

BBS

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MAGAZINE

August 1993

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The Magic of PCB-UUCP

NEW COLUMN!
Commodore Connections
plus Macintosh, Internet

BBS Notebook visits Worldwide Brochures, Travel Mates BBS & Travel Mates II, Idaho Interactive, The Lock Box, and PreRapture BBS



The Innovation Continues...

VERSION 6.1

of **The Major BBS®**

Hard at work in sun-swept Florida, our fearless developers have discovered the future of BBSing... EGA/VGA graphics and ANSI together on the same BBS! The Major BBS Version 6.1 gives you the power to create a graphical DOS-based BBS that also supports non-graphics users — *everyone* can use your system.

Our new multi-lingual/multi-protocol architecture lets you easily plug in languages, such as Spanish and French, and alternate presentation protocols like RIPscrip and NAPLPS. You can offer as many as 50 different languages for up to 256 simultaneous users on a single machine. Add new languages with just a couple of keystrokes.

Use our RIPscrip add-on option to give your users dazzling online graphics. The Sysop "paint" tool works directly with The Major BBS configuration utility and lets you draw beautiful scenes and mouse-driven menus. A royalty-free, graphics terminal program is included for distribution to your customers.

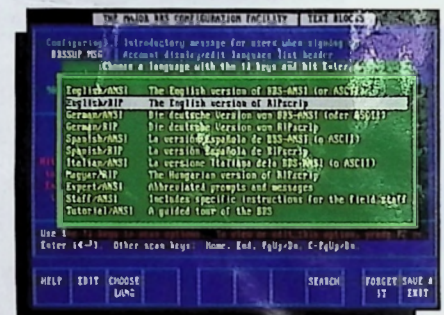
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That's just the beginning. Our new Fax/Online add-on lets you integrate fax-mail and fax-server technology into your BBS. And our new Major Gateway/Internet add-on directly ties you into the world's largest message network.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Volume 4, Number 8

August 1993

FEATURES

THE MAGIC OF PCB-UUCP

by Rick Robinson 4

COMPUTER-RELATED POLITICAL GROUPS — THE GOOD GUYS

by Philip Zimmerman 44

COLUMNS

POLISH YOUR NETIQUETTE ON USENET 8

Newcomers to the Internet by Mike Robinson

LEGAL GUIDE, UTILITIES, AND GLOSSARY..... 10

Uncle Hank's Shareware Reviews by Hank Hurteau

MODEM MASTERY PAYS OFF 14

BBS Callers: Who Are They? by Richard Lowell Harding

COMPUTING & PARENTS... NEXT ON GERALDO! .. 18

Tales From the Lighter Side of Computing by Carol Carmichael

AVOID SOME COMMON BUSINESS PROBLEMS.... 22

Bell Business Report by Laura Bell

TRAVELING BY BBS 30

BBS Notebook by Alan Bechtold

BBSING ON A COMMODORE 40

Commodore Connections By Gaelyne R. Moranec

SQUASHING YOUR FILES 42

Telecommunicating on Your Mac by Michael A. Kuykendall

DATA ENCRYPTION AND BBSs 48

The Law and BBS Users by Shari Steele

PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS, HAYES REVIEWS 52

Modem Information by Victor R. Volkman

ORIGINS OF THE BBS 60

Walt's Tutorial by Walt Ledbetter

ET CETERA...

NEWSLINE 2

BBSCD BBS LIST 51

BOOK RELEASES 62

CLASSIFIEDS 64

ADVERTISER'S INDEX 68

COVER: Terry Wilson

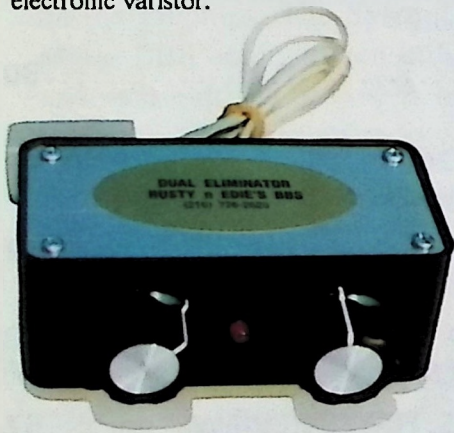


Rusty

Edie

Dual Eliminator

Rusty n Edie's BBS announces the introduction of our their **Dual Eliminator**. Simply plug your phone line to the Dual Eliminator and then plug the Dual Eliminator into your modem. This device consists of 2 passive electronic filters that handle both high and low frequency noise from the phone line. Both high and low frequency are independently adjustable with knobs that mount on the front of the unit. Surge protection is provided by an electronic varistor.



A light emitting diode, also mounted on the front of the unit, glows whenever the device is eliminating noise from the phone lines. This device can solve the majority of noise problems associated with telecommunications today, and is sold with a 30 day, money back guarantee. They sell for \$25 each plus \$4 shipping and handling. To order, call Rusty n Edie's at 216-758-8342 or call their BBS number 216-726-3589, they will accept Visa or MasterCard.

LINE NEWS LINE NEWS LINE NEWS

ADMISSION OF GUILT

"OOPS! I (Alan Bechtold) goofed (twice) BIG TIME! The telephone number listed in our June issue, for STAR-LINK NETWORK BBS in Brooklyn, NY, was incorrect. As this is actually the number of an innocent individual's home and NOT a BBS, PLEASE DON'T DIAL IT WITH YOUR MODEM! My apologies to Michael Keylin, STAR-LINK NETWORK BBS system operator and to the readers! With 10 14.4 lines, STAR-LINK NETWORK BBS is a high-quality multiline general interest BBS that deserves your call. You can actually reach it by dialing 718-972-6099. Recommended!

The telephone number listed in our July issue, for THE LIBRARY BBS in Davis, FL was incorrect. PLEASE DO NOT CALL IT WITH A MODEM! My apologies to Terry Woodward, THE LIBRARY BBS system operator and to the readers! You can actually reach it by dialing: 305-581-4983. THE LIBRARY BBS is a also a high quality multiline general interest BBS that deserves your call."

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

Medford, NJ — *BBS Callers Digest* back issues are available for all months except April 1992. Prices are: 1-4 copies \$5.00 each, 5 to 9 copies \$4.00 each, 10+ copies only \$3.00 each. All back issue sales are mailed to you first class mail. Order NOW while copies are available. Call 609-953-9110 and use your Visa or MasterCard. If ordering by mail, please include your complete return address along with the months you are ordering and how many copies of each month; include your check or money order payable to:

Callers Digest Inc., 701 Stokes Road,
Medford NJ 08055.

RIP DOOR RELEASED

Stony Brook, NY — Searchlight Software has released a freeware RIP graphics door game, RIP Puzzle, that is the first BBS door to take full advantage of the RIPscrip graphics protocol developed by TeleGrafix, Inc. Currently the leading graphical standard among BBS systems, RIP has been announced as the protocol of choice by most major BBS vendors and terminal software developers.

Searchlight's RIP Puzzle door lets callers who are using RIP compatible terminal programs (such as RIPterm) take advantage of mouse support and see features like windows, pick lists and fast graphics animation online while playing the game. RIP Puzzle works with any BBS program that supports doors (it does not require a RIP-compatible BBS program) and it can use a door.sys file, pboard.sys file, or command line parameters. RIP Puzzle supports any COM port (arbitrary base address/interrupt) and includes support for both FOSSIL drivers and Intelligent DigiBoards.

RIPUZ100.ZIP (43k) is available today from many BBS systems; or download it from Searchlight's support BBS at 516-689-2566. RIP Puzzle is FREEWARE!

For more information, please contact Frank LaRosa, Searchlight Software, PO Box 640, Stony Brook NY 11790 or call 516-751-2966 Fax 516-689-2566.

HAYES NEW PRICING ANNOUNCED

Atlanta, GA — Hayes Microcomputer

Products, Inc. announced the world-wide implementation of its Sysop Program, which offers qualified sysops the opportunity to purchase selected Hayes products at discounted prices. This program, effective through September 30, 1993, also includes enhanced customer service support and marketing activities, including a special rebate offer on Smartcom for Windows.

The products included in Hayes Global Sysop Program are Hayes Smartmodem OPTIMA 14400 FAX144 and Hayes ULTRA Smartmodem 14400. Also included are Hayes ESP Communications Accelerator for Windows, Hayes ISDN System Adapter, Hayes ISDN PC Adapter and Millennium 8000, a high-density communications platform that provides a long term, upgradable solution for wide area connectivity to both host and local area network environments.

"We are always looking for ways in which to provide the sysop community with the best technology available, in both hardware and software products, at affordable prices," said Hayes President Dennis C. Hayes. "Smartcom for Windows, our newest communications package, allows sysops the ability to develop their own custom interfaces with its built-in powerful scripting capability."

Hayes has also broadened its service and support to better serve the sysop community. Hayes now offers sysops a variety of aggressive product opportunities, US same day shipment on orders received by 3 pm EST (subject to product availability), and free pre-ship service for returned products. Hayes continues to support its Sysop's Forum, which contains a variety of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) with files and information on many bulletin board system software packages.

Hayes is also implementing new marketing programs for sysops and their respective bulletin boards. For every copy of Smartcom for Windows communications software ordered by bulletin board users through their registered Hayes sysop, Hayes will contribute to the support of the sysop's bulletin board. Also, the sysop's bul-

letin board will receive a free copy of Smartcom for Windows with their first order for an OPTIMA 144 + FAX144 or ULTRA 144.

Best known as the leader in micro-computer modems, Hayes develops, supplies and supports computer communications equipment and software for personal computer and computer communications networks. The company distributes its products in over 60 countries through a global network of authorized distributors, dealers, mass merchants, VARs, systems integrators and original equipment manufacturers.

For more information, please contact Hayes Customer Service: 404-441-1617 (US) 519-746-5000 (Canada) 44-252-775544 (UK) 852-887-1037 (HK) 33-1-34-22-30-15 (France) or online with Hayes BBS 800-US HAYES (US/Canada) 404-HI MODEM 404-729-6525 (ISDN Access) 44-252-775599 (UK) 852-887-7590 (HK).

RIP-BASED WILDCAT! BBS & QMODEMPRO SOFTWARE

Bakersfield, CA — Mustang Software, Inc. (MSI), supplier of both BBS and communications software, has introduced new versions of its WILDCAT! BBS (v3.9) and QmodemPRO communications software (v1.5) that support the new Remote Imaging Protocol (RIP) graphical interface.

The new software packages are the first in the industry to integrate RIP for both the host and terminal user.

RIP is the emerging graphical standard for the bulletin board system (BBS) industry and introduces new graphics performance levels for both sysops and users. The RIP-equipped WILDCAT! v3.9 can send full-screen graphics to callers' and lets mouse users select BBS commands by clicking on selection buttons or screen prompts — very much like popular online services such as Prodigy and America Online. WILDCAT! 3.9 still retains full support for standard text and ansi.

In order for a caller to access the WILDCAT! v3.9's RIP graphics, the caller needs to use RIP-equipped Communications software such as

QmodemPRO v1.5. Like its WILDCAT! counterpart, QmodemPRO v1.5 allows callers to view full-screen graphics and use a mouse when connected to a RIP-ready BBS. RIP also lets the QmodemPRO caller select BBS commands by clicking on graphic selection buttons or screen prompts.

"Adding RIP support to QmodemPRO makes this new graphics level available to the millions of WILDCAT! users," said Jim Harrer, MSI President and CEO. "Our goal is to make QmodemPRO the tool of choice for connections to mail systems, whether it is a BBS, CompuServe, MCI or other online services."

For more information on WILDCAT! BBS or QmodemPRO please contact: Mustang Software Inc., PO Box 2264, Bakersfield CA 93303 or call 805-395-0223 Fax 805-395-0713 BBS 805-395-0650.

NEW buttonFILE FOR WINDOWS

Bellevue, WA — ButtonWare announces the immediate shipment of buttonFILE, a simple to use Windows flat filer. Targeted for the easy-to-use and inexpensive niche of the Windows market, buttonFILE allows names, companies, phone numbers, contacts, any kind of data, to be filed on over a dozen pre-defined card decks (databases). All card decks can be customized, and data can be printed on over 100 pre-defined and customizable forms. CEO Jim Button commented, "buttonFILE is easier to learn and use than any competing product. You don't even need the manual!"

- Work with over a dozen pre-designed templates, or customize a card deck to fit your needs.

- Multiple Document Interface (MDI) allows multiple files to be open at the same time.

- View files as cards in a Rolodex (card) format, or in a spreadsheet like table view.

- Print lists, mailing labels, 3x5 cards, envelopes, reports, including Avery Dennison laser and tractor feed forms — point and click with a

Continued on page 68

THE MAGIC OF PCB-UUCP

BY RICK ROBINSON

In the legends of King Arthur, we read about Middle Ages Camelot, the noble Knights of the Round Table with Sir Lancelot and Sir Galahad, Queen Guinevere and the wizard and chief advisor to Arthur, Merlin.

Rewritten numerous times over the years, it has been told in one account that in his august years King Arthur sailed to the mystical island of Avalon, supposedly gone forever. However some say he will one day return.

At presstime he had not done so. His magician, however, has shown...but not in England. Merlin has reappeared in Canada.

In 1992, under the direction of the consultant and modern-day computer wizard Roy Pereira, Merlin Systems Inc. was begun in Ottawa.

Pereira's specialty lay in creating e-mail gateways, with his first product line the PCB-MHS, a PCBoard to Novell MHS gateway. PCBoard owner Clark Development was immediately interested and today remains its exclusive distributor.

"Fred Clark [of Clark

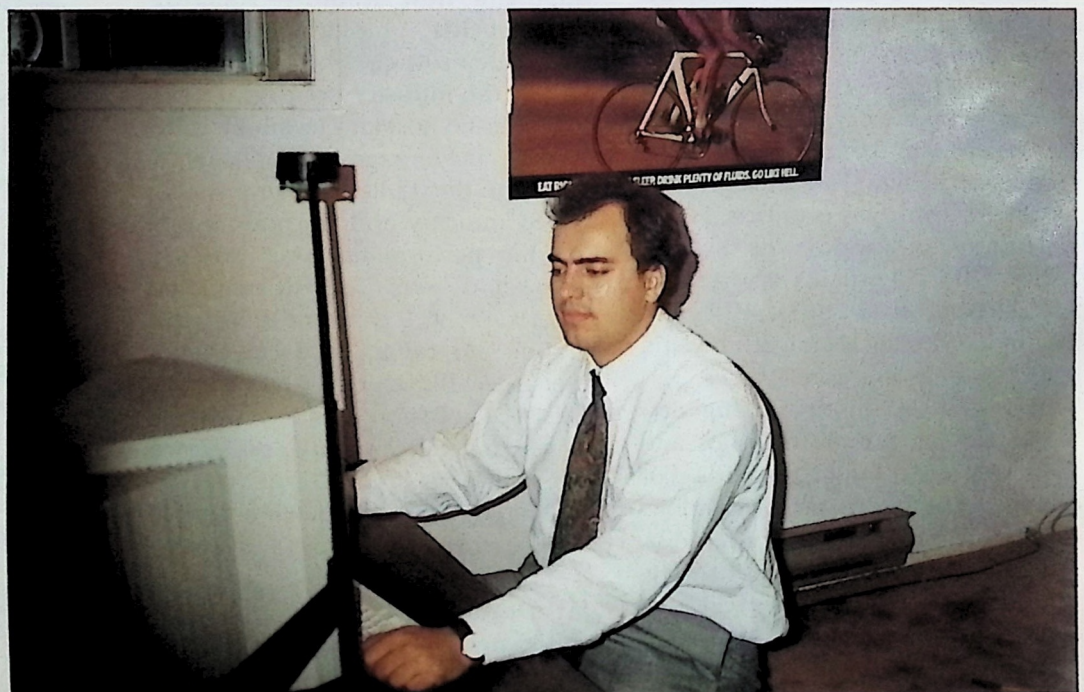
Development] really helped me out at the beginning since I was a rookie to the software business," said Pereira. And through them "I was invited to both BBSCON and COMDEX to demonstrate the product in the PCBoard booth."

Next came PCBxBase, a recently available program able to read a dBase III+ PRG program and run it.

VERSION 1

The flagship of Merlin followed: PCB-UUCP, allowing PCBoard BBS software to exchange mail with UUCP/RFC822/RFC1036 based systems...giving PCBoard users access to mail on the Internet and USENET. It was a project spawned at the request of a client seeking a UUCP gateway for PCBoard at their site. A week after in-

Roy Pereira



stalling the system Pereira decided it wasn't sufficient; he figured he could easily do better.

"I had some experience with the UUCP protocols, so it wasn't long before I had something to demonstrate."

And working on a laptop, Pereira made quick work of the project: In just four weeks he had a beta test team that spanned the globe.

"I started off with simple functions to gateway Internet and USENET messages into and out of PCBoard," said Pereira, "Then I added things we needed and that no other packages had."

Of these additions, the LISTER V function is one of Pereira's favorites. LISTER V allows a system to construct its own mailing list and automatically take subscription request from Internet users. "No other DOS product could do that."

Ready for the general marketplace, PCB-UUCP version 1.0 was released in March of this year.

"It took off immediately," said a surprised Pereira. Before getting a handle on the demand "we kept running out of diskettes and bubble-wrapped envelopes for mailing...and we exhausted our printed manual supply."

The popularity of the program owes much to its laundry list of offerings.

Some of the more outstanding features of v 1.0 included private e-mail, with mail waiting flag set (optional); attached files/automatic uudecode/uuencode (optional); seamless replies (You don't have to enter a To: line in the text of your reply); routing of private mail to and from other systems; and, allows the sysop to add 'services' for PCB-UUCP to automatically handle incoming messages addressed to certain users.

As for the newsgroups, PCB-UUCP automatically uncompresses and unbatches; batches and compresses outgoing newsgroups (optional); offers moderated newsgroups; read-only newsgroups; distribution of newsgroups to other systems (including your own newsgroups); and, plenty more.

PCB-UUCP also includes 'mouse-

able' install and setup programs as well as online context-sensitive help, each designed to be 'goof-proof.'

After the immense response to PCB-UUCP, Pereira set about doing what came naturally — trying to top

It was a project spawned at the request of a client seeking a UUCP gateway for PCBoard at their site.

himself. He began collecting comments and suggestions from purchasers for appropriation into the new version, 1.1.

STAND BY YOUR CUSTOMER

"The biggest problem was providing excellent technical support," said Pereira, alluding to published reports of the poor quality of support offered by other software companies. "A piece of software isn't any good if you can't get answers to your questions quickly."

Pereira continued: "The Internet and USENET are not easy subjects to swallow, especially by sysops who had never heard of them a few months before."

To remedy this and to ensure quality support, a newsgroup (alt.bbs.

pcbuucp) was set up along with a support conference on the Salt Air BBS (801-261-8976).

IN THE BEGINNING

But for Pereira, it wasn't always Internet.

For his end-of-year ninth-grade English project, Pereira used a Commodore Pet computer to devise a Pac-Man based game taking its plot from John Steinbeck's 'The Pearl.'

"My teacher was so amazed at the plot resemblance, I got a 90 percent."

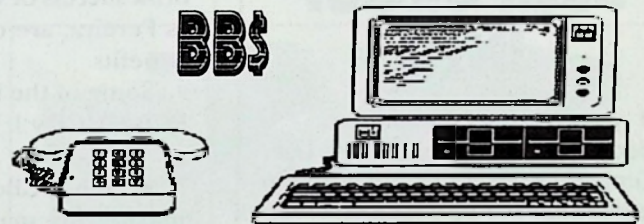
It was this blend of computer programming skills and an interest in the written word that served as an impetus for Pereira shortly after: "...I made up my mind that I wanted to own my own computer software company."

Reading King Arthur, Pereira found a name. And in March of 1992, with the official registering of Merlin Systems, he had his company.

Officials at the Federal Government agency for whom he was consulting at the time were so impressed

Continues...

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The Ultimate BB\$ Profits Kit for \$499.95 includes The Premiere Kit, The Major BBS Professional Bulletin Board System V6.0, and the How to Write a Business Plan Program by the Small Business Institute, plus much, much more.

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
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Please allow 2-3 weeks for check orders.

by e-mail gateways he'd developed for them, that "I was pushed to start my own software company from my superior." Soon Pereira became Merlin and his consulting services slipped beyond the government to the private sector.

Pereira says he was pleased with the opportunity to discover what the "real world" was looking for in software products, not to mention the money that was to be made: "It's amazing what you can write that will fill the gap between other applications and make money" doing it.

THE LATEST RELEASE

Version 1.1 of PCB-UUCP, which is now available, began with less of a bang than its predecessor. Pereira's goal was to shape v 1.1 into full compatibility with PCBoard 15.0, which at the time was in alpha testing. And when the beta version of 1.1 was ready, it was sent along to everyone buying PCBoard.

"Not everyone was ready to take the bumps of using beta code," said Pereira. "That was a lesson we learned

USER GROUP INFO

If you are the President or the decision making person in a User Group, you might be interested to know that the *BBS Callers Digest* has a special program just for you!

If you are interested in offering your members a discounted subscription to *BBS Callers Digest*, then you need to contact us.

Along with a group discount for your members, we will pay you commission to obtain these new or renewal orders.

For more information, please contact the publisher, Richard Paquette, at your earliest convenience. Call 609-953-9110 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or write us at: Callers Digest, PO Box 416, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054 (attn: Group Sales)

STARTUP TIP & PREDICTIONS FROM THE WIZARD

STARTUP TIP:

◆ "Let me say to anyone thinking about releasing a product: Support will eat up your time like nothing else. Thus, you have to create software that is easy to install and configure, software that the inexperienced end-user can manipulate without worrying about millions of options or switches. Having an INSTALL program that sets everything up in a basic configuration — ready to go — is invaluable to someone who doesn't fully understand what the software is all about, but just wants it to work."

PREDICTIONS:

- ◆ BBSs will be all GUIs (probably RIP-based)
- ◆ BBSs will be commonplace in the corporate market.
- ◆ The Internet will be a way of life for almost everyone who owns a computer.
- ◆ ISDN will finally be made available in all of North America (grin).
- ◆ There will be a new computer architecture provided by Apple and IBM that will not be 8086-based and a new GUI operating system that will be standard.

the hard way."

But things swiftly returned to the brisk success of v 1.0 and users, as well as Pereira, are currently reaping the benefits.

Some of the key features added to PCB-UUCP v 1.1 follow:

- Fully PCBoard 15.0 compliant, making the marriage of PCBoard and PCB-UUCP seamless. (Quite nice for those with PCBoard).

- PagSat compatible. PagSat being the satellite USENET distribution system from PagSat, Inc. of Palo Alto, CA.

- Smart Archiving. PCB-UUCP has always been able to archive incoming articles from select newsgroups into files and also extract

attached files, placing them in a directory. Now, PCB-UUCP will reform split messages that contain files and place the correct combined file in a subdirectory.

- Inbound and outbound aliasing.
- Handles CONTROL articles.
- Bouncing of messages addressed to unknown users.

- QWK offline reader friendly — first reader joins large messages split by PCB-UUCP.

- Requires less available memory than v1.0

To some extent the future is divided for Pereira and Merlin Systems. Plans include building a gate-

way between UUCP and Novell's MHS. Microsoft Mail UUCP and

"It's amazing what you can write that will fill the gaps between other applications and make money" doing it.

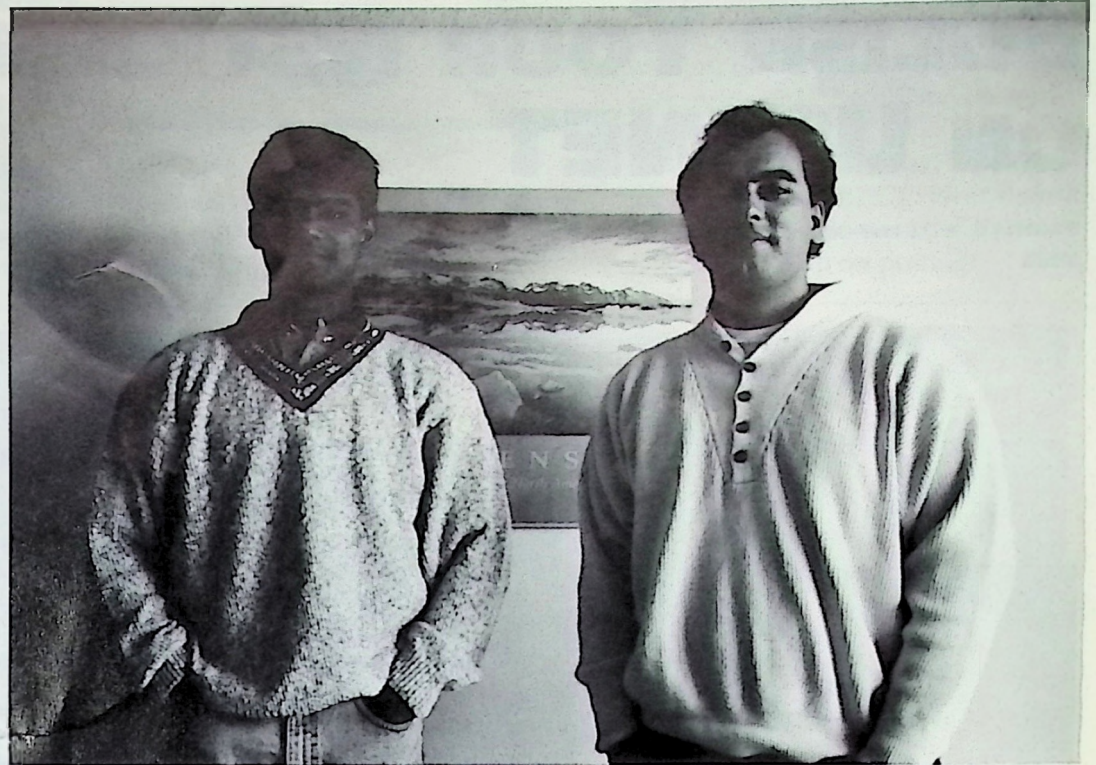
cc:Mail UUCP packages could soon be in the works, as should many more e-mail gateways for various systems, including PCBoard.

Meanwhile, keep an eye out for the next release from the wizard and pleasant e-mailing.

For more information on PCB-UUCP v 1.1, contact Merlin Systems at:

Merlin Systems, Inc.
 PO Box 3043, Station C
 Ottawa, Ontario
 K1Y 4J3 Canada
 613-236-1138
 613-236-1481 (Fax & BBS)
 Internet: info@merlin-systems.on.ca
 UUCP: uunet!mersys!info
 MHS: info @ merlin [cserve]
 FidoNet: Info 1:163/509

Hari Kant, programmer, with Roy Pereira.



BBS Software & Hardware

This Month's Advertised Specials

The Major BBS 6.1, 2-user	\$209
The Major BBS 6.1, 8-user	CALL
MBBS RIPscrip Add-on	CALL
MBBS Fax/Online Add-on	CALL
MBBS Entertainment Collection	\$219
Wildcat! Single Line BBS	\$ 99
Wildcat! 1-10 Line BBS	\$199
Online Blackjack/Hangman Doors	CALL
DigiBoard 8 Port Comm. Card	\$449
TBBS 2.2, 2-user	\$219

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New! Version 6.1 of The Major BBS

This latest version now supports "doors" to a second machine, multi-lingual/multi-protocol support for easy use of RIPscrip graphics, better messaging, and more! The Major BBS is the only BBS that supports up to 256 simultaneous users on a single machine, direct X.25 and LAN access, and plug-in DLL add-ons. You can expand the system with online fax services, databases, order entry, Internet access, a C developer's toolkit, and some of the hottest multi-player entertainment in the industry. A new RIPscrip add-on includes an integrated RIPaint and a complete out-of-the-box graphics interface! CALL!

POLISH YOUR NETIQUETTE ON USENET

BY MIKE ROBINSON



I admit it. I'm a roller coaster maniac. There's a certain thrill in going down a 150 foot incline, reaching speeds of 60 mph, and being yanked from near death at the last minute! Stand up, sit down, looping, wooden or steel, I just plain like roller coasters! Unfortunately, I don't have the time (or the money) to go gallivanting across the states to ride every coaster possible!

This is where reading USENET news comes in handy. One of the several hundred newsgroups is called 'rec.roller-coaster'. Reading this newsgroup allows me to get the latest scoop in coaster news. Currently, there's a debate going on about the best coaster in the world, and of course everybody has a different favorite! Readers from across the country tell of their experiences on each coaster, give ratings, update me of changes made over the winter to some of the tracks. I can also find out about special days when theme parks "soup up" the rides for coaster diehards like me!

Now, I don't assume that everyone enjoys roller coasters as much as I do.

But with around 3,000,000 USENET readers, there's bound to be something there that you'll enjoy. For instance, are you a CAD user? Try 'comp.lsi.cad'. Do you want to talk about abortion? Then 'talk.abortion' is just for you! One newsgroup I recommend for everyone to read is 'news.newusers.questions'. This newsgroup will tell you the ins and outs of USENET, such as how to post, where to post, and more. Its also an excellent place to ask any questions you may have as a new user.

Since the majority of you have been on a BBS before, you understand how

*I can also find out
about special days
when theme parks
"soup up" the rides for
coaster diehards like me!*

important it is for users to be polite when talking with others on the system. This can only be amplified when talking on the USENET. Most of us never have the opportunity to address

several million people at once. Let's take an opportunity to brush up on our USENET "netiquette."

1. BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY. You never know who might be reading, like your boss, your children, your friends. Wouldn't want to say something that could get you fired, would you?

2. THINK BEFORE YOU POST. This cannot be overstated. It doesn't make much sense to talk about your '57 Chevy when you're in 'bionet.general' or anywhere else not pertaining to cars, for example. Unless, of course, you want to hold a serious dialogue about the various forms of fungus growing in your tirewell!

3. BE BRIEF. Remember that many megabytes of information is transmitted each day for the various groups, and someone is paying for it, so stick to the point.

4. BE GENERALLY POLITE. Remember that on the other end are people just like you. And people that aren't just like you. So, just as you can't run outside and scream profanities at the police and claim its your First Amendment Right, don't do it here.

SIGNATURES

Finally, a note about signature files. You may or may not have the

ability to create one to be attached to every post. I've seen many different signature files. The best are under four lines long, and give the senders name and e-mail address. KISS - Keep It Simple, Stupid!

Of course, you could take the opposite position on signature files. For example, make your signature file 30 or 40 lines long so that it will positively dwarf your 3 line post. Use ASCII characters to fill in any dead space, or make drawings. Leave as many ways to contact you as possible.

I mean, what if someone wants to phone you or send you a letter? Finally, put in at least nine or ten of your favorite one-liners. I say its not a message unless its got a great signature! If you follow these instructions, in a matter of days you'll be on the kill file of several million people — what an honor!

DON'T GET KILLED!

Which brings me to kill files. Depending on what software you use to read news, you might not have this capability. If you do, use the manual or online help to find out how to set one up for your system. Kill files can be great. For example, maybe you are sick and tired of hearing about company XYZ. Simply put that in your kill file, and any message with 'XYZ' in its subject line will not be shown. Or, maybe you don't like the ramblings of 'john.doe@nowhere.usa'. Put HIM in your kill file, and you won't see any of his messages.

Last month I mentioned how big USENET is. Well, I've done some digging around and found some more infor-

*Most of us never have
the opportunity to address
several million people
at once.*

mation on exactly how big it really is. The following are two statistics for March 1993.

Total articles posted: 696,516
Total Kbytes posted: 1,853,585.75
This translates into more than 1800 MEGABYTES of information posted throughout the USENET for March alone. Imagine this amount of information duplicated on literally thousands of USENET servers worldwide!

That concludes our two-month look into the USENET. Next month we'll return to the world of Internet. Until then, keep on posting! ■■■■■

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LEGAL GUIDE, UTILITIES, AND GLOSSARY

BY "UNCLE" HANK HURTEAU



BBS LEGAL GUIDE (BBSLAW)

By: Herb Kraft
BBSLAW01.ZIP

I had just got finished reading about the FBI raids on a couple of BBS's. I'm sure most of you have heard a little bit about these recent incidents and I won't go into any of the details here. However, they do have an effect on what we as Sysops need to know and be concerned with in keeping our BBS's relatively safe from suffering the same fate. No one would enjoy watching their BBS hardware and software walk out the door, not knowing if or when it will ever be returned.

Right off, I want to strongly point out that I in no way condone distribution of commercial programs. I really don't have a problem with "Adult" material on a BBS (to a point), however, I don't allow it on my BBS. But, that's just a personal policy. However, a BBS of any size will have problems with pirated software and adult files from time to time. Even the most diligent Sysop might unintentionally miss the rare unwanted upload. Luckily, most users will alert the Sysop of any file that may slip by. At least in my case the users know my feelings and are quick to let me know.

Anyways, as I was saying, shortly

after I read about the FBI raids, I received an evaluation copy of the BBS LEGAL GUIDE in the mail. I'm sure most of you are familiar with the Home and Business Legal Guide. These same people have now created a package with the BBS Sysop in mind.

From the manual:

- "Will I get in trouble for having x-rated .GIFs available for download?"
- Can I be sued for libel is someone goes nuts in the flame room?"
- Can I deduct losses I sustain running my BBS?"
- If someone posts a commercial program on my BBS will the FBI confiscate my equipment?"

...features in BBS Legal Guide include Computer crime and BBS-specific laws for all 50 states.

As Sysops, we all have had similar questions come to mind. Where would we go for answers? We can't really rely on rumors we see floating around, and for most of us, hiring an attorney is out of the question. This is

why the BBS Legal Guide can be invaluable to any size BBS. It has been prepared by working Sysops and attorneys and will always be kept up to date.

Some of the features in BBS Legal Guide include:

- Computer crime and BBS-specific laws for all 50 states.
- Sample BBS screens and bulletins that can be edited to reflect your own system.
- Complete manuals for co-sysops and employees.
- Sample forms and letters that you can also edit.

BBS Legal Guide is completely menu driven. However, all the files are in standard ASCII text so that they can be read, printed, or edited outside the program. While viewing a tutorial or sample form, you can jump to a notepad to jot down any thoughts or ideas and such that comes to mind. This notepad saves as an ASCII file that can also be printed. There is also a nice full featured editor within the program that can be used to edit any of the legal documents.

Registration for BBS Legal guide is \$39 - \$129, depending on the level of support you want. I urge you to take look at this well done program; it could prove to be most helpful.

Oh, by the way, the answers to the

above questions: Again, from the documentation:

"The good news is that an investment in time will protect you and your system. Yes, you can deduct losses sustained running a BBS — if you know the ropes. Yes, you can carry adult .GIFs. And you can have folks flame away at each other if they want to without trouble. There is a way to handle inadvertent postings of commercial software."

TRANSFER RECORD V2.0

TRANSRC2.ZIP

Are you one of those that likes to keep detailed records of your file transfers? If so, take a look at a program called Transfer Record. All it does is print out nicely formatted forms that you can use to fill in upload and download records in two different styles. It also lets you print out file records and BBS information.

Using the program is just a matter of turning on your printer and typing GO. Choose the record you want to print from the colorful menu and that's it. Now all you would need to do is punch some hole for a binder and you have all your information in one spot.

Nowhere in the program could I find the name of the creator of this program. In fact, there isn't any documentation at all. But, it is FREEWARE and simple to use.

PC GLOSSARY VER 5.1

By: Disston Ridge, INC
GLOS51.ZIP

How many times have you come across a computer related word that you've never seen before? How about the words or acronyms that you use regularly, but don't really understand what they mean? Most of us have that information in one of the many books and manuals cluttering our desk or bookshelves, but it's somewhat of a pain to go looking for it. Wouldn't it be nice to have all you need in one complete package? If so, look for PC GLOSSARY ver 5.1 and you'll have definitions and much needed data anytime you need it.

There are other programs that

claim to define all the computer terms, but they are mostly text files that list words and definitions. These are fine if that's ALL you want. You'd have to load your word processor or text viewer and do a search for what you were looking for. Not so with PC GLOSSARY. Everything is menu driven and moving around is very intuitive.

Once the program is loaded, you are given a variety of choices. The word list in on the far left of the

*TABLES option list
several (17) useful
"Reference Tables"
including ... every DOS
filename extension
known to man!*

screen. You can cursor up and down to highlight a word and hitting ENTER will give you the definition. While viewing the definition, you are shown a list of "See Also" words at the top of the screen that relate to what you are reading about. You can move to any of these topics by highlighting it and hitting ENTER again.

However, the program goes beyond just listing hundreds of words and definitions. Context sensitive HELP is available everywhere. You can do string searches that are very fast. You are given 3 different color combinations; however, the default was the one I preferred. There is a "Lookup" table that lists such things as registration information and bibliography. But, one of the handiest portions of the program besides the word definitions is the TABLES option.

The TABLES option list several (17) useful "Reference Tables" including such things as ASCII codes, floppy disk specifications, common virus problems, and one that lists every DOS filename extension known to man!

PC GLOSSARY is a complete pro-

gram that has tons of information in one convenient spot. I highly recommend this for anyone, be they beginners or long time users. It's an excellent program to pass out at user group meeting or wherever you'd find new users. Highly recommended!

PC GLOSSARY has a registration fee of \$29.

HS/LINK VER 1.20

By: Sam Smith
HS120.ZIP

In my years of BBS'n, both as a user and Sysop, I've seen quite a few file transfer protocols come and go. Each new one boasted that it was THE BEST ever written. They all promised to be the "Protocol of the Future", replacing everything you had used up to that time. Well, some did have potential, but because of the difficulty in setting up and lack of real support, we were left with the old stand-bys. Besides, these "tried and true" protocols were stable and worked as advertised. So, like most, I just ignored any new one that came along. If they got uploaded to my BBS, I usually deleted them after a week or so.

Anyways, along comes HS/LINK promising not only bi-directional transfers, but higher transfer rates than anything yet available. This one might also have been overlooked as the others except this one was different. It was written by Sam Smith! Anyone who has had anything to do with PCBoard should know how Sam Smith is. Sam is one of those few authors that enjoy a reputation of qual-

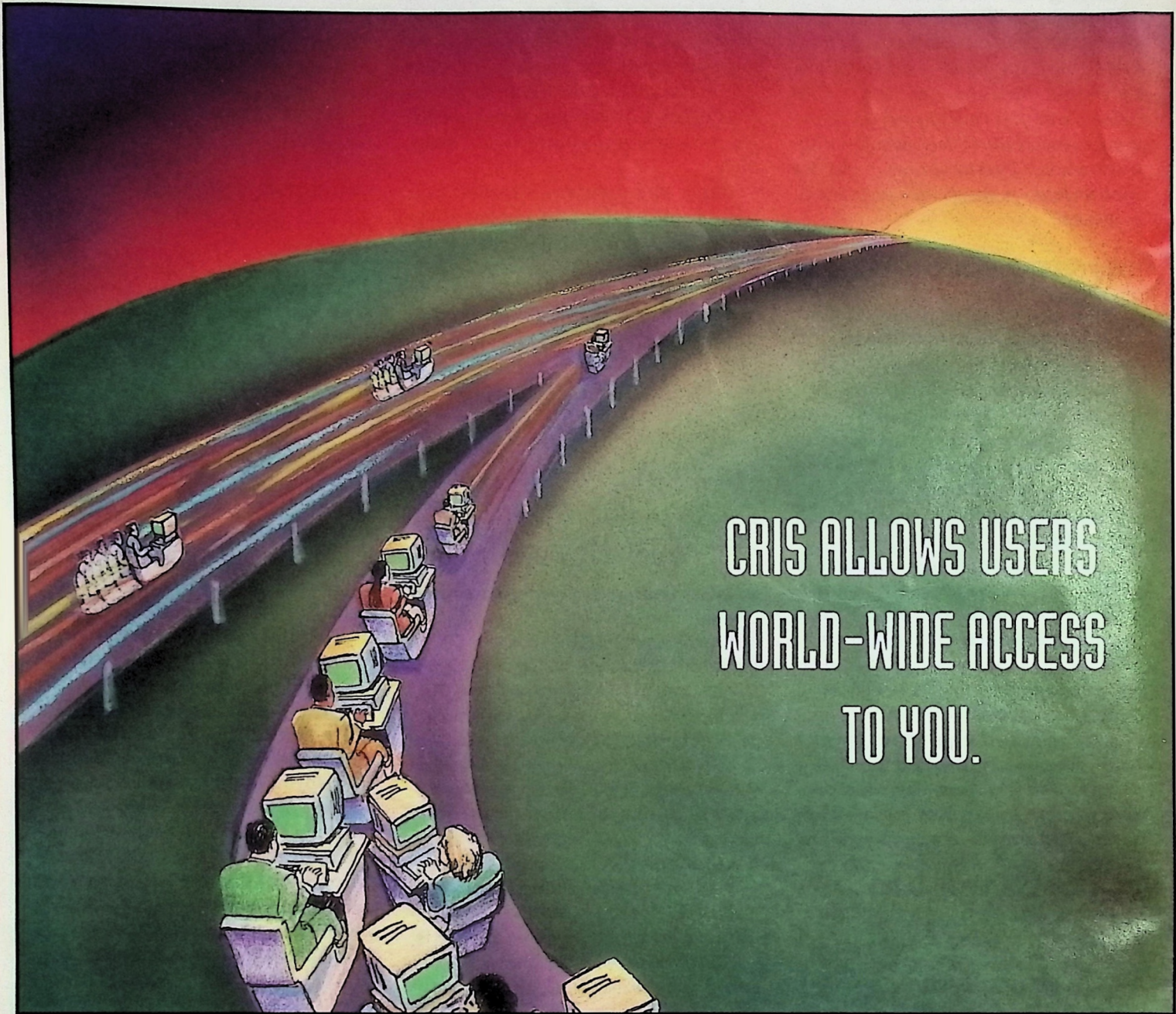
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ity BBS related products. Well, if Sam wrote it, it's at least worth a look.

Higher transfer rates are no idle promise. I continually see faster rates on my BBS. Where users with 2400 baud modems were once getting around 220-230 cps on a good day, those same people are getting in excess of 270 cps with error correcting modems. If you have a 2400 baud modem, those extra 30-40 cps can be quite exciting! High speed modems can also expect higher cps.

At the start, I mentioned two problems with the other new protocols - Difficulty in setting up and lack of support. As far as setting up is concerned, it's really quite easy. There is a file called HS-INST.ZIP that should be found wherever you find HS/LINK. Included in this .ZIP file are text files giving step by step instructions for adding it to just about any BBS or terminal program. Adding HS/LINK to

PCBoard took me just a few minutes. Support for HS/LINK is also quite

HS/LINK allows you to upload AND download at the same time! You can even CHAT with the Sysop while you're uploading and/or downloading.

good. Many of the national echo networks now carry conferences devoted to HS/LINK and related utilities with an active message base. I don't see Sam himself too often, but most

questions can be answered by the experts that frequent the conferences.

If that wasn't enough, HS/LINK allows you to upload AND download at the same time! This might be a bit trickier, but as before, the installation instructions are pretty complete and easy to understand. But wait, there's more. You can even CHAT with the Sysop while you're uploading and/or downloading.

I don't want to go into the finer points or all the available options included, but what I do want is for you to at least take a look at HS/LINK. If you are a Sysop, I urge you to offer it to your callers. If you're a user, I recommend you ask your favorite BBS operator to give it serious look. Registration for HS/LINK is \$20.

Please watch for the complete cover story on HS-Link scheduled in an upcoming issue of *BBS Callers Digest*. ■■■■■



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MODEM MASTERY PAYS OFF

BY RICHARD LOWELL HARDING

BEHIND EVERY MODEM...



IS A REAL, LIVE PERSON!

So many people want to know "What's the big deal about computers, modems and on-line services?"

The answer is simple ... a pot-of-gold for lots of folk across America. Here are three, true stories which brought health, wealth and happiness from modem mastery. The same can happen to you!

FIRST, A PERSONAL WORD.

Not too long ago, I lost my job ... unexpectedly! Through no fault of my own, I became another pink-slip victim of the plus-50 year old workforce. I was unemployed, underskilled and un-computerized. And, like lots of others in the USA, I was hurting badly without PC, modem or on-line skills.

And, nobody seemed to care.

I found little comfort from my college diploma, edged with the gold letters "cum laude"; or from my updated resume with its list of skills and thirty-five years of hands-on-business experience.

Before the magical pot-of-gold from on-line activity entered my life, I was forced to struggle each week through the hot, stuffy unemployment line with four frightening words

pounding against my brain — "Too old!" "Too late!"

I had become a plus-50 COMPUTER ILLITERATE.

TOUGH TO GET OLD — TOUGHER TO GET OLD AND JOBLESS

I knew that telecommunications was the wave of the future. And, I was determined to learn on-line skills ... whatever my age. Whatever the cost!

During this period of emotional

*I realized with a
modem and computer, I
could open doors
of opportunity
for myself.*

doldrums, I experienced a dream that actually changed my life. Outside, the weather was rainy, cold and dreary. I sat alone at my empty desk, filled with

empty thoughts and empty dreams.

I looked at my old, manual typewriter which had been a working companion with me since college days. But, now the machine was only a well-worn, battle scarred relic of my past ... obsolete, useless and a symbol of a different era.

The longer I sat there, the sleepier I became. Then, slowly but surely the typewriter seemed to change form into a PC monitor screen. In my imagination, I sort of visualized five bright, glowing words of hope on this "dream machine."

My eyes focused on the word ENJOYMENT. I smiled as I pictured my grandkids and me playing all sorts of computer games with other people across the country. An on-line lifestyle would take years off my life and let me revive "the kid again in me."

I also saw the word EMPLOYMENT on this imaginary dream-screen. I realized with a modem and computer, I could open doors of opportunity for myself. I could create my resumes, start-up a few home based businesses. Plus, I'd be able to market my writing skills.

A third word appeared ... EDUCA-

TION. The dynamic world of BBS could lead me to a bonanza of shareware and software information. I could learn new terms, codes, skills and personal know-how which had never been a part of my former workplace vocabulary.

I liked the next word on the screen — EASE. For most new computer learners, the thought of a computer or modem means "a lesson by trial and terror." Just mention on-line communications to the 50 plus crowd, and they simply run in the opposite direction.

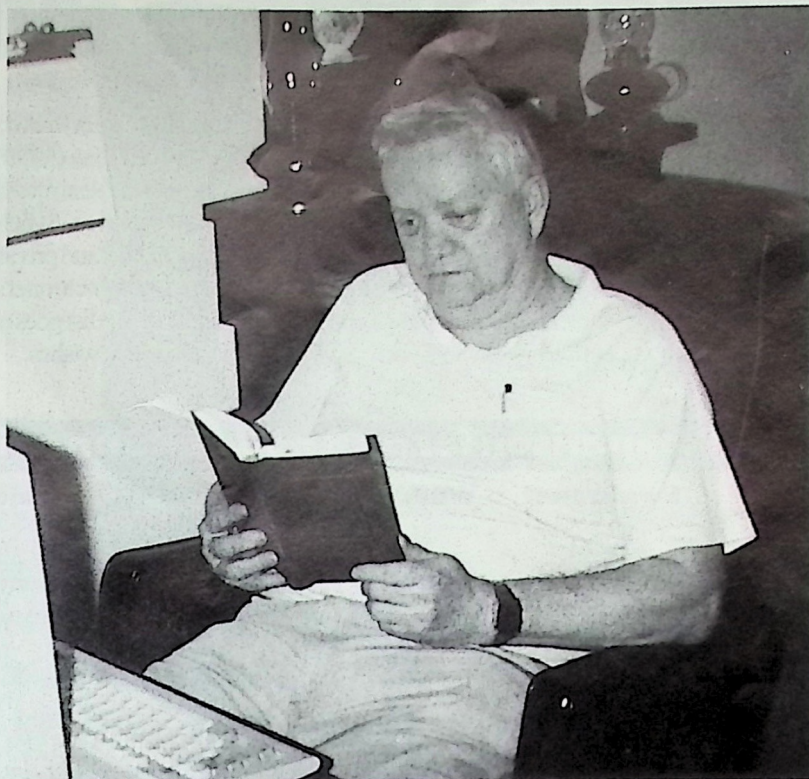
But, times have changed. Ease of operation with the newer models could give me inner tranquility that a "computer friendly" machine would be an even better helper for me, than my old typing clunker. I pushed my chair back a little, relaxed and took a deep breath.

The final word flashed on the screen. It was simply ENTRY. With computer literacy, modem mastery and on-line activity, I could rejoin that 118,000,000 members of the daily workforce. My emotional health would be well again. And, life would be worth living.

My dream reverie was jolted back to reality by the loud ringing of the telephone. I awoke quickly. It was a job opportunity that required computer skills... but with no time limitation. Opportunity and effort joined hands for me. I was alive again!

But, that's not the end of my experience.

Within a few weeks, I was enjoying basic PC computer, performing Modem connections and an on-line status across the USA. Yet, the best part was being able to use my writing skills to interview and enjoy "real, live people behind the modems" and share in their pot-of-gold stories. Hopefully, just like yours!



Howard Vibber

Not only health, but wealth comes from modem mastery.

BOOKSTORE BUSINESS BECOME A GOLDMINE

Howard Vibber has always been a successful businessman and "lover of books." For years, he had owned and

All his ordering, invoices, accounts and inventory are now easily handled by full scale computer-scanning and communication contact between his nationwide vendors and mail-order services.

managed a large book restoration company.

But, in 1985, he went into the end-

user side of the publishing industry by opening a state-of-the-art religious bookstore, called "The Burning Bush." His first ordering and inventory control procedures involved a hand held scanner and a most inefficient transmission system.

The next summer, Howard upgraded his entire bookstore operation by installing a mainline computer with sixteen ports. This now services his two expanded stores via US Robotic modems and several PC's.

This online move became his pot-of-gold in the business area. All his ordering, invoices, accounts and inventory are now easily handled

by full scale computer-scanning and communication contact between his nationwide vendors and mail-order services. The printed page is his business, but electronic equipment is the real key to his success.

Howard Vibber says, "It is so much better to let the computers take care of the "in and out" ordering of my best selling volumes. To me, time is money. And, being connected to the entire country, saves me time, effort and lots of dollars."

His major complaint is that people get so dependent on computers and modems, they forget to think for themselves. He calls it "the brain dead syndrome."

For example. Whenever a billing or payment error is put on someone else's account, he feels that many people truly believe "the computer is never wrong." Instead of handing and resolving the problems by using the mind, they turn to the machine as master. Vibber says, "We need both computer and brain power in the business arena."

Continues...

IF YOU HAD THREE WISHES,

Take a close look and you'll see why so many sysops are switching to the Synchronet Multinode Bulletin Board System. For one, message networking is second nature for Synchronet. Not only does Synchronet support FidoNet, QWK, and PostLink (RIME) message networks, but network considerations are integrated into every aspect of the BBS. Synchronet's hierarchical message and file areas are the perfect organizational solution for today's multi-network message and CD-ROM file areas. Synchronet has many built in features that other packages either don't offer or require an add on, such as multichannel and private key by key chat, offline reader features, and multiuser CD-ROM support. First time operators appreciate Synchronet's elegant menu driven configuration, while experienced sysops revel in its wealth of options and flexibility. The list goes on and on. But don't take our word for it, check out the competition first. With Synchronet, you won't need three wishes.

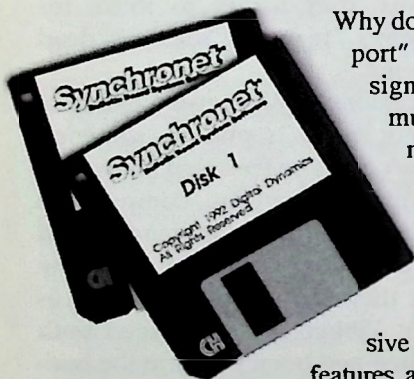


Feature and Price Comparison for an 8 node BBS on a single 486 PC

	Synchronet	Wildcat!IM	PCBoard/M	MajorBBS	TBBS
Node license	\$199	\$799	\$440	\$508	\$895
Multitasker	\$200	\$200	\$200	Yes	Yes
8 port I/O	\$300	\$800	\$995	\$575	\$500
Multinode chat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multichannel chat	Yes	Extra	No	Yes	Yes
Private key by key chat	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Offline reader support	Yes	Yes	Extra	\$199	\$99
QWK networking	Yes	Yes	Extra	No	Yes
FidoNet import/export	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Send/receive NetMail	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
PostLink (RIME) support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra	No
RIPscrip GUI support	Yes	No	No	Extra	No
Novell/DOS LAN support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
976/900 billing support	Yes	No	No	Extra	Extra
Real-time node activity alerts	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Enhanced CD-ROM support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Extra	Extra
Multiuser SDK	Yes	No	Extra	Extra	Extra
Incoming FAX support	Yes	No	No	No	No
Chat between doors	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Bidirectional file transfers	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Multiple user command sets	Yes	No	No	No	No
Supports DOS doors	6 types	1 type	3 types	No	No
Hierarchical msg & file areas	Yes	No	No	No	No
External transfer protocols	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Total price	\$699	\$1799	\$1635	\$1282	\$1494

Prices do not include CPU or modems. Features and prices compiled from vendor supplied information 2/93, are subject to change without notification. Wildcat!IM, PCBoard/M, MajorBBS, TBBS, QWK, FidoNet, PostLink, RIME, RIPscrip, Novell, and DOS are trademarks or their respective companies. Commercial or Shareware Toss/Scan utilities are required for some message network technologies.

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Modems have definitely advanced his lifestyle, plus made him money. But, he hopes that soon the addition of a laser printer and desktop publishing unit will further enable him to reach that pot-of-gold in life with creative advertising, brochures and bookstore flyers

GOODBYE LONELINESS!!!!

Near Dallas, lives a delightful and pleasant personality who spends nearly 4,000 minutes on-line every month. Jessie Askew's world was shattered in 1985 when her husband died suddenly ... leaving her alone and lonely.

Her first step was attending graduate school for a master's degree. Next, she purchased a Commodore 128 computer and found her pot-of-gold in literally thousands of friends around the earth.

Jessie used her computer in volunteer database services for 100 United Methodist Churches and her local Fire Department.

By upgrading into a 286 IBM machine, she became deeply involved in networking. Someone shared Quantum Link software with her. Soon, she was hooked. Life has never been the same again.

Today, she hosts online conferences for Single Parents, Mental Health groups and holiday specials from New Years, St. Patrick's Day to July 4th Celebrations.

Jessie Askew says, "I'm meeting new people all the time. Thanks to a friend in New Zealand, I learned the secrets of a cellular phone. This eliminated those expensive long-distance calls and the opportunity to "access" the whole world.



Jessie Askew

As a widow, she has discovered the benefits from BBS people. Got a question? Got a problem? She advises, "Get online and you'll always find an expert out there somewhere." "From 6 pm til midnight, you'll find my friends and me going strong — on all types of topics and issues."

For example. Saturday morning is her Diet Club by modem. With other weight conscious ladies, they discuss

how to lose pounds — what are we going to eat this week? — and what's the good word to help us reach our goals?

"I just wish everyone in America had a modem," remarks Jessie Askew. "It's my

dream for the future. It's my cure for loneliness. Everybody gets a chance to say 'something.'"

Her most serious statement involved Depression. She feels, "There are lots of lonely people. And, chatting together helps lift that cloudy spirit from all of us."

Doctors are writing poetry, profes-

sional people are composing books and novels, and adults are deeply dedicated into helping troubled kids. Goodbye loneliness!

When Jessie met online with a certain gentleman from California, it sparked a magical bond of friendship between them and their computers. Separated by distance perhaps, but not by spirit and sense of happiness.

So — whatever your dream or pot-of-gold health, wealth or happiness, it all comes true for real people behind a modem.

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Place your free story and photo today in a future edition of *BBS Caller's Digest*. Call or write. It's easy and fun to share or sound-off about what and why BBS means to you. If you are interested in being interviewed for this monthly column, please call the office at 1 (609) 953-9110 from 10 am to 4 pm EST. Ask for Richard. Details will be forwarded to Richard Lowell Harding. Do it today! BBS CALLERS DIGEST, Box 416, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054 or call 1-609-953-9110.

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Prepared by the publishers of The BBS Marketing Newsletter - the quarterly newsletter for Sysops.

COMPUTING AND PARENTS... NEXT ON GERALDO!

BY CAROL CARMICHAEL

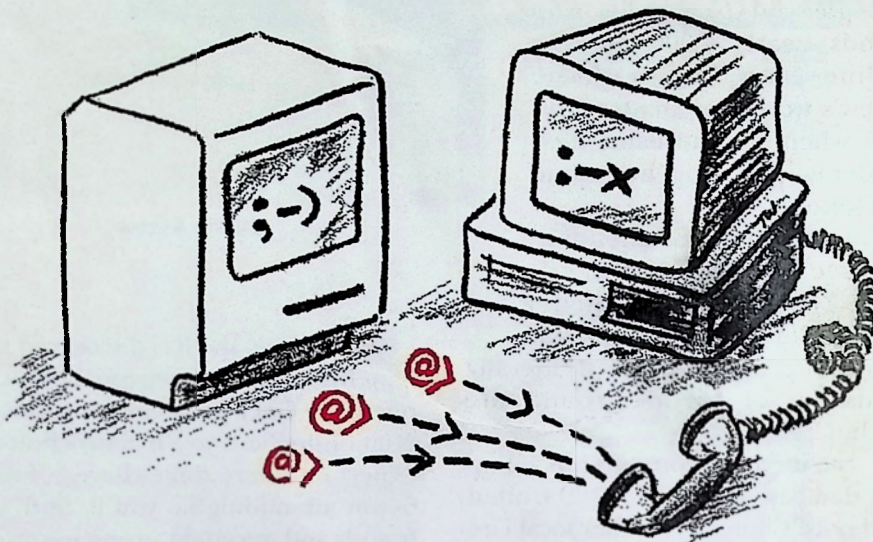


Carol's father, a former pilot, eagerly looks forward to when he visits and can play Flight

Simulator. Now keep in mind that dear Dad is in his 60s and does not have his own PC. And like most of our fathers, where it concerns his children ... he's also always right:

As he hunches over the keyboard playing Flight Simulator with this intense look on his face, Carol says that she can easily picture him when he was flying in World War II on a mission. His body is taut, eyes focused on the information displayed on the screen — ready to take action in a heartbeat.

Sometimes though, although he knows what should be done, his fingers don't cooperate while manipulating the keyboard or the joystick. But, there's no telling Dad that. If he has an aborted mission or heaven forbid — crashes — he comes out of the computer room with this thoroughly disgusted look on his face, shaking his head, exclaiming, "That damn PC... I think there's something wrong with it! You really should take it in for repair, dear!" Needless to say, we've stopped



trying to even bring up the issue of possibly his problems being operator error!

This next tale of parents & computing comes to us courtesy of Lora Wendling. Lora is a Struppi's regular, and when she had heard about Carol's

Lora groggily answered the phone to encounter this demanding and frustrated voice on the other end, "The damn PC ate my document!!!"

father's reaction to the PC, she smiled a fond smile in remembrance and shared her tale...

Once Lora discovered PCs and how they could make her life easier, in addition to providing entertainment, there was no stopping her enthusiasm. And as anyone who has ever met Lora will attest to, when she is enthusiastic, she could sell ice cubes to Eskimos! So, none of us were surprised when she announced that she had persuaded her father to purchase a PC, with the provision that she set it up and install all the different software. Even though she considered herself a PC novice at that point, she wasn't the least bit daunted by this request; Lora jumped right in with both feet towards achieving the goal of making her dad computer literate.

From all accounts, her father caught on right away, and was instantly hooked. Not only did he enjoy the amusing games Lora loaded on the PC for him, but he found the word-processing and spreadsheet programs immensely helpful. That is until...

Lora received the first call around 1:00 a.m. (yeah, her father happens to be a night-owl). Lora groggily answered the phone to encounter this demanding and frustrated voice on the other end, "What happened to it? The damn PC ate my document!!!" Fortunately, by the end of that sentence, Lora could tell that this was no ordinary obscene phone caller — it was dear Dad calling, and he apparently was having trouble with his PC. She managed to calm him down, determine what steps he had done while working with his document in the word processor, and tell him how to retrieve it. (Another trait that Lora's Dad has is very little patience).

There were several more such calls over the next couple of months. Lora was not unduly concerned for she made certain that the word processing package she found for her dad had an autosave feature. Finally the calls decreased in their frequency. Lora had created an emergency check book for her father each time a new 'incident' occurred. Peace once again reigned over the Wendling household. Dad was happy and content.

Unlike Carol's dad, Ed's mom recently bought a used 386SX (from him) and has been having just the most wonderful of times with it. Until taking possession of her new 'toy', she would have to go to her son-in-law's house to use his computer. See, she'd taken a few classes in DOS and WordPerfect, and really liked tinkering on the PC.

Well, Ed had no sooner delivered and set up the 'new' PC and was on his way home when he got a carphone call from his mom. She was all upset — seems the blooming machine's floppy drives weren't working! Ed had her try a few things, but nothing he had her do was making any sense. So Ed turned the car around and drove back to her house.

Unfortunately, at the time Ed returned to her house, someone came to the door, and Ed's mom had to spend some time with them. So Ed went back into the computer room and verified that the drives were in fact working okay. Being late for a dinner date with his wife and daughter, Ed

said goodbye to his mom and her friends and went on his way. Sure enough, when he got back from dinner, there was an exasperated message from his mom on the answering machine, a message about the drives not working right.

Well, rather than try the 'over-the-phone' route again, Ed got in his car

Well, wouldn't you know it, as luck would have it, the computer system in his car had malfunctioned, and sure enough — his problem was in fact a result of a computer error.

and drove back to his mom's house. Together they sat down at the machine. Ed watched anxiously as his mom picked up a 3.5 inch disk and put it in the appropriate drive. She then typed DIR B:, and got the infamous "Not ready reading drive B:" message. She sat back smugly and said, "There! You see? The stupid thing's not reading the B: drive right!"

Ed, while stifling a chuckle, reached over and keyed in DIR A: ... which produced a directory of the diskette in the drive. Ed's mom sat there in stunned silence and finally broke out laughing as well. You see, although Ed's brother-in-law's machine was set up with the 3.5 inch drive as drive B:, (as had every other machine she had worked on), Ed had his ma-

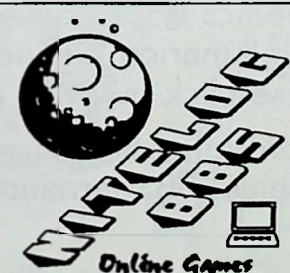
chine set up with the 3.5 inch drive as the A: drive. She just never considered that the drives would be in a different order than she was used to!

Ed also thinks it's humorous to note that although there is a PC in their house, Ed's father refuses to use it! It's not that he won't use computers in general, just that machine in particular. You see, although he's been exposed to computers for fair longer than Ed's mom, he isn't quite as computer literate as she is, and we all think that that fact grates on his ego — although he'll never admit it. He's much happier using the PC at work or driving to his son-in-law's house ... or so he claims. Besides, he says it gives him another excuse to see his new baby grandson. <grin>

And lastly, while on the topic of Parents and PCs, here's a final tale Carol's father shared with her that did not help strengthen his enthusiasm for the wonderful world of computers and technology. Dad is retired now, and every year he takes off to Florida in the late fall, where he hibernates until Spring. During his last trip south, he was driving along enjoying the day when his car started acting oddly. It seemed that whenever he accelerated, hot air would come blowing out through the air vents.

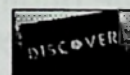


Yet the moment he removed his foot from the gas pedal, the air conditioner would resume. After a few miles of this on a sweltering day he started to get more than a little annoyed, and finally pulled into the first service station he could find. Well, wouldn't you know it, as luck would have it, the computer system in his car

Continues...



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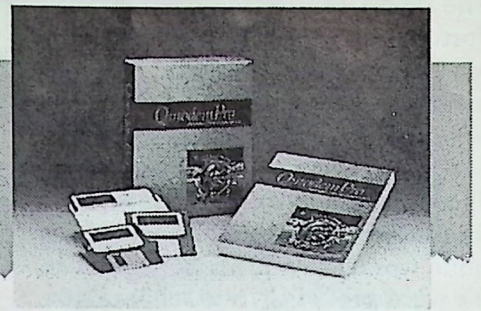




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had malfunctioned, and sure enough — his problem was in fact a result of a computer error. Maybe Dad had been right after all! <grin>

EMOTICONS & ACRONYMS — FACT OR FICTION?

Acronym: n. A word formed from the initial letters of a name, or by combining initial letters or parts of a series of words.

As anyone who has BBS'ed for any length of time will tell you, Multiple Letter Acronyms (MLAs) are to be found throughout the online world, often to the utter befuddlement of novices! But keep heart, they are not designed to confuse you, merely as a necessity for busy people running high-speed modems, but with low-speed typing skills.

To help lift some of the confusion we present a continuation of our regular feature on these often frustrating beasties:

BAD Broken As Designed

BBR Burnt Beyond Repair

BRS Big Red Switch

BWQ Buzz Word Quotient

DTRT Do The Right Thing

FISH First In, Still Here

FOAF Friend of A Friend

FURTB Full Up, Ready To Burst

GFR Grim File Reaper (pervasive data destroyer)

IMAO In My Arrogant Opinion

NAFA! Not Another Freaking Acronym!

NFW! No Freaking Way!

PLOKTA Press Lots Of keys To Abort

PMFBI Pardon Me For Butting In

POSSLQ Person of Opposite Sex Sharing Living Quarters

SFLA Stupid Four Letter Acronym

WOFTAM Waste Of Flaming Time And Money

XTLA eXtended Three Letter Acronym

YABA Yet Another Bloody Acronym

As mentioned at the start of this column, we have dedicated this column to the lighter side of computing. If you have an experience or thought that you'd like to share with us, please do not hesitate to drop us a line via BBS Callers Digest.

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AVOID SOME COMMON BUSINESS PROBLEMS

BY LAURA BELL



At the end of April, corporations who start their fiscal year to coordinate with the calendar year are reporting

their first-quarter earnings. The following insights about Bank of America and Rockwell are first hand quotes from their company-issued press releases.

5/22/93 — BankAmerica Corporation reported first-quarter 1993 earnings totaling \$484 million or \$1.19 per common shares. Earnings for the first quarter of 1992 were \$303 million, or \$1.22 per common share.

"It is precisely one year since BankAmerica's merger with Security Pacific, and the process of combining the two companies is now substantially completed," says Richard M. Rosenberg, chairman and chief executive officer.

"First-quarter results showed the continuing effects of weaknesses remain a source of concern. However, improvements in the more controllable aspects of our business, such as expenses and credit quality, have helped mitigate the effects of the soft economy on the corporation's earning."

Of additional import is the following, "In the first quarter of 1993, the

corporation completed the First Gibraltar Bank acquisition," Rosenberg said. "This transaction strengthens the Bank of America Texas franchise and diversification.

As a result of the merger, we believe that BankAmerica is positioned to take advantage of increased opportunities when the economy improves. Although some operations are still consolidating and we have further operating expense reductions to achieve, we do not anticipate incurring significant additional costs..." Rosenberg concluded.

This good news from the BofA does not imply that a complete recovery for financial institutions is around the cor-

revenues since 1985, when everybody in the industry saw them as an eye blink away from complete disaster. They are a leader in the recovery of this highly tarnished industry.

If you have a penchant for studying company balance sheets, you can probably come up with a good idea as to when they will be back on the track of continued growth. But, no investment in that industry is going to be anything but risky for quite awhile. It will take someone dedicated to studying corporate accounting numbers in order to make a wise choice.

On to another a company. This is one the public usually identifies as belonging in the aerospace world. Rockwell International is a diversified publicly traded company with nine different business units.

Rockwell announced 40% second quarter earnings per share increase, April 19, 1993. Rockwell International Corporation (NYSE:ROK) reported its fiscal 1993 second quarter earnings per share were 63 cents, an increase of 40 percent over last year's second quarter of 45 cents per share.

Net income for the second quarter was \$136.9 million, an increase of 38 percent from 1992's net income of \$99 million. Sales for the quarter totaled \$2.7 billion, down from 192 second quarter sales of \$2.8 billion.

Donald R. Beall, chairman and chief executive officer, said,

*...earnings of
Telecommunications more
than doubled as a result
of strengthening markets
and customer acceptance
of new products."*

ner. The BofA has been fighting the battle of ensuring that their marginal costs will start equaling their marginal

"Significantly, seven of our nine business units posted earnings increase over 1992's second quarter and both our Electronics and Aerospace segments had substantial earnings growth in the current year quarter."

"In Electronics," Beall stated, "earnings of our Industrial Automation business nearly tripled from the 1992 second quarter, while earnings of Telecommunications more than doubled as a result of strengthening markets and customer acceptance of new products."

"In Aerospace, improved contract performance and continuing cost containment initiatives in both the Space Systems and Aircraft businesses resulted in a 46 percent second quarter earnings increase, even though sales were down five percent," Beall added.

The Rockwell chief executive also commented on the outlook for the year, noting, "Even though earnings of our Automotive business were well below our expectations, the earnings improvement we achieved in the first

half of our fiscal year was greater than we had planned makes us confident we will meet our previously announced goal of double-digit earnings

*When facing a \$45
fee for a credit report,
the woman did it
herself for \$20.*

per share growth for the full fiscal year."

Rockwell international is an interesting and diversified apparently well-managed company. It would serve to be an interesting case history.

INSIGHT ON SOME PERSONAL MONEY MATTERS

Several months back, I went to some

indepth analysis as to what to look for when refinancing your home. May 2nd's Los Angeles Time Magazine did a short piece on the necessity of questioning every charge you come across when dealing with this avenue of personal finance. You either stay on your toes or continue writing checks.

They itemized a list of charges a couple early this year had to plow through when battling refinancing. The aggregate saving over the life of the loan to this feisty couple turned out to be \$4,100.

When first promised a guaranteed rate, it was 7.38%. When it came time to sign "docs" (as they are called in the biz), this rate had jumped to 7.8%. Negotiations involved role playing on the phone and calling in a lawyer until the final docs were signed with a 7.5%. This rearranging saved the couple \$3,300 over the course of the 7-year loan.

When the escrow officer wanted a \$100 fee to retype the grant deed,

Continues...



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there was a need to add a name before the closing, the woman spent \$1.50 to get the document form and did it herself.

When facing a \$45 fee for a credit report, the woman did it herself for \$20. In other words, when dealing with refinancing if you are the busy type, and don't pay attention to the dollar signs as this process gets close to the end, you are going to end up only one way — screwed. Question every charge and find out if there is a way you can either renegotiate or do it yourself.

Refinancing for the unwary can be a one way ticket to losing dollars to a less-than-honest escrow officer. It is sound advice to inform the person in charge of your loan, at the very beginning, that you will be auditing every charge and asking for explanations. Also, realize going in, that a guaranteed rate is very ambiguous to the folks in the "re-fi" biz. Let them know they are dealing with an educated consumer and you have a better shot at coming away with a deal you are happy with.

STILL THINKING ABOUT STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS (PART 2)

THE LAUNCH

Finally, after all the planning and time spent with your nose in the book, you are ready to announce your business to the public. You have, of course, investigated and completed the paperwork requirements tied to your area. This could include formal business li-

cense, a re-seller's number from the state, a DBA in your county's legal paper or local paper, as well as any other items I may have missed.

If you are opening a retail store, then a new business is thought of as being launched the day of the grand opening with fanfare of balloons, banners, and any other attractions the new owner may wish to indulge in.

Many times, however, businesses are launched with a little or no fanfare

...the IRS does not look kindly on thousands of dollars spent on expenses with little or no income to write off against it for the first several years.

except maybe for a tiny item written up by the local daily newspaper's business editor. Or, in the case of some consultants I have known through the years, they don't think about announcements to anyone until after the initial start. By that time, they are so knee deep in paper work and problems to solve, they usually either put it off or assign the task of initial ads, or press releases to someone else.

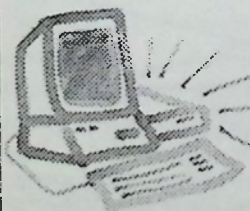
No matter how together you may feel when it comes time to open the

door of your business, resist the temptation to spend anything more than a very small percentage of your allocated budget on office furnishings and business gadgets. There are a variety of things, one would love to have in a new office. The problem is start-up capital only goes so far and the IRS does not look kindly on thousands of dollars spent on expenses with little or no income to write off against it for the first several years. There are several things which are, of course, required — phones, computers, etc. — but I am talking about 'fancy stuff.'

I remember visiting the office of a consultant, who recently left the dominating arms of IBM. His office looked like it belonged in the pages of Gentleman's Quarterly or the special section of Fortune the month they profile the CEOs of the Top 500. When it comes to computer consultants — oh my — are the only words I have for them when it comes to spending unnecessary capital on office equipment. They have a wonderful pocketbook excuse. They carry it around with them consistently so this label is appropriate. It's required they have the latest equipment. Otherwise, they will not be up to snuff if they get a job which requires them understanding how it works. This rationalization keeps many computer consultants in hole during the course of their entire 'experiment' in entrepreneurialship.

If it's something you want and you can't write off (depreciation in a few years) think again. Also leasing or sharing equipment with someone

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down the hall is a logical alternative. Be reasonable. If you don't need to make the purchase to get by in the first year, figure a way around it.

Next cautionary note. New owners tend to get very content (in the case of any segment of the service industry) when two or three good clients are knocking continuously at their door. They tend to forget one basic premise. At some point in time, good clients and good customers can disappear without warning. Just because you are bringing in sufficient income for the time being, is not a reason not to be concerned about maintaining a marketing edge. But, the 'newbie' business owner, points out he wouldn't know what to do with more work if it came. The answer is easy — subcontract. If you don't know someone currently you could feel comfortable subcontracting with — join a professional organization and find that someone. It could save your life later on the down the road. It could also provide you with additional work when you need it. Networking on the professional

level can be just as important as networking for new clients.

New owners who do well are warriors who realize they are in the eye of

*If you don't know
someone currently you
could feel comfortable
subcontracting with —
join a professional
organization and find
that someone.*

the hurricane. I found myself in that position for approximately six months and went around to professional meetings constantly grinning like a cat who just ate the canary. Little did I know, the canary would be resurrected into something out of Alfred Hitchcock's, "The Birds." I was so un-

aware during the months, when I had 4 content clients who were paying their retainers on time. Then the month of calamity hit; they all disappeared. One had a nervous breakdown, one went bankrupt, one decided she no longer needed public relations, and one decided to change careers. I think, at that time, only one actually sent me check with her notice.

Marketing is a constant requirement. I'll say it again — customers and clients disappear. Don't allow a state of deadline pressure to cast a cloud on your judgment. Projects get finished; projects get canceled, customers go elsewhere and they have their own money problems which roll over on to you. Hopefully, they will be honest about it and not write you bad checks. I had plenty of that in my public relations days; but thankfully, during the course of running the newsletter not a one. Be watchful, be alert, be diligent.

Continues...

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THINK I AM GONNA DIE STAGE — HARD LABOR

There is no other way to accurately describe this stage in your business growth. It is the equivalent of being told you have to perform your everyday duties while you are in the middle of hard labor (childbirth). By this time, you will have gone through several traumas revolving around paying-the-bills and payroll struggles. If you had initial capital when starting, most of it has probably been drained. You will have faced down deadlines and crises many times over. Customers wanted products or services on a deadline which were crashed by circumstances outside of your control. You will have dealt with unreasonable customers or clients demanding things you couldn't give. You may find out, if in the service industry, that you are performing for someone whom you can only logically label a "crook."

One of the most well paid and frequently published freelance writers on the West Coast used to be in the pub-

lic relations business. He was working late on a deadline and looked up across the hall, to his amazement, watched his bread and butter client (a

*I hope at some point
in your life, you spent
some time playing
shoot-up video games.
You have to think
on your feet just
that fast in order
to stay alive.*

small insurance company) packing boxes and exiting the building lock, stock and barrel.

I once worked as an Account

Executive for a small Public Relations Agency. I was eager, and spent more hours working on projects than actually required. I was up late one Saturday night listening to a radio talk show where one of our clients was being interviewed. The show featured call-in phone calls. The client was a dermatologist. Apparently, he'd been sued a year earlier for use of a controversial new treatment before it had been given the okay by the FDA. I was the one the next day trying to talk the Agency out of hot water with the booking agent for the show. I can't recall what the owner had to say to the client.

These things happen and one has to be prepared for them mentally. Can these disasters be absolutely avoided? My opinion, is, not in this world. Planes with shipments on them crash. Packages get addressed wrong. People get sick at the worst possible time. Folks promise you orders and they

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cancel because of their financial problems; after you have allocated that revenue to pay a critical bill. And yet... And yet deadlines still have to be met. Clients are still waiting for their shipment and more customers are knocking at your door.

There are days when you will pray for a way to pull the plug. The problem is — something nobody bothered to explain — the plug is stuck and you have to move forward no matter what. This is the part of the untold story. Anyone who tells you, not so, is a liar.

During this phase of business growth, I hope at some point in your life, you spent some time playing shoot-up video games. You have to think on your feet just that fast in order to stay alive. Those that don't, find themselves recuperating in intensive care after the explosion comes which dislodges the plug. You have to make the decision, at some point in time, just how much of the shifting of gears you can deal with before buying

out. But, these doors of buying an edge, never happen when you are in a crisis. The crisis passes and then opportunity shows up. Murphy's law has a long addendum when it comes to

*They typically describe
an overnight success
as something which
took 20 years of
hard work
to achieve.*

small business.









Positive alternatives include during this part of start-up: finding a partner with capital, handing that initially polished business plan over to a broker whom will diligently search for addi-


tional funding. (The initial benefit of this should be to hire staff to share the burden if you have been playing the game alone until this point.) Also, if you have been in business long enough, when you want to be able to slow down the onslaught of going it alone — you may want to think about taking the company public. However, this is reserved for companies whose books will pass the scrutiny of the eyes of the SEC. This requires a good set of books and a history which shows potential growth to possible stockholders.

Backing up a minute. The best possible way to get yourself mentally prepared for the "hard labor" stage is to read as many case histories of famous business/corporations as possible. You will see how they chose to handle these growing pains. This way, you can ask yourself now whether or not you are capable and willing to go down that road. Can you and your family life personally deal with it? If you have any questions in your mind, whatsoever,

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now is the time to ready yourself, not later. Later will be when you are hit with divorce papers at the same time you are in contract negotiations with someone who wants to shut down your whole operation.

No one ever promised you being in business would be easy or that anyone plays the game of business according to any rules. During the time Iacocca took Chrysler's problems to Congress, his wife fell terminally ill. Before ever entering your initial planning stage, if you have a spouse or significant other in your life, you need to sit down and have a heart-to-heart chat. Don't, no matter what, launch a business while your significant other is in the throes of a career identity crisis. You may as well close the door on the relationship. Having a spouse or mate who is well established and secure in their own business or professional is a definite plus for the new entrepreneur. Anything else, is a walking time bomb. Talk it out before trouble erupts.

Viewing this portion of your business evolution can be wisely defined when listening to interviews of celebrities. They typically describe an overnight success as something which took 20 years of hard work to achieve.

ACTUAL BIRTH AND GROWTH

Finally, after a myriad of endless sleepless nights and harried days, things will start to come together. Your name/business name will actually end up in newsprint without you having to buy an ad.

You may even, at this point, start thinking about selling franchises so you can expand further without having take on the whole burden yourself. During this time, you will be faced with a growing rank of employees. You will really need to learn how to let go of some of the creative duties. You can no longer at this point, be founder, manager, and fire-stamper all in one entity. Otherwise, you will be paying more than your share of costs in medical fees. And, while you are in the hospital recuperating, the fires will con-

tinue to burn and there is no telling what they might consume.

Again, look for a clone/executive assistant early on. The person definitely has to be somebody you can get along with. So, don't chose in haste.

On a final note, don't assume that success, growth, and birth mean the end of fighting fires. It simply means you will be stronger and now capable enough to deal with potential disasters

*...the parent may
have to buy more than
one item —
one to play with
and one to put aside
for the collection.*

with more strength, judgment, skill and courage. After all, you have now become a seasoned warrior, one worthy of admiration. Be ready for the camera when the interviewers come calling!

A FEW MORE THOUGHTS ON COLLECTING

There was recently an interesting story posted on Prodigy about starting out your kids at early age (after 8 was suggested) in the business of collecting. Kids, are, if you think about it, natural packrats when it comes to things they have a passion for.

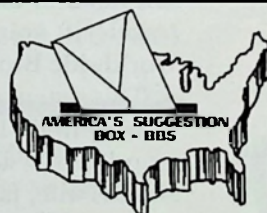
Whether it is comic books, baseballs card, a line of celebrity toys, or McDonald toys, they are never satisfied. They want more. Anyone who has gone through that phrase of parenting can re-

late to the chronic unrelentless moans of "...more." Put these desires to use in a creative way which may spark the desire in your kids now and down the road ways to make money out of something they love.

The article cautioned that when it comes to some items, such as comic books, or toys, if you want them to start a collection and have parts of the collection in good shape, the parent may be forced in the position of actually having to buy more than one item — one to play with and one to put aside for the collection. The article also emphasized the requirement of saving containers the items come in. This may increase their individual and collective worth when it comes time to put the collection on the market.

After lighting a fire under your kid, the next step is to get them involved in doing research as how an individual market is fluctuating on his particular passion. Again, as mentioned in previous articles, there are hobby and collecting publications which can be researched through the public library if need be. Also your child may decide to start a local club for others who want to flush out the passion, or simply get together for social reasons and compare each other's collections. They might also get into the buy/trade and sell aspect amongst each other as time goes on.

This could be an activity for parents to also join in. But, at the least, it will spark an interest at an early age for investing in your children. This may engender money making habits which last a lifetime.



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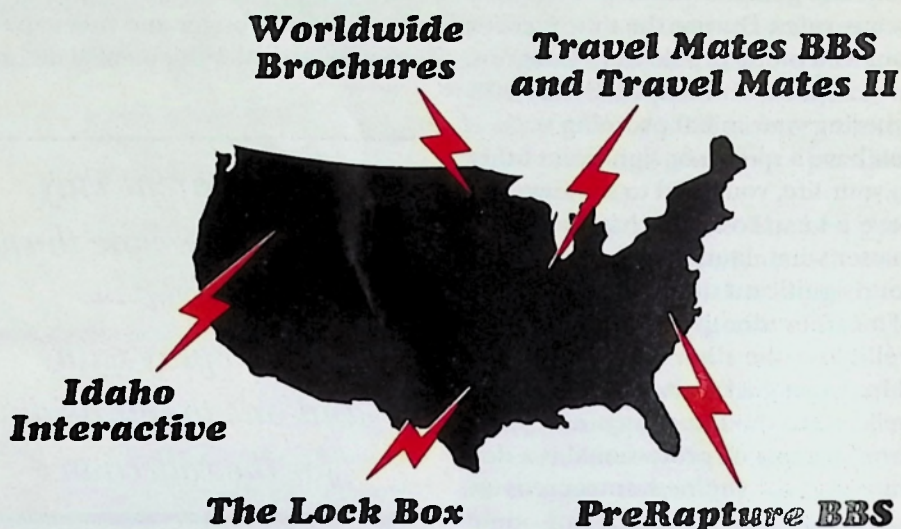
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TRAVELING CROSS COUNTRY BY BBS

BY ALAN R. BECHTOLD



Usually, I'm an organized modem traveler, starting at one point and moving logically from state to state, generally taking things in order. This month, however, we're going to do things a bit differently and jump around a bit. That's because we're deep in the midst of the travel season and two of the boards I called this month are travel-related. So we'll start with the first of them...

"WORLDWIDE BROCHURES"

Sysop: Jeff Mohr

Location: Detroit Lakes, MN

Phone Number: 218-847-3027

Modems: Generic 9600bps

Software: RBBS-PC 17.4

MOTTO: "Travel Information With Over 10,000 FREE Maps, Guides and Brochures — Just for the Asking!"

I do so much of my traveling via modem it's often easy to forget all the planning that goes into physically visiting a new destination. You have to

plan where to stay. Make arrangements for lodging along the way, if you're driving, or get the best deal on tickets if you're traveling by some other means. It also pays to know what to expect when you get where you're going — so you can pack properly and bring enough money to enjoy yourself.

In fact, physical travel is so much more trouble than simply flitting around the world in that cyberplane called a modem you sometimes have to wonder why people bother. Almost. But — you can also use your modem to help you gather all the information you need to make plans for physical travel, if you use it to call the Worldwide Brochures BBS.

This system operates as an adjunct to Worldwide Brochures, a company founded by system operator Jeff Mohr and his wife, Janet, out of frustration when they were trying to find information to help them plan a trip to Sweden in 1988. "We decided there should be a 'one stop shop' to find travel information," Jeff said. Determined to carry out that idea, he

and Janet hooked up with a business partner, computer programmer Kevin Sohl, and spent the next five years compiling travel information, developing products (a printed directory and software package) and designing a distribution service.

Then, Janet asked the question, "Why don't we have a bulletin board?" The rest is history.

The BBS is really an electronic extension of the company's printed and software-based directories of travel information sources. As such, it's loaded with great research aids and very little else. The whole idea is to connect online users with the people who have travel information available. You call Worldwide Brochures BBS to locate and request information which is later mailed directly to your door.

"The system is extremely simple," Jeff explained. "Members log on, search for what they want, order what they need, and log off. They can also leave messages if they have questions about which maps, guides and brochures are appropriate, or they can

ask other members pertinent questions on their future vacation plans.”

First-time callers pretty much get free access to everything offered on the system. This includes the Online Dictionary, which allows you to search on keywords for various topics and locations and pull up information for onscreen viewing. You can also perform keyword searches in the system's Online Searching menu. This is where you can quickly find lists of available brochures, maps and guides by destination or by the name of the company which produces them. Once you have paid a modest fee to become a subscribing member, this is also the place where you can request free information that is sent to you via mail, directly to your home. In fact, requesting free brochures, guides and maps is about the only thing you have to be a subscriber to do here.

Okay. My family and I are planning to physically travel to South Padre Island, Texas (it's still pretty hard to get the feel of the sun and salt air on your skin via modem — even if you

throw some sand on the floor, turn on a bunch of sun lamps and imagine you're at the beach while you call!). I looked up South Padre Island in the

*Worldwide Brochures
BBS is really an
electronic extension of the
company's printed and
software-based directories
of travel information
sources.*

World Brochures BBS Online Dictionary and got this information:

“SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

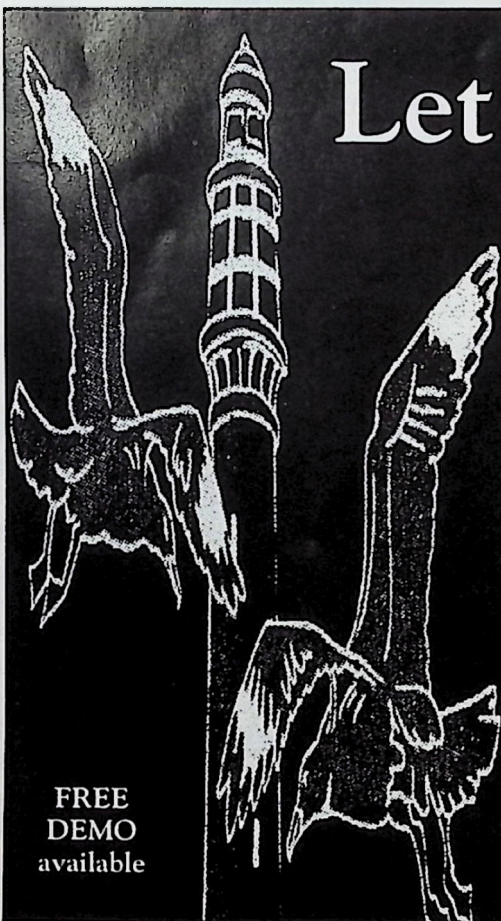
*Country: USA Continent: North
America uninhabited sand reef off
southern Texas, USA”*

Well — I found out the dictionary isn't necessarily all that up-to-date. Whoever put that information together obviously hasn't visited South Padre Island since all the hotels, resorts, condos, restaurants, and clubs popped up everywhere, making it a popular stop even for the Spring Break crowd.

A search for South Padre Island on the system's Online Brochures list hit 25 matches, however — everything from tours and RV vacation guides to general information about the island today and, of course, a brochure about Spring Break on South Padre. Each of these guides and brochures has an associated WWB number. All I had to do was type the number for each of the information packages I wished to receive and they arrived in the mail safe and sound in about 11 days.

And that's about all there is to it. Literally. There is only limited message activity and there aren't many downloadable files to speak of. Worldwide Brochures BBS is really the

Continues...



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perfect example of a completely focused, single-interest online information system doing what it was set up to do and doing it well.

It is interesting to note that, if you need help with anything, you can expect to get it here. Jeff told me one of his favorite features on the BBS is the Page Sysop function, because callers can get instant gratification on any question or problem. But everything is set up so straightforward and easy to use, I doubt seriously you'll be paging Jeff unless you just want to say "hi."

Worldwide Brochures BBS memberships are just \$12 per year. Well worth the cost if you find just one or two brochures that make a single trip better as a result. The company's IBM PC-compatible software version of their online directory is just \$19 and the printed edition of the indexed directory is \$39. Jeff told me he is now at work on a version of the board's online directory that could be run on other BBSes. You could soon find the Worldwide Brochures directory popping up everywhere.

Meanwhile, you can count on Worldwide Brochures' continued growth. "Most of the companies who have brochures listed in the database have had requests for their information as a result," Jeff said. "That keeps us in the 'top of their mind.' The BBS has catapulted us into becoming the 'central hub' between cus-

tomers requesting travel information and the companies providing the service.

Jeff said he also plans to add the full text of some brochures to the system's download libraries in the near future, but primarily his plans are to keep the system simple, fast and easy to use. It's already all that and more. If you haven't planned your summer vacation trip yet, you can't go wrong giving the Worldwide Brochures BBS a call. Even if you've already been on a

*Travel Mates [is]
a board designed
to help you meet
people who travel.
I like that!*

trip — call and request brochures to help you remember where you were! A one-year membership now will still be good when you're planning a trip NEXT year.

From here we move on to Franklin Park, IL, a suburb of Chicago, where we can take a look at an entirely different kind of travel-related BBS...

"TRAVEL MATES BBS AND TRAVEL MATES II"

Sysop: Jason Frost

Location: Franklin Park, IL

Phone Number: 708-928-0195

Modems: Hayes 14,400

Software: Galacticom and WildCat

MOTTO: "Meet Interesting People
Who Like to Go Places and Do
Things"

This is another BBS dedicated to travel — but system operator Jason Frost has put a bit of a different twist to the theme. There's plenty of travel-related information here — loads of it. But Jason explained he really started the board because he wanted to meet people who travel and bring them to-

gether to share their experiences.

"I have some knowledge and connections in travel," he said. "I worked as a travel agent for two years, and I maintain strong ties with my former agency, Peter Pam's Travel in Franklin Park (named for Peter and Pam, of course)."

But, Jason explained, he was more interested in people who travel.

"I am somewhat limited in the amount of time I have to meet and socialize with people," he said. "The motto of the board summarizes the reason I run it. People who travel frequently are usually very nice people, and they always have interesting things and places to talk about.

"Interestingly, I was also strongly influenced by the first installment of BBS NOTEBOOK in BBS CALLERS DIGEST, in March of 1992. The column was written by Patrick Grote then, and he reviewed a board in St. Louis called Travel Online. I called and was impressed with what I found (although Travel Mates bears little or no resemblance to that BBS)."

As a result, Travel Mates is unique. It's a BBS about travel, where you can find plenty of information about places to go for your summer vacation, especially about Chicago and the surrounding area. That's why I have included it at this point in the column. Even more, however, it's a board designed to help you meet people who travel. I like that!

A lot of the message and file areas here will give you the travel information you need. I found most of this information posted as messages left by Jason. I found active message bases covering special events in IL, IN, MI and WI, hot travel bargains, and special events in Chicago. I also found MajorNet international echomail forums on travel and travel bargains, reports on travel destinations, adventure and outdoor vacations, foreign travel and more.

But there's a lot to interest general modem users here as well. I found message areas supporting BBS ads, a teen discussion area, questions and answers about computers and modems, and more. And there are literally thou-

The Bell Business Report is in its 4th year of publication. Topics covered have expanded to include: economic and business trends, company news, investment and financial topics, real estate, collecting, management and start-up issues. It is distributed to over 40 bbses and also uploaded to three libraries on Genie.

Electronic and print subscriptions are available along with sample issues. Call for Advertising rates in the electronic version.

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sands of files, including games, business programs, programming utilities and more, on CD-ROM and hard disk.

Jason told me his callers seem to like the system's online games the best. I tried my hand at Against the Clock, an intriguing online trivia game where you get to enter the question the next player will have to answer — IF you guess the one that's been left for you. It reminded me of King of the Boards, a similar trivia game I've played on other BBSes. Incidentally, I couldn't guess the answer and didn't get to leave a new question. Does anyone remember which company created Tass Times in Tone Town? I couldn't think of the answer for the life of me! Now I remember why I rarely play Trivial Pursuit!

I also found Tim Stryker's Fazuul, Hangman's Secret Cove and Super Nova, a popular online challenge that closely resembles Battleship. I won the first two rounds of Hangman that I played. I think I'm getting good at that one!

Travel Mates callers can also participate in a nifty matchmaker feature to meet one another on a more personal basis. Jason also likes to get to know his system's callers. There are several in-depth questionnaires you can answer that ask — in depth — about literally every interest you could possibly have. If used properly, the results of these could serve Jason as an excellent market survey, so he can meet his users' needs more completely. And I found Jason to be a helpful, supportive system operator, always willing to give new callers a gentle helping hand.

The most unique feature I found on the board was the Online Flower Shop. This unique service lets you select from several different graphics flower designs and send them as messages to other users on the system. You can send a carnation, a sweetheart rose, a Happy Birthday message complete with balloons, a heart with "Thinking of You" in the middle, or a pretty little rose just for lovers. I haven't seen this feature on any board before and it's one of the

niftiest doors I've seen in a long time.

Travel Mates BBS is unique physically as well. It's actually TWO BBSes, each running different software, working together as a single system. "I first began to entertain the notion of becoming a sysop in 1991 when Mustang announced the release of version 3.0 of WildCat," Jason said. "I was very excited by the features listed in the promo material, and promptly bought a copy.

*Games, unlimited
downloads, national chat
events, national netmail
and the matchmaker
database are all available
to callers who are
registered and verified as
Standard users.*

"The only thing it lacked was the ability to run more than two or three lines from a single machine (we had no affordable 486 machines available then). I bought the Major BBS with the intention of using its out-dial product to connect it to my WildCat board. Unfortunately, that could not be accomplished — until the latest release of Major BBS."

Jason's got the two boards connected now. Basically, when you call the Travel Mates BBS, you connect with The Major BBS. This is the basic bulletin board. To access most of the file directories and message bases, however, you select a door on the Major BBS sys-

tem that jumps you to Travel Mates II, running on the latest version of WildCat. Jason was in the process of moving most of the message bases and file directories over to Travel Mates II when I called.

You'll want to give this system a call. There's more here of interest than meets the eye. What is here is often unique and always interesting.

First-time callers get free demo access to the system after filling out an online registration questionnaire. This allows you to look around, download a list of available files and write E-mail to the sysop. Games, unlimited downloads, national chat events, national netmail and the matchmaker database are all available to callers who are registered and verified as Standard users.

Paid users get varied numbers of credits which can be used to pay for online casino games, dial-out functions, and enhanced chat functions. Half-year or one-year members get one hour of privileged access every day and are exempt from being charged credits for most (but not all) of the services available to Paid users.

It's less complicated than it sounds. Basically, you can buy 75,000 credits for \$5 or 200,000 credits for \$10. If you prefer a membership, you can subscribe for six months for \$18 or 12 months for \$24. Subscription memberships include some free credits. Take a look around this one!

Now that all of our vacation plans are made and we have access to TWO systems that can help us with future journeys — it's time to hit the cy-

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berhighway for some more modem meandering. Our first stop...

"IDAHO INTERACTIVE"

Sysop: Bob Cooper

Location: Boise, ID

Phone Number: 208-345-4987

Modems: Boca and Infotel 9600

Software: MajorBBS 6.03

MOTTO: "Friendliest and Funnest Board in Idaho"

Idaho Interactive is an interesting professionally-run general interest BBS that seems to cater to teleconferencing and games more than files and other online activities. That's not to say you won't find files here — just not many. One CD-ROM offers a great selection of shareware and freeware, but I only found roughly 25 files on the system's own download directories.

But fear not, file freaks — Sysop Bob Cooper said his major focus for the near future is the addition of more files via CD-ROMs, and he was in the process of adding six more discs when I called. They should all be online by the time you read this. And Bob doesn't ever place upload/download ratio restrictions on his users.

Once you've downloaded your fill, you'll want to check out the system's chat areas. This is where Idaho Interactive stands out above many other boards I've called. This board's users are some of the chattiest folks I've ever run into. I was paged for chats often in the short time I had for my visit to Idaho Interactive and I witnessed more than a few excellent, interesting discussions raging full bore when I checked in.

Echo conferences are also popular on Idaho Interactive, mostly from

FidoNet. There are buy and sell conferences, Advanced Dungeons & Dragons discussion areas, and categories for talking about books, home gardening, environmental issues, BBSes, recipes, Star Trek, partying, and politics, in addition to the usual array of computer-related discussion areas.

The most interesting feature I found was Idaho Interactive's online shopping mall. There are some inter-

The most interesting feature I found was Idaho Interactive's online shopping mall. There are some interesting vendors — and products — represented here, ones I rarely see on BBSes.

esting vendors — and products — represented here, ones I rarely see on BBSes as a rule.

Research Consultants has an entire section in the online mall where you can request information on any subject and get it quickly — for a price. This is a professional information brokerage that will help you with simple fact-finding missions, term papers, even large research projects. The company also has a large selection of government documents on hand that can be ordered or searched. You can

also purchase a number of handbooks or completed research projects or sort through a nice selection of computer hardware and software for sale.

Role play-

ing game aficionados will love Idaho Interactive's Dark Horse online store. This well-known company offers an impressive array of new board and role playing games and accessories, books and miniatures you'll be glad you discovered, at prices that are certainly below what many retail outlets charge.

You can make online purchases in any of the stores with a simple "Y" or "N" keystroke, then go back through all your purchases and verify that you want the items you've selected, one by one. Once you've verified your list, the system automatically generates a total price, adds in the shipping and verifies your mailing address and payment method of choice. Products you've ordered are shipped directly to your door.

Online games are always fun and Idaho Interactive provides several intriguing electronic challenges for your entertainment, including Hangman's Secret Cove, Androids, Super Lotto, Fazuul, Super Nova, Quest for Magic and Auto Wars. My personal favorites are Fazuul, a bizarre text-based adventure game written by Tim Stryker (author of the MajorBBS bulletin board system software package), and Auto Wars, a fine online challenge based on the popular Car Wars role playing game.

It's easy to see why so many callers enjoy spending their time connected to this system. You should give it serious consideration, too.

First-time callers get 2 free hours on Idaho Interactive after filling out a little information in an online registration form. Bob Cooper verifies all new users via automatic callback verifier or voice telephone call.

Once you're verified, you get a month of free access, limited to 30 minutes per day. With this access, you can view the list of available files from the system's CD-ROM directory — but you won't be permitted to download them. You can enter private chats with other users, but not page another user for chat. And you can send E-mail, but you won't be able to request return receipts for messages you've sent. There are other services and features to which you won't have free access, or which won't be visible to you, but you

Educator's BBS

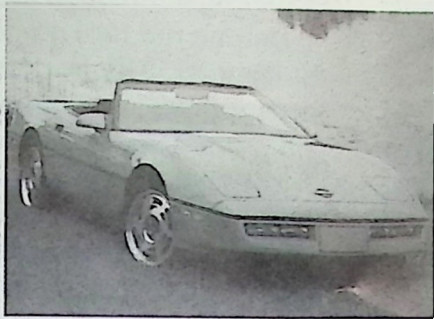
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do get access to most of the system's file directories, message bases, chat functions and games. A message to SYSOP will also get you verified if the automatic call-back verifier doesn't work for you.

Memberships are reasonably priced. You can get one month of access, for an hour per day, for \$7.50. A month of access for three hours per day is \$15. And a full year of access for three hours per day is \$115.

After that enjoyable visit, it's time again to move a bit closer to the sun. Texas one of my favorite vacation sites so our next stop is Dallas, where we visit...

"THE LOCK BOX"

Sysop: The Keeper (Chuck Morgan)
Location: Dallas/Highland Park, TX
Phone Number: 214-559-3994
Modems: Viva 2400
Software: WWIV BBS
MOTTO: "Very Well Put-together Board, the Best in On-line

Games Selection, Message Areas That Will Interest Just About Anyone."

When I first logged on to this BBS, an onscreen message informed me that I was NOT welcome on the BBS if I was a member of any law or telephone agency. Hmmm! That peaked my interest right away. What I found on the board was interesting — but certainly nothing that would get any police or telephone company snoops foaming at the mouth. I suppose sysop Chuck Morgan, who goes by the handle of The Keeper on the BBS, simply doesn't care for these people and hopes the message will warn them away. Since many police and telephone company officials logging on to BBSes have been known to occasionally lie about who they are, I wonder how much good this message really does.

Anyway, if you're NOT a member of a police or telephone agency, you'll find plenty to make you feel wel-

come on The Lock Box BBS. Chuck told me one of the reasons why WWIV is his BBS software of choice is the fact that it can so easily be customized to fit his personality. He's obviously put in a lot of work on this aspect of his system. The Lock Box is packed with personality.

In addition to extensive support for fellow WWIV BBS system operators, files on the system range from graphics, DOS utilities, communications, games, and language files, to graphics and text files covering every possible adult interest imaginable (sorry kids, you're going to have to prove your legal age to gain access to these latter areas!).

I was pleased with the selection of files I found on The Lock Box. For example, in the "New Uploads" area, I found a great GIF graphics file of some "strange sheep" you would have to see yourself to believe, a text file telling you what to do if you are hit with line noise problems on your

Continues...

modem, a program that simulates brainwaves on your screen, and many more.

Messages don't seem to be a strong point here, but what message bases there were active and interesting. There were areas for online game hints and news, movie and theater reviews, national and local sports discussions, talk about music and hobbies, classified ads and political debate. I also found a number of interesting ICEnet echomail areas, including disgusting jokes, more political debate, an area for talk about campus life and high school life, and TradeWars hints and news.

The Lock Box is also host of the controversial "OPEN FIRE *UNCENSORED* DEBATE" echomail forum and also hosts the Drug Legalization Forum. A brief scan of these two areas is guaranteed to get you talking!

I also ran into a rather interesting local discussion concerning the issues surrounding the whole Branch Davidian affair. This one almost kept me online longer than I allow myself for a review, just reading the heated

debate. In fact, I noticed there seems to be a lot more interesting activity on the local message boards here than on many BBSes. This is most likely due to Chuck's unique method of encour-

*The Lock Box is also host
of the controversial
"OPEN FIRE
UNCENSORED
DEBATE" echomail
forum and also hosts the
Drug Legalization
Forum.*

aging his users to post E-mail. When you log off of the board, you get a "Message Posting Rating" that is based on how many messages you left while you were connected. Since comments to the Sysop don't count and that's all

I had time for during my visit, my rating was an embarrassing "0." I almost logged back in just to leave a couple more messages and get a better grade!

Despite the board's general interest leanings, The Lock Box's central focus appears strongly slanted toward computer games of all kinds. There were quite a few games in the file areas and the discussion on most of the message boards was also quite often centered around games. To meet this interest, Chuck offers an impressive array of online challenges. The board isn't multi-node, so there aren't any multiplayer online games, but still there are more than 30 excellent interactive online amusements to choose from here, including Championship Bowling, Battle Zone, Dragon Lance, Mat Mania Wrestling, Solar Realms Elite II, Food Fight, Dragon's Hoard, Bat Man — The Game, Star Trek and a lot more.

I had a bit of fun trying my hand at Red-Or-Black Cards, an online gambling game where you bet against the house on which hand of cards will

Pics OnLine!

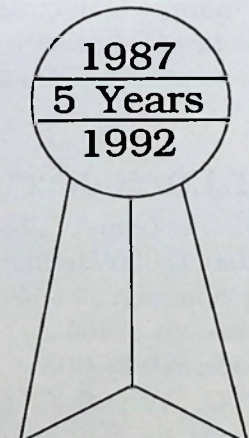
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come closest to adding up to 33. Chuck's made this game — and several of the other games on the board — more interesting by adding an on-line "slot machine" that you play when you log on. If you win, you get credits which you can spend to play online games and to wager in the gambling games. Out of two tries, I won some credits — then went on to win one hand of Red-Or-Black Cards. Four hands later I was broke!

On the adult side of things there are even more online games to choose from — many with names I can't even list here! It's enough to say these can provide many hours of adult fun in the privacy of your own home. Most are actually hilarious, but then again that's what their authors meant them to be.

After three years online, Chuck said he's most proud of the fact that The Lock Box has managed to gather a large group of faithful callers. He's made more than 100 modifications to the stock WWIV BBS software and these "tweaks" make his system truly unique. He also told me he hopes to help with the development of multi-node WWIV, saying, "I feel it's a must for WWIV to continue to thrive as it has." Chuck said he also hopes to continue improving the "feel and touch"

of the BBS, and said he intends to continue offering "the most in online games and unique message areas." I recommend you check this intriguing system out for yourself!

When you first log on to the Lock

*The PreRapture BBS's
interactive online*

ANSI and ASCII

*Bible Classes were some
of the most interesting
I've seen in quite
some time.*

Box BBS, you won't get much access at all. To get more access, you must post a message addressed to SYSOP telling Chuck your real name (handles are allowed on the board), your voice phone number, where you found the number to the BBS, what other BBSes you frequent. Omit any of this information, and Chuck may decide to give you lower access. Stay away from po-

lice work, avoid telephone company employment, and follow the above suggestions and you'll find yourself hooked up with a BBS worth dialing frequently.

Finally, we move further eastward, almost to the coast but still very much in the south. We'll end this month's silicon sojourn in Durham, North Carolina, where we visit...

"PRERAPTURE BBS, HOME OF THE PRIME NETWORK"

Sysop: Steve Winter

Location: Durham, NC

Phone Number: 919-286-3686

Modems: US Robotics 16.800

Software: Maximus

MOTTO: "A Wholesome, Christian, Family-Oriented BBS That Also Has Plenty Available For Those Not Religiously Inclined"

It's getting tough these days to find a BBS you can log onto with your kids. The PreRapture BBS is one board you can call and never worry who's looking at the screen over your shoulder. The main interest here is Christianity and Bible study, but the board also has a lot of general interest files and features. The board is also home of the

Continues...

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PRIME network, a huge popular international echomail network that's carried on literally hundreds of BBSes all over the world.

System operator Steve Winter said he honestly feels the Lord led him to start the PreRapture BBS, back in 1986, because he really had no interest whatsoever in computers at the time. In fact, he even got rid of his first 1200 baud modem when he first heard about computer viruses.

Steve was actually a total stranger to computers at the time. In fact, he used a lot of dedicated computers of one kind or another in the operation of PreRapture Productions, a Gospel recording/production company/studio he was running then. Fortunately for the online world, Steve eventually got another modem — this time a 2400 baud model — and started calling local BBSes.

"One day I happened to download a copy of WWIV BBS and all of a sudden it was set up," he said. Thus, PreRapture first went online, on an old Corona PC (state of the art for the mid 80s), running WWIV with an internal 2400 baud modem. "I even had an old Okidata printing out every line

of the BBS log in realtime (brrr, ka-chunk, brrr ka-chunk)."

Callers came online in increasing numbers and the system grew. "After a while, I upgraded to GAP so I could run multi-node, then to Remote Access for FidoNet compatibility, then to Maximus for the Squish style message bases and now to Maximus/2 (with four high speed nodes under OS/2 on a 486/33 with 15 megabytes of RAM)," Steve explained.

Steve also told me he started the PRIME international echomail network because he simply didn't fit in on the networks that were already in operation at the time. "It was originally started so I would have a network that I couldn't get kicked off of," he said. "A true 'One God' Bible preacher doesn't last real long on the false Christian networks or echoes unless he basically sells his soul. Now the Lord has blessed and PRIME is carried on several different continents. PreRapture BBS is also the home base for the PRIME HOLY_BIBLE echo, which is the only 'One God' Christian echo on the FidoNet backbone."

If you're looking for this kind of re-

ligious teaching in an online environment — look no further. Steve is an active and opinionated orator and his own sermons are scattered all over the BBS. The PreRapture BBS's interactive online ANSI and ASCII Bible Classes were some of the most interesting I've seen in quite some time. There are also several searchable Bible databases, available online or downloadable.

Steve's also quite active in the BBS and PRIME Network message areas. "For those interested in the Bible, we have several religious echoes, and sometimes emotions get rather extreme when people who have been taught one thing or another come face to face with certain versus that don't quite fit with their 'beliefs,'" he said. "Sometimes the echoes are calm and other times it probably appears to newcomers to be flame city.

PreRapture BBS accepts donations, but there is never a charge required to access the system. New callers must fill out a brief online questionnaire, agree never to use profanity on the board and wait for call-back verification, but that's all that's required and you're on.

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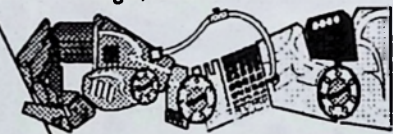
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BBSING ON A COMMODORE HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

BY GAELYNE R. MORANEC



Calling or running a Bulletin Board System with the Commodore 64 or 128 has never been

easier, or better! Only a few years ago, Commodore users had to contend with screen displays that left much to be desired, and slow modem speeds were the norm. Today, a term program for the Commodore 64 lets you call bulletin boards and see them it as they were meant to be seen, both in color and in 80 columns.

There's a variety of new hardware that have amazed the original designers of the Commodore computer, including hardware that allows the use of high speed modems, new disk drives that have storage capacities of up to 3.2 mega bytes (over 13,000 blocks free!) and RAM expansion devices that give instant access to up to 16 megabytes of battery backed-up RAM. As if that weren't enough, new programs have been written that allow Commodore users to read and reply to BBS mail offline.

Whether you want to run your own bulletin board system, or simply want to keep up with the latest developments for telecommunicating with the C64/128, this column is for you. In the coming months, I will be writing about new hardware and software that make telecommunicating with your C64/128 a breeze, as well as cover the basics of BBSing, from the

Commodore point of view.

I'm going to start out with the assumption that you're new to BBSing and want some basic information about using your Commodore to communicate with the rest of the world. My first suggestion is to read everything you can on the subject, and this magazine is a great place to start.

Don't stop at this column! There's a lot to be learned about the world of Bulletin Boards in this magazine. Browse it's pages and familiarize yourself with some of the terms used. The MS-DOS world and the Commodore world are very similar

*...new programs have
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Commodore users to read
and reply to BBS
mail offline.*

when it comes to calling Bulletin Boards, and almost all of the features available on these boards are accessible to you, too.

MODEMS

Let's begin with modems. There are two different species of modems that the Commodore can use. One will plug directly into the user port of the

computer, while the other one requires another piece of hardware between the modem and the user port, called an interface. Modems that are plugged directly into the computer can be found in many of the mail order houses that cater to Commodore users (I'll list a few of them at the end of this article).

The prices for these vary between \$24.95 for a Commodore 1200 baud modem and up to \$79.95 for an Aprrotek 2400 baud modem. Commodore-ready 300 baud modems can be found easily because they are usually given away. Try to avoid these and instead use a 1200 or 2400 baud modem, as there aren't many BBS's that will support 300 baud callers. Hayes or Hayes compatible modems, designed for the IBM and it's clones, are readily available and can be purchased from almost any outlet that sells computers.

Be sure to get the "external" type. The least expensive choice may be to purchase a used Hayes or Hayes Compatible modem, and then buy an interface for it from the mail order houses. Right now there are a lot of used 2400 baud modems on the market, and these can be found for sale in your local classified ads. Another excellent source for finding used modems are the "For Sale" areas on local Bulletin Boards.

INTERFACES

The reason you need an interface for a modems not designed specifically for

the Commodore, is because Commodore 64/128 computers have a non-standard port for the modem. The interface acts as an adapter you can use to plug the modem into your 64 or 128. What kind of interface you need depends on what kind of Hayes or Hayes compatible modem you have.

If you have a modem that has speeds above 2400 baud, you will need a SWIFTLINK cartridge interface from Creative Micro Designs, Inc. This interface provides a true RS-232 port for the Commodore and it will allow you to use high speed modems up to 38,400 bps (bits per second). If you have a 1200 or 2400 baud Hayes compatible modem, you can order a plain-jane interface from one of the mail order sources listed below.

Interfaces are usually referred to as "RS-232 interfaces", and range in price from \$24.95 for the regular interface to \$39.95 for the SWIFTLINK cartridge. If you're handy with electronics or a soldering iron, it is possible to make your own interface, but that's beyond the scope of this article.

TERM PROGRAMS

Once you have a modem connected to your C64 or 128, you will need a program called a terminal, term program or simply "term." This is a program that you load and run on your 64. It tells your modem how to send information, and then interprets how the information received through the modem looks on your screen.

The term program can also keep a phone book for your modem calls. Term programs come in many different styles and types, and it's best to find one that offers a variety of features. A good term program can make a world of difference when it comes to telecommunicating.

The Term program offers you several choices in how the information the modem receives is interpreted. This is referred to as "emulation". Standard emulation will show you only text when you call a BBS. Color Graphics (also called C/G) will show you Commodore color graphics, but only when you call a Commodore Color/Graphic BBS.

Ansi 80 column emulation will translate the IBM ANSI color graphics the BBS sends and let you see them on your screen in an 80 column format, while Ansi 40 column emulation gives you the same, but in 40 columns. Vt emulation allows you to communicate with main frame computers. Most MS-DOS based BBS's have ANSI abilities,

*...there are a great
many bulletin boards
run on other systems
that have Commodore
files available*

and there's at least one Commodore 128 BBS program that has this ability.

When you first get on a BBS, you may see a screen that says "Press Escape (or ESC) twice to enter the BBS". If you have a C64, you've probably noticed

that it doesn't have an ESC (escape) key. In place of that, many term programs for the 64 let you use the backarrow < as an ESC key. If that doesn't work, pressing the CTRL, SHIFT and Left Bracket ([]) keys all at the same time usually does the trick.

What

can a Commodore user do on a BBS? Simple! Everything that everyone else does, including joining in on message bases, playing games, chatting, or file transfers. It's not always easy to find a BBS run on a Commodore computer, but as an alternative, there are a great many bulletin boards run on other systems that have Commodore files available on their bulletin boards for downloading. Be sure to support the boards that do carry Commodore files, and don't forget to thank the Sysop!

MAIL ORDER SOURCES:

Creative Micro Designs, Inc.:
(SWIFTLINK cartridge) 1-800-638-3263 (orders only) 1-413-525-0147 (information)

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Software Support International:
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SQUASHING YOUR FILES

BY MICHAEL A. KUYKENDALL

Why do we need compression and archiving utilities?



By compressing and archiving files, we can save more room on our hard drives, as well as keep multiple files

together so they don't get lost. In the world of telecommunications, these utilities mean fewer files to download and less connect time to download these files. And when your paying by the hour or minute for connect time, this time can add up very quickly. This month, we will discuss .compression/archiving utilities, their history, and how some of this compression is achieved. We will only examine the public domain/shareware products.

One of the first utilities on the Mac was called BinHex, created by Yves Lempereur around 1985. It took a file and converted the info from Binary to a Hexadecimal representation. For text files, this was fairly good, but the program did not compress files as much as translate files, hopefully into a smaller size. The last version of BinHex was v.5.0, around 1986-87. BinHex was okay, but did not allow archiving of multiple files.

EARLY COMPRESSORS

The first compression and archiving

programs on the shareware scene was PackIt, by Harry Chesley. PackIt not only compressed and archived files, but also allowed encryption. The encryption was a string of 8 characters, of any type, including special Mac characters. This is like a password protection scheme for your protected file.

The next major program to come along was StuffIt, by Raymond Lau. StuffIt had an advantage over PackIt in

...by several independent tests done by multiple parties, [Compact Pro] seems to compress a little tighter than the original StuffIt.

that it compressed files much better (smaller files), and soon became a regular on most bulletin boards. StuffIt went through many different versions and improvements. The last shareware version I believe was 1.5.1, and there was a StuffIt Classic 1.6 that came out as shareware. Raymond

Lau was one of the few developers who made money from the shareware route (besides Scott Watson for Red Ryder). Raymond finally sold StuffIt to Aladdin Systems, where it became a commercial package, StuffIt Deluxe. StuffIt also offered multiple techniques for compression. One of which is Huffman technique, which will be discussed later.

COMPACT PRO

The latest contender in the compression/archiving world is Compact Pro. Compact Pro does not have all the bells and whistles as StuffIt Deluxe, but by several independent tests done by multiple parties, it seems to compress a little tighter than the original StuffIt. Compact Pro started as Compactor several years ago, and archives may be recognized by the extension ".cpt".

Unfortunately, there is no standard for compression in the Mac world. Many commercial packages have become popular, and one might find archives of many different programs out on any given board. If an archive is out there, and you don't have the program to uncompress the file, there are only a few things you can do. One, ask the originator to re-upload the file as a self-extracting archive (has the extension ".sea"), or in a format

that you can uncompress. Or two, you can ask someone who has the program the archive was originally created to uncompress the archive for you. Many sysops try to maintain only a few compression programs on their board and try to keep all archives in those formats. If all else fails, contact the sysop and see if he or she can help.

HUFFMAN TECHNIQUE

To help understand how these programs work., I've asked a friend of mine, Larry Terrill, to help explain the Huffman technique. Larry is a programmer/networking/Macintosh guru of the highest order. He beta tests for Apple Computer, and is a developer for about 28 different companies. Here is how the Huffman technique works...

"The Huffman coding scheme was developed quite a long time ago to reduce the transmission time required to transmit data over serial communications lines. Using serial communications techniques, the bits representing each byte of the data stream are sent one at a time in sequential fashion. Using ASCII encoding, the system all desktop processors use today, this requires eight bits for each byte sent. The goal of Huffman coding is to reduce the total number of bits required to communicate a given number of bytes. Huffman coding schemes use a variable number of bits to represent each byte, rather than the standard eight bits per byte."

"Using less than eight bits can significantly reduce the total number of bit transmitted, but the data stream must remain understandable. This requires each byte to be represented by a sequentially unique stream of bits. In this manner the receiver will know when a byte starts and stops. Thus some bytes will be represented by less than eight bits and some by more. The goal is to encode the more frequently occurring bytes with short bit streams and the less common bytes with the longer bit streams. In this way the total number of bits required is less than the original eight bits per byte."

"As an example, consider the message "APPLE". If this message was rep-

resented using the standard ASCII coding scheme (uncompressed) it would look like this in hex:

0x41 0x50 0x50 0x4C 0x45 and the equivalent bit stream would be: 01000001 01010000 01010000 01001100 01000101 for a total of 40 bits (spaces were added to show character breaks)."

"If we examine the message, we find that the letter 'P' occurs twice

The goal is to encode the more frequently occurring bytes with short bit streams and the less common bytes with the longer bit streams.

while A,L, and E each occur once. No other letters occur at all. Using this frequency of occurrence, we can choose bit codings which are shortest for letter P and longer for each of the other appearing letters. Since no other letter appears, we will not assign them a code. The Huffman code table for the message "APPLE" would be

P = 1

A = 01

L = 000

E = 001

Note that the bit patterns were carefully chosen so that as we look at the bits one at a time, we know if the character is complete or not. If the first bit we see is a '1', it must be a letter 'P'. If the first bit is '0', we know we must examine more bits to determine the next letter. If the second bit is a '1', it must be a letter 'A'. If not, we need to examine the next bit, and so on. Using our Huffman code table above, our message "APPLE" is now sent as the following bit stream.

01 1 1 000 001

This message is now ten bits as opposed to the original 40 bits, or a com-

pression of 75%! Again spaces were added above to show the character breaks. Of course, in a real application, you would also have to transmit the code table to the receiver so that the receiver could de-code the message, but this illustrates the technique."

"With such savings possible, it is easy to see why programmers used this technique to compress programs and data. The compression program first examines the file to count the frequency of occurrence for each byte in the file. A code table is constructed in such a manner that the most frequently occurring bytes are coded with the shortest bit patterns. The file is encoded and the compressed version of the file is saved along with the code table. This way the compression program will be able to re-build the original file by reading the code table, reading the compressed bit pattern, and re-coding the bytes in their original pattern."

"In summary, Huffman coding schemes deliver the best compression rates when the file contains very few unique bytes. Thus text files, which by their nature contain many spaces and vowels, result in very high compression rates. Executable programs on the other hand tend to contain a very high number of unique bytes with a fairly uniform number of occurrences so the compression rates are lower."

Next month... we'll examine public domain telecommunications programs. and what are the advantages of some compared to others. Until then, good luck and keep connected!

Michael A. Kuykendall is a veteran Mac User and crony from the days of 64K ROMs and 400K floppies. He has been an overworked officer for 3 Mac User Groups, written for several computer publications around the country, and is currently President/Sysop/General JUNKIE for the Online Macintosh Users Group, based out of Atlanta, Georgia. Time is his enemy, not his friend. Comments and or suggestions may be sent to him in care of this publication.

COMPUTER-RELATED POLITICAL GROUPS -- THE GOOD GUYS

BY PHILIP ZIMMERMAN

This document describes three computer-related organizations that encourage government and other policy makers to be more responsible in their actions and attitudes toward the computer community. The three are the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the League For Programming Freedom, and Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility.

This document was compiled by Philip Zimmermann for inclusion with his PGP22 encryption program packet, "Pretty Good Privacy." The material was drawn from documents supplied by the three organizations and is generally available. The Freeware Hall of Fame believes these organizations should be better known in the BBS community and is providing wider distribution of Mr. Zimmermann's compilation.

THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION (EFF)

The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) was founded in July, 1990, to assure freedom of expression in digital media, with a particular emphasis on applying the principles embodied in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

to computer-based communication.

From the beginning, EFF was determined to become an organization that would combine technical, legal and public policy expertise, and would apply these skills to the myriad issues and concerns that arise whenever a new communications medium is born.

EFF has become an organized voice for the burgeoning community of nationally and inter-nationally networked computer users.

By remaining faithful to this initial vision, EFF has become an organized voice for the burgeoning community of nationally and inter-nationally networked computer users. We perform the multiple roles of guardian, advocate and innovator, to serve and protect the public interest in the information age.

GOALS OF THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION, 1993

EFF's mission is to understand the opportunities and challenges of digital communications, in order to foster openness, individual freedom and community. We expect to carry out our mission through activities in the following areas:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY.

EFF has been working to promote an open architecture for telecommunications by various means, including the Open Platform Initiative, the fight against the FBI's Digital Telephony wiretap proposal, and efforts to free robust encryption technologies from NSA control.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY.

Much of the work we have done has been directed at fostering a sense of community in the online world. Because we realize that we know far less about the conditions conducive to the formation of virtual communities than is necessary to be effective in creating them, we will devote a large portion of our R & D resources to developing better understanding in this area.

LEGAL SERVICES.

EFF was born to defend the rights of computer users against overzealous and uninformed law enforcement officials. This continues to be an important focus of EFF's work. We provide legal information to individuals who request it and support for attorneys who are litigating. We maintain print and online legal archives, disseminate this information, and make it available for downloading. Our board and staff are continuously engaged in writing and speaking about these issues.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT.

We have started many projects over the years as their need became apparent. Going forward, EFF will allocate resources to investigate and initiate new projects. To ensure that our projects have the greatest impact and can reasonably be completed with the resources available, EFF will sharpen its selection and review process.

THE LEAGUE FOR PROGRAMMING FREEDOM

PROTECT YOUR FREEDOM TO WRITE PROGRAMS

Join the League for Programming Freedom (Version of January 15, 1993)

Ten years ago, programmers were allowed to write programs using all the techniques they knew, and providing whatever features they felt were useful. This is no longer the case. New monopolies, known as software patents and interface copyrights, have taken away our freedom of expression and our ability to do a good job.

"Look and feel" lawsuits attempt to monopolize well-known command languages; some have succeeded. Copyrights on command languages enforce gratuitous incompatibility, close opportunities for competition, and stifle incremental improvements.

Software patents are even more dangerous; they make every design de-

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

If you support our goals and our work, you can show that support by becoming a member now. Members receive our bi-weekly electronic newsletter, *EFFector Online* (if you have an electronic address that can be reached through the Net), answers to your legal questions, special releases and other notices on our activities. (Because we believe that support should be freely given, you can receive these things even if you do not elect to become a member.) Your membership dues and other donations are fully tax deductible. **Mail to:** Electronic Frontier Foundation, Inc., 238 Main St., Cambridge, MA 02142

I wish to become a member of EFF. I enclose: \$ _____
\$20.00 (student or low income membership) \$40.00 (regular membership)

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Number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Our privacy policy: The Electronic Frontier Foundation will never sell any part of our membership list. We will, from time to time, share this list with other nonprofit organizations whose work we determine to be in line with our goals. However, you must explicitly grant us permission to share your name with these other groups. Member privacy is our default.

I hereby grant permission to EFF to share my name with other nonprofit groups from time to time as it deems appropriate. [] Initials: _____

cision in the development of a program carry a risk of a lawsuit, with draconian pretrial seizure. It is difficult and expensive to find out whether the techniques you consider using are patented; it is impossible to find out whether they will be patented in the future.

The League for Programming Freedom is a grass-roots organization of professors, students, businessmen, programmers and users dedicated to bringing back the freedom to write programs. The League is not opposed to the legal system that Congress intended—copyright on individual programs. Our aim is to reverse the recent changes made by judges in response to special interests, often ex-

PLICITLY rejecting the public interest principles of the Constitution.

The League works to abolish the new monopolies by publishing articles, talking with public officials, boycotting egregious offenders, and in the future may intervene in court cases. On May 24, 1989, the League picketed Lotus headquarters on account of their lawsuits, and then again on August 2, 1990. These marches stimulated widespread media coverage for the issue. We welcome suggestions for other activities, as well as help in carrying them out.

Membership dues in the League are \$42 per year for programmers,

Continues...

managers and professionals; \$10.50 for students; \$21 for others. Please give more if you can. The League's funds will be used for filing briefs; for printing handouts, buttons and signs; whatever will persuade the courts, the legislators, and the people. You may not get anything personally for your dues—except for the freedom to write programs. The League is a non-profit corporation, but not considered a tax-exempt charity. However, for those self-employed in software, the dues can be a business expense.

The League needs both activist members and members who only pay their dues. We also greatly need additional corporate members; contact us for information.

If you have any questions, please write to the League, phone (617) 433-7071, or send Internet mail to lpf@uunet.uu.net

Jack Larsen, President
Dean Anderson, Secretary
Steve Sisak, Treasurer

Jack Larsen can be contacted at (708) 698-1160; Fax (708) 698-6221.

To join, please send a check and the following information to:

League for Programming Freedom
1 Kendall Square #143
P.O.Box 9171
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

(Outside the US, please send a check in US dollars on a bank having a US correspondent bank, to save us check cashing fees.)

Your name:

The address for League mailings, a few each year; please indicate whether it is your home address or your work address:

The company you work for, and your position:

Your phone numbers (home, work or both):

Your email address, so we can contact you for demonstrations or for writing letters. (If you don't want us to contact you for these things, please say so, but please give us your email address anyway so we can save paper and postage by sending you the newsletter by email.)

Is there anything about you which would enable your endorsement of the LPF to impress the public? For example, if you are or have been a professor or an executive, or have written software that has a good reputation, please tell us.

Would you like to help with LPF activities?

*New monopolies, known
as software patents and
interface copyrights, have
taken away our freedom
of expression and our
ability to do a good job.
The [LPF] works to
abolish the new
monopolies*

The corporate charter of the League for Programming Freedom states:

The purpose of the corporation is to engage in the following activities:

1. To determine the existence of, and warn the public about restrictions and monopolies on classes of computer programs where such monopolies prevent or restrict the right to develop certain types of computer programs.

2. To develop countermeasures and initiatives, in the public interest, effective to block or otherwise prevent or restrain such monopolistic activities including education, research, publications, public assembly, legislative testimony, and intervention in court proceedings involving public interest issues (as a friend of the court).

3. To engage in any business or other activity in service of and related to the foregoing paragraphs that lawfully may be carried on by a corporation organized under Chapter 180 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

The officers and directors of the League will be elected annually by the members.

COMPUTER PROFESSIONALS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CPSR empowers computer professionals and computer users to advocate for the responsible use of information technology and empowers all who use computer technology to participate in the public debate. As technical experts, CPSR members provide the public and policymakers with realistic assessments of the power, promise, and limitations of computer technology. As an organization of concerned citizens, CPSR directs public attention to critical choices concerning the applications of computing and how those choices affect society.

By matching unimpeachable technical information with policy development savvy, CPSR uses minimum dollars to have maximum impact and encourages broad public participation in the shaping of technology policy.

Every project we undertake is based on five principles:

- We foster and support public discussion of and public responsibility for decisions involving the use of computers in systems critical to society.

- We work to dispel popular myths about the infallibility of technological systems.

- We challenge the assumption that technology alone can solve political and social problems.

- We critically examine social and technical issues within the computer profession, nationally and internationally.

- We encourage the use of computer technology to improve the quality of life.

Founded in 1981 by a small group of computer scientists concerned about the use of computers in nuclear weapons systems, CPSR has grown into a national public-interest alliance of computer industry professionals dedicated to examining the impact of technology on society. Currently, CPSR has 21 chapters in the U.S. and affiliations with similar groups worldwide. In addition to our National Office in Palo Alto, CPSR maintains offices in Washington D.C.

and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

CPSR PROJECTS

As computer technology becomes increasingly pervasive, the issues facing us become more complex. CPSR provides a forum where we can examine technology's impact on our lives, the lives of our fellow citizens, and on society as a whole. By sponsoring both national and local projects, CPSR serves as a catalyst for in-depth discussion and effective action in key areas: Civil Liberties and Privacy: The 21st Century Project: Technology Policy and Human Needs: Workplace Issues and Participatory Design: Reliability and Risk

In addition, CPSR's chapter-based projects and national working groups tackle issues ranging from the development of nanotechnology and virtual reality to computing and ethics to community computing to computers and education.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

CPSR is a democratically organized grass roots alliance. Our accomplishments are the result of the member activism. Many CPSR members serve as national organizers

CPSR's cost to provide members with services is covered by the \$75 dues. To keep CPSR membership open to a wide range of people, we offer dues levels of \$20 and \$50.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

When you become a member of CPSR, you are joining a nationwide network of computer professionals who are committed to bringing social responsibility to all aspects of computer technology. CPSR sponsors, supports, and participates in conferences, roundtables and meetings on advanced issues in computing, local civic networks, cryptography, participatory design, and computers and social change.

Every fall the CPSR Annual Meeting brings together the foremost representatives of the technology industry to explore current topics in seminars and panel discussions. Our

conferences and chapter meetings provide important opportunities to meet other members and share ideas and expertise.

OTHER MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- a quarterly newsletter which provides in-depth analysis of key issues in computing as well as updates on

CPSR has grown into a national public-interest alliance of computer industry professionals dedicated to examining the impact of technology on society.

CPSR activities and action alerts,

- an organized voice for socially responsible computing in Washington,
- well-researched public testimony and public policy development,
- invitations and discounts to CPSR events,
- discounts on research papers, books, and educational videotapes,
- on-line information and discussion of key issues in computing,
- membership in a local CPSR chapter (where available) and notices of chapter meetings and activities,
- participation in local and national working groups which allow you to have effective impact on the issues you care about,
- information and referral about crucial issues in computing.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

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PRIVACY NOTICE

The CPSR membership database is never sold, rented, lent, exchanged, or used for anything other than official CPSR activity. CPSR may elect to send members mailings with information from other groups, but the mailings will always originate with CPSR. ■■■■

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DATA ENCRYPTION AND BBSs

BY SHARI STEELE

How do encrypted messages work and how do they relate to our national security?



I get a number of questions from BBS users and SysOps regarding the legality of

sending encrypted messages. Let's discuss what encryption is and some of the legal issues surrounding its use on electronic bulletin boards.

WHAT IS ENCRYPTION?

Encryption is a use of codes or "ciphers" to transform text in order to conceal its meaning. You probably have seen a simple form of encryption in your daily newspaper's comic pages, where letters are substituted for other letters in a word puzzle. In an example of this simple encryption method, the phrase:

*Congress shall make no law . . .
abridging the freedom of speech. . .*

could be encoded to read:

*EgfuktlI liqss dqat fg squ . . .
qwkoruofu zit yklttrgd gy lhtlei. . .*

In this cipher, the letter *e* is substituted for the letter *c*, *g* for *o*, *f* for *g*, and so on. Anyone who knows the ci-

pher, or who can figure it out, can decrypt the message.

Obviously, this cipher is rather simple and is meant to be decoded in order to figure out the "answer" to the puzzle. Most encrypted messages, however, are not meant to be decrypted by anyone except for the intended recipient — the purpose of encrypting the message is to ensure the privacy of the message's content. This is very important, for as we begin depending on online communications more and more, we need to have a way to protect our "speech" from un-

*...as we begin depending
on online communi-
cations more and more,
we need to have a way to
protect our "speech" from
unwanted interception.*

wanted interception. For this reason, most ciphers are quite complex.

Modern ciphers use computers through the use of encryption algorithms. An algorithm is a set of step-by-

step instructions the computer uses to tell it how to transform the message into either an encrypted or decrypted format. The sender of the message uses an algorithm and a key to disguise, or encrypt, the message. The receiver of the message uses an algorithm and key to decrypt the message, making it readable once again. Anyone who does not have access to the proper decryption algorithm cannot decrypt and read the message.

In the mid-1970s, the United States government adopted an encryption algorithm to be the U.S. standard called the Data Encryption Standard (DES), based on technology developed by IBM. While the DES algorithm was made public, the privacy of individual communications was ensured by the use of a secret "key" that encoded messages so they could only be decrypted by using the same key. But both the sender and the receiver — and nobody else — had to know the key to keep the message private. Getting the key to the intended recipient of the message, however, often posed a problem. Including the key with the encrypted message created obvious security problems.

PUBLIC KEY ENCRYPTION

At about the same time DES was being developed, two researchers at Stanford

University, Whitfield Diffie and Martin Hellman, published a paper describing an algorithm that used one key to encrypt and a different key to decrypt. The beauty of public key encryption, which is what the Diffie-Hellman method came to be called, is that the creator of the message could encrypt it with a private key that s/he would never have to reveal to anyone. Meanwhile, the other key (the public key) could be revealed to anyone or everyone, so the problem of passing a key along to an intended recipient of a message was solved with public key encryption. Here's how public key encryption works:

Let's suppose I want to send you an encrypted message using public key encryption. I own two complimentary keys, one that is my public key and one that is my private key. These keys are unique to me and must be used together to encode and decode messages. Messages encoded by my private key can only be decoded with my public key; messages encoded with my public key can only be decoded with my private key. Anyone can have access to my public key, and, in fact, I freely distribute it to anyone I want to receive encrypted messages from.

You also have a public key and a private key that compliment one another and are unique to you. If I want to send you an encrypted message, I must first have a copy of your freely available, public key. I can get this from you, or I can get this from anyone who knows you and happens to have it, or I can get this from a BBS that offers a listing of users' public keys, or I can get it from anywhere else that your key happens to be accessible. You may have noticed that many people automatically have their public key print as part of their signature on all of their e-mail messages.

Once I have a copy of your public key, I can prepare my message for you. I encrypt my message using your public key.

Now I send the message to you. In order to read the message, you decrypt it with your private key. The message is restored and readable, and we didn't have the risks associated with passing on a secret key.

RSA AND PGP

Soon after Stanford's Diffie and Hellman published their paper on public key encryption, three researchers at MIT, Rivest, Shamir and Adelman, discovered an algorithm that met Diffie and Hellman's criteria. That algorithm is now called RSA, in reference to its inventors. The RSA technology was patented by Stanford and MIT, and a company, Public Key Partners, was created to manage licensing of RSA technology. A company called RSA Data Security, Inc., was also formed to license the tech-

The RSA encryption algorithm proved to be extremely secure — so secure, in fact, that it has adversely affected its sale and distribution

nology from Public Key Partners and market products to the public based on the technology.

The RSA encryption algorithm proved to be extremely secure — so secure, in fact, that it has adversely affected its sale and distribution through RSA Data Security, Inc. You see, "cryptographic devices and software (encoding and decoding)" are listed as "arms, ammunition, and implements of war" on the U.S. Munitions List (alongside automatic firearms, military flamethrowers, missiles, explosives and warships), and their export is heavily regulated by the United States Department of State. In order for an encryption algorithm to be licensed for export, it must be capable of decryption by the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA), so messages can be monitored for threats to national security. Since messages encrypted with the RSA algorithm cannot be decrypted by anyone not possessing the necessary private key, RSA Data Security's export license application was denied.

Software producers in this country (including Microsoft, Apple, Lotus and others) were very interested in using the RSA algorithm to provide added security to their software. Unfortunately, most of this country's large software producers export their wares for sales overseas. Without a license, the RSA algorithm cannot be exported, and few software producers find it financially feasible to produce separate versions of their software for U.S. and foreign markets. So the RSA algorithm was not used as much as we would have liked.

However, things changed dramatically in 1991. Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) introduced Senate bill 266, the Comprehensive Counter-Terrorism Act of 1991, which would have required manufacturers of secure communications software and equipment to include "back doors" through which law enforcement officers could get the "plain text," i.e., unencrypted version, of any message. The software industry was extremely concerned. Senate bill 266 would have required them to "dumb down" their software, effectively stalling advances in security technology and making their software insecure.

Because of this threat, a programmer and political activist out of Boulder, Colorado, made a bold move that changed the face of the encryption debate. In June of 1991, Phil Zimmermann released a public key encryption system, called PGP (for Pretty Good Privacy), on personal computers using the RSA algorithm. PGP was released as freeware, a move Phil says was done "for political reasons. I wanted PGP out there so people would have access to good encryption technology before it became illegal." Whitfield Diffie, one of the originators of the concept of public key encryption, has stated, "What Phil did when he released PGP is one of the most important things ever to happen to cryptography." Due to widespread opposition, including EFF's, Senate bill 266 died in committee.

Privacy experts aren't celebrating yet, however. New threats to the use of

Continues...

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robust encryption continue to be proposed by different agencies within the federal government. I have written in a previous column about the FBI's Digital Telephony proposal from last Congress. In next month's column, I'll write about the latest proposal from NIST and the NSA involving the use of the Clipper Chip.

The RSA encryption algorithm is still not licensed for export, so users of PGP should be aware that it is illegal to send the PGP program out of this country. PGP is widely used around the world, however, with versions now available for MS/DOS, several UNIX, VAX/VMS, Atari, Amiga and Apple Macintosh platforms. It is legal to send PGP-encrypted messages out of the U.S.

One final note — I often get asked about patent issues regarding the RSA encryption algorithm, particularly as it relates to PGP. While I understand that a compromise may be reached sometime soon between Phil Zimmermann and the folks at RSA Data Security, at the present time, U.S. users of PGP and other unauthorized software containing the RSA algorithm are in violation of the patent held by RSA Data Security.

Shari Steele is a Staff Attorney with the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing freedom and openness in computer-based communications. Send your legal questions to Shari at ssteele@eff.org (Internet) or c/o BBS Callers Digest.

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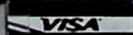
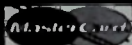
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As more BBS's register the CD-SUB program, they will be listed in the next issues. Each registered bbs gets free access to The Livewire BBS 609-235-5297 for newer versions. If you registered and are not listed, please give us a voice call (1-609-953-9110, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., M - F, EST) to make the correction.

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Warp Factor BBS	Mark Stewart	404-773-7966	City Lites	John Lundell	701-772-5399
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The Night Owl II	Danny Dyess	512-836-4262	The Ouija! Board Online Services	Keith Burgner	909-925-9564
Ranch House BBS	Larry Easley	512-945-9304	Mirage Network N.Y.	Brian Buffell	914-426-0729
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PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS, HAYES REVIEWS

BY VICTOR R. VOLKMAN



You may have heard that various modem manufacturers offer discounts on high-speed modems to qualified sysops. Its

true: you can save 40% to 70% off list prices on brand-new, state of the art equipment. However, you will soon find yourself chasing down every BBS in the country trying to get all the details. When you get the details, you will still have to sort through and find out who really has the best deal. I've been researching Sysop Discounts since 1991 and until recently published regular electronic report (SYSMOD.ZIP). The readers of Caller's Digest will now get this report as a new monthly feature.

PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Last month, I reported how Practical Peripherals has literally captured the Sysops Discount market with its all-time lowest price for a v.32bis/v.42bis modem: just \$155 for the PM14400FXMT. The PM14400FXMT is a small footprint Rockwell-based external fax and data modem with caller ID capability. I've had their older model v.32bis/v.42bis modem, the PM14400FXSA, online since August 1992. The PM14400FXSA initially had some in-

teresting setup problems resulting in a ROM upgrade. I needed to bring my BBS up from four nodes up to six and the PM14400FXMT seemed like the right price at the right time.

Well, I'm happy to say that the PM14400FXMT has exceeded my expectations in all regards. First, its ease of setup is unprecedented in my five years of sysop experience. Since it was simply too new of a product to have its own configuration in the PCBoard

*...Practical Peripherals
PM14400FXMT is
approximately the size
of a 5-1/4-inch floppy
disk ... just over
an inch thick.*

PCBModem setup program, I chose the closest thing to it — the PM14400FXSA. The configuration AT strings worked the first time and haven't needed any adjustment since then.

Second, I was surprised again at its total compatibility with every modem

already built and in service. All of my previous modems, and especially the two FORVALs, have had difficulty connecting with older modems already in the field. However, since I've put the two PM14400FXMT modems on my two heaviest used lines, I have not had a single complaint. Each of them routinely handles 60 to 70 calls per day every day of the week.

Also, I'm overwhelmed by their extremely compact size. In terms of surface area, they are approximately the size of a 5-1/4-inch floppy disk. In terms of thickness, its just over an inch thick. This makes it by far the smallest modem I've ever had and is easily about half the overall size of most v.32bis/v.42bis modems. I would even recommend it for a laptop user who needs a cheap, lightweight, fast, and reliable solution.

Last, I wish I could say great things about the Practical Peripherals documentation. However, as I glanced over to read the technical specifications, I noticed that manuals were still in the original wrapping and untouched. The modems have worked so well from the first day I plugged them in that I haven't had to even look up a single "AT" command.

You can get data sheets on either of these modems by calling the PractiFAX system at 800-225-4774. Follow the voice menus and select the

Continues...

TABLE Ia — SYSOPS HIGH-SPEED MODEM DISCOUNTS BY VENDOR & MODEL TYPE

Vendor/ Product	9600 v.32 Internal	9600 v.32 External	14400 v.32bis Internal	14400 v.32bis External
Accex	N/A	N/A	1496VP* \$290	1496V+* \$320
AT&T Paradyne	N/A	N/A	3721-B1-001* \$202	3710-A1-201* \$222 3710-A1-211 \$206
ATI Technologies	N/A	9600 ETC/E \$275	N/A	N/A
Digicom Systems	Scout \$241	Scout \$248	Scout Plus \$266 9624PC+ \$340	Scout Plus \$276 9624LE+ \$350
Forval	N/A	N/A	14400 (Int.) \$375	14400 (Ext.) \$405
Hayes Corp.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ultra 144 \$249 Optima 144+FAX* \$179
Intel	N/A	N/A	SatisFAX/400 \$249	14.4 EX \$269 SatisFAX/400e* \$245
Multi-Tech	MT932ECB \$450	MT932EAB \$450	N/A	N/A
Practical Peripherals	N/A	N/A	N/A	PM14400FXSA* \$249 PM14400FXMT* \$155
Supra Corp.	N/A	SupraFAXModem* \$199	SupraFAXModem* \$199	SupraFAXModem* \$249
USRobotics	N/A	N/A	N/A	HST Dual Stand. \$449 Courier v.32bis \$299
Ven-Tel, Inc.	PCM96FAX* \$310 MCM96FAX* \$340 MCA	EC96FAX* \$330	PCM144FAX* \$325 PCMV.32bis* \$505 MCM144FAX* \$400 MCA	EC144FAX* \$365 ECV.32bis* \$550 RMV.32bis* \$450
Zyxel	N/A	N/A	U1496B* \$289	U1496E* \$299 U1498* \$450

* Modems with an asterisk include 14,400 baud FAX send/receive at no extra charge!

Notes on Table I:

1. All internal modems are assumed to be PC-AT ISA bus unless otherwise noted.
2. Consult manufacturer for details on availability of Caller ID or voice-mail processing options (any modem above).
3. These prices NEVER include shipping and handling, which is always extra.

TABLE Ib — SYSOPS MODEM ACCESSORY DISCOUNTS BY VENDOR

Vendor	Part #	Product Description	Sysop Price
Hayes Corp.	08-00593	ISDN PC Adapter	\$450
	08-00509	ISDN System Adapter	\$450
	08-00456	ESP (Enhanced Serial Port) AT Bus	\$ 99
USRobotics	N/A	High-speed Dual-Async Serial Card	\$ 50
Ven-Tel	DS1200-3PR	Rackmount for 16 modems. w/PS	\$425

FAX document you want: 1010 for the PM14400FXSA or 1200 for the PM14400FXMT. Alternately, you can download complete product specifications from PPIFORUM on CompuServe. The files are in Library 6 and are named PM14SA.TXT and PM14MT.TXT. These files are also available on the PPI BBS at 805-496-4445.

Practical Peripherals offers Sysops more than just its automated FAX support, voice support, and CompuServe forums. The Practical Peripherals SYSOP EXPRESS program insures your BBS against modem failure. The SYSOP EXPRESS program covers any sysop who has purchased a modem through the Practical Peripherals Sysops Discount plan. If you notify their Technical Support department before 10 a.m., Pacific Time, Monday through Thursday, they will immediately ship you a replacement modem by Federal Express.

To fulfill your end of the bargain, you must supply them with a credit card number to insure the return of the defective modem. You must return the defective modem within 14 days of activating SYSOP EXPRESS to avoid being charged for it. The total shipping and handling of a SYSOP EXPRESS order costs \$22.50. Of course, you can still use the traditional warranty return system, if you don't mind waiting.

HAYES ANNOUNCES GLOBAL SYSOP PROGRAM

For some time, I've expressed my opinion that the Hayes Corporation made great products but their Sysop Discount program had long since lost its competitive edge. I've owned

Hayes has also offered many modem accessories which are simply unavailable in any other Sysop Discount plan.

Hayes high-speed modems since 1988 and been consistently impressed with reliability that counts for years and unbeatable customer service. On May 24th, Hayes Corporation announced the new Global Sysop Program and it seems clear that they're out to win back the sysops in a big way.

First, they have cut the already discounted Hayes Ultra 144 another 50% down to just \$249. This makes the Ultra 144 a full 75% off list price. I've owned an Ultra 144 since the month they started shipping and can attest to

its compatability and reliability. Although the Ultra 144 is not a fax modem, it is still the only v.32bis/v.42bis that supports multi-session X.25 for packet-switched networks.

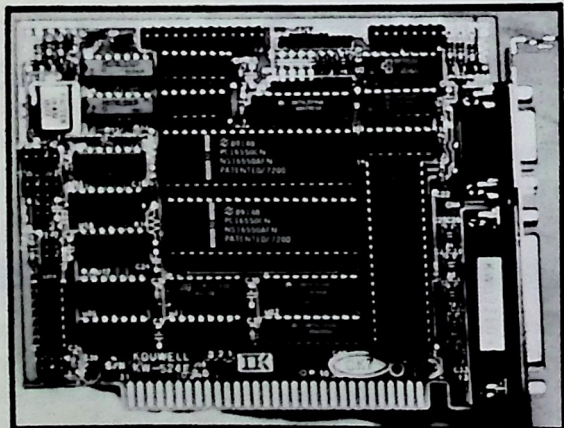
In a similar move, they cut the price of the OPTIMA 144 + FAX 144 another \$120. At \$179, the OPTIMA 144 + FAX 144 challenges Practical Peripherals offer and becomes clearly the second place leader in the brutal price war of 1993.

Hayes has also offered many modem accessories which are simply unavailable in any other Sysop Discount plan. In the same announcement, they have reduced the price of ISDN adapters another \$200 down to just \$450. Additionally, the Hayes Enhanced Serial Port (ESP), perhaps the best communications solution for Windows, has been cut \$75 down to just \$99. This two-port serial board includes onboard NS16550AFNs plus a dedicated 8-bit CPU with 8K RAM buffer and DMA capabilities.

This latest posting from Hayes eliminates discounts on Smartcom software products, the ISDN adapter for NeXT computers, and rack-mount modem harness. Additionally, the Ultra 96 v.32 modem has been discontinued as well as sales of refurbished modems. However, Hayes will

Continued on page 58

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TABLE II — SYSOP BUYERS RESTRICTIONS — IMPORTANT!

Vendor Contract	BBS must have been up and working for...	After buying it, you must use it for...	Maximum number of modems you may buy...	Credit Cards Accepted for Purchase
Aceex	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
AT&T Paradyne	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard American Ex.
ATI Technologies	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
Digicom Systems	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
Forval	N/A	N/A	No Maximum	none
Hayes Corp.	6 months (may be waived)	unspecified time	1 per phone. Max. 4, may be negotiated	VISA MasterCard
Intel	currently	12 months	1 per phone. Max. 4.	VISA MasterCard American Ex. *
Multi-Tech	currently or plan to	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	none, must have Cashier's Check
Practical Peripherals	currently	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
Supra Corp.	currently	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
USRobotics	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
Ven-Tel	6 months	N/A	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard
Zyxel	3 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard

* Indicates no personal checks accepted.

TABLE III — SYSOP ORDER PROCESSING, AVAILABILITY, FIRMWARE UPGRADE POLICY

Vendor Name	Orders can be placed placed for shipment to these countries...	Typical time between order and shipping	Firmware (ROM) upgrade policies
Aceex	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay 8% GST, +7% Ontario res.)	Unspecified	Unspecified
AT&T Paradyne	U.S., Canada	3-4 weeks	Unspecified
ATI Technologies	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay 8% GST, +7% Ontario res.) CAN\$ prices assume exchange rates of CAN 1\$ = US \$0.83	4-6 weeks	Unspecified
Digicom Systems	U.S., Canada, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia (185 to 245 VAC)	2-3 weeks	Unspecified
Forval	U.S., Canada, Europe (call for details)	1 week * (or less)	Anyone can download from their BBS and load the EEPROMS w/AT command

Continues...



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TABLE III — SYSOP ORDER PROCESSING, AVAILABILITY, FIRMWARE UPGRADE POLICY (continued)

Vendor Name	Orders can be placed for shipment to these countries...	Typical time between order and shipping	Firmware (ROM) upgrade policies
Hayes Corp.	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay pay 13.9% customs tax)	1 week * (or less)	Will replace entire modem if warranted, otherwise no upgrade
Intel	U.S. only	2-4 weeks	Unspecified
Multi-Tech	U.S. only	Unspecified	Unspecified
Practical Peripherals	U.S. only	3-4 weeks *	Call their voice line and they will send FREE
Supra Corp.	U.S. only	3-4 weeks	Call their tech support BBS and order them FREE
USRobotics	U.S., Canada, Europe (110/220 VAC only) see EURODEAL file	2-6 weeks	Unspecified
Ven-Tel	U.S., Canada	1-2 weeks	Unspecified
Zyxel	U.S., Canada	1 week (or less)	Unspecified

* indicates the shipping time has been personally verified by my own purchasing experience.

Order processing: "Unspecified" means there's nothing in writing, you could be looking at from 1 to 8 weeks.

Firmware upgrade: "Unspecified" means that the policy is simply not publicized. If the modem was properly engineered and tested, no upgrades should be necessary.

TABLE IV — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Vendor Name	Call their BBS at this number and...	...download this file.	If you have questions or problems call..
Aceex	(416)538-9999	ACEEX.ZIP	(416)538-0101
AT&T Paradyne	(813)532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800)554-4996
ATI Tech.	(416)756-4591	SYSOPLAN.ZIP	(416)756-0718
Digicom	(508)262-1412	SCOUT.TXT	(508)262-1277
Forval	(408)294-3065	FORVAL.ZIP	(408)294-0526
Hayes Corp.	(404)446-6336	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404)840-9200
Intel	(503)645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503)228-9707
Multi-Tech	(612)785-9875	MULTI.DOC	(612)785-3500
Pract. Per.	(805)496-4445	SYSBBS.TXT	(805)497-4774
Supra Corp.	(503)967-2444	SUPRA.TXT	(503)967-2400
USRobotics	(708)982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708)982-5010
Ven-Tel	(408)922-0988	VENTEL.TXT	(408)436-7400
Zyxel	(714)693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714)693-0804



Rusty Edie

Call a different kind of BBS "We are the Friendliest BBS in the World". Our name says it all. Edie and I are a couple of burn outs from the 60's. We didn't like rules then and we don't now. Come on in and relax, you will be among friends. We have a **huge adult section**, including over three gigs of adult graphics, as well as a fine selection of public domain and shareware programs, including over a gig of family type graphics. But that's not what sets us apart. When you call the first time, you'll know what no amount of words can tell you, you are Home. That's right, put up your feet and enjoy yourself.

We live by three no's: **"No Censorship, No Rules, No Hassle"**.

You'll find us like no other BBS:

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- We post our address.
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Youngstown, OH 44512

Voice 216-726-4217
HST only 216-726-1804
Compucom 216-726-3584
Hayes V-Series 216-726-3619
All (V32 etc.) 216-726-2620

provide one complimentary copy of Smartcom for Windows with any modem order from now until September 30th.

Hayes Sysops can now participate in a Sysops Discount plan that actually pays them back too. For every copy of Smartcom for Windows communications software ordered by bulletin board users through their registered Hayes sysop for \$49, Hayes will contribute \$5 to the support of the sysop's bulletin board.

Last, Hayes customer service now offers a plan comparable to Practical Peripherals SYSOPS EXPRESS. Sysops who have purchased modems through Hayes discount plan are automatically eligible for pre-ship service. Hayes will immediately ship out a replacement modem as soon as you report the failure. Similar shipping and credit card terms apply.

PRICE AND PERFORMANCE

I've boiled down all the price and performance data from the manufacturers into a simple chart (see Table Ia). The minimum performance level is v.32 (9600 baud), since this is the worldwide high-speed standard. All modems also must have v.42bis for error correction and data compression to make this list.

UNCLE HANK'S SHAREWARE REVIEW NEWSLETTER

Published bi-monthly, this newsletter takes a good look at some of the best Shareware available today. Each issue contains reviews from a wide variety of areas. Always in plain English.

For a sample issue, send \$2 to:
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Easthampton, MA 01027

Send \$10 with this ad, you can
subscribe for 1 yr. (6 issues) & save \$2.
Make checks payable to Hank Hurteau

In practice, I recommend only v.32bis (14400 baud) modems for sysops. The v.32bis offers 50% more throughput for between 10 to 25% extra cost. I expect that many manufacturers will quietly discard v.32

*I expect that many
manufacturers will
quietly discard v.32
modems from production
as soon as v.FAST
(22000 to 28000 baud)
modems go into
production.*

modems from production as soon as v.FAST (22000 to 28000 baud) modems go into production. As shipping dates for V.FAST modems come closer to shipping, I'll be providing upgrade information on them.

MORE THAN A MODEM

Some vendors offer more than just modems to the sysops that join their program. For example, Hayes Corp. offers 50% to 70% off discounts on the high speed serial ports ISDN adapters. Other vendors offer big discounts on modem rackmounts. A rackmount reduces the tangle of multiplying power supplies and becomes economical for sysops planning on eight or more of the same brand modem. See Table Ia for a complete

listing of modem accessories available.

BUYERS RESTRICTIONS

If you're the sysop of a BBS that has been operating 24-hours per day for the last six months, then you're automatically eligible for any of these discounts. Table II shows the minimum operating requirements as given by each manufacturer. Some manufacturers only require that you are currently running a BBS at time of ordering. A few, such as Hayes, may actually waive the current operating requirement.

Once you receive your modem, you're expected to keep the BBS up and running between six and twelve months (requirements vary). Generally, the modem is yours to do whatever you want with after this period expires. Some manufacturers may ask you to never sell modems purchased on a discount plan. Modem resellers, such as computer stores, are generally excluded from participation in discount plans.

Most manufacturers allow you to purchase up to one modem per incoming BBS phone line. However, if you plan to purchase more than four modems at the discount price, then you should talk to someone before placing your order. Multiple modem orders may require you to submit copies of phone bills as proof. At that point, there may be traditional quantity discounts available.

Nearly all of the modem vendors are accepting VISA and Mastercard for orders. Some (Accex, ATI Digicom, Forval) still do not accept credit cards for orders. In those cases, you

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must submit a cashier's check or money-order. Personal checks often require additional clearing time which just holds up your order.

One requirement, which goes for all vendors, is that they generally expect at least a one-line advertisement somewhere in your welcoming screens. For example: "Using the finest Model YYZ modem from Acme Modem Co.", would be perfectly acceptable in all cases.

Most vendors will expect you to create a special account on your BBS for them to verify at least one of your phone numbers. They don't like to have to sign on without a pre-existing account.

ORDER PROCESSING AND AVAILABILITY

Delivery times and schedules vary radically, so your mileage may vary. My own experience with Hayes Corporation is that they will generally ship Sysop orders within 48 hours.

I have also ordered from Practical Peripherals and they have a mandatory three week waiting period before they ship. On the far extreme, US

If you're the sysop of a BBS that has been operating 24-hours per day for the last six months, then you're automatically eligible for any of these discounts.

Robotics guarantees a two to six week waiting period. Table III summarizes the published processing schedules of each manufacturer. Remember, the manufacturers are doing you a favor by offering dis-

counts below retail. Please observe courtesy.

For Canadian, European, and other sysops outside the U.S., you may or may not be eligible for a discount offer. Please check carefully ahead of time to avoid disappointment. You may want to check with their European subsidiaries before contacting the U.S. office.

UPDATE INFORMATION

If you have information about manufacturer discounts then please contact me through one of the ways listed below.

Internet:

sysop@hal9k.com
or Victor.Volkman@bbscd.com

U.S. Mail:

Victor R. Volkman, Sysops Disc.
c/o Callers Digest Inc.
701 Stokes Road
Medford NJ 08855

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 Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
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Mail to: BBS Callers Digest, 701 Stokes Rd.,
Medford, NJ 08055.

*If paying by credit card,
you may FAX this form at (609) 953-7961.*

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Shareware Tiger	\$39	Giffy Gold	\$29
Shareware Avalanche	\$39	Busty Babes	\$39
Gigabyte Gold	\$39	SeedyRom 7th Heaven	\$39
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So Much Shareware 2	\$29	Ecstasy Hot Pics	\$42
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ORIGINS OF THE BBS

BY WALT LEDBETTER

More of what BBSs are all about



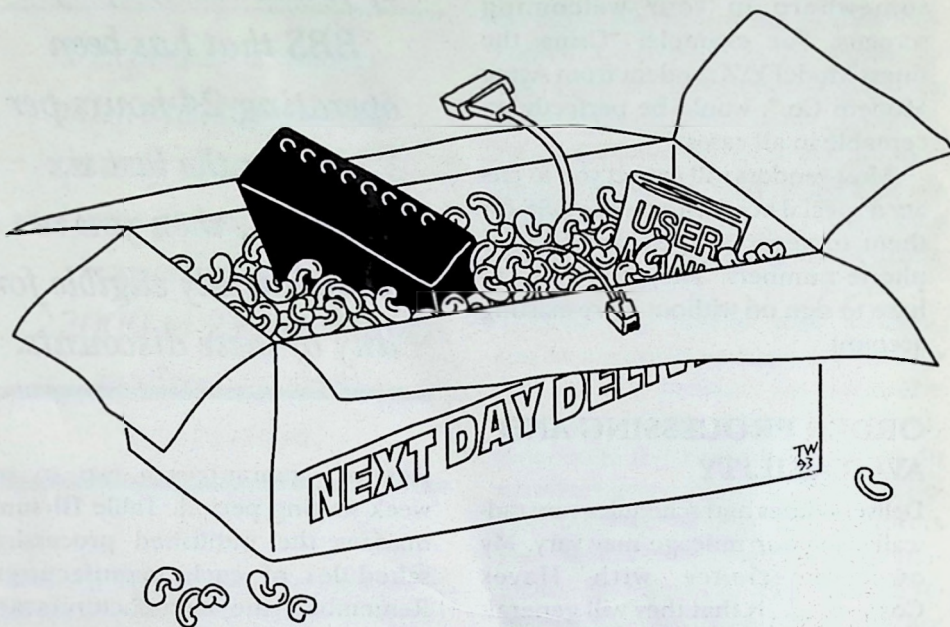
This month I'm going to give you a glimpse of how the BBS world has evolved.

The first BBSes ran on computers with double floppy drives, 300 baud modems and seldom more than 64K of memory. Those first boards little resemble the giant boards of today, with megabytes and megabytes of disk storage, high-speed modems and often some of the most complex software in existence. However, one thing has remained the same through the ten years in which BBSes have prospered. It is the spirit of the people who make this such a wonderful and dynamic hobby.

While modern BBSes often have hundreds or even thousands of files available for download, on-line games, international message 'echoes' and more, the original ideas behind BBSing have never changed.

AT FIRST, SIMPLY MESSAGE BASES

As BBSes first started to pop up in the early 80s, seldom more than "message" bases was offered. People could chat with one another, carrying on conversations that often last weeks or months. BBSes were places where



computer users from all over could meet and talk about both computer and non-computer related topics. Since then, they have evolved to also

The BBS world could not survive without all the wonderful people who work together to keep their hobby alive.

allow callers to play games together, share public-domain and shareware files, and much, much more.

Some boards now try to make money by selling goods, services and or by memberships seldom make any profit.

BEHIND THE SCENES

What makes this all work? You, of course! The BBS world could not survive without all the wonderful people who work together to keep their hobby alive. If users did not participate on BBSes, they would simply cease to exist. Callers need new messages to read and new uploads to peruse. BBSing is a hobby for both the people who use them and the people who run them.

The SYStem Operators, or SysOps, almost always put a lot of time, effort and money into maintaining their boards. They do this because they enjoy it. Generally speaking, all that most SysOps want in return for running the BBS is for the users to contribute to and enjoy the board. This helps keep things going.

WHERE BBSes ARE HEADED

In the last couple of years, BBSes have really begun to take off. Costs of hard-

ware have dropped in many categories, innovations have sent 300 bps into antiquity with modems sending and receiving at 14400 bps and higher. CD-ROM has extended the capacity for storing files. Other surprises are in the wings. There is already technology in limited use with 'wireless' computing and higher graphics display ability.

BBSes have also experienced some of their greatest threats. While more and more users get involved these days, there is more of a tendency for people to try to get the most out of BBSes without contributing to them. This has caused the File Ratio to appear on some boards. Features have been added to some BBS software to deny more than one account per person to keep access distributed more evenly for callers.

Yet, another feature rewards uploaders for their contribution. Many boards credit time equal to the time of the upload. Others even go higher.

But if things keep going the way they have, looking back, BBSes will be around for quite some time.

*Yet, another feature
rewards uploaders for
their contribution.
Many boards credit
time equal to the time
of the upload.*

HOW DO I GET MORE HELP?

Easy! Read ALL bulletins and look for the on-line help system most BBSes have available to instruct a user in the commands and procedures

used on the BBS. If at any time you are experiencing difficulty with some feature on the BBS, referring to this online help will often answer your questions.

If after consulting the instructions, online help, etc., you are unable to solve your sysop will usually be able to answer any questions you may have. Remember to describe the problem fully and what it was that you were trying to do. This sysop has had great difficulty with the many-times asked question, "How do I download?" It's a simple sentence, but a very complex question.

Read all you can and try the option several times. If after you've exhausted all your avenues, then it's time to say Hi! to the Sysop. We like callers to acknowledge us; we usually jump at a chance to help, especially when we get to chat live for a bit.

So, relax the fingers, sit up straight, and till next time, Happy Modeming!
Walt

MONEY

With Your Modem

The Monthly Guide for Online Entrepreneurs

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Alan R. Bechtold, noted online author, publisher, editor and sysop, will **SHOW YOU HOW**, step-by-step, month after month.

With more than nine years' experience in the BBS industry, Alan knows the ins and outs of running a BBS for profit. If he doesn't know the answers, he knows the people who do. In his newsletter, you'll learn how to define a personality for your board, how to latch on to a unique niche in the market, how to design your board to attract callers and make them want to subscribe, how to publicize your board without spending a fortune, low-cost advertising that works, which software will work best for you, marketing plans and offers that will generate cash on your board, how to avoid legal liability and more! Whether you already run a board or plan to in the future, everything in **MONEY WITH YOUR MODEM** is geared toward increasing your cash flow and lowering your costs **NOW!**

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BOOK RELEASES

THE SHAREWARE COMPENDIUM

by Rob Rosenberger
\$24.95

Muskegon, MI — Almost 1,100 programs, marketed through the shareware "try before you buy" marketing concept, covering hundreds of subject categories, are detailed in this new book titled *The Shareware Compendium*, edited by Rob Rosenberger and published by the Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP).

With over 700 cross-referenced and well-indexed pages, this massive book will serve as an invaluable guide to those who want to find the very best software products that will fit not only their personal needs but their pocketbook as well.

Each program listing in *The Shareware Compendium* has detailed descriptions, hardware and software requirements, registration fees and benefits of registration. Separate appendices list the programs by author or company and how to contact them to order or get support. Also listed are hundreds of BBSes and disk vendors where evaluation copies can be obtained either free or inexpensively.

The book opens with an introduction by Jim Button, one of the pioneers in the shareware world. It follows with solid information about what shareware is and how this method of marketing software benefits both you and the authors. It also contains information about the Association of Shareware Professionals, a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of the shareware marketing principle.

For anyone who is serious about se-

lecting quality software products for their everyday use, *The Shareware Compendium* will provide an irreplaceable reference resource that will allow them to pick and choose the programs that they're most interested in trying out.

Those unfamiliar with shareware should buy a copy of this book, if for no other reason than to see how they can expand their choices of software by considering the most popular, fastest-growing segment of the software market today.

The Shareware Compendium has been years in the making. An interesting side note is that this up-to-date version was largely "written" by an intricate software package developed by the editor, Rob Rosenberger. It compiled the descriptions, indices and table of contents from materials submitted by the individual authors. The software itself, notes Mr. Rosenberger, took nearly a year to perfect.

For more information, please contact Jan Abbott (ASP Executive Director) at 616-788-5131 or Fax 616-788-2765.

USING PAGEMAKER 5 FOR WINDOWS

by Martin and Carole Matthews
\$39.95
500 pages

Berkeley, CA — Osborne/McGraw-Hill announced publication of *USING PAGEMAKER 5 FOR WINDOWS*, a new book and disk package by Martin and Carole Matthews, co-authors of two previous editions of *USING PAGEMAKER* that are the all-time best-selling PageMaker books ever sold.

Readers who are upgrading to

PageMaker 5 or interested in learning about this exceptionally powerful product will discover this book provides all the information they need to create everything from simple forms and flyers to newsletters, catalogs, and annual reports.

As an added bonus, the book includes a 3.5 inch disk containing all the sample projects in the book with additional text and graphics files from Microsoft Word for Windows, Microsoft Word for DOS, WordPerfect, CorelDRAW!, Micrografx Designer, Microsoft Excel, and dBASE that can be imported into PageMaker 5.

The Matthews cover all the latest features of version 5 including expert kerning and extensive color manipulation with four-color separations, spot color, and process color. PageMaker users will discover how to work with new professional tools including Aldus Additions, Control Palettes, True Type fonts, and more.

Divided into three sections that contain increasingly more advanced applications of PageMaker, the first section begins with an overview of desktop publishing concepts, working with Microsoft Windows, and an introduction to the most basic features of PageMaker through a quick lesson in creating a flyer.

In the second section, readers are guided through three common desktop publishing projects — business forms using the Table Editor feature, an advertising brochure that introduces users to importing a graphic created with Micrografx Designer included on the companion disk, and an introduction to using color that explains color concepts in-depth.

A special project involving a four-color label is included that uses a four-

color scanned image and type produced with CorelDRAW! both of which are contained on the companion disk. A four-color insert provides the final results.

In the third section, readers learn to "dress up" multi-page documents that include a financial report, catalog and newsletter while learning the integrating power of PageMaker by importing files from Microsoft Word for Windows, Microsoft Excel, and dBASE found on the book's companion disk. The Matthews also cover using PageMaker's powerful and versatile features that include autoflow, style sheet, Drop Cap and Continuation Aldus Additions.

Creating memorable presentations needn't be time-consuming or confusing with USING PAGEMAKER 5 FOR WINDOWS, Martin and Carole Matthews' outstanding book and disk package.

VOODOO DOS, SECOND EDITION

by Kay Nelson

\$21.95

325 pages with 90 illustrations

Chapel Hill, NC — Ventana Press announced publication of *VOODOO DOS, SECOND EDITION*. Is it really magic that DOS 6 lets users double the space on their hard disks? Is it some curious conjury that gives good old DOS the power of modern client-server communications? "Why waste time trying to understand theories and applications?" says voodoo queen Kay Nelson in the Second Edition of her hit, *VOODOO DOS* from Ventana Press. "Use your time to learn new and better ways to compute!"

Referring to DOS 6 as a "trickster's delight," Nelson sheds light on simple techniques and traps that will make true DOS wizards out of the most timid technophobes. New information emphasizes DOS 6's built-in compressing, defragmenting and memory management features and highlights new CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT tricks like creating startup

screens and setting up different configurations on the same machine. Also included in *Voodoo DOS, Second Edition*:

- **New Utility Players:** taking advantage of DOS's new built-ins, including DoubleSpace, defragging, MemMaker, E-Mail, and virus checking.
- **DOS Shell Games:** using the shell to set up program groups, switch between programs, use keyboard shortcuts and otherwise get more from programs.
- **Disk & Drive magic:** getting around boring day to day disk routines, using the new Quick Format Command, copying disks and dealing with hard disks.
- **Do-it-yourself DOS:** letting batch files and time saving Doskey macros do more of the work.
- **Command sleight-of-hand:** mastering new commands for DOS 6, in-

cluding DELTREE and MOVE; wildcard tips and traps; special symbols and commands; DOS 6 Startup menu tips; using MENUITEM, MENUCOLOR, SUBMENU and MENUDEFALT; and finally turning NumLock off with NUMLOCK!

Kay Nelson is widely celebrated for her ability to turn techno-babble into plain talk for everyday computer users. In addition to her *Voodoo* books for Ventana (*Voodoo DOS*, *Voodoo Windows*, and *Voodoo MAC*) she has also written instant references for all audiences (*DOS Instant Reference* and *WordPerfect Instant Reference*, Sybex) and beginner books (*The Little DOS 5 Book* and *The Little Windows Book*, Peachpit Press)

Ventana Press publishes books and other materials that help computer users become more productive. For more information, contact Diane Lennox at 919-942-0220, Fax 919-942-1140. ■■■■■

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INSTRUCTIONS are provided to keep the ad rate low and to ensure accuracy. Use the form on the next page to type or print your ad. Ads received that are difficult to read will be returned. **Write the desired category at the top of each ad.** If a category is not specified, the ad will be placed in the Misc. section. **If more than one ad is submitted, use a separate piece**

of paper for each ad. Ensure that your complete name and address is at the bottom of each ad sheet.

CLASSIFIED RATES as of February, 1993— \$25 per month or \$250 for the entire year. Ads can contain up to 300 characters. The name of the BBS is set in boldface capitals. All other type is plain only.

Fill out the form on the next page and **FAX** your ad to 609-953-7961 or **MAIL** it to BBS AD, Callers Digest, Inc., 701 Stokes Rd., Medford, NJ 08055 with check, money order, or credit card information, or call 609-953-9110, 10 am – 4 pm EST.

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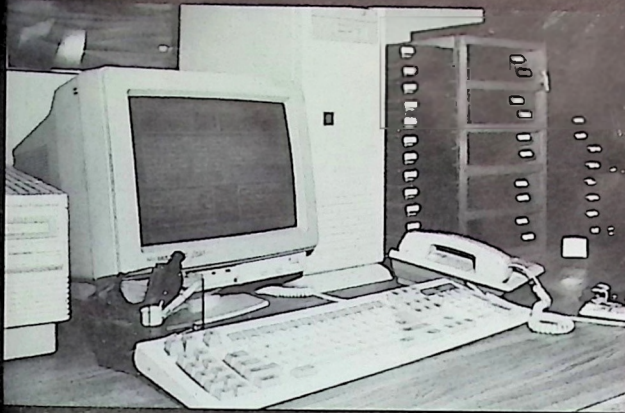
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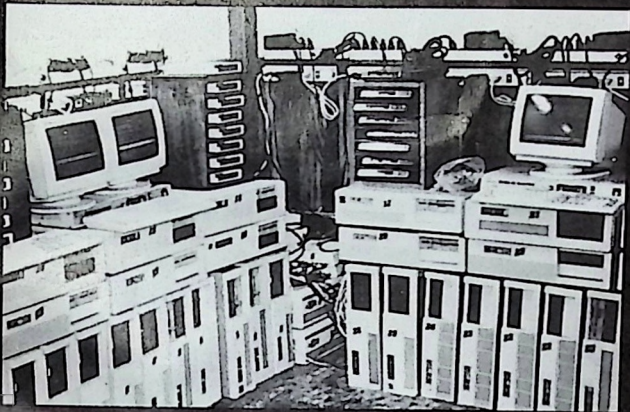
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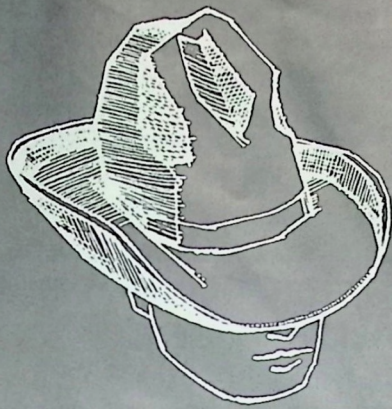
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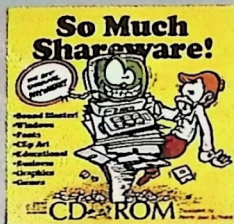
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buttonFILE requires a machine running Windows 3.+ 1mb RAM, and a hard disk. It is available on all disk sizes. For more information, please contact: Suzanne Faith, ButtonWare, PO Box 96058, Bellevue WA 98009 or call 206-454-0479 Fax 206-454-1838.

DELPHI HAS NEW "MODEM TO MODEM" GAME AREA

Cambridge, MA — DELPHI, a leading international online service, announced the opening of a new area which allows its members to play a wide variety of graphical games head-to-head with any other member. These "modem-to-modem" games all

feature colorful graphics, and give players the ability to "chat" with each other, or type messages back and forth, during the game. There is a growing list of commercial and shareware games that support modem play, any of which can potentially be played on DELPHI. These games include classic board and card games, as well as newer arcade, strategy, and adventure games.

Popular modem-compatible games supported on DELPHI include:

- ChessNet — a chess game for Windows by Masque Publishing
- Command HQ — a war/strategy game by Microprose
- Conquest — a shareware strategy game similar to Risk
- Empire Deluxe — a war/strategy game by New World Computing
- The Perfect General — a war/strategy game by QQP
- TeleGo — a shareware version of Go, the popular Japanese board game
- Telecards — a shareware program which includes Crazy Eights, Gin Rummy, and Cribbage.

Through a special trial member-

ship offer, anyone interested in learning more about DELPHI can receive 5 free hours of access. To join, dial 1-800-365-4636, after connecting, press <CR> once or twice, at the password prompt, type MTMPR. Member Service Reps can also be reached by voice by calling 1-800-695-4005.

DISTRIBUTION FOR BBS CALLERS DIGEST INCREASES

Medford, NJ — *BBS Callers Digest* is now available at many more newsstands than ever before. Along with its regular distribution to many book store chains in United States and Canada, it has now increased its circulation to include many computer retail outlet chain stores.

If you are interested in handling *BBS Callers Digest* (print version) in your retail store, please contact Richard Paquette for more information at: 609-953-9110 or write to: Callers Digest Inc., 701 Stokes Rd., Medford NJ 08055.

MS-72

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ADVERTISERS INDEX

AMERICA'S SUGGESTION BOX	29
BBS CALLERS DIGEST ONLINE!	50
BBSDG PROFITS	5
BBS MARKETING	17
BBS PRESS SERVICE	61
BBS TECHNOLOGIES	7
BELL BUSINESS REPORT	32
BLACK CAT INFORMATION SERVICE	47
CHANNEL I	33
CLARK DEV. CO., INC.OUTSIDE REAR COV.	
C.R.I.S.	12
DATABANK	26
DESIGN SYSTEMS	25
DIGITAL DYNAMICS	16
DSC BBS	63
DURAND COMMUNICATIONS	35
EDUCATOR'S BBS	34
ESOFT, INC.	65
GALACTICOMM, INC.INSIDE FRONT COV.	
GARBAGE DUMP	28
GARLIQUE GRAPHICS	9
HACKERS WORLD BBS	27
HARMONY AGENCY	24
J & W COMPUTERS	38
MARKETPLACE	50
MUSTANG SOFTWARE, INC.	20
NITE LOG BBS	19
O'CONNOR DISTRIBUTORS	67
ODYSSEY	41
PCB-UUCP	68
PC INFO	21
PERELINE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.	13
PICS ONLINE	36
PROFIT PRESS	56
RAM SOFT	INSIDE REAR COV.
RUSTY-N-EDIE'S BBS	2, 57
SEARCHLIGHT	31
SILICON DREAMLAND	23
TESSIER	39
TRIMARK ENGINEERING	37
TSD SYSTEMS	54
UNCLE HANK'S NEWSLETTER	58
UNI-ROM	59

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