TURBO DELPHI PRO COMPATIBLE

CodeGear technology partner

ReportBuilder Standard Edition allows you to elegantly model free-form reports, nested reports, side-by-side reports, and drill-down reports!

Use the Report Wizards and Drag-and-Drop tools to quickly produce layouts. Then refine the layouts using the MS Office style Report Designer.
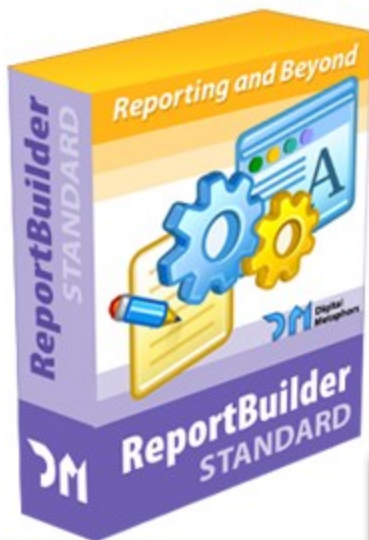
- Use the Report Wizards and Drag-and-Drop tools to quickly produce layouts. Then refine the layouts using the MS Office style Report Designer.

- Build complex reports using a full suite of components: Text, Lines, Shapes, Charts, Barcodes, Regions, and Subreports.

- Use the datapipeline components to access data from databases, text files, and in-memory data structures such as arrays and lists.

- Create custom components to extend the power of the Report Component Library (RCL).
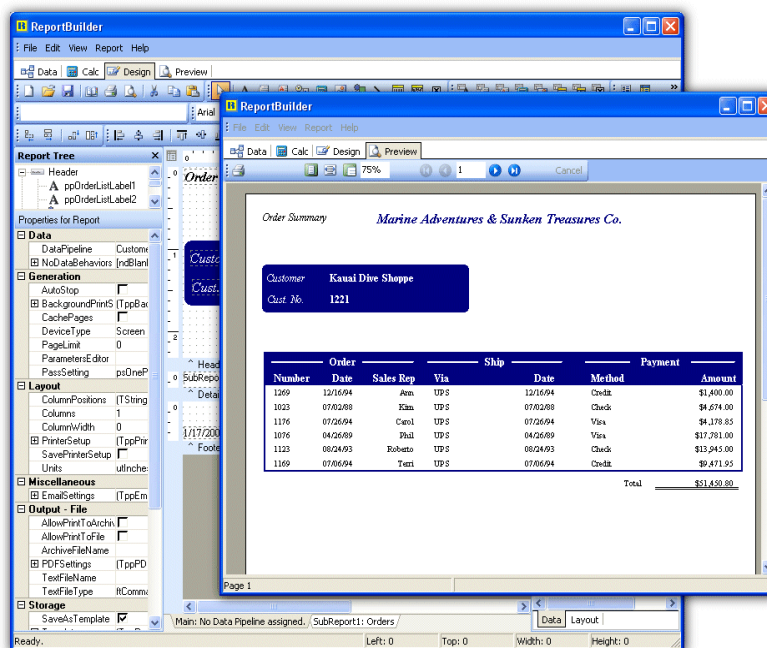
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ReportBuilder is a development environment that can be used to construct reports, report components, and reporting applications. Because reporting encompasses a very wide range of requirements, it is often difficult to put a limit on what should be expected of a reporting tool. The designers of ReportBuilder reduced this broad set of requirements down to the following equation:

data access + data process + report layout = report output

Data Access

The retrieval of data from a database table, text file, Delphi object, or other data source in an organized fashion (structured as records and fields).

Data Process

Refers to the calculation of intermediate results based on the data and the modification of the report layout as the report generates.

Report Layout

A set of components that describe the look and feel of the report and define the behavior of components during report generation.

Report Output

A set of components that describe the exact content of each page.

This equation more or less covers the entire area of development known as reporting. In terms of importance, each element of the equation is basically equal. If any one element of the equation is not supported or is weakly supported, than the utility of the reporting solution is greatly reduced.

Leveraging Delphi

Early versions of **ReportBuilder** focused on the report layout and report output elements, largely due to the fact that Delphi has abundant solutions for the data access (DataSets, FileStreams, StringLists, etc.) and for the data process (events and Object Pascal) elements. In fact, utilizing these solutions is still a quite valid and productive way for developers to use ReportBuilder. The developer can configure standard Delphi data access components, connect them to a report via the data pipeline component, design and preview the report at Delphi design-time, and, if necessary, code event handlers in Object Pascal to perform calculations or to modify the report layout during generation.

ReportBuilder Standard | Advantages

A Pleasure to Use User-Interface

The ReportBuilder Report Designer is really a pleasure to use. Because it works the way other Windows 95 applications work, the Report Designer saves you the hassle of learning a new interface. The Report Designer is fully integrated with the Delphi IDE, thereby allowing you to use either the Report Designer, the Delphi Object Inspector, or both. And the user-interface is rich, providing multiple ways for you to complete your work (for instance, any property of a report or report component can be set in the Object Inspector or via the speed menus and dialogs of the Report Designer).

Simple Reports Made Quickly

By utilizing the drag-and-drop capabilities of ReportBuilder, you can create data-aware components and associated formatting components in seconds. You can also use the report creation capabilities of the Report Wizard to create professional quality reports with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Complex Reports Made Simple

ReportBuilder provides a level of flexibility unmatched by any other reporting tool ever created. This flexibility is due to the large number of report components, the ability to group components using regions, the ability to create relationships between stretching components such as memos, richtext and subreports, and the flexibility of nesting full-fledged reports within one another. With ReportBuilder, there is no limit to the complexity which you can resolve.

Interactive Reports Made Possible

ReportBuilder provides a powerful feature found in no other competing product: multiple nested drill-down subreports. This feature can be used to create a highly sophisticated 'tree view' of the data: an initial summary report is displayed and additional information can be accessed simply by clicking on an item in the Print Preview window. The page is then re-rendered with more detail information shown. You can also utilize this technology to make the Print Preview window 'clickable' so that you can create solutions of your own, such as launching an independent report when an item in the report is clicked. The potential uses of the 'hot' Print Preview window are literally endless.

Speed, Speed, Speed

The third generation report engine in ReportBuilder is fast and flexible. While other report engines force a resource-intensive caching scheme on your application, the ReportBuilder engine allows you to choose between minimal caching or full-page caching. When few records are traversed for each page, minimal caching is faster; when many records are traversed for each page, full-page caching is faster. With ReportBuilder, you can optimize the engine's caching scheme to run fast for your report. With other products, you're stuck with the one caching scheme offered.

Expansive Functionality Unmatched

Twenty-one components are delivered standard with ReportBuilder. Everything from labels, to shapes, to lines, to memos, to checkboxes, to barcodes, to charts is offered. The feature set provided by these components is a super-set of the features offered by other products. And when it comes time to handle those really complex reports, isn't it nice to know that you have a super-set of the reporting functionality available rather than a subset?

ReportBuilder Standard Advantages Continued…

True Delphi Integration

ReportBuilder is a reporting development environment – but it is also coded as a set of real Delphi components. Therefore, you can use the Object Inspector to configure any component in a report or create event handlers for any component in a report, all at Delphi design-time. Event handlers allow you to modify the report layout or perform calculations while the report is generating, which can be vital in getting the exact output you want. While other products may be written in Object Pascal, they may not support standard Delphi constructs like event handlers, form inheritance, or dynamic report creation. The truth is that true Delphi integration is technically challenging, and products that take short-cuts to avoid these challenges must eventually invent other 'technologies' to replace what is already provided in Delphi. This practice introduces unnecessary and potentially unstable code into a product. For example, there is a competing product that advertises two types of report creation: code-based and visual. But standard Delphi components - as most developers know - should already have both a visual and run-time interface. True Delphi components are inherently code-based and visual; if they are not, then they are not designed in a standard way and some new 'technology' has been invented. The fact that this design also creates two learning curves - one for the visual and one for the code-based - is also a serious drawback.

The bottom line: ReportBuilder leverages standard Delphi technology wherever possible. This leverage keeps unnecessary and potentially unstable code from being introduced into the product and significantly reduces the learning curve for developers who are accustomed to working with standard Delphi implementations.

Extensible Object-Oriented Architecture

The feature set required of a professional reporting product is prodigious. It is impossible to code every feature exactly the way a developer might want to see it   implemented in their application. In order to answer the necessity of customization, ReportBuilder has been designed as a reporting platform. This platform allows developers to replace any dialog displayed in the user-interface with one of their own; they can create new report wizards, data pipelines (for native data access to proprietary data formats), devices (for conversion of native ReportBuilder output into any format), and report components (to handle any special reporting requirements). All of these tasks can be accomplished without changing the source to ReportBuilder itself, which is why we say ReportBuilder truly is a reporting platform.

Superior Documentation

A new reporting tool may look great. But how fast can you get through the learning curve? Where competing products offer scant descriptions or reference-style help, ReportBuilder offers a complete learning system. The Developer's Guide provides documentation on the fundamentals of the product and then guides you through a series of tutorials that show how to build simple to highly complex reports. The more advanced tutorials even show how to deploy your reports in a working application. Once you have completed the tutorials of the Developer's Guide, you are ready to pick apart the large number of demo reports and demo projects provided with the product. These demos provide a concrete example of how some of the more advanced features of ReportBuilder can be used. Finally, the exhaustive, 1,500 topic on-line help provides reference information on the components, properties, methods, and events you will find in the product. The help is done in the same style as the Delphi help itself, so it is very easy to use. Together, these three sources of information - the Developer's Guide, the sample projects and the on-line help - create a learning system that will help you get the most out of ReportBuilder in the least amount of time.

For more information, please send an e-mail to info@digital-metaphors.com.

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ReportBuilder Standard Edition, US $498

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