



Nite Lite™ Bulletin Board System

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Introduction

On November 3, 1983 at 6 pm, the first Nite Lite bulletin board was in operation. It would be named Nite Lite about a week later, and didn't resemble the current Nite Lite Bulletin Board System in many ways. It was a very small bulletin board, running completely in memory. Functions included a single message base, one bulletin, one help file and one main menu.

Nite Lite has progressed through five complete rewrites since that time, gradually adding features and flexibility. The first version required a disk to boot the system, then the disk was disconnected for use on another computer while the board was running. As features were added to this original system, the message base, being all in memory, became too small, which prompted the writing of version two.

The second version required one disk drive, placing the message base on the disk drive and adding logoff comments and a daily log file.

The third rewrite added up and downloads, accessing a second Atari 810 disk drive. The menus were placed on the disk in this third version, using a command system similar in concept to the current one. The first on-line text adventure was written under this version.

More system expansion followed. The fourth rewrite used the current menu command system and placed more of the system on disk. The "hot-keyed" feature was added during this rewrite. The Atari 810 disk drives were replaced by an ATR8000 and double density disk drives, and the commands were altered to allow them to access the additional features of larger disk drives.

The current version of Nite Lite contains 31 menu commands and supports C-GUL protocol for graphics and sound transmission to callers using the C-GUL terminal program. The software is constantly being updated and improved. All improvements to version five are available to all registered Nite Lite SysOps free in the form of patch files that can be downloaded from the original Nite Lite Bulletin Board System, or by mail for a small fee.

FEATURES OF VERSION 5.0

You will find that the bulletin board software on the accompanying disk is the most flexible, comprehensive bulletin board system you can get for your Atari computer. It is set up as a high level bulletin board system language, allowing you to "program" your own bulletin board exactly the way you want your callers to see it. Only a few of the prompts and text lines are "hard coded" into the software. Most of what the software sends to your callers will be text that you type into the system.

The entire system is controlled by the menu command

structure and the password access codes. Operating almost independently is another coding system that controls the message bases. There are also other systems in operation tracking things like error trapping, modem status and keeping records, but these are designed to operate with little or no intervention from the system operator.

Once you have your system set up the way you want it, you will find that it will operate with very little maintenance. Most of your time with your bulletin board will be spent chatting with callers or reading and replying to messages in the message base. As you become more familiar with the structure of Nite Lite, you will most probably be spending some time restructuring the way various sections of your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System look, adding and changing menus to alter the way your system looks and how callers access the various features. Since Nite Lite systems are so easily changed while in operation, this type of altering "on the fly" is often an irresistible temptation to Nite Lite SysOps.

Very few things are actually required for minimal maintenance. There are only two files, which are your logoff comments and your daily log file, that require attention. These two files will keep growing in size until you reinitialize them. These files can be printed or viewed on the screen in either local or remote modes. Because of the SysOp functions built into the software, the entire system can be maintained completely from a remote location except for such things as power or hardware failures.

UTILITY PROGRAMS

On your System Master Diskette are several BASIC programs that can be used to maintain your bulletin board system, extract printouts for record-keeping, or recover from system "crashes." Three C-GUL picture files are also on this disk and these can be copied to your data disks and listed using the K8 and K9 commands as described in this manual.

All of the utility programs are written in BASIC and can be easily altered if you are familiar with the language. If you do alter a utility to provide more functions or a variation of the functions it provides and you think your alteration would benefit other Nite Lite SysOps, please upload your new version to Nite Lite and it will be made available for other Nite Lite SysOps to download.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System Setting Up Your BBS

Since Nite Lite Bulletin Board Systems work on such a wide variety of different configurations, setting up your system may be quite different from how others would set up theirs. However, on any system, at least three diskettes should be created on the drive referred to as D1: on your system. Format three diskettes on that drive and label them Working Master, Boot Disk and Drive 1 Data Disk. Copy the System Master Diskette to the Working Master using the J command, or equivalent, of your DOS.

The next task is to set up your Boot Disk. Write DOS files to this disk using the DOS that you have selected for running your BBS. Also, if an AUTORUN.SYS file is required for your modem handler, copy this file onto the Boot Disk also. If you are using a RAM disk, append the AUTORUN.SYS for the RAM disk to your modem AUTORUN.SYS file or, if it is a .COM file, simply copy the .COM file onto the Boot Disk. Copy NITELITE from your Working Master onto the Boot Disk and rename it BBS.

Next, put your Boot Disk aside and load the program SETUP from your Working Master. When it is loaded, place your Drive 1 Data Disk in drive one. RUN the program. It will set up your data disk for operation. There are a few items that you will have to enter.

SETUP will ask you for your SysOp name and password. Enter the name in all UPPER CASE, then enter the password exactly as you will be entering it when you log on. Passwords are case-sensitive and can contain upper case and lower case characters as well as almost any other types of characters. Avoid null (CNTL-comma) and, in case you have to log on from remote using an ASCII terminal, avoid special Atascii control characters, inverse video, and CNTL-M, which is the ASCII code for carriage return, in your password.

The SETUP program will also ask you for your message base index. Use 60 for single or enhanced density or 30 for double density. This factor will be used by the bulletin board to determine when to automatically roll over the message base. There are six files used in the message base to enable the rotation and the factor you enter will determine the number of sectors that, when exceeded on the current file, will cause the system to delete the first 1/6 of the messages to make room for new messages. Note that the check occurs while a caller is being logged off, so these files will always be at least as long as the message base factor indicates. On single density systems, for example, the message base files may be 60 to 75 sectors long.

Also note that the naming of these six files, MSGA to MSGF, have no correlation with the naming of the menus or bases. All messages on all bases are kept in sequence of entry, separated only by codes in the message base index. The factor of 60 (or 30 for double density) is calculated

to allow approximately 150 messages on line at any point in time. Since messages may be of varying length, you may have to adjust this factor once your BBS has gotten its first 150 messages. You may also want to adjust this factor to keep fewer than 150 messages on line, using the disk space for other purposes. Nite Lite is able to handle bases somewhat larger than 150 messages, but would require an alteration to the code in order to index more than approximately 190 messages.

Once SETUP is complete, you can log on in local mode using your SysOp name and password. Before you do, read on so that you understand how the menus work, since your first task after logging on will be to enter menus. If you are going to be using a RAM disk, there are also a few more steps involved, as described below. If you are not using a RAM disk, you may proceed with the next chapter.

SETTING UP FOR A RAM DISK

To prepare your Boot Disk for use with a RAM disk, place the Boot Disk in drive 1 and RUN the SETUP program again. This will put files on your Boot Disk that will be transferred to your RAM disk. When SETUP is finished, go to your DOS menu and delete the files MSGA through MSGF, INDEX, BASENAM, STAT, DAYFILE, LOGOFF and PASS. Copy the STARTUP program if you are using a RAM disk referred to as D8:, or if using the V:Handler, copy STARTUPV from the Working Master to the Boot Disk.

You must also add your first patch to your Nite Lite program. Return to BASIC and load BBS from the Boot Disk. Place your Working Master in drive 1 and ENTER "D:D8PATCH" if using a D8: RAM disk, or ENTER "D:VHPATCH" if using the V:Handler. Put your boot disk back in drive 1 and SAVE "D:BBS" so that the patch will be in the program when you boot.

A RAM disk does add a few steps to some of the procedures involved in running a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. However, it will also decrease the number of disk accesses required and will also increase the overall speed of operation of the system. Nite Lite will use the RAM disk for files that are not normally altered by callers while on line. Therefore, there will always be a backup copy of everything on the RAM disk in case a power failure erases your RAM.

You can now return to the DOS menu and place your Drive 1 Data Disk in drive 1. Delete the files AMENUB, LOGON and GREET. These will be in the RAM disk, so they are not required on your drive 1 while the system is running.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System Your First Logon

A plug was supplied with your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. The type of plug included differs depending on which general type of system you are using. If you have an MPP modem the hardware is simply a joystick plug, which must be inserted into joystick port 1. If you have the Atari 850 interface module, ATR8000 or other standard RS-232C interface, the 9-pin plug goes into joystick port 1 and the other end, which contains feed-through 25-pin plugs, must be inserted between your modem's 25-pin connector and the 25-pin connector leading to your interface. For Atari 1030 modems, a ring detector is provided. The 9-pin plug must be inserted into joystick port 1 and the telephone plug must be inserted into a telephone jack. Plug the short white cable on your Atari 1030 modem into the telephone wall plug and plug the ring detector into the back of your modem.

Your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System is now set up to receive calls. However, your first logon should be in local mode. When you log on in local mode, you should unplug the telephone connection from your modem and plug in a phone that is off-hook. This will cause the line to appear busy to others trying to call. After you unplug your modem, place your Boot Disk in drive 1 and boot your computer.

When your system boots (make sure the handler for your modem boots correctly), RUN "D:BBS" or, if you are using a RAM disk, RUN "D:STARTUP" or RUN "D:STARTUPV" depending on whether you are using a D8: RAM disk or the V:Handler. The STARTUP programs will load the proper files into your RAM disk, then ask if you have additional files that you want to transfer to it. For now, simply hit RETURN and the STARTUP program will run BBS for you.

When the DATE? line appears on your screen, take the Boot Disk out of drive 1 and insert your Drive 1 Data Disk. Enter the date using the MM/DD/YY format. Leading zeroes are important in the date. The month, day and year must all have two digits. This is not checked by the program.

Next, the system will request the time. Enter the hours, comma, minutes, comma and seconds in 24-hour time. The BBS clock is set as soon as you hit RETURN at the end of this line. Next the system will ask OK? Answer with an upper case Y if the date and time were entered correctly. Any other response will cause the program to request the date and time again. After you enter an upper case Y, the program will initialize and the next thing you will see on your screen is "Waiting..." with the time and date under it.

Log on in local mode by pressing the CAPS key to put the system in lower case. This will stop the clock. Press the L key. The lower case L will cause a local logon. Enter your SysOp name and, when it is requested, enter your SysOp password. The password is not echoed to the screen.

Your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System will then log you on line in local mode. Your SysOp menu will appear and await your first command. One of the first things you should do is to enter the non-password callers' main menu. Press B to enter a text file. Name the text file D:AMENUZ or if you are using a RAM disk, name it DB:AMENUZ or V:AMENUZ.

Enter the sample menu as given below. To create blank lines, since hitting RETURN on an empty line will end input, press a space, then hit RETURN. The empty line between the word END and the line of letters below it is important. There must be exactly one line there, so use a space character followed by RETURN to create it.

——Main Menu——

```
<B>ulletin
<C>hat with SysOp
<D>ump messages
<G>oodbye (log off)
<H>elp
<L>eave a message
<R>ead messages (with reply option)
<S>can messages
```

END

BCDGHLS

J9D1:BULLETIN

J1

J2

J3

J9D1:HELP

J4

J5

Note that if you are using a RAM disk, replace the D1: with DB: or V: as is appropriate if you want these files on your RAM disk. Save the menu. You can create another main menu for non-password users later, but enter this menu now since it will be used to explain the system functions.

Next, you must enter the other files that menu called. Enter another text file using the B option from your SysOp menu called D1:BULLETIN (or DB:BULLETIN or V:BULLETIN if you specified those on the menu instead of D1:). Type in whatever text you want for your system bulletin. After saving that file, create the file D1:HELP (or DB:HELP or V:HELP) the same way. Once this is done, your system is ready to receive your first caller. However, instead of putting your system on line immediately, continue reading so that you know what other

options you have available so that you can customize your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System to operate the way you want it to operate.

Check out your new menu by first logging off using the D function on your SysOp menu. When the system returns to the "Waiting..." section, use a lower case L to log on again, using a name other than your SysOp name. You should log on to this new menu. Try out the bulletin and help file. Leave a message or two and check the dump, read and scan functions.

This first configuration of your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System is just about the smallest configuration that would be of any use on line. Nite Lite has many more options and commands at your disposal. Use this setup to experiment with different commands to learn more about how Nite Lite operates. When you are ready to set up your first board for on-line operation, you can erase your data disk and run SETUP on it again to reinitialize a new system to contain the menus you select.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System Menu System

The menus are actually the key to your system. All of the functions that will be available on your bulletin board system are controlled by the menus you place on your disk.

There can actually be separate boards, from the callers' point of view, running on your system, with callers having access to one, and other callers having access to another. Up to 36 different sub-boards can be set up on one system. One is automatically assigned as the non-password system, which is the section that all callers without passwords will see when they log on. Another is assigned by the SETUP program and is your master SysOp section. The other 34 can be assigned however you want them.

The menu system is tied into the password codes. The first byte of the password code is the password access code and it determines the main menu that the caller will see right after logon. This may be a letter from A to Z or a digit 0 to 9 and is appended to the filespec D:AMENU, or D8:AMENU on versions using RAM disks. Z is assigned for the non-password callers, and B is the master SysOp code. For example, non-password callers will log on to see the menu saved as D:AMENUZ (or D8:AMENUZ or V:AMENUZ). When you log on with the name and password you enter when you ran SETUP, you will see the menu saved as AMENUB.

TYPES OF MENUS

There are two general types of menus on Nite Lite. The ones discussed so far are primary menus, identified as having MENU as the second through fifth letters of the file name. Note that if you are using a DOS that allows subdirectories, primary menus cannot be in a subdirectory. The file specification must be D:xMENUY or Dn:xMENUY, where n represents the drive number and x and y represent the letters associated with the menu.

The two letters in main menu file names have specific functions. The last letter (note: this may also be a digit) in the file name is the password access code, which makes main menus password code dependent. The first letter designates which main menu it is of the series specific to the password code. The AMENU for each series is the main primary menu for a password access code. All others must be called from the main or other menus, and carry little significance other than the fact that they are password code dependent.

The other type of menu on the system is independent of the password code and in fact may be shared by several password code accesses. These menus can have any file name you want and can, if you are running a DOS that supports them, be in a subdirectory.

The basic differences between using a primary menu

and a secondary menu are that a primary menu checks time on line just before it is displayed, whereas a secondary menu does not. Also, a primary menu can be seen only by callers who have the password access code that is used by the primary menu and secondary menus can be called from menus independent of the password access code.

MENU FORMAT

Menus on Nite Lite are all text files, and many text editors or word processors may be used to create them, or you can use the text enter function in Nite Lite by logging on in local or remote modes. The menus must be entered according to a fixed format, but contain nothing but standard text unless you choose to add graphics characters to them.

The first part of the menu is the text that you want the caller to see, exactly as you want it displayed. At the end, you need the word END on a line by itself. Under END, leave a blank line or one with just a space character on it. If you are entering the menu from the editor in Nite Lite you will need to put a single space on the line since RETURN on an empty line ends input. Under that are, in upper case, all letters that you want defined for that menu. Each line under that is a command line corresponding to each of the listed letters, in order. The following text is a sample of a menu to show this format:

-----Main Menu-----

ulletin
<C>hat
<D>ump messages
<G>oodbye (log off)
<H>elp
<L>eave a message
<R>ead messages
<S>can messages

END

BCDGHILRS

J9D:BULLETIN

J1

J2

J3

J9D:HELP

J4

J5

J6

This menu will appear to the caller as follows:

-----Main Menu-----

ulletin
<C>hat
<D>ump messages
<G>oodbye (log off)
<H>elp
<L>eave a message
<R>ead messages
<S>can messages

BCDGHLS or RETURN?

The above menu could be used as a simple non-password menu if you save it on your data disk as D:AMENUZ (DB:AMENUZ or V:AMENUZ on RAM disk versions). You will also need to supply text files for D:BULLETIN and D:HELP, which will be sent to the caller when B or H are entered. The J9 command loads a file from the disk and sends it out directly to the caller. J1, J2, etc., are other Nite Lite commands and are described fully in the Menu Commands section in this manual.

For a more complete understanding of the menu system, which you will need in order to put together an effective bulletin board system, you also need to study the commands available for the menus, and also more about how the passwords work with the system. Study those two sections and look through the sample systems before designing your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System, or use a simple non-password system using the menu given in this section plus your own bulletin and help files.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System Menu Commands

Nite Lite is controlled primarily by the commands listed for the menus. This chapter details the 33 commands available.

All menus must be created in a specific format. Since they are standard text files, they can be created by using the B option from your SysOp menu, almost any word processor or text editor, or by the utility program MENUMAKE on your Working Master disk. If you are using a RAM disk, be sure to save the appropriate menus to your Boot Disk or, if they are created in your RAM disk, be sure to copy them to your Boot Disk before you turn off your computer.

COMMANDS

There are 33 commands available in Nite Lite. These are designated as J0 through J9, K0 through K9, L0 through L8, D, V, E and S. Each of these commands is described below and examples are given for variations that are allowed.

J0 - Select bases-----

There are 27 message bases allowed on a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. These are designated using a space or an upper case letter. When using a J2, J5 or J6 command to dump, read or scan messages, Nite Lite refers to a list of message base designators that normally contains just a space for the open message base. With J0, a caller can add bases, subtract bases, set this list to contain a list of bases or view the current selection of bases. This command must be listed on a menu other than an AMENU, since returning to the AMENU causes the selection list to return to the default value of one space.

J0 by itself causes the current list of selected bases to be shown to the caller. Append =, + or - plus a base designator or list of designators and you can allow the caller to alter the list. The equal sign sets the list equal to the list you provide. Plus will add the base designators following it to the list and minus will subtract the designators following it from the list.

EXAMPLES:

J0

The list of selections are sent to the caller.

J0= ABC

The list of message base designators is set to the open base (space) plus bases A, B and C.

J0+A

Base designator A is added to the list. If base designator

A is already on the list, it will be added anyway. Multiple occurrences of a message base designator will not affect operation.

J0-A

Base designator A is subtracted from the current list if it appears on that list. If it appears more than once, all occurrences of it will be taken off the list. If it is not on the list, the command will not delete anything from the list.

J1 - Chat call-----

If the chat flag is on, this command will cause the bell to sound on the computer and wait ten seconds for you to hit RETURN, after which it will go into chat mode and you and the caller can type to each other. If the chat flag is off, or if you don't hit RETURN within the specified ten seconds, a message is sent to the caller that you are not there and your screen border will turn red to inform you that a chat call was made. The border will return to black when you use OPTION to initiate a chat or when the caller logs off and the system returns to the "Waiting..." line.

J2 - Dump messages-----

The caller can specify a starting message number (and, if the caller has a password, whether to read all the messages or just the ones addressed specifically to that caller) and messages starting at that number will be sent with no prompt line between the message. Message base designators can be appended to this command to specify which base(s) are to be read by the command. If no base designators follow it, then the default list is used, which will be just the open base except when altered by the J0 command. Note that the main SysOp access code defaults to all bases instead of just the open base, so executing a J2 command from SysOp access will read a combination of all bases in the system. If message base designators follow the J2 command, the default list is automatically set to the list supplied as if a J0= command were also issued.

EXAMPLES

J2

Dumps all bases on the default list of base designators. The default list is not altered.

J2AB

Dumps all messages in bases designated as A and B. The default list is set to AB.

J2 A

Dumps messages in the bases designated by space and by A.

The default list is set to space and A.

J3 - Log off-----

This command sends the caller to the logoff section, allowing entry of a logoff comment if so desired. Anything appended to this command is ignored

J4 - Leave a message-----

The caller may leave a message on the base designated by a message base designator appended to this command. If nothing is appended, the message is left on the open base. If more than one base designator is appended, the first designator is used.

EXAMPLES

J4

The caller may leave a message on the open message base. This may be listed on the menu as J4 or as J4 followed by a space

J4A

The caller may leave a message on the base designated by the letter A.

J5 - Read messages-----

This command is identical to the J2 command except a prompt line will be inserted at the end of each message. This prompt line will allow the caller to abort reading, go on to the next message or reply to the message. If the message is from or to the caller, or if the caller has private read access to that base (see Message Bases), the option of deleting the message is also given. If the message is in reply to another message, the What? command is also offered, allowing the caller to go back and read the message that was replied to.

J6 - Scan messages-----

This command is identical in operation to the J2 command, except only the heading of each message is displayed. The heading consists of the name of the message base, the message number, the name of the person who left the message and who it was left to, the subject, the date and the time. If the message was received by the addressee and/or was replied to, this information is also displayed.

J7 - Relogon-----

The system will return to the "WHAT IS YOUR NAME" prompt to allow the caller to log on again. Note that the password code is NOT updated in the process, so the new message pointer will not be saved. No additional information is required for this command and anything appended to it is ignored.

J8 - List names of password users-----

A list of all of the names in the password file is sent to the caller. Technically, it sends every third record in D:PASS to the caller, starting with the first record. No additional information is required and anything appended to this command is ignored.

J9 - Dump text file-----

Append a file specification to this command to send a file to the caller. This command can be used to send bulletins, help files and other information files to the callers. Used with nothing appended, the J9 command becomes a SysOp command. It will request a file specification and will send whatever file is indicated.

EXAMPLES

J9D:BULLETIN

This will load in the file called BULLETIN on drive 1 and send it to the caller.

J9

This is the SysOp version of the command. It will request the file specification and send the file found under that file specification.

J9V:AMENUZ

If using the V:Handler, this command will send the non-password main menu.

K0 - Enter text file

This is intended as a main SysOp or remote SysOp function. For the main SysOp, this command has nothing appended to it, in which case it will request a file specification and save what you enter to that file. For remote SysOps, append the name of the file you want them to be able to enter so that they can perform such tasks as updating a bulletin or announcement file.

EXAMPLES

K0D:BULLET1

The remote SysOp using this function will be allowed to enter the file on drive 1 called BULLET1.

K0

This command should be only on the main SysOp menu. It will request a file specification and will save the entered text to that file.

K1 - Change password access code-----

This command can be used to divide your bulletin

board into a number of sub-boards, allowing the caller to select another main menu. A password access code must be appended to this command. If the caller logs off using a J3 command, the password access code last defined by a K1 command will be saved so the next time that caller logs on, the first menu will be the AMENU defined for that password access code.

EXAMPLE

K1A

This switches password access code to A and loads and executes the menu AMENUA.

K2 - Download by file specification-----

The file specification of the file to download must be appended to this command. The caller will be given the option of XMODEM or Capture.

EXAMPLES

K2D2:FILE

The file on drive 2 named FILE will be set up for a download. The caller may select XMODEM or Capture, or can abort back to the menu.

K2V:FILE

The file in the V: RAM disk is set up for downloading with the XMODEM or Capture selection.

K3 - Upload-----

Although this command requests a file specification from the caller, as well as what computer the file is for, a file stem must be appended to the K3. The file name and computer type entered appear only in the daily log file. The system will append .001 through .999 to the file name given so that the file will be saved to disk without writing over an existing file. Use a file name with no extension. Do NOT use D1: for uploads. Nite Lite requires room on drive 1 for operation and the system will crash if drive 1 fills. XMODEM must be used to upload a file to Nite Lite.

EXAMPLES

K3D2:FILE

Uploads will go to drive 2 to files named FILE.001, FILE.002, etc., with the number increasing with each upload.

K3D2:UP:FILE

When used under a DOS that allows subdirectories, this command will upload the files to FILE.001, FILE.002, etc.,

in the subdirectory UP on drive 2.

K4 - Enter passwords-----

This is a main SysOp command. It will allow entry of the name, password and password code and will append the entry to D:PASS. Refer to the section on passwords for more information. This command requires no additional information and anything appended to it will be ignored.

K5 - Upload to file specification-----

Intended for use by remote SysOps, this command will allow the caller to upload using XMODEM a file and will save the file to the file specified. A file specification must follow this command. The file specification may have an extension. This command can be used to allow a remote SysOp to upload things like bulletins. However, the uploads do not translate any characters in an uploaded file, so if the remote SysOp is using ASCII, the file will contain CNTL-M characters instead of the Atascii RETURN characters.

EXAMPLE

K5D:ADVBLTN

An upload is allowed to the file on drive 1 named ADVBLTN. If the file already exists, it will be deleted and replaced by the new upload.

K6 - List directory-----

This command can be used as a main SysOp command, a remote SysOp command or as a command that can be listed on non-SysOp menus. It must be followed by a file specification of some type. If you use a file specification that doesn't exist on the drive specified (but the drive is on the system) the command will return the number of free sectors on that disk.

There is a special form of this command that will allow downloading by file specification. Append a slash (/) and the system will, at the end of the catalog listing, begin at the rightmost character and work right to left, deleting the / then any * and . characters found until a character that is not a * or . character is encountered. A K7 command is executed using the remaining file specification.

EXAMPLES

K6D:*.*

This command will list all files on drive 1, with or without an extension.

K6V:

All files in V:, if using the V:Handler, will be listed.

K6D2:*/

All files on drive 2 that do not have a file extension are listed. This is followed by execution of a K7D2: command.

K6D3:DLD:*.*/

For use under a DOS that allows subdirectories, this command will list all files, with or without extension, in the DLD subdirectory on drive 3, then it will automatically execute a K7D3:DLD: command.

K7 - Download by file specification-----

This command must have a file specification stem appended to it. It will allow the caller to enter the remainder of the specification, then will set up the file for downloading by XMODEM or Capture.

EXAMPLES

K7D2:

Any file on drive 2 can be downloaded by typing the name of the file, including the file extension if it exists. XMODEM or Capture may be selected.

K7D3:DLD:

Any file in the DLD subdirectory on drive 3 can be downloaded by entering the file name, including the extension if it exists. This form is for use under a DOS that allows file extensions.

K7D2:M

Any file on drive 2 that has a name starting with M can be downloaded using XMODEM or Capture.

K8 - Load C-GUL menu-----

This command must have a file specification appended to it. If the caller is using a C-GUL terminal program, C-GUL graphics is enabled and the menu specified is loaded and executed. The menu may have K9 commands on it. If the caller is not using a C-GUL terminal program, a warning that a C-GUL terminal program is required for access is sent to the caller and the menu listing the K8 command is loaded and executed.

EXAMPLE

K8D:CGULM

If the caller is using a C-GUL terminal program, the file D:CGULM is loaded and executed as a menu. If the caller is not using a C-GUL terminal program, access is denied and control is returned to the menu listing the K8 command.

K9 - Send C-GUL file-----

Use this command only on menus loaded by a K8 command. This command functions like a J9 command and is identical in form, but sends the file according to the C-GUL protocol. CGUL, STAR and CLOCK are three C-GUL picture files that you can list on your Nite Lite BBS using K9 commands.

L0 - ASCII/ATASCII switch-----

This command asks the caller to hit RETURN and sets the ASCII/ATASCII mode according to the character received.

L1 - Load if access code is set-----

Append to this command the digit, 1 to 5, corresponding to the access code to check and the file specification of the menu to load. If the access code is "1" the caller will next see the menu specified. If it is not, the caller is informed that special authorization is required and is returned to the menu listing the L1 command.

EXAMPLE

L13D:SPECIAL

The menu SPECIAL on drive 1 is loaded and executed if access code 3 is set to "1" in the caller's password code.

L2 - Leave E-Mail-----

This command functions identically to J4 except the message must be private. Refer to J4 for command forms.

L3 - Read E-Mail-----

This command functions identically to a J5 command, except all replies to messages are private. Refer to J5 for command forms.

L4 - Message to SysOp-----

Append a file specification to this command. The file must exist. The command will allow the equivalent of a logoff comment to be entered and will append the comment to the specified file.

EXAMPLES

L4D:SMSGS

The caller can leave a comment like a logoff comment and the text entered is appended to the file SMSGS.

L4D:LOGOFF

The text left by the caller is appended to the logoff comments file. L4 puts "Message to SysOp" and the callers name at the top of the comment, so you can distinguish between logoffs and messages to the SysOp in that file.

L5 - Copy file-----

This command allows files to be copied while on line. With nothing appended, complete file specifications are requested. Alternatively, for remote SysOp operation, you can specify file stems. The remote SysOp must complete the file name for the copy, which is requested. Adding /A to the "to" filespec allows the append option, as is done with the DOS C command.

EXAMPLES

L5

The system will request full file specifications for the "from" and "to" files. P: can be specified for the "to" file to print a file.

L5D:FILE,D:FILE

The file names must be completed by the caller. The caller must add at least one character to each file specification and pressing RETURN without an entry will abort the command, and the system will return to the menu. Entering 1 for the "from" and 2 for the "to" prompts will cause a copy from D:FILE1 to D:FILE2.

L6 - Delete file-----

A partial file specification must be supplied by the caller. The system will delete the file. Wildcard specifications will delete all files matching the wildcards, so be careful.

EXAMPLE

L6D:FILE

The caller must enter at least one character to complete file specification. The system will locate the file and delete it from drive 1.

L7 - Expert switch-----

No additional information is required and anything appended is ignored. The system will ask the caller if expert mode is to be on and requires a Y or N response. The expert switch is turned on in response to a Y and off in response to an N.

L8 - Edit file-----

This command requests a file specification and will ignore anything appended to it. The file is loaded and the editor used for the message entry can be used to alter the file. The file is saved to the same file specification.

D or V - Load menu-----

This command is actually a file specification. The file is loaded and executed as a menu. See the Passwords

chapter for information about main menus and this command.

S - Load menu by file specification-----

Intended for the main SysOp menu only, this command will request a file specification and execute it as a menu.

E - Immediate mode-----

Also a SysOp command, this will request the command and execute what is entered as if it were listed on the menu.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System

Sample Menus

The menus in this section can be used for complete setups in some cases, or can be used for reference to clarify the command system. Each menu or set of menus is presented with a short explanation of what they are intended to do.

SIMPLE ONE-MENU NON-PASSORD ONLY SYSTEM

D:AMENUZ

-----Main Menu-----

ulletin
<C>hat
<D>ump messages
<G>oodbye (logoff)
<H>elp
<L>eave message
<R>ead messages
<S>can messages

END

BCDGH LRS

J9D:BULLETIN

J1

J2

J3

J9D:HELP

J4

J5

J6

The above menu requires two text files, which are a bulletin file and a help file. These can be entered from your keyboard or by using most text editors or word processors. The above menu will access the OPEN message base.

TWO-MENU SYSTEM

D:AMENUZ

-----Main Menu-----

ulletins
<C>hat
<G>oodbye
<H>elp
<M>essage base

Nite Lite BBS - Sample Menus

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END

BCGHM

J9D:BULLETIN

J1

J3

J9D:HELP

D:BMENU

SECOND MENU - D:BMENUZ

-----Message Base Menu-----

<D>ump messages (no reply option)
<L>eave a message
<R>ead messages (with reply option)
<S>can messages

END

DLRS

J2

J4

J5

J6

The above system functions similarly to the one-menu approach, but lists fewer commands on each menu. It also requires D:BULLETIN and D:HELP text files (you can change that to D8:BULLETIN and D8:HELP, or V:BULLETIN and V:HELP if you are using a RAM disk based system).

SAMPLE DOWNLOAD MENU

-----System Downloads-----

<C>atalog of download files
<D>ownload by filespec
<U>pload a file

END

CDU

K6D2:*/

K7D2:

K3D2:FILE

The above menu must be listed on another menu. It can be named CMENUZ and added to either of the above systems. The K6D2:*/ will list the files on drive 2 that do not have file extentions. At the end of the catalog

list, it will request the name of the file to download. The K7D2: command allows callers to enter the file name without having to go through the catalog each time they download. The K3D2:FILE command will list uploads on drive 2, but they won't be listed on the catalog of download files because they will all have the numeric extensions. Although these files will not be listed in the catalog, be aware that it is still possible to download them. If a caller knows your system, the uploads can be downloaded by typing in FILE.001, etc., before you have a chance to review them. A more secure method would be to send the uploads to another catalog (possibly drive 3).

Instead of listing the catalog, you can set up a menu that lists all of the file names with a letter for the caller to hit, using a K2 command for each download you want on your system. This is a much more secure way of putting downloads on the menu, but requires that you change the menu every time you add downloads to your system. If you are using a word processor to form your menus, this isn't too much of a problem, but it is more work than simply naming a program properly on the correct drive.

For downloads on a two-drive system, you can set up several downloads using the above menu. Alternatively, you can use a menu with the K2 commands by placing the menu on drive 2 along with the downloads. Then you can rotate the disks on a regular basis, allowing callers access to more downloads than could fit on your system at once. If you set this up properly, you can make up your download disks without altering the main system at all, which is contained completely on drive 1.

MESSAGE BASE MENU WITH SELECTIONS OF SEVERAL BASES

-----Message Base Menu-----

Base	Add	Subtract
ATARI	A	E
MUSIC	B	F
TRIVIA	C	G
JOKES	D	H

<I> to enable all bases
<J> for OPEN base only
<L>eave, <R>ead or <S>can messages

END

ABCDEFGHIJLRS
J0+A
J0+B
J0+C
J0+D

Nite Lite BBS - Sample Menus
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J0-A
J0-B
J0-C
J0-D
J0= ABCD
J0= @
D:CMENU
J5
J6

The above menu requires a CMENU for leaving messages:

-----Leave a message-----

<O>pen
<A>tari
<M>usic
<T>rivia
<J>okes

Press base to leave message on, or
press <R> to return to message menu

END

QAMTJR
J4
J4A
J4B
J4C
J4D
D:BMENU

The first menu should be saved as the BMENU for the password code used (D:BMENUZ for non-password systems, for example) and the second as the CMENU. You can also add a J0 command with no parameters for a "view bases currently selected" command. Note that the @ sign was added to the second J0= command on the first menu. This was simply to highlight the space following the equal sign. It does not have to be on that menu, although putting it there will not affect operation.

SETTING UP SUBBOARDS BY CHANGING ACCESS CODES

D:AMENUA

-----Main Menu-----

ulletin
<C>hat
<D>ump messages
<G>oodbye (logoff)

<H>elp
 <L>eave message
 <R>ead messages
 <S>can messages
 <X> to switch boards

END

BCDGHLSRX

J9D:BULLETIN

J1

J2

J3

J9D:HELP

J4

J5

J6

K1C

D:AMENUC

-----Switch Boards Menu-----

<M>ain board
 <A>tari board
 <J>okes board

END

MAJ

K1A

K1D

K1E

D:AMENUD

-----Atari board-----

ulletin
 <C>hat
 <D>ump messages
 <G>oodbye
 <H>elp
 <L>eave message
 <R>ead messages
 <S>can messages
 <X> to switch boards

END

BCDGHLSRX

J9D:BULLETIN.ATA

J1
J2A
J3
J9D:HELP
J4A
J5A
J6A
K1C

The "Music" and "Jokes" menus can be set up in a similar manner. The above assumes that the OPEN base is accessed from the main board and that the base designated with the letter A is the Atari base.

You can use many of the above menus all on the same system. Use the one- or two-menu non-password system menus for the non-password section, using the OPEN base for non-password callers. Use the AMENUA, AMENUC, AMENUD, etc., for the password section, assigning A3000000 for password codes (for a 30-minute time limit). You can also add the up/download menu to the Atari section by adding the command D:BMENU to the Atari menu for <P>rogram transfers. The download menu should then be saved as D:BMENUD. Don't forget to enter the various text files requested by the menus on your system.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System Passwords

Codes saved with the passwords on a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System control which menus a caller can see. Three items are saved per record. The first is the caller's name and the second is the password. Each of these can be up to 40 characters long. The name is "normalized" so that all letters are upper case, but the password is not, so it must be typed by the caller in the same case in which it is entered into the file.

The third item is the password code. It contains the password access code letter, a time limit, the new message pointer, a private message read code and five special access codes. This item must be exactly 14 bytes long.

CONTENTS OF THE PASSWORD CODE

The 14 bytes of the password code are used constantly while the caller is on line. The password access code letter is appended to D1:AMENU (or D8:AMENU or V1:AMENU) to create the file specification for the main menu for the caller. Therefore, you must have an AMENU that corresponds to each password access code letter you assign. This letter is the first byte in the password code.

The second and third bytes contain the caller's time limit. This allows time limits of between 1 and 99 minutes on line. If you use "00" for the time limit, it assigns 10,000 minutes, which for all practical purposes is infinite.

The next five bytes contain the new message pointer. When a caller with a password logs off properly, the password code is updated and the highest message number on line at the time is saved in this field. Next time that caller logs on, the system uses the values stored in this field, in reading, dumping and scanning messages, to point to the first message left since the caller's last call.

The ninth byte of the password code is the private read access. This byte is normally a space, which allows the caller to read only those private messages left by and to that caller. If the byte is a @ sign, all private messages on all bases can be read. For remote SysOps who are in charge of a particular base on the system, use the message base designator for this ninth byte and that remote SysOp can read all private messages on that base only.

The last five bytes are the five special access codes used in conjunction with the L1 command. Bytes 10 through 14 correspond in order to access codes 1 through 5. These can be set to "1" in any combination to control access into "high level" sections within the caller's password access level. Note that these codes are not affected by the K1, change password access code, command. To open up a special section controlled by an L1 command, use the BASIC utility program ACCESS from your Working Master.

The passwords are saved in a file on drive 1 called

PASS. This file will grow as passwords are added, causing a longer and longer time required for logon for non-password callers and for callers whose passwords are near the end of the file. You should trim this file down on a regular basis. There are two methods suggested for this. One is by using PASSEDIT to delete all passwords that have message base pointers below a given message number, meaning that the caller has not logged on since that message number was left. The other method is by using a word processor to selectively delete password records. Make a backup of the password file before editing it in any way.

Editing the password file, other than to add passwords using the K4 command, while on line is not recommended. If you must maintain the system from remote, do all password file editing by downloading the file, making the changes locally, then uploading the file back to D:PASS. When you upload the password file, do not log off properly, but drop carrier. The password file will relocate to a different section on the disk when it is resaved, so the pointers the program uses to keep track of your password will not be valid after the upload. Dropping carrier causes the system to bypass trying to update your password code.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System On-Line Functions

There are several controls available to you for controlling callers while they are on line. The three function keys can be used at any prompt line that requires a single keystroke for response. This includes the prompt at the end of the menu and any "Y/N" type or "hit RETURN" type prompts.

The OPTION key will immediately bring the caller into chat mode. Do NOT use this key until the caller has gotten to the first menu. It will break into chat mode from the Y/N prompts during the logon procedure, but when you break out of chat mode, it will return to the last AMENU used on the system by the previous caller.

Chat mode, initiated by hitting OPTION or by a caller requesting chat when the chat flag is on, is terminated by a CNTL-X. CNTL-Z is used on the system to break into BASIC at any point, including from chat mode. If you can't get a caller into chat mode because he never gets to a prompt line, hit CNTL-Z. When you get the "STOPPED AT..." line, enter GOTO 3560 and the system will enter chat mode in the same manner as if you hit OPTION at a prompt line.

SELECT toggles the chat flag on and off. This can be used during logon, since it does not alter the logon procedure at all. It will print "CHAT=1" if it toggles the flag on or "CHAT=0" if it toggles the flag off. This prints only on the local screen. The caller will not see it on the terminal screen.

START will allow you to change the password access code letter. It will ask, on your local screen, "P/W CODE?" and will allow you to make an entry. Enter the upper case letter and hit RETURN twice. The main menu (AMENU) for the new password access code letter will then appear. This function performs identically to a K1 command.

OTHER OPTIONS AND FEATURES

Many fields entered by callers must be in upper case. Instead of requiring the caller to switch case, Nite Lite will convert the entry from lower to upper case automatically. This happens with the caller's name, the name and subject entries in entering a message, any file names or file specifications entered into the system, and on the name entry under the K4 (enter passwords) command. The command entered using the E (immediate mode) command is also converted in this manner.

There is automatic error trapping in the program so that the program will not crash while a caller is on line. If you make an error on a menu, for example, and list a command that Nite Lite cannot interpret, the caller will be sent "Error detected..." and the system will return to that caller's AMENU. Error trapping is intentionally turned off during the accounting done after a caller logs off. If an

error occurs in this area, you should be aware of it and make the appropriate corrections before another caller logs on. An error in these accounting functions is an indication of a serious problem and further calls may do further damage to the data on your Drive 1 Data Disk.

LAST10 is a file on drive 1 that contains the names of the last 10 callers. It is updated automatically when a caller is logging off. This file may be listed on any menu in your system using J9D:LAST10.

CNTL-Z

This command, from the local keyboard only, will cause the system to stop almost anywhere. It can be used to enter a BASIC command or two while a caller is on line. If you are familiar with BASIC, make sure that you GOSUB MODEMCLOSE before you access the disk, printer or anything other than the modem when you use the CNTL-Z command.

CNTL-Z can be used to route the caller in the system and change various controls. The following BASIC statements can be entered after a CNTL-Z:

GOTO 2270

This brings the caller back to the AMENU for the password access code letter in effect.

GOTO 3560

This brings the caller directly into chat mode, as if you hit OPTION at a prompt line.

TLIMIT=XXXX

Changes the time limit of the current call. If a caller exceeds the time limit and goes to autologoff, you can enter a higher time limit if you want to keep the caller on line longer on this call. Replace the xxxx with the number of minutes for the time limit.

?NAME\$

?PASS\$

?PW\$

These print statements will print the caller's name, password code and password. If the caller has no password, PW\$ will contain the password of the last caller who logged on with a password. PASS\$ will start with a Z for non-password callers.

GOTO TOP

This will return to the last menu viewed by the caller before you hit CNTL-Z. If you use the print statements or enter other code, you can use this command to return the caller into the system. It will reopen the modem if a GOSUB MODEMCLOSE had been executed.

GOTO NOCAR

Very useful for terminating problem calls. This command will cause the system to immediately log off the caller by dropping carrier. Note that this command will not work correctly on modems that cannot hang up the telephone. If you are using one of these modems, unplug the telephone line that connects the modem to the telephone system instead, wait a few seconds until the bulletin board responds with a "DROPPED CARRIER" statement on the screen, then plug it back in.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board Systems File Structures

If you want to make any alterations on what your bulletin board system is doing, you will need to know certain information about the files used by the Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. You will find this section particularly helpful if you can program in BASIC and intend to produce some of your own utility programs, alter some of the existing utility programs or alter the bulletin board system software itself. The files described in this chapter are described in groups by function.

MESSAGE BASE FILES

This group includes D:MSGBA, D:MSGGB, D:MSGBC, D:MSGD, D:MSGE, D:MSGF and D:INDEX. These files contain all of your message bases plus the index.

The files D:MSGBA through D:MSGF contain the messages themselves. Each message in the file starts with a line that begins with a CHR\$(0) (CNTL-comma) if it is a public message or CHR\$(1) (CNTL-A) if it is a private message. Delete codes are not kept in the message base, but are noted in the index. This first character is followed by the message number, consisting of five bytes. Two spaces follow this, then one character containing the message base designator letter. This is followed by the name of the person who left the message, one space, the word "TO," one space, and the name of the person to whom the message was addressed.

The second line of each message contains the information supplied as the subject, or the phrase "REPLY TO #xxxxx " (xxxxx being the message number of the "parent" message) followed by the subject. The third line contains the time and date the message was entered.

The messages are appended to the end of the currently active file. When a caller logs off, the system compares the number of sectors occupied by the active file to the message base index factor. If it is more, a message base rotation is performed. The oldest message base file is deleted, the index is adjusted, then this oldest file becomes the newest file, used to save the new messages entered.

The index is in a slightly different format in memory than it is on disk. Each message indexed requires seven bytes. On disk, each message index entry is followed by a RETURN character. The RETURN is stripped when the index is loaded into memory. The RETURN character is placed at the end of each entry in order to make it possible to load it by using BASIC INPUT# statements.

The entry for each message contains seven bytes. The first byte is a combination of several flags. The disk file number (1=MSGBA, 2=MSGGB, etc.) is multiplied by 32 and the public/private/delete flag (using 0, 1 or 2 in that order) is added to it. If the message has a reply, add 4

and if the message was received, add 8. The result is used as this first byte. The second and third bytes are the low and high order of the sector pointer and the fourth byte is the byte pointer for the POINT statement used to locate the message in the indicated file. The fifth and sixth bytes are the message number converted to standard two-byte binary (low, high). The last byte is the message base designator, which is a space or an upper case letter.

During a call, the index is maintained in memory, rewritten to disk during the accounting that occurs while the caller is being logged off. Therefore, interrupting the program during a call by loading in some other program, losing power, etc., will lose the index pointers to any messages that caller left. They would be in the message base, but not in the index, so it will appear as if they didn't exist at all.

RECORD-KEEPING FILES

A few files are kept on disk simply to keep track of what is happening on the board. One is the daily log file, kept in a file called D:DAYFILE. It contains one record for each thing a caller does on line. This can be read on line using a J9 command and is printed in a compressed format by utilities such as DUMPALL. The records kept in this file are not used by the Nite Lite Bulletin Board System, so the file can be altered and/or reinitialized at any time. To reinitialize this file, write a blank file to it by either entering a file using a K0 command and saving it without entering any text, or by using an OPEN#n,8,0,"D:DAYFILE":CLOSE#3 statement in BASIC. The file name must exist on the disk.

D:LOGOFF contains all of the logoff comments left since the last time it was reinitialized. The logoff file contains the caller's name plus the time and date the logoff was typed, followed by the message typed. Note that a logoff comment is saved by Nite Lite whether the caller indicates to <S>ave or to <A>bort. Reinitialize D:LOGOFF in the same manner as D:DAYFILE.

D:LAST10 keeps track of the names of the last ten callers who logged onto your board. There is no function within Nite Lite for such a file, but exists so that you can make the list available to your callers using a J9D:LAST10 command. This file does not need reinitialization and should never be reinitialized.

You can create other record files that are to be used with L4 commands. List the file as L4filespec on the menus and if the file specification doesn't exist on your disk, save a blank file to it, just as if you were reinitializing it (see instructions for reinitializing D:DAYFILE). You can use these files for the equivalent of logoff comments for your remote SysOps, as password applications or order-taking if the bulletin board is being used as a sales

tool. Since the command simply appends the entry to a text file, it can also be used to allow callers to enter a "continuing story" on line if you also list a J9 command pointing to the same file so that they can read the story.

D:STAT keeps only two numbers. One is the next caller number and the other is your message base factor. The message base factor is kept in memory while the program is running as the variable MX and the caller number as CALL, which is the number of the next caller to log on, not the current caller. Only during logon, up to the point where GREET has already been sent, is CALL equal to the current caller number. D:STAT is updated between sending GREET and the first appearance of the main menu.

OTHER FILES

Most of the other files on the system are created by you, the SysOp, or by remote SysOps. These files include LOGON and GREET, all main menus and text files, such as bulletins and help files. There is another file named ATLOGON that will replace LOGON for Atascii callers only. If this file does not exist, LOGON will be sent to all callers. However, if ATLOGON does exist, it will be sent to Atascii callers so that you can have a different logon that contains Atascii graphics characters and cursor controls.

There is also one other system file that is created when you set up your board. This file, BOARDNAM, contains the names of all of your message bases. Use the utility BASENAME to edit this file. It is initialized to name just the OPEN base, which uses a space as the message base designator. BASENAME allows you to enter, edit or delete the names by letter.

The format of the BOARDNAM file is 27 records of eight characters each. The first record is the name of the base designated by the space character. The remaining 26 are the names of the bases corresponding to the designators A through Z. The maximum size allowed for a message base name is eight characters. If a name is less than eight characters, spaces are appended to the name by the BASENAME utility.

LOCATION OF THE FILES

All of the files mentioned in this chapter are on drive 1 of a system that is not using a RAM disk, except for menus not named AMENU and text files that are called from menus. These files can be located anywhere on any drive on the system.

When using a RAM disk, LOGON, ATLOGON, GREET and all AMENUS must be on the RAM disk. Other menus and text files may also be located there. PASS, MSGA through MSGF, INDEX, DAYFILE, LOGOFF and all other files that are normally

changed while a caller is on line must be on drive 1. BOARDNAM is also kept on drive 1. Note that menus other than the main menus (AMENU), general text files and up and downloads can be located on any disk on your system. Do NOT put uploads on your drive 1, since Nite Lite requires room to be available on drive 1. If drive 1 fills up with uploads, your bulletin board will error out looking for room on drive 1.

The only other file required for drive 1 is DOS.SYS. This file is placed on drive 1 in case of a power failure. Your system will try to reboot when the power is restored. Having DOS.SYS on drive 1 will cause the system to boot into BASIC and wait for you to reboot the bulletin board system. Not having DOS.SYS on drive 1 will cause the computer to keep looking for it on drive 1 when power is restored.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System

Your Modem

Since Nite Lite will run on many different modems, and each modem has its own set of peculiarities, it would be impractical if not impossible, to list specifically how to use each one. However, there are categories of modems, and using the information presented in this chapter along with the manufacturer's manual for your particular modem should solve any potential problems you may have setting up your bulletin board system.

Some modems have no selection switches on them, and they are the easiest to use. The MPP1000C and MPP1000E modems, for example, require no setup. However, you will need an AUTORUN.SYS file on your disk to install the handlers required for those modems. The handler that has worked most successfully with the MPP modems is the "short" handler released by Microcomputer Peripheral Products in 1984. If this is unavailable, contact the Nite Lite SysOp section at (617) 663-4221, (300/1200 baud, 24hrs) for additional information.

Hayes and Hayes-compatible modems, interfaced through the Atari 850 Interface Module need little setup. However, Nite Lite depends on no Hayes commands or echos, so to set up your Hayes or Hayes compatible, set all echoing off and disable the commands. Nite Lite uses only the RS-232 standard communications lines. If you are running 300/1200 baud, be sure that the speed detect line is active. If you have a modem that will run 110/300 baud, deactivate the speed detect line to run a 300 baud only board.

Racal-Vadic modems have an array of switches that may take you some time to go through. Basically, you want to set them up the way the Hayes compatibles are set up. Make sure the modem will not accept any commands from the computer and will not echo anything to the computer. Also, be sure the signal lines, particularly DTR (Data Terminal Ready), carrier detect and speed detect, are functioning properly and are enabled.

Signalman modems all have different peculiarities. Some of the 300 baud Signalman modems do not have the DTR line connected. This causes a problem because Nite Lite uses that line to hang up the telephone at the end of a call. Contact the Nite Lite SysOp section for information about obtaining a patch for your copy of Nite Lite if you have this problem.

There are many different handlers available for the Atari 1030 modem, and they are not all compatible. The handler that is built into the modem is used for the Atari 1030 modem which must be called from the software. The file required for this is supplied with your System Master Diskette. Be sure to transfer this file, named THAND to your Boot Disk and rename it AUTORUN.SYS so that it will install the handler when you boot the system.

The modem you are using must, of course, be an autoanswer modem. The only exception is the Atari 1030

modem, which is delivered with external circuitry that provides this function. Acoustic couplers and other modems that do not autoanswer are not supported with Nite Lite. There will be modems introduced after the printing of this manual that Nite Lite may or may not support, and there will be future alterations of Nite Lite set up to support some of these new modems. If you are having problems getting your modem to work with Nite Lite, log onto Nite Lite at (617) 663-4221 and leave a message in the Nite Lite SysOp section or leave a logoff comment describing your problem. The required information includes describing your system, your full name and telephone number, and your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System serial number. If you don't get a return telephone call within 48 hours, log back onto Nite Lite. Your response will be in message in the Nite Lite SysOp message base.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board Systems Utility Programs

Included on your System Master Diskette are various utility programs. These programs are all BASIC programs. To use one of the utilities, use the BASIC LOAD command to load the utility into memory, then place the Drive 1 Data Disk into drive 1 and enter RUN.

Most of the utilities are provided to help with normal system maintenance work. One utility is for helping to recover from damaged disks or adjusting the message base index if you use the DOS C (copy file) command to move all of your system files to another diskette. The utilities are described below:

DUMPALL and EDUMP

On a regular schedule, if you want to keep hard copy records of your BBS's activity, you will want to use this utility. It will print the most current messages left on your board, plus the DAYFILE and LOGOFF files. If you keep messages to the SysOp in a separate file, you can also specify the name of this file and DUMPALL or EDUMP will print that file also. Note that the DAYFILE will print in a compressed format, which makes it easier to read and takes far less paper.

The difference between these two utilities is that DUMPALL will work on any standard printer and EDUMP is designed to output Atascii characters to Epson-compatible printers. Both programs mask out printer codes and DUMPALL prints them as the numeric ASC(value of the control code enclosed in slashes (e.g. /12/ instead of a top of form character). EDUMP prints the Atascii equivalent characters.

RECOVER

This program is intended for use only when you are having a problem or converting densities on your drive 1 disk. There are two options. Option 1 simply resets the pointers in the message base index to point to a new location for each message and is used after you use a DOS C command to copy the files to another diskette. Use this option, for example, when you copy from single density to enhanced or double density. Copying using the DOS C command will relocate the files on the new disk, so the index has to be updated to point to these new locations.

Option 2 is used when you have had drive problems of some sort causing your index or parts of your message base to be lost. After you have used the DOS C command to recover what is left of the damaged disk onto a new drive 1 diskette, run option 2 to recreate a new index. Note that this option will remove all "deleted" flags from the index, so if you had messages that were supposedly deleted, you

will have to again delete them after running option 2. NEVER run option 2 unless you must recreate the entire index because of some catastrophe on your drive 1.

PASSEDIT

Occasional maintenance is usually necessary on the password file. As you add passwords, the file will become quite large. Copying PASS to PASSBAK, then PASSBAK back to PASS will clean up the order of the file on your disk and, if you are using a DOS like Atari DOS 2.05 or 2.5, it will also reduce the number of sectors required for the file on the disk. However, when you simply have more passwords in the file than you want on your system, PASSEDIT can be used to delete ones that have not been used for a while. It will also allow edits and deletions of single password entries and will also allow a printout of the password file. Many word processors or text editors can also be used to edit your password file.

ACCESS

There are five special access codes in the password access code occupying the tenth through fourteenth bytes. These are codes one through five used in conjunction with the L1 command. ACCESS will allow you to set or clear these codes in groups. If you want to open up a section of the board, for example, to a select group of callers who have passwords, use ACCESS, identify which access code you want to set, then enter the names of all callers you want to have this access.

DTBOOT and DTPATCH

This option may be incorporated into your version of Nite Lite if you are using Nite Lite with a command-driven autodial modem. It installs a dumb terminal program so that you can call out when there is no one on your BBS. To install it, first load Nite Lite into your computer, then ENTER "D:DTPATCH" and the file will alter the program to include the dumb terminal calls. Save the altered version on your Working Master. Put DTBOOT onto your Boot Disk. When you boot your system, run this DTBOOT program before you run STARTUP, STARTUPV or the BBS program. It installs the dumb terminal program code, which is in machine language, into memory.

To operate the dumb terminal program, whenever the board is at the constantly updating time line, hit START and hold it until the system asks BAUD,AT? In order to keep the memory requirements of this function to a minimum, the entries to this are not checked and are a little cryptic. The statement requires two numbers separated by a comma. The first number is zero (0) for 300 baud or ten

(10) for 1200 baud. The second number is zero (0) for ASCII translation or one (1) for Atascii. For example, you would enter 10,0 for 1200 baud Atascii. To enter commands to your modem when you are in Atascii translation, use a CNTL-M instead of a RETURN, since modems are designed to recognize the ASCII carriage return. The carriage returns sent back to you by the modem will look like overscores, probably followed by a triangle, which is an ASCII line feed.

BASENAME

This is the utility program to use to alter the names of your message bases. It will load in the current file from your data disk and set up a menu of all 27 names, using blanks (eight spaces) for the bases not yet named. Press the space or upper case letter of the corresponding message base to enter the new name. Remember that base names must be no longer than eight characters. When you are done updating all the bases you want to name, have the program resave the names to your data disk. The new names will then appear above any messages left on the corresponding message bases.

MENUMAKE

The menus for Nite Lite can be made using most word processors or text editors or by using the editor built into Nite Lite, entering a standard text file in the format described for a menu. Alternatively, you can use the utility MENUMAKE. This utility will check inputs, dividing the menu into its three sections for entry and editing. The menu text is entered using any keys on your keyboard to form the characters. Cursor controls, inserts and deletes can be used in formatting it. The only restriction is that the menu text cannot take up more than one screenful.

When you have finished making the text part of the menu, hit CNTL-3, which is a special code to the operating system in your Atari computer that ends the entry of the text. MENUMAKE will then read the screen and convert it to text for the first part of the menu file.

In creating a new menu, the second part is the line of letters that you want to allow on the menu. Enter them in upper case. MENUMAKE will check for duplicate letters and to make sure all of the characters are allowed in this line.

The last part of the menu entry is filling in the command lines. MENUMAKE will prompt you with the letters in the order they were entered. Enter the command line you want corresponding to each letter. MENUMAKE does some error checking on your command entries. It is not complete error checking, but is designed instead to pick up typographical errors that would enter illegal commands into

the menu. If you enter a line that MENUMAKE will accept, but Nite Lite reports an error, you can use the L8 command on line to edit the menu.

Save the completed menu on the Drive 1 Data Disk or on the Boot Disk if you are using a RAM disk and the menu will be on the RAM disk when you are running Nite Lite. You may also load in an existing menu to add, delete and/or change commands on it. To alter a command line, delete the command letter first, which will delete the letter from the line of allowed letters and the command line that corresponds to it. Then enter the correction as a new command, entering the letter then the command line as requested by the program. Remember to save the new version using the same file specification in order to update the copy on disk. If you are making a series of similar menus, you can also make up a general menu, edit it for each of the menus you want to use, save it, load in the general menu again, edit it for the next menu and save that one until you have the entire series of menus saved on disk. This can not only save you time in creating similar menus, but will also keep the format of the menus as similar as possible, which adds some consistency to your bulletin board.

TEXTMAKE

This is a very short program, supplied mainly for creating an ATLOGON file for your Atascii users. It contains no error checking and has no edit features. It simply stores every keystroke you make, whether it is a character or cursor control. Hit CNTL-3 when you finish and it will request the file specification to which you want to save the completed string. If you make a mistake entering it, since there is no editing, hit BREAK or RESET and start over.

There may be other utility programs on your System Master Diskette, possibly accompanied by a file with the extension .DOC, which means that it is a file you can copy to your printer using the DOS C command. None of these files will be required for normal operation of your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System, but may make some tasks easier for you. These additional files are included for your convenience. Some of them may be files uploaded by other Nite Lite SysOps who wanted to share a new utility or alteration of an existing utility that they developed with other Nite Lite SysOps. If you have any questions about any of the files on your System Master Diskette, call Nite Lite at (617) 663-4221 and ask about the files in the Nite Lite SysOp message base. You will get a description of the file in question in a reply message in that base within 48 hours.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System

Appendix A - Sample Text Files

The following are samples of help files that you can use on your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. Use them as they are or modify them to customize them to the particular structure used on your Nite Lite Bulletin Board System.

READING MESSAGES AND TEXT FILES

All text files on this system, including messages, bulletins and this help file, can be controlled using certain keyboard characters. The letters indicated can be entered in upper case, lower case or as control characters.

S or P will pause reading.

A or X will abort reading

Any key except A, X, S or N will resume after S or P

N in the message base will skip to the next message

Also in the message base, hitting a ? (question mark) at the prompt at the end of the message will redisplay that message. This is particularly helpful if the message had scrolled off the screen because of its length. The question mark will work on any message being read, even those being read in a "What?" chain.

USING THE MENUS

All menus are "hot-keyed" type menus. Any key defined for that menu can be pressed while the menu is being displayed. The corresponding function will be initiated without completing the sending of the menu text as soon as you hit the key.

If you are in expert mode, you can view the current menu by hitting a question mark at the prompt line. This must be pressed after the prompt has been displayed. The menu will also repeat when not in expert mode by hitting a question mark at the prompt line.

All keystrokes for menus are normalized so a menu letter can be pressed in upper case, lower case or as a control character. X-ON, X-OFF using CNTL-S, CNTL-Q will not work with menus, since these characters will be interpreted as S and Q and any function defined for S or Q will be initiated when those characters are received.

At all menus, the RETURN key is enabled as a command. Pressing RETURN will cause the system to return to the main menu. If you are at the main menu, it will cause the main menu to be displayed again.

UPLOADING AND DOWNLOADING

All uploads to a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System must be done using XMODEM. Downloads may use XMODEM or Capture, but it is suggested that Capture mode is avoided for any

files except text files, since it affords no error checking. Make sure your terminal program supports XMODEM protocol before uploading to this bulletin board.

The XMODEM protocol implemented here is very standard and obeys the standard timeouts. In downloading, it will send the ACK or NAK every ten seconds when waiting for a block of data. In uploading, it will wait one minute for an ACK or NAK. If the ACK or NAK in uploading is not received within one minute, or in downloading, if a block isn't received by the time ten ACK or NAK characters have been sent requesting it, the system will time out and cancel the transfer, returning to the menu.

Some terminal programs will not handle larger files correctly. Nite Lite will, as described in the protocol, wrap the block number back to zero after block #255 is sent on a download, and will expect this to also happen in uploads. If your terminal program implements this incorrectly, the transfer will time out at block #256.

PASSWORDS

This system keeps track of certain information by using the password system. One of these items is your new message pointer. If you have a password, when you log off properly, this new message pointer is set to the current high message number on the system. Next time you log on using your password, this number is used as your new message pointer, allowing you to hit RETURN with no entry to the "Start at # (RETURN for NEW)?" prompt when dumping, reading or scanning messages. If you don't have time to read all the new messages on this call, drop carrier instead of logging off. When you drop carrier, this new message pointer is not updated, so your next call will show the same pointer as this call.

EDITING MESSAGES AND TEXT FILES

At the end of any text entry, which includes messages entered, you will be presented with a prompt that gives you four choices. You may save the message, abort it, continue it or edit it. The editor used is a phrase editor, which is a little different from editors used on other bulletin board systems.

To use the phrase editor, spot your error and, in response to "Enter phrase as it appears now" enter the line exactly as it appears in the message, complete with the error(s). The system will then locate the phrase in the message and ask for the corrected phrase. It will delete the old phrase and replace it with the corrected version.

Note that the search for the phrase will use the first occurrence of that phrase. If you want to alter only the second appearance of the phrase, edit the first one, then repeat the edit for the second one. When that is

complete, edit the first one back to where it was before.

Use these help files to form your own set of help files. You may want to add some things, like explaining that callers will log back onto the same sub-board they last logged off if you are using the K1 command to divide your board into sub-boards. Eliminate the sections that don't apply to your bulletin board. For example, if you don't have uploads and downloads, don't list that help file. If you don't list the expert mode, remove the references to it. You may also want to add a help file to explain certain things about use of the message bases or about how the menus are structured on your system to help callers in finding their way around.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System
Appendix B - Answers to Questions

There are a series of questions that are often asked about running a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System. The more commonly asked questions are answered below, so if you have one of the problems described here, try the solution given first before investigating other routes.

PROBLEM: The modem occasionally stops answering the phone.
SOLUTION: Although it is possible that this is caused by a malfunction of the modem, Hayes and some Hayes-compatible types will develop this problem if they are not set up correctly. For proper operation with a Nite Lite Bulletin Board System, all commands, including the +++ that puts the modem into "command" mode, and all echoes from the modem must be suppressed. Refer to the manual for your modem on the proper switch settings for this.

PROBLEM: The modem doesn't "hang up" at the end of a call.
SOLUTION: Some modems cannot hang up the telephone. On others, the DTR (Data Terminal Ready) line controls this function. There is normally a switch that controls operation of this line. If you are having this problem, locate the switch controlling DTR and reverse its position.

PROBLEM: Sometimes the disk "locks up" and keeps whirring but the program doesn't do anything.
SOLUTION: This may be a magnetic field problem. This can happen if your disk drives are located too close to a television or monitor. Make sure your disk drives are at least two feet away from your television or monitor. If the problem persists, check the drive for possible malfunctions. Do not try to correct the problem by altering the software, because software cannot cause the problem. There is no way for the software to make a drive do this.

PROBLEM: Whenever a call is received, the caller just sends garbage and just receives garbage, although the system looks like it is sending the proper characters.
SOLUTION: This could be caused by one of several things. If it happens only occasionally, the modems probably just mismatched or there was excessive line noise. The only solution in either case is for the caller to hang up and call back. If it happens constantly, it could be a problem with your modem or telephone line. It is also possible that your modem and the modem used by the caller do not match. There are some modems that will not communicate correctly, particularly in Atascii translation, at 1200 baud. If the problem is particularly in Atascii at 1200 baud, suggest logging on in ASCII. If the problem diminishes or disappears in ASCII, the only complete solution is to get another modem for your bulletin board system. Note that some modem manufacturers will not admit

this problem exists with their modems, and will log onto your board (in ASCII, of course) to "prove" it to you.

PROBLEM: Callers keep leaving objectionable messages

SOLUTION: The best way to handle this problem is to ignore it. Delete any objectionable messages from the base and don't respond to them. Without replies, these callers will lose interest and go bother someone else. Remember, it is your board, and you can delete whatever messages you don't want in your message base. If the caller has a password, the solution is even more obvious - threaten to revoke the password if the problem persists, then follow through if you get no positive response. If the objectionable messages are left as logoff comments, you can't delete them, but you are the only one who can read them, so you can ignore them.

PROBLEM: Someone keeps logging on and trying to "crash" the board.

SOLUTION: Let them try. Chances are they won't be able to do it, and they will eventually give up and go away. Make sure that they aren't simply having a problem with their modem or terminal program. If anyone does succeed in crashing your board, and the cause is not a missing main menu, an incorrect menu command, a full drive 1, or some other reason that you can correct, please report exactly how the board was crashed by logging onto Nite Lite at (617) 663-4221. If you leave enough information and the problem can be duplicated, there will be a patch file issued to correct it.

PROBLEM: Nite Lite won't run on my system.

If you have an Atari computer, Atari BASIC (or a compatible BASIC), at least 40K of memory, one disk drive and an autoanswer modem of Atari 1030 modem, Nite Lite will run on your system if you specified your system correctly on ordering. If it doesn't run, it is either not set up properly or the DOS or modem handler you are using takes up too much memory. If you get an error 2, you must use a smaller DOS and/or handler. For example, if you are running under MYDOS and using an Atari 850 interface, make sure you have the right MYDOS. MYDOS 3.18, for example, has the R: handler for the ATR8000 built into it. If you also load the Atari 850 interface handler, which you must do to operate with that interface, you will have two R: handlers in memory. Use a MYDOS without the R: handler, such as version 3.013.

If your system locks up, which can happen on systems using MPP modems, you may be using the wrong handler. On the MPP version of Nite Lite, you must use the so-called "short" handler, released by Microbits Peripheral Products in the summer of 1984. If you can't get a copy of this handler, contact Nite Lite at (617) 663-4221 for more

information.

PROBLEM: Some uploads and downloads aren't working.

SOLUTION: There are many possibilities for uploads and downloads not working. One of the more common reasons is the caller on an upload is using the "Upload" function of an AMODEM program, or some other function on a terminal program that sends the file without using XMODEM. This can look confusing on your screen and will not work. On downloads, a caller may also be using some other protocol trying to download from the board by specifying XMODEM. For callers using AMODEM programs, the correct functions for them are the "Send" and "Receive" functions. For other callers, you will have to do some explaining to them about use of XMODEM.

Another possibility exists between certain types of modems. For example, Atari 1030 modems and MPP modems have problems communicating with each other. If you are running your BBS on one of these modems, callers using the other type will probably not be able to upload and download from your system. Other modems often cannot handle full Atascii translation at 1200 baud correctly and may scramble characters causing a bad upload or download. The only solution to these problems is to get another modem or simply tell your callers which combinations don't work.

Nite Lite Bulletin Board System
Appendix C - Menu Command Summary

Note	Cmd	Function
4	J0	Add/sub/define/view msg base defaults
	J1	Call for chat
1	J2	Dump messages
	J3	Log off
5	J4	Leave messages
1	J5	Read messages
1	J6	Scan messages
	J7	Relogon
	J8	List password user names
2	J9	Dump text file
2	K0	Enter text file
4	K1	Change password access code
3	K2	Download a file
6	K3	Upload a file using XMODEM
	K4	Enter passwords
3	K5	XMODEM upload to file spec
7	K6	List disk directory
6	K7	Download, requesting file name
3	K8	Load menu if C-GUL present
3	K9	Send C-GUL file
	L0	ASCII/ATASCII switch
4	L1	Load menu if authorized
5	L2	Leave EMAIL message
1	L3	Read EMAIL messages
3	L4	Leave message to SysOp
4	L5	Copy files
6	L6	Delete file
	L7	Expert mode switch
	L8	Edit file

Other commands include:

D and V - File spec for menu to load
S - request file spec and load as menu
E - Immediate mode - requests command

NOTES - Information to be appended to commands:

- 1 Optional - base(s) to be searched
- 2 Optional - file specification
- 3 File specification required
- 4 See text for complete description
- 5 Base to leave message on
- 6 Partial file specification required
- 7 Wildcard file specification required

The above list is for quick reference only. Refer to the text for complete descriptions of each of the commands.