

ATARI

COMPUTING

Issue 11 • October 1998

£3.50

ISSN 1461-9539

ACC '98

Milan UK Launch!
See it live at ACC '98

Reviews

Calamus SL98
Aniplayer
M-Player
Solitaire
NoStalgia

Features

Digital Audio
Solution Software
Inter Jam

Tutorials

DA's Layout
Papyrus
Inside GEM

Plus: Calc Cyber, aFTP, GEM, Heshack, Stewart, Sounds and Stuff CD, Texel NYP, Q&A

Veloce+

STe system
upgrade from
T.U.S. Developments



Bring your STe
up-to-date with
Veloce+ from T.U.S.
Developments,
processor upgrade to
68020 32 Bit at 16Mhz,

additional 2 or 4Mb FastRAM and TOS 3.06
all on board. Load NYDI into 32 Bit
FastRAM for lightning screen updates, along
with the program disk to leave 4Mb STe
Ram free for data.

Compatible with most high end STe software
packages such as CURASE v3 and Score,
Necator Logic, Papyrus, Calamus,
Timeworks and many many more. Please call
or visit our website for further information.
Available for DIY installation (soldering
required) with full manuals or fitted by
THE UPGRADE SHOP.

- ✓ 68020 Processor running at 16Mhz
- ✓ 0, 2 or 4Mb FastRAM
- ✓ TOS 3.06 on board
- ✓ FastRAM and TOS full 32 Bit
zero wait state
- ✓ Switchable between existing 68000 and
68020 for maximum compatibility
- ✓ Compatible with IDEal
Hard Drive Interface
- ✓ Fits inside a standard STe case

Veloce+ (0Mb FastRAM)	£ 99.00
Veloce+2 (2Mb FastRAM)	£149.00
Veloce+4 (4Mb FastRAM)	£189.00

IDEal

The IDEal hard drive system from T.U.S.
Developments uses the latest 2.5" IDE hard
drives found in computers such as the
Falcon and PC Notebooks.

The entire hard drive fits inside the
standard STe case and is extremely quiet in
operation. All kits are complete with fitting
instructions, cables and software.

IDEal Interface only	£ 59.00
IDEal Interface and 170Mb Drive	£109.00
IDEal Interface and 340Mb Drive	£139.00

Other sizes available - please call

T.U.S. Developments
01625 503448

<http://www.tusdev.demon.co.uk>
Email: dave@tusdev.demon.co.uk

- ✓ Fully Atari compatible design
- ✓ "New" 2 drive systems - please call
- ✓ Works alongside SCSI-based systems
- ✓ Complete with formatting/partitioning
software
- ✓ Very quiet in operation

Veloce+ & IDEal Drives

Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 170	£249.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 170	£289.00
Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 340	£279.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 340	£319.00

Other options available

CHDETAN EXTERNAL HARD DRIVES

The Chetan external hard drive from T.U.S. Developments brings affordability and style to any Atari system.

- Complete with Host Adapter and cable
- Formatting and partitioning software included
- Small case dimensions
- Built-in power supply and cooling fan
- Dual SCSI external connectors for daisy-chaining extra devices
- ID selector

A fully featured system that can be used on more than Atari computers. All systems are supplied pre-formatted and partitioned ready for immediate use.

160Mb	£149.00
200Mb	£179.00
340Mb	£225.00

HI RESOLUTION 14" MONO MONITORS

Improve your clarity with T.U.S.'s 14" monochrome monitor for the Atari ST series. High resolution screen ideal for Cubase, Metatext and many other programs. All monitors include appropriate connecting leads and a tilt and retract stand.

Without (seal)	£94.00
With seal	£109.00
(please see list)	

ATARI MEMORY

ST/H Mega Sfs	
1/2 meg	£10.00
3 meg	£15.00
4 meg	£19.00
ST/H Mega	
1/2 meg	£16.00
3 meg	£25.00
4 meg	£29.00

All kits are supplied with comprehensive fitting instructions, testing software and a free disk of useful PC/Shareware utilities.

TOS 2.06

- Enhanced operating system from Atari
 - Improved desktop
 - Full keyboard control of windows
 - Place programs on desktop for easy launching
 - Assign function keys to launch programs
 - Switchers give access to old TOS system for complete compatibility
 - All kits supplied with full fitting instructions and TOS manual
- | | |
|--|--------|
| ST/H Version 3 kit | £47.99 |
| (TOS 1.62/2.06 supplied) Simple solderless installation. | |
| ST/H/2/T/H fitted line | £54.99 |

HIGH DENSITY DRIVES

- Easy exchange of data with other platforms
 - Year ST reads and writes high density (0.44MB) discs
 - Fully automatic switching controlled by type of disc placed in the drive
 - Complete with software drivers and high density formatting software
- | | |
|--|--------|
| High Density Module | £28.00 |
| High Density Module and 2MB disc drive | £49.00 |
- Note: ST/1 & 4 or above required for high density support

TOS 2.06 & HIGH DENSITY DRIVE PACKAGE

ST/H TOS 2.06 with HD Drive & Controller	£95.00
ST/H TOS 2.06 with HD Drive & Controller	£101.00

MODEMS

Do you want to send emails, browse the world wide web and join in the internet revolution with your Atari? Using one of our modems and suitable software you can do just that.

T.U.S. 24,000 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	£89.00
T.U.S. 97,000 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	£74.00

OSMT approved with TCI markings, complete with cables and software for Bulletin Board access.

SERIAL PORT UPGRADE

Use a fast modem with any ST machine by installing a T.U.S. 57,600 baud serial port upgrade kit.

DOY fitting with full instructions	£22.00
If supplied with any of above modems	£15.00

REPAIRS AND FITTING SERVICE

Fully trained engineers for a reliable repair. All jobs quoted for individually (the fixed price). 48 hour turnaround on most machines. Long 4 months warranty as standard. Courier collection and return available for £14.00.

We can fix any of the advertised products to your machine for a one off fitting charge of £18.00. This means that if you require an upgrade and a high density drive fitted then the charge is only £19.00.

Please telephone for an appointment before bringing your machine or call if courier collection is required. Please ensure all parcels collected are adequately packaged.

Replacement internal drive kit

For any ST with internal drive. High quality mechanisms, with stand-offs for old ST's if required. 17MB or 20MB drive supplied

Power Supplies

Repaired and supplied (call for availability)

★ Veloce Falcon? ★

Call for details

The Upgrade Shop

37 Crossall Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6QF

Telephone 01625 503448

Monday - Friday 9:00AM - 6:00PM Saturday 9:00AM - 12:30PM

ACCESS DELTA MASTERCARD VISA SWITCH

Delivery Charges

Small items under £35.00 please add £3.00 P&P
Large items and orders over £35.00 please add £7.00 courier charge.
Courier Pickup for upgrades and repairs 7.00.

All prices include VAT@ 17.5% but exclude delivery (unless otherwise stated), please see panel above. Orders can be placed by telephone quoting credit card details or by Mail Order, please make cheques and postal orders payable to "The Upgrade Shop".

1 year warranty on all products (unless otherwise stated), 4 months on repairs. Prices subject to change without notice. E&OE

ATARI

COMPUTING

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We're part of



Milan
1988 Personal Computer

25

Stewart

45

CALAMUS CL'OO

18

Soundz n' Stuff

18

ABOUT THE COVER



Pup! Pup!

The objects were created in Cybermagik II with the Cohen style up there with the best, running on a Falcon, and the whole thing rendered in Phong/Modular in Rendered 3.2 - which is cool.

All the textures were generated using Render's surface mapping tools, and the background clouds captured from a TV advertisement using Euphoria (you guess which ones), then processed using the image tools in After Effects. All items are simple extruded shapes, curved and angled around a tube for the sides which itself was curved. The flowers are the same, except of course, there's a simple hemisphere primitive for the center which was re-worked to make it flatter. The box was actually three objects, a tube, and two hemispheres, which were glued together.

Cybermagik allows you to re-color individual items in an object, and this is how the black and yellow objects were created. Then Ben's the that-flops-look-like-spoor-flops 3D on the wheel, the that-flops-look-like-spoor-flops 3D on the wheel.

The ACC'98 letters are 3D objects created with Cybermagik, a cool PD utility (3D). You're looking at an 800 which currently places within in Calamus CDX fonts to recognize for Cybermagik.

It would be nice to see something like 3D Studio Max on the PC, but it's for more rendering when the first night looks cool because you can say "I did that", as opposed to "look what my computer did".

Danny McKee

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FEATURES

- 12 Milan
- 17 Solution Software
- 26 MIDI programming
- 29 Inter Jam
- 38 CyberTrider files
- 39 Suggestive remarks
- 42 Site seeing
- 52 Maggie



SHAREWARE

- 44 News
- 45 Tessel EYP
- 48 Stewart v1.0b
- 48 FreeGEM v1.7
- 48 GEM Network
- 47 aFTP beta
- 49 Calc Cyber
- 49 Calc 3D



REVIEWS

- 14 Amplayer v Mplayer
- 18 Sounds and Stuff CD
- 18 Falcon Select CD
- 21 Calendar 95
- 25 Software
- 26 ModTalgia



REGULARS

- 6 News
- 9 Reader Offers
- 10 Subscriptions
- 11 Letters
- 40 User group news
- 43 Reader Disk 11
- 54 Q&A



TUTORIALS

- 52 Trackers
- 56 HiSoft BASiC
- 56 Papyrus
- 41 Inside GEM
- 60 DTP with DA's Layout



Neuss v Stafford

It's show season again and over the next few months Atari Computing will be taking around Europe checking out the latest releases and generating our magazine.

First up is Neuss, on October 4/5th in Germany, where we're expecting the Atari computer to be on sale for the first time.

I was lucky enough to get hold of one of these machines and you can read my first impressions on page 12 - with more to come next issue. There's still no confirmation of a show in France this autumn but December is the month named in discussions which means Atari Computing's own ACC95 is the real one in November 14th in Stafford. If everything goes according to plan UK readers should find a flyer with out-of-the-discount form inside this issue. Check out our ACC 95 Show Guide on page 8 and you'll see there's something of interest to anyone interested in computing to bring along your friends and make a day of it.

With the show and the festive season looming it's likely ACC95 will hit your desktops until January so I'll take this opportunity to thank you all for your support, especially our contributors, and wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

If you're wondering what's happened to Ken's regular page I've held it over until next issue because I ran out of space. Ken finally got about building that Team Tap file's been promising us for a while now.

Joe Conway

News...

System Solutions

A new batch of the optional SoundPool M04 MIDI output expander which offers 64 additional channels are in stock.



The M04 uses the parallel (printer) port and clever electronics to achieve unrivalled MIDI timing. Bundles and prices including VAT:

- Cubase 3.1: £149.00 including free 2Mb memory for STE/Magnum (Add £50 for STN/STNPMag3.1T)
- M04: £149.00
- M04 and Cubase 3.1: £199.00

Also in stock are Image ZIP drives, specially modified to work on your Atari ST (or SCSI sampler) without any dummy fly leads to the joystick port. The kit is supplied ready to go, and includes ZIP 100 drive, 15/50-way SCSI adapter, Link 97 host adapter, HD-Drive and one Atari-licensed ZIP disk for £199.00 including VAT.

Finally there are two new CD-R solutions and both include a free upgrade to Extended Gold (if required), CD Writer (CPR-95), a SCSI cable and five blank CD-Rs. SCSI terminators and non-standard SCSI cables are extra.

Price for pack with external cased Zip drive (secondhand) is £199.00 or £199.00 for a full, both including VAT.

Extended Gold and CD Writer cost: CPR-95 each or £18.95 together including VAT plus P&P.

Sales office: 119 Arthur Road, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 1BU

Tel: +44 (0)1753 852212

Fax: +44 (0)1753 838433

Email: sales@system-solutions.co.uk

Head office: 17-19 Blackwater Street,

East Dulwich, London, SE21 6SD

Tel: +44 (0)181 680 3300

Fax: +44 (0)181 681 6956

Atari Times

Recently published their first printed "Special Edition 1" which runs to 44 A5 pages. Issue 1 focuses on materials and includes some new materials along with some which have appeared on their HTML format disk magazine. The first 50 copies of the special edition are in colour on high quality paper with subsequent copies on black and white paper.

A copy, including P&P costs £2.80 (UK), £3.00 (Europe), £3.40 (ROW). All payments must be in sterling by UK cheque, Postal Order or cash (not recommended) made payable to Colin Polonsowski but do check out their web page for the latest information regarding overseas distribution.

1999 Atari Times Awards

Following on from the success of the 1997 awards here's another chance to reward those who support our platform. The categories are:

- Best Programmer
- Best Commercial Release
- Best Multimedia Release
- Best PC/Firmware Release
- Best Game
- Best Hardware Add-on
- Best Company
- Best Non-Profit Organisation
- Best Disk Magazine
- Best Paper Magazine
- Best Web Page
- Best Internet Service Provider
- Special award for services to the Atari community



Colin Polonsowski, The Graft, Haze Rd, Witley, Nr Farnham, GU24 0LN, England. Email: polonsowski@atnet.co.uk <http://www.atari.atnet.co.uk/polonsowski/atimes/>

You can vote by email, via the web pages or by post. Last year Atari Computing won the best printed magazine award and we'd like to see it again so get those votes in!

Atari Serial Mouse Interface

Marin Research in New Zealand has announced a Plug&Play Atari serial mouse interface which enables any PC serial mouse to be connected to any Atari ST/TT/HiScore or compatible via its mouse port. The interface doesn't require any drivers and supports trackballs, touchpads and any other Microsoft or Mouse Systems compatible serial pointing device leaving your serial port free for other uses. The interface is a small unit measuring only 4x6x1cm, with a serial mouse plug at one end, and a cable that plugs into your Atari mouse port at the other end. To install the unit, simply plug it in - no other setup is required. Units are available now directly from Marin and he expects to appoint a UK dealer shortly. Each unit costs £15 (£25 US) or £20 (£30 US) including a suitable 3-button serial mouse, both plus p&P which is around £4 (£5 US) - contact Marin for a quote. Marin Research, PO Box 132, Rumeo, Auckland 1160, New Zealand. Email: mri@pl.net.nz <http://www.pl.net.nz/mario/>



Guarantee

Cubase rescue!

During an IRC session with the Milan crew one of the Milan guys explained how Steinberg's head honcho, who remains an Atari enthusiast at heart, is prepared to bring a Milan Cubase to light even if he has to do it in his spare time!

New UK Atari ISP

This new provider promises hassle free connection with full Atari support provided by Ray Goring. Features:

- Free trial
 - Fast 56K connection
 - No engaged times
 - Local call rates
 - Large newsgroup/forums
- PC and Plan users also supported, for a free trial contact:
- Ray Goring, Tel: (0)1705-611847
The Atari Webbing
<http://atariwebbing.home.mil.org>

STOS News

Although our regular STOS coverage has come to an end we will of course continue to publish any STOS related news. Paul Jones has recently completed the interpreter version of Networld for STOS. This means STOS programs can now be written to utilize the internet via STANC to communicate with each other. An example application would be multi-player network games... We also understood David Wilson is planning to create a special version of Helgate called HelgateSTOS to take advantage of this facility. Contacts: Email: paul.jones@helgate.net Email: davidwilson@btinternet.com



Easy Beat aims to offer features to most 'thinkings': Easy Box offering on the PC platform. Easy Beat enables rhythms to be composed like a drum machine. Several digital effects including distortion, reverb and echo are included along with many other desirable features. Output options include Easy beat or Digital Tracker using terms, MIDI file or audio sound. **SOFTWARE: 4-1100 LAMARVILLE, France** Tel/Fax: +33 (0)5 31 41 81 87 Email: soft@easybeat.fr <http://www.easybeat.fr/~easybeat/>

Raster Generator Plus

From 1st September 1998, Invers Software, developers of PEG Calamus 1198, have dropped the raster generator PLUS (RGENPLUS.COM and RGENPLUS.COM) from the standard PEG Calamus II package in Europe. The module has caused too much trouble and the developer has not been able to fix the main bugs in over two years. Users should use the Raster Cache Generator (RASCACHE.COM in most languages) instead. For more information in the UK, contact: Steve Llewellyn, IMAGE Applications, Unit 1 Wellesley House, Palmer Circle Road, East, CT11 7NS, UK. Tel: 01304 382394. Fax: 01304 312741. Email: sllew@ixx.co.uk <http://www.ixx.co.uk/~jps/Calamus.html>

Retro computing

A new shop of interest to Atari enthusiasts has recently opened its doors. The shop is dedicated to "Retro computing" and is a new venture sponsored by one of London's popular Computer Exchange

shops. With Atari machines seen increasingly as cult machines the shop is intending to stock STs, Falcons, classic Atari consoles alongside other consoles and computers along with a range of software. All machines will be available for viewing and purchasing, together with their games.

The new store is located at 1111 Whitefield Street, close to Warren Street tube station and the opening hours are from 10am till 6pm Mon-Fri, with Wednesday closing at 1pm in the afternoon. Hopefully once the store establishes itself they'll extend the opening hours to match the opening hours at other Computer Exchange premises. The shop is light and airy and a pleasure to visit so next time you're in London why not drop in and take a look for yourself?



Empire, developed by Titen Software of Sweden, exclusively for Titen Design, is a new graphics expander for the Falcon which offers fast, high resolution, true-colour display. Standard PCI graphic cards and can be plugged into the Eclipse adapter which is a non-pump design. The main interface plugs into the Falcon expansion connector and an external box houses the PCI graphic card - reduced Falcons shouldnt need the external box. Eclipse can support a massive 1600x1200 at high refresh rates depending on the graphic card used and should outperform any currently available graphics adapter. Estimated cost including VCI driver software and graphic card is under £280 including VAT with availability in October - hopefully for launch at the German Messe show.



The another exciting development by Invers Software in Sweden, exclusively for Titen Design, Tempest is a simple, inexpensive way to accelerate a Falcon to achieve amazing performance! Tempest will either employ the latest Motorola 'Culdrill' processor development or a 600 PowerPC processor. Initial research indicates this could offer performance

around five times faster than an Afterburner940 or v407 running native PPC applications.

The design will also feature SDRAH support for up to 32MB memory expansion and an AGP slot for advanced graphics processing - to drive the Eclipse. Processor speeds could between 100MHz to 300MHz. Price and availability are still uncertain but hopefully prototypes will be ready before the end of this year.

Titen are changing their entire contact details. During the changeover the original details remain valid. The new details are: sales@titen-bus.co.uk tech@titen-bus.co.uk info@titen-bus.co.uk <http://www.titen-bus.co.uk>

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

SOFT/EE have just announced MINICLOCK, a 800000 compatible external clock for the Falcon (similar to JAP clock). MINICLOCK will support both 44.1MHz and 480kHz - software selectable. The case (Hire/Software) will include an LED to indicate the selected frequency and be connected to the DSP unit. The clock will reset somewhere around 146.66 (GHz).



This version is released on CD, with a detailed manual. MINT 98 includes an installer which provides a convenient way to install MINT onto any TOS compatible machine. Drivers are included which make it possible to network Atari machines via a TCP/IP-Ethernet network on Mac, Windows and other platforms. The CD costs £19.95 (around £3.50 down: AG Computerbooks) And for more, Schönerstraße 10, D-81701 München, Germany Tel: +49 (0)89 186111 Fax: +49 (0)89 186120 Email: AG_Computerbooks@compuserve.de Or in the UK from System Solutions, price TBA.

16/32 Online changes

16/32 are in the process of setting up a new domain. The

16-32@systeme.co.uk account is now closed. In the meantime please use the following contact details: Email: systeme@planet.at Email: shurloo@ixx.co.uk

C:\ONE_2\ACC_98\ATARI\COMPUT.ING*.*

W:\e've come a long way!.*

Atari Computing Convention Show Guide

Sunday November 14th from 10am to 4pm is our great day-out in Stafford!

All the UK based Atari dealers, user groups and programmers be it this show for your benefit and we will ALL be on show to the wider computing audience.

ACC '98 is a great opportunity to change attitudes and demonstrate to other computer users we're not the only computing platform that thinks different.

Inside this issue UK readers should find Sharward's home test promotional flyer for APEXACE '98 which contains you're replaced entry rates on the show along with travel details by road, rail and bus.

Here's the current line up:

- Atari Computing**
Our stand will carry all available back issues, Reader Disk(s) and Offers and for the first time ever we'll be having demonstrations and advice clinics covering all the major aspects of computing including MIDI/music, DTP/word processing, Communications (local and hard) emulation.

- Team Demos**
UK's dealer of Budget, i-PC adapter that enables relatively modest 3D graphics cards to be connected to the Falcon offering fast, high resolution, true-colour display! Hopefully there will also be a chance to see a prototype of the TSP/ST (and Falcon) motherboard. DA's Laptop, Stability and APEX Modem and Demos will all be on display and Team's range of cameras, hard drives, software drives, CD-ROM drives, Falcon 140k memory upgrades, cables etc. Larger items, monitors etc, can be ordered on the day for dispatch the following week.

- 16/01**
If you're looking for getting or upgrading outside certain places this stand is the way of your life. 1400 is also the UK dealer for SoundBlaster, ProAudio and other various applications not available anywhere else.

- FaIt Club**
Will have the FaIt Club CD(s) with Demolator 4.0, Commander Pro-MS/PC/40 Apple and Atari emulators, languages, and all the other FaIt Club software.

- System Solutions**
Will be showing professional audio and MIDI products. Come and meet the man for advice and see CD's waiting to arrive or an ST with the recently released Extended-Gold and CD Win32. Hear the fabulous sound of JAM and boost your MIDI with the HORN. Take a look at applications running on the new PE/AN TOS compatible computer complete with MINT '98 networking. CD's come will be bringing along the latest software including Info-Driver 2.0 and AM's WVD's, CAB 1.7 and making it's UK debut, please, the ultimate replacement desktop. There will also be showpieces on hardware upgrades, modems, scanners, graphics cards, large screen monitors and much



- Flappetylap**
Check out the various in the form of sounds and stuff and the Falcon Select CD and you'll know what to expect. Their product line up also includes Fusion Image, EZ-arc Professional, Easy State, Family Room 3, Power Up/Plus, Team 3, where CD-ROM rules and PQA, library.

- Abington Synthesis Programs**
Will be building CD-ROMs, hard disks and other PC2 devices into standard PC case and converting them to standard Atari machines using the PC2 format expansion option. Making an UK debut will be a PlugItPlay serial mouse interface which enables any PC serial pointing device to be connected to any Atari TT or TTPlus or compatible mouse port. ASP will also be offering a back-up service on CD or SCRAM format to bring along your hard disk mechanisms or hard-drive (copyright restrictions apply).

- Electronic Case**
Specialist CD case will be waiting to see and the brand new sample processor is aimed at creative musicians who want to do more than just cut and paste samples makes it's Worldwide debut here! There will also be latest new releases of their other popular products including MIDI Assembler v1.0, Sound Chip Synth v3.1, Sample Synth v1.0 (now supports ST/STX playback), Sample Synth v1.0 (now supports ST/STX playback) and RC MP v2.0 - which also now works on ST/STX machines. [Existing registered L-Cow users can upgrade to their latest releases for FREE but you must bring along your original master disks.

- The Upgrade Shop (TUS)**
You'll read the review of the Falcon 1 in AC#18 now, here's your chance to meet the designers, see it in person, and look your machine in for its upgrade... and don't forget to check out the ST/CD interface and other hardware goodies.

- InsVier Solutions**
Cabinet 0.98 will be on display running on a Falcon machine and under Haptic Plus running with ST's monitors.

- InsVier Solutions**
For the first time ever InsVier will be accepting "open source" form" in the show and promoting the activities of the Bank-Open translation team.

- CyberScribe**
CyberScribe will also be showing "open source" form" in the show and promoting its commercial based services and products.

- Atari Portfolio Club**

The Portfolio is Atari's solution to playing computing and there's an astounding range of software and extras available. Cross their palm with show and the Portfolio Club team will look after your future!

- Key Greeting**

Will be launching the 2nd edition of its book "Users Guide to the Internet for Atari", selling more promotional materials and promoting the activities of the Atari Veterans Club and its publications.

- Savannah & Herbie's Atari Atari Group (SAG)**
SAG will be promoting themselves and the benefits of user groups in general. The new profit making ST + Falcon will be promoted and Gordon Young will launch Huginn Plus 1, the sequel to his award winning game.

- Connecting Atari User Group (CAUG)**
Intend to bring along a range of machines including an AM40-501 Haptic Plus, Vector sponsored ST and more.

- Paul Jones and Hardware Basics**

If you're interested in programming here's your chance to have a show with the Atari Computing Dynamic Disk.

- Magpie, Alan Tress, All Format Magazine, The Show & other Atari User Group, TUSAG (South East Atari Group), PRC (Western Atari Group), other user groups and numerous other stands.**

- Sharward Promotions** also runs a stand where you can offer your surplus hardware and software for sale - or pick up some bargains.

- There's also dozens of other stands** dedicated to other platforms and technology offering general computer hardware, accessories, cables, CDs, books, cables, telephones, radio and general electronics.

- If you've got a table full of "pre-sold" gear** or sell or some new computer kit, whether on someone you probably qualify for a non-commercial 1 foot stand which just £18.75 plus £5 for power. If you take a stand you get in for free and have the space - ask for a booking form NOW!

Travel to show

Some User Groups are organising transport and/or car shares. We'll also see how to get you in touch if you email or post us your details. All: 98, 98 Hill Road, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2JL. Tel: +44 (0)206 826260 (conference service) [Email: +44(0)206826260@compuserve.com] <http://www.atari.computing.com> <http://www.atari.co.uk/~atariworld/index/sprint.htm>

ATARI COMPUTING

Offers...

Essential accessories for you and your machine - subject to availability. Stocks for some offers are LOW, therefore and you could miss out!

READER DISKS

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LeftTers



A friend indeed!

I've been invited to write for ages to here's my long overdue comments. ACPP was a classic where, for me, it all came together with topics of interest right across the board.

Icon Power is an example of a real hands on tutorial which takes a shareware program and opens new doors for many of us - as does the excellent Paypro pages. Good stuff!

I also get the feeling there's plenty more in the pipeline and our platform offers an stability in a world where Gates and Intel global domination mean users in making more than profit fudder. Back in 1993, £1000 would buy you a 160MB PC with 4MB memory. Of course it's obsolete now but no problem, just throw it away (along with all the software), spend another £1000 and you'll be back where you started!

For me no other platform comes close to what my concept of real computing is about because we deal with real people who can give us a real sense of belonging.

I use my ST now more than ever and it's great to see our platform offering practical solutions for real enthusiasts. My ST remains comfortable to work with and pramp much accommodates all my needs whilst the news that Magic, MIDI and Paypro updates are all in the pipeline is very encouraging because I use all three.

Compatibility with other platforms remains an issue. My particular area of concern is compression. Other platforms are developing improved compression techniques and I fear we will be left behind. I've recently been helping Carl Hefner iron out some bugs in 86LPE - a compression tool which makes entering TTP parameters a breeze. Carl programs over 30 different programs and these deserve some coverage in Atari Computing.

ACCP is a MUST and is in my diary in bold print - I even have it on my Eas desktop rate pad! Your comments were spot on about people drifting away from previous shows after bagging their goodies - I know I did.

There is a real chance for us to collectively show support for our platform and at the same time expand our expertise. I know that way forward is to get online but I find the whole business so daunting that I'd like to reserve my place at the head of the queue for some

practical help and straightforward advice - I prefer to learn by doing, not reading!

Last but not least I feel ACCP is a truly professional publication in every sense of the word and may I express thanks to ALL those involved and good luck for the future - I look forward to catching up with you and others at ACCP98.

Steve Whitehead, Swindon

Thanks Steve, and apologies for trimming your letter down from several pages! If you or Carl would like to send us his software or an online service we'd be pleased to make a look.

Zip ZIPs?



It's always exciting to read any contribution in print and I enjoyed reading my article on HP printer drivers in ACCP98.

However I was rather disappointed to find that I could not really access the article on the Reader Disk, or any other item on the disk, owing from the change from self extracting files to ZIP files, for which I had no instantly available de-zipper.

I would assume many other readers were similarly disappointed and I am surprised there was no reminder asking subscribers could use the utility on ACCP7 Reader Disk. I strongly suggest a ZIP utility such as ST-ZIP be included on the next disk for those new subscribers who do not have access to a utility of this type.

Keep up the good work.

Rob Jenkins, Queensland, Australia

To date Roy's letter is the only one we've received on this subject. I did include advance warning in the ACCP9 Reader Disk "... we plan to do this from next issue unless lots of you write in asking to keep the self extracting TOS files" - maybe Roy missed that?

The Two-in-One archive manager we included on the ACCP7 Reader Disk is merely a shell and does not include the TTP utilities

needed to extract archives which are only available as part of the ST-ZIP distribution. I felt including ST-ZIP, which is both large and widely available, would have been a waste of valuable disk space - maybe I am wrong!

Trading places?

I am writing to register my concern about certain comments encouraging Atari users to change machines. This is exactly what we Atari enthusiasts don't need. I read an advert offering prices for PC systems and another company advertising Mac upgrades. I fully understand that for companies to survive they must expand into other markets but why can't they advertise in PC and Mac mags or sell rubber wear instead.

Names and address supplied

If we printed too many letters like this one they probably would! I understand your point of view but I'm confident Atari enthusiasts can resist the urge. The reality is we'd probably include ads selling rubber wear given the chance because we need the advertising revenue. Our Advertising Manager adds:

Like it or not, magazines are very dependent on advertisers money. Without the revenue from adverts, each copy of the magazine would cost about £1.00 - £1.50 more, not such a good thing for our readers! We maintain a strict editorial independence and advertisers have no say in what we publish, so it would be unfair to tell them what they can put in their adverts. However, we would refuse adverts if an advertiser was breaching accepted advertising conditions or was causing major problems through their words or deeds.

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There's been a lot of talk about the Milan but now it's finally a reality. Joe Connor shares his first impressions...

Milan

YOUR Personal-Computer



The Milan, named after another bird of prey, is the unofficial successor to the Falcon and arrival to the future of the Atari market in Germany where there's still the necessary critical mass of developers and users to sustain the Milan as an ongoing venture.

Milan runs a modified version of TOS, v1.5. MINT and Milan Plus OS 1.2 (an offshoot from M.A.S.) can be installed from the supplied CD-ROM to provide a multitasking environment. This combination will be competing head-to-head for users with MagicC. Sadly MagicC does not run on the Milan system and with many Atari "power users" vested on MagicC this is a major disappointment.

DIY Milan

At the heart of the Milan computer system is a motherboard which has sensibly been designed to plug straight into any standard PC AT case.



Although most people will find it easier (and probably cheaper) to buy a complete Milan system from their local dealer I bought a motherboard kit and built the machine myself. So long as you give up on Lego and you take anti-static precautions it's easier than installing a memory upgrade into an IBM. In addition to the Milan motherboard kit you'll need:

- Standard PC AT case
- PCI graphics card
- HD floppy drive mechanism
- IDE hard drive (optional)
- 1 MBs (minimum) EDO memory (or faster) memory module
- 2 button PS/2 mouse
- Standard PC keyboard
- IDE CD-ROM mechanism (optional)

The Milan motherboard includes four slots into which EDO memory can be installed. Bank 3 (P18T) is filled with a 1MBs or larger EDO memory module. The other three banks can be filled, or left empty, which means combinations from 1MBs up to 5 1/2MBs are possible.

The motherboard is mounted in the case so the keyboard connector lines up with the hole in the rear of the case.

After that it's a simple matter of plugging in a PCI graphics card, connecting up the cables, installing the floppy drive then loading the machine from the supplied Milan System floppy disk. If all goes well you should see the Milan boot

screen followed by the Milan/TOS desktop in 640x480x1 resolution.

Now I had a working system I proceeded to install a hard drive (IBM 320MB) and CD-ROM (Creative Labs 24 speed) into the device bays using the supplied IDE ribbon cable to make a daisy-chain connection the primary IDE interface on the motherboard.

All that remained was to connect the two serial and single parallel ribbon cables between the front-panel ports on the rear of the case to the sockets on the motherboard. Unfortunately my parallel ribbon cable was too short - even though I was using the recommended case, and no "jumper" sockets were provided to fit the sockets to the front-panel, a black mark.

There are three COM1 ports, COM2 and COM3 support 115k bps and COM1 is Atari PPP compatible and taps out at 19200 bps. The driver follows the V.43M000M conventions to access the higher speeds.

Booting once again using the Milan System floppy HD-Driver (supplied) correctly loaded the hard drive and CD-ROM and installed the freeware Spind CD-ROM driver software and various other widgets before arriving at the TOS desktop once again.

At this stage the manual suggests you copy everything from the MILAN.DAT

holder on the CD to the root directory of drive C: - to install MMT and Milan Multi OS. I did experience a few configuration problems but these were promptly diagnosed by the Milan tech support team and the CD-ROM has since been re-mastered with a GEM installer which should preclude the problems I experienced.

Graphics

I purchased a PCI 5M 320x480 graphics card with 2MB video memory from Milan Computer so I could be sure it would work with the Milan low-level driver which offers a range of resolutions including:

- 320 x 480 x 144 == 160 Hz
- 320 x 768 x 324 == 96 Hz
- 3152 x 864 x 641 == 80 Hz
- 3280 x 1024 x 756 == 73 Hz
- 1152 x 864 x 768 == 96 Hz

There's ST-High support but no ST-Medium or ST-Low which rules out most auto-booting games. Most GEM based games including GEM Hack and Desktop Solitaire run fine.

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000 System type	000	00000000
001 Video card	000	00000000
002 Video mode	000	00000000
003 Video resolution	000	00000000
004 Video refresh	000	00000000
005 Video color	000	00000000
006 Video depth	000	00000000
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Pixel Motion

Want to watch movies on your Atari?
Here's some advice from Shuming Lai



Several native video-animation formats have evolved from the ST's early days as a prominent graphics work-horse for the masses. Since then industry developments on more powerful hardware have left those in the dark, so where do we stand now? The short and sharp answer for most Atari users is, "In the slow lane" - which is a lot better than total exclusion!

Decent quality video demands high colour and resolution, which takes up bandwidth requirements to enormous proportions. For more than can be economically held on most current storage media. The solution is compression, and to work effectively this relies on raw hardware processor power or dedicated decoding chips.

With a complete absence of the latter and relatively little of the former, it's interesting to see programmers still taking up the challenge to squeeze our Ataris for every last drop of performance. Here we have two different video players, both from France. Light, camera, action!

M Player



▲ This is actually how you'll see it in M Player



above. It's best described as an imageplay for videos. On the player side there is support for major formats like Apple

Guillemo Tello has been developing two versions of his M Player for some time, one for ST(s) computers and the other for 486(s) or above.

QuickTime (and VR extensions), Windows AVI, and MPEG, along with their built-in or available variations of colour encoding and compression schemes. The popular Atari standards are there too, plus extended FLI (which has sound) and the French (TheTOS magazine's proprietary CD4/L).

The conversion capability is accompanied by single frame sequencing for those all important (or irritating) animated GIFs for web-pages. Anyone struggling with compressed low-GIF animation programs ported from UNIX will be a little more relieved to use the batch file utility shell from the same author. When you create a movie from a pool of frames you can choose to add a sound. There is

no complex time coding, the playback can be set to synchronise with the sound, in which case the sequence's frame rate is simply calculated as it lasts the duration of the sound, or not.

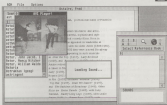
M Player's presence in an ST guide is very important - few, if any, other players on the base TOS machines can match its facilities. While the ST can't handle some of the newer formats at anywhere near

real time, M Player's batch utility can convert them down to a format suited for the ST, like Lector's FLI. That provides an immediate comparison with ByteStream's FLI4 player, and our test shows M Player to be not quite as speedy, even without GDM and no dithering.

When playing MPEGs on the Falcon its speed can't match other DSP-driven players, and the output exhibits a little more grain near the border of sharply contrasting solid areas. Same bugs in the MPEG decoding are apparent too. One of my test files had a horizontal resolution 50 pixels wider than the physical screen, and instead of being cropped or scaled, the end 50 pixels of each scan line appeared at the beginning of every other scan line!

My enthusiasm waned, I tried to play some VCD (Video CD, not to be confused with CD Video from about 18 years ago!) discs, which are MPEG compressed. No luck, in fairness, none of the other MPEG players I tried could manage these either, but Guillemo is looking into it. The format is a sort of half-way house between Laser Disc and DVD Video, with the benefit that it uses old VHS, so with the current decoding algorithms even a basic ST with CD-ROM drive could easily read a film.

The author has aimed to keep the program as compact as possible and this is evident in the user interface, it can be



▲ M Player is used as a viewer by Video Systems' driver for Softkey's Infopics CD



▲ Putting together some picture files easily

slightly cryptic at times and gives the impression of being keen to quit, if that's a concept you can grasp. It does the job without any fuss other than as soon as you click "Cancel" in the file selector, bang, out of there with nothing left to say. Credits to Ole, However, with respect to the machine support. There are three graphics output routines, optimized for Nova cards, automatic resolution changes to Falcon TrueColor, and no graphics card. Sound-wise there is DMA for ST/TT and Falcon, or Yamaha PDS or Regal/PPV for S386, very thoughtful indeed.

It's easy to dismiss M Player on the basis of its looks, a great mistake because that minimalist interface hides some real power. There is still plenty of room for refinement though - I would like to see more advanced audio encoding, among other things. Registering M Player gets you the colour version (the unregistered release is grayscale only), and I'd say the fee is quite reasonable.

MPLAYER v2.95

AUTHOR

Gulhaime Tolo
Email: spok@statos.fr
<http://pers.wanadoo.fr/gulhaime/>
Status: Shareware

Price

Free, with support, many configurations, compare

Comments

Simple, intuitive, simple, sluggish MPEG

83%



▲ MPlayer you can use the current picture in a window to the clipboard, or a series of frames

Amigaplayer

Daniel Mühlgrast's Amigaplayer is rather more flamboyant - it is a general media player offering a comprehensive interface, in a choice of five European languages installed by a simple and elegant installation program. It's also best suited to Falcon, STs don't get a look in unless faced with some later version of the 68030 CPU (and Falcon review isn't here). The best it can manage on an ST is a audio playback, and a even attempts large file direct from disk albeit with a bit of skipping and jumping.

Amigaplayer doesn't cater for as many video formats as M Player, nor is it able to convert. However, it does use the Falcon's DSP and the MPEG version currently in development reaches 15 frames per second with a 144x128 movie on a Speed Resolution card (40MHz CPU/CPU2 30MHz bus). In the meantime it uses the DSP where appropriate anyway.

No detection is made between sounds, images or movies in the detailed file information box, it gives all possible parameters that exist for a given file. The same applies to the slide show feature, it'll play whatever is in the directory you choose and I found this very useful when compiling audio CDs with another program running as an accessory. Amigaplayer itself will run this way, perfect for breaking up those long carloads of work by watching some movies!

Choosing a non-GEM display speeds things up and means you can run Amigaplayer from any video mode and it will automatically switch to Falcon TrueColor. Generally this is a good idea, as the debuting is somewhat primitive (for maximum speed) and makes images appear similar to being covered with a net curtain.

Oddly viewing JPEGs from 16-colour mode doesn't switch to a higher colour mode and you get that dithering instead. Maybe it is very smart, with pictures larger than the screen, unless you select a GEM display as it can come up in a scrollable window.

Video playback performance is fair, it's watchable despite "tearing" across the middle and frame updates - still, less apparent than M Player.

MONITOR INFORMATION:

0 x 0 is 1 colors
Number of frames: 0
Number of frames/second: 0
Step key-frames: 0
Time: 0'12"33
Number current picture: 77777 (0'14")
Compression: 15: 50000000
Size: 0

SOUND INFORMATION:

Quality: 16 bits stereo
Frequency: 44100 Hz = 44100 Hz
Time: 0'12"33
Compression: 15: gsm

MEMORY INFORMATION:

Size of file buffers: 0 bytes
Size of picture buffer: 0 bytes
Size of screen buffer: 0 bytes
Size of sound buffers: 139440 bytes

OK

✓ DSP for decompress	0
✓ Direct screen	1
✓ Quality	8
✓ Resample	2
Shut-off sound	3
Sound only	4
Control slowness	5
✓ Pass pictures	6
Tape-recorder look	7
Little window	8
Without GEN	9
✓ Without DSD	8
✓ Loop mode	8

MagiC Inc will be glad to know *Aniplayer* conforms to the ICH-OLGA protocol (see Mark Wherry's article in ACiPS, page 27), so it can be used as a viewer module in CMI v2.1, coming soon now.

A global direct-from-disk option can be toggled. In this mode large and coloured movies can cause hiccups in playback, especially if they're coming off a slow source (3x CD-ROM, perhaps). It works fine for audio, which is played in the nearest hardware frequency or resampled on the fly. I don't recommend resampling unless absolutely necessary because it generates audible harmonics. Good news is it picks up the 44.1kHz timing signal from the Creative Audio Clock for smooth playback of CD-speed audio, bad news is it doesn't have its option to choose either of the Steinberg/SoundFont PDI's 44.1kHz or 48kHz clocks.

Overall, a versatile viewer, even though the only supported image format is JPEG. There is no shortage of help in the form of ST Guide hypertext and those fancy Thomas-Mach speech facilities.

My main concern is the control offered by the transport buttons - in video mode the jog shuttle only appears to work forwards, otherwise if you want to rewind

ANIPPLAYER v2.02

Author

Dickie Maypin
Email: dickie_maypin@earthlink.net
http://www.warrior.fr/video/

Notes in file
Status: Freeware

Price

Simplicity: speed

Cave

Currently no MPEG, no pro-audio hardware support

88%

MPEG

MPEG stands for Motion Picture Experts Group. It created a format designed to minimise the amount of data storage required for video by means of Delta compression. In a succession of video frames there are likely to be parts of the picture that haven't changed from the last, for example, an airplane flying across a blue sky. The sky will be more or less the same except for the parts where there is a moving object, so the video can be encoded in terms of changes from the last frame, such as a change of pixel colour at co-ordinates (x,y). This is obviously far more efficient than storing a completely new frame that contains this one difference. "Delta" is the Greek letter used in mathematics to denote a change or difference in values, hence Delta compression.

You'll also encounter the words, "B frames" and, "P frames" in MPEG. These are the partial (Delta-encoded) frames between each key frame (I frame, or intra frame, coded in their entirety). P frames precede each I frame as shown here.



Some players skip partial frames to keep pace with real time and this results in a jerky animation.

The MPEG standard itself has proliferated, there is MPEG 1 and 2 for video, differing principally in the precision of colour encoding, and MPEG 3 for audio.

you have to use the larger time-unit based PTIMEW. Perhaps it is actually in there, hiding among the hundreds of other options.

Likeable with audio, the controls resemble a standard tape recorder rather than a sophisticated digital console.

Summary

Both these programs have something different to offer. In my opinion *Aniplayer* just has the edge owing to the more user-centred design.

Hi Player's ability to create and disseminate animations, and its wide range of supported formats, makes it a handy tool for all TOS machines. If you need these functions, get yourself a copy.

If you have a Falcon, get *Aniplayer* anyway: it's good and it's free. In common they share command line operation, media/video/picture/animation adjustments and extensive documentation, which includes some programming information.

What are you waiting for? **D**



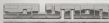
Milan
TOSW Personal-Computer

Dreams can come true...

Foundation Two

Paranoia

Solution Software evolution - a retrospective by Mad Butscher



ENTERTAINMENT

S O F T W A R E

Solution Software was a German Software developer, created by Thorsten Butscher and Oliver Heen. ESA League Manager III was the first release to be reviewed the UK and our Pipemania style Rollercoaster Experience follow up, matched up a creditable 81% in ST Format before the UK magazines threw in the towel.



A year later Solution released Nightfall, a Risk style strategy game which can be played by up to eight players. Nightfall featured decent graphics and a plethora of customisation options. But True was the first, and perhaps, most original release. True is a puzzle game with cool graphics and simple addictive gameplay which involved moving and creating zones to reach the next level.



After releasing Nightfall Solution split into Paranoia Programming and Foundation Two. Paranoia just released STCircs, a cool Tetris clone which takes maximum advantage of the extra C64 hardware capabilities - and there's Falcon compatibility planned for the final release.



Paranoia is also working on another new game in the style of another classic, called Breakdance, which will feature some quite popular Atari scene people and has been active creating graphics for other projects.



Foundation Two has released Sunshine, the first (and only) Falcon disc game based on a popular pub game where the aim is to throw particular combinations. Sunshine was Mad Butscher's first attempt programming in C and contains multilingual sampled speech in English, German and French.



Only three months later Foundation Two released Dry Egg for the Falcon. Dry Egg is loosely based on dominoes except you place triangles next to each other.

There's also the possibility of a Menopony style game to come for the Falcon but these days the Mad Butscher doesn't have as much free time and may retire from the ST scene and switch platforms to... Atari XE/XL/5 disc machines - that surprised you didn't it?

So far he has coded and released a Mahjong style disc game called Taktan, and a beta version of a mixture between Golf and billiards, called Bombol Wo - you can check it out using one of the Atari 8 bit emulators, or better still get hold of the real thing! ☺

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New CD-ROMs

Floppyshop are the only UK company actively compiling Atari specific CDs at the moment. Following on from their recent GTP+Graphics release here's two more titles reviewed by Mark Wherry and Matthew Bacon...



Sounds and Stuff has been compiled by Electronic Cow's Danny McAfee, and is subtitled 'The Atari Musician's Toolkit, but is that claim justified?

The CD is extremely well organised, and finding stuff is easy. The best previously commercial, demo and free software are all here, and it is true to say that there will probably be something for everyone. There is far too much on the CD to go into details here, but hopefully you'll get a flavour of what's on offer. The MIDI section includes tempo calculators, sequencers including Trakman and Arranger, composition tools including Schismberg, synth editors, system isolation based tools like PEOman, and much more, including the Master file MIDI utilities from the golden era. Audiophiles will relish the sample converters, players and editors, including the full version of Studio Sound v2 for the Falcon, software synthesis programs, trackers and other utilities.

I was really pleased to find MIDI and audio programming information, including specifications, sample formats and playing routines. There is also a dedicated Falcon folder with demo versions of the SoundPool and Solstice mangers together with other merely audio based software, especially hard disk recorders.

When you're tired of exploring software, there's a folder full of music in Quares, Pro24, MIDI and MOD formats, as well as two folders of sound samples from the exclusive Electronic Cow library. These are of varying quality and presented in 16-bit AVR format, and 8-bit SPL format for you to use freely in your own music when you get that creative urge. The thing on the cake is a complete uncut version of Sound Chip Synth v1.XL, which scored 89%, in ACP2.

Even musicless fansels from non-musical artists and a thoughtful collection has been provided, along with some games writers, with more monitors in mind, enter Floppyshop software and catalogues, a demo version of C&B and the Floppyshop, Cowmat, InterActive and Atari Computing websites.

Hy only criticism of **Sounds and Stuff** is that the only way to navigate the CD is via the desktop, reading the ASCII format directory content notes as you go along. I know this is the way Atari CDs are generally presented, but given Danny's programming and graphical talents, a more attractive front end would have been easier. That aside, anyone who does anything remotely musical with their Atari will enjoy this CD and, given the inclusion of Sound Chip Synth, is tremendous value for money.

Mark Wherry



This CD is based on a title originally called **Falcon008 Volume 1**, which was compiled by Apicure 885 in Paris. As the title suggests, it is dedicated to Falcon users and will be of little use to anyone else. Floppyshop took the original release and first made sure all the software was up to date and all the folders had English names. Not all content, 1.5MB of new software was added along with the obligatory C&B demo and Floppyshop, Cowmat, InterActive and Atari Computing web sites.

As usual the CD is broken down into different folders, and the layout is fairly logical to navigate. Over half of the CD is given over to demos (1.6MB) and games, including a full version of Pleon Games - a superb racing game but other highlights include a ready to install MINT based

UNIX system (FreeMINT is also included elsewhere), Martya Rod's Philosophy2, and a handy folder of console software with an HTTP server, STing, demos of Win,Save, C&B, Homepage Program and more. There's also a selection of graphics tools including POV-Ray and demos of Apes and Karamon, a folder containing magazines, including AtariFile, Atari Times, Pledge, FOG, and more; a reasonable selection of programming source code; and an excellent TECH_STUFF folder with all sorts of documents and specifications. An audio folder is also provided, but if you're looking for musical content get **Sounds and Stuff** instead.

The French origin of the CD is evident, as some of the material is in French. However, Floppyshop have once again done an excellent job in ensuring most of the disk is in English. There's also a sizeable overlap of content with the ST+TOS CD (especially if you have ST+TOS IP2) but the quality of the content is high and if you're an avid Falcon enthusiast who enjoys watching demos and other entertainment software you won't be disappointed.

Mark Wherry (MW) and Matthew Bacon (MB)

CD-ROMs

Publisher: Floppyshop,
PO Box 271, Aldershot, AH1 5GJ
tel/fax: +44 (0)1234 311794
Email: floppyshop@btinternet.com
www: floppyshop.btinternet.com
Cost: Stock CDs cost £15.00 + P&P
CD UK, CD Europe, CD ROW, each

Sounds and Stuff

Price: High-quality to crash ratio, full version of SCI, music, sound and programming resources.
Cons: Nothing serious, but a front end would have been nice.
Score: 89%

Select CD

Price: Up to date (March 95), Value For Money, 345MB of mostly high quality content.
Cons: No content but no other navigational aid.
Score: MW: 70% MB: 89%

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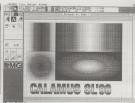
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Ed McGlone gets his hands on Calamus SL'98, one of the most eagerly awaited upgrades to one of the Atari platform's oldest professional quality software packages...

Back in the eighties, Calamus was released for the Atari ST and revolutionized Desktop Publishing on our favourite platform. Up until that time, desktop publishing software had used bitmapped fonts for the text shown on screen. Suddenly, Calamus burst onto the scene with its use of vector font technology and DTP would never be the same again.

Calamus was the first true WYSIWYG desktop publisher on any platform. It was the fastest printing package under most circumstances and, indeed, when combined with the Atari LM800 Laser Printer, was undatable with a "click to print" time of about 30 seconds!

I remember being given the latest version of (at that time) Aldus Pagemaker to do a bit of desktop publishing on at work and just about tearing my hair out with frustration at that program's lack of capabilities compared to my beloved Calamus at home. And that has been Calamus' trump card ever since. It has been said on many occasions, Calamus has a steep learning curve and a quality interface - which is true, but when you're hooked on Calamus, nothing else will do! That is why many Calamus 1.09 users upgraded to Calamus SL when the full colour version was released and remain loyal Calamus users to this day.

What's new?

So, what does the new Calamus SL'98 have to offer? Well, the answer is more of everything. New features, smoother interface, more flexibility, better stability and increased functionality. Here's just a few of the new features:

- Text scaling
- New flip object
- Newly revamped and improved Print dialog

- Built-in mailing
- New Guideline module
- New Text Ruler dialog
- Innovative font handling
- Improved Multitasking operation

Buttons, Bars and Panels

To start with the new look, when you open up Calamus SL'98, it looks very familiar but some subtle improvements begin to intrude on your consciousness.



▲ A typical Calamus command tree. These are usually displayed one at a time by selecting between the top row of icons

Calamus has become more modular in nature, some commands which were previously located in the left hand command panels have moved up to the external modules toolbar. This toolbar can now be resized and repositioned to accommodate more external modules and the basic screen and view toolbar can also be moved to allow for this. If the external modules toolbar is kept too small to show all of the modules available, it displays scroll arrows like before. This is a bonus particularly for users of large screens with enough space to expand their toolbar displays. On my usual 800x600 display there is room across the top for about 30 external module buttons - far more than I think anyone would ever need.

The links between modules is now much smoother. For example, if you select

Special Options for a frame type which has no commands under that heading, a dialog box pops up to offer you the chance to go straight in to the module which deals with that frame type. Also, if you click on a module, for example, Vector Graphics, without having first selected a frame of that type, the Frames Module is switched to that frame type and you can immediately draw one into the page. Little features like this make the latest

version easier to use but without losing the Calamus feel.

This move to separate modules however sometimes serves to confuse users - rather than make things easier. There is a new Guidelines module for example which gives excellent control over the placement and visibility of grids.

guidelines, view and column guides, printable areas and the notorious Calamus Magnetic Frames feature. The only trouble is that, to activate any of these guides for snapping frames to, you have to go back to the frames module - that function has not been taken in to the Guidelines Module. This reorganisation of feature buttons can be frustrating for the seasoned Calamus user but, to be honest is probably of less importance to newcomers to the software who will simply learn it that way.

Looking at the frame types available, we come across the first of the newly included modules which used to be sold separately - Plink Frames. These work like this. Choose and select two frames of any type. Click on the Plink icon and the back frame is masked by the front frame. For example if your back frame is a picture and

your frame frame is a frame of black text, the end result will be a frame of text filled with the picture – very neat!

All of the other old favourites are there: Fill, Vector and Raster Graphics, Line Frames, Raster Areas, Groups and so on and in most cases the available commands have been refined.

Raster Graphics frames are now freely convertible between TrueColor, palette based images, grayscale or monochrome in the frame special functions panel and their vertical lines or histograms can be edited.

Stylish Text

Much of the time spent in a desktop publishing package like Calamus is gobbled up laying out textual elements. Calamus has always excelled in this with comprehensive control over every aspect of the text's appearance.

Most of these functions have been in Calamus since the very first release but for anyone unfamiliar with Calamus here's a brief description of the tools which, from left to right, can:

- Set the colour and thickness for outlining.
 - Set the colour and distance for text shadows.
 - Define and choose Text Style Lines.
- All of this adds up to some of the most comprehensive text style control tools available anywhere.

One especially useful new feature which involves creating 'beamer' headlines and display text, is the ability to resize text simply by stretching the containing frame. This scales the text independently in the x and y directions so you can make it flatter or plumper this way as well. Text sized in this way does not lose contrast for further editing but the stretch settings are retained so that when you are finished, a single mouse click restores the stretch.



Adding an Emboss Effect using the Phototouch module

Basic picture editing can be carried out from inside Calamus. The brush module allows single pixel and brush based editing for manually touching up images and the new Photo Touch filter module from P&G allows whole image effects to be added including Sharpen, Effect, a programmable generic blur and an excellent Emboss filter. In addition, Histograms or Colour Control Lines can be used to adjust brightness, contrast and the colour balance of images.

Output

Printing has received a fair bit of attention in Calamus since the last release. It is still as fast as ever but excellent results are now easier to achieve especially with colour inkjet printers.

Most of the printer drivers have been updated and support is now offered for HP laser and desktop printers as up to 600 dpi resolution is recommended. In addition, the HP colour drivers come with variable pre-sets for replication and shingling

settings, to compensate for the variations in the way that the different coloured dots of ink from the printer mix and combine on different types of paper. Pre-sets are supplied for normal paper, transparencies and premium quality white glossy paper. Calamus has always printed output at equal horizontal and vertical resolutions in the slightly unusual 1800x1800 resolution offered by some recent HP colour



The Textstyle Module Command Line

- Choose the font. Fonts can be freely loaded and unloaded from memory. There are thousands of Calamus fonts available commercially and in the Public domain and if you're still left wanting more you can use programs like Fonty, available from the HAST club, to convert TrueType and Postscript Type One fonts for use in Calamus.
- Set the font size freely from small to large with control over the sizing method.
- Set the text effects from Normal, Underlined, Outlined, Shadowed, Italic/Superscript, Compressed or Stretched. Compression (flatter) and Stretch (plumper) angles can also be freely set.
- Set the text colour, word and character spacing.
- Set the colour, thickness, overhang and distance for underlining.

Calamus has always been good with long documents and all the tools are there to help you track your work into shape with section and chapter numbering, indexing and footnote generation.



Defining colours for use in the Blend Module



▲ Different types of paper can be taken into account for various printers

desktop is not supported. On the other hand, colour Epson Stylus support goes right up to 720 dpi and the results from both laser and inkjet printers can be quite stunning.



▲ The updated Print Dialog

As before Calamus can print whole documents, page ranges, selected files, left pages only, right pages only, ascending or descending order, mirrored, inverted, scaled and so on and so on. Calamus offers control over print quality which remains second to none in the field of desktop publishing.

Better multitasking

This release is much more stable running under *PlayG* although all the attempts to make it more multitasking friendly will have stopped in trying to hog all available memory when launched! On the other hand, Calamus' memory management seems to have improved - a large document which I could previously only work on in monochrome mode running single TOS now loads and runs smoothly in 24 colours under *PlayG*. Overall Calamus SL98 proved to be reliable and stable in operation and I only suffered one crash during the entire review process despite trying out all sorts of silly things whilst running screen grabbers and text editors at the same time.

Minor

It's not perfect of course and there are a few things which could be improved. I had been looking forward to seeing the new 3D look when running in 16 colour

resolutions or higher but was disappointed to find only dialogues have been given the 3D treatment. I know it's purely cosmetic but it would have been more convincing if all the contained panels included 3D colour icons - maybe in a future release.

When running Calamus on the Falcon in 24 colour mode, you will have to fire up a separate screen driver program. A minor point, certainly but I still forget to do it.

The standard text editor for Calamus is still an unchanged PEG Write. I know replacement editors like my venerable *Ed* can be purchased but surely it's time PEG Write was updated.

Dialog fields seem to have lost the ability to clear them by hitting the [Esc] key. This has been a standard GEM convention for years now and I am puzzled why Calamus has abandoned this method. To clear a field now you have to hold the [Backspace] key down until all the characters have been deleted - definitely a backward step.

The new features are covered in a tiny addendum to the original Calamus SL manual. This barely covers the basics and the doc need properly documenting.

Conclusions

An article about an application which is as advanced and mature as Calamus can only ever hope to scratch the surface - the sheer number of features and commands probably means the reviewer has to "cherry pick" which points to cover.

Hopefully I've given you a flavour of what Calamus is like to work with. As you can probably tell, I like it, a lot. Calamus 98 is now "desktop publishing for dummies" in the way Microsoft Publisher and some other DTP applications have evolved to appeal to a mass audience. However Calamus 98



▲ Beginning a document using the PageSet Module

is a comprehensive, professional and powerful desktop publishing application which will repay the time you spend using it with incredible flexibility and superb results - you will never outgrow Calamus.

The future

Contrary to all the rumours which have been circulating since 1994, Calamus is still being developed both for PC and for the Atari platform. In the UK Calamus 98 is supported by Image Applications, and at its new price point offers superb value for money. ☐

CALAMUS 98

Publisher

PEG Software Corporation

UK Distribution

Image Applications, Unit 3 Wellesley House, Welmer Castle Road, Deal, Kent CT14 7NG, UK
Tel: 01304-349554
Fax: 01304-371141
Email: calamus@ia.co.uk
http://www.ia.co.uk/~peg/Calamus.html

Cost

Full Package:	£199.00
Competitive upgrade from D&L Layout, Papyrus or Timesworks Publisher:	£119.00
Upgrade from Calamus v1.0:	£119.00

Requires

Any Atari or TOS compatible machine running 68040 (32 bit) high resolution or higher, software supplied on HD floppy disks.

Pros

Powerful, precise, flexible

Cons

Steep learning curve, poor addendums manual, only partial interface revamp - looks like a work in progress.

90%

THE TRUE PICTURE

WYSIWYG - What You See Is What You Get

This is claimed by all desktop publishing software but as far as I know, Calamus is still the only truly WYSIWYG desktop publisher on the market. This is because it has a special zoom function which shows you your document as a Printer 1:1 view - that is, one pixel on screen exactly represents one printer dot on the paper. You can't get more WYSIWYG than that!

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Desktop Solitaire

Jonathan Adams tries his Patience...

DEMO



REVIEW

SOLITARY ENTERTAINMENT

ATARI COMPUTING ISSUE 11

25



There's not much to say about the gameplay - if you haven't played Solitaire (or Patience as it's more commonly called in the UK) you're not likely to buy this anyway, and if you have it's effectively the same as playing the real thing. If you get the game "out" you're "rewarded" with a Congratulations dialog - no bonus cards like the Windows version but let's face it, you're not playing the

game for that! - otherwise it wouldn't be called Patience would it? On the other hand, you can relax instantly, which saves picking up the cards and shuffling them, so just consider that your reward - OK?

If you're feeling creative you can change the background or design a set of cards from scratch. Maybe a cloudy set of themed cards on animals, trains or even a risqué set of naked ladies - like that pack I had confiscated back in my school days! The individual cards, the design on the back of the cards and the desktop background are waiting for your attention in a single image.



The images are saved in Picas Paint's True Paint format so you'll need need an art package capable of loading and saving this format. Some paint packages will only recognise the card sets as images if the extensions are renamed to PNT or TPL. Alternatively a conversion utility can be used to go between between your favourite art package and the final image format. I used Imagecopy and Painter.

A complete card set is made up from three images, one for mono resolutions

(DEFAULTC11), one for 16 colour resolutions (DEFAULTC04) and a 256 colour image (DEFAULTC08) - which also works at 34-bit screen depth. If you only run in 256 colour resolutions you only need to create an alternative DEFAULTC08 file although it's easy enough to generate a usable 16 colour version from this image using Imagecopy's dithering options.

Conclusions

Desktop Solitaire looks great and is the best version I've played on any Atari machine. It's the ideal game to while away idle moments and because it runs under MacG and Geneva you can play a game between other tasks without needing to quit applications or reload. Sadly it doesn't run as a desktop accessory which means TOS owners can't enjoy the same luxury. I'd like to see the next version support at least one of the standard ST resolutions and run from floppy. Maybe a 16 colour card set running on a virtual desktop or a mono set running in 640x480 (ST style). ☐

DESKTOP SOLITAIRE v1.02

Publisher: Kordia Development
Distribution: Systems For Tomorrow
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64655, USA
Tel: (816) 631-4738
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Email: sales@systemsfortomorrow.com
<http://www.systemsfortomorrow.com>
UK Dealer: Atari Computing
Cost: £99.99 plus £1 shipping
world-wide; £30.00 - refer to Reader
Offers on page 9

Requires: 486+160 minimum resolution,
TOS 2.06 or later, 128k memory
(4Mb in TrueColor), hard disk drive.

Price: Runs under TOS, MacG,
Geneva, N.A.S, Milan and graphics
cards.

Comments: No use to standard ST owners,
only one card set.

On the Atari platform we're used to taking the best ideas from other platforms and improving on them. Desktop Solitaire is different - it's a way to spend hours in front of your machine achieving absolutely nothing - much like Windows!

However, in the spirit of "anything they can do we can do better" Desktop Solitaire delivers the goods, offering no less than eight different variations and three difficulty levels of the time honoured game. If you know your Solitaire you'll be interested to learn the variations included are: Baker's Dozen, Demon, Fourteen, Golf, Poker Squares, Pyramids, Scorpion and Klondike - the most common variation. Happily the rules for each variation are explained in the 16 page manual.

There was a time when most games wouldn't run under Windows and in a speedy cross platform parallel there was a time when most games wouldn't run under GEM either! Recently the situation has improved with a slew but mostly trickle of games which run happily under GEM and, you've guessed it, Desktop Solitaire is one of them. It also runs on just about any Atari compatible machine capable of running 640x480 resolution or higher. This neatly rules out standard STs and leaves a monumental area in the last but there it is.



75%

Music U can C

However implausible it might sound, writing your own MIDI software is the best way to compose exciting music. Danny McAleer sets Cubase aside in favour of a C compiler...

The Atari definitely owes its success as a musician-friendly computer to its built-in MIDI ports. Whether their inclusion was a carefully considered plan, or (more likely) a happy accident caused by over-eagerness designers hell-bent on adding as many peripheral ports as space permitted, matters not. What is important is the wealth of musical potential this interface offers, and how easy it is to capitalise on it.

Like most things, there is still a small learning curve to climb in order to understand both the fundamental principles of Atari programming, and the MIDI communications protocol, but these aren't nearly as difficult as they sound. Once you have grasped the basics anything is possible, from simple utilities to fully-featured sequencers, and you'll never have to settle for using the available compositional tools ever again.

Reading data from the MIDI port is equally simple, because their command sets built into the Atari's BIOS (Basic Input Output System) they can be handled directly from a high-level programming language like C.

To read data from a device, there's a function called `Readin(short device)`. `Readin()` returns a long integer with the data read from the device. Although MIDI is 8-bit and so only uses the lower eight bits of this, the other bits are important for other devices (the keyboard for example, uses the two upper bits for

non-MIDI key notes such as [Shift] or [Control]). Its single argument specifies the device to be read, where 0 is the MIDI ports 0 and 1 for the parallel and serial ports respectively, and 2 for the keyboard.

When calling the `Readin()` function, you must be certain that there's something waiting to be read, else the computer happily twiddles its thumbs until infinity (or until something does arrive) before relinquishing control back to the operating system. Since this is rather undesirable behaviour, the function `Isready(short device)` should always be used first. This function polls the device number (as above) passed in its argument, returning a long integer value of zero if nothing is there, or -1 if a some information is ready to be read.

To write data to a device, there's a function called `Writeout(short device, short value)`. This accepts two arguments: the device number, which is mapped the same as `Readin()`, and the value to send. `Writeout()` returns zero if successful, or any non-zero value otherwise - told you it was easy.

After registering the Atari's BIOS, there's still the additional obstacle of the MIDI protocol itself, since simply sending anything through the MIDI wires may result in a very unhappy synthesizer (or at the very least, it'll just ignore you). To complicate things further, MIDI messages can be any number of bytes in length, depending on what they're describing, and so it is up to the program to decipher the

"header" byte, and read in the required number of subsequent bytes to complete the message. MIDI is a serial communication protocol and so only one byte at a time can be sent, unlike the printer port which is serial-directional and lots of bytes can be moved around in parallel.

There are two types of MIDI messages: channel, and system. The former is peculiar to only one channel (or instrument part), whereas the latter does not concern itself with channels (things like system exclusive messages, MIDI timecode and other synchronisation messages, and sample dump pointers are examples of these). Channel-specific messages include note information, and other performance controller attributes, like pitch bend, modulation, panning, volume, and so on.

The note-on message is perhaps the most important channel message, and the comprises three bytes of information. The first byte contains the message ID in the upper four bits, and the channel (0 to 15) in the lower four bits:

```
Hexadecimal:  8      0
Binary:       0001  0000
```

To find the channel in a note-on message, the byte is logically AND'ed with 0F (binary 1111). If you're only looking for a note-on, regardless of channel, you can use a conditional operator:

```
if(message >= 000 00, message <= 00F) // then  
process the MIDI note... *
```

The second byte contains the note number itself, and this ranges from 0 to 127, where 60 is equal to middle C. The note's velocity, which is how hard the note is struck and not necessarily associated with the volume (since it can also be used to open flaps, and all sorts of other things on modern synthesizers), is stored in the first byte. Therefore, if middle C is played firmly (velocity 100) on channel ten, then the bytes 009, 50C, 044 are sent (in that order).

The first example (MIDIMON.C) is a simple program that reads incoming MIDI data and provides information about what sort of message it is. This should help clarify a few things - even though the

Common controller messages

	header	data bytes	
Note On	0x	0x 0x	note-number (0 to 127), velocity, immediately
Note Off	0x	0x 0x	
Pitch-wheel offset/track	0x	0x 0x	pitch-wheel, 0 to 0x7fff, pitch is positive
Channel aftertouch	0x	0x 0x	since this is applied to the whole channel
Program change	0x	0x	variable number (numbered)
Bank select	0x	0x 0x	unchanged, pitch is program number
Bank select	0x	0x 0x	since new up to 128 banks/hundreds of sounds
			a message that enables MIDI selection of these
			patches has been implemented in the form of
			bank-select. This requires two messages, which
			must be sent one after another
			unchanged, note=000, 0x0000
			unchanged, 0x0000=0x0000 MIDI port
			selectable data is range greater than 0x00, so
			the value must be sent in two bytes, 0x0000
			unchanged, velocity of controller (0-127)
			0x00000000 hexadecimal value of 7 then set 1 to
			variable, including 0x07 velocity, and 0x04 up to

interface is fairly functional (so be polite about it), in particular, how the MIDI ports are used, and how to decipher vital MIDI messages.

The second example (MINSEQ.C) illustrates how to send and receive MIDI status information (as well as other controllers), in the form of a fairly modest sequencer. This sequencer basically comprises three sections: note reading, note send, and the user interface/pullies. To check for a note-on, the code uses the 6803 commands, `ReadData()` and `ReadC()`:

```

NOTE is, velocity, note;
NOTE channel = 2; /* MIDI channel 1 */
ReadData(NOTE);
if (NOTE >= 0x80) = channel)
    note = ReadC(); velocity = ReadC();

```

In the above example it is quite safe to call `ReadData()` since we know that a message is coming, and after checking its header for a valid note-on message, that another two bytes are expected, and that these will be the note number and its velocity respectively. These can then be stored in a variable (or array) ready to apply using the note send part of the code:

```

void note_send(NOTE channel, NOTE note, NOTE vel)
{
    SendData(0x90 + channel);
    SendData(note);
    SendData(vel);
}

```

With this function, all you need do is to pass it the note number and velocity and the channel to send a message, and it takes care of the details, transmitting it in the right order, and without any spurious interruptions. Of course, once a note-on has been sent, it must inevitably be followed by a note-off message, otherwise the synthesizer will drone on forever. Note-off can either be sent as a note-on with a velocity of zero, or using the note-off specific message `0x80 + channel`. Although two bytes to describe the note's number and velocity are sent the same as a note-on, the velocity in this case is how quickly the note is depressed - this is used to good effect on some synthesizers.

There is a sensible reason for having two methods of sending a note off message: running status. This is a system where if the same type of message is repeatedly sent, then it removes the header bytes in subsequent packets, thus effectively reducing the number of bytes needed to send data. For example, if a note-on is played and then released, and if the keyboard supports active sensing, and sends note-offs as note-ons with zero velocity, then the following shortened message is sent: 0x90, 0xC, 0x4, 0xC, 0xC, 0x0. This also works for other messages such as pitch bend and modulation, where lots

of continuous messages are needed.

Naturally, the note-off shouldn't be sent immediately after the note-on, else all we'll get are little blips instead of long notes, so the program must check the note-off when the next note stored in the sequencer is about to be played (some statements note later). The timing is calculated using the system clock using the formula: ticks = ((3000000/pulse) * 100 in the clock speed in Hertz (this is fixed), range is the value in beats per minute, 60 is the number of seconds in a minute (obviously), and 4 is the division of beats into sixteen notes. Should you wish to vary the step rate into other measures, the last value can be changed to two for eighth notes, eight for thirty-second notes, and so on.

Clear note data has been read from the MIDI input, and stored in an array (the example program has an eight note capacity, but this can quite easily be extended), it is ludicrously simple to start creating/manipulating it. As in the example sequencer program, you could make it play back the notes in any order that the user chooses, increase or decrease the rate at which it plays through the notes, or even non-destructively rearrange the sequence (by adding or subtracting a user-defined amount to the value sent to the functions to send note-ons and offs). You could also manipulate the velocity, or even add performance controllers such as pitch change, panning or volume. To send a program change, only two bytes are needed: the first is 0xC, where 0 is the channel number (80 to 10), the second is the patch number (0 - 127). Control changes need three bytes, and the most common are detailed in the boxes.

For each of the MIDI messages that the mini-sequencer supports, there is a separate function to make things easier. Most of the other code in the example concerns itself with the user interface (redrawing parameters and the menu, moving the cursor, and checking for keyboard input), but this is all fairly basic C code, and certainly would be covered in



▲ Example MIDI sequencing program

the first two days of my C course-book class going to C programming.

Perhaps the worst dilemma for doing anything in that it's too hard, especially when no one's prepared to help.

However, if you're determined to write some C programs for creative music writing, and you're stumped, then please do send questions, however silly I won't laugh - honestly to me at elm@twi.cwrl.mel.pipes.com

I'll do my best

to help.

Example C

code, project

files for Lotus

C, accessible

programs, and

GEN versions

(just for fun) are

included on this

month's Reader Club to try out... ☐



InterJam 98



Over the last week mentioned in *Play* the InterJam was held near Karlsruhe in Germany. The convention was organised by Inter and Goli magazine and there were over 150 attendees complete with their Atari ST/Falcon/20x, Commodore 64 and PC machines at the party.

I left my flat at 7 o'clock Sunday morning to drive to Heidelberg and collect Grey who left his house in Poland twenty hours earlier. His bus was delayed several hours and we finally arrived at the InterJam early afternoon.

During the journey we exchanged news and Grey and Grey revealed that apart from coding futuristic demos, Mystic Bytes are considering coding a Falcon game - all they have to do now is come up with an idea and code it!



▲ Oliver and a copy of ST/TOS #4

The first person we ran into was Oliver Heider, one of the guys involved with the French ST/TOS magazine. He showed us a copy of ST/TOS #4 which is now in 4x format and he told us Corvus's Centurion II accelerator was in production and would be available within the month - it is now available and should be shown publicly for the first time at the Atari Phoenix '98 in Mainz, Germany.

After writing up my thirty 8-bit Atari machines I showed Foundation Two's latest game *Cryog* on the Falcon to S&

of Checkpoint. Next to S&S on the brother of S&S - Not of Escape. He was working on his next European graphics package and a 4096 for the competition. Next to Escape and Checkpoint was TSCC. Llama was working on another 4096 and MC Laser was creating a Mail and was pleased to release *Module Completion #1*, certainly more pleased than he was with his prize in the real competition - but that's another story.

MC Laser is also a member of the Parts of Decay who produce the Undercover disk magazine which will include the real-time article in its next issue. After just four hours sleep I was up again and THE MATCH of FUJI showed me his latest game called *Search* which is a logical puzzle style game. He's currently working on a 'True clone' with some cool extras, *D&X*, another FUJI member is working on an intro and improving the Undercover shell. SCHULS of FUJI demonstrated a new version of *Play of War*, a two player game.

Next to FUJI, the Poppy Team from France were coding some new routines, but were struggling with the German keyboard.

The Raining development team were also there offering beta versions of *Raining* which looked slick. They plan to release a level editor in the near future and they're also working on a multi-player version.

ST *Survivor of Loaf* (Reformation of Nix Limit Coding) said *Loaf* are also programming a 'True clone

The Mad Butcher of Foundation Two and Grey of Mystic Bytes report from this annual coding convention...



▲ Grey (Mystic Bytes) plus D&X and THE MATCH (F.U.J.I.)

and they continue to work on the Toxic magazine. 42 Bastion was programming a few games card for the Lynx including *Invaders*, *Snakebyte*, *Pinax*, *Isolation* and *18XX*.

Most of the Atari enthusiasts were either coding or creating graphics or sounds, most of the PC users were playing out games including *Quake*, *C & C* and *Age of Empires*.

The Commodore 64 enthusiasts were more active producing some fine demos. The only two Atari 8-bit enthusiasts (Heaven and Mad Butcher) were busy - check out the next *MSBUC* (8-Bit User Club) disk to see the results of their efforts.

Before the convention took place the organisers had stated this year's event would be the final InterJam due to the amount of work involved. However, hopefully there will be another Interconvention to attend next year. ☺

COMPETITION RESULTS

Atari demos

Place	Title	Group
1	Time Out	Mystic Bytes/Poland
2	Reformation	Syntax/Poland

Atari 486/68

1	Surprise!	Mystic Bytes/Poland
2	Power Off	Escape/Germany
3	Fish	TSCC/Germany

Atari M680x

1	Kabotekage	TSCC crew/Netherlands
---	------------	-----------------------

AUTUMN

Our Summer Heat sale generated a lot of response, obviously our readers know a bargain when they see one or two! We've still got reasonable stocks of all sale items, but if you want something in particular and aren't planning on coming to the ACC '98 show in November then it might be a good idea to order now as we reckon that our stocks will be severely depleted and some items completely sold out during the show!

Do you like mind games like Backgammon? Or do you prefer a shoot-'em-up? Perhaps you enjoy the challenge of a game with massive levels and hundreds of rooms to explore?

Hang on, not everyone uses their Atari for games, we know this, so we've bought in stocks of some serious stuff to tinker with. How about Hyperpoint, the excellent point package from Atari themselves, still good years after it was first released! Are you a bit disorganised? No fear, how about ST Organizer with its combined functions to put order into your chaos!

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Due to the maturity of this software, you'll need an STFM and a low, medium or high resolution screen to run most of it. STs owners will find most software runs OK. Polcoe owners are probably out of luck though!

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Hitting the right note

Fumbling with frequencies? Puzzled by pitch? Tune in with Shiuming Lai...

The last installment of this series examined the technique of varying the playback speed of a recorded sound to make musical notes. This has some fundamental implications which are often overlooked, as demonstrated by many works based on the computer music scene - some of which are even composed by highly revered figures in their field.

Irrespective of the base technology (analogue or digital, the principle is the same), the absolute pitch of the resultant sound is only relative to that of the original from which it was synthesised. More specifically, it's a function of three variables: a note x , its base sampling frequency y and output replay frequency z .



One of the main flaws in the original Sound Tracker format was the omission of sample rate information. Therefore, in order to make effective use of this system, we must establish a standard recording speed for a reference pitch. In digital terms this means a set sampling frequency. Although the word "frequency" is regularly used in relation to digital recording, it's important to differentiate between sampling frequency and signal frequency. To avoid confusion we'll say sampling "rate" henceforth.

The most common tracker format on the ST (4-voice Pro/NoiseSound Tracker) uses a base sampling rate of 44KHz for C-3, the C note in the third octave. The table on the opposite page contains the exact sampling frequencies, to the nearest Hertz, for the three-octave range (see boxset) of this standard.

Unfortunately, low-cost personal computer sampling systems tend not have a small number of preset rates. Even Soundlib (figure 1 on opposite page) with its fairly large range of sampling rates, can't quite match the ones we need.

ProTracker tips

This isn't as bad as it appears because the difference can be compensated for by software. One particularly powerful feature of ProTracker (supported by CyberTracker and most popular tracker in the Huggle charts) is its resampling facility. It's also a double-edged sword because ironically the manual doesn't explain how to use it.

Press [Control]+F to open the sampling menu, shown in figure 2. You can see in the screenshot the mouse pointer is over the button marked B-1, which we will call our current sample pitch. The button below, marked C-3, is the reference pitch. All this means is, B-2 sounds like a properly tuned C-3. These two buttons are for data input; click on them to clear the entry, then enter a new note by pressing the appropriate key on the keyboard - so the program can compute the correct shift from the specified tuning error.

From theory to practice

On the Reader Disk, are some samples for you to play with. REF.SPL is a correctly-tuned reference sample, so load this first. Then load 34K.SPL into another, empty slot. This is a typical sample from a PD disk illegally for use in tracker programs, and is out of tune. For demonstration's sake we'll use C-3 as our reference pitch; play a few notes of 34K.SPL until you match or nearly match REF.SPL at C-3.

It should be D#F2. Now we've found the error we can enter the data. Going back to our previous explanation, this is "D#F2 sounds like C-3" so make your current sample is the one you're going to modify, click the current sample pitch button and enter D#F2. The reference is C-3 by default so you don't need to change that. Now just hit RESAMPLE.

ONLY THREE OCTAVES?

In isolation it seems mutually inadequate - however, there occurs in a deliberately imposed limit of a tracker's pitch-shifting ability (some have four, maybe five), rather than the range the hardware can reproduce. A digital resampler can only be pitch-shifted so far, before its final resolution deviates from the original source to the extent it begins to sound terribly artificial in comparison. That's the engineering viewpoint. On the other hand, in an artistic sense, excessive resampling can create some very unusual sounds, so by all means try it and hear.

Noise Tracker uses my lumping a sample up or down a few octaves (figure 3) while ProTracker people can use the resampler to get the same effect; make the current sample pitch an octave more or less than the reference and resample. Repeat this several times, as the current sample pitch button changes to match the reference pitch after each resampling operation.

Multi-sampling

This is a technique used by synth manufacturers when sampling a real instrument, to overcome the often-dimensional problem. It simply involves sampling a number of notes along the musical scale of the instrument. Upon playback from the synth, interpolation fills in the gaps in between to recreate the whole range of notes, far more accurately than can be achieved with a single sample for the same range.

You can apply the same method when recording instruments for trackers, with the advantage you only need sample for the range you will use.



The last practical experiment concerns sounds which are out of tune by less than a semitone after resampling. For this, load GORGEP1 (a sound generated by Electronic Arts's Solpett synth using a popping bottle cork as the grain-wave table) then repeat the process of finding a note to match reference C-3. It's roughly D#F1 again, so resample it as follows.

Now adjust the fine-tune controls - click on the VQSUPR1 box in the sample parameter block to reveal the FINE-TUNE box. It's approximately -3. Once your sound is tuned, it's advisable to save it using ProTracker's extended SFF format, to preserve fine tune and loop values.

If at this stage you're thinking resampling is a lot of hassle, how many times have you written a track then tried changing the instrument? If the one you composed with was not properly tuned, you're faced with worse problems,

especially if you want to evaluate the piece with a number of other instrument sounds.

In fact, there has been at least one case of a tracker module's score being translated into conventional musical notation for a pianist, and when it was played for real it sounded completely off. The piano was not to blame as it had been subject to regular tuning checks, so I hope that consolidates the point. It's worth every effort to track samples two stages before commencing any real work. ☐



▲ Figure 1: Soundable 1.0: Early flexible sampling/resampling speeds.

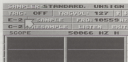
Sound Tracker standard sampling frequencies (KHz)

Note	Octave 1	Octave 2	Octave 3
C	4.091	8.183	16.376
C#	4.430	8.860	17.720
D	4.697	9.395	18.809
D#	4.971	9.943	19.886
E	5.279	10.559	21.116
F	5.593	11.186	22.373
F#	5.926	11.852	23.705
G	6.279	12.559	25.091
G#	6.653	13.306	26.613
A	7.046	14.092	28.186
A#	7.457	14.914	29.809
B	7.891	15.803	31.677

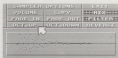
RESAMPLING PITFALLS

Beir is mixed not all sounds are suited to this kind of treatment as it introduces digital artefacts (giving a ringy quality). Those with plenty of harmonics and distortion will mask it out to an extent. This is actually true of normal ST/Tracker tracker replay too, which is essentially real-time non-destructive resampling, with the processed sample data routed to the audio output system rather than overwriting the source stored in memory.

One Atari software developer with notable expertise in digital synthesis is Solpett in France. Its products use basic note information to discuss earlier, to avoid having to make a second-generation resample.



▲ Figure 2: Resampling to an accuracy of one note in ProTracker.



▲ Figure 3: Sound Tracker's active shift, in the SAMPLER menu.

ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS

The ill-fated TOS Tracker from the Swedish demo masters broke new ground in ST tracker programming back in the early '90s. Its concept and design was more or less identical to the more established Sound Tracker format, differing in its file structure and use of 300Hz base speed. Some years down the line, when another Swedish group started work on an 8-vision tracker, Octalyser, it was decided to include both 160Hz and 300Hz, as well as a new 200Hz base speed option. The latter enabled the use of samples recorded at 500Hz.

Squash it!

A brand-new sample processor for all Atari

If you're like us at Electronic Cow, you'll believe that there's more to sample editing than just cut and paste. That's why our new program has more than thirty different processing algorithms, from simple scaling effects and conventional synthesis tools, to innovative sounding special effects and imaging filters to enabling you to explore a whole new sonic environment. With so many flexible editing tools it's easy to turn just one sample into a huge library of unique sounds. So go on, be a little more creative with your samples, and squash 'em.

- Low- and high-pass (FIR/IR), and comb filters
- Compression, autoformants delay, and Karvonen
- Dynamic, Chorus drive, and Gate (with threshold control)
- Envelope, Smooth, Granularize, Envelope and Attack
- LFO with delay, shape, and envelope settings
- Fourpole amplitude envelope shaper
- Ring filter, reverb, Phase and Spectral modulation
- Transpose, Squeezing and stretching
- Waveform plot, Flip, Reverse, Random, and Shuffle
- Blur, Freeze, Tilt, Mirror, and Position
- Reverb speaker simulacra (with drive different shapes)



Other Features

- MIDI sample transfer with drivers for Akai S990/SB and Sample Champ Standard compatible devices
- Load and save in AIF, AIFF, or WAV format, with additional support for raw data (Apple II/PowerPC)
- Basic sample analysis, including tempo and pitch calculation
- Drawn up to with gated or free division modes (draw each section as a sample and creates a MIDI file template)
- Single operation (to memory or hard disk)
- Extensive clipboard facilities, including the ability to mix samples with various modes, such as amplitude modulation
- Spatial source effects, like Stereo, Surround, and Cross-Fade
- Smart auto-crop to remove dead space before and after each wave (interlocked sample data)
- Sample playback on all Atari (On-line store to Format II-III (Atari) TT1111, 16-bit mode TT1170, up to 30K/24 for 40K/32 Future, and 40K/32 TT1170)

- Multiple window interface with processors in dock-mount style windows
- Supports all resolutions above 440 x 400 (including the 8-bit to graphics card), colors or mono
- On-line quick reference help, using OTCut, and an extensive printed user manual

Squash will run on any Atari with at least 128K of memory, and a 440 x 400 display (either on monitor or screen). A hard drive is also recommended, due to the increasingly large size of samples. It's worth all Electronic Cow software releases, upgrading to new versions and user support is free of charge. For a limited period, registration costs of other Electronic Cow software can be purchased Squash at the special introductory price of \$99 (one daily 129) plus \$1.50 postage and packing.

Squash will be released in November in time for ACE'94, so come along to the show and try it out for yourself!

Other news

Electronic Cow have had a busy summer, getting ready for the ACE'94 show, when all our new software will be released. As well as producing new software, we've also added new features to all our existing titles too...

- MIDI Sequencer v1.0** - now has even more composition tools
ACE'94 v1.0 - now 32-bit compatible, multi-format, and more exciting!
Sound Chip Synth v1.0 - even more real-time MIDI control
Logic Synth v1.0 - totally revised, and more flexible synthesis system
Synthesizer Synth v1.0 - bundles of new editing features added

Both Logic and Synthesizer Synth now also have SMP playback facilities and bring along your master disk to the show to upgrade free of charge, or contact Electronic Cow to arrange upgrading by post or email.

Contact us:

If you'd like some more information about Electronic Cow software, or would like to order a product, the get in touch:

WWW:

<http://www.electroniccow.com>

Email:

electronic_cow@btinternet.com

Telephone:

044 244 03 or 0434 181 147

Or write to:

Electronic Cow, 88 Broadwater Gardens, Torrington,
 Devonshire, EX2 8LZ, UK

Distributors:

UK/Canada
 Systems for Success
 PO Box 384
 Nottingham
 NG4 6BB
 Tel: 044 555 0700

The many
 Fates Ware
 Manchester
 2001 Ltd
 Tel: 044 555 0700



FILES

Returning from his holidays, Cybes brings you the latest Atari news from around the world...

Those of you who had problems accessing the Atari Computing web site at <http://www.ataricomputing.com/> using AOL's PPP-Connect will be pleased to hear the problems have now been resolved. CyberStrider's commercial arm, who provide the Atari Computing domain services, has moved to bigger and better Internet servers, using slightly different technology (prior to the launch for a detailed explanation of these problems).

A recent addition to the way to remember Internet names brings us *Flash Objects* which can now be found at: <http://www.flash-its-it.it/>

I'm sure you'll agree it's a whole lot easier to remember than the previous long-winded *CompuServe URL*! There also has now small contact addresses which you'll find in the next page.

Until recently Atari users have only had a couple of options to access MME files. Mosaic includes a TTP utility called *MFSPACE* which handles these and although it can be used as a stand alone utility with other applications it's not user friendly. There's also *ISI-Coda*, which also offers the ability to create MME mail attachments.

Recently I created screen *Flarinas*, a standalone MME utility which can decode MME, UUE and quoted printable files from a single GEM application and it automatically uses the *ANSWER* if available.



Flarinas is currently only available in French but is simple to use. Registration costs FRF6 (around £1) so if you'd like an

English version the more of us that register the more likely this is to happen.

Download available from: <http://services.worldat.net/vol-conn/atari.shtml>

PPP-Connect PPPProblems

The current English PPP-Connect release has problems accessing some web sites. These problems occur when trying to connect to web servers using the *http 1.1* protocol instead of the earlier *http 1.0* protocol.

Every computer on the Internet has a unique numerical IP address. We don't generally use these because they are mapped to easier to remember names. For example, www.ataricomputing.com has the IP address 216.21.159.21 and your browser takes you to the numerical IP address automatically.

As Internet is the World Wide Web exploded it soon became apparent there wouldn't be enough IP addresses to go around so work started on *http 1.1* which doesn't rely on fixed IP addresses to the same extent and works roughly as follows:

- One "host" domain name has an IP address assigned to it. All other addresses are alias from this IP - effectively they have the same IP address.
- All the HTML files for the domains are in their own directories and the web server is configured to know which files are kept where.
- When a browser looks for a *http 1.1* domain, the data packets arrive at the web server, which in turn examines the data packets to see which domain it wants to go to. Once it has worked out what domain the data packets are seeking it looks in its database and passes them on to the correct directory.

Anyone experiencing problems with the current English PPP-Connect can switch to *HTTP* or *STING* and browse happily using the latest *CAB-OWL*.

Get Real

AOL users are now able to listen to Real Audio files on their PCs - well the few of us that run MMT can. RealAudio Player by Peer Media is not actually a player but it can take 14.4K AM (Real Audio) files and convert them to WAV sound data which can be rendered to an AUDIO device under MMT which plays the music. Less happy Peer state working on a version for "normal" PCs soon. You can grab a copy of this TTP converter from: <http://www.danish.cyberstrider.org/>



If you're into MMT, pay a visit to Katherine Ellis's web page at: <http://www.primetel.com/~telis/> where lots of easy-to-use MMT stuff hangs out. Katherine programs various utilities for TOS and MMT and her latest creation is *POPGEN* - a cute little program which lets you download email via the POP3 protocol. You will need a working *STX/STING* installation, a multitasking OS (preferably MMT) and an AOL server. Registration costs \$8 US (around £1) for which you get a copy of *SMTPGEN* which enables you to send email.

CyberStrider Steps up

CyberStrider have just expanded their services by moving into the "costume" Internet arena. Having invested heavily in both time and money they are now able to offer custom solutions to your Internet needs, ranging from simple Domain Name registration through to full maintenance of your web site. Commenting on this expansion Danish from CyberStrider said "Having followed in the footsteps of the Internet for the past ten years, we will be putting that amount of experience into providing our clients with one of the best services around. Our products are accessible to the business user and even the home hobbyist." Domain Registration starts from just a US\$ (including registration fees) through to full web site design and maintenance starting from £150. For more details contact CyberStrider at info@cyberstrider.net <http://www.cyberstrider.net/>

CYBER PAINT™

Cyber Paint is part of the legendary Cyber Series and can be used together with the other programs in the series or as a stand alone program.

£6.99



Cyber Paint is a powerful paint and animation package. Choose from a host of flexible paint box techniques to create colourful animations. Images can be overlaid and Degaus/Neochrome images can be loaded as backdrops. Cyber Paint has a range of special effects to resize, distort, move and superimpose entire screens, so you can produce video effects on a standard ST1.

- Choice of brush styles, including user-definable brush shapes, airbrush and stipple
- Range of drawing tools: Pen, line, polygon, circle and box
- Move, resize, mirror, or rotate picture sections
- Text input in a wide range of fonts and styles
- Automatic image registration to create cut animation sequences
- Real-time zoom mode for detailed editing or viewing animations
- Load/save images/sequences from Cyber Studio, Degaus, Neochrome, Argis Animator
- Multiple overlaid images - static or animated
- Special animation effects, with automatic intermediate view generation (tweening) on whole screen or selected area.

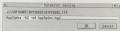
System requirements: 1 MB memory minimum. Order form on page 40.

Suggestive Remarks

Mike Kerlake with some suggestions for better Atari computing and some ideas for programmers...

First off I've been taking in what some people have said in letters and elsewhere about help files. These are normally supplied with shareware and PD software, and increasingly with some commercial software, mainly because printed manuals are expensive to produce and can quickly go out of date.

Many help files come in the ST-Guide HYP format, and assuming you have the program installed, either as a desktop accessory or an application, provide a quick and easy way of getting instant help from inside a program. However, not everyone wishes to use ST-Guide, and they face a problem because more often or not there is no ASCII help file provided with much new software. Trying to make sense of a HYP file is not easy without the proper viewer! Therefore, I would suggest all programmers making documentation available in HYP format for their programs should consider including ASCII documentation as well. It also helps those of us that like to print out help files - which isn't convenient from ST-Guide.



▲ HYP:STGDS does the job, but it's a really TTP and all in German

That really brings me on to another suggestion, how about someone coming up with a proper print utility for ST-Guide? I'm aware of the German HYP:STGDS utility which can output HYP files via GDCOS but it appears unsupported and a similar utility in English would be really useful.

Playing with output options, has anyone come up with a way of getting Papyrus output into PostScript or PDF format? Papyrus has drivers for outputting to HT repeaters, but both these options would be useful additions for anyone trying to output Papyrus documents as commercial printers or bureau services. In, better ideas, or better still, proper drivers, are required!

Now it's Readers' suggestion time and Stephen Brown of Carlisle in Scotland came up with the following idea which is intriguing, although I'm not sure it's

workable - in usual comments or working programs are issued?

"I have thought about improvements that could be made to the Atari system (particularly ST) and came up with this:

I thought that a small utility, probably as AUTO folder program, could be written to allow four or sixteen colours on screen at once at high res. I have always considered the desktop resolutions to be guidelines by which the ST will have in, and that good coding can replace these resolutions, so surely these can be altered (I know some games are made to allow 32 colours on-screen).

This would be most useful for internet users, being able to view the pictures and be able to see the general idea of what it's meant to look like in colour if only four colours are used.

By my calculations, a 640x400 4 bit image (16 colours) would take up 128kb of main memory which shouldn't be a problem in most cases. The only trouble is monitors. Those with an Atari in use specify computer will take out. Those who have adapted VGA, SVGA, and also

multimedia monitors will be able to benefit.

I could understand why something like this was not released commercially because of the number of times

monitor's around, but this may not be a problem for the "usual programmers" as it could benefit them too, and take with prices of GDCOS aren't necessary."

Thanks Stephen, let's see what the experts can come up with.

Finally, I've had a bit more response to the idea of a directory of people willing to assist other Atari users with help and advice. And I hope to have the first directory ready for inclusion in AGP12. However, the more offers of help will get the better the chances of the directory being useful. If you think you can spare a bit of time to help other Atari users, please get in touch with me via the usual editorial address or email me at mike@ataricomputing.com



And so to print

by Michael High

Michael High continues his tutorials on Papyrus with some tips for getting the best results from the printer...

When you select Print Papyrus builds up an image of the page and relies on the printer driver to tell the printer how to print it. To get the best from your printer you need an understanding of how printer drivers are set up. Happily this chore is easier now Papyrus and NVDI have implemented remarkably similar set-up dialogs. However, there is a snag...

Manual - what manual?

The Papyrus manual boldly declares "most people will not need to use the Printer set-up dialog". While that's true if your printer is explicitly included in the available drivers it still leaves the rest of us following the pearl of wisdom: "... use one it resembles how your printer's manual for details". Unfortunately most current printers are supplied without manuals so it's a case of buyer beware!

However, all is not lost, there are some general principles which should help you make sense of the four pages of Printer set-up dialog.

Which driver to use?

Every time you print you are given a choice between the Papyrus drivers or those provided by NVDI, GDDII or IgspeedGDDII, depending which font handling system you have installed. I have found no significant speed or quality difference between the external and internal drivers so I use the Papyrus drivers because they provide convenient popup menus to set the quality and paper settings. NVDI often offers the same settings but you have to open the Control panel to change them. The choice is yours depending on which other applications you use - you can copy the settings between them.

Printer families

- **Daisy-wheel:** This technology is strictly text-only and not supported by Papyrus.
- **Postscript:** Commonly offered as an option on top-end laser printers and used by printers and typesetting houses. Papyrus can output to these printers via an external NVDI supported extra driver but is not covered in this article.

- **Pin Printers:** This originally consisted of printers with 9 or 14 pins that struck a typewriter ribbon onto paper to produce the image from a pattern of dots. These days they are more often inkjet printers which squirt dots of ink onto paper using a variety of similar technologies. The common characteristic is that the dots are printed in a line at a time, as the data is received by the printer. Each line consists of multiple dots and spaces and the number of "pins" determines the resolution.

- **Page Printers:** Laser printers fall into this category. The laser is "baked" onto the paper. Since the paper must keep moving to avoid clogging fire, these printers usually wait until all the data for a page has been received into printer memory before starting to print. Hence the term page printer. To minimise the amount of printer memory needed data compression is almost always used. If your pages include large detailed or dense bitmaps images you may run out of printer memory in which case the only solution is to print at a lower resolution or invest in a printer memory upgrade.

- **Image Printers:** These are not physical printers but drivers which can generate an image file for use in another program. These could be anything from 10240 dpi images for use in 3D-Guide (generates up to 2400 dpi 800 files for high quality photo-typesets).

Where do I start?

Although there are no formally agreed standards for printer instruction codes, many offering codes of printer share common instructions with major manufacturers such as Hewlett Packard or Epson. The manufacturers themselves do not override the rules with much modesty. So if you cannot find an existing driver for your exact model, look for a driver for an earlier model from the same family of printer where a Pin 4 laser printer driver will probably drive the latest Pin 6 - although any new features are unlikely to work. If that fails, look for a driver for the same family of printer from another major manufacturer. This may work if your target printer resolution is more

expensive brother's code. There are few fewer manufacturers of printer components than there are printer manufacturers, so the odds are better than you'd imagine. Once you find a driver which produces some recognisable output and you have some documentation to decipher the control codes you can then begin to fine-tune the settings as described in the Papyrus manual along with the following pointers.

General Dialog



The first two fields in the General Dialog define individual drivers: Printer and Quality. These are the only settings you see again in the Print Dialog. Quality is normally used for things like dpi settings. However, it can be used for any special effects. For example, page printer drivers can usually be set to produce multiple copies very rapidly. If you want to add these Printer and Quality descriptions, make the changes in the fields marked Name and Quality settings. (In Papyrus 2 a new called Quality Specification). Once you hit Apply, they appear as popup choices under Printer and Quality. The Output Port is normally set to Parallel. This is where you set up Image Printers by selecting HPGL or CG-Graphics. When an Image printer driver is used, the file selection appears after you hit Print so you can specify and name the image file you are about to create. Postfile margins are strictly for Pin printers only - leave them at zero for all other printer types. Margins for page printers are set in the Cut Sheet dialog.

A word about margins.

It is important not to confuse the margins set for the printer driver with those set in the Page Layout dialog. Printer margins are the physical limitations of the printer. Page

User Group News



Ray Golding and Ed Smith have officially taken over running the club from AGPC founder Jim Hamby (jimbac), who has stepped down for personal reasons.

They propose to discontinue the magazine in favour of a printed AG magazine. The magazine will be published at a nominal price - more details when available. As Ray says "Although the Club was founded for the more 'serious' Atari, we are looking to expand the number of members and could do with some 'younger' blood".

Atari Computing would like to wish Ray and Ed every success in their new roles, and thank Jim (jimbac) Hamby for his efforts getting the club started. For more information contact:

Ray Golding (Editor) 55 Wainford Farm Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 9PA. Tel/Fax: 01233 631111. Mobile 0845 365 406. Email: rgolding@atariat.co.uk
Edmund Smith (Design/Layout) "Fire-Thyme", 10 Laurel Bank, Derby Lane, Derby, DE11 4BB. Tel: 01332 747421. Email: edmund@atariat.co.uk

STAG (Scotland's TOS/Atari Group)



At Gold, STAG Founder and Chairman, reports on the latest goings on from Scotland...

STAG has become one of the biggest and active Atari User Groups in the UK. Well attended meetings are held every second Tuesday, and we produce a 30 page, A4 newsletter every four weeks or so. We

have also recently produced a 30 page special on how to write your own HTM5 pages.

On 29th September 1998, the third AGM will be held at The Railway Inn, Hovecroft - we'll include a report in AGP13.

The roles of the proposed committee positions have changed as part of a rethink to ensure the posts are effective. The posts are: **Chairman:** Co-ordinating the activities of the group and the committee. **Treasurer:** Deals with all financial matters and co-ordinates members and new members. **Membership secretary:** New post with responsibility for promoting STAG in an attempt to increase our membership. **Webmaster:** Maintenance of STAG's WWW pages. **Events secretary (West and East/Central):** Duties to involve organising more structured meetings - like we did in the early days. **Newsletter Editor:** To continue to produce a 4 weekly, 16 page printed newsletter for members.

Most of the positions are really about co-ordinating the groups activities a bit more. No one person should have to take on too much work. All should be able to approach appropriate members to seek assistance.

Also it's time we had some new blood on the committee to introduce new ideas. Sandy Thomson has tendered his resignation as Secretary due to personal commitments which means he will be very busy for the next couple of years and I feel it's also time for me to stand down as Chairman. I'm already spending far too much time on Atari Computing related matters but, more importantly, I would like to give someone else a chance to influence the direction of the group. I fully intend to remain active - I enjoy the meetings far too much to stop. Contact: Alexander Gold, STAG (Scotland's TOS/Atari Group), "Rosa Whelan", Overton Crescent, Johnston, PA5 1BS. Email: agold@cia.compuk.co.uk



SWIFT is a fairly new German User group. Thorsten Butschke has dropped us a line to tell us a little about their aims...

PROMOTIONS 'R' US

If you would like to promote your user group on these pages totally free of charge then all you have to do is send us some copy.

Atari Computing (User Groups), "Rosa Whelan", Overton Crescent, Johnston, PA5 1BS, Scotland, or Email: usergroups@atari.computing.com Tel/Fax: 08 100-315.04@net.fr

Most of the members have been members of other groups for a long time. We have no organisation at all, we meet frequently - but not on fixed dates. The meeting are held in different venues including Warrna, Trar and Whedda. Anyone interested (member Luxembourg is close to them) is welcome to come along. Our interests include: Games, GTP&B coding, collecting and many more. We use XE/XX, ST/TT/HiScore, Japan's and Lynx machines.

On the 5th of August we met for the second time - at my flat in Warrna. The first person who appeared, was our guest of the day, Oliver (Parosod). He had just bought an old ATARI 500 (no XL) and needed a power supply for it. We tested it with the power supply of my X505/Flappy, then enjoyed playing Asteroids with four players. Rijnard (Highlander) and Walter (the Gambler) from Trar appeared and we showed off the latest Foundation Two beta release "Bombol Wo" for the 8-bit Atari. The Gambler tried hard, and was quite successful at the end. After the presentation, we had something to eat, and talked about some Atari topics, including web browsers, Pascal accelerators and so on. The Gambler showed some rare VCI modules, a new game for the 8 bit from the USA called Jet Break, and handed over a list of used modules for nearly every Atari console on behalf of a friend of his, so we could order some new stuff for our collections. The soon it became late and Highlander and the Gambler left for home. I showed Burn, the new Palace "jump'n run" from France to Oliver before he left. It was an interesting meeting with something for everyone and we're looking forward to the next meeting. Then we will prepare the upcoming SWIFT@PTTVERBAMM.LINQ.de of the Abbey (8-Bit User User Club) in Hohen at the end of October. Thorsten Butschke, Bismarck 16, D-42785 Wuppertal, Germany. Email: Butschke@online-online.de

We've enjoyed Mark Wherry's System Extensions features so much we've persuaded him to turn them into a mini-series - now if we can just sell the film rights, *Romancing the GEMstone*, anyone?...

In previous issues we've explored programs that add extra functionality to your computer. In this mini-series we'll be looking at how both users and developers can make use of these system extensions, so hopefully something of interest to everyone - please do write or email me with your questions and feedback so we can keep the mini-series focused. In this first episode I've taken a closer look at GEMScript - a subject that seems to be creating more than a little confusion?

Are you sitting comfortably?

First of all let's try clear up the confusion. Quite a few people seem to believe there's a program called GEMScript which actually does something - there isn't.

GEMScript is a protocol, a mere set of rules devised by various German programmers including Thomas Mach, Manfred Lippert and Holger Meier which effectively enables one program to control another.

Although GEMScript does nothing on its own, the fun begins when you have several programs on your system that are GEMScript aware, like GAB, Text, Jones, GEMView, GEMDraw and so on.

At its most basic level, two GEMScript aware programs could communicate to achieve certain tasks, but in order to make the most of the protocol you need a GEMScript interpreter. This is a program which can send user specified GEMScript commands to other programs - effectively allowing specified tasks to be carried out automatically.

Back in the DOS style Command Line Interface (CLI) era batch files were used to automate repetitive tasks and processed using programs like Piped on the Atari platform. These days the graphical user interface (GUI) reigns supreme and automating modern GEM applications required a different approach.

Think about the tasks you carry out regularly, for example, logging onto the internet and visiting a series of websites to check the latest news, running a Text spreadsheet to generate reports and printing out the results for future reference and so on. How many mouse clicks do these tasks

normally take? I've run out of fingers (and toes), but if I use a GEMScript interpreter I can count the clicks on one finger!

We need an interpreter!

Simple Script



Currently two GEMScript interpreters exist: *Scripter*, a German commercial product published by AGH and my own *Simple Script* which I have released as freeware and you can find on the Reader Disk.

Both products have different uses. For example, although both interpreters can carry out the simple tasks mentioned above if you want to write a set of instructions which fully interacts with the receiving program then *Scripter* is your only choice. *Scripter* is a full interpreted C-style programming language and very powerful.



How it works

The GEMScript protocol implements a system where commands can be sent to an application that has been established to support them. The application then tries to execute a command and returns the result to the sender. To use the interpreter you must first of all create a list of instructions (a script) using an AGCI editor (Bewerz, QED, Edit etc) then this can be loaded into the interpreter which executes your script. To understand this more fully here's a flowchart:



Conclusion

Hopefully by now you'll be aware of the potential this offers GEM programmers and you're interested enough to try out the scripts included with *Simple Script*. Of course you can modify the scripts or write your own to perform other tasks if you have suitable GEMScript aware applications.

Next time we'll delve further and look at how programmers can implement GEMScript support. There's more information on my web pages, including some English GEMScript documentation at: http://www.dcu.ie/~mark_wherry/ Email: mark_wherry@dcu.ie 4 Knapock Close, Tapscott Road, Iveter, Devon, EX2 9BW, England



▲ Here is a script you can run in *Simple Script* which plots a sound sample in GEMing the open GAB's internal pages



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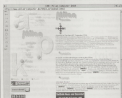
Stadthalle Neuss near Düsseldorf

3rd and 4th of October 1998

SITE SEEING

Milan Computer

82%

<http://www.milan-computer.com/>


As you've no doubt read already the Milan computer is now available from dealers all around the world (I'm from Dagen, and System Solutions in the UK) so I scoffed off to the official web site where I was disappointed (in the typical British way) to find the web site was all in German with Dutch and Swedish options but no English!

Happily armed with a copy of GEMTrade I was able to make sense of

most pages. The pages are updated and updated most days. The layout encourages "Just one more page" style on-line browsing but it's quite hard to figure out whether you've visited all the pages or not leaving that feeling you've missed something. From my encounter it's obvious the site is a vital resource for existing Milan owners with flash-ROM TOS updates online along with hints and tips for users to get the most out of their systems and generally

feel they have their finger on the pulse. For the rest of us there is loads of useful information about the Milan, details of the bundled software, benchmarks, lists of compatible hardware and software and some useful links. If you're thinking about buying a Milan and have some questions, then visit this site before you talk to a dealer - and you'll probably return often. *Danish Madhwa*

The Reservoir Gods

90%

<http://www.sot.bolton.ac.uk/~magpiez/reservoir.htm>


owners who have taken the Falcon to its limits with their programs. Not only have they uploaded golden classics such as Double Trouble and Terts to make use of the Falcons enhancements, they have also programmed Nintendo Gameboy and NES emulators so you can play games for those platforms on your computer. All their games, utilities and other programs are

available for download from this huge site and links are provided to other cooler pages.

Sadly the site will shortly be closing down to take a look before they do! The new site, although different to this one, will be online at:

<http://www.sot.bolton.ac.uk/~magpiez/3rds.htm>
Danish Madhwa



Wow! What a site! If you have a Falcon, The Reservoir Gods site is a definite must visit - great graphics, really laid-out, and very informative. The Reservoir Gods are a bunch of

SITE NEWS

CyberScribe Update

All CyberScribe Atari shareware programs can be downloaded via ftp using an ftp client from:
<ftp://cyberscribe.org> <ftp://cyberscribe.net>
login: anonymous
password: your email address
or pub/atari
Alternatively, via your web browser:
<ftp://ftp.cyberscribe.org/>
<ftp://ftp.cyberscribe.net/>

MOS640 available

Point your software at:
[www.internix.it/users/mike/pub](http://www.internix.it/users/mike/pub/www.internix.it/users/mike)
and look for the "public download directory" at the beginning of the page.

- MOS644.LZH is the 68000 binary and README
- MOS64400.LZH is the 68000 binary and README
- MOS644_5.LZH is the source archive

Notes/features in this release include:

- POP1 and -clear, although the "pop" command and "pop2" protocol are not implemented in Atari MOS - does anyone need them?
- Ability for watchdog to try GROUP and START commands after a failure occurs with the NEWNEWS command.
- Enhanced Help function.
- Improved keyboard handling.

There's also a MOS mailing list which you can subscribe to by sending an e-mail with the subject line "SUBSCRIBE MOS" to: atari@siggate.internix.nl



Nail Roughley's Atari related web pages have recently moved to the following addresses:

- What's TOS?
http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/people/roughley/ios_main.htm
- TT Overview:
<http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/people/roughley/overview.htm>
- Atari Timelines:
<http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/people/roughley/timeline.htm>



Around half our subscribers take the Reader Disk. The combination of tutorial files, listings, PD/shareware and exclusive software is unbeatable and not available anywhere else. Individual back-issue copies of the Reader Disks are still available. Please refer to page 7 for ordering details.



Desktop Solitaire v1.00
Playable demo
Copyright Korides Development
This is a fully playable version of Klondike (often called Patience) in its intermediate difficulty level. Runs at any resolution 640x480 or higher. The commercial release features eight different games and offers three different difficulty levels.

M Player v2.00
Shareware, Guillaume Tello
M Player is a QuickTime and AII player with sound, and a MPEG, FLV/FLH, SEQ, RI+DIT, FLH, OL, GE, CDH, CDLGGH player. M Player can also create QuickTime files (images and sound), QuickTime VML files (Interactive Video) or AII files (images and sound) of FLH files (images and sound) and animated GIF files. Documentation in English, German, French, Swedish and Spanish is included. We've also included the STX to videos. Three unregistered versions are fully functional but restricted to grayscale display.

Trainers tutorial
Three MP3 format samples to accompany the tutorial in AC#11

Simple Script v1.20
Freeware, Mark Wherry
A utility which enables you to write scripts to control GEM/Windows aware applications. Use Simple Script to automate online sessions, printing files, playing stamps and so on.

MOBRO EXCLUSIVE
Freeware, Danny McAleer
This program illustrates how easy it is to write a simple atmospheric MIDI sequence, and also the ease with which note data can be manipulated. Compiled TOS and GEM versions are included along with the Latex C source code.

HiSoft BASIC tutorial, EXCLUSIVE
Copyright Paul Jones/War
Computing Unit
POD (Post Documents Out) program and source code to accompany the HiSoft BASIC tutorial in AC#11

Unofficial Teal (LHYP) ROM Freeware, Mick Ripley
If you own a copy of Teal this ST-Guide hypertext is the ideal online companion to the printed manual.

FreeGEM v1.7
Freeware, Katherine Ellis
FreeGEM is a small utility which runs as a program or

desktop accessory and monitors your memory consumption, the more LEDs in the icons memory you're using.



Includes English, German and French MSG files.

MOBRO EXCLUSIVE
Freeware, Danny McAleer



This is a simple program to decipher MIDI messages. It is designed to explain the very most common MIDI messages are received and sent, so you can then use this knowledge in your own MIDI programs. Compiled TOS and GEM versions are included along with the Latex C source code.



Sadly, the TOS is not available and we have no firm delivery date. Obviously we will keep you fully informed on how things progress with the CD. Like you, we're disappointed, but, as we point out each issue, the production of the ST+TOS CD-ROM is beyond our control. However, what we can do is offer CD-ROM subscribers who want to get their hands on the Reader Disk software now the opportunity to do so - just complete the form below and we'll adjust your subscription's accordingly.

- ☐ Please send me the AC11 Reader Disk now, reduce my CD-ROM subscription by one, and continue my CD-ROM subscription.
- ☐ Please send me the AC11 Reader Disk now, cancel my CD-ROM subscription, and send me Reader Disks from now on instead.
- ☐ Please send me the AC11 Reader Disk now, I previously converted my Reader Disk subscription to CDs and would also like to receive the following Reader Disks which I have missed. I understand my CD subscription will be reduced by one for each Reader Disk ordered:

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☐ Reader Disk 10

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Send the completed form (photocopy or relevant details on a plain piece of paper are also acceptable) to:
AC Subscriptions, 38 Bantock Drive,
Troon, Ayrshire, KA10 6AC,
SCOTLAND.

Unofficial Texel HYP

77%

Documentation, Firmware, all Atari
 Author: Nick Nigley
 Email: ntd@igmal.demon.co.uk
 http://www.igmal.demon.co.uk

In ACIP we covered Nick's unofficial Pippin LT Guide Hypertext and in the same genre Nick has now turned his attention to Atari's Texel v1.4 (H). Although the German release included a hypertext on English topics has been released.

Furthermore there were some extra features which made it into the release version which were not covered in the printed manual to the Hypertext. Covers these, corrects a few mistakes in the manual and includes some simple features



examples for demonstration purposes.

The HYP included in the latest German distribution of Texel (currently version 2.1) weighs in at 1.04MB and covers every function and menu option. Nick's HYP isn't nearly as comprehensive - around one sixth the size of the original and, because it doesn't follow the exact layout of the

German HYP not many of the context sensitive links remain available. However keyword searches through Texel are possible, and the index can be called via Texel.

The unofficial Texel LT/HYP package has two aims:

- To regenerate certain essential items covered in the manual, enabling help to be available from the desktop.
- To provide some basic instruction and examples on the use of peripherals in a business environment.

Texel LT/HYP fulfils these aims admirably and, since it's freeware, all Texel users should get hold of a copy.

Joe Connor

FreeGEM v1.7

83%

Utility Firmware, all Atari running replacement AES v4.1 or later

Author: Katherine Ellis
 Email: kelli@planetatm.com
 http://www.planetatm.com/~kelli/

FreeGEM is a small utility programmed by Katherine Ellis, which runs as a program or desktop accessory and monitors your memory consumption - the more LEDs in the more memory you're using. Both ST

and TT memory is supported. When you are using more than 80% of available memory the stack LED is displayed and which serves as a visual reminder you're running low on memory.

The FreeGEM window can be divided to minimise its size and in this state memory checks are not performed - which saves CPU time. Alternatively the window gauges can be hidden which just leaves the LEDs which can be ticked away in a custom bar bar window cannot be dragged into the menu bar area.

Under MacG running a 256-colour resolution the background window pattern is displayed as speckled blue instead of marbled grey as my system - because my colour palette is different. Instead of changing my palette I simply edited the RSC file, for my own personal use, instead. Separate English, German and French RSC files are included in the distribution.



Joe Connor

Stewart v1.00e beta

89%

Stewart v1.00e beta



Utility, Shareware,
 MacG (v3 or later) required

Author: John McLeod
 Email: lars_and_john@online.de
 http://home3-online.de/home/
 lars_and_john/home_a.htm

Stewart is one of those utility apps you'll either love or hate. Stewart offers a variety of means to change the look and feel of the straight-lined MacG interface

as shown in the main dialog. This open beta release, which can only be used by existing registered Stewart users, offers two new features:

- Replacement MacG popup menu. This offers the following advantages over the built-in menu:
 - Applications listed after other entries.
 - Applications are sorted alphabetically.
 - Mini-icons can be displayed (Pic also required).

- Option to switch to the Mac Finder (for MacG/Classic users).
- Long Menus support.
- Ability to install from file (ST/H) icon in the menu bar - instead of the usual button on the desktop. The icon is user definable via a RSC file.

Although this is a beta release the German version was released just over a year ago and I've been using it without problems for several months, or to put it another way - there's no reason for existing users not to give it a try.

Shareware registration costs £7 via lars@jhs.

Joe Connor

aFTP v1.4 beta

Dan Dreifelbis reports...



One of the best ways to finding new software to use on your machine is through searching via the File Transfer Protocol, or ftp. Many systems on the internet have space set aside for storing vast quantities of software for various platforms - including the Atari. You can also find a mind-boggling quantity of graphics and sound files to cover just about any interest or topic on these sites. FTP is also the method used by some ISPs to enable their users to upload and maintain their personal web pages.

Originally to get to ftp sites you had to log into an ISP via a terminal program, activate its online UNIX ftp server client, and then type in various commands in order to log onto the server, get to its proper file area where you want to search, and then download to your computer or to your personal online storage area - an intricate and cumbersome procedure. Now many ISPs are dropping their access in favor of their users utilizing their own desktop client software which makes the whole process much more user-friendly.

Thankfully there are a handful of solutions available in Atarians already or for soon to be left out in the cold. One of the two solutions is aDACK, IFT or aFTP which is programmed by Czech programmers Jan and Tomas Kravencovs.

Installation

There are two separate versions of aFTP: one for use with the STARTING TOS/MP stack and the other for use with MinISET. For the former, you'll need an operating system AGS that can handle pop up and sub-menus (all TOS versions above 3.26, MagiC with XMENU, PCOR, PCG installed, or German), for the latter you'll additionally

need MinIT v1.08 and MinISET 1.01 or later. The Kravencovs also recommend you use a desktop with AV Server capability and thankfully most of the popular replacement desktops include



installing aFTP is a cinch, a simplicity itself. After installing aFTP on your drive simply run the program. Configuration is performed using the various GEM menus screens which set the paths, upload/download paths, whether to keep a log file of each session and where to keep it.

The footer is one of the programs most features. After setting up your favorite sites complete with the necessary login and password prompts revealing them a click of a mouse. After logging on and launching aFTP select a host's entry and aFTP performs all the necessary commands and log one displaying a GEM window with all the directories and files on the site. Changing directories and uploading/downloading files from/to your machine are all simple point and click operations. Unlike some ftp clients, aFTP can also upload/download



entire directories which saves having to open folders and upload/download files individually.

The upload/download progress bar is another neat feature which, for multiple uploads/downloads, includes two graphical bars which indicate the progress of each individual file and the total upload/download progress along with an estimate of time remaining.

This release refreshes directory windows much faster than the previous release when changing directories or accessing a different ftp site.

I've been using aFTP for months and find it to be the most intuitive and easy to use FTP client available to Atari users - it's indispensable for maintaining my web pages and searching for new files and tons of all the Kravencovs splash logs and web server features at an amazing rate. This program is a keeper! ☺

aFTP v1.4beta

Author: Jan and Tomas Kravencovs
Email: 2004@atari.com
URL: <http://www.jan.atari.com/>
Address: 26, 120 18 Plzeň, Czech Republic
Status: freeware, but donations accepted

Requires: Minimum 1 Mb, TOS/MP stack (TOS or TOS/MP), AGS supporting popup menus (MagiC, German, TOS 3.x and above), AV server desktop, MinIT (for MinISET version).

Pros: Fast, easy-to-configure, GEM interface

Cons: Won't run on a standard ST without system enhancements (needs loading, AV Server desktop)

80%

SL Upgrade or Re-Birth?

Here's the reason why you've remained loyal and kept your SL98 these past few years: also great news for those existing Calamus SL98 users who are considering an upgrade.

MGI Software Corporation, the Canadian company now behind this fantastic DTP package, has now released the English version of the long-awaited Calamus SL98 upgrade. The production of this major upgrade has been brought about by the arrival of a new development team who have been hard at work bringing a new feel to the SL98 version of Calamus by including a lot of up-to-date features.

X By far the most significant aspect of this update is MGI's inclusion within the SL98 package of most of the latest optional modules. These include Basic, Gridplay, Photo'n and Bulletin plus.

X There are several refinements to the user interface. E.g. new-style floating dialogues boxes, support for 80 dialog boxes under VGA 4 / Mega, Mac/PC/Box, and some new look aids.

X The Mark frame/function is now incorporated in the program and this eliminates the need for a separate Mark module.

X A NEW Gridlines Module provides comprehensive control over gridlines, grid lines and margins; frames, their number, placement and the colour/position of help elements.

X A NEW Text Frame Leading Feature, enables the user to proportionally adjust the text size within the frame by dragging the corner of the text frame.

X A NEW Frame Background feature allows the user to include different frame types as background within a text frame (ie. Bitmap).

X A NEW Feature allows text frames to have their own margins. This has been designed to be used in-conjunction with the Background feature previously mentioned.

X A NEW Feature has been added to allow frames to be visible outside the Document desktop inside the Page area; this gives the user the option to place unmod frames outside the page area for later use.

X A NEW Feature allows the Document desktop inside the Page area to set any colour (not grey window backgrounds any more).

X A NEW Feature allows the option to custom raster images between all planes: monochrome, grey, grey palette, RGB, RGB palette, CMYK and vice versa.

X NEW Frame handling enhancements including: Multiple selected frames can be moved at once without grouping and ungrouping. The mouse pointer can now change to identify the use of several functions including Proportional Sizing, rotate. A number of functions can now be utilized by using the mouse pointer in-conjunction with certain key combinations.

X Several new Bitmap Import/Export drivers have been added, adding access to additional Bitmap formats such as Kodak Photo CD (import), Photoshop PSD (Import/Export), Windows BMP (Import/Export) and IMG (Import/Export).

PLEASE NOTE: MGI Software Corp's policy is one of continuous improvement and they reserve the right to change the specifications of this package at any time without notice.



Calamus SL[®] 98

For Professional Design & Layout

Introductory Price
£ 179.00

Inc. 1st Class Reg Postage and VAT

This offer is valid from
1st October 1998 until 31st December 1998
Normal Retail Price £ 299.00

MGI Calamus SL98 Demo
£ 2.00 (if a disk) for PC and Mac

Calamus is a trade mark for MGI Software Corp.

Upgrade to



Calamus SL[®] 98

For Professional Design & Layout

SL92/93/94/95 to SL98	£ 129.00
5/52 to SL98	£ 129.00
1.09/1.09m to SL98	£ 159.00

Bearing in mind the fact that Calamus SL98 now includes four modules which used to be available only at extra cost these upgrade prices are better value than ever.

To qualify you must return your original master disk(s) with serial number, together with your invoice. Any disks posted to us should be sent Registered Post with insurance. In-Print Solutions Ltd cannot take responsibility for any disks lost in the post, other than those we despatch to you, which are insured in any case.

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Email: ips@clix.co.uk
Web Site: www.clix.co.uk/~ips



Please make all Cheques / Postal Orders payable to 'In-Print Solutions Ltd'
In-Print Solutions Ltd are the official UK distributor for MGI Calamus.

Calc Cyber/ Calc CAD

Sculpting anything, let alone fonts, in 3D programs isn't easy. Donny McAleer used Calc Cyber to create the ACC'88 text on the cover of this issue...



It takes an awful lot of patience to generate carefully-crafted 3D models in Cyber Sculpt and any help you can get is more welcome than a rare relative. Calc Cyber, and its companion Calc CAD, are two small desktop accessories for generating templates from Calamus fonts, for use in Cyber Sculpt and CAD3D respectively.

Both accessories allow you to specify the detail of the final template, with settings from rough to extra fine. For the most part, the default "normal" setting is fine; coarser settings are more useful for smaller 3D objects although I've not found a use for the finer detailed templates as yet.

After choosing a font a sliding box appears, where the phrases to be converted is typed. Only up to 32 characters are permitted but this isn't limiting because Calc Cyber creates individual templates for each letter as opposed to the entire phrase, so you don't need to type in duplicated letters.

The TMP files are then saved in the same directory as the font (an alternative path cannot be specified) using the font file as part of the filename, suffixed by the letter with an additional 'L' to denote

lower-case. These templates can then be loaded into Cyber Sculpt's Extrude, Spin, or even Cross-sectional editor (the latter is useful for manually creating bevelled effects). Since Calc Cyber works as a desktop accessory, it can be called without having to leave Cyber Sculpt too, which is exceptionally useful.



The program is functional rather than aesthetically pleasing and doesn't seem to like NVDR - Calc Cyber hangs the system

when you try to run another application (I got around this problem by using the Calamus accessory loader to load it when I need it then unload it again).

These caveats are forgivable considering how useful the program is. There's also a problem with some commercial fonts which can result in self-intersecting templates - nasty! Nevertheless, even these can be edited within Cyber Sculpt itself, and it's still a far better solution to modelling text from scratch.

Calc Cyber is an invaluable tool for adding text to 3D objects and I've certainly never found a better alternative. **D**

CALC CYBER

Author
Set Cyber

Where to get it
Propshop disk, A&T4541
<http://www.ataricomputing.com/>
Cost/Status
Prepared, donations invited

Required
Any Atari (ST high, preferably)

Pros
Superb idea, univalued on the ST, invaluable accessory for creating 3D templates in Cyber Sculpt

Cons
Some files produce unusable templates that need further editing, odd problem with NVDR.

70%



Getting Layered

Using Layers with Layout to good effect. David Encill tells us more...

So far we have dealt with the basics of DTP and some of the more complex issues of DTP terminology. To progress further, this issue examines some design issues and other features that DA's Layout can offer.

Layers

The ability to handle layers within a DTP package is a very useful, and often unused, feature. If you were required to produce a multipage design which incorporated a logo or a background "watermark" (see below) in the same position on every page, the last thing you would want to do is copy the logo from page to page. But if the logo could be placed on one layer, and the layer automatically copied to every other page (it certainly *is* a damn sight happier!)

DA's Layout can handle this easily. Imagine each layer as a transparent sheet of paper. On each of these sheets you can build up the page from separate components. The bottom layer would contain all the information that was required to be duplicated on every page across the entire publication; watermark, footers, headers, page numbers, etc. and, more importantly, registration marks and colour calibration strips.



Using this article as an example, it would be ideal to duplicate the side banners for every page. However there are instances when they would not be required, such as when adverts are inserted which use the entire page. In this case it is extremely easy to "white-out" the unwanted objects with a simple box containing white "fill" and "fill" attributes—or just simply delete the background objects for this page!

Firstly start with a new document and create a new layer to single layer already exists as default. Now use the (Sort Layer) to ensure that Layer 1 is under Layer 2. Switch to Layer 1 and create the desired background set-up. Duplicate the page by pressing on the (Copy current page) icon repeatedly to create the number of pages required in the document. That's all! Yep, that's all you need to do!

Left: The Layers palette. Note the three layers used in this document. The (A) button indicates the current active layer (A indicates all layers) (Z) showing and switching (Z) button disables the layer.

USING WATERMARKS

A very subtle design concept that adds panache to a document and can be used very effectively in letterheads and adverts.

As described in the main element of the article, this should be treated as a background layer so that text and graphics will overlay the watermark. The word "subtle" is very important. As a general guideline it is advisable to use a line level between 12% and 25%. The level of fading will depend on whether the document is being printed to film, in which case 12% can be used, or via a desktop printer where a border that is 20% faded.

Watermarks do not work well when the document is photocopied. This can produce variable results resulting in any text being difficult to read or, if the tint is too light, the watermark becoming invisible or patchy.

A sample watermark has been placed in this corner of this page with a 20% tint. Obviously I have no way of knowing if this was successful until the magazine is printed!



WATERMARK

Briefly speaking we are not copying the layer each time but creating new pages using existing layers, however the overall effect is the same. The reason for adding a second layer is so the main document can be worked on using Layer 2, without interfering with the background set-up.

Layer Menu

The Layer menu itself does contain several other options which can be experimented with. For instance you can copy and move layers to and from other pages, or even copy selected objects between layers on different pages, or sort layers so that objects can be placed under, or over, other layers. The ability to load and save individual layers to disk means layers can be used repeatedly in different documents – particularly useful when the same layout is required for periodicals.

Layout can even disable layers which is very useful when a page is dominated by graphics which could slow down the screen redraws. If heavy graphic content within a document is envisaged it is advisable for this reason to place much of the graphics onto a separate layer.

Overall the Layering features are extremely powerful and a multi-layered tool which opens up several possibilities for the DTP user.

Vector Net Transform

Time for a break to explore another inclusion of the DA's Layout arsenal. The BitMap Net Transformation tool is included with the standard version of DA's Layout and can be used very effectively to alter bitMap objects as though they were being wrapped around a completely re-definable 3D object.

Right: Two of the standard 'nets' offered. Note the various points which are used to modify the shape.



After clicking on the BitMap Net icon, you will be presented with a variety of preset 'nets'. Clicking on any of these presents places it onto the page. To create the net, select the 'Widely Net' icon then hold down the (Shift) key and click drag with the mouse button on any of the points.

A click-drag on any of these points (or (Shift) key) would modify the net to whichever shape desired.

To 'Transform' a vector object onto the modified net, hold down the (Shift) key and select the object, and select the 'Transform object' icon.

After a few moments the vector object is transformed/wrapped around a completely re-definable 3D object. Used with the 3D Extrude tool some very eye-catching designs can be created.

After clicking on the BitMap Net icon, you will be presented with several preformed 'nets'. Click any of these to place it on the page.

Vector Examples

Following are just a few examples of bitMap net transformations.



These were created from the same graphic text object (copied from the clipboard) with a 125%-175% graduated tint applied, to give the illusion of a light source positioned to the left, and further the 3D illusion. These vector objects can still be transformed in the usual way: stretch, rotate, rotate, perspective distort, etc. although once transformed the text or shading cannot be altered.



Next month the 3D Extrude tool will be examined, and used in conjunction with the BitMap Net feature, to create some really fascinating objects!

PRINTER TERMS

Character mark: A symbol which is added to a letter to indicate a special phonetic value.

Discretionary hyphen: An invisible character used to mark the desired location to be used to break a specified word during hyphenation. Discretionary hyphens can be entered directly into text with DA's Layout.

Document Window: The on-screen window that displays the document. Dot leaders: A row of periods or dots used to fill tab spaces. Dot leaders are most often used in numerical tables or tables of contents.

Dots per inch: Usually referred to as dpi, it is used to measure the pixel resolution of monitors or the dot resolution of printers.

Ellipsis: Three dots (...) usually used to indicate an omission of words. To place an ellipsis in text, use the character selector tool box. In most applications, when an ellipsis follows a menu item this indicates that choosing this item will open a dialogue box with further options.

Emulsion: The photosensitive coating on film or paper.

EPS: An abbreviation for Encapsulated PostScript file which is a graphics file format that stores high resolution pictures. An EPS file contains a PostScript image for printing and a preview for viewing.

First line indent: The distance between the beginning of the first line of a paragraph and the margins of the text block. In DA's Layout, a positive value creates an indent whereas a negative value creates an outdent also known as a hanging indent.

Font: A complete set of characters (letters, numbers, etc.) that share a unified design or typeface.

French kick: A page printed on one side and then folded at two right angles to form four pages.

Apologies for not including the sample advert as promised last issue. Due to the lack of space this was not possible, but I hope to include one in the next issue, along with an examination of the powerful 3D extrude tool.

DA'S LAYOUT V8.1

If you have any queries feel free to contact me – David Inzell,

TDANWEL@compuserve.com

A complete demo including the Plugle module is freely downloadable from our web site – see back cover for URL.

"amazing" Gen Lives demo to amaze your friends!

GenDemos is not only a way to bring Falcon demo effects to machines like the Milan and Hades - it could also have the reverse effect, encouraging some with PC-tids running Atari emulators to code modules for it too, just as the 128 byte entries listed some key people into action. I can imagine a few multi-Atari coders dusting down their copies of Devpac to create some GenDemos modules.

GenDemos is a brilliant and innovative idea which is both amazingly quick and entertaining so let's hope more effects are ported to modules soon.

Ray! How about turning the concept on its head and make DemoGEM - a demo that runs different versions of GEM in test windows!

Mr. Pick

K - 90%

Entertainment - Playable preview, Falcon only

K is a promising "Mario Kart" style game for the Falcon. The game is being developed by French demo coders EXX, who are also reported to be working on projects for the mysterious Czech "Rhexis" super-Falcon clone.

What we have here would not disgrace the computer, or indeed, a standard stock Falcon, which this preview runs quite happily on. The preview is a lush-looking, if slightly limited, single training track level. The graphics are drawn by Daniel "Flux" Delaune, so the creepy business which normally proliferate in their demo releases in the driving seats of the karts is there!

The rest of the graphics, from the introduction and menu screens, through to the in-game graphics, are all of the very highest standard, on a par with top console games. I'm not surprised the full version of the game will be a commercial release.

The gameplay is a superior version of the basic "Mario Kart" premise - in addition to racing the other cars on the track, there are also bonus power-ups to assist the player. Obstacles, such as walls



Illness - 80%

Entertainment (Demo) Falcon only, 4Mb, RGB required. Author: Escape

This demo was released at the Polish Coast Party last August where it was a distinctive entry in a very polished competition.

Escape always have had a reputation for doing their own thing which they established at the 1997 Siliconworld with their organically scary Illness-Came demo. This latest release confirms their idiosyncratic approach to "design".

Conventional demos take a soundtrack and load a parade of effects down it. Some very good demos synchronise the changeover and progression of effects in

time with the music. A very select few are able to create a "mood" with an adept combination of the audio and visual parts, being the separate pieces to make a "whole" greater than the sum of the individual parts - "Illness" does exactly this!

The sensation of this demo is sick. There is no overt technical virtuosity, of the sort found in Sonicthehedgehog, no fancy logos or textures wrapped 3D. Indeed, without the soundtrack, it would be very hard to tell just what is going on with the "Jackson Pollock on a high" inspired visuals.

Somewhere the cleverly blended and mood optimised soundtrack grabs you, and you'll keep coming back for more.

Chris Holland



and water are not just for show with amusing possibilities such as "flooding" the engine of your kart if you drive into a lake!

The full release version of this game should be another milestone in gaming on the Falcon in the same league as *Flaming*

and *Crooks of Creation*, with extra features such as a linked-Falcon full multi-player mode! This one is one to try with care!

Chris Holland

**Download Maggie 26
and check out the
new Maggie pages at....**

<http://rg.atari.org>



Q&A

"We always have more answers than questions"

The snowball principle

I Recently my computer and external hard drive stopped talking to each other. I tried replacing the cable, but that made no difference so I bought a replacement hard drive but that wasn't the problem either! I began to suspect the DMA chip but Dave at TUS soon narrowed the problem down to a faulty power supply in the hard drive case.

So now I had two working hard drive mechanisms and no case! After some head scratching I remembered the SCSI Bunker cable advertised by ADP in Atari Computing. After some helpful advice from Chris Crossley (ADP) I bought the cable for £18 and a PC case for £12. I now have both hard drives and a CD-ROM player housed in a neat case with no cable spaghetti problem. I'm a happy Atari worker again!

John Nicholas Oakes, Manchester

Unknown Device?

Q I have an ST's system using the ICD Link 1 hard adapter to access a CD-ROM drive. I'm into assembly language programming and want to read data from a CD-ROM (including audio CDs) into a program. I expected to be able to use the GEMDOS Pseudo call but all I get is the return code "E: Unknown device" when the device is clearly known to the desktop and CD accessory player. Also can you recommend any books or sources of information to control SCSI devices, ensuring GEMDOS calls are a non-starter?

Gary Smith, York

A Not all CD-ROMs will allow the transfer of audio data over the SCSI chain, so that may not be an option anyway. Can anyone else help?

Derynck Creker

Cookie Magic!

I Some applications look for Cookies when setting themselves up but they don't always look for the right cookies or interpret the results correctly. For example, EditPro, incorrectly checks for long filename capability by looking for the "MINT" cookie. The good news is you can change

this in a disk editor to "MagiC" and EditPro will then display long filenames when running under MagiC. Other applications look for "MINT" making the assumption MINT = MultiTOS and AES-4 which is wrong because AES-4 can be installed without MINT and vice versa.

Bob Job



A: EditPro's owner might also like to know they can stop EditPro's display appearing by setting 'mode' as I comment in the poster.

SHUTTER GUN

I The tip to pull down the rear corner of the printer (which switches off the heater and the fan) is only applicable to the older SUMSH printers.

There are two alternative ways around the problem, which is due to the controller 'loading' the DMA bus of the Atari if the printer is switched off. One involves fiddling with the components inside the controller and the second involves making up some simple hardware. Anyone interested in either of these solutions can contact Derynck Creker directly by email or write to him via our office address.

derynck@tin.computel.co.uk

Shutdown MagiC

I Changing resolution in MagiC seems to take longer if you use a replacement shutdown program, however there is a way to speed resolution change up a bit:



1. Copy the original shutdown program that came with MagiC into your `Thing/press/MagiC/Desk` folder and rename it as `SHUTDOWN2.PRG`.
2. Load the `CHANGES.PRG` program into Kells ST or other disk editor (making sure you keep a back-up first).
3. Move search the file for the line that says `SHUTDOWN.PRG` and when you find a change it to `SHUTDOWN2.PRG`.

4. Save the altered file and now you should find when you shutdown MagiC it loads your fancy replacement Shutdown program but if you're changing resolution it uses the plain vanilla Shutdowns internal - the best of both worlds.

Neither Atari Computing nor the author accept any responsibility for the loss of any data you may experience as a result of using this tip.

Paul Barton

Lots of questions!

Q I have some questions I have been wanting answered for a while but I have only just got around to asking them!

- 1) I have been told "multitypes" monitors can be used on Atari systems to display low, medium and high resolutions, but I am wondering how it is possible. I currently have dedicated mono monitor and colour TV scope and would like the ability to view all three resolutions on one monitor.
- 2) I have been using Solor-to-ru emulator with MagiC, and have recently noticed while Solor is running I cannot access the program manager via the `[Alternate]+[Command]+[F6]` key combination. Are there any other frames emulators available?
- 3) Do the SolorX drivers work on flatbed scanners other than the Microsoft model? I've seen a Phasix scanner for around £50 and I presume the internals are all fairly similar between models, but does anybody know for sure? I noticed that it used the parallel port, with a through-port so a printer can still be plugged in. Although I also have a PC and will probably be able to convert images to an Atari readable format, it would be so much simpler to plug it into the ST.
- 4) Are there any GEMOS printer drivers compatible with the Epson style colour 888 printer, particularly one which can take advantage of colour and 240dpi resolution? If there are, can you tell me where to get them?
- 5) Finally, a question that has haunted me for years. Programmers use programming languages to write software but who writes the languages for the programmers? I realise it could be possible to use assemblers to make high level languages, but what is used to make low-level languages?
- 6) Sphynx 2Floppy, Carika

A 1) Some multitypes monitors are capable of displaying all three ST resolutions. The long since superseded NEC 30 model was a popular choice, try Display Electronics or 0161 679494 - opposite Crystal Palace football ground, for up to date recommendations.

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