DROMONT
Dispensing Knowledge

D_DSP
2.01 Build 40418

User's manual

Printed in Italy

Edition 25th January 2005

Adresses:

DROMONT S.p.A. Headquarters

Via Borzone,42
12060 Grinzane Cavour (CN) – Italy
Tel. (+39) 0173 230 411
Fax. (+39) 0173 230 421
e_mail: dromont@dromont.it
Web Site: www.dromont.it

DROMONT Asia / Pacific - Branch

C/o Rhine Ruhr Process Equipment
A304, 3Rd Floor West Wing, Wisma Tractor
No. 7, Jalag SS16/1
Subang Jaya, 47500 Pataling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel. (+60) 3-7319341
Fax. (+60) 3-7319343
e_mail: nikitar@pd.jaring
Web Site: www.dromont.it

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1. INTRODUCTION

D_DSP is designed for PC based color management programs like color-matching systems and electronic formula books. The program resides on the PC hard drive and operates the dispenser functions by interfacing with the machine's on-board control program.

D_DSP also allows the operator to manipulate the formula and to have full control on the colorants contained in the dispenser.

The program is designed to be quickly learned, easy to use, and cost effective. Training periods should be short and have little impact on daily workloads.

1.1. System requirements

Before attempting to install **D_DSP**, make sure that your computer meets the following minimum system requirements (see Table 1-1):

Processor	Pentium or similar
Operating System	Windows 9.x, NT, 2000 or XP
Hard disk	100 MB minimum required for the executables
RAM	128 MB System memory
Drives	CD-ROM for installation
Video	SVGA 800x600 pixels
Colors	High color (16 bit) o true color (24bit)

Table 1-1

1.2. Installation

Insert the CD-ROM that came with your package into the CD-ROM drive. This is an auto-play CD-ROM, meaning that Windows should detect the presence of the CD and automatically start up the installation program. If for some reason your computer's automatic detection feature is turned OFF, use Windows Explorer to view the content of the CD, and then double-click the **SETUP.EXE** program.

When the **D_DSP** installation screen appears, follow the prompts displayed in this screen to install the application.

When the installation is completed, eject the CD-ROM and store it away safely.

1.3. Starting up D_DSP

You can start up **D_DSP** by the Icon on the Desktop or by the icon in D_DSP.exe in **C:\Dromont.**

1.4. Exiting D_DSP

You exit **D_DSP** using any of the following methods:

Click the program close button in the upper right corner of the title.

Right click on the program title to display the Control menu, and then choose Close.

Press <ALT + F4>.

D_DSP IS DESIGNED TO RUN IN THE BACKGROUND BETWEEN DIFFERENT DISPENSING TASKS.

YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO EXIT THE PROGRAM EVERY TIME YOU ACCESS THE CALLING SOFTWARE OR OTHERS APPLICATIONS.

1.5. Program window

When yu open **D_DSP**, the main program window is displayed (see **picture 1-1**). This window is your working area and contains the tools you use to handle your formulas and dispensing equipment.

Icons are used to identify the Function Tabs and label the color information and data entry fields. These icons have been designed to reflect the function or data they represent.

Across the top of the screen is the program Title Bar.

Depending on the application configuration a group of up to 6 Function Tabs are located along the bottom of the screen. They are used to select the program's main functions.
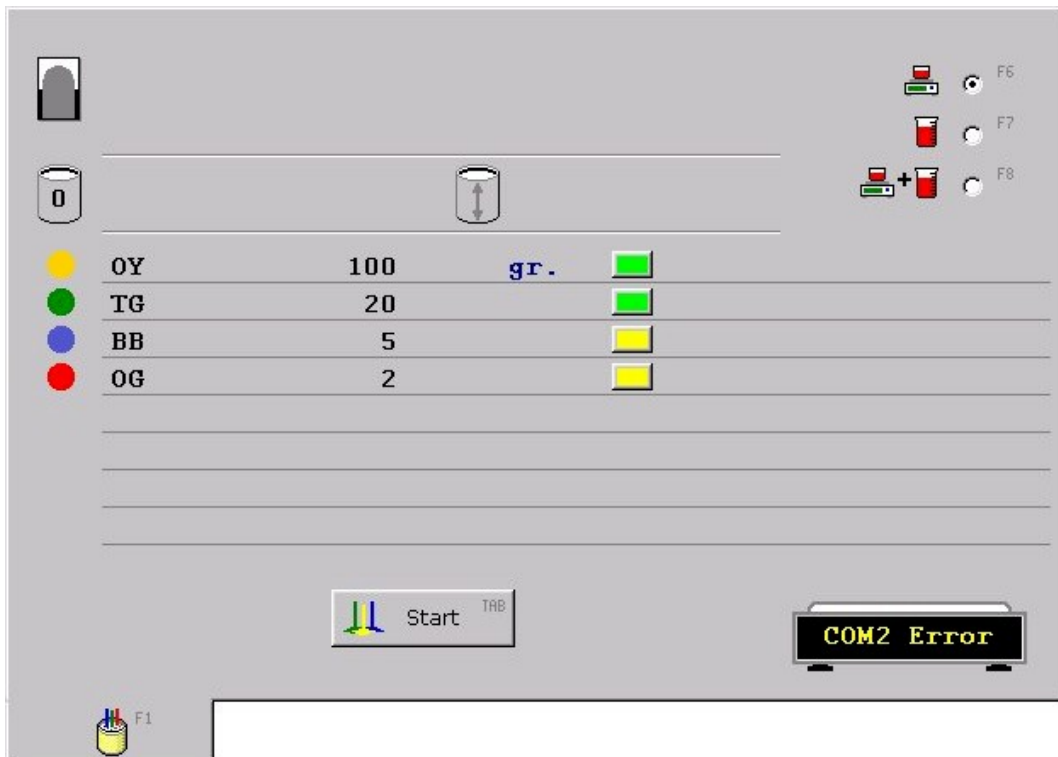
picture 1-1

1.6. Buttons and tabs

This tab returns to the Dispenser manager. The modified formula will be available for delivering.

This tab accesses the Colorant levels function for the canisters of the Prima/Compacta

This tab displays a histogram of all colorant levels installed in the Prima / Compacta machine

This tab accesses the Formula editor. The actual formula can be modified or a new formulation can be inserted.

This tab accesses the Colorant levels function for the tank (only in the External Tanks configuration).

This tab displays a histogram of all colorant levels installed in the external tanks (only in the External Tanks configuration).

This tab displays the Label printer screen. Through this function, labels containing formula information can be printed (Optional)

This tab displays the Information screen. Important dispensing parameters and system configuration data are visualized through this function.

2. DISPENSER MANAGER

This is the main function of **D_DSP (see picture 1-1)**. On the dispenser manager screen all the formula information is displayed. Buttons are available to start a dispensing or correcting cycle and to import new formulas (configuration dependent) from color-matching and formula book applications.

Four main regions of the screen can be identified:

a) The main portion contains formula information.

b) At the upper-right corner of the screen the dispensing mode can be selected (gravimetric option installed).

c) In the bottom part of the screen the function buttons are grouped.

d) In the right-lower part of the screen an icon displays the current scale reading (gravimetric option installed).

The formula is identified by a product reference, a brand or note field and the color ID.

Between the formula information and the colorants fields, the base required and the size of the can are displayed.

Each colorant is listed by code, quantity to be delivered, level icon and eventually correction data.

2.1. Double pumping

If the machine has the same colorant loaded in two canisters, fast double-pumping dispensing is enabled. The setting for this feature has to be done in D_SET (for more information please read the D_SET manual). If the formula includes a colorant that is double loaded in the machine, two colorant "spheres" (in place of a single one) will identify the component.

If the quantity is larger than 100cc (milliliters) the machine doses simultaneously from the two canisters.

If the quantity is smaller, the machine doses only from the canister with the highest colorant level.

The formula is displayed in the main portion of the screen below the title bar:
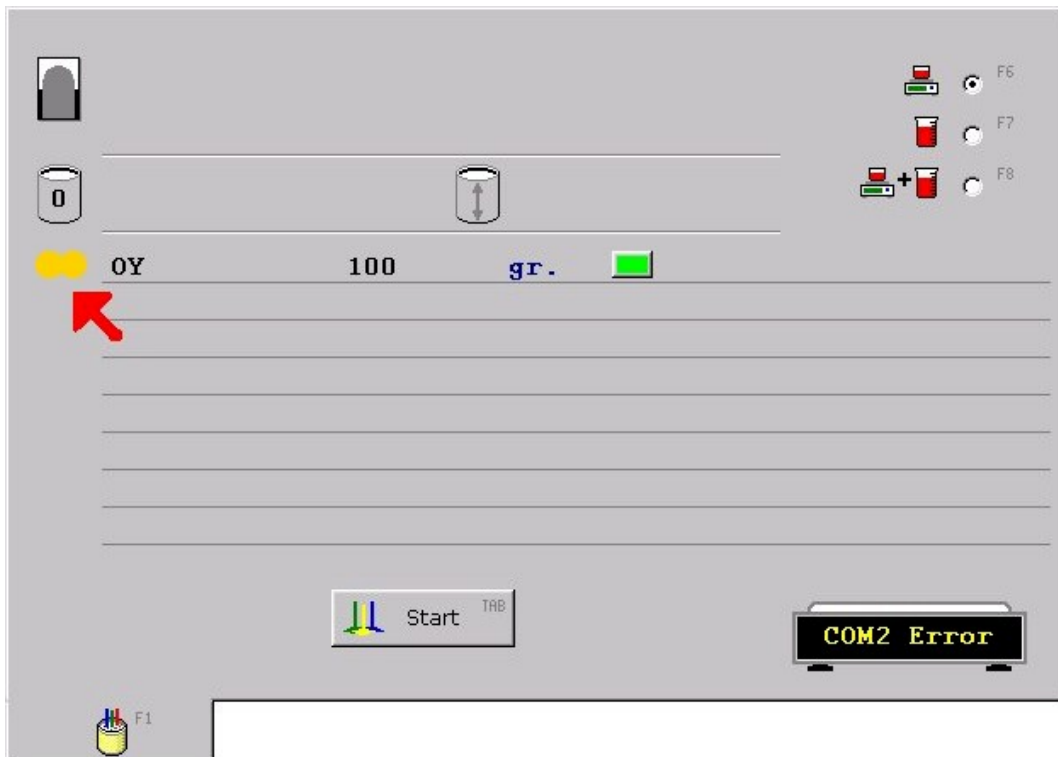
picture 2-1

2.2. Level icons

As mentioned, close to each colorant information, a level icon shows a representation of the amount of colorant available in each canister.

This level is automatically adjusted downward after each dispensing cycle. The program will show a red level icon when there is insufficient colorant to complete the dosing. In this case the dispensing command is not available.

This is a description of the level icons and their meanings:

The canister contains enough colorant to accurately complete the formula. All the canisters should be filled to this level during normal operation.

The canister contains enough colorant to accurately complete the formula but the level is close to the minimum point. As soon as possible the canister should be refilled. This level icon is activated when the canister level is lower than 2 times the minimum point.

The colorant level is insufficient to accurately complete the formula, after delivering the quantity required the level will be lower than the minimum point. In this situation the Start and Adjust buttons are not displayed. The operator must refill the canister before dispensing the formula.

The colorant is not contained in the machine's canisters. In some situations a formula can contain information about components that cannot be delivered by the dispenser (fillers, catalyzers, etc.). In this case the specific components will be ignored during the dispensing cycle.

The colorant is contained in the machine's canisters but vital dispensing parameters (specific gravity, calibration data, etc.) are missed. In this situation the Start and Adjust buttons are not displayed. The operator must insert all the correct parameters (**D_SET**) before dispensing the formula.

2.3. Dispensing mode

Through the radio buttons located in the right upper part of the screen, the desired dispensing procedure can be selected. The volumetric mode is always vailable while gravimetric and combo modes are license dependent.

Up to 3 dispensing modes are available on **D_DSP**:

Gravimetric – (Optional) This mode dispenses one colorant at a time. The scale is read after each individual delivery and, in case the target tolerance is not reached, a correction is performed. Only when the target weight has been delivered the function starts with the following colorant until the full formula is completed. This is the slowest but more precise dispensing mode. Using this mode, a very high absolute precision can be reached.

During the dispensing cycle the delivered weight and percentage is displayed on the right of each individual colorant. On the scale icon the actual scale reading is available at any time.

Volumetric – (Default) This mode performs a simultaneous dispensing of all the colorants included in the formula. No scale feedback is required. This is the fastest mode to deliver colorants.

Combo – (Optional) This mode integrates the benefits and performances of the two previous dispensing procedures. During a combo dispensing the first delivery of the formula is performed in gravimetric mode. This ensures a good absolute precision. The following deliveries of the same formula are performed in volumetric mode using the dispensing parameters calculated during the gravimetric cycle. This dispensing mode does not reach the speed of the volumetric procedure but is a good compromise between accuracy and working efficiency. It's a powerful tool in the daily job of producing sequential batches of the same color.

> **The gravimetric and combo dispensing modes require**
>
> **an approved (shared communication protocol)**
>
> **electronic scale interfaced to the application.**

2.4. Dispenser status

After the program verifies the formula information, the dispensing operation can be started.

If the formula can be correctly delivered the program will automatically return to the dispenser manager screen after exchanging information with the dispenser and the scale.

The waiting time can take a few seconds in volumetric mode or all the dispensing cycle in gravimetric mode (where the scale and the dispenser are continually checked).

If for any reason an error is detected in the dispenser or scale communication, the program provides an operator warning for conditions that prevent proper operation:
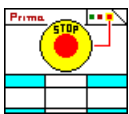
 This warning indicates the **Emergency Stop** switch has been pressed. The switch must be reset before the machine will respond to any other commands.
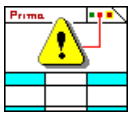
 This warning indicates a **Safety Device** (maintenance panel, canister protection, etc.) has been activated. Safety must be restored before the machine will respond to any other commands.

 The dispenser did not detected a **base can** on the delivering shelf. Check the correct positioning of the base or insert a can before dispensing.
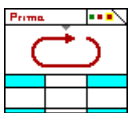
 This condition will occur when the machine is **busy** with another operation. When the dispenser will finish the actual task, normal operation will be restored automatically.
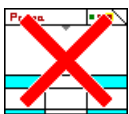
 The program cannot establish communication with the dispenser. The dispenser is **OFF**, busy with a lengthy task or the serial cable is not properly connected. During installation of the software, an incorrect COM port setup can generate this warning.
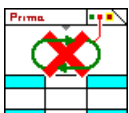
 The main dispenser motor is **stalled**. This can be generated by a jammed colorant line (pipes, pump, nozzle, etc.). If the problem cannot be resolved cleaning the dispensing head, contact your service organization.

 This warning indicates the dispenser is running an internal test procedure. To return to normal operation, switch the dispenser OFF and, after few seconds, switch it back ON. The internal test procedure is activated using diagnostic software like **D_TST**.

The software is not able to initialize the dispenser **COM port**. The port can be used by an other application, or can be inaccurately configured. Check that the proper port number is selected, that your PC contains the particular serial device and that the port drivers are correctly installed under Windows.

This warning indicates that a communication error has occurred while establishing connection with the **scale**. Keep in mind that each scale manufacturer implements different communication protocols. Be sure your scale brand and model is compatible with **D_DSP**.

During a gravimetric delivering, the scale could not reach a stable reading. Check the scale positioning and the absence of vibrations disturbing the normal scale operation.
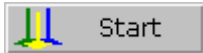
2.5. Job counter

D_DSP displays the total number of successfully delivered formulas. Each time a new formula is handled this counter is zeroed.

The counter total is visible inside the base icon.

2.6. Buttons and tabs

This button starts a complete dispensing cycle. The formula visualized on the screen will be delivered immediately. This button is visible only if a valid formula and correct colorant levels are available.
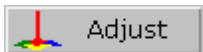
This button starts a correction session. Only the difference between the target formula and the already dispensed quantities will be delivered. This happens usually after a gravimetric dispensing is manually stopped or after the formula has been manually altered. This button is visible only when a formula correction is possible.
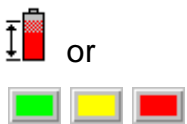
This tab accesses the Colorant levels function. To access a specific colorant data (if contained in the displayed formula), click on the level icon on the right of the colorant quantity.

2.7. Cost of the formula

From the Dispenser manager function, two special key combinations are associated to cost handling:

$ Shows / hides the **cost of the formula**. The single colorant costs must be stored (see access key combination below) in the D_DSP.CST file.

ALT – E Allows entering and editing the **colorant costs**. These values are stored in the D_DSP.CST file. This file can also be modified using an external standard text editor.

Visualization and editing of formula cost is achieved using the D_DSP.CST file. This file must be installed in the same directory where the application is running.

This is a plain ASCII (text) file and can be edited/modified using a simple text editor.

From within D_DSP, is also possible to access this file content pressing the < **ALT - E**> key combination.

D_DSP.CST

Euro = 1000   // Euros ; Liter (1000 cc)

AX = 10   // Colorant reference = Cost per Liter

BE = 6.0

NO = 4.50

VI = 5.00

VR = 7.00

XC = 12

XV = 24

XF = 34.34

XS = 8.5

AW = 12.00

BLACK = 20.33

WHITE = 20.45

picture 2-2

The first line of D_DSP.CST contains the currency reference (text field) used to visualize the cost (Euro, US$, CA$ etc.) and the volume (in cc or milliliter) associated to each price. Currency and volume are separated by the equal (=) character.

The following lines contain colorant references followed by the related cost. Colorant references and costs are separated by the equal (=) character.

A comment or note can be added at the end of each line using the "//" separator. Empty lines are ignored.

3. COLORANTS LEVEL

Colorant can be added to a canister at any time, whether as a response to a low-level warning or as a scheduled routine task.

To add colorant into a canister or to manually modify any colorant level, click on the levels' tab or on one of the level icons in the dispenser manager screen. The program will display the canister level manager. The display consists of:

an overhead picture of the dispenser with the canister layout and a color reference of the colorant contained in each canister.

a vertical picture of the canister showing the actual colorant level and the associated maximum and minimum limits.
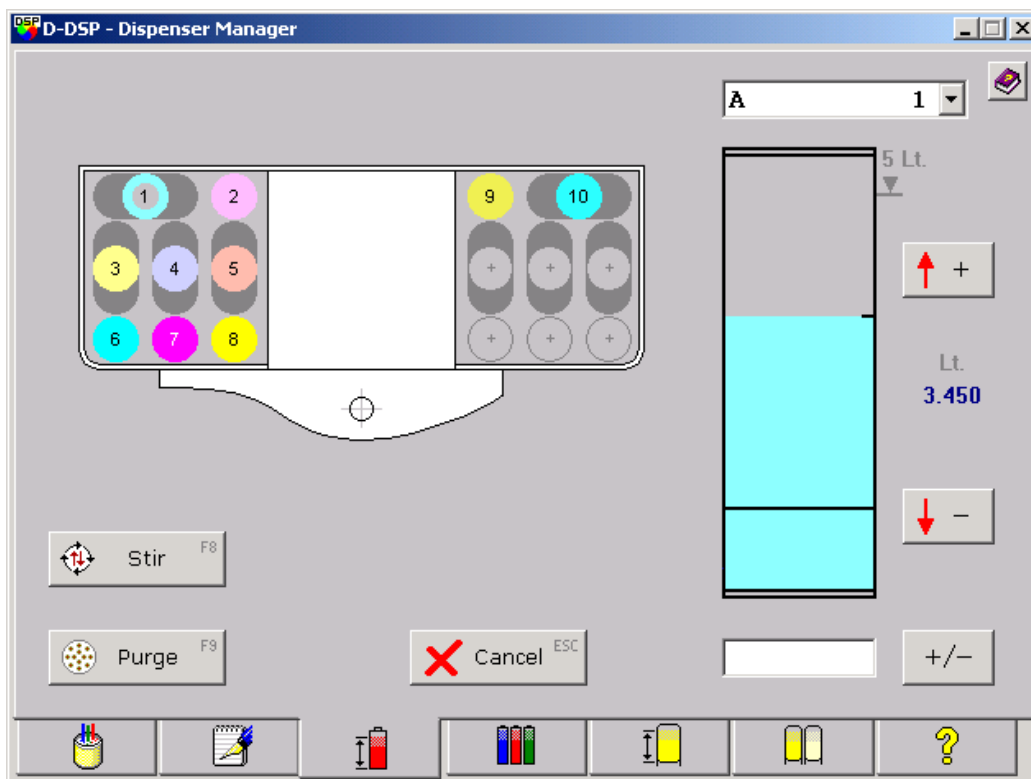
Table 3-1

To select a specific colorant, click on the canister cap (canister layout) or select the colorant name from the drop down list.

If this utility is accessed from the dispensing screen or as the result of a low level warning, the program will automatically advance to the canister that requires filling.

The level should be adjusted on the screen as colorant is added to a canister. The < **+** > and < **-** > keys are used to increase or decrease the level indication. These keys make adjustments in ½ level unit (Liters, Quarts, etc.) increments. For smaller increments the canister volume can be adjusted by clicking on the canister graph itself.

Is the operator responsibility to adjust the canister level each time colorant is added.

The program decrements automatically the colorant level after each dispensing cycle.

As the level is adjusted, the new colorant level will be displayed on the canister picture.

After the filling is completed and the levels have been adjusted, click on any other application tab to exit this utility.
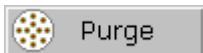
An indexing point (small circle) inside the canister cap shows the present highlighted canister (in the above picture canister Nr. 1).

Buttons and tabs
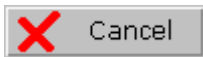
Cancel This button will restore the original colorant levels as registered before any operator's adjustment.

All the level adjustments and modifications introduced during the current session will be lost.

**Purge** Pushing this button starts a purge cycle. A purge cycle is performed to clean the nozzles at the beginning of the day. D_SET (see the manual) is used to define the desired purge volume. This button is visible only if required by the D_DSP configuration.
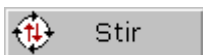
Stir Pushing this button starts a complete colorants mixing and recirculation cycle.This button is visible only if required by the D_DSP configuration.

4. COLORANT OVERVIEW
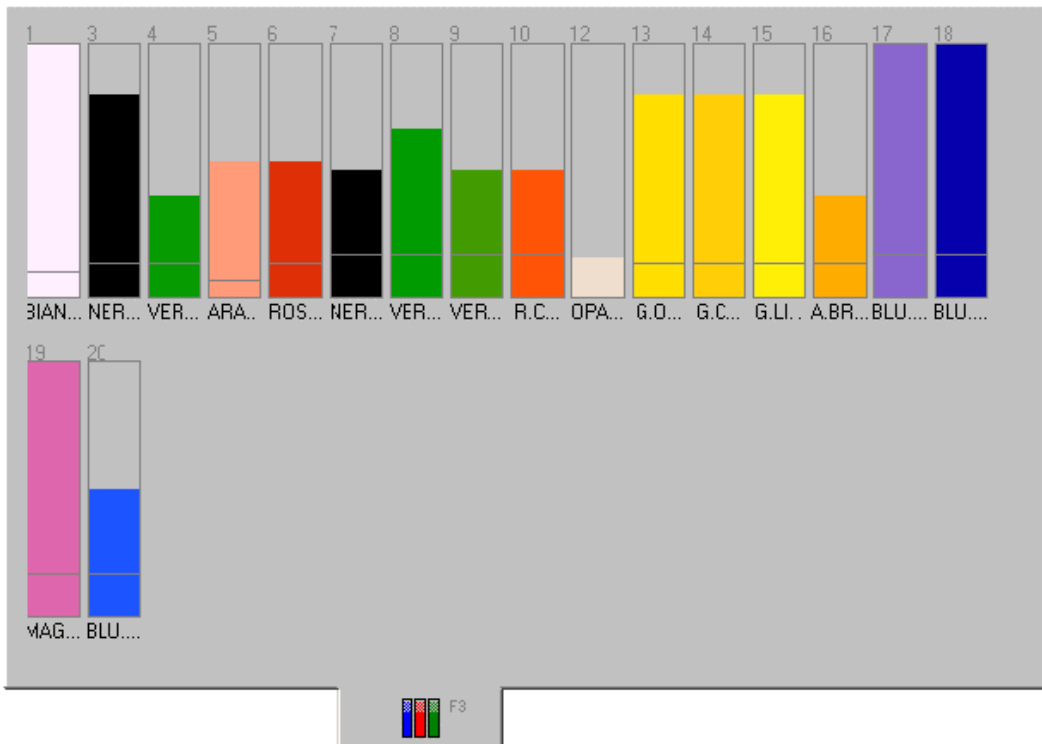
picture 4-1

This function displays an overview (histograms) of all the colorants with associated levels. Colorant are listed by position and each minimum level is also displayed

By clicking on the desired colorant you go directly to the correspondent colorant level screen.

5. FORMULA EDITOR

If this option is available, **ColorDSP** provides this function for easy modification of existing formulas and the preparation of custom colors.
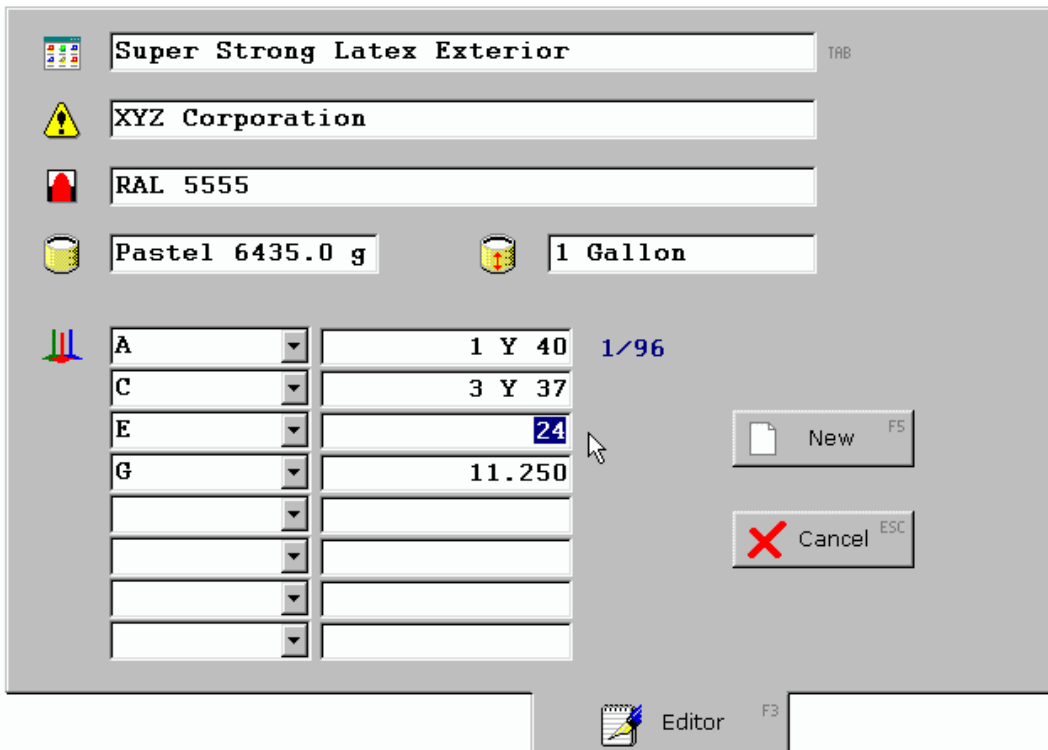
picture 5-1

All the formula data can be inserted or modified through this function:

Product identifier.   Brand name or note.

Color code, number or ID.

Base identifier.   Base size.

Colorants and quantities. Each colorant name can be manually inserted in the proper field or selected in the drop-down list containing the codes of all the available colorants.

5.1. Correct formula insertion

Formulas are entered using standard formats. In a ounce/shot based environment, use the program's ounce separator or the < **+** > (Plus) key to define integer ounces. Fractions of an ounce may also be entered.

For example, in a 1/48th ounce system, the same quantity may be entered as:

2Y10.5 or   **2 +10.5** or **106.5**

The syntax in all three of these examples is correct. Each quantity will deliver **2 ounces** (96 shots) **plus 10 and half units** (shots) of colorant. The program automatically checks the correctness of the formula component amounts and the syntax used.

For a weight based formulation, formulas are generally entered using **grams**. All entries are in decimal format. In this case, below the unit, the program displays a "total" of the formula's weight.

Formulas must be always expressed

**in the program's specific unit.**

5.2. Buttons and tabs
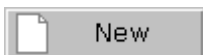
| New | This button will reset all the current data and all the entry fields will be emptied. This function is useful to insert a completely new formula. |

| Cancel | This button will restore the original data as available before any operator's modification. All the data introduced during the current editing session will be lost. |
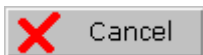
6. LABEL PRINT

If this option is available, D_DSP gives the possibility to print labels. All the selected formula information can be printed multiple times. By disabling (unchecked) a line the corresponding data will not appear on the label.
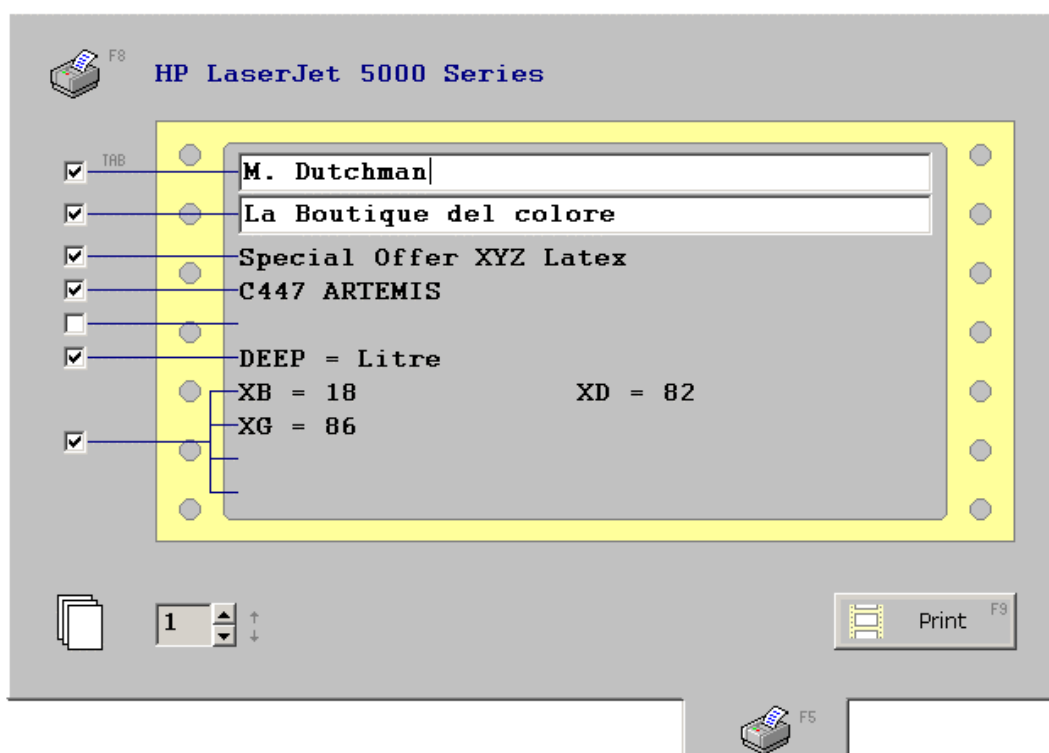
picture 6-1

In order to use this function a valid label printer device must be installed. Any label or desktop printer can be used as long as the specific driver is available for Windows.

To properly setup a label printer, few steps are required:

Install the printer drivers following the manufacturer's instructions for the specific version of the operative system.

Configure the printer driver for the correct label format and size.

In D_DSP (Print label tab) select the label printer pressing <F8> until the correct device is visualized.

At this point D_DSP is ready to handle label printing. The text font is automatically calculated to fit the label dimensions. For this reason is crucial to correctly perform step 2 of the list above.

These steps are not related to D_DSP but are tied to the way Windows handles printer devices. In other words, Windows must be properly interfaced with the printer for D_DSP to work correctly.

There is the possibility to print labels up to a maximum of 10 copies, choose the correct number of copies and press the "Print" button.

7. INFORMATION SCREEN

The last or right most tab will display the **D_DSP** information screen. The following information is provided:
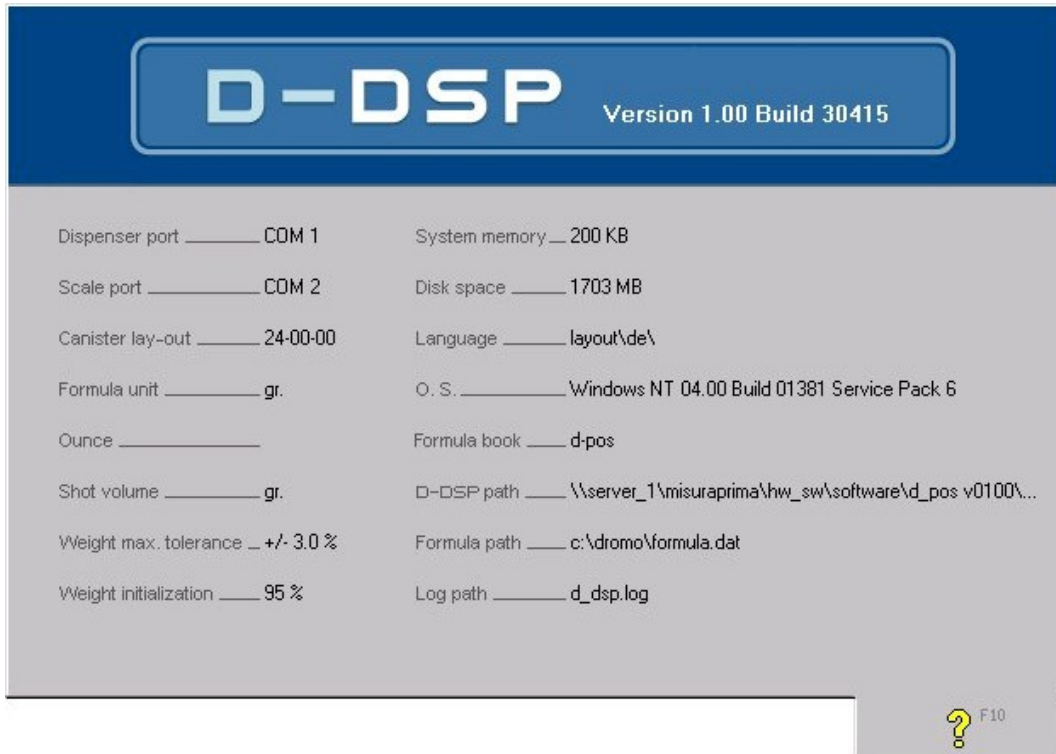
picture 7-1

7.1. Program version

Below the D_DSP logo the program version is displayed. The program version is important to exactly identify the current software release.

⚠️ **It's very important to reference to the exact program version every time the manufacturer or the service organization is contacted.**

7.2. Dispensing parameters

On the left side of the screen the major dispensing parameters and variables are grouped together:

Dispenser port   This is the serial COM port (1 to 8) where the dispenser is connected. A value of 0 sets the dispenser OFF.

Scale port   This is the serial COM port (1 to 8) where the scale is connected. A value of 0 disables the gravimetric and combo dispensing mode.

Canisters lay-out   Defines the machine lay-out (16 or 24 canisters).

Formula unit   This is the dispensing unit D_DSP uses to display formulas. Common units are 1/96th, 1/48th, c.c., grams, etc.

Ounce   This parameter identifies the character designator for ounces. Usually this is set to "Y" but several paint manufacturer use different letters and symbols.

Shot volume   This is the volume of the formula unit in c.c. or ml.. In case of formulas expressed in grams this parameter must be set to 0. In case of shots and ounce fractions, this value is calculated dividing the ounce volume (i.e. 27.57cc) by the required fraction (32, 48, 96, 384, etc.).

Weight max. tolerance   This is the target tolerance (%) for gravimetric (scale) dispensing. When the colorant dispensed is within this tolerance, the dispensing cycle is terminated.

Weight initialization   This is the initial delivered quantity (%) for gravimetric (scale) dispensing. The weight is then measured and the correction is calculated and delivered. A higher value (close to 100%) increases the dispensing speed and usually decreases the number of sequential corrections.

7.3. System parameters

On the right side of the screen some useful system parameters are listed:

System memory   This is the amount of memory available for the application task. This information is only useful for diagnostic purpose.

Disk space   This is the amount of free disk space available on the drive where **D_DSP** is installed. Check this value before installing upgrades or others software packages.

Language   Indicates the language interface of the program. Keys, tabs, error messages are displayed according to this setup.

O.S.   Shows the operating system name and complete release number.

Formula book   Formula book application title

D-DSP path   Full path of D_DSP program

Formula path   Formula file full path and name

Log Path   Log file path and name

7.4. Setup parameters

Below the System parameters, the most important file locations are listed:

Formula book	This is the name of the optional application (executable file) used to retrieve formula data.
DSP path	This is the actual directory/folder where **D_DSP** is installed.
Input path	This is the complete path and file name of the input formula file. This file is generated by the calling program (color-matching or formula book) and is cyclically checked by **D_DSP** (polling).
Log path	This is the complete path and file name of the LOG file that **D_DSP** generates after each dispensing cycle. If this parameter is empty or does not contains a valid file name, the LOG file is not created and updated.

8. NOTES