

PostScript Quick Tips: Printing Ransom Notes

Copyright © 1995 Herb Weiner. All rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to use these tips in the design and production of any document. However, the PostScript code provided here may not be incorporated into any software product without a license from the author.

Today, just to be different, we'll show you how to make your documents look less professional (like a ransom note). This program uses the PostScript pseudo-random number generator to vary the font, size, style, spacing, etc.

You can replace the message at the end of the program with any message of your choosing. However, you must specify the line breaks manually, since the program has no facilities for wrapping long lines.

The parameters at the beginning of the program allow you to specify the minimum and maximum character sizes, the lightest and darkest shades of gray (or black), the maximum percentage of the height by which to stagger the text, the maximum rotation angle, the percentage of characters that are outlined and inverted, and the amount of leading and extra character spacing. Changing the RandomSeed causes the program to choose a different random sequence of character attributes.

The March/April 1995 issue of the X-Change contains a PostScript Quick Tip entitled *Converting PS to EPS*. The technique described in that Quick Tip can be used to convert this PostScript to EPS.

This is a
Ransom Note
Leave \$100 in
small bills
or you'll never
see your
software again

© Copyright 1992-95 Herb Weiner. All rights reserved.

```
/MaximumSize 36 def /MinimumSize 24 def
/DarkestGray 0.000 def /LightestGray 0.250 def
/StaggerPercent 10 def /MaximumRotation 10 def
/OutlinePercent 25 def /InvertPercent 25 def
/ExtraSpacePercent 25 def /LeadingPercent 20 def
/RandomSeed 0 def

/allFonts [ [/Times-Roman /Times-Italic /Times-Bold
/Times-BoldItalic /Helvetica /Helvetica-Oblique
/Helvetica-Bold /Helvetica-BoldOblique /Courier
/Courier-Oblique /Courier-Bold /Courier-BoldOblique
/AvantGarde-Book /AvantGarde-BookOblique
/AvantGarde-Demi /AvantGarde-DemiOblique
/Bookman-Light /Bookman-LightItalic /Bookman-Demi
/Bookman-DemiItalic /NewCenturySchlbk-Roman
/NewCenturySchlbk-Italic /NewCenturySchlbk-Bold
/NewCenturySchlbk-BoldItalic /Palatino-Roman
/Palatino-Italic /Palatino-Bold /Palatino-BoldItalic
/ZapfChancery-MediumItalic] {findfont} forall] def
/x 72 def /y 720 MaximumSize sub def RandomSeed srand
/nFonts allFonts length def /character 1 string def
/dY MaximumSize LeadingPercent 100 div 1 add mul def
/randRange {1 index sub rand 1000001 mod 1000000 div
mul add} bind def
/randBoolean {rand 100 mod exch lt} bind def
/randInteger {rand exch mod} bind def
/makebbox {gsave currentpoint newpath moveto
character false charpath flattenpath pathbbox
/y2 exch def /x2 exch def /y1 exch def /x1 exch def
grestore} bind def
/max {2 copy lt {exch} if pop} bind def
/ransomLine {newpath x y moveto
{character 0 3 -1 roll put
allFonts nFonts randInteger get
MinimumSize MaximumSize randRange scalefont setfont
character stringwidth pop /deltaX exch def
makebbox /width x2 x1 sub def /height y2 y1 sub def
currentpoint /yOffset y1 3 -1 roll sub def
/xOffset x1 3 -1 roll sub def
/doBox InvertPercent randBoolean def /boxDelta
doBox {width height max 4 div} {0} ifelse def
boxDelta 0 rmoveto gsave width 2 div height 2 div
0 StaggerPercent randRange 100 div MaximumSize mul
sub rmoveto
MaximumRotation neg MaximumRotation randRange rotate
width 2 div neg height 2 div neg rmoveto
LightestGray DarkestGray randRange setgray
doBox {gsave currentpoint newpath moveto xOffset
boxDelta sub yOffset boxDelta sub rmoveto
width boxDelta 2 mul add dup 0 rlineto 0 height
boxDelta 2 mul add rlineto neg 0 rlineto closepath
fill grestore 1 setgray} if
character OutlinePercent randBoolean
{false charpath stroke} {show} ifelse grestore
deltaX 0 ExtraSpacePercent randRange 100 div 1 add
mul boxDelta add 0 rmoveto} forall
/y y dY sub def} bind def
```

```
(This is a) ransomLine
(Ransom Note) ransomLine
(Leave $100 in) ransomLine
(small bills) ransomLine
(or you'll never) ransomLine
(see your) ransomLine
(software again) ransomLine
showpage
```