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Spotlight '94 will provide visitors with demonstrations of software and hardware configurations and permit them to ask questions about many products directly to experts in the field. The show will also offer a wide range of hardware and software bargains, many items at substantially reduced prices.

Discover the world of Amiga and Atari with the following top name companies:

Among the top companies exhibiting will be HiSoft with a wide range of software for both the Atari and Amiga range including a 12 bit sound card for the Amiga A1200 and a Voicemail system for the Atari. Meridian Software will be showing new software from America. AlfaData Benelux have a range of brand new CD32 add-ons. Power Computing will be showing their new SCSI hard drive controller for the Amiga A4000. Microvitec are displaying their latest multisync monitor, the 1438, suitable for use by both Atari and Amiga machines. System Solutions and Atari Workshop will be demonstrating an exciting range of new products from both Germany and America. This includes new software called Expander for an Atari CD ROM, HD Drive, an invaluable hard drive utility and Power Up, a Falcon accelerator. BSC of Germany are showing their superb add-on ROM drive for the A1200 Amiga together with other useful products. Europress, well known publishers of Atari ST User, Amiga Computing and ST Review will have all their magazines and back issues available. GE Soft Systems are demonstrating an accelerator for the Atari Falcon together with a novel 'clone' STE. Digital Village and Music Village will be showing and demonstrating all the latest products for the music industry and Prima Technologies have a keyboard for the CD32 and various other successful and unusual products. Golden Image will be exhibiting a wide range of peripheral hardware at amazing discounts and ACE will be showing the World of CD ROMS from Holland. 16/32 Systems will have their huge Public Domain software library for both the Atari and Amiga and Lightwave will be able to solve all your cable and connector problems. We also hope to demonstrate the new Atari Jaguar 64 bit machine with its amazing capabilities and CU Amiga will be offering technical support to help solve those little problems that are ever present.

- Hi-Soft
- Meridian Software
- Weekend Developments
- 16/32
- Power Computing
- Computronics
- Gasteiner
- Marpet
- Antic Systems
- 1st Computer Centre
- Alfa Data (Benelux)
- Golden Image
- Europress Enterprise
- Microvitec
- BSC (Germany)
- Broadfield Computers

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Next month on sale June 13

The CoverDisk

Use magic and weapons to battle your way through monster-filled corridors in our exclusive English version of Walls of Illusion, a brilliant Dungeon Master-type shareware game

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- Antibomb replaces those cryptic bomb symbols when the ST crashes with friendly text messages in a dialogue box
- And much more besides

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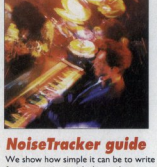

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"Microvitec 1440...Highly recommended"–Atari ST User

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See SIMM prices below

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Hand scanner supplied with Silhouette V1.4 Autotracing vector package (mono monitor only). £119.99

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PC Emulators

- Check configuration before ordering

PC Speed STFM or STE (XT) £49.99
AT Speed STFM (8MHz) £139.99

Now HiSoft extend their Atari range

JUST weeks after Compo Software announced several new products for Atari computers, software specialist HiSoft have extended their range.

by John Butters

The developer's launch of a new database and upgrade to their hard disk utility Diamond Back prove that leading third-party supporters are still committed to TOS-based machines.

Diamond Back 3's new user interface is claimed to make the program easier to use, and it now has support for SCSI tape drives and improved compression and reporting features. According to HiSoft, the £49.95 program is the fastest of its type, can back-up or restore any number of drive partitions, directories or specific files and has a range of formatting options.

Twist 2 is a new database for all Atari computers. It has a GEM user interface and comprehensive statistical, string, logical and mathematical functions.

It contains keyboard shortcuts, a built-in bitmap editor for IMG image files, the ability to define a sort priority on up to five fields and can import and export files to other platforms.

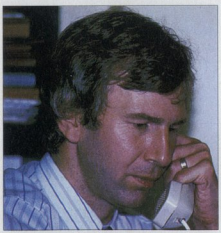
Atari font systems GDOS and SpeedoGDOS help produce professional-looking printed reports, and the program can also take advantage of system fonts and those built into printers.

A range of functions are available to make it easy to view data. Information can be sent to the screen, printer, a clipboard or Twist's built-in text editor.

Alternatively, data can be mail merged to a template report or saved as an Ascii text file for manual editing.

The program needs at least one megabyte of memory and a hard disk is recommended. It is due for imminent release and will cost £89.95.

HiSoft, who can be telephoned on 0525 718181, refused to comment on their plans for a Falcon voicemail system.



David Link: HiSoft boss continues to develop for Atari computers

Microvitec have Falcon vision

MICROVITEC have unveiled a new 14in VGA monitor which they claim is suited to a wide range of Falcon applications.

The Auto-Scan 1438 has a maximum non-interlaced resolution of 800 x 600 pixels and features an anti-glare screen which rests on a tilt and swivel base.

Supplied with necessary cables, it costs £299 from Silica Systems, who can be telephoned on 081-309 1111.

Microvitec: New Falcon monitor costs £299

Hot products travel north

RECENT Atari shows in Newcastle and Glasgow gave enthusiasts from the north of England and Scotland the chance to see several new ST and Falcon products.

While overall attendance was disappointing, there were some irresistible special offers, including Studio Photo image processing software at £59 and DA's Vector at £125.

On the Compo Software stand, NeoDesk 4 was being previewed alongside Geneva by developer Dan Wilga. NeoDesk 4 was very impressive with multi-coloured icons and a host of new features.

These include group icons for keeping related files together and handy file search facilities using name, size and date as masks.

The competition was there too in the form of the new MagiX multitasking operating system and the Ease desktop replacement, both shown by System Solutions.

ASTONISHING

Ease was certainly nice to look at but it was the integrated file transfer utility Kobold that was drawing the comments, swapping files around at astonishing speed.

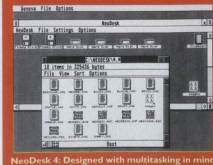
Also available was the new ExtenDOS CD-ROM software together with host adapter/cable and twin speed Apple 300 CD ROM drive at under £300.

CGS ComputerBild showed off their excellent range of graphics products including the new version of DA's Layout.

There were also some newcomers from Germany aimed at music lovers. Digit, a sample soundtracker and Music Mon ST, a soundchip synthesiser, both require a mono monitor and appear to be easy to use with English manuals and interfaces.

Titan Designs demonstrated the Graffiti genlock and Expose digitiser linked to a late beta version of the extremely impressive Chroma Studio 24 image editing and manipulation package.

Other exhibitors included Best Electronics selling spare parts, and Warpzone and 16/32 public domain libraries with a range of budget software, peripherals, and PD disks.



NeoDesk 4: Designed with multitasking in mind

News briefs

Gasteiner take CD

GASTEINER have been appointed UK distributor of Walnut Creek's GEMini CD-ROM disc mentioned in the news pages of our March issue.

It contains 2,872 files for Atari computers, taking up a massive 616Mb of storage space and costs £49.99. Among its contents are public domain and shareware programs and 50Mb of games. Tel: 081-345 6000

★ ★ ★

SCSI control

TOPLINK is a multi-function hard drive controller for all STs which features a SCSI controller for CD-ROM drives and a version supporting most popular SCSI hard disks.

Also offering support for the SyQuest 3.5in removable media drive, the device costs £59.99 from Gasteiner (081-345 6000), who distribute two Toshiba CD-ROM drives.

★ ★ ★

Publishing guide

DESKTOP Publishing for the Small Printer is Nexus Publishing's first guide to Atari computing.

It is aimed at convincing small printers who are still using old paste-up techniques to move on to new technology, as well as helping ST enthusiasts who are looking to buy new equipment.

The manual costs £14.95, and will be followed in due course by a communications tutorial. Tel: 0922 616358

★ ★ ★

One-stop buying

HEAVENLY Music Midi Software's new Desktop Music Division (0255 434217) aims to provide a one-stop buying point for musicians.

The firm say they will be offering complete desktop music packages from companies such as Roland, Yamaha, Twelve Tone Systems and Turtle Beach.

"Customers can get almost anything they need from sequencers and editors, cables and interfaces to sound cards and lots more at realistic prices," said a spokesman for the firm.

★ ★ ★

Jaguar expands

A $12.8 million investment by Time Warner in Atari Corporation will be used to expand Jaguar throughout the United States.

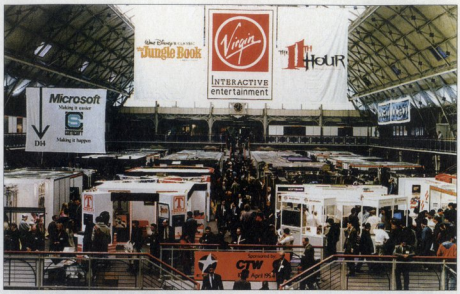
Time Warner's extra 1.5 million shares in Atari increases their interest in the firm from about 25 per cent to 27.5 per cent.

The deal is subject to regulatory clearance and other formalities.

★ ★ ★

On sale

WATCH out for the July issue – on sale at a newsagent near you from June 13.



ECTS: Atari pick up Jaguar award at leading trade show

Jaguar picks up top award

JAGUAR has picked up another prestigious award – this time Best Hardware at Europe's leading electronic entertainment trade show, ECTS.

It was one of 18 awards voted on by a panel of magazine editors and consumers from across Britain and mainland Europe, and follows a string of awards in the US.

Atari used the show itself to demonstrate the revolutionary games console and somes software titles under development. But one of the firm's main reasons for attending was to attract new developers, which company spokesman Peter Walker claims was achieved.

He said a meeting for interested people in a nearby hotel after the actual show attracted more than 100 software makers, and judged it a great success.

Losses continue at Atari

ATARI continue to lose money, although the cash shortfall for the 1993 financial year was cut to $48.9 million compared to $73.6 million in the previous year.

But during the same period sales fell considerably, from $127.3 million in 1992 to just $28.8 million.

Atari are disappointed at the magnitude of their losses, but believe they have completed the transition from old technology products and have consolidated their world operations.

The firm's president, Sam Tramiel, has warned of further losses. "In addition to the initial launch markets of New York and San Francisco, we have now introduced Jaguar in Los Angeles," he said.

"As availability of Jaguar hardware and software increases, we will broaden our distribution throughout the United States.

"As a result of increased spending for marketing activities and until such time as shipments of Jaguar products are made in substantial volume, we do not expect to achieve profitability."

Meanwhile, long-time Atari rival Commodore are facing their own cash crisis and continue to trade in negative equity.

They warned recently that unless they receive financial backing they could be forced into reorganisation or liquidation proceedings.

DIARY DATES

May 28-29, 1994
Spotlight '94
Venue: Novotel Hotel, Hammersmith
Organiser: Gasteiner
(081-345 6000)
The organisers promise exhibitors will be showing new ST and Falcon products.

September 20-25, 1994
Live '94
Venue: Earls Court
Organiser: News International
(071-782 6893)
Some players in the electronic entertainment industry have pledged their support for this large consumer electronics show.

October 6-9, 1994
BBC Big Bash
Venue: NEC, Birmingham
Organiser: Haymarket Exhibitions
The Future World area of this big show will contain the latest computer games and virtual reality.

October 26-30, 1994
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CHAOS STRIKES BACK
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IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE
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D/S = requires double sided disk drive
+ = NEW Item

ATARI ST GAMES SELECTION

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CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING 6.99
CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 93/94 D/S (1 MEG) 16.99
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(93/94 + UPDATE DISK) D/S (1 MEG) 21.49
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Euro News

Networked straight through the Channel Tunnel, Don Maple's news from the Continent

More beeping craziness

FOLLOWING the success of Crazy Sounds, Maxon have just released a considerably improved version which enables users to assign sounds to virtually all aspects of everyday computer use.

GEM events such as opening a window, pressing a key and printing text can all sound an audible effect of your choice. You can even tie a sound to a timer, starting up a program or clicking on OK/Cancel alert box buttons.

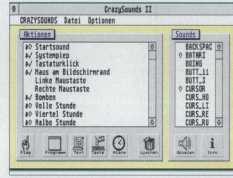
The program is not all play – it has its useful side too. Crazy Sounds has a built-in time announcer and you can set its internal alarms to remind you of things with a short message.

The sounds used are basically samples and can contain anything you wish from sound effects and speech, to music and sampled TV shows.

There are two folders with many default sounds contained in both 8-bit and 16-bit versions.

You can also use sounds from Macintosh and Windows programs after you've converted them with the supplied CONVERT.PRG program.

It comes on three disks and includes an accessory to modify the settings and a multitude of samples.



Crazy Sounds: Assign sounds to everyday computer use

The program runs on all ST, STe, TT and Falcon computers but needs a minimum of 1Mb of RAM and TOS 1.04 or higher.

Crazy Sounds II is available from Maxon, Industriestr.26, 65760 Eschborn, Germany for DM79 (about £32).

Seeing double

AS ITS name suggests the Merge module for Calamus S and SL merges two images into one. In addition to the images, you can specify a mask indicating how the pictures are to be combined.In this way only portions of the images can be merged. The result can be a greyscale, RGB or CMYK image. All colours can be individually adjusted and only certain colours can be merged.

The module also previews the colour-separated image. Merge costs DM400 (£160 pounds) from Adequate Systems, Am Steinern Kreuz 19, 64297 Darmstadt, Germany.

Eurotalk

● **CD FEVER** in Germany continues as another new Atari CD is announced. *STE Power CD Volume 1* contains 600Mb of software for ST/E, TT and the Falcon.

The Falcon folder contains 350 files from about 9,000 on the whole CD. It is in ISO 9660 format and can be had at a limited introductory price of DM30 (about £12).

After May 15 the price goes up to DM43 (about £17) and can be bought from Michael Wehner, Ostpreussen Strasse.10, 35460 Staufenberg, Germany.

● **DESPITE** the postponement of the official European Jaguar introduction until the summer, German gamesters have already been buying their big cats.

The biggest mail order chain, called Quelle ('source' in English), have been shipping Jaguars for several weeks now.

The Jaguar appeared in their catalogue earlier this year and is the genuine PAL model, not an NTSC import.

For the lucky UK owners, here are the Cybermorph level codes: 1: 1008, 2: 1328, 3: 9325, 4: 9216, 5: 3444 and X: 6009.

● **AND** finally, an amusing titbit from the CeBIT show. The well known Intel campaign with the 'Intel inside' stickers has been countered in Germany with a grass roots 'Intel OUTside' sticker which Atari fans have been producing in large numbers and sticking to their computers.

Seeing these stickers, Intel representatives became very irate. However, the funniest bit was in a CeBIT toilet cubicle where a genuine 'Intel inside' was seen firmly stuck to the toilet seat cover...

Bugs on the run from system monitor

THIS month we turn to programming. SysMon is the most popular PD/shareware system monitor in Germany and is now appearing in version 1.0.9 which also runs on the Falcon and under MultiTOS.

A system monitor is used to track down program bugs by – as its name implies – monitoring the system behaviour during program execution.

SysMon is very powerful and can be used to keep track of all system resources from memory and system calls - AES, GEMDOS and (X)BIOS - to vectors and even Line-A.

The monitor installs itself and remains resident until invoked. It uses a separate hidden screen so that the original screen is unaffected.

PD of the month

The monitor screen, invoked with Right-shift/Help, is character-based, despite its GEM-like appearance with text menus and windows.

SysMon will single-step and output to screen, file or printer. The unregistered version is limited in that only one Trap can be traced.

The program is unusually priced in that it costs DM50 (about £20) for private use but DM100 (about £40) for commercial use.

Available from the author: Karsten Isakovic, Wilmersdorfer Strasse 82, 10629 Berlin, Germany.

System Solutions

Computers

520 STFM - 1Mb	£199
520 STFM - 2Mb	£249
520 STFM - 4Mb	£299
TT 030 - 32Mhz	£Call
MegaSTE 2Mb/16Mhz	£399

Special Purchase - Limited stock.

Monochrome Monitors

The award winning SM14 is a perfect replacement for the Atari SM124/5 monochrome monitors: it exceeds Atari's original specifications. The 14" high resolution, paperwhite FST (Flatter, Squarer Tube), gives a perfectly centred, crisp, sharp image without blurring at the edges.
The SM14 comes without, and the SM14s with, a speaker. The SM14f is for the Falcon. A Tilt and Swivel stand comes as standard.

The special version for STfm/Mega ST installed with Overscan, the screen enhancer, gives a 40% bigger display.
All monitors come as a plug-in-and-go unit, complete with Atari plug, and no adaptors are necessary.

"Essential Buy, 90%"
ST Review, May 93

without audio	SM14/f	£129.95
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The Falcon is fast becoming the preferred choice for 8 track digital recording, with powerful programmes such as Cubase Audio using it to its full potential. The DSP chip opens up a whole new world of Sound and Graphics. System Solutions now supply 32Mhz Falcon 030 computers from stock.
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MagiX - Multitasking Operating System

Definitely the most exciting product this year is **MagiX** - Multitasking Operating System. Written by the same programmers that brought you NVDI and the replacement desktop EOS, **MagiX** is likely to become the standard by which all other Atari operating systems are judged.
MagiX runs on all Atari ST/STe/Mega and TT computers with 512Kb, but 2Mb Ram is recommended for a useful working system. Not only does this system run several programs at the same time, but it has been so highly optimised that running one application under **MagiX** is actually faster than under normal TOS. The Falcon version is promised for later in the year.
Also available is the lightning fast file manager **Kobold**.

MagiX	£59.95
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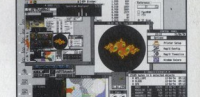

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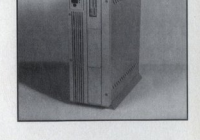

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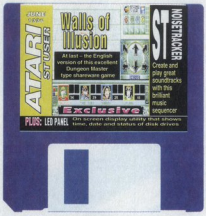
ATARI WORKSHOP



Check out this month's game offering, Walls of Illusion, or try your hand at creating a musical masterpeice with ST NoiseTracker. Plus several utilities to make your ST easier to use

COVER disk

Press the button to open the door, but be careful, you never know what's behind it waiting to tear your head off

Walls of Illusion

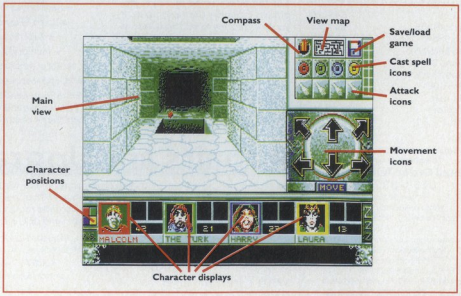
Wander down mysterious corridors and battle with devious denizens in this brilliant Dungeon Master-type game

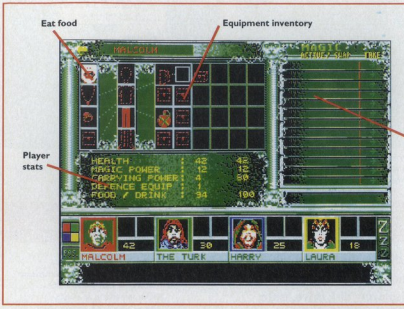
By: Harald Breitmaier and Heinz Munter
Configuration: All STs with 1Mb or more - Low resolution
Filenames: X_WOI1.TOS, X_WOI2.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 655360 (X_WOI_1.TOS), 219136 (X_WOI_2.TOS) bytes
Start program with: WOI.PRG

THERE can't be many ST owners who haven't heard of Dungeon Master. Its first-person perspective and atmospheric graphics together with its sound effects, all added to the excellent gameplay to create what has become one of the most cloned games around.

Asking around the office for a few opinions on the game soon led to a major nostalgia trip among the *Atari ST User* crew as well as our *Amiga Computing* counterparts. Tales of horrendously late nights and nearly broken marriages were just a couple of the discussions heard from some of the DM veterans.

Of course, it was inevitable that such a successful game would lead to a myriad of wanna'-bes madly scrambling onto the proverbial bandwagon. Even today, some new releases





on other formats are still trying to recapture the same success DM achieved.

Walls of Illusion is one such clone and brings the monster-filled passageways and tense exploration back onto the ST scene again. This demo version gives you a smaller playing field to the registered one, for which you can send off to the address listed in the documentation file on the disk (DOC.PRG), but there are still lots of places to wander and lots of monsters to bash. The registration fee is DM28 for the English version – about £12.

To extract the files, copy X_WOI1.TOS and X_WOI2.TOS to separate blank disks and run each one. After the extraction processes have finished, delete the X_WOI... files and transfer all remaining files onto one disk. Those familiar with Dungeon Master will have no trouble

Behind every closed door a nasty monster may lurk. These guys are particularly nasty

getting to grips with the control method. You control four characters by clicking on the arrow icons or using the keyboard.

You can move forwards and backwards as well as turning on the spot and stepping to the left or right. The ideal way to play the game is to have one hand on the mouse to select the attack icons while your free hand uses the keyboard to move your characters.

This allows you to stay one step ahead of any monsters by quickly attacking and then moving before they can counterattack, which is much safer than standing still and battling it out.

At the start of the game you have no weapons or armour but you will find a couple of daggers and a sword on the floor when you start and there is some leather armour available nearby.

There are also various magic scrolls which you can pick up. Once collected, you can cast the spell by clicking on the appropriate colour icon of the player who has the scroll to cast it.

If you are one of those rare people who are not familiar with this game, check out the icon guide for a description of the game controls.

You find signs dotted here and there on your travels. Be sure to click on them to read the message. It may contain clues or a warning

For all you people who hate drawing maps, Walls of Illusion features a simple automatic mapping facility (hurrah!)

Written a program?

Then send it to *Atari ST User* – we pay £££s for quality CoverDisk submissions

Using the CoverDisk

Write-protect your CoverDisk now by sliding the write-protect tab so you can see through the hole at the top right corner of the CoverDisk.

In order to fill the disk with as many programs as possible, ST User employs disk compression techniques when placing large programs on the CoverDisk.

These files are termed "archived files" and cannot be directly executed from the CoverDisk. Archived files are identified by their names beginning with X_.

Any files that do not begin with X_ are actually folders containing files which are not compressed.

These uncompressed files should also be copied to a blank disk. Following are a series of step-by-step instructions for using the CoverDisk.

Important: The ST User CoverDisk uses an extended format of 10 sectors and 81 tracks to increase storage space. This means you will not be able to copy the disk using the ST's built-in copying feature.

To make a backup of the CoverDisk, you will need a copying utility, such as FastCopy 3. Such utilities are available from all good PD libraries.

Alternatively, you may use a formatting utility, to format a disk to the same 10 sector, 82 track specification as the CoverDisk and simply copy all files to this.

Using archived files

Note: When copying files, the ST refers to disk A and disk B in its on-screen instructions. Disk A refers to the disk being copied while disk B refers to the disk being copied to (usually a pre-formatted blank disk).

1. Format a disk.
2. Copy the required archived file to the formatted disk.
3. Run the copied archived file. It will now automatically "extract" to its full size.
4. Once complete, delete the X_ filename as this is no longer required. The formatted disk should now contain all the files that were in the archive file.

Normal uncompressed files

1. Format a blank disk
2. Open the required folder and copy all files in the folder to the formatted disk.
3. You can now immediately run the program/s as is.

Highlighting and dragging files and icons

1. Click once on the item, it should turn black (the item is now highlighted).
2. If you keep the left mouse button held down on the item, a dotted outline of the item appears and you may then re-position it by moving the mouse to the required position (effectively dragging the icon) and releasing the mouse button.

If you are new to the ST and did not understand some of the terminology in the preceding steps. There now follow an explanation of some basic techniques needed.

Formatting a disk

1. Place the disk to be formatted in the drive.
2. Highlight the drive A icon.
3. Move mouse pointer up to the FILE menu at the top of the screen and select FORMAT.
4. A box will appear. Click on OK.
5. Another box will appear. Ensure DOUBLE SIDED is selected then click on OK. The disk is now being formatted.

Copying files to another disk

1. Select the file to be copied by highlighting it and dragging it to the disk B icon.
2. A box entitled COPY FILE(s) appears. Click on OK and follow instructions on the screen exchanging disks as requested.

Antibomb

Confused by those silly bombs that appear when your ST crashes? Antibomb will replace them with a dialogue box and text error message

By: Greg Baker
Configuration: All STs - All resolutions
Filenames: X_ANTIBM.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 35840 bytes
Start program with: ANTIBOMB.PRG in AUTO folder

IT'S happened to all of us. There you are, working away at your ST when, all of a sudden, those infamous bombs appear on screen followed by a total lock-up of the computer.

This in itself is annoying, but to rub salt in the wound, you are left totally in the dark as to what exactly the error was. Well, fret no more, as Antibomb comes to the rescue to shed light on the disastrous event.

Once installed, Antibomb will spring to life if an 'exception' – the technical term for an interruption in the normal computer process – occurs. Instead of the rather useless and uninformative routine which prints those damned bombs, Antibomb will display a dialogue box with a text description of the error which occurred.

You then have the option of continuing, performing a warmstart (similar to pressing reset) or a coldboot (just like switching off your ST).

Verify

Speed up your disk drive's performance with this small but useful program

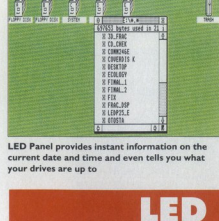
By: Articulate Software
Configuration: All STs - All resolutions
Filenames: X_VERIFY.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 11264 bytes
Start program with: VERIFY.PRG

EVERY time your ST writes information to a disk drive, it performs a verify function to ensure that the information was written correctly.

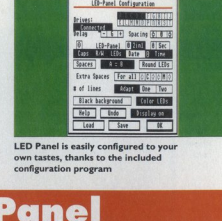
This may be a sensible measure, but it is very rare that a problem will occur during writing because the majority of floppy and hard disk drives are extremely reliable with the quality of disks today.

Verify gives you the choice of de-activating the verify function, thereby effectively doubling the speed of the writing process. Simply execute the VERIFY.PRG program and you will be asked whether you want verification on or off.

Alternatively, if you want to have verification off all the time, you can copy the AUTOVRFY.PRG program into your AUTO folder.



LED Panel provides instant information on the current date and time and even tells you what your drives are up to



LED Panel is easily configured to your own tastes, thanks to the included configuration program

LED Panel

A neat utility which provides an information panel at the top of the screen displaying disk drive, time, date and Capslock status

By: Christoph Zwerschke
Configuration: All STs - All resolutions
Filenames: X_LEDPNL.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 81070 bytes
Start program with: LEDPANEL.PRG in AUTO folder

PROGRAMS that display the time and date at the top right of the menu bar are pretty common, you might be thinking. But LED Panel also features a row of LED lights which show exactly what your drives are doing.

For example, if you are copying a file from one drive to another, the LEDs will light up to show the activity. At the same time, LED Panel will display the letter W or R, showing whether access to the drive is due to a reading or writing operation. The status of the Capslock key is up there too.

You can configure LED Panel to your tastes with the CONFIG.PRG program which lets you specify such things as which drives to keep track of and how the information is displayed.

ST-NoiseTracker

Create great sampled soundtracks with this excellent ST sequencer

By: Dr Satan
Configuration: All STs - Low resolution
Filenames: X_NOISE1.TOS, X_NOISE2.TOS - Self-extracting archives
Disk space required to extract: 202752 (X_NOISE1.TOS), 366592 (X_NOISE2.TOS) bytes
Start program with: NOISE_15.PRG

CREATING your own musical score using sampled sounds of real instruments is easy with this excellent sequencer utility. In fact, things are made even easier for you if you read our three-page feature on tracker programs for the ST starting on page 26.

The NoiseTracker files have been split into two archive files because of the space they take up. X_NOISE1.TOS contains the main program and some sampled files and X_NOISE2.TOS has a couple of example MOD files for you to load and play.

RDE RAMdisk problem

Sincere apologies to all you frustrated readers trying to get the RDE RAMdisk utility (April Issue CoverDisk) to run. The initial excuses behind the problem, which results in a TOS error 35 when trying to run the RDE.PRG program, are quite complex, involving sunspots, UFOs and alien abductions. However, after lengthy and painful torture, we finally got the truth from the person responsible, and it's quite sad and not half as exciting.

It seems the RDE utility was test extracted to a hard disk, at which point the tester was called away from the machine to deal with an enquiry. On his return, the usual 'Press any key' prompt was there, so a successful extraction seemed to have occured.

After pressing a key and preparing to test run the program, the tester was again called away to answer another enquiry. This time when the tester got back he found that someone had used the machine and had changed the directory in search of another file.

The tester therefore had to locate the freshly extracted files to finish the test run. After a global search, courtesy of the TOS 2.06 search facility over four partitions, the tester found an RDE directory and ran the program successfully.

Unfortunately, there were two RDE directories on the hard drive, each in a different partition and it seems the global search found the original unarchived version first instead of the second (and faulty) RDE directory created during the test extraction.

As you can see, a sad and sorry story indeed. The tester has since been approached by Steven Spielberg regarding the aforementioned excuses given first and is entirely basing his next UFO film – Majestic – on them.

DC Max Track

Check out just how many tracks your disk drive can format to, with this useful program

By: Michael B Vederman
Configuration: All STs - All resolutions
Filenames: X_DCMAX.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 15360 bytes
Start program with: DCMAXTRK.PRG

IF YOU format a double-sided disk using the ST's built-in formatting routine, you will get a disk with approximately 720k of free space on it. The ST formats each disk to 80 tracks, usually numbered 0 to 79 with each track containing nine sectors.

Some time ago a knowledgeable programmer sussed out that you can actually tell the hardware how many tracks and sectors it should format a disk to. This resulted in the plethora of 'custom formatters' now available in the public domain, which allow you to format disks using 10 or 11 sectors per track and up to 83 tracks.

However, using too high a number of tracks and sectors can result in unreliable disks. Ten sectors per track is the commonly used value but the number of tracks to which you can format to is dependent on what model of drive you have.

This led to some problems with certain games during the early years of the ST. To prevent piracy, many software houses put software protection on the disk which standard disk copiers could not duplicate. Usually, this "software security" was stored on the higher tracks, such as track 82. Unfortunately, some drives were not capable of reading these higher tracks and therefore caused loading errors.

So how do you find out how many tracks your drive can read? After running the program, click on the Test It! button and it will begin to continually write and verify high tracks. After the process has finished, it will display a maximum track figure to which you can format your disks.

Remember, the number displayed is the actual number of tracks, not the track number, which you should enter in your disk formatting utility.

DC Show It

Replace the boring and featureless Show Document facility from the ST's Desktop with this much more useful utility

By: Michael B Vederman
Configuration: All STs with TOS 1.6 or lower - All resolutions
Filenames: X_DCSHOW.TOS - Self-extracting archive
Disk space required to extract: 20480 bytes
Start program with: DCSHOWIT.PRG in AUTO folder

WHENEVER you click on a file which is not executable, you get the familiar option to Show or Print the selected file, most commonly used for quickly viewing text files which may be on a disk.

The problem with this built-in facility is that it is totally lacking in basic controls. For instance, you are restricted to scrolling forwards through the document a line or page at a time without the ability to scroll back should you have missed something. Putting DC Show It in your AUTO folder will totally replace the ST's built-in routine and offer many more features for viewing text files.

These include the ability to scroll through the document a page or line at a time in both directions using the arrow keys, a search facility and even a print-page facility.

```
DC DESKTOP is an incredible enhancement for the GEM DESKTOP that supplements
and replaces certain GEM DESKTOP routines in super fast super small assembly
language.

DC SHOWIT is a _complete_ replacement for the GEM desktop 'SHOW' routine
which is used to 'type' files to the screen.

The unique feature about DC SHOWIT is that you never need to perform an
'Install Application' for DC SHOWIT to be called.  In other words, DC SHOWIT
gets loaded once from the AUTO folder, and when you click on 'SHOW,' it is
called instead of the systems SHOW routine.

DC SHOWIT views regular ASCII files and NEO and _uncompressed_ DEGAS
pictures.  Simply double click on the file/picture you wish to view and then
click on 'SHOW' from the system dialog box.

When viewing a picture, press either mouse button or any key to exit.

Press the HELP key when viewing a TEXT file for all available commands.

TO INSTALL DC SHOWIT, SIMPLY COPY IT TO YOUR AUTO FOLDER.

**********************************************************************
File: DCSHOWIT.DOC Len: 4542   Tab: 4  DC SHOWIT by Mike Vederman (C) 1989 DCS
```

Replace the ST's featureless show document facility with this much more versatile utility which makes viewing files from the desktop much easier

```
Up line         :   Up arrow
                :   (BACKSPACE)
                :   RIGHT mouse button
Down line       :   Down arrow
                :   (RETURN)
                :   LEFT mouse button
Up page         :   (SHIFT) + up arrow
Down page       :   (SPACE)
                :   (SHIFT) + down arrow
Down 1/2 page   :   (D) key
Up 1/2 page     :   (U) key
Top of file     :   (T) key
Bottom of file  :   (B) key
Print page      :   (P) key
Cancel Print    :   (UNDO)
                :   (Q) key
Search          :   (S) key
Next match      :   (N) key
Tab width  -1   :   LEFT arrow
           +1   :   RIGHT arrow
Quit View       :   (UNDO)
                :   (Q) key
                :   BOTH mouse buttons

Press any key to continue
```

Show It even has a help facility to remind you of the function of the various keys

CoverDisk Hotline

Hotline number: 0625 859766,
2pm to 5pm every Wednesday.

If you have any other problems with the CoverDisk, our technical editor, Darren Evans, will be available on the *Atari ST User* CoverDisk Hotline. Help is only available within the times specified, and no advice will be available outside these hours.

If a fault turns up...

With thousands of disks being duplicated each month, a few will inevitably be faulty. Fortunately, we can help you. Send the faulty disk to:

PC Wise, Dowlais Top Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan CF48 2YY.

A replacement will be sent free of charge but please allow 28 days for delivery.

Full speed ahead

Darren Evans looks at some of the software and hardware available that can turn your ST into a real speed demon

The desire to make a computer go faster is common to both the largest computer corporations and the humblest of home computer users.

The big computer manufacturers spend millions on research and development in order to improve their technology and to make it outperform their competitors' hardware, while the home user will probably base a buying decision on the performance difference between the products on,offer.

However, for those of us already with an ST, there are affordable ways of getting an extra burst of performance out of it. You don't even have to splash out on expensive hardware to get respectable results, as there are software packages which can help.

Such speed enhancing products are generally termed accelerators, be they software or hardware, and they can make a significant difference to your computing life, whether it's at work or play.

Hardware accelerators are the more expensive but they do provide an increase in overall operating speed from drawing graphics to performing calculations and even accessing memory. Software accelerators usually work to speed up the graphics of the operating system by replacing the internal graphics routines of the operating system with custom written routines that work faster.

It's common knowledge among many ST owners that the ST's operating system has been written in a language called C. The C language is one of the most widely used languages in the world because it is extremely portable between different computers, making for fast development times, and therefore resulting in lower development costs.

It was instrumental in making the ST so affordable, considering the hardware it contained (a then expensive Motorola 68000).

SLOW

C does produce relatively slow programs compared to specially written assembler routines, but writing a complete operating system in assembler is time consuming and expensive.

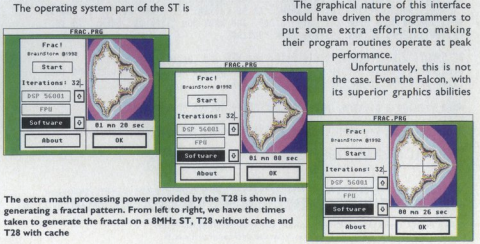
Thus the trade-off is between the quick, low cost development times against and the faster, optimised performance of an operating system written in assembler.

The operating system part of the ST is what provides you with a friendly interface to the complex inner workings that make up your computer. As soon as you switch on your ST, you are faced with the ST's desktop, which is a specially written program that allows you to easily execute and manipulate program and data files via a graphical user interface (GUI).

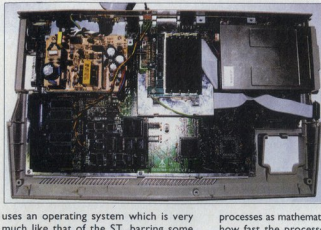
Drilling a hole in the ST's case is required to fit the T28 switch. This allows you to change between normal 8MHz, T28 with cache and without modes

The graphical nature of this interface should have driven the programmers to put some extra effort into making their program routines operate at peak performance.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. Even the Falcon, with its superior graphics abilities



The extra math processing power provided by the T28 is shown in generating a fractal pattern. From left to right, we have the times taken to generate the fractal on a 8MHz ST, T28 without cache and T28 with cache



The T28 fits neatly under the keyboard position (conveniently removed here). Your ST's motherboard may look different

uses an operating system which is very much like that of the ST, barring some additional features, and it doesn't really take full advantage of the 68030 which is vastly superior to the 68000.

The Falcon's extra graphics modes include the ability to use a desktop with between 2 and 32,000 plus colours, so it is surprising that no attempt to re-write the graphics routines has been made.

Those using a Falcon will no doubt have experienced a slowing down of the desktop as you use higher colours for the screen modes. This may not be such a vast problem when using the desktop, but when it comes to using such packages as DTP programs, where a quick and responsive working environment is essential for fast productivity, it becomes much more of a problem.

Fortunately, there are some pretty clever and talented programmers and hardware bods out there who are aware of this and have written and developed software and hardware to improve things.

SOFTWARE

So, let's turn to what you can do to improve your computing life and, more importantly, how much it costs. First, we will look at the lower priced method of boosting your ST's performance, achieved through software means.

There are two main contenders in this area, NVDI, sold by System Solutions and Warp 9, developed by CodeHead Technologies in the USA and distributed this side of the big pond by The ST Club.

Both utilities work on the same principle in that they replace the ST's graphics routines, known collectively as the Virtual Device Interface, or VDI routines, with their own code, written specifically to execute faster.

This makes for a surprising increase in speed and shows how slow the VDI routines are. Just check out the test results for NVDI and Warp 9 and judge for yourself. An important distinction between hardware and software accelerators must be understood when deciding which to splash out on. Software accelerators will only speed up the execution of operating system routines and will have no effect on the actual speed at which the computer's hardware operates.

The hardware speed of a standard ST is 8MHz. This figure essentially determines how fast the processor executes each instruction. A software accelerator, which is only affecting the speed of the graphics routines, will have no effect on such processes as mathematical calculations, or how fast the processor can access the ST's memory.

So, those of you who may be speculating that NVDI or Warp 9 will speed up the rendering times of your favourite raytracing package will be disappointed.

But if your package uses a GEM interface, it will obviously benefit from faster screen updates when using the menus and windows and other VDI grahic processes.

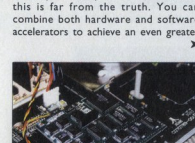
In terms of performance between NVDI and Warp 9, the results speak for themselves. Warp 9 does offer extra utilities over NVDI, it is cheaper and it does provide a good increase in speed, but in the end, you are no doubt buying an accelerator for maximum performance, and NVDI clearly has the edge here.

On a more cosmetic note, NVDI comes with an installation utility which handles copying of the required files to appropriate directories such as the AUTO folder and even takes care of the ASSIGN.SYS file and the fonts, an area which many inexperienced users will have problems with.

Warp 9, on the other hand, requires that you copy its files – and create the required folders if they are absent – manually. Not very important in terms of performance, but nevertheless, NVDI is much easier to install.

Before we move on to the more expensive hardware accelerators, there is one more vitally important aspect with regards to software accelerators which may affect your buying decision.

It is tempting to think of hardware accelerators and their software counterparts purely as alternative options to speeding up your computer. In other words, you can buy one or the other. But this is far from the truth. You can combine both hardware and software accelerators to achieve an even greater ➤

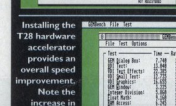


That big square chip at top right of the T28 is the faster 68000. The other components on the board also include a 64k cache

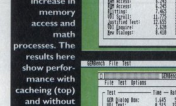
The benchmarks

The test results shown here were measured using Gembench v3.40, written by Ofir Gal. The utility is available as shareware and anyone wishing to register for the latest versions should contact Ofir at 3 Downs Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 2JY. Alternatively, he may be contacted via email at ogal@cix.compulink.co.uk

Software accelerators such as NVDI (left) and Warp 9(below) can make a huge difference to graphics performance



Installing the T28 hardware accelerator provides an overall speed improvement. Note the increase in memory access and math processes. The results here show performance with cacheing (top) and without (right)



Combining NVDI (left) and Warp 9 (below) with the T28 gives an even more impressive boost to the speed

performance increase than you would get with them as separately installed entities. As can be seen from the test results, the added performance is quite astonishing.

The hardware accelerator alternative, although more expensive than the software, does provide a more powerful and widespread increase in performance.

As mentioned earlier, the software versions only operate on the GEM graphics routines and do not actually increase the speed at which the computer operates.

But the T28, from System Solutions, once installed, will increase the relatively sedate speed of a standard 8MHz ST to a much more respectable 28MHz. At the moment, the T28 is only available for the ST, STFM and Mega ST. However, there may be STE versions in the pipeline soon.

INTEREST

This hefty 28MHz jump results in all areas of processing in your ST operating at much higher speeds than normal, which is of special interest to those of you who use processor intensive graphics packages such as raytracing and computer aided design (CAD) programs.

The heavy use of maths routines slows things down quite dramatically. But with the T28 installed, the maths processing is operating at a much higher rate and therefore results in the expected increase in calculating power.

As with the combination of software accelerators mentioned earlier, the same is true of computers which can take a floating point co-processor, such as the Mega ST range. Adding this little beauty will again speed things up considerably, providing the programs you are using are written to take advantage of it.

The actual T28 board is extremely compact, measuring a neat 95mm x 79mm, which is essential as the space within a ST or STFM is rather sparse to say the least.

The board features an enhanced 68000 which is rated at a faster speed than the 68000 already in your ST. There is also an on board 64k cache which further improves the processor's performance.

The board is fitted by simply plugging it into the 68000 socket once the current chip has been removed. But the ST range of computers does suffer from having numerous versions of the motherboard.

This means that the location of the 68000 may vary and is probably surface mounted. Attempting to remove a surface mounted component is not for the weak of heart (I say this from personal experience), and I strongly suggest you take advantage of the fitting service that System Solutions provide, which also includes full testing after fitting.

SWITCHING

The T28 also includes an external switch which is fitted externally to the ST's case (meaning you will need to drill a hole). This three-way switch allows you to change the mode of the T28 between normal (standard 8MHz) and the two accelerated modes, one with cacheing and one without.

In testing the T28 with such applications as Calamus SL and even with archiving programs (used extensively for our CoverDisks), the extra power of the T28 increased productivity tremendously.

It even outperformed my trusty 16MHz Mega STE and I am not looking forward to having to go back to the slower speed I can tell you.

Printing is another area which can benefit from acceleration software currently available. Two commercial programs which are useful in this area are Outburst and Multiprint. Outburst, from Douglas Communications, is the latest of the two and offers buffering and an improved print routine to replace the ST's built-in version.

This results in much faster printing and is essential for those of you who use DTP programs, as specific Calamus and PageStream drivers are included.

In a test with PageStream and a HP 500 colour printer, a document took in excess of seven minutes to print. When used with Outburst, the same document took just over three minutes.

Buffering utilities such as Multiprint work by sending data to a buffer where the much slower printer can access the data. This means that your ST is not kept idle while the printer tries to process the data, which is coming at a faster rate.

On the cheap

Useful increases in performance can also be gained through various utilities available both as shareware and PD from all good libraries. For example, there are many cache programs for both floppy and hard disks which will speed up data access between your computer and disk drive.

We have even put a neat utility called Verify on this month's CoverDisk. This little blighter gives you the option of turning off the write verify procedure.

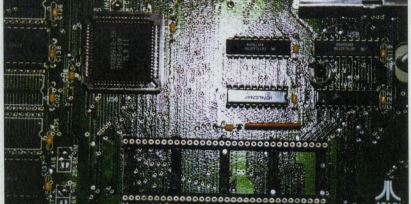
Write verify consists of reading all data after it is written in order to ensure it has been safely recorded. Although this is a wise precaution, with the quality of today's drives and floppy disks, it is quite unlikely that data will be corrupt.

Turning write verify off will double the speed of any writes to your disk drive. Not something to sneeze at. Of course, the risk, however small, is still there, so you will have to decide for yourself whether to use it or not.

There are also various alternative desktops available, such as Terra Desktop, Kaosdesk and Gemini. These programs can increase performance as they can have useful features and much faster routines over those of the ST's desktop.

Even loading programs can be made faster by using some program packers, which squash programs to smaller sizes and thereby loading quicker, and also by simply setting the Fastload bit, a feature available in later TOS versions.

Formatting utilities will allow you to format a disk using an "interleave" method, which essentially means that your ST can find a sector more quickly than it could have done if you used the ST's built-in formatting facility.



Opening up the ST reveals the 68000's socket into which the T28 plugs. If your 68000 is surface mounted, it's advisable to let System Solutions fit the T28 for you

Where to get 'em

Product	Supplier	Price
T28	System Solutions (0753 818816)	£199.95
NVDI v2.5	System Solutions (0753 818816)	£49.95
Warp 9	The ST Club (0602 455250)	£24.95
Multiprint	The ST Club (0602 455250)	£9.95
Outburst	Douglas Communications (061-456 9587)	£19.95
MultiTOS	HiSoft (0525 718181)	£29.95
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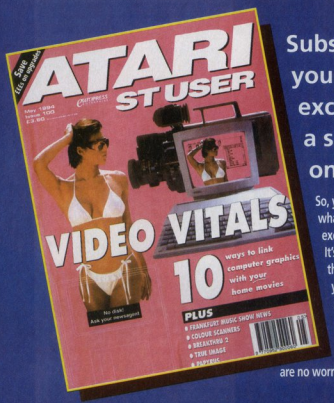

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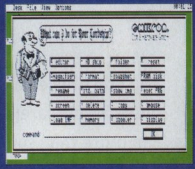

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Gamer, Atari ST User November 1992

Everything o

You don't necessarily have to pay the earth for a decent piece of software; very often PD or shareware offerings can more than suffice. Dave Cusick investigates

There is a tendency among computer users to assume that because a certain piece of software is more expensive than another, it is the better of the two. Often this is indeed the case; nobody would claim, for example, that £5 would get you a word processor rivalling Protext for sheer power and speed.

But that's not to say that there aren't PD and shareware programs capable of fulfilling all the needs of the average user in any given area.

Being realistic, there really is no point in shelling out a couple of hundred pounds for Protext if you only intend using it to write the occasional letter to the bank manager. Plenty of PD programs can provide the stylish and sophisticated look of a word processed letter without the enormous financial outlay.

Indeed, the chances are that whatever type of application you need, the public domain can offer something that fits the bill perfectly.

Graphics and video work, Midi music sequencing, spreadsheets and accounting programs are all available either for the price of a disk or, in the case of shareware, a small donation to the author.

Art and Graphics

Crack Art

Supplier: shareware (PD version free. For full registered version, send DM20 to Jan Borchers, Vititorwall 10, 3379 Coslar, Germany)

For some time there was a situation where, to get a really powerful ST art package, you'd have to pay £50 or more for either Deluxe Paint or CyberPaint.

That all changed with the release of a German shareware program that rivals both of these for sheer power, and in some areas even surpasses them.

The basic operation of the program is

Spreadsheets

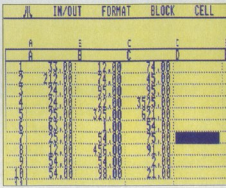
GEMCalc

Supplier: public domain

Spreadsheets can be handy for all sorts of calculations. GEMcalc offers up to 26 columns and 999 rows for entering your data. The name is perhaps a little misleading since the GEM actually stands for Gregor Englmayer, the author's name, and the program only has a partial ST GEM interface.

Nevertheless, it is quite straightforward to use and operates in both medium and high resolutions. The cursor can be moved around the spreadsheet with the arrow keys or the mouse, and the sliders at the edge of the window can also be used for scrolling around the spreadsheet.

As you would expect, text, numbers and expressions can be entered in the cells, and a wide range of mathematical functions are available. For those unfamiliar with spreadsheets, these functions allow you, for instance, to have one column containing the total of the numbers in two or more others. Adjust any one of the columns and all the others will adjust themselves



simple, with the right mouse button flicking between the workscreen and the menu screen. The menu features scores of options, and appears slightly bewildering at first.

However, the icons are all labelled and well designed, and the benefit of cramming them all on one screen is that there are no submenus to wander through to get at various features.

But perhaps the most stunning feature of Crack Art is the superb array of block manipulation options. These range from perspective changes to curling blocks of graphics around, and even wrapping graphics around cylinders (ideal for drawing things like drinks cans).

For these features alone, Crack Art is worth the registration fee. Although Crack Art is not GEM-based, you can still access desk accessories at any time from the main menu screen. You can also format disks and even perform virus tests from within the program.

The comprehensive menu screen from Crack Art

Far more powerful than the competition, Crack Art is an essential buy for any budding computer artist. Just one word of warning though; unless your German is considerably better than mine, I'd advise you to get hold of a copy with the translated English version of the documentation included.

Those who don't may have fun trying to work out how to use some of the more powerful functions.

n the cheap

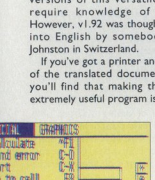
The colour scheme may be grotesque, but GEMcalc is considerably more powerful than some commercial offerings

accordingly, making number crunching extremely easy.

GEMcalc supports graphics; you can produce pie charts, linear plots, strips, stacks, and so on. You can also give your spreadsheet a password for protection.

Originally written in German, the latest versions of this versatile program still require knowledge of the language. However, v1.92 was thoughtfully translated into English by somebody called Britt Johnston in Switzerland.

If you've got a printer and can get a copy of the translated documention on paper you'll find that making the most of this extremely useful program is even easier.

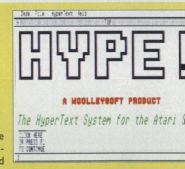


Spreadsheets make number crunching a simple task

Presentations

Hype!

Supplier: shareware; demo is PD. Full version with no restrictions costs £19.95 from WoolleySoft, Humblesknowe Cottage, Ramoyle, Dunblane, Perthshire FK15 0BA



Introducing Hype!, a versatile and potential very useful program

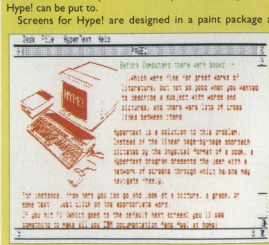
Increasingly in the last few years we have seen a move towards interactivity in the field of computer presentations, such as informative computer-based multimedia guides.

You could be forgiven for thinking that to produce something like this, a great deal of programming skill and an expensive PC with multimedia authoring software would be needed. In fact, that's not the case at all – all that's needed is your ST and a copy of Hype!.

For the uninitiated, the idea of hypertext systems such as Hype! is that you can access different screens of information not in the standard linear page-by-page approach, but in whatever order you choose by clicking on different keywords of the screen. Sampled sounds and music can even be linked in as well.

This system can be put to a variety of applications. For example, imagine an interactive tour of a farm. Clicking on a picture of a cow could bring up a page of information and play an appropriate sound effect. The educational possibilities of this sort of program are practically endless. A full tutorial in the form of a presentation is provided and gives a few ideas for the kind of applications that Hype! can be put to.

Screens for Hype! are designed in a paint package and then imported into the construction program from where the entire presentation is saved as a script. The demo version only allows the inclusion of up to six screens in any one script, but registered users get the full unrestricted version.



Pictures and text can be combined with ease to create attractive presentations

Hype! is quite easy to use, being GEM-based, although if you become annoyed with the menu and scroll-bars you can use it in full-screen mode without them. With a little thought and effort, some impressive and educational presentations can be produced.

Word processing

First Word

Supplier: public domain

The grandfather of ST word processors, First Word was long bundled with all new ST computers and has been available in the public domain for what seems like an eternity.

There have been scores of programs which have sought to emulate its simplicity and user-friendliness, but that First Word has remained the firm favourite of thousands of users is surely confirmation that it deserves to go down in the annals of ST history.

Perhaps the beauty of the program is that it combines a wysiwyg (What You See Is What You Get) display with a fairly speedy screen update and a stunningly easy-to-operate GEM-based interface. A row of boxes across the bottom of the screen activate various text styles such as bold or italic when clicked on, although experienced users will prefer using the function keys to save time.

Menus allow access to a justification option and an on-line help facility, with block editing options and a find and replace feature also available.

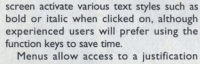
This intuitive interface makes First Word simple for even a novice to master, meaning that anybody from schoolchildren to those just unfamiliar with computers can produce smart-looking documents in the minimum of time.

If you're looking for something packing a little bit more power you want to retain the simplicity and feel of First Word, its commercially available big brother First Word Plus can still be found, although it'll cost you about £40.

First Word+ has two main improvements; a spelling checker and a mail merge facility. The former is possibly the single most useful feature a word processor can have, while the latter is a godsend for either those with businesses or younger users with parents who make them write hordes of thank you-letters every Christmas.

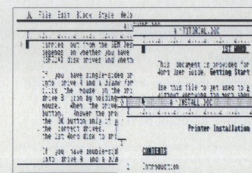
It enables you to write a template letter and then print as many copies as you like, each subtly changed to include the correct name, address, and other details pertaining to the person the letter is for.

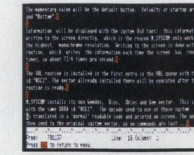
While it certainly isn't the most sophisticated program around, FW is nevertheless ideal for newcomers to the ST scene and those with only occasional word processing needs.



Simple but extremely effective, First Word is an age-old favourite

Basic text styles such as italic and bold are easily incorporated into documents





ST Writer may not be anything special to look at, but it is quite speedy in use

ST Writer Elite

Supplier: public domain

For those looking more for speed and functionality than ease of use, ST Writer Elite is ideal. You don't get a wysiwyg display, but in return for this trade off, the whole program runs significantly faster than First Word.

As a result, it is far more suited to coping with long documents. You can still preview the page layout before printing to check it is to your satisfaction.

Like First Word, output is through your standard printer fonts, with bold, light and italic styles available. Here though, you can also print out in two columns if you desire.

The emphasis is on functionality; you won't find ST Writer Elite attractive to look at and there's little chance that younger users in particular will be eager to get to grips with the system of using control code characters to set printing options from within the text.

That said, however, once you have become familiar with its slightly idiosyncratic interface you'll probably find it more versatile than First Word.

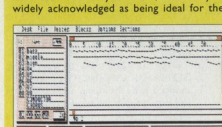
Essentially then, which of the two programs you opt for really depends on what role to intend to employ your ST in and exactly who will be using the machine most.

Music

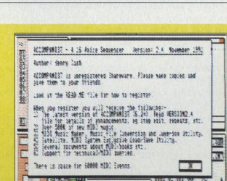
Accompanist

Supplier: shareware; PD version free. For registered latest version send £10 to Henry Cosh, 31 Dukes Wood, Crowthorne RG11 6NF)

Professional recording studios everywhere have used STs for years now, since they're widely acknowledged as being ideal for the task with their built-in Midi sockets and impressive range of powerful sequencing packages.



A selection of classics is provided on the Accompanist disk



Sequencing need not be the exclusive domain of the rich – just get hold of Accompanist

But you don't have to splash out several hundred pounds on Notator or Cubase to be able to have a bash at this sort of thing in your own home.

Accompanist is a 16-track Midi sequencer, ideal for those who have a Midi keyboard already and fancy dabbling in the ST music scene.

Sixteen tracks are more than enough when you consider that most popular keyboards available for under £300 only tend to have 28 or 32-note polyphony anyway, which means that up to 32 different notes can sound at once.

Once you've got your keyboard, Accompanist and a couple of Midi leads from your local music shop, you're in business. While it's not exactly brimming over with ultra-powerful features, Accompanist is nevertheless more than adequate for the casual user, and a bargain at the price.

It's got a Quantise function (this helps get rid of little errors of timing that are only human), and you can punch in to your recorded work to change little bits you don't like. You can also transpose tracks and control the relative volume of different tracks independently.

The program uses the familiar GEM interface, which means it is a little slow as regards screen updates but it is very easy to use. It is supplied with clear documentation and a selection of music saved as standard Midi files.

Since Accompanist saves and loads in this file format you can obtain music on disk from practically any source and use it with no problems on your ST.

Accounts

Double Sentry Accounts

Supplier: shareware (PD demo free. Full version costs £28.75, from Graham R Hutcheon, 45 Connaught Street, London W2 2BB)

When setting up a business spare cash can be a rather rare commodity, and so one might not think of getting a computer accounts program. It could be seen as too expensive for a fledgling company.

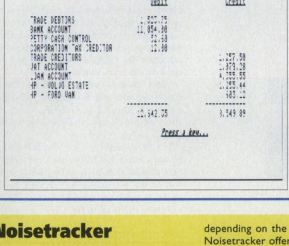
The reality is, of course, that it needn't be. A fully usable demo version of this program costs only a couple of pounds, and the full registered version, featuring the odd improvement such as the inclusion of VAT and the option to use desk accessories from within the program, costs under £30.

Get your finances in order with Double Sentry

To get the most out of Double Sentry, a printer is an absolute necessity. You'll also need an ST with at least 1Mb unless you want the number of entries limited to 600. Not using RAM disks and desk accessories saves valuable memory.

It may take a while to get up and running, and in the early days you could often find yourself poring over the documentation (supplied on disk).

However, once you become familiar with the system you will find that keeping track of your financial situation becomes a relatively simple and quick process.



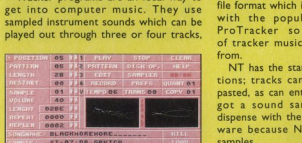
Not much to look at, but invaluable to those with small businesses

Noisetracker

Supplier: public domain

If you can't stretch to buying a Midi keyboard, you don't necessarily have to put up with that horrible bleepy ST sound chip.

Tracker programs are an ideal way to get into computer music. They use sampled instrument sounds which can be played out through three or four tracks, depending on the program you're using. Noisetracker offers four-channel output, either through your monitor or TV or through a supported cartridge such as the ST Replay box.



Tracker programs are great for writing all kinds of music, from dance to grunge

As tracker programs go, I must confess this isn't my favourite. That said, it's probably the best PD offering and it's very easy to get hold of. It also has a file format which is (usually!) compatible with the popular Amiga program ProTracker so there's a wealth of tracker music to draw inspiration from.

NT has the standard block edit functions; tracks can be cut, copied and pasted, as can entire patterns. If you've got a sound sampler you can also dispense with the standard editing software because NT can grab and edit samples.

For a full rundown of NT's features and a detailed explanation of some of the terms mentioned you should take a look at our guide to tracker programs elsewhere in this issue, which shows just how simple it can be to produce quality music on your ST.

Databases

Fastbase

Supplier: shareware (free PD demo version. Registered version with no restrictions costs £20 from Andrew Brown, 2 Ullswater Drive, Wetherby LS22 4YF)

Databases can be used for pretty much anything, from keeping track of people's names and addresses to cataloguing your collection of valuable vinyls.

There are scores of database programs about these days, but the best value for money must be Fastbase because it boasts a slick interface and, in the full version, a practically unlimited number of records in any given database with up to 200 fields.

Fastbase can be run in all three resolutions. The screen consists of a toolbox and a colourful GEM menu bar which even boasts keyboard shortcuts. Windows open to display information and graphics too if they are included in the database.

Several different sets of records can be in memory at a time – five in the demo, 22 in the full registered version – whether or not they have windows currently open on screen.

You can sort the data by different field names, search out specific entries, print out information and even perform mail merges if you so desire. Formulae can be used in fields, with some fairly complex mathematical operations possible.

The disk menus feature various useful functions such as Format Disk, New Folder and Rename File which make using Fastbase a pleasant and convenient procedure.

There's even a little help for inexperienced users, with explanations of the functions of menu options given in the top right-hand corner of the screen. GDOS is supported, so you can present your databases well on-screen. In short, the whole program has a very professional look and feel to it.

Certainly there's no other database which offers this much power for a comparable price. If you have any need for a database whatsoever, I'd recommend Fastbase.

What's the average life expectancy in Cameroon? Fastbase tells all

Get on the

The ST is naturally associated with expensive Midi music systems, but not everybody can afford to splash out £200 or £300 on a suitable keyboard or sound module.

However, if you're in this sort of position you don't have to endure the tinny warblings of that Yamaha sound chip. There is another option, soundtracker programs, and the best thing about them is that many are public domain and cost only a couple of pounds.

To demonstrate how easy it is to get going, we'll take a look at Noisetracker, probably the best PD tracker program on the ST – and contained on this month's CoverDisk.

Tracker programs have certain things in common. The first is the use of patterns. A pattern is a section of the song, usually 16 bars or thereabouts in length, which might be part of a verse or a chorus. Once you've written a pattern you can use it as many times as you like in the finished song.

All trackers also use sampled sounds for the instruments in the song. When you've written a song using certain instruments, you can save the song and sample data together in the form of a module.

To have a listen to some modules, try loading up Noisetracker. By the way, you should put it on a disk by itself and make sure you back it up regularly – it is alarmingly easy to destroy the information on a disk from within Noisetracker. You should also unplug your joystick before running the program.

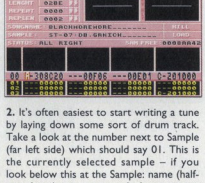
Once loaded, click on the Disk Op button followed by L Module. The file selector window will list various files on the disk. Use the arrow buttons at the right of the file selector (above and below Exit) until WOTROCK.MOD appears on screen, then click on it and wait for it to load.

Once it has done so, you'll be returned to the main screen. Click on Play and sit back and listen. Quite impressive, isn't it? Press Stop when you become bored. Some more modules are included, so you might like to try those too. When you've finished listening, it's time to try writing a tune from scratch.

Creating your first module

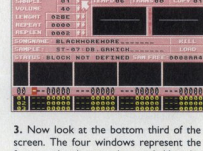
1. Load in BLACKMOR.MOD and then select Clear (top right corner). Select Patts to clear all the patterns from memory, but not the samples. This gives us some nice sounds to work with since we don't have a disk full of sampled sounds handy. Numerous samples disks are available in the public domain.

Now click on the black writing next to Songname: and enter a name for your module, pressing Return when you've finished. Bear in mind that since NT is a Belgian program, the Q and A keys are in opposite positions to the English keymap.



2. It's often easiest to start writing a tune by laying down some sort of drum track. Take a look at the number next to Sample (far left side) which should say 01. This is the currently selected sample – if you look below this at the Sample: name (half-way down) you can see which instrument this is.

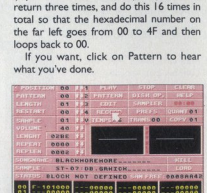
It should say ST-07:DB.GRKICK. If it doesn't, change the currently selected sample using the up and down arrows next to the sample number until it does. This is a bass drum, an ideal instrument to start with.



3. Now look at the bottom third of the screen. The four windows represent the four tracks that can be used. Use the arrow keys to position the red square as far left as it will go in track one. Now press the spacebar. The mouse pointer will turn blue, indicating that NT is in record mode.

Certain notes on the keyboard now behave like notes on a piano, allowing you to play your tune in step by step. Press V (equivalent to note F on a piano) and then return three times, and do this 16 times in total so that the hexadecimal number on the far left goes from 00 to 4F and then loops back to 00.

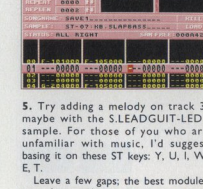
If you want, click on Pattern to hear what you've done.



4. Select instrument 4, the DS.SNARE7. Using the arrow keys to position yourself in the appropriate positions on track one, press T (on a piano, G an octave above the previous F) in the following positions: 04, 07, 0C, 14, 17, 1C, and so on until the track loops.

Now that we've got a basic drum track, we can add a bass line. Choose sample 5, the KB.SLAPBASS. Position the red block in the first column of track 2.

Enter something like the following (dashes stand for blank positions which you should skip by pressing Return or the down arrow): V---V-H-B-V-C-V-three times, then Z---Z-Z-D-Z-D-C-. Listen to the tune so far.



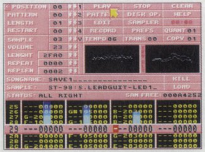
5. Try adding a melody on track 3, maybe with the S.LEADGUIT-LED1 sample. For those of you who are unfamiliar with music, I'd suggest basing it on these ST keys: Y, U, I, W, E, T.

Leave a few gaps; the best modules are those where the instruments are used sparingly but at well-timed intervals.

When you're happy with what you've got, go through the samples you haven't used and click on Kill to remove them before saving your work to disk – it saves valuable disk space.

right track

Tracker programs are a great way to get into computerised music making. Dave Cusick shows how simple it can be to write your first masterpiece

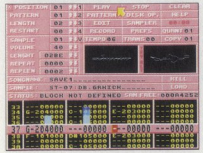


6. So far our tune consists of just one endlessly looping pattern. Go up to the top left corner and click on the up icon next to Length so that it changes to 02. Now go to the start of the pattern at 00 and press F5 to copy the whole pattern into the block memory .

Then go back to the top left corner and click on the up icons next to Position and Pattern, in that order. Make sure the red cursor is at position 00 in the pattern, then press F7 to paste the pattern from memory.

We now have two patterns, numbers 00 and 01, which are currently identical. Go to track 3 of pattern 1 and press F10 to delete the existing guitar track. Write a new tune on this track.

When you are happy with it, click on Play and NT will play through both patterns one after the other. Then save your creation to disk. Congratulations – you've just written your first module in NT.



Special effects

Tracker programs all use a series of letters or numbers after the note name down in the edit window. Load one of the pre-written modules and you'll see that all the contents of the tracks all look something like, for example, C-1 3C23.

The code contains information for NT on whether it should apply effects like volume slides, vibrato and portamento. The documention on these functions is quite clear and needs no further explanation here.

Advanced features

So far we've only briefly touched on some of the possibilities of NT – there are a whole host of features hidden away under the surface. Full details of exactly what you can achieve are given in the documentation on the disk, but since it is sometimes less than clear, some features deserve a little more explanation. Let's take a look at what a few of the on-screen buttons do.

Pattern: Plays the pattern currently being edited – when the end of the pattern is reached it loops and plays again, whereas Play simply plays the entire module starting from the current position.

Disk Op: Allows loading, saving and deleting of samples and modules and the formatting of double or single-sided disks. Be very careful here. If you have changed disks to save a module, then go to L Module and cancel it a few times so that NT realises you want to change the directory. Not doing this can cause NT to completely destroy all the data on a disk.

Help: Allows access to the on-line help mode which lists the functions of various keys.

Edit: Equivalent to pressing the spacebar; puts NT into the note step-edit mode. This edit mode is more useful than Record, which is a real-time note entry mode, where notes can easily end up all over the place.

Sampler: This allows you to mess about with the currently selected sample, fading it in and out and taking it up or down an octave.

Prefs: Lets you change things like the current disk directories, the screen colours, whether the output is through the monitor or a connected sound cartridge, and whether loaded samples are in ST Replay or Amiga format.

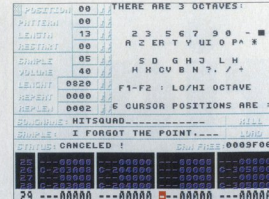
Quant: The number of positions that the red cursor moves down after a note has been entered. When entering the bass drum track in step 3 of our tutorial we could have set this to 04 and just pressed V 16 times without the Return in between – it would have had the same effect. It is especially useful for creating drum tracks.

Tempo: Controls the speed of the module; the higher this hexadecimal number is, the slower the module plays.

Trans: Transposes the tune. For some reason though, it never seems to sound quite right afterwards, so this is not an option I'd advise using too frequently.

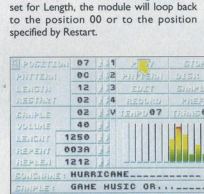
1,2,3,4*(left of Play, Pattern...)*: When these numbers are in black, the appropriate track can be heard. Clicking on them turns them white and the corresponding track is muted.

Length, Restart: When the position reaches the number matching the value set for Length, the module will loop back to the position 00 or to the position specified by Restart.



If you get really lost, hit the help button

Press Alt and a trendy equaliser springs into life



Volume: Sets the volume of the currently selected sample, from 00 to 40 in hexadecimal.

Lenght: *(sic)*. Presumably spelt incorrectly to avoid confusion with Length. Lenght sets the length of the currently selected sample. The main use of this would be to extend length before adding a fade out or in with the Sampler menu.

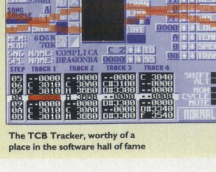
Repeat, Replen: For some samples, disk space and memory can be saved by looping a certain section of the sound indefinitely. You might want to experiment with this, but it can be hard to get such a sample to sound realistic though.

Block functions

The function keys F3 to F10 can copy and paste either individual tracks or entire patterns. When writing a long module, it can be extremely convenient to be able to paste a single drum track or bass line into every pattern. The on-line help mode lists the functions of individual keys.

TCB Tracker

While NT is a perfectly good example of the genre, for me the ultimate ST tracker program is the ageing TCB Tracker. Long-time readers may remember a version of it appeared on an *STU* CoverDisk about three years ago. However, since distributor MPH disappeared some time back this program has all but vanished from suppliers' catalogues and is exceedingly difficult to get hold of. It may have boasted a file format which was incompatible with virtually every other tracker program ever, but it was also the only tracker I have seen which allowed you to open a file selector at the same time as accessing all the features on the main screen.



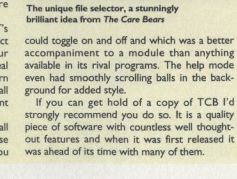
The TCB Tracker, worthy of a place in the software hall of fame

This enabled you to load one sample, change the sample number, load another sample and so on, all without having to continually open and close the selector window.

It was TCB which really got me interested in the potential of trackers. It had full STE stereo support at a time when few programs were exploiting the potential of the machine.

For those who couldn't handle using the ST's keys as a musical keyboard, you could connect TCB to one of the real things and play your music in through that (although it wasn't in real time). By clicking on one icon you could turn your ST into a primitive drum machine, with all 16 possible samples accessible through different notes on the keyboard.

There was a selection of colour schemes, all of which were far easier on the eyes than those offered by NT, and a wibbly line which you could toggle on and off and which was a better accompaniment to a module than anything available in its rival programs. The help mode even had smoothly scrolling balls in the background for added style.



The unique file selector, a stunningly brilliant idea from *The Care Bears*

If you can get hold of a copy of TCB I'd strongly recommend you do so. It is a quality piece of software with countless well thought-out features and when it was first released it was ahead of its time with many of them.

ALL WORK AND ALL PLAY

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Magic with words

In the last of his three rounds-ups of educational software, Richard Williams finds that the ST definitely has a way with words

Anyone who thinks that words are merely functional tools that represent objects and abstract things doesn't know much about them. Words are a form of magic passed down through generations from time immemorial. They can soothe, annoy, upset, calm and inspire us.

Put together by a genius, they can become classic books, poetry, plays or take on the form of many other published and performed works too numerous to mention.

Not all of us are destined to be great wordsmiths, but progress in a world where written material – on paper and screen – is vital to so many areas of our working and private lives is impossible without reading and writing skills.

So teaching children to recognise letters and words from an early age is important. Not all of the letter and word programs for the ST are for younger children. There are some, for instance, to suit GCSE children, and others suitable for adults as well as older children.

But most of them are for the young, and with good cause: learning the alphabet and being able to recognise those first few simple words is undoubtedly one of the major challenges for all small children.

Of course, adults do not want to put them off by going over the top on the importance of them meeting the challenge. Far better to help inquisitive young minds along with some genuine fun and entertainment, while still enabling them to learn the necessities.

The ST is an ideal learning medium with its excellent sound and graphics capabilities, and with a genuinely large range of word skills software available for the machine you can take your pick of the best for your child.

Which programs will be most beneficial for your children? By and large, those which are simplest to use and feature colourful graphics and good sound are the ones to go for.

Also, bear in mind that the more repetitious a program is, and the fewer choices available by way of levels, subject matter, word lists and so on, the more likely it is that the child will quickly become bored.

Choosing which ones to include in this multiple review was not easy, but the following is a good cross-section of what is available. For those on a tight budget, I've again included some of the better offerings from the world of PD/shareware.

• This is the last of a three-part series on educational software. In the May issue, Richard Williams looked at programs dealing with shape recognition, and in the April issue, those which teach number skills. If you missed them, and would like advice on either of these vital areas of learning, why not order a back issue from page 77?

Mouse House and Runabout

Age Range: 4-8 years
Prisma Software • £19.99

Part of the Which? Where? What? package in the Kid's Academy range, this program demands you have some tasty cheese at the ready and make sure the cat's out of the room, because it features a team of tiny rodents determined to make reading fun.

Mouse House teaches reading using the Play and Read method and Runabout improves spelling. The games were created with the National Curriculum in mind.

In Mouse House, the child moves a tiny mouse around an image of a house which has three floors. First, a word or object is chosen from the left side of a staircase. The child then takes the mouse on a tour of the rooms on the right side of the staircase to find the corresponding word.

There are four levels. In level one, there are only a few words to choose from on the right side of the staircase, and each word has its associated object next to it to make matters easier for smaller children.

In level two, the child chooses a word, then matches it with an object only. In level three, the child must find the word representing an object, and in level four, there are no objects at all on screen – only words.

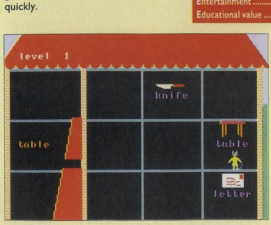
Children should be encouraged to say the words out loud whenever they choose them. Sound is mostly nursery rhyme tunes, with the occasional whistle and bleep as objects or words are selected.

I have only one major criticism: the words in Mouse House are difficult to read. Blue on black in lo-res just doesn't seem to work very well, on my monitor at least. In Runabout, the child controls three mice in turn, making them run up and down ladders to choose the letters of three-letter words which are written on the pavement below. The letters appear on the blinds in a total of 12 windows on three floors of the house.

This game features just two levels – easy and hard. The graphics are very colourful and there are one or two sound effects, such as when a mouse rings a bell at the door of the house, as well as the nursery rhyme tunes.

Children genuinely enjoy these games, and learn from them very quickly.

Graphics	8 Very good
Sound	6 Fair
Entertainment	9 Very good
Educational value	8 Very good



The little girl mouse has found the required word on the first floor of the house in level one of Mouse House

First Letters

Age Range: Under 5s

Rainbow Educational Software • £7.99

Here's some excellent fun for children with a reading age of three to five. First Letters has been designed to enhance learning of phonetically hard (that is hard-sounding) letters. The action is based in Bobby the Clown's house and garden.

Objects in each room move, one at a time, in a random order, and the child is asked to indicate the first letter of the currently moving object.

This can be done in three ways: by pointing and clicking on a letter of the alphabet using the mouse; by pressing a letter key on the keyboard; or by pressing the spacebar repeatedly until the right letter appears, then pressing the Return key.

When five correct answers have been given in a room, the player can move on to another. A bonus screen is displayed after five rooms have been completed.

It's a simple, colourful program, with a first-rate help facility, but use of sound tends towards the minimal.

Looks like a Moggie 1000 in the garage here, but that feat of recognition hasn't improved my tally of five right and four wrong in Rainbow's First Letters

Graphics	9	Excellent
Sound	5	Could do better
Entertainment	9	Excellent
Educational value	8	Vey good

Not quite the birds and the bees, one half of Alvin's Puzzles by Kids' Academy

Breaktime and Jumble Up

Age range: 6-8 years

Prisma Software • £19.99

This is part of Alvin's Puzzles, in the Kids' Academy range. There are more mousy goings-on in Breaktime, where we join the playful rodents in the kitchen. Letters appear on the items of crockery on a large dresser, and the idea is for the child to spot the words among them – one in each of the five rows of crockery.

Using the mouse which scampers to the top of the dresser at the start of each game as a pointer, the child identifies the letters of each word. Words can be taken in any order, but the letters of individual words must be indicated in their correct order.

When all the words have been identified, another, rather obliging, little mouse scampers up the dresser and proceeds to smash every item of crockery apart from those which contained the letters of the words, to nursery rhyme tune accompaniment.

But don't worry – the crocks miraculously reappear for the start of the next game.

The game features 14 sets of 20 words, and the sets are chosen at random. Once a set has been started, all 20 words have to be found.

Once a child gets used to the game, one of six different time limits can be set to make things more challenging. All good fun – and plenty of genuine learning for little ones into the bargain.

Jumble Up isn't exactly a word game, but I've included it in this feature because it's so closely allied to story-telling and reading. It teaches children that stories have a start, a middle, and some kind of conclusion, and paves the way for early reading.

The screen is divided into six squares. Five of these each contain a picture, and the other the question: "Which is the first picture?". The idea is that the child places the pictures in the correct sequence to tell a little story.

For instance, a pair of birds build a nest, the mother bird lays some eggs then sits on them until they hatch, and they are fed until they grow into bigger birds.

"Which is the first picture?" changes to "Which is the next picture?" after the first piece is placed at the start. The child does not discover if all pieces of the story have been positioned correctly until all pieces have been placed. If a piece has been placed out of sequence, the child is told to try again.

Graphics	8	Very good
Sound	6	Fair
Entertainment	8	Very good
Educational value	8	Very good

Alphabet and Spell It

Age range: 2-5 years

The Really Good Software Company • £19.95

Picture Book features four games and two free keyboard overlays which make matters easier for smaller children. Here we look at two of the games.

One of the overlays has the letter keys in alphabetical order rather than the usual Qwerty layout – don't forget to choose this option from the main menu first, or it can get really confusing!

All of the programs in this set feature great sound effects, voice and first class graphics. Alphabet is an electronic version of the traditional alphabet book, designed so that even very young children can experiment.

Each time the child presses a letter key, a picture (say, a cat if c is pressed, a windmill if the child presses w) appears, together with the full word for the object. Pictures can be made bigger or smaller by pressing the > or < keys. Some of the graphics are animated – for example, the zip actually zips open and closed, to a most appropriate zippy sound. Use of sound and voice (the voice sounds very much like Stephen Hawking on that BT advert) is a very strong feature of this package.

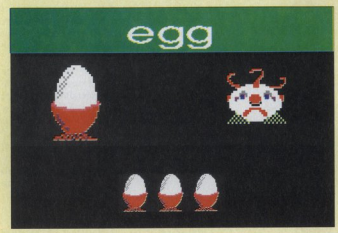
Spell It has two levels – Easy and Hard. On the first level, a word and an illustration of the word are displayed, and the child copies the word. Any correct letter pressed will be placed in the appropriate position.

On the Hard level, an image only is displayed, and the child must spell its name. If the child gets it wrong, he or she is given the first letter. If the child makes another mistake, the first two letters are given and so on until, if necessary, the whole word is revealed.

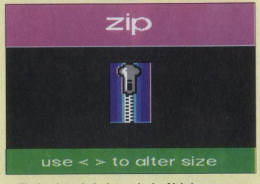
The whole word has to be typed at each attempt – not just the letters which have not been displayed.

Correct attempts are rewarded by a round of applause and a clownish face changes expression from looking glum to smiling.

Graphics	8 Very good
Sound	9 Excellent
Entertainment	9 Very good
Educational value	9 Excellent



This is the easy level in Spell It. Here, the word is written at the top of the screen and the child can copy it. In the hard level, the child sees only an image of the object to be spelled



Zipping through the letters in the Alohabet game, one of the activities in The Really Good Software Company's Picture Book

Data Word

Age Range: Approx ten years to adult

The Really Good Software Company • £19.99

Now here's something a bit different. Data Word is first and foremost a database – but it's far more than that. It's also a simple word processor, a record-linking system that can be used as a revision aid for any subject, a multiple choice question tester and a quiz game. Inventive children will no doubt find other uses for it, too.

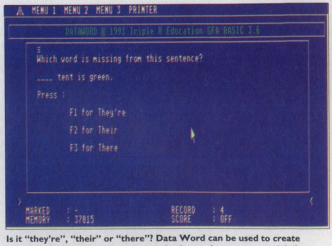
The interface, it must said, is far from inviting. But once children have got over that, they'll find that this really is a simple way to write and print a letter, store some information or create a quiz.

The program, which runs in med-res, fulfils many of the needs for a database in the National Curriculum (if we dare use that term these days). It works just like a card index, but the text editor allows it to be used as a simple word processor too.

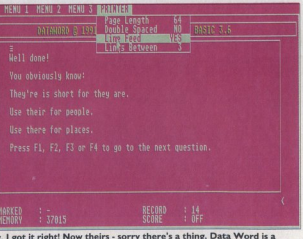
Data Word includes five excellent example files and two of the very useful keyboard overlays for which The Really Good Software Company is noted. These replace capital letters – which can be confusing for children – with lower case ones, and give the choice of the normal Qwerty arrangement or letters arranged in alphabetical order which are so much easier to find for young "hunt-and-peck" typists.

Note that graphics and sound are not features of this program, and have not been taken into account in determining entertainment and educational value.

Graphics	n/a
Sound	n/a
Entertainment	7 Good
Educational value	9 Excellent



Is it "they're", "their" or "there"? Data Word can be used to create quizzes. It's versatility means it can also be used as a more straightforward database and a word processor



Wow, I got it right! Now theirs - sorry there's a thing. Data Word is a unique package in which children can make thier own entertainment and learning aids

Robot Words

Age range: 5-15 years
Shareware Software • £2.95

Can software at such a ridiculously low price really be of any value? In this case, the answer is a definite yes. Available from Goodman International PD and shareware library, this is a variation on the old hangman game, but the implementation is first class.

It's an excellent example of budget software at its best, with no compromise on sound, graphics or the fun factor. Players can choose a single word game, an easy ten-word game, or a hard ten-word game, and select one of four banks of words.

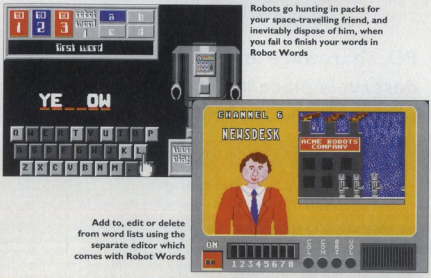
There is also a word editor, provided as a separate program, for making your own word lists or modifying existing ones.

Each time a wrong letter is typed or selected with the mouse, another piece is added to a robot on the right of the screen.

The object of the game is to complete all letters of a word before the robot is complete. When you win a game, you are shown a Channel 6 Newsdesk Bulletin in which a character who arrives in a spaceship shoots and blows up robots which appear to go hunting in packs. If you lose a game, our space-travelling hero is disposed of by the robot pack.

Graphics	8 Very good
Sound	9 Excellent
Entertainment	10 Excellent
Educational value	8 Very good

I must say I enjoyed this game – and, more to the point, so did my children!



Robots go hunting in packs for your space-travelling friend, and inevitably dispose of him, when you fail to finish your words in Robot Words

Add to, edit or delete from word lists using the separate editor which comes with Robot Words

Alphabet

Age range: 3-6 years
Paul Dickinson • £1.95

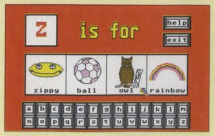
This is available from Goodman International PD and shareware library. Learning the alphabet is one of the major challenges facing younger children. Paul Dickinson's aim in writing this program was to teach the alphabet to pre-school and reception class children in a simple yet fun way – an objective he has achieved in no small measure.

Alphabet is totally mouse driven, so it should also teach co-ordination. To play, the child clicks the left mouse button on a letter along the bottom of the screen. Four pictures then appear in the middle and a large version of the letter in the top left-hand corner. The child then clicks the left mouse button on the picture they think is the correct answer.

If it is, a dancing teddy replaces the large letter. If it is incorrect, the teddy shakes his head. If the child can't think of the right answer, he or she can click on the word Help, and the correct answer and is surrounded by a flashing yellow box.

Sound consists of nursery rhyme tunes. Graphics are bright, with instantly recognisable objects making life easier for small children. Alphabet represents incredible value for money.

Graphics	8 Very good
Sound	6 Fair
Entertainment	7 Good
Educational value	8 Very Good



Deciding which picture matches the selected letter in Alphabet, by Paul Dickinson

There's a friendly good bye for the children when they exit

You can choose an object to spell from the bathroom – and three other places

Let's Spell First 500

Age Range: 4-6 years
Squirrel Soft • £1.95

Also available from Goodman International PD and shareware library. Richard and Jayne Dunn, have reserved a place for themselves in educational program history with their Magic Story Book.

Let's Spell again demonstrates their talents as designers of entertaining learning software for younger children. This shareware version has all but four of the usual 26 topics disabled, but, even with 100 words instead of the full 500, there's enough for you to discover whether you like it before investing £10 in the full, registered version.

Once a topic has been selected by clicking on one of 26 picture boxes, a full-screen picture appears with various related items displayed – for instance, if you initially click on the apple, you are presented with a fruit and veg stall, with items including carrots, onions oranges and bananas on display.

Clicking on one of the objects calls up a picture of that object, and a colourful grid containing all the letters of the alphabet. The child then attempts to spell the word by clicking the relevant letters in the grid in turn. Each time one is clicked, a child's voice says what the letter is.

There's an Oops! button for when the child realises a wrong letter has been entered, and a Finish button for when the attempt has been completed.

If the word is spelt correctly, an adult voice says "well done" and a tune is played. If the spelling is wrong, the voice says "let's see", and the word is spelt out for the child, who is then asked to try again.

Like many of the best educational programs for younger children, it's simple, easy to play, bright and colourful and makes good use of sound.

Graphics	9 Excellent
Sound	9 Excellent
Entertainment	9 Excellent
Educational value	10 Excellent

Contacts

Rainbow Educational Software	0626 779695
Goodman International	0782 335650
Prisma Software (Kids' Academy)	0244 326244
The Really Good Software Company	0582 761395

PUBLIC SECTOR

Optimistically speaking, the days and evenings should have filled out now into a blossoming summer season where the last thing any normal living being wants to do is settle in front of a computer.

How unfortunate then that this is Britain and that the weather really has a problem with being nice to us. But even if there are absolutely no decent weather vibes to soak up, the public domain is always there to be dipped into...

PD, shareware and licenceware all deserve a place in your software collection. Adam Phillips explains why

Mobster City

Produced by: Silly Software

Available from: Merlin PD
Disk No MPD SS001

Those gangsters are out in force again covering up for Mr Big, the crime lord. You, DS Silly, a hardened and slightly stupid policeman, must arrest all the criminals in this point 'n' click adventure from the people at Silly Software.

The game revolves round a city made up of several towns. Each town has a certain number of set locations – a police station, local bar (which includes a game of pontoon to raise cash), paper stand, gun store (for the all important Magnums and shotguns), a cigarette shop and a hospital. The basic idea is to work out from the descriptions given by the local police stations and papers which criminal is where.

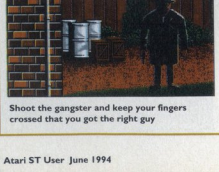
Find him at one of the local bars and then challenge him to a duel to the death. If you've deduced the right guy then you'll receive part of a map that will, with all 12 pieces intact, reveal the location of the Big Boss' hideout.

If you get it wrong, you're stripped of your badge and marched off to jail to serve a hefty imprisonment for murder. This is all presented as a series of still screens that can be clicked on in certain places with the pointer. At the paper stand, click on the young vendor and he'll sell you a newspaper. In the police station, pressing on the notice-board will show a mug shot of the local villain and so on.

Each town looks identical but the design of the game, while very linear and repetitive, is interesting and different enough to hold the attention.

The main downside is the invariable wait as the computer accesses the disk to load in each screen – with each town made up of the same screens, it would have been nice to see at least a few of them stored in memory for instant access.

Graphics are well executed and the sound contains various samples such as a laughing policeman.



Shoot the gangster and keep your fingers crossed that you got the right guy

Quest For Knowledge

Programmed by: David Cobbledick

Available from: Goodman International Disk No GD2197

Move round the colossal maze gathering keys and answering questions in the Quest For Knowledge

I dread the day that I might meet Mr Cobbledick – not because he has a social disease but simply because he must know so many facts and trivia that I would seem insignificant next to his staggering knowledge of encyclopaedic proportions.

Brain Damage, his last release, was mind bending enough, but now with his latest, The Quest For Knowledge, my brain simply said – enough is enough, let's put Llamatron on. This isn't criticism. In fact, for puzzle-hungry punters out there, this is a blessing on a divine disk.

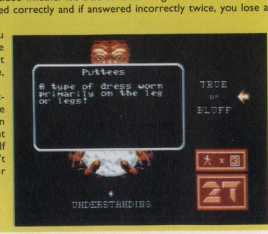
The player moves his character down the corridors of three large and sprawling mazes to find three kinds of icon. Twelve must be found in each maze to unlock the gate to the next level.

The main problem is that each icon is guarded by a key – make a challenge for the key and, depending on the colour, you'll be presented with one out of a choice of three puzzlers.

The three types of question range from a multiple choice to a statement which the player must decide to be true of false. By far the most difficult category is when a word is given with a definition and, again, you must decided whether it's true or false. To gain access to the icon, three questions have to be answered correctly and if answered incorrectly twice, you lose a life.

While you might think that you have a 50/50 chance based on the law of averages, you'd be wrong – it seems that whatever guess I made, I'd end up not guessing correctly.

The graphics are crisp if unspectacular and wandering round the maze hunting down the next icon works well. Getting a question right is a satisfying experience indeed. If you're a Cobbledick fan, you won't be disappointed with Quest For Knowledge. A good buy.



True or false? Answers on a postcard please

Wing Lord

Programmed by:Victor Bruhn

Available from: LAPD Disk No G355

After David Munsie's games collection featuring revamps and renditions of some seriously classic titles, this month sees the return of the arcade favourite *Joust* . Strapped on a horse and clutching a large lance between your hands, the object is to fly round the screen, landing on the heads of the flying enemy.

You also have a missile, the only problem being that it'll only work on certain types of enemy. Two players can have a go and if you prefer flapping your wings solo, the computer will control the other winged beast for you which invariably does much better and is always left standing when you've bitten the lance.

The whole title is very playable but is marred by the rather cumbersome controls. To fly, the player has to hit the fire button repeatedly and only then, once airborne and slapping the button, can you actually fly left and right. This leads to aching wrists and curses as your horse wanders round the screen or seems to rest in the same spot for quite some time.

I have no doubts that this system could eventually become second nature but it's a shame that it's there in the first place. Despite this, Wing Lord is a great little game.

Joust revisited in this enjoyable, if a little unwieldy, tribute to years gone by

Termodroid

Programmed by: Below Zero Software

Available from: Riverdene PDL

On first booting up this much plugged PD title, my heart sank. It looks a little basic to say the least and the screen size is definitely on the small side.

Your ship is also rather large for the playing area and can lead to frustration as you blast wave after wave of aliens, only to be taken out by a single bullet that clipped the bottom of your rather large Termodroid.

There's no complex gameplay in this title. Fly from right to left and kill everything. Pick up the various power-ups such as auto-fire, speed, extra lives and multiple lasers and that's it. Strangely though, the whole proceedings are quite addictive as you weave your way in and out of enemy fire. Yes, the ship is far too big but the scale problem is bearable after a while.

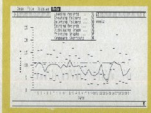
Whether you'd pay a fiver for this depends on whether you're desperate to lay your hands on some blast action. If you are, get this if you already own Llamatron – if not, go for the classic instead.

Move up, down, left, right and hit the fire button as quickly as possible in Termodroid

Diabetic Database

Programmed by: Paul Mountain

Available from: LAPD Disk No M167



A useful and potentially helpful program for all sufferers

Although not a sufferer myself, I have seen the lengths that people with diabetes have to go to to keep a balanced and healthy diet for safe living. Any program that sets out to help people with this condition can only be a good thing with the approval of a doctor.

The Diabetic Database is a utility that aids the sufferers of Insulin Dependant Diabetes Mellitus who use multiple pen injections in conjunction with background insulin. It can also be used by people with Non Insulin Dependant Diabetes Mellitus.

The program features a database diary that holds daily records of blood glucose concentration and insulin dosage and when these were taken. The package also allows the user to keep track of their blood glucose levels so that they may be adjusted to within the normal limits. Call up either a line graph or pie graph to take a look at all the data within the database for a clear visual representation.

Diabetic Database is a useful and constructive program that is worth taking a look at to see if it suits your particular needs.

Personal Golf Database

Programmed by:C Peters

Available from: LAPD Disk No L83

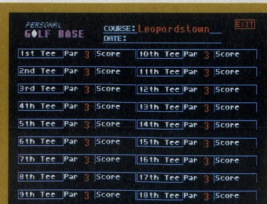
Golf is an expensive game to properly establish yourself in. Clubs, balls, outfit and social standing at the local club can burn a deep hole in the pocket. What a relief then to have PD there to help you with the practicalities of the sport and present it in an easy to use format.

Included in the proceedings is a reminder option to help keep track of things that need to be done and people who need to be contacted.

The two Don't Forget features enable you to keep close tabs on equipment that needs replacing and how available fellow players are for a five-hour game on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

The main bulk of the database though comes in the form of a course constructer. By entering in each par of each hole, you can then include the scores achieved on that particular course and, if you were given any, handicaps.

Any excellent shots such as birdies, holes-in-one and the like, may be recorded as well for future ego-gratifying reference. After all this has been done, it's possible to print the entire listings out to show off to friends at the course. The package is simple, effective and useful for both budding golfers and semi professionals alike.



Impress your golfing friends and get them to buy you more drinks at the over priced club bar with this useful database

Pacman On E's

Produced by: Digital Dreams

Available from: Floppyshop

PacMan - the bane of PD rehashes. A continual stream of little heads chasing little pills and fleeing ghosts. Eat a mega drug and the tables are turned for a brief few moments. Collect bonuses in the shape of fruit and generally have an ancient old time.

Pacman On E's is fortunately the best version I've come across, with smooth graphics and a pounding soundtrack that stirred the office to cries of "Turn it down", "Shut up" and less printable expletives.

Unlike most of the clones, this title actually manages to feature intelligent ghosts that don't simply copy your every move and make the game all the more fun and addictive.

There are a variety of differing layouts to each level, therefore offering some kind of long term appeal. Bonuses take on the usual shape of fruit but there also letters to be built up that give you an extend feature and mystery items that cause different effects.

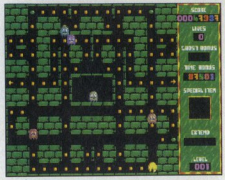
One of the best moments is after taking a mega power pill - the Pacman goes into hyper speed and makes the game all the more interesting. It would have been nice to see this speed maintained all the way through the game.

If you're still not sick and tired of this incredibly tired and jaded format after all these years and you haven't bought any of the other maze orientated games in the past from the PD libraries then this is worth a look. If you are fed up to the back teeth of it all then leave well alone.

Attention all PD libraries

If you wish to feature in *Atari ST User*, just send any of your titles which you feel worthy of review to: Public Sector, Atari ST User, Europress Enterprise, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

Please include a list of the contents of each disk detailing the program name/s and what they are. This ensures quick assessment and inclusion into the magazine. If you are a shareware author, send in your latest creation along with a list of libraries who will be distributing your program/s thereby achieving maximum publicity.



While not receiving any awards for helping the anti drugs campaign, this is an addictive little number with nicely rounded pills and plenty of speed

Printer Shop Plus

Programmed by: Thomas Much

Available from: Caledonia PD
Disk No AG 178

Mono monitor owners who want programs in high resolution are hardly catered for. Fortunately for this minority, the public domain has always had coders writing with them in mind. Print Shop Plus is a high calibre black and white art package featuring an abundance of features to help create strong, successful images.

Presented in an easy to use and well laid out manner, the title offers the user a professional and rewarding opportunity for punters to flex their artistic muscles. Options include the usual draw, spray, erase and copy facilities as well as more advanced functions - mirror, rotate, oval, spirals, square and circle creation, a large library of patterns and many, many others.

Each is fully adjustable for personal preference and printers are catered for to enable the user to create pictures with typography for posters, menus and the likes or simply to have fun messing about in computer ink.

Blat!

Programmed by: Infamous Cabbage

Available from: Caledonia PDL
Disk No. STE 40

Tetris and its variants is another regular repetition in the PD scene with some taking the straight clone road while others are of the more ambitious 360 degrees rotating variety. Blat is an enhancement of the original where the player, instead of lining up the different shapes, matches colours in rows of three or more.

On the two levels I managed to get through, each contained differing graphics - one used the classic squares, the other marbles. Also, new features have been introduced for lasting appeal - on the second level, it is possible to use lightning bolts that drop from the sky to zap anything that is in between a pair of them. And light a stick of dynamite with a flame and a miniature explosion will destroy everything within a certain vicinity.

It's these touches that add an extra element and addictiveness to the title. Graphics are reasonably effective and the sound is of a high standard with calls of "Did you eat a brain tumour for breakfast this morning!" taunting you as a game comes to an end. When a row of colours are removed, explosions ring from the speakers and a voice shouts out at your achievement.

Blat packs a hefty challenge and while not exactly original by any wild stretch of the imagination, it is a worthwhile and fun purchase for simple, involving entertainment. Recommended.

Drop the blocks in to place and move up the levels in Blat!

Lay your hands on me...

Caledonia PDL
250 Oldtown Road
Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
Tel: 0463 225736

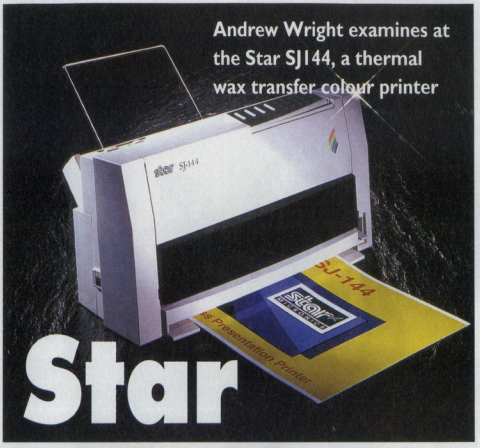
Floppyshop
PO Box 273 Aberdeen AB9 8SJ
Tel: 0224 312756

Goodman International
16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Close
Longton, Stoke On Trent ST3 1SW
Tel: 0782 335650

LAPD
PO Box 2, Heanor
DE75 7YP

Merlin PD
11 Grange Close , Minchinhampton
Stroud GL6 9DF
Tel: 0453 882793

Riverdene PDL
30a School Road, Tilehurst
Reading RG3 5AN
Tel: 0734 452416



Star quality

Thermal wax transfer technology has been around for years but only recently has it made its way into the consumer end of the printer market. The advantage of the method, once restricted to high end plotters, is that it offers much higher paper coverage than other types of printer such as the inkjet or dot matrix.

The SJ144 is a compact, surprisingly lightweight affair, weighing just 2.5 kg and measuring just over a foot in length (325mm), 5.5in deep (140mm) and almost 7in high (175mm).

Power is supplied via an external AC adaptor and while the power on, four control panel buttons and print density dial are all easily accessed from the front.

On the road

Running costs are likely to be moderately high. Star say a colour cartridge will last for only eight (yes, eight!) full pages and at £6 a throw, this ain't going to be cheap, especially as you'll have to pay more for your paper.

Mono cartridges last longer and will do 180 pages of nice, crisp text. On the other hand, the recent price drop – down from £449 – makes it a handy for those wanting low volume DTP and letter output and occasional use for presentations, leaflets and other documents with bright, solid colours.

the main paper path using the 30 sheet feeder is at the back.

Paper is pushed through the printer where it is ejected through the front. Two alternative paper paths are available if needed but there are two paper control levers and it requires some experimentation to get the paper feed spot on.

The SJ144 emulates various printers and uses the parallel interface. For colour work it will emulate the Epson 24-pin colour standard, the LQ 860, or the Star LC24-200 colour printer.

The best way to achieve controlled colour output is via a dedicated colour printer driver such as Flexidump Plus or Imagecopy. For mono work you can choose from Epson and NEC 24-pin drivers, IBM Proprinter or Star LC24-20.

Most GDOS applications such as Timeworks have a suitable mono driver. On test I managed good quality colour results from programs like Chagall and even PageStream. The SJ144 is also equipped with AEC, Automatic Emulation Changing, so if you swap between IBM and Epson drivers, you won't need to fiddle with dip switches.

The printer mechanism is almost identical to that of an inkjet or dot matrix in the sense that the ribbon cartridge is moved backwards and forwards across the moving paper. Two types of cartridge are available, one for plain paper and the other for overhead transparencies, in both mono and colour versions. This requires some cartridge changing when swapping between jobs but it takes only seconds to do.

The Star prints at 360 x 360dpi resolution though it can manage only 256 distinct colours, making it unsuitable for printing photo-realistic colour images. Programs like Imagecopy do a creditable job with halftoning but the results still leaves something to be desired.

To be fair, though, the Star is aimed at a different sector entirely, that of business presentations where charts, overheads and graphs are printed using bold, solid colours.

For this type of work the colour quality is superb with consistent bright colours and clear text (the colour cartridges have a black element too).

INTERESTING

One particularly interesting feature is the zoom – you can print entire pages at 50, 67 or 80 per cent of normal size using the control panel and even print two A4 pages together at A5 size on one piece of paper.

The effect of changing the paper from normal everyday copier paper to special smooth inkjet paper was nothing short of dramatic. In fact Star recommend paper Xerox 4024 standard, and it makes a stunning difference to output quality.

On normal paper even text looks broken and dotty but on smooth paper it becomes far closer to 300dpi laser quality. Despite having a mechanism for optimising print quality, a certain amount of banding was always present.

The print speed is good, averaging 300 to 400cps in mono mode depending on letter spacing and 150cps or so in colour mode. It isn't as fast as a dot matrix but it doesn't leave you drumming your fingers either.

Only two fonts are present in the printer, a rather odd-looking monospaced serif called Roman and a monospaced sans serif font called H-Gothic. A disk is supplied with PC-compatible fonts and drivers but unfortunately it's no use whatsoever to you or me.

BOTTOM LINE

FEATURES
Great for solid colour on smooth paper and overheads.
Excellent / Good / Average / Bad / Appalling

EASE OF USE
Odd, slightly awkward paper feed mechanism and fiddly cartridges.
Excellent / Good / Average / Bad / Appalling

VALUE FOR MONEY
Well priced but likely to work out a little pricey in the long term.
Excellent / Good / Average / Bad / Appalling

Product: Star SJ144 printer
Supplier: Ladbroke Computing, 33 Ormskirk Road, Preston PR1 2QP
Telephone: 0772 203166
Price: £369.99
Configuration: Any Atari

Very English jars of home-made marmalade and jelly - but the labels were produced with the Taiwan-made Atari computers and the American DTP package PageStream...

Compliments of the ST

Let me introduce you to the Severn Bore. No, we are not talking about a particularly tiresome person from the West Country but a little-known quirk of nature that occurs twice a year or so in the lower reaches of the River Severn.

I certainly had never heard of it, but I should have been alerted to something odd going on as I was driving down the A48 alongside the river banks, noticing that the water was rather high and deeply brown as if tons of mud had been stirred into it.

Every now and then, men in rubber suits clutching surfboards appeared along the way, a rather incongruous scene for a rainy Monday morning in Britain towards the end of March. It was only an hour or so later, after I had arrived at the Parkend House Hotel, that proprietor Andrew Lee told me about the Severn Bore: a huge tidal wave of sea water entering the mouth of the river, churning up the river bed, flooding local residents' gardens, and providing enormous fun for the rubber-clad surfboarders.

Events like the Severn Bore are a bonus for hotel owners like Andrew as they help fill the rooms out of season. Not that the Parkend House Hotel would have much trouble attracting visitors even without the salty tide rushing up the Severn: it is, after all, located right in the middle of the Forest of Dean, surely one of the most beautiful spots in England.

The hotel, 200 years old and set in three acres of parkland, is an ideal base for exploring the many waymarked trails through the Forest and a host of other activities such as climbing, caving, mountain biking, or just sight-seeing.

By now, of course, you will be waiting for the appearance of an Atari ST, and I bet you expect to encounter it at reception, handling reservations and keeping the accounts. Well you're

Stationery – all created using an Atari computer

The set-up

The reason Andrew has chosen an HP DeskJet 510 in preference to a laser is that he constantly needs to change between different colours – easily done by swapping ink cartridges whereas changing the laser toner between jobs would be impossible.

Most of the hotel stationery is printed in brown on a rather attractive yellow textured stock, giving it an elegant, somewhat old-world, slightly faded appearance. In terms of quality, there is little to choose between the later DeskJet models and the average 300dpi laser, and on this type of paper it may even be preferable since some toners do not adhere very well to anything but smooth copier-type stock.

At the heart of the system is a Mega STE with 4Mb of RAM and a 52Mb internal hard disk. On top of its TT-style case sits a Trust multisync monitor supplied by System Solutions, its video output boosted by a Crazy Dot graphics card.

Until now, PageStream Version 2.2

A country hotel in the Royal Forest of Dean may not be the most likely place to look for Atari computers. But if you ask the landlord nicely, you can have your mugshot on a jar of home-made marmalade. Günter Minnerup gives his lungs a break from the city this month and visits the Parkend House Hotel

wrong. The computer is kept well out of sight, and in keeping with the very traditional atmosphere of the hotel, all the transactions involving the guests are conducted in impeccably old-fashioned style.

The clatter of keyboards and auto-

has ruled Andrew's hard disk but its days are definitely coming to an end as it is simply too slow and bug-ridden by today's standards. While I was visiting he took delivery of DA's Layout and DA's Repro, ordered from CGS ComputerBild after some considerations of the alternatives, especially Calamus.

"In the end, the price of Calamus and its incompatibility with PostScript tipped the scales in favour of DA's Layout," he explains. The built-in autotracing of DA's Layout and the ability to bend text into all kind of shapes are added attractions, while the acquisition of DA's Repro will obviously greatly improve on the picture editing facilities of TouchUp which he uses at the moment.

Andrew's favoured word processor is Compo's That's Write because of its ability to combine text and graphics at a reasonable speed, but for simple text editing he makes a lot of use of the shareware editor Everest. Perhaps not surprisingly for a regular user of CIX, his hard drive is crammed with all kinds of utilities, accessories and AUTO folder programs, many of them public domain or shareware.

matically printed receipts may be acceptable in a motorway refuge for travelling salesmen but not in a peaceful country retreat for ramblers and nature-lovers. And this is not a metropolitan Grand Hotel, either, with hundreds of visitors each month to be accounted for. With eight bedrooms, the business administration is just about manageable without the aid of spreadsheets and databases.

The vital part played by the Mega STE on Andrew's desk is not on the administrative but on the creative side of things. Yes, creative, for one of the most important aspects of running a hotel, or indeed any business, is the impression created by printed matter such as promotional brochures, confirmation of bookings, compliment slips, general correspondence, menus and even receipts.

There was a time when you went to your local printer or copyshop for such items, choosing between various samples and ending with something pretty much indistinguishable from dozens of other, similar businesses. A computer, equipped with suitable software and printer, enables you to design and produce your own distinctive paperwork as and when you require it. Above all, it gives you complete creative control over the image you want to project.

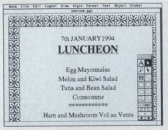
PUBLISHING

Desktop publishing this may be, but with a crucial difference. For most typical DTP applications, the term is actually a misnomer since a good deal of the "publishing" process still needs to be contracted out to specialist services far from the average desktop – printers equipped with process cameras, platemaking machines and, above all, printing presses. "Page layout" or "desktop design" would be a much more accurate description of what the average "desktop publisher" actually does with his computer.

But not in this case where the quantity of printed output required is fairly small, a few dozen or perhaps a hundred copies at a time – no more than an ordinary laser or inkjet printer can comfortably cope with.

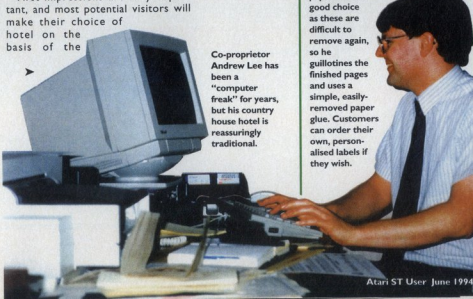
First impressions are very important, and most potential visitors will make their choice of hotel on the basis of the

No, the upside-down bit is not a mistake but just one example of the careful planning (called "imposition" in the trade) that needs to go into some apparently – and deceptively – simple projects. The main hotel brochure is an A4 folded twice to fit DL envelopes and printed on both sides, so one third of the front page needs to be of the opposite orientation.



McDonald's may be able to get away with standard menus for years, but a small hotel like the Parkend House needs to change the fare on offer each day - an ideal task for the computer because once the basic template has been set up including the pretty borders and choice of typefaces, all that remains to be done is edit the text and print.

Again, good imposition avoids paper wastage and the block-copying features of PageStream avoid having to design each of the identical labels separately. Andrew has found that self-sticking label paper is not a good choice as these are difficult to remove again, so he guillotines the finished pages and uses a simple, easily-removed paper glue. Customers can order their own, personalised labels if they wish.



Co-proprietor Andrew Lee has been a "computer freak" for years, but his country house hotel is reassuringly traditional.

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Atari veteran

Listening to Andrew explaining his set-up, and watching him demonstrate his working methods, the thought suddenly occurs that here we have a good example of what is probably the typical serious Atari user.

Now I know that there are some STs in very high-powered commercial situations, especially in music, DTP and the academic world, but the majority probably belong to users very much like Andrew: people who are knowledgeable, even enthusiastic about computers, spend more time with them than is strictly necessary for work purposes, and don't have unlimited financial resources.

And they also tend to have been with Atari for a few years because they started to look for user-friendly, versatile, powerful and affordable personal computers when the PC clones now flooding the market were far from being any of these things.

Andrew himself graduated from a Spectrum and Atari 400 via a 520ST to his present Mega STE (and still reckons that the add-on keyboard he bought for his Spectrum was superior to anything the Atari machines ever offered in this department).

Ask him why he hasn't deserted to a PC or Mac and you get the same reply you get from most other Atari veterans: not only have they invested so much in Atari software and peripherals that a move to another platform would be rather expensive, but why bother as long as the ST/TT/Falcon can do the job just as well, if not better? The proof of this argument lies in the quality of the final product: quite simply, even the latest Windows box or Power Mac could not produce better hotel stationery than Andrew's Mega STE does.

Another point which is often overlooked also emerged from my conversation with Andrew. He is not, after all, a graphic designer by trade. His Hotel and Catering Studies course in Bristol did not include page layout and typography, and when he took over Parkend House to turn it into a hotel, the creation of pleasing stationery was just one task among many – he is, for example, also the cook and gardener!

So it was very much a case of learning the necessary skills as quickly as possible, with a minimum of obstacles placed in the way by the computer technology itself. The ST is ideal for this because one of its unsung qualities is that it is very much a switch-on-and-work machine: much less trouble to set up and configure than a PC, even a Mac, so that you're free to concentrate on whatever you are doing.

No wonder ST-generated DTP output tends to look better than its PC equivalent: by the time a DOS or Windows user has learnt to chant all the obscure mantras required to get going, the ST owner is already well into kerning and the golden triangle!

➤

brochure sent to them by the local Tourist Information Office or the hotel itself. Andrew has opted for a simple A4 sheet, printed on both sides and folded twice to fit into a DL envelope.

Batches of this are run through the HP DeskJet as and when required. The sophisticated Garamond typeface used, the simple but effective clip art of trees, rural scenes and woodland birds, a drawing of the hotel and a map showing how to get there provide all the information required but, equally important, convey an impression of peace, tranquillity and comfort.

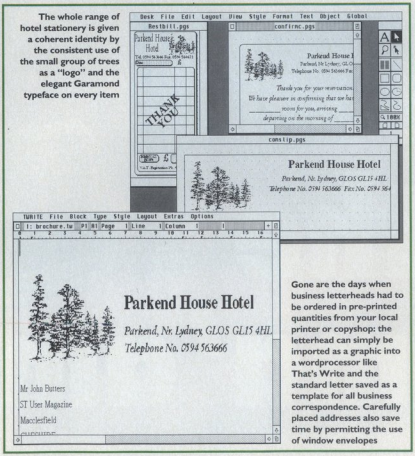
Once a reservation has been

> *Calamus' price and incompatability with Post Script tipped the scales in favour of DA's Layout*

accepted, confirmation is sent on a card which echoes the mood of the brochure. Then there are all the other standard business stationery items: compliment slips, letterheads, receipts and, since this business is a hotel and has a small restaurant attached to it, the daily menu.

Plenty to keep the desktop copyshop busy, you would have thought, but there is more: jars of home-made marmalades and jellies are on sale to visitors and need to be labelled, there's a simple newsletter for guests and, on top of everything else, Andrew and his partner Bobby are also involved in an import business, supplying hotel guests and a number of off-licences with unusual German and Czech lagers. That means price lists, more promotional literature and oddities like "tent cards" – promotional cards that fold to sit on restaurant and pub tables.

● If you fancy a few days away from it all yet cannot bear the thought of all that concentrated fresh air and nature without some computer chat in the bar to combat the withdrawal symptoms, you will be made more than welcome by Andrew Lee and his staff at the Parkend House Hotel, Parkend nr. Lydney, Gloucestershire, GL15 4HL, Tel. 0594-563 666, Fax 0954-564 631, E-mail ajl@cix.compulink.uk. Just send for one of the brochures I have told you about



The whole range of hotel stationery is given a coherent identity by the consistent use of the small group of trees as a "logo" and the elegant Garamond typeface on every item

Gone are the days when business letterheads had to be ordered in pre-printed quantities from your local printer or copyshop: the letterhead can simply be imported as a graphic into a wordprocessor like That's Write and the standard letter saved as a template for all business correspondence. Carefully placed addresses also save time by permitting the use of window envelopes

Reminder

I took away from the Forest of Dean not only a substantial sample of the alcoholic delicacies brought into this country by the lager import business, but also a healthy reminder that Atari DTP does not necessarily involve a race to keep up with the top-end world of process colour separations and professional pre-press systems but, for most real-world users, means very practical benefits on a tight budget. Enabling us to do things for ourselves, the way we want, and having a good deal of fun in the bargain – isn't that what Atari computing is all about?

Just the fax, ma'am

Two new additions to the fax modem market arrive in the form of Ladbroke Computing's Pegasus 14,400efx and Siren Software's Smart One 1442FX. Darren Evans gives them the once over

Fax machines have become extremely popular and essential to many of today's hi-tech, high-turnover businesses and, thanks to drastic price drops, they are making their way into many homes too.

The ability to quickly send printed documentation via telecommunications lines has immediately obvious benefits, most notably the speed at which they can be sent to their destination compared to standard mail.

Those not familiar with fax machines may be concerned about the cost of using a telephone line compared to a stamp, but postage costs are roughly equivalent to those of today's high speed 14,400 baud fax modems.

The benefits of fax machines become even more apparent when faced with possible postal strikes, like the one in the late 80s, and all its damaging effects to businesses both large and small.

However, dedicated fax machines are now in danger of falling victim to the computer technology on which they themselves are based, with the introduction of fax modems.

The advantages a fax modem has over a dedicated fax machine are in the manipulation of the material to be sent and in its dual ability to be used as a standard modem for accessing on-line information systems such as CIX and Compuserve.

Documentation commonly transmitted by fax can include both text and images, such as charts, diagrams and company logos. It is thus safe to assume that with the large number of computers in the office, and indeed the home, such text and images would have been prepared using a computer, word processor and business graphics software.

Unless the office has access to a DTP-type application with which to create and then print the composite of text and images onto paper, the process of preparing documents before to fax transmission would probably have involved cutting and pasting the text and images onto sheets of paper.

Fax modems do away with such steps because they are integral to the computer

upon which these documents are no doubt created.

The two fax modems on review here are not aimed directly at the ST market but in fact the PC. This is evident when you open the packaging to find the fax software is for Windows. So you will need to get hold of suitable fax software for the ST, such as the excellent STraight Fax! package from System Solutions (more of which later).

NEAT

First up is the Pegasus 14,400efx, distributed by Ladbroke Computing. This compact and very neat model differs from many other fax modems in that it stands vertically on two sturdy rubber mounts.

This makes for an extremely small "footprint" (jargon for saying it doesn't take up much desk space), which is most welcome for me personally as my desk is reminiscent of a crash site. It features a perspex front panel with transparent symbols to represent the modem status LEDs. But these are too small and unclear for my liking. A convenient power button is located on the front making it very easy to reset your modem should problems arise.

At the back is the usual power and serial connector with a line jack, to connect to the phone wall socket, and a phone jack for connecting a phone. Both are unmarked and are of the US type but a US to UK phone jack converter cable is supplied.

The Pegasus has group three fax compatibility, essential for communicating with the majority of dedicated fax machines, and also has the class two command set, which means the hardware in the fax modem is more intelligent than those that only have class one. Both of these are features you should be looking for in any fax modem.

The speeds supported range from 300 to 14,400 bps (bits per second) for data with fax speeds of 300 to 14,400.

Also supported are MNP 2-5, V42 and V42 bis error correction and data compression protocols which should allow you to achieve speeds up to 57,600. However, because of the ST hardware, you are limited to 19,200 (still pretty damn quick!).

The power supply is a rather clumsy affair – a two pin plug requiring an adapter plug – which comes supplied. Another minus is that you don't get a serial cable with it (available for £9.99 from Ladbrokes).

The manual for the modem is well written, but does assume some knowledge as it is filled with jargon.

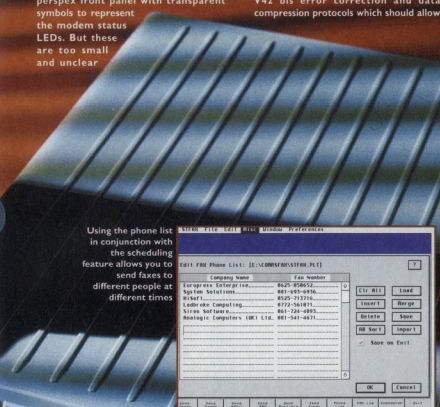
The Smart One 1442FX is similar in performance to the Pegasus, due, in the main, to them both being based on Rockwell technology. It too is group three device compatible and also has a class two command set.

CLEAR

It is light brown in colour and has clear and large status LEDs for easy to read information on what it's doing.

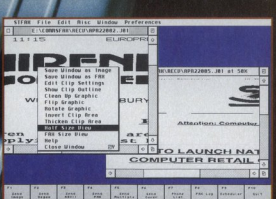
At the rear are the serial, power and (again US-style) line and phone jacks. Unfortunately, the power switch is also here which makes for troublesome access to it should you want to power down.

The power supply is larger than the Pegasus', but does have a UK power plug, so no problems with adapters here. Also included is a dual socket adapter for plugging both the modem and the telephone onto the line. A standard serial ➤



Using the phone list in conjunction with the scheduling feature allows you to send faxes to different people at different times

You can open multiple windows for viewing received faxes as well as processing them using tools available in a pop up menu



Various popular text and image formats can be imported directly into STraight Fax!

cable (again useless for those with a Falcon or Mega STE) is provided.

Speeds supported by the Smart One 1442FX are 300,1200,2400,4800,7200, 9600,12000 and 14400 (data) with fax speeds of 2400, 4800, 7200, 9600, 12000 and 14400.

MNP 2-5, V42 bis error correction and compression are featured for fast transfer rates when it's being used as a normal modem.

The documentation is good, with clear instructions on setting up and connecting the various cables to the modem and computer. An added bonus is the inclusion of a selection of PD and shareware terminal programs such as Vanterm, which will allow the new user to log on to bulletin boards and the like immediately. There is no fax software though.

PERFORMANCE

Both modems worked well in conjunction with STraight Fax! 2.0 software, receiving and transmitting faxes without major errors. They both gave good performance when used as normal modems, achieving transfer rates of 1600 bits per second during a session of CIX.

All in all, two nice fax modems offering good performance for attractive prices. Although the Ladbroke model is cheaper, it does suffer from having a non-standard power supply which requires an adapter, and from the lack of serial cable and unclear LED status lights. Nor does it include any ST software whatsoever.

The Smart One does include ST terminal software, but no fax software, and also has a standard UK power supply. It is more expensive though, so with both modems essentially offering equal performance, it will all boil down to what you are prepared to pay.

Product: Pegasus 14,400efx
Supplier: Ladbroke Computing, 33 Ormskirk Road, Preston, Lancs, PR1 2QP
Telephone: 0772 203166
Price: £159.99
Configuration: All Atari computers

Product: Smart One 1442FX
Supplier: Siren Software, Wilton House, Bury Road, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 9UR
Telephone: 061-724 7572
Price: £199.99
Configuration: All Atari computers

The software fax

To get both modems up and running as fax machines requires the right fax software. Sadly, neither modem includes any ST software and it is irritating to find fax software and manuals for a PC in the boxes.

So you have a fax modem and want to know what software you will need? Well, my personal favourite and arguably the best software currently available for the ST is STraight Fax! v2.10.

Basically, a fax software package works by converting text or image files to a fax file format for transmission via the modem.

The fax software also has to handle incoming faxes, and that's just what STraight Fax! does automatically and very efficiently, even producing log files of faxes received while you were out.

The major changes in version 2.10 include the ability to use it as an accessory by simply changing the program name to STFAX.ACC, as well as support for modems with silent answer features.

Silent answer allows you to share the same phone line for both fax and normal telephone use.

If used as an accessory, the program does take up 350k of memory, so 2Mb is recommended when using it in this mode.

Special printer drivers, also supplied, allow you to prepare fax documents using programs such as Calamus, Calligrapher, Timeworks and others. There are also drivers for many word processor packages.

Modem support has been improved with Class one fax modem support and overall improvements have been made in the communications between software and modem, resulting in less troublesome operation compared to the previous version, which had problems with certain modems.

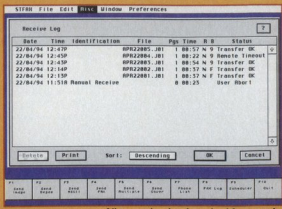
There is also the addition of a quick dial dialogue box which allows you to enter a fax number without having to find your way to the phone list.

You can even run your favourite text editor or word processor from within STraight Fax! without having to quit, a rather nice touch. STraight Fax! is compatible with the Falcon and operating systems such as MultiTOS and Geneva.

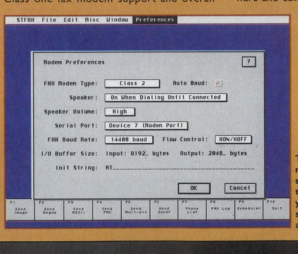
Many dialogue boxes feature a help button, where useful descriptions on the various fields and selections within each box are available.

This is one outstanding piece of fax software and considering the Pegasus and Smart One are pretty much useless as fax modems without fax software, STraight Fax! should be high on your list.

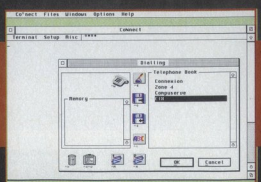
STraight Fax! is available from System Solutions and costs £79.95 (£26 to upgrade from 2.1)



All transmitted and received faxes can be automatically logged to file for easy reference



The preferences menu allows you to set up STraight Fax! to operate just how you want it too and supports both Class 1 and Class 2 devices



When using the fax modems as standard modems, you will need a good terminal application. CoNnect (from System Solutions) is the best

The other side of the coin

As well as functioning as perfectly good fax machines, both the modems on review here can be used as standard modems for logging on to your favourite bulletin boards.

They both feature high 14,400 speeds and MNP 2-, V42 bis error correction and compression which reduce transfer problems as well as the phone bill.

There is a wealth of communications software available both as shareware and PD, such as CoNnect and Freeze Dried Terminal. CoNnect is by far the best around at the moment, so check it out and register.

More games please

I have written to give you an ear-bashing about this new combined magazine thing that you've got going.

I had bought *ST Action* since I got my ST and I was very pleased with the product I was buying. I then discovered through Freestyle that the magazine was to get a whole new crew.

I wasn't sure whether this was going to be a blessing or a curse, and now I am going to have to say that it seems to be bit of both.

I would have to say that I rather enjoyed the old style *STA* where there were 66 to 100 pages on games, although I realise that companies are tending to forget about the ST.

I also think one of the best features of the old *STA* was the demos on the CoverDisk. I long for the days when three or more demos would appear on one or two disks.

This would usually be enough to satisfy my game playing ego until the next month when another magazine would come out.

To overcome this problem I have come up with a few suggestions you might like to consider.

Would it be possible for you to repeat demos that were really popular – like FireForce or Hiemdall – but with different parts of the game?

Would it be possible to put small parts of games that were released a while ago – like Ishar or Cruise for a Corpse – that did not appear as demos?

I am happy to say that the reviews and Cheat Modes in the new combined magazine are just as good, if not better, than in the old *STA* and I hope you continue the good work in that area.

Also the idea of incorporating a games magazine within an applications magazine has its merits but I'm afraid you'll never be able to replace the feeling that one had after they had just bought the newest *ST Action*.

Shane Thurston, Australia

I agree with many of your comments, Shane, but unfortunately there is little that can be done bearing in mind there are very few games now being released for the ST.

It would be nice for us to carry a game demo on every CoverDisk but many software houses are unable to produce them either for technical reasons or the programming cost involved.

The difficulty in progressing with your proposals is that the programming teams concerned will have now moved on to new projects.

Few software houses will show any interest in marketing titles they have long since forgotten about and, in many cases, are no longer widely available.

We have some ideas that could see more disk space given to commercial games though, but at the moment I'm unable to go into detail on these.

Regarding the number of pages devoted to games reviews, we would love to be able to review more software but in order to do so we need to see the games.

During the last year or two, as new releases have been cut back considerably, the amount of coverage has been reduced accordingly.

Got anything to say to the ST community? Then this is your soapbox

Write Now

Throw away hassle

£25 Prize Letter

I'm writing to you in the hope that you will print this letter to warn the general public of the follies of throwing away software packaging.

I bought my first ST in 1985, I then changed to an STFM, and then to an STE. My software library is extensive – more than 200 original titles – and I feel strongly against piracy.

Now to get to the point of my letter. A pile of software boxes nearly reached the ceiling in my spare bedroom.

My wife is expecting a baby in two months time and we decided to have a clear out and decorate the room in readiness for the new baby. We threw away all the boxes and a load of magazines, among which was the manual for B17 Flying Fortress.

I wrote to MicroProse and told them of the situation, asking the price of a replacement manual. They wrote back saying it would cost £6.50 and asked me to enclose the original product.

I duly sent off the required amount and my original disks. MicroProse wrote back saying they also needed the original packaging. I informed them of the situation and they said it was company policy that they must have the packaging as well, and therefore they wouldn't sell me the manual.

As I explained to MicroProse I'm a 42-year-old civil servant, not an adolescent teenager who thinks it's clever to copy games without thinking of the effect this has on the industry.

I think MicroProse deserve the golden raspberry award for the abysmal way they have treated a customer of nearly 10 years standing.

Here's one person who will not be buying any more MicroProse software. Before I trash my disks is there anyone out there who can sell me a manual?

R. Dean, Glos

With piracy a massive problem for the software industry it's understandable that games publishers try to protect their products.

Large manuals are often the most difficult part of a package to copy – even with a photocopier it can be time consuming and expensive to reproduce documentation.

It's therefore logical that software houses should try to ensure that anybody attempting to buy a replacement manual is a legitimate owner of the program concerned.

But it seems that in this case MicroProse went over the top – I can't see any reason why the original disks should not have been sufficient evidence to show the product was not pirated. MicroProse were unavailable when we tried to contact them for a comment on their policy, but the contents of your letter illustrate the importance of holding on to everything.

Lonely in Africa

SOS, SOS, SOS. I'm suffering from a serious lack of ST pen-pals and I am in the unfortunate situation of ST software not being freely available in South Africa.

Being an Atari fan – starting with the old faithful 8-bit – I don't like the idea of defecting to IBM because of the poor availability of software.

So I'm calling out to everybody. If your interests are DTP, games, CAD, electronics and demos drop me a letter and save me from the world of beeps and trashy PC graphics.

Keep up the good work *Atari ST User* because you are my eyes on the ST world.

Craig Ladewig, 58 Tennant Street, Kraaifontein, 7570, Cape Town, South Africa

It's good to read that we help so much with your interest in Atari, and we hope you'll find pen-pals that will be able to give you further advice on how to get more from the ST.

Waiting to hear form you...

To join the ST chat show drop a line to The Editor, Write Now, Atari ST User, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP

ATARI ST USER exclus 15 £££-

Atari Joystick

This is an unbeatable offer for all gamers – an Atari joystick for just £2.99.

It's ideal for anyone, but especially for those who would like a second stick ready as a spare for visiting friends. With easy access Fire buttons on both sides of its small case, this model is suitable for left and right-handed players and fits comfortably into the hand.

ONLY £2.99

Atari Robotics

Control battery-operated robots such as Lego from your ST with this powerful and easy-to-use package. It contains an interface card and software, both designed for use by people without electronics experience.

The manual takes users from the basics through to building sophisticated models, with the help of clear diagrams and examples.

ONLY £19.99

Trackball

Ever fancied a mouse alternative, but been put off by poor trackball designs? Well, we've found the answer – the Legend Ball.

This 320 dots per inch trackball has been ergonomically built, putting all controls within easy reach of your fingers and featuring a smooth platform on which to rest your palm.

While the mouse pointer is controlled by your thumb, item selection can be made easily without removing your hand from the device.

ONLY £24.99

GREAT WAYS TO UPGRADE

External drive

An external floppy drive which plugs straight into the back of the ST can benefit every type of user – from games player to publisher.

Disk copying is faster and easier once a drive has been fitted, and there's no need for inconvenient disk swapping when using powerful software.

The advantages of owning a second drive – and what better way is there of expanding your system than choosing this bargain-priced but high quality device?

ONLY £57.99

Mouse

This high resolution replacement for the chunky and sluggish Atari mouse is perfect for use alongside all your leisure and business applications.

Switchable between ST and Amiga use, the stylish Eklipse model features micro-switch technology to give smooth operation, easy use and durability.

ONLY £9.99

Memory

With more and more memory-hungry programs being launched for Atari computers, there's never been a better time to upgrade yours.

Extra memory will enable you to play the most exciting simulation games, use powerful graphics drawing programs or even design colourful pages with the latest publishing software.

We've put together options for all types of Atari enthusiast – and with the STFM boards you'll be able to extend the memory up to 4Mb of memory at a later date.

They're all at really competitive prices, with a service available for buyers who don't feel confident to fit the upgrade themselves.

FROM £8.99

512k STE	£8.99
STE to 2Mb	£49.99
STE to 4Mb	£99.99
512k STFM	£29.99
STFM 2Mb	£74.99
STFM 4Mb	£129.99

ively presents

saving ways to stretch your ST's limits...

Midi Studio Master

This Midi sequencer – which previously sold for £99 – enables you to turn your ST into a fully-fledged music controller.

With this software and compatible synthesiser keyboard you can write, store and playback stunning compositions just like the professionals.

Its features include 100 track storage, 240 PPQ resolution, Midi standard file compatible, real-time mix-down via mouse, real-time scrolling arrange window and pipeline module system.

ONLY £9.99

Internal Drive

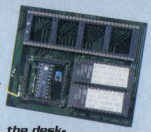
Imagine the advantages of upgrading a single-sided floppy disk drive to a double-sided version.

If you're still using the old style single-sided drive, then you'll have already found that most of the latest software doesn't work with your ST. Replace it with this internal model and you'll be able to run all programs, including your existing collection, and have double the storage capacity on every disk.

The drive is easy to fit but because official Atari drives are no longer available, some small alterations will be needed to the ST's case.

ONLY £39.99

TOS upgrade



Give your ST the extra features and improvements of the latest operating system but keep compatibility with all your existing programs.

With TOS 2.06 you'll be give your computer a brilliant new look, and have the ability to put frequently used folders and files onto the desktop for easy access.

Extra icons are available for folders and hard drives, keyboard shortcuts make control easier, the desktop's colour can be changed and GEM programs set to run automatically.

Its support for high density floppy drives is just another reason why this bargain upgrade is right for you. A fitting service is available.

ONLY £59.99

Fitting and return delivery

We realise that many ST owners would love the power offered by extra memory or the latest operating system but are put off by the prospect of fiddling about inside the computer.

This is why we've teamed up with a leading Atari dealer who for a small extra charge will be able to fit memory and TOS upgrades, and even arrange for your machine to be sent back.

If you choose this service please don't send you computer just yet – once we've received your order an Upgrade Centre representative will arrange a convenient appointment time.

UPGRADES ORDER FORM

Fill in this form and send it to Upgrade Centre, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP

ATARI ST USER

❒	512k STE upgrade £8.99	❒	Mouse £9.99
❒	STE memory to 2Mb £49.99	❒	Trackball £24.99
❒	STE memory to 4Mb £99.99	❒	Midi Studio Master £9.99
❒	512k STFM upgrade £29.99	❒	Robokit £19.99
❒	STFM 2Mb £74.99	❒	Joystick £2.99
❒	STFM 4Mb £129.99	❒	TOS 2.06 (STE) £59.99
❒	Internal floppy £39.99	❒	TOS 2.06 (STFM) £59.99
❒	External floppy £57.99	❒	Fitting and return delivery £19.99

Please add £1 per item for postage and packing within mainland UK – for overseas telephone the Upgrade Centre on +44 772 203166. All products only available while stocks last

I wish to pay by...

❒ Cheque/postal order payable to Europress Enterprise Ltd

❒ Credit Card No [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] Expiry date ___/___

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode ..... Daytime phone .....

Please do not send your ST to the above address. The Upgrade Centre will contact customers requesting the fitting service with full address and booking details.

❒ Tick this box if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies

THE BEST FOR ST AND FALCON 030!

THE ATARI FALCON

At New Age PDL we are supporting the new Falcon 030 101%. We currently have a huge stock of Falcon specific and enhanced software all on High Density (1.44 meg) disks. We also fill these disks to capacity wherever possible to give you the best possible value for money. We now have a dedicated Falcon catalogue containing loads of free software including utilities, demos, music and a game. This catalogue is COMPLETELY FREE to new customers with your first order – just ask for it.

ALL FALCON DISKS £1.75 EACH

FALCON ART & GRAPHICS PROGRAMS

FALC 3 - Birdy 2 Animation (4 megs+), very cute! Cyrel Roberts' demo.
FALC 8 - Fractal DSP, Fractal Zoomers, IFF, GIF, BMW & TGA viewers, B/I Camera for altering raster images. Speed of Light 2.6, F-Point, Chagall demo, Slideshower.
FALC 37 - Fractal Playtime, Germlow 3.00, Delmpaint, Gix Gif, Binario 2.0 + more!
FALC 95 - Geotech - landscape generator, Numerics, Photo Studio demo + more!
FALC 98 - Chloe demo, Overlay demo 1.03 (zipped), Pixart demo 1.02.
FALC 102 - Raystart demo 1.1, View XGA, IMG converter, Chagall Demo, Jpeg view 2.14.
FALC 110 - Vidi - load, copy to or from screen. Rainbow demo 2.5+. Truecolour art package.
FALC 117 - POV Raytracer 2 on 2 disks, zipped & expands to nearly 5 meg! £3.50.

FALCON PICTURES & ANIMATIONS

FALC 23 - Tongs Slideshow - 24-bit Truecolour pictures - photographic quality!
FALC 31 - Temptation The first disk of an EXCLUSIVE pack of JPEG pictures of gorgeous girls. Excellent quality pictures and the three disk pack contains no less than ninety pictures! Yes 90! Disks 2 & 3 on FALC 32 & 33.
FALC 34 - The Chippendale Auditions. This time a disk of gorgeous blokes!
FALC 38 - FIJ Animations: AS Lamp, Balloon, Bart, Glass, Hands, Bounce 2.
FALC 39 - FIJ Animations: ADIDS, Apple, B Ball, Bugs Bunny, Chubbs, Cone, Figment
FALC 78 - Magic Pictures - train Japanese films as well as Akira, Dragon Ballzee in JPEG format.
FALC 85 - Startrek Pictures - JPEG's from all series
FALC 89 - Animal Pictures - the first of five disks of all sorts of mammals. (JPEGS).

FALCON DEMOS

FALC 9 - Grotesque (Excellent!), Sound, Speeder, Phases 30 & 50, Intel + more!
FALC 11 - Morphing demo - requires 2 Meg memory + hard drive space. + 3 more!
FALC 96 - When Dreams Become Reality (RGB), Warum (RGB), Incomex (RGB).
FALC 97 - Fuji Boy animation 2 meg memory + HD space!, Plastic Dreams - RGB/TV only.
FALC 105 - Arrival demo by Agression, Conflict demo (4meg+), Cool demo. All RGB/TV only.
FALC 106 - Falcon Flight Demo - real time scanning over fractal landscape + great music.
FALC 107 - Come by the Dr'Zee - Magnetic Fx, Absolute Reality + RGB/TV only.
FALC 111 - Lemans - digitised sequence of cars racing round track with music.
FALC 113 - Margo demo (4meg+) - digitised pictures of a woman modelling a skimpy bikini!
FALC 116 - Papa was Blade Runner (4meg+) new demo by EKO, very good. RGB/TV only.

FALCON MUSIC RELATED PROGRAMS

FALC 7 - Fortune for creating cities, Protracker 2, TCB Tracker, Desktracker 1.11.
FALC 17 - Winnie 1.35 (SID), Digital 030 - new 8-track tracker program, unstable though.
FALC 29 - Stemtek Cites for Fortune, Dame - Digital Audio Multiprocessing Editor.
FALC 52 - System Audio Manager 1.1 - assign samples to events, Digitrak 2 demo.
FALC 68 - 49' Wav samples for System Audio Manager.
FALC 82 - Protracker SKMod modules: Come & Get me, Piggy, Tripout, Hardcore etc.
FALC 83 - As above: Freudian Dreams, Goodbye, Harry, Intro, Journal + 5 more.
FALC 84 - As above: Watch Your Bass Spin, Boom And She Cums, Fir + 4 more.
FALC 94 - Miyazaki - Huge sound player program. Zipped, expands to 2 meg.
FALC 115 - Octalyser 0.8 - another 8-track tracker porting from the ST + docs & source code.

FALCON GAMES

FALC 21 - Humans Demo disk 1, Background 2.23 (ST emulator), New Deposit, Text Files, Desk Copy.
FALC 35 - Multitrack 3.1.1 - 24 meg memory, Mac sequencer and dragons game.
FALC 93 - Cloyd (excellent!), Die Losers et Des Hommes (3D shoot em up), Masters of Chaos (Dungeon Master clone), Tron, Silver Editor, Mario Kart demo.
FALC 104 - Speckle (RGB) - great space shoot em up, Meeblis (RGB) - crazy 'fatrus', Vertical Mayhem (RGB) - nice version of Columns.
FALC 112 - Mahjong II - German version of this classic tile game. Disk approx 1/2 full.

FALCON UTILITIES & APPLICATIONS

FALC 2 - Falcon Boot 1.2, Backword 2.23 (ST emulator), New Deposit, Text Files, Desk Copy.
Deskpic 1.05, Synchro, Multi Dialogue, DC Strad 2.1, Revive, SpinHD 1.3.
FALC 5 - CSek - C compiler, Chipmunk Basic 1.0, GTAR 1.11.1 - for MINT & Mivia systems.
FALC 10 - DSPSHOT - Assembler 1.1, ASM-One DSP port, DSP programming tools!
FALC 15 - 45 assorted MINT/MultiTOS utilities + extended colour icons that run in Truecolour.
FALC 20 - DSP Routines - about 1 megabyte of useful DSP routines.
FALC 28 - X Control 1.2, Clock 2.0, Edison screen saver, Mini FV 0.55, Magic Boot, Gemar 1.23 - Tape Backup, BAMP Fix 2, Fslc mods, Outside demo, PRG Flags.
FALC 36 - RDE 3.1 Tavern 1.4, Ute 2.22, Zoo 2.1, Zip 2.3, Gem Bench 3.25, Good Backup 1.13, Boot Init 1.1, Easy 1.5, Frontrid, Stfax! 1.3
FALC77 - Emacs 3.11, Everest 1.5, KiK Term, Atomik 3.5, X-Mens 1.3, Profile 1.43, Rezhacker (run RGB stuff on VGA monitor), Pullres 1.01, Swab, Dcbeck 1.0, Fuzzy Clock 1.14..
FALC 109 - DMB scans - two large sets of replacement scans. Before/Down screensaver 1.25
FALC 114 - Multi-Dialogue 1.3, Master Browse 3.2 - excellent text file viewer, T Cache 6.0.

THE ATARI ST/STE

New Age PDL in now in it's third year of business supplying top quality ST's software. We now have over 1400 disks of some of the best PD, Shareware and Licenceware to suit all tastes. Just look through our advert at get an idea of the huge range that we carry. Our disk based catalogue describes every single program in detail, has a beginners section and is very easy to use - it's also COMPLETELY FREE to new customers! Just ask for it, there's no need to send any disks or SAE's. If you are an existing customer and you would like an update then send back your disk with a stamped SAE.

HIGH RESOLUTION GAMES

GAME 1 - Anduril, Elimonator, Galaxy, Gilgalad, Mini Golf, Bubble, Runner, Space War, Tetris, Play Thing, Once 'A King
GAME 8 - Diamond Bookkeeper3, Invaders, Mazzam, Megaroids (Asteroids), Minefield, Missile, Murray, Solitair, Sprang
GAME 28 - Pyramid, Escape, Solidoku, Cube World, Battleships.
GAME 31 - Air Traffic Control, Go-Bang!, Munchers, Pong, Pac Put, Trivia, Go-Up.
GAME 33 - Bolo (Excellent breakout game), Super Breakout, Baseball
GAME 34 - Park 1 & 2 - good Zork type adventure games, Enchanted Realms.
GAME 38 - Net Hack v2.3, Scribble, Sherlock, Zarge, Checkers
GAME 39 - Exams Practice Kit, Pure Pursuing Kit, DOS7 - dungeons and dragons.
GAME 125 - Jeopardy, Clueso, Airline Manager, Locomotive, Bandwurm, Mastrix.
GAME 126 - Hack & Slay Construction Set, Mario Clone, Match It, Crossword Editor 2
GAME 168 - Nagalaw - a Tetris like game with a real strategy
GAME 185 - Oryd 2 - the sequel to the brilliant Oryd, much harder than the original.
GAME 186 - Tetric - new Tetris type game.

COLOUR GAMES

GAME 11 - A Question of Sneaker, Pinball, Dewtastic Rail in Nudge, Ranger.
GAME 68 - Squidge, Fruit Machine, Pin Game, Rocket Ball.
GAME 78 - Trapped - a magic maze game with lots of items.
GAME 81 - Battlescape, Blox - brilliant variation on the Tetris theme.
GAME 83 - Grandad & the Holey Vest - superb animated adventure. 1 Meg.
GAME 104 - Blall - A very nice version of Tetris. STE ONLY.
GAME 105 - Infiltration - 3D game. Classic. Atomik Kobold. Great shoot em up.
GAME 117 - Fast Freddy - lovely platform game with superb graphics.
GAME 121 - Dashlyte - great isometric 3D way/strategy similar to Hero Quest
GAME 123 - Top Trainer (horses), Anarchy Academy - wreck havoc in school. Boing.
GAME 128 - Dungeon Lord - good Dungeon Master clone. Add Mega-sheet em up.
GAME 131 - Gloss Buttock at Thorp - save the from the evil buttock! - 1 Mega+.
GAME 132 - Psycho Pig - two disk platform game, very cute. £3.50.
GAME 136 - Chess 1.7 (play against computer), Amazon (one converted). 1 meg on GAME 137
GAME 139 - Grandad II - the sequel to Game 83, comes on 2 disks 1 Mega+ £3.50.
GAME 148 - Operation Blue Sunrise 3 - massive STAC adventure game. 1 Meg+
GAME 150 - Cosmo Angel 1.02 - go bubble fishing - nice! STE only.
GAME 151 - Sim Pgl - a brilliant pig farm simulation! Like Sim City & Sim Earth.
GAME 153 - Wormhole - a new exciting addictive shoot em up with slick graphics.
GAME 155 - Three Realms of Suspicion - STAC adventure. Spacehall - like Ice Hockey.
GAME 157 - B17 - bomb the buildings, F-16 - very good flight game, 8 missions.
GAME 158 - Vikings 2 - shoot em up in the Defender - but like Xenon.
GAME 163 - Theme Park Mystery. Combat - kill everything!, Sammania.
GAME 164 - The Obscure Naturalist - STAC graphic adventure 1 Meg. Dominos, Slither.
GAME 166 - Mahjong Solitaire, Form Line, Micro Chess Reactor - volume.
GAME 169 - Megaline - four player Tron/Light Cycles, Insectoid, Caps n Rabbets.
GAME 170 - Magic Tomb (1 meg+), Hyrulia - great new 3D CK game
GAME 173 - Oryd (1 meg+) - superb puzzle strategy game, Dick Dash
GAME 173 - Lobsty Invaders - uses hardware scrolling, stereo sound. STE only
GAME 174 - Bludgeon 1 - 1st fantasy role playing with full colour graphics
GAME 175 - Tradesman's Condition - the sequel to Three Realms of Suspicion - STAC adventure
GAME 176 - The Heavy Bunch - Wild West game of gunfights, gambling etc. Spot It - puzzle.
GAME 177 - Freemantle - superb arcade adventure/dungeons and dragons
GAME 178 - Argon, Out, Cadenzone, Bomb, Pyramid, Disk Hunt, Sitrel, Turbo, War Jeep, Thumper, Picker, Planet Man, Lbloot, Tpsilon - 13 games!
GAME 179 - Asteroid, Bang 3, Bath Attack, Blaster, Chunks, Europe, Explode, Fuzzball, Gems, Invaders, Magnetoids, Micro, Octopod, Othello, Pac Man, Plant, Rocklid, Tank, Tennis, Wall Street, Zappy
GAME 180 - Mystic Well, Gem Golf, Football, Harris Goes Skiing, Haunted House, Invaders, Jumpster, Room, Stonegate Deluxe, USA, Zyxm, Firestorm
GAME 181 - Cyclone - a new type of Dungeon Master Clone, good one though. 1 Meg+
GAME 183 - Towers - a great new Dungeon Master Clone - the best yet! 2 disks (1 Meg+) £3.50.
GAME 187 - Karate Champion, Hector and the Mutant Vampire Tomatoes - nice platformer.
GAME 188 - Premier Manager 2 - excellent football management game. 40Mb only.
GAME 189 - Cud Lee's Quest - platform game for kids. Mindmelt - roleplaying fantasy game.
GAME 190 - Quest for Knowledge - quiz type game set in a maze arena.
GAME 191 - Wells of Illusion - another Dungeon Master Clone, good one though. 1 Meg+
GAME 192 - Kings of Power - shoot em up written with the SEUCK by Ken Reader.
GAME 193 - World Fighting Championships - beat up opponents from all over the world.
GAME 194 - Survivel Another shoot em up written with the SEUCK.
GAME 196 - Pegasus - Complex futuristic strategy game set in space. 1 meg + 2 disks £3.50.
GAME 199 - Skulls - very nice version of Breakthrough for STE's. STE only. 1 meg+
GAME 201 - It's A Mug's Game - good overhead view boxing simulation
GAME 207 - Hypnotic Lands - arcade puzzle game a bit like Klax, very good

BUDGIE GAMES - £2.75 EACH

BUGAM 83 - Cybernism, a very slick Defender game, really fast!
BUGAM 89 - Horse Racing Simulator for 1 to 5 players. Buy/sell and bet!
BUGAM 104 - Jetpack - another faithful clone of a classic Spacey game.
BUGAM 113 - Football Tactician - formerly in 620 release! Excellent
BUGAM 119 - Football Tactician - the Premier League 92/93 season.
BUGAM 121 - Super Scrambler - take to trip to the B-bit days with this shoot 'em up

POWERFIST GAMES - £3.00 EACH

POWER 1 - Snatt 92 - previously commercial playable platform game. 1 Mega+ (512 on POWER 11)
POWER 3 - Seven Galaxies - extremely slick shoot em up, one of the best so far.
POWER 4 - Hunchy 1066 - go back in time with some artillery for this classic!
POWER 5 - Deluxe Nostrum - great flip screen arcade adventure.
POWER 8 - Power Cut - fly-around blast-em up with 25 power boxes to destroy!
POWER 10 - Dungeon Master 2 - escape four mazes level by level. 2D game.
POWER 14 - Castle Capers - wonderland platform game set in a haunted castle.

MEGA-GAMES PACK ONE!

No less than ten disks crammed to the brim with archived games (de-archiver and printed instructions supplied) to squeeze on an amazing 117 games covering board/puzzle/strategy/arcade and adventure. For a full list ask with your order, or if not ordering, send a stamp. All should run on a colour system with 512k and be STE compatible! You will need about twenty disks to unarchive these disks and AMAZING VALUE FOR MONEY!

117 GAMES – JUST £14.95!

ART & GRAPHICS

ART 1 - A disk full of 23 miscellaneous utilities including viewgif 1.2.
ART 51 - Cracker! 3.0 - latest version of the best ST art package! 1 Meg+
ART 128 - Germview 3.00 - new version of this superb viewer/converter
ART 137 - PAD 2.4 - English version of this high res drawing package. 1 Meg+
ART 172 - Paintshop Plus 2.03 - A commercial quality drawing package.

TEMPTATION! VOLUME 1

The first pack in a whole new range of top quality pictures of tempting girls! We have produced two versions of this pack (please state which is required) - one for the STFM and one for the STE which takes advantage of it's 32,768 colour palette! This pack is EXCLUSIVE to New Age PDL! Ten crammed disks at just £15.00! Art 187-196.

JUST £14.95!

ART 180 - Paintpot - an all-commercial painting package which was £15.00!
ART 207 - Car Slideshow - brilliant Photochrome pictures, Near Photographic! STE Only
ART 209 - Girls Slideshow 1 - all pictures of Samantha Fox! Cowboys!
ART 210 - Erotic Dreams slideshow 2 - another disk of Cindy Crawford pictures.
ART 212/213 - POV Raytracer, the best raytracer around! 2 disks. £3.50.

DEMOS

DEMO 356 - Kuka Club Culture Mix Pack 1 - 6 pieces of excellent club music.
DEMO 358 - The Brace Demo - a rather nice auto-running multi-part demo.
DEMO 361 - The Edge of Panic Demo - STE only demo by ACCS with thrash music
DEMO 363 - Exhaust demo - another STE auto-running demo by ACCS
DEMO 347-348 - Cyberspace Aimes Les Moules - strange but weird demo. 1 Meg+
DEMO 366 - Lethal Trash demo - Another multi-part, from Zeal. 1 meg STE only
DEMO 339 - STAR Hair Fashion Show
DEMO 332/3/5 - Tnaos i Int Kel Ster Dead Demo Breman (2 disks) 1 Meg+ £3.50
DEMO 335 - Reality Is A Lie demo - 1 meg+
DEMO 338 - Cream Demo By Chaos
DEMO 325 - Perpetual Down Demo. 1 Meg
DEMO 320/324 - TNN Megademo 2 disks £3.50
DEMO 314/315 - Coding So Far Demo. 2 disks £3.50
DEMO 311-313 - Relapse demo - three disks. STE ONLY £5.00
DEMO 310 - Mad Max Demo 2 - brilliant STE demo
DEMO 276 - E605 - a great STE only demo by Fercy of Light
DEMO 274/275 - Dreamware - the latest megademo from the Wild Boys. £3.50.
DEMO 270-272 - The Omicron Megademo - takes up 3 disks! 1 Meg+. £5.00.
DEMO 258 - Brutal Techno - Fantastic STE and 1 Meg only demo.
DEMO 242 - Electro Dream II - 9 superb 50Hz tunes by E.T. - STE only.

SOUNDTRACKER MUSIC

TRAC 129 - Four, Froglunk, Cdl 2, Cdl 3, Federal Force, Rave 1
TRAC 138 - Cars, Short, House, Jewell, Spaceorg, Celtic 3, Rapmit, A-Team, Sweet Dreams
TRAC 127 - More Lemmings, Backgrapped, Psychic 1, Bushlite, Donna 2, Ace Base, Echoing
TRAC 124 - Scrambled Mind - 6 World, Wyre It, Pearl Jam, Sabre Dance 2, H-Metal
TRAC 125 - The Leader Final, Artificial, Finally I Play, Space Journey, Sit1
TRAC 124 - Donna, Haze Part 1, Meaty Man (1 meg+), SPF, Piano TVA, Willow
TRAC 123 - Electro Dream, Flash 4, Racer XXX, The Credits, Time to a Kill
TRAC 122 - Klvja Pax Klvja, Oldmuc, Absolute Muzak, Slenz-Vector, Frag Mix, SNT Vector
TRAC 121 - Engine, Eww-Wor Remix, G-Gac, Galaxy, Fwok

WORDPROCESSING (ANY RES)

WORD 1 - ST Writer Elite, ED Text, Zap ST, ST Page, Typist, Desk Accessories.
WORD 2 - Mail Merger, Spell Check, Large Printer Maker, Count, Double, Convert.
WORD 3 - First Word + text processor check demo, Spell Binder, Text Filer.
WORD 5 - Calamus Demo, no save function but you can print. High Res only.
WORD 6 - DB Writer 1.4 - very slick wordprocessor with many features. 1+ Meg
WORD 9 - Calamus Support disk - loads of utilities for Calamus and fonts etc.
WORD 10 - Calamus Manual in the form of a CDK. (Disk not full).
WORD 11 - Wordflair Demo 2 - Fab - good Atari wordprocessor with fonts etc. 1+
WORD 13 - Calamus S demo - fully functioning except save. 2 disks. £3.50. 1+! 1 Meg+

BUSINESS (ANY RES)

BUSI 2 - Sheet 2.0, Dbase One, First Base 1.6, Home Budget Template
BUSI 4 - Opus 2.2 - brilliant spreadsheet. 1 Meg+
BUSI 5 - WG Data, ST Sheet, Vis Calc Clone - three more spreadsheets
BUSI 6 - Double Sentry Book Keeping System, Address Book
BUSI 7 - Ashbank 1.1 - complete home accounts system - colour only
BUSI 11 - Compact Office Management Program 2.05 - for any small business, many features
BUSI 12 - Inventory PRO - keep track of stock levels, GP Data Control Fax for GP's (1M!)
BUSI 14 - Data Techniques 1.41 - easy to use but powerful new shareware database system

£1.75 EACH New Age PDL

Unless otherwise stated

UTILITIES (ANY MC)

UTL 2 - Startgem, Head Start 1), DC Clock, Disk Checker, Hard Disk Utils, Ram Disks, Hack 'n' Copy, Turbo 2.2 (HD backup), Megaformat, Memory Test.

UTL 4 - Pack 2.5, 2.9 or Arcshrink - loads programs faster, 20 DC utilities.

UTL 5 - F-Copy 3, DC Shoot!, Desk Manager, Disk Scan, Mono Emulator 5, Spool, DC Stuffer (boots 32 secs), Speech Synthesiser, Mouse Accelerator

UTL 6 - James The Butler, London Desk Copies, MenuSYS, Pinhead, Super Calendar Batch Startup, Auto Sort, Postermaker, No Bombs, E-Disk, 9 Quick Utilities.

UTL 12 - Jam Packer 4, Wired XES (Modulator control panel), Satellite 4.01, Clock Set

UTL 13 - Germas to English translator, Test Print, DC Submge, MINT, Mascal 3.0.

UTL 14 - Printer Drivers inc Canon Bubblejet, Qume Daisywheel, Brother + Epson.

UTL 16 - Chameleon - loads and unloads accessories without having to reboot, Sticker 3.0 (mono only), Definitive File Selector, Super Virus Killer, Benchmark.

UTL 19 - Your Second Manual, Adobe, GDOS info, Bambo info + several magazines.

UTL 30 - Superboot 8.1, Build Your Own Scanner, Report Writer, Disk Cleaner

UTL 35 - Cheetah 1.1 (high speed copying util), Mouse Toys, Patches, Icons 2.2.

UTL 38 - Printer Drivers inc: IOP 1124, Star LC24, NEC Pinwriter, Brother, Canon, Citizen, HP Deskjet, Oki, Qume, Tosan, Toshiba, Riteman, Atari.

UTL 40 - Loads of packers inc: Atomik 3.5, Automation 5, Dragon 3, Fire 2, Ice 2.4, Pompey 1.9, Speed Packer 2, Branch Always Packer, + Multi Depacker 1.5

UTL 42 - Intro Maker - mix pictures, sprites, sounds and music together. Colour only.

UTL 45 - Kaos Desk 2.01, Terra Desktop 1.36 - replacement desktops.

UTL 46 - STOS Shoot em up builder kit 0.6 - colour only

UTL 51 - Form Finder 2.2 - horse racing predictor which is easy to use. Colour only.

UTL 53 - TOS Version 1.6 - allows you to run programs that don't run on your TOS.

UTL 54 - Message Scroller, Archiver Shells, Envelope Printer Demo, Mega Cracker.

UTL 55 - Spectrum Emulator 1.2 - run Spectrum games - includes Hobbit, Manic Miner 1 Mega

UTL 57 - Revenge Disk Displayer 2.0, Wordfinder 3.0, Desktop art configurator.

UTL 58 - Corner Themes Inventory and Personality Tester - great fun!

UTL 59 - Neodesk patches - upgrades 3.01 to 3.02 and 3.02 to 3.03.

UTL 60 - JC Label 1.3, Jan Osa 1.7, Flowchart Compiler, Boot Time 2.0, Multisync.

UTL 61 - Rename It, Jaso Archiver 2.1, Insert Date, Morrow - Shadow Remedial, Power DOS.

UTL 62 - BJ Chrome 1.1, Desk Master, Crazery Lister, Silk Mouse, Auto Load, Blitz.

UTL 63 - JC Calendar 0.3 - an extremely pleasant and flexible calendar maker.

UTL 64 - Gem plan your garden, Dynamical - stars modeller, Alarm Clock. Vol 7.

UTL 65 - Connections Multimedia - mix text, graphics, animation & sound. 1 Mega+ ST

UTL 66 - Nation X utility disk - over 150 programs! Everything you need to get you started. Includes disk utils, diary, virus killer, packers etc. - highly recommended!

UTL 67 - Label CAD 2.2 - design cards, posters etc. Document files on UTIL 68. 1Y

UTL 69 - Mini Draft 1.10 - a simple drafting package with loads of examples. 1Y

UTL 70 - Route Finder 1.8 - Like Autoroute - plans journeys for you. SpinED 1.3, Dw Unfit.

UTL 71 - Ponds and Watergardens - great tips for this type of thing in pictures and text 'C'

UTL 72 - Northern And Equatorial Star Atlas 'C', Gloss it - hypertext concept

UTL 73 - Stupendous Software Utilities, database, diskettes, file manager, and much more

UTL 74 - Award maker - easy to use program to create certificates with nice fonts, borders etc.

UTL 75 - Idealist 3.4 - file printer that can save up to 80% of paper consumption! 2 disks £3.50.

UTL 76 - Before Dawn 1.25 - latest and biggest version of this screen saver. 2 disks £3.50.

UTL 79 - Spectrum Games - a disk full of games to go with the emulator on Util 55.

UTL 80 - Terrabill II (label), Ji Font, Cuttons - printer over ST from snappers

UTL 81 - Two column printer, Searcher Deluxe 2.01, Sys Info 8.4, Password Protect, STD Cat 5.2

UTL 82 - Beraprez 2.6 - create posters, banners, gift cards, letters etc. 1Y

MUSIC & MIDI

MUSIC 1 - Novatracker 1.5 - popular soundtracker creator with samples & source.

MUSIC 2 - Samples disk 1, works with most soundtracker creators.

MUSIC 3 - Tracker voice and songs for use with Quartet ST

MUSIC 9 - Midi Magnet, Chord Master, Keys KMP, TXB1z, Satellite (High Res only).

MUSIC 11 - Arpeggiator, Zapptrk, MIDI Beat, Project, Jukebox, MKS-50 - any res.

MUSIC 12 - Henry Cash Sequencer, Composer - any resolution

MUSIC 13 - Drum Patterns for Ca-Base in standard MIDI format - any resolution.

MUSIC 16 - Yamaha PSS790 Editor, includes loads of sample voices.

MUSIC 22 - Alchemia Junior 2.0 - sequencer with midi and sampling etc. High res.

MUSIC 23 - Sound Merlin - good eco-commercial program, Mozarts Dice Waltz - compose music without musical knowledge. High res only.

MUSIC 24 - Octalyser 8-track tracker - STE only, Protracker 2.1, YM Tracker.

MUSIC 26 - PSS Utilities disk, loads of programs including patch editor, librarian etc.

MUSIC 27 - Casio CZ-101 - 8 track sequencer, Korva K1 editor, MIDI menu.

MUSIC 29 - Korva K1 synth sounds.

MUSIC 30 - ST Sound 1.2 - Sound sample player with loads of example samples.

MUSIC 31 - SCIX 1.0 - professional translator. Reads and writes patterns in MIDI format. Midi Mover.

MUSIC 32 - Tri-Sound Sequencer (Not STE) - three channel chip music sequencer. In Control.

MUSIC 33 - DTX File reader/catalogue, Gryph 3 - quarter music player and utilities.

MUSIC 34 - Guitar Professional, Lite Play, YM 2149 Editor, SCX 64 - for YM units.

MUSIC 35 - Roland 'D' Series Sound Banks, Replay Pro Editor Demo.

MUSIC 36 - Final Score 2.0 M - WYSIWYG score writing system, EKSEQ 1 - 100 track sequencer.

MUSIC 37 - Midi Step 1.2 - 16 track midi sequencer for step time music creation. 1 mega 'A'.

MUSIC 39 - SSP PD Voicepack - patches for the Roland GM-70, D-110 and Yamaha TX81Z.

EDUCATION

EDUC 1 - Kid Music, Kid Notes, Kid Piano, Kid Puzzle, Kid Graph, Rebus Writer.

EDUC 2 - Kid Grid 2, Kid Mixup, Kid Publisher, Kid Sketch, Kid Story, Kid ABC.

EDUC 6 - Maths Made Easy, Kid Shapes, Kid Shapes Plus, Race Cards.

EDUC 7 - Michaels Big Adventure - colourful graphics, easy to play. Age 8+

EDUC 9 - Bodyshop, Computer School 2 & 3, Butterfly in the Park.

EDUC 12 - English Consultation System, Pure Logic, Phonics, Key Capers.

EDUC 16 - Frangton 1 & 2 - French Tutors, Mir Prob 2.0, Numbers, Stimming.

EDUC 18 - Spanish Verb Tutor, World of Risk, About the House, Perfect Match.

EDUC 19 - Computer School 4 - tests reflexes, memory, logic, coordination etc.

EDUC 20 - Easter Egg Hunt - pleasant adventure for 7-12 yrs without violence etc.

EDUC 21 - G.C.S.E. Higher Maths Grade Tutor, Francjazo 2 - French Tutor.

EDUC 22 - G.C.S.E. Chemistry Tutor - all you need to attain grade 'C' or above.

C.I.A. WORLD FACTBOOK

Four disks crammed with information about the world, covering 247 nations and their populations. An absolute mountain of knowledge built for research. Also covers weights and measures and contains a complete Chemistry Reference Book. Amazing!! EDUC 23-26.

£6.50

EDUC 27 - Mastertime - brilliant time tutor, Simple Cinema, Weather Time, Human

EDUC 31 - 1900's USSR - a very good interactive learning system

EDUC 33 - Sample Time, Picture Time, Add Up - great learning programs just for kids

EDUC 34 - Malays, Geo Puzzle - learn the countries of all the continents graphically. 1Y

EDUC 35 - Math Circus, Elite Mouse Colouring, Piggy Bank, Seaside - more kids programs.

EDUC 36 - Benjamin's ABC - teaches the alphabet using speech and pictures.

EDUC 37 - From Pics to Parliament - a textual and graphical look at British history.

EDUC 38 - Knowledge Tree Add Up - nice maths title in the form of an arcade/adventure.

EDUC 39 - Mini Magic Storybook - put down version of the successful commercial packages.

EDUC 40-42 - World War II - look at life on the Home Front during the war. 3 disks. £5.00 1M

EDUC 43 - Professor Clever 2 - teaches kids ages 5-11 about numbers, spelling and time.

EDUC 44 - Witches, Mice and Fairy Tales - collection of nice games for children.

PROGRAMMING

LANG 1/2 - Szasbon C Compiler release 2. Includes documentation, shell etc. £3.50.

LANG 3 - C Source code, loads of routines including documentation

GNU C++ COMPILER 2.1

This five disk set is archived and will need to be unarchived to a hard drive before use. It also requires at least 2.5 meg of memory. This is intended as a developers version - ie not for novices. LANG 5-9.

£8.00

LANG 11 - GFA Basic programs, includes runner program. ST Basic 1 programs.

LANG 13 - Professional GFA guide - 12 chapters of tutorial with C source.

LANG 16 - STOS Tutorial and various Basic programs.

LANG 24 - 'C' Adventure Toolkit - the very best adventure creator available.

LANG 27 - GFA Basic v 2.0 - GFA Expert - a nice GFA Basic tutorial.

LANG 29 - STOS Tracker - adds a new set of STOS commands for Soundtracker.

LANG 33 - Comenius Enterprises C++ Tutorial 2 - 12 chapters + source.

LANG 35 - Ultimate GFA Database 1.7 - loads of references to GFA articles.

LANG 36 - STOS Extensions: Missing Link, Misty, Blitter, MIDI, STE + 7 more!

LANG 37 - STOS Software pack 1 - millions (almost) of routines etc.

LANG 38 - Robert Annett Source Code disk - from the author of StosAssyst.

LANG 40 - Maupas Pascal Compiler and utilities.

LANG 41/42 - STOS 3D - brilliant extension allowing you to program in 3D. 2 disks £3.50

LANG 43 - A disk crammed to the brim with STOS ACB's.

LANG 44 - STOS Adventure Creator 1.03 - write your own graphic adventures. 'C'

LANG 45 - Heat 'n' Serve Assembler C - a very easy to install version of this compiler.

LANG 46 - XLISP 2.00 - object oriented programming language with a huge 84k manual.

LANG 47 - Interactive Fiction - loads of routines to write Infocom type adventures in Basic.

LANG 48 - STOS Extra Extension - adds about 52 new commands to STOS.

STOS 12 - The latest issue of STOSSER disk magazine. Tutorials, articles, reviews etc.

BUPRO 2 - 68000 Programmers Library - hundreds of routs for games, 2Y

BUPRO 4 - Moving Bytes 1 - more routines for screen effects, music, scrolls. £2.95.

BUPRO 16 - ST-68K Reference 3 - includes full data on ST internals, excellent. £2.95.

ARE YOU A PROGRAMMER?

We always endeavour to get the latest software into our collection as it becomes available and usually the fastest way to do this is to obtain the software straight from the author. If you have written something which you think is worthy of inclusion then send us details and if we like it then we will contact you to arrange a swap.

Mr. Smart's BIG TIME

An amazing pack of twenty-five COMMERCIAL educational programs for 5-11 year olds, complete with a video tape detailing the various games and how to use them. Recently reviewed in ST Review magazine given the 'Essential Buy Award', they quoted "My advice is simple. Buy it!"

Spoken Clock, Grid Work 2, Till Plus, Picture Pop Ups, Sea Colour, Up The Pole, Number Friends, 12 Hour clock, Grid Sums 1, Till Minus, Word Memory, Shape Match, Country Wide, 24 Hour Clock, Grid Sums 2, Picture Memory, Street Wise, City Slicker, Grid Work 1, Lost Letters, Word Pop-Ups, Sea Shape, Body Builder, Shadow Master.

£24.95

ACCESSORIES & COMMERCIAL ALL ITEMS BELOW UK ONLY

Easy Text Professional DTP (1 Mega)	£35.95
Easy Text Professional Vector DTP (2 Mega+ & HD & Speedo GDOS)	£36.95
Introducing Atari ST Machine Code - book & disk	£17.95
ST Handbook - magazine for PD & Shareware	£2.50
Beginners Guide to STOS Basic - 618 page book + disks	£29.95
IMPrint, for quality mono printouts on 9 or 24 pin printers	£9.95
IMPrint, same as above but for colour printers	£13.95
Degas Art v2.0 - computer art tutor on 2 disks	£9.45
Family Roots - Genealogy program	£23.95
Calamus 1.09 - high resolution 1 mega+	£78.95
ST/STE High resolution mouse	£12.45
Quickstart Joystick	£6.95
Mouse/Joystick Extension leads	£4.95
10 Capacity disk box (only with order of one or more disks)	£0.95
100 Capacity Disk Box	£7.95
200 Capacity Disk Box	£9.95
3.5 inch Drive head cleaner	£3.45
ST or Falcon dust cover	£3.45
Keyboard Cleaner - pack of ten wipes	£3.95
Copyholders (attach to monitor to save desk space)	£3.45
Mouse house	£2.95
Mouse mat	£2.95
Mouse cleaning kit - 10 cleaning sticks and cleaner tissues + fluid	£4.95
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Advice

Back to Basic

I have recently bought an Atari 1040STE and have also just started attending an evening course in Basic programming.

I got the ST purely so I could practice my programming skills at home. The ST cost me a mere £175 and came with 35 programs including word processors, games and, more appropriately, ST Basic.

The person I bought it from recommended that I get hold of another version of Basic, as the one which came with the ST is not very powerful and is unfriendly to use. I also do not have the manual.

I am therefore looking for a good Basic language which is powerful and will not become too simple for me when I eventually master the subject and wish to create more complex programs.

I am also interested in the Falcon computer and, although I can't afford one at the moment, I would like a package which can be used on the Falcon.

I have a budget of £120 to spend on a decent package and would appreciate any recommendations.

I Strickland, Northampton

Your friend is right about ST Basic; it's not very friendly at all and is not very powerful compared to the Basics which are available at the moment.

The ideal package for your needs is HiSoft Basic 2, which is currently at v2.1. It costs £99.95 and boasts complete Falcon compatibility and support.

There are extensive Falcon library routines for accessing all the internal goodies within the Falcon as well as all Atari computers.

HiSoft are renowned for producing excellent documentation with their software packages and HiSoft Basic 2 is no exception.

The manual includes both tutorial sections for beginners and comprehensive reference sections for the more experienced. For more information, contact HiSoft on 0525 718181.

Monitor TV

I currently use a Sony Trinitron FST TV with my Atari 1040STFM and have decided to treat myself to an SC1224 colour monitor, which my friend says I can have for £80.

My question is that if I get this monitor, will I be able to use it to receive TV broadcasts too?

Neil Havers, Southampton

No. The SC1224 is not capable of receiving TV signals because it lacks the necessary tuner hardware. It is feasible that given the right modifications, it could be made to receive signals, but I would think the cost involved would prohibit development.

Besides, you already have a perfectly good TV now, so why would you want to get rid of it?

If you were thinking of selling the TV in order generate funds to buy the SC1224, you should first check to see if your Sony Trinitron has a Scart socket on the back.

If it has, you can buy appropriate leads to connect your ST to the TV via this socket. Doing this vastly improves the image quality over that of the TV because the signal is direct RGB instead of RF. It won't be quite as crystal clear as using a SC1224, so you will have to balance the options of being without a TV over that of the difference in image quality between the Scart method and dedicated monitor.

All change

When I put a disk in the internal drive of my 520ST and open a window to show the contents, and then remove the disk and insert another, how come the ST still shows the files of the previous disk?

I always have to close the window and open another one to view the files on the new disk. Is there a patch program which can cure this annoying problem?

C Burgess, Avon

There is no patch program to do what you wish. However, your problem with having to close and open another windows to view the new contents is easily solved by simply pressing the Esc key. This tells the ST to re-read the disk directory and will then update the currently active window to display the new information.

Software speed-up

I have recently managed to buy Calamus v1.09 to do some newsletters for my local church. However, My 1040STE, which has been upgraded to 4Mb, still suffers from a annoyingly slow screen update rate in mono.

I wondered if there is any way to speed up the screen drawing as it tends to get frustrating when using Calamus with particularly complex pages. I can only afford about £80 for whatever suggestion you may have in mind.

T Simmons, Derbyshire

System Solutions are the people who can help you. They supply various products which can vastly increase the speed at which your computer operates.

On your budget, NVDI, the software accelerator is the one to go for. Once installed, you can expect an increase in graphics performance well in excess of 100 per cent.

Should you find yourself with a larger budget, you may like to go for the hardware alternative which System Solutions offer.

The T28 or T36 hardware accelerator boards can be fitted to increase the speed of your average 8MHz ST to a blistering 28 or 36MHz.

What's more, you can also use NVDI in conjunction with the boards to squeeze even greater performance out of your machine. The hardware alternative does require you to have the boards soldered into your computer, so it's advisable to take advantage of System Solutions, fitting service if you are not handy with a soldering iron.

The T28 and T36 boards cost £189 and £279 respectively with NVDI on offer for a discounted £39.95 if you buy it with one of the boards. You can contact System Solutions on 081 – 693 1919.

Unfriendly manual

Since buying my 1040STFM a couple of months ago, I have been trying to get to grips with using it and failing miserably.

I bought the ST because I am interested in all things electronic and for £100 I couldn't resist buying my first computer. However, I am beginning to think that, at my age, I am destined never to understand the workings of these computer beasties.

After reading through the manual, I was totally at a loss on some of the techniques required to operate the damn thing. Please could you recommend a more friendly manual to help me get to grips with my computer?

P Allen, Sheffield

I doubt if your age has anything to do with not being able to get to grips with the ST. It is general knowledge that the manual supplied with the ST is far from adequate and totally lacking in clarity.

Such is the case that a book called Your Second Manual was released some time back which aimed to explain the ins and outs of the ST in a down to earth, no jargon infested manner.

ST – Club managed to obtain a limited number of them and may still have some in stock. Give them a ring on 0602 455250.

TOS upgrade

My friend and I both have a 520STE computer. I have TOS 1.06 and my friend has recently upgraded to TOS 2.06 with a switcher board that allows him to have TOS 1.06 on hand as well.

I now wish to upgrade too, but when my friend did so, he didn't get a manual that lists the extra features in v2.06. Thus, he has been blindly exploring the various features and noting them down.

Surely when you upgrade to a superior version of computer operating system, you should also get appropriate documentation listing the enhanced features?

K Samuel, West Yorkshire

I would guess that your friend did not get his upgrade from Compo Software, the only UK company officially licensed by

SERVICE

Atari to duplicate the TOS 2.06 Eproms. As such, they also are able to supply the official 38-page TOS v2.06 documentation manual as well as a fitting instruction manual.

You also get a disk containing the latest Atari hard drive utilities (AHDI) and Xcontrol, Atari's extensible control panel utility complete with various CPX modules.

But if you are about to upgrade your own computer, I suggest that you check out our latest readers' offers on page 46.

You will find that we are selling TOS 2.06 at an attractive price of only £59.99, and we can even arrange for fitting.

STOS starter

I have recently been given the STOS Basic programming language from a friend. The pack includes the manual, compiler, STOS Interpreter and STOS 3D.

I am keen to start writing children's educational games, which are sadly too few in number these days, and STOS seems to offer good graphics and sound features to do this.

The STOS manual is good but I was wondering if there are any newsletters or other tutorial books on tricks and tips and generally getting the most out of STOS.

I have tried various bookstores with no luck. Please can you help?

P Ellwell, Wigan

The Beginners Guide To STOS from MT Software is just what you need. It weighs in at a hefty 611 pages, complete with two disks containing all the examples mentioned in the guide.

There are 26 chapters in all, covering topics such as using the editor, screen manipulation, graphics, sound and much more. It's the most comprehensive guide to STOS currently available.

It costs £29.95 including £3 post and packing. You can contact MT Software for a copy on 0983 756056

Mac to ST disk

I have recently bought an Apple Mac IIci to allow me to take work home. I have also had an Atari Mega STE 4 for three years.

I often use both computers as they each are better at doing certain things than the other. It would be very advantageous if I could transfer files between the two computers but obviously the disk formats are totally incompatible.

I have various utilities for the ST which allow me to format PC compatible disks but are there any such utilities for formatting Mac disks?

R Lewis, Shropshire

There are no utilities available for the ST which allow you to format Mac-compatible disks. However, there are utilities for the Mac which allow them to use PC-compatible disks, such as PC Exchange.

Installing this will allow your Mac to read, write and even format PC disks. So, using it in conjunction with the PC utilities for the ST will mean easy and painless file transfers between your two computers.

Trying comms

After eagerly awaiting delivery of my first modem for three months, it has finally arrived. My pride and joy is a Courier HST which was rapidly connected to my ST within milliseconds of the local postie handing it over.

After hooking it up, I quickly loaded my Mini Office comms software, which my friend generously donated to me when he sold all his ST software before going to work abroad.

I half expected lots of problems to surface considering this was my first dip into the world of comms, but to my surprise, everything was going smoothly.

After a month of exploring and finding out about CIX and CompuServe, I now find myself requiring a program which offers much more than the relatively simple Mini Office package.

I have found two shareware programs on bulletin boards which I am considering. They are Uniterm and the Freeze Dried package. Which one of them, in your opinion, is the one to go for?

A Burgess, Liverpool

There is not much between Uniterm and Freeze Dried, they are both good programs. However, I have recently come across an excellent package called Connect, which I believe is currently at v2.46.

This is the best comms program I have seen and is packed with all manner of features, including full compatibility across all Atari computers (Falcon, TT and so on), various terminal emulations, such as complete VT 100, VT220, VT102 and ANSI standards.

As with Uniterm and Freeze Dried, Connect is available in demo form to try before you buy. If you do find it's just the package you're looking for, you can get the complete package, including printed manual, for £29.95 from System Solutions (081-693 1919), who are handling the registration.

Falcon monitor

I have recently bought a Falcon computer with 4Mb and 65Mb IDE hard drive. At the moment, I am using a SC1224 colour monitor with my Falcon, which is working fine.

However, I have the opportunity of buying a second-hand 15in SVGA Samsung monitor from a friend who is selling his PC. If I buy the monitor (which by the way will cost me £100) will I be able to use it with my Falcon?

J Williams, Wirral

£100! That's quite a bargain for a 15in SVGA. The monitor will indeed work with the Falcon but you will need a VGA adapter to connect it to the Falcon's 19-pin monitor socket.

VGA adaptors are available from all good retailers who sell the Falcon, so phone around for the best deal.

Colour grabbing

I'm a Falcon owner and am very impressed by the growing number of graphics programs which are becoming available, particularly in the raytracing area.

I've always been interested in computer graphics and when I found out that Atari's new machine features a speedy 68030 and vastly superior graphics I just had to have one.

I am soon to start a Falcon club newsletter and would like a utility for grabbing screens. Please could you recommend a suitable package?

B. Hopkins, Sheffield

The program you need is Imagecopy 2 from The ST Club (0602 410241). Not only does it offer screen grabbing, it's also the ideal tool for printing colour pictures.

What's more, it's an accessory so it's instantly available when needed.

No Falcon owner interested in computer graphics should be without this utility. What's more, it's only £19.95.

Got a problem?

Are you at the point of taking an axe to your ST? Do you want to pulverise your printer? Well just count to ten and relax. Then, jot down the problems you are having, along with a detailed description of your setup.

Include information on the type of ST you have, the TOS version (if known), what peripherals are attached and any extra hardware that lurks inside your computer (accelerators, graphics cards and so on) and I'll do my very best to give a solution.

For those who have had problems and overcome them, chances are that someone somewhere is having the same problems and would benefit from your advice.

So get in print and send any tips or suggestions that other users may find helpful.

Send all tips and cries for help to: Darren Evans, Advice Service, Atari ST User, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

The digital

Right from the beginning, Digital Arts have shown extreme dedication to product quality and support. Don Maple visits the German firm to see what makes them tick

The history of Digital Arts (DA) reads like a history of Atari DTP in Germany, as it involves most of the big names. Its origins are in the company called 3K.

The Ks stood for the surnames of the current general manager Günter Kreidl, his brother Wolfgang and Gerd Knops.

3K were founded to market various hardware devices built by the threesome in their spare time for personal use. The product palette included things like printer switch boxes, the very first external ST keyboard and other interfaces.

The only available DTP programs at the time were for the exorbitantly expensive Macintosh. An ST user could only use it with a Mac emulator.

After wrestling with this unreliable and unnecessarily complex setup it was decided to develop an ST-based DTP program. In the course of his job Günter kept close tabs on other DTP companies in Germany which is how he heard of DMC.

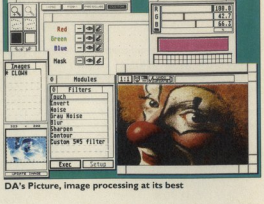
Having seen a demonstration of, you guessed it, the very first prototype of Calamus, it was immediately clear that's exactly what they wanted and it made no sense to duplicate the effort. Instead, Günter and Gerd started working to port Calamus to the PC.

However, it soon became evident that what they saw was more a prototype than a working program, so it was decided to rewrite Calamus and involve Günter and Gerd more closely with the Atari version. This was weeks before the legendary 1987 Düsseldorf show where DMC showed Calamus for the first time.

CONTRACT

The DMC contract gave 3K limited Calamus distribution rights so 3K shifted focus to DTP by employing graphic artists and building up a dealer network.

In the meantime DMC turned to Atari who used Calamus to launch the Mega ST. In Germany, each buyer of the machine got a free copy of Calamus. A month later this turned into a bundle, leaving 3K in a very precarious financial position.



DA's Picture, image processing at its best

3K's investments into Calamus distribution were high but now all of a sudden their market was gone, hitting the company hard and forcing them to reorganise. They decided to return to hardware, showing the first removable hard disk for the ST at the 1988 Düsseldorf show.

A year later, at the 1989 show, 3K were re-established as a software house thanks to Retouche. This was a program by Jochen Riekhof, a contract programmer, who joined the company on the

Who are the people behind DA's software

Software houses are only as good as their programmers. At DA this responsibility rests on the shoulders of four people: Günter Kreidl, Jochen Riekhof, Marcus Jürgens and Peter Egger.

As a team the group have worked together since the beginning of 1989 with Peter Egger joining in 1990. However, they all live and work hundreds of kilometres apart.

All four are totally different personalities and, by their own admissions, would have trouble working together in the same office. Nevertheless, they are all very good friends and the four complement each other perfectly as a very rich product palette clearly proves.

They specialise in different areas following their own interests and everyone contributes something to each DA product. Due to long distances everything is done over the phone and fax – a typical case study of telecommuting.

Most of this data exchange occurs at night when various program modules and image files are exchanged and the modems run hot.

Günter Kreidl

Günter comes with a very rich background suited very well to his current job. His contact with computers dates back to his student days where he found it boring to have to wait for the university mainframes so he bought the British made NASCOM Z80 computer. This was followed by a CP/M system, a Commodore 64 and in 1986 the first ST.

He started programming as a hobby but quickly turned that into a job writing accounting software. He also published a NASCOM user newsletter and eventually started working as a journalist in 1982.

Since he not only wrote the articles but also did the layout this led to increased interest in DTP software. Disappointed that the only DTP available was on the Mac, he joined the original Calamus team in 1987 to produce similar software for the ST. This eventually led to the job of product manager at 3K ComputerBild.

Günter's experiences make him focus on production and ergonomics. Having been in publishing himself he believes that only someone who has had to make last minute changes to a layout, insert ads, and the like can appreciate a user's needs. All this makes Günter the concept man behind DA's products.

Even though Günter programmed in many different languages, ranging from Basic and Pascal to Forth and various assemblers, at the moment he concentrates on program design and new technologies.

To this end he uses interpretive languages for prototyping and is particularly fond of GFA Basic. It lets him prototype quite quickly and then pass the ideas on.

With his journalistic background Günter is the natural choice to write user's guides for all DA's products.

Jochen Riekhof

Like many of his contemporaries, Jochen was introduced to computing through ZX81 and Basic. However, the first computer he actually bought was an Atari XL.

His first programs in Atari Basic reflected his interest in speaker design. Later he moved on to Turbo-Basic written by Frank Ostrowsky

strength of his digital image processing expertise.

The program was very well received and introduced 3K to a company called ComputerBild resulting in a merger to form 3K ComputerBild (3KC). At this time Gerd Knops left to work for TmS – another German Atari graphic giant.

The new company grew by leaps and bounds increasing their 1989 turnover of DM500,000 to DM1.8 million in 1990 and then to DM3.6 million in 1991. This success was the result of 3KC's goal to make the ST a professional DTP platform providing both software and hardware, such as ST typesetter interface.

SCANNERS

Retouche Professional appeared in 1990 and thanks to its scanner module, 3KC sold more Epson scanners than anyone in the world for two years in a row.

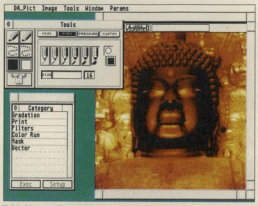
The firm also took over the distribution of the Didot Line Art vector graphic program, a Swiss product by Peter Egger who was the last to join today's DA line-up.

In 1991 3KC released their first colour image processing program, Retouche Professional CD, but what was missing at that time was a colour DTP program. Calamus SL's release was constantly being delayed so 3KC decided to go ahead and write their own.

The main driving forces were Peter Egger with his graphic background and Günter with his layout experience. The result – Didot Professional – took only nine months to develop and was introduced at the 1991 Düsseldorf show.

3KC started working with other companies such as Polaroid and, for the first time, exhibited in the USA where contact was made with NeXT who were looking for a DTP package.

This led to an internal conflict between the developers who wanted to continue developing on both platforms,



DA's Vector Pro, full video presentations

and the management who wanted to focus exclusively on the NeXT. In the end the developers left 3KC and, in the middle of 1992, founded Digital Arts GmbH, Germany.

This caused other problems because Riekhof and Egger, as outside contractors at 3KC, owned the software while 3KC owned the documentation and utilities written by – now former – employees Kreidl and Jürgens. The resolution was a licensing agreement giving 3KC distribution and support rights.

However, the licence severely limited DA's future developments as they were not allowed to release competing products to 3KC. To get around this, towards the end of 1992 Digital Arts AG, Switzerland was founded to release GT Look 2 and shortly thereafter DA's Vector.

Without developers, 3KC fell on hard times and in May 1993 ceased trading. All program rights reverted back to DA which completely refurbished them, including the production of new manuals and packaging.

DA also lowered prices and changed the names from Retouche and Didot to DA's DTP System, DA's Repro and DA's Layout. A widespread update action followed to bring in as many users as possible. Today DA continue this twin ➤

commitment

who was later to become the author of the famous GFA Basic for the ST.

Having seen a friend's ST, Jochen was so taken with it that in 1987 he bought one with a mono monitor, which to this day is the favourite German configuration. He also changed languages, partly because of his studies, and switched to C.

His interest in DTP was peaked at CeBIT 1987 where he saw ImageStudio on the Mac. A friend claimed that such a program was only possible on a Mac. Jochen proved him wrong a week later with the first version of what was eventually to become Retouche.

A chance meeting with 3K in 1988 – where he bought a monitor switch – turned into a co-operation and the release of Retouche in 1989, Jochen's first commercial program.

This was followed by Retouche Professional and Retouche Professional CD for the newly merged company 3K ComputerBild. During this time Jochen also flirted with the NeXT-Cube where he gained experience with object oriented programming in the guise of Objective-C.

Jochen's biggest contribution to the DA team is his enormous knowledge in the area of image processing. He's been involved with the subject for over seven years and four major products.

He not only wrote the first Atari image processing program Retouche but also the latest DA's Picture. Anything that has to do with image processing such as colour separation or correction has been written by Jochen.

He is a true computer specialist and his interests are programming languages and user interfaces. Jochen's favourite language is C, either as Objective-C or plain C on the ST. He does not particularly like C++ but is very interested in Smalltalk.

Like most programmers he prefers working odd hours, starting around noon and going on until early morning, usually crashing into bed after 3am. He likes listening to music while he works and his music taste is very eclectic ranging from heavy metal and pop to Varese and Bach.

Marcus Jürgens

One of DA's strengths is in hardware interface technology and Marcus Jürgens, the main low level programmer, is responsible for all scanner and printer software. In short – drivers.

His experience in assembler makes him also the man to take care of optimising any performance-critical code. For example, all rendering routines which are independent of number of colours and the type of graphic card were written by Marcus. Because of this Marcus is the co-author of all DA programs.

Somewhat unusually he started programming in 1980 in Basic on a FX-602P pocket calculator. It wasn't until he got a Commodore 64 that he really took to assembler and tried his hand at demos.

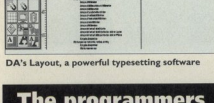
Even though he wanted an Amiga – which were not available at the time – he ended up getting an ST in 1986. The main reason was to ➤

company approach. The Swiss DA, wholly owned by the programmers, develop new products and have all rights to them. They also carry all development costs including paying contractors.

The German DA does all manufacturing, including manuals and packaging, and has worldwide distribution rights – usually through other distributors. Since January this year, DA Germany also deals with customers directly, maintaining an even closer contact. Even though 80 per cent of people buy programs from their local distributor, most deal with DA Germany directly to get their updates.

DA also plan to branch out into other platforms which are of particular interest to British computer users. DA's Picture will appear on the Acorn Archimedes in May. DA's Photo Screening for Windows and the Macintosh are also planned.

In the UK, DA's products are distributed by CGS-ComputerBild. DA people worked with Ray Cross, the boss of CGS, back in the 3K days so it was only natural to continue this partnership. CGS ComputerBild (081-679 7307) will also carry DA's products for other platforms.



DA's Layout, a powerful typesetting software

The product palette

October 92 – GT Look 2
December 92 – DA's Vector
July 93 – DA's DTP System BW and CD (formerly Retouche and Didot)
October 93 – DA's Vector Pro
December 93 – DA's Picture
May 94 – The product palette is completely reorganised as DA's Layout comes out it four different versions:

DA's Layout Light BW v2.3 (black & white). Conceived as an entry version for the first-time buyer, the program design is identical to higher versions except that certain features are left out. This is particularly interesting for the Falcon user who wants to give DTP a try.

DA's DTP System BW (black & white) including DA's Layout v3.3. This a complete black and white DTP system.

DA's DTP System CD (colour) including DA's Layout 4.3. This colour version has many new features and it also works in two monitor mode. Most users work on a big screen mono monitor and use a smaller colour monitor to check the results.

DA's DTP System TC (true colour) including DA's Layout v5.3. This is the top of the line version created to work on all graphic cards and in all colour resolutions.

In addition, the latter three products comprise the corresponding image processing Repro version either BW or CD.

As Atari shifted the focus from the TT to a consumer machine like the Falcon DA had to adapt and address a much wider audience in addition to the professional user.

This widening of the user base resulted in

DA's Repro, processed image ready for printing

programs such as DA's Vector, DA's Vector Pro and DA's Picture, the latter for example having Kodak CD capabilities right from the start. These programs cost between £100 and £200 and run in all resolutions.

The new concept is to have advanced features to satisfy the professional user at a price attractive to a wider market. This is also why DA's Vector is the first multimedia DTP program including capabilities such as animation for production of videos.

The brand new DA's Movie goes a step further in that it provides a library of 300 predefined video effects for people who would find it too hard to create them from scratch.

In that way DA not only continue to support Atari but also adapt to new developments such as the Falcon which they see as a strong video machine.

To this end DA work closely with other companies such as Overscan and Matrix to expand Falcon's video with genlocks and resolution enhancers.

On the professional market, DA are focusing on the Atari, Mac and PC machines, with programs such as DA's Photo Screening. Building on their traditional strengths in colour correction and separation, the company are also employing the cutting edge technology of frequency modulated screening.

The programmers

start programming in C, the language of the future as everyone thought.

However, since the Atari developer kit was so pitiful he reverted back to assembly. His first program was a fractal landscape generator. The speed of assembler over C and Basic impressed Marcus so much he stuck to assembler from then on.

His first contact with 3K was writing printer and scanner accessories for Retouche. Marcus quickly found his niche as assembler programmer writing time-critical and interrupt routines. He also wrote low level scanner interfaces including GT-Look, the Epson scanner driver, and rendering routines for DA's Vector.

Marcus is also one of the rare people outside the UK to have and work on the Acorn Archimedes, currently porting DA's Layout. He also owns a number of other computers including a TT, Mega ST, Amiga 500 and a PC.

A great games fan, Marcus has almost every game ever released. If DA ever wanted to branch out into games he would be the man to do it. All of his friends actually work for games companies.

In addition to computers he also plays games on his Mega Drive, Super NES and PC-Engine. These include Dungeon Master, Doom, Musha Aleste, Xevious and Galaga, while listening to the Beatles, F.G.T.H., Queen, The The and ZZ Top.

Peter Egger

Peter, the only Swiss team member, is mainly responsible for repro graphics and fonts. As a long term graphic artist and the owner of a graphic agency between 1976 and 1992 he is very well versed in the requirements of a DA's program end user. Like Günter he's a user-cum-programmer.

His computer background started quite uniquely, in buying a TI 99/4A in 1986 when it was "horrendously expensive". His first programming steps were made in Basic and TI-assembler.

As an electronics engineer he had no problem building his own hardware such as the 68000 board he saw in a German computer magazine. This gave him the taste of 68000 assembler so in 1987 he got his first ST, a 1040, together with Publishing Partner.

He used the computer professionally for typesetting technical documentation. To this end he bought Calamus as soon as it became available but there was a severe lack of fonts and he didn't like the supplied font editor.

"It took me over two weeks to create only the normal character set of a font," he says, so the natural progression was to write his own. This is how the legendary Didot Fonteditor came to be. As all good software, it was written for his own use but ended up being distributed by Atari Switzerland.

Having mastered the basic concepts and techniques he set his sights on a vector drawing program and produced Didot Line Art. Thanks to this program he got in touch with the other members of the DA crew. As a result of this he developed the whole Layout series of programs.

As a programmer and a long-time graphic artist with experience in typography and layout, Peter brings with him the technical know-how.

This is most apparent in DA's Vector and DA's Layout. He programs in a mixture of C and assembler where the latter accounts for about 40 per cent of his work. Peter also designs DA's product packaging so he continues to be an active user as well.

June 1994

ST ACTION

INSIDE

WIZKID ● PART 2 OF CANNON FODDER GUIDE ● HINTS AND TIPS FOR POLICE QUEST ● OPINIONS ON THE JAGUAR ● FEATURE ON CASPIAN SOFTWARE, CREATORS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL CLAMS

Preview - Rock 'n' Roll Clams

Caspian Software, a recently established, London-based games company, are taking a gamble. By the time you read this, their Rock 'n' Roll Clams will be available via mail order to any Atari owner who is frothing at the mouth for some gameplay.

Most businesses would shy away from such a financial risk with the machines in such a weak position in the market place.

The men in white shirts, braces and polka dot ties would surely chuckle and tell you that creating something for a computer that is fast becoming extinct really isn't the way to make substantial amounts of money.

On the other hand, Chris Dillon, managing director of the company, isn't that greedy. According to Atari, there were one million STs sold in Britain and Dillon reckons there must be 100,000 still in use. A majority of these are being used by games players and this is not seen as a big enough market for investment by large companies.

Because of this, the ST market has fallen down to the shareware and PD level. While the home grown scene does have its fair share of classics, at the end of the day it's not up to professional scratch in many cases.

With this ebb in software titles, very little competition from other firms and a fair number of owners still wanting to use their joysticks once in a while instead of the keyboard, it seemed an ideal time for Caspian Software to emerge. The company are interested in providing a service for their limited range of customers and building up a solid reputation for gaming titles.

In August last year, Dillon started the clam rolling by 'tapping in to the talent', hunting out and sifting through programmers who could become part of Caspian's programming base.

He believes that the ground breaking coders of yesteryear are part of a dying breed that, thanks to the blandness and conformity of most console games, have been ushered back into their bedrooms and told to put a plug in their creativity. Dillon is adamant about using these people to create fresh, imaginative and interesting software.

Dillon is also a long term Atari fan and when it comes to moving to other formats, he's convinced that if you spread yourself across other machines, you'll end up developing games for the base model and ignoring the high-end computers such as the Falcon.

This philosophy for making the most out of the available hardware is ideally exemplified by Rock 'n' Roll Clams, their first release.

Machines: ST upwards with 1Mb of RAM

As far as concepts go, Rock 'n' Roll Clams is in a very viable position for attaining the title "original".

The story revolves around Caspar, a clam that, with his friends, lives under the ocean. One day, while listening to an orchestra on a school trip, they hear some funky music far away on the shore.

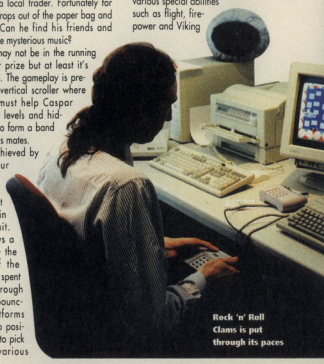
Making their way past their teacher, the aquatic truants head towards the thumping beat only to be scooped up in a fish net and sold to a local trader. Fortunately for Caspar, he drops out of the paper bag and rolls away. Can he find his friends and bring back the mysterious music?

Behind this inconspicuous red door is one of the few forward thinking ST developers in the world

The plot may not be in the running for a Booker prize but at least it's vaguely fresh. The gameplay is presented as a vertical scroller where the player must help Caspar through 100 levels and hidden screens to form a band and rescue his mates.

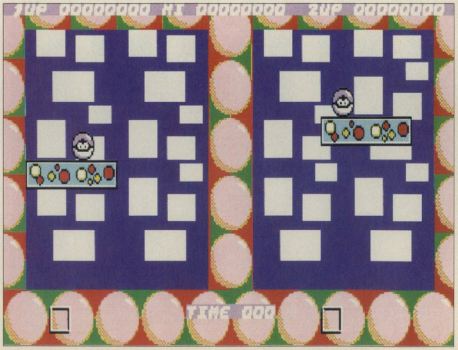
This is achieved by making your way to the end of the zone as fast as possible in the time limit. Gravity plays a large part – the majority of the gameplay is spent dropping through the levels, bouncing off platforms and trying to position yourself to pick up the various power-ups and other bonus objects.

These come in the form of hats that give various special abilities such as flight, fire-power and Viking



Rock 'n' Roll Clams is put through its paces

Standing

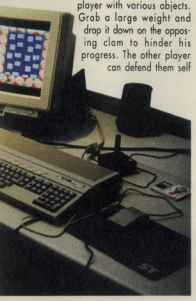


The split screen, two player mode in Rock 'n' Roll Clams – move down the screen and be the first past the finishing post

helmets to impale the enemy on. There is a seriously large array of foe to avoid or destroy accompanied by other hazards and obstacles.

One of the game's strongest features is the two-player version, presented in split screen and pitting opponents against each other in a race to get to the end first.

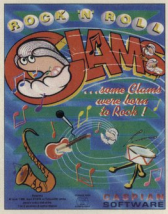
This is made all the more interesting through your ability to disable your fellow player with various objects. Grab a large weight and drop it down on the opposing clam to hinder his progress. The other player can defend them self



> *The plot may not be in the running for a Booker prize but at least it's vaguely fresh*

by shooting up an umbrella to stop the impact of the impending shell cracker.

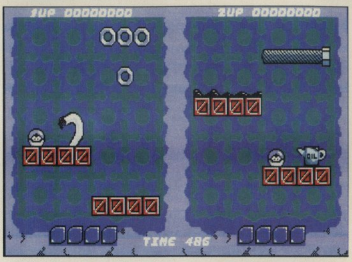
The graphics are quite simple but effective and the movement fluid. Sound is of a very high standard, with effects continually hurtling out of the speakers.



As mentioned in the introduction, one of the best features of the package is the compatibility with all Atari machines and the program's ability to take into account the specific capabilities of your own computer.

Rock 'n' Roll Clams registers blitter chips and uses them to improve the scrolling. Sound can be selected to come from the monitor or, if you have speakers, pumped out in full stereo. The game is also hard disk installable, so there are no long waits while the title boots in.

Rock 'n' Roll Clams is shaping up to be an addictive little number with polished gameplay especially in two-player mode. Look out for a full review within the next two months.



Avoid the cigarette butts and try to disable your opponent

firm

While much of the software industry has turned its back on the ST and Falcon, one company is going against the grain with their games. Adam Phillips reports

Due to the program's versatility, Jaguar power pads can be used as well

Grab the saxophones and form a band to win the game

Chris Dillon, managing director of Caspian Software

Caspian's future

With these two titles on the way and the ST market hanging in the balance, I asked Chris Dillon about the future plans for the company if the ST does go under.

Sounding a touch cynical, the MD was a little unconvinced by all the companies stepping forward "to put their toe in the water" by saying they will develop for the Jaguar.

Dillon doesn't want to make any false promises to the buying public when Caspian decide to release a game on the Jag, it will actually appear within a few months.

He sees any potential products being available in mid '95 when the machine has finally been released in Britain and units have been sold across the country.

As for the present state of the market, he believes that the home computer and console scene is going through some revolutionary changes. The main problem is that while hardware manufacturers keep producing new machines, the software companies are having a hard time keeping up.

To properly find out the various hidden capabilities of a machine, it takes from six months to a year, sometimes longer, and by the time this has been achieved another system has been hailed as the next best thing and the software company has to start all over again.

Subsequently, the general public want the latest titles for the very latest machines like the Commodore CD32 and inevitably come away feeling disappointed because the game houses simply don't have time to develop software that pushes the machine to its limit.

"Computer users should start looking at what they've got instead of constantly looking towards the horizon," says Dillon.

With that message ringing in my ears, I leave, clutching a cuddly toy clam and the box of their latest game hoping that this kind of company will be around in five years time, untouched by the sticky fingers of men in suits running large, monolithic and faceless corporations.

Zero-5

Machines: STE upwards with 1Mb of RAM

Hidden deep within Caspian's hard drives is their next release, Zero-5, a 3D polygon-based space shoot-'em-up in the mould of Epic and Wing Commander, programmed by Andrew Gisby.

Still some way from release, this is shaping up to be a must-buy product for the middle of the year.

Taking on the role of a pilot, you must defend the earth from alien attack with dozens of missions needed to succeed. Your tour of duty includes travelling through deep space to meet enemy convoys head on and shooting across asteroid and planet surfaces taking out alien installations.

At first glance, the graphics are mighty impressive with smooth frame update and digitised sound to match. On one mission, you're thrust into a firing frenzy with enemy cargo ships.

Shooting away at one section of the large craft results in a bitmapped explosion – shoot the ship's reactor to pieces and the whole lot goes up in smoke.

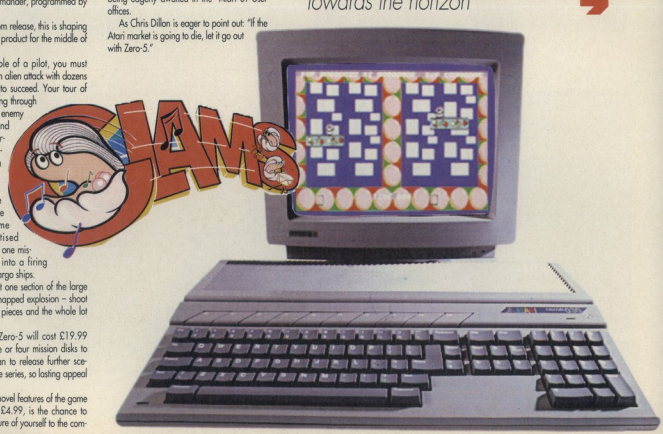
On its release, Zero-5 will cost £19.99 and come with three or four mission disks to savour. Caspian plan to release further scenarios to continue the series, so lasting appeal looks ensured.

One of the most novel features of the game at an extra cost of £4.99, is the chance to send a passport picture of yourself to the company and they'll digitise it for you. On getting the disk back, simply load it in and your mug will appear in the pilot roster on screen.

Couple this with a hard drive install (Amiga developers could learn a lot from these guys) and the program's ability to identify different hardware such as accelerator cards (for texture mapping), and you've got a game that is being eagerly awaited in the *Atari ST User* offices.

As Chris Dillon is eager to point out: "If the Atari market is going to die, let it go out with Zero-5."

> *Computer users should look at what they've got instead of looking towards the horizon*



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DISK PRICES:
£1.75 each.
unless otherwise stated

UTILITIES

UTA01: THE HITCHIKERS UTILITIES, which includes a document displayer, BOOTDRIVE, select which drive to boot from. BOOTWAIT, boot up both the ST and hard drive at the same time. BSIS, store boot sectors. CUSTOM, allows you to create disks of almost any format. DISKAT, database your collection and many more. With full manual.

UTA02: STICKER 3, stickers for your disks with a selection of icons that printout onto the label.

UTA03: FASTBASE DEMO, ICON, change your desktop icons. HEADSTART, auto boot any type of program from an auto folder. ON SCHEDULE, work schedule program with both a very good printout routine.

UTA05: SUPERCARD V1.3, an index card database, easy to use and very fast search feature. Comes with a database of game cheats. CHEF, an electronic cookbook with 300 recipes each with cooking instructions and ingredients.

UTA19: TLC BOOK, an excellent on line address book and date reminder which holds up to 500 names and addresses. Has a good printout routine. DATABASE, a good database construction kit. SUPERBOOT, allow you to create custom bootup disk. TARADISK, a good FD desktop replacement program. COCKTAIL SELECTOR, a database of cocktails (400+).

UTA06: FASTOPY 3, A-COPY, PRO-COPY and several other copying programs and utilities. ZAPMENU, a great way of launching programs from the desktop and ARCSYS, one of the better arc progs. PACK ICE, the other arc program.

UTA28: AWARD MAKER, a useful program for producing award certificates. Design your own or use one of the 120 already on the disk.

UTA30: DB MASTER 1, this has got to be the best answer to your database problems, design and create exactly the need Very easy to use.

UTA36: DATA EDITOR, enter your data and the program turns it into easy to read graphs. PIE, BUBBLE, OPPOSED BARS, FLOATING BAR, TIE BAR, STAR BAR graphs can be produced, stored and updated at any time. Many students have used this program for their course work.

UTA37: WG DATA, another database, but for younger users to learn how to construct and use a database. For the 11+ DATABASE CONSTRUCTION SET, a powerful program that allows the user to design your own way of processing information. SANDP, a newsletter/magazine program.

UTA39: IDEALIST V3.1, a versatile program for printing out text and offering lots of helpful functions to use your print in clever ways. A selectable index, up to 5 columns, separate output of fonts and pages, editable headlines and default fonts for dot matrix and laserjets.

UTA40: CALAMUS SUPPORT DISK. METACON, converts Calamus fonts to Text metafonts. FASTPRT, accessory to speed up printing to the HP laser. GUNTH, sample graphics in outline format. LASABEL, template for printing 3.5 inch disk labels. CANON, printer driver for the BJ10e.

CAL_FNT text file describing Calamus font format. HPTDTPRT, a patch for the HP deskjet printer and a few other small programs.

UTA43: A disk full of accessories and utilities, ideal disk for those who do not wish to buy a disk for each type of utility.

UTA45: MAILMERGE, a good program for those with a WP package without this utility.

UTA46: INVENTORY, very easy to use inventory system and stock control for the small business.

UTA48: SAGRATOM V1.1, FREE VIRUS KILLER in the PD world.

UTA51: 70,000 word dictionary, replace your standard spelling checker with this and you will be onto a winner.

UTA52: FOOD AND WINE MENU MAKER, an excellent database that stores and prints out a menu for both wine and food.

UTA53: GERMAN TRAINSLATE, one of the better translation programs that makes sense of those German documents on your PD disks. Does a fair job.

UTA55: HP CHROME, prints colour pictures in Degas and Neo format utilising deskjet printers. HYPERBASE, a multi media database, you can create windows holding text, graphics or sound and link them together. CLIPART, user size with Hyperbase. UNIPRINT, a fit ins Degas Elite printing program for 24 pin printers.

UTA56: HP DESKJET UTILITY DISK 1, printer drivers for use with 1st Word, ENVELOPE PRINTER, FITLABEL, JETSET, set parameters on your deskjet. LASERJET, print at 300 dpi and loads of other useful utilities.

UTA57: ASTURIAN, a general accounts program that will tell you how much you can spend in any one month.

UTA58: HARD DISK UTILITIES, everything you need to look after and maintain your hard drive.

UTA60: MANUAL MAKE, a utility for putting together neat and tidy printed manuals.

STARTER PACKS SPECIAL PRICES

Any 5 disks for £6.75

Any 10 disks for £11.50

GAMES

Towers Dungeon Master Game. 2 disks. £2.95.

GM13: FMC trading, space trading game. Laserball & Regatta, sail against 10 other countries.

GM21: Llamatron & Revenge of the Mutant Camels, as above but from the Master of such games, Jeff Minter.

GM26: Airwars, Flight Sim (not a blaster).

GM27: Blasto, defender type game. Wheel of Fortune, as per the TV show. Monopoly & Pentominoes.

GM38: Pipe Perfect, build your pipeline before the flow starts.

GM40: Tennis, Plumb Crazy, build a pipeline again. Virus Killer, a war zone simulator.

GM42: Penguins, a Lemmings type game with 40 levels. Great fun, good enough to be a commercial game.

GM43: Mystic Well, a very addictive Dungeon Master Game from the USA with loads of levels and puzzles to sort out.

GM48: Crossword Editor, create and solve crosswords.

GM52: Battle for the Throne, a great RPG that takes some time to complete.

GM54: Bug, Football, Trivia, Time Bandit, Wall Street, Quixwiz & Tahtree. Quizzes and blasters all on one disk.

GM69: Ozone, an award winning platform game that has everything in it, including a bang glider.

GM76: Master Break, good Breakout clone. Atom, Blaster & Gobbleaid. Mag

GM75: Drachen, a 3D Mahjong game. Super Game, a good track and field game.

GM83: Vidmix, a very good Xenon type shoot-em-up game.

GM87: Pub Games. Pool, Darts, Cribbage, Pontoon and Checkers.

GM88: Hunt for Grey November, control your hunter-killer planes in its search for rogue sub's.

GM97: Futernaut, a great arcade romp on an alien planet with an alien gang. 1 Meg.

GM106: Mindlock, another great quiz game from D. Gobleidi. 1 Meg.

GM109: Colour clash, from the same people who gave us Futernaut, this time you need to use the grey matter as well as the finger.

GM113: Galaxians & Mrs. Munchie, two blasts from the past. A Pacman clone and Breakout thrown given a romp.

GM114: Course Angler, a good game and a fun way to learn how to fish, all without getting cold or wet you know.

GM120: Brain Damage. D. Cobbledick at his very best. Watch your brain cell count drop as you fail to answer the questions.

GM121: Walls of Illusion, a new Dungeon Master type game with commercial quality graphics and gameplay. THIS IS A MUST HAVE.

GM123: Blodgone. Fantasy D&D combat game.

GM124: Startrec The Klingon war battle simulation.

GM125: Gerrilyn Guide a lunar probe and battle with underground forces.

GM128: Software Projects: Software Company & Simulation – develop your company.

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60ml bottle of ink. Refill Canon BJ printers four times or HP 500c and 550c three times £8.00
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Now for the first time with full English Manual. Ask for AAG038.

LICENCEWARE
We also stock licenceware by Powerfist, Organised Chaos, Virusoft and HeavenSent. All priced at £3.00 or less

ART

AAG01: PALETTE MASTER art package. DEGASAVE, save the screen in Degas format. MANDEL, Mandelbrot prog. Plus a few other small progs.

AAG04: VIDI V1.1, art package from France. Not much in the way of instructions.

AAG05: CRACKART V1.0, almost the last word in art packages comes with complete English manual. 1 Meg required.

AAG06: FRACTAL ZOOM, probably the fastest generator of fractals around. Full manual on the disk.

AAG07: A data full of fractal programs and utilities. A 3D CAD program. Full manual on disk.

AAG10: ST CAD, runs in Med or Hi res. DRAWNER, printout 5 times bigger. Printer paper. REMINDER & MEMO & LOOKER.

AAG11: ANIM, great animation program that once sold for over £80.

AAG21: Picture Converter, a complete disk of picture converters. SHOWART, display your art work with effective fades between each one.

AAG22: PUBLIC PAINTER, an art package for mono monitor owners. On disk manual.

AAG26: PICTURE WORKS, load, save various picture formats and do amazing things with them.

AAG27: MINDRAWP V1.30, easy to use CAD prog.

AAG28: ART MASTER, screen dump clipart, add text and draw simple clipart, you can also print out and save in reset formats.

AAG29: PAINTART, a simple and easy to use art package for half nrag owners.

AAG35: CREATIVE TITLES, create titles for your Christmas videos, add the professional touch.

AAG36: ART MASTER, the latest version of this excellent art package with several new features. 1 Meg.

AAG39: STAR PAINT MANAGER, whatever you need to do with images this is almost sure to do it. 2 disk set.

AAG50: 3 Disks of Wedding Clipart. £4.50.

AAG64: Kozmic 4. Create psychedelic patterns.

SPRITE WORKS

- A powerful new set of commands for GFA Basic versions 3 and above from Organise Chaos.
- Turn GFA Basic into a games language with Sprite design & two MAP designers.

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EDUCATION

EAG012: Easter Egg Hunt for children 5-12 years. Find all the Easter Eggs in the garden through the magic door to the sea. Good fun.

EAG01: PERFECT MATCH, question and answer card game, MATHS TEST. For the under 10's. QUIZZCAL, a very good general knowledge trivia game.

EAG02: BODY SEARCH, designed to help children learn the human anatomy as required in elementary and junior school. THE SEARCH, a computer aided enquiry program. Search the village for info about the Glegg family. MATHSQUIZ, a very good maths program that grows with the student, TRIVIA, tests your general knowledge test, some of the quiz questions are based on the USA.

EAG06: SHEPWRK2, an excellent maths program that combines graphics and easy and hard levels of play. The childs interest is held by turning the learning process into a game where correct answers help the character on the screen to escape his fate. HANGMAN, the old school room favourite that helps spelling.

EAG07: ABOUT THE HOUSE, control a butterfly as it moves around the house. As it lands on various objects a description is given and some animation takes place. ME, displays four pictures of a task that must be placed in the right order, once this is done the scene is animated. Help the child understand that most tasks need several steps to complete.

EAG09: CHUNNEL, a good French/English tutor. SPANISH VERB TUTOR, this program is designed to help you learn, revise or check the present conjugation of Spanish verbs, can be initialized to communicate in French, English, Spanish or German.

EAG39: NOAHS ARK, a good game for teaching children spelling and word recognition. SPIDER SPELL, a very good spelling aid for younger children.

EAG31: MATHS MADE EASY, for the younger ST user, the program teaches maths and four disciplines by talking to the user thus keeping interest levels high. GEOGRAPHY QUIZ, one for the slightly older user, the test is based on flags and capitals of the world.

EAG74: COLORADI, designed to give the younger ST user an insight into how a computer creates colour. AIKEN, design a man made from fruit, CREBUS writer allows the user to design and print mirror images. Also a code in which letters and symbols are used in place of words. Several other programs on this disk.

EAG18: THE WORLD, an excellent program that teaches you about the countries and the countries of the world.

EAG19: PLANETARIUM, if you are into astronomy then this is for you. Pick a star from the map and click on it to find out info you want is there. It will also animate past or future events. Full manual on the disk. MONO.

EAG20: TELETALL CHEMISTRY by E. Milk Bsc, PhD. An interactive program on the basics of chemistry, the program relates to GCSE, O, B and C, good graphics & explanations of atomic structure, electron structure, formulae compounds, etc.

EAG21: CIA WORLD FACTBOOK, a free disk set of everything you want to know about over 240 countries. If you want to know how many people live in Albania, what the birth rate is, death rate, who they are upset with, where they sell their products or just about anything else then this is for you. A document display is also included on the disk. £3.00 for the set.

EAG29: WORKOUT V1.0, a general purpose learning aid for either question & answer tests or learning passages by heart. This program conforms partially to the C.L.T. guidelines on computers, language learning and may be of use in the classroom.

DTP & WP

WPD01: ST WRITER ELITE V4.1, an excellent WP package that works in all three resolutions.

WPD02: EASY TEXT + DEMO, a fully working demo of this DTP program but you can only print out the top quarter of any A4 page.

WPD03: TYPING TUTOR, teach yourself touch typing with this program, several levels of lessons have been built into the program.

WPD05: FIRST WORD PLUS, an excellent WP program that features WYSIWYG on the screen. 1ST WORD UTILITIES, help with 1st Word. DOUBLE TTP, print your text in columns. LARGEPRINT, lets you printout in large text.

WPD12: OPUS V2.2, a very good spreadsheet program with an excellent chart printout routine.

WPD15: PRINTER DRIVERS for 1st Word users covers just about every make of printer, comes with full installer & instructions. WORD COUNTER. WPTOOLS, a selection of WP utilities for 1st Word.

WPD18: PAGESTREAM FONTS, Postscript screen fonts for the following fonts:- Artistic, Creative, Hudson, Letter, Gothic, Oriental, Santana, University and Roman.

WPD19: PRINTING PRESS V3.10, the closest thing to a full DTP program in PD. Also on the disk is a picture converter.

WPD22: PRINTING PRESS EXTRA'S, a disk for use with WPD19 containing extra fonts and clipart.

WPD23: ST WRITER V1.6, a very good WP program for Hi res users which can be used by both half meg and 1 meg machines. A manual on the disk gives a good guide to the program.

WPD24: DB WRITER SUPPORT DISK, includes a comprehensive thesaurus and a selection of dictionaries covering Medical, Legal, Computer and Biblical terms. You can also add your own with a utility on the disk.

WPD25: A utility for designing and downloading fonts to the STAR NL10 & LC10. Hi res only with loads of fonts ready to use. Can be used with the emulator.

WPD26: GUTENBERG PRESS, allow a 9 pin dot matrix printer to be used as a NLQ printer, load as ASCII files and print them out in high quality format and a selection of fonts.

MUSIC AND MIDI

MUM01: ACCOMPANIST, a 16 voice sequencer for use with any model of ST, with room for over 10,000 notes, multi-recording with separate MIDI channels and a wide range of editing utilities.

MUM02: IN CONTROL, a user definable MIDI controller with over 20 sliders that can be programmed to control your midi instruments. SCONVERT, compress or expand sound samples.

MUM15: 1632 voices for use with the Yamaha DT/TX series of 6 operator synths with a file reader for loading the voices directly via the midi. A varied and useful collection of voices on this disk.

MUM19: TRI-SOUND SEQUENCER, a chip/digi-chip 3 channel music sequencer.

MUM20: SAMPLE EDITING DISK, a disk full of useful programs for editing, sampling and converting. Also on the disk is a chip music tracker to create your own music.

MUM21: MIDIDRUM & MIDIPLAY, two useful programs for creating sounds with a drum machine and Midiplay is a basic sequencer. Full manual on disk with English version on disk. 1 meg and Mono.

MUM32: TX81Z - TX81Z, a mouse driven Yamaha TX81z editor. MIDIMOVER, a powerful midi file converter from Hybrid Arts Freeware.

MUM34: ALCHIME IV V2.22, this has got to be one of the best musical sequencers for the Atari anywhere. Comes with over 200 tracks for your use and has far too many features to list.

MUM57: FINAL SCORE, a graphic based fully WYSIWYG score writing program for the Mainstream Music. Draw staves, line spaces, 5 selectable score fonts, print preview mode, etc. Printer drivers now added for most makes of printer.

MUM58: ROLAND 'D' SERIES SOUND BANKS, a bank of tones for the D5, D10, D20, D110 and GR synths.

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Superior automatic translation.

AWARD MAKER
now with full instructions. 286 awards on disk.

PRINTING PRESS
Plus Support. Compressed on one disk. English version £2.95

Bricks come in all shapes and sizes – in this case Yin and Yang symbols

Sensible Software's penchant for producing zany, unusual games continues with this novel budget re-release

WIZKID

Here you can see the many locations you need to visit on the Island of Wiz

Boot Camp provides you with some pre-game training

In these dismal days of almost identical titles being released and clone after clone hitting our shelves, it's very refreshing to see something that is just so different.

Normally, tried and tested formulae are stuck to, churning out a multitude of similar platformers, and it comes as a great relief to see something that breaks the mould.

Wizkid is does this, and if you fancy an original title with fast, frenetic gameplay then it comes highly recommended. However, Wizkid makes my job harder in that it is just so difficult to categorise, and to place in a particular genre. So I won't – I shall describe it and then you can make up your own minds.

The story is similar to that of your usual platform scenario, in that characters have been kidnapped by your standard obligatory baddie and you must rescue them. In this case, the evil Zark has kidnapped Wizkid's parents, Wizard and Wizball, and Nifta the cat.

Corny storyline aside though, thankfully the gameplay has little to do with the plot – unless, of course, you count the fact that the baddies you need to eliminate are apparently Zark's minions.

This is where the fun starts. Each screen is jam-packed with enemies who you'll need to destroy by bouncing bricks off them. Don't be fooled by how simple this sounds. The bricks are limited and there are a vast number of baddies too. No sooner do you think you've cleared a screen than more appear.

Matters are complicated even further because when an enemy is hit several times a prize bubble is produced. These can take on a number of forms. A clown's juggling nose can be won which will enable you to bounce the bricks on your head and direct them at the baddie.

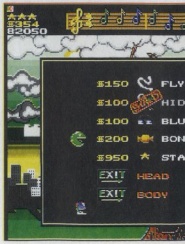
Thunder Choppers can help you in plucking the bricks out of the screen and throwing them in the desired direction. Flying tiles can also be caught and redirected at an enemy.

Levels are completed when all the baddies are killed. All is not lost, though, if you fail to do this, as the level will be repeated later on. Other bubbles found in the game contain various colours, which when popped send a coloured note to the stave at the top of the screen.

When all notes are collected, a bonus tune is played resulting in collectable coins falling down boosting the cash score needed to purchase items in the shop.

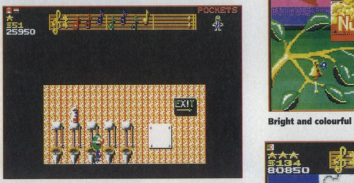
All this is relatively simple, but things are going to get confusing. To add to the fun, there are also Head and Body modes! Strange though it may sound, playing in one of these modes determines which levels you will play.

Body mode accesses the puzzle levels of the game. Objects can be bought from the shop and are needed to solve the puzzles.

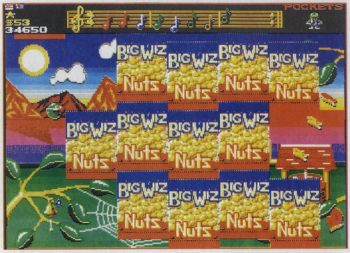


BUDGET ACTION

Kill the enemies to release bubbles and fill the music notes



In Body mode you access the puzzle dimension of the game



Bright and colourful graphics really make the game

Baddies vary from bees to ducks – hardly very threatening, hey?

Landscape also forms part of these puzzles in that certain objects can be manipulated to your advantage by jumping on them or by hitting them from below.

And if all this wasn't enough, the game even contains a sub game of Crossword 2091, offered if you fail to eliminate all the aliens on a tile screen. Fail the puzzle and you will be given the chance to have another go; succeed and you will be rewarded with a pot-full of cash.

Graphics-wise Wizkid looks as if it is more likely to appeal to a younger audience because of the nature of some of the sprites, such as penguins and bumblebees. Don't let this put you off though because the game does require quite a bit of thought as well as dexterity with the controls.

The graphics are bright and colourful – almost kaleidoscopic. The scenes are varied enough to keep things interesting but the screen sometimes becomes so cluttered it's difficult to keep track of where you are.

A bigger, more obvious sprite may have benefited the game a great deal because as the screens become more chaotic you tend to lose yourself in the background.

On the sound side, Wizkid has a jaunty accompanying tune which is in keeping with the theme of the game and fits nicely with the gameplay.

First impressions are somewhat misleading. Cutesy baddies, and rather basic first levels, may be off-putting. Don't be misled though, as all is not what it seems.

There is much more to this game than at first meets the eye and once you've realised all the aspects that exist, you'll know for sure that you're in for a highly entertaining time!

Sensible Software have once again managed to produce an original and quality piece of software. The unusual gameplay makes a pleasant change and combining it with a puzzle element promises to be a winning combination.

So, that is basically Wizkid! Let's be glad that there is something that's perhaps so original that you simply cannot categorise it. Ocean describe it as "a bit of arcade" and "the best bath'-em-up on the software scene".

Hmmm! Personally I'd describe it as in a class of its own.

TINA HACKETT

After the Golden Shower you can buy items from the shop

The background is so cluttered at times you lose track of where you are

VISION	8
AUDIO	7
DIFFICULTY	8
LASTABILITY	7

An excellent puzzler/platformer/bounce-'em-up. Totally different and well worth the pennies. Don't be put off by the high cutesy factor, either.

77%

Publisher ➤	Hit Squad
Developer ➤	Sensible Software
Disks ➤	1
Price ➤	$12.99
HD Install ➤	No
Size ➤	1Mb recommended

Welcome to part two of our sensational guide around the computer battlefield of Virgin's top war-'em-up

cheat mode

CANNON FODDER

MISSION 5, PHASE 2

Still in the freezing weather, your commanding officers have ordered you and your men to destroy a couple of installations.

Your starting position is at the top of a cliff. Below can be seen two huts, one of them active with a legion of enemy troops. To the west at point 1 is another hut with a bazooka guard keeping look-out. Take one man to point 1 and destroy the building and any enemy encountered.

Then, descending the cliff face, move your unit to point 2 to annihilate the active structure. You shouldn't encounter many enemies here so there shouldn't be any problem.

To the south at area 3 is another couple of buildings. Both are fully operational, so must be destroyed. However, don't make haste with this job until you have successfully retrieved all of the rocket ammo next to the southernmost hut.

With the first two operations completed you should head for the bazooka guard at point 4, and as long as you are travelling at full speed you shouldn't have any difficulty disposing of this lone soldier.

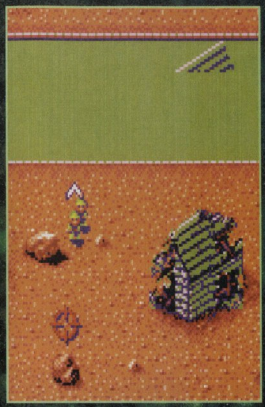
The same applies for point 5 where another bazooka guard threatens your mission. But he's not alone. Surrounding the small island are several enemy commandos, and they too must be eliminated, but not before the bazooka guard, as he can wipe you out from a distance.

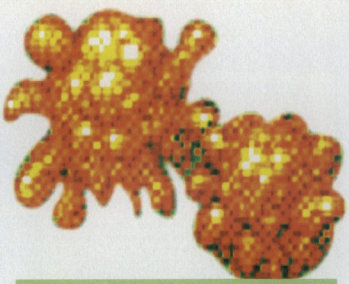
With this eastern side of the map nicely secured and free of enemy presence you may concentrate on the western side. Begin with point 6. Next to the foxhole is another rocket launcher – it's best to approach from the south as he won't see you there. Then, as you get out of the freezing waters, let him have it with a rocket before moving in with the machine gun to mop up any survivors.

Further to the west at location 7 is an over-populated barracks guarded by – wait for it – a bazooka operator! Always try to neutralise the rocket soldier first before attacking the barracks itself.

Moving swiftly to point 8, you face more adversaries in the form of three bazooka patrol men. Use your remaining rocket to kill the one on the ground and the ones situated at the top of the cliff.

If the phase doesn't end after killing the last man, search the mid areas of the map for soldiers. Sometimes the fox-hole lets a few more soldiers out to give you some grief.





MISSION 5, PHASE 3

Things get a little more complex and much more fun now, as you are able to borrow enemy equipment in the form of the enemy vehicles.

Down in the south eastern corner is a skidu. This marvellous piece of military hardware is fully bullet proof but also highly susceptible to rockets and collisions with the scenery.

After securing your surrounding area by blowing up the hut and killing any soldiers roaming these parts, you may send a single man to point number 2.

If you travel between the trees nearby, you can catch the bazooka guard completely off guard. With this minor problem sorted you can eliminate the single guard at point 3 before moving on towards point 4 where another bazooka operator needs to be killed if this mission is to be a resounding success. The same applies for area 5 but remember to use the trees as cover before surprising the enemy with your trusty weapon.

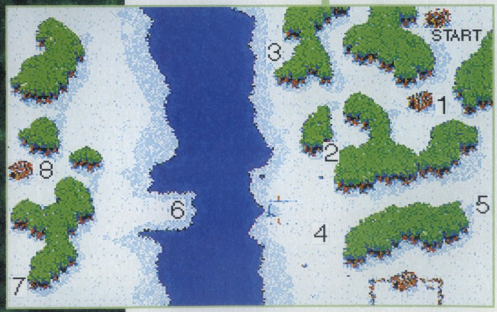
This island is now nearly secured and under control with the exception of the hut to the south. Be sure to throw the grenade as far away from the skidu as possible, as large explosions will cause the vehicle to be damaged beyond repair.

Before rushing into the skidu to go for a quick spin, you must knock off the guy situated at checkpoint 6 – use a rocket for this. Then, leaping into the skidu, you must use the ramp to get across to the other island.

As soon as the vehicle lands safely, get your man out and take him to area 7 where another life-threatening guard scans the surrounding area for any enemies.

That just leaves one job to do and that's to destroy the last building at point 8. With this simple task completed you can sit back and enjoy yourself, as the C.O. hands you and your men another fine promotion.

But, what's so good about medals you may ask? Well, as your soldiers increase in rank, their abilities to control their weapons increase accordingly. So try to keep casualties at a minimum because we can guarantee you'll be needing some sort of super hero for the later suicide missions.



CANNON FODDER cheat mode

MISSION 6 PHASE 1

All right men, this is the situation as detailed by our superiors. We're heading for the Grand Canyons, but the location of these hazardous chasms is as yet unknown.

The area is important to the enemy as it appears to be one of their vital ammo dumps. By destroying this weapons plant we'll greatly reduce the fire-power the enemy will have in the future.

It is guarded by crack commandos, so when the bullets start flying be sure to keep yourselves well covered and do not try to engage large groups of enemy soldiers as they will surely gun you down.

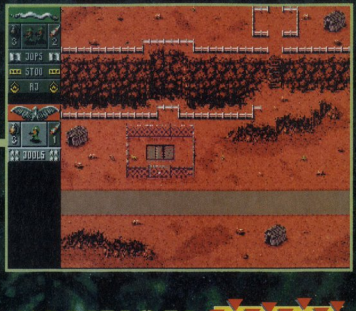
Looking at the map, you can see the drop-off point. A helicopter will secretly fly you in at dusk. Suggested tactics are as follows. Using your grenades and rockets, it is advisable to destroy the building at point 1.

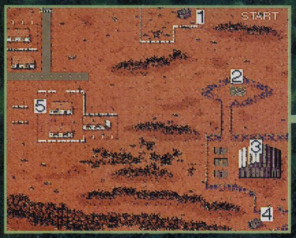
This will greatly reduce the presence of enemy soldiers by the time you reach point number 5. With this initial strike it is imperative that you move quickly to points 2 and 3.

At point 2 you will encounter minor resistance from a small patrol squad and at 3 a medium size barracks is in operation and therefore must be destroyed.

At point 4 we'll find another barracks. Admittedly it is not large but it is guarded by a rocket launcher. You must make sure that is also destroyed before securing the last sector at point 5.

At checkpoint 5 you'll find a small squad of soldiers. Use the road to increase foot speed and use the rockets you have been issued with to eliminate them. The ammo dump is for your back-up teams which will arrive at a later time. Remember, speed is of the essence during this operation. That is all.





MISSION 6 PHASE 2

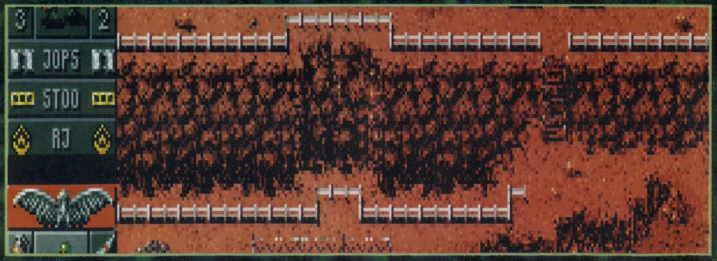
Supplies gentlemen. Like all army units the enemy depend upon their supplies stores. Intelligence reports of a large supply depot in this area.

As you can see from this aerial photograph, the enemy have also acquired surrounding civilian homes. No matter what the feeling is, we must attack and kill anybody who tries to interfere, and that includes civilians. Your mission objectives are as follows. Proceed to point 1 where you'll find a small enemy installation. Destroy this structure to be on the safe side.

Then, moving down the map to area 2, breach the wire fence and grab what ammo you can. Further down in this complex you'll find the main stores themselves. It's not really heavily guarded, but there is someone residing on the roof armed with a bazooka. Be sure not to overlook this chap.

At the bottom of the map you'll find another hut which must also be destroyed. Otherwise enemy forces will be overwhelming.

The last objective for you is to ensure that area 5 is cleared of all enemy army persons. After this the chopper will return to pick you up where you'll recuperate after the day's events and then be briefed for your next mission at 0600 hours. Good luck gentlemen.



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Grab your nightstick, load your revolver and make your siren go woo-woo in the first part of our complete guide to Sierra's classic graphic adventure game

Busting drug dealers is just one exciting part of Sierra's classic adventure

POLICE QUEST

cheat mode

You start the adventure standing in the main section of the police station. First thing you should do is go to the locker room which it situated through the bottom right door.

Find your locker, then open it and take everything including the objects inside the briefcase. Change your clothes, remembering to have a shower beforehand.

Stand at your position which is at the front right desk and wait for the briefing to start. When it had been completed, go over to the pigeonholes and take the message. Leave the room and take a radio extender off the table and your car keys off the wall.

Walk out of the station to your squad car, remembering to safety check it first by walking right around the vehicle. If you have done it right a message will appear informing you that you're ready to hit the streets.

ZOOM OFF

Open the door, get in and start the car. Drive around the streets getting used to the controls and your whereabouts until you get a call reporting an accident and zoom off to the scene of the occurrence. When you see the incident, pull over and stop the car.

Use your radio, open the door and get out of your squad car. Walk over to the crashed car and examine it. Try to give first aid to the driver and then talk to the crowd of people who are standing nearby.

When the man has finished telling you what he saw, use the radio and talk to the crowd once more.

Use the radio again and by this time some other police officers should have arrived at the scene. Talk to them before getting into your patrol car and driving off.

The main hall of the police station is where Sonny Bonds begins his quest

Drive around the streets once more until you get a call to go to Carol's Caffeine Castle. Drive to Carol's and go into the shop to have a sit down and a talk to your fellow officer, Steve. The phone will ring and you'll receive a message. When you've got the message, leave the coffee house and hit the streets.

Now drive around until you see a car jump the lights. Chase and stop the offending vehicle and get out of your own car. Walk to the other vehicle and look at the driver. Ask to see the woman's driving licence and whatever she offers you, you must refuse to give in to her and should write her a ticket.

Return her licence, give her the ticket and walk back to your car, get in and start to patrol the streets again. The next call means another trip to Carol's Caffeine Castle to answer a complaint from Carol herself.

Enter the coffee house. Talking to Carol will inform you of her problem with a group of bikers who are hogging the parking spaces outside her shop. Pop next door; making sure you stop by your car and collect your handy PR-24 nightstick for your own protection.

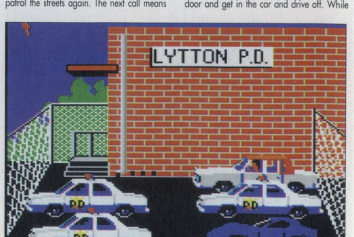
Go into Wino Willy's and approach the bikers. When things start getting nasty, use your nightstick on the bikers and the situation will defuse itself. After a quick chat with the local prostitute, Sweet Cheeks Marie, return to your patrol car.

IN PURSUIT

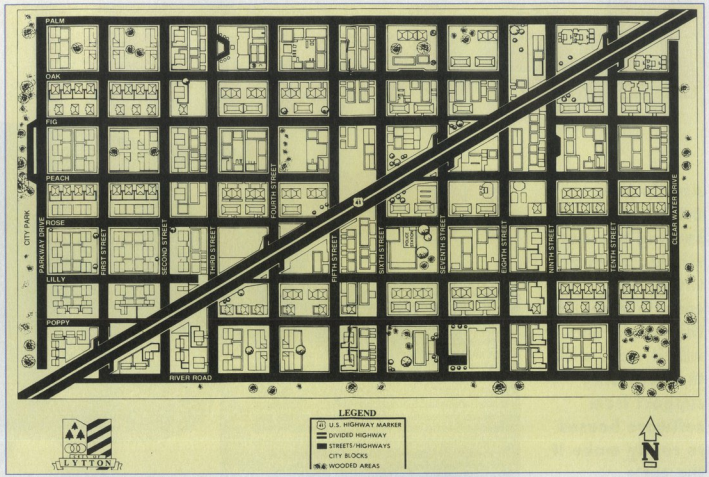
Drive around once more and the next incident will be with a car that is being driven erratically. Pursue the car until the drunken driver pulls over. Stop the car and use the radio before getting out. Walk up to the offending vehicle and look at the driver. Talk to him and ask to see his license.

Ask the driver to get out of his car and perform a FST (field sobriety test). Read the driver his rights and handcuff the man. Despite his whinging make sure you handcuff him with his hands behind his back. Open the back door and tell him to get in. Close the door and get in the car and drive off. While

One of the hardest sections of the game is actually driving your squad car



The Lytton car park and Sonny starts his engine, ready to face crime



A handy reproduction of the map of the city of Lytton

on the journey to the jail, use your radio to inform dispatch of what you are doing. When you arrive at the jail stop the car, get out and open the back door. Before entering the jail, make sure to close both the doors otherwise it'll get pinched while you're in the jail.

Tell the drunk driver to get out of the squad car and follow him up the steps. Open one of the lockers placed on the outside of the jail and deposit your gun inside and then close the locker door.

Press the buzzer and the jailer will allow you to enter the building. Enter the jail and talk to the jailer. Say the words "book him" and when you're asked for what say "DUI". Remove the cuffs and lead him into the cell.

Laura from the station will come in, talk to her and then talk to the jailer and leave the jail. Open the locker and take your gun back. Get in your car and return to the police station. Once you've arrived at the station, get out of your squad car and enter the building.

Immediately as you enter the station, you'll see a table. On it you'll find some memos. Write a memo and then place it in the tray. Walk to the right and talk to the captain.

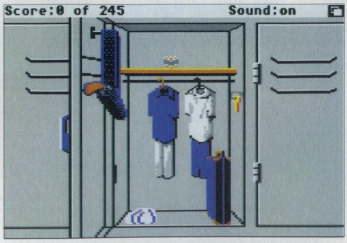
RELAXING

When the captain has finished talking to you go to the locker room. Go to your locker and open it. Get everything, shower, and change your clothes. Close the locker and leave the locker room.

Replace your car keys and extender before leaving the station and get in your own car. Your destination is the Blue Room, and you'll be able to relax after your first shift as Sonny Bonds.

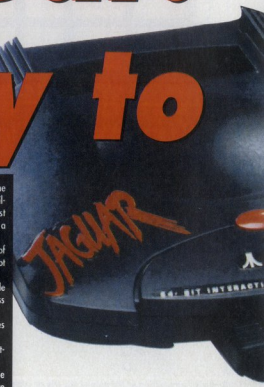
The Blue Room is not quite as dirty as it sounds, but the cops all hang out here

Showering your body after a long day on the streets is essential



In your locker you will find your weapon, a change of clothes and a briefcase

The Jaguar: ready to



Atari's new 64-bit wonder is causing a major stirring among the other console kings of the jungle. But will it meet with the necessary support from software houses to really make it the cat's whiskers? Tina Hackett investigates

The launch of Atari's Jaguar left other consoles chugging along the hard shoulder as it roared past with its 64-bit capabilities, 16.8 million colours and 3D animations. Picking up the award for Best Hardware at the recent ECTS, it could have the potential to be a world beater.

However, the Jaguar, like any new hardware, could also be in danger of falling into the "Chicken and Egg" scenario as brilliant hardware alone is not enough to ensure success.

People are unlikely to buy a console unless they see plenty of available software, while developers are often reluctant to make the software unless they see people buying the hardware – and so the vicious circle goes on.

The future of the Jaguar lies to a large extent with the software houses who need to convince a wary public of their commitment to the machine.

But unless they're convinced they can reap the rewards from financial outlay they are unlikely to commit wholeheartedly, if at all, to the project.

Although Atari have developed a number of excellent games to satisfy the immediate demand, support from third-party developers will be needed to ensure the console's longevity.

We see how the industry feel in general about the console and ask some major and small software houses alike how they see the future of the Jaguar and what their plans are for it.

Will Gunship 2000 be MicroProse's first Jaguar release

MicroProse

Jason Dutton, public relations

Jason Dutton, sums up MicroProse's feelings on the Jaguar and states enthusiastically: "Atari have developed a technically brilliant piece of hardware and, after a very thorough examination of the machine, we are convinced we can produce the type of high quality software which has become synonymous with the MicroProse name.

"We are seen as pioneers of all new technology and it is certainly not our policy to sit on the sidelines and wait to see how the market develops.

"With this in mind, we have already started development on one of our leading titles and are positive it will become one of the market-leading products that sets the benchtmark in quality and playability."

Virgin

Peter Hickman, producer

Virgin recognise that the Jaguar is a great machine and that developers can do a lot with it, as it is flexible and easy to use.

"Virgin are one of the biggest software companies in the world and we're pretty forward-thinking and adventurous when it comes to supporting new hardware," says Peter.

"At the moment a large percentage of our resources are being committed to Jaguar development.

"Technically, the Jaguar is astounding. It decimates the current opposition and I personally think it's the first machine that can be considered to be part of the next generation of consoles.

"We've had our development machines for quite a while now, the next step for us is to get hold of the CD add-on which by all accounts will be mind-blowing – CDs will open up a whole new area for a console with this much power. "Our support doesn't end there," promises Peter. "But obviously I have to keep some things under wraps... for now!"

Their enthusiastic attitude towards Jaguar development is reflected in the three titles Virgin currently have in production: Demolition Man, Dragon and Cannon Fodder, which are all due for release between this winter and spring next year.

pounce!

US Gold

Tony Porter, development manager

Tony Porter, development manager for US Gold, gives his initial thoughts: "The Jaguar is a very powerful machine which, as Atari seem to have perfected it, is perhaps ahead of its time.

"The machine looks good, has an interesting controller – not liked by all, but I find it OK – and once the CD add-on becomes available – if the price is right – it will be up there along with the new Sega machines, the Sony machine and other expected newcomers."

But Tony believes a lot will be down to marketing: "A really good, clever, marketing campaign is needed, accompanied by some high quality, key titles to launch this machine big time."

He thinks success will be governed by sufficient support from the software community, product support on a technical basis, realistic ROM pricing and getting the CD upgrade out quickly and at the right price.

US Gold are substantially advanced in developing Jaguar titles, their first being at the Betatest stage.

"Obviously a company the size of US Gold cannot jump onto every bandwagon that rolls through town," explains Tony.

"However, we have carefully considered the Jaguar and will be supporting it in the future, though to what extent I am unwilling to comment ton at the moment."

The first game released on this 64-bit machine is a good start for the Jaguar

Krisalis Software

Tony Kavanagh, managing director

Generally, Krisalis are feeling very positive towards the Jaguar and think that if Atari can get enough machines into the market place, backed up with sufficient marketing, then it could be a great success.

However, managing director, Tony Kavanagh, believes that if they delay much longer then Sony may well steal this success from them. Timing and marketing will prove to be crucial factors.

Krisalis do see themselves as pioneers, and are already planning to release three Jaguar titles.

Those currently in development include the highly-acclaimed platformer Soccer Kid and Battle Chess for other publishers. Work is also about to commence on a new football game.

Krisalis believe that if developers don't commit to the Jaguar at this early stage it could well damage the console's chances.

Tony sums up: "It's a good product. It's got good press. It has been very well received. They should go for it."

Ocean

Gary Bracey, software director

Ocean's Gary Bracey sees the Jaguar as part of the next generation of console which consumers are looking for.

He thinks that if Atari can get the machine over here soon then they can capitalise on the fact they have the market to themselves.

Ocean currently have several titles in development. These include Apeshit, Theme Park (commissioned from Bullfrog) and a revamped Soccer Kid.

"Hardware depends on software sales. It's a symbiotic relationship," says Gary.

They are developing for the Jaguar with more of a long term perspective in that it affords a learning opportunity to develop for the next generation console.

Ocean believe it to be an investment for the future and the Jaguar will hopefully be part of that.

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Team 17

Alan Bunker, media manger.

Impressed by the power and ability of this 64-bit machine, Team 17 see the console as being able to produce some excellent, state-of-the-art games and, being cartridge-based, it eradicates the problem of piracy which has hounded the industry for such a long time.

For the software publisher it does mean that the production of cartridges drastically increases their costs and adds many financial complications to the typical software publishing equation.

The future of the Jaguar will depend to a large extent on the competition.

Team 17's Alan Bunker sees the 3DO as an up-and-coming machine, having already been in the spotlight for quite some time with regular press coverage.

"The forthcoming line-up includes the Saturn, Project Reality and PS-X which will no doubt have the backing of big promotional campaigns," said Alan.

As for Team 17's own commitment, they are developing for the next generation of consoles with plans for such games already in the pipeline.

They will adapt to the market as they see necessary because the industry doesn't seem to be able to decide which direction to head in because of the number of machines being announced and developed.

Alan Bunker says: "We will remain open-minded and always flexible."

Tempest 2000 has already shown what the console is capable of

Theme Park all set for the Jaguar

Brutal Sports Football making its appearance

Tempest 2000 shows off the Jaguar's 3D polygon rendering capabilities

Domark

Richard Browne, development manager

Richard Browne from Domark sees the Jaguar as a very potent piece of hardware, but at a disadvantage because it is not CD-based from day one.

"For Atari to penetrate the cartridge market that is so dominated by Sega and Nintendo is a huge task, simply having the best hardware isn't enough," he says.

Success or failure will mainly depend on the software base and Domark believe that if the software is available in quantity and quality then people will have a reason to buy the product.

"No matter how powerful the hardware, if the software doesn't exist neither will its market share," claimed Richard.

Retailers also have to be convinced that dedicating shelf space to Jaguar product will reap financial rewards.

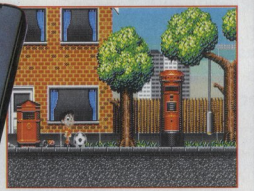
Domark say that if the software doesn't arrive on the shelves in quantity and quality people won't buy the hardware:

Richard added: "Atari cannot be soley responsible for providing a deep variant catalogue of product. It is vital to the Jaguar's success that third parties are involved from day one."

Domark are currently evaluating the Jaguar as a development platform but at this stage think it would be difficult to commit to developing Jaguar-only product.

They are, however, still looking to convert suitable products in the future.

The Jaguar breaks into the console market dominated by the likes of Sega and Nintendo



Soccer Kid revamped for the Jaguar(Amiga screenshot)

Gremlin

Steve McKevitt, PR manager

Gremlin are very positive towards the Jaguar and say that, like all the new consoles, it's technically very impressive but has initially suffered from a lack of decent software.

However, Gremlin's Steve McKevitt now sees some really impressive stuff becoming available, pointing to Alien vs Predator, as an illustration.

"No-one is going to buy any console, no matter how impressive, without the software to support it," says Steve.

Gremlin are producing a game for release at the end of the year and pride themselves on being one of the leading UK software developers, currently working on all new platforms.

Steve adds that companies cannot go on developing for the 16-bit machines forever and will be forced to upgrade to the more powerful machines.

"If they don't support the new machines early on, it's their own long term future that they'll be affecting," he says.

A cat among the pigeons?

Atari's Jaguar has met with enormous enthusiasm, especially towards its technical capabilities and most software houses believe their products could benefit from this new technology.

Practicalities such as development costs, increased by the fact that the Jaguar is cartridge-based, will force some companies to play safe.

Others are simply being more cautious, preferring to wait and see in which direction the market will swing.

Positive feedback from many software houses shows a great future for the console, with a great deal of third-party titles in development and the majority wishing to commit in some way.

Most houses agree that the console now needs a clever marketing strategy, combined with getting the machine over here in quantity as soon as possible, to ensure it really does beat its rivals.

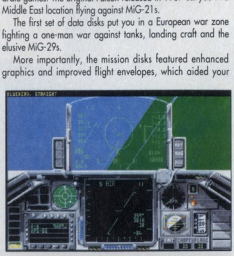
Link-up games

Falcon Spectrum Holobyte

When you speak of Falcon, you're really referring to three separate games. The original Falcon released in 1987 sat you in a Middle East location flying against MiG-21s.

The first set of data disks put you in a European war zone fighting a one-man war against tanks, landing craft and the elusive MiG-29s.

More importantly, the mission disks featured enhanced graphics and improved flight envelopes, which aided your



pilot's dogfighting abilities radically. The third Falcon data disks gave you Hind helicopters and a whole batch of extra missions.

The most important aspect of all these improvements was their benefits to the head-to-head dogfighting. Via a modem or RS232, two players can engage in aerial combat over the skies of Europe or the Middle East.

You both fly USAF F-16s, and it far outweighs fighting against the computers MiGs. The duels are fast-paced, exciting and you need to keep your wits about you at all times to avoid losing out.

Midi Maze 2 Shareware

This little software gem enabled you to link-up 11 (count 'em!) players for a bout of frenetic blasting whilst running about a maze. The reason it's called "Midi Maze" is that, instead of the null-modem cable, you all linked up via the midi ports.

Although you could connect 11 mad games players together, it wasn't really that practical to set it all up, unless you quite like the idea of having your homestead jam-packed full of cables, computer and monitors.

Once you'd found enough people to play against, the Midi Maze fun could commence. Each player was represented by a ball with a smiley face and would run reckless around the maze shooting at the others. Along the way there were plenty of power-ups to be grabbed which produced various effects to either help or hinder your final goal.

If Midi Maze 2 had been a one-player game it would have been the worst piece of entertainment software ever to be released, but with Midi cables and a copious supply of friends, you couldn't wish for a better game.

Two can play

Sick of playing alone, Simon Clays and Jonathan Maddock unroll their modems, uncage their mice and unleash their joysticks to show you what's best in the world of the multi-player games

The computer games enthusiast is often thought of (by the uninitiated) as a single solitary soul twiddling his stick, or fingering his mouse into the early hours of the night, without friend or conversation. However, this image is almost exclusively misinterpreted, for the majority of games players prefer playing against other humans to playing against the computer.

How often does the computer comment on a cracking goal, or wind you up about a dirty piece of cutting up? Never, and this is the fundamental reason why players enjoy playing against real life opponents.

If you indulge in a one-player game for any duration of time the chances are that it will stay in your memory, but will have little significance in a conversation among friends.

However, a night indulging in a bout of Kick Off 2 or multi-player Lotus will undoubtedly give birth to all manner of debate and contention.

Some titles have split-screen facilities or simple multi-player options as a natural part of the play, MicroProse Golf for example.

The story doesn't end here though. Advancing technology has rationalised the price of the modem, and given the games player multi-player options down the telephone line.

Setting up machines to play multi-player games can be initiated in a number of ways. Route one (the cheaper of the two, as no outlandish phone bill is generated) entails the users linking machines via a null-modem lead in the same room.

The other choice is the modem route. This can be a doorway to new worlds as long as the correct modem is bought. The best 9600 baud modems enable you to link up effectively with all software and give the user compatibility with online software like Air Warrior.

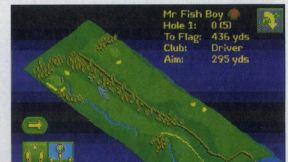
The cost of these modems is about £120 but there are cheaper alternatives. The cheapest, 1200 baud, are best avoided as they are practically useless for gaming. But, for all-round value and effective interaction, a 2400 baud modem can be bought for about £50 upwards.

With this in mind ST Action brings you the penultimate part of a two part round-up featuring the best multi-player link-up games currently available for the Atari.

Next month we connect ST Action readers to the world of on-line gaming.

Two-player games

MicroProse Golf MicroProse



The definitive golf game for any home computer, MicroProse Golf comes with a host of options.

Featuring four different courses, it uses a very inventive system for simulating golf. It also allows the player to advance his skill and progressively improve in true learning curve fashion.

Unlike many golf titles, MicroProse Golf enjoys a variety of camera angles and action replay facilities. This, coupled with a contour effect that gives the courses an extra-real edge, makes MicroProse Golf a must for every sports

Lotus Turbo Challenge 2/Lotus 3 The Ultimate Challenge Gremlin Graphics

Following the success of the original Lotus game, Gremlin decided to make several improvements. Aside from graphical enhancements, the Sheffield outfit decided on a link-up option.

Due to the nature of Lotus and its split-screen two-player racing, linking two Ataris means you can race against two, three or even four players.

Racing across deserts, marsh and even through fog, Lotus is an exciting multi-player encounter. Anyone who has played the split-screen option in Lotus 2 will have a good idea of how competitive it is and how much fun racing against three other competitors is. We know we've compartmentalised this round-up into two separate sections, and Lotus is a classy two-player game. However, Lotus is a classic link-up game which shifts up a gear when used in multi-player mode, and it's for this reason we've included it in this section.

at that game!

sim enthusiast. It also boasts a wide range of game options. For instance, you can play matchplay, skins and at least ten other different derivations of the nation's noblest of games.

While it's fun against computer opponents, it's a far superior game when played against a friend, or indeed a group of friends

Kick Off 2 Anco

We could have chosen a number of footy games for this feature which play a lot better with two players than one, but we would always pick the same one. Kick Off 2, in our humble opinion, is still the best football game on the ST.

When playing against the computer it won't take you very long before you can easily beat it every time you play a game. Playing against a friend was, as they say, a whole different kettle of fish.

For starters every match is different and the interaction (either verbally or physically depending on how the game is going) between two competitors makes it that much more enjoyable to play.

We couldn't possibly list all the occurrences, but if you foul or score against your opponent you are ritually verbally abused by your desperate chum. It's very hard to describe exactly what this interaction is like, but if you've played Kick Off 2 you'll know exactly what we're going on about.

Bubble Bobble Hit Squad

In most two-player games you are in competition, but there are a few pieces of software that require you to work together. Bubble Bobble is one of the finest examples of this particular genre.

Bubble Bobble arrived on the scene first and introduced the gaming world to Bub and Bob, the two boys who had been turned into bubble-blowing dragons. The game idea was simple yet again. All Bub and Bob have to do is clear the screen of any enemies by encasing them in a bubble and then simply popping it.

Sounds easy, but the later levels are incredibly hard and the addiction level almost through the roof. There is that competitive edge to Bubble Bobble because when an enemy is killed a bonus is left behind and a frantic scramble would ensue to see who would get the most points.

Bubble Bobble is one of those timeless two-player classics that should never be forgotten.

Dynablaster Hudson Soft

The greatest multi-player event in the history of computer gaming without a question of a doubt. Up to five people can play Dynablaster, courtesy of a joystick adaptor, which is free in the software package.

The game is one of the most devilishly simple ever devised. Played on a screen which looks like a maze of brick walls, each competitor starts from one of the four corners of the screen, the centre if you're the fifth player.

At your disposal is a never-ending supply of bombs. Once the frenetic battle commences, the little men you control go kill-crazy and start blasting away at the bits of brick currently blocking their paths.

The idea is to kill all your opponents with your bombs and be the last man (or woman) standing. Underneath the bricks are several power-ups which give you more bombs and make them more powerful. The first one to five wins is the victor.

We know it sounds like complete rubbish in print, but we have never ever had so much fun playing one computer game than Dynablaster. If you haven't got a copy yet, go and get one, grab a few friends and demand that they play it.

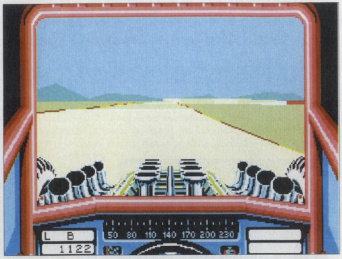
Action FEATURE

Stunt Car Racer MicroProse

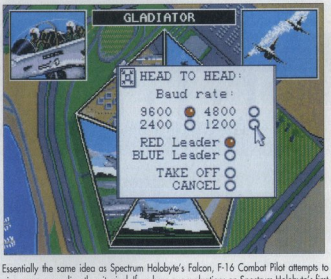
This dynamic racer was the very first link-up game we played. One summer afternoon with null-modem cable firmly in hand, I wandered around to the home my Amiga-owning chum and we connected up for what was an amazing couple of hours of solid racing shenanigans.

Stunt Car Racer was created by the god-like genius of Geoff Crammond and was blessed with a level of gameplay that has firmly stood the test of time. The polygon-based graphics were quite incredible for the time, but because of the high standard of playability and devilish addiction level, were never really a major concern.

Playing Stunt Car Racer on your lonesome was great fun, but with a chum to race against it improved the game almost beyond belief. The sheer competitiveness of the racer made it an absolute joy to play. It rates as one of the best ever link-up games.



F-16 Combat Pilot Digital Integration



Essentially the same idea as Spectrum Holobyte's Falcon, F-16 Combat Pilot attempts to give you more realism than its rival. If we base our evaluations on Spectrum Holobyte's first Falcon release, then F-16 Combat Pilot is indeed the superior product. But, measured against the improved data disks, DI's efforts are beaten into second place.

Graphically, F-16 does not have the same in-game graphical clarity, but like its rival it does have a link-up facility.

F-16 lets the player use most different speeds of modem, so the action can accommodate most players' pockets. Again, like Falcon, the action is fast and furious, with little time, and any error leapt upon by your dog-fighting opponent.

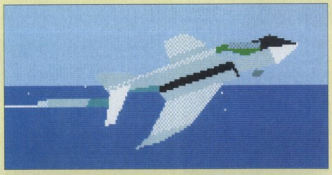
F-16 is as good a simulator as the ST has, but in two-player mode it excels itself, and is well worth investing in a modem because it takes gaming to a refreshing level.

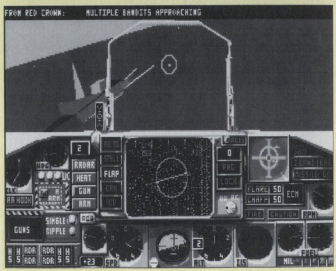
Flight of the Intruder MirrorSoft

This simulation takes place during the Linebacker campaign in 1972 over North Vietnam and is one of the better link-up flight games that you can get for the ST. You can choose between the A-6 Intruder or the F-4 Phantom 2 to fly in. Your mission is to search out enemy targets and destroy them while trying to avoid getting shot down by both air and ground defences.

The Flight of the Intruder link-up allows you play with or against another player. Now it often occurs when playing with a chum that he or she has got a faster/slower machine than yourself. Thus there is an option to make the faster machine do more work than its slower counterpart.

Flight of the Intruder might not be the ultimate flight simulation link-up (that honour belongs to Falcon), but it is a damn fine game and one which you and a friend can easily lose yourselves in.





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This is an easy to use fully featured Desktop Publishing package for the Atari ST/E, TT & Falcon. It lets you create your own newsletters, brochures, business stationery, notices etc. It produces truly professional results with virtually all printers and comes complete with a 134 page fully illustrated manual. Easy Text Pro Vector requires at least 2 meg of memory and a hard drive or 2.5 meg of memory if you don't have a hard drive. SpeedoGDOS is also required but is NOT supplied. Easy Text Pro Vector costs ONLY £35.95. If you don't have SpeedoGDOS, why not get Easy Text Pro instead for ONLY £29.95. It is almost identical to the Vector version, except that it runs on a 1 meg machine and uses standard GDOS fonts (a number of which are included) instead. Overseas customers please add £2 Europe or £4 Rest of World, for either product.

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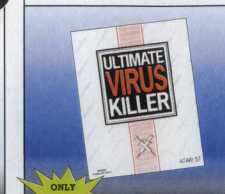

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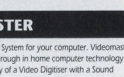

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SOFTWARE – EDITOR – The sample editor is a highly flexible 'WIMP' style program which allows conversion or editing between any AVR format 8/12/16 bit, Mono or Stereo samples. Sampling rates of up to 48Khz can be used, but the program can re-synthesise samples to practically any other speed.

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STU JUNE

Easy fra melody

Ian Waugh revisits a fractal music program, just improved with new features and made much easier to use

While the word fractal may be a page-turner for most people other than hackers, you can do some interesting musical things with them. Given the right treatment, they can produce harmonic and even melodic music.

We looked at a program called Fractal Music Composer back in August 1992 and we've kept you informed of updates in recent news sections in this column.

The program has now reached v2 and sports many improvements and additions to the original.

EASIER

For starters, everything is integrated into one program which makes it much easier to work with.

You can move back and forth between screens so you can set the rhythm and tonality maps in any order.

It can now compose six tracks of music instead of four and you can mute individual tracks. You can also create your own scales.

After composing, you can save the file in Midi File Format 0 or 1. The program also includes a useful Midi File Player and Analyser so you don't have to exit to your sequencer to replay a file. It can also convert between type 0 and 1 files.

The Analyser shows the presence of various types of Midi data and you can selectively remove it from the file. The Analyse screen looks a bit horrendous but there's a pop-up help menu which explains what the symbols mean.

The new Fractal Music Composer is much easier to use than the first version, although you will still have to read the manual to discover what the one, two and three-letter mnemonics mean (a result of using a text-based layout rather than a graphics one).

As of writing, the manual is still being prepared but there are several helpful crib sheets which explain what all the functions do.

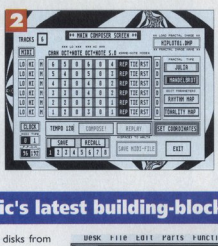
But irrespective of all this, you want to know what sort of music it produces. Well, thanks to the Tonality Map it can produce very harmonic music moving through preset key changes – preset by you, that is.

The six tracks give you ample scope to experiment with percussion parts while still leaving some tracks for music. As with most

1

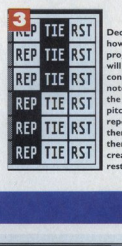
All three sub-programs are now available from the loading screen. Select Fractal Music Composer

2



In the centre of the Main Composer Screen assign each track a Midi channel, a high and low octave and note range, and a starting octave

3



Decide how the program will treat consecutive notes of the same pitch. It can repeat them, tie them or create a rest

Rave on with Heavenly Music's latest building-block

Dr Rave is the latest in the Dr series of building-block disks from Heavenly Music.

It contains 12 Rave grooves all around 48 bars long and constructed from eight or nine music tracks. They are all mapped to GM/GS.

The programmer, Nick Ruggles – yes, let's name names – has done an excellent job of getting analogue-type sounds out of a GM unit.

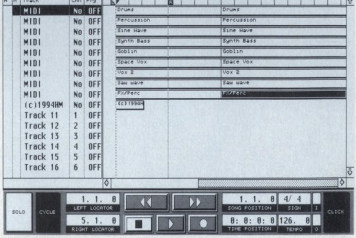
There are some very effective bass and analogue lines here, plus some unusual FX courtesy of Pitch Bend. Pump up the volume!

To use the grooves in your own pieces requires judicious use of your sequencer's cut, copy and paste facilities. It may be personal preference but I find this much easier to do using a sequencer with a pattern-based Arrange page such as members of the Cubase family and Notator Logic.

You can easily create several different sections of music and simply drag them together to hear what they sound like when put together in different way.

Heavenly Music continue to produce impressive sequences. If you're a Rave fan, check this one out.

● *Dr Rave costs £16.95 plus £1.50 postage and packing. More from Heavenly Music, 39 Garden Road, Jaywick Village, Clacton, Essex, CO15 2RT. Tel: 0255 434217.*



A Dr Rave track in Cubase Lite, cut off with the scissors tool at bar nine so the various sections of the patterns can be rearranged.

ctals make

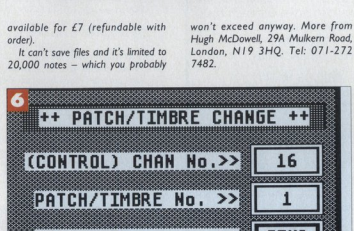
composition programs, you get the best results if you keep a fairly tight rein on things. If you set all the parameters to extremes you will get an extreme composition.

I've had great fun with this program and produced some very interesting – and melodic – compositions.

I created some Midi files, exported them to Notator and applied some pretty heavy quantisation and groove factors to them. FMC can produce interesting results but you'll get even more out of the program if you treat it as raw material.

● *Fractal Music Composer costs £79 or £59 to genuine education customers. If you already have v1 you can upgrade for £39. If you don't want to risk your readies, a demo is available for £7 (refundable with order).*

It can't save files and it's limited to 20,000 notes – which you probably won't exceed anyway. More from Hugh McDowell, 29A Mulkern Road, London, N19 3HQ. Tel: 071-272 7482.



Use the Patch/Timbre Change window to send Program Change numbers to your synthesiser

Beginner's jargon

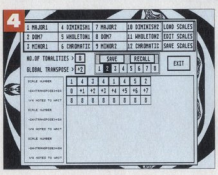
GM/GS: GM (General Midi) is an agreed standard whereby the same types of sounds are put in the same position and respond to the same Program Change number.

So, for example, the first one is always a piano, the 14th is tubular bells, number 73 is a Flute and so on. This means you can play a Midi file configured to GM on any GM instrument and it will sound approximately the way the programmer intended.

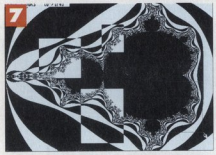
GS is Roland's development of GM. It includes additional reverb parameters and has provision for additional sounds.

Building-block disks: A disk containing a collection of drum, bass, guitar or full arrangement patterns designed to be chopped up by the user and used in their own music.

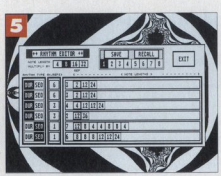
Arrange page: A feature in some sequencers which shows sections of music as oblong bars on a grid with the recording tracks down the left of the screen. These Parts or Patterns can be dragged around with the mouse and placed on any track at any position in time. It's a very powerful and easy way to arrange music.



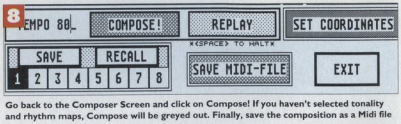
On the Tonality Screen set the number of tonalities for the program to cycle through along with the scale pattern, the transpose value and the length of time the tonality will be used (in quarter notes)



Select Set Coordinates on the Composer screen and use the mouse to select areas by clicking and dragging. Draw two boxes for each track – one for pitch and one for duration



In the Rhythm Editor, set the basic duration value, the number of durations each track cycles through and the values of each of them



Go back to the Composer Screen and click on Compose! If you haven't selected tonality and rhythm maps, Compose will be greyed out. Finally, save the composition as a Midi file

Music update

● Steinberg have put together versions of Cubase with tutorials aimed at students. Cubase Lite and Cubase Score Education Packs contain the standard program and manual plus an educational booklet, two tutorials and a disk of music examples.

The tutorials teach the basic features of the Cubase programs and include an interactive study of music theory and history. For schools and colleges the packs complement the National Curriculum at a variety of levels. More from Harman Audio on 081-207 5050.

● If you're aged between 8 and 18 years, it's still not too late to enter for the TES/Yamaha National Youth Rock & Pop Awards. There are three age categories: 8-11, 12-15 and 16-18. Winners in each get the chance to perform with a distinguished group of session players in front of a live audience at Live 94 and along with £10,000 of musical equipment from Yamaha. Your composition should be no longer than three minutes and recorded on cassette. For full details contact the Yamaha Hotline on 0908 369 219. The closing date is June 25.

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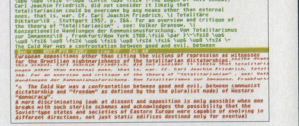
Incompatible computers and software? Don't worry too much about it says Günter Minnerup, as he reveals the mysteries of the RTF format



Footnotes are handled rather unsatisfactorily by Protext's RTF import. They are there, but will require a fair amount of manual editing to print out correctly from the program

Conversion reversion?

A lot of fuss has been made recently about the ability of Apple's newly released Power PCs to run DOS and Windows software.

This was celebrated as a breakthrough in overcoming old incompatibility barriers as though emulators were an entirely new discovery.

To make Apple's new computer run PC stuff, you still need to buy an emulation program separately, as indeed you could for previous models of the Macintosh series and – as you will know – have been able to do for years if your machine was not a shiny new Power PC but a humble Atari ST.

All the PR hyperbole unleashed by Apple may fool the innocent and ignorant but it will not fool anyone who has made a habit of wandering between the different operating system worlds for years.

BARRIERS

The fact is that the incompatibility barriers have been coming down for some time now, to the point where it does not matter which machine you buy any more – unless your requirements are very specialised indeed, or company policy imposes a standard.

Take disk formats. A few years ago, even computers with the same CP/M operating system – very much the business standard before the arrival of MS-DOS – had difficulties exchanging files between floppies which looked identical.

Today, the double or high-density 3.5in disk is everywhere, and it is perfectly possible to make a PC, a Mac and an Atari read and write to or from the very same disk without breaking into a sweat.

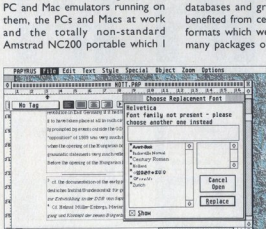
I have a box of such pre-formatted floppies on my desk which I use precisely for the purpose of carrying text files between the TT and Mega ST with PC and Mac emulators running on them, the PCs and Macs at work and the totally non-standard Amstrad NC200 portable which I use on the move – and none of them has so much as coughed so far! Then there is the increasing migration of successful software from platform to platform. Heavyweights such as Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, Excel, Aldus PageMaker and so on are available in near-identical PC and Mac versions and will, of course, happily run on the ST, emulating either operating system.

Word Perfect, Protext, Superbase Professional, Cubase and others are sold for the ST as well as the Mac and/or PC. There will soon be a Calamus Windows NT, and there is always the Gemulator to make PCs run most ST software.

As to file formats: spreadsheets, databases and graphics have long benefited from certain standard file formats which were supported by many packages on any platform – from the Lotus WKS format to Encapsulated PostScript.

Word processors tended to be more incompatible than any other software category because each program and each hardware platform devised its own character sets and formatting codes.

There was ASCII, of course, but ASCII files are stripped of all formatting and accents.



The soon-to-be-released Papyrus seems the best of the Atari bunch, coping effortlessly with footnotes and fonts. If a font used in the original document is not available, a 'Choose Replacement Font' dialog pops up for you to choose a different one

SOLUTION

Foreign names, bold and italics, footnotes and index markers invariably fell by the wayside when, for example, a Word Perfect file written on a PC was transferred to an ST word processor (except the ST version of Word Perfect, of course).

I'm pleased to find increasing support by the major Atari software houses for the Rich Text Format developed by Microsoft some time ago as a solution to this problem.

Using RTF files, most good DOS, Windows, OS/2 and Mac text crunchers can now swap documents without losing the hard-earned fruits of your editing labour. Fonts, text effects, page numbers, even footnotes and graphics are still where they were put in the first place.

How does RTF work? A few years ago, before desktop publishing had been invented, I used to prepare word processor output for typesetting bureaux, laboriously inserting text codes into the copy for font changes, hyphenation, spacing and other desired effects.

RTF works in exactly the same fashion, except that it's done automatically by the originating software – known as the RTF Writer – and decoded equally automatically by the receiving program – the RTF Reader.

Using simple combinations of the backslash symbol, a control word and a numeric delimiter, almost all text effects can be expressed in a format independent of machine and software. '\b', for example, switches on bold and '\b0' switches it off again.

In reality, things are more complicated, of course, but there is no need to understand every detail of it – unless you wish to write your own conversion utility, not such a difficult task for simple requirements – as long as you have software that takes care of the encoding/decoding for you.

The benefits of RTF-capable software are not, of course, confined to the wanderers between different software worlds, but can be equally useful within the Atari community to swap documents between the bewildering variety of different word processors, desktop publishers and other packages.

Let us hope that the likes of Protext, Calligrapher and Papyrus will soon be joined on the RTF bandwagon by all other text-hungry ST and Falcon software!

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Blowing up a real Storm?

André Willey looks at a shareware comms program that is flexible and full of considerable potential

There are a multitude of communications programs available for the Atari ST, some in the commercial arena, but most tend to be public domain or more frequently these days, shareware.

Storm is the latest offering from original Flash author Alan Page, and it appears to be significantly better than the 'official' licensed sequel, Flash II.

Released as shareware, Storm should be available for downloading from most bulletin boards. Unlike other similar shareware programs such as CoNnect, the generally available version of Storm is not restricted by time or features, although users who register by sending $25 to the author will receive updated and improved versions as they are released.

TRADITIONAL

Storm is a traditional terminal-oriented communications program. Modules are supplied to support various different terminal emulations and file transfer protocols, although VT100/102 and Zmodem appear to be accepted as the de facto standard these days. Although X, Y and Zmodem are supported, some users might find other protocols, such as Kermit, useful.

A custom font allows the program to provide 24 lines of text and a type-ahead buffer on the same screen, although it would be nice if the comms session window were re-sizeable – especially for those using a large-screen monitor or MultiTOS.

It's font is not one of the best I've seen, especially in ST medium resolution, and it would be nice if the program allowed for user-installed fonts too.

Storm's script language should be familiar to a great many ST users as it is a variation of Basic, with a wide range of additional commands to handle comms-specific tasks, including triggering interrupts when given events occur. There is no built-in 'auto-learn' option to generate scripts based upon live interaction with an online system, but a Basic program is supplied which can do the same job.

Storm Basic has the distinct advantage over some other comms script languages in that it is interpreted rather than compiled. This is a big plus when execution speed is less of a critical factor than fine-tuning the precise details of a program.

As with the capture log editor/viewer, Basic programs can be edited in their own re-sizeable window, even while online tasks are taking place. Existing Flash users will be pleased to note that the Basic language is an extension of the old Flash command language, so upgrading scripts should be a relatively trivial task.

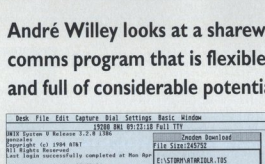
On the down side, Storm doesn't support baud rates beyond 19,200, even on hardware that provides such rates (Mega STE, TT or Falcon). This is a big failing in this age of fast modems, and hopefully the registered version will improve on this situation. The same applies to the lack of multi-port sessions in separate windows, a very powerful feature of CoNnect. That said, it's likely that anyone needing such a feature will probably be using a multitasking operating system such as MultiTOS anyway, in which case there is no reason why the program cannot be loaded twice to achieve the same effect.

However, although Storm runs happily under MultiTOS, its dialogues are not window-based, which prevents the system from multitasking during configuration operations. At least file transfers and script execution can both occur as background tasks.

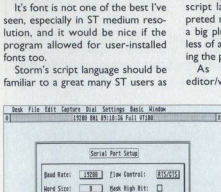
There also seemed to be a few glitches in certain facilities. For example, when trying to select VT100 as the terminal emulation mode for a specific dial entry, Storm kept reverting back to TTY. The item was ticked in the pop-up menu, but not in the accompanying dialogue button.

Storm will certainly appeal to existing users of Flash, and to those who find the over-complexity of packages like CoNnect a little daunting. It is perhaps a little limited in its range of supplied terminal emulations and file transfer protocols, but hopefully more will become available with future releases.

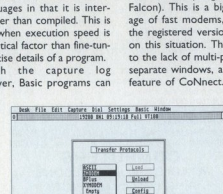
Similarly, the lack of support for baud rates beyond 19,200 may be frustrating for Falcon owners. However, it is generally a very straightforward package to use, with the flexibility to handle more complex functions later.



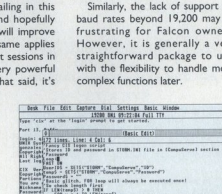
Storm's Zmodem file transfer can occur as a background task, allowing you to get on with other tasks in the meantime



The extra serial ports on a Falcon or TT are supported baud rate is still limited to 19,200



Download protocols can be installed or removed at will, as can terminal emulations



Storm's script language should be familiar to most users – it's Basic with extra comms commands

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Mastering mastheads

Andrew Wright delves deeper into masthead design

The most successful mastheads tend to be those blending text and graphics into a tasteful yet uncomplicated design. Too much cleverness makes for a bad visual impression just as a plain single word masthead fails to convey very much at all.

The graphic element should be as unobtrusive as possible, unless a corporate or other such logo is required. For example, the graphic element might not even be an imported graphic as such. It may simply be a box, a border or slightly distorted or shadowed text.

The first and last letters of the title can be enlarged to "frame" the newsletter's subtitle. Alternatively two or more different weights of the same typeface can be used, perhaps in conjunction with different letter spacing on each line. In other words the text itself is being turned into the graphic element of the masthead.

DISTINCTIVE

The next step up is to blend a small piece of clip art with the first letter of the title or substitute a relevant piece of clip art for one of the letters in the title.

Simply putting the logo and title together on the same line works perfectly well but your newsletter will be far more distinctive if you can find some way of varying the juxtaposition of the text and graphic elements. The title can partly cover the logo (or vice versa) or you can bend the text around the graphic.

A word about typefaces is needed here. Most PD collections are composed largely of display faces and it can be tempting to use them in your masthead. But the majority are rather too ornate to be used alongside prominent graphics such as logos.

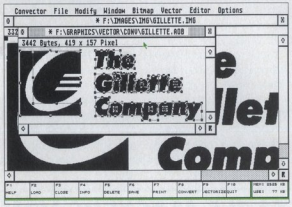
If you need to incorporate a logo or other device, keep the typeface relatively simple. For more formal newsletters it is perfectly reasonable to create the masthead from the same face intended for the body text or headlines.

If you're stuck for ideas and find working in a graphics package heavy going, there are still plenty of tricks you can use inside a DTP program.

Try creating a drop shadow for text by duplicating the text frame and carefully positioning it so that it is slightly offset by a millimetre or two. Shadows can be black or mid-grey, depending on the look you want to achieve.

Autotracing or vectorising programs are often useful in masthead design as it is often necessary to scan in a logo or other piece of clip art.

Turning a scanned image into a vector graphic means you can resize the logo to any size without fear of distortion. If you need to include a company name, for example, and you don't have (or can't identify) the necessary typeface, scanning and vectorising may be the only way.



This poor quality scan works far better as a vector graphic courtesy of Convector

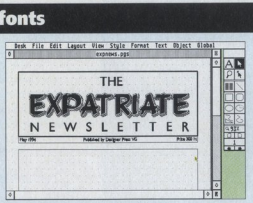
Textstyle plays about wint fonts

If you're using a GDOS-based package such as Timeworks or Easy Text, I can heartily recommend Textstyle, a budget package from the ST Club written by Jeremy Hughes of Fontkit fame.

It will work happily with any other DTP program too, of course, but GDOS users will get more out of it, particularly when used with fancy Calamus fonts.

Textstyle is a standalone program that lets you play about with GDOS or Calamus fonts, adding dozens of special effects such as contours, shadows or inlining. Effects can be applied cumulatively and there are endless possibilities for experimentation.

The end result can be saved as an IMG or TIFF file of any size or resolution, making resizing unnecessary when it is imported into the DTP program.



This masthead is based on an IMG file created using Textstyle

FONT OF THE MONTH

This month's choice comes from the ST Club's own range of 200 quality Calamus fonts. The full STC range is available in six separate packs and though each has a varying number of typefaces, they remain excellent value at £14.95 each for those using Calamus or Digital Arts' applications.

They are also good value for users of GDOS applications like Timeworks as well as That's Write, because programs like CFont and Fontkit can readily convert them to bitmapped format.

Set 1, for example, contains 13 sans serif faces suitable for headings and display purposes. Each comes in several different weights and styles, making a total of 60 fonts in all. Set 3 has 21 display faces which will be useful in all kinds of publications, particularly newsletters.

So Display 124 corresponds to Hobo while Display 416 is Cooper Black. One particularly clean typeface is Display 479, otherwise known as VAG Rounded. If you find VAG an odd name for a typeface, think Volkswagen-Audi-Golf and you'll be on the right track – it was originally designed for the German car maker and can still be seen on VAG dealerships.

VAG Rounded

VAG Rounded – a clear, well-balanced typeface

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL MASTERS 4

VERSION

Quite simply the best Football management game for your computer. We have served thousands of satisfied customers during our 4 years of trading. Over 10,000 man hours (during 5 years) has been dedicated to the production of this games constant improvement and it must be one of the most realistic and accurate representations of a professional football managers job. Main features below:-

Managers : 1 to 4 Human players, Ratings, Performance statistics, sack and offers. 3 Difficulty levels, Manager of the month and season awarded, Pools, Pick any team in any division to begin with.

League & Cup : Premier 22 teams, Division 1,2 & 3 have 24 teams, Play-offs, Tables. 7 Cup competitions with precise rules (2 legs, extra time, away goal rule, seeded draws, European Cup tables, 5 subs, non-domestic player restrictions etc.), Finalist route to glory.

Games : Yearly fixture/previous list, Week fixtures/results, Results from previous meeting with opponent (goes back up to 6 seasons).

Players : Real life statistics reflecting the start of 93/94 season with real positions, height, age. Live transfer market, Contract & wage negotiations, Preferred foot (left/right/both), Loans, Injuries, Training, Special talents, Trainees, Goalkeepers (separate skill categories), Defenders, Midfielders, Attackers & Utility, Retirements, Foreign transfers, Unhappy players, Top 10 Hat shots.

Team : Training, Tactics (15 different styles), Aggression, Formation allows specific player field settings (Left winger, Sweeper etc.).

Club : Sponsorship, Ground improvements, View opponent, Finances

The Match : Real time scoreboard reporting goals & injuries yellow/red cards, Sound effects, Interventions permitted at any time to change tactics, formations and make subs. Physical graphical penalty participation (optional). Over 80 different referees.

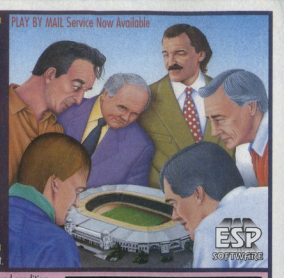
Other : Fast load/save, Printer access, 20 Options to set various game preferences, Instruction book, Easy to play, Technical support.

Plus : Over 100 other meticulous refinements impossible to list here.

Editor : Allows you to amend various items in saved games. £12 Extra

Scottish : Dedicated version details available upon request.

PLAY BY MAIL Service Now Available

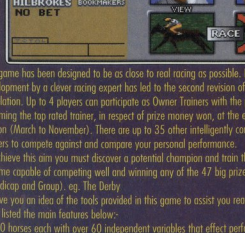


CRICKET MASTERS

This is a purely managerial cricket manager game that concentrates on strategy and includes plenty of relevant statistics. The game has been designed and developed by a true fan of the sport. It replicates everything that a real manager has to contend with and it's a totally unique production that anyone with an interest in Cricket should experience. A summary of the main features is shown below:-

- AXA EQUITY & LAW 18 league county teams, 50 overs per game.
- 4 Cup competitions including Benson & Hedges, Nat West.
- 20 different match umpires with accurate nomes and strictness.
- Accurate player details Surname, height and age.
- 27 different player attributes, most have a direct impact on the effectiveness of each individuals actions during a simulated match.
- Easy player selection. All game text is clearly presented.
- Batting and bowling averages. Top batting and bowling tables.
- 3 Different training intensities to boost batting, bowling or fielding.
- Weather, pitch and light often make an impact on ground condition.
- Full match highlights let you watch the action ball by ball with full graphics and/or realistic sampled sound effects for significant events (Fours, Umpire decisions, etc.). Interventions are permitted at any time to change batting tactics or fielding placings.
- 3 Batting/Bowling classifications (Normal, Attack and Defend).
- Choice of 15 different field placings, Manager rating.
- Full scorecard results with best batting and bowling figures.
- Other staff (Physio, Groundkeeper, Scout) can be hired and fired .
- Annual league fixtures listing. Current week and last league results.
- View current cup competition draws and historic records.
- Real time transfer market. Player contract and wage negotiations.
- Sponsors, Printer access, Finances, Poor ground fines,
- 15 Options to alter game preferences, Load/Save game.
- Instruction book with plenty of examples.
- Plus many more fine details that we are unable to list here.

STABLE MASTERS V2



This game has been designed to be as close to real racing as possible. Five years of development by a clever racing expert has led to the second revision of this Flat Horse Racing Simulation. Up to 4 players can participate as Owner Trainers with the primary objective of becoming the top rated trainer, in respect of prize money won, at the end of each racing season (March to November). There are up to 35 other intelligently controlled computer trainers to compete against and compare your personal performance.

To achieve this aim you must discover a potential champion and train them so that they become capable of competing well and winning any of the 47 big prize money races (Handicap and Group). eg. The Derby.

To give you an idea of the tools provided in this game to assist you reaching your objective we have listed the main features below:-

- 250 horses each with over 60 independent variables that effect performance.
- 26 different race courses (2 all weather), real life characteristics mirroring the diversity and uniqueness of racecourses in the UK, descriptions of each are accessible in the game.
- 20 Jockeys who vary in ability and booking fees, Give orders and Receive feedback .
- Formbook and Win Summary Cards cover the previous 200 races.
- Animated race display or just the result. View Declaration List of other horse entries for races.
- Very informative report by Head stable lad. Tipsters. Bookmakers.
- Racecards similar to racing press. Real life. Handicaps & Race Types.
- Viruses, Injuries & Vets. Load/Save game. Many other items included.

Version 1 is available upon request (Simple training & betting) @ £15.

ORACLE Horse Tipster

You could have won £94.85 with this HORSE TIPSTER Utility

Open National Tipping Competition 1991 : Organised by Racecall, regulated by the Tote, this program achieved joint second. This led to a serious approach from a well known national book maker. Rejected in favour of supporting the public.

Winnings Statistics : 104 wins out of 166, as from 2/6/93 to 1/9/93.

Formula : This program tells you exactly what to do. You can NOT amend our system unlike so many other similar programs. How confident can you be in something that invites amendments!

Research & Development : Three years full time race analysis and experimentation to refine and test the prediction system.

Inside Knowledge : Plenty of unique hints from contacts in the know.

User Friendly : No racing knowledge required, easy to use, tutorial book.

Restricted Sales : As soon as our programs predictions have a prolific impact on the betting odds we will stop accepting new buyers.

Monthly Updates : Highly recommended option. If any update fails to break even we'll send the next one free of charge. From £25.

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Making news

Richard Williams provides ten tips to improve the chances of getting your news into print or on to the air

I recently sent a press release about a business program I had written to four magazines, feeling fairly confident they would be interested.

This confidence stemmed largely from the fact that I tailored a different version of the release for each of the publications, in the light of my knowledge of the slightly different markets they serve, and the decidedly different philosophies of their editors.

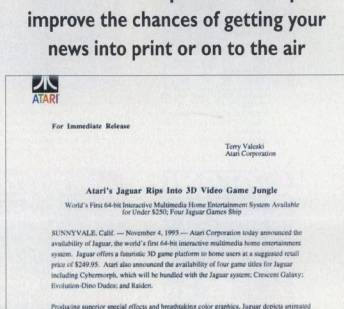
Two of the four replied by letter. One letter said, in effect: "Thanks for thinking of us, but there's no guarantee we can carry anything – you'll have to wait and see."

The second letter sounded more positive, saying the information would be carried "in future issues", and I would be informed when anything about the program was about to appear.

Another of the four replied by telephone. The deputy editor asked me several questions about the program and also requested that I send screenshots and photographs of a set of the disks complete with printed labels.

I duly obliged (as you invariably do when offered some free publicity), and am quite confident something will appear in the next issue of that magazine.

Only one of the four failed to respond. The reason, as I discovered on attempting to follow up my release with a phone call – which you should always do if you've had no response after a reasonable period of time, say a couple of weeks – was that the magazine is no longer being published!



ATARI

For Immediate Release

Terry Valeski
Atari Corporation

Atari's Jaguar Rips Into 3D Video Game Jungle

World's First 64-bit Interactive Multimedia Home Entertainment System Available for Under $250; Four Jaguar Games Ship

SUNNYVALE, Calif. — November 4, 1993 — Atari Corporation today announced the availability of Jaguar, the world's first 64-bit interactive multimedia home entertainment system. Jaguar offers a futuristic 3D game platform to home users at a suggested retail price of $249.95. Atari also announced the availability of four game titles for Jaguar including Cybermorph, which will be bundled with the Jaguar system; Crescent Galaxy; Evolution-Dino Dudes; and Raiden.

Producing superior special effects and breathtaking color graphics, Jaguar depicts animated objects that appear to have no restrictions on how fast they run, fly, blast or retaliate. Each fast-paced video adventure surrounds players with Jaguar's 16-bit CD-quality audio, bombarding users with the realistic sound of human voices, racing cars, soaring jets and colliding worlds.

"Jaguar revolutionizes the video game industry by re-setting the standards for system performance and price," said Sam Tramiel, president of Atari. "Jaguar's advanced technology has the power to transform each player's living room into the game arena of their choice, whether it be a blazing battlefield, a cumming space capsule or an embattled fighter plane. Atari founded the video game market and we are proud to be leading the industry to the next generation of multimedia video entertainments."

A well designed press release can work wonders. But don't go over the top on design – remember, content is the most important aspect of any release

HIT-AND-MISS

Despite the inevitable hit-and-miss element in the response to this kind of public relations exercise, what this particular mini-campaign illustrates is that publicity is available if you provide precisely what a magazine or other publication, or even local radio or TV, is looking for.

One thing many writers and editors are looking for is an easy life. That's not to say they are unprofessional, or careless about what material they use in their publications.

They are careful – but if you take the care for them, and provide them with something unusual, well-written, newsworthy and exactly in keeping with the kind of market they aim at, they will be glad to use it.

Send them something unremarkable which is poorly written, and perhaps fairly obviously incomplete, and it will take a considerable effort on their part to bring it up to a standard worthy of publication. The sad truth is that it will most likely end up in the bin.

So you need to use your ST and, if you have one, your printer to maximum advantage. Good word processor or DTP software need not be expensive, and if you can do graphics as well – not necessarily half-tone reproductions of photographs, but include these if you have the capability – then so much the better.

Study the magazine, newspaper, local radio or regional TV company closely before deciding what angle to take, and the form of words. You may need to take a different line with each one, depending on the markets they serve.

For instance, it's no use writing technical information for popular TV or radio, whereas a technical journal will find a generalised piece too vague. So the bad news is that mail-merge is not always the answer when sending out press releases – at least if you want them to have a better than average chance of success.

For TV and publications, think in terms of images as well as words. Even if you can't do your own pictures, once an editor is interested, he or she may want to organise some form of illustration, especially if it's the kind of picture story they are constantly looking for.

Make sure your product or service gets a prominent mention in your release, but don't make it read like a sales pitch. Journalists are fiercely competitive, but most of them are non-commercially inclined by nature, and will probably reject out of hand anything that reads like an advertisement. The only exceptions to this are the specialist magazines looking for new items coming on to the particular market they cover, and even then, they occasionally decide to "slate rather than state" even after you've had the decency to send them free samples of your product for review.

Make your press releases look professional but don't go over the top. No-one will be fooled by fancy presentation if the release is fundamentally flawed because it's otherwise uninteresting.

Don't use annoying, meaningless expressions such as "highly successful", "well known", "and so on" and "etc". If something is highly successful, simply say why it qualifies as such; if it's well known, people will know it already; if you can't spell out precisely what the "and so on" or the "etc" is, then you're exaggerating.

Don't exaggerate. Journalists are often accused of this, but it's usually a false allegation. What they do is take a particular angle or place a particular bias on a story to make it more interesting.

Make no mistake – news is a product like anything else, and there are ways of making the product more exciting and palatable to a jaundiced public. You can do it, too, with some thought and careful choice of words.

Send your release to a named individual. When researching particular magazines, newspapers and broadcasting companies, it's important to make contacts.

ANGLE

Don't give up easily. If you appear to elicit no response, call the publication or broadcaster concerned, but do bear in mind that responses can sometimes take a while.

When your releases prove successful, give yourself a pat on the back. This kind of publicity might be free in one sense, but hopefully the foregoing will have given you an inkling of how difficult it can be to achieve.

You won't be able to measure your success in the way you can when you exhibit at a trade show or send out a direct response mail-shot, but any favourable publicity will help your firm or cause, and a mention of your product or service, with your address and/or telephone and fax number, can have a dramatic effect on sales.

Atari ST User back issues and binder

Have you missed one of our past issues? Well now's your chance to bring your collection up to date – but hurry stocks are limited!

FEATURES: Upgrading the ST, Frankfurt Music Fair, hard drive management, piracy, PostScript printing and beginners' guide pt2.
REVIEWS: Stylus 800 printer, Midi Studio Master and Calamus S
ON DISK: Personal Finance Manager VALUED AT £40

FEATURES: Graphics packages compared, fuing faulty STs and Atari in Europe
REVIEWS: Slave Driver, TruePaint, NeoDesk 3, NeoDesk CLI, Convector Professional, Musicom and Arabesque
ON DISK: Devpac ST2 VALUED AT £90

FEATURES: Multimedia explained, monitor round-up, picture viewing utilities and how to compute safely
REVIEWS: Mouse Tricks 2, John the Composer, DataPulse Plus, Retouch/Distot, NameNet, DataLite
ON DISK: Video Master software and TruePaint demo

FEATURES: The world's greatest hacks, replacement desktops compared, software buyers' guide and Atari printing bureaux
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FEATURES: Improvisation programs, professional Atari support and DTP guide pt 1
REVIEWS: Video Titler, Falcon Speed, View II, scanning solution and NVDI 2.51
ON DISK: Word Writer VALUED AT £50

FEATURES: Ray-tracing for Atari computers, music on the Thames, printer round-up and DTP guide pt2
REVIEWS: Atari Works, HP Portable printer, Microvitec Cub-Scan monitor and Supernon
ON DISK: Prodata VALUED AT £80

FEATURES: Genlocking, home accounting, how software reaches the shop floor and jargon buster
REVIEWS: Protext 6, Chagall, Sweet Sixteen and Ultimate Virus Killer 5.9
FREE: 32-page ST Action games supplement
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REVIEWS: Omega II, Tabby, Studio Photo, Raystart and Vidi ST (12)
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REVIEWS: Hardwire 3, Easy Text Vector, Chroma 24, Mortimer and Geneva
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FEATURES: Memory upgrades, information transfer, how to avoid mail order misery
REVIEWS: Jaguar, Digiplan, UVK 6, Video Master Falcon, DA Vector Pro, Edhak 3, Magix 2
ON DISK: Tempus 2 VALUED AT £40

FEATURES: Desktop Publishing guide,Virtual Reality, Data Compression
REVIEWS: Audio Master, DA's Picture, Clarity 16, Thought!, CP-EDN, Digit
ON DISK: Easy Text Plus VALUED AT £20

FEATURES: 25 Essential Utilities, Education, Atari Computers at Birmingham University
REVIEWS: Copyist DTP, GEM-View, Pixart
ON DISK: DA vector demo, Photochrome v4

FEATURES: Video Vitals, Frankfurt Music Show, CeBIT, Education round-up
REVIEWS: Breakthru 2, True Images, Papyrus
ON DISK: GIP Image Processing, Violence

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All prices include VAT.

Please place your orders using the Readers' Offers form on page 76.

Kick starting the system

John Hetherington looks at boot managers and why they're so necessary for Falcon owners

If you boot up in colour on an ST, you have at the most two choices of resolution, low or medium.

With a Falcon, you've got at least ten resolutions to choose from, depending on your setup. If you happen to have a screen expander like ScreenBlaster or BlowUp, the choice is probably even higher.

All this makes it even more vital to use a boot manager program to set you up for the session ahead. Boot managers enable you to select which AUTO folder programs and desk accessories you want to load as you boot up but more importantly for Falcon users, they offer you a choice of NEWDESK.INF files too.

The NEWDESK.INF file contains all the information on resolution and number of colours, along with the position of things like windows and drive icons on the desktop.

RENAMING

All you have to do is create your ideal desktop layout and then save the information via Save Desktop in the Options menu. Don't worry about the colours and resolution for the moment – make sure your applications are installed on the desktop and the windows and drive icons are as you need them.

Now you rename the current NEWDESK.INF file to something else, such as TEMP.INF, and then save a NEWDESK.INF file in every conceivable resolution and colour depth you're likely to use, immediately renaming each one to reflect the video mode – for example, 80C256IL.INF for 80 columns, interlace on and 256 colours or 40CTRUNI.INF for 40 columns, true colour and no interlacing. If you get stuck, just load the TEMP.INF file again, using Read INF File under Options.

You can now store all these INF files in a dedicated folder. All your boot manager has to do is rename them to NEWDESK.INF when instructed and you will boot up in the video mode stored in the file.

Of course, the choice of boot manager is up to you but one stands head and shoulders above the rest – XBoot 3. XBoot3 is supplied on a single floppy disk with a smart 56-page manual and it installs itself in your AUTO folder when you run the installation routine.

You can create a default set of AUTO programs and accessories for everyday use that installs your usual accessories and AUTO programs and arranges the GEM desktop in the way you work best. Other sets can be created for special purposes.

You may use a particularly memory hungry program with very few accessories to keep as much RAM free as possible, in which case you can even set XBoot to automatically load it without further ado.

Once it's installed, XBoot executes first in the resolution specified in the Falcon's non-volatile RAM.

It searches your boot partition and lists all the AUTO programs (.PRG) and accessories (.ACC) it can find and lists them on screen in the two left-hand windows (the limit is 100).

A better way to start the day – Falcon compatible XBoot version 3.03

ICONS

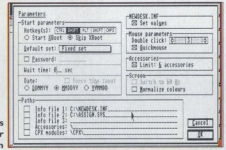
CPXs, both active and inactive, are listed too and you can specify which ones XCONTROL should load. You can also specify a NEWDESK.INF file, an ASSIGN.SYS file and a third user-defined option such as the configuration file for your chosen RAM disk or whatever.

There are also tens icons on the right-hand side of the screen from which you can access various other commands or complete the boot procedure.

Everything is selected using the mouse – a far better way of doing things than the antiquated keyboard interface offered by Superboot, the shareware boot manager.

You can skip XBoot for quick reboots if necessary by holding down user-defined hot keys and there's also a help screen if you get confused and an UNDO command if you make a real dog's dinner of it. XBoot is certainly a treat for ST owners but for Falcon owners it's a must.

This unmissable utility is available from HiSoft on 0525 718181 and costs £35.



XBoot's parameter screen

Eeh, that's naughty!

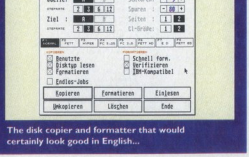
Readers' letters keep rolling in – who says there are no Falcons out there?

Mr Andy Richardson from Etchingham in Sussex wrote in enclosing a program called Ecopy which he'd downloaded from a BBS.

It handles the copying of HD disks correctly, unlike Fastcopy Pro, but unfortunately it's entirely in German. Worse still it looks like ripped-off commercial software.

Take a look at the 'About' screen - the serial number appears to have been removed by some antisocial cretin.

If you see it on a BBS anywhere, ask the sysop to think again. I've written to the program's author for confirmation – let's hope an English version appears soon...



The disk copier and formatter that would certainly look good in English...

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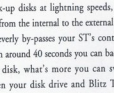

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