

From The Edge:

by

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Using the Rich Text Control for Mail Merge

R:BASE 7.x and V-8 "Turbo" for Windows

Trademarks:

R:BASE, Pocket R:BASE, Oterro, R:Archive, R:Accounting, R:Capture, R:Charts, R:Code, R:DWF Viewer, R:Fax, R:Java, R:Linux, R:Merge, R:Scheduler, R:Scope, R:Struc., R:Syntax, R:Style, R:Tango, R:WEB Suite are trademarks or registered trademarks of R:BASE Technologies, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other brand, product names, company names and logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies.

January 28, 2005

From the Edge: Using the Rich Text Control for Mail Merge
Section: Report Designer
Chapter: Running R:BASE Your Way!
Platform: R:BASE 7.x and V-8 "Turbo" for Windows
Build: 7.1.79.30128 and higher

The **Rich Text** Control of next generation R:BASE 7.x and V-8 "Turbo" for Windows Report Designer also includes the option of Mail Merge to create form letters and more ...

This document will show you how to do the following:

- Generate a form letter with address information
- Edit the standard Rich Text document
- Use the Mail Merge feature of Rich Text control in Report Designer

Connect the Database and Create a Report

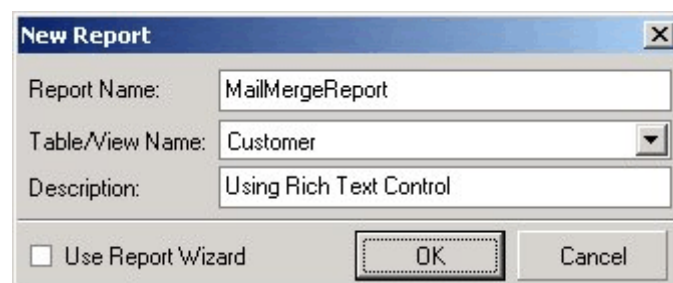
Create a New Report based on Customer table in ConComp database:

01. Start RBG7, RBG75 or RBG8 and CONNect ConComp database
02. Database Explorer | Reports | New Report

Report Name: MailMergeReport
Table/View Name: Customer
Description: Using Rich Text Control

Do not check the option for Use Report Wizard

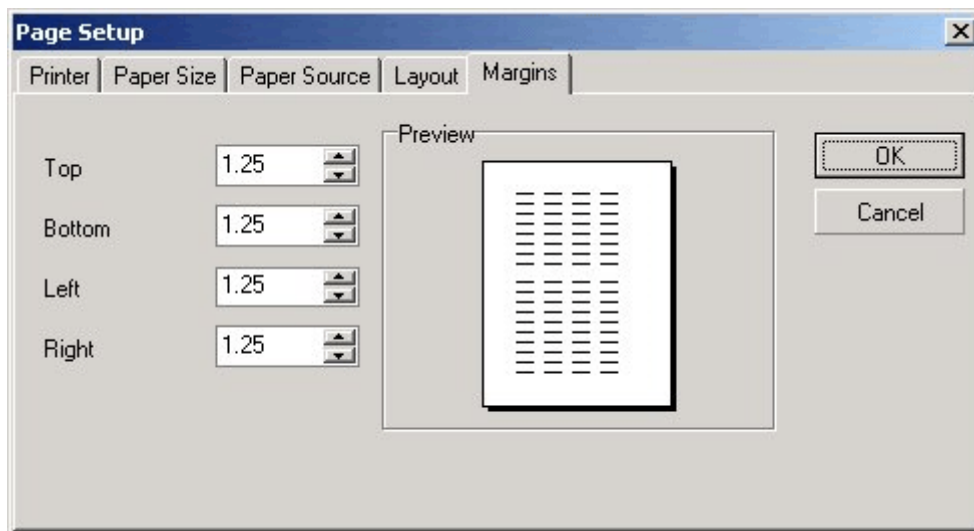
Click on [OK] button to invoke Report Designer



(Figure 1)

Set the Page Layout

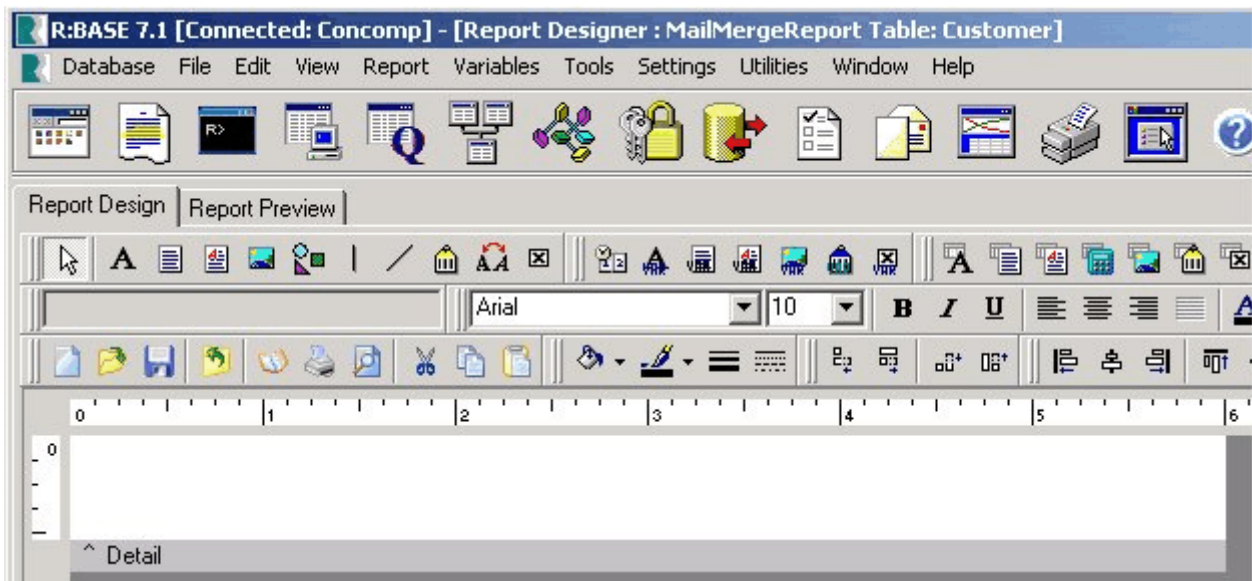
03. Select File | Page Setup from the Report Designer main menu.
04. Select the [Margins] tab.
05. Set all margins to 1.25
06. Click the [OK] button to close the Page Setup dialog.



(Figure 2)

Modify the Bands

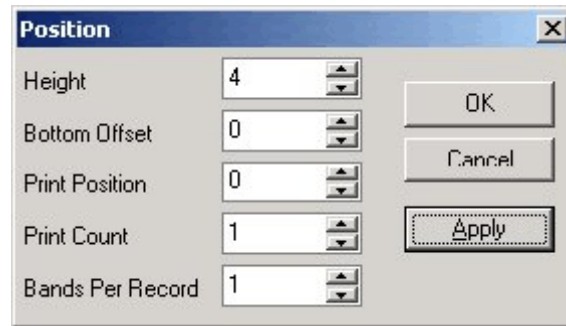
07. Report Designer | Main Menu | Report
Un-Check the **Report Header** option. The Report Header band will be removed from the report.
08. Report Designer | Main Menu | Report
Un-Check the **Report Footer** option. The Report Footer band will be removed from the report.
09. Report Designer | Main Menu | Report
Un-Check the **Page Header** option. The Page Header band will be removed from the report.
10. Report Designer | Main Menu | Report
Un-Check the **Page Footer** option. The Page Footer band will be removed from the report.



(Figure 3)

11. Right-click over the white space of the **Detail** band and select **Position...**

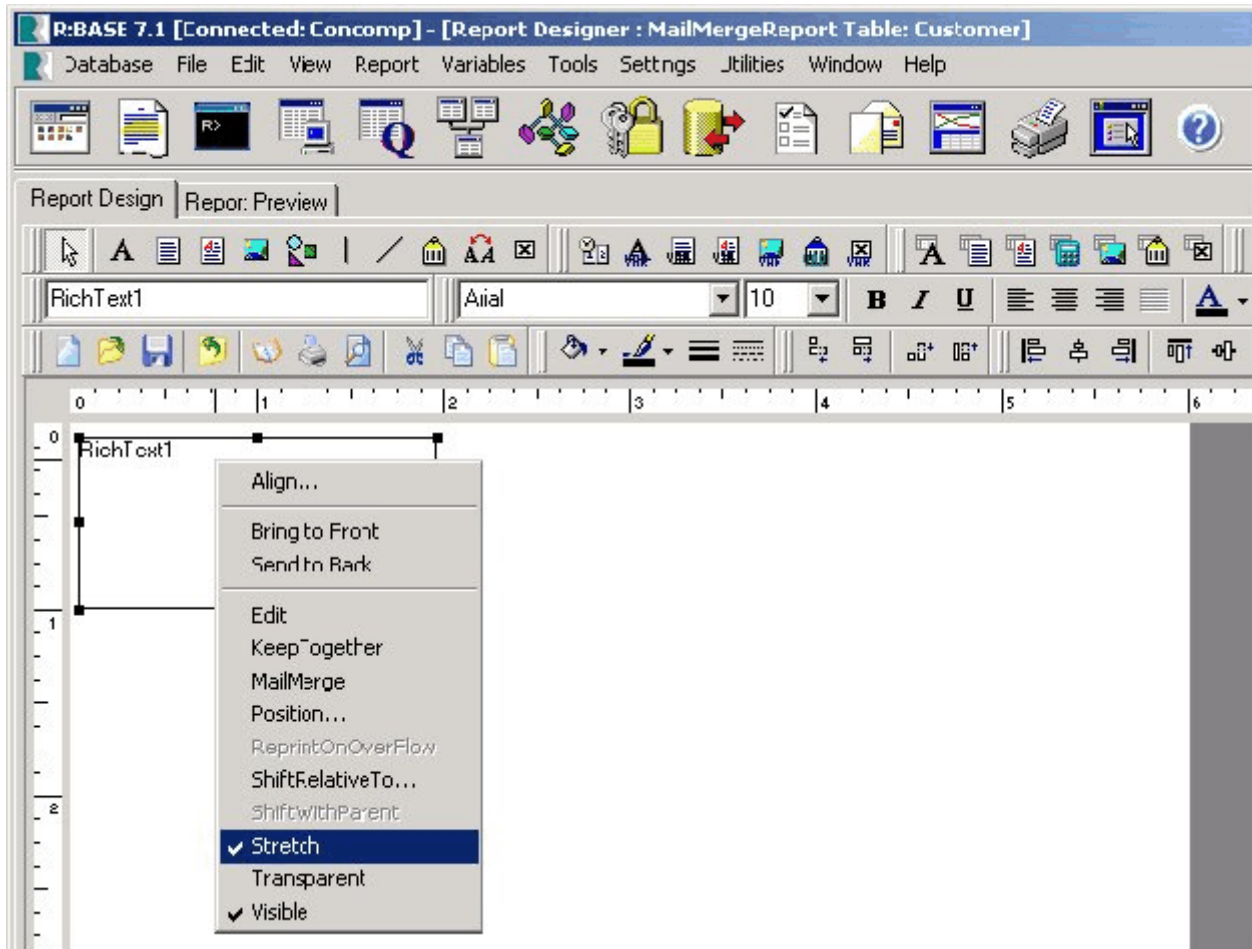
Set the **Height** to 4 and **Print Count** to 1. This will allow only one detail band to print per page, thus creating the effect of one form letter per page. (Figure 4)



(Figure 4)

Click on [Apply] and then [OK] button to save Position parameters.

12. Place a Rich Text control (part of Standard Controls) in the Detail band.
13. Right-click over the Rich Text control and select the "Stretch" menu option. This will force the Rich Text control to resize based on the size of the letter. (Figure 5)

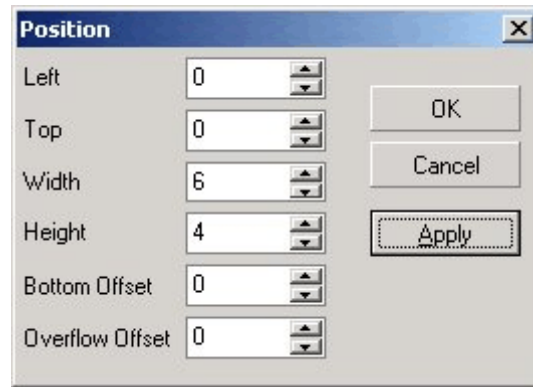


(Figure 5)

14. Right-click over the Rich Text control and set the position and size: (Figure 6)

Left: 0
Top: 0
Width: 6
Height: 4

Click on [Apply] and then [OK] button to save Position parameters.

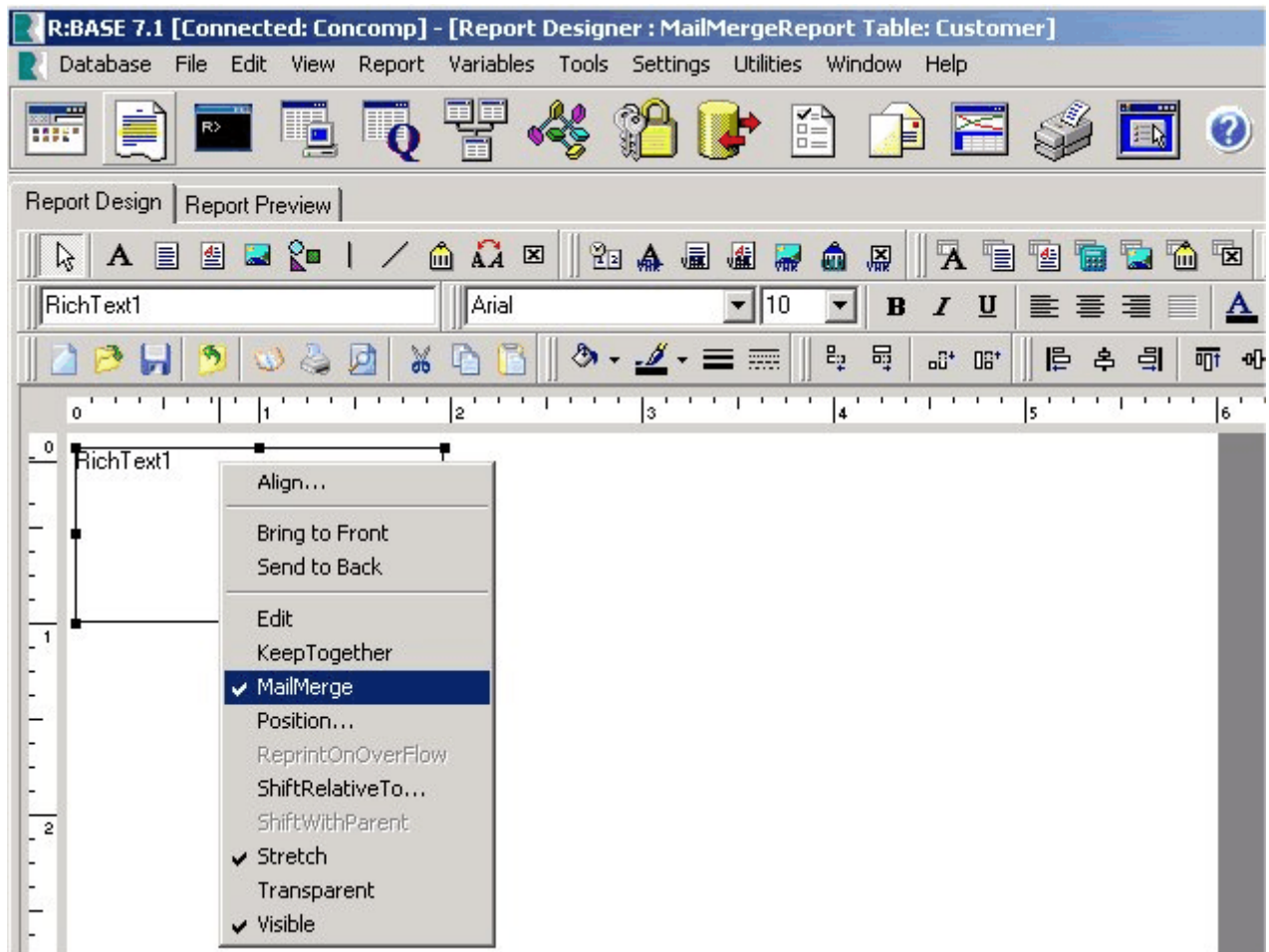


(Figure 6)

Note: We've positioned the Rich Text control so that it fills the entire detail band. This allows us to use the margins of the report to control the positioning of the letter, as opposed to positioning the Rich Text control within the band. The height of 4 is arbitrary; it will simply allow us to read the entire contents of the letter while designing. When the report prints, the Rich Text component will calculate its height based on the length of the letter.

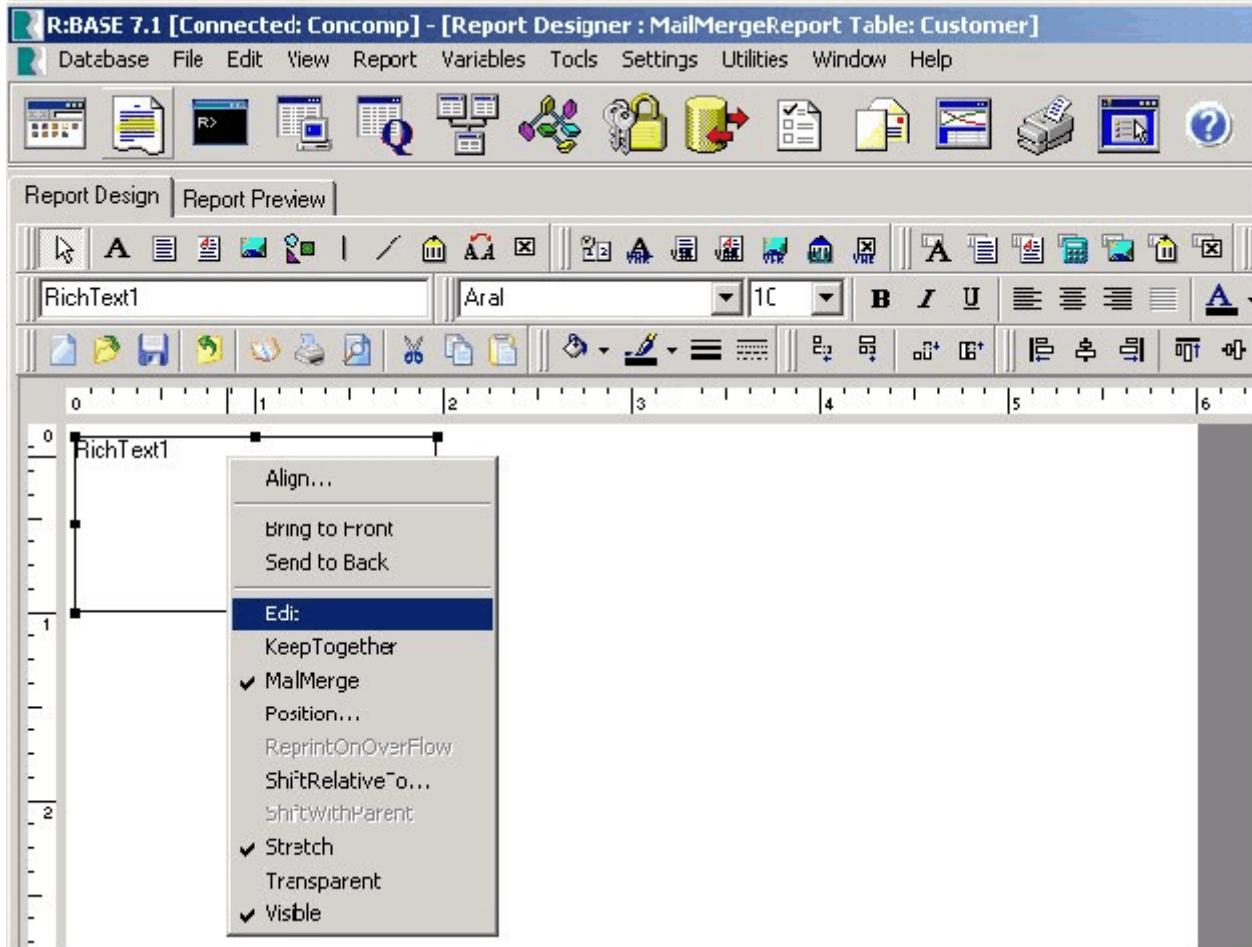
Type the Body of the Letter into the Rich Text Control

11. Right-click over the Rich Text control and select the MailMerge menu option. (Figure 7)

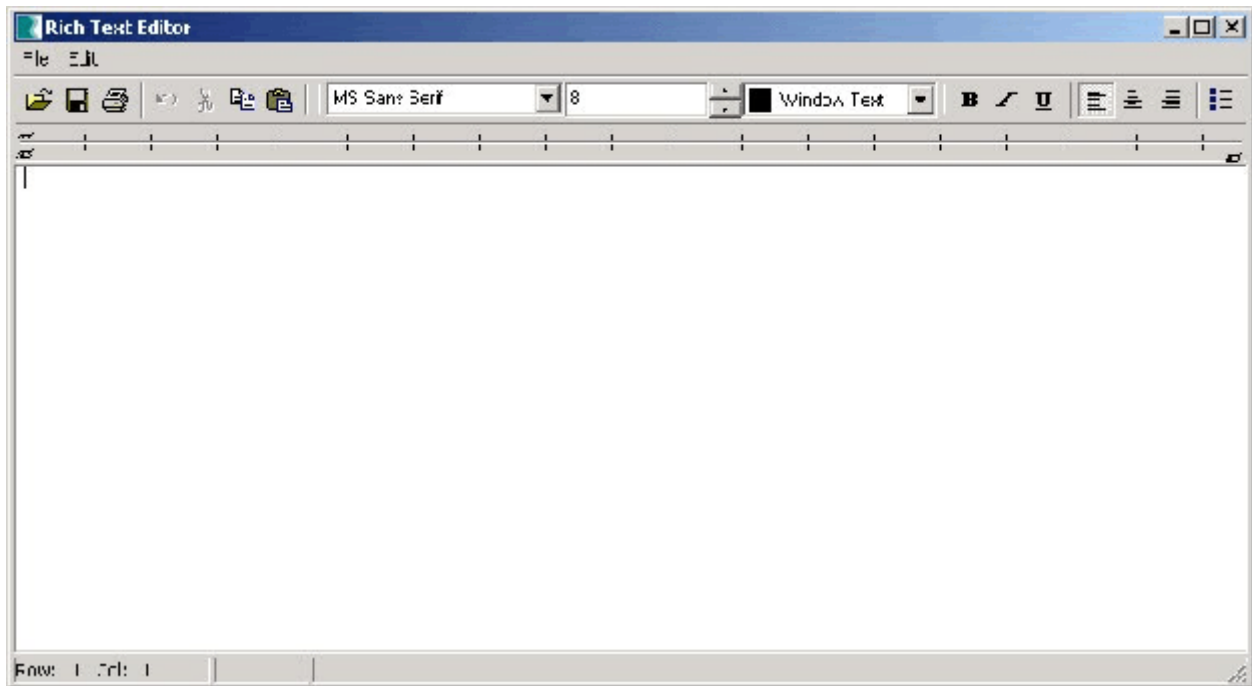


(Figure 7)

12. Right-click over the Rich Text control and access the Edit menu option. The Rich Text Editor will be displayed. (Figure 8 and Figure 9)

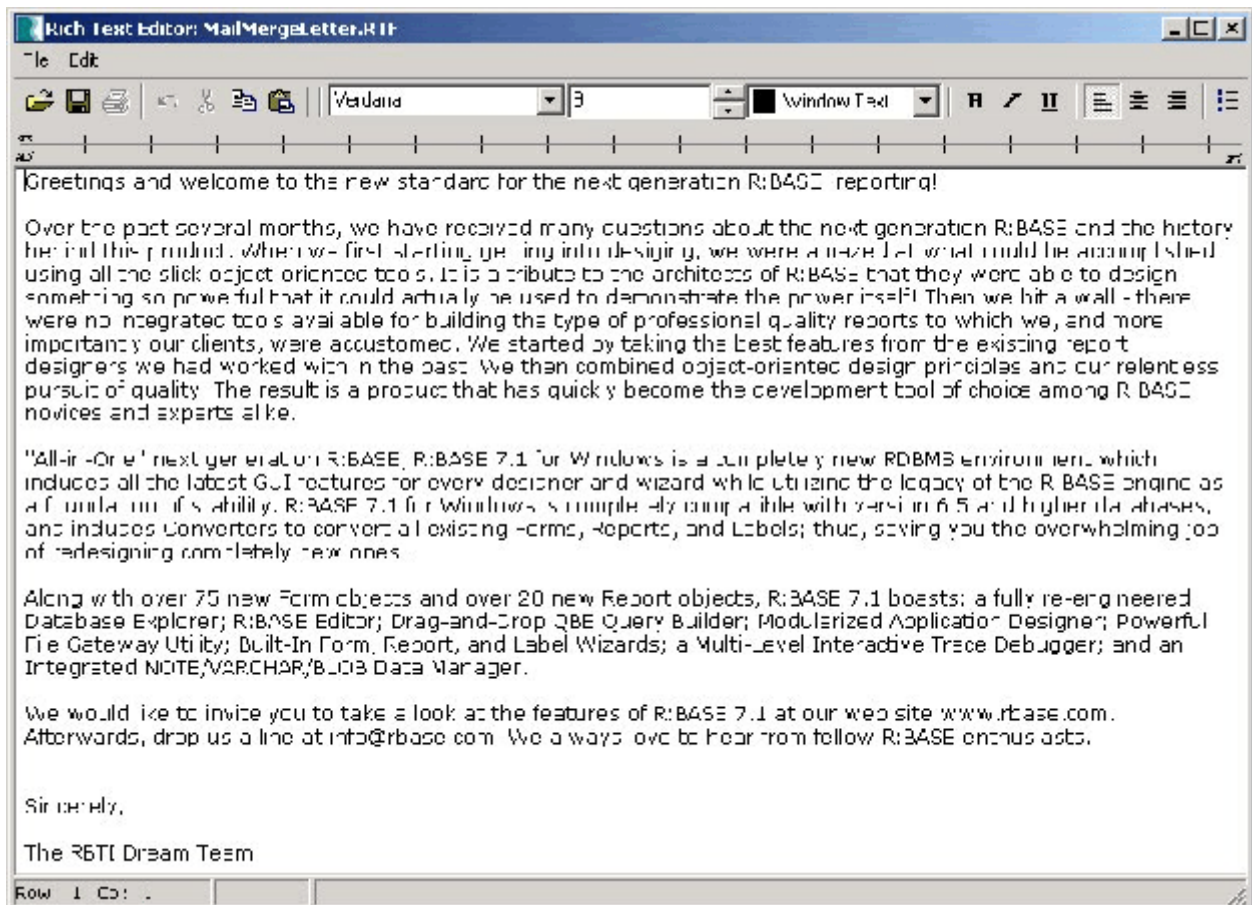


(Figure 8)



(Figure 9)

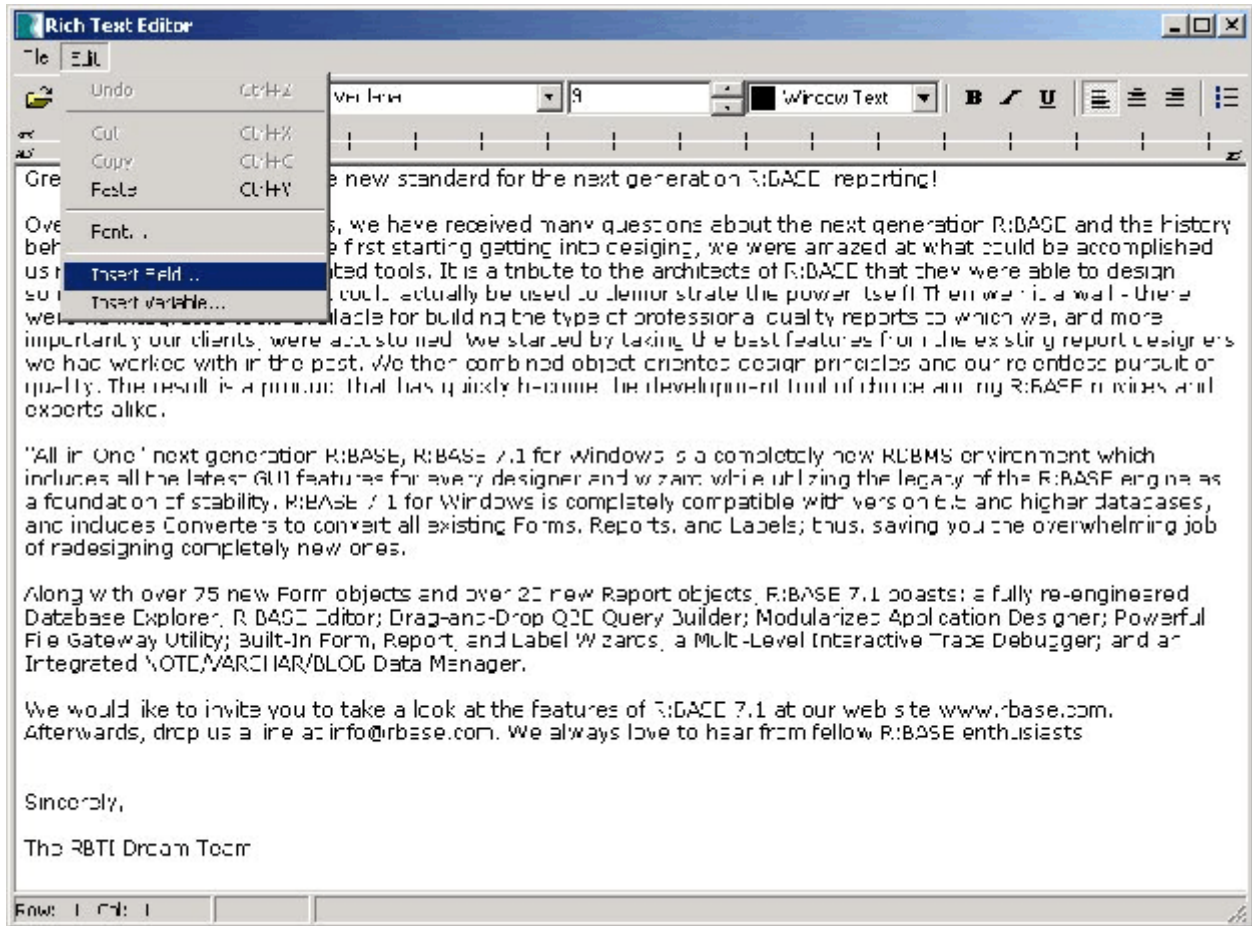
13. Type the following paragraphs in Rich Text Editor: (Figure 10)



(Figure 10)

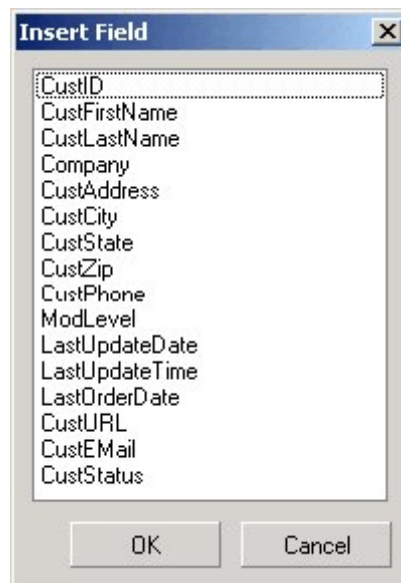
Add Fields to the Letter

14. Select Edit | Insert Field. A list of columns from the Customer table will be displayed. (Figure 11 and Figure 12)

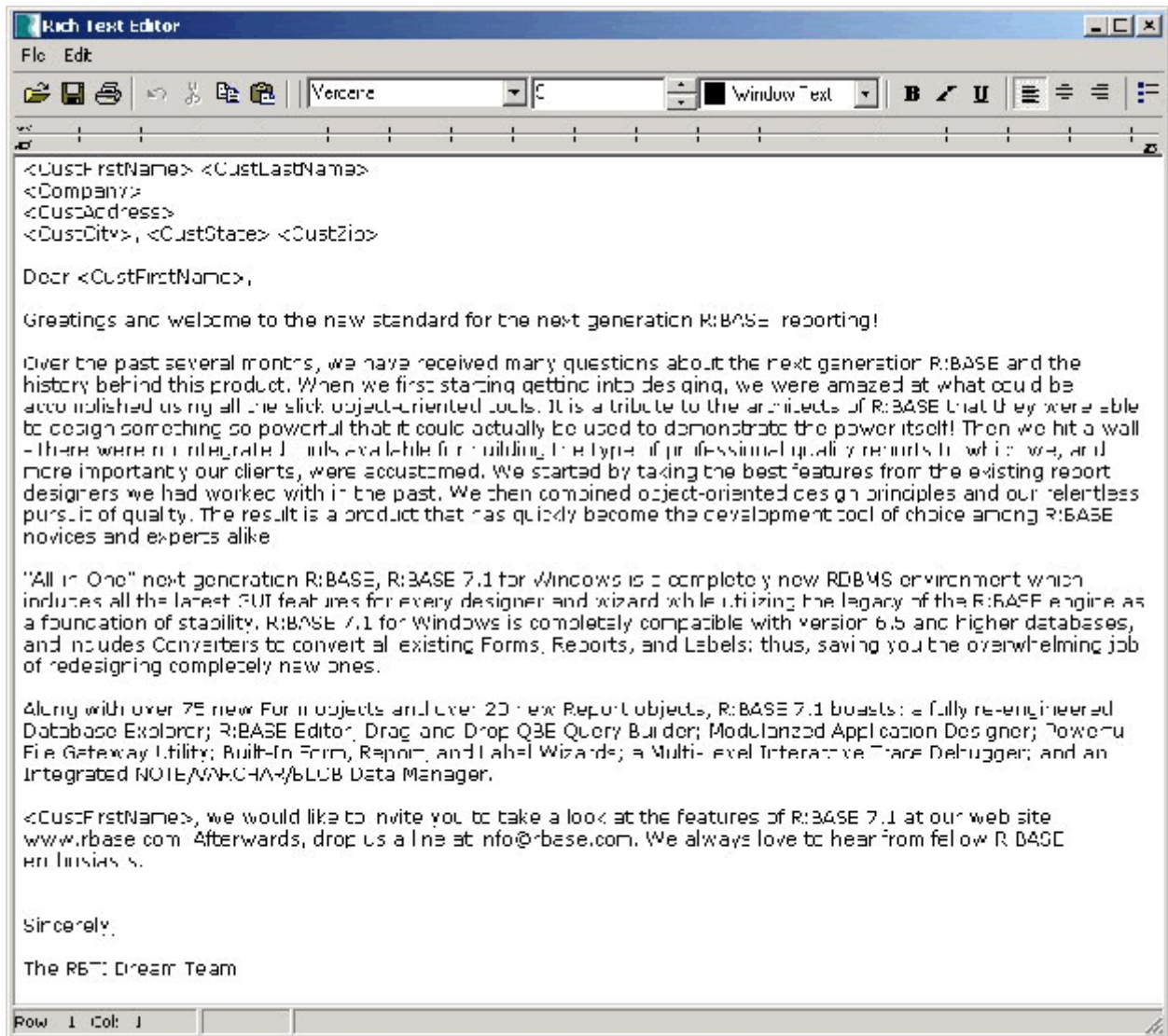


(Figure 11)

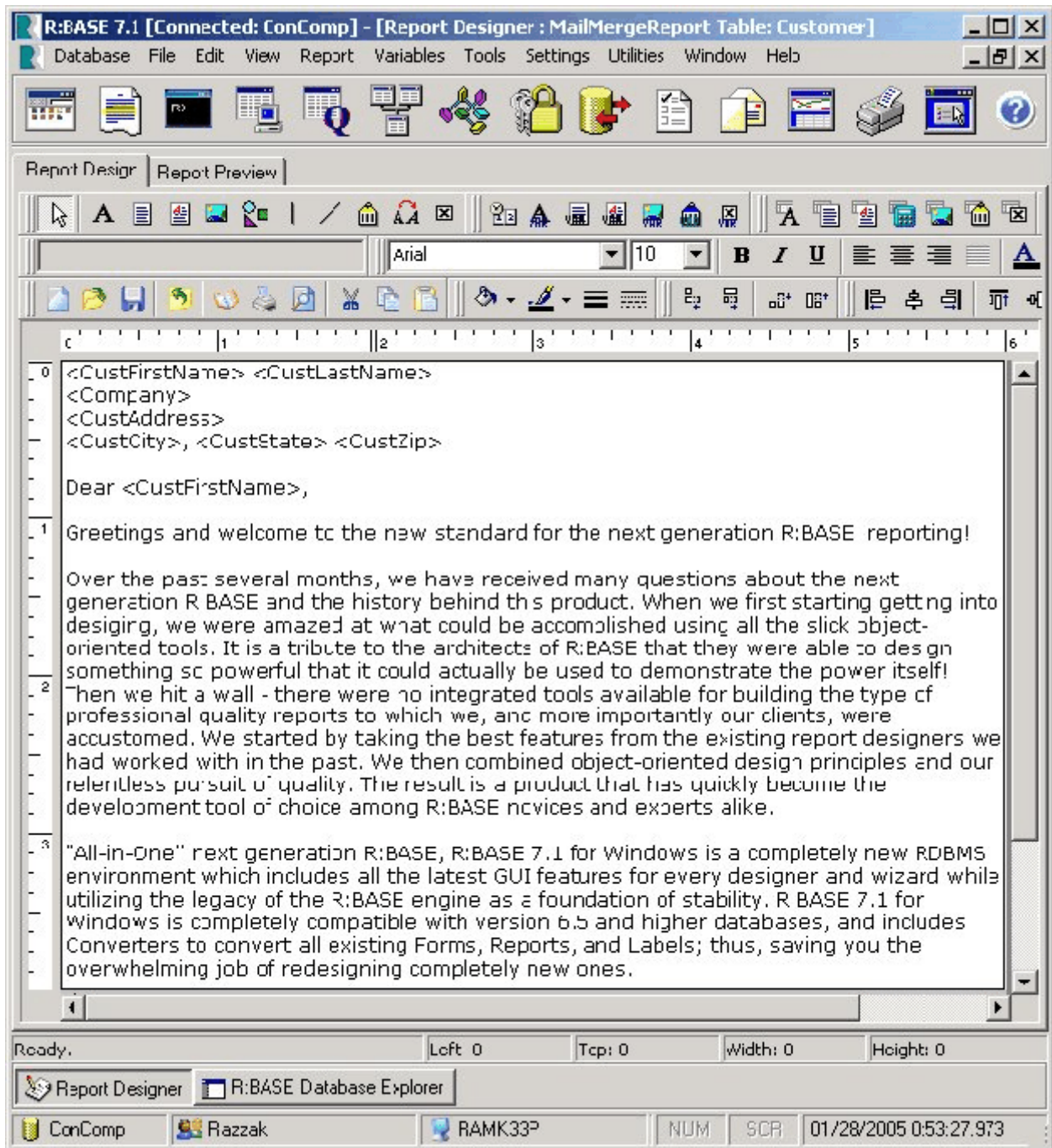
(Figure 12)



15. Select the **CustFirstName** field and click OK.
16. Type a space and then insert the **CustLastName** field.
17. Press [Enter] to start a new line.
18. Insert the **Company** field.
19. Press [Enter] to start a new line.
20. Insert the **CustAddress** field.
21. Press [Enter] to start a new line.
22. Insert the **CustCity** field. Type a comma and a space.
23. Insert the **CustState** field.
24. Type a space and then insert the **CustZip** field.
25. Press [Enter] twice to create a blank line below the address fields.
26. Type 'Dear', then a space, then insert the **CustFirstName** field.
27. Type a comma and press [Enter] twice.
28. Locate the start of the last paragraph (starts with the words "We would like ...')
29. Change this to '<**CustFirstName**>, we would like ...'
30. Close the Rich Text Editor. Click the Yes button when the Save Changes dialog appears.
(Figure 13 and Figure 14)



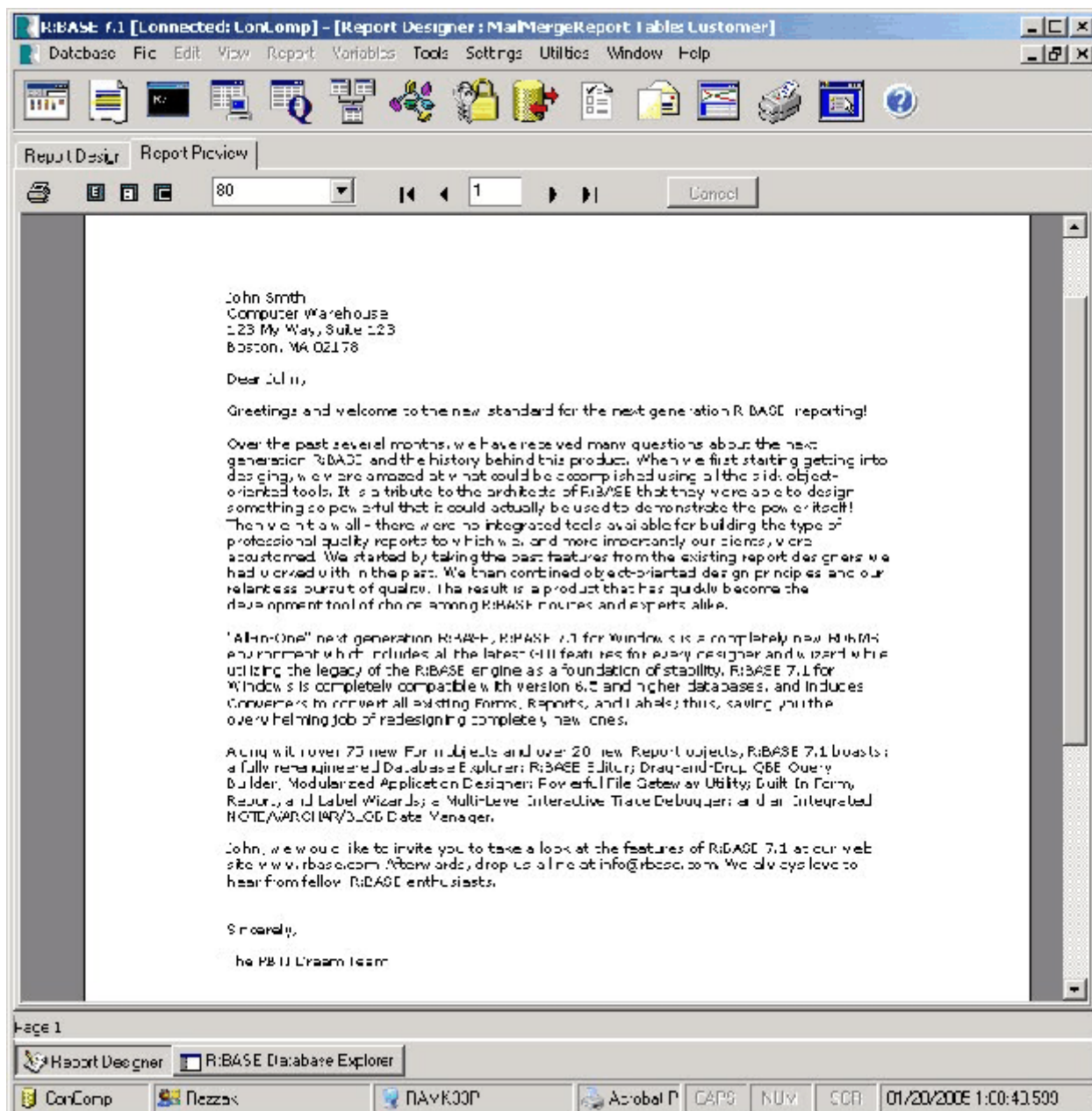
(Figure 13)



(Figure 14)

Preview the Report in Report Designer

31. Click on the [Report Preview] tab to preview the report. The report should be twenty-eight pages, with one letter per page.



(Figure 15)

32. Save the report and close Report Designer.
33. At the R> Prompt:
PRINT MailMergeReport OPTION SCREEN |WINDOW_STATE MAXIMIZED

For sample application with database, reports and all related command files:

<http://www.razzak.com/SampleApplications> (Item #021)

Database: ConComp
Associated Table: Customer
Associated Reports: MailMergeReport (as explained in this document)
MailMergeVARReport (same report demonstrating the use of report
expression variables)
Command File: MailMergeReport.RMD
MailMergeVARReport.RMD

Tips

- To follow the sample and all illustrated instructions, make sure that you are using R:BASE 7.1 for Windows (Build: 7.1.79.30128 or higher), R:BASE 7.5 for Windows (Build: 7.5.3.30128 or higher) or V-8 "Turbo" (Build: 8.0.2.30128 or higher).

- Use Rich Text Editor to update the body of the letter

Report Designer | Right-click over the Rich Text control and access the Edit menu option. The Rich Text Editor will be displayed.

- Column fields are represented with < >
- Variable fields are represented with { }
- To change the Font, Font Size, Font Color, Font Style (Bold, Italic, Underline), Justification or Bullets, use Rich Text Editor.
- Use Insert Variable... option to insert variables defined as expression or global variables, such as #DATE, #TIME, etc.

Select Edit | Insert Variable... A list of variables will be displayed.

- You may type the entire Rich Edit Text as an external file using your favorite word processor or **RBBE filename.RTF**, save as RTF document and then use File | Open option of Rich Edit Editor to import into the body of the letter.
- To insert the field or variable, you may also use right-click in the body of the letter for speed menu options.

Imagine the Possibilities!

Send your constructive comments or suggestions to: razzak@rbase.com