BBS

THE BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEMS MAGAZINE

July 1994
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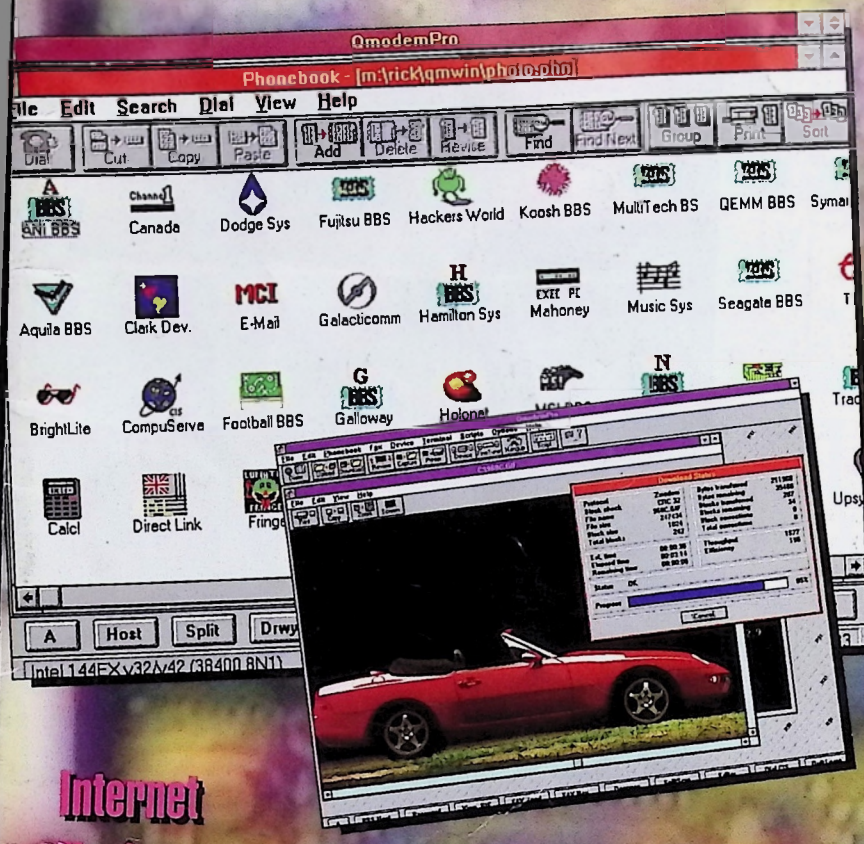
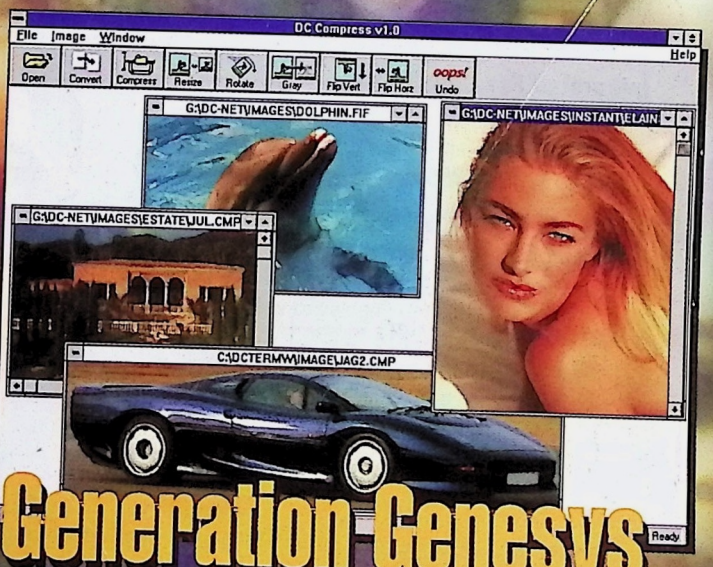


QmodemPro for Windows

IMAGE VIEWING
SOUND
RIP
FAX

Internet
Novice
Commodore
Shareware

BBS Notebook:
New System Computing,
Boiler Room BBS, Pirate's Cove,
WestNet BBS



Generation Genesys

Durand's New Multimedia Online Database

07
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What Can You Do with the Open

Multimedia Document Retrieval Systems
MagiComm, Inc.
Parallax Development Corporation

Group Decisionware and Electronic Democracy
Consensus Systems, Inc.
MagiComm, Inc.
MajorSoft Inc.

Novell LAN Access
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Durand Communications Network
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"Dial-Out" with Scripts
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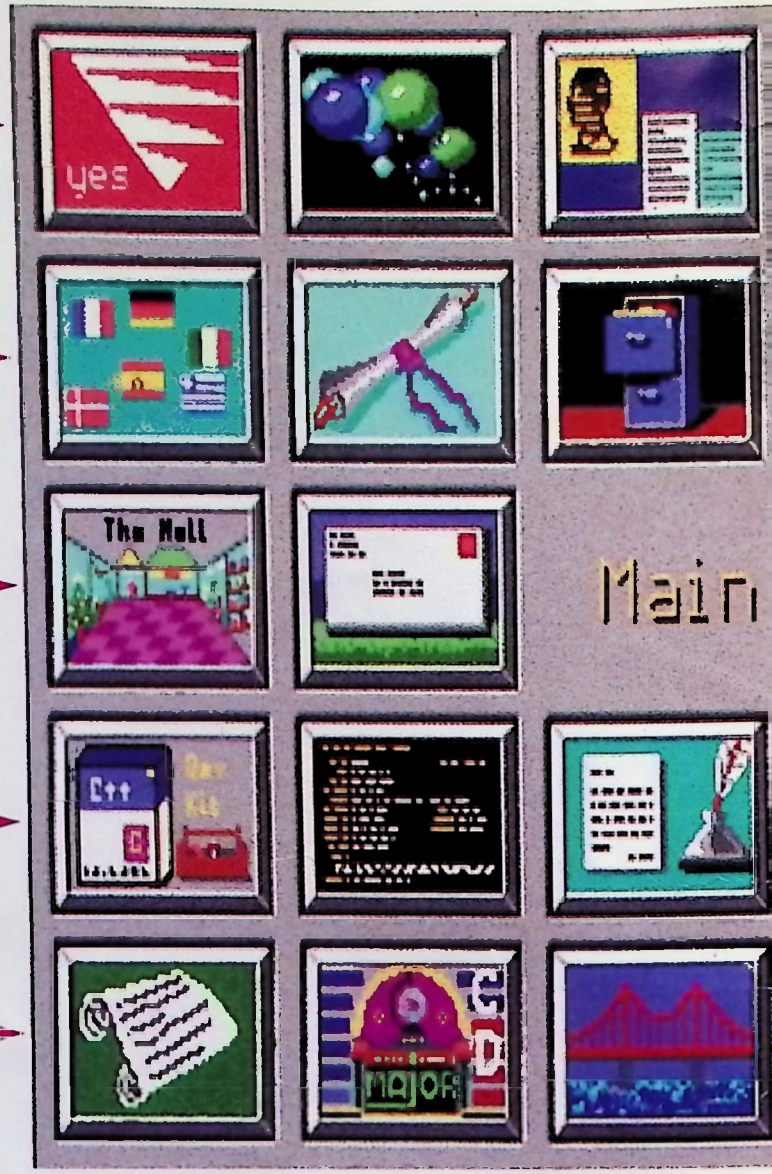

Just about anything you want. That's because The Major BBS is a completely open-ended platform for creating your own unique online service.

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ProStar Computer Corporation
Public Data Network
Tessier Technologies, Inc.

Outstanding Multi-Player Games

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High Velocity Software, Inc.
Jabberwocky
Logicom, Inc.
MajorSoft Inc.
M.B. Murdock & Associates
Tessier Technologies, Inc.
WilderLand Software

Credit Card Verification

DataSafe Publications

Photograph/Image Databases

Durand Communications Network
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Advanced Account Management

East Side Computing
High Velocity Software, Inc.
Parallax Development Corporation
ProStar Computer Corporation
Sirius Software
Tessier Technologies, Inc.

X.25 circuits, and Novell LAN channels. No other BBS platform gives you this power.

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To quote Newsbytes, "The Major BBS is one of the most powerful and expandable boards available, yet it is extremely easy to install and run."

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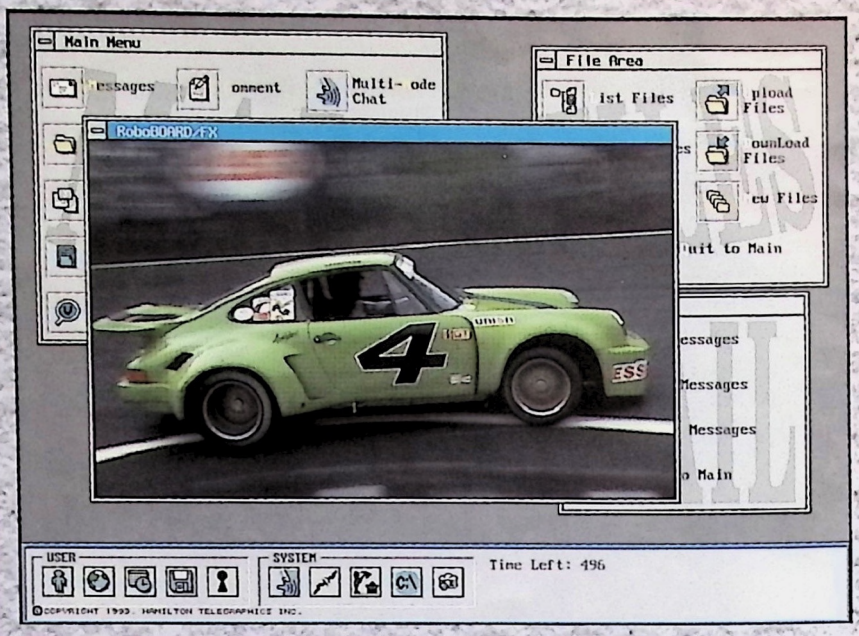
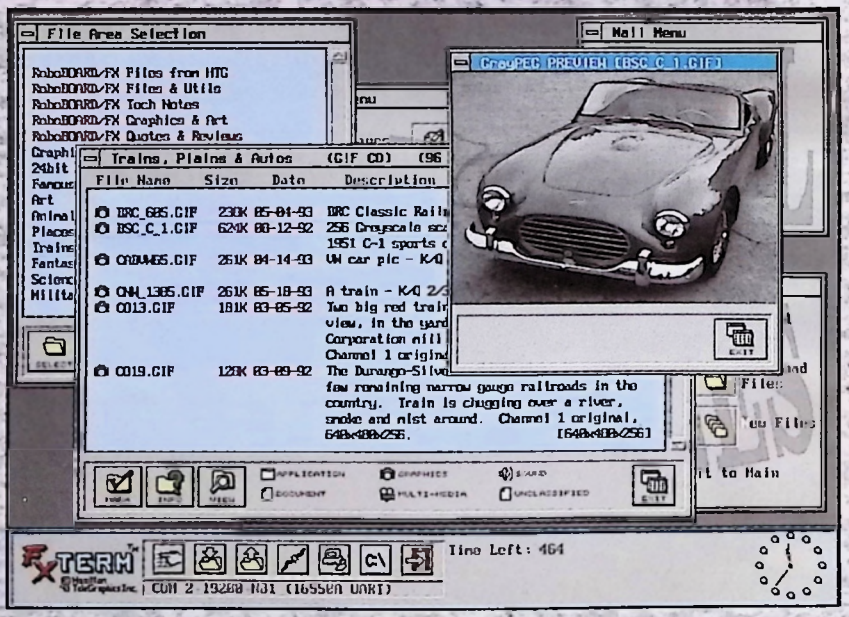


Professional Communications Software



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Demo System 1-819-682-7771

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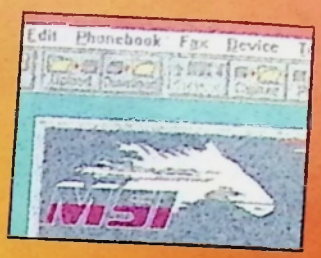

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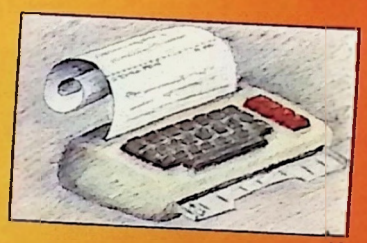

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Rusty Edie

Dual Eliminator

Rusty n Edie's BBS announces the introduction of 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 216-726-4217, fax to 216-726-3595 or call their BBS number 216-726-2620; they will accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

Rusty n Edie's BBS
7393 California Ave.
Youngstown, OH 44512

readme.txt

DataMedia

QmodemPro for Windows is the latest in a line of respected software coming out of the Mustang camp in California. Many have become intimately familiar with Qmodem over the years and with so much moving in the direction of Microsoft's Windows, it's only logical for QmodemPro to be there, too. There's a lot new here (data, fax and graphics incorporated "into one integrated package," says Mustang chief Jim Harrer) including plenty you might not have expected.

We take it on a test run, talk to its makers and deliver the results on page 8.

Durand Communications Network, the young company responsible for the likes of DC NET, where images are attached to online database entries, and Filex for Windows has pulled another one from the collective hat of its programmers: DC Genesys.

It's the lineage's next generation and we found multimedia playing a big role — in its present and future (page 16).

Next month: EMS and Wildcat!

Richard W. Robinson Jr.

Editor-in-Chief

The Best Kept Secret...

We won't deny that Virtual Bulletin Board System has been kept under wraps for the past three years. In this time VBBS has evolved into the premiere bbs software for DOS and OS/2 platforms. It simply took a lot of time and hard work to get VBBS where you wanted it. The result is the most flexible and integrated bbs software in the industry - the first to introduce sysops to an effective script programming language and true multi-networking. All this in one extremely easy-to-install package. But don't take our word for it. Call one of the numbers below for your own free demo version today. You'll agree that the best kept secret is now out of the bag!

$199

8-Channel Version

VBBS

Includes:
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Virtual Script Language Library
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Two-Tier Database Message Structure (250) Database Groups with 99 Databases Each)
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Multi-Network Carbon Copies and Mail Forwarding
Multiple DIRECT mail/CrashMail Options
SysOp Definable User E-Mail File Attaching
Multiple Taglines, Optionally Random
Optional Random Message Headers
Remote Text Uploads and Extract-to-Text Features
SysOp Configurable Random Messages and Ads

File Transfer Functions

Multi-Network File Requesting
CD-ROM and WORM Compatible Databases
Configurable Upload Description Requirement
Auto-Archive Comments and File_Id.diz Support
Configurable Upload/Download Ratio and Credit System
User Definable New File Date Scan
Master File and Top Download Listing by Security Level
Integral VXY Zmodem Protocol and Bidirectional Support
AutoBatch Downloading and Uploading
File Archive Viewing
User Definable File Listings Format

Multi-Channel Support

Multi-Node Support (4 to 256 Channels, 8 per PC)
Easy WAN/LAN Interfacing for Novell, Lantastic, and Others
OS/2 Compatibility (DOS and OS/2 Versions Available)
Fast Internal Serial Routines in Assembler with Fossil Option
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True Multi-Network Database Structure for Network Gating
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Support for Multiple Industry Standard Archive Formats

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Total 'Look and Feel' Control through Configurable Menu Function Blocks
Stacked Multi-Menu Functioning
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Multi-Language Capability with All Text Strings Externalized and Modifiable
Flexible Color Schemes in Ansi, 'Heart Code', or RIP Formats

User Conveniences

TeleConferencing
Integral Test and Quiz Facility
Survey and Voting Booth
AutoPosts
System Bulletins and Text Files Grouped by Topic
Hyper Text User Help System
Door Support-Supports Industry Standard Drop Files
Integral Time Bank
User Phone Charge Accounting System
User Definable Macros

Security

Access Security Coding on All Functions
Callback Verifier
SysOp/Moderator Message Base Validation
Definable New User Security and Flag Presets
AutoSysOp Validation Option
Toggleable Forced New User Feedback
Multiple SysOp Feedback
Selectable Log Information Detailing
SysOp Security Uploads
Upload Duplicate, Virus Scan, and Integrity Checking

SysOp Conveniences

VSL-Virtual Script Language for Easy Customization
VME-Virtual MultiNet Engine
VAREA-Automatic Message Base Subscription/Desubscription System
VString-Dynamic External String Manager
VLive-Hot Linking between Networked Systems
Lifetime Source Code Access (DOS Version) and Upgrade Privileges
Extremely Easy Installation and Setup
Internal Diagnostics Troubleshooting
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20 Configurable Timed Events
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NEWSWIRE

comp.bbs.tbbs

AURORA, CO — Are you a TBBS sysop? Then get with the group: comp.bbs.tbbs newsgroup.

eSoft, maker of TBBS, has announced the creation of the comp.bbs.tbbs newsgroup on the Usenet network, giving TBBS sysops worldwide the opportunity to network with one another and obtain information about and assistance with TBBS and TBBS-related issues.

Given this is a "comp" and not an "alt" newsgroup, much wider distribution is assured.

For more information contact eSoft at 15200 E. Girard Ave., Suite 3000, Aurora, CO 80014. Or call (303) 699-6565.

Florida Via AOL

VIENNA, VA — America Online, Inc., and the Tribune Company have agreed to combine resources and offer users of AOL a new service based on Florida tourism and travel, called Destination Florida.

And later this year, Tribune's Orlando Sentinel plans to offer local editions of the newspaper on AOL followed by editions of the Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel in early 1995.

Destination Florida is to be available to AOL's national subscriber base and will feature interactive services and information about attractions, hotels, sports, entertainment and other activities of interest to those traveling in Florida. The service will also offer ticketing, event information and entertainment merchandise through an alliance with Ticketmaster.

The Orlando Sentinel and the Sun-Sentinel plan to make services available that will provide AOLers local news content, interactive exchange with editorial staff and other information. The newspapers will also contribute content for the Destination Florida Services.

AOL can be reached at 8619 Westwood Center Drive, Vienna, VA 22182-2285. Or call (708) 448-8700.

Speed Today, Speed Tomorrow

ALBANY, OR — Says Supra: get 28,800 bps today without a care for tomorrow. How? Supra's V.Fast Class modems, currently available, will be fully upgradable to V.34 for as little as $49.

"We know that many users have a real need for speed now, but they are concerned about how today's V.Fast Class modems will communicate with the promised V.34 modems due out later this year," said John Wiley, Supra President. "Supra's upgrade policy eliminates those concerns."

Due to short supply, the initial upgrade price will be $69 through November, then drop to $49 where it will remain until Feb. 28 of next year. Supra's V.FC modems are priced around $349. The new V.34s will likely be priced significantly higher.

For more information, contact Supra Corp at (800) 727-8772.

USR Sales Up 136 Percent

SKOKIE, ILL. — U.S. Robotics, Inc., recently announced record sales and earnings for the second quarter and six months ended April 1.

That quarter's revenues were $90.6 million, an increase of 136 percent over the $38.5 million for the same quarter the prior year. Net earnings for the second quarter of fiscal '94 increased 71 percent to 6.4 million, from 3.7 million for the second quarter of fiscal 1993.

According to USR, revenues for the six-month period were $173.3 million, an increase of 142 percent over the $71.5 million for the same period of the previous year. Net earnings for the first six months of fiscal 1994 increased 74 percent to $12.2 million, from $7 million for the first six months of fiscal 1993.

Naturally shareholders are pleased and, commenting on the second quarter results, USR Chairman, President and CEO Casey Cowell said, "It is my pleasure to report to our shareholders the 10th consecutive quarter of growth in revenue and profitability since becoming a public company in October of 1991."

Cowell attributed the gains to a number of factors, including the initial shipments of the new Shared Access Fax Server, which provides inbound and outbound network-based fax capabilities for Novell networks. He also pointed out the demand for modem products remains strong and that the international operations continue to expand.

For more information, contact USR at (800) DIAL-USR.

The Skinny

TIME MAGAZINE plans to include an advertising section and photographs on America Online sometime this summer. Except for a classified ad section on the service, Time is the first to offer advertising there. The AOL spokesperson said the ads would be "unobtrusive and information oriented." The photo images would be available using AOL's next software release offering online graphical capabilities.

TRANSWITCH CORP., the creator of VLSI devices for high-speed communications, reportedly signed an agreement with IBM to market a new 25 megabit per second ATM chip set.

COMMERCENET was officially launched this spring by BARRNet, Enterprise Integration Technologies and Stanford University's Center for Information Technology. CommerceNet is the first large-scale market trial of electronic business on the Net.

Speaking of commerce, **COMPUSERVE'S** Electronic Mall has signed some major retailers this year: Pontiac, L'eggs, Dial-A-Mattress and Playtex are but a few. The signups come after a record performance for the mall in 1993.

ESPN ENTERPRISES and **PRODIGY SERVICES** Co. announced the two will form America's most comprehensive multimedia sports network, called ESPET, through the Prodigy service.

MICROSOFT, the software mammoth, and AT&T are reportedly closing in on a deal to offer information services, possibly including email.

COMMTOUCH SOFTWARE INC. has released Pronto, a new Windows software program supporting easy communication between PCs and Unix networks.

PRODIGY plans to put on a new face for Mac users this fall. According to MacWEEK the company will offer a Mac-like interface enabling users to steer through a more familiar environment.

DATATIMES, the powerful electronic source of business news and research, has added an additional 21 daily newspapers to its international electronic information network.

ResNova Delivers Multiple Release

HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA — ResNova Software, Inc. has released version 3.1 of its NovaLink Professional (NLP), the multi-platform graphical information client/server software package (offering BBS-like services).

What can the new version do? Well, it'll backup your entire server — in the background...It'll also backup the contents of your server to another drive on the network without interruptions to online users.

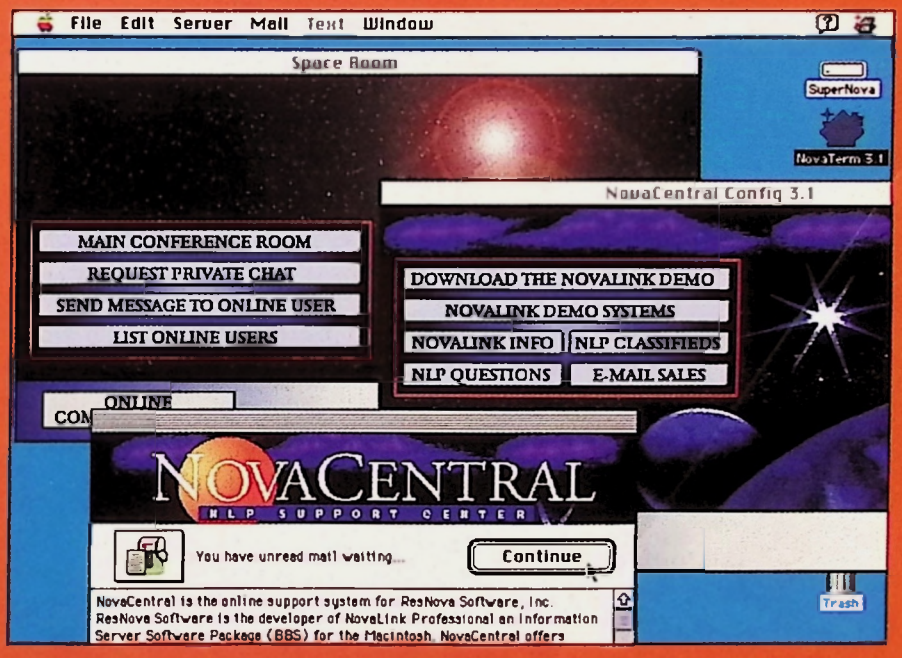
NovaLink 3.1 supports true telnet connections without need of third-party tools (an exclusive on the Mac). Internetters can telnet into the NovaLink server and navigate the same way as modem and LAN clients. To boot, NovaLink supports high-speed modems including ISDN and switch 56.

Also new from ResNova is the international electronic communications network called NovaWorld. NovaWorld is described as a simple-to-use yet very powerful wide area network of BBS systems. NovaWorld includes integration into the Internet and Fidonet, multi-hop mail routing, shared-message forums and file libraries, and multiple interface options including MAC. GUI. RIPscrip, TTY, VT100 and ANSI.

Also from ResNova is MenuMaker 3.1, a Mac to RIPscrip graphics conversion program, and NovaUtilities, a program optimizing the system's file structure. MenuMaker allows NovaLink sysops to create a custom graphic interface on their Mac and convert those Mac images into RIPscrip images. Additionally, MenuMaker defines the mouse clickable regions for both Mac and PC users. This makes for a simple-to-design custom graphical BBS system.

ResNova is currently offering an economy package for $100 that includes one serial connection, 10 NovaTerm (Mac GUI client) users, unlimited RIPterm users (PC GUI client) and unlimited command-line users. Also, keep an eye out soon for a PowerPC version of NovaLink Pro.

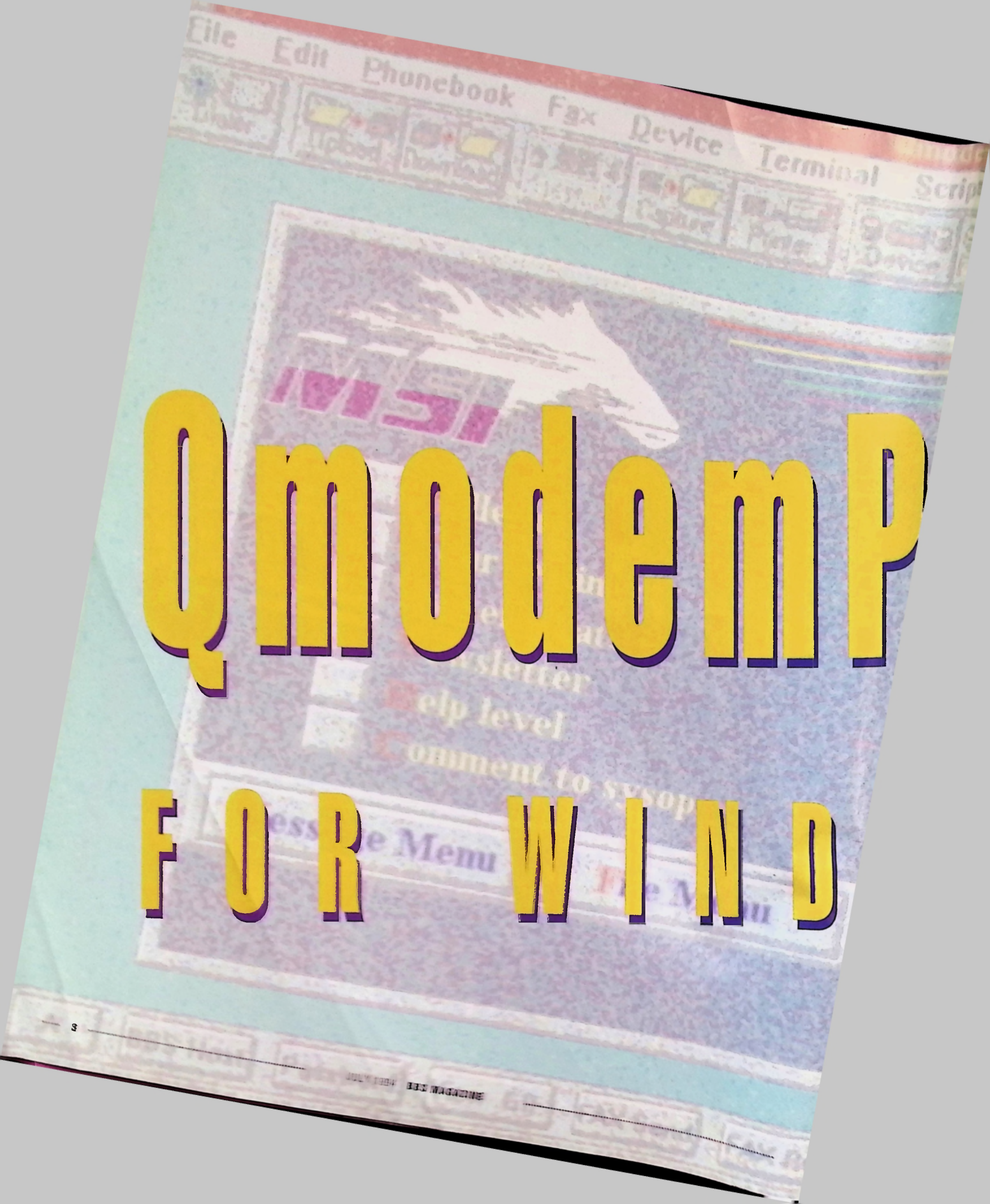
For more information contact ResNova at 5011 Argosy Drive #13, Huntington Beach, CA 92649, or call (714) 379-9000; server (714) 379-9004.



ATI TECHNOLOGIES, INC. has announced that its 19200 ETC fax-modems have achieved 19,200 bps transmission rates.

AT&T, at presstime, reportedly was ready to announce a device to allow workstations support voice, video and data links over 155M bit per second ATM links.

TELESCAN, Inc. has announced an agreement with **PUBLIC INFORMATION ONLINE, INC.**, to develop the (aptly named) Public Information Online communications network.



QMODEM FOR WIND

PO WS

Mustang queues up the Pro for an adventure through Windowsland. We went along and here's what we found.

"How do I send a file to my buddy?"

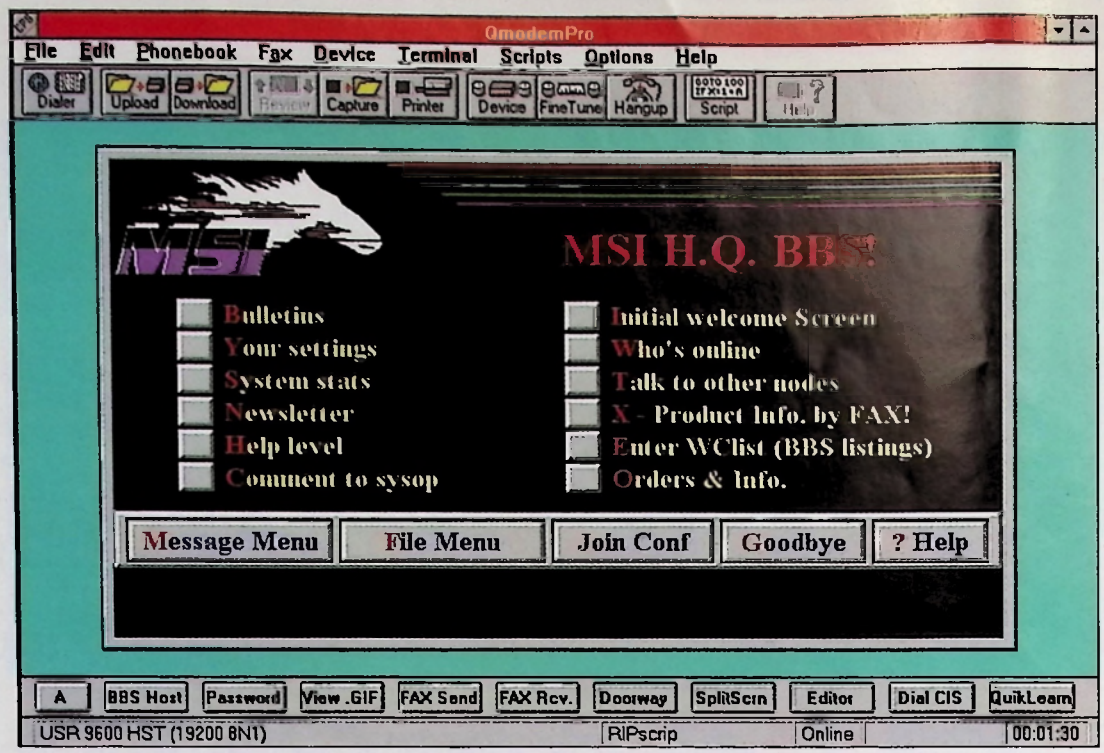
Ah, the quintessential question of so many beginning modemers. And though it doesn't exactly sum up the position taken by Mustang Software in its QmodemPro for Windows, this actual "Help" entry does shed light on the obvious aim of the program: computer telecommunications is this simple.

Mustang President Jim Harrer puts it a little differently: "The overall goal for QmodemPro for Windows," said the 36-year-old Harrer, "...was to create a Windows communications program which was powerful, yet simple to learn."

No matter how you look at it, version 1.01 (the one we tested — a minor upgrade from v1.0, available early this year) and the latest, 1.1, have taken communications somewhere fun.

CONTINUES...

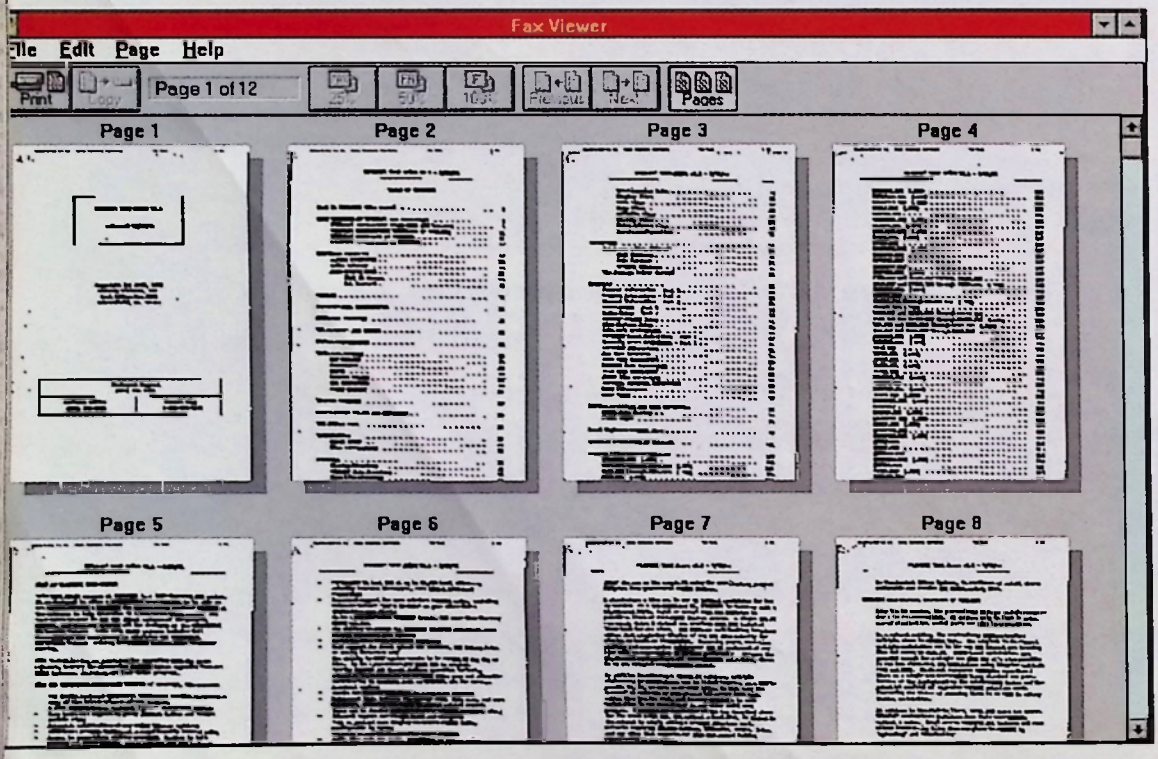
A closer look



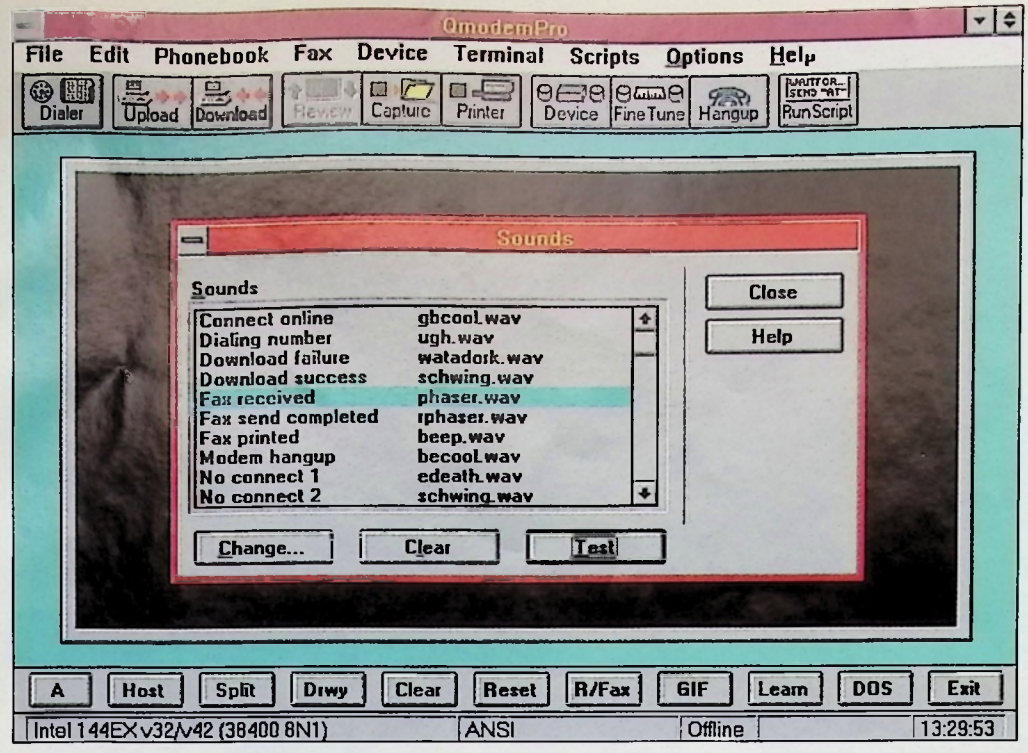
Whether you've ever encountered a Qmodem communicator in the past is not an issue here. QmodemPro for Windows begins at the beginning, assumes very little and takes its operators by the hand to a table where they're fed a beautiful palate of rich but digestible grub. And though it is similar to other Windows-based communicators (Telix, for instance) QMP/W takes one down a somewhat different path. In learning the program, at each turn, it seems, there's so much more to be had.

For instance, the built-in RIP support is designed in a fashion that ends up appearing to make things too simple. Say there's a RIP board you want to call. When entering its number in QMP/W graphical phone book, simply click on the RIP emulation and revise the path to the RIP icons and you're set. And if the RIP board needs to send you new icons, it's simple to do. Though we sought them, a couple test runs of this feature found no glitches.

Downloading has its own nice features. All the usual numbers are supplied to track performance, but the brow raising comes during download of graphics. The instant a download session is initiated, up pops a window displaying the graphic as it spills down the screen. We know, we know — big deal, you've all seen this before. Well, try clicking on the Zoom icon in the toolbar just above the image and as the pic is coming down the image is blown up in increments (depending on how many Zoom-clicks) so one can concentrate on a detailed area. Suppose you want just a piece of the graphic — use the mouse to select the section you want and copy it to the clipboard. The viewer is quick and not-so-dirty — that little icon above the image depicting a printer? Click it and out comes the pic on your printer.



While inside QMP/W users are presented with a number of options. Again, with the click of a toolbar icon one can jump to the versatile Host mode, Split the screen, open the Doorway mode, Clear the buffer, Reset, View a GIF (anywhere on the system) go to Quicklearn (for creating



scripts without learning the new SLIQ script language), Fine Tune baud and parity, Capture and Fax.

The last of which we tested a number of times without fail. Windows makes it easy for QMP to ask the user where the document-to-be-faxed is located. Just click on the directory, etc., and the page is on its way. A cover page feature is included, as is the ability to view received faxes. While not as robust as, say, WinFax Pro, this one gets the job done fine. (We should note version 1.1 allows for faxing from anywhere in Windows via the printing command, much like WinFax Pro. This followed the initial, and warranted, poor reaction to its absence. While we're on the subject of remedied shortfalls, it is notable that version 1.01's Host mode cannot answer both data and fax calls. "We found a lot of our customers want to be able to receive a fax or a data call using one phone line. We decided to address both of these quickly and released QmodemPro for Windows v1.1 in May," said Harrer. The new Host has a built-in message, file and paging system, key elements found in many major BBS packages. For those with 1.0/1.01, a free patch is available on the MSI HQ BBS, CompuServe, Genie and America Online.)

Harrer, who started Mustang software (MSI) in September of 1986, points to Wildcat! — the BBS software — as the company's flagship product.

"We released it in 1987 as shareware," said Harrer. "The difference was we shipped a printed manual and offered voice technical support Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m."

The added support paid off for Harrer — in 1987 582 people registered Wildcat! v1.03 and "Mustang Software was on its way to becoming a real company."

In that same year Harrer began building the staff at MSI, from a handful in 1988 to 36 "team members" today.

"It's like a family and we're very proud of the team we have built."

Before the team and the software, before Qmodem and Wildcat!, Harrer worked in the oil business selling pipe valves and fittings for a company called Grant Supply in Bakersfield, CA.

"I dropped out of college to begin working for them in 1979" [in their] Inside Sales Department," said Harrer. "Grant Supply did a really great job of challenging me...the last four years I was at Grant I had become their district manager, handling a budget of seven million in sales and a staff of 26 people. Grant Supply was my college education."

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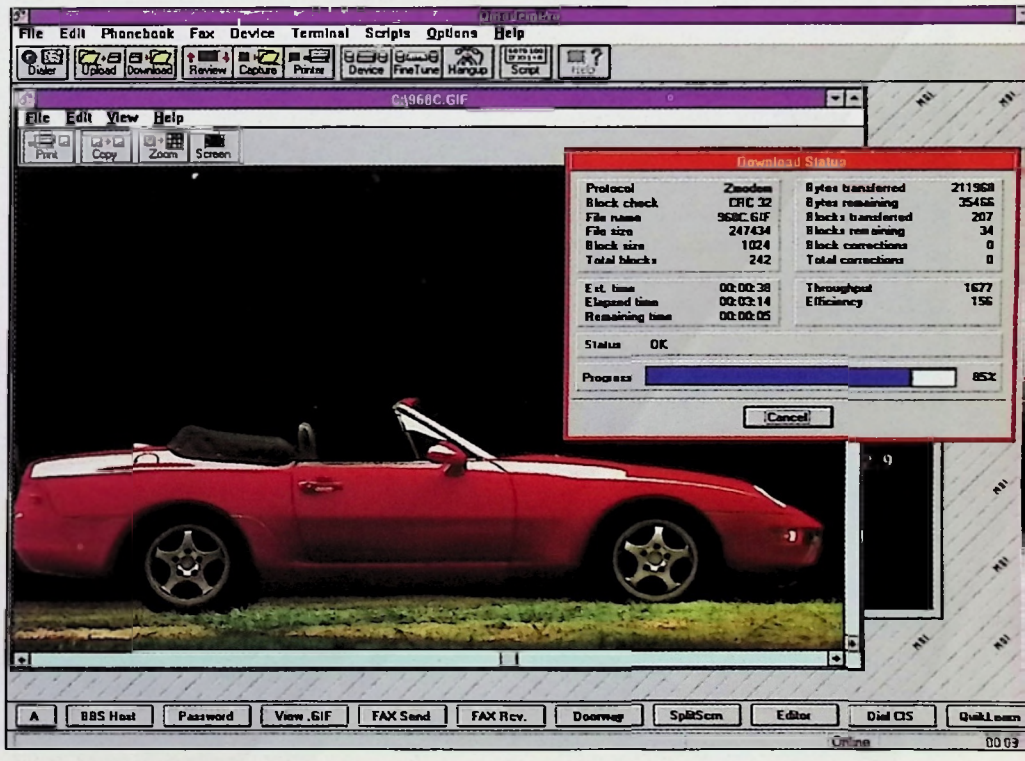

"I believe by incorporating data, fax and graphics into one integrated package. It makes us stand out from our competitors..."

–Jim Harrer

As a teen, Harrer said he was very involved in the Air Force Auxiliary's Civil Air Patrol Cadet Leadership Program "which gave me the leadership training and confidence to manage people and skills needed to develop 'high performance teams' like we have at MSI."

(We witnessed that management style from afar: It was a Saturday when Harrer fielded our questions and his staff was working against another product-release deadline. He wasn't home watching a game, he was in the office all day...Sunday, too. Granted, it's on a large campus in the foothills where Frisbees are as much a part of lunch as ham, but hey.)

A self-taught Turbo Pascal programmer, Harrer claims Wildcat! was nothing more than "my serious attempt to learn how to program." Probably thousands of sysops out there are happy the attempt was successful.

Harrer later met John Friel (Qmodem's author) and Scott Hunter (current vice president of research and development at Mustang) in a most appropriate way: online.

It happened "when I was stuck and needed some help," Harrer said. "Friel actually gave me his Xmodem and Ymodem protocol code for Wildcat! v1.0."

The online meetings struck a nice key with Harrer for, as he puts it, "Over half of our staff members have been hired as a result of building a relationship with us online." To boot, "all of our tech support specialists and a couple of our engineers are still Wildcat! sysops and love working in the online field."

Breaking windows

QMP/W was written by Mustang's "hot-shot" software engineering team of Hunter and Greg Hewgill. It's the company's first foray into the Windows environment and, as Harrer puts it, both are pleased by the positive response the product has been receiving from all directions.

"John [Friel]...was able to continue to work and upgrade our DOS version while the Windows release was under development," Harrer said. But he got "his feet wet in Windows by writing the install program."

Harrer believes the group succeeded quite nicely, pointing out some distinguishing highlights: "QmodemPro for Windows has the first Windows-based communications program to actually support RIP graphics. We also added send and receive fax support and a GIF viewer with zoom capabilities," as described previously.

It's this and the addition of the pow-

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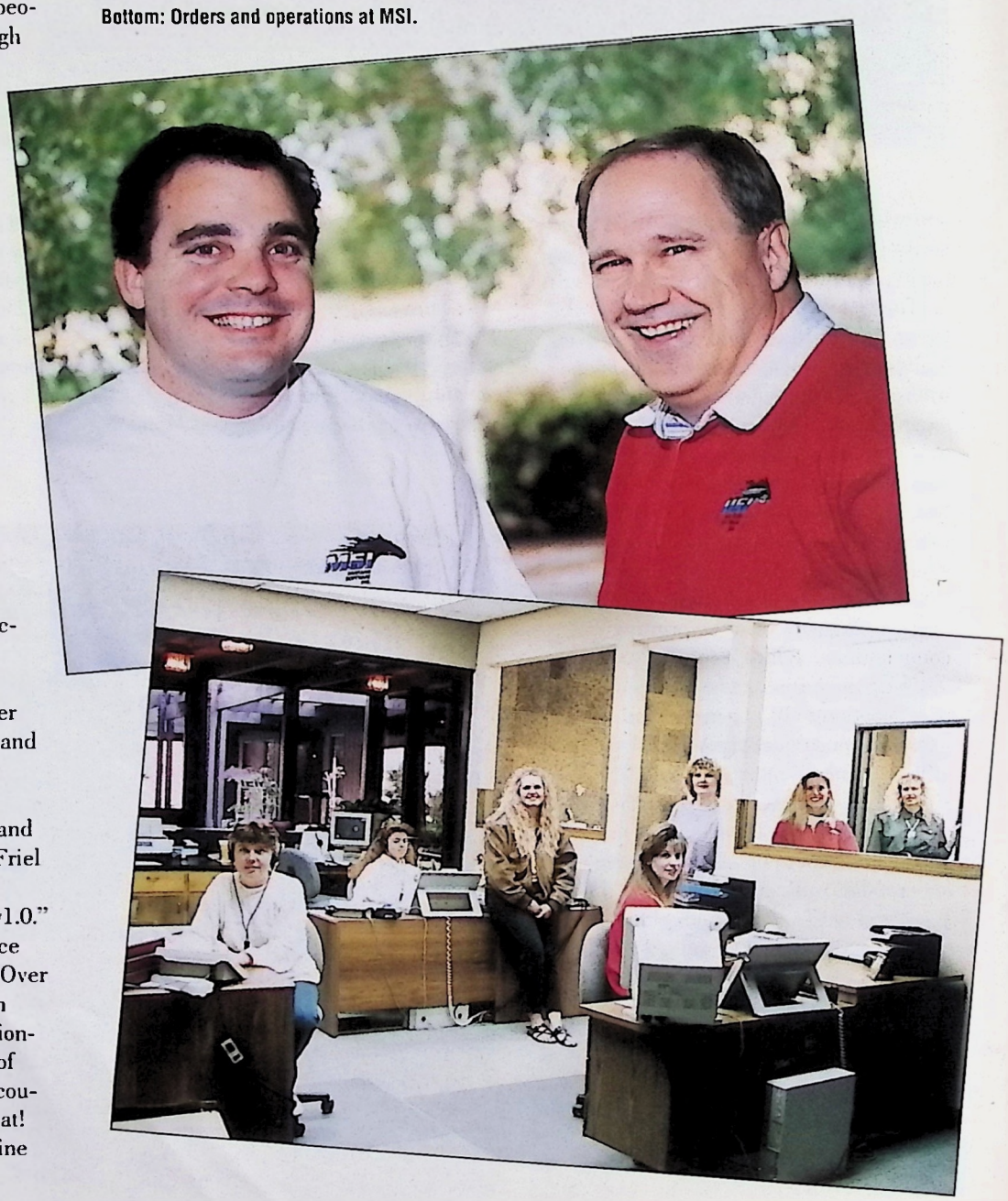
Top: Jim Harrer (left) and Mustang vice president Rick Heming.
Bottom: Orders and operations at MSI.



RIPscrip™ Graphics

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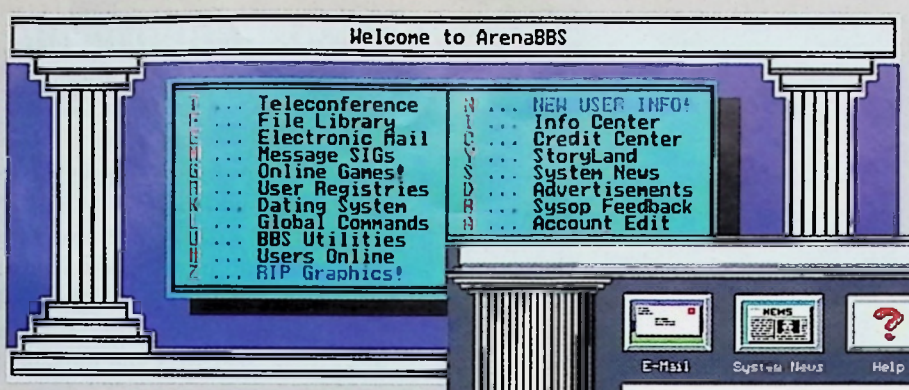
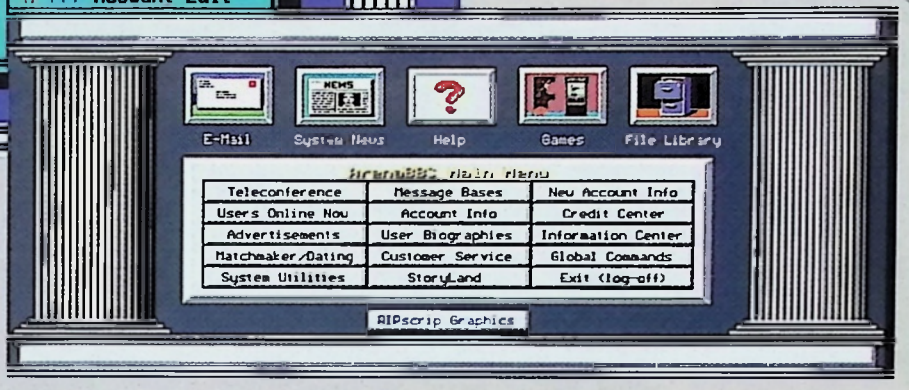


TIRED of the same old ANSI menus?



Get RIPPED!

Graphical user interfaces have been available on many different computer systems for years. But until now, you haven't been able to get a bulletin board system with a GUI unless you used a proprietary solution. Until now. RIP*scrip* (Remote Imaging Protocol script language) is a published specification developed by TeleGrafix supported by over twenty-five leading vendors on the PC, Macintosh, and Unix platforms. Any on-line system that can display a text menu can use RIP*scrip*. Chances are that your favorite BBS has RIP*scrip* support built in.

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RIP*draw* is the entry level RIP*scrip* graphics creation package. Designed for recreational system operators and the telecommunicator, RIP*draw* is perfect for creation of stunning on-line graphics at a low price – ~~$49~~. • *Special - $35* •

RIP*aint*™

RIP*aint* is a graphical drawing environment designed for creating menus and screens to supplement or replace a host's existing menus. Integrated tools for creation of clickable buttons, creation and use of bitmap icons, and optimization of files makes this a powerful tool for creating a graphical user interface for your system at an affordable price – $200.

RIP*scrip* Graphics are supported by these bulletin board systems:

The Major BBS (Galacticomm)	PCBoard (Clark Development)	Synchronet (Digital Dynamics)
NovaLink Professional (ResNova)	Remote Access (Wantree)	TBBS/TDBS (eSoft)
Osiris XLT (Int'l TeleCom)	Searchlight (Searchlight Software)	Wildcat! (Mustang Software)

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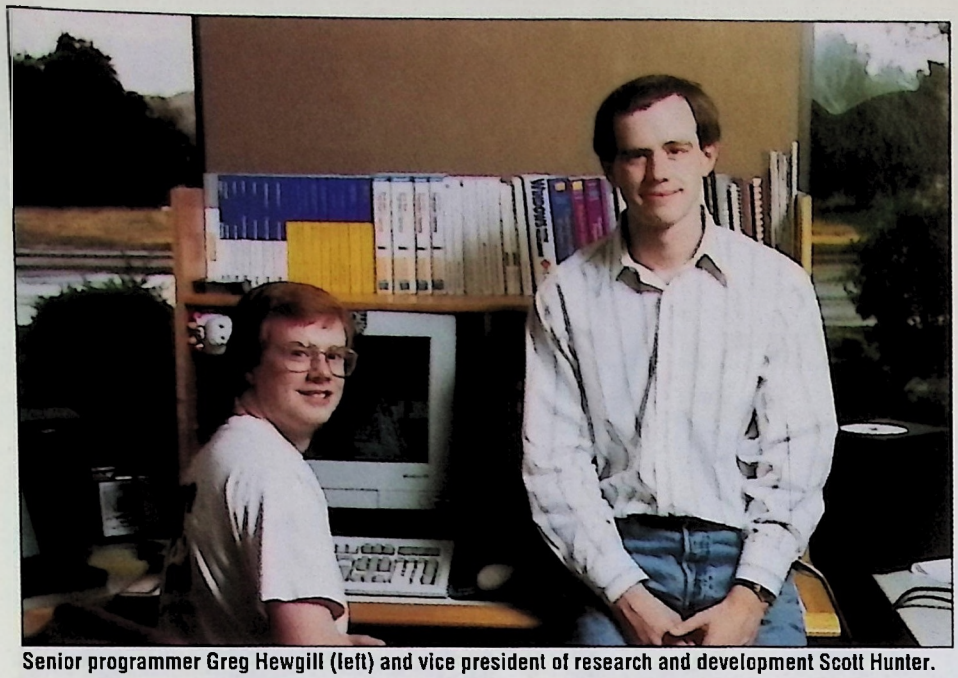

Senior programmer Greg Hewgill (left) and vice president of research and development Scott Hunter.

erful script language, its editor, compiler and debugger that make the product shine, Harrer said.

"I believe by incorporating data, fax and graphics into one integrated package," he said, "it makes us stand out from our competitors, besides the fact that we're cheaper than most of them as well." (The suggested retail price is $139; buy it at CompUSA and other outlets for under $100 — no shareware.)

As mentioned, Mustang in May released version 1.1 of QMP/W and plans another Wildcat!, this one version four.

"We have delivered the tools our customers have been asking for," said Harrer. "We'll continue to pour our profits back into R&D creating new and exciting products for 1995 and beyond. We're glad the 'Year of the Paperless Office' and the 'Year of the LAN' is behind us, now it's the 'Year to be Online' and Mustang Software will lead the way with new tools to make it easier than ever before."

Get your kicks on I-way 66

When asked about the fate of BBSs in a future pregnant with images of an information highway, Harrer said he saw BBSs as major information providers and that "as more people get online, the demand for information-rich BBSs will continue to grow."

"BBSs will simply become off-ramps from the Superhighway to which all of us will have access. CompuServe, Prodigy and America Online have all introduced telecommunications to an estimated 4.5 million users, now these users are finding out about their local BBS and demand is growing to service this new market. Mustang Software is positioned to support these information providers via Wildcat! and its slate of utilities, and the end-users via QmodemPro and Off-Line Xpress (OLX). We have a great year planned."

Mustang Software can be reached at Box 2264, Bakersfield, CA 93303, or by calling the sales line at (800) 999-9619; the BBS can be reached at (805) 873-2400.

A Few Q Highlights

FILE TRANSFERS: Zmodem, CompuServe B+, Kermit, Ymodem, Ymodem/G, Xmodem/1K, Xmodem/1KG, Xmodem/CRC, Xmodem or ASCII.

GIF VIEWER: View GIF graphics as they are downloaded; zoom in on any GIF or BMP during download and mark portions of the image for copy to clipboard. Users can even print the images from the d-load image viewer.

D&D: Drag and drop files for upload.

TERMINAL EMULATION: RIPscrip (full support when calling RIP compatible boards), ADDS VP60, ADM 3A, ANSI, Avatar, DG 100, DG 200, DG 210, Hazeltine 1500, Heath 19, IBM 3101, TTY, TVI 910/912/920/925/950/955, VT 52/100/102/220/320 and Wyse 30/50/60/75/85/100/185.

FAX: A very nice faxing component (for Class 1 or Class 2s) that allows for text, BMP and PCX files; cover pages can be attached as well and automatic fax receive is supported with handy viewer offering zooming, copying and printing.

ICONIZED DIALING DIRECTORY: The icon view mode allows one to create icons to stand alongside phone book entries. Just double-click and you're online. RIP? The phone book will attach the RIP icon directory to the RIP BBS you're calling.

SCROLLBACK: Review the scrollback buffer while capturing information.

TERMINAL WINDOW, CUSTOMIZED: Add a pattern/wallpaper, change the fonts.

SLIQ: This is the new Script Language Interface for QmodemPro. Result — more power, speed and flexibility. A Quicklearn element is built in so users can do their own scripting without having to learn the language. A compiler and script debugger are in their as well.

SOUND: Windows sound files (WAVs) can be attached to various events in QmodemPro. Download complete? Record or find a WAV that states, "Hey, I'm done!"

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Generat

See it, hear it, access
DCN just changed the

If you're not familiar with DC Genesys, chances are it won't be long before you are. Creator Durand Communications Network (DCN) has billed it the next generation online photograph database with a powerful application toolkit and full relational database capabilities. In other words — sound, images, text and all the other informational benefits of any database, accessible online through a door on nearly any BBS.

The system, says DCN, is designed to assist in the startup of information businesses as well as establishing a new platform for which existing businesses can make products or services available online. And it will likely be a godsend for many, from catalog producers to real estate marketers.

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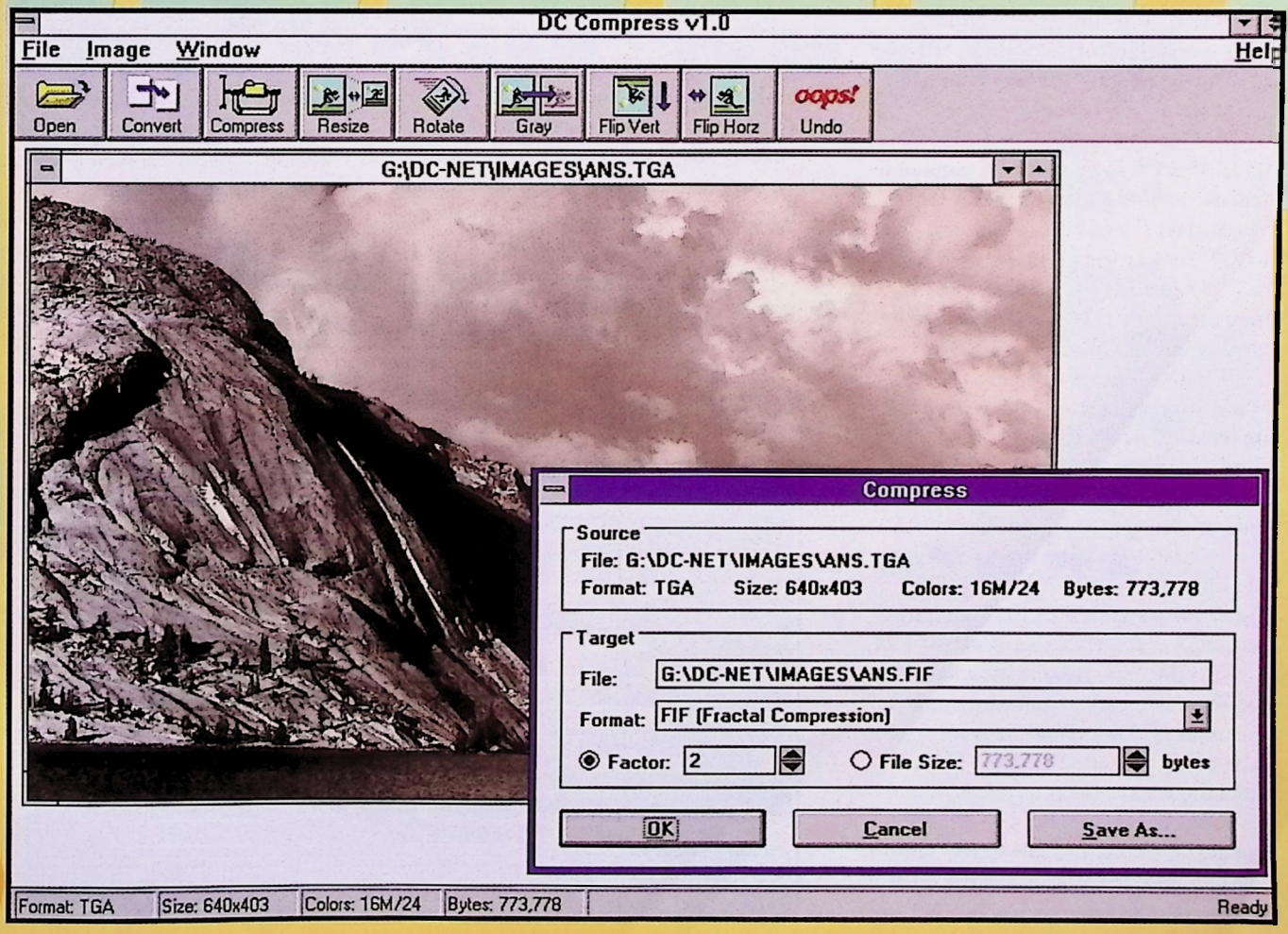
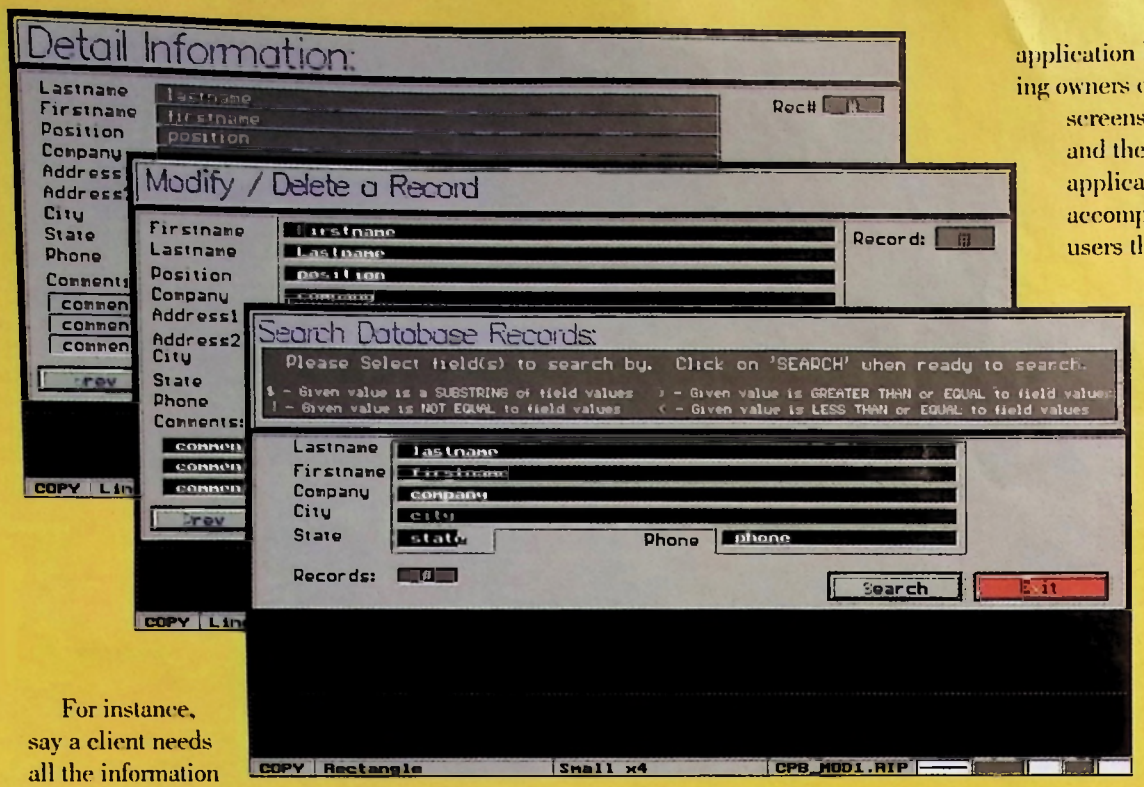
ion Genesys

it through any BBS doorway — way you experience databases.





For instance, say a client needs all the information on a certain California property, with photographs, this afternoon in Florida. Fax it? Sure, if one-dimensional black and white will suffice. Overnight it? Too late. And suppose it's Sunday and you're miles from the office. The luxury of a Genesys just became necessity.

But what is it, exactly?

"DC Genesys is an all new dBASE III, dBASE IV and FoxPro II compatible database engine and application scripting language," said Andre Durand, CEO of DCN, developers of the popular DC NET, "which was designed to allow users the ability to create a fully relational online multimedia database."

He calls Genesys fully multi-user aware, supporting complete record and file locking. And with the new Windows image compression utility, users of Genesys can attach "as many images, text files or sound files (WAV) as they wish to any database record," including JPEG, CMP, Fractal (FIF) and Pegasus, as well as the standards GIF, PCX, TIF, TGA and BMP.

With the compression attachment (for Windows and DOS) users are able to compress 24bit color images (640X480) to around 12-20k. Durand notes there have been requests to add CAD (DXF) file support as well as document (MS Word and MS Excel) support and that plans are already under way to honor them.

"We have also had a significant number of requests for video file support," said Durand, who adds that until "everyone upgrades to 56 or 128k (ISDN speeds)" it won't be realistic to support "live" video compression.

Our aim "is to make DC Genesys a central harbor for several different types of images, sounds and documents online," he said, and "we are achieving this through our new DC TERM for Windows (TERM is also available in a DOS version; both ANSI and RIP compatible) which already has the image and sound support."

The method for creation of these remarkable databases is the GeneScript application language, a language allowing owners of Genesys to "paint" custom screens in ANSI or TeleGrafix RIP and then linking those screens into applications. Documentation accompanying the package guides users through the language — helping them avoid pitfalls — so results are simple to use and pleasing the eye of end-users.

And for those not wanting to engage in database creation, DCN provides many ready-to-use "turn-key" applications such as Residential Real Estate, Commercial Real Estate, Rental Properties, Dating Services, Resume Databases, AutoSeller, Video Product Catalogs, Contact Phonebooks, Yacht and Plane Sales, and Foreclosure and REO Databases.

Our test runs of the Genesys prerelease turned up positive results on nearly all fronts. The simplicity, as is expected in DCN products, was in evidence. The point-and-click element worked without a single hesitation and accessing database info is easy as following street signs on a back road. Displayed image quality was surprisingly good (given your monitor is of this decade) and the compression enabled pictures to be viewed in around 15 seconds. There are times when Genesys seems a bit dogged — if you get impatient, clicking the mouse too quickly

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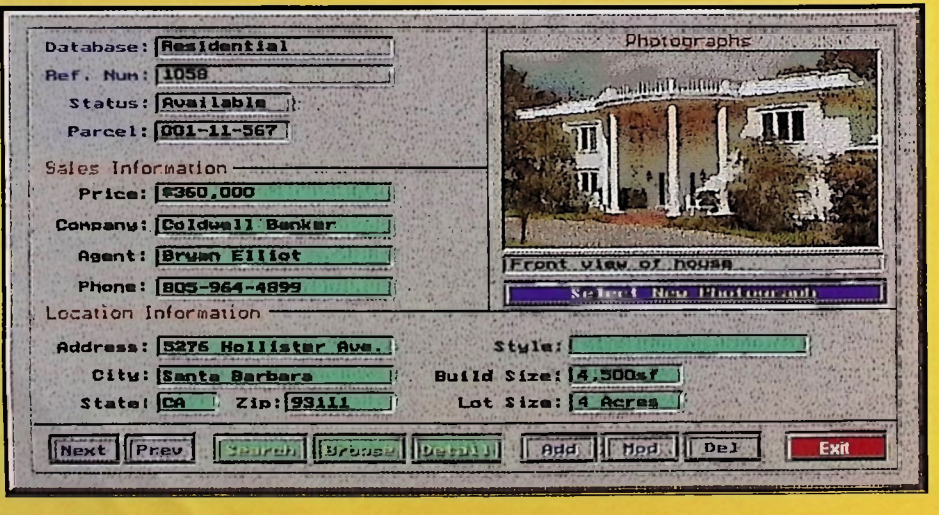

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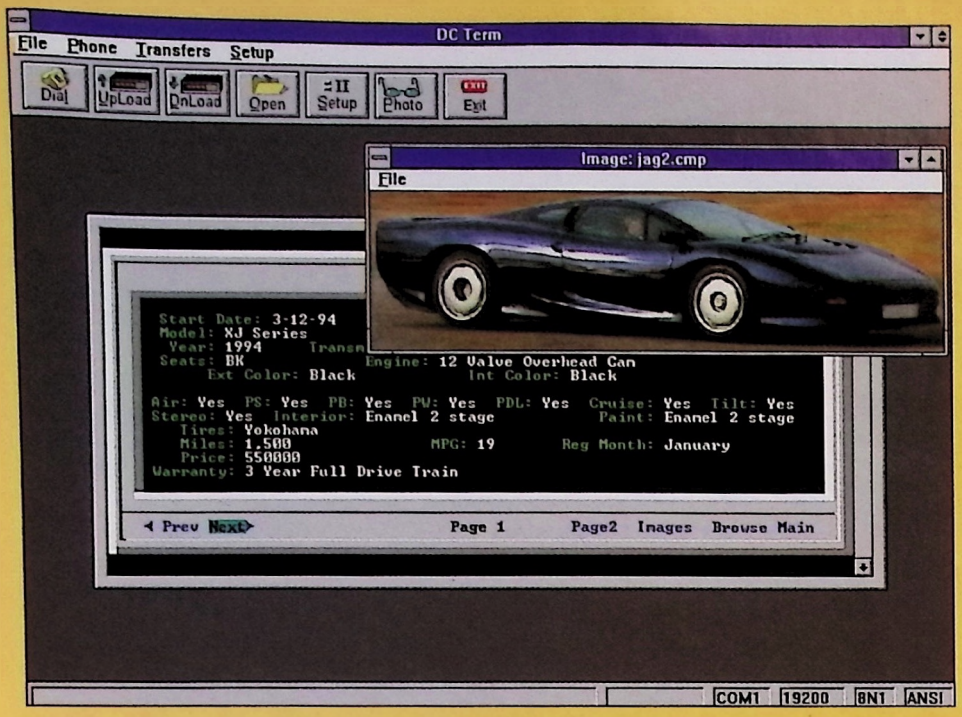


too often you can find yourself getting ahead of Genesys' firing synapses. Take one screen at a time and you're fine. It's fair to note the version we used was a pre-release and subject tweaking and improvements before hitting the shelves.

Readers of this magazine will recall past investigations into DCN's DC NET, the database for The Major BBS. The obvious question is, "What separates Genesys from its earlier (and still available) incarnation?"

Durand quickly pointed some differences, saying DC Genesys is fully relational and allows for query-by-example and support for pick lists for both entry, modification and searching of database records.

"It has browse-to-detail jumping and a completely flexible menu design," Durand said. And "DC Genesys allows for any number of attachments and is not limited (like DC NET) to just 10 images."

Users can access Genesys through doorways on most BBSs, including Wildcat!, PCBoard, Remote Access, Synchronet, Searchlight BBS, The Major BBS and TBBS. And while some door programs let the BBS handle Com port IO, Genesys has the ability to take over of the modem allowing for more control of the door software and less overhead for the BBS.

Access is simple. Call a BBS running Genesys, enter the door and walk right in. As for terminal programs, "a standard COM program which has ANSI or RIP support" can be used, said Durand. "However they will not be able to view the compressed images or other attachments. DC Genesys will automatically 'sense' what the terminal program is and adjust features accordingly." But to gain the full benefits of Genesys, Durand recommends the royalty-free DC TERM.

Firm development

Aside from software development, DCN (founded in 1991) has been busy taking plenty of turns this year. For starters, Synergy Communications, Inc. — the company Durand formed last year to develop Filex for Windows — has merged with DCN. And employee numbers have grown to 31.

Of the merger, Durand said his plan for the two companies was to keep each moving down "two different but complementary paths, one vertical and one horizontal."

But the market moved much more quickly than was anticipated, he said, and "we had some duplication between the companies and it made sense to consolidate our talents and resources, ensuring smooth delivery of all our products and upgrades while decreasing costs."

The company has also endured a move. In February, DCN relocated to a new, 10,000-square-foot facility "to allow for our expected growth over the next couple of years."

And for that growth, DCN has built a powerful board of directors with the likes of Don Esters (former president of Harmon International); Dave Berkus (CEO and president of Computerized Lodging Systems, a fifth of the global market for hospitality software); Frank Perna (former CEO and president of MagnaTek, with $1.5 billion in annual sales); and former AT&T consultant Dr. Robert Grayson.

But this kind of success — in an industry beating with staunchly independent hobbyists and home-boy hackers — could appear to some as smacking of financial opportunism. Aware of this perception, Durand allays those concerns by addressing them head-on:

"Many individuals looking from the outside assume that we are making a lot of money because of our growth. In actuality, we are basically a group of college students or recent graduates working around the clock to pursue a dream and assuming a lot of risk."

He points to the team spirit of his young staff in describing the dedication toward completing projects and "supporting our customer base."

"Everyone feels a certain sense of obligation toward producing the software that will make our customers successful," he said. "The company doesn't have a policy of punching time clocks, but because of their dedication to their work, it is the norm to find half a dozen workers at their stations very late into the evenings and on weekends as well. A white chalkboard in the front lobby shows our various deadlines and is updated daily. We push hard and the atmosphere is pretty intense at times, but there is no feeling of ennui.

"Internally, shorts and T-shirts are required attire. One of the benefits of a software company is that it is not a 'walk-in' operation. We are actually surprised when a customer comes to our facility. So for the most part, our office is our home. In fact, it is not uncommon to find sleeping bags on the floor around certain terminals...the ground floor is so large, we sometimes play Frisbee or roller hockey after hours."

Durand says that "everyone at DCN is extremely dedicated," and that "without the exceptional support staff and sales marketing team, we would not have come this far."

Specifically, on the programming

side, he points to Robert Bronson and Paul McAvoy (the DC Genesys team) for their "relentless dedication," and to Bryan Elliot ("the mastermind"), Phil Mayes (Windows terminal), Phu Ngo (Windows interfacing), Alex Wong (image compression) and Albert Gallego ("firefighter") as integral players.

Going for goals

When asked about the initial goal for DC Genesys, Durand seemed to describe exactly what his company had produced: "...a robust, flexible and expandable platform by which all BBSs (through doorways) could utilize a completely graphical online multimedia information service."

But, he says, this has gotten them "only part way there." The development staff is still working (as of last May) "full-time on making it a robust tool that encompasses everything an information provider would want in a database package. The first release of DC Genesys is the core of this database platform. Once a user learns the GeneScript language for application development, creativity is their only limitation."

In the near future DCN plans to support a high-speed text search engine completely integrated with the terminal programs supplied by the company and the GeneScript language.

Said Durand: "We are also working on an all-new completely Windows interface (v1.1) that will give end-users a seamless Windows environment to the DC Genesys database and high-speed text search engine." What this will offer callers who use Windows is impressive: a completely familiar interface appearance—icons and all.

And the company will soon be concentrating its talents on the Genesys Network, "a method of communicated information between Genesys systems all over the country," he said. "In addition, we will be rolling out our CLASS technology [something you'll be hearing much more about] and later versions of Genesys will be a big part of that."

In fact, a preview of the next version of Genesys (1.5) shows it to be a bit of an independent. That is, v1.5 is scheduled to run as a stand-alone program, without the need for a BBS door.

DCN's Genesys database toolkit is selling for $995, which includes the Genesys database engine, the GeneScript language application builder, a DOS and Windows compression program and royalty-free distribution copies of the DOS and Windows terminal program for end-users.

For a trial run of DC Genesys, call the DCN demo system at (805) 961-8710. DC TERM for DOS v2.7 or DC TERM for Windows is required.

Durand Communications Network can be reached at 147 Castillian Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93117. Or between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. (PST) at voice: (805) 961-8700, fax: (805) 961-8701, or Filex: (805) 961-8702.

FEATURES

MULTI-USER CAPABILITIES

- Support for multiple users running separate copies of DC Genesys on the same computer (through DesqView) or on separate computers on a LAN.
- Seamless sharing of files with concurrent dBase/FoxPro applications on the same LAN.

MIGHTY SEARCH ENGINE

- Query-by-Example via custom forms as well as an "expert mode" command line.
- Customized query optimization and fine tuning.

FLEXIBLE USER INTERFACE

- Total flexibility in design of data entry, searching, browsing and detailed viewing.
- ANSI and RIPscrip graphics protocol support for all database functions.
- Complete entry screen validation via pick lists.
- Online and Offline database updating.
- Browse to detailed view jumping.

WHAT YA NEED TO RUN GENESYS

- A 286 or higher IBM PC or compatible.
- DOS 3.3.
- Five megs of HD space.
- VGA compatible monitor/video card (SVGA recommended).
- BBS that's DOOR.SYS or DORINFO#.DEF compatible.

PHOTO ACCESSIBILITY

- Support for the following images: JPG, CMP, PCX, BMP, TIF, TGA and GIF.
- Online and offline image viewing capabilities.

Genesys is also completely dBase III+, dBase IV and FoxPro2 compatible, and it's completely relational with support for seamless relational capabilities between fields in different tables.

DC TERM, THE ACCESSER

For Windows and DOS, this is the graphics-based terminal program (v2.7), a composite communications program made up of earlier releases of DC TERM and RIPterm from TeleGrafix Communications. With it, one can: view TXT, ZIP, PCX, TIF, TGA, GIF, BMP and CMP files online; print images on- or offline with DC Slideshow; scroll backward; enjoy full ANSI support (plus VT-102 and VT-52); have a context-sensitive, keyword-driven help system and plenty more.

GENESCRIPT APPLICATION LANGUAGE

The GeneScript Application Language is a simple set of commands linking the user's application graphics menus to a database file. Using GeneScript, one can create an whole series of ANSI or RIP menus that make up your application. And because most database applications have many of the same elements (main menu, search screen, browse screen and an output screen) much of the Genesys application development is a matter of cutting and pasting other applications to meet the user's specific needs.

BY WILLIAM A. CIZMARIK

The New System Compu

Augusta, Georgia

Boiler Room BBS

West Pittston, Pennsylvania

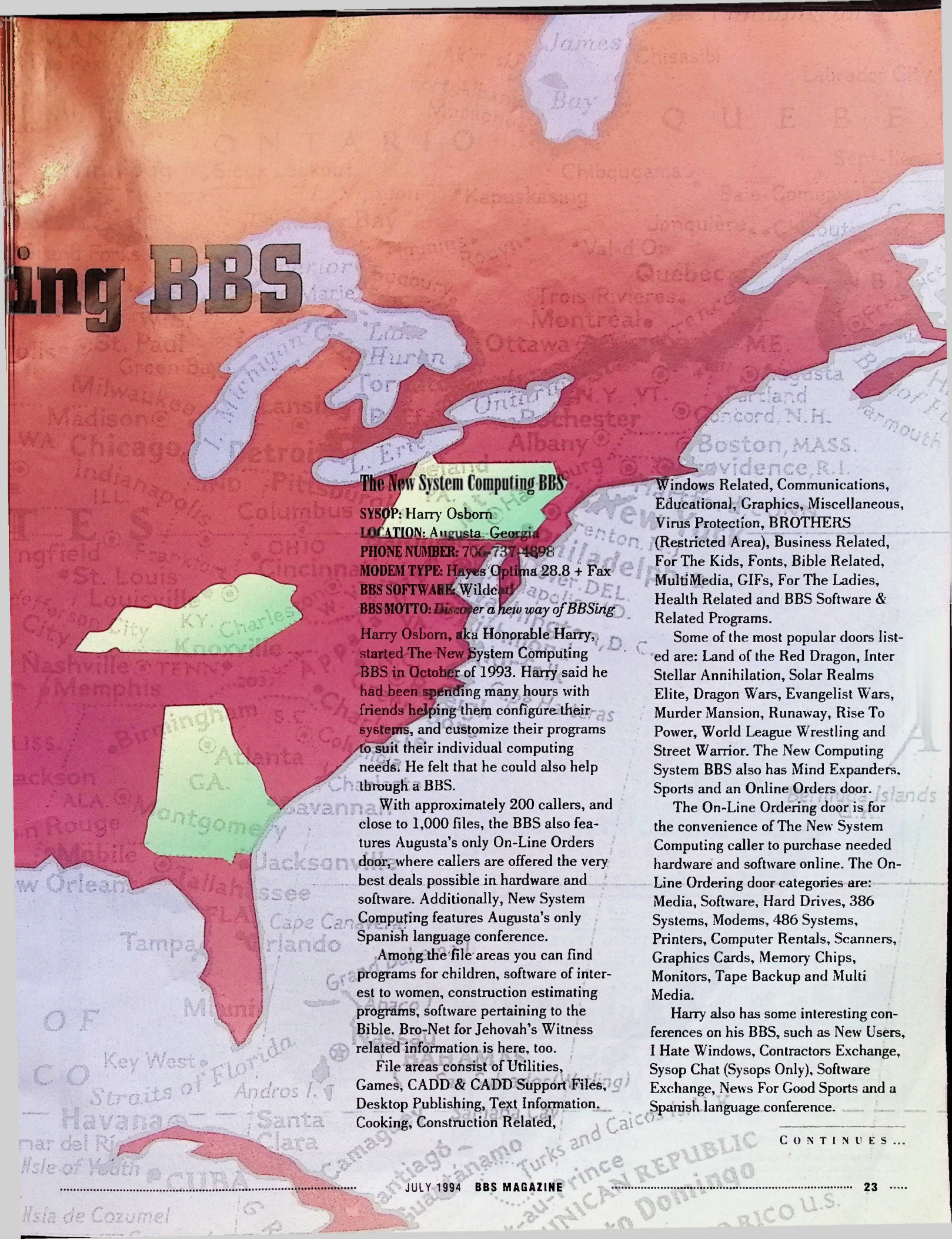
The Pirate's Cove BBS

Louisville, Kentucky

WestNet BBS

Helena, Montana

ing BBS



The New System Computing BBS

SYSOP: Harry Osborn
LOCATION: Augusta, Georgia
PHONE NUMBER: 706-737-4898
MODEM TYPE: Hayes Optima 28.8 + Fax
BBS SOFTWARE: Wildcat!
BBS MOTTO: *Discover a new way of BBSing*

Harry Osborn, aka Honorable Harry, started The New System Computing BBS in October of 1993. Harry said he had been spending many hours with friends helping them configure their systems, and customize their programs to suit their individual computing needs. He felt that he could also help through a BBS.

With approximately 200 callers, and close to 1,000 files, the BBS also features Augusta's only On-Line Orders door, where callers are offered the very best deals possible in hardware and software. Additionally, New System Computing features Augusta's only Spanish language conference.

Among the file areas you can find programs for children, software of interest to women, construction estimating programs, software pertaining to the Bible. Bro-Net for Jehovah's Witness related information is here, too.

File areas consist of Utilities, Games, CADD & CADD Support Files, Desktop Publishing, Text Information, Cooking, Construction Related, Windows Related, Communications, Educational, Graphics, Miscellaneous, Virus Protection, BROTHERS (Restricted Area), Business Related, For The Kids, Fonts, Bible Related, MultiMedia, GIFs, For The Ladies, Health Related and BBS Software & Related Programs.

Some of the most popular doors listed are: Land of the Red Dragon, Inter Stellar Annihilation, Solar Realms Elite, Dragon Wars, Evangelist Wars, Murder Mansion, Runaway, Rise To Power, World League Wrestling and Street Warrior. The New Computing System BBS also has Mind Expanders, Sports and an Online Orders door.

The On-Line Ordering door is for the convenience of The New System Computing caller to purchase needed hardware and software online. The On-Line Ordering door categories are: Media, Software, Hard Drives, 386 Systems, Modems, 486 Systems, Printers, Computer Rentals, Scanners, Graphics Cards, Memory Chips, Monitors, Tape Backup and Multi Media.

Harry also has some interesting conferences on his BBS, such as New Users, I Hate Windows, Contractors Exchange, Sysop Chat (Sysops Only), Software Exchange, News For Good Sports and a Spanish language conference.

CONTINUES ...

The following conferences are for Witnesses only, and are associated with BroNet: Bronet Conversation, TheoTalk, Experience\Illustration, Family Matters, Overseas and Classifieds.

New System Computing features Augusta's only Spanish language conference.

Harry said The New System Computing BBS strives to keep up with the latest innovations and pass along to others what is learned. They also want to be a completely unique place.

"To this end we daily search for ways to improve our presentations to our callers," Harry said. "This is a family and business-oriented board." And Harry wishes all persons to feel welcome to use this BBS. To back that up, he points out there is no adult-oriented material on the board. "All users agree not to upload any material considered adult."

New System Computing BBS does not charge subscription fees, nor is there a charge for downloading files.

"We are supported 100 percent by advertisers," Harry said. "Please read their ads at least once monthly. Anyone interested in our advertising terms and rates should download Advertis.arj from the miscellaneous file area."

Full user access is granted upon voice verification only. At that time you will have 45 minutes per day with full upload and download privileges.

Boiler Room BBS

SYSOP: Bob Dushok
LOCATION: West Pittston, Pennsylvania
PHONE NUMBER: 717-655-8206
MODEM TYPE: 2400 and 14.4 baud
BBS SOFTWARE: FALKEN BBS
BBS MOTTO: *The Boiler Room really doesn't follow a motto or theme. The system caters to a wide variety of users from many different occupations and interests. The BBS is very much a social system.*

Bob started The Boiler Room BBS on Feb. 4, 1988 and notes that it has grown considerably since then. The Boiler Room BBS began with a Commodore 64-based system with two floppy drives online. At first the system ran 17 hours a day with a single phone line, three months later the BBS grew to a 24-hour operation and hasn't ceased yet.

The next year, Bob said, the BBS got its first hard drive — bumping The Boiler Room to 20 megs online. Shortly after the system was expanded to 105 megs. Then in July of '91, the board was switched to an IBM-based system using Falken BBS software and a second phone line was added. By late 1992 a third line was installed and space was expanded to 1.5 gigabytes. And yes, a fourth phone line will be added shortly.

The Boiler Room file area contains approximately eight thousand files, two hard drives and two CD-ROM drives online. The file areas are listed into sub-areas such as IBM Software, OS/2

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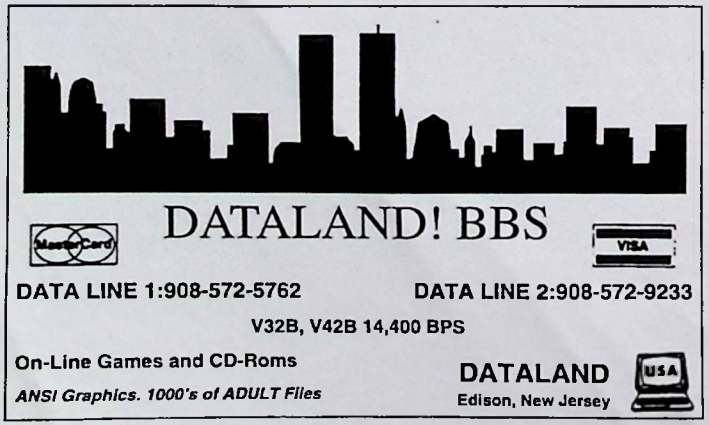

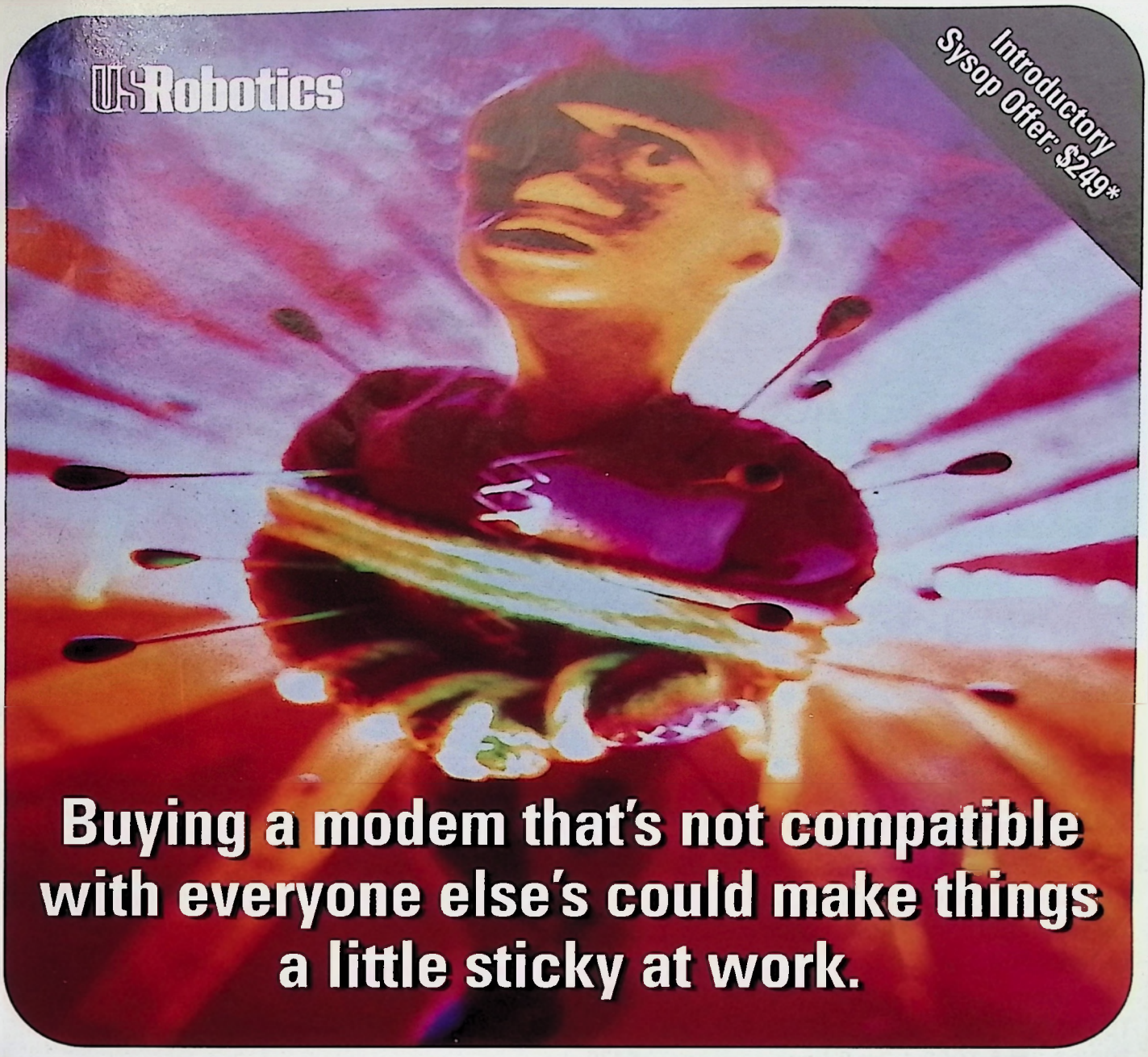

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files, Text files and Graphics and BR Base, (Boiler Room Database). The Archives 1 – Gif Showcase, contains six subareas: Picture from around the World, Flight/Space, Assorted Pictures/Graphics, Animals, Swimsuit Pictures, and Ray Traced Graphics. The Archives 2 – General Shareware, includes 14 subareas: Games, Business Applications, Graphics, Programming, Utilities, MS Windows, Communications, Education, IBM OS/2, Linix (PD Unix), GeoWorks,

The Boiler Room also "networks" with another Falken BBS every Thursday night...

Misc. #1, Misc. #2 and Misc. #3.

Bob says games are always a popular feature on a BBS. Games currently online — to name a few — are Trivia, Connect 4 (two players), Othello (two players), Network poker, Food Fight and Let's Make a Deal. Previously, Falken BBS could run only a very limited number of standard door programs. This limitation is due to Falken's built-in multitasker. A second computer is now used to execute doors. Users, through a menu choice, "link" to the second computer to play games of their choice. This is still a fairly new feature, but has proven to be very popular.

Conferences on The Boiler Room are very busy as well...conferences like FalkNET, Teleconference and Toshi Teleconference keep very busy. Some of the conferences listed are, Politics, Ramblings, Commodore Amiga, IBM PC & Compatibles, Falken BBS & related Topics, Programming, Computer Games and The Horse Lovers Forum.

The Boiler Room runs Bill Bell's "Western Teleconference" door, which allows users online to chat with each other. This is a very popular portion of the BBS and gets a lot of use. Bill's programming also allows Western Teleconference to "network," or link, with other systems (Major BBS and Falken boards). People logged on in the Teleconference area can chat with others on linked boards. The Boiler Room

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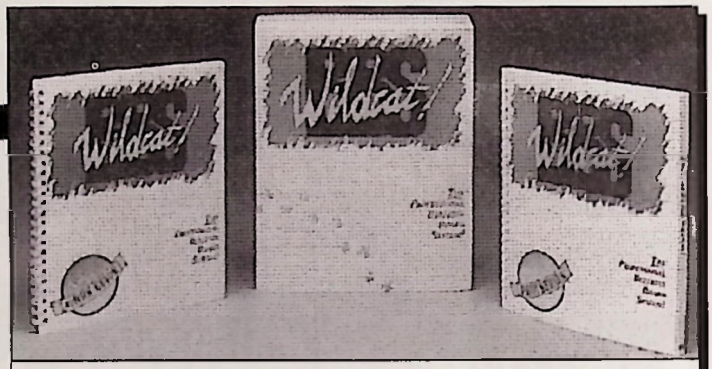

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Cheetah enables you to search online for any combination of words in seconds! Cheetah lets your users access large amounts of data quickly and easily.

Cheetah also performs phase and proximity searches. Users can specify word proximity within a paragraph or sentence and the file viewer conveniently highlights all found text.

Unlike other full text searching software, Cheetah was specifically designed for BBSs. Cheetah keeps track of users' time left on the BBS, mode settings, modem status and even allows users to download their search results using any compression software they choose.

Cheetah handles any text – newsletters, magazines, even government regulations!

Cheetah is available in both serial port and Digiboard versions and works out of the box on Novell networks. Cheetah comes with an unlimited user license per BBS.

So if you work for a corporation, association or government and run a BBS, or just have the task of building one, call APDI at 1-800-785-APDI and find out more about Cheetah's ability to give your users what they need.

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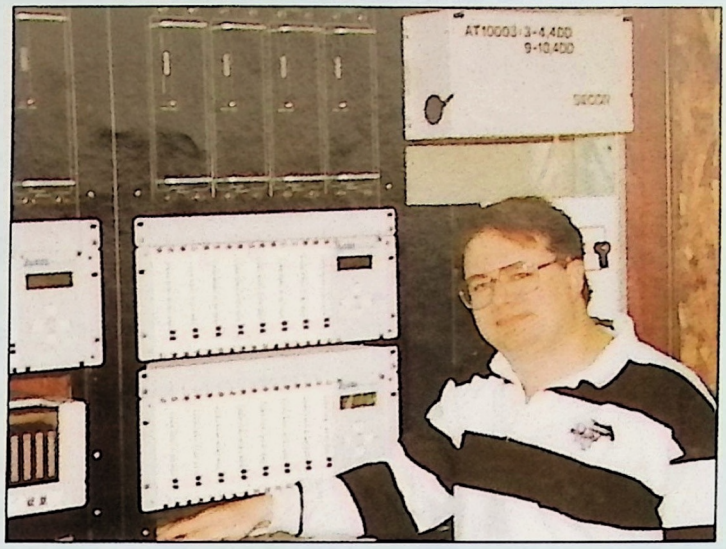

Mark Burnett at APDI's BBS Controls

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also "networks" with another Falken BBS every Thursday night...an event Bob says draws a lot of people. "All lines are busy during this sort of event."

Bob said that the calls per day have rapidly increased over the past year and a half, the system currently receives an average of 120 calls per day and has close to 400 users.

This is a broad group, Bob says, "it's a wide range of callers."

Callers currently range in age from 11 to 75.

"People from a variety of occupations log on. We have students, accountants, projectionists, computer programmers and repair people, eyeglass makers, car repairmen and many others calling on a regular basis," he said. "The BBS definitely isn't for any one particular group of people...The board has proven to be a lot of fun for myself and others. Many people have met, dated, and become good friends by meeting online. In fact, several of my good friends were met online. I would encourage anyone interested in BBSing to jump right in. Boards, in general, are a great hobby and a lot of fun."

Of the three lines currently up, one is high-speed and the others 2400 baud lines.

Callers with 2400 baud (or lower) modems should call the Boiler Room using: (717)-655-8206 This will connect you with an available 2400 baud line. Callers with modems greater than 2400 baud should connect using: (717)-655-9287 This number supports MNP levels two through five as well as V.32 and V.42

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The Pirate's Cove BBS

SYSOP: Mike Redman
LOCATION: Louisville, Kentucky
PHONE NUMBER: 502-254-7312
MODEM TYPE: USR D/S 16.8 and Lightcomm 14.4F
BBS SOFTWARE: WILDCAT! 3.9 Multiline
BBS MOTTO: *The BBS caters to the adult community, boasting the largest GIF collection in Louisville*

It all started when Mike was stationed in Hawaii for the Army. One day he decided to call a BBS on his 286 and thought, "wow, this is neat; I want to run a BBS myself."

"That's when the spending started," Mike said.

It required some time and patience but on May 5, 1992 the Pirate's Cove

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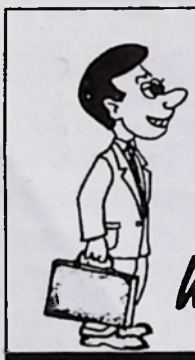

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The Pirate's Cove stays on top of all current technology with probably the best RIP graphics in the Louisville area . . .

BBS was online.

The BBS now has an 80486/DX50 mhz file server with 8meg RAM, 1.2 Gigabyte HD and a 80386/DX33 mhz CD Rom file server with 4meg RAM. The two CD drives rotate 10 different disks with file request capabilities.

Mike runs Lantastic 5.0 to link the two computers and two phone lines.

The Pirate's Cove is designed for the mature adult community, although they offer a wide range of door games and many other non-adult related serviees. The Pirate's Cove has one of the largest online registered door games sections in the Kentucky area with over 55 to choose from, as well as numerous Windows and DOS files.

Online door games are listed in several categories. These include Action Adventure Games, Sports Games, Information and Services, Space Adventure Games, Adult Adventure Games, Continue a Story and Gambling Games.

Each category has approximately 10 to 12 popular games listed.

The Pirate's Cove has a very large conference list as well, starting with Local Conferences, FileNet BBS Group, WildNet, DragNet, VetsNet, Catlink, KYANANet, ThrobNet, WomensNet, RushNet, JobNet, AlaNet, RalNet, ETNet, FrightNet, and MSI Support Net. Within each Net there are anywhere from two to 38 conferences.

If games and Message Nets are not enough, Mike has 80 sub-directories for files. Thirteen areas for DOS, five for G-Rated, including GIF, FLI, BMP, PCX, TIFF and DL files. Thirteen file areas for Windows programs, four for Ripscrip, 36 different GIF file areas, and eight XXX files areas. There are also Shareware Games (Non-Adult), Drawing Programs & Utilities, Hints, Docs & Unprotects, Desqview Applications, Mail Network Information, Door Programs, Wildcat! Utilities and Offline Mail Readers.

The Pirate's Cove has over 40,000 GIF Files available for download on rotating CDs in ROMDOOR.

Mike said that the one reason his BBS is different from the rest is he tries to go the extra mile (no matter what) "to help my callers get what they pay for and to make sure they are getting everything out of my BBS that they expected. I will help to find files or message nets that I don't presently carry if a caller wishes. I just want them to have a good time like I do. That is why I run a BBS, to enjoy it!"

The Pirate's Cove stays on top of all current technology with probably the best RIP graphics in the Louisville area, says Mike.

He is looking for the BBS community to grow leaps and bounds in the future. He thinks we will see the day when you can do anything you want all from the comfort of your local area BBS and looks forward to that day.

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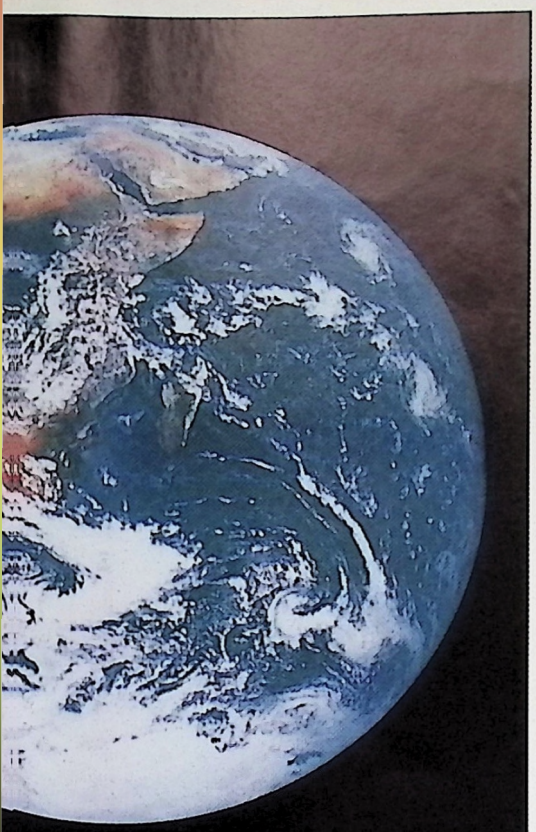

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*Picture shows complete 16 user TBBS/TDBS System.

WestNet BBS

SYSOP: Steven Elwood, Blake Gardine
LOCATION: Helena, Montana
PHONE NUMBER: 406-458-9379
MODEM TYPE: ZOOM VFX V.32bis – Practical Peripherals V1V
BBS SOFTWARE: Spitfire
BBS MOTTO: *Setting Standards For Quality Since 1991*

WestNet BBS started out as an amateur radio BBS in May 1991, but was converted to a generic board in September of the same year. There was a tremendous lack of quality BBS systems in Montana during that time and Steven Elwood, sysop of WestNet, said he saw a real need to fill some of the gaps.

As an example, there was no board in Montana's capital city with netmail/echomail. WestNet was the first Spitfire BBS in Montana; the first board in Montana to offer the CircuitNET (Spitfire BBS Network) mail network; and the first (and only, thus far) BBS in Helena to offer FIDOnet.

WestNet BBS currently has one gigabyte in hard disk space and nine gigabytes in CD-ROM files (uncompressed).

The system currently has 38 file areas on the hard drives — seven CD-ROM disks and five doors ("we don't offer online games since those services are readily available on other local boards," Steven said). Doors include time/byte banking, FIDO database scanning/lookups, offline mail support and one or two entertainment doors.

WestNet is primarily an echomail BBS, with conferences such as CircuitNet (102 conference forums), FIDOnet (68 conference forums), MTNet (20 conference forums) and Local (two conference forums.) In case you weren't counting, that's 192 conferences in all.

WestNet files areas include the following: Sysop Uploads, Caller Uploads, New Files, Other Games #1, Other Games #2, Educational, Music, Graphics, Clipart, GIFS of All Kinds, Hobbies Of All Kinds, General Files, Desktop, Budget, Finance, Database, Programming in C, General Programming, Programming in Pascal, Programming in Basic, General Utilities #1, General Utilities #2, NetWorking, OS/2, Windows Related #1, Windows Related #2, True Type Fonts, Printing, Word Processing and Modem Communications.

The WestNet BBS CD-ROM library includes Shareware Studio III, Dr. Shareware Gold II, Phoenix IV, Top Drawer I, Digital Dreams I and Ultimate Shareware II.

Downloadable files total 4,390 with 606,384,980 bytes and 4,382 CD-ROM files.

Steve said WestNet is hobby-oriented; a BBS supported by contributors.

"It's a BBS which provides a number of key services for those individuals who enjoy telecommunicating, downloading files and having fun with computers and modems," Steve said.

WestNet is also a place where like-minded hobbyists meet to chat with one another and stay in touch.

Steve also pointed out WestNet is neither a business nor a profit-making venture. If you want a BBS that offers guarantees; if you believe WestNet has a proprietary obligation to you; if you

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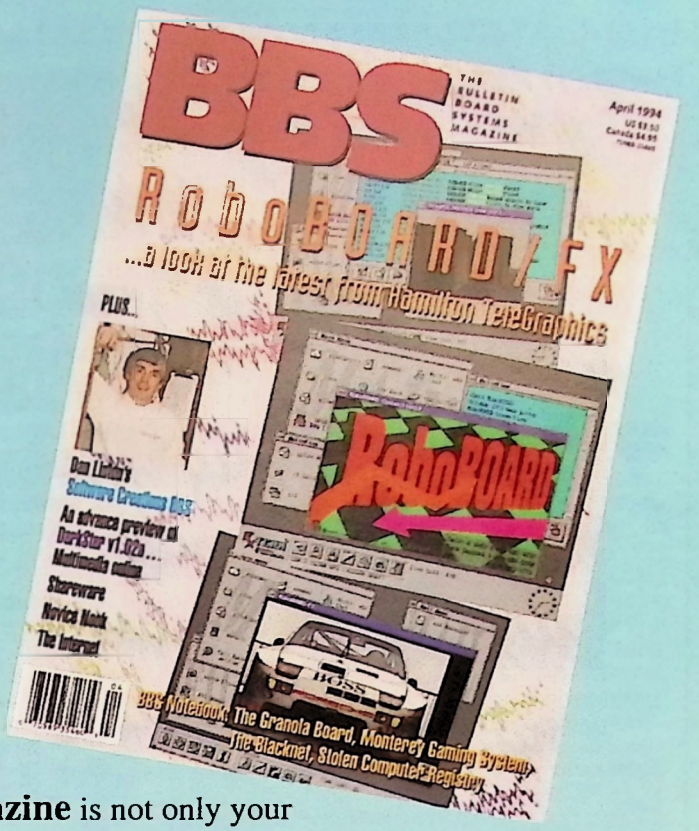

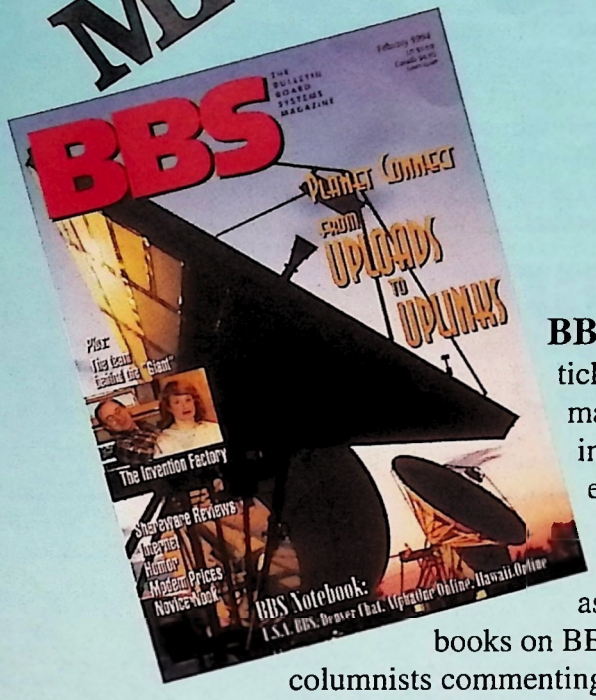

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WestNet is also a place where like-minded hobbyists meet to chat with one another and stay in touch.

consider yourself a "customer", you have the wrong BBS. WestNet BBS is/offers none of these things.

According to Steve, BBSs are growing up. Customary things such as text-adventure games, outdated shareware CDs and local-only chat forums will finally lose out to more sophisticated services and technological advancements. Steve believes BBSs will continue to grow in the area of graphics and graphic interfaces and in the email arena as more and better software is developed. Rudimentary graphics (ANSI) will rapidly fall by the wayside giving way to higher-level graphics capabilities. RIP represents only one small step in that direction.

BBS callers will become more sophisticated as well, with an increased level in the sheer number of users. I expect to see an increase in user-service demands for more functional services. Although there will always be some demand for entertainment features, callers will become much more computer-literate resulting in a demand for higher quality offerings. BBS sysops will need to take a long, hard look at their service "entree" and begin thinking about adding more high-end-user services.

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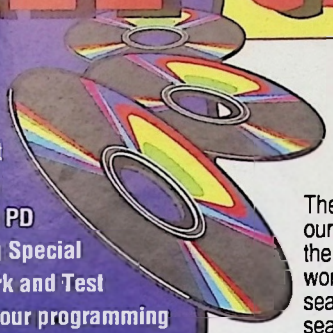

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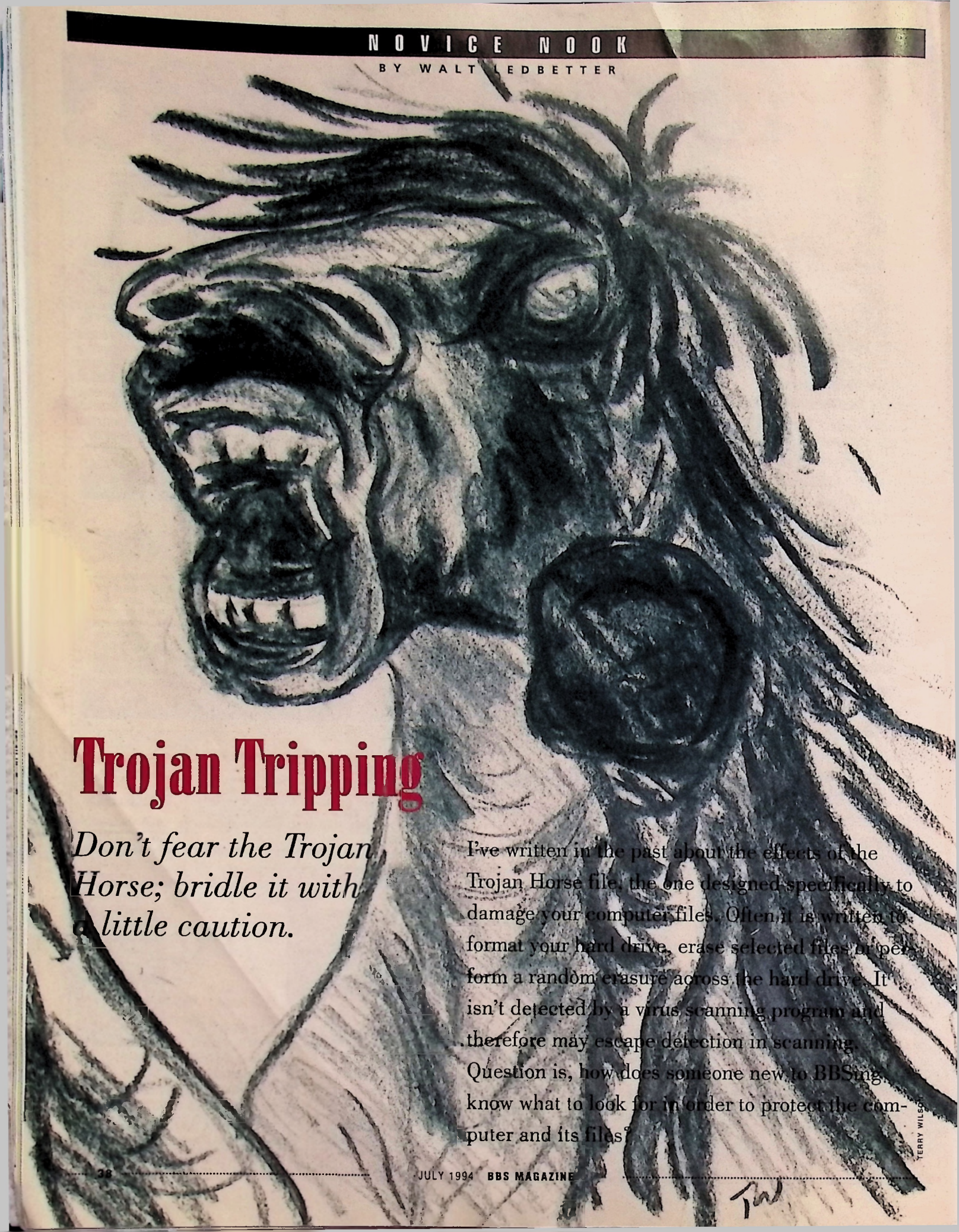

Trojan Tripping

Don't fear the Trojan Horse; bridle it with a little caution.

I've written in the past about the effects of the Trojan Horse file, the one designed specifically to damage your computer files. Often it is written to format your hard drive, erase selected files or perform a random erasure across the hard drive. It isn't detected by a virus scanning program and therefore may escape detection in scanning. Question is, how does someone new to BBSing know what to look for in order to protect the computer and its files?

TERRY WILSON

To begin, try looking at the contents of the unarchived file. There are many ways a hacker can change a program to activate his Trojan effects. The new computer/modem user can view some parts of the program and possibly catch a Trojan before it can activate.

Begin by unarchiving the compressed file into its own directory. One way the hacker can change the performance of a good program is by creating a .COM file which will initiate the Trojan. Take a look at the dates of the files in the directory. They usually are written in the same year and near the same date. Should a .COM file be present that is newer than the others, it may be a Trojan program inserted into the archive. If that .COM file has a companion .EXE file with the same name, ie. COMPL.COM and COMPL.EXE, this should alert you to a possible Trojan. The characteristic of a .COM file is that it will be executed before an .EXE file by the same name.

In the above example, say that COMPL.EXE is the good file that originally came with the clean program. All the dates are near except for the COMPL.COM file, which is dated a year later. Your computer will run the COMPL.COM file before the good one. If the COMPL.COM file was written to do damage, the moment after you run the program it may be too late.

The good program may work perfectly well, but if you turn off or reboot your computer, the odds are you'll find the results of the Trojan as it ran before the good program was executed.

Keeping an eye out for these things isn't a sure-fire solution, but it can catch some Trojans. What you're learning, though, is to be more critical of a program before you run it. If a batch file, or set of instructions (ie. pacman.bat) was written to do damage and compiled into a .com file, it may often be viewed by entering "type pacman.com" and pressing enter. Sometimes there is a message shown to the screen after Trojan damage and that text may often be seen by the above viewing method.

View all .BAT files before running a program for the first time, as they are the easiest to change and turn into warriors. These may be viewed from a program such as LIST, READ or even the DOS Edit program, or by typing to the screen as mentioned above.

Probably the easiest way to verify a program is to view the documentation. If there is none, delete it immediately.

Shareware is commonly archived with .txt and .doc files. Often hacked programs exclude these. If, upon reading a readme.now, readme.!!!, or some such file, you see demanding, or threatening language, my suggestion is to delete it immediately. Many hackers seem to enjoy mouthing off in their text files and that's often a giveaway to their intent. In the same manner, observe the grammar of the text files. I've seen some text files that contained really poor grammar, using phrases such as "ain't none", "don't got none", misspelled words, incorrect case of proper nouns, as well as cursing.

Quality shareware takes time to write and is painstakingly groomed to look the best it can. If the documentation that is present is very sparse and looks bad, don't use it. The honest shareware author wants to sell the program. Side-by-side, visually, the good program outshines the hacked program more times than not.

By taking these steps before actually running a program, the new computer/modem user can rest a little easier. Evaluating the quality of a program, even as simple as these methods, can often catch a Trojan Horse before the damage is done. Nothing is ever foolproof, but by looking the gift horse in the mouth the computer user can add more defense against the Trojan.

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BY MIKE ROBINSON

Netting Big Business

Is the Internet too elusive for the corporate world? Not if you're willing to take a leap of faith.

For those of us who read a daily newspaper or watch the nightly news, it's all but impossible to not know about the Internet. It seems that everyone wants to talk about how marvelous the Net is, while at the same time skirting the real issue: what can it do for us? As an individual, the uses of the Net are fairly easy to see, and it is only the cost and ease of use which currently stand the way. But corporations (where such costs are non-prohibitive), however, could benefit greatly from effective management of this new tool.

In fact, even if your firm never uses the Internet, it has little choice but to understand the effect the Net will have on it. This is especially true for companies that are technical in nature, or have a wide target audience. Think I'm exaggerating? Recently, a friend of mine was going to buy a small sports car, and was ready to deal. He'd talked to one or two others who already owned the same car and they gave it good reviews. He liked the car. Then, after posting a message to the Net and receiving over 20 negative comments (versus three positive) he decided to take his money elsewhere.

I have found that many people would like to discount that story, saying that it is a rare event. I challenge that — after all, where else can you ask a question to several million people simultaneously, and then receive intelligent responses back in a very short time?

So if the Internet is the greatest thing since sliced bread (which, if you ask me, wasn't really a genius invention but simply common sense) then how come it is used by relatively few companies? This is hard to answer, but I think a large part of the problem comes from over-expectation. Everyone who talks about the Internet seems to be speaking on some other plane of existence, explaining all the wonders of this information network. But these people, who are largely computer geeks like myself, often forget that what they consider to be "quite easy and useful" is, in fact, "excruciatingly difficult and absolutely a waste of effort" for the non-compu-inclined. Sure, I can hook my computer, TV, VCR, CD and cassette players into my 200 mega-watt stereo system with relative ease, but my father (who never seemed to quite grasp the intricacies of our on-screen-programmable VCR) thinks that's a little overkill just to listen to the AM news report.

The problem is that the Internet is an intangible good. You can't measure it's ability or usefulness, so you have to guess at what a legitimate expense is to justify it (strike one). There is also a lack of understanding of just how much connectivity is needed. This is coupled by the fact that the cost of being connected is so unpredictable, varying greatly depending on factors such as what services you need, how fast you need to access information, and where you're located. And no matter what you buy into, you'll probably need to refit your business a few years from now because you'll be using or wanting more than you currently have (strike two).

Finally, the Internet is currently unstable. Every day, services are added and, unfortunately, removed. The user interface, which is usually extremely

unfriendly, is different on every machine. And even common applications, such as Gopher, WAIS, and Word-Wide-Web, have different interfaces. This makes training extremely difficult, as it changes depending on platform and intended use (strike three).

A solution

The good news is that there is a solution. The bad news (which is inevitably coupled with good news) is that it won't come quickly. To make the Net a useful tool for companies, individuals from all positions will have to be involved. In the past it was the corporate brass who held all the cards. But the Internet is so expansive that no single group is in charge. In order to effectively manage this massive network, engineering, marketing, top administration and even the clients will need to work together. There might actually be an added bonus for large corporations, where quite often departments have become extremely isolated from each other.

Remember my friend's car-buying dilemma? Five years ago if you bought a bad car from, say, Ford, who could you complain to? Probably the Better Business Bureau and a few of your (un)lucky friends. If you're ticked off today, simply post an irate message to the Net and watch as it's beamed around the planet within hours. And then smirk with the sweet taste of revenge as 20 to 30 others who have the same feeling tag along. Ford might loose several hundred customers because of a few individuals' bad luck. You'd better bet that someone should at the very least be observing what's going on out in cyberspace.

In the end, companies have two objectives: to utilize the technical strengths of their employees and to understand the ever-expanding data highway. The best way to do this is to simply swallow that ego, take a leap of faith and jump right in. You'll make many mistakes, but you'll gain far more than you can ever possibly imagine.

Books

This month I faced a tough decision: Do I recommend an excellent book and ignore its somewhat offensive title, or do I look past the cover and rave over the elegance of its learned presentation of the Internet? The book I'm referring to, if you haven't already guessed, is the *Internet for Dummies* by John R. Levine and Carol Baroudi. Published by IDG Books, this is perhaps the best book for all-around beginners, especially those who are not technically motivated. If you've read any of the other books in this series (with their familiar yellow cover and white on black-board writing) then you are already familiar with their value.

The book begins with a great explanation of what the Internet is and how it began. It covers a wide range of materials, from electronic mail to system editors. And scattered throughout are pointers, expert tips and humorous anecdotes and cartoons. The drawback is the title. I doubt I'd want to keep it out in the open, and I'd probably only use it when hidden behind locked doors. If you're willing to overlook this embarrassment, you'll be extremely pleased with *Internet for Dummies.*

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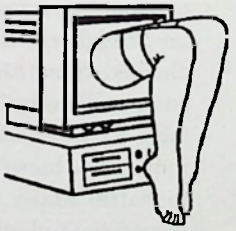

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BY MICHAEL A. KUYKENDALL

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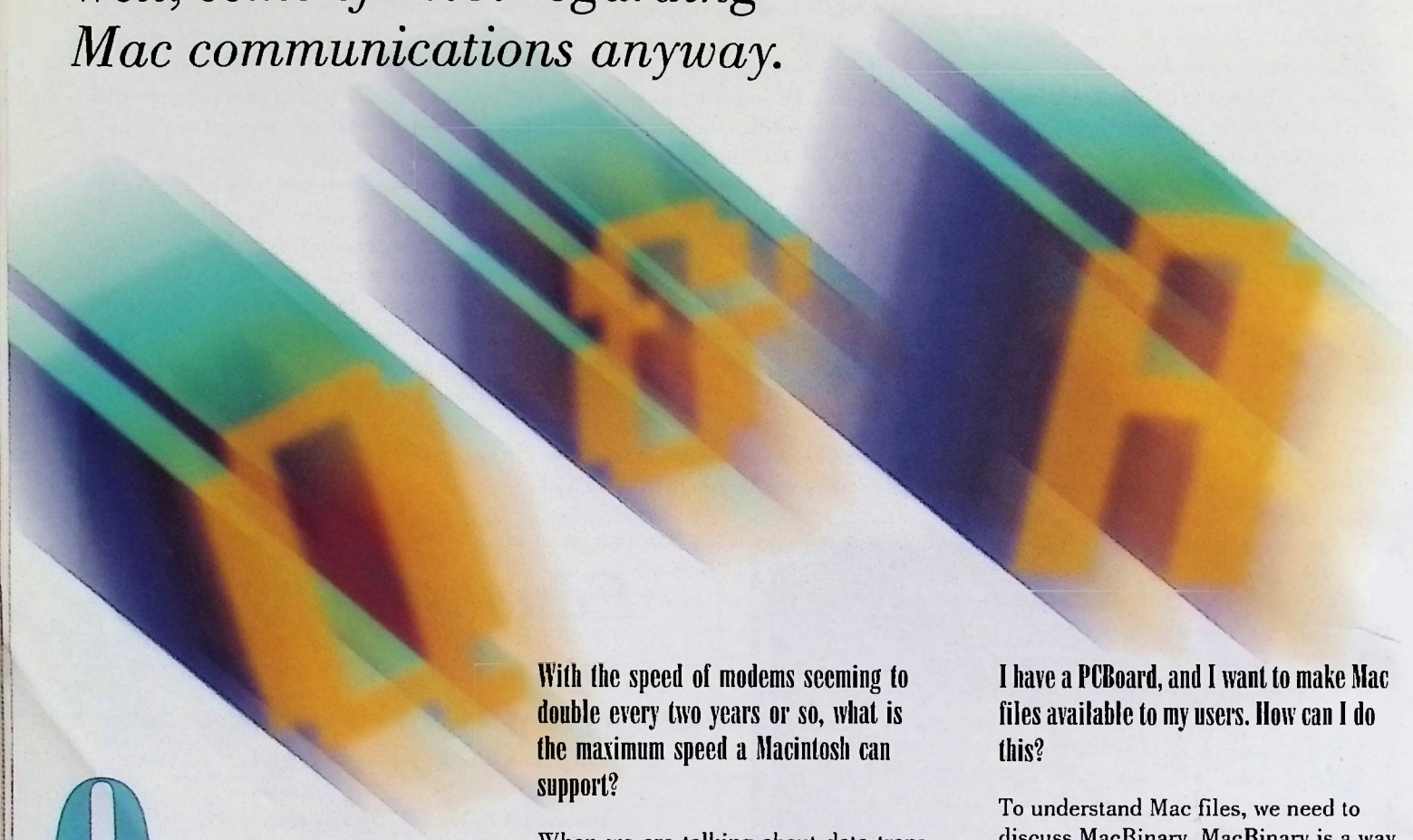


TERRY WILSON

Over the past few months I've been receiving a lot of mail asking about different aspects of telecommunicating with a Macintosh. I thought it's about time I answered a few letters... I've paraphrased the questions to save a little time.

With the speed of modems seeming to double every two years or so, what is the maximum speed a Macintosh can support?

When we are talking about data transfer rates and the Macintosh, we are mainly discussing the limitations of the serial port. The Mac operating system supports data rates up to 57,600 baud, but the serial port itself can support transfer rates that are much higher if they are externally clocked. Some sound input hardware, such as Farallon's Mac Recorder, and most AppleTalk boxes use this technique to achieve transfer rates greater than 100 Kbps. AppleTalk being turned on and ethernet-network traffic can slow down the serial port. If you turn off AppleTalk through the Chooser, or disconnect the ethernet connection, this should alleviate the problem.

I have a PCBoard, and I want to make Mac files available to my users. How can I do this?

To understand Mac files, we need to discuss MacBinary. MacBinary is a way of taking a Macintosh file (both resource and data forks) and creating a new file with just a data fork. This new file can then be transferred to other platforms which know nothing about the native Macintosh file system, without losing the information stored in the resource fork. MacBinary also stores information such as the filename, creation and modification dates, file type and creator for the original file.

If you want to store some Macintosh files on a non-Macintosh computer, one way is to convert them to a MacBinary format file before transferring. MacBinary files are useless to people who are not using Macs. Although there is a public domain program that con-

verts back and forth from MacBinary (which is called, coincidentally MacBinary); most telecommunication programs have MacBinary conversion. ZTerm, for example, can be configured to detect a MacBinary file when it is received and automatically convert the file to its original representation. Similarly, ZTerm can automatically convert files as well.

Also, if you use network email and Usenet gateways, most of these are not receptive to binary files (they only allow non-binary files to pass through). To make it possible to send MacBinary files through these gateways, you will have to convert your files to a text-compatible form. Two different translation techniques that will do this are BinHex and uuencode. However, using BinHex or uuencode will result in files that are larger than the original MacBinary file. You will find most files on the Internet are in BinHex format. BinHex files are denoted by the suffix ".hqx".

Uuencode was designed to allow UNIX binary files to be easily transferred through text-only interfaces, such as email. Usually, one won't find Macintosh files in uuencode format, except on the Usenet newsgroups. If you want to access these files, such as images from alt.binaries, etc., then you should check out a program that will allow you to convert to and from uuencode on your Mac, such as UUTool 2.3.2 and UULite 1.4.2. StuffIt also has a translator that will deal with uuencode conversion. Uuencoded files are usually denoted by the suffix ".uu". That's a little more than was asked, just keep the change.

What is this Communications Toolbox (CTB) that everyone is talking about?

The Communications Toolbox is a part of the Macintosh operating system that provides a standard interface for programmers writing communications programs. Rather than write routines to make calls to control the modem serial port, for example, a programmer can call an equivalent CTB routine. This makes it easier for programmers to deal with many of the different routines, and concentrate on adding features to their programs. There are many different extensions, or "tools", that provide terminal emulation, etc., that are appearing each day in the PD/Shareware world. You can find many of these tools on BBSs or pay-services such as America Online. The Communications Toolbox requires System 6.0.4 or later, but comes built into System 7. Under System 6.0, tools belong in the Communications folder. Under System 7, tools can be added by placing them in the Extensions folder.

I'm confused by all the different terms people use when discussing Mac networks and communications. What are some of the different "protocols" these people are talking about?

To answer this question, I refer to some information I found on the "comp.sys.mac.comm" newsgroup on the Internet (Usenet news). The FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) I found discussed many of the different protocols involved in networking. This information was provided through the efforts of editor David Oppenheimer and many other Mac users on the Internet. If you have access to the Usenet news, check out this newsgroup!

The following terms describe protocols (software descriptions) common to the Macintosh networking world:

APPLETALK: A proprietary suite of protocols developed by Apple Computer, Inc. that provides for near-transparent network connections between Macintosh computers. However, within the last few years AppleTalk has been ported to operating systems other than the Macintosh OS, including UNIX, VMS and DOS. Questions about the AppleTalk protocol are probably best posed in the newsgroup comp.protocols.appletalk.

TCP/IP: A suite of protocols developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) whose purpose is multi-platform connectivity. TCP/IP drivers are available for almost all of the computer platforms in use today, including micros, minis, mainframes and supercomputers. TCP/IP stands for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, because these are the two most widely used protocols in the suite. However, TCP/IP includes the User Datagram Protocol (UDP), Address Resolution Protocol (ARP), Reverse Address Resolution Protocol (RARP) and others.

ETHERTALK: The driver which allows AppleTalk protocols to be transported by Ethernet.

TOKENTALK: The driver that allows AppleTalk protocols to be transported over IBM TokenRing networks.

The following terms describe hardware (the physical link such as the wire[s] connecting computers) common to the Macintosh networking world:

LOCALTALK: One type of hardware over which AppleTalk protocols can be transported. LocalTalk has a throughput of 230.4 Kilobits per second, or roughly a quarter of a Megabit per second.

PHONENET: Another type of hardware commonly used to transport AppleTalk packets. PhoneNet mates LocalTalk hardware with ordinary (unused) telephone wire. PhoneNet is probably the cheapest way to connect widely separated Macintosh computers within a single building.

ETHERNET: A network medium over which AppleTalk, TCP/IP and other protocols travel, often simultaneously. Ethernet's maximum throughput is 10 Mbps. Competing successors offer 100 Mbps.

TOKENRING: A network medium developed (and patented) by IBM based on a topology of a ring of nodes connected serially by a single cable. Each node, or computer, speaks on the cable only when it has possession of a token. TokenRing technology can demonstrate throughputs of ranging from four to 16 Megabits per second.

Again, thanks to the users on the "comp.sys.mac.comm" newsgroup for the above information.

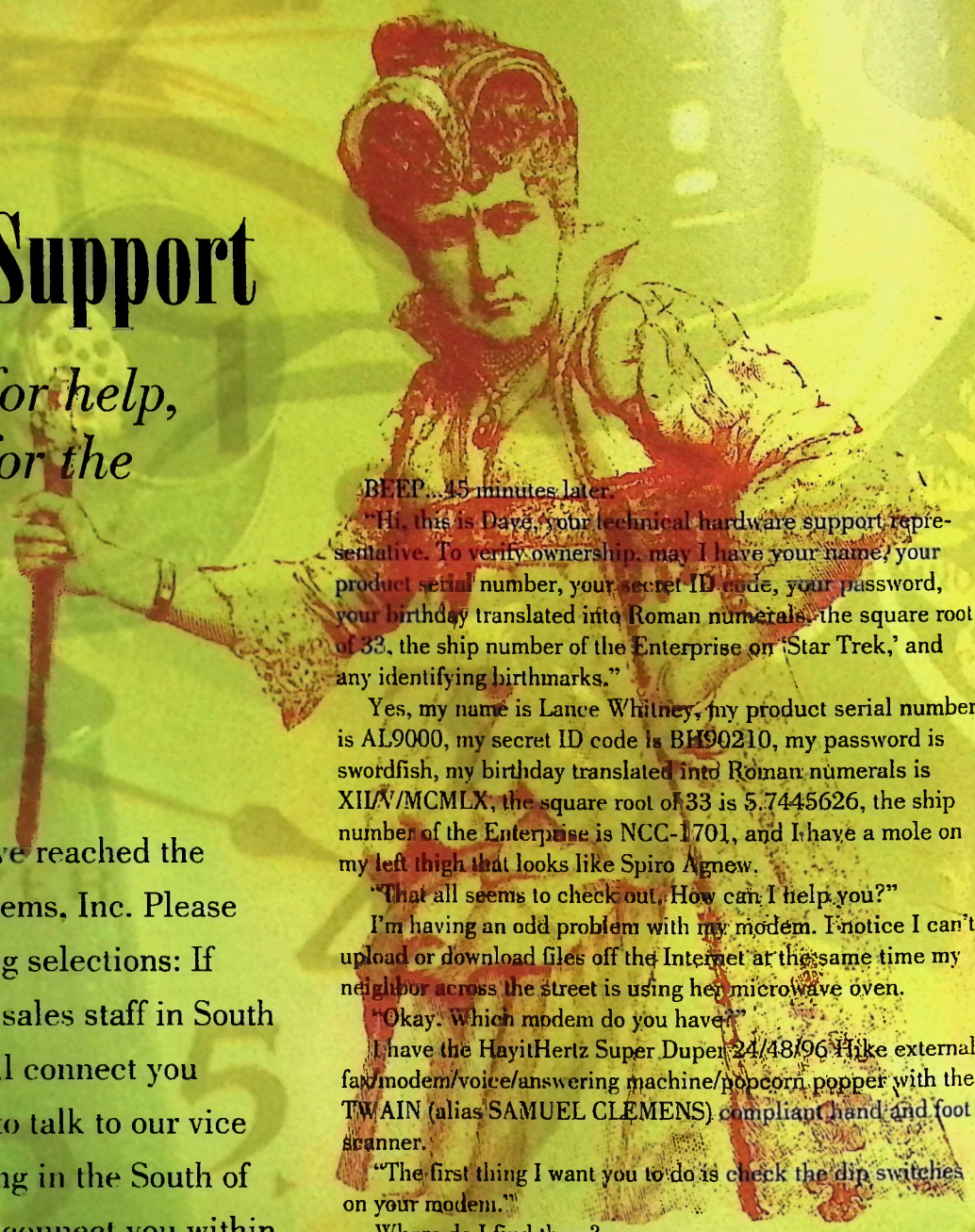
Next month, I'll shed some light on Fidonet connections and how to hook your BBS up. Since Tabby 3.0 is the last version of Tabby (it has be discontinued), what will you do? Check me next time and I'll tell you.

Michael A. Kuykendall is a veteran Mac user and has written for several publications around the country. He is currently President/Sysop/General flunky for the Online Macintosh Users Group, based in Atlanta, Georgia. Comments: andyfish@aol.com.

BY LANCE WHITNEY

A Tale of Technical Support

Before calling for help, dial your boss for the day off.



"Good morning. You've reached the offices of HayitHertz Modems, Inc. Please choose one of the following selections: If you'd like to speak to our sales staff in South America, press 1 and we'll connect you immediately. If you want to talk to our vice president who's vacationing in the South of France, press 2 and we'll connect you within five seconds. If you'd like to make contact with our remote communications satellite orbiting 500 miles above the earth, press 3 and we'll connect you within 10 seconds. And if you'd like to speak to our technical support staff about a problem with your modem, press 4 and we'll put you on hold for about 45 minutes."

BEEP...45 minutes later.

"Hi, this is Dave, your technical hardware support representative. To verify ownership, may I have your name, your product serial number, your secret ID code, your password, your birthday translated into Roman numerals, the square root of 33, the ship number of the Enterprise on 'Star Trek,' and any identifying birthmarks."

Yes, my name is Lance Whitney, my product serial number is AL9000, my secret ID code is BH90210, my password is swordfish, my birthday translated into Roman numerals is XII/V/MCMLX, the square root of 33 is 5.7445626, the ship number of the Enterprise is NCC-1701, and I have a mole on my left thigh that looks like Spiro Agnew.

"That all seems to check out. How can I help you?"

I'm having an odd problem with my modem. I notice I can't upload or download files off the Internet at the same time my neighbor across the street is using her microwave oven.

"Okay. Which modem do you have?"

I have the HayitHertz Super Duper 24/48/96 Hike external fax/modem/voice/answering machine/popcorn popper with the TWAIN (alias SAMUEL CLEMENS) compliant hand and foot scanner.

"The first thing I want you to do is check the dip switches on your modem."

Where do I find them?

"They'll be in the most awkward and hard-to-reach spot." Ten minutes of straining, sweating and cursing later:

Okay, Dave, I've found the dip switches. Repeat, I've found the dip switches.

"How the switches are set."

Let's see, I have to stand on my head and dislocate my neck, but I think I can read 'em. Ughh. Okay, switch 1 is up, 2 is down, 3 is halfway up, 4 is about two/thirds down, 5 and 6 are locked together in what appears to be a half-nelson, 7 seems to be moving up and down by itself, and where switch 8 is supposed to be, there's a little sign that says: "Surrender Dorothy."

"Hmm, That set-up sounds confusing. It must be right. You know, I'd say it's a software problem. You should call the com-

TERRY WILSON

pany that makes your communications program."

But I'm using the software that came with the modem.

"Oh, in that case, I'll connect you to our software support department. Can you hold for a minute."

I guess so.

Forty-five minutes later.

"This is Shirley in software support. How can I help you?"

Hi, Shirley. I'm having a strange problem. I can't upload or download files off the Internet at the same time my neighbor across the street is reheating pork 'n' beans.

"Sounds like a hardware problem to me."

But Dave...

"Dave? Lardware Dave? Guffaw. What program and version number are you using?"

I'm using HayitHertz Pro for Windows for Workgroups Turbo Deluxe Plus Plus. Version 6.001002A.

"Okay, let's check your initialization string. Go into the Initialization String Setup Menu which is located in the Initialization Codes Setup Menu which is located in the Modem Codes Setup Menu which is located in the Setup Modem Menu Codes Setup Menu."

Let's see, the initialization string is ATA&ETA&PTA& ASPCA OB1&R2D2&C3PO B4&G3&N7 BINGO.

"Sounds right. Can you hang on for a few minutes while I consult with my supervisor and go out for lunch."

Well, I guess so.

Two minutes (and an hour for lunch later).

"I'm back, Lance. And I've found the problem. It seems there's a minor glitch in version 6.001002A that creates a conflict between your modem and the electromagnetic waves of any microwave within a two-mile radius. Fortunately, we have an interim productivity enhancement upgrade fix for it. Version 6.001002B won't have the same problem. I can send that upgrade to you right away."

Does that cost anything?

"No, it's free."

Great...

"Of course, there's a slight charge of $99.99 for shipping, handling, insurance, sales tax, user tax, and donation to your favorite charity."

Okay, okay, fine. I'll pay it.

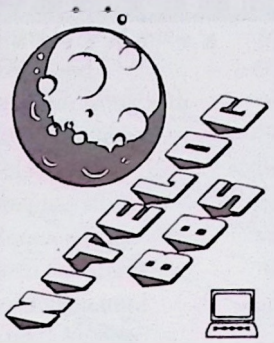
"Thank you for your order."

One week later.

"This is Shirley in HayitHertz Technical Support. Can I help you?"

Yes, Shirley, I recently installed version 6.001002B of HayitHertz Pro for Windows for Workgroups Turbo Deluxe Plus Plus. The conflict I had with my modem and my neighbor's microwave is cleared up. But now I have another problem. When I'm on a local CompuServant I can't seem to chat with anyone in Kansas City during a full moon.

"Yes, sir. We just found out there's a glitch in version 6.001002B which creates a conflict between your modem, Kansas City, and the lunar cycle. But don't worry, we've just come out with a brand new interim productivity enhancement upgrade bug-fix. Version 6.001002C should take care of the problem. That upgrade is free. But of course, there's a slight charge for..." ■



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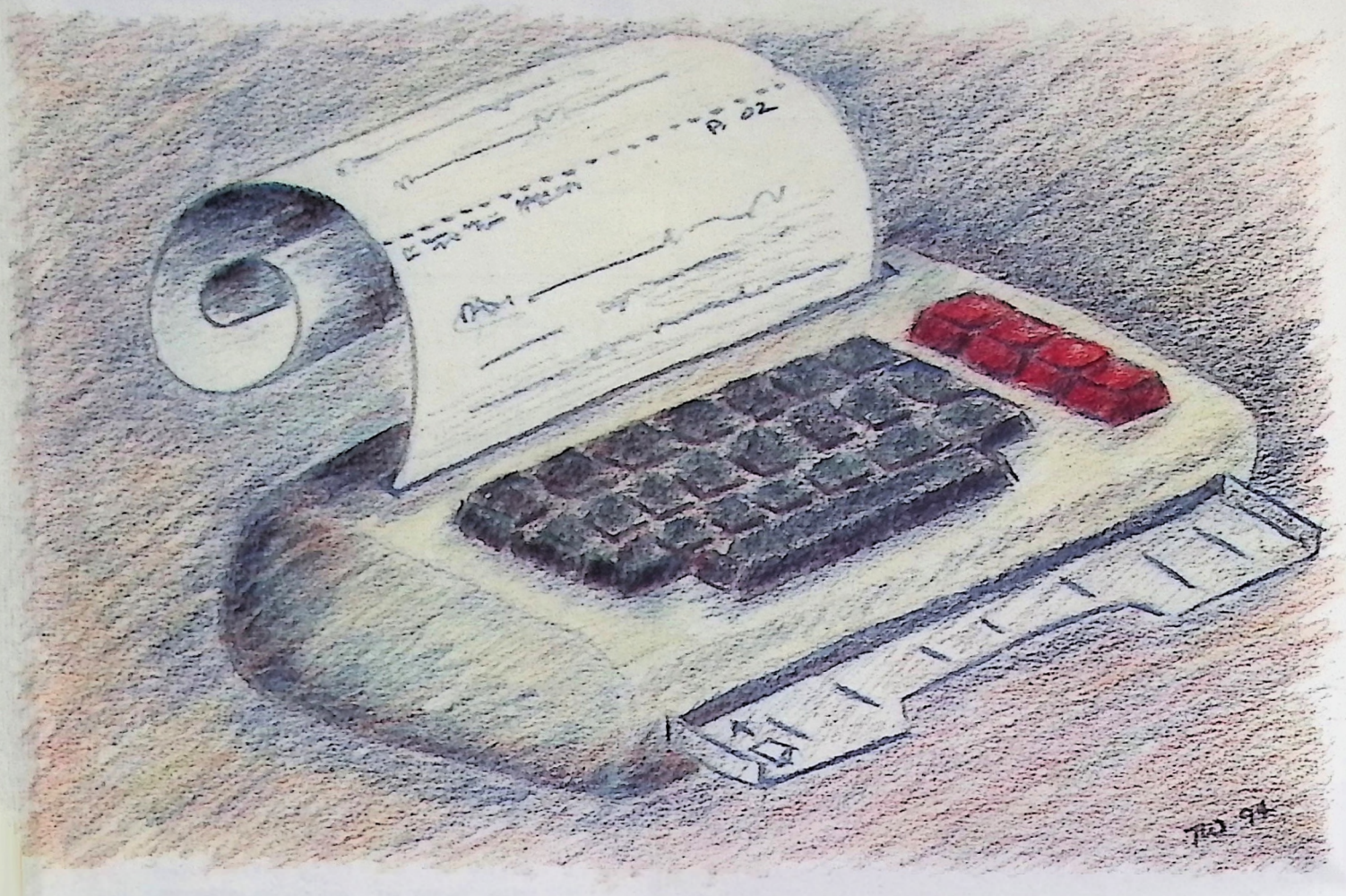
BY GAELYNE R. MORANEC



TERRY WILSON

Terminal Taste

Which communication package is right for you? Here are two.

This is the tale of two terminal programs. One is for the C=64, the other runs on the C=128 program. One is shareware, the other commercial. I have no intention of comparing the two for, as I mentioned, they run on two different Commodore systems, and neither is "better" than the other — they each have very strong and unique features (how's that for diplomatic?)

Novaterm 9.5

Nick Rossi, Shareware
For the Commodore 64

Yes, I've written about it before, but like all good programs, Novaterm (not associated with ResNova Software) continues to evolve, and version 9.5 is now available on BBSs and online services for download. Look for NOVA95-1.SFX, NOVA95-2.SFX, NOVA95-3.SFX, NOVA95-4.SFX and NOV95DOC.SFX.

Novaterm is well known for its 80-column ANSI graphics abilities as it continues to redefine the parameters of Commodore 64 term programs. The big news is the addition of a Zmodem protocol. This is a batch protocol that allows you to download several files in succession. It was only last year that I read messages

stating emphatically that Zmodem simply could not be implemented on Commodore computers.

It isn't "perfect," as it can only be used for downloading at this stage, and it allows a maximum block size of 512 bytes, meaning that if the BBS from which you're trying to download sends a larger amount of block-bytes at one time, this protocol won't work for you. One of Zmodem's features that can be toggled on or off within Novaterm is "auto-downloading." This means never having to START the download yourself by pressing the Commodore and "D" keys together as you normally would (to begin a download with other protocols using Novaterm). Once the BBS sends the signal, the download automatically begins. I tried using Zmodem with this feature toggled on, and I'm already spoiled by it. Auto-restart, another feature of Zmodem that's available on other computer platforms, has not been implemented due to memory constraints.

Oh yes, WXmodem is another new feature to Novaterm 9.5. This is a receive-only protocol used on "packet-switching" networks such as PC Pursuit.

Novaterm offers several methods to control the overflow of data which can occur when using modems at baud rates faster than 2400. Xon/Xoff and RTS/CTS are both supported, along with two additional features to "fine tune" or "tweak" the best possible performance of both modem and term program without losing data. The tolerance value can be adjusted by the user so Novaterm will send a pause to the modem until the computer "catches up." Another feature, available while in the 80-column terminal mode, is one that allows the user to set how many lines are scrolled on the screen at one time. The settings range from single-line through four lines. The previous version of Novaterm allowed up to "Triple Scroll." This setting is saved when the configuration settings are saved. Using these features with a high-speed modem and SWIFTLink cartridge allows 80-column screen displays and file transfers of 9600, 14.4k, or 28.8k bps.

It's in the script

Novaterm now loads script files from the autodial menu before dialing the bulletin board, but executes the script only after connection to a BBS. Several script files are included with Novaterm 9.5, which allow the automatic change of terminal emulation, ASCII translation and font for calling different bulletin boards. I use this feature often as I call several different types of BBSs, such as Commodore Color Graphics, ASCII, ANSI, and one or two VT-102 online services.

The last version of Novaterm had a bug in the BBS mode that did not correctly detect the incoming call's baud rate. This has been fixed. The mini-BBS feature is one I had enjoyed using on occasion, and I'm glad to have it's use once again. A bug that caused problems when printing text files and the Ymodem Batch protocol also have been fixed.

I am delighted to report that Nick Rossi is not finished with Novaterm yet. Some of the planned features for future versions of this term program include using REU's (RAM Expansion Units) as program buffer space instead of using it as an additional fast disk drive. That's nothing in comparison to the ambitious plan to

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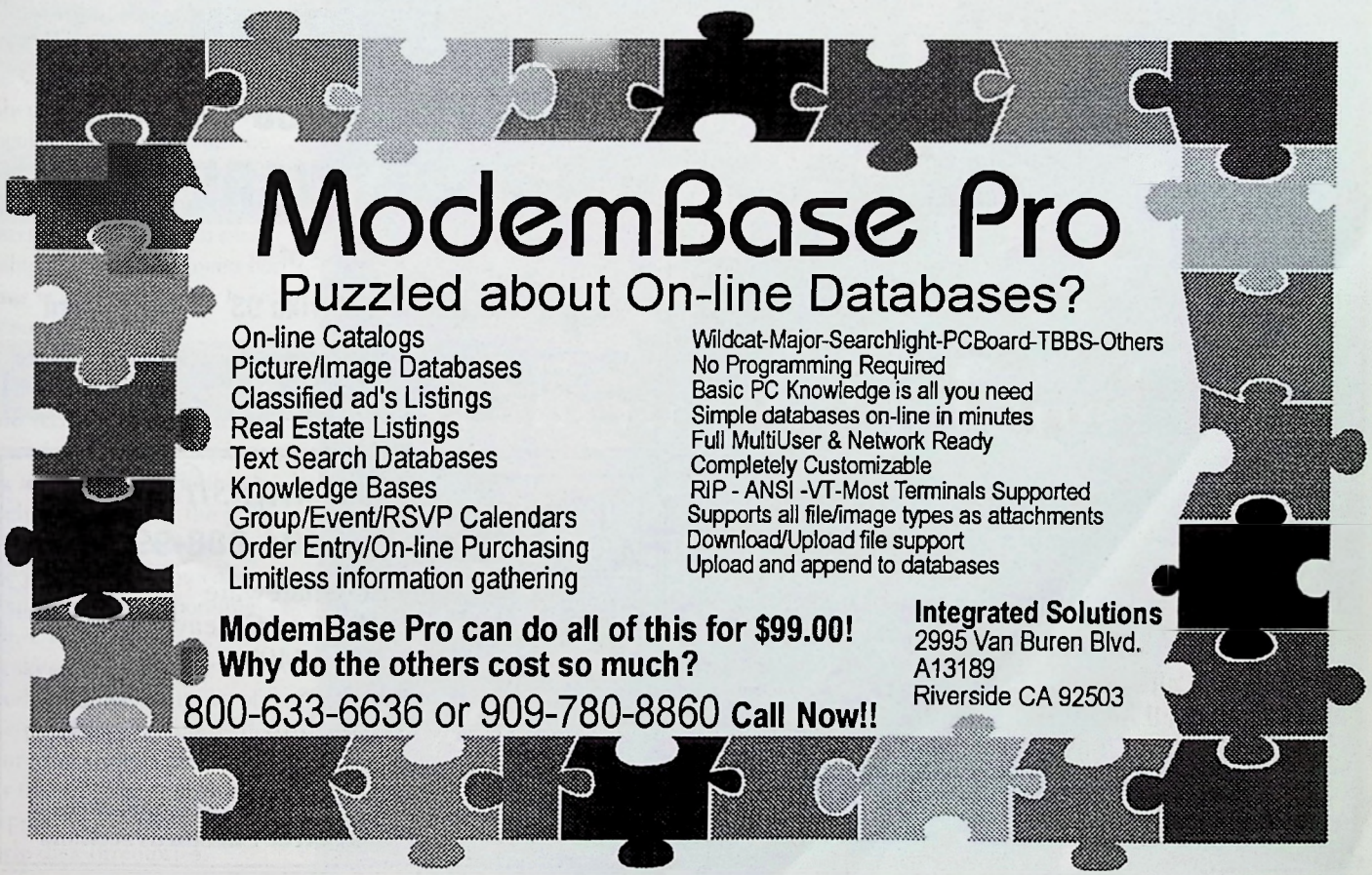

include Zmodem upload ability, and a fax module. Yes, I said fax. Imagine using a modem with fax abilities to send and receive faxes with your Commodore 64! If anyone can implement this feature, I'm sure Nick Rossi can do it.

Novaterm's shareware fee is $25. Registered users receive a disk with the current version and a registration number. They also receive upgrades of every other upgrade free from the author. Product support is available via email and postal mail. For more information, or to register, contact Nick Rossi at: 10002 Aurora Ave. N. #1159, Seattle, WA 98133, or by Internet: "voyager@eskimo.com".

Dialogue 128 V2.2

Triple Point Software
$29

Dialogue 128 is a commercial term program available from Creative Micro Designs, Inc. or Software Support International. It has two versions, one for modems connected via the User Port, and a version for SWIFTLink or other UART connected modems. Both versions come on the same disk (side one contains the first version, disk side two has the UART version). Modem speeds from 300 baud to 38.4k bps can be attained, depending on the version used. As with Novaterm, it allows ASCII, ANSI, Commodore Graphics, VT-52 and VT100 terminal emulations. It operates in fast 2mhz mode for all operations, and can be used from any type of disk drive, including CMD's RAMLink, hard drives and FD series drives.

This is a very full-featured, comprehensive term program, one of the few programs that give the option of mouse support. It offers full support for RAM Expansion Units, either as an extra disk drive or for buffer usage. The buffer editor is comparable to a good quality word processor. One of the strongest features of this program is its script file support. Using the buffer, one can write a script file and save it without any extra steps. Another feature linked to the script support is "auto-exec" scripts which will automatically dial the BBS and then follow whatever instructions are in the script file. This system is so powerful I know of at least one user who rarely touches his keyboard once loading Dialogue.

I'm not a programmer, and have always been dubious about my abilities to write a script file for BBS calling. However I was pleasantly surprised to discover that it's a fairly easy process, especially because of the excellent documentation for this feature.

I make heavy use of the buffer capabilities of Dialogue 128, both for capturing text and to send messages and email I've written offline. An option to Transmit buffer, along with three different variations of transmitting from the buffer and some transmit delay options allow this to be a very easy way to answer email, or respond to messages from online services, without relying on the often frustrating and archaic editors these services offer their users.

Another unique feature is a 9,000-character scrollback review buffer, totally separate from the other buffer(s) available. If you've ever had information you needed scroll by too fast on your screen, you know the benefit of this feature.

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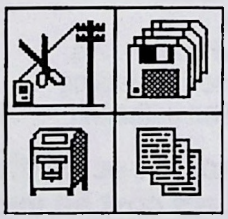

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keep track of time online, which is stored as a disk file upon disconnecting from the BBS. This is a user-definable option, toggled on or off when editing the phone book entry for each BBS. Other options available for each entry include the ability to define up to four F-Key macros, as well as emulation, file transfer protocol, number of screen lines, flow control, local echo, and the buffer transmit mode and delay settings.

Macros are accessed using the ALT and number keys as well as a drop-down menu with a highlight bar, and can be up to 60 characters long. This is excellent for storing and sending those long Internet addresses! Macros can also be defined to perform many of Dialogue's command sequences, for short "script" style use. Macros can be saved and loaded from disk, giving the user any number of different macro files that can be accessed. I have one for sending modem initialization strings, and several that I use as "address books" for sending Internet mail.

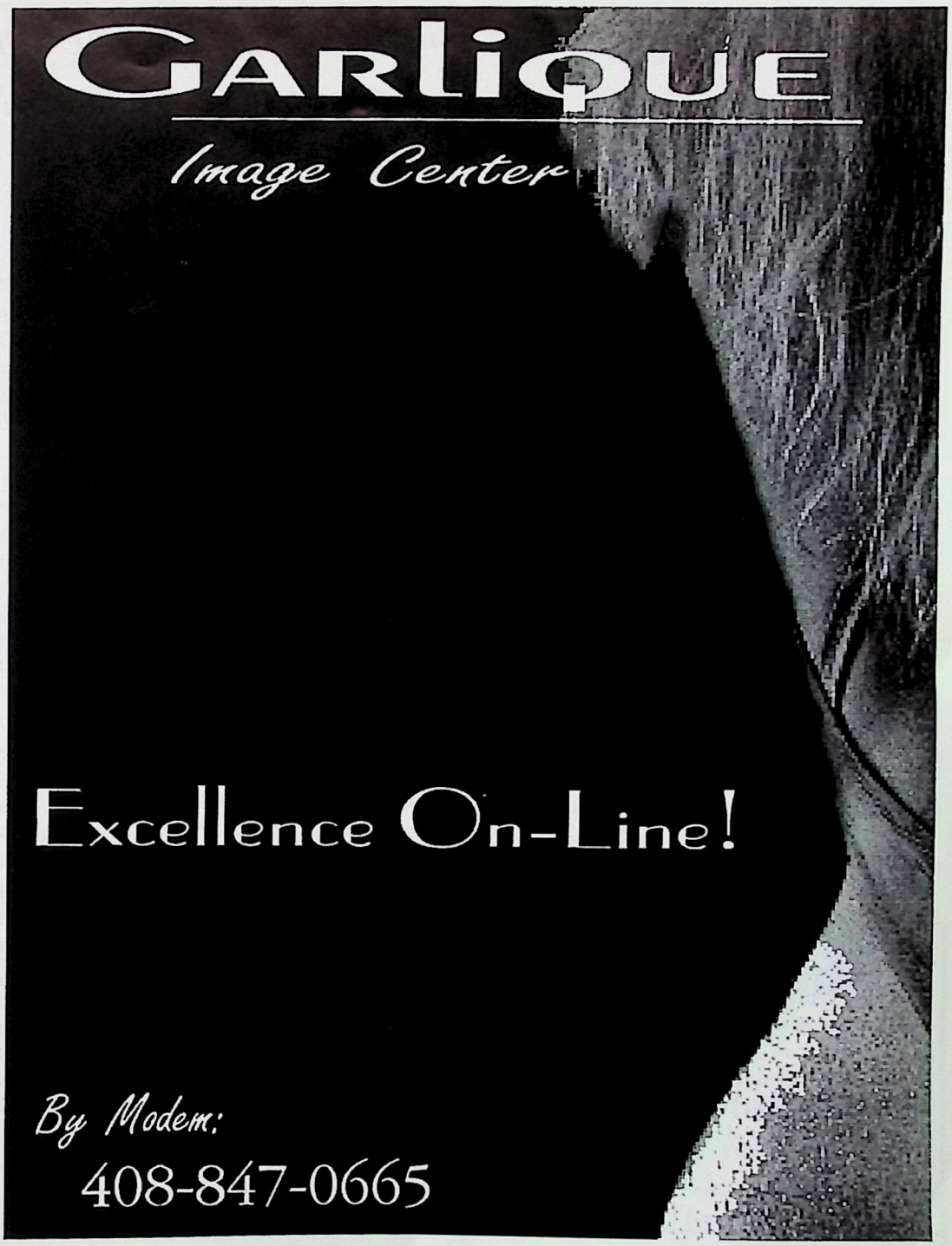
Dialogue 128 offers Punter C1, Ymodem Batch, CompuServe Quick B, and Xmodem Checksum, CRC and 1K protocols. When uploading, the disk directory can be called up to the screen, and the user can select the file(s) to send using a highlighted menu bar. This is a luxury feature I really enjoy.

Pull-down style menus as well as Commodore, CTRL, and ALT key combination commands make things easy for the new user, via the Help key to toggle the pull-down menus, and because the pull-down menus also display the corresponding C=, CTRL, or ALT keystrokes. The new user can gradually phase out use of the pull-down menus as they learn the various commands for the program. Partition support is available for 1581 style disk directories, although I personally would have preferred full CMD device support instead of 1581 disk drive support.

Both Novaterm v9.5 and Dialogue 128 v2.2 are "top of the line" terminal programs that can make BBSing a pleasure. There is no "worst of" in this true tale of two term programs.

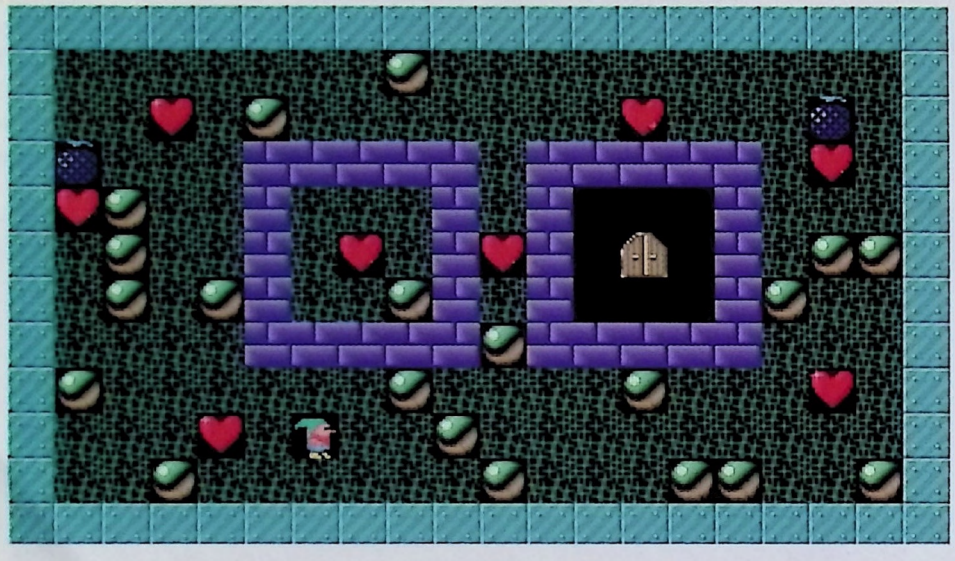
Because they each offer so many different options and features, they each can seem very daunting to the new user. Learning to use any new program can be a challenge, so take your time and try not to learn too much all in one session. Select an option, read about it, then experiment and learn. Trial and error seem to be the best teachers. When you find something that works well for you, don't forget to save your configurations.

Freelance writer Gaelyne Moranec is editor of CEE-64 Alive!, a disk magazine for Commodore 64 users, and co-sysop on Ancient Heart BBS. She can usually be found in the CBM FIDOnet echo.



Heartlight, Travel Points and QEdit Advanced

A game, a tour guide and the only text editor you may ever need.



HEARTLIGHT

by EPIC MegaGames
HEART.ZIP

One of my favorite games when I had my Commodore 64 was Boulderdash. The object was go from point A to point B without getting hit by one of the boulders. I spent many hours trying to beat that game — now EPIC has done it again with a superbly crafted amusement called Heartlight. Though it is quite similar to that old favorite, it's certainly no clone.

The object of the game is to get a little elf-like creature named Persival to gather all the hearts on each level and then make it to the exit. Sound simple? Yeah, right! Make a wrong move and you'll end up with a stone on your head or a bomb will blow you to bits. Each level is a puzzle that you must solve before continuing. It will likely take several tries before you finally get it figured out. A lot of trial and error is involved, so don't expect to finish a level on the first try.

By manipulating the placement of the stones and/or bombs, you'll be able to guide Persival through the maze and gather the needed hearts. Be careful not to let a bomb land on one of the hearts because you have to get all of them to advance. Also watch out that you don't get trapped by falling stones or rising balloons.

There is no time limit, nor is there a set number of "lives" to deal with. You can take all the time you need to ponder each level. And if you find yourself stuck, just hit the ESC key to start that level over. If a level seems impossible, you can move forward or backward by hitting the SPACE bar and the left or right arrow keys. You also don't have to start at "level one" each time you play the game. Begin wherever you wish. There is no need to repeat any level unless you want to.

Unlike other games of this sort that use simple ANSI graphics, Heartlight is done in real 256-color graphics that are easy to see (even across the room). The background music is nice and doesn't get irritating after a while like some of the other games. And you have your choice of either a joystick or cursor keys, but I found it easier with the keyboard. Try both ways to see what suits you.

The shareware version comes with 20 levels. That's plenty to keep you busy for hours. Once you've mastered them, I know you'll want to register. The registered version has 70 levels including some that seem impossible at first glance. In fact, they seem impossi-

ble at second and third glance!

You can have up to three players with progress saved for each player. The game keeps track of which levels you've already completed. You also get a nice colorful manual with hints and tips on playing the game.

Each time I started playing this game, I pondered how much fun it would be if there was a way to create my own levels or edit some of the ones that were just too difficult. Well, I must have missed the section on generating levels the first time I read the manual because it can be done. In fact, anyone can do it with just a simple text editor or a word processor. Each level is just a little 12-line text file with text characters representing grass, rocks, stones, etc. You could edit and/or create several new levels in no time at all. However, you will need the registered version for this option.

You will need at least a 386 and VGA for Heartlight, and Adlib and Sound Blaster is supported. Registration is a very reasonable $19. This is one of my all-time favorites for sure.

Travel Points of Interest in the U.S.A. ver 2

by Facts Online
TPOI2.ZIP

Are you planning a vacation anytime soon? Not sure what to do once you get there? Well then, Travel Points of Interest (TPOI) could be just what you're looking for.

TPOI is a real nice database of interesting places to visit all across the U.S. There are several search options for specific states or particular cities, and even a broad search of the whole country. For example, if you choose a state, the search is limited to that state. If, however, you select a city, you can limit the search for 10, 50, or 100 miles. This is a great way to plan a day trip with the kids.

After you choose your geographic location, you can select up to three different categories. These include such things as History, Amusement Parks, Museums, etc. There are 15 categories in all. Once you've entered all of your criteria, click on the Search button for a list of all matching entries. Once the search is done, you can either view the list on-screen or send it to your printer. Printing the list makes for a handy planner to take with you. I printed out a list of all sites within 100 miles of my hometown and found 46 matches. That should keep the family busy this summer.

Besides the general search options, users can also use the "Name of a Point of Interest" choice. Here you would be asked to enter a specific name to search for. Using this feature, I entered Lincoln and came up with four matches. An example follows:

```
Travel Points of Interest
Viewing # 1 of 4
HISTORY MUSEUM

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE
NAT HIST SITE
Route 1, Hodgenville KY
42748 (502) 358-3874
Daily 8am-5pm Extended
hours in summer

Early Kentucky cabin sym-
bolizes Lincoln's birth-
place. Enclosed in granite
and marble building on
birthplace site. Visitor
Center, audiovisual pro-
gram, exhibits, memorial
building, picnic area,
camping facilities nearby.
Located 3 miles south of
Hodgenville, Ky. on US
31E-Ky.
```

As you can see, all the important information is given to you. This can be a handy program if you like to take in the sites, whether you plan a long vacation or only care to travel a few miles from home.

The shareware version contains 700 points of interest and the registered version has over 2,000. The registration fee is $25.

QEdit Advanced ver 3.0

By SemWare
QEDIT3C.ZIP

The long-awaited update to QEdit by SemWare has been released. QEdit is the text editor that all others are judged by and one of the most widely used. If you liked the previous versions, you'll love the latest.

QEdit has been the standard for many years for several reasons. Not only is it a very powerful editor for even the most demanding user, it is also easy enough for the novice. Unlike other full-featured editors, you only need one file, (Q.EXE), which takes up very little space. It has everything you could want in an editor and you can begin to use it without even glancing at the documentation. Hit the ESC key for a menu bar at the top of the screen, or hit F1 for a HELP screen showing all of the key combinations.

QEdit is fine just the way it is, however, you are able to change most of the defaults with the QCONFIG.EXE file. Just run this included program to set QEdit the way you want it. There is also a very powerful macro language built in that can be used for just about anything you can think of. I've seen lots of these on the boards, so you might want to look around for them. There could be something you could use if you have trouble creating your own.

If you are still using the DOS edit command, or are unhappy with your current editor, I urge you to look at QEdit. Don't let the 100+ page manual scare you — it's merely an in-depth explanation of the commands. The manual does go into several other things you can do as well, but for starters, just load it and go. I'm sure you'll be impressed.

I'm not going to reveal here all QEdit can do; I'll let you be the judge of it's versatility. Let's just say that if you want something in an editor, you'll find it in QEdit.

Registration is $59 and gets you a bound manual, a built-in spell checker and extra utilities. If you are a Sysop, be sure to check out the special price for system operators.

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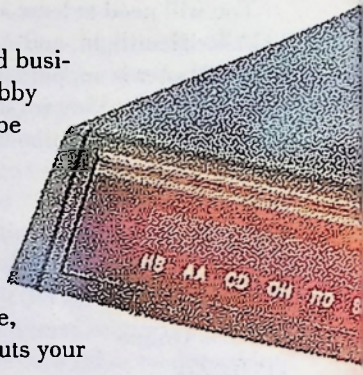
and charge your subscription to Visa or MasterCard.

BY VICTOR R. VOLKMAN

A New Sysop Modem Program at Telebit

Once past the odd restrictions, the program's worthwhile.

On January 26 of this year Telebit Corporation announced Revision 1.1 of its "Sysop Modem Purchase Program." Qualified sysops can buy Telebit modem products for up to 60 percent off the manufacturer's suggested retail price under this program. The Telebit program has some unusual, but reasonable, rules for entry. But it's worth the extra effort since you can purchase up to six modems on your first order — regardless of how many lines you currently have. Thus, Telebit is one of the few companies that helps sysops out of the chicken-or-the-egg dilemma: which to buy first, the modem or the phone line?



The Telebit rules are targeted toward business BBSs, but can be applied to hobby BBSs as well. First, your BBS must be publicly advertised to qualify. This can be a classified ad or public listing such as those found in BBS Magazine, Computer Shopper and others. Alternately, you can supply a printed flyer, newspaper article, or computer club affiliation which puts your BBS in the public eye.

Second, you must agree to actively promote Telebit products in several ways. You must announce the presence of your new Telebit modems for at least 30 days in your system news file. As well, you're required to list the Telebit modems used in a bulletin describing your system configuration and allow Telebit Corporation to upload text news files about their products from time to time.

Last, you must provide a user ID and password without expiration and with unlimited access to the BBS at no charge. This user ID will be used to verify your compliance with the Telebit program.

Another unusual aspect of the Telebit sysops discount is that purchases can be made with only with VISA or Mastercard credit cards. Checks, money orders and COD orders are strictly disallowed.

Table 1a lists the Telebit modems that will continue to be tracked in this report. I have excluded the rackmount (RM) models since many sysops don't opt for them. Normally profuse technical details would be offered at this point, but product-specific details on the Telebit BBS are scarce.

Instead, I'll just point out that Telebit had one of the first and most successful proprietary high-speed connections called

CONTINUES...

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

VENDOR/ PRODUCT	14.4K V.32BIS INTERNAL	14.4K V.32BIS EXTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC, V.34 INTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC V.34 EXTERNAL
AT&T Paradyne	3721-B1-001* $160	3710-A1-201* $180 PC $190 Mac	N/A	N/A
CPI/ ViVa	ViVa 14.4 $180	ViVa 14.4 $196	N/A	N/A
Digicom Systems	Scout Plus $266	Scout Plus $276	N/A	N/A
	9624PC+ $340	9624LE+ $350		
Hayes Corp	Optima 144B* $179	Ultra 144 $249	N/A	Optima 288+FAX v.FC 28.8k $288
		Optima 144+FAX* $179 PC		
		Optima 144+FAX* $179 Macintosh		
Intel	SatisFax/400 $249	144 EX $269	N/A	N/A
	Faxmodem 144i $99	SatisFAX/400e* $245		
		Faxmodem 144e $109		
Microcom	N/A	N/A	N/A	DeskPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
				TravelPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
MultiTech	MT1432BC $400	MT1432BA* $400	N/A	N/A
	MT1432ES $400 MCA	MT1432ML* $300		
		MT1432BL* $450		
		MT1432PCS $575		
Practical Peripherals	N/A	PM14400FXSA* $215	N/A	N/A
		PM14400FXMT* $215		
Supra Corp	SupraFAXModem* $129	SupraFAXModem* $149	N/A	Supra V.FC 28k $169
Telebit Corp.	N/A	T3000 v.32bis $429	N/A	WorldBlazer TurboPep $429
		QBlazer v.32bis $299		
USRobotics	N/A	HST Dual Stand. Courier v.32bis $299	N/A	HST Dual Stand. v.32terbo 21.6k $399
Ven-Tel	PCM144FAX* $195	EC144FAX* $215	N/A	N/A
	PCMV.32bis* $480	ECV.32bis* $525		
	MCM144FAX* $380 MCA	RMV.32bis II* $425		
Zoom Telephonics	VFP V.32Bis* $99	VFX V.32Bis* $119 PC $130 Mac	VFP V.FC 24k $99	VFX V.FC 24k $119 PC $130 Mac
			VFP V.FC 28.8k $139	VFX V.FC 28.8k $159 PC $170 Mac
ZyXEL	U-1496B* 16.8K $299	U-1496E* 16.8K $299		U-1496E* v.32terbo 16.8K $299
	U-1496B+* 19.2K $389			

* 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. 4. V.34 is the new name for what used to be called V.FAST

TABLE IIb — 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 2.0 Enhanced Serial 1-Port	$ 69
	08-00456	ESP 2.0 Enhanced Serial 2-Port	$ 89
MultiTech	CC216A	Rackmount for 16 modems. no PS	$175
	PS216A	Power Supply for RackMount	$ 85
USRobotics	N/A	High-speed Dual-Async Serial Card	$ 50
Ven-Tel	DS1200-3PR	Rackmount for 16 modems. w/PS	$425
ZyXEL	N/A	High Speed I/O (1P/2S/1G) 1 16550	$ 30
	N/A	High Speed I/O (1P/2S/1G) 2 16550	$ 45

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
AT&T Paradyne	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard American Ex.
CPI/ ViVa	2 months	12 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard
Digicom Systems	currently	6 months	1 per phone. 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. *
Microcom	In the next 3 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
MultiTech	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
Telebit Corp.	currently	6 months	Up to 6 on first order	VISA Mastercard only
USRobotics	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
Ven-Tel	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard
Zoom Telephonics	6 Months	9 Months	Double the # of current phone lines on the bbs	Visa MasterCard Amex
ZyXEL	3 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard

* Indicates no personal checks accepted.

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QmodemPro for Windows

This powerful, easy to use communications program integrates both data and fax into one package. Check and compare:

Send and receive fax using your class 1 or class 2 fax modem. Send and receive files with 10 transfer protocols including Zmodem, CompuServe B+ & Kermit. Over 30 Terminal Emulations including the new RIPscrip graphical emulation used on thousands of BBSs.

Plus you can automate simple to complex tasks with the new *Script Language Interface for QmodemPro* (SLIQ) — based closely on the popular BASIC language. Includes script compiler and debugger.

DOS version also available

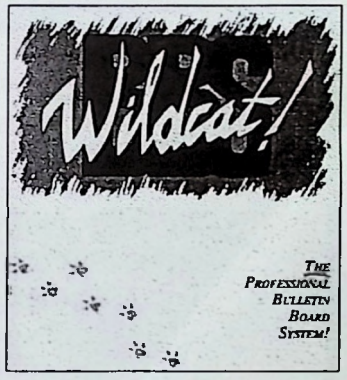
Compare Features. Compare Value.
***QmodemPro for Windows* is the clear winner, hands down.**

Features:	*QmodemPro* v1.1	PCPlus v1.02	Crosstalk v2.1	Smartcom v1.0a	CommWorks v3.10	Wincomm v1.0
File Transfer Protocols	10	13	16	8	5	8
Terminal Emulations	34	32	22	8	6	16
Background Mode	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Built in Text Editor	✓		✓	✓	✓	
GIF viewer	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Sound Card Support	✓					
RIPscrip Graphics	✓					
FAX Send	✓				✓	✓
FAX Receive	✓				✓	✓
Script Compiler	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Script Debugger	✓					
Quicklearn Scripts	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Queue Dialing	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Group Dialing	✓					
Iconized Phone Book	✓					✓
Auto-Doorway Mode	✓					
Drag/Drop File Xfers	✓		✓	✓		✓
Macro Keys	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Customizable Host Mode	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Comm Ports Supported	1-9	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4
Interrupt 14 Support	✓		✓	✓		✓
Max DTE	921600*	115200	115200	115200	115200	115200
Sugg Retail Price	**$139**	$179	$195	$149	$199	$179

*with Hayes ESP card

Wildcat! BBS

Build a service-oriented BBS that gives your customers 24 hour access to your business: E-mail, bulletins, product upgrades and technical tips over the modem, even transmit data to you in a few minutes that took days to send through the mail. Your customers can even have sales and product literature faxed to them on request with our fax-on-demand utility, wcFAX.



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MSI Mustang Software Inc.

Mustang Software, Inc.

Professional Communications Software

the Packetized Ensemble Protocol or PEP for short. All of their modems today continue to offer PEP service or TurobPEP service. Telebit modems were one of the first adopters of digital signal processors (DSP), thus enabling considerable flexibility for upgrades.

The original PEP was designed to work 19,200 bps at a time when US Robotics HST was only getting 9,600 bps. The PEP technology works by dividing the usable audio bandwidth of the phone connection into 512 discrete channels. The modems then negotiate which channels to use based on the frequency response and drop out the noisy ones automatically. Although PEP has been adopted by a few other modem manufacturers, it has by and large remained proprietary. All the Telebit modems listed here support at least the v.32bis/v.42bis international standard, so you'll have no problems with connectivity to the mainstream world of modems.

Telebit has separate sysop discount applications for U.S. and Canadian sysops (SYSOPUSA.TXT) as opposed to international sysops (SYSOPINT.TXT). The programs are essentially the same except that the international sysops can only choose from Telebit T2500 or TrailBlazer Plus (TB+) modems. The TB+ is also known as the T2000. Ironically, international sysops cannot purchase the WorldBlazer.

Telebit summary

Modem Model	Sugg. List Price	Sysop Disc. Price
WorldBlazer	$1099	$429
WorldBlazer(RM)	$1049	$399
QBlazer Plus	$599	$299
T3000	$949	$399
T3000(RM)	$899	$369
TB+	$849	$249
TB+(RM)	$749	$219

(RM) indicates a rackmount model, which is cheaper than an external modem because it has no power supply or case. However, you must purchase the rackmount separately.

To contact Telebit, write to:

Telebit Corporation
1315 Chesapeake Terrace
Sunnyvale, CA 94089

Or call:

Telephone #: 1-800-TELEBIT or 408-734-4333
FAX #: 408-734-3333
BBS #: 408-745-3861.

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.32bis (14400 bps), 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. The rightmost column of Table Ia shows all modems faster than 14400 bps that support at least v.32bis standards.

In practice, I recommend only v.FC (28800 bps) modems for sysops. The v.FC offers 50 percent more throughput than v.32bis for only about 25 percent extra cost. It is possible that some manufacturers will discontinue v.FC modems from production as soon as v.FAST/v.34 (22000 to 28800 bps) modems go into production. However, this is no reason to purchase an old

CONTINUES...

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Synchronet v2.0 unveils PCMS, the Programmable Command and Menu Structure. At the heart of PCMS is *Baja*™, an easy to use basic-like programming language and compiler that allows flexible command shell programming without external programs or add-ons. Because compiled command shells are loaded dynamically upon user logon, multiple BBS structures can be available for your users to choose from; including emulations of other BBSs, complex graphical user interfaces, foreign language shells, and custom applications.

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Coming soon! Synchronet for OS/2, the 32-bit big brother of Synchronet for DOS. Finally, a powerful and feature rich 32-bit BBS will soon be within your grasp.

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(714) 529-9547 28.8Kbps V.FC

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2 node	$ 99.00
4 node	$199.00
8 node	$299.00
16 node	$399.00
250 node	$499.00

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PO Box 501 Yorba Linda, CA 92686
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(714) 529-9721 fax

Compare 8 nodes on a single 486

	Synchronet	Wildcat!IM	PCBoard/M	MajorBBS	TBBS
Node license*	$299	$799	$440	$508	$895
Programmable	Yes	No	Extra	Extra	Extra
Multiple command shells	Yes	No	No	No	No
Intelligent DigiBoard	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Int14h device support	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Standard serial ports	Up to 10	No	Up to 4	Up to 2	Up to 2
Caller ID security	Yes	No	Extra	Extra	No
Nested security logic	Yes	No	No	No	No
Multichannel chat	Yes	Extra	Yes	Yes	Yes
Private user chat	Yes	No	Extra	Yes	Yes
Offline reader support	Yes	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra
QWK networking	Yes	Yes	Extra	No	Yes
FidoNet import/export	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PostLink (RIME) support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra	No
Includes RIPscrip menus	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Novell/DOS LAN support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Enhanced CD-ROM support	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Incoming FAX support	Yes	No	No	No	No
Chat between doors	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Bidirectional file transfers	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
DOS door support	11 types	2 types	2 types	No	No
FILE_ID.DIZ support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Yes	No
Offline NetMail	Yes	Yes	Extra	No	Yes
Offline/Remote file requests	Yes	No	No	No	No
Real-time configuration	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

Features and prices compiled from vendor supplied information 2/94, 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. Third party utilities may be required for some message network technologies.
* for 8 nodes Wildcat!/M requires a 250 node license, PCBoard/M requires a 10 node license, TBBS requires a 16 node license.

If you haven't checked out Synchronet yet, crank up your modem and download a demo. There isn't a faster, more feature rich BBS available anywhere from anyone. Synchronet combines the robust interactive nature of a multiuser BBS with the speed, power and flexibility of a multinode system.

It was innovative out-of-the-box features such as intelligent variable timeslicing, ARS™ security, RIPscrip, enhanced CD-ROM, and easy to use fully integrated message network support that made Synchronet a multinode powerhouse. And now, with version 2.0, custom programmability, lightning fast high volume messaging, and much more makes Synchronet *the* sysop's choice for BBSing in the 90's.

Synchronet BBS version 2

Multinode Bulletin Board System Software

TABLE III — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

VENDOR NAME	CALL THEIR BBS AT THIS NUMBER AND...	...DOWNLOAD THIS FILE.	IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL..	CONTACT VIA EMAIL
AT&T Paradyne	(813) 532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800) 554-4996	t.bradshaw@paradyne.com
CPI/ViVa	(805) 499-9646; (215) 746-9948	CPIA.TXT	(800) 854-7600	
Digicom	(508) 262-1412	SCOUT.TXT	(508) 262-1277	wolfgang@netcom.com
Hayes Corp.	(404) 446-6336; (800) USHAYES	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404) 840-9200	rlacy@hayes.com
Intel	(503) 645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503) 228-9707	
Microcom	(800)822-8224	SYSOP.TXT	(617)762-5134	
MultiTech	(612) 785-9875; (800) 392-2432	PRICE.TXT	(612) 785-3500	
Pract. Per.	(805) 496-4445	SYSBBS.TXT	(805) 497-4774	GO PPIFORUM (CompuServe)
Supra Corp.	(503) 967-2444	SYSOP.TXT	(503) 967-2400	supra@supra.com
Telebit Corp	(408)745-3861	SYSOPUSA.TXT SYSOPINT.TXT	(800)TEL-EBIT	support@telebit.com
USRobotics	(708) 982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708) 982-5010	support@usr.com
Ven-Tel	(408) 922-0988	SYSDEAL.TXT	(408) 436-7400	
Zoom Teleph.	(617) 423-3733	ZOOMBBS.ZIP	(800) 666-6191 (617) 423-1072	Dan.Vassily@Cdreams.com CIS 71333,1527
Zyxel	(714) 693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714) 693-0804	sales@zyxel.com

v.32bis type modem. Beware of upgrade plans to v.FAST/v.34 modems: these can run you from $100 to $300 for such an upgrade.

Some vendors offer more than just modems to the sysops who join their program. For example, Hayes Corp. offers 50 percent to 70 percent off discounts on the high-speed serial ports and 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 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 12 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. The only exception is Zoom, which allows up to two modems per existing 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. However, Digicom and MultiTech still do not accept credit cards for orders. In those cases, you 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 nearly 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 Robotics guarantees a two to six week waiting period. Remember, the manufacturers are doing you a favor by offering discounts 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 at: Fax: (313) 663-6861; Internet: sysop@hal9k.com.

Victor Volkman has been researching modem prices since 1991.

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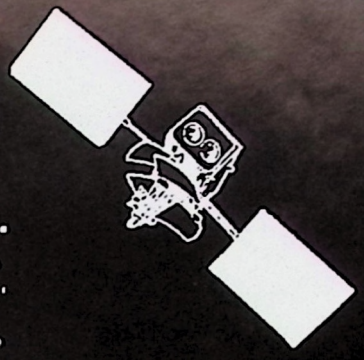

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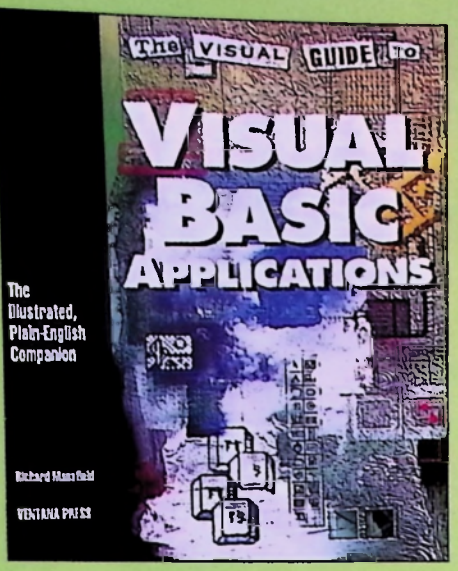


The Visual Guide to Visual Basic for Applications

by Richard Mansfield
$27.95, 350 pages, disk

Struggling to get a handle on Microsoft's Visual Basic for Applications? Don't. Don't struggle, that is. Author Richard Mansfield has penned a helpful book for Ventana Press's Visual Guide series which, along with a companion disk, lets readers in on the skinny of the program designed to tie all Microsoft's key applications together with a single programming language.

The Visual Guide to Visual Basic for Applications (the latest in the Guide series which began with *Visual Guide for Visual Basic for Windows*), is split with the first part looking into VBA's interface, tools, history and concepts, and then going on to examine all the key commands and objects new to Visual Basic. Illustrations bound, as do thorough examples. As for the accompanying disk: a selection of the graphics and all programming examples are included.

Specifically what readers will find are tips and examples for expanding the tools using OLE, DDE, Linking and Embedding; descriptions of dozens of new Basic commands; a sample customizations project that creates a working spreadsheet featuring available models, inventory and graphic illustration; how to use the REGEDIT program to discover the OLE capabilities and syntax for contacting any application and manipulating applications; simplified examples on how to take advantage of OLE Automation; and, plenty more.

Says Mansfield, former editor of Compute! magazine: "*The Visual Guide to Visual Basic for Applications* teaches how to use VBA and OLE 2.0 to break down the barriers between your programs, moving toward the ideal of freeing information from any particular application..."

BOOK SHELF

The Internet Yellow Pages

by Harley Hahn and Rick Stout
$27.95, 560 pages, ill.

Net junkies and BBSers have always let their fingers do their walking and talking. So it's no surprise that a directory to the Internet would borrow two words that in our culture mean "information at your fingertips" — Yellow Pages.

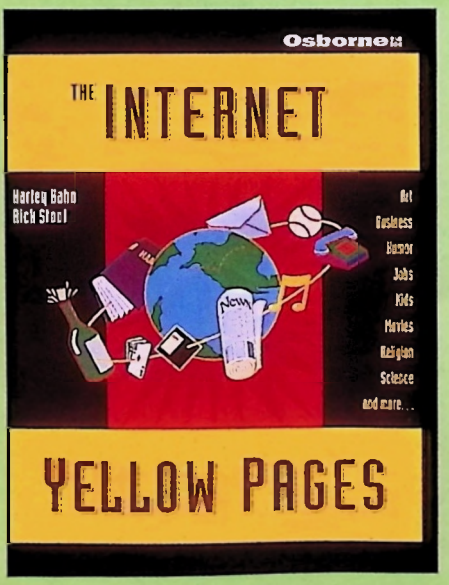
From Osborne/McGraw-Hill, *The Internet Yellow Pages* applies the same tried and true format of the old YP and applies it to the vast resources of the Internet. By Harley Hahn and Rick Stout (*The Internet Complete Reference* team), The Internet Yellow Pages lists subjects and their correct Net addresses, along with definitions about the topics listed, hints on accessing them and "advertisements" on services of particular interest that might otherwise be overlooked.

While not exhaustive, the YP format runs 359 pages and does cover a lot of ground. But that Yellow Pages yellow...it can get annoying after a couple of hours. We suggest referring to it when the lights are low.

Readers don't need us to tell them the "Information Hypeway" has brought scores of newcomers to the Net, many in search of information gold. Trouble is (as is the case in the non-cyberworld), gold must be dug for, and often without success. *The Internet Yellow Pages* sets out to change that.

We won't call it your prospector — it doesn't do the work for you — but it is a nifty guide. As co-author Hahn puts it: "The Internet is vast beyond measure but, unfortunately, there is no easy way for users to find what they need. Rick Stout and I spent months researching this book in order to make the Internet's resources simple to find and accessible to everyone."

Categories included in the book include art, books, business, children, computers, games, government, hobbies, humor, jobs, literature, movies, music, pets, religion,



science, sexuality, sports, television, travel...2,400 separate items in all, each of which points to a free Internet resource.

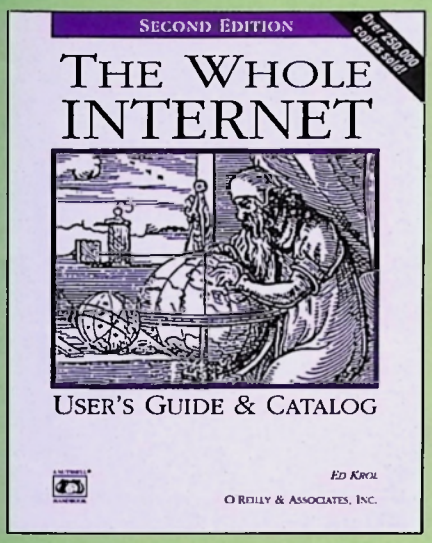
What about Usenet newsgroups? The book includes an annotated list.

To order the book by phone, call 1-800-227-0900, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific time.

The Whole Internet User's Guide & Catalog (Second Edition)

by Ed Krol
$24.95, 450

What can be done to improve the much lauded *Whole Internet User's Guide & Catalog?* Before saying "not much," read on.



First published in 1992 (O'Reilly & Associates, Inc.) and written by Ed Krol, the man MicroTimes named one of the "100 Industry Leaders and Unsung Heroes of the Computer Industry in 1993," *The Guide* has become a standard of sorts; it's something other Net books aspire to.

And *The Guide* has a lot more to offer this time around — it's not just a re-release seeking to cash in on the first edition's success (which sold over 250,000 copies). A sampling of the new material follows:

- Expanded resource catalog.
- Descriptions of three resources that serve as the Internet's "card catalog."
- An exploration of Mosaic.
- A look at multimedia mail (MIME) —what is it and how to deal with it.
- More on FTP mail servers.
- New "white pages."
- New Gopher features.
- An introduction to tin.
- An expanded list of Internet access providers.

And plenty more.

Creating Successful Bulletin Board Systems

by Alan D. Bryant
$39.95, 393

Creating a BBS is the simple part. Creating a successful BBS is another story. Actually, it's a book.

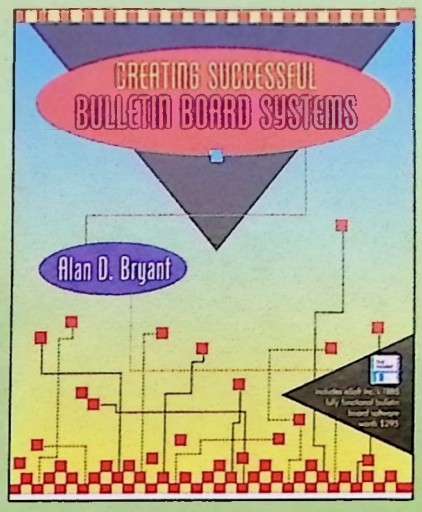
Creating Successful Bulletin Board Systems (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.) was written by eSoft's Alan Bryant and comes packaged with a full-featured version of that company's DOS-based TBBS software.

Within the 10 chapters, readers knowing little about BBSs are guided from a discussion on whether a BBS is what they really need to maintaining a board as a business. Along the way they're treated to numerous expert insider tips to help newcomers avoid the hours of learning-by-doing normally required.

Chapter headings include "Planning Your BBS," "Choosing Basic Hardware and Software," "Buying Your BBS Equipment," and "Finding Users for Your BBS." Each is light on graphic illustration but ripe with worthy information, and subdivided for easy digestion (remember your college textbooks?). For instance, in the chapter "Buying Your BBS Equipment," under the sub-heading "Selecting and Buying BBS Hardware," under the sub-sub-heading "Understanding CD-ROM Drives" and the even smaller heading "Selecting a CD-ROM Drive," readers can look to the bullet points of speed, type, interface and capacity and discover all they might want to know about the subject.

An interesting bonus is the worksheet following each chapter, put there with the intention of helping readers organize thoughts and ideas as they move through the book.

Whether it's for a hobby, business or an extension of an existing enterprise, *Creating Successful Bulletin Board Systems* takes readers by the hand, without condescension, and walks them



through the process of getting a board up, running and successful. When that's done, it's still a good thing to have around for reference...just in case.

Bryant is currently marketing director for eSoft, Inc. After first becoming aware of BBS technology in 1985 — through a classified ad — he borrowed a modem from a friend and was immediately "hooked" on computer telecommunications. The following year his own BBS was up and remains so today, eight years later.

Bryant has written about BBSs and related subjects for several publications and is a speaker on a variety of bulletin board-related topics. He also develops and markets add-on utility and entertainment products for sysops.

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via any member of our Authorized List of local BBSs running the CD SUB Door program.

Those wishing to run CD SUB on their BBS should call The Livewire BBS at 609.235.5297 and download CDSUB.ZIP for more information and registration instructions.

LISTED IN ORDER OF AREA CODE:

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The Third Millennium	Jim Fromm	208.664.2983
The Soul Connection	Mike Demski	210.674.1242
Walter's BBS	Walter Parrish	212.749.3268
USS Inverness	Jonathan McGirr	214.245.9315
Collector's Edition	Len Hult.	214.351.9859
The Lonesome Dove BBS	Matthew Peacock	214.699.7142
Community Netlink	Kassie Stevenson	216.324.6410
PC.Ohio	Norm Henke	216.381.3320
The Scientist's and Musician's BBS	Soo Kurz	216.639.9508
First Due Bulletin Board System	Francis Fowler	301.949.1927
Shareware Express BBS	Shawn Bogardus	301.963.4453
Megabiter II	George Belcher	314.281.8598
Griswold's Private Reserve	Jim Kelland	316.788.7520
Warp Factor BBS	Mark Stewart	404.773.7966
Music Connection	David Coleman	404.936.0550
The Death Star BBS	Nicholas Seabury	407.859.7428
PereLine BBS	Tom Serface	408.364.2789
Wayne's World BBS	Wayne Belvin	409.769.4249
entertain me bbs!!	Shawn Cupec	412.567.6782
Uncle Hank's BBS	Hank Hurteau	413.527.8977
Platinum Express	Glenn Jarvis	416.770.6917
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Southern Online Services	Russell Jackson	504.356.0790
Computer Solutions of Hammond BBS	Sidney Egnew	504.542.9600
Wolf's Den BBS	Keith Shinkle	505.678.0902
Computer Confident	Edward Zdrok.	508.528.2295
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The Moonflower BBS	Peter Link	509.891.6148
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Your Software Resource	John Woodstock	516.736.6662
The Wish Book	Lorne Shantz	602.258.7113
The Ghost House BBS	Michael Haley	606.441.2130
The Livewire BBS	Richard Paquette	609.235.5297
Next Generation BBS	John Carcione	609.482.7345
Tao BBS	Bob Watson	609.587.2672
Radio Wave BBS	Tyler Myers	609.764.0812
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The Registry BBS	John Kern	615.870.0794
Channel 1 BBS	Brian Miller	617.354.8873
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The Last Resort BBS	Derek Figg	703.435.8644
The Arlington Software Exchange	Jay Falvey	703.532.7143
Xsword's Haven	Randy Hedgecock	703.638.7580
The Virginia Connection	Tony McClenny	703.648.1841
Central Ontario Data Systems	Robin Wells	705.722.8194
Download Dungeon Super BBS	Paul Stewart	705.749.2345
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Suburban Software	Chuck Valecek	708.636.6694
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The Liberty BBS	Steven Grande	714.996.9999
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Rama One BBS	Tommy Brunning	718.366.6165
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The Seaside	Les Jones	805.964.4766
The Casual BBS	Pat Cargill	810.631.6885
The Contrails BBS	Joe Richter	817.355.9252
Sleuth BBS	Mark Valentine	818.727.7639
Metroplex BBS	Rick Vanhooser	901.327.1895
Dataland! BBS	Rick Young	908.572.5762
CyberCulture	Todd Novak	909.797.3135
The Ouija! Board Online Services	Keith Burgner	909.925.9564
The Publishing BBS	Mike Robinson	913.784.7171
Databank	Bob Oyler	913.842.7744
Mirage Network N.Y.	Brian Buffell	914.426.0729
Dark Side of the Moon	Peter Cacchioli	914.621.2865
Executive Info Network	Andy Keeves	914.667.4567
Powerboard Support BBS	Scott Brown	914.833.1479
Golden State	Gregory Smith	916.585.2281
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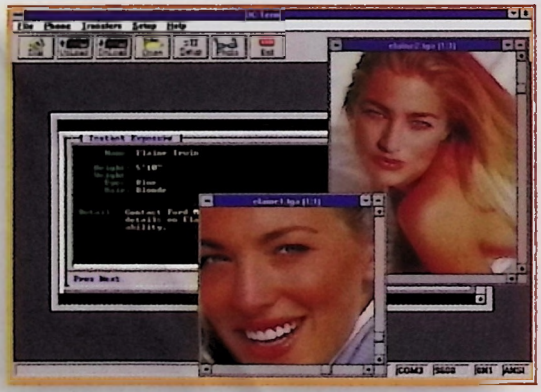

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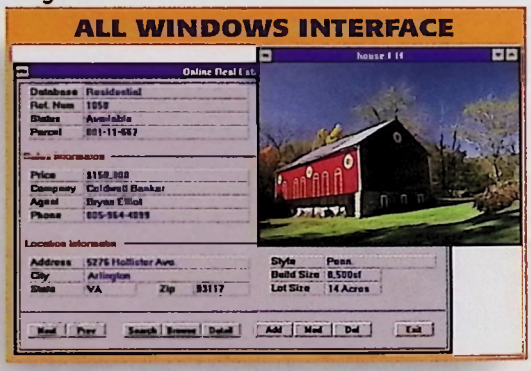

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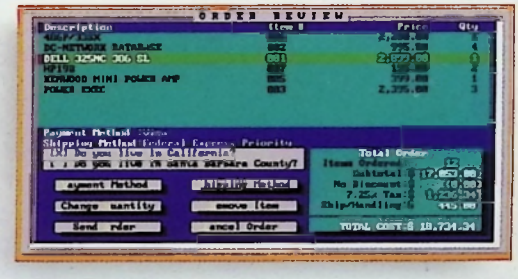

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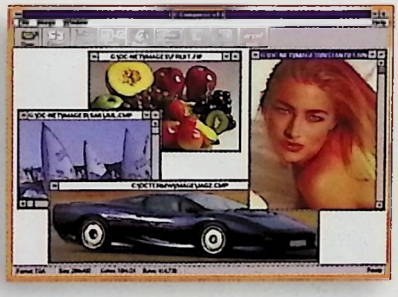

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