

NeoWin Interface Designer

Quick Start Guide

Drag-and-drop UI layout designer for VisualNEO Win

Version 1.3 | ezEdge WebView2 Plugin

What You Need

This guide assumes you have VisualNEO Win (VNW) installed with the ezEdge WebView2 plugin. NWID runs inside ezEdge as an HTML application.

The ezEdge plugin is available at: <https://ezwarelab.com/product/ezedge-plugin/14>

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1. Installation & Setup

Install the Companion Plugin

The NWIDCompanion plugin provides VNW actions that communicate with the designer at runtime. Without it, your VNW publication cannot control the NWID interface.

Steps

- Copy NWIDCompanion.nbp to your VNW Plugins folder.
- Restart VisualNEO Win. The plugin appears under Plugins > NWIDCompanion.
- The plugin provides 8 actions: NWID_Set, NWID_Get, NWID_Visibility, NWID_Navigate, NWID_Items, NWID_GoSub, NWID_AddRow, NWID_ClearRows, and property dialogs with auto-detection from control ID prefixes.

TIP: The companion dialogs use a type:id format for control identification (e.g. button:btn_1). When you type an ID, the type is auto-detected from the prefix.

File Structure

File / Folder	Description
NeoWin_Interface_Designer.html	The designer application (loaded into ezEdge)
NWIDCompanion.nbp	Companion plugin for VNW (copy to Plugins folder)
Templates/	Demo layout files (.nwid) ready to import
Interface_Tester.pub	VNW test publication for previewing exported layouts

TIP: You do not need to compile the NeoWin Interface Designer. It runs directly as an HTML file inside ezEdge. In fact, it will run faster uncompiled.

2. The Designer Interface

The designer is a single-page HTML application that runs inside an ezEdge WebView2 control. It is divided into several key areas:

Toolbar (Top)

The main toolbar contains the menu bar (File, Edit, View, Tools, Help) and alignment/distribution tools. Use File > New to start fresh, File > Layout Manager to open a .nwid layout file, and Ctrl+S to save your work.

Left Panel: Objects & Layers

- **Objects tab** — Drag controls from here onto the canvas. Controls are grouped into categories (Basic, Selection, Display, Data, Layout, Advanced UI, Media). Use the search box to filter.
- **Layers tab** — Lists every control on the current page in z-order. Toggle visibility, enable/disable, and lock. Drag rows to reorder z-index.

Canvas (Center)

The main design surface. Drag controls from the Objects tab and drop them here. Click a control to select it; drag to move, use handles to resize. Right-click for a context menu.

Properties Panel (Right)

- **Properties** — Control-specific settings (caption, items, value, etc.)
- **Appearance** — Visual styling (colors, fonts, borders, gradients, shadows)
- **Events** — Wire GoSub events and JS Actions
- **Behavior** — Visibility, enabled state, lock, anchor mode

Page Strip (Bottom of Canvas)

Multi-page support. Click + to add pages, right-click a tab for page options.

TIP: The Preview brightness slider (in the Preview window header) initializes from the canvas brightness setting, making dark layouts easier to inspect.

3. Building Your First Layout

Step 1: Set Canvas Size

Go to View > Canvas Properties. Set your target width and height (default is 1024 × 768).

Step 2: Drop Controls

From the Objects tab, drag any control onto the canvas. A few controls to get started:

- **Label** — Static text display
- **Button** — Clickable button (7 styles: primary, secondary, ghost, danger, success, warning, link)
- **TextInput** — Single-line text entry
- **ComboBox** — Dropdown selector
- **ListBox** — Scrollable item list with optional checkboxes and icons
- **Table** — Data grid with sortable columns

NOTE: Always use the default naming convention. Each control type has a standard prefix: btn_1 for buttons, lbl_1 for labels, txt_1 for text inputs, etc.

Step 3: Configure Properties

Select a control and adjust its properties in the right panel.

Step 4: Wire Events

In the Events tab, click + Add to create a JS Action. Set the Event dropdown, the Action to GoSub (VNW), and type the subroutine name.

Step 5: Preview

Press F6 or go to File > Preview Runtime to see your layout running.

TIP: Use icon tokens to add icons to buttons, labels, list items, and more. Format: TokenName: Label Text. Open the icon picker to browse all 145 available tokens.

4. Canvas Modes, Anchoring & Master Pages

Canvas Display Modes

Center in Browser

The layout maintains its exact design dimensions and is centered in the browser window. This is the default mode.

Fill Browser

The layout stretches to fill the entire browser window. Controls are repositioned based on their anchor mode.

Custom Position

The layout is placed at an exact pixel position within the browser window.

The Geometry Manager (Anchoring)

Mode	Behavior
Proportional	Scales position, size, and font proportionally with the window. Default.
Anchor	Docks to specific edges using Left, Right, Top, Bottom flags.
Fixed	Keeps exact design-time position and size regardless of window dimensions.

TIP: Common pattern: header bars Anchor Left+Right+Top, status bars Anchor Left+Right+Bottom, side panels Anchor Top+Bottom+Left, main content Proportional.

Master Pages

Master pages let you define a shared layout inherited by multiple pages. Common elements like headers, navigation bars, and footers only need to be designed once.

NOTE: Controls on master pages cannot be selected from a child page. Switch to the master page tab to make changes.

5. Templates & the Layout Manager

Demo Templates

Template	Controls	Highlights
Contact_Manager.nwid	39	GroupBoxes, icons, ComboBox
Project_Tracker.nwid	31	TabControl, Table, SearchBox
Knowledge_Base.nwid	24	TreeView, RichText, sidebar
Inventory_Manager.nwid	45	Sliders, master-detail
Sales_Dashboard.nwid	48	KPI cards, SimpleChart
Application_Setup.nwid	36	ProgressSteps, Switches
ListBox_Showcase.nwid	26	6 ListBox configurations
Media_Studio.nwid	55	MediaPlayer, playlist, EQ

NOTE: Always use Save As when modifying a template so you preserve the original.

6. Exporting the Runtime HTML

Export Steps

- Go to File > Export Runtime HTML (or press F5).
- Choose a filename (default: runtime.html).
- Optional: enable Minify and Remove unused control CSS.
- Click Export. Two files are produced:

› **runtime.html** — The complete runtime interface

› **runtime_subs.txt** — VNW subroutine stubs for all wired events

The Subroutines File

The runtime_subs.txt file contains ready-to-paste VNW subroutine stubs:

```
. ■■ Example exported subroutine stub ■■  
. Control: btn_1 (button) | Event: Left_Click  
. Variables: [btn_1.caption]  
:btn_1_Click  
. Your VNW logic here  
AlertBox "Hello" "Button clicked!"  
Return
```

7. The Interface Tester

The Interface Tester is a ready-made VNW publication (Interface_Tester.pub) designed specifically for testing NWID layouts without building a full application.

- Export your layout from the designer.
- Open Interface_Tester.pub in VisualNEO Win.
- Point the tester to your exported runtime.html file.
- Paste the contents of runtime_subs.txt into the tester's subroutine area.
- Run the publication and test.

NOTE: The Interface Tester is for development and testing only.

8. Using VNW Variables in Text

NWID automatically substitutes VisualNEO Win variables embedded in text properties. Type any VNW variable token (e.g. [Time], [UserName], [MyVar]) directly into a control's text — when the runtime loads, VNW resolves each token and pushes the actual value into the control.

How It Works

At export time, NWID scans all text-producing properties across every page. For each [VarName] token it finds, a single line is generated in the exported runtime_subs.txt file that pushes the VNW-resolved value into the control via the NWID runtime. No manual wiring required.

Example

A TextArea containing this text in its value property:

```
VisualNEO Win Global Variables:  
  
Time: [Time]  
Date: [DateLong]  
User: [UserName]  
System: [SystemLanguage]
```

After export and runtime load, each token is replaced with the live value from VNW — the user sees the actual time, date, username, and system language.

Supported Variable Types

- **Built-in system variables** — [Time], [Date], [DateLong], [DateShort], [DayOfWeek], [UserName], [ComputerName], [SystemLanguage], [WindowsVersion], [PubDir], [TempDir], [AppDataDir], [ScreenWidth], [ScreenHeight], etc.
- **User-defined globals** — any variable you SetVar in your VNW code, as long as it's set before the page containing the token is entered.

Properties That Support VNW Variables

Property	Applies To
value	TextInput, TextArea, RichText
placeholder	TextInput, TextArea
caption	Button, Label, GroupBox, CheckBox, RadioButton, Switch, CountdownTimer
items	ComboBox, ListBox, TreeView, ButtonBar, ContextMenu, Accordion, ScrollingTicker, ProgressSteps
tabs	TabControl
segments	StatusBar
labels	SimpleChart

When Values Are Updated

- **On startup** — Variables on the boot page resolve just before your :NWID_OnReady subroutine runs.

- **On page navigation** — Variables on the target page resolve each time the page is entered, so time-sensitive values like [Time] always show the current value.

NOTE: Tokens that contain a dot (e.g. [txa_1.value]) are treated as NWID control bindings, not VNW variables. Tokens starting with "NWID" (e.g. [NWID.PageName]) are system variables and also bypass substitution. Only plain variable names like [Time] or [MyVar] are resolved through the VNW variable system.

Forcing a Manual Refresh

If you update a user global from VNW code and want the displayed text to refresh immediately (without waiting for page navigation), call the page's auto-generated variable routine:

```
. Update a global and refresh the current page's text
SetVar "[MyStatus]" "Connected"
GoSub "_NWID_ApplyVars_Page_1"
```

The routine name is built from the page name: _NWID_ApplyVars_ followed by the page name with any non-alphanumeric characters replaced by underscores.

9. Working with the Companion Plugin

The NWIDCompanion plugin provides VNW actions to control the NWID interface at runtime.

Action	Purpose
NWID_Set	Set a property on a control (caption, value, color, filter, search, etc.)
NWID_Get	Read a property from a control into a VNW variable
NWID_Visibility	Show or hide a control
NWID_Navigate	Navigate to a page by name, or go to next/previous page
NWID_Items	Add, remove, or clear items in a ListBox, ComboBox, or TreeView
NWID_GoSub	Trigger a GoSub subroutine from VNW code
NWID_AddRow	Add a row to a Table with comma-separated values
NWID_ClearRows	Remove all data rows from a Table

Table Properties

Tables support special properties through NWID_Set for data management and filtering:

Property	Format	Description
filter	colIndex value	Show only rows where column matches value (case-insensitive, 0-based). Empty clears.
search	text	Case-insensitive search across all columns. Empty clears.
addrow	comma-separated	Append a single row to the table.
clearrows	(empty)	Remove all data rows and reset filters.

```
. Filter table by department column (column 1)
NWID_Set "Rectangle1" "table:tbl_1" "filter" "1|Engineering"

. Search all columns
NWID_Set "Rectangle1" "table:tbl_1" "search" "alice"

. Clear both filters
NWID_Set "Rectangle1" "table:tbl_1" "filter" ""
NWID_Set "Rectangle1" "table:tbl_1" "search" ""
```

Control ID Format

The companion uses a type:id format. When you enter a control ID like btn_1, the dialog auto-detects the type from the prefix.

Common Prefixes

Prefix	Control Type	Prefix	Control Type
btn_	Button	lst_	ListBox

lbl_	Label	img_	Image
txt_	TextInput	sld_	Slider
txa_	TextArea	tbl_	Table
chk_	CheckBox	tab_	TabControl
rdo_	RadioButton	stb_	StatusBar
sw_	Switch	mp_	MediaPlayer
cbo_	ComboBox	cht_	SimpleChart

Important: NWID_Get and Async Timing

The NWID_Get action reads a property value from a control at runtime. Because communication between VNW and the WebView2 control is asynchronous, the result does not arrive instantly.

NOTE: The value is NOT available immediately after calling NWID_Get. The result arrives asynchronously via the message handler. For frequently accessed values, use variable bindings instead (e.g. [txt_1.value]).

TIP: A custom ChatGPT has been created to help you design and build your NWID projects. Try it here:
<https://chatgpt.com/g/g-69b6e0cb8458819195371b416a06fc02-neo-win-interface-designer>

10. Quick Reference

Keyboard Shortcuts

Shortcut	Action
Ctrl+N	New layout
Ctrl+O	Layout Manager (open/import/delete)
Ctrl+S	Layout Manager (save)
F5	Export runtime HTML
F6	Preview runtime
Ctrl+Z / Ctrl+Y	Undo / Redo
Ctrl+C / Ctrl+V	Copy / Paste control
Ctrl+X	Cut control
Delete	Delete selected control
Ctrl+D	Duplicate control
Ctrl+A	Select all controls
Ctrl+Shift+E	Open Rich Text Editor
Ctrl+G	Toggle grid
Ctrl+Shift+G	Toggle snap
Ctrl++ / Ctrl+-	Zoom in / Zoom out
Ctrl+0	Reset zoom
Ctrl+] / Ctrl+[	Bring to front / Send to back
Escape	Deselect all / Close modal

Typical Workflow

1. **Design** — Build your interface in the NWID designer
2. **Preview** — Press F6 to test. Use the event monitor to verify wiring.
3. **Save** — Save the .nwid layout file for future editing
4. **Export** — F5 to produce runtime.html and runtime_subs.txt
5. **Test** — Paste subs into the Interface Tester, run, and verify
6. **Integrate** — Move runtime.html and subs into your VNW publication
7. **Code** — Use NWID_Set, NWID_Get, etc. to control the interface from VNW

Available Control Types (30+)

Button, Label, TextInput, TextArea, CheckBox, RadioButton, Switch, ComboBox, ListBox, Image, RichText, Slider, Separator, ProgressBar, GroupBox, Container, TabControl, Table, StatusBar, SearchBox, TreeView, ProgressSteps, CountdownTimer, ScrollingTicker, Accordion, SimpleChart, ContextMenu, ButtonBar, Rectangle, Oval, MediaPlayer, Doc Viewer

Getting Help

- Use the Preview event monitor to debug event wiring
- Check the Properties panel hints for accepted value formats
- Open the icon picker to browse all 145 icon tokens
- Examine the demo templates for real-world layout examples

End of Quick Start Guide