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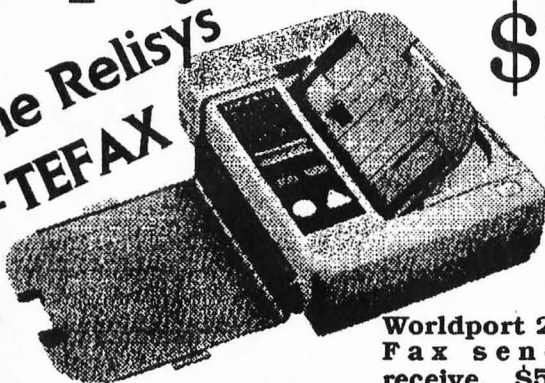
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Contents!

Read Me!

▼ FROM OUR EDITOR, JOHN NAGY

This new magazine is a **journalist's dream**—I'm composing the news pages on Saturday, April 6, 1991. This afternoon, they'll be laid out. Monday, to the printer. Thursday, **30,000 copies** of *AtariUser* magazine will enter the distribution channels. I can actually talk about *news* and have it still be *new* when it is read! That's a feature that's been lacking in Atari magazines, and one I am proud to be able to use to everyone's advantage in *AtariUser*. You'll find super up-to-date news both in this column and in the *Alert* boxes above each department's column throughout the magazine.

NEXT MONTH

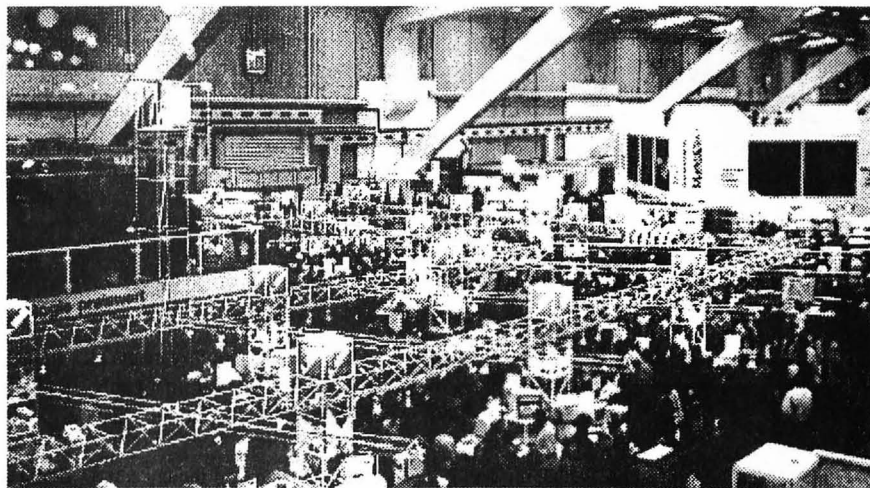
We'll begin our listings of other magazines that cover Atari. Each month you'll see a summary of what is available, what is featured in the other mags that month, and how to subscribe to them. Let us know what magazines you'd like us to keep tabs on. So far, we expect to cover *STart*, *ST Informer*, *ST World*, *Atari Explorer*, *Current Notes*, and *AIM*. Do you want the larger imported magazines like *ST-Format* included? Talk to us.

Here's one magazine mention we did have time to include before closing our first issue of *AtariUser*: The **April/May 1991 issue** of *STart* is on the newsstands now. Learn to fix it yourself with Dr. Troubleshooter's guide to keyboard, modem, mouse, monitor, desktop, floppy drive, hard drive, printer, joystick and MIDI problems. Plus, this issue of *STart* features the first column by Atari's user-group coordinator, Bob Brodie. Bob tackles the tough question of Atari's pricing.

Now that *STart* is bimonthly, subscriptions are cheaper. One year costs \$39.95 and two years are only \$59.95 — the second year is half price! Call 1-800-234-7001 to order.

Be sure to take advantage of *AtariUser's* introduction subscription rate—\$15 for one full year—12 issues! Call 1-800-333-3567. Take advantage of it now. This rate is only good this month.

Now, on to business...



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High Resolution!

▼ VIEWPOINTS AND RESPONSES FROM OUR ATARI COMMUNITY

Welcome to AtariUser!

You're holding a rare commodity in today's world: an Atari specific monthly magazine. In fact, *AtariUser* may be the U.S.'s *only* monthly commercial Atari magazine-format publication! We used to be *ST Journal*, the widely praised but relatively low-production ST specific glossy magazine.

Steven Lesh of Quill Publishing and I had been kicking around the concept of doing a free computer magazine for quite a while. Then *Journal* got caught in the money trap. Despite *ST Journal's* popularity (where it could be found), we couldn't afford to print more than 10,000 copies with the ad revenues we were earning—and couldn't raise more revenues without increasing circulation. While our acceptance and quality increased with each issue, the recessionary times kept advertising sales in check. *ST Journal* finally began to succumb to the same pressures that put *ST-LOG/ANALOG* out of business and made *STart* go bi-monthly.

Enter *AtariUser*. Since we found that we couldn't make enough money to support ourselves by producing and selling *ST Journal*—we're giving it away! By a series of trade-offs of production numbers against printing and binding methods, ad rates, and distribution schemes, we're becoming the largest circulation Atari magazine in the USA—and providing a *free* product. Every month! I agreed to become the editor and Steve will provide his outstanding management, layout and art direction. Also from *ST Journal* are Kevin Horn heading up advertising and marketing, John King Tarpinian as assistant editor, Gantry Gappmayer controlling media traffic and distribution, and a number of contributors from the old *Journal* staff. (You may have noticed the \$1 price on the cover—and some of you may have had to pay it. Sorry, but some major bookstores and businesses simply can't and won't cope with a totally free magazine. Rather than give up the substantial potential circulation, we allow them to charge meagerly, if they must.

AtariUser covers the *entire* Atari computer product lineup, including the TT, STe, ST, MEGA, MEGA/STe, Portfolio, Lynx, and even the out-of-production Atari 8-bit series of computers. And as Atari's product family grows in the coming months, so will we. We'll focus on the facts that will make life easier for *Atari users*. Every month we'll try to cut to the meat of what's happening, what's available, what it can do for you, and how to get it. And we'll do it *fast*, with less—much less—than two weeks between final edits and distribution. We're maintaining close alliances with other magazines and news agencies to be sure our information is as current as possible. We're exchanging material with the *Z*Net International Atari News Service*, Germany's *PD Journal*, and several other foreign magazines. Our departments regularly include all Atari product lines, plus special focuses on DTP, communications, graphics, MIDI applications, new software and game reviews, top PD and shareware software, user group news, emulation, hardware hacking, and even classified ads. And I'll be keeping you current with *Atari News and Notes*, the column I've done for years in *Computer Shopper* magazine.

You'll find two specific constructs recurring throughout our pages:

■ **The Alert Box.** This will be at the top of each department's column with quick news and facts about the subject in general. You'll be able to keep up with developments in each department with a glance.

■ **The Resource.** Each month we'll feature a *Save this Page* resource for one or more of our departments, giving a comprehensive listing of available products, dealers, user groups, BBS's, etc. Starting next issue, we'll be continuing the expanded advertiser, product, and people indexes that were famous in *ST Journal*.

We'll even do something unheard of since Kris Kringle suggested Macy's in *Miracle on 34th Street*—that is, we'll recommend you to the *other* Atari publications, let you know what each of them feature in their current issue, and how to subscribe! We want to make it easier to be an *Atari user*. Our concept and goal is to be your standard monthly reference for all Atari interests... at a price Atari Users can truly say is *Power Without the Price—Free!* Let us know how you think we're doing!

John Nagy, Editor-in-Chief, *AtariUser Magazine*

AtariUser

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■ We'd like to hear from you! Send your subscriptions, comments, suggestions, complaints and submissions to *AtariUser* at 113 W. College St., Covina, CA 91723. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope for a copy of our writer's guidelines.



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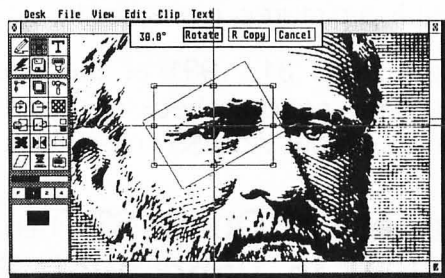
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“Rebuilding” of Atari is Starting to Show Results

▼ NAGY'S ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT BY JOHN NAGY

DIFFERENT YEAR FOR ATARI.

I know, I know, no matter how many times I and others have said that in so many years past, we have yet to see the company that makes those wonderful computers at those great prices “really make it” in the USA. But year after year, we keep seeing signs that it might turn around. In any case, Atari keeps making money every year... and remains in the market when others have come and gone again. So we remain the faithful minority, the Atari Users.

This year, the lights at the end of the tunnel of Atari's undeserved obscurity are a new marketing approach and the promise of tantalizing new products. I won't go into the recently announced new products here, as we have a major photo feature on the ST Notebook and STPad following this column. So lets talk a minute about the company — we can catch up on third-party news next month.

Jack Tramiel, former owner/ chairman of Commodore, owns 48.3% of Atari stock, while **Warner Communications** still owns 24.6%. The 16 member group including Jack and all directors and executives of Atari Corp hold an aggregate of 51% of all stock. There are almost 58 million shares of Atari stock outstanding.

The Atari Corporation reported at the **Hannover CeBit 1991** show that the turnover for the fourth quarter 1990 was 151.9 million dollars with a net income of 8.8 million dollars. The sales for the financial year 1990, which ended on December 31, 1990, were 411.5 million dollars. That corresponds to a decrease of 3 percent compared to the same period in the previous year (423.6 million dollars). The net income for 1990 was 14.9 million dollars against 4.0 million dollars for 1989. Yes, Atari is making money—more every year.

STAFFING

Many **staffing changes** have plagued Atari USA in recent years, the latest being the loss of the widely praised

Elie Kenan. Elie came to America as the French hope - he was to take over marketing and management and turn it around. General Manager of Atari USA, Elie withdrew to Atari France after only a few months of working in California. Next up is **Alwin Stumph**, the man who almost singlehandedly made Atari the darling of Germany. Alwin is now “President of Worldwide Marketing and Sales”, while **Greg Pratt** is Atari USA's new President. Pratt was chief financial officer of Atari for years. There is also recurring talk of the “**North American Plan**”, what appears to be a meshing of Atari USA and Atari Canada. **Recent layoffs** in Canada were due to some business and accounting functions being transferred to the US division.

Other recent additions to the Atari crew include **Bill Rehbock**, **Mike Fulton**, and **James Grunke**. James was a member of the Beach Boys band until Atari snared him to handle the MIDI end of marketing in January, 1991. Mike was programmer and manager in Neocept, now defunct maker of the popular *WordUp!* document processor. He now works in Atari's developer support team. Bill Rehbock is the new Director of Technical Services, and has fingers in most of the Atari pies. His latest is the just-announced “Professional Systems Group”, a subdivision of Atari Corp that is essentially a marketing group effort of third party developers and Atari for vertical applications like publishing.

Bill Crouch's position of Vice President of Sales was filled in February by **Don Mandell**. Don comes to Atari from a similar position at Wang, where he concentrated on vertical marketing. He plans to use his expertise to help sell Atari to the packaged markets of desktop publishing, drafting, etc. Already out and selling even before settling in his Sunnyvale office, Don is very impressed and encouraged with the **possibilities of-**

fered by the TT and Calamus, DynaCadd, and others. Mandell has been as long time associate of Jack Tramiel, owner and chairman of the board of Atari, and worked with Jack at Commodore years ago.

Sam Tramiel, CEO of Atari, “spoke” in February via live electronic conferences of plans for this and next year. He indicated that they were developing a **clear marketing direction**. That plan includes easier availability of many Atari products through general distributors of computer hardware and software, rather than only direct from Atari to Atari dealers. **High-end hardware will remain restricted** to select Atari approved dealers. Mass merchandising is planned, but through the likes of electronic specialty chains, not K-Mart or Sears. A “Strategic Partner” plan will have Atari hand-holding key dealerships with full line support. New deals with third-party developers like C-Lab will offer training and extra dealer support for advanced applications. And **retail prices continue to drop** on Atari products.

For example, Atari Canada announced new retail pricing for their 1040STe at \$499.00 CDN (about \$399 US). With the new pricing, a 1040STE, color monitor and 30 meg hard drive is about the same price as a Mac Classic, which comes without a hard drive, MIDI ports, stereo sound, built in operating system, color, etc. It is also known that the 520STe, popular in Europe but never sold in the West, will become available stateside in the immediate future. This baseline machine will finally be part of a beginners game (and hopefully some productivity) software bundle, sold very cheaply in the chain stores. **The design of the STe line allows easy memory upgrading**, so the new users that are reached with the small machine will have the upgrade path open too.

Even while encouraging things are being discussed for this year in the

USA, it appears that the **major marketing push** that so many have waited for **will not occur until 1992**. This year is dedicated to rebuilding the dealer network and the production/distribution chain, and to introduction of the new products that will see wide general distribution mostly in 1992. The rebuilding is going fairly well; a December 1989 USA dealer list from Atari held only 410 names, while the list in March, 1991 is over 2,200. To be fair, the new list is nearly half Lynx and Portfolio dealers, toy stores, and the like—but the listed “real” computer sellers are nearly tripled in number in the last 15 months.

Meanwhile, the **rebuilding of Atari** continues in the developer support arena as well. Atari has decided that support can come in many forms, and one is to be a customer itself. Bundles of Atari computers and software from third parties have been established that will help everyone. Also, the developer system itself has been altered within Atari. Now, **two distinct “tiers” of developers** exist, one for the more casual private programmer with ideas for commercial projects, and one for full-time developers whose existing products are already part of the marketplace. This classification helps Atari put its efforts where the market needs it most, and eliminates some abuses of the old system. It used to be simplicity itself to qualify for half-price Atari hardware: simply register as a developer. Can't program? Don't have any plans to learn? No problem. Here's your super discounted hardware. Thankfully, this situation is over.

CEPS

As we go to press, the **Corporate Electronic Publishing Systems (CEPS)** trade show is about to open. Atari is making an **unprecedented appearance** with a new division, the **Professional Systems Group** (mentioned earlier). Atari and the groups of developers have an aggressive and impressive array of software and hard-

ware tools that they are pushing as the "Direct to Press" system of pre-publishing solutions. According to press information, "Direct to Press includes full-featured, high quality, and high performance tools for every phase of pre-press work from document processing and design to photo retouching and imagesetter film output. Tools offered as part of these publishing solutions produce film that is ready to go to directly to press, including photographic images with up to 256 levels of grayscale."

Hardware to be shown at CEPS include the Atari TT030 and 19" monitor, the 3K Image Speeder (based on the TT030 but in a tower case with screening processors, scanner and imagesetter interfaces built in) by 3K-ComputerBild of Germany, and the Hell Systems Imagesetter featuring 300 to 3,000 DPI image creation, built by Linotype-Hell.

Software will be Calamus and the new Calamus SL, PageStream 2 (apparently just finished!), and Didot Professional page layout systems. Line art systems are Calamus Outline Art, Didot Line Art, and TMS Vector Studio. The latter two are new entries to the US market from Germany. Image processing systems include Retouche Professional, Retouche CD (Color), and tms Cranach Studio. Character recognition via Sherlock Professional, presentation graphics by SciGraph, and document processing by Wordflair II.

The major players here are of course ISD of Canada, who handle the Calamus lines, Soft-Logik with PageStream, and newcomer, Goldleaf Publishing. Goldleaf began with Wordflair but has established itself as the new import powerhouse with the addition of the 3K product line. Look for more about these new and really powerful software systems, as well as a review of how CEPS went for Atari in future issues of AtariUser.

NEWS NOTES

Page Design has released a new version of **The Calamus Font Resource Guide**, featuring over 500 font samples for use with Calamus or Outline Art. All currently available Calamus fonts from Cherry Fonts, Compugraphic, DMC (Calamus De-

signer Fonts), FontAbility, Fonts By Guber, Ideal West, Mainstream Fonts, Mirthful Fonts!, MS Design, Dennis Palumbo, Safari Fonts, and pd/shareware fonts are displayed. The Guide also contains information about all Calamus products distributed by ISD, GENUS (formerly TypeCad), FontVerter, Font Designer, The Calamus Font Utility, and WP to GEM. \$19.95, PDC (Public Domain Corp.) 4320-196th SW, Suite B-140, Lynnwood, WA 98036-6721, (800) 255-8220.

Darek Mihocka of Branch Always Software (Quick ST) has confirmed rumors that he has a functional **68000 emulator working on an IBM platform**. He calls it the *GEMulator*, and it requires a 386 or higher CPU. So far, GEMULATOR does not include emulation of the Atari ST hardware or video, so it is NOT yet an ST emulator.

Darek says that further development of the Gemulator will wait for this summer after he completes and ships Quick ST version 3. Darek hints that the ST emulator, when completed, will be intended to run under 32-bit Windows (from MicroSoft, Darek's "real" employer), which is not yet even scheduled for release.

Most Atarians recall when Darek created the "ST Transformer", an emulator of 8-bit Atari computers for use on the then-new ST line. Atari was not amused at Darek's intention to use the copyrighted Atari operating system, in file form, which was required for use with the ST Transformer. An agreement to allow Public Domain distribution was worked out in that case, based in part on the free distribution of the 8-bit OS that Atari itself had promoted via its own "Translator" disk for later model 8-bit Ataris. Atari also permitted third party companies to create and sell derivative "translators", weakening their claim against use by Darek and his followers. However, this time around, Atari has been much more careful in limiting non-ROM use of the ST TOS operating system.

Darek Mihocka may be in for a legal battle of serious proportions if he expects to distribute an emulator that relies on what Atari firmly holds

is a pirate file: TOS (1.0 or higher) on a disk. His position is weakened by the fact that he has devised a program (QuickTOS) that easily dumps the Atari ROM code to a disk file. We'll keep you posted.

GAMES?

Yes, the Atari is alive and well in the game marketplace. Perhaps the best testament to this is that **Electronic Arts has announced a series of new games for the ST** and other computers. EA incurred major wrath from Atari users in past years by periodically announcing that they were pulling out of Atari altogether, and at one point, EA even answered public inquiries about Atari products with pointed letters telling users to give up and buy what EA considered a "real" machine - the Amiga. Now, the situation is different. Announce titles to be released by press time include:

From CINEMAWARE, "AIR STRIKE USA" is a combat flight simulator. It combines arcade action and strategy to control the Advance Tactical Fighter II in a variety of intercontinental scenarios. (\$39.95, available for ST, IBM, and Amiga.)

Strategic Simulations, Inc, is releasing "CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS", a sequel to "Pool of Radiance". A role playing adventure, BONDS has 24 high-level spells and characters. (\$59.95 for the ST, Macintosh; \$49.95 for Amiga, PC, Apple II; \$39.95 for C64/128.

SEGA's hit, GOLDEN AXE is also available for the ST now. Challenge the Death Adder to save the people of Yuria in this arcade game. (\$49.95, ST and Amiga; \$39.95 IBM; \$34.95 C64.)

"NIGHT SHIFT" is a toy factory scenario arcade simulation from Lucasfilm Games is now on the Amiga and IBM with ST and C64 versions to follow. (\$39.95)

"CRACKDOWN", also from SEGA, features cyborgs of the evil Dr. K, who wants to destroy all purely biological life. (\$49.95 ST and Amiga, \$39.95 IBM, \$34.95 C64.)

UBI SOFT has "B.A.T.", the Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters. An adventure that lets you live out every aspect of life as an agent who can save

Terrapolis on the planet of Selnia. Over 1,100 places can be visited in the game. (\$49.95 for ST, IBM, Amiga, \$34.95 for C64.)

"DRAGONLORD" from Cinemaware, is a strategic role play game in which you guide dragons as your weapons of combat. You need to hatch and raise them too! (\$49.95 for ST, IBM, Amiga.)

Ocean Software (also through Electronic Arts Distribution) announced four more new game releases for the Atari ST computers:

F-29 RETALIATOR (ST and AMIGA, \$49.95): A futuristic flight simulation with four battle scenarios and 100 missions to fly. Real-time cockpit, internal and external viewpoints and fast, detailed graphics.

NIGHTBREED (ST, PC, and AMIGA, \$39.95): Based on the Clive Barker horror film, you are Aaron Boone, fighting both to save the race of the supernatural "Breed" from both the police and a villain called "The Mask". An interactive adventure.

THE UNTOUCHABLES (ST, AMIGA, and C64, \$39.95): Another movie action/adventure conversion. Control Elliot Ness's squad in "spectacular busts, raids, shoot-outs and duels" in 1920's Chicago."

LOST PATROL (ST, AMIGA, PC, \$49.95): It's 1966, and you and six other soldiers are crashed in central Vietnam. Will you survive the 57 mile trek through enemy forces with little food and less ammunition? This strategy adventure allows you to deploy your troops as you see fit—one of your guys just might be a psycho!

Other game news: Populous 2 will be released later this year, according to UK's **ST-FORMAT magazine**. The sequel to the best selling Populous will include over 200 different animations, compared to Populous' 20. The landscape will also be fully animated with terrain-sensitive land blocks. Buildings and cities will literally grow, rather than just transform as they did in the original Populous. Displays will be four times faster with ten times the depth. Meanwhile, a revised version of the STe compatible Populous is on its way to correct a lockup problem occurring for some users. ■

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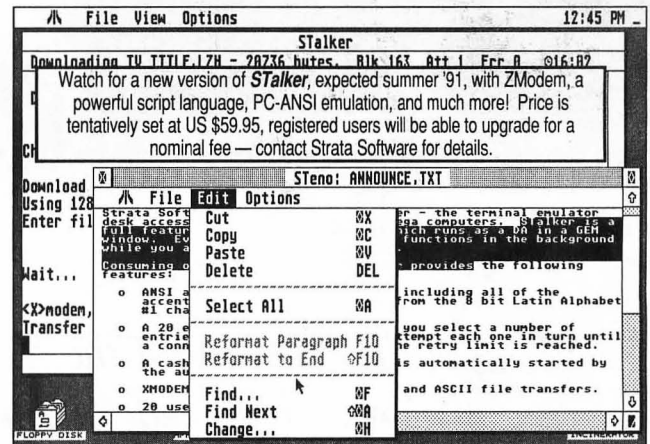
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If you plan to do any telecommunicating with your Atari computer, you owe it to yourself to check out **STalker**. **STalker** is the only terminal emulation program for the Atari that fully utilizes the GEM interface, making it easy to learn for even the first-time user. Experienced users will appreciate its rich set of features, all of which function in the background, allowing you to use the computer for other tasks.

Use it for business to access the computer at work, or for pleasure to access local "Bulletin Board Systems" or networks like **Genie™**, **CompuServe™**, and **Bix™**. Either way, you'll appreciate its VT52 and VT100 emulation, 20 entry phone dialer with auto-logon, scroll-back buffer, and X/YModem file transfer capabilities.



STeno is a fast and powerful text editor that can be used as either a program or a GEM desk accessory. It's perfect for jotting down quick notes, editing configuration files for other programs, or for use with **STalker** to type electronic mail messages off-line. You can even cut & paste between **STalker** and **STeno**, making it fast and easy to exchange data between them.

STeno even has some features that you'd normally expect only in a word processor, such as word wrap, fast paragraph reformatting, search and replace, block marking using the mouse, background printing, and much more. You can even use **STeno** as the ultimate type-ahead buffer for **STalker**.

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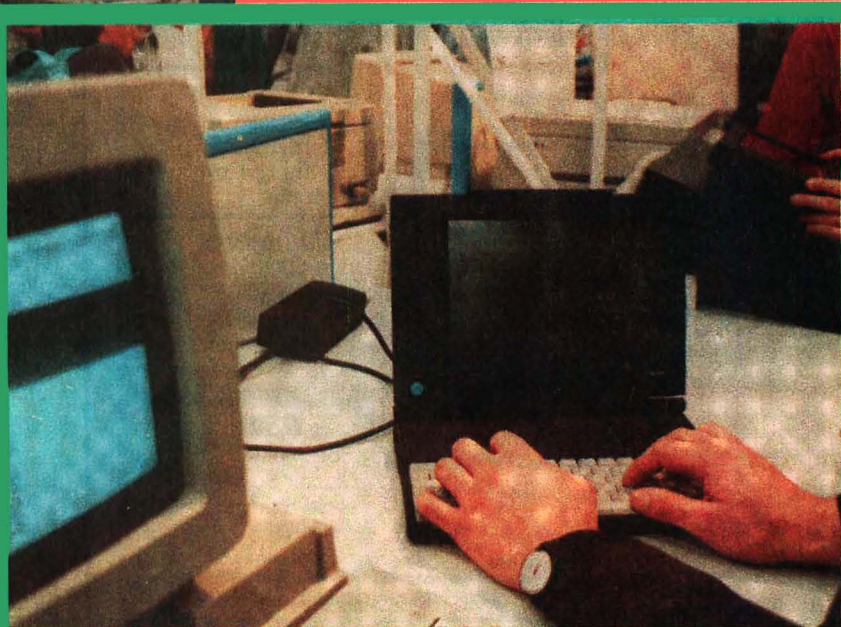
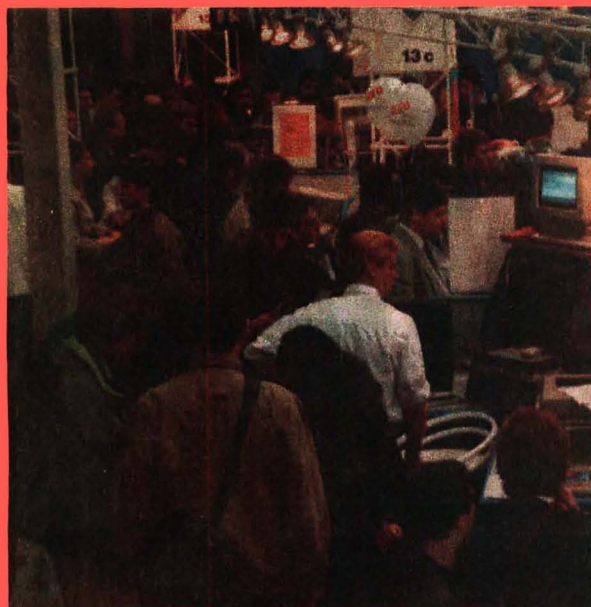
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See What Happened at CeBit!

▼ THE NEW AGE OF THE ATARI ST ■ New Computers and New Products shown at CeBIT Show



Photos—Tim Reyes

The Future of the ST computer was revealed in Germany in March—the ST Notebook and STPad computers show a new direction for Atari...

These and other new Atari products were shown for the first time at CeBIT, the huge computer show in Hannover, Germany. Like the domestic COMDEX shows, CeBIT is a multi-computer trade show, but unlike COMDEX, features Atari in an *enormous* way. The facilities for the show spanned many separate halls. One was dedicated to CAD-CAM systems, another to Networking. There were *four* halls for personal and mid-size computers, and Atari shared theirs with the likes of Microsoft and Compaq. Nearly 500,000 people came to this CeBit, and most visited the sprawling Atari exhibit under a white high-tech framework filled with illuminated Fujis. The Atari exhibit was more than triple the size of the U.S. show counterpart, and featured perhaps 30 of Europe's best Atari developers. But the major excitement at the exhibit was Atari's announcements.

ST NOTEBOOK

Imagine a complete ST computer—everything that makes up

the current STacy - in a package *1/4 the size of the STacy*. The ST Notebook has a nearly full size keyboard but is only the size of a standard sheet of paper when unfolded—half of that when closed. It features a clear, although non-backlit, gray-tone LCD display. Battery life is expected to be longer than 10 hours before recharging even with the built in 20 to 80 megabyte hard drive. The replaceable battery pack shown contained eight AA batteries. Like the Portfolio, when the battery pack goes down, the Notebook is automatically put in a halted state that is maintained for weeks until recharged. As tiny as the ST Notebook is, it still has internal room for a FAX modem and RAM drive-cards similar to the Portfolio, but with capacities of up to four megabytes each. All ST ports (MIDI, ACSI/SCSI, mouse, monitor, printer, etc.) and features are included. An external floppy disk drive can be plugged in as well. Word from Alwin Stumph, Atari's President of Worldwide Sales and Marketing, is that you may be able to buy this marvel for under \$2,000 in the USA—late this year.

ST PAD

The STPad may also be in production in 1991, but looks less ready for market than the ST Notebook. A complete ST computer without a keyboard or mouse, the STPad uses a pen and a touch-screen coupled with truly revolutionary handwriting recognition technology. Like the GEM interface itself, the keyboardless computer is designed to maximize usefulness with

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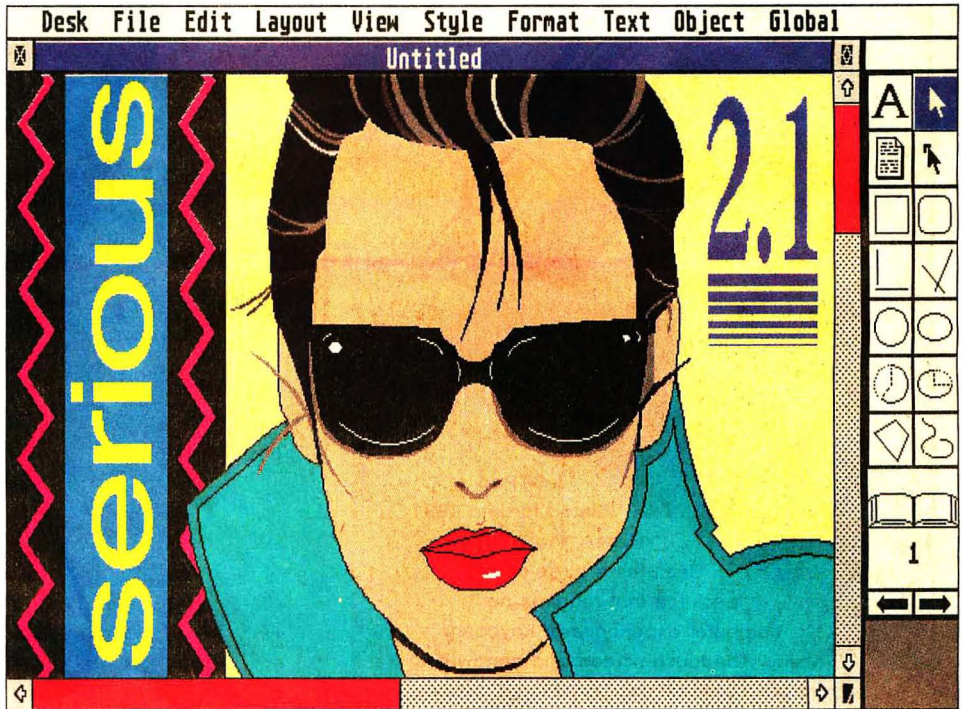
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Actual PageStream 2.1 screen shot. PageStream is ST/STE/TT compatible.

Have you ever been envious of all the neat DTP programs for the Mac? They have all those great PostScript fonts, multitudes of clip art and with Adobe Type Manager they don't have screen-jaggies. "Sure, we didn't have to mortgage the house to buy a computer, but it would be nice to have all those fonts."

SAY NO TO MAC ENVY

At Soft-Logik, we have a cure for Mac envy. We call it PageStream 2.1. Do you want PostScript fonts? PageStream lets you use any PC format PostScript font. Plus, PageStream can print PostScript fonts on your dot matrix, inkjet, HP or Atari laser printer!

SAY YES TO HINTED COMPUGRAPHIC FONTS

There are now two types of Compugraphic fonts for the Atari: unhinted, non-standard format fonts and hinted PC standard Intellifonts. Guess which we chose? PageStream 2 has the latest Compugraphic Intellifont Bullet technology. These typefaces are hinted so that they look great on all printers, even at small sizes. Of course we give you ten fonts from the Times, Triumvirate and Garamond families to get you started.

LOOK MA, NO ATM!

Because Adobe Type Manager is not likely to be released for the Atari any time soon, we've built font scaling technology into PageStream 2.1. When you select Palatino Italic 72, that's what you will see on the screen, even if you rotate it or bleed it off the page. PageStream scales all Compugraphic, PostScript and Soft-Logik outline fonts.


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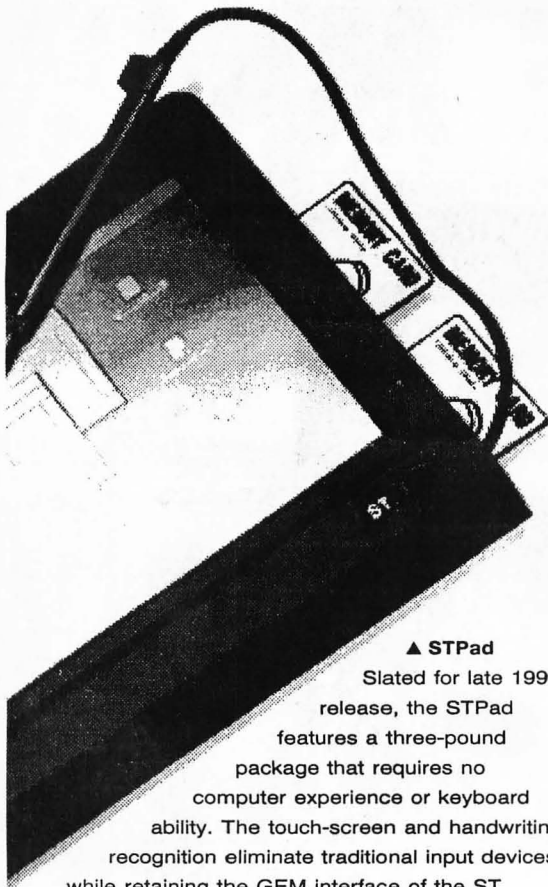
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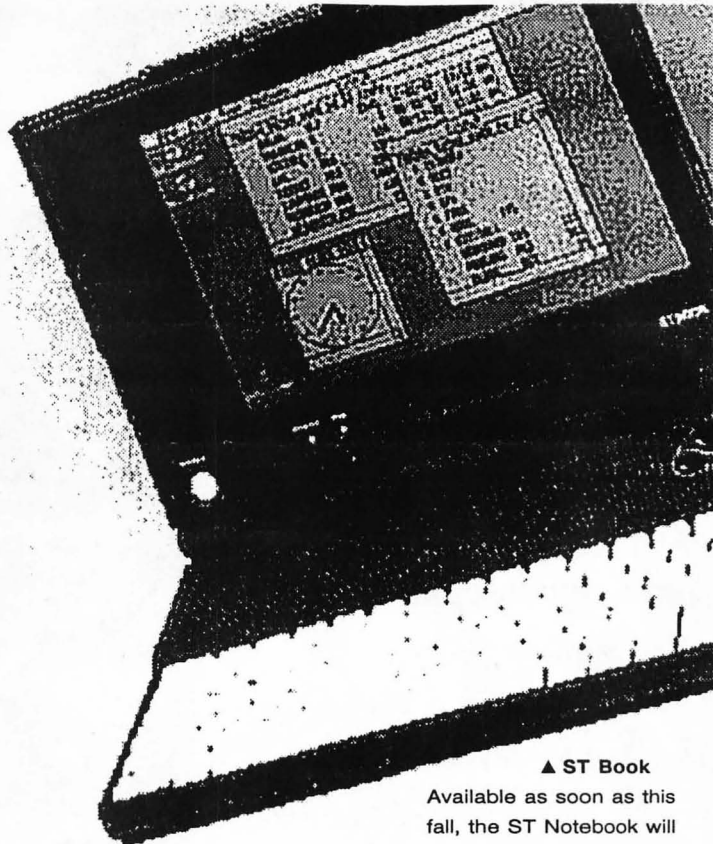
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▲ STPad

Slated for late 1991 release, the STPad features a three-pound package that requires no computer experience or keyboard ability. The touch-screen and handwriting recognition eliminate traditional input devices while retaining the GEM interface of the ST computer. Yes, ST applications will be compatible! \$1,500 base price in one to four megabyte RAM versions.



▲ ST Book

Available as soon as this fall, the ST Notebook will offer everything that the STacy does now, plus true portability. One and four megabyte versions will be built, with prices starting under \$2,000.

■ **FACT SHEET** ■ **ST Notebook** - 68000 processor - 8MHz speed - 1 to 4 meg. RAM - 20 meg. hard disk - 84/85 Keys, Built-in *Joypad* - 10 hours continuous battery operation - LCD screen - 2 4 meg. card slots, Interfaces... 2 MIDI, RS232, Parallel, DMA, Floppy, Bus connector - Options... Numeric keypad, FAX modem, mouse, external floppy, larger hard drives. ■ **STPad** - 68000 processor - 8MHz speed - 1 to 4 meg. RAM - 10 hours continuous battery operation - 2 4 meg. card slots - Interfaces... MIDI, RS232, Parallel, DMA, Bus connector - Options... External keyboard, mouse.

CeBit!

a minimum of "computer skills". Look for the STPad at prices starting in the \$1,500 range, but probably not right away. Atari also admits that the names of both the ST Notebook and STPad may be changed before market time.

OTHER GOODIES

A new CD-ROM player was also shown by Atari to replace the outdated CDAR504. While the 504 was never available in quantity, the CDAR505 may be more popular at a retail price of \$399. Like its predecessor, the 505 will act as a 500 megabyte hard drive while "playing" optical disks filled with software or text and graphics. It will also play audio Compact Disks, controlled by the Atari ST or TT computer. We may see this unit at dealer by mid-year as Atari gears up its dealer support SoftSource plan, using CD's with countless demos of virtually every ST application and game.

Atari's other major announcement at CeBIT was the fi-

nal configuration of the TT/030 Unix and Developer package. The Developers Package V includes Unix V (Release 4.0), a graphical interface based on X/Windows and OSF/Motif, and the software tools GNU C, C++ and XFacemaker 2. The package is not ready for sale, as it can't run ST or GEM programs yet in windows. The UNIX and X/Windows appeared to be completed and running fine. X/Windows is network-based and allows operation of programs from a local workstation that execute at a remote host.

General announcements and discussion included the "AtariFile 200", a new hard drive in the old Mega standard case. The new technology high capacity hard drives will replace the smaller ones quite quickly. It was mentioned that the TT will likely be available with up to a 1.2 gigabyte internal drive, ideal for UNIX users that really eat storage space. Atari's improved scalable font FSM GDOS was also shown and an imminent release was predicted. ■



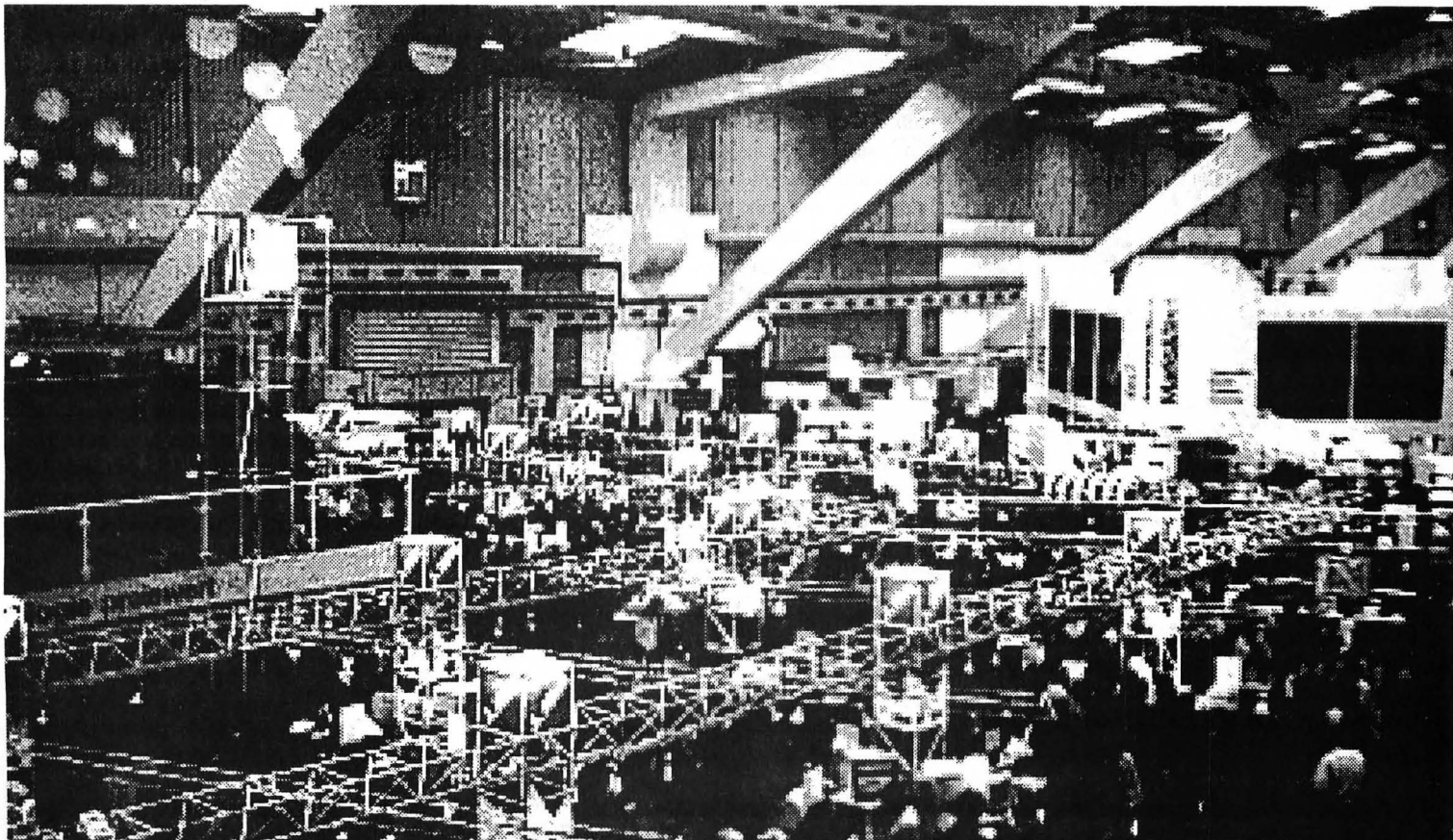
▲ CDAR505

Replacing the virtually invisible CDAR504 is a much smaller CDAR505, a optical CD disk player. Each CD can hold up to 500 megabytes of programs and data, text, and graphics. Targeted for market almost immediately for \$399, the device will also play music disks under computer control. SCSI and ACSI ports make it usable on any ST or TT.

CeBit!

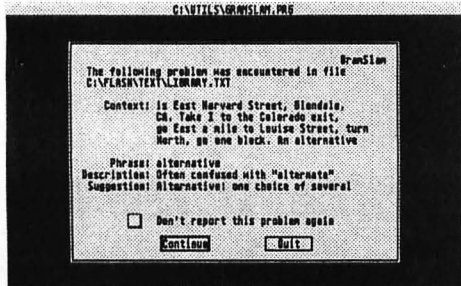
▼ 500,000 people came to CeBIT, and it looks like most of them are in the Atari area here, an enormous span with a simple white overhead scaffolding holding many Atari signs. The only U.S. exhibitor was Gadgets by Small, makers of the Macintosh emulators and 68030 upgrades for the ST.

Photo—Tim Reyes



GramSlam for Better Writing

ST, TT ■ GramSlam is a Grammar and Style Checker by Phil Comeau Software. The new GramSlam Version 3.01 checks for over 1200 common grammar and writing-style problems. As the manual states, GramSlam "...examines documents for wordy phrases, common grammatical errors, and misused words. Each suspect word or phrase is displayed in the context in which it appears, along with a description of the problem and a suggestion of how you might correct it." GramSlam has a built-in problem phrase editor and also gives you writing style and readability statistics. It can be run as a desk accessory or from the desktop. Although GramSlam works with any word processor documents, it delivers most accurate results (word count, etc.) if checking an ASCII text file with no imbedded control codes.



Unlike more sophisticated (and expensive!) grammar checkers available on other platforms, GramSlam doesn't check your context to see if your word usage is already correct. It locates typical trouble words and phrases, like "their", or "it's", or a preposition ending a sentence, and reports that there is a potential for a usage problem. You have to decide, although the program supplies examples of correct alternative usages. If you figure you don't need help on the matter reported, you can select "Don't report this problem again", but then you risk missing a later actual error.

I find that GramSlam is a little more picky than I am... but then, why else use it? But then again, I tend to write a little casually, so this program is a must for me. I suggest that students buy it for use in writing term papers. Also, budding authors might find GramSlam makes the difference between getting an article accepted, or being rejected. \$39.95 from Phil Comeau Software, 43 Rueter St. Nepean, Ontario Canada K2J 3Z9, (613) 825-6271. — *John King Tarpinian*

Hard Drivin' II - Drive Harder

ST ■ In many ways, Hard Drivin' II is not so much a sequel as a remake. Although the original Hard Drivin' lived up to the arcade version in almost every way possible, some were disappointed that it didn't offer more. Once you mastered the one track, the game lost much of its appeal. Fortunately, Hard Drivin' II addresses most of the shortcomings of the original by offering four new, generally more difficult tracks at three difficulty levels, as well as a track editor and the ability to link machines together to allow head-to-head racing.

Using the built-in editor, you can create your own tracks or customize any of the original four tracks. One nice thing about the track editor is that you can make the original tracks a little easier to handle if they're too tough for you.

You can use either joystick or mouse. Although the manual claims an improvement with controller handling from the original, I found the mouse was the only way to go. With the joystick, the car was just way too easy to oversteer, and I would recommend it only for the very best armchair drivers.

When I tried the game using the 16MHz accelerator in my 520STFM, it came up just fine, and with a much faster screen refresh rate. Unfortunately, the joystick handling was twice as sensitive, so my warning about the joystick goes double. If you use the mouse, however, the game is very controllable at 16MHz, and in fact offers a whole new dimension in play, because the game is playing much faster, the timer still clicks off at the correct speed, which means it's very easy to reach your checkpoints.

I also had a chance to try the game on a TT/030, and although it did work, it was so unbelievably fast that there was just no way I could control it. I can't wait for a game like this designed with the TT/030 in mind.

Hard Drivin' II will be enjoyed by anyone who likes driving games. If driving games aren't your cup of tea, I recommend you take a look anyway, because Hard Drivin' II may make you change your mind. \$49.95, from Domark (Import) — *Michael Alfred*

HotWire/MaxiFile 3.0 - Super Utilites

ST, TT ■ CodeHead Software has a new version of HotWire, the super program launching shell. With HotWire 3.0 you have the ability to execute program and data files with keystrokes. You can click on the line entries to assign a program or document file. With each program or data file you can assign different parameters such as a 'hotkey' and document extender. The power of HotWire is that you don't have to sort through windows and/or folders to run programs. HotWire is an integral part of the CodeHead ST utilities collection. HotWire needs to be combined with MaxiFile, a file and disk manipulation program, to get the full power and speed of HotWire.

Improvements are many in the new Hotwire. Color menus, sub-menus, icons, easier block assignments, etc. add to the already long feature list: up to 400 possible hot keys; GEM drop menus; ledgers for tracking use of programs; passwords; corner clock; alarms; chaining programs; and more.

On the HotWire master disk comes an assortment of HotTools. They range from a HOT menu editor to a default path editor. Especially good for new HotWire users is the KickStart program which will automate the process of installing HotWire into an auto folder and HOT menus. The disk also comes with several sample HotWire menus as well as some useful shareware programs by Charles F. Johnson and John Eidsvoog, including Eidsvoog's latest screen saver, HotSaver.

MaxiFile is also being revised to include "everything anyone ever asked for" and maybe a few more things too. Version 3.0 of MaxiFile, the file manipulation tool, will allow simultaneous view of source and destination for file copies and lots more. It should be available by press time.

The CodeHead products are among the most stable and respected utilities available anywhere, and the new upgrades make them easier to use as well as more powerful. Hotwire 3.0 - \$44.95. MaxiFile 3.0 - \$44.95. Together - \$69.95. Upgrades available. CodeHead Software, P.O. Box 74090, Los Angeles, CA 90004, 213-386-5789. — *Noel Saw*

MUG SHOT! - Face the Fun!



ST, TT ■ MUG SHOT! is kind of hard to explain. This piece of software falls into a category of software that you have to have, but you may not know why. At least, until you get it home and start playing with it. With MUG SHOT! you're a police sketch artist—or Van Gogh doing a self-portrait.

The software is very intuitive. The disk comes with two files of facial parts. Basically, you have ears, noses, eyes, hair, etc. and get to mix and match them to make funny faces or serious faces. Fine tweaking of each part is available to change size or position. The resulting faces can be saved in either PI3, IMG or in a MUG SHOT! specific file. You can then import them into a desk top publishing program such as Calamus.

Portraiture is the second half of MUG SHOT!, allowing you to draw your own facial parts. The nice thing about MUG SHOT! is that those of us who can't draw a straight line with a ruler can stick to the supplied pieces, and those with artistic talent can create their own.

MUG SHOT!'s manual is purposely sparse, but the inside back cover is a template that pretty much tells you what button is what. It runs in monochrome or color on only 512K of memory, and is even big screen compatible.

To quote the manual, "The possibilities are truly endless. MUG SHOT! has features that other programs of its kind only dream about!" This program is fun for the whole family. The kids will get a kick out of drawing funny faces. You'll be able to indulge your artistic eye and your sense of humor. \$39.95, from Wizworks. — *John King Tarpinian*

Blockout - A Tetris Buster

ST, Lynx ■ Tetris inspired an entire genre of games, and Blockout provides pleasing new twists to what is by now a familiar theme. In contrast to the flat, two-dimensional side view of falling game parts in Tetris, Blockout presents the player with a three dimensional view of a pit 10 spaces wide by 10 spaces tall, by about 18 spaces deep, as viewed from the top. Instead of filling a horizontal row of 10 blocks, you have to fill an entire level of 100 blocks in order to clear it! Fortunately, you have that much extra room to place blocks. Unfortunately, that also makes it just that much harder to plan how you arrange to the blocks.

Blockout allows you to rotate the pieces in all three dimensions, and this is where the game really gets interesting. Nearly every piece can fill a hole somewhere, as long as you can figure it out before the piece reaches the bottom.

Despite similarities, Blockout ultimately stands out as being a significantly different game than Tetris in many ways. The differences in perspective and how you rotate the blocks dramatically increase the strategic considerations of the game.

Graphically, the game is not stunning. Most of the screen is taken up by the three-dimensional block pit. The blocks themselves are three-dimensional wireframe outlines as they fall, changing into solid-colored blocks as they reach the bottom of the pit. The game features music while you play, but tends to get annoying in long playing sessions. However, graphics and music aren't what this game is all about, so none of this should bother anybody too much. This game is about playability, and it's got that!

By the time you read this, a version of Blockout for the Atari Lynx handheld color video game system should have appeared. But regardless of which system you have, I strongly recommend you check out Blockout. From California Dreams (by LDW) — *Michael Alfred*

The Adventures of Maddog Williams

ST ■ The Adventures of Maddog Williams in the Dungeons of Duridian is a new, unique text/graphics adventure game by Game Crafters, a new US-based software company.

Maddog offers something a little different from other text/graphic adventures. First of all, it is more extensive. In the game are over 115 graphic screens, far more than the others. To support all of this detail, Maddog comes on *five* compressed double-sided disks! Much to Game Crafter's credit, Maddog is not physically copy-protected, and will install on a hard drive (4.5MB) to minimize disk swaps and wait time. The game is just as content to work off of the floppy drive, though, and will take advantage of all of your computer's RAM. The game also supports several synthesizers for music output.

As for the game play itself, it is pretty good. In the game, you guide the hero, Maddog Williams, with the keyboard or a joystick around the screen, and tell him what to do via the keyboard in simple sentences. To battle evil characters, you go into battle mode and use the joystick or keyboard to fight with Maddog's trusty sword or your local friendly dragon. The goal of all this is to free your favorite king from the bad guys, meanwhile wandering all over the kingdom.

There is a lot of detail in the graphics, which are cartoon-like. You have to look hard at the graphics around Maddog to see usable items, traps, hidden doors, etc. The animated sequences are great, and the Maddog character and what happens to him are often hilarious.

Maddog even has three levels of play, which changes the difficulty of the arcade battles and some of the puzzles. Theoretically, this feature will keep your interest longer and/or let the game adapt to the proficiency level of the player.

Complaints about the game are few. Sound is almost non-existent, and it is not that good (unless you have a synthesizer!) There are a few logical flaws and rough edges in some of the puzzles, and the parser (the system that interprets your typed input) keeps you guessing as to what it wants to hear. A better manual would help. These are small gripes, though.

All in all, Maddog Williams is an endearing game, and we found it to be a very rewarding experience. If you like adventure, take a look at Maddog Williams! \$59.95, from Game Crafters. Double-sided floppy drive required. — *Gantry Gappmayer*



ST ALERT ■ The Mega STe computers are coming!

The new 16MHz, TT-styled machines are now shipping to the U.S. and Canada at reduced prices: \$1,699 retail for a 2 meg RAM, 50 megabyte hard drive unit. A Mega STe 1 may become available at or below \$1,000 that would have only one meg of RAM and no hard

drive, allowing the user to upgrade as he desires later. **Fujitsu Introduced a 5-1/4" hard disk drive** with a capacity of 1600 Megabytes. What does that do, you say? Well, small hard drives (under 100 Megabytes) are now becoming a glut on the market. So if you were thinking about getting one, now is a good time. ■

How Fast is Faster—and How?

▼ THE SECRETS OF SPEEDING UP YOUR ST SYSTEM—HOW AND WHY

Most new users of Atari products are impressed with their speed. Windows in GEM move and programs load pretty quickly when compared to Mac or IBM counterparts. But familiarity breeds contempt, and we heavy users constantly look for ways to make the fast faster.

Your choices for speeding up your ST or STe are increasing. There are new products announced by FAST Technology, Gadgets by Small, ICD and several German companies. Atari itself is producing the Mega/STe, which is essentially the 1040 STe with an accelerated processor. These devices have taken two directions and it might be useful for you to know something about them.

FAST FASTER FASTEST

The idea of an accelerator is to replace the microprocessor in your ST computer, a Motorola 68000 running at 8 megahertz, with something faster. The first direction is to use another 68000, but one running at a faster rate. That rate is usually 16MHz (twice as fast as the original), though 20MHz devices have been announced for release later this year.

The advantage of this method is that most software will continue to work on the souped-up ST, but not quite all. A few programs and add-on systems are very sensitive to clock speed, and can't adjust to faster processing. So, these acceleration devices generally come with a switch that lets you slow down to 8MHz for those balky programs. Not all of them accomplish a 100% complete 8MHz mode, however - check it before you buy if you need Spectrum 512 pictures, for example.

The second method of speeding up is to use the newer and more powerful 68030 microprocessor, the one that comes with the Atari TT. You'll also need the new TT TOS to make it work, and fortunately Atari has consented to license their TOS for accelerators. This method can really zip along, both because of the inherently faster processing of the 68030 and the selection of available processor chips ranging up to 50MHz. Of course, all this can also cause havoc with some programs, so one manufacturer puts a 68000 on the same board so you can switch over to it for programs that won't run on the new system. Very clever. Of course, you pay for this versatility.

If you can stand some more technical talk, bear with me. Because the ST's internal systems must run at the original speed, and the data processing must share the pathways with the ST's screen display system, just adding a faster processor doesn't generate a big speedup. Early accelerators, introduced two years ago, were very disappointing because of that.

To really speed things up, the newer boards incorporate fast cache memories. What these do is to transfer the portion of the system memory that is currently being used by the program you're working with, into a special, fast RAM that is on the accelerator board. So, while the regular, slow memory is

crawling along and sharing time with the screen display system, your accelerator is running the program in this backup copy of the data in fast RAM, with no need to share its time with the screen.

Now your program runs like greased lightning! When appropriate, the data in fast RAM is written back to regular RAM and another section of the regular memory is written into the fast cache. This way, all the required info that should be saved to disk, or displayed on the monitor, happens like it's supposed to.

All the current accelerator boards for the ST and STe use this method. This is also how the Mega/STe accomplishes its 16MHz 68000 speed up. There are small differences in the results you get within each of the two types of accelerators, mainly caused by the way the manufacturer decided to implement the cache. How important these differences are isn't really clear, because benchmarking programs aren't particularly good indicators of actual use.

The main thing is, the new accelerators can truly make your ST go like crazy. And they are getting better all the time. But who should buy one?

JUST DO IT

My advice is, if you're using programs that require a lot of memory and calculations, these devices are for *you!* Desktop publishing, CAD, big spreadsheets and the like, are much nicer to use with an accelerator. Just ask yourself how often and for how long you sit, tapping your fingers on the desk, waiting for a screen re-draw or a calculation. Divide your budget surplus by the number of taps to determine your true need for speed.

If you use your ST mostly for gaming, then an accelerator won't do much for you, except give you bragging rights at your local Atari club. On second thought, that might be worth it after all. — Norm Weinress ■

The products mentioned are available from:

Gadgets By Small, 40 W. Littleton, #210-211, Littleton, CO 80120, 303-791-0253

Fast Technologies, P.O. Box 578, Andover, MA 01810, 508-475-3810

ICD Inc., 1220 Rock St., Rockford, IL 61101, 800-968-2228

▲ Norm Weinress is an Atari developer and former co-owner of an Atari store in Southern California. He was an electronic engineer for TRW under Sig Hartmann. Norm also hosts the "Spuds" meetings each month for a variety of professional Atari users including programmers, musicians, and writers... but trust me, that's a whole other story.

The main thing is, the new accelerators can truly make your ST go like crazy. And they are getting better all the time. But who should buy one..?

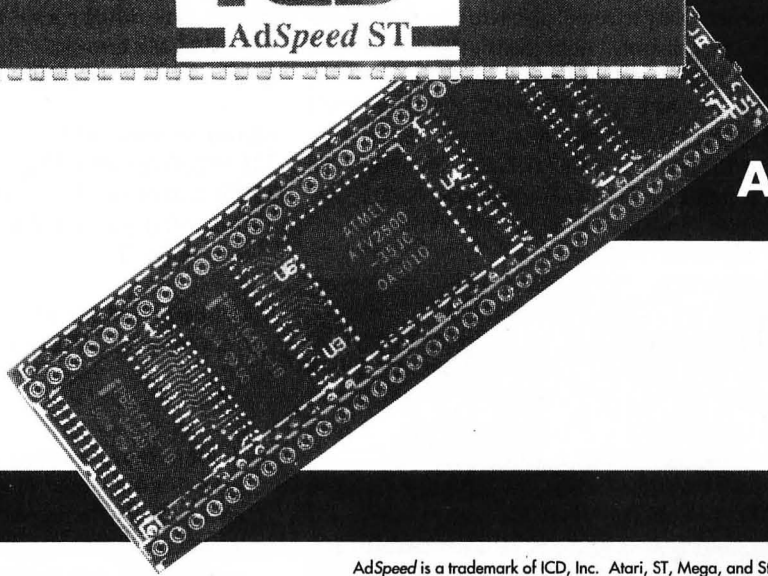
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TT ALERT ■ Atari TT/030 computers are arriving at U.S. dealers at presstime, available for sale to the general public despite FCC Type A ratings. Dealers must have buyers sign a statement that the machines are being sold for industrial and business use only, in keeping with the Type A rating. Atari officials state that the desired Type B (home) rating should become

available at any moment. Plans for the TT line for later this year include dramatic increases in the available memory and hard drive capacity. Expect the UNIX equipped TT/030 machines to range up to 26 MEG of RAM onboard, with a built-in 1.2 Gigabyte hard drive—network servers—and giant monitors! Yikes! ■

TT/030... The New Atari Flagship

▼ ATARI'S NEW "TT/030" IS MAKING ITS WAY TO THE USA

Atari's new "TT/030" is making its way to the USA. It offers a whole new vista of possibilities with its extended graphics modes and lightning processing speeds, plus it retains compatibility with almost all of the existing ST software base. In fact, most ST programs perform better on the TT! In coming months, AtariUser magazine will explore the questions of compatibility, features, and emerging TT-specific software. This month, we'll look at how the TT got here—and a few specifications.

BACKGROUNDER

Nearly six years ago, the premier of the Atari 520ST broke everyone's concept of a powerful, inexpensive computer. Eight megahertz, Motorola 68000 CPU, color, and the GEM interface positioned the Atari ST as the potential darling of the computer set, even making Macintosh uneasy.

Two years ago, the 16-bit, 68030 TT began to emerge as the new lead computer design from Atari—but repeated "introductions" without production or availability of the actual machine soured what could've been a powerful debut. Then, as time passed and the TT failed to appear, the advanced and exciting speed and technology it represented started to become almost commonplace in machines that were actually available.

Then last year, the TT actually went into production, at least for developers, and two new additions to the system brightened the picture extensively. Atari leaked, then denied, then announced that the CPU would be boosted to 32 MHz—double the original speed—and a new TOS and GEM desktop would be included, giving the TT a truly new "face." The showing of numbers of TT machines at COMDEX in November 1990 was convincing: this machine was indeed in production.

The cost of the TT line plus the new intermediate options offered by the Mega/STe may keep TT's from being the "natural" next step for many ST owners. But serious hobbyists and those using the Atari computers in their work will become quick converts as the TT/030 machines become generally available.

Below ▼ A digital pic of the TT (trust us) sporting Unix V and a graphic environment based on X/Windows and OSF/Motif on the new 19" Atari TTM high-res monitor.

NOW

Many developers have repeated the same story... While originally unsure of the value of the new machine to the small Atari market in the U.S., a few hours with the TT at home made zealous converts of them. Many programs, Calamus Desktop Publisher among them, act as though the TT was the machine they were waiting for. Re-draws and calculations are instantaneous. Options for alternate monitors are everywhere. Add-on boards use the world standard VME cards, of which there are perhaps a thousand varieties already available, doing everything from enhanced graphics to who knows what. Even the styling of the unit, which was criticized heavily when introduced, has become easier on the eye, even elegant when coupled with the mating monitor stand.

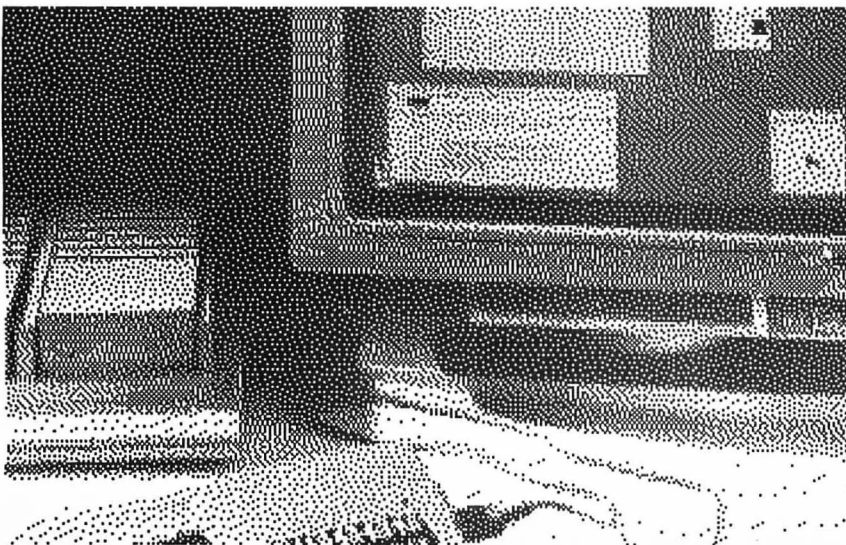
SPECIFICATION SUMMARY

Compatible with the Atari ST/STe and existing software - All ST/STe resolutions plus 3 New Graphics modes: 320 x 480 with 256 colors from a palette of 4096 640 x 480 with 16 colors from a palette of 4096 1280 x 960 high resolution monochrome - Stereo 8-bit PCM sound - 68030 running at 32 Mhz - 68881 Floating Point co-processor - 2 Megabytes of RAM, expandable to 26 Mb - SCSI and ASCII with DMA built in - Internal Hard disk - SCC LAN port with DMA - Four serial ports - Parallel port - MIDI ports - Detachable keyboard - Internal A24/D16 VME card slot - Real-time clock with non-volatile RAM - ROM cartridge slot - External floppy connector.

RETAIL PRICING (U.S.)

TT030/2-50 (2 meg RAM, 50 mbyte hard drive): \$2,399.95
TT030/4-50 (4 meg RAM, 50 mbyte hard drive): \$2,799.95
TT030/8-80 (8 meg RAM, 80 mbyte hard drive): \$3,799.95.
— John Nagy ■

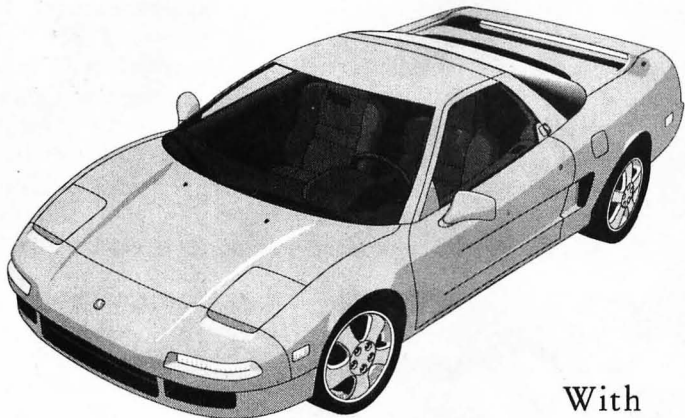
Note: specialized memory boards are used—field memory upgrades are possible but must use Atari's integrated memory boards.



▲ **John Nagy** has been writing professionally for years, mostly about Atari Computers. He's been a columnist for *Computer Shopper* magazine, editor of *Z*NET Atari Monthly*, and a contributor to most Atari magazines—both in and out of print—and was the creator and editor of *Michigan Atari Magazine*, predecessor to *Atari Interface Magazine*. John's "other" calling is as an attorney and administrator. He presently works for the State Bar of California, after leaving a position at Michigan State University. John says California's groovy (geez!)

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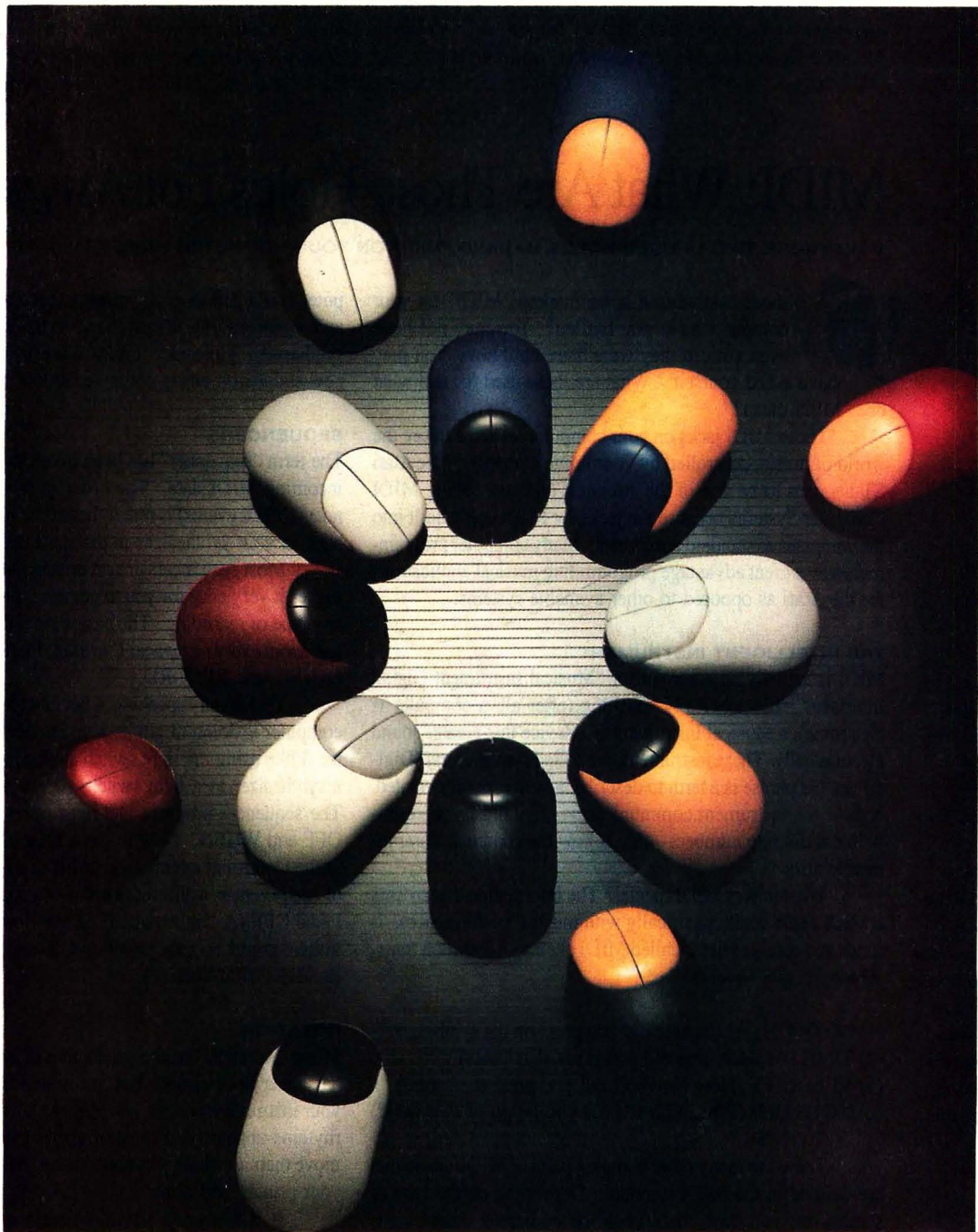
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MIDI ALERT ■ C-Lab MIDI software is now distributed in the US and Canada by Thinkware and has a new support category on GENIE's MIDI Roundtable. C-Lab's Notator 3.1 was shown at the Frankfurt Music Messe and now exports scores as IMG files. C-Lab technical support: 415-738-1633. Thinkware, 130 8th St. #303, San Francisco, CA 94031, 800-248-0403.

Former Beach Boys member James Grunke now heads Atari's MIDI support group. Increased communication with the music industry is the result, plus new media contacts. Look for a STacy mid-stage in the Arsenio Hall Band, every night in the popular talk show. They often feature a close-up of the Atari hard at work during the cut-aways for commercial breaks. ■

MIDI: What Are Those Holes For Anyway?

▼ DO THOSE TWO UNUSED HOLES MARKED "MIDI" ON YOUR COMPUTER HAVE YOU BAFFLED?

Do those two unused holes marked "MIDI" on your computer have you baffled? You may not have even noticed they were there until now. You may have asked yourself: "What are these used for and what does MIDI mean?"

Those MIDI jacks on your computer let you explore the world of music, controlled by your home computer. The Atari ST happens to be one of the strongest and best selling MIDI Computer Systems because the jacks for MIDI come built into the computer as standard equipment. Many computer programmers saw a great advantage programming musical applications for the Atari as opposed to other available systems.

THE INTELLIGENT INSTRUMENT

MIDI is actually an acronym for "Musical Instrument Digital Interface." Electronically speaking (after all, a computer is electronic), a Musical Instrument is a device that creates sound electronically. These instruments are called synthesizers. "Digital" in this phrase is a term to describe how the sound's created, or how the instrument communicates—digitally, by representation in discrete numbers—that is how the computer communicates also.

What makes MIDI special? The information that crosses a MIDI cable deals specifically with musical performances. It sends and receives items called MIDI events. A common transfer may contain events like:

- (1) NOTE ON (Which note did you press on the synthesizer?)
- (2) TIME (At what time did you press *that* note?)
- (3) VELOCITY (How hard/soft did you press *that* note?)
- (4) NOTE OFF (When (TIME) did you let go of *that* note?)

There are many other complex parts of MIDI/music that are defined in the MIDI standard. Depending on the type of synthesizer you own, there could be numerous other events defined. A popular instrument might offer: Pitch Bend; MOD Wheel; Portamento; After-Touch; MIDI-Volume; Pan; Balance; Sustain (Hold Pedal); value increment/decrement—and more.

PATCH EDITORS/LIBRARIANS

Synthesizers can typically produce many different types of sounds. While each may have different capabilities, every synthesizer creates and represents a given sound by a group of numbers. The term "Patch" was given to this group of numbers, a word leftover from the old days of electronic music when musicians used wire jumper cords to patch many different sound generators and control devices together.

Again, the computer was the perfect candidate to organize and save these "patch" numbers. Through MIDI, a com-

puter could just as easily change these numbers in a planned and organized way, in turn changing the sound produced by the synthesizer. This made it easy to create and save thousands of new sounds on cheap computer disks.

SEQUENCERS

The term "sequencer" has been given to programs that record incoming MIDI data. The order in which you played those notes (MIDI events) is remembered/recorded and digitally sent back to your synthesizer in the same order.

Most sequencers are set up just like tape recorders. That makes it very easy for you to get used to—if you've ever done any type of recording. The basics are all included functions of just about every sequencer I've used: PLAY, STOP, FF/Rewind, PAUSE, and RECORD.

Technically speaking, a better understanding of what the computer is doing might help you understand the process better. I like using my light switch analogy: think of each note on a synthesizer as a light switch—it can either be ON or OFF. The sequencer program just remembers the "switch" is ON/OFF and WHEN. Now to get a little bit more complex, add in the Controller events to your list of switches, and still think of each event as a different switch—sustain Pedal ON, Sustain Pedal OFF (A "light switch" on the floor). Continuous Controllers could be thought of as Dimmer Switches (like Pitch Bend or MIDI Volume).

NOTATION

Music "notation" or the production of written musical scores has never been easier. Yes, it's now possible for you to play your instrument and, as you play, watch the notes, chords, and rhythms appear on a musical staff. Click on the bad notes; move them to where you meant them to be played. Then select your printer, and print.

It is that easy. Bach, where are you now? — Bryan Celano ■

▲ Bryan Celano is the resident MIDI expert at The Computer Network, an Atari dealer at 1605 W Glenoaks Blvd., Glendale CA 91201-1813 (818-500-3900) (shameless plug). Bryan worked for HYBRID ARTS doing documentation, and has years of experience as a musician and Atari owner.

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8BIT ALERT ■ **Reeve Software** has just announced a new release of their graphical operating system *DIAMOND*. This release features improved performance, in addition, several new features. Updates for the Diamond applications (also available) take advantage of the improvements. **Reeve Software**, 29W 150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville IL 60555. **Computer Software Services (CSS)**, a long-time supporter of the Atari computers, has announced a

new upgrade for the Atari XF-551 disk drive. The upgrade allows use of a 720K 3.5" drive mechanism while maintaining full functionality of the original 5.25" drive. New features added by the upgrade include increased transfer speed and correction of several problems in the original XF-551 ROM. CSS's phone number is (716)-586-5545, or you can write them at Post Office Box 17660, Rochester NY 14617. ■

The Atari 8Bit State

▼ WHAT'S UP, WHAT'S DOWN—AND WHAT YOU MAY FIND IF YOU JUST LOOK AROUND...



While there is not as much activity in the Atari 8Bit arena as there once was, the Atari 'classic' computers remain as reliable and usable as ever. There are still many third-party developers producing exciting new products for the machines, besides the many seasoned products that are available. This column will offer news and information relating to your Atari 400, 800, 600XL, 800XL, 1200XL, 65XE and 130XE 8Bit computer every month. With your *AtariUser* magazine handy, you may find survival in the computer jungle a bit easier.

"The 8-bit systems can be used for all kinds of serious work. The types of programs listed here are just a small sample of the many different applications available. While it may take searching through magazine advertisements, and making a few phone calls, you should be able to find just the program you are looking for..."

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH IT RECENTLY?

Ok, so you're a member of the 'I own a computer' club, but just what have you done with it recently? Ahhh, so you say there just are no programs available for your "old 8Bit Atari"—but have you *really* looked? You'll be surprised at the quantity and quality of economical software and hardware available for your machine. And you probably won't believe me when I tell you that more products are on their way—but there are!

As with any other brand or model of computer, you have to invest enough into the system to make it usable. For most people that means you need a computer console with at least 32K bytes of RAM, a disk drive, and a monitor, or TV. Many applications will also require or be enhanced by using a printer. A second disk drive, while usually not mandatory, will usually make life with your computer system more pleasurable. There are many additional peripherals you can add, such as a modem, serial and parallel interfaces, and of course hard drive systems.

I realize many owners of Atari 8Bit (and ST for that matter) systems have no local dealer or distributor. While this may make you feel like you cannot survive with your 8Bit system, with a little effort, you will find everything you need is just a phone call or letter away. *AtariUser* will also make your life easier with many national distributors advertising within its pages, and monthly feature articles, reviews, and product guides.

Another way to acquire new program files and associate with other Atari 8Bit users is by telecommunications. All you need besides the above suggested system components is a modem and terminal software. Besides local bulletin board systems (BBS), there are several large national services which feature specific areas for users of Atari computers. Compuserve (CIS), Delphi, and GENie all have active areas, which provide thousands of public domain and shareware files. These services also have message bases, and weekly real-time confer-

ences, where you can 'chat' with other users.

STRONG CONTENDER

The Atari 8Bit computer systems remain a strong contender in many applications. If you write letters, there are several word processors available for the 'classic' Atari. There are two versions of the *AtariWriter* word processor available. The first version is a cartridge based program, and the latter is disk based. The newer version also offers a spell-checker, which is a good addition. There is also the very popular and powerful shareware program *TextPro*, is scheduled to be updated soon.

If you are into number crunching, there are several spreadsheets available, such as *Visicalc*, *SynCalc*, and the cartridge based *Turbo-Calc*. Spreadsheets are *the* way to handle complex calculations, especially where large numbers of variables are involved. In a matter of seconds, you can see the results of changing one or more variables.

There are many mailing list managers, and database applications available. The commercial program *SynFile* will allow you to transfer data to and from *SynCalc*, which is a nice feature. There are several other commercial and shareware database management programs available.

As you can see, the 8Bit systems can be used for all kinds of serious work. The types of programs listed here are just a small sample of the many different applications available. While it may take searching through magazine advertisements, and making a few phone calls, you should be able to find just the program you are looking for. Of course, *AtariUser* will keep you informed of what is available, and what is under development. If you have any comments or suggestions, feel free to send them to me, care of *AtariUser* magazine. — **Chuck Steinman** ■

▲ **Chuck Steinman** is the VP of Research and Development for a company which designs and manufactures facility management systems, sold worldwide. Chuck has been published in almost every Atari magazine. He has a degree in Electrical Engineering and designs hardware and software for the Atari 8-bit, Atari ST, Apple, and IBM/PC systems, distributed under the *DataQue* label.

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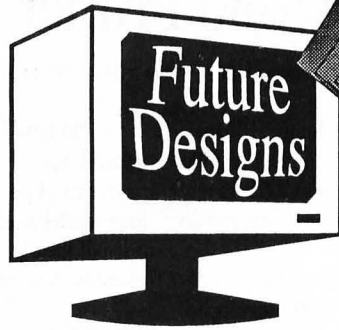
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PORTFOLIO ALERT ■ John Feagans has developed a driver which allows the Portfolio to interact with the Radio Shack Portable Disk Drive, originally designed for the Model 100 computer. The Portfolio can now load and save files to a floppy disk instead of the more

expensive memory cards. For more details, contact Mr. John Feagans, 2681 N. Rodeo Gulch Road, Soquel, California, 95073. The cost is \$70 for the drivers on a ROM card, or \$40 for the drivers on an MS/DOS compatible disk. ■

The Practical Portfolio Primer

▼ GETTING MORE FROM YOUR PORTFOLIO—AND A FEW TIPS FROM B.J. GLEASON

Welcome to the Portfolio *AtariUser* column. I'll keep you up to date with what's happening in the Portfolio world—including applications, new products, and programs. However, we'll concentrate on what you can do to make the most of your Portfolio.

I always wanted a pocket computer. Over the past decade, a number of pocket computers have been developed. Radio Shack was among the first to develop one. It ran BASIC and had 2,000 bytes of memory. More sophisticated "pocket" computers were developed, but they lacked both memory and applications. Recently a number of "smart" calculators that will store names and addresses have appeared. These are more functional, smaller and have more memory, but are not programmable - you are limited to the programs and features that come with the unit.

About a year ago, Atari released the Portfolio, a "pocket" sized personal computer that's very (but not completely) compatible with the IBM PC computer systems. The base unit, when folded, is about the size of a VHS tape. It unfolds to reveal a 40 characters by 8 lines screen and a 63 key keyboard. It comes with 128k of RAM, which is divided between memory and a RAMdisk. The Liquid Crystal Display screen's very easy to read, even in poor lighting, and has contrast adjustment built into the keyboard. The keyboard's arranged in the standard QWERTY fashion (like a typewriter), making it very easy to find the keys, although the spacing of the keys is a bit tight. The unit's powered by three AA batteries which last about 100 hours, and retails under \$300. With the addition of the parallel interface, you can upload and download files to another PC. A serial port's also available.

TIP *New users will occasionally notice the screen flash when the unit's turned off. The computer will briefly turn itself on about every two minutes to check the alarms in the diary.*

You don't have to have them, but you can also purchase RAMcards, on which programs and data can be stored. These little credit card size devices contain 32k, 64k or 128k of memory, and are treated the same way as a floppy disk. Atari offers a RAMcard reader for PC type computers, so you can quickly read the cards on your desktop machine rather than use the parallel file transfer program.

TIP *It's best to get a RAMcard for the Portfolio. If the computer should ever crash, all the files on drive C (internal memory) are lost. Many users keep all their files on the RAMcard, and set the C drive to about 8k with the FDISK command. This will leave you about 100k of free memory for your applications.*

So now I have my pocket computer. What have I used it for? I was buying a new car and concerned about the monthly payments. I popped up the spread sheet, entered a simple little loan model and went car shopping. I would tap in the base price of the car, the interest rate and length of the loan, and the monthly payments would appear on the screen.

TIP *When a built in application asks for a filename to load, type *`<RETURN>` to display a list of files for that application.*

I also use it in my classes. I teach, and keeping track of students' grades and attendance is one of my most tedious tasks. With only a few minutes work, I make spread sheets to keep track of all my classes. My students and I now have easy access to the grades, and any necessary changes can be made instantly and permanently.

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS

Here's a sampling of applications other users are developing...

- ✓ A government agency's looking into using the Portfolio on ships at sea for tracking and transmitting weather data via a modem and a satellite linkage.
- ✓ Public Service Electric and Gas of New Jersey is investigating giving the field technicians a Portfolio to record data from electronic volume correctors.
- ✓ A medical firm's placing drug databases on the Portfolio. This allows for quick and easy access.
- ✓ An environmental firm's evaluating the palm-top computer as a hardware platform for real-time simulation of the dispersion of pollutants during spills and other emergencies.
- ✓ A heating company's using the machine to provide customers with chiller efficiency studies and to calculate heat exchanger efficiency data.
- ✓ An electronics firm's using the Portfolio as a portable EPROM programmer.
- ✓ A waiter at a restaurant has the Portfolio play *Happy Birthday* to lucky patrons.

In future issues of *AtariUser*, look for coverage of Portfolio programs on ROM cards, bug fixes, and easy data exchange... and lots more tips for the palmtop wonder. — B.J. Gleason ■

▲ B.J. Gleason is an instructor of Computer Science at The American University in Washington D.C. and he's been programming over a decade now. He's the author of over two dozen utilities and games, including *PBASIC*, the "freeware" BASIC interpreter designed specifically for the Portfolio.

In addition to the built in DOS 2.11, the Portfolio also has a simple ASCII text editor, a calculator, a diary with alarms, and an address book that can dial numbers on touch tone phones. The most impressive built-in application is a spreadsheet program that's compatible with Lotus 1-2-3.

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LYNX ALERT ■ Nintendo Drops License Exclusivity: A major factor which has prevented major game developers from creating versions for systems such as the Sega Genesis, NEC TurboGrafix 16, and the Atari Lynx has finally been lifted. At the recent Winter Consumer Electronics Show, Nintendo announced it

would no longer prevent Nintendo licensed developers from marketing versions for rival systems. Previously a Nintendo developer wasn't allowed to 'do' a game for the NES or Gameboy and produce the same title for another system. Details below on the new Lynx and new Lynx games. ■

Mo'Games/Less Lynx=Less Bucks*Mo'Fun²

▼ ATARI ANNOUNCES NEW LYNX SPECIFICATIONS AND NEW GAMES

The Lynx is the world's first color portable video game system. Some of its outstanding features: A 16 MHz clock speed (making it one of the fastest game systems available), multi-player hookup (allowing Lynx owners to connect their systems and play games against each other—in some cases with 8 players competing at once), visual scaling (allowing an object's size to be increased or decreased smoothly—very handy for 3 dimensional-style games), 32 bit stereo sound system (allowing for clear digitized sound and music), and a versatile graphics system (for smooth animation and massive amounts of moving objects).

My intentions in *AtariUser* are to get all of you to subscribe to my newsletter—just kidding. Actually, I want to provide Lynx enthusiasts with up-to-date Lynx news and info that's difficult to find in most video game publications. It's still pretty much a Nintendo and Sega world out there and that's the market video game magazines gear their issues to. The Lynx is coming on strong though, and if you want to know what's new with the Lynx, this is the place. If you've any Lynx questions, or suggestions for our column, contact me in care of my newsletter (address below). Of course, I won't mind if you subscribe, too!

▼ Atari's new Lynx system—smaller, lighter, cheaper—all with the same large 3.5" color screen! Sam Tramiel, Atari's CEO says "We're going to win back the American video game-playing market from offshore competitors."

THE NEW LYNX

Right now, there should be many new titles available (including the long awaited World War I areal combat title, *Warbirds*). But probably the biggest thing going on in the Lynx world right now is the new, low-cost model unveiled at the Winter Consumer Electronic Show. Atari has taken the Lynx, reduced its size and, more importantly, its price. What was a rather hefty priced system is now very competitive. At \$99, the new Lynx is but \$10 more than the black-and-white Gameboy, \$150 less than the TurboGrafix 16 compatible Turbo Express, and \$60

less than Sega's similarly featured GameGear. The new Lynx is 2" shorter than the original model, lighter, yet maintains all its features including the same 3.5" color screen (the largest on any portable system).

To reduce the price, Atari did some re-engineering work and left a few accessories out: the AC Adaptor (available for \$10 and also absent from the three competing systems); the Com-Lynx Cable (a multi-player cable, also \$10 and an extra cost item for the other two color systems); and the *California Games* cart. The nice thing about leaving the game out is that someone who'd like to start out their system with something else, can. The new Lynx model is supposed to be available very soon, but in the meantime Atari has done somethin' smart. Knowing that gamers want to get their hands on a \$99 Lynx as soon as possible, Atari's selling the original model, sans accessories, for \$99 until the new model is widely available.

GOOD DEAL

For those who want everything right off the bat, the full, original (larger) Lynx system (Lynx, *California Games*, Com-Lynx cable, and AC adaptor) plus a coupon for a free Lynx game (*Chip's Challenge*, *Electrocop*, *Gates of Zendocon*, or *Blue Lightning*) has been marked down to \$149, \$30 off the original price.

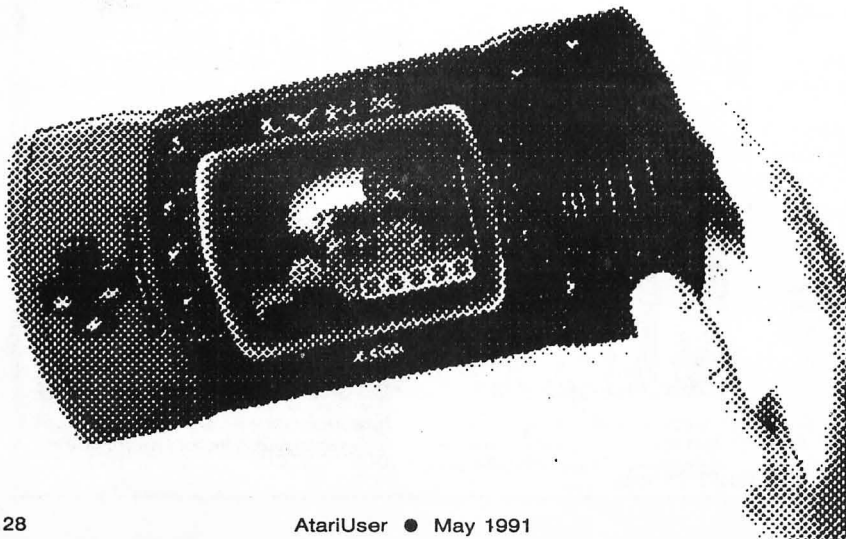
The \$99 Lynx is being received very favorably by the video game media and is drawing much needed third-party developer interest. Expect to see some big names getting into the Lynx market. You can usually find the Lynx and its games at Toys 'R Us or your local Atari dealer.

NEW LYNX GAMES COMING SOON

Atari has promised 16 new titles by June, and they're already trickling into the marketplace. They include: *Shanghai* (strategy puzzle), *Blockout* (arcade puzzle), *NFL Football* (sports tournament), *Cyberball 2072* (arcade sports), *Xy-bots* (arcade), *PacLand* (arcade), *APB* (arcade), *Warbirds* (areal combat), *Vindicators* (arcade), *Scrapyard Dog* (action), *Turbo Sub* (action), *Ninja Gaiden* (arcade), *Viking Child* (action adventure), *World Class Soccer* (sports), *Grid Runner* (action), *Checkered Flag* (sports).

Next month we'll take a look at a few of the Lynx support groups! — Clinton Smith ■

▲ A five-year veteran, Clinton Smith has written for *Atari Explorer* and *STart*. Clint publishes the *APE Newsletter*, a quarterly dedicated to Atari Lynx coverage. Contact Clint c/o *APE Newsletter*, 2104 North Kostner, Chicago, IL 60639. On GENie, you can leave a message to him at C.SMITH89.





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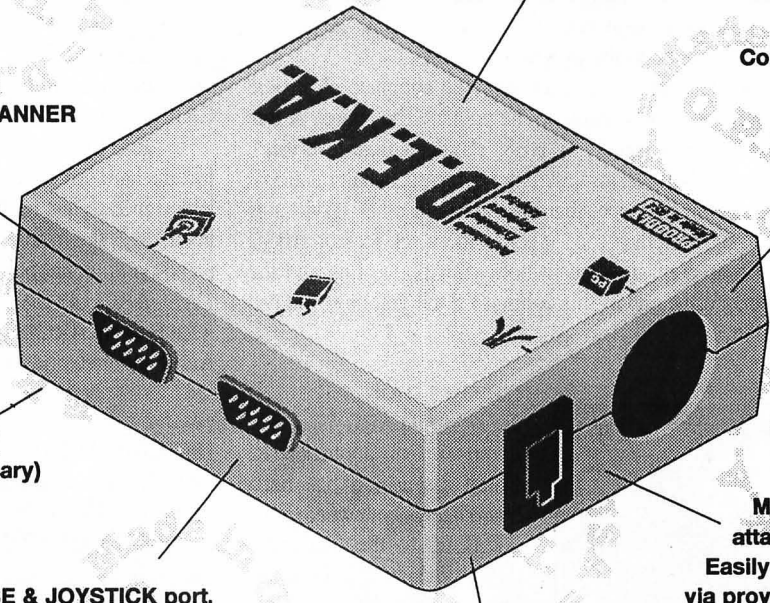


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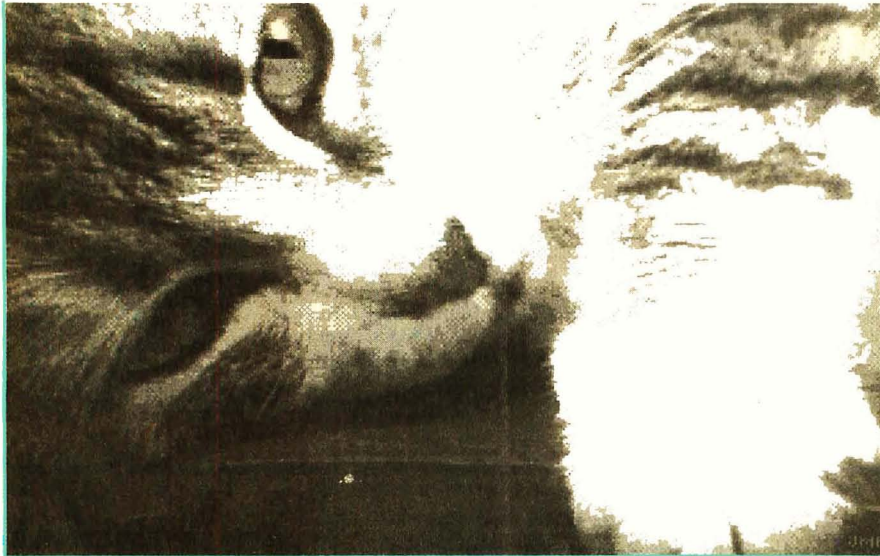
Welcome! For those brand new to the this column and to those unfamiliar with freely distributable software, computer pictures, and online magazines, let's talk a little about it all. For those of you who are BBS pros, welcome, and feel free to 'scroll' past the next paragraph.

Many fine developers write programs that they can release to the public in a variety of ways. "Public Domain" software and "Freeware" are available free of charge. "Shareware"

is the single most expensive (\$1000.00) software program for the ST in the United States if the program wasn't top notch. You now have a chance to try a demo of it and see what you think.

VEKTOR.PRG is a nice 3D graphics demo from Europe. (For this and a few other European demos, you may require a 60hz to 50hz converter program so that your monitor screen doesn't "roll". Many monitors will not need any help, others just a touch to their vertical hold control.)

*Net has been an innovator in video graphics, and recently



brought us a series of demo pictures in 512 color Spectrum format, done using the video digitizer VIDI-ST with the new VIDI-CHROME software. ▲ KITTEN.SPC is a great example of the quality of the system. Be sure to catch Z*Net Magazine online ▼ on many BBS systems around the world!

is available to you initially free of charge, but if you decide to keep it and use it, then you are required to send the usually small fee for same to the program's author.

Pictures, music files, articles, and complete electronic magazines are also available to the public. The source of this plentiful library is usually a "BBS" (Bulletin Board Service), or an "Online Service" (a very large database, usually national or international in scope, that specializes in other services as well). Your computer can "talk" to these services or BBS's through a modem attached to both your phone line and the computer. At the end of this column I'll tell you how you can get started.

MORE GOODIES

Disk formatters are always popular. Some wonder if their formatting program will yield disks that a PC can read, others want to know how fast can it be done, while others demand extras.

FLRMT3_5.ARC (Shareware) isn't a minor upgrade but a completely new program. (180k) It has been completely rewritten and sports new utility features, an embedded custom formatting module, and an embedded virus utility program and more. This file includes a long and detailed explanation of the program which seems to be much better than the last version. Also, this version runs in medium resolution, something the last did not. One critical flaw might be that high resolution isn't supported. Many ST users have only SM124s and to overlook them isn't wise.

AREACODE.LZH and POSTAL22.LZH have both been upgraded to versions 2.2 each. Both PRG/ACC/TOS (rename as you wish) type programs, the former will locate and identify telephone area codes in North America, the latter will give you zip code information.

SUGGESTION: Never miss another Birthday, Anniversary, or occasion, take a look at CAL47.ARC and CALSH47A.ARC.

RATEHD.ARC version 2.0 has been released by ICD Inc, the hard drive specialists. This hard drive performance test is designed to test fairly the speed of different drives. It does not address the handler's speed so that each drive can be compared on an equal basis.

ARC_LIST.ARC (Shareware \$5) will tell you exactly what is in an .ARC or .LZH file. The archive lister will handle Arc'd subdirectories and will list comments in .LZH files.

"DEMO" LITION

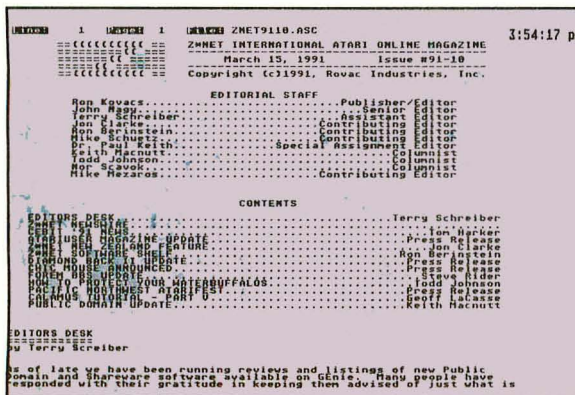
DYNACDD.ARC is a tidy demo file of about 661K. Much discussion has been heard lately about whether the ST is up to the Computer Aided Design (CAD) challenge. Most of the negative comments have come from those who haven't really tried it. One person noted that ISD Inc. (the Calamus DTP people) wouldn't market what

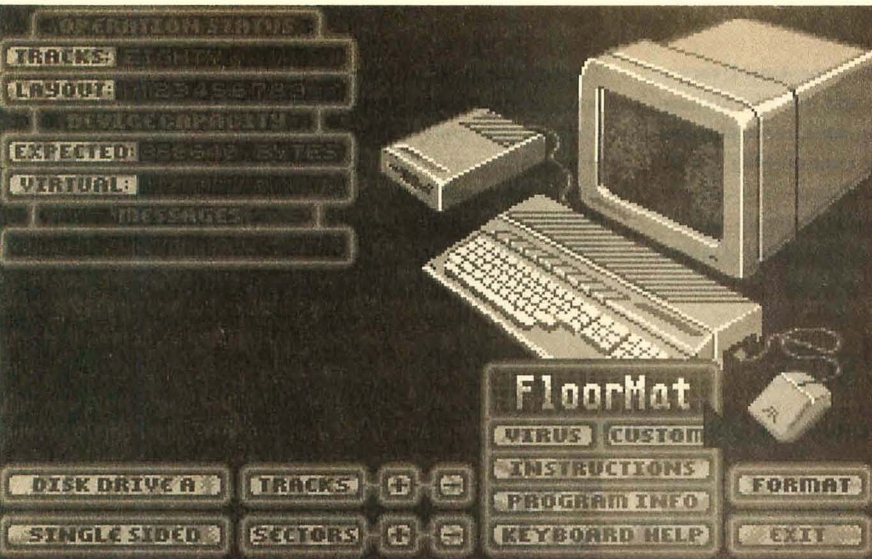
"SURE SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!"

DIGIUBIK.ARC (Shareware \$5) is a digital sound file editing tool. Digitalized sound samples may be merged, appended, packed or played.

STNOISE.LZH *ST-NoiseTracker* V1.5 (+) is based on the original Amiga *SoundTracker*, *NoiseTracker*, and *StarTracker*. Similar to Amiga's *Sonix* which uses samples as instruments.

If you are at all like me you might suffer from a common disease called "clutterdriveitis effect syndrome." Nah, you couldn't have a case of it as badly as I have been known to have, but, this friendly ST doctor recommends that you study





this prescription: AUTOARC.ARC (Shareware \$20), a program for the automatic archiving of files. *AutoArc* uses your archive program to create daily, weekly, monthly, or custom archive files of selected file types, taking up far less space on your hard drive. You can configure it to archive files after they reach any age. Also will delete arced files after they reach a specified age to keep your disk clean.

LZH11316.LZH might well be the fastest .LZH compressor/extractor alive today! The only trouble was that it wasn't compatible with Charles F. Johnson's *ArcShell*. However, Johnson has just released *ArcShell 2.4* (ARCSHL24.ARC) and guess what. It was especially designed to accommodate LZH11316. So, even though the warning on the new LZH's box says, "use at your own risk," some very knowledgeable folks are real impressed with it. And, needless to say, ARCSHL24.ARC should be on everyone's list as well.

DRUM ROLL PLEASE

And Now, for My Favorite of the Month, a *must have* download! HOTSAYER.LZH (Shareware) - The screen saver that also places a clock on your screen, and provides you with the *ultimate mouse accelerator*. This accelerator is totally revolutionary. You program it by picking the exact amount of vertical acceleration, and the exact amount of horizontal acceleration you want. Also contains special features for *HotWire* owners (and the program is free to them), as well as the *HotSwap* demo, so that folks can use their own icons.

GCC124.LZH GNU C compiler—executable, basic utilities, and library sources. Minimal docs. Requires a larger than 1 meg machine, 850K free needed to run it. The library's in source form, GCC needed. By the way, expect a newer version to be available any week.

Are you excited yet? Want to get into the world of freely transferrable software? Getting started is easy. A 2400 baud modem should cost less than \$100.00 and a terminal program's about \$35 for a great one, or "free" for a variety of, you guessed it, public domain terminals. Any will allow for easy communication, uploading, and downloading of files.

Now, just where are these BBS's and Online Services? Almost everywhere. Usually included in the package with the modem and/or term program that you buy are introductory offers and instructions for joining the three major online services that support Atari Computer oriented special interest groups. These are GENie, Compuserve, and Delphi. Bulletin Board Systems are usually free locally run services, a hobby for

the operator (SysOp) or as a service of a club. Many BBS's also provide lists of other BBS's as well. Most BBS's have two major departments, the message base where you and others post questions and answers and comments, and the file library

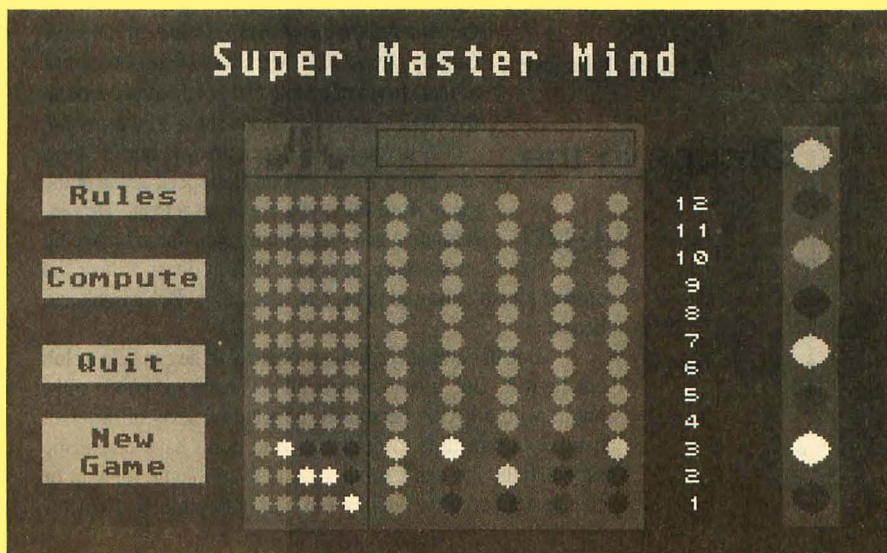
where freely distributable software is made available to you for downloading. BBS's are typically regional in nature and it isn't unusual to meet several folks online that live near where you reside. Online Services are usually much broader in scope than a BBS and charge accordingly, mostly by the hour.

Here's some numbers to get you started: CodeHead Quarters BBS (213) 461-2095 (Must be called with a modem and a terminal program). GENie Online Service: 800-638-9636 (Voice number) Compuserve Online Service: 800-848-8990 or 614-457-8650 (Voice) Delphi Online Service: 800-544-4005 or 617-491-3393 (Voice).

Like *AtariUser* to offer an inexpensive mail-or-phone order disk with a selection of the reviewed PD and Shareware files each month? Let us know! — Ron Berinstein ■

▲ Ron Berinstein runs both the *CodeHead Quarters BBS*, the official home base for CodeHead Software Support, and the *Vine Street Bar and Grill*, a Hollywood haven for some of the best jazz and food anywhere. Ron also manages several performers including Marlena Shaw. When he isn't making pasta or arranging for Dizzy Gillespie to appear, Ron does a weekly software review column for *Z*Net Online*.

▼ *Super Master Mind* is a low resolution color game of strategy. You must deduce the color code used by the computer that places five colors in a row. Your job should you choose to accept it: Find the colors, identify them, and win! As usual if you, or any of your team get caught, we at *AtariUser* will disavow any knowledge of you. Good luck.





USER GROUPS ALERT ■ The Windsor Atari Users Group of Windsor, ON, Canada, and the Washtenaw Atari Users Group of Ann Arbor, MI are hosting the Windsor/Detroit International AtariFest on May 4-5 at St. Clair College of Arts and Technology, Windsor. Atari Canada and US will both support the show. Contact Craig Harvey, 313-994-5619 or Brian Cassidy,

519-966-0305. Atari Canada will also attend and support the Pacific Northwest AtariFest on June 15-16 at Steveston Senior Secondary School, 10440 No.2 Road, Richmond, BC. This is the first major Canadian Atari show west of Toronto. It's just across the US border from Seattle. Contact Terry Schreiber, 604-275-7944, T.Schreiber1 on GEnie. ■

A Group of Users

▼ A NEW MAGAZINE—A NEW FORUM FOR USER GROUPS

Uhis column isn't intended to be one person's view of the state of the user groups. So let's start out by soliciting your input.

Your Atari user group is invited to publicize any special events you might be having by sending it to us at *AtariUser*. If you're participating in a local swap meet or have some sort of fund raiser, let us know. Maybe your club does something that's extra special, particularly successful, or that you're proud of—tell us. When you do send us something, give us ample lead time and give us a 'bio' of your group. Please let us know how long you've been around, when you meet, membership size, if you have a newsletter or BBS, etc., and who to contact.

We need your help, too. We intend to continuously add to the distribution list for *AtariUser* magazine. If you have a computer dealer in your area that doesn't carry *AtariUser*, give us the

name of the store and the store's owner/manager, address, and phone number. If you don't have a store in your area, then tell us where you buy your products. We'll contact them and try to get them to carry the magazine.

Of course, you should also be sure to have your group get their own bundle of *AtariUsers*, free each month for the membership. Look for the details of how to elsewhere in this issue.

There's one special person at Atari that we user groups look to for help: Robert G. Brodie, Manager, User Group Services, sort of a nomadic ambassador of good will. He's one of us, both figuratively and literally. Bob's past president of the *Atari Computer Association of Orange County* (ACAOC). Mr. Brodie was also part of a small group of people that got the first cooperative Atari Corp./User Group show off the ground.

If you haven't been privy to one of Bob's user group visits or heard Bob speak at one of the many Atari fairs, you are in for a treat. He's informative and entertaining, and doesn't make up answers as he goes. If Bob doesn't have the answer (or isn't allowed to say), he'll admit it. Bob's frank and honest.

Bob has empathy for our problems. If he can help a club out, he will. Bob tries to answer all his letters and phone calls, but as with all Atari personnel, he wears dozens of different hats. Give him time to respond. And don't have unrealistic expectations; he can't solve your club problems for you or change Atari corporate policy—at least not overnight. Remem-

ber, it's *your* club, not Atari's nor Bob's club.

Maybe Bob will be able to send you literature or some "Atari party favors" to hand out if your club is participating in a computer show at the local college or mall. Or, invite Bob to visit. If there is more than one club in your area, make a party out of it. Bob is scheduled to visit my club, *H.A.C.K.S.*, in Glendale on April 27th. I've rented a 325 seat theater and invited the fifteen clubs in Southern California to attend. I also put a press release on GEnie, CompuServe, and the electronic newsletters, and made arrangements with the local Atari computer store to host an open house in honor of Bob's visit after he gives his speech.

The idea here is to make his trip worthwhile. Believe it or not, employees at Atari have families, so don't take Bob away from the wife and kids for ten or twenty people. Atari spends a lot of money when Bob is sent on the road; airline tickets are not cheap, nor are hotel rooms. Treat Bob as a guest, take him to lunch, show him the local dealer situation. One club even gave Bob a plaque. By contrast, another club expected Bob to fly out to visit with them, bring goodies to hand out, then buy dinner for everyone on Atari's tab.

For any kind of assistance or visit, Bob needs as much lead time as you can give him. When doing The Glendale Show, I try to give Atari at least *18 months* advance notice. I've already selected the date for September 1992. I realize that's an extreme example, but I think I've made my point: give Bob as much time as you can.

Of course, Bob cannot help you if he doesn't know you exist or if you haven't updated your records with him. If you haven't registered with Atari, do so now. Get out that pen and give Bob the following information: Group name, Acronym, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Contact person, Phone number, Group size, BBS phone number and if you have one, a GEnie or CompuServe address. Bob needs this information to validate your group. Send this information to: Robert G. Brodie Atari Corporation 1196 Borregas Avenue Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

Put him on your newsletter list, too (*AtariUser* should also be on your list). You ought to update your information after each club election. Bob makes the club information available to developers and magazines—be sure that yours is correct and up-to-date. — *John King Tarpinian* ■

▲ **John King Tarpinian** is the longtime President of *H.A.C.K.S.*, an Atari User Group in the Los Angeles area. He's been the organizer of the Glendale Atari Faire since its inception six years ago, and is a collector of state-of-the-art Atari hardware... some of which he even knows how to operate. John is Assistant Editor at *AtariUser*.

Resource!

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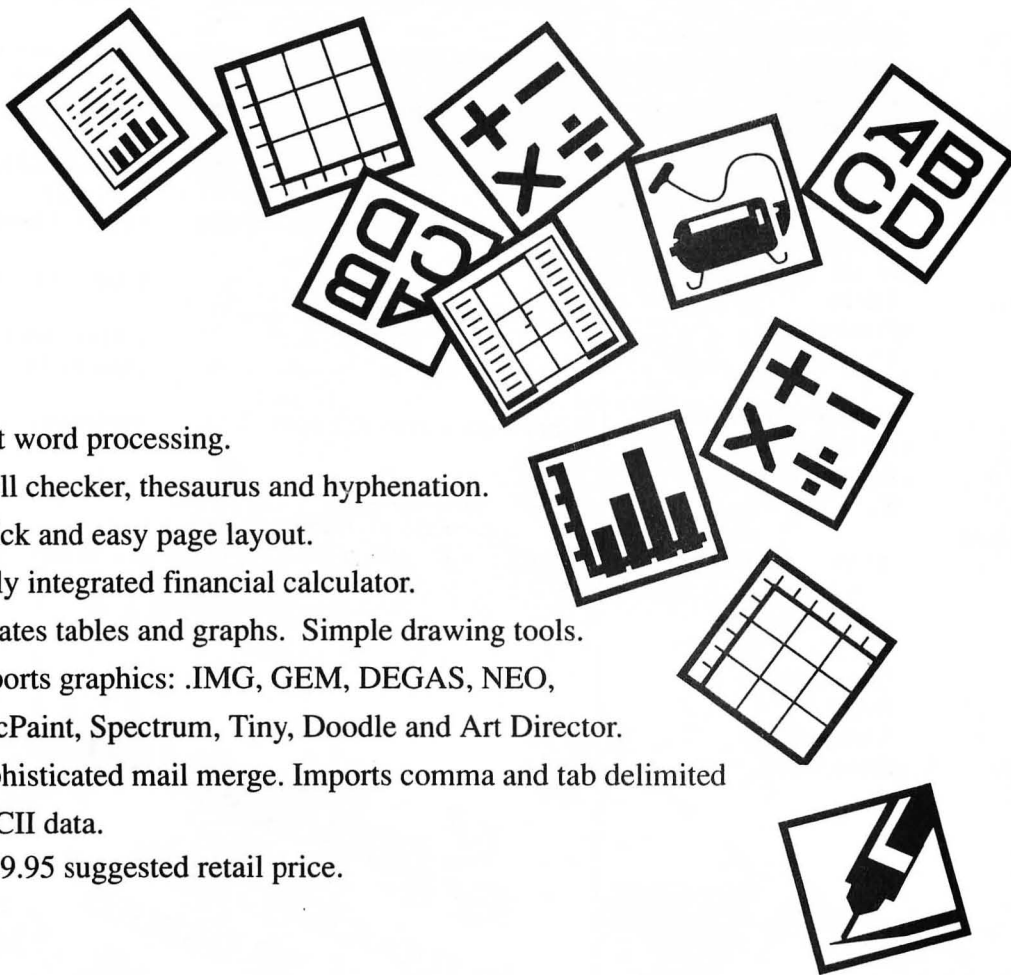
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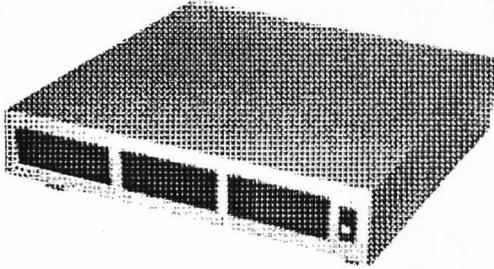
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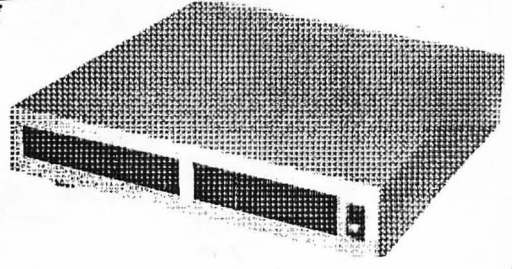
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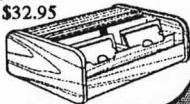
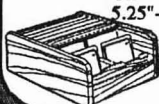
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