BBS
THE BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEMS MAGAZINE
January 1994
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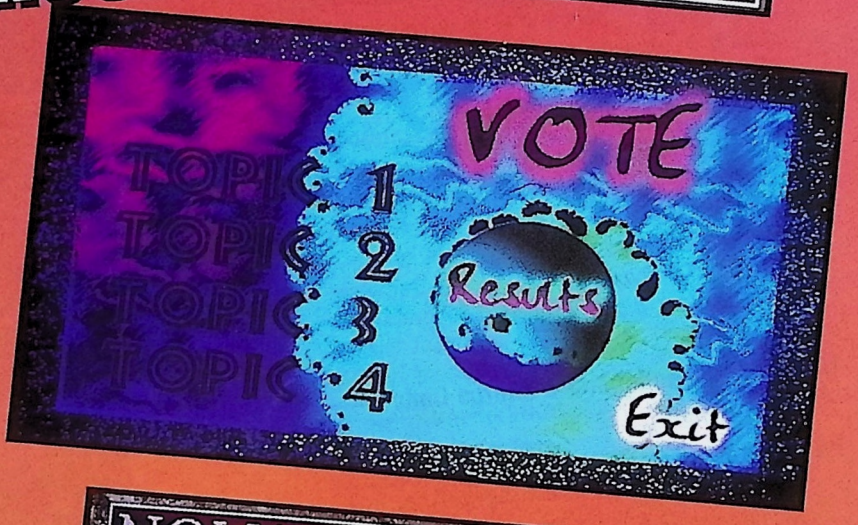
74470-78651

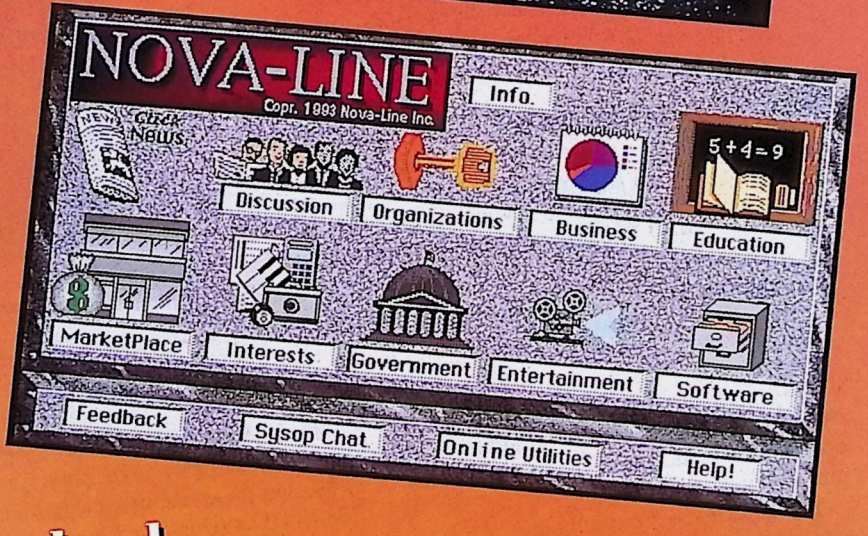
NovaLink Pro

A graphical host for the Mac that doesn't discriminate

Plus:

Scott Brown's NUIQ Powerboard





Shareware Reviews
Commodore
Macintosh
Modem Prices

BBS Notebook:

The Data Bank, The Wizard's Palace, Deep Cove, Brave Dave's

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
Galacticomm, Inc.

Language Add-on Options (Spanish, German, French, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, RIP*scrip*, etc.)
Astrocom Multimedia
BSI Technologies
Galacticomm, Inc.
Infima
Medcom Information Systems
Online Store
Studio 5 Liguria SRL
Techtrade
TeleGrafix Communications Inc.

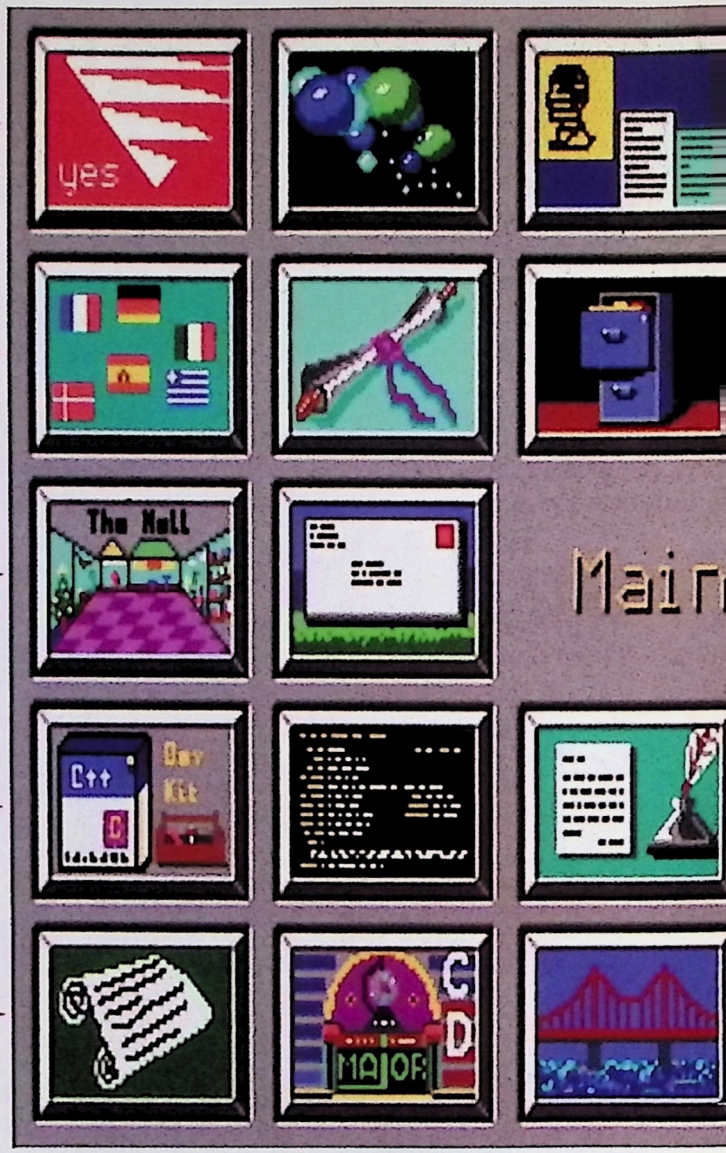
Online Shopping/Order Entry/Auctions
BSI Technologies
DataSafe Publications
Durand Communications Network
Excalibur! Software
Galacticomm, Inc.
Infinetwork

Developer's Toolkit and C Source Code
Galacticomm, Inc.

Integrated Fax Capabilities
Galacticomm, Inc.
MagiComm, Inc.
The Business BBS

Super CD-ROM Management
Farwest BBS
Mountain Rose Multi Media

"Dial-Out" with Scripts
Galacticomm, Inc.
Logicom, Inc.



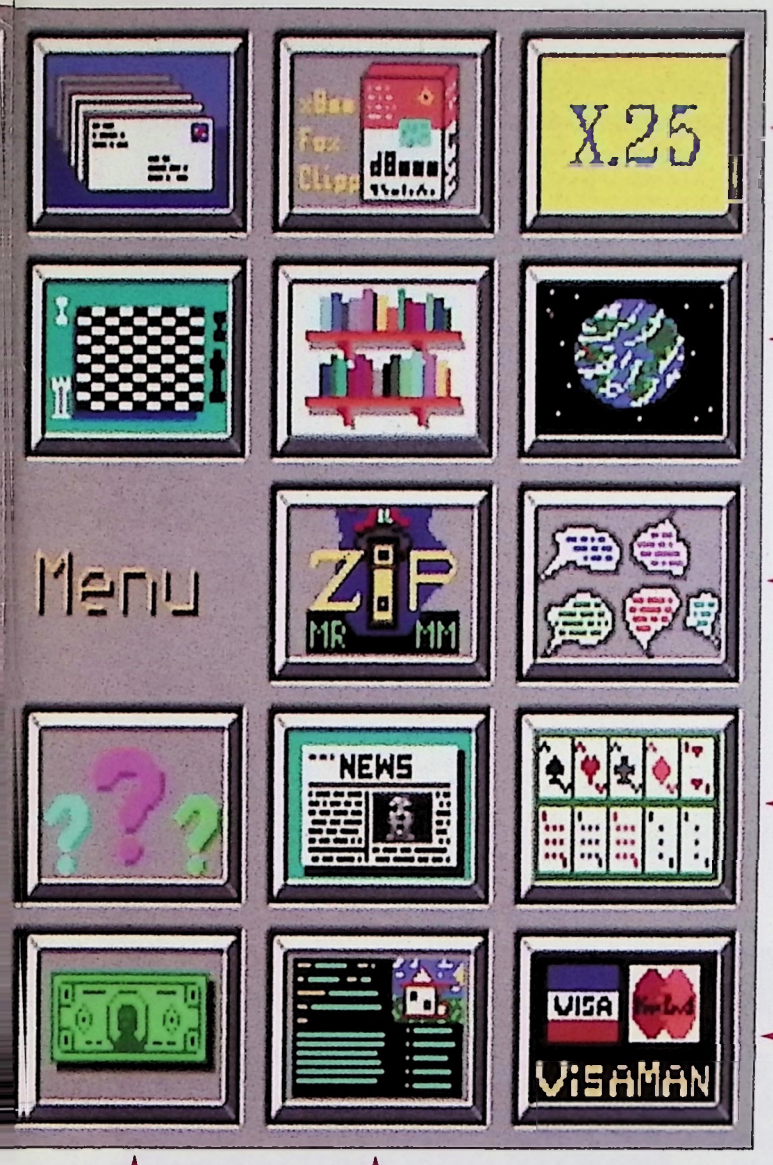
Just about anything you want. That's because The Major BBS is a completely open-ended platform for creating your own unique online service.

You can choose from a huge selection of off-the-shelf software — just a small fraction of which is represented here — offered by over 100 third-party developers.

Most of these add-ons integrate into your BBS as DLLs (Dynamic Link Libraries). No shelling to DOS is required. And because these DLLs are written in C and Assembly, they provide far greater performance and flexibility than script languages or dBase derivatives.

You can run all this from a single computer and support up to 256 simultaneous users via modems, serial connections, direct

Architecture of The Major BBS®?



Mail Networks of All Kinds (FIDO, RIME, QWK, MajorNet, etc.)

Crystal Vision, Inc.
DigiTel Inc.
MLP Associates
ProStar Computer Corporation
Public Data Network
Tessier Technologies, Inc.

Programmable xBase Capability

Integrated Solutions, Inc.
The Business BBS

Direct X.25 Connectivity

Galacticomm, Inc.

Internet Mail and Newsgroups

Galacticomm, Inc.

Teleconference Links and Worldwide Chat

ProStar Computer Corporation
Public Data Network
Tessier Technologies, Inc.

Outstanding Multi-Player Games

Computel
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
The Business BBS

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.

Need "doors" capability too? You can hook up additional machines and instantly use the programs written for multi-node BBSes as well.

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."

For more information, see your local dealer, or give us a call at 1-800-328-1128 (outside U.S. and Canada call 305-583-5990). And team up with BBS developers that link you into everything else.

GALACTICOMM

IF YOU HAD THREE WISHES,

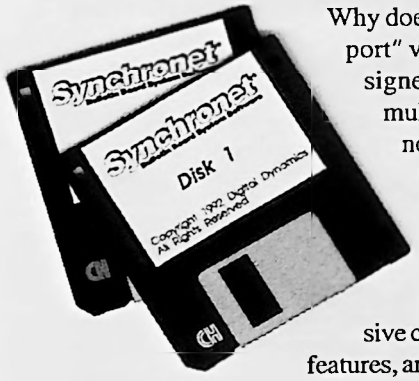
Take a close look and you'll see why so many sysops are switching to the Synchronet Multinode Bulletin Board System. For one, message networking is second nature for Synchronet. Not only does Synchronet support FidoNet, QWK, and PostLink (RIME) message networks, but network considerations are integrated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

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

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

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

YOU COULD TOSS THE OTHER TWO.



Why doesn't Synchronet have a special "multiport" version? Because Synchronet was designed from the ground up as a high-speed multinode BBS capable of running up to 10 nodes on a single 486. It's advanced interrupt driven output design combined with DESQview optimizations maximize CPU utilization, allowing Synchronet to out perform other systems running special "multiport" versions on expensive coprocessed I/O cards. For performance, features, and value, nobody beats Synchronet.

Synchronet® BBS
Multinode Bulletin Board System Software

Undeniable Value

2 Node License	$ 99
4 Node License	$ 149
16 Node License	$ 199
250 Node License	$ 399
Multiuser SDK	FREE

Node license upgrades are available for the difference plus 10%.
Minor revision upgrades can be downloaded free of charge.

Digital Dynamics®
P.O. Box 501 Yorba Linda, CA 92686
(714) 529-6328 voice (714) 529-9721 FAX

Download the Free demo version:
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(714) 529-9721 9600+bps ZyXel
(714) 529-5313 9600+bps v.32
(714) 529-9547 9600+bps HST

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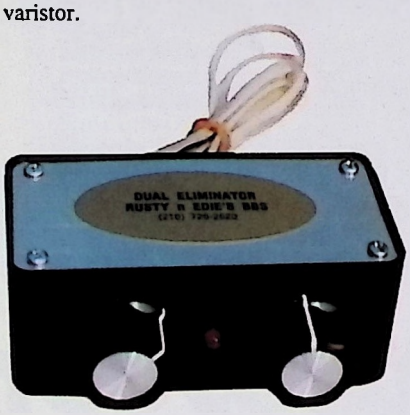
Rusty Edie

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 devide 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

So you'd like to know everything about the expanding network of information systems, bulletin board software, discounted modems, your rights on the Info Superhighway, shareware programs, the Internet and the latest news about the telecommunications industry? Well, you chose the right source.

BBS Magazine has been covering bulletin board systems and related subjects for years. With an eye on static events in the world of BBSing and another on system operators and callers, we've continually brought readers analysis and reports in an intelligent, yet simple manner.

If you are getting acquainted with the magazine for the first time, you might be interested to know a little more about us. For the veterans, bypass the next paragraph.

BBS Magazine published its first issue in September, 1990, to help members of the expanding bulletin board subculture figure out who to dial, and to shepherd novices getting online for the first time. Since then, the world of BBSing has changed tremendously: Four million calls a day are made to thousands of boards smattering the cyberscape with myriad special interest files, programs, messaging, conferences and services. Corporations have gotten involved — companies who two years ago knew only faxes and the U.S. Mail for information exchange now take orders through the office BBS. Politicians are talking information highways over cocktails and everywhere people are wondering, "what's this all about?" And they're getting involved. Our goal now is to continue bringing you the latest in BBSing, from reviews of cutting edge software to commentary on special interest bulletin boards and everything in between.

You'll notice the look of the magazine has changed. We've added a graphical interface, if you will, with the intention of making it a little easier to get from page one to the back cover. The changes will be moderate and incremental — allowing longtime readers to keep their footing — but the thrust of the content will remain intact.

In future issues, this space will be devoted to introducing stories and columns. You also might read a comment or two on the increasing importance of BBSs in everyday life. We have a penchant for humor here, so don't take it personally if we poke fun now and then. But most of all, this and other pages in the magazine will serve as a guide for those making the leap into online communications. So hit the pause key, find a comfortable chair in a sealed room and turn the page.

And by the way, readme.txt cannot be deleted.

NEXT MONTH: Want daily access to the Internet and nearly any conference network, continuously updated info 24 hours a day all while cutting your telephone bill 80 percent? Pick up the February issue and we'll give you the whole story.

R. Robinson Jr.

Editor-in-Chief

Online Photograph Database and Catalog Order Entry

DC Net v2.0

Durand Communications Network proudly announces the DC Net Online Photograph Database. This powerful multi-line database is 100% configurable to meet your application needs. Now you can create your own business database application or use one of our 'turn-key' applications to provide complete database services. With DC Net, you can have up to 16 databases online at one time.

The latest addition to the DC NET Online Photograph Database family of products is Order Entry v1.0. Callers can search a graphical database, view photographs and order products online. Order Entry can link to any custom designed DC NET database application.

Features

DC Net v2.0

- ✓ Multiple images and text on the same screen
- ✓ Move, resize or tile multiple images online or offline
- ✓ Terminal program is 100% RIPscrip compatible
- ✓ Attach up to 10 photographs or text files to any record
- ✓ View up to 7 pages of detail for every record
- ✓ Print photographs online or offline
- ✓ Bill only successful database searches
- ✓ Offline viewing of images with DC Slideshow
- ✓ Support for BMP, PCX, GIF, TIF, TGA and CMP
- ✓ Most images compress to 8k-15k
- ✓ Shareware terminal program distributed royalty free

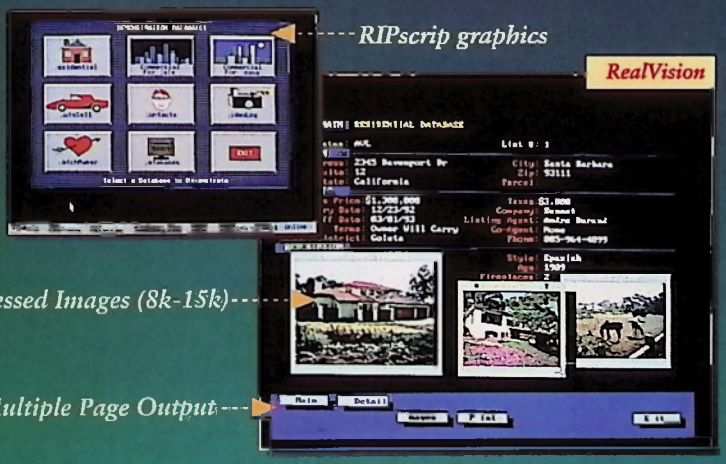
Order Entry v1.0

- ✓ 100% configurable to meet your Order Entry needs
- ✓ Configurable shipping and payment methods
- ✓ Define distributor discounts
- ✓ Complete user-account level security
- ✓ Review orders and totals before ordering
- ✓ Automatically calculates taxes and shipping
- ✓ Automatically generates E-Mail P.O.
- ✓ Complete mouse support

NEW v1.0 ORDER ENTRY

AutoSell

MatchMaker



DEMO BBS: 805-964-2833 (8N1)

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NEWSWIRE

Move Over Bureaucrats — ZyXEL Puts the Citizens Online

Diamond Bar, CA — Unaccountable bureaucrats, red tape and the dreary Muzac behind the hold button getting you down? One Orange County, CA, city has — with the help of ZyXEL voice/fax modems — found a way to beat the system (and clean up the air).

The town of Diamond Bar last fall implemented a telecomm pilot program enabling residents to use their PCs to access city documents, read announcements, send electronic mail to officials and staff members, and to complete city surveys.

Called City Online, the system was put in place without the use of tax money. The computer/telecomm system is made up completely of hardware and software donated by various vendors.

Key components of City Online are four ZyXEL U-1496E voice/fax modems which the Anaheim, CA-based supplier of high-speed land and cellular modems donated to the city. The ZyXEL modems offer integrated voice and fax line sharing, call forwarding, remote access and private mailboxes.

A thrust behind the communications project is a recent California law requiring municipalities to create ways to reduce auto usage, thereby improving air quality: fewer cars traveling to city hall, less air pollution.

But what about those without computers and modems? The city plans to install City Online terminals in local supermarkets and libraries, enabling them to consolidate short errands, too.

For more information, contact ZyXEL at 4920 E. La Palma Ave. Anaheim, CA 92807, or call voice (714) 693-0808, fax (714) 693-0705, BBS (714) 693-0762.

Stryker Wins Dvorak/Zoom Award

Fort Lauderdale, FL — Timothy J. Stryker, creator of the Major BBS multi-user bulletin board software and founder of Galacticomm, Inc., received a Dvorak/Zoom Award for Technical Excellence at the second annual ONE BBSCON in Colorado Springs, CO.

An "all-around industry guru," according to John C. Dvorak, Stryker founded Galacticomm in 1985, then designed The Major BBS, making the source code available to encourage third-party development. Today, with an installed base of over 14,000 and more than 100 third-party developers, The Major BBS supports 256 simultaneous users on a single CPU, 3,500 public forum areas and one million files in the libraries. Add-on options include fax-mail, online order entry and Internet connectivity.

Chairman of the board Stryker is currently working on two new ventures, as well: Consensus Systems, Inc., a third-party developer for Galacticomm, and the Superdemocracy Foundation, a non-profit corporation encouraging participation in electronic democracy and voting.

For more information, contact Galacticomm at 4101 SW 47th Avenue, Suite 101, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314 or call them at voice 800-328-1128, fax (305) 583-7846, BBS (305) 583-7808. For information on Consensus Systems or the Superdemocracy Foundation, call (305) 370-7850.

New Version of SemWare's QEdit Products Hits the Streets

Marietta, GA — SemWare Corporation recently began shipping version 3.0 of its flagship line of QEdit products, including QEdit Advanced, QEdit TSR and QEdit for OS/2. Each has been enhanced with greater editing control.

SemWare has been recognized for incorporating ease-of-use in its powerful, quick and configurable products.

New features in QEdit 3.0 products include a fully integrated spelling checker, increased maximum line length (1,000 characters), enhanced printing options allowing users to select print device, adjust the line spacing and print numbers. Improved macro capabilities make it even easier to develop macros to further personalize QEdit.

For more information, contact SemWare at 4343 Shallowford Road, Suite C3A, Marietta, GA 30062-5022 or call: voice (404) 641-9002, fax (404) 640-6213, BBS (404) 641-8968.

Hayes Announces JT Fax 144B Dual

Atlanta, GA — Hayes Microcomputer Products, Inc., recently announced Hayes JT Fax 14400B Dual (JT Fax 144Dual), an internal, dual port fax board that supports Group 3 fax speeds of 14,400 bit/s and full-featured digital voice capability. The high-performance fax board can be used in LAN fax server or gateway applications, as well as for enhanced fax services such as fax-on-demand.

JT Fax voice capability eliminates the need for an additional voice card and provides voice announcement and prompting, voice record and playback and Dual Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF)

encode/decode, allowing commands to be entered from a TouchTone telephone. The product comes with two dedicated fax and voice units, each with a 16 MHz microprocessor allowing send and receive conversions on-the-fly.

The JT Fax Applications Programming Interface (API) enables fax developers to compose or adapt applications with ease. Applications include FACSys from OPTUS Software, Inc. and FaxFacts from Copia International.

For more information, contact Hayes Customer Service at voice (404) 441-1617, BBS (800) US-HAYES, ISDN (404) 729-6525.

Synergy Comm. Presents Worldwide Desktop

Santa Barbara, CA — Synergy Communications' FILE EXPRESS, "The Worldwide Desktop" for Windows, allows users to view local and remote hard drives on a single Windows desktop. FILE EXPRESS owners can click-and-drag files from their system in Toledo to the one on their desk in New York...or Miami, for that matter.

Via modem or direct link, FILE EXPRESS provides "server" capability so a remote PC's hard drive structure can be viewed from anywhere. Passwords are provided for security and an activity log, including messages, is maintained.

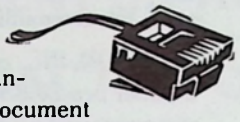
For more information, contact Synergy Communications at 5276 Hollister Avenue, Suite 405, Santa Barbara, CA 93111 or call: voice (805) 964-1755, fileX (805) 964-1962, Fax (805) 964-4418.

Version 6.0 of Ready,Set,Go! Released

Hartsdale, NY — Manhattan Graphics Corporation has released Ready,Set, Go!, the high-end Mac desktop publishing package first offered in 1985.

Version 6.0 includes many new features, including object-level trapping, multiple master pages, gradient fills and EPSF export. Auto scaling of text and graphics, XTND support, auto drop caps, floating tool palettes and a presentation module all are incorporated in the package.

Says MGC: It's System 7 savvy, with support for QuickTime, Apple Events and Publish & Subscribe (of formatted text and graphics).



Ready,Set,Go! supports multiple languages in a single document with automatic hyphenation and spell-checking. Stylesheets can be language-specific or shared globally. For color, a separator provides complete spot and process functions, including RGB-to-CMYK conversion of TIFF/RIFF/EPSF files, dot shape selection, screening control and GCR/UCR control.

For more information, contact Manhattan Graphics, 250 East Hartsdale Avenue, Hartsdale, NY 10530, or call 1-800-572-6533.

ASP Adopts Shareware Info System

Muskegon, MI — The Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP) voted last fall to adopt the VENDINFO Software Distribution Information System developed by Rams' Island Software of Parker, CO.

VENDINFO conveys software product information and distribution permissions from author to distributors. A standard file (based on a public format) will carry extensive information in a compressed format. The associated tool set will aid the author in constructing the record, and will allow the distributor to extract portions of the record, or to make distribution decisions based on its content, in a highly automated fashion. Operations currently performed manually by sysops and disk vendors will be automated.

VENDINFO will also increase use of the author-provided product descriptions, and improve compliance with product distribution policies.

It is expected the VENDINFO.DIZ record will replace the VENDOR.DOC, SYSOP.DOC, LICENSE.DOC, WARRANTY.DOC, SITELICE.DOC, FILE_ID.DIZ and DESC.SDI usually found in shareware and public-domain software packages.

For more information, contact the ASP at 545 Grover Road, Muskegon, MI 49442-9427, or call Rudi Ramsey at (303) 841-2848.

Plug-and-Play Mobility with Wireless LAN Adapter

San Diego — Soloctek Corp. recently introduced AIRLAN/PCMCIA, the latest member of its AIRLAN wireless Ethernet product family.

Designed for use with PCMCIA equipped notebook computers, AIRLAN allows mobile LAN connections giving users the freedom to about their workplace uninhibited by power cords and network cables.

AIRLAN operates a 2 Mbps and supports all major network operating systems including Novell NetWare, Artisoft LANtastic and Microsoft Windows for Workgroups. No line-of-sight operation is required: the technology passes data through walls, ceilings and floors up to 800 feet.

AIRLAN is just 5.25 ounces and small enough to be tucked in a purse or pocket. Use is simple and without the need for external AC power or cabling. The antenna comes with a self-mounting bracket for easy connection to the notebook, no matter where it is.

For more information, contact Solectek Corp. at 6370 Nancy Ridge Drive, San Diego, CA 92121, or call 1-800-437-1518.

Searchlight Makes its Move

Cleveland, OH — Searchlight Software has moved its corporate headquarters from Stony Brook, NY to Cleveland, OH.

The BBS Software developer said the November move was the first in a series of dramatic announcements planned for its users.

"Once we're in Cleveland, we can begin taking the next steps," said Frank LaRosa, Searchlight President. "We'll be making a major announcement in each of the next six months; I think our users will be thrilled to see what we have planned for them."

After considering Boston and San Diego as possible sites for relocation, Searchlight finally chose Cleveland for its business cost-effectiveness. Cleveland is the country's seventh largest metropolitan area and ranks as the third lowest in cost of living, not to mention the city offers low-interest loans to businesses

CONTINUES ...

relocating there, noted Geoff Beckman, vice president of operations.

Searchlight's new address is Searchlight Software, 6516 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102. They can be reached at (BBS) 216-631-9285, (voice) 216-631-9290, (fax) 216-631-9289. The Orders line remains 800-780-LITE.

The Skinny

NEC AMERICA INC. recently announced its Dr. Bond collection of bandwidth-on-demand dial routers now supports AppleTalk via AppleTalk Remote Access Protocol.

PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS, a leading manufacturer of modems and other peripherals, has appointed John W. Murphy as president.

XIRCOM INC. has introduced its Pocket Ethernet Modem.

VON BULOW ASSOCIATES is now offering its Voice Tree and Fax Tree System. The computer-based fax-back system is programmable and interactive.

A U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES subcommittee in Washington has OKd a bill funding pilot programs to connect schools, health care facilities, local government and library systems via the latest in telecommunications technologies.

MICROCOM, INC., released in late October two 28.8 Kps V. fast modems at a suggested retail price of $499. Microcom is a leading developer of remote PC connections.

INTERNIC INFORMATION SERVICES recently launched its premier issue of NICLink, a CD-ROM-based quarterly periodical.

TRIBUNE COMPANY, Ticketmaster Corp. and America Online, Inc., have formed an alliance allowing Chicago Online members to check schedules and buy tickets for concerts in the Chicago area and Florida. AOL is also offering the Cowles/SIMBA Media Daily, an electronically delivered assortment of daily media and publishing news.

IBM IS PRESENTING a new group of personal computers, Personal System/1, that the company claims will greatly reduce the learning curve for neophyte home and small business PC users.

SUPRA CORPORATION reached an agreement in late September to acquire assets of PSI integration, the modem manufacturer based in Campbell, CA. Supra manufactures communications products for Macintosh, DOS and Windows operating systems.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES is expanding its line to include Macintosh. The comm-products maker is offering CrossTalk for Macintosh.

INFO ENTERPRISES has announced an online service offering digital information, multimedia, messaging and more by way of wide area network or modem.

AIR COMMUNICATIONS INC. has announced AirCommunicator. The device supports 57,600 bps data transmission over the current cellular telephone network.

PIICEON, the modem and memory manufacturer, is distributing it's cell-ready/full-featured PCMCIA with SmartConnect. The entire PCMCIA line has undergone price reductions of nearly 30 percent.

IBM PC CO. recently announced its Windsurfer Communications Adapter for Micro Channel Systems. The device is said to turn the PC into a "complete telecommunications center."

AT&T'S INTERSPAN frame relay in Europe will be expanded to allow customers to connect their LANs directly to InterSpan.

MICROSOFT CORP. is set to release upgraded e-mail clients with built-in remote features and more user-interface customizing ability.

EDIFY CORP. has announced v.3.0 of its Edify Electronic Workforce, the agent-based software that automates the handling and communication of information.

AT&T PARADYNE has released a non-proprietary multimedia modem that will allow users to send and receive still images, graphics or data while talking on the telephone.

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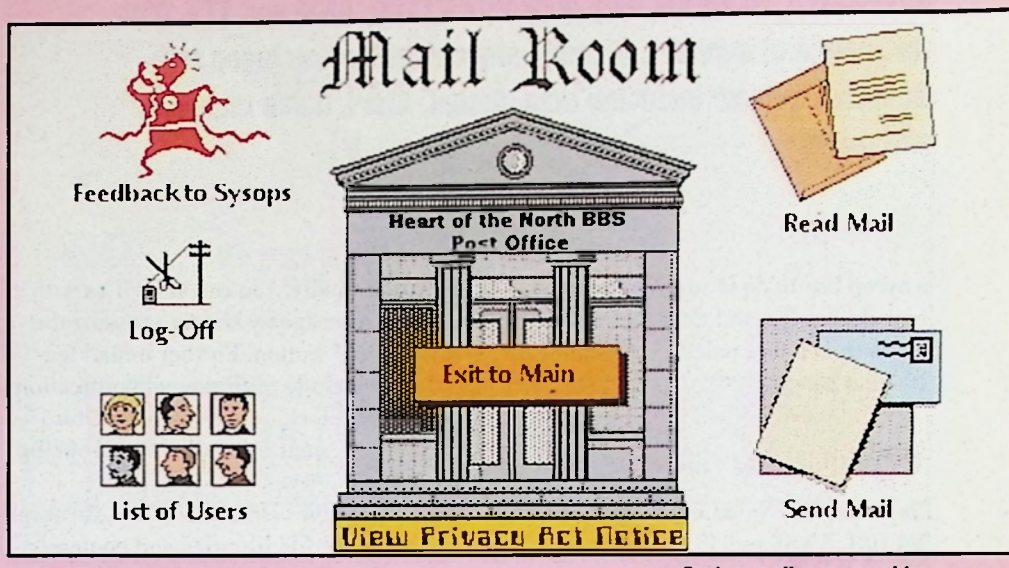
Probing the Pro

A Friendly Mac GUI Host that Doesn't Discriminate? Welcome DOS Callers

BY SCOTT EDWARDS

Custom conference room graphics in the Heart of the North BBS.

Much has been written over the past few months about GUI (Graphical User Interface, or goo-ey) hosts for the Macintosh. In general, most find that graphical bulletin board systems are more exciting and easier to use than the traditional command-line user interface, common to most PC-based systems. There are three main contenders in the Macintosh BBS software market: TeleFinder by Spider Island Software, operating out of California, First Class by Soft Arc in Canada, and NovaLink Professional (NLP) by ResNova Software, also headquartered in California. First Class has garnered plenty of good press, but I would like to focus on one of the three packages: NovaLink Professional.



Custom mail room graphics in the Heart of the North BBS.

NovaLink, the first version of NovaLink Professional, was written by Alexander Hopmann (currently ResNova president) in 1987. March of 1992, ResNova Software was formed to develop, promote and sell the NovaLink information server technology. Since that time, NLP has gone through a continuous cycle of improvements and has received worldwide support. Above all, ResNova's product support is the best I've seen shy of Scott Watson in his Red Ryder days.

The Features...

There are two key elements to this client-server software package. NovaLink Professional is the server/host software and NovaTerm is the client/terminal software. Beyond standard bulletin board functionality, NLP is full featured, including a GUI for both Mac and PC users, message forums, e-mail, file libraries, conferencing, a built-in scripting language, external applications support (similar to "doors" in the DOS world), gateways to e-mail packages and interconnectivity to Internet, Fidonet and InfoLink.

User Interfaces

There are many "looks" to a NovaLink board. Each interface is designed to meet the needs of a specific user in the on-line community. The choices are custom graphics, icon-driven and the traditional text-based interface (VT100).

Custom Graphics

With the unlimited flexibility of custom graphics, system operators (Sysops) can design unique systems reflecting their personality. For server navigation, sysops can create their own custom icons, unique buttons and menus. Custom GUIs are available to Mac (NovaTerm graphics), Windows and DOS users (Remote Imaging Protocol-RIPscrip).

NovaTerm graphics can either be imported from your favorite paint program or created in a utility called NovaMondrian. NovaMondrian allows the sysop to define mouse sensitive regions, so that an easy-to-use point and click environment can be implemented. On the other hand, RIPscrip is used to design a GUI for DOS and Windows users. The RIPscrip package includes RIPaint (used to create the interface) and RIPterm (the client software).

NovaView

The icon-driven GUI, also known as NovaView, is similar to the Macintosh desktop with folders, scrollable windows and clickable icons. The NovaView interface is automatically generated as you design the server. All

CONTINUES...

Beyond GUI, NovaLink fully supports VT100, ANSI and TTY. With this range of support, literally any computer can logon to a NovaLink server including Unix, Amiga, Atari, dumb terminals and more.

a sysop has to do is run NLP, open a new design file and drag miniature icons from a tool palette into a folder. It's that easy.

Traditional Interfaces

Beyond GUI, NovaLink fully supports VT100, ANSI and TTY. With this range of support, literally any computer can logon to a NovaLink server including Unix, Amiga, Atari, dumb terminals and more. Historically, Mac-based BBSs did a poor job of implementing command-line user interfaces, but with NLP Mac users can rival PC-based systems.

Elements of the Server

NovaLink Pro has an excellent messaging system. Message forums are threaded, so the original message and all its replies are chronologically organized. The software creates folders for each new post and stores all replies to that message in the same folder. (With all messages located in one place, life is a little easier).

Other message forum features include quoting, message scanning and auto deletion of stale messages; both message forums and e-mail support stylized text. Similar to a word processor, font sizes, style and color can be altered to add excitement to any message. No more unfamiliar word processing environment, like the clumsy line editors in some host software packages.

Additionally, you can send files with your message by simply pressing the "Attach" button. Further e-mail features include off-line mail notification, message forwarding, quoting, return receipts, mailing groups and browsing lists.

Two other elements of the NovaLink server are file libraries and conferencing. NovaLink has complete file library support, including auditing, CD ROM support, simultaneous uploads/downloads in the background and searching by short and long description. NovaLink offers several options for internode communication. NLP can have any number of real-time teleconferences, bulletins, two-person chats, sysop chats and special sysop supervision control.

NovaScript

Beside all the built-in capability of NovaLink Pro, the package allows you to add even more flexibility to your BBS. This is achieved through the user scripting language, NovaScript. NovaScript is similar to HyperTalk in appearance, and allows you to create things like on-line quizzes; restriction of certain nodes to authorized clients; displays of varying graphics based on user criteria; and, plenty more. But the exciting way to add more pizzazz to your board is through the use of externals.

Externals

Since NovaLink has been around in some form or another since 1987, there are a substantial number of externals available in the public domain. There are games, BBS list utilities, sysop tools, and many more utilities. Externals can be developed in C or Pascal. ResNova promotes and encourages the development of externals, making C libraries available to everyone on their BBS, NovaCentral (714-379-9004). In fact, Omeed Fanaian, a college student, has developed and is marketing — with the help of ResNova — an "External Power Pack," complete with an array of useful tools, including:

- Bulk Mailer, which allows sysops to mail to multiple users at once, based on access level, computer type, number of calls, etc.
- E-Mail Director, which allows you to combine all of a user's mail into one text file for mailing.
- MenuGen, which lets you automatically generate a RIP or NovaTerm Graphics menu for those areas you haven't gotten around to yet
- Netris 2.0, a multi-user Tetris-clone. Users play against each other, or against the computer.
- NovaStat, which allows you to export account info to your favorite database or spreadsheet, based on your criteria.
- NovaLink Accountant Professional, which calculates billing based on minutes used. It also contains invoicing functions.
- NovaLink Accountant Hobby, which

A colorful example of custom graphics possible with NovaLink Pro. Shown is the Secret World BBS.

calculates billing periodically for non-commercial applications.

■ New User, which takes all the info from new signups and puts it in a file for your database and a file for your sales department.

The External Power Pack is being offered through ResNova for $99 to NLP sysops. You can also buy both the complete package with source code for $300.

E-mail Gateways

NovaLink also offers a gateway to QuickMail. These gateways — which bridge one program to another — are bi-directional and transparent to the end user. E-mail gateways allow users to send and receive messages from their internal mail server. Other e-mail gateways under development include Microsoft Mail and C.C. Mail.

The Connectivity... Access to the World

The real power in the NovaLink Pro software is in its networking/connectivity capability. ResNova offers an Internet professional pack that allows you to connect NovaLink Pro to the Internet via a SLIP, PPP or router. Once connected, you can set up TCP/IP nodes where internal network users and Internet subscribers can telnet directly into a NovaLink server. This package also permits you to dial into a NLP server and telnet out to other systems on the Internet. Access to Usenet newsfeeds is available as well.

For Internet news and mail, NovaLink Pro supports NNTP and SMTP respectively. Additionally, UUCP just became available late last year.

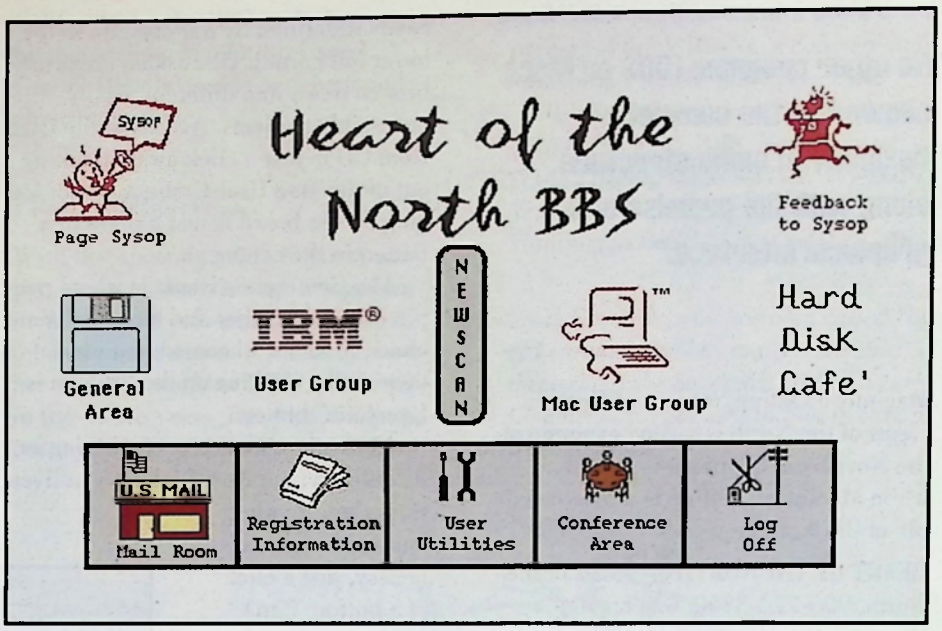
Fidonet

As for FidoNet connectivity, Craig Vaughan, author of the MacWoof point package, has released a new package, being marketed through ResNova, called MacKennel. The product is offered in 3 different flavors :

■ Version 1. Basic Point Mailer — This package offers manual or auto-session operation, seamless integration with NovaLink Pro, unlimited echo support, ARC and ZIP mail bundle processing, both 4D and "pointnet" addressing support, and WaZoo and FTS-0001 sessions.

■ Version 2. FidoNet "end" Node Mailer — This is Version 1 plus operations scheduling on a daily or weekly basis and "continuous/crash" mail operation.

■ Version 3. Full FidoNet Node/Hub Mailer — Version 2 plus an integrated Nodelist processor, full "zone" awareness with direct and "host" routing, points and other nodes for echomail distribution, or hubbing.



The main menu in the Heart of the North BBS.

InfoLink

In the process of final beta-testing is InfoLink, ResNova's wide area networking solution. InfoLink is built into every NovaLink package. This feature allows Multiple remote NovaLink servers to be linked together. InfoLink identifies a specific time interval for a server to call its supervisor and, at that time, automatically update and route file libraries, message forums and e-mail. InfoLink operates over all NovaLink supported connections including modem, AppleTalk, X.25, TCP/IP and Communications Toolbox.

Coming soon from ResNova, a gateway for complete QWK and AppleSearch. QWK will provide an off-line reader to clients on many different platforms. AppleSearch allows users to logon to a NLP server and conduct text searches of unstructured documents on a file server. AppleSearch queries can be performed over all supported NovaLink connections.

NovaLink's client software NovaTerm.

A customized version of NovaTerm.

NovaLink Pro Boards...

To show what NovaLink Pro is capable of, we are going to look at two boards running the software: Heart of the North, run out of Michigan, and

CONTINUES...

"No other program (DOS or Mac) allowed us the complete flexibility of menu structure along with the promise of a graphical interface."

Macintosh Online, run out of Georgia. Heart of the North is a good example of the NovaTerm Graphics-type look, while Macintosh Online is a nice example of the NovaView look.

HEART OF THE NORTH — Heart of the North, 906-774-3260, was created by Clarence Christian and John Darrow in early 1992. They started with NovaLink Pro in 1990, running a BBS for a local computer store, and have been with it ever since. Their reasons for using NovaLink were its flexibility in allowing them to support both Macintosh and MS-DOS users. Their location in the heart of northern Michigan's upper peninsula made cross-platform support essential. They migrated to NovaLink Pro from an Apple II based BBS and, according to Clarence, "When evaluating programs on the DOS and Macintosh side, NovaLink seemed to have the most promise as far as having our board formatted exactly how we wanted. No other program (DOS or Mac) allowed us the complete flexibility of menu structure along with the promise of a graphical interface."

Their board is a good example of what one can do with the NovaTerm graphics. The main menu consists of images resting upon "invisible buttons." By clicking on the picture, it takes you to another area of the board. Using these links, one can move to any part of the board, being limited only by what buttons are available.

This makes the BBS less hierarchical and more "HyperCard-ish" in its ability to jump around to different areas. One does not have to go through a series of menus, then back out of the menus to go to a different area.

By clicking on the Macintosh image, another screen representing the Macintosh User Group main menu appears. Here, the library section is easily identified by the diskette in the lower left corner. Discussion areas are broken down into different, easily accessible subjects. Access to the Giga Rom CD is just a click away. Backing out of the Mac User Group menu or logging off the board is just a press of a button in the center.

The Conference Room is where people can get together and have real-time chats. Find out who is on and where they are by clicking on the "Where is Everyone" button.

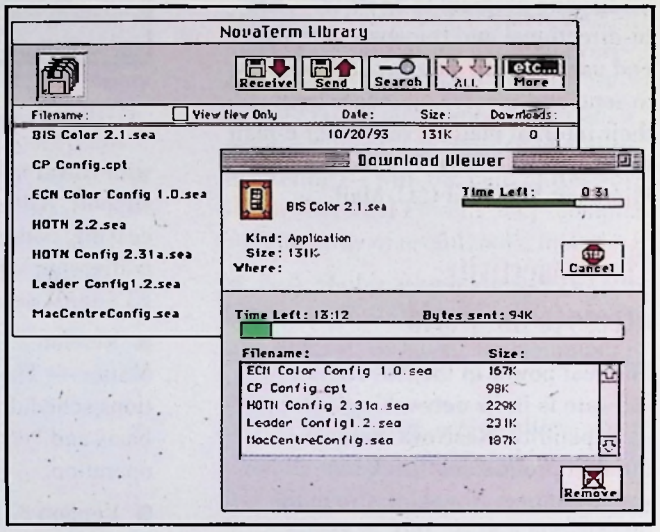
Normally e-mail is pretty boring in its delivery, but NovaLink let you liven things up. Reading and sending mail is easy, just a click of a button. Can't remember the handle or exact name of the person you need to contact? Click on "List of Users." Learn about the Electronic Mail Privacy Act by clicking at the base of the building. Also, logoff can be activated at every screen.

All in all, the graphics of NovaLink is what makes the board fun. Using RIPterm, a terminal program that supports RIP graphics, IBM users as well can call and use the GUI of the BBS. In other words, the board can be run with a Mac, but accessible by IBMs and Macs alike.

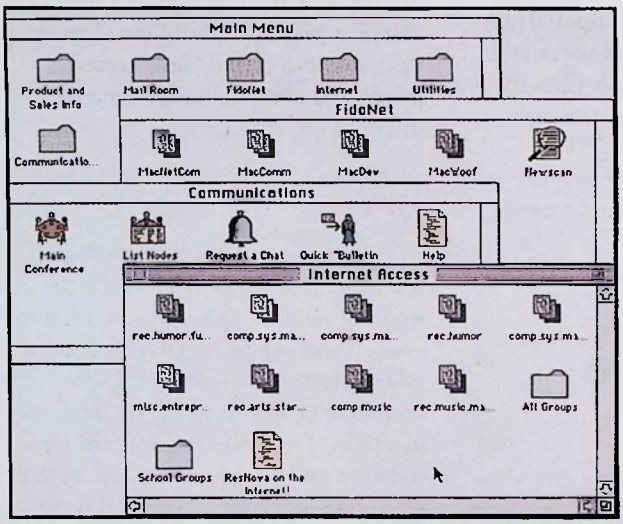
MACINTOSH ONLINE — Macintosh Online, 404-988-9904, was created by Andy Kuykendall as the home of the Online Macintosh Users' Group (OMUG), and a place to disseminate as much info as possible to the Mac community. OMUG chose NovaLink Pro over the other GUI host software packages, such as First Class, because of the amount of development ResNova puts into their product.

"I have friends that run First Class boards, and all the development is being done by third party developers, and it's not that good. For example, a friend of mine runs FidoNet off his board in Texas, but he has to run a macro, that he himself had to develop, that has to make his Mac jump through multiple hoops before he can get and send his messages."

The goal of the Online Mac Users' Group is "to educate and make the Mac user more self-sufficient, but have fun doing so."



A view of NovaCentral BBS shows the line-up of files to be downloaded.



NovaView's icon-driven interface allows for multiple windows, as shown in the NovaCentral BBS.

There are several folders that allow you to organize different subjects into different folders. Macintosh Online has a folder for its user group activities (OMUG folder), a message area folder, PD/Shareware library, demos library, classified ads section, games, mail, etc. The Subscribe option allows users to choose what area of the board they want to join (mainly the joining of message forums). The Scan for New option allows the user to check to see what has been added to the board since the last time he or she was on. The Read Me First! icon is a document that is set up for new users logging in to help them navigate around the board.

In the OMUG folder, we can see examples of how read documents, libraries and externals can be blended to perform as a place for club business to transact, with announcements as double-clickable read documents, a "club articles and reviews" section for download, a news section where you can scan for headlines and an external allowing members to share the numbers of their favorite BBSs.

Message forums are an important part of a BBS, and NovaLink Pro allows you to have as many areas as you wish. By being able to set up folders (and further break down your message areas) you can set up some highly focused topics.

Although good conversation is always welcome, many users seem to gravitate towards the download section of a BBS. File areas on NovaLink Pro are easy to set up, and you can select different paths for the files to be stored, allowing you to spread files across multiple volumes. If you have several small drives, you can "break up" where you want your files to be stored. As well, sysops can have files automatically updated into the library, or NovaLink can be configured to allow sysops to "release" files after they have been checked out first. Although this may take more time, some sysops prefer to do it this way, so as to let them check the software first, thereby providing a virus-free library.

CD-ROMs can easily be incorporated into a NovaLink Pro as a library section, provided the CD uses the SIT C resource in their files (resource contains the file descriptors). An excellent CD for this is the BBS in A Box, put out by the Arizona Macintosh Users' Group. Details on this may be found almost anywhere.

Final Thoughts...

With the upcoming data highway project being pushed through our government, and the ever-changing world of telecommunications, it's hard to imagine what the world of BBSs will be like in five to ten years. But with ISDN support already built into NovaLink Pro and their ongoing commitment to development, I think ResNova Software and NovaLink Pro will play a key role.

ResNova can be reached at (714) 379-9000; BBS, Nova Central – (714) 379-9004; Fax – (714) 379-9014. Write to 5011 Argosy Drive, #13, Huntington Beach, CA 92649.

Scott Edwards, who has been called "an old curmudgeon" by many consults throughout the Southeast United States. Comments may be sent to him in care of BBS Magazine.

a peek into POWERBOARD

NUIQ President Scott Brown and his Powerboard.

NUIQ'S BBS SOFTWARE IS AUTOMATED, CONFIGURABLE AND JUST MAY BE SMARTER THAN YOU

If Scott Brown had his druthers, Powerboard BBS would be accepted as "the first BBS package not requiring third-party software." It's quite a statement. But with 50 third-party programs under his belt — authored for other BBS packages — he seems to have experience on his side.

Powerboard is the software created by Brown's NUIQ Software Inc. of Larchmont, New York (pronounced New IQ), the company first brought the system to the public in late 1991. It quickly gained popularity with the release of v.1.20, and today stands as a flexible, configurable package with the future of telecommunications in focus (not to mention a soft spot for eye-pleasing simplicity).

School of Thought

Eighteen-year-old Brown and current NUIQ tech-support/customer relations/software distribution expert Eric Speer, also 18, met while attending high school together. Realizing each had an interest in becoming a successful computer-industry entrepreneur, the two became friends.

Speer followed his bailiwick in computers to become an independent consultant, providing services to individuals and small businesses, while Brown (NUIQ president) performed freelance programming. The next move was a natural one: The pair combined their skills to form Speer-Brown Systems.

SBS took on small consulting and programming jobs, one of which spawned SB-LINK: "A subscription BBS offering services specialized for the local community," said Brown.

But after "a year of running the BBS," Brown noted, "we decided to go our separate ways."

Speer continued running the BBS as Brown moved into the realm of shareware programming.

Shortly after, in 1990, Brown started writing third-party utilities (features BBS authors forgot to include in their software).

Moving On

"By 1991, I had written some 50 third-party programs and made the decision to begin work on a complete BBS package."

Using his knowledge of what "extras" sysops liked on their BBSs, Brown generated the skeleton of Powerboard. And "while I was developing the software, Speer began testing the programs and offering suggestions."

Brown started working alongside high school student Doug Vermes, the former co-sysop of SB-LINK, who "brought with him many ideas for the Powerboard software."

"When differences of opinion arose on how a procedure should be done," Brown said, "the option or procedure was made configurable by the sysop."

Following the initial release of the software, Speer was back working with Brown full time. And by the end of 1991 two official releases of Powerboard were made.

The software promised sysops an "automated system that required Expandability; High resolution graphics support; Fast e-mail; Security; Compatibility; Professional technical support; and, no-maintenance automation."

After diligent alpha testing and wide acceptance of v.1.20, Roland Baroni was brought in to handle marketing. Said Brown, Baroni took on "much more than marketing and was given the title of General Manager" in August of last year.

Currently, Powerboard sales have reached 10 orders a week. And to help increase that number, Brown has made a functional test drive version available on BBSs across the country. Callers should look for the files: PB125A_1.ZIP/2.ZIP/3.ZIP/4.ZIP. A test drive is also available by calling NUIQ.

The Specs

Message/Mail Databases

- Proprietary format
- Conference Setup
- Maximum of 2,147,483,647 messages per area
- Maximum 32,767 message areas
- .QWK format mail door included
- Internal full-screen messaging editor

Users can enter brief codes to substitute reader's name, calling from etc. in e-mail and public messages. Also, color codes may be entered unseen if the reader is not in color mode.

Echomail/Netmail

- Postlink via UTI-2.1 drivers
- QWK (Qnet) via TNET and UTI-1 drivers
- FIDO
- Internet via TNET or FIDO

File Areas

- FILES.BBS listing format
- No limit to number of file areas per area
- Maximum 32,767 file areas per conference

ZIPPYCHECK Archive Scanning utility included. ZIPPYCHECK scans archives (ZIP, LZH, ARJ) for virus, validity, age constraints and unwanted files. The ZC program also replaces BBS ad comments and will make sure the archive is compressed optimally.

View Function

- Online file viewer will view a file in standard text format, as well as archives in .Zoo, .Zip, .Lzh, .Arj, .Arc and .Pak.

Doors

- External programs can be executed as a child process (shell) shelled to after swapping memory to Disk/EMS or

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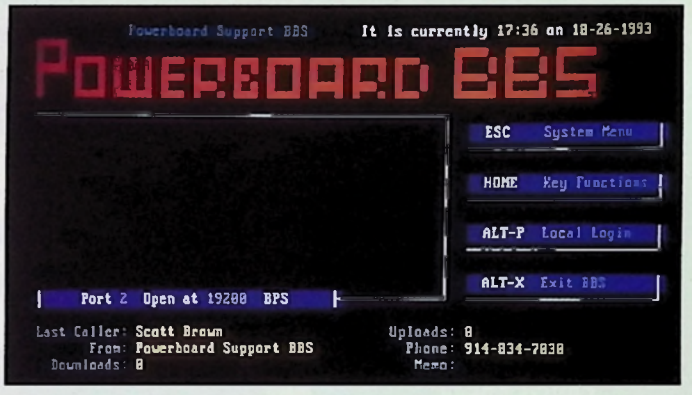

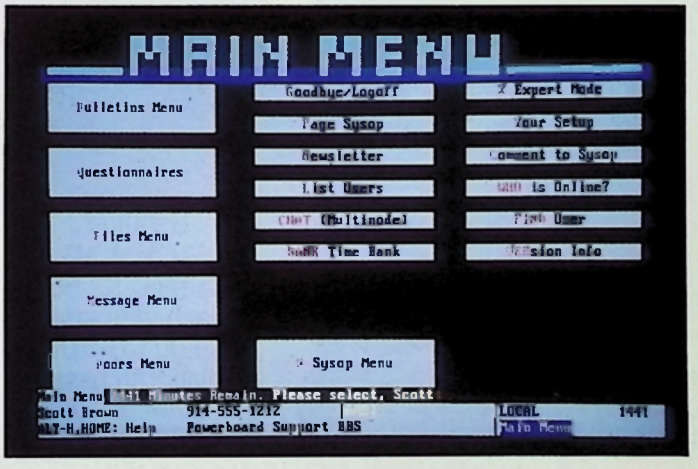

(top) Powerboard at rest, waiting for calls.

(right) Powerboard's Main Menu.

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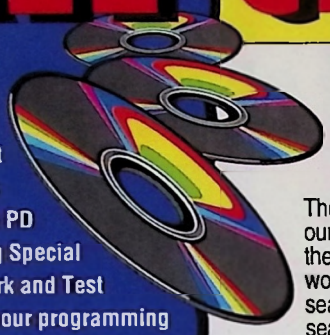

Mega Demo & Test contains 350 Megs of PC Shareware & PD software. Including Special CD-ROM Benchmark and Test Utilities written by our programming staff, & NOT available on any other CD-ROM Discs. Our Special Test Utilities measure throughput as well as access time in a reliable and consistent manner for a meaningful real-world benchmark for CD drives. The Disc and Interface Software are fully functional (Even for BBS Use) and not crippled in any way. When purchased separately Mega Demo and Test is $14.00 plus $6.00 for S&H However for a Limited Time This Demo and Test CD-ROM Disc is Free with any CD Disc purchase.

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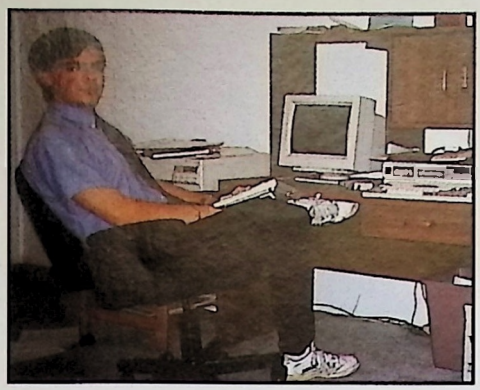


Eric Speer, programmer in repose.

executed after completely exiting the Powerboard main program.

Door "Drop" Files

- Powerboard creates DOOR.SYS and DORINFO.DEF files each time a program is executed. Door programs not supporting the standard DOOR.SYS interface can be run via conversion software.

Displays

- Over 275 default display files. System can be modified to display as little as zero or as many as many display files as necessary.
- Displays can be in any file format. Powerboard interprets and displays locally PCBANSI(@X), ANSI, PBANSI(&,$), THEDRAW and ASCII display formats. RIP, NAPLPS and other graphic formats can be displayed by caller.
- Internal RIP and ANSI auto-detect.
- Hundreds of imbedded text codes supported, such as %NAME% for user name and %FROM% for user calling from.
- Internal editor for editing ANSI and ASCII display screens (PBUTIL ANSIDRAW).

Sound

- Completely configurable sysop page bell with PagePlay utility included.
- ANSI Music supported locally and remotely

Multinode

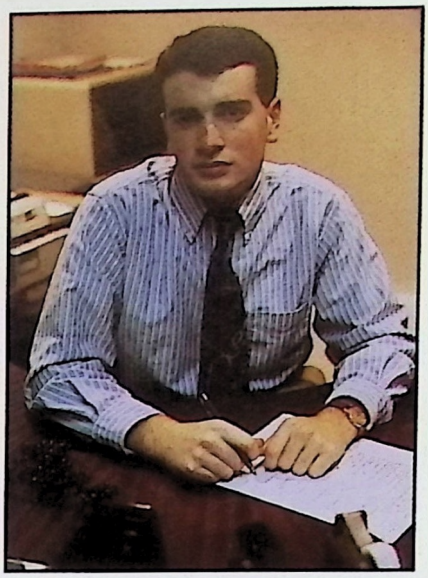
- Remote sysop control for disconnecting online users, shutting down nodes, viewing remote screens and viewing alternate node caller's logs.
- Multiconference multinode chat allowing private/public chats, specific node chats, all-node chats and on-the-fly remote user creation of chat conferences.
- Remote users can exchange messages. Destination node's user can be anywhere on the BBS and receive the message instantly.

Security

- Automatic checking for phony users by comparing phone numbers, checking passwords, calling-from fields, etc.
- Unlimited security levels

Control Language

- BBS is infinitely configurable/expandable via Powerboard Control Language.



General Manager Roland Baroni

Powerboard comes in six flavors, from single node ($99) to 999 nodes ($2,300). NUIQ can be reached at 415-A Richbell Road, Larchmont, NY 10538, or (voice) 914-833-3479; order number, (800) 844-6526.

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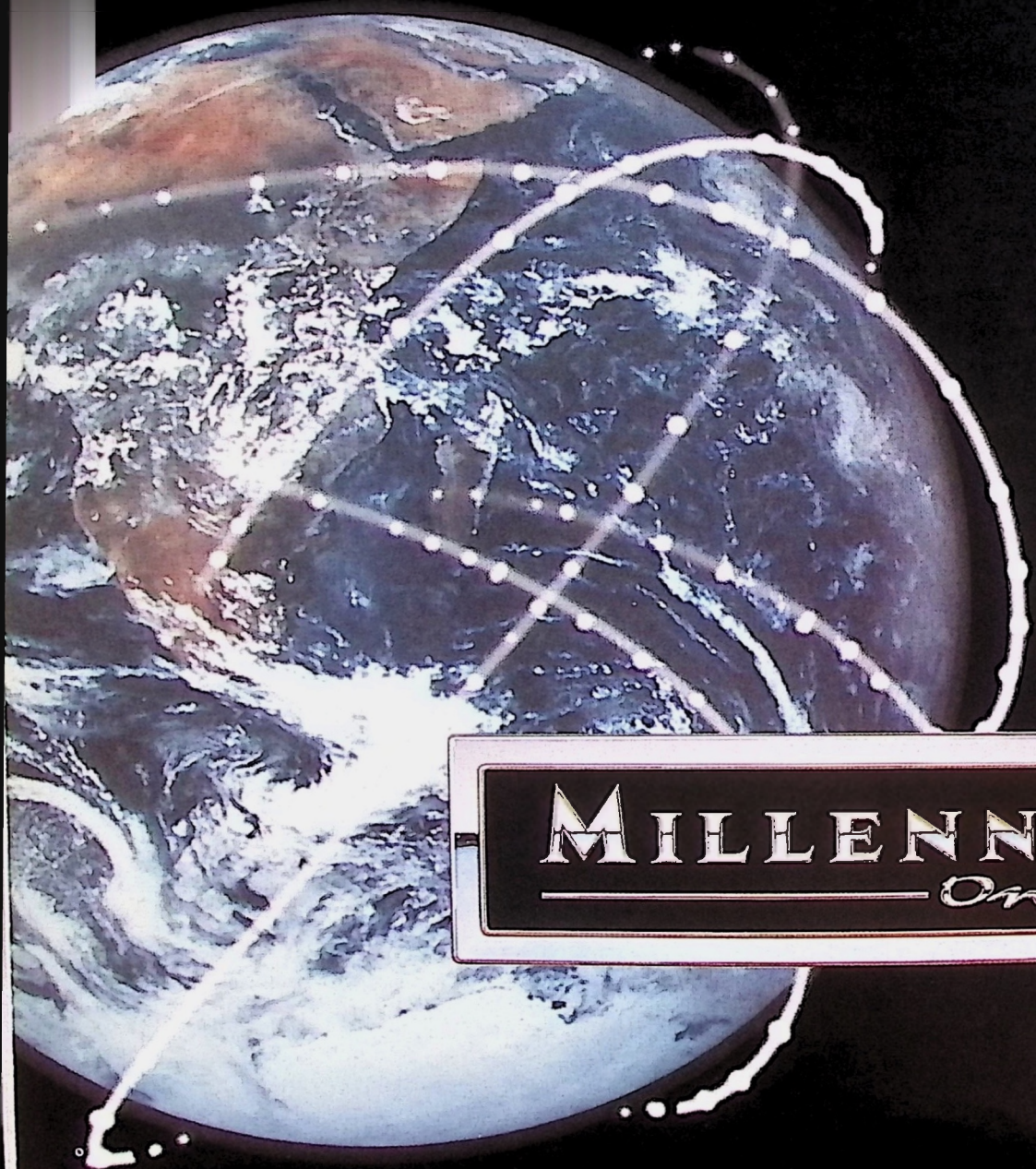

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This month we begin our travels in the heartland — Kansas — then we'll jump around quite a bit for a change, even leaving the country. Roughly 20 miles from my home base of Topeka, we come to our first stop, Lawrence, a delightful college town. Home of Kansas University and home of...

The Data Bank

SYSOP: Bob Oyler
LOCATION: Lawrence, Kansas
PHONE NUMBER: 913-842-7744
MODEM TYPE: U.S. Robotics Dual Standards
BBS SOFTWARE: PC Board 14.5
MOTTO: "Start Your Data Bank Savings Account Today!"

Forget everything you ever knew or thought you knew about Kansas. You won't find Dorothy or Toto on The Data Bank. And no wheat or cattle. What you will find is a massive amount of data — more, I believe, than I've ever seen on a system in any city the size of Lawrence, Kansas. Even on systems in much larger cities. That's because system operator Bob Oyler designed The Data Bank with real nationwide appeal.

The system has come a long way toward that goal in the year and a half since Bob first brought The Data Bank online. This is mainly due to Bob's concentration on the "back end" — the hardware, software and connections which go into making a huge system like The Data Bank operate smoothly and offer the most for every caller's dollar. This is the part of every BBS that callers never see unless there is a problem, like the churning machinery which moves an elevator up and down or the boiler and intricate system of pipes which heat a large building. Unfortunately, since this part of a BBS is rarely seen, many new system operators tend to neglect it, only putting together what is needed after the fact, almost as an afterthought. Not so Bob Oyler.

"If you build the back end first, they will come," Bob remarked, philosophically. "The front end will take care of itself. Toward that end I now have two Novell file servers, a UNIX box, router and term server and four machines doing non-stop work. And I still need to add another three work machines, another server and another UNIX box."

A system operator's work is never done and Bob's proof of that. But there's a lot more to it than simply hard drives and modems, networking software and CDROM drives. Bob's convinced the future of BBSs lies in their ability to act as front-ends for the Internet and he's devoted much of his efforts toward building full Internet connectivity into The Data Bank's back end. "The Internet offers more information than anyone could handle in a lifetime," he said. "BBSs will never be able to compete with that. But they CAN offer the front end to the Internet. And the new users will need help and a guiding hand to enable them to make sense of it all."

CONTINUES...

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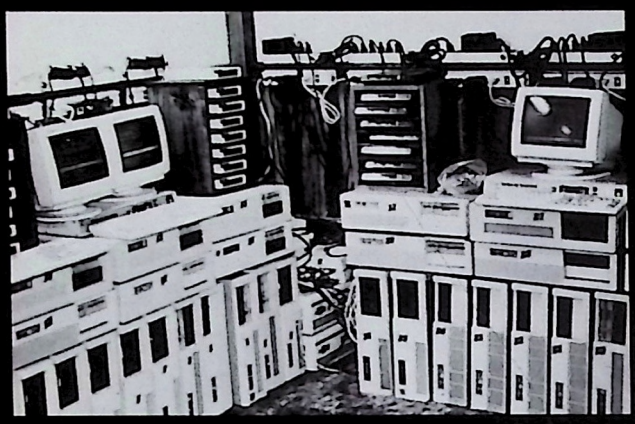

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MULTI•USER BBS SYSTEMS

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This is one of the first things you notice when you first log on to The Data Bank. Thanks to all of Bob's painstaking work on the back-end, including a satellite dish for delivery of network mail, I don't believe I've ever seen so many different internationally linked message networks and conferences on a single micro-based system anywhere. Bob's bringing in literally every available conference on FidoNet, plus everything on NaNet, ProgNet, RelayNet, SmartNet, SourceNet and UN'I-net. And literally every Internet conference and Usenet newsgroup. Bob told me he's pushing for a goal of one million messages online and he's already more than a quarter of the way there.

In case your calculator's broken, that's 250,000+ messages on the system — in roughly 7500 conferences! In every category imaginable, from any network you could possibly wish to access. Regardless of your interest — from AdLib sound cards, Africa and AD&D to the White House, Windows, Writing, Zmodem and everything in between, chances are you'll find more than one conference serving that interest on The Data Bank — with thousands of other people actively participating.

And, not only can you read messages FROM everyone on these networks, you can also post mail that will go out on any of these networks. Including the Internet. But, unlike many BBSs which claim they offer Internet connectivity, The Data Bank is now a full-blown Internet server. No matter where you are, if you can find a connection into the Internet, you can get on The Data Bank from there.

If you're new to the Internet, Bob's also building an extensive set of bulletins and help files which will get you up to speed in a hurry. Everything from "How to Use the Internet" to "Who's Who On the Internet" and more — plus system operators willing to take you by the hand and help you find your way and get the most from your experience.

Another interesting feature on The Data Bank is ClariNet News, delivered as a vast array of various newsgroups. This service brings you late-breaking world and national news, sports coverage, entertainment features — even the full text of NewsBytes, the computer and software news service. Literally hundreds of full-text stories, articles and features every day. Small wonder ClariNet News is one of Bob's favorite features. "I'm a news junkie and I felt this was the most economical way to offer up-to-the-minute news," he said.

As if that weren't enough, there are other news features and online magazines on The Data Bank which should interest you as well. Bob's gathered together a nice collection of popular online publications, all available in his Magazines door. His newest addition is PC Catalog, a popular online feature which brings pricing of 2000 different computer items from 160 different vendors into an easily searchable online format, updated weekly.

Needless to say, if messaging and news were you only interest, The Data Bank would be all you'd need. But, files are still what most BBS callers want today and a good deal of this system's behind-the-scenes infrastructure is devoted to hard disk storage and CD-ROM drives to satisfy that demand. As a result, you'll find files aplenty on this Midwest mega-system. I found a total of 25 areas on The Data Bank dedicated to files — each with literally dozens of subcategories beneath them and each subcategory offering literally hundreds of files. This adds up to thousands of choices, grouped in such categories as communications, PC utilities, personal and household related files, desktop utilities, computer aided design, multi-taskers, word and text processing, desktop publishing, games and entertainment and far too many more than I can possibly list here.

At DataBank you don't even have to download the files you want, if long distance costs are a consideration. You can select the files you'd like and order them delivered on diskette or data tape.

For example, I logged into the graphics, pictures, drawing and viewers area and found hundreds of fresh shareware and public domain files, in 15 related sub-categories, ranging from Corel Draw, animation and simulation, drawing, GIFs and viewers to Geoworks, virtual reality, RIP and more. Thanks to Bob's diligent efforts (transferring files from satellite, buying them on tape and gathering them through more conventional means, such as calling other systems), the files you'll find on The Data Bank are all fresh, late-breaking releases, too. On the day I logged on for this review there had been more than 600 new files added — none of them on CD-ROM or via file networks.

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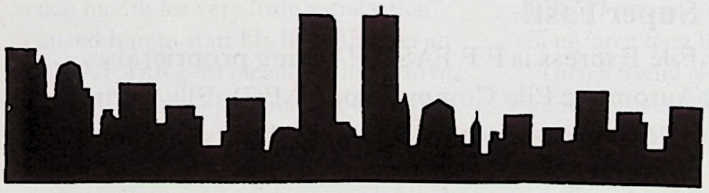

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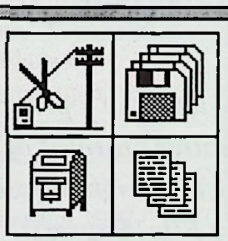

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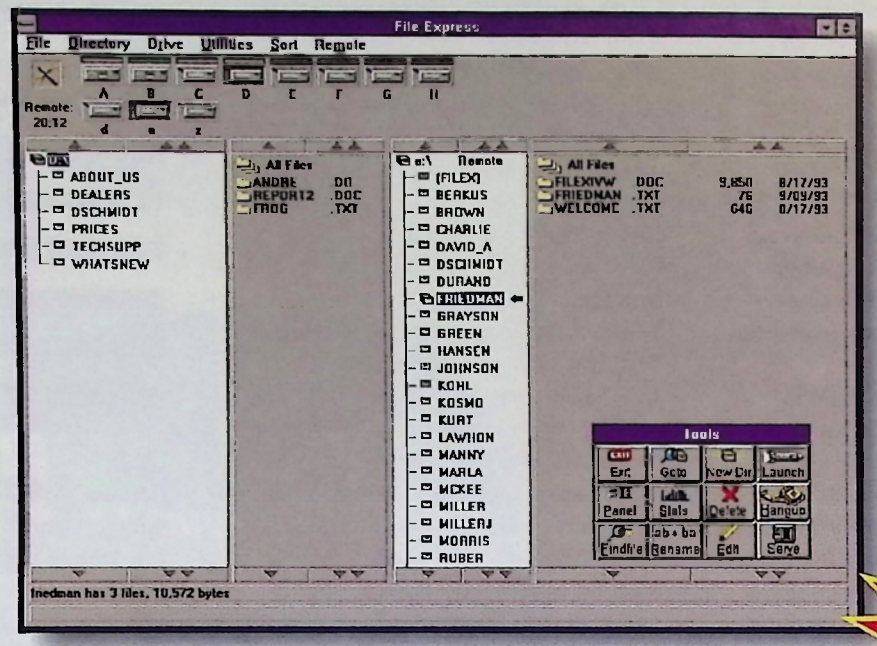

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Mark A. Kellner - Washington Times

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There are also loads of CD-ROM discs always online for you to browse, each offering thousands of files of their own.

And you don't even have to download the files you want, if long distance costs are a consideration. If you wish, you can select the files you'd like to receive and order them delivered on diskette or data tape. The cost is $5 each 360K diskette ($4.50 each for two or more), $10 per 1.2 Megabyte diskette ($9 each for two or more), or $11 per 1.44 Megabyte diskette ($10 each for two or more). If you request your files on tape, you pay only 75 cents per Megabyte plus $20 for the tape and postage.

You can also shop on The Data Bank — for CD-ROMs, computer hardware and software and music and videos. Just search the lists of hundreds of titles and you can order online with your MasterCard, Visa, American Express or Discover card.

In short, a visit to The Data Bank feels more like you're in Oz than Kansas. It's a virtual wonderland of offerings for modem users, all priced at an incredible $10 per month or $50 per year. For everything! And Bob is still hard at work adding more capability to this amazing system. Many of these improvements will sound like Greek to the average caller — domain name registration, archie, gopher, www, wais, irc, slip/ppp dialup, dedicated ports, leased 14.4, 56K ISDN and T-1 lines and nationwide LOCAL dialup and frame relay — but they'll all beef up the system's back end to make for a more exciting, varied and powerful front end for callers.

Bob's reasons for starting The Data Bank were simple enough. "Calling CompuServe and getting an $80 bill each month for very little satisfaction" caused him to start his first BBS, on an IBM XT with a 40 megabyte hard drive, in 1989. "I quickly found out it was not enough and quit," he explained. "Instead, I ventured into rabbit raising and veggie farming and now wish I had put all that money and effort into the board."

That was before Bob officially launched The DataBank in 1992, with the goal of establishing one of the top boards in the country. Give the system a call and take advantage of Bob's generous free trial access. I can almost guarantee you'll thank him for getting out of vegetable and rabbit farming by signing up for a subscription — and you won't be sorry if you do!

But, it's time to leave this digital pot of gold behind, click our heels together and move on — but not home. Instead, we move west next, to sunny Ivanhoe, California. Located just north of Visalia and a little south of Fresno, this small community is the home of...

The Wizard's Palace

SYSOP: Mr. Wizard
LOCATION: Ivanhoe, California
PHONE NUMBER: 209-798-2092
MODEM TYPE: Practical Peripheral 14.4
BBS SOFTWARE: Virtual BBS
MOTTO: "If We Don't Have It We'll Find It"

"The greatest joy of being a sysop is knowing that you provide a free service to people!" That's how Glen Carter, known only as "Mr. Wizard" on The Wizard's Palace, feels about his system — and that's the feeling you get as soon as you log on. The Wizard's Palace is a free, open system, carrying the shareware concept to the extreme by asking its users for donations only if they like and use the BBS regularly.

Many Wizard's Palace users apparently feel they're getting a good value. I noticed several notices honoring recent donators and you must first step through some unobtrusive advertising messages from three or four local commercial sponsors to get to the main menu.

The Wizard's Palace is files, e-mail and fun — from a system operator who's only in it for the pleasure of operating a BBS. "I was an avid user of local BBSs in my area for a long time," Glen said. "Then a friend of mine who got me interested in BBSing started up a BBS of his own. I went over and saw how it all worked and it looked fun, so I decided to start up a board of my own. I officially went online in August of 1992."

I noticed an interesting feature on The Wizard's Palace even before I made it to the main menu — a door program called "Remind Me!" With this program, users can set a range of anniversaries, birthdays, appointments, events, due dates for bills, even shopping lists — and reminders of these events will pop up each time they call.

Next you step through a voting booth function and answer a series of questions about your hobbies, interests, the computer you use, and what you look for in a quality BBS. Glen's collecting this information from all callers so he can better tailor the system to suit the user's needs. You can also view the responses from the other callers, to ascertain the crowd with which you're keeping company. When I called, I found 78% of the callers were male and 41% were using 386 IBM or compatible computers. 37% were using MS-DOS, 36% call BBSs looking for files and 58% thought The Wizard's Palace looked good on first call. Interesting results, but certainly not surprising!

"My typical user calls at least every other day if not every day," Glen said. "They download files and are active on the message bases. I have several very dedicated users who call boards out of our area and download files, then call my board and upload new stuff. This is the kind of caller I would like to see more of. It really takes the pressure off the sysop to provide new files."

Since most BBS callers are looking for files, I first went to The Wizard's

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Palace's files directory. I found five different directories of local files, including "Miscellaneous Files," "The Wizard's Utility Files," "The Wizard's Game Room," "NightOwl 9.0 Shareware CD" and "So Much Shareware On-Line CDROM."

Each of these directories holds numerous sub-directories full of files. For example, the "Miscellaneous Files" directory included sub-directories of spreadsheet programs, business and productivity files, communications applications, graphics and clipart and more, including some great information and utilities for setting up a variety of different hard drives. Each subdirectory held anywhere from two or three to more than a hundred files. Add this to the two CD-ROMs and you get more than a gigabyte of excellent programs and text files — everything any self-respecting data collector could ever want.

Interesting new files on the system included a great new Windows communications program (MLK104.ZIP), a new shareware alternative to RIPaint (FUTUN102.ARJ), the latest versions of McAfee's virus detection and eradication software, VENDETTA.ZIP (a neat new shoot-em-up VGA shareware game), and a new level editor for the popular Apogee shareware game, Castle Wolfenstein (MAPED41.ZIP). And those additions were all made within the two days before I called.

"I have over a gig of files and that is what people seem to go straight for," Glen said. "When I put a new CD online I average about 35 to 40 callers a day for a couple of months. The average otherwise is about 20. But my favorite feature on the board has got to be the networks. I'm in VirtualNet and FidoNet. It's fun sending messages out across the nation and world and getting responses from people from all walks of life."

You can satisfy your creative side by drawing some quality ANSI art and entering it in The Wizard's Palace ANSI Art Contest.

Messages on The Wizard's Palace are broken down into 12 basic categories, each with a selection of sub-categories beneath them. Some of the topics covered include TV and movies, generally intelligent conversation, buy/sell/trade, music, sex and lies in government, networking, hardware, space adventures and roleplaying games, and far too many more to cover here. Suffice to say I found literally thousands of messages online, and more come in to the system daily.

In addition to commercial advertising, which is available on the system for just $12.50 per month, callers can take advantage of a solid selection of Help Wanted and Work Wanted classifieds, reading them or placing them at no charge.

Even if you're only interested in whiling away some time with enjoyable and challenging games, The Wizard's Palace can satisfy that need well. I found a nice selection of online door games when I called, including Road Warriors, The Simpsons — even BBS Drag Racing.

You can also satisfy your creative side by drawing some quality ANSI art and entering it in The Wizard's Palace ANSI Art Contest. You can download the latest version of THEDRAW (a popular shareware ANSI drawing program) from the board and use it to create your works of beauty. Glen's looking for ANSI art in categories including space adventure, cartoon characters, people, animals, computer-related and miscellaneous art. Upload your work as E-mail addressed to Mr. Wizard, and Glen will include it in a special online ANSI art gallery he's creating. The best works each month will win an additional 30 minutes' access time on the system for a month, 10,000 credits and — FAME!

It all makes for an enjoyable, lighthearted fun BBS. But this is to be expected, given Glen's attitude toward his board and the callers. "Being a sysop should be fun," he said. "Keeping up with the users' wants (within reason) and needs is very important! What it's really about is pro-

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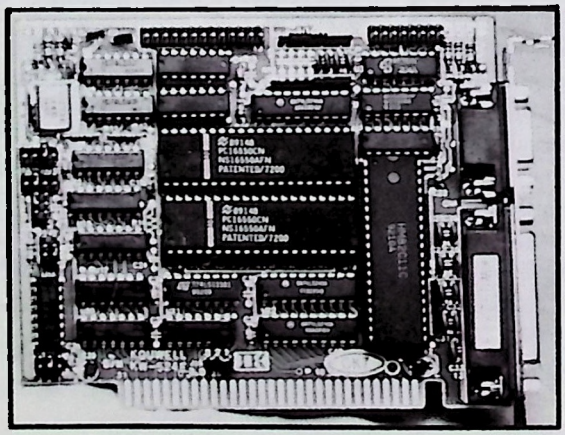

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viding a service to the computer community that enables them to meet other users, play games and find a good program or two."

Glen's also bullish about the effect BBSs have on the software market. "The BBS community is the greatest way a programmer has to get his work out and on people's computers," he said. "Being a programmer myself, I know the amount of money you save by not having the large amount of advertising overhead to deal with."

He's equally bullish on the future of BBSing. "The future should be real interesting, with all the new technologies coming out (faster modems, better software, etc.)," Glen said. "Before too long, downloading a 1 megabyte file will be just a blink of the eye."

As for the future of The Wizard's Palace, Glen's got some interesting plans there, too. "Hopefully I'll be running the system on a faster processor soon, and I plan to add at least one more CD-ROM drive. I also plan to add RIP graphics in the very near future, unless something better pops up. New ideas are always welcome and I encourage my users to provide their input."

It's anybody's guess where this system will be going in the distant future — but it's a sure bet The Wizard's Palace will make for an interesting logon, whenever you call, which I suggest you do soon.

Now it's again time to move along. This time we're leaving the country, heading north and across the border for a couple of stops in Canada. First we barely dip our toe across the line, moving straight up from California into British Columbia. Our first stop is in White Rock, a smallish town located just across the U.S./Canadian border, a bit south of Vancouver and about as far west as you can go without stepping over onto Vancouver Island. This is where we'll visit...

Deep Cove BBS

SYSOP: Wayne Duval
LOCATION: White Rock, British Columbia, Canada
PHONE NUMBER: 604-536-5885
MODEM TYPE: Zyxel 14.4
BBS SOFTWARE: TBBS 2.2M
MOTTO: "A Comprehensive Online Service Package for Most Computer Platforms At A Reasonable Cost"

System operator Wayne Duval started Deep Cove BBS in 1985, with the express purpose of "creating a home for serious telecommunications enthusiasts who wanted to participate in discussions of a mature nature and to exchange high quality shareware for personal computers." He's most certainly accomplished that — and more. This 33-line TBBS system was recently ranked as the number one BBS in Canada by placing 12th in BoardWatch Magazine's latest Reader's Choice Top 100 contest.

"Like the vast majority of online systems throughout the world, the number one feature on Deep Cove, from the standpoint of its users, is the large file sections for DOS, OS/2 and Macintosh," Wayne said. "Responses from our questionnaires indicate that the second most popular feature is access to Internet E-mail, FTP and Telnet services. But, my favorite feature is a Buy & Sell module unique to Deep Cove BBS called J-Bidder. I like it because of the unique way it allows callers to bid on posted articles as if they were at an auction."

Users can access the special TDBS program, J-Bidder, on Deep Cove and post items they wish to sell, stating a minimum bid if they wish. Other callers then bid on each item and the highest bid is displayed for all to see.

Users can access this special TDBS program on Deep Cove and post items they wish to sell, stating a minimum bid if they wish. Other callers then bid on each item and the highest bid is displayed for all to see. A calendar function displays when an item was first put up for bid and when the bidding for each item will be closed. When I logged on, I found everything from brand new hardware and software still in the box to used computer equipment, and even some cars and boats! Almost all were seeing some active bidding and the prices were enticing. I really liked this feature and can understand why Wayne picked it as his personal favorite.

When it comes to the number one interest of BBS callers, however, Wayne's got them covered, too. Deep Cove currently offers more than 5 gigabytes of shareware files for DOS, OS/2, Amiga and Macintosh computers.

CONTINUES...

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These are offered in a number of categories and you'll find literally every file imaginable, including an extensive selection of GIF graphics files.

All the files on the system are fresh, thanks to Wayne's policy of assigning each download area to remote assistant sysops who manage them, gathering new files, uploading them to the system and arranging them so they're easy to find and download. In fact, there are a few openings for file managers on the system and you can perform this task remotely, earning free connect time for your trouble. Leave e-Mail to Sysop if you're interested.

It's interesting to note that there are no longer any adult graphics files on Deep Cove. Wayne explained he removed all adult-oriented graphics files after a consensus was reached, among system operators at the ONE BBSCON this last August in Colorado Springs, that adult-oriented materials don't have any place on BBSs. Still, there are literally hundreds of incredibly beautiful GIF files on Deep Cove BBS — everything from beautiful scenic photographs to wacky fun cartoons and more. And you don't have to worry about being embarrassed by the names of the files, let alone the images!

If you're looking to communicate with the world, a call to Deep Cove BBS will make it happen. The system offers access to Internet e-mail and files, complete with a nice selection of files detailing how to use the Internet and find your way around the thousands of newsgroups and information sources on it.

Of course, there are also thousands of messages generated locally by Deep Cove callers, in addition to a vast assortment of FidoNet message echoes, on every subject imaginable. And you can access this wealth of internationally distributed mail, including the Internet e-mail, with any QWK-compatible offline mail reader.

Subscribers to this large, active system can also post free classifieds online and participate in the J-Bidder at no extra charge, but commercial interests can also now advertise on the system — for as little as $25 per month.

Another kind of advertising — matchmaking — brings people together who could one day wind up being mates, lovers, or simply dates for an enjoyable night out on the town. The Connex Matchmaker on Deep Cove BBS makes this process easy, allowing callers to list their attributes and interests and to generate lists of other users in the database who match a set of criteria. Scanned photos can even be added to a person's description, which others who are interested can download and view offline.

When you're between file downloads, matchmaking and messaging, you can also pick up the latest news from around the world on Deep Cove. Subscribers can select from USA Today, BoardWatch Online, NewsBytes or an interesting new online publication, Common Sense Digital Magazine. The latter is provided by Deep Cove member Jurgen Hesse, who also edits the magazine. Common Sense Digital Magazine covers literally any topic with a liberal dose of humor and always with a grain of common sense that makes it both charming and enlightening while it entertains. It's truly unique and it's a Deep Cove original!

There is also a nice assortment of online games to play on Deep Cove BBS, and I found a huge assortment of CD-ROM software which you can order while online, with MasterCard or Visa. Add these features to the huge list I've already outlined, plus access to numerous online forums offering support for major commercial software packages and far too many other features to list here and you'll see why Deep Cove BBS ranked so high on the recent BoardWatch 100 list. Wayne has also pledged his efforts to continue making the system grow. Behind the scenes, he's already at work adding more online news services, entertainment modules, storage capacity and RIP-compatible icon-based menus and graphics screens. He also intends to add as many as 30 more lines in the near future, and he's working on increasing the speed of the system's Internet connection.

This kind of dedication spills over into Wayne's feelings about the BBS industry. "My philosophy is to provide the most services you can for the least expenditure by members of the general public, and to try and maintain a personal touch, even though the system is operated as a business," he said. "I want callers to feel comfortable with both the system and its operators and to call us on our Customer Support line when they have a question or problem. As a communications media, BBSs are intrinsically apersonal so one of my objectives is to offset this by providing opportunities for social interaction among our members (e.g. dinner meetings) and communication without the use of a keyboard."

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Boardwatch Magazine September 1993 Readers Choice Awards.

FIRST PLACE SOFTWARE CREATIONS

The top BBS in the Boardwatch 100 Readers' Choice Contest was Dan Linton's Software Creations BBS in Clinton, Massachusetts. The system started in December 1989 with one telephone line on a DTK XT, a 2400 pbs modem, and a 209 MB hard drive. By the following October, the system was up to 4 lines, using U.S. Robotics HST Dual Standard modems, a 386 MB hard drive, and a LANtastic network to tie the computers together under PCBoard BBS software. With Linton's background in hardware design, the system largely served as a technical information center for other local BBS operators.

In March 1991, Linton released his first shareware program, titled Picture Puzzle. The popularity of the system increased as it became known as the home system of Picture Puzzle. As more and more BBS operators and callers from around the country called to get the latest version of this software, Creations blossomed. Today, Software Creations runs PCBoard version 15.0, Novell 3.11 local area network, and other top services. Dan has developed a following around the country. Congratulations Dan. For those interested, you can reach Software Creations' BBS at 508-368-7139.

These are just a few of the many PCBOARD users in the top100 readers choice poll.

THIRD PLACE • DELTACOMM BBS

This company is headed by Jeff Woods and currently markets the communications program Telix. They operate a 10 line BBS in Cary North Carolina using PCBoard v.15.0.

The system does provide online product support for Telix users, but they also want to expand the BBS into a full fledged online service. They offer a high quality, high volume service at little or no cost. Congratulations to Jeff and company. You can reach their BBS at (919) 481-9399.

FOURTH PLACE • PC-OHIO

Norm Henke started PC-OHIO on 9/1/85 with one telephone line on a used TAVA XT clone in his bedroom. He began with RBBS but switched to PCBoard within a few months.

In 1986 he expanded to three nodes and then to five nodes. It has grown to (40) 486 computers in the basement all linked together thru an Ethernet newwork. He is now a "pro-fessional" Sysop spending as much as 12 hours a day. Congratulations, Norm. Contact his BBS at (216) 381-3320.

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the price. A regular annual membership is $53.50, or $21.40 for three months (including sales tax). Full time students can subscribe for as little as $40.13 per year, or $16.05 for three months and family rates are also available. Long distance callers who fill out a registration form can look around for free, and I suggest you do!

And, once again, we have to move along because we've got a long way to go — this time clear across Canada's southern border, heading eastward, to Amherst, Nova Scotia. This small town is located just east of New Brunswick and south of Charlestown, just south of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It's where we find...

Brave Dave's BBS

SYSOP: Brave Dave
LOCATION:
Amherst, Nova Scotia
PHONE NUMBER:
902-667-7248
MODEM TYPE:
Advanced Logic 2400
BBS SOFTWARE:
Synchronet 1b
MOTTO: "The BBS Playground Where You Learn, Too"

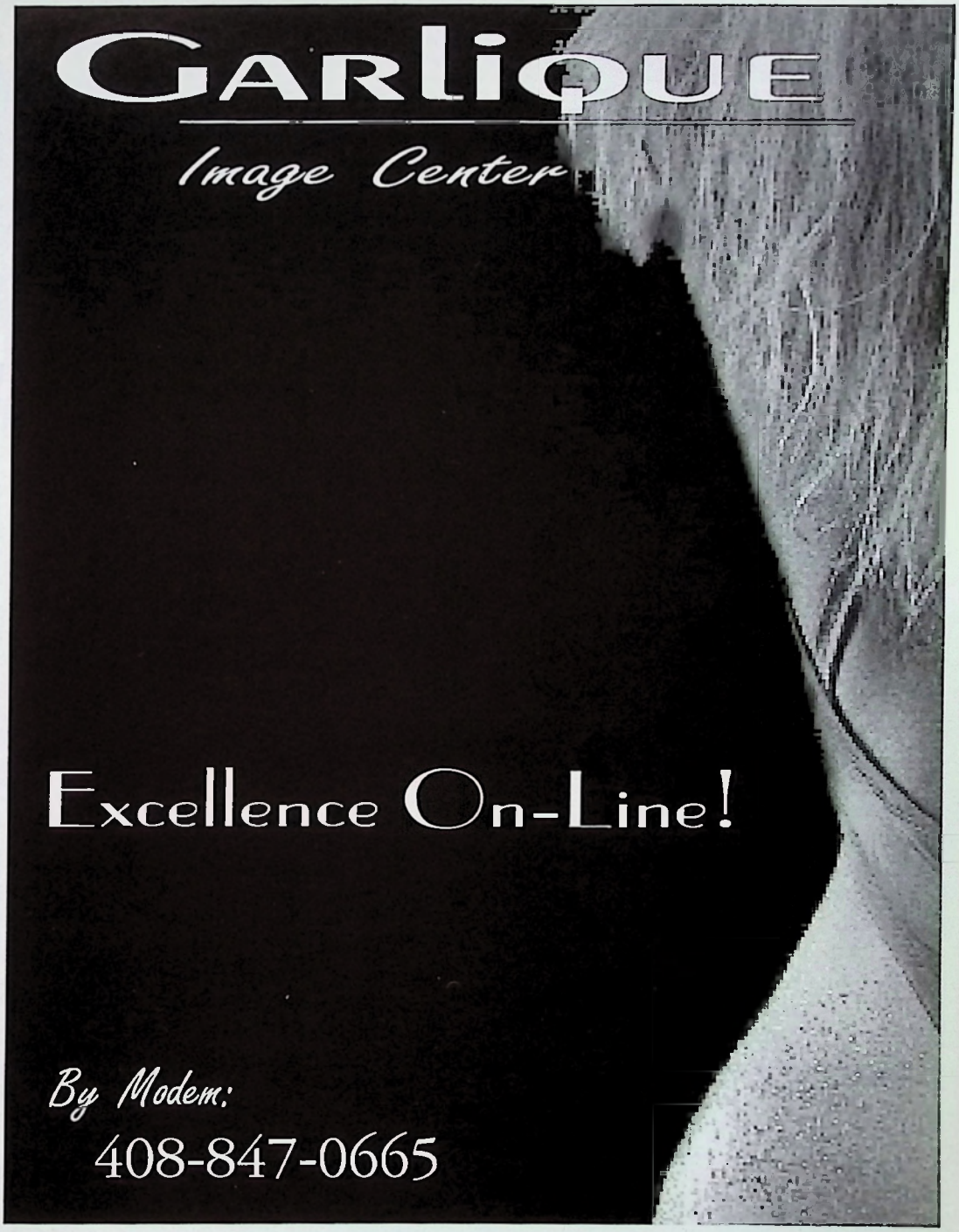
This is a fairly small, new BBS with 2400 baud access. It's run by a system operator who refers to himself only as Brave Dave, online and off-line. Dave told me he started his BBS just out of frustration. "In the local area there is an adult board and a small board with very little on it," he said. "The latter is only run from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. I wanted more and I'm sure other people did, too, so I checked out all the BBS software that I could put my hands on and ended up with Synchronet. It's very nice, I think!"

Dave's put the popular Synchronet BBS package to work running a straightforward general interest BBS. As such, the main thrust here is on files and messages.

I found the messages on Brave Dave's broken into three main categories — Main, Dove-Net and Brave Messages. Each of these three main divisions held three or more subdivisions. For example, the Main category held four subdivisions — Sysop Notices, General, Debate and Entertainment. I didn't find a lot of activity in many of the local message bases, but remember this is a brand new board (it just went online in August of this year), in a small area. I'm sure things will pick up as soon as more callers discover Dave's warm, open system and start frequenting it. Meanwhile, there is plenty of message traffic on Dove-Net, with 8 internationally echoed conferences on Brave Dave's to choose from.

The system also offers netmail capabilities so users can send and receive e-mail to any user on any system in the

CONTINUES...



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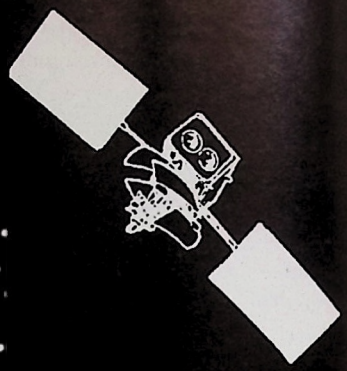

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FidoNet. A live conference system also allows callers to chat live among themselves.

What this system lacks in message traffic is made up for by the selection of files Dave's started gathering. I found several dozen fresh new files in the local file libraries and a popular CD-ROM offers access to more than a thousand more files — in 27 different categories, covering most any topic you could need. There is also a directory of GIFs that appears to be brand new. It only held eight files when I called, but I'm sure there will be more soon.

If you like online games you'll find seven already installed and ready to play on Brave Dave's. I found Synchronet Blackjack, Dice War, Domain Poker (where you play against other callers on the system), Global War, an intriguing new RIP graphics puzzle game called (interestingly enough) RIP Puzzle, the ever-popular Food Fight and Dr. Match. The latter allows users to fill out questionnaires about themselves and find other callers who match their specifications.

...you can call Brave Dave's now and become part of the core of knowledgeable users who will help make this system grow.

Another door program on Brave Dave's offers a nice BBS list to which visiting system operators can add information on their own systems.

I found a lot of local callers already partaking of Brave Dave's offerings, but did notice I was the only recent U.S. caller. That should change soon, now that the system is up and rolling and the word is out. This looks like a good place to call, especially if you're looking for a system where you can become a part of the overall growth. It should also be a great place to call if you're new to BBSing.

"My greatest joy as a sysop is helping my users or even users of other boards," Dave said. "My typical users are people who are learning computers or just learning about communications — or lonely people looking to meet other people. But the kind of caller I would like to see more often is one who knows more about computing and communications and is willing to help me with suggestions. I love suggestions."

Sounds like a cue to me. You can learn more by calling Brave Dave's and expect close-up, personal, hands-on answers to your questions — or you can call now and become part of the core of knowledgeable users who help make this system grow. Don't shun this one just because it's small. There is no fee and Dave's done some really nice work with RIP graphics you should see! To log on as a guest, use the New User password "password," and Dave said the magic word is "Magic."

And that, unfortunately, ends our travels for another month. Once again it's time to pack up and head for home. The good news is we can always visit the new friends we make on this journey by simply issuing the mighty "dial" command from wherever we are. Until next month, let these fine system operators and their callers get to know you better.

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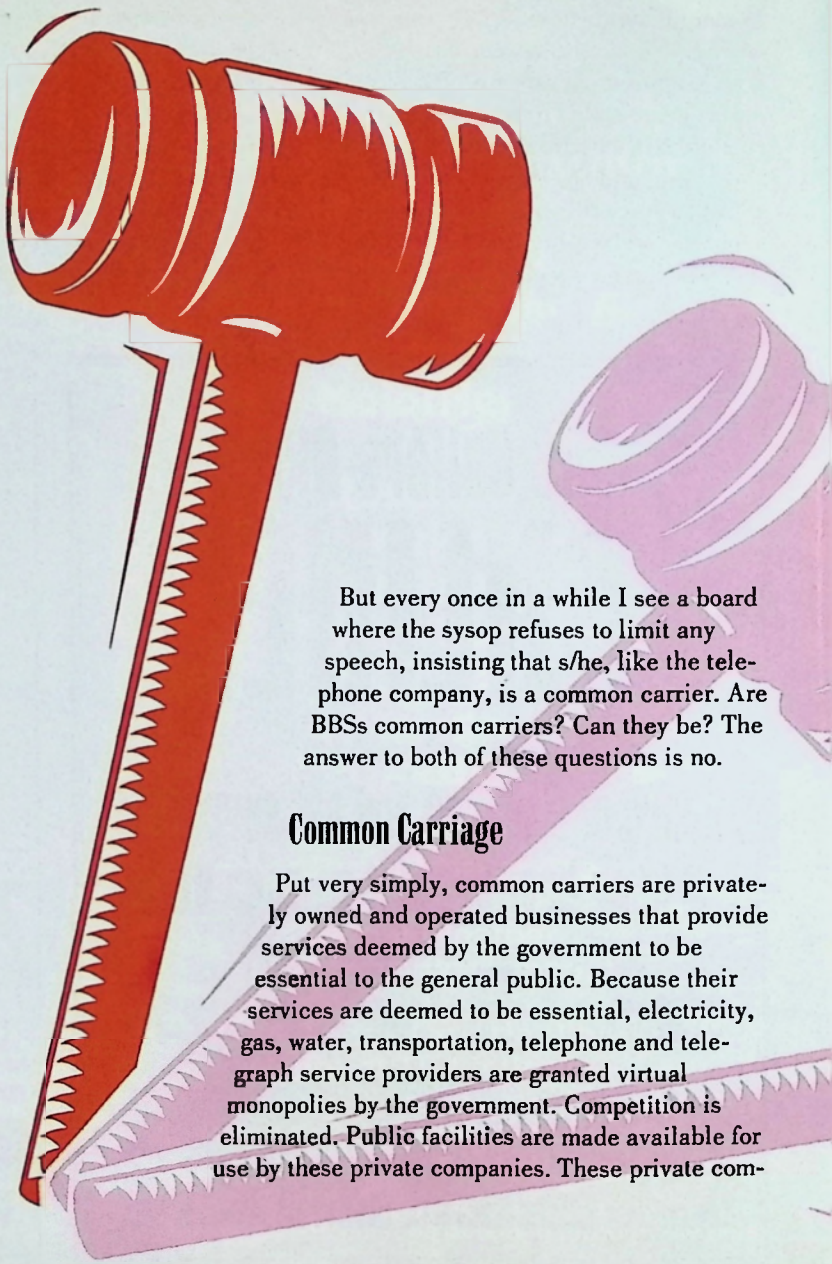
Common Carrier Status and BBSs

A Regulatory Scheme That Is Best Avoided



I often see discussion among BBS users and sysops regarding the proper way to regulate speech that takes place on a BBS. Most systems have an established set of rules concerning the posting of illegal information or information that can harm others. There are notices informing users of repercussions should they disobey board rules or local laws, which I advocate.

But every once in a while I see a board where the sysop refuses to limit any speech, insisting that s/he, like the telephone company, is a common carrier. Are BBSs common carriers? Can they be? The answer to both of these questions is no.

Common Carriage

Put very simply, common carriers are privately owned and operated businesses that provide services deemed by the government to be essential to the general public. Because their services are deemed to be essential, electricity, gas, water, transportation, telephone and telegraph service providers are granted virtual monopolies by the government. Competition is eliminated. Public facilities are made available for use by these private companies. These private com-

panies can even go so far as exercise control over privately owned land, "taking" right-of-ways and easements over which they can run their wires, lay their tracks, or otherwise install their equipment. In exchange for these advantages, however, these service providers are saddled with regulations requiring them to indiscriminately provide service to all who apply and to charge reasonable rates as determined by the appropriate government oversight commission.

In the United States, the notion of common carriage was initially applied to the railroads. In 1887, Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act, which created the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to regulate railroads as common carriers. In 1910, Congress classified telephones as common carriers subject to regulation by the ICC when it passed the Mann-Elkins Act. Then in 1934, Congress passed the Communications Act, which set up the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take over the regulation of interstate communications common carriers (telephones) and broadcasters. Individual states regulate local telephone companies as common carriers.

According to state and federal law, in order for an entity to be given common carrier status, the entity must be granted a "certificate of convenience and necessity," which authorizes that entity to engage in the business of providing service to the public. (While there are nonstatutory, common law criteria that can be used to determine if an entity is a common carrier, the cases that apply these criteria go on to state that entities determined to be common carriers must apply for a certificate of convenience and necessity.) The certificate is granted by the state's public utility commission or the FCC. This gives these oversight commissions the ability to determine which entities are subject to their regulation and to monitor them accordingly.

And the regulatory requirements state public utility commissions and the FCC make on common carriers are extensive. For example, common carriers must file tariffs with the appropriate commission. Tariffs are public documents that set forth the services being offered by the common carrier; the rates and charges for those services; and the governing rules, regulations and practices relating to those services. Tariffs are subject to commission approval and must be made available for public comment before they are approved.

Communications common carriers are also required to carry all speech, regardless of its content or the identity of the person speaking. In exchange for making service available to everyone, communications common carriers are immune from legal prosecution based on the content of the speech. This is why AT&T does not have to worry about being found guilty of criminal conspiracy if someone uses its service to arrange a drug deal or engage in other illegal activity.

BBS sysops, on the other hand, do not have this protection. If a BBS user uploads illegally obtained credit card numbers, child pornography or a sexually explicit file to an area where children have access, a sysop's failure to remove such postings when s/he knows they exist could result in serious legal ramifications for the sysop.

BBSs Are Better Than Common Carriers

While BBSs are not given the protections from prosecution that common carriers are given, there are good reasons to discourage a common carriage regime on BBSs. Currently, there are huge differences in the kinds of BBSs available, and individuals can choose to access boards that cater to their specific interests. For example, I can choose to dial into a board that offers conferences on horticulture. Other fans of horticulture and I can share growing tips and information about upcoming flower shows. Conferences can be dedicated to specific species of plants, and posts that do not apply to a particular conference topic can be moved or deleted. The sysop can determine the rules of the board.

People who were not interested in horticulture could call the board and leave completely unrelated messages in the message areas of their choice. The sense of community would be lost. While the freedom of speech would be protected, the quality of the speech would be severely hampered.

If BBSs were considered common carriers, all speech would have to be carried, regardless of the content. People who were not interested in horticulture could call the board and leave completely unrelated messages in the message areas of their choice. The sense of community would be lost. While the freedom of speech would be protected, the quality of the speech would be severely hampered.

In addition, sysops generally dedicate a lot of time and energy, not to mention money, to their BBSs. Requiring them to carry all speech would limit the ways they could choose to run their BBSs. Chances are, fewer sysops would be interested in setting up boards under these circumstances. The loss in the diversity in places in which speech could occur when individual boards shut down would change the nature of BBSing in detrimental ways.

It certainly would be nice to be able to shield sysops from all potential liability for illegal uses of their boards. However, individuality and self-determination, two qualities that have been central to the explosive growth of BBSing, would be sacrificed if BBSs were considered common carriers. High levels of government regulation would be essential. These are sacrifices we should not be prepared to make.

Shari Steele is Director of Legal Services at the Washington office of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing freedom and openness in computer-based communications. Send your legal questions to Shari at ssteele@eff.org (Internet) or c/o BBS Magazine.

BY LANCE WHITNEY

"Honey, Did You Download the Mail?"

Forget Paper, Postage...and Punctuation

Nobody I know sends letters on paper anymore. Paper, for those of you who don't remember, was a white-like substance made from trees. It was used as a form of communication in the years B.M. (Before Modems). My friends and I send all our mail to each other electronically now. And we're not alone.

Electronic mail was once the domain of computer nerds and geniuses at MIT. No longer. Average citizens across the world are now part of the e-mail generation. Everybody seems to be online somewhere. These days you can send e-mail to almost anyone—your grandmother, your nursery school teacher, your old army buddy now stationed at the North Pole, Rush Limbaugh, the Pope. Okay, maybe not the Pope. At least not yet. It's only a matter of time before the Vatican has its own Confessions bulletin board. Sort of an Abstinence by E-Mail.

I know you can send e-mail to the White House. Our new president is more technologically-savvy than the old one was. (Mr. Bush, you may recall, was once astonished by a supermarket scanner.) Mr. Clinton is online. I bet everyone who works for him or knows him is online, too. I think these people are known as FOBO (Friends of Bill Online). So you can send e-mail to the president, the president's wife, the president's brother, the president's half-brother, the president's second half-brother-in-law twice removed. I'm not saying these people will read your e-mail. In fact, I suspect the White House prints out all the e-mail it gets and uses it as e-mail kitty litter for Socks, the presidential cat (who probably gets a lot of e-mail himself). But the point is, even the White House is online.

E-mail is popular because it's quicker, easier and cheaper than post office mail (lovingly known as "snail mail" by BBS types). Write your message, hit a few keys and your mail is on its merry electronic way. No postage. No envelopes. No unpleasant stamp glue aftertaste lingering in your mouth for days.

E-mail is also different in tone from regular printed letters. E-mail is casual and informal. We write e-mail the way we talk. When you write a printed letter, you rely on those formal letter-writing rules that Mrs. Knocknees, your 6th-grade English teacher, brainwashed into you. Remember her lecture? "First, you start with the date, then you move to the greeting, then to the body of the letter, then you close with the salutation. And if you ever for-

get that, I'll have no choice but to keep hitting your knuckles with that big steel ruler I keep in the closet." So according to Mrs. Knocknees, a typical letter to your best friend Bill would be written like this:

Dearest William,
Greetings to you. How art thee and thy loved ones?
Your obedient servant, Ronald

E-mail letters are a bit less formal. The same letter to your friend Bill written in e-mail style would read like this:

Yo, Billy Boy, how's with you? Happening with the wife and kids?
Later, Ronnie

We write e-mail in a very free, loose, stream-of-conscious way. It's almost like e-mail is a rough draft for an actual letter. But instead of sending the letter, we send the rough draft. I've also noticed that e-mail messages contain no transition from one idea to another. Many messages read like this:

Hi Julie
How's the new job going? Oh no, it's raining here now. Hey, my wife found out about our affair.
Steve

If writing e-mail is easy, addressing it is the hard part. An e-mail address is not quite as simple as a street address. You can mail a letter through the Post Office and forget the zip code and write the name and address backwards in Sanskrit, and your letter may still reach its destination.

But e-mail addresses must be precise and accurate. One typo in the address, and your message winds up in some dead e-letter office. Bouncing around in electronic space are thousands of e-letters that don't know where to go because the address has a capital "A" instead of a lower case "a." Or an ampersand instead of an asterisk, or a bracket instead of a parenthesis, or a whatchamacalit instead of a thingamajig.

E-mail addresses must also include the recipient's precise name and specific location. The proper form for a typical e-mail address is usually something like: FIRSTNAME.LASTNAME.MIDDLE NAME.MAIDEN NAME.NICKNAME.NAME THE KIDS CALLED YOU IN SCHOOL TO MAKE FUN OF YOU@NETWORK.NODE.DOMAIN.KINGDOM.TIME ZONE.SCHOOL DISTRICT.UTILITY COMPANY.HEMISPHERE.DISTANCE FROM THE EQUATOR.DISTANCE FROM THE EARTH'S CORE.

E-mail addresses can also be very long. (According to Ripley's Believe It Or Not, if you took the average e-mail address and stretched it out end to end, it would circle the earth three times). It's not uncommon for the address to be longer than the actual message. So you'll find messages that look like this:

To: Dr. Albert Weinstein
Subject: Pick me up on Saturday
FROM: joseph.weinstein.but.all.my.friends.call.me.joey@freshman.dorm.in.exclusive.ivy.league.college.where.everyone.parties.all.night.and.never.studies.and.maybe.that's.why.i'm.flunking.every.subject.edu
TO: dr.albert.weinstein.md.dds.phd.mhd.bvd.and.devoted.father.who's.shelling.out.plenty.of.money.to.pay.for.lazy.son's.college.education.working.@lucrative.medical.practice.giving.unnecessary.facelifts.to.rich.women.on.park.avenue.in.manhattan.new.york.med.

Dad,
Pick me up on Saturday.
Joey

Assuming you've figured out the correct address, your e-mail should reach its destination quickly. Receiving e-mail is exciting. We all love to log onto a bulletin board and discover we have mail waiting. E-mail is much more fun than your regular postal mail which usually contains only bills, junk mail and Dear John letters. With e-mail, you know all your messages are from cool friends or co-workers or people you're having affairs with.

Of course, that's what it's like now. By the 21st century, the entire world will be e-mailing. And then we'll be getting e-mail bills and e- junk mail and e-mail eviction notices and e-dear John letters. And then e-mail probably won't be as much fun anymore.

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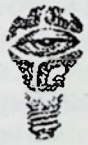

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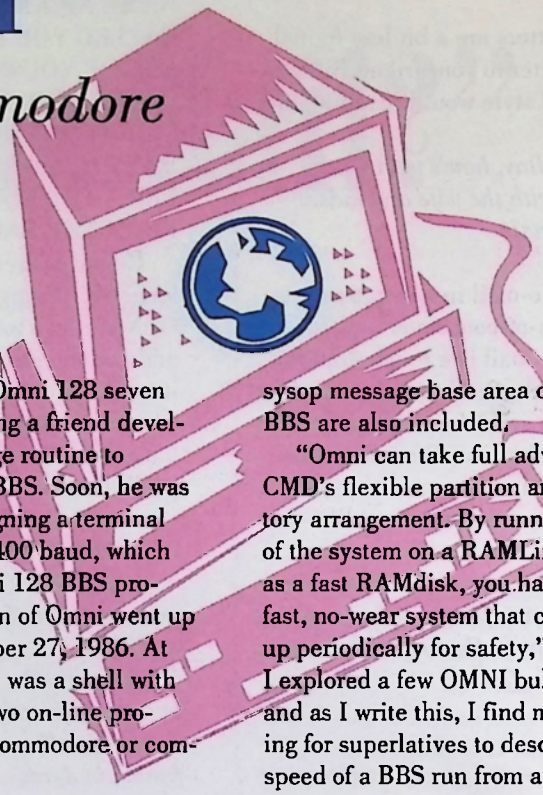
BY GAELYNE R. MORANEC

Doing the Impossible

Omni 128 BBS Brings Commodore Into the Real World



Wouldn't it be great to find a BBS program that allowed us to use all of the features of the newer, high-speed/ high-capacity devices that are now available for our computers? This month, we'll take a look at a Commodore 128 BBS program, not yet commercially released, which fully utilizes the potential of our computers. Once again we'll see that for the Commodore user, the word "impossible" doesn't necessarily mean that it can't be done.

Brian Bell began Omni 128 seven years ago while helping a friend develop a machine language routine to detect carrier on his BBS. Soon, he was off and running, designing a terminal program to support 2400 baud, which evolved into the Omni 128 BBS program. The first version of Omni went up for testing on November 27, 1986. At the time, the program was a shell with modem drivers and two on-line programs, all run from Commodore or compatible disk drives.

To run an Omni system today, sysops need a Commodore 128 computer operating in fast 80-column mode, a CMD RAMLink (with at least 4 megabytes) AND/OR an HD series Hard Drive, and a 2400 or 14.4k modem from a specific list of tested units. A CMD SWIFTLink RS232 Serial Cartridge is also highly recommended. Omni 128 callers can use ANSI, Commodore Color/Graphics or ASCII terminals, with modem connections of up to 14.4k BPS (Bits Per Second). While Omni 128 has not been officially released because the manual is not yet completed, experienced sysops can purchase it for $69, plus $15 for the manual when it is complete. Once released, it will sell for $80. Currently, the system comes with detailed setup information, a hardware checklist and trouble-shooting guide. About 150K of messages from the sysop message base area on the support BBS are also included.

"Omni can take full advantage of CMD's flexible partition and subdirectory arrangement. By running the heart of the system on a RAMLink configured as a fast RAMdisk, you have a quiet, fast, no-wear system that can be backed up periodically for safety," Bell told me. I explored a few OMNI bulletin boards, and as I write this, I find myself searching for superlatives to describe the speed of a BBS run from a RAMdisk. Not trusting my own judgment, I had an IBM sysop call Omni's support BBS (Omni-World 128). I told him that it was a Commodore BBS that utilized ANSI, but didn't elaborate. When my friend called back, he was excited. The speed impressed him, and he said if he hadn't known it was a Commodore 128 bulletin board, he would have thought it was run on an IBM.

Mega Message Capacity

Bell's favorite feature is the message base. On the surface, it looks like many other message systems, but it offers a vehicle for specialized conferences within individual message bases. Up to 990,001 message bases, or sub-boards can be created, with 50 "posts" (initial or "subject starter" messages). Replies are unlimited. For instance, a message base can be created called "Fruits". An

initial message would be about apples. The replies to this subject would (hopefully) continue to be about apples, with no limit to the number of replies.

All messages are saved in pure machine language (within the program itself) to produce top speed when reading messages. An option to scan for keywords allows text searches in either selected or all message areas using search words of up to 50 characters.

Omni systems can be networked, allowing the sharing of messages between other Omni BBS systems. A special mode allows networking with Color 64 BBS systems, although future versions of the two BBS programs may change this ability. The networking facilities use a built-in protocol. Omni-Link, an extra program that comes with the BBS software, allows sysops of Omni based boards to send batches of files to other Omni systems. A standard message packeting system hasn't been implemented, yet callers can download their mail in Commodore petascii format, and upload replies to be merged into the system editor. Bell has plans to add standard ".QWK" packets for offline reading and editing of messages, since this is available for all computer platforms, including the Commodore 64 and 128.

The Files Area

Omni offers four protocols for uploading and downloading, plus four others that are strictly for downloading. The four protocols for both uploading and downloading are: X-Modem CRC, X-Modem Checksum, Punter C1 and Multi-Punter C1. Download-only protocols are: Y-Modem Plain CRC, X-Modem 1K CRC, Y-Modem 1K CRC, and Y-Modem G. To my knowledge, Omni is the first Commodore system to have Y-MODEM G. It should be noted that Y-Modem G is designed specifically for use with high speed modems with built-in error correction. This has been tested on Omni with the following Non-Commodore terms: ProComm Plus, Telemate, Q-Modem, and Lync (1k only) for the IBM, Baud Bandit and JR-COMM for the Amiga, and ZTerm v0.9 for the Macintosh. The highest speed attained during tests of Y-modem-g was 1460 cps with a 9600 baud, plain V.42 connection. Bell is also working on at least partial Z-Modem support.

One interesting feature in the files area is Tran Scan, which allows the user to quickly search through files areas for one or two keywords (including dates), at a rate of 50 to 100 files per second. To save the user time and frustration, this feature scans only the file areas that the user can access.

Other BBS Features

There's more to a bulletin board than messages and files. Many times it's the "extras" that make a board a fascinating place for callers and sysops to enjoy. Omni offers a Voting Booth, User Lists, BBS Lister, Graffiti Floor, Signature Creator, Newsfile (bulletins) area, private E-Mail, and on-line games. Interest-Matcher will match users with similar interests. The BBS Lister data base can be searched by 16 different search options.

A Call-Back module for local callers who happen to have a bad phone line is available. Once the user connects, the BBS drops carrier and calls the user, usually bypassing the problem phone line. This is not to be confused with the Auto-Call Back Validation for validating new users, which is also available.

Flexible Sysop Features

Omni offers features for the sysop that equal or rival other systems, regardless of computer platform. The main BBS system can run from any disk device number, from 8 to 29, a far cry from bulletin boards which must be run from device 8. Burst routines are implemented for disk drives with this ability.

While waiting for calls, the sysop can perform a variety of operations without the need to go online and tie up the phone line. The Sysop menu includes a file copier with built in alphabetizing, an ASCII to PET converter, user search, and options to edit users or BBS characteristics. The utilities module has 16 features that let the sysop perform less common functions, such as edit default colors, change the pause prompt, print user list, change disk drives for uploads, etc.

Local (sysop side) screen printing can be disabled to allow maximum BBS speed. Independent of screen printing, BBS activity can be output to a printer, providing a continuous hard copy of BBS events.

Midnight updates of the system can be customized to meet the sysop's needs. The utilities can be chained, so a series of functions can be performed automatically. This can be modified so activities are performed only on certain days, or daily.

Planned Updates

The future looks bright for this program. Bell says he has a large manual of upgrade plans that he whittles away at each month. Most of Bell's current efforts are towards finishing the manual. His plans include a virtual memory system, so larger and more complex programs can be added to the BBS. As mentioned earlier, he's working on a Z-modem receive function and a "front end" to implement mail processing between the Omni BBS system and IBM or Amiga systems. He also mentioned updating the current ANSI support, and work towards RIPscrip support.

A demo of Omni is not available, but Bell will give guided tours around the support board on request. The support BBS offers mainly sysop support for the 20 or so systems that currently run Omni. I found a majority of these boards listed in the on-line data base and called a few of them. I found that each board I called had it's own distinct "personality," which is a mark of the flexibility of the software.

For more information about Omni 128 Color Bulletin System, call Omni-World 128: (206)-536-9353 (38400 serial, 14.4K V.32bis or lower).

RAMLink, SWIFTLink, and HD series Hard Drives are trademarks of Creative Micro Designs, Inc.

Gaelyne Moranec is freelance writer. Very active in the Commodore community, she is the Editor of CEE-64 Alive!, a disk magazine for Commodore 64 users, Secretary and Co-Editor for her local Commodore User's Group, and Co-Sysop on Ancient Heart BBS in Saginaw, Michigan. She can usually be found in the CBM FIDOnet echo. Comments or suggestions can be sent to her on GEnie, addressed to G.Moranec, or sent to BBS Magazine.

BY VICTOR R. VOLKMAN

Chasing Down the Deals

Price Cuts at Hayes, Speed at US Robotics

Regular readers of this report may have been wondering why I haven't cast much light on US Robotics modems this year. The fact is I bought my first US Robotics modem more than seven years ago. Of course, that little external Courier 1200 cost more than today's v.32bis modems, but it served me well for many years. I have been expecting an aggressive move in their Sysops Discount program for some months and it finally arrived: US Robotics has cut the price of the very popular Courier HST Dual Standard another $50 and added v.32terbo with speeds up to 21,600 bps at no extra charge. Just $399 buys you v.32bis/v.42bis, v.32terbo to 21,600 bps, and USR HST proprietary transmissions all in one box.

Four months ago, I gave a stern warning about going against the international standards community in favor of v.32terbo. The US Robotics modems now allow a hardware upgrade to v.FAST. They had a limited time offer where you could pre-buy the upgrade for $100. Unfortunately, this offer was guaranteed only between July 2 and September 30, 1993. There has been no announcement as to whether the very-low upgrade cost will be allowed an extension. The press release of July 2 very clearly states that those who do not take advantage of the pre-buy will face a $300 upgrade cost. I don't know about you, but I know where I can buy *TWO* brand-new v.32bis/v.42bis modems for the price of their upgrade. I can only hope that we'll see more competitive upgrade offers in the coming year.

In their August 23, 1993 announcement they introduced a total of seven new v.32terbo modems. It is unclear from their Sysop Discount notice as to whether their special offer modem includes fax or not.

v. What Did You Say?

What has become known now as traditional v.32terbo normally offers speeds up to 19,200 bps. The US Robotics modem uses their proprietary Adaptive Speed Leveling (ASL) technology to push the speed to 21,600 bps. In either case, when you add v.42bis compression on top with its 4:1 speedup, you're looking at DTE data rates approaching 100,000 bps. US Robotics ensures that its modem won't be your bottleneck by increasing DTE (modem-to-PC) speeds to 115,200 bps compatibility.

US Robotics extends the feature war a bit by adding dialback-security, call selection and HST Cellular. Details on dialback-security have not yet been released, but it puts the product line definitely in the high end of sophistication. Call selection means that the modem can automatically answer cor-

CONTINUES

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

VENDOR/ PRODUCT	9600 V.32 INTERNAL	9600 V.32 EXTERNAL	14400 V.32BIS INTERNAL	14400 V.32BIS EXTERNAL
Aceex	N/A	N/A	1496VP* $290	1496V+* $320
AT&T Paradyne	N/A	N/A	3721-B1-001* $160	3710-A1-201* $180 PC $190 Mac
ATI Technologies	N/A	9600 ETC/E $275	N/A	N/A
CPI/ ViVa	N/A	ViVa 9642e $176	ViVa 14.4 $180	ViVa 14.4 $196
Digicom Systems	Scout $241	Scout $248	Scout Plus $266	Scout Plus $276
			9624PC+ $340	9624LE+ $350
Forval	N/A	N/A	14400 (Int.) $375	14400 (Ext.) $405
Hayes Corp.	N/A	N/A	Optima 144B* $179	Ultra 144 $249
				Optima 144+FAX* $179 PC
				Optima 144+FAX* $179 Macintoshl
Intel	N/A	N/A	SatisFax/400 $249	14.4 EX $269
				SatisFAX/400e* $245
MultiTech	MT932BC* $375	MT932BA* $375	MT1432BC $400	MT1432BA* $400
			MT1432ES $400 MCA	MT1432MU* $300
				MT1432BL* $450
				MT1432PCS $575
Practical Peripherals	N/A	N/A	N/A	PM14400FXSA* $215
				PM14400FXMT* $155
Supra Corp.	N/A	SupraFAXModem* $199	SupraFAXModem* $199	SupraFAXModem* $249
USRobotics	N/A	N/A	N/A	HST Dual Stand. v.32terbo 21.6k $399
				Courier v.32bis $299
Ven-Tel, Inc.	PCM96FAX* $175	EC96FAX* $195	PCM144FAX* $195	EC144FAX* $215
	MCM96FAX* $325 MCA		PCMV.32bis* $480	ECV.32bis* $525
			MCM144FAX* $380 MCA	RMV.32bis II* $425
Zoom Telephonics	N/A	N/A	VFPV.32Bis* $145	VFXV.32Bis* $149
ZyXEL	N/A	N/A	U-1496B* 16.8K $299	U-1496E* 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.

rectly whether it is a data or fax incoming call. Typically, older modems must be pre-set in data or fax mode and can't change on-the-fly. HST Cellular is a proprietary standard similar to Microcom's MNP 10. These type of extensions handle long carrier loss and high noise environments without complaint.

US Robotics' advanced modular modem architecture allows the current Courier V.32 bis, Courier HST Dual Standard and Courier HST external desktop modems to upgrade to 28,800 bps v.FAST. The modems contain a motherboard and a smaller daughterboard, which holds the microprocessors and firmware. This daughterboard can quickly be replaced with a new board containing the 28 technology. The upgrade procedure takes less than five minutes, and can be performed in the field by the user, reducing unnecessary "down" time and eliminating excess shipping and handling costs.

For detailed information and technical specifications on the above products, call the U.S. Robotics Technical Support Department at (800) 982-5151 in the U.S. or (800) 553-3560 in Canada. From outside the U.S. or Canada, call (708) 982-5151. Or Fax at (708)-933-5552. In Europe call +33

TABLE Ib — SYSOPS MODEM ACCESSORY DISCOUNTS BY VENDOR

VENDOR	PART #	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	SYSOP PRICE
Hayes Corp.	08-00593	ISDN PC Adapter	$450
	08-00509	ISDN System Adapter	$450
	08-00456	ESP (Enhanced Serial Port) AT Bus	$ 79
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
Aceex	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
AT&T Paradyne	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA , Mastercard American Ex.
ATI Technologies	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
CPI/ ViVa	2 months	12 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA MasterCard
Digicom Systems	currently	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	none
Forval	N/A	N/A	No Maximum	none
Hayes Corp.	6 months (may be waived)	unspecified time	1 per phone. Max. 4, may be negotiated	VISA MasterCard
Intel	currently	12 months	1 per phone. Max. 4.	VISA, MasterCard American Ex. *
Multi-Tech	currently or plan to	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	none, must have Cashier's Check
Practical Peripherals	currently	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
Supra Corp.	currently	unspecified time	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
USRobotics	6 months	6 months	1 per phone. No Maximum	VISA Mastercard
Ven-Tel	6 months	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.

20-471210 or FAX +33 20-919927.

Hayes Cuts Prices, Adds Products

Readers following this monthly report will note that it was just five months ago that Hayes slashed Sysop Discount prices by literally hundreds of dollars. As I've noted before, keeping a Sysop Discount ahead of competitors and the retail market requires constant vigilance. Hayes latest price cut takes another $20 off the Enhanced Serial Port (ESP) reducing it to just $79. This two-port serial board includes onboard NS16550AFNs plus a dedicated 8-bit CPU with 8K RAM buffer and DMA capabilities. The original list price for the ESP was $300. The lower pricing will make room for the new ESP 2.0 card expected very soon.

Another change since since their May 1993 overhaul is the addition of an internal version of the popular "OPTIMA 144 + FAX 144" v.32bis/v.42bis data and fax modem. The internal version, designated OPTIMA 144B (Hayes Part #08-01181), is now available for $179. Similarly, the Macintosh external version of the OPTIMA (Hayes Part #08-01197) is available for the same price. For those who are not familiar, Macintosh modem packages generally include a special serial cable and Macintosh software.

Price and Performance

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

In practice, I recommend only v.32bis (14400 bps) modems for sysops. The v.32bis offers 50% more throughput for between 5 to 15% extra cost. I expect that many manufacturers will quietly discard v.32 modems from production as soon as v.FAST (22000 to 28000 bps) modems go into production. As shipping dates for V.FAST modems come closer to shipping, I'll be providing upgrade information on them.

More Than Modems

Some vendors offer more than just modems to sysops who join their program. For example, Hayes Corp. offers 50% to 70% 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

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USR Sportster 14.4K, V.32bis, No FAX, int/ext ..... $149/$168
USR Sportster 14.4K, V.32bis, W/ FAX, int/ext ..... $169/$188
ZyXEL U1496E 16.8K, V.32bis, CALLER ID, W/ FAX, int/ext ..... $281/$281
ZyXEL U1496E 19.2K, V.32bis, CALLER ID, W/ FAX, int/ext ..... $390/$390

Tape Backup Units

Conner 250MB tape backup unit $129.00
Summit 120MB/250MB/305MB tape backup unit ..... $139/$177/$245
Colorado 120MB/250MB tape backup unit ..... $148/$175

I/O boards

2 COM & 1 printer port. 2 16450 UARTs $21.00
2 COM & 1 printer port. 1 16450/1 16550 UART $31.00
2 COM & 1 printer port. 2 16550 UARTs $41.00

Software

PCBoard BBS software (2 node version) $159.00
PCBoard BBS software (10 node version) $319.00
Wildcat! BBS software (1 node version) $97.00
Wildcat! BBS software (10 node version) $197.00
RIPaint v1.53.00 - Add RIP bit-mapped graphics to your BBS $159.00
DesqView386 v2.6 ..... $99.00
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IDE Adapter, 2 FDD, 2 HDD, 1S/1P/1G $27.00

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SB Pro Deluxe - Stereo support, 20 voices instead of 11 voices $126.00
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System Requirements: IBM-PC Compatible, 640k RAM, modem (up to 38,400 bps). Site licensing available. DOORWAY is the tradmark of TriMark Engineering.

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

VENDOR NAME	ORDERS CAN BE PLACED FOR SHIPMENT TO THESE COUNTRIES..	TYPICAL TIME BETWEEN ORDER AND SHIPPING	FIRMWARE (ROM) UPGRADE POLICIES
Aceex	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay 8% GST, +7% Ontario res.)	Unspecified	Unspecified
AT&T Paradyne	U.S., Canada	3-4 weeks	Unspecified
ATI Technologies	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay 8% GST, +7% Ontario res.) CAN$ prices assume exchange rates of CAN 1$ = US $0.83	4-6 weeks	Unspecified
CPI/ViVa	U.S. only	1-2 weeks	Unspecified
Digicom Systems	U.S., Canada, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia (185 to 245 VAC)	2-3 weeks	Unspecified
Forval	U.S., Canada, Europe (call for details)	1 week * (or less)	Anyone can download from their BBS and load the EEPROMS w/AT command
Hayes Corp.	U.S., Canada (Canadians must pay 13.9% customs tax)	1 week * (or less)	Will replace entire modem if warranted, otherwise no upgrade
Intel	U.S. only	2-4 weeks	Unspecified
Multi-Tech	U.S. only	1 week* (or less)	Unspecified
Practical Peripherals	U.S. only	3-4 weeks *	Call their voice line and they will send FREE
Supra Corp.	U.S. only	3-4 weeks	Call their tech support BBS and order them FREE
USRobotics	U.S., Canada, Europe (110/220 VAC only) see EURODEAL file	2-6 weeks	Unspecified
Ven-Tel	U.S., Canada	1-2 weeks	Unspecified
Zoom Telephonics	Worldwide Call for details.	2-3 Weeks	Unspecified
ZyXEL	U.S., Canada	1 week (or less)	Unspecified

* indicates the shipping time has been personally verified by my own purchasing experience.
Order processing: "Unspecified" means there's nothing in writing, you could be looking at from 1 to 8 weeks.
Firmware upgrade: "Unspecified" means that the policy is simply not publicized. If the modem was properly engineered and tested, no upgrades should be necessary.

TABLE IV — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

VENDOR NAME	CALL THEIR BBS AT THIS NUMBER AND...	...DOWNLOAD THIS FILE.	IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL..
Aceex	(416) 538-9999	ACEEX.ZIP	(416) 538-0101
AT&T Paradyne	(813) 532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800) 554-4996
ATI Tech.	(416) 756-4591	SYSOPLAN.ZIP	(416) 756-0718
CPI/ViVa	(805) 499-9646; (215) 746-9948	CPIA.TXT	(800) 854-7600
Digicom	(508) 262-1412	SCOUT.TXT	(508) 262-1277
Forval	(408) 294-3065	FORVAL.ZIP	(408) 294-0526
Hayes Corp.	(404) 446-6336; (800) USHAYES	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404) 840-9200
Intel	(503) 645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503) 228-9707
Multi-Tech	(612) 785-9875; (800) 392-2432	PRICE.TXT	(612) 785-3500
Pract. Per.	(805) 496-4445	SYSBBS.TXT	(805) 497-4774
Supra Corp.	(503) 967-2444	SUPRA.TXT	(503) 967-2400
USRobotics	(708) 982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708) 982-5010
Ven-Tel	(408) 922-0988	SYSDEAL.TXT	(408) 436-7400
Zoom Telephonics	N/A	N/A	(800) 631-3116
ZyXEL	(714) 693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714) 693-0804

requirements as given by each manufacturer. Some manufacturers only require you currently be running a BBS at time of ordering. A few, such as Hayes, may actually waive the current operating requirement.

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

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

Nearly all of the modem vendors are accepting VISA and Mastercard for orders. However, Accex, ATI, Digicom, Forval, 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 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 also ordered from Practical Peripherals and they have a mandatory three-week waiting period before they ship. At the extreme, US Robotics guarantees a two- to six-week waiting period. Table III summarizes the published processing schedules of each manufacturer. Remember, the manufacturers are doing you a favor by offering 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.

Victor R. Volkman has been researching Sysop Discounts since 1991 and, until recently, published a regular electronic report (SYSMOD.ZIP). Currently, Volkman tracks the 15 most popular modem manufacturers on a monthly basis.

BBS Software & Hardware

This Month's Advertised Specials

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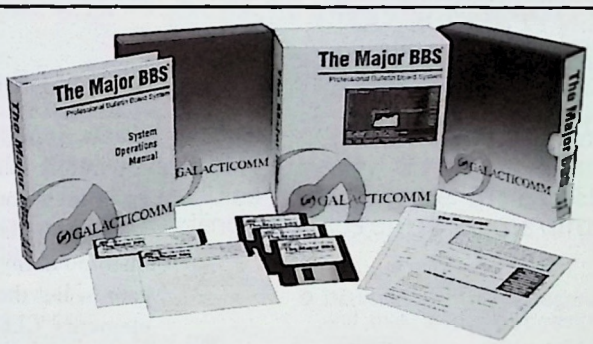

New! Version 6.1 of The Major BBS

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BY MIKE ROBINSON

You Called?

Answers to Some Common Internet Questions

Welcome back to the world of the Internet. Recently, I've been getting a lot of questions from readers on a variety of topics. This is not surprising, as the Internet has much to offer. The following are my replies to some of the more common questions.

Relaying the Message

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is a program allowing real-time communications to network users throughout the world. The first step is to telnet to one of the IRC servers. There are many such servers on the net, such as the one provided at "irc-2.mit.edu." Each chat program has many channels available, and you may jump through these channels as you wish. One channel may be discussing politics, another sports, while a third is holding discussions on the next Star Trek episode. Once you have joined a channel, you may type freely within that group. Your text will be sent when you hit enter. All IRC commands begin with a slash. For example, '/help' will give you more information on IRC. 'list' is used to see which channels are currently active, while '/join' can be used to join a channel. Finally, as with BBSing, IRC has its own rules of etiquette and jargon. Your first time on, just sit back and listen for awhile.

Down and Dirty

MUDs, or Multi-User Dungeons, are essentially role-playing games that many of us computer hackers enjoy. Those who play frequently might be insulted at my calling them simple games, but they do share some common elements. Chances are, if you like role-playing games, you'll love to MUD. If you want to find out more about these games, read the rec.games.mud.* newsgroups. You'll be able to find some popular sites, as well as some tips on how to MUD. But be warned! There have been known disappearances of MUD players, losing contact with family and friends. It is very addictive.

The Worm and the Egg

Clifford Stoll, in his book "The Cuckoo's Egg," described his journey in tracking down someone who had broken into a system at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory in California. Apparently, a few-cent error in the Lab's records led him on a wild chase through the U.S. and Europe. Working with several government agencies, he relentlessly pursued this computer hacker. Stoll's efforts helped to point out the need for improved communication in our electronic information age.

Perhaps the most famous story about the Internet is that of the Internet Worm. In 1988, a graduate student at Cornell wrote a program much like today's viruses. His worm was able to duplicate itself while propagating from site to site. Unfortunately, the worm spread quickly; much faster, in fact, than the creator himself had anticipated. Machines at each site came to a screeching halt. Although a solution was developed, it could not get through in time because major portions of the network were clogged with the worm. Eventually the worm was stopped, and the network returned to normal operations. By then, however, people wanted to know who was the master of this so-called worm. Robert T. Morris, Jr., was convicted and sentenced to a combination of probation, community service and a fine.

A final story you may hear about concerns a child with a terminal illness. His last wish was to get more

mail than anyone else in the world. Thousands of well-wishers, including network users, sent letters. Officials at the Guinness Book of World Records have acknowledged that he holds the world record for mail. Apparently, this helped the boy incredibly, as he is now alive and well.

Mailing Lists

If you are a frequent Internet user, you have probably come across one or two mail lists. Mailing lists exist to quickly disseminate information to its subscribers. Once you join a mailing list, any message sent to the main list address will, in turn, be mailed to each user on the list. This is especially helpful for users who do not have USENET access, but do have standard mail capabilities. A list of current mailing lists is available at "ftp.nisc.sri.com" as "/netinfo/interest-groups." On BITNET is an automated mailing list server, aptly named "listserv."

Unlike the above mentioned mailing lists, however, the listserv is an automated program which interprets incoming messages and acts on them. For instance, the server can add or delete users without the need for a human administrator. To obtain a list of available lists, write to "LISTSERV@BITNIC.BITNET."

In the body of the message, put only the command: "list global." For a list of commands, write the same address with the command "help" in the body.

Archie

Archie was originally developed at McGill University in Canada to scan various anonymous FTP sites for available files. Today, archie follows over 800 archive sites, holding at least one million files. Archie updates itself every month, so its information is usually current. The original Archie server can be reached by telnetting to "archie.mcgill.ca." Another popular site is "archie.rutgers.edu." At the login prompt, enter "archie" to start. To use Archie, type "help" at the command prompt. To make a query, use the "prog" command. For example, try the command "prog spice" to obtain a list of all FTP sites with spice programs and information. Use this command with appropriate caution! Unless your target is extremely specific, results are often pages long. If you don't have telnet capability, send mail to "archie@archie.mcgill.ca" with the word help as the body of the message. This way you can enjoy the benefits of FTP without even having FTP access.

Definition of the Month

NSFnet: This is the backbone of the network. It was originally funded by the National Science Foundation. Operated by the Merit Corporation, it connects mid-level networks to each other.

January's Book

This month's book has little to do with the Internet. "Neuromancer," by William Gibson, is a fantasy novel where the word Cyberspace first appeared. In his book, Gibson uses Cyberspace to describe the world of computers, of which the Internet is now an integral part.

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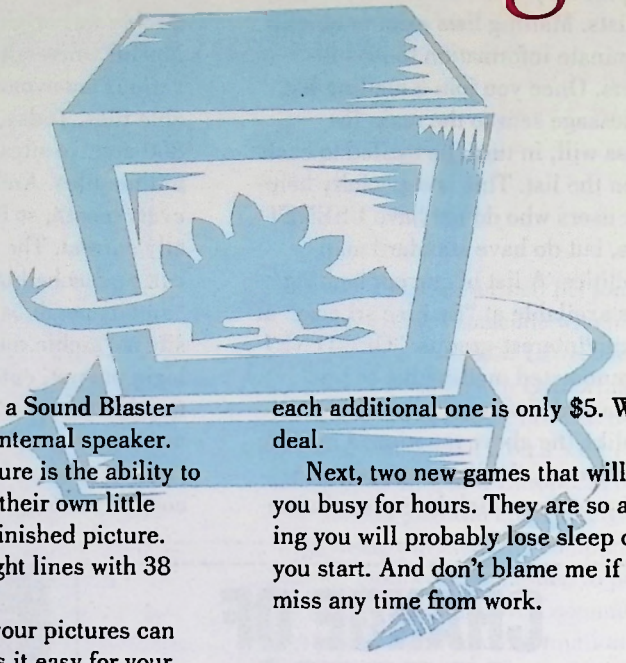
BY "UNCLE" HANK HURTEAU

Keep the Kids Coloring

While You Try to Stay Dry



BERT'S COLORING BOOKS

by Theron Wierenga

BAACC32.ZIP — Bert's African Animals
BCCC32.ZIP — Bert's Christmas
BPACC32.ZIP — Bert's Prehistoric Animals
BWDCC32.ZIP — Bert's Whales and Dolphins

Here's a collection of wonderful programs for the kids. BERT'S COLORING BOOKS are just what the name says. They let your children create scenes and then either color or print them.

Once loaded, the program will ask you to select one of six background screens. You then choose any or all of up to 12 images that can be placed anywhere on the screen in one of four different sizes. Once the picture is the way you want it, then you can go on to coloring.

To color in your drawings, choose the crayon icon from the left side of the screen. A screen will appear with all the available colors. Pick the one you want with your mouse and use it to fill in parts of your picture. Keep going until you are finished. Other icons include save, print, undo, erase, and stop. There are also voices that can be heard either through a Sound Blaster card or through the internal speaker.

Another nice feature is the ability to have the child write their own little story to go with the finished picture. This can be up to eight lines with 38 characters per line.

The fact that all your pictures can be printed out makes it easy for your children to create their own personal coloring books that can be shared with friends or keep them busy on a long trip in the car.

There are several varieties of BERT'S COLORING BOOKS. Try one and I'm sure you'll want the whole set. Each program must be installed with it's own install program that needs to be run from a floppy disk. However, if you install more than one of the programs, they all go into the same directory. But, if you type BERT.EXE in that directory, you will be shown a menu of all the coloring books you have installed. That's really a nice feature.

So, load up one or several of these programs and let the kids play for hours. They won't soon lose interest with this collection. There are so many combinations that they'll never get tired of creating. They might even learn something!

Registration for any one of BERT'S COLORING BOOKS is $20, however, each additional one is only $5. What a deal.

Next, two new games that will keep you busy for hours. They are so addicting you will probably lose sleep once you start. And don't blame me if you miss any time from work.

WALL PIPE ver 1.1

WPIPE11.ZIP
by William Soleau
Special Requirements: EGA/VGA and Mouse

Have you gotten over your addiction to Tetris and Lemmings yet? If so, have I got another one for you! It's called Wall Pipe by William Soleau (BOLO series of strategy games) and it'll grab you just like the games mentioned above. You just can't get enough. I dare you to try and play just ONE game.

The object of Wall Pipe is simply to keep the water flowing. You do this by connecting sections of pipes of different styles to direct its flow. Once the water comes to a dead end, that level is finished. If you have gathered enough points, you'll go on to the next level. Now doesn't that sound easy? Think again.

Once loaded, most of the screen is taken up by the "playing field". On the left side you will see four pipe sections.

The bottom one is the one that can be played whereas the other three are what's coming next. This way you can plan ahead a little. Click on the bottom piece and place it on the board where you want. Then just keep placing pipes until the water catches up with you.

When you first start a level, you are given 40 seconds to get started before the water starts on it's way. Then it's a mad dash to keep ahead. You can pause the game, but when you do, it won't show you the board. Thus, you can't use it to plan your strategy.

It all sounds pretty simple, and it really is. There are, however, several obstacles that can get in you way, like moving bricks. There are also several pieces that can increase your score like the cross pipes allowing you to loop the water through itself for extra points. These cross pipes are important to use if you want to gain enough points to go to the next level.

Also on the left side of the screen is your present score and the time remaining before the water starts flowing out of the well. The bottom of the screen tells you how many points you need to advance to the next level. But, points are taken off for unused sections of pipe, so you might not end up with what you had hoped.

Registration for Wall Pipe is only $12. The shareware version comes with 12 levels whereas the registered version has 100. Although I don't recommend you to take this game to work unless you like being unemployed, it does have a "Boss Key".

Wall Pipe is a game different each time you play and will become addicting in a very short time. You'll find yourself saying "Just one more game!" So, delete Tetris from your hard drive and install Wall Pipe for many hours of frustrating fun.

TUROID ver 1.0

TUROID10.ZIP
by Jason Truong
Special Requirements: VGA and Mouse, Sound card recommended

Just when I thought I'd seen all the variations of the classic breakout game possible, along comes TUROID. I'm not sure where the name comes from, but the game is certainly different. In a way it's like most of the others, but instead of trying to catch everything that falls, you only want to catch the gold balls. Catching these will do all sorts of different things for you, such as adding more balls in play, making your paddle longer or shorter, turning the paddle into a laser, and more. The tricky part is you don't know what's going to happen when you do catch the gold ball. But, catch anything else twice and you lose a "life".

After each level is a "Bonus Level". You gain extra points by blasting anything weird that happens across your screen.

The "evaluation" version only has two levels, but it will certainly give you an idea of what to expect from the registered version ($10) which has a total of 25 levels. For an extra $5, you can also order a level editor so you can create your own screens.

The graphics are quite nice and overall play is smooth. Although it will work fine on a 286, the author recommends a 386 because the program is "graphic intensive". Also, the sensitivity of the mouse can be controlled and there is a lively musical score and sound effects if you have a sound card.

When you first start a level [in Wall Pipe], you are given 40 seconds to get started before the water starts on it's way. Then it's a mad dash to keep ahead.

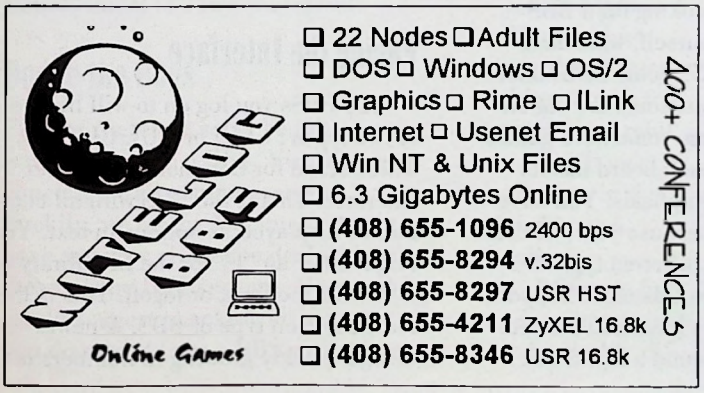
So, like Wall Pipe, if you can afford to lose time from work, I recommend you take a look at TUROID.

File Names

The listed BBS file names are current as of the time I wrote the particular review. One of the advantages of shareware is the regularity of upgrades. You may find that by the time you read a review, the program has gone though a few revisions. You might want to take the time to do a search on your favorite BBS to see if that is the case. And remember to support those authors!

What Is Shareware?

Shareware is a special type of software. It can be called a variety of names, but very basically, shareware is "try before you buy". Shareware authors allow you to try the program asking little or nothing in return.. Try it, and if you like it, send in the requested registration fee. If it isn't what you were looking for, try something else. But please, if you find yourself using a shareware program on a regular basis, consider sending the author his requested fee. This will encourage the shareware authors to continues providing you with quality products at reasonable cost.



BY MICHAEL A. KUYKENDALL

Getting Online...

And What To Do When You're There

I was sitting around last night trying to think of a subject to discuss. Being January of a new year, I wanted the subject to be fresh and exciting. So naturally, I asked my 3 year-old daughter, Lauren, what I should write about. She said, "Oh, how about...Barney! I love Barney!"

If any of you are parents and have small children, you've likely developed an urge to choke a certain purple dinosaur.

I read in the paper that a man in Florida has started an "I Hate Barney Secret Society." Online, there have been numerous humor items ranging from comparisons of Barney and Jurassic Park, to digitized sounds of "I love you..." followed by machine gun fire, then the sound of a falling body. We onliners are a pretty sick bunch. Funny, but sick!

Back to Basics

The past few months I have been telling you how to use different packages to log onto your favorite boards. This month, we will be exploring the different types of BBSs, how they operate and some general online philosophy.

First off, when looking for a BBS you've got to ask yourself, what am I looking for in a BBS? Some BBSs offer lots of message areas, some are big on files for downloading, some have games you can play. But each board has its own style, its own emphasis. You have to remember this, because you will definitely encounter a different type of people on the Hayes Customer Support BBS than those on a local adult board.

Once you have found a board that interests you (check a local User Group BBS for a list of your local BBSs), you should first try logging on with the communication settings of N-8-1. About 95% of all boards use these settings. If strange characters seem to be coming across your screen, though, log off and re-log using E-7-1 settings instead. If you find that a board is always busy, don't worry. The board may be out of order, or the BBS may have only one or two lines coming into the board. Most telecommunications packages have a redial option to keep calling the board until it connects, or until it reaches your preset maximum number of redials.

Some good times to call a BBS are early in the morning and during lunch. However, I do suggest you make certain the number you have is a BBS and not a residence. No one likes to be awakened at 3 A.M. to the squeal of a modem.

Facing the Interface

The BBSs you log on to will be one of two types : CLUI or GUI. CLUI. These stand for Command Line User Interface. This is the BBS with all commands displayed as options in text. You might enter an "F" for the file library or a "G" for goodbye, or logoff. This is the most common type of BBS. A newer design quickly growing in numbers is

the GUI BBS, which stands for Graphical User Interface. These BBSs require you to use a client software package, downloaded in vt100 mode from the board, before you can take advantage of the graphics.

The graphics are of two types : Macintosh icons, folders, etc., or RIPterm graphics, with pictures and buttons you "click" to get around the board. Both are fine interfaces, and each serve their purpose: to allow you to move around performing functions on their boards.

Many BBSs will allow you to log onto their boards during your first call, but may limit your access. This may be done by limiting the areas you may enter on the board, not allowing downloads, or limiting the amount of time you have per call or per day. Greater access may be achieved through becoming validated by the Sysop, uploading programs to the board, or sending in a registration fee (depending on the BBS).

Some boards require membership, some are free, some ask for donations.

If you like a board, or find yourself logging onto a certain BBS more often, make some kind of donation to the board. Sysops do this as a service to the users, and don't make a living out of doing this. They have tied up their machines, their hard drives, modems and invested heavily in software and time. Not to mention the monthly cost of phone service.

Also, if you enjoy a BBS don't forget to tell your Sysop what you like...or even what you don't like. Feel free to make suggestions. Sysops will never make changes to improve their boards if they don't know about the problems or receive feedback from the users. Logging onto a board and saying it sucks is not constructive criticism. Improvement is a two-way street.

Dodge the Bugs

Finally, there are some bad things to watch out for on a BBS. Viruses are a concern for all computer users. Luckily, we on the Macintosh do not have as many viruses to deal with as those on the IBM systems. However, I would suggest checking all software you download from a BBS with a free-ware application like Disinfectant. Also, run the software away from your hard drive the first time, to ensure that it is safe, and not a Trojan horse-type program (one that pretends it is doing one thing while really doing something in the background, like formatting your hard drive). Most User Groups are very virus-aware, and check all their software to ensure a virus-free library. Remember, viruses are most often found on free boards and on those not requiring identification. If a Sysop doesn't allow uploads to automatically appear on the download list, odds are that he or she checks the software for viruses before letting the file out onto their BBS.

Another bad thing to find on a board is pirated or illegally copied copyrighted software. This could get the Sysop in a lot of trouble. If you find a pirated piece of software, or even an illicit picture in an area that it shouldn't be in, alert the Sysop immediately so the software may be deleted. You wouldn't want to find your favorite BBS shut down by the SPA (Software Publishers Association).

Also, beware of classified ads for illegitimate services, defective or "too-good-to-be-true" priced merchandise, and other scams. Even on the Internet you'll find pyramid schemes, or other scams offering to make you $50,000 in the next three months. If something sounds too good, be careful.

You'll meet all types in this world, even online.

BBSs are fun, educational and a thoroughly different world. Once you start getting involved online, you'll never turn back. But just a hint... you might want to take the spouse along with you. There's enough computer widows out there as it is.

If you enjoy a BBS don't forget to tell your Sysop what you like...or even what you don't like. Feel free to make suggestions.

Michael A. Kuykendall is a veteran Mac User and crony from the days of 64K ROMs and 400K floppies. He has been an overworked officer for 3 Mac User Groups, written for several computer publications around the country, and is currently President/Sysop/General flunky for the Online Macintosh Users Group, based out of Atlanta, Georgia. The Online Macintosh Users' Group may be reached through their BBS, Macintosh Online, at 404-988-9904. Comments and or suggestions may be sent to BBS Magazine.

BY RICHARD LOWELL HARDING

A Ticket to Ride

Administrators, Artists and Students in the Fast Lane of the Online Superhighway

America has always been a pioneer in the development of superhighways. Can you name at least five of them?

The first was created by a crude collection of dusty wagon trains, weaving their way westward over challenging hills and valleys. This was the PATHWAY of the early settlers in 1822.

In 1850, the bells, whistles and belching black smoke from locomotives sketched a RAILWAY ribbon across the national terrain from Atlantic waters to the vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean.

In 1936, a transcontinental network above the American sod and soil was created for commercial airplane flights. This was the AIRWAY connection from sea to shining sea, superhighway number three.

Later, the noisy sounds of car engines, horns and dashboard radios opened the fourth superhighway during the 1950's — the automobile ROADWAY. Americans got their kicks on Route 66.

Now there's something new under the sun...21st Century Satellite Skyway! Appropriately nicknamed the Satellite Skyway, the Online Superhighway promises the biggest and best still lies ahead.

To commemorate this national dream and achievement, the sketchpad and color palette of the artist is already feverishly at work capturing this historic landmark.

Heiko Schlueter

Planes, Trains and...Art?

A young, creative artist and computer buff, Heiko Schlueter, near Boston, is working on a space-age design which compresses these five American milestones into a single scene entitled, "America's TelCom Age — THE NEW FRONTIER."

Says Schlueter: "I hope to rekindle the American spirit toward the telecommunications superhighway as did the portrait of Betsy Ross in her "Birth of the American Flag," with its traditional red, white and blue symbolism."

"I would like to see this proud 21st century 'Birth of the Information

Skyway' duplicated on T-shirts, posters and possibly postage stamps all over the United States. Americans are true pioneers from the wagon train to the online computer."

These historic moments about America's New Skyway Frontier could well become collector's items as a new Online-Theme T-shirt is planned for release each year 'til 1999.

Minutemen of the High-Tech Revolution

Not far from the battlefields of the American Revolution, Concord and Lexington, stands the quiet and picturesque community of Clinton, Massachusetts which is nestled at the foothills of Mt. Wachusett.

Because of its rich historic background, it's a great place to make a satellite hookup with the coming Info Superhighway. Although Lexington is famous for the Minutemen and "the shot heard round the world (1776)," Clinton is famous for President Jimmy Carter and "the Middle East Peace question heard around the world (1976)."

On international TV, Carter publicly called for "a homeland for the Palestinians here." It's still one of the world's top news stories 17 years later.

But more important than a shot or question, is the sight of a large white dish atop Clinton's local high school. It's the hope of the younger generation and a symbol of this town's connection with the Superhighway.

This New England town is no stranger to telecommunications.

Several local BBS services have made a solid impact upon the resident computer-modem hackers. One BBS has 100+ lines available to its subscribers and has already received national recognition. Clinton's plastics manufacturing company, NYPRO CORPORATION, is recognized as a world producer and distributor of software disks and related items. The company and the school system are already networked together with modems.

Teamwork between industry, the school system and the Cable-TV Advisory Committee are struggling to persuade the giant Continental Cablevision to at least provide one educational channel for Clinton kids as they have already done on three channels for a neighboring, more lucrative community. Discrimination in the 21st will not be based primarily on creed and color, but on the availability or lack of availability to the Superhighway.

This connection with Internet, cable and the school classrooms will afford these "smalltown" kids with equally unlimited information, instruction and education from the new NII (National Information Infrastructure) as the larger and more affluent towns.

Satellite dish atop Clinton High School

Town Administrator is a Fervent Online Booster

I asked Clinton's Administrative Assistant, "Why is the online superhighway important to small towns across America like yours here in Massachusetts?"

It's quite simple," he replied. "The electronic age is not in the future, it's here today. Everybody needs to get online. Keeping up with the national community is the name of the game. Without the super skyway, no one will be able to keep abreast of the fast paced outside-world.

"Although our town is computerized already from bank machines, telephones services, accounts receivable to water bills, sewer charges, etc., municipal government will certainly have to hook up with high tech data bases like the Internet.

"This advance development in the information age will offer more choices than we ever dreamed possible."

He observed, "The Internet and the NII is the last, but vital, link between big business and the small towns , dotted across the landscape. Both need each other to survive in the 21st century."

"The new workforce in the town's economic picture will require that every town employee be totally computer literate and able to connect with the online superhighway. It promises not only greater increased productivity for our town, but also more efficiency in all town offices."

Jensen himself has been a longtime online advocate. He says, "I enjoy services like AOL (America On Line) and BBS programs. I can recall in college how my old Vax CardReader, a huge monster machine, had a grand total of only two megabytes. It was a slow struggle and so limited.

"But now, I enjoy the luxury of a Mac Centris 650 with a 235 Mg HD with 8 RAM. I plan to upgrade my Image Writer II printer soon for a new laser unit. My real pleasure as a amateur astronomer comes from NASA programs such as "Mariner," "The Hubble Telescope" and "Voyager."

Jensen said that he has a new CD-ROM on the top of his birthday list. He feels, "Multi-media is just great. And when I consider what the ONLINE SKYWAY will mean to future generations in terms of education, employ-

CONTINUES ...

ment and healthcare, my mind gets boggled." "The combination of our schools, industry, local cable into the Internet format is going to bring an "econmic highway" right through the center of our community — all for the best. And the sooner, the better!"

Teachers with an Internet Vision

The classrooms and staff at Clinton High School are readying themselves for the coming information age. For example, Joseph Balvin, a psychology teacher, has purchased a multi-media 486 computer with a CD-ROM so he may pursue "The New Frontier" from the satellite skyway in his home, classroom and with his pupils.

Alan Gage, a civics teacher, has played a major role in getting the Internet "up and running" at the high school. Lots of hours and lots of work. But worth it all! Gage has a vision of unlimited resources which are now available through the Internet to every pupil in his classes.

Also, William Colombo, a science instructor, looks with a sense of deep accomplishment at the series of Apple PC's in his Bio-Lab Department which flows the "endless data" from the Internet dish on the school rooftop into his classroom below. In Clinton, Massachusetts, the future is here!

Teenager Seeks to Capture the Future

Student Jason Bailey has a personal dream about the Online Superhighway, U.S.A.. At home, he enjoys an Epson PC for word processing projects with WordPerfect and DrawPerfect.

But at school in his Environmental Science course, he sees two great benefits from the Internet highway.

First, Jason feels, "This electronic highway connects our school with other schools around America and the globe. We no longer feel alone. We are part of a larger educational community.

"Secondly, there is so much that our textbooks cannot teach us. Now, through Internet, we can go straight to university libraries like Princeton with our online computers and discover all kinds of new materials," he said.

"My dream is that some day there will be a union of the computer with cable TV-video for a complete interactive classroom. This would be great."

And the challenge to all of us with a computer, modem and online services is to become a part of the future, a part of the Superhighway.

Help Wanted: Let's Hear Your Story

Behind every modem sits a live operator. And *BBS Magazine* is looking for real people with real online stories. Whether you've got a problem, a personal experience, a gripe, dream, or good or bad BBS encounter, we would like to hear about it.

If you're interested in being interviewed for this monthly column, please call our office at 609-953-9110 from 10 am to 4 pm (EST). Ask for Richard and the information will be forwarded. Or write to us at: *BBS Magazine*, 701 Stokes Road, Medford, NJ 08055.

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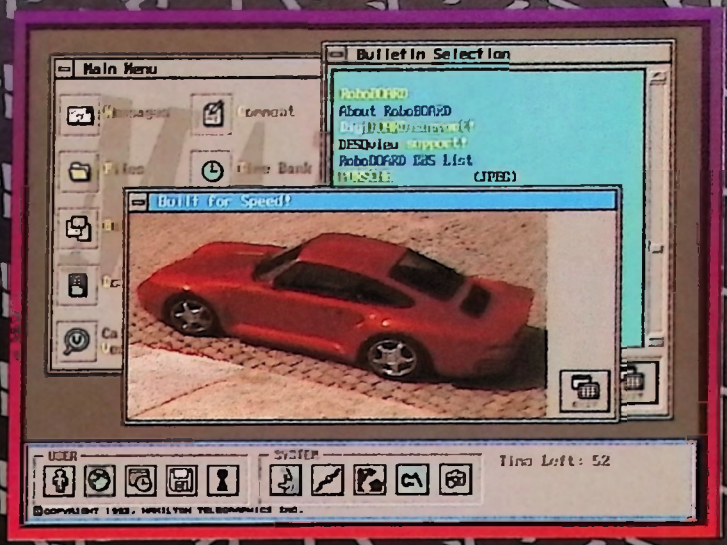

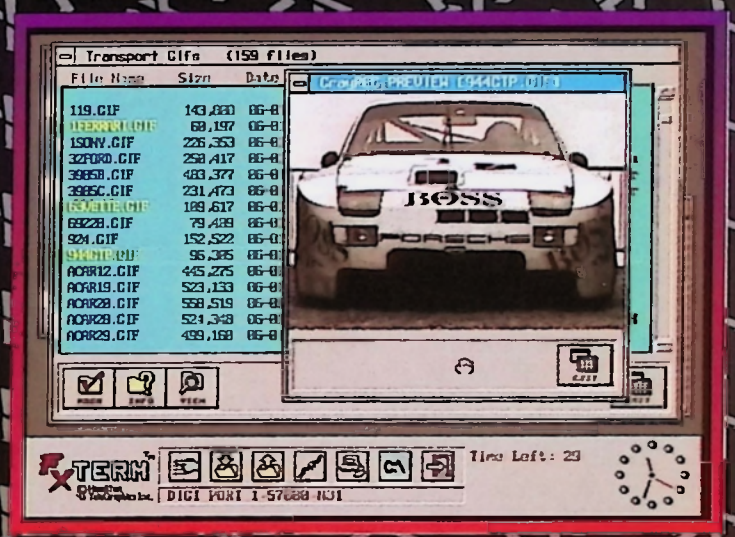

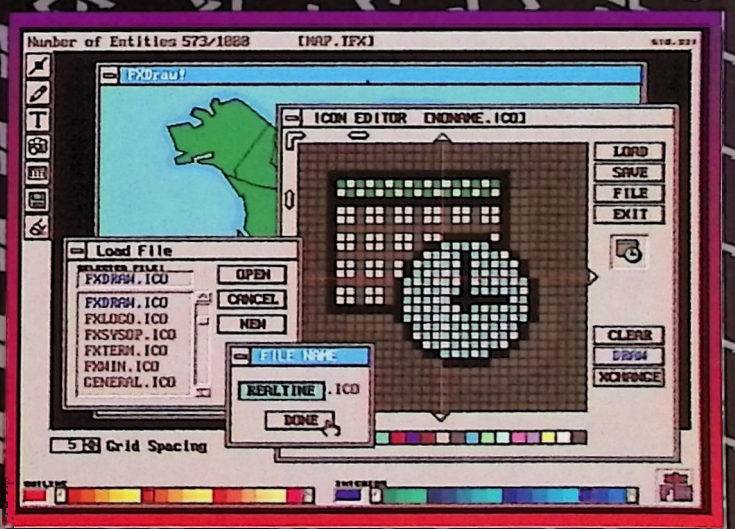

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Authorized CD SUB BBS List

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

LISTED IN ORDER OF AREA CODE:

Chuck's Attempt BBS	Chuck Ammann	201-729-2602
The Soul Connection	Mike Demski	210-674-1242
USS Inverness	Jonathan McGirr	214-245-9315
Collector's Edition	Len Hult.	214-351-9859
The Lonesome Dove BBS	Matthew Peacock	214-517-3433
PC-Ohio	Norm Henke	216-381-3320
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
PereLine BBS	Tom Serface	408-364-2789
Wayne's World BBS	Wayne Belvin	409-769-4249
entertain me bbs!!	Shawn Cupec	412-845-1959
Uncle Hank's BBS	Hank Hurteau	413-527-8977
Platinum Express	Glenn Jarvis	416-770-6917
Chemeketa Online	Bob Hunter	503-393-5580
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
Schunix — Pub UNIX	Robert Schultz	508-853-0340
The Moonflower BBS	Peter Link	509-891-6148
The Night Owl II	Danny Dyess	512-836-4262
Ranch House BBS	Larry Easley	512-945-9304
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
BB's BBS	Bob Browne	609-768-6585
The Vault BBS	Keith Ketcham	614-387-2762
The Lebanon Link	Bruce Richardson	615-399-0707
PC Junction BBS	Doug Carpenter	615-478-2890
Data World BBS	Sean Dudley	615-966-3574
The Registry BBS	John Kern	616-429-9757
Channel 1 BBS	Brian Miller	617-354-8873
City Lites	John Lundell	701-772-5399
Mountain Air BBS	Edward Wood	703-427-0226
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
Adline U.S.A.!	Charles Parker	708-260-8818
Suburban Software	Chuck Valecek	708-636-6694
Systems/Software BBS	Wayne Lauton	708-433-8287
BBS Data Systems	Greg Kaiser	708-991-2452
Rama One BBS	Tommy Brunning	718-366-6165
Holmen's World	Michael Holmen Sr	718-529-8890
Formula 350	Eric Lundberg	805-499-5717
The Seaside	Les Jones	805-964-4766
Metroplex BBS	Rick Vanhooser	901-327-1895
Dataland! BBS	Rick Young	908-572-5762
The Ouija! Board Online Services	Keith Burgner	909-925-9564
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
Black Gold BBS	Michael Cline	918-272-7779
The Hub! BBS	Warren Farrimond	918-627-0923

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The classified ads are for **Pre-Owned items & Software,** and for **BBS ads** only. Ads for new equipment must be inserted in the regular display advertising sections. No logos, or photos, or any other illustrations can be used in the classified ad section.

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

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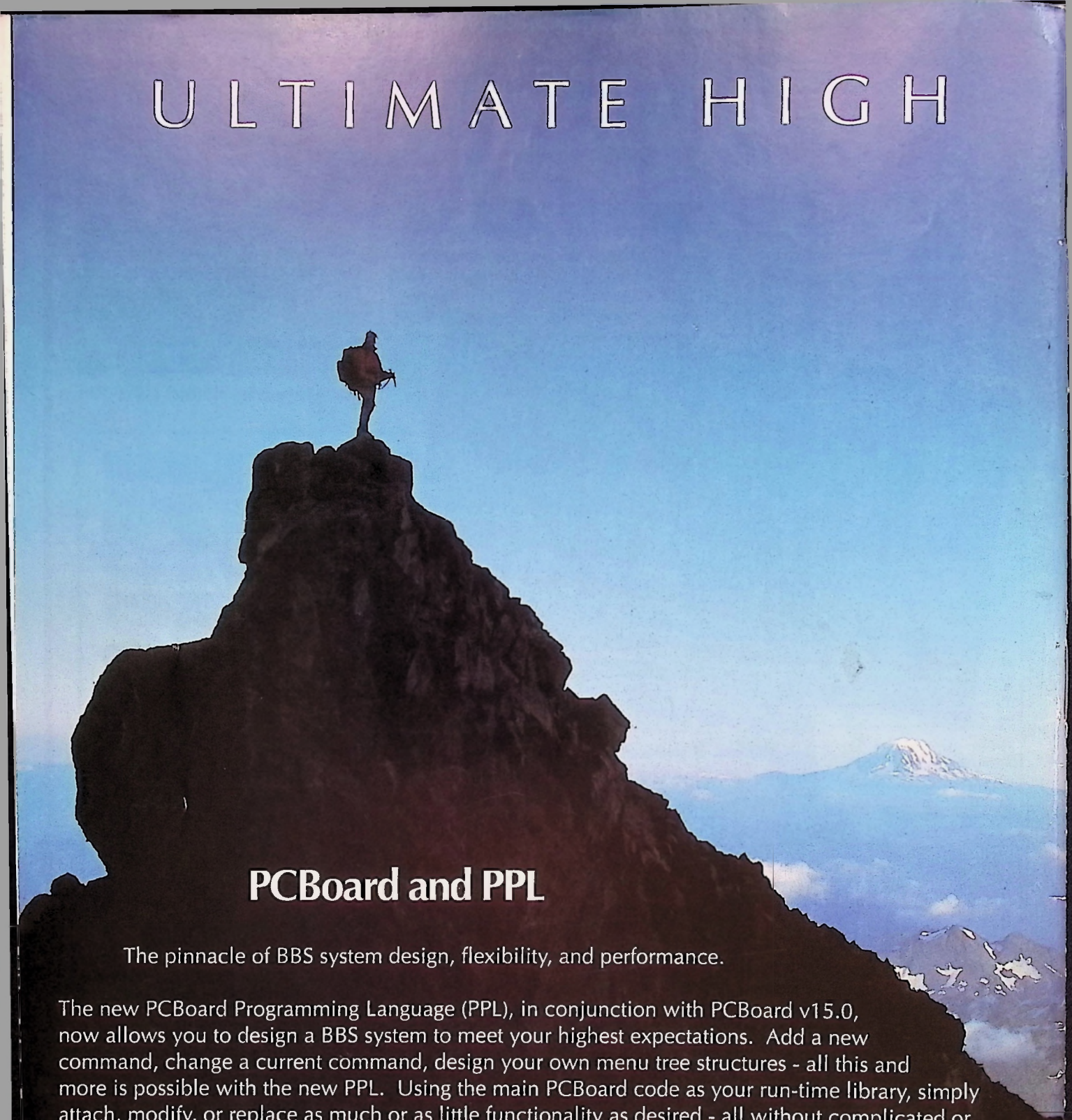

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