To be regarded as a BETA version. And by now this is essentially a seven year old document. No warranty.

FONT NAMING v1.03

There are various ways of naming fonts, each with advantages and disadvantages. Do you want to produce OpenType TT fonts only, or OpenType PS fonts only? Do you want to supply 'the same' fonts both as OpenType TT and OpenType PS versions, and make sure that documents produced with either version also works with the other one? This may be required for corporate type. Do you want font names to be displayed identically, or at least similarly, in a wide range of applications?

As soon as you intend to generate both OpenType TT and OpenType PS fonts from the same source or your family exceeds the four Microsoft 'standard' styles – Regular, Italic, Bold, Bold Italic – there is no *one* particular scheme that fulfils all wishes at once. This document shall explore two basic font naming schemes.[1]

PREMISES

Our objective is the production of both TrueType- and PostScript-flavored OpenType fonts.[2] PostScript Type1 is considered a dead font format and is ignored here.

As a first consequence, entries for Menu Name and FOND Name in FontLab Studio's font naming interface can be ignored – they do not go into OpenType fonts anyway. This means that there are six name entries[3] to care for:
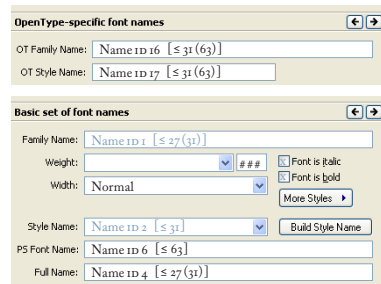
¶ Entries in black are particularly relevant for OpenType-savvy applications, including settings for Weight (the numeric one) and Width.

¶ Entries in ugly-blue – ID 1, ID 2, with Bold and Italic selectors – are regarded as legacy relicts in this document. Truely OT-savvy applications would ignore them. But as most applications still rely on them, they deserve attention nevertheless!

---

1. The aspect of a user interface will be ignored & the current FontLab Studio 5 interface be used instead. However, these considerations shall, in the long run, lead to a simplified naming interface which will be presented in a future update of the *Font Naming Interface* document. See http://www.kltf.de/downloads/FontNamingInterface-kltf.pdf for a sketch.

2. A note on terminology: As suggested by Adam Twardoch, this document uses the terms OpenType PS for PostScript-flavored OpenType, and OpenType TT for TrueType-flavored OpenType. There will be no further distinction between OpenType TT and 'plain' TrueType – there is no real difference except that OpenType TT fonts have additional OpenType tables like GDEF, GSUB, GPOS (these contain the typographic OpenType features) or DSIG. Abbreviations used are OT-PS for PostScript-flavored OpenType, and OT-TT for TrueType-flavored OpenType.

3. Name entries are referred to by their ID number in this document to avoid any ambiguity. Unfortunately, different applications and documents refer to them by different descriptive names – e.g. what is called 'OT Style Name' in FontLab Studio is called 'Preferred Subfamily' in the Apple specifications. There are different sets of font name entries for Macintosh and Windows environment; where the distinction matters, this will be indicated in the text, e.g. 'ID 4/Mac'.

This distinction of two sets of name entries is reflected in both naming schemes. Different colors shall help to literally *see* them as two sets of font names, and in a second step, that and how these levels correlate with each other.

In brackets, the maximum number of characters for each entry is stated. If you stick to the first and smaller one you should be on the safe side.[4]

Note: Shorter name entries are to be preferred. Some applications' font menus just cut off part of a name if it is too long. It may be advisable to use abbreviations like 'Cn' or 'Cond' instead of 'Condensed', and if unavoidable even 'It' instead of 'Italic' in name entries other than ID 16 and ID 17.
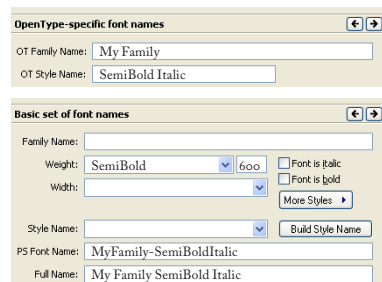
TWO NAMING SCHEMES

Fonts which include ID 16 and ID 17 will be grouped into families in OT-savvy applications as well as in non-OT-savvy Mac applications if in FontLab Studio, *Preferences/ Generating OpenType* PS, *OpenType* TT *and TrueType*, 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' is selected. Both allow a big OpenType font family to contain any number of arbitrarily named styles. The black set.

Windows applications and cross-platform applications like Freehand, however, rely on ID 1 and ID 2 and require that families consist of no more, or other, than four standard styles: Regular, Italic, Bold, Bold Italic. This means that for these applications, legacy name entries, style selectors – and the numeric Weight setting – must be defined with great care. The ugly-blue set.

It is the latter set of names that imposes limitations which are addressed by the two naming schemes described below.

The first things you will recognize when comparing naming schemes [A] and [B] :

¶ Both naming schemes do *not* differ as regards entries for ID 16 + ID 17, ID 6 and ID 4, and Weight settings.

¶ ID 6 and ID 4 reflect entries for ID 16 + ID 17 (rather than ID 1 + ID 2 as the arrangement of the dialogs suggests) – i.e. ID 6 combines ID 1 + hyphen + ID 2, all space characters to be deleted, while ID 4 combines ID 1 + space + ID 2.

---

4.   Different sources give different values. FontLab Studio's auto-check is a bit more restrictive than Adam Twardoch's recommendations somewhere in the *Font Family Naming* thread, see link in note 6. Adobe's own compareFamily tool assumes a maximum length of 63 for ID 1, ID 2, ID 4, ID 16, ID 17. Compare with Adobe's *Font Naming Issues*, TechNote #5088 at http://partners.adobe.com/public/developer/font/index.html which is more restrictive. But this is from 1993 and dedicated to PS T1 and MM fonts. For further limitations of ID 6, please read the Microsoft name table specifications, section 'Name IDs', at http://www.microsoft.com/typography/otspec/name.htm

SMALL PRINT FOR BOTH NAMING SCHEMES

Setting entries as shown will work for both OT-TT and OT-PS. Fonts shall be cross-plat-form, cross-application, cross-flavor compatible, and across OT-savvy and non-OT-savvy applications. (There is no guarantee that this is true for *all* combination of platforms or applications.)

Important: In *Preferences / Generating OpenType* PS *(.otf)*, 'Use PostScript FontName as FullName on Windows' *must* be activated. This is applied to OT-PS only. It addresses a condition for OT-PS – that ID 4 / Win is identical with ID 6 / Win.[4]

    (Obviously, there are *no* compatibility issues if a font's ID 4 / Mac & ID 4 / Windows differ. ID 4 / Mac is mainly used by non-OT-savvy Mac applications, but ID 4 / Windows does not seem to be used in Windows at all. Most OT-savvy Mac applications rely on ID 16 + ID 17. Again, no guarantee that this is true for *all* applications.)

    ID 6 does not seem to be exposed, at least in recent applications. Its main use is for identifying fonts in documents and in communication with PostScript rasterizers.

In *Preferences / Generating OpenType* PS*, OpenType* TT *and TrueType*, you may activate 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh'. This will set ID 1 / Mac equal to ID 16, and ID 2 / Mac equal to ID 17. So font families are grouped identically in non-OT-savvy & OT-savvy Mac applications alike (using style names like Medium or Black Italic).[5] And non-OT-savvy Windows applications (and Freehand / Mac) will get ID 1 + ID 2, with ID 2 restricted to the four style names Regular, Italic, Bold, Bold Italic.

If you produce 4-style-families only, just omit entries for ID 16 + ID 17 as they would be identical with entries for ID 1 + ID 2. This should be your choice if you want to make sure that users are shown identical font names in *most* (but not all) applications. In this case, ID 6 and ID 4 should reflect ID 1 + ID 2 rather than ID 16 + ID 17.

A NOTE ON NAMING FONTS IN FONTLAB STUDIO 5

FontLab 4 required that the user did some manual adjustments in *FontInfo / Additional OpenType names* as described in steps 9 – 13 in the 'OpenType' section of the *Font Family Naming* recommendations.[5,6] In FontLab Studio 5, this is *not* required any more. If you do not plan to make any manual changes or additions to the name table, just leave *FontInfo / Additional OpenType names* empty and forget about it, and in *Preferences / Generating OpenType* PS*, OpenType* TT *and TrueType*, select 'Do not export OpenType name records' from the popup.

---

5. E.g. font family and style names exposed in Apple's TextEdit (as of Mac OS 10.3) are ID1 + ID2 which equal ID16 + ID17, so at first glance it looks like this app would show ID16 + ID17.

6. See http://groups.msn.com/fontlab/tipsandtricks.msnw?action=get_message&mview=0&ID_Message=2843 which now can be found at http://forum.fontlab.com/index.php?topic=313.0

[A] BIG OT FAMILY INTO SMALL, STYLE LINKED NON-OT FAMILIES

One big family for OT-savvy applications into two 4-style-families for non-OT-savvy applications. Except for two changes as described in the footnotes below the screenshots, this scheme follows Adobe's practice and Adam Twardoch's *Font Family Naming* recommendations.[6] Studying the sample naming on the next page may be the best way to understand how it works. A few notes:

¶ ID 16 + ID 17 allow a big OpenType font family to contain any number of arbitrarily named styles.
¶ ID 6 combines ID 16 + hyphen + ID 17, all space characters to be deleted.
¶ ID 4 combines ID 16 + space + ID 17.
¶ Numeric Weight setting matches the weight mentioned in ID17.
(The black set.)

¶ ID 1 + ID 2 reflect legacy 4-style-families.
¶ Italic and Bold selectors reflect ID 2.
(The ugly-blue set.)

The arrangement of screenshots shall help spot the two 4-style-families. It is easy to see that the family name in ID 1 of the bottom 4-style-family differs from that in the top 4-style-family. That way, non-OT-savvy applications recognize two different families.

SMALL PRINT FOR NAMING SCHEME [A]

Setting entries like this will work with both OT-TT and OT-PS. Fonts shall be cross-platform, cross-application, cross-flavor compatible, and compatible across OT-savvy and non-OT-savvy environments. (No guarantee that this is true for *all* combination of platforms or applications.)

Important: To make style linking work in non-OT-savvy applications, it is important that (numeric) Weight is set correctly: It is the *combination* of (numeric) Weight values set for 'Regular' and 'Bold' styles – as defined in ID 2! – which matters. Please read Adobe's document *Setting Font Weights for Windows* carefully and study Thomas Phinney's chart that displays which weight settings work & which don't.[7] In OT-savvy applications, Weight & Width settings are primarily used to sort styles in style menus.

   Also, avoid any weight values less than 250 – such styles would be fattened in some applications.[8]

About the example: The second small family could just as well have linked Black as a bold for SemiBold. Which weights are best linked with which others, depends on the complexity and structure of a particular family.

---

7.   See *Setting Font Weights for Windows* at http://partners.adobe.com/public/developer/opentype/afdko/topic_font_wt_win.html, and Thomas Phinney's chart at http://typophile.com/node/16327

8.   As a personal comment: These restrictions for setting weight values are quite unhappy. As the Regular is expected to have 400, the Bold 700, this leaves 500 or 600 for SemiBold; and in large families, ExtraLight, Light, SemiLight may get 250, 300, 350, while ExtraBold, Black, UltraBlack may get 750, 800, 850. The spectrum cannot be fully used, which is a pity as e.g. CSS defines weights in steps of 100.

regular italic

regular

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Regular

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Regular
Full Name: My Family

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Italic ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Italic
Full Name: My Family Italic

bold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☐ Font is italic ☒ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Bold ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Bold
Full Name: My Family Bold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☒ Font is italic ☒ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Bold Italic ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-BoldItalic
Full Name: My Family Bold Italic

light

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family Light
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Light
Full Name: My Family Light

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family Light
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☒ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Italic ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-LightItalic
Full Name: My Family Light Italic

semibold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family Light
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☐ Font is italic ☒ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Bold ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBold
Full Name: My Family SemiBold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: My Family Light
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☒ Font is italic ☒ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Bold Italic ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic
Full Name: My Family SemiBold Italic

(*)   As mentioned above, the option 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' uses entries of ID 16 + ID 17 for ID 1 / Mac + ID 2 / Mac too. Especially non-OT-savvy applications may sort styles alphabetically, not according to fonts' Weight settings. Using 'Regular Italic' instead of 'Italic' makes sure that Regular and Regular Italic styles are next to each other, instead of Italic being near the top of the styles menu and Regular at the bottom. Also, this harmonizes style names, for now you get (for example) Light, Light Italic; Regular, Regular Italic; Medium, Medium Italic; Bold, Bold Italic, &c. *Using 'Regular Italic' is my personal preference but is neither part of any specifications nor technically required!*

NAMING SCHEME [A] IN FONT MENUS

OT-savvy applications as well as non-OT-savvy Mac applications (if 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' is selected) show the font family like this:

My Family > Light
              Light Italic
              Regular
              Regular Italic
              SemiBold
              SemiBold Italic
              Bold
              Bold Italic

Non-OT-savvy Windows applications show ID 1 in the font family popup, and buttons must be used to access the styles:

My Family   (no button = Regular)
                 [Italic]
                 [Bold]
                 [Bold] + [Italic]
My Family Light (no button = Light)
                 [Italic]   (= Light Italic)
                 [Bold]   (= Semibold)
                 [Bold] + [Italic]   (= Semibold Italic)

Older Mac applications, and Freehand / Windows, show ID 4 of each style right in the font family popup:

My Family Bold
My Family Bold Italic
My Family Light
My Family Light Italic
My Family Regular
My Family Regular Italic
My Family SemiBold
My Family SemiBold Italic

[B] BIG OT FAMILY INTO NON-OT ONE-FONT-FAMILIES

One big family for OT-savvy applications into one-font-families for non-OT-savvy applications. This scheme is used by foundries dedicated to making fonts for designers and goes back to the PS T1 era. Studying the sample naming on the next page will show how simple this solution is. A few notes:

¶ ID 16 + ID 17 allow a big OpenType font family to contain any number of arbitrarily named styles.
¶ ID 6 combines ID 16 + hyphen + ID 17, all space characters to be deleted.
¶ ID 4 combines ID 16 + space + ID 17.
¶ Numeric Weight setting matches the weight mentioned in ID17.
(The black set.)

¶ ID 1 combines ID 16 + space + ID 17 and thus is identical with ID 4.
¶ ID 2 is always set to 'Regular'.
¶ Italic and Bold selectors are always deselected.
(The ugly-blue set.)

The arrangement of screenshots reflects the fact that there are no 4-style-families but individual fonts.

SMALL PRINT FOR NAMING SCHEME [B]

Setting entries like this will work with both OT-TT and OT-PS. Fonts shall be cross-platform, cross-application, cross-flavor compatible, and compatible across OT-savvy and non-OT-savvy environments. (No guarantee that this is true for *all* combination of platforms or applications.)

Important: You need to advice users of these fonts never to apply Italic or Bold buttons which would mathematically slant or bold the styles!

regular *italic*

light

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Light
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Light
Full Name: My Family Light (*)

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light Italic

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Light Italic
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-LightItalic
Full Name: My Family Light Italic (*)

regular

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Regular

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Regular
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Regular (‡)
Full Name: My Family Regular (*)

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Italic

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Italic
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Italic
Full Name: My Family Italic (*)

semibold

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family SemiBold
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBold
Full Name: My Family SemiBold

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold Italic

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family SemiBold Italic
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic
Full Name: My Family SemiBold Italic

bold

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Bold
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Bold
Full Name: My Family Bold

OpenType-specific font names ← →
OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold Italic

Basic set of font names ← →
Family Name: My Family Bold Italic
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold
Width: Normal ▾ More Styles ▸
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-BoldItalic
Full Name: My Family Bold Italic

(‡) This obviously violates the specifications for ID 4 in OpenType TT fonts, see http://www.microsoft.com/typography/otspec/name.htm. However, naming scheme [B] does not involve style linking, so this should not matter.

(*) Yet again, if the option 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' is selected, 'Regular Italic' instead of 'Italic' makes sure that Regular and Regular Italic styles are displayed next to each other in style menus. With this naming scheme however, it is a matter of taste if this option is selected or not.

regular *italic*

light

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-Light
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Light
Full Name: MyFamily-Light

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Light Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-LightItalic
Weight: Light ▾ 300 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-LightItalic
Full Name: MyFamily-LightItalic

regular

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Regular

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-Regular
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Regular   (‡)
Full Name: MyFamily-Regular

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Regular Italic   (*)

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-RegularItalic   (*)
Weight: Normal ▾ 400 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-RegularItalic   (*)
Full Name: MyFamily-RegularItalic   (*)

semibold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-SemiBold
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBold
Full Name: MyFamily-SemiBold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: SemiBold Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic
Weight: SemiBold ▾ 600 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic
Full Name: MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic

bold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-Bold
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-Bold
Full Name: MyFamily-Bold

OpenType-specific font names

OT Family Name: My Family
OT Style Name: Bold Italic

Basic set of font names

Family Name: MyFamily-BoldItalic
Weight: Bold ▾ 700 ☐ Font is italic ☐ Font is bold More Styles ▸
Width: Normal ▾
Style Name: Regular ▾ Build Style Name
PS Font Name: MyFamily-BoldItalic
Full Name: MyFamily-BoldItalic

This is an alternative to naming scheme [B] – using ID 6 style for all legacy name entries: no spaces, and with a hyphen between (virtual) family and style name.

If you want to go one step further, and force identical name entries in virtually *all* applications, omit entries for ID 16 + ID 17 – here displayed in grey.

(‡)   See the black note on page 8.
(*)   See the red note on page 8.

NAMING SCHEME [B] IN FONT MENUS

OT-savvy applications as well as non-OT-savvy Mac applications (if 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' is selected) show the font family like this:

My Family > Light
              Light Italic
              Regular
              Regular Italic
              SemiBold
              SemiBold Italic
              Bold
              Bold Italic

Non-OT-savvy Windows applications show ID 1 in the font family popup, Bold and Italic buttons must not be used. (The same is shown in OT-savvy applications and non-OT-savvy Mac applications if ID 16 + ID 17 are omitted.) Older Mac applications, and Freehand / Windows, show ID 4 of each style right in the font family popup. So it would look like this:

My Family Bold
My Family Bold Italic
My Family Light
My Family Light Italic
My Family Regular
My Family Regular Italic
My Family SemiBold
My Family SemiBold Italic

With the alternative to naming scheme [B] (page 9), the latter would look like this:

MyFamily-Bold
MyFamily-BoldItalic
MyFamily-Light
MyFamily-LightItalic
MyFamily-Regular
MyFamily-RegularItalic
MyFamily-SemiBold
MyFamily-SemiBoldItalic

This would be shown in OT-savvy applications as well as older Mac applications if 'Use the OpenType names as menu names on Macintosh' were deselected.

PERSONAL NOTE ON PLANNING BIG OPENTYPE FONT FAMILIES

The FontLab Studio 5 user manual shows an interesting sample of a small OpenType font family:

```
Cond
Regular
Italic
Bold
Cond Bold
Bold Italic
Black
Cond Black
```
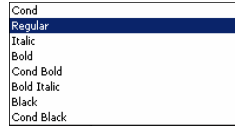
This looks a bit chaotic. Following my suggestion to add 'Regular' as a weight index to 'Italic' in ID 17, the result would have looked like this:

Regular

Regular Cond

Regular Italic

Bold

Bold Cond

Bold Italic

Black

Black Cond

So regular, bold and black weights are nicely grouped together.

However, not only did the order of regular, italic and condensed styles vary within each weight, but also, the application did not list condensed styles separately from the normal-width styles. It would be better to mention the weight index first and 'Cond' second in ID 17. This too is already reflected in the 'corrected' version. (The sample also demonstrates that style naming and sorting in style menus interact.) [9]

Now consider a big OpenType family of 8 weights, each of them with normal-width regular & italic and condensed regular & italic styles. Mixing normal-width and condensed styles in one big family might look chaotic in the styles menu, especially if they are sorted as in the first sample above. So, despite of the temptation to put all styles into one family, it may be advisable to make separate families for normal-width and for condensed styles. Then, 'Cond' would become part of ID 16. This would also allow for this: If a text has been set in the normal-width version, and words have been emphasized in italics or bold, this allows to select this text and switch to the condensed family in the family menu – style assignments would remain intact.

---

9.   I should add that this violates the naming convention as of Adobe's *Font Naming Issues*, TechNote #5088, page 11, which recommends the following order: <FamilyName><VendorID>–<Weight><Width><Slant>. See note 4 for a link.

OPENTYPE AND COMPATIBILITY

If you want to make sure that font names are displayed (almost) identically in both old and recent applications, omit OpenType name entries for ID 16 and ID 17. This works with both naming schemes.

For scheme [A] this means that a big family is broken into many four-style families even in OT-savvy applications.

With scheme [B] you end up – technically – with a bunch of one-font-families. This means that font menus show all styles as if it were individual families each consisting of a Regular style only. (Font managers might help.)

But then, you should be aware that backward compatibility involves more than just font names. A *fully* (backward) compatible OpenType font is one which …

¶ omits name entries for ID 16 and ID 17 (for these are invisible to non-OT-savvy applications, OT-savvy and non-OT-savvy applications would display different font names and even structure families differently),

¶ uses only four standard styles (any additional one would confuse Windows),

¶ does not cover more than 256 glyphs (additional ones cannot be accessed by non-Unicode-savvy applications – which also means that for non-Unicode-savvy applications you still have to prepare special CE versions of your fonts)

¶ which follow Adobe's standard glyph order (required if an OT-PS font shall map the Euro correctly in OS 9 with ATM; this is not an issue with OT-TT fonts, but these in turn would require a suitcase to be supported by OS 9)

¶ and bear Adobe standard names (to allow text search in PDFs produced via PS-file),

¶ omits any OpenType features (ignored by non-OT-savvy applications – this can well be regarded as incompatibility: a user might complain that an advertised features cannot be accessed in Word),

¶ has but one lookup in the kern feature (or kerning will be ignored by all current applications except Adobe's; and in OS 9, ATM will refuse to recognize and support such OT-PS fonts at all).

At least, such a 'minimum standard' OpenType font is cross-platform compatible with Windows 2000 and higher, and, with limitations, OS 9 and higher. Now the flavor comes into play …

¶ OpenType PS fonts require installation of ATM on OS 9 and Windows versions prior to 2000,

¶ OpenType PS fonts require, as mentioned, a special glyph order for ATM in OS 9 to map the Euro correctly,

¶ OpenType TT fonts require a suitcase to gain native OS 9 support.

The question you should ask yourself is: For whom do I produce fonts? And, depending on the answer to this question: How (backward) compatible do my fonts have to be?

As of yet, the *fully (backward) compatible* OpenType font does not fulfil what OpenType specifications and announcements promised. And a *real* OpenType font – one that takes advantage of the extras which 'OpenType' promised – is anything but compatible (read: fully supported), not even with current applications.

Remains the hope that more specific recommendations for both font and application developers allow font developers to forget about redundant OpenType table entries one day.

As to naming – a real progress were made if fonts would not require name entries other than ID 16 + ID 17, maybe ID 6 for identification (maybe ID 3 and ID 5 could serve this purpose as well), Weight and Width settings. And if a document like this were obsolete.

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