

Background Image Options For Instant Branding

Introduction

Ffenics has had for a while the option to add a background image. Until 1.53, this had to be added on a document-by-document basis. 1.53 now allows you to set an image as the default for all newly created documents.

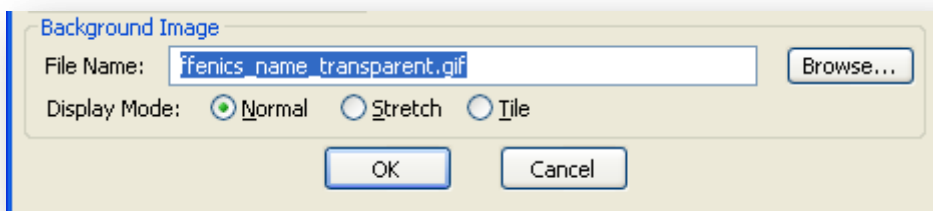
Along with style sheets, the background image helps you create a consistent look and feel, resulting in a more professional application.

For data-entry and other user-facing screens, a decent looking app can encourage pride from your users in their work. For reports, it will make the recipient feel you've put in some effort into the presentation, and underlines the quality of the application you've built.

And it can also impress customers and investors.

Adding a Background Image

To add a logo or other branding behind a specific document, go to the Document Properties dialog to see the Background Image section:



Here you type (or select via the Browse button) an image file, and optionally change the display mode:

- 'Normal' displays the image, starting in the top left-hand corner of a document, without changing its size.
- 'Stretch' will increase the width and/or height of the image to fill the size of the document window. Note this may result in a distorted image, depending on how the proportions of the image itself fit with the window. This is probably best used for pattern-type images. In Run Time, the image will resize if the window itself is resized.
- 'Tile' will repeat the image without distorting across and down the document window.

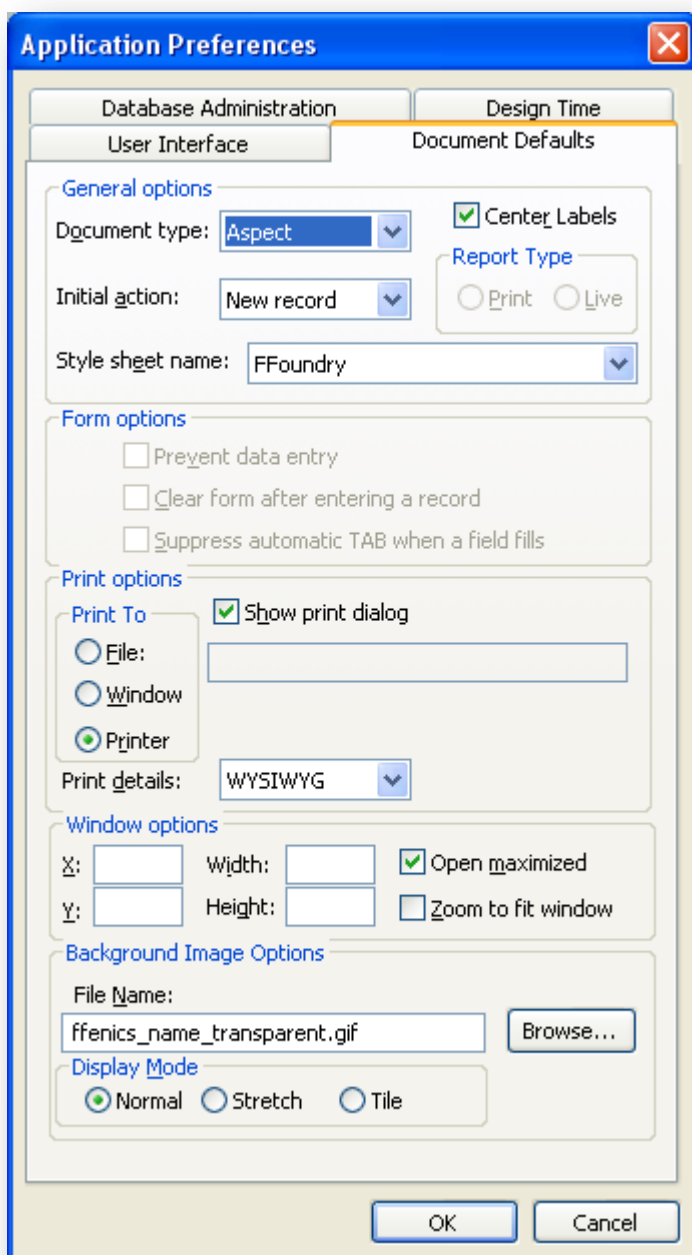
The following screen shot shows the Ffenics logo on an invoice document, using the settings above:

The screenshot shows a software window titled "ASPECT : AddEditInvoice". The window has a blue title bar with standard Windows window controls. The main content area has a grey-blue background. At the top left, the "ffenic^s" logo is displayed in a stylized orange and red font. To the right of the logo, the word "Invoice" is written in a green, serif font. Below the logo, the company name "Database Software Ltd" is followed by contact information: "Centre for Advanced Software Technology (CAST), Ty Menai, Ffordd Penlan, Parc Menai, Bangor LL57 4HJ, Tel: 0844 870 9397, Email: sales@ffenic.com, Website: www.ffenic.com". To the right of this text are three input fields: "VAT Reg No:" with the value "986 2777 54", "Tax Date:" with a date format "/// / /", and "Invoice #". Below these is a "To:" dropdown menu and an "Update" button. The form is divided into sections for "Billing Address:", "Delivery Address:", and "Customer Ref:". Each address section has fields for "Street:", "Town/City:", and "Postcode:". The "Customer Ref:" section has a single large text input field. At the bottom of the form is a table with the following columns: "Qty:", "Item:", "Description:", "Unit Price:", "Tot Ex VAT:", "VAT %:", and "VAT:". The table contains five rows, each with a dropdown menu in the "Item:" column and empty input fields in the other columns.

The logo appears behind the main form object. In order for it to be visual, the main form object needs to be transparent (no fill). The main record object must also be transparent if it appears over the area the logo will occupy. In this case, the main record object (the grey-blue area) has been moved down to expose the logo.

Pictures Everywhere

To have the image appear as a default behind all new documents you create, go to the 'Document Defaults' tab on the Application Preferences dialog:



This dialog lets you set various defaults for the four document types: Form, Aspect, Report and Procedure.

You will need to select each document type and then set the background image options.

When You Create a New Document

If you have set a background image for the type of new document you are creating, the image will automatically be added to the background. However, it may not be initially visible.

Every document starts with two 'container' objects – a form and a record. The main form object contains all records for the main form; each record object contains data from one and only one record.

You can clearly see this if you change the main form to display multiple records, but even if there is only one record being displayed, you will still have a record object inside a form object. Visibly they may appear on top of each other.

You may have to make the following Design Time adjustments to make the image visible.

No Title

If you did not specify 'Add Title' in the auto-layout dialog:

1. Select all the fields and label objects (lasso them with the mouse, or via the menu option Edit → Select All, or type Ctrl-A)
2. Drag them down the screen a little bit (enough to clear the approximate size of the image)
3. Click on the area around the fields and labels. You should see a small black square in the top-left hand corner, and the status bar should read 'Record...'. This means you have selected the record object.
4. Click and hold the mouse on the left-hand black square, and drag downwards. You will have selected the top edge of the record container, and are moving it out of the way for the image.
5. If the image is still not visible, even partially, either:
 - a. You have a fill on the form object. To resolve this:
 - i. right-click the top area. If the name of the main form appears in the status bar, you have selected the main form object.
 - ii. Select Display from the context menu.
 - iii. Change the 'Fill Type' to 'None'.
 - b. The image itself has white space around it, and is still obscured by the record object. Move the record object down even further until it stops obscuring.

You can also just set the fill on both record and form objects to None, if that fits with your design requirements.

Added a Title

If you added a title, the title is placed on the form object, and the record object is moved down sufficiently to accommodate the font size of the title (see the section 'New Default Styles' in the '1.53: Style Sheet Changes' document, which you can download from [here](#)).

In this case, as long as the form object does not have a fill, and the original image is not surrounded with white space, you should see at least a bit of the picture. You may still need to drag the main record object downwards to make it fully visible.

Here there is a minor glitch; the record object won't drag down!

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To work around this, instead push it UPWARDS into the top left-hand corner. Release the mouse, and then click on the record object again (be careful to make sure you've selected the container, and not other fields or labels). Now you can drag it down to where you need it.

When you release the mouse, you will again only be able to move the container upwards first. Therefore it is a good idea to move it below where you need it. You can then push it upwards a little at a time.