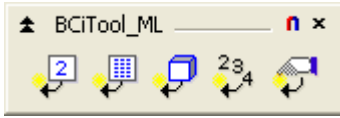# BCiTool_ML - Magic Leader

## Introduction



These tools are all variations on a theme of creating normal TC Leaders quickly, automatically, and with a minimum of user input.

One tool creates Sequentially Numbered Leaders, another lets you choose the text from a PickList, and the last allows you to select an Object and base the text on that Object's Properties. There is also a Renumber tool for re-ordering a selected group of Numbered Leaders, and another for setting Options for the three drawing tools.

There is an **option for creating TC Text instead of a Leader** by double-clicking the first point of the leader.

## Compatibility

- Requires TurboCAD V9 Pro for all functions.
- It also works in TurboCAD V8.2 Pro, except for the Renumber tool.
- Windows 95 & later.

## Installing

- Copy BCiTool_ML.DLL into your TCV9 (and/or TC8.2) Draggers Folder.
  Usually this will be C:\IMSI\TCW90\Program\Draggers.
- Magic Leader will be installed next time you start TurboCAD.

## Removing

- Remove BCiTool_ML.DLL from your Draggers folder.

## Registering

- The first time you activate any of the tools, you will be warned that Magic Leader (ML) will be disabled in fifteen days. You do not need to register immediately (click Later if you don't want to), but this dialog will popup at least once in every TC session where you use ML, until you do. If you do not register in 15 days, Magic Leader will be de-activated, but the toolbars will remain in TC until you manually remove the DLL from Draggers.
- To register you must purchase a Registration Key, and then simply fill in the Register dialog next time it pops up. You will never see it again. Details for purchasing registration keys are at the end of this document. They will cost $US25 per user.

***Now, let's get to the interesting part - the Tools.***

All of the tools only work in wireframe mode. This is a TurboCAD limitation.

## ML Sequential Number Tool

This tool creates Sequentially Numbered Leaders - pretty obvious, and pretty easy to use ...

<u>Drawing</u>

- Activate the ML Seq Number Tool
- Start drawing (click a spot for the arrow head, click one (or more) spot(s) for the tail, then click Finish).
- The resulting Leader will be automatically labelled for you with a "1" (which you will see while between the first & later clicks)
- When you click Finish, or double-click, the ML Number tool will be ready for your next Leader, which will be numbered "2" etc. That's pretty much it.

<u>Options</u> (right-click|Magic Leader Options)

- You don't always want to start at "1". To change this you can …
  - right-click|ML Options and change the "Start At" value, or
  - often you just want to go back one step to fix a mistake - in these cases right-click|Decrement Number.
  - Both these methods take immediate effect on the current Leader.
- You can also select one of three formats for the numbers in right-click|ML Options.
- The options/defaults/styles set for the normal TC Leader tool apply to Magic Leaders in the same way. For an example of a nice effect with numbers, try right-clicking the TC Leader tool, and in Advanced Format turn "Draw as Spline" ON and set "Text Box" to Circle, then start using ML Number.

<u>Other Notes</u>

- As a general rule ML Sequential Number will keep track quite well. It can handle Undos and Cancels etc within a 'Run' of Leaders, and also remembers where the last 'Run' finished. Where it does get tripped up is if you activate another Tool, thus ending the Run, and then start deleting/undoing. It is not possible to keep track under these circumstances.
  This is why it usually better to right-click to Options ... because it allows you to keep the Run going. When you use the Options button on the toolbars, TC treats this as activating a new tool, and the Run is broken.
  If it does get out of sync, the best thing is to to right-click to Options and change the Start At value, or quite often just Decrement.
- You may note that when you activate any of the ML Drawing Tools, the standard TC Leader is also activated in the background. This is normal - all the ML tools sit on top of the Leader - it's how they work. However if you customise the TC toolbars, it is best not to put Magic Leader tools on the TC Dimensions toolbar, or it can get annoying.

**ML PickList Tool**

This tool creates Leaders with the text chosen from a PickList. In use, it is very similar to the Sequential Number tool.

Drawing

- Activate the ML PickList tool
- Immediately a picklist will pop up.
- In the dialog you can edit the list, select an item from the list or type the text in the editbox below.
- When you have your text click OK, or press Enter.
- Start drawing (click a spot for the arrow head, click one (or more) spot(s) for the tail, then click Finish).
- The resulting Leader will be automatically labelled with the text.
- When you click Finish, or double-click, the Picklist will popup again for the next Leader etc.

Options

- You may find the PickList popping up all the time a bit annoying or disconcerting. Or you might use it in a way where you select the text then place it in several spots.
  Either way you can stop the list popping up in right-click|ML Options - turn "Pop list up automatically for each leader" OFF
- In the PickList dialog, there is an option "Add automatically on OK". What this does is if you type text in the edit box and then click OK to use it in the leader, then it will also be added to the list for future uses.

Other Notes

- The PickList is also Multiline & MText compatible, but at this stage doesn't display it well in the dialog :-(. I hope to improve this in future builds.

**ML Object Tool**

This tool creates Leaders with the text based on the properties of a selected Object. In use, it is slightly different to the other tools because it has two stages - selecting, then drawing.

Drawing

- Activate the ML Object tool
- TurboCAD will switch to Select mode.
- Select the the object you want to base the leader on
- TurboCAD will then switch to Leader drawing mode - Start drawing (click a spot for the arrow head, click one (or more) spot(s) for the tail, then click Finish).
- The resulting Leader will be automatically labelled with text based on a property on the selected object (it defaults to the 'Info' field).

- When you click Finish, or double-click, TurboCAD will go back to Select mode ready for you to select the object for the next Leader etc.

Options

- In right-click|ML Options - you can select one of three properties/attributes that the text can reflect. It is likely that more will be added in the future, when I get more feedback about which attributes people are likely to use.

Other Notes

- ML Object in 'Info' mode works best with items that have names associated with them - particularly Blocks and Symbols.
- A limitation of TurboCAD selecting is that it is not possible to select a Modelspace object from within Paperspace. Thus the ML Object tool really only works for objects created in the same space as in that which the leader is being created. I am currently looking into ways around this, but don't expect change quickly, because it would mean rewriting the ML Object tool - and it is not even certain that it is possible. *Note ML Number & ML PickList are not affected by this issue.*

**Convert 'Point Leader' to Text Option**

Before we move on to Renumber & Options summary, I think it worth mentioning this option which affects all three of the above tools. It is found in Options|Convert Point Leaders to Text.

Essentially, if you create a normal TC Leader with the first two points very close together, TC doesn't draw the arrow head because there is no room for it. The same thing happens when you double-click the very first point - you just get a little line.

Either way I call these 'Point Leader's, (though arguably 'pointless' is closer to the truth :-) ), and what this option does is automatically convert these into Text when they are created. This means you can use the Magic Leader tools for creating Text as well simply by double-clicking the first point of the Leader.

This works best with ML Sequ Number (for making lists of numbers), and with ML PickList (for placing boilerplate text in the drawing). I also prefer to use it with normal Leader Options|Format|Force Text Horizontal OFF. If you are using V8.2 the text will be created as normal Text but in V9 it will be MText.

Also note that the text goes where a Leader would put it - not exactly the same place a Text tool would put it.

**ML Renumber Tool**

Finally to the last of the Tools - ML Renumber. With this tool you can renumber a selected group of leaders, filling gaps or changing formats as desired.

<u>Renumbering</u>

- Select one or more Leaders (they do not have to have numeric values)
- Activate the ML Renumber Tool. A dialog will pop up for you to set the parameters for the renumber action.
- The first section filters which leaders in the group will be renumbered  - Choose all selected leaders or a subset.
- The second section determines the renumbering/formatting scheme to be adopted - the same fields that appear in the Options Dlg.
- When you are finished Click OK

<u>Other Notes</u>

- This tool is a bit fussy about what it considers to be a number - basically it will only work with leaders created with ML Sequ Number, or that have numbers formatted in the same way. Work is progressing on making this more flexible.
- This tool only works in V9. I haven't been able to make it work in 8.2.

**ML Options Tool**

All options have been covered in the preceding text. But for what it's worth, here they are in summary

- **ML Sequential Number** Change Format & Start At value. Other options in local menu.
- **ML PickList** Edit List. Other options in local menu & PickList dialog.
- **ML Object** Change property/attribute reported.
- **ML Renumber** All options in Renumber dialog.
- **Global Option.** Create Point Leaders as Text.

**Purchasing Registration Keys**

Keys can be purchased at

http://www.BCiTool.com/MagicLeader.htm

Please note the site will prompt you for

- **User Name** – usually as reported in the Register nag screen that pops up, but it doesn't need to be. It can be any name with eight (8) or more characters. It should reflect who you are in some way.
- **Country** - I need this for my taxman!

*Both of these fields are required for the Key & Registration.*

After payment, usually the keys will be emailed to you within 24hrs, but allow 48hrs.

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