

Choose Left, Centred or right alignment for the Index Line text.



Choosing the Index Line content

There are a number of items that can be included in the Index Line. These options can be added to the current Index Line by clicking the **Text** options drop-down. A list of pre-defined codes appears. Choose

the desired code, and it is added to the end of the current text selection. It is also possible to enter text to the Index Line.

Option	Description
Path + Filename	Source *NeoGroup* filename and the path to that file.
Filename	Source *NeoGroup* filename
Date	Date the job was printed from *NeoGroup*
Time	Time the job was printed from *NeoGroup*
Image Number	Pack's Image Number
Image Tag	Pack's Image Tag
Image Corrections	Colour and density corrections for this pack
Pack	Package selected
Queue	Originating printer queue

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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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