data highways ltd

Temporay Operating Instructions

This is a temporary version of the operating instructions to get you started.

When you start a new document based on one of my templates, you first get a group of small dialogue boxes, which describe how you don't have to pay me the main fee for use of the templates, until you succeed in selling a major script. However when you make your first sale, I will expect a small cut from it, and then you have free use forever after. These boxes look like this:

Scroll through to read this note, then click on [CONTINUE], this won't happen every time you open your script to work on it, only each time you start a whole new script.

data–highways–ltd

252 Colney Hatch Lane, London N10 1BD,
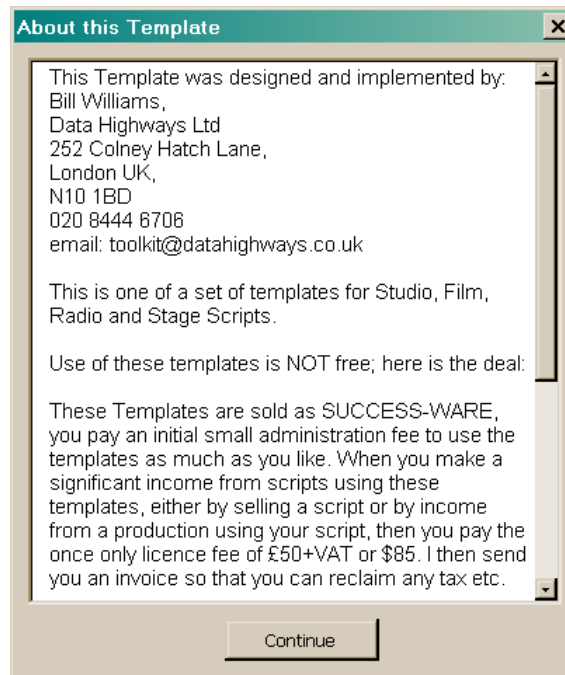**Phone: 020-8444 6706.   Fax: 020-8444 7968.**
e-mail: billwill@datahighways.co.uk

After the adverts, you reach a dialogue box, into which you type the name of your new masterpiece; this can be a working title, as you can change it later.

--	Microsoft Word: BillWill's Script Templates

Enter Title of Script

Title   of Script

OK		Cancel

After you type in your title and do an OK, the Characters' Names box appears.

--	Microsoft Word: BillWill's Script Templates

Please Enter the names of the characters in your script.

Person 1		Person 11	
Person 2		Person 12	
Person 3		Person 13	
Person 4		Person 14	
Person 5		Person 15	
Person 6		Person 16	
Person 7		Person 17	
Person 8		Person 18	
Person 9		Person 19	
Person 10		Person 20	

Use TAB or Mouse clicks to move from person to person

OK	Cancel

Should you need more than 20 characters in your script, you can type infrequent names each time they speak

You work down this box putting in the working names of your characters for your play; they don't have to be the final names as you can change them later. As you can see from the on-screen notes, you move from field to field above using the Tab key or the mouse, (Shift+Tab will move backwards).Each of these 20 entries have fast keystrokes to put in the name and be ready to type the dialogue. If your play needs more than 20 characters, the instructions for typing dialogue for the 21st etc. are detailed later in this document.

When you have typed in the initial set of characters, click the OK button. You will see the names being inserted into the crib sheet on the first page of your script. The document will then prompt you to save the empty script. You should navigate to the place in your filingsystem on your hard disk whereyou want to save it, and give it a relevant name.


Print the Crib Sheet

Your first action should be to print the crib sheet, so that you can have it in front of you while you work. The crib sheet is Page 0 of your script, so printing it on its own is done by just selecting File then Print, and then select Curent Page and press OK.

The crib sheet shows you the shortcut keystrokes corresponding to the characters in the list, from Control +1 for the first person through to Control+Shift +0 for the 20th Person.

Below the description of those keystrokes are the short cuts to be used to change the style of a paragraph; (most of these also have a button on the toolbar to do the same operation, see diagram below.(the toolbar varies slightly according to the needs of particular templates..
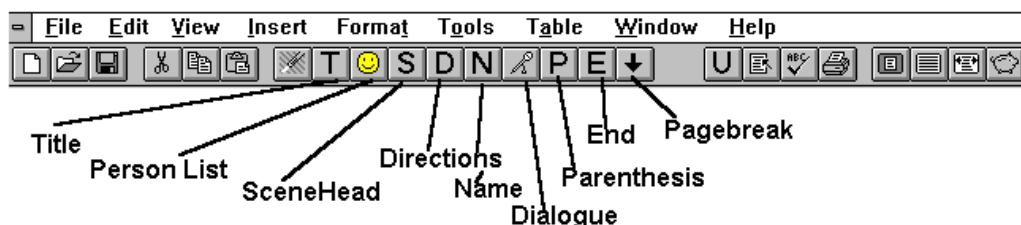
If you cannot see the toolbar you will need to drop down the View menu, select Toolbars and put an X in the Scripts line to see this button bar; you could also clear the other Xs because with all the built-in script formatting you are unlikely to need the normal formatting toolbars. You can also turn off the Ruler in the View menu as you wont need that either.

As you use the templates you will see that the various type of the paragraphs are shown in different colours, so that you can easily tell that they have been set correctly. They will print in ordinary black and white of course, though if you have a colour printer you may need to instruct it to print in black & white.

You next action can be to revise the various bits of personal information on the Title page, but that can be left till later. Now while you have the urge to write scripts it is probably best to get into the meat of it. So use the PgDn key or the right-hand scroll bar controls to get to the beginning of the main script.

Scene Start

Place your mouse cursor on the first slug line, (usually called SCENE 1) and click to move the keyboard insertion point to there. Modify the line to suit the first scene of your play and then move down to the second line if there is one and modify this too. Then with the cursor at the end of the line press the RETURN key

First Stage Directions

The style will then switch to Stage-Directions format and you type in your first set of stage directions.

Character names and Dialogue

When you are ready to begin some dialogue don't hit return at the end of the directions paragraph instead press the key combination for the relevant person (e.g. CTRL+1 for Person 1). This keystroke combination will finish the current paragraph, go down by the right amount of spacing, insert the Name of the character and position the insertion point ready to type dialogue. For Film and Studio scripts this is on the next line, for Stage and Radio scripts it is on the same line. Should you find that you pressed the wrong combination, it is easy to just hit the correct combination and then delete the redundant empty name later using the mouse; but should you wish to delete an erroneous name immediately, hold down shift and use the arrows to

highlight it backwards, then press the DEL key. (If you backspace one position too many the previous dialogue will become NAME type, so just press CTRL+SHIFT+D to switch it back to dialogue, or click the chat balloon button on the toolbar).

When you have finished the dialogue of the current speaker, don't press RETURN, just press the key combination for the next speaker; it will do the details for you and position the insertion point ready for you to type dialogue.

More stage directions

To switch from dialogue to more stage directions, press Return then CTRL+SHIFT+V to switch style to directions and carry on typing. To start dialogue again, just press the key combination of the next speaker.

At the end of a scene

Studio	Film	Stage	Radio
Press RETURN, type Cut-to or Fade-to etc. and press CTRL+SHIFT+C. Then press CTRL+SHIFT+E or CTRL+SHIFT+I and finish the scene heading etc. The template will force a page break, after the Cut-To	Press RETURN, press CTRL+SHIFT+I (for scene heading) or CTRL+SHIFT+E for the INT or EXT scene heading as relevant, then type the rest of the slug line. Scenes in films can be very short, so only a few blank lines, not a page break are used to separate scenes. Films have only one slug line per scene, when you press RETURN you are ready to type the first Directions.	Press RETURN, press CTRL+SHIFT+E and type e.g. End of Scene 1, Press CTRL+SHIFT+S and type the heading for Scene 2. --------------------------- For a new Act after ending the Scene, press RETURN then CTRL+SHIFT+Z then press CTRL+SHIFT+A and type CTRL+SHIFT+S: etc. The template causes each Act to begin on a new page.	Radio plays don't have scenes, just keep alternating dialogue and sound effects until the play is finished. The final END is already in place.

Typing Names for Infrequently Speaking Characters.

The shortcut keystrokes cover 20 speaking characters, if you have more than 20 in your play, assign the most frequent speakers to the 20 shortcuts. For the others you type their names each time they speak with a few extra keystrokes to set the styles.

Film and Studio Scripts	Stage and Radio Scripts.
At the end of the previous speakers dialogue (or stage directions), press RETURN, then press CTRL+SHIFT+N to set Name style, then type the name of the character e.g. The Vicar and press RETURN Then you can type his dialogue.	At the end of the previous speakers dialogue (or stage directions), press RETURN then CTRL+SHIFT+N to select Name style, then TAB then type the name of the character, e.g. The Vicar then COLON then TAB. You can then type his dialogue

Parenthesis

Sometimes you will want to put various qualifiers against a persons name such as OOV for out of view or (continued) for the same speaker talking after some stage directions or a page break. You can either put this on a line by itself usually in round brackets and press CTRL+SHIPT+P or type it at the relevant point in the dialogue in brackets. If you then come back to it in an editing pass, highlight the qualifier with the mouse and click the Pin-button on the toolbar; it will then put just that highlighted portion into italics.

Sometimes this is used to indicate moods e.g. *(angrily)* though I see from some Internet notes that you are advised not to do this in dialogue, but to set the mood correctly in the Stage Directions preceding the dialogue.

Poetry and Blank Verse

The Stage and Radio Templates contain styles for Poetry or Blank Verse, this is set by the Blank button on the toolbar or by pressing CTRL+SHIFT+Y. In the present versions this does not set the style correctly on the line with the name on it, so you will need to press RETURN after the name then CTRL+SHIFT+Y to start the poetry.

Non-printing notes

There is a facility for including non-printing notes in your script, CTRL+SHIFT+U will start these notes, or you can drop down the style list and select non-print style. These notes are displayed in grey font.

Revisions

As you go through a script to revise it, you will sometimes accidentally delete the invisible paragraph mark at the end of a paragraph, causing its style to change to the wrong one. Simply click the mouse in the paragraph to put the insertion point in the paragraph an then click the relevant button on the toolbar to reset the paragraph type. You might lose the characteristic blue colour, but this is not important.

If you decide to rename any of the characters or to use up a few more of the 20 names, click on the Smiley button to bring up the Characters' Names box. When you have made your alterations click OK. The revisions will then be inserted in the crib sheet and from there will propagate into the Names headers in the script. The names in dialogue or stage directions will not be revised; to change those use the Edit menu, then the Replace option.

The Character's Names are actually held as invisible document variable, but the crib sheet must not be deleted after printing it, or it will cause an error when you update the character list

When revising just before printing you may find that you need to insert a page break. On the Film template is a button with a page-split on it which inserts a page break with the (continued) markers You will need to insert the speakers Name again with his/her shortcut keycode and then put (continued) and use the parenthesis button on it. Should you subsequently decide to remove that page break, first switch the view to Normal mode so that it is easy to highlight and delete the whole pagebreak sequence. Practice it first before using it on a serious script.

Passing the Script to the Production Team

As before mentioned if you pass a script on floppy disk or by modem to a colleague, then they will not be able to use the full automatic features unless you also pass them a copy of the template. Production teams probably don't need the full facilities, so to make a submission script drop down the Format menu and select the bottom entry which reads "Make Submission Script" or "Make Production Script".Then click OK on the messageswhich appear.

This action, changes all the colours to black, then removes the cribsheet, then disconnects the template to remove the macros. This prevents a macro virus security alert from occurring in the production office. The result is a plain Microsoft Word document which looks as if it has been typed by an expert user of Word, with full understanding of paragraph styles.

Copyright

The copyright in any scripts which you write belong to your usual copyright holder, usually yourself unless you are writing under contract for someone else, but the copyright in the templates themselves is mine, so you may not modify the templates and sell or pass them *as a scripting system* to anyone else, without permission and a suitable fee.

Further Information

This is the fifth release of these templates and this documentation, further revisions will be produced in due course, together with an example script done with each template.

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Bill Williams
21 August, 2003

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