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# THE PEDALER'S PAGE

BREWER SALES NEWSLETTER/TIP SHEET

JANUARY 1997

## Xenetech Tips

This first-of-its-kind(?) and maybe last-of-its-kind (?) newsletter is to the Xenetech owners in Brewer Sales' territory. Its purpose is to help you get the most out of your Xenetech equipment and let you know of things coming "down the pipe".

As I travel around my territory — calling on Xenetech owners — I see users doing things with our system of which I would never have thought! On the other hand, I see that almost all have overlooked at least one of the more "basic" features of the software. Therefore, I've broken this initial newsletter into four divisions:

### 1) RECENTLY ADDED FEATURES

*Many users are not using these ... simply because the features were overlooked!*

### 2) GREAT "OLD" FEATURES

*These are **dynamite** features that have been around "forever". You will probably know MOST of these. I believe, though, that you will find at least one of these that will be brand new to you ... or at least you remember your trainer telling you about it, but you had forgotten about it!*

### 3) CORELDRAW! /XENETECH TIPS

### 4) NEW ADD-ON PRODUCT

*New "laser" software about to be released. This will be a "for sale" item. It is an **UPGRADE** of your existing Xenetech system ... not an **UPDATE** (updates always have and always(?) will be at no charge!*

## RECENTLY ADDED FEATURES

Please don't ask me which version added which feature ... all of a sudden they were there! As a matter of fact, I'll bet when Jay and the other technicians see this list, they'll tell me that one or more of these have ALWAYS been there! By the way, the current version is 3.04.

**1) NUDGE.** Select one or more objects and use the SHIFT+arrows (up, down, left, right). Ctrl+arrows moves 1/10 of the amount of SHIFT+arrows.

NOTES:

- a) left/right-arrows won't do anything unless Justification is set to None
- b) YES, it can be changed! **PAGE | SNAP SPACING | Line "Nudge" Amount:**

*Brewer's Recommended Setting:*

.1 causes the SHIFT+arrow to move .1" and the CTRL+arrows to move .01".

- c) Watch the baseline value "confirm" the nudge amount

**2) ENGRAVE BY COLOR.** We are now able to use colors to engrave "layers". That is, assign different colors to different cutter specs (width, speed, depth, etc.).

Sample applications: a) multiple plate layout with small industrial tags with holes to be cut out and text. b) two-line nametags with different cutter for each line.

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In both examples an entire sheet full of smaller tags can be engraved by “sending” one color at a time To Engraver.

**3) MACRO LANGUAGE** (for “propeller heads” and programmers mostly). With just a little study of the on-line help, one could manually assemble a macro that would load different jobs with variable text onto one or more multiple plates. While most of this is beyond what most engravers would want to learn, even beginning programmers could write a simple program that could create these macros for you.

**4) SIMPLIFIED COLUMNS LAYOUT PROGRAM.** The “old” columns method is still available and it is probably the fastest way to make columns, but for those who never understood it, you will *love* the new method. As you will see from the suggested “preferences” below, it is very versatile. ALSO, if you don’t get it right the first time, go back to **Text | Columns** and change one or more settings and OK it again. Unlike the old method, it retains all info you put in originally. It will take a bit of work to get familiar with it, but believe me, it is worth the effort!

*Brewer’s Recommended Settings (until you master it):*

**Text | Make Columns | Setup**

Inches (not Percentage)  
 Row Spacing by Baseline (Not interRow Spacing)  
 First Line Measured from Top of Line (not baseline)  
 Enter Text by Columns or Rows (whichever)  
 Justify Columns=Yes (that is, be sure checkmark is turned on)  
 You then specify horizontal spacing by either the distance between the columns or the margins.

**5) RIGHT MOUSE BUTTON** calls up context-sensitive options! A great time saver! Note especially the “Edit PopUp Menu...” option. This allows you to put whatever menu items you want under the different “contexts.” You will use this scores of times a day, if you’ll spend a few minutes to figure it out.

**6) MORE THAN ONE “COPY INPUTS”** in one multiple job. Now use two or more data files to add variables.

**7) DRAG A “POLYMARKER”** and keep it proportional. *Secret:* hold the shift key down! While it at first doesn’t look like it’s working, IT IS! The box seems to resize non-proportionally, but if you release the mouse before you release the shift, you will see it is 100% aspect ratio (or whatever AR it was when you started “dragging”).

**8) ROUNDED CORNER GRID CUTOOUT** automatically “radius” corners to a user-defined radius. See **Misc | Setup | Grid Cutout Corner Radius**.

**9) TRUE TYPE FONTS.** Technologically, this is the greatest single feature ever added to Xenotech software. I put this last because I’m sure everyone is already using this feature!

## **GREAT “OLD” FEATURES (often overlooked and/or forgotten!)**

**1) COPY LIST OF VARIABLES** into clipboard (from any Windows™ application as well as Notepad™) and Paste them “into” one or more selected lines in layout. That is, you really don’t have to save them as text file and do a Copy Input; just copy and paste!

**2) THE - & + KEYS** (numeric keypad, not typewriter row) are often the easiest way to select one or more lines. By holding the Ctrl key down and pressing any one of these keys allows you to add lines to the selection (easiest way to select first line and last line). These keys are the ONLY way of which I know to select an arc that you’ve inadvertently given a radius that puts it off the plate.

**3) USING THE RESCALE FEATURE** of the **Size Plate/Workspace** dialog allows you to change the plate size and keep all proportions and relationships. This is especially valuable if your layout includes arcs, columns, vertical texts, etc.

**4) ABILITY TO CHANGE MANY TOOL KIT PARAMETERS** at once. For instance, to change a line's size, baseline and margins all at once, click on Letter Height (or Alt+H from the keyboard) and set desired value ... but instead of pressing ENTER, press down-arrow and fill in baseline ... down-arrow again to change margins etc. ... and THEN press ENTER and all values are modified at once. This technique saves hundreds of keystrokes/mouse picks in just a few hours!

**5) ABILITY TO CHANGE PERCENT FILL.** The Percent Fill feature allows us to increase or decrease the relative size of one, a few or all objects. Example: you get through with a rather complex layout only to see it is too busy or massive. By Selecting All (F6) then changing the Percent Fill to a slightly smaller value, each selected object will be **proportionately** reduced.

**6) USE CENTER LINE OR TOP OF LINE** instead of baseline. While this feature will be used under many circumstances, it's a Godsend for blueprints. If you ever work from blueprints or other specifications, you know that placement will often be specified from the center of the object or the top of the object, instead of the baseline. To activate this feature, click on Baseline in the toolkit and then press the right- or left-arrow to cycle between Top, Center, Baseline.

**7) "ADD TO" VALUES** in tool kit. Example: you have a line 2.175" tall and need to make it 2.275" tall. All you have to do is click on Letter Height and enter +.1 [then ENTER]. All numeric values can be incremented or decremented in this fashion. Another instance: if you select several lines of different heights and use this method to add (or - for subtract) to the height, each line is increased by the same absolute value.

**8) AUTOMATIC LAYOUT.** Example: you need to leave room for a 2" medallion at the top of a plate, but you want to use the Even Spacing feature to "balance" the plate. **Page | Automatic Layout Format**, then put 2.75" (or some amount to leave a little extra room) for top margin, then .5" for bottom margin and then Even Spacing (F8).

**9) ADJUSTABLE DUPLICATE.** Do you know that the duplicate "offset" is controlled by **Snap Spacing? Page | Snap Spacing** allows you to adjust horizontal and/or vertical duplication amounts. This is the easiest way for me to do a "baby plate" layout. It's even more valuable in a blueprint where the specifications for the cutouts are relative to each other. Set the first one ... then change values and duplicate ... change values and duplicate...etc.

## CorelDRAW! / XENETECH TIPS

- 1) If using **Corel5** or newer, you should **convert all text to curves** before Copying and Pasting into Xenetech.
- 2) If using **Corel5** for simulated fill lines, do not import anything until after you finish exporting. Why? After you use any import filter, it "breaks" the simulated fill capability. You must exit the program and start again before doing any more simulated fills (HPGL).
- 3) If using **Corel4** or newer, you would be wise to set all line widths (i.e., non-text objects) to .001.
- 4) If you use **Contour** to fill items and want to reverse the engraving pattern to engrave from the inside out:
  - a) Separate
  - b) Ungroup contour group
  - c) Combine both original and all contours
  - d) Break apart
  - e) Combine one more time.

## NEW ADD-ON PRODUCT (Xenotech "Laser" Software)

**C**urrently named simply *Graphics Workstation 4.0*, this new \$1,295 software program has all the same user-friendly layout capabilities that Xenotech owners have loved since the beginning — BUT has the power to replace your scanning program, your paint program, your raster-to-vector program, and your drawing program ... and is it fast!!!

This software will be sold as a complete graphics solution for engraving, sublimation (B&W and color), vinyl lettering and laser engraving. **One software program will do it all!** Watch industry press releases for more information.

**For a limited time only**, Xenetech is offering this program [in its initial release] to our existing customers for a greatly reduced price of \$395. This initial release, in many ways, is a glimpse of things to come. After you have once purchased this UPGRADE, UPDATES on it will be at no charge, just as they are on our engraving software.

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