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Using Braille2000 with a USB Embosser

When to use these instructions

If your embosser uses a USB data cable to connect to your computer, you should follow these instructions to configure Braille2000's embossing function. These instructions apply to Windows98 through Windows 11, both 32-bit and 64-bit operating systems. (These instructions do not apply to graphics-only embossers such as the ViewPlus Columbia or Tiger or the APH PixBlaster, or similar units manufactured by ViewPlus... this type of graphics embosser is accessed via the Print function. See the document "Using a Viewplus Tiger embosser" at www.braille2000.com.)

Background

For traditional embossers (those that are not fundamentally graphics, those that receive a data stream of ASCII-braille (cell) data), Braille2000 uses its own printer driver for embossing to queue embossing jobs, to communicate with your embosser in the background, and to give embosser configuration data (such as page-size limitations) to Braille2000. Your traditional embosser may have setup automation that will create a print icon with a simplistic driver... follow those instructions; keep the icon; then do the steps below. When selecting the "Port", use the same port name as the automated mechanism selected (a port name such as USB001).

For USB connections, the USB port may be assigned by the Windows "plug and play" mechanism, as your USB embosser is detected when first plugged in. A USB embosser manufacturer will supply instructions and/or software for making the USB connection. After you have followed the manufacturer's instructions and have made the initial USB connection to your embosser (such that a printer icon for it shows in the Printers Folder), you are ready to set up the Braille2000 embossing driver for it, as explained below. This will create a new icon for the embosser. Keep both the new and the original icons in your Devices and Printers folder (they utilize different software).

Embossing via Braille2000

Braille2000 has distinct output functions for ink-printing (via the Print button, also used for graphics embossers) and for embossing (via the Emboss button, for traditional embossers). Braille2000 maintains, for its own use, a record of which printer icons in the Windows printers folder are ink-printers and which are embossers, and from the Braille2000 point of view, only the printers that utilize the Braille2000 embossing driver are embossers. Everything else is considered an ink printer. This includes any icons created by the embosser manufacturer's plug and play mechanism (that icon could be used by some software, but not by Braille2000). Thus, after you have done the embosser manufacturers installation, you still need to create a printer icon for embossing via Braille2000. That icon will operate the embosser by way of the Braille2000 embossing driver software (and it is precisely those icons using the Braille2000 embosser driver that Braille2000 understands to be "embossers").

Installing the Braille2000 Embosser

Do not use the normal “add printer” function to install a Braille2000 embosser. Instead, run Braille2000 and right-click the “Emboss” button in the toolbar and select “Setup” (or key Alt f e u on the keyboard). This will take you to a dialog box titled “Embosser Setup”. Click the button “Install New Embosser”. You should then see a dialog box titled “Braille2000 Embosser Installation Wizard”. (At this point you will need “Administrator” system access rights.)

To install the embosser you need to supply three pieces of information, as follows.

1. New embosser name

This name will ultimately appear on an icon in the Printers Folder. The default such name is “Embosser”. Note that the name used must be new, i.e., it cannot match the name on any currently-defined printer icon.

2. Model

The Braille2000 embosser driver supports most embossers, and for correct operation, you need to indicate the model of embosser you have, such as “Romeo” or “Index Everest”. Select the name in the list that most closely describes your embosser model.

3. Port

For a USB embosser you need to select a USBnnn name such as USB001. Select the USB port already associated with your embosser: assuming the initial printer icon already exists, look at its Printer Properties (at Devices and Printers) to see its port name. (Note: you cannot create a USBnnn port manually, they are created as Windows recognizes the device. You must have completed normal USB embosser installation previously, following your embosser manufacturer’s instructions.) **Tip: When doing the initial setup of your embosser, DO NOT connect the USB cable to different USB sockets—plug it in and keep it in that same socket; on a new computer Windows will name that socket USB001, making it easy to know the proper port name.**

Click the OK button. Braille2000 will install a new printer icon, for your embosser, for use by Braille2000. Once this is done, you may immediately emboss via the new device (assuming of course that the embosser is ready and connected).

Note: the “Include network devices” checkbox and the “Enter share name manually” button are used only when setting up a link to a remote embosser; they are not involved with configuring a local embosser that connects via USB.