Mustang's OLX for Windows • Worldgroup's multimedia extensions

BBS

THE BULLETIN BOARD SERVICES MAGAZINE

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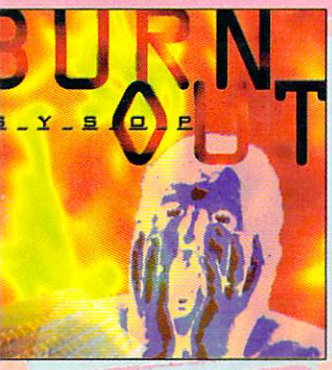

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It's not just a DOS world anymore

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Webwise

Shareware

Internet

this notebook:

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F2B2,
Starbase International,
Cult of the Tentacle

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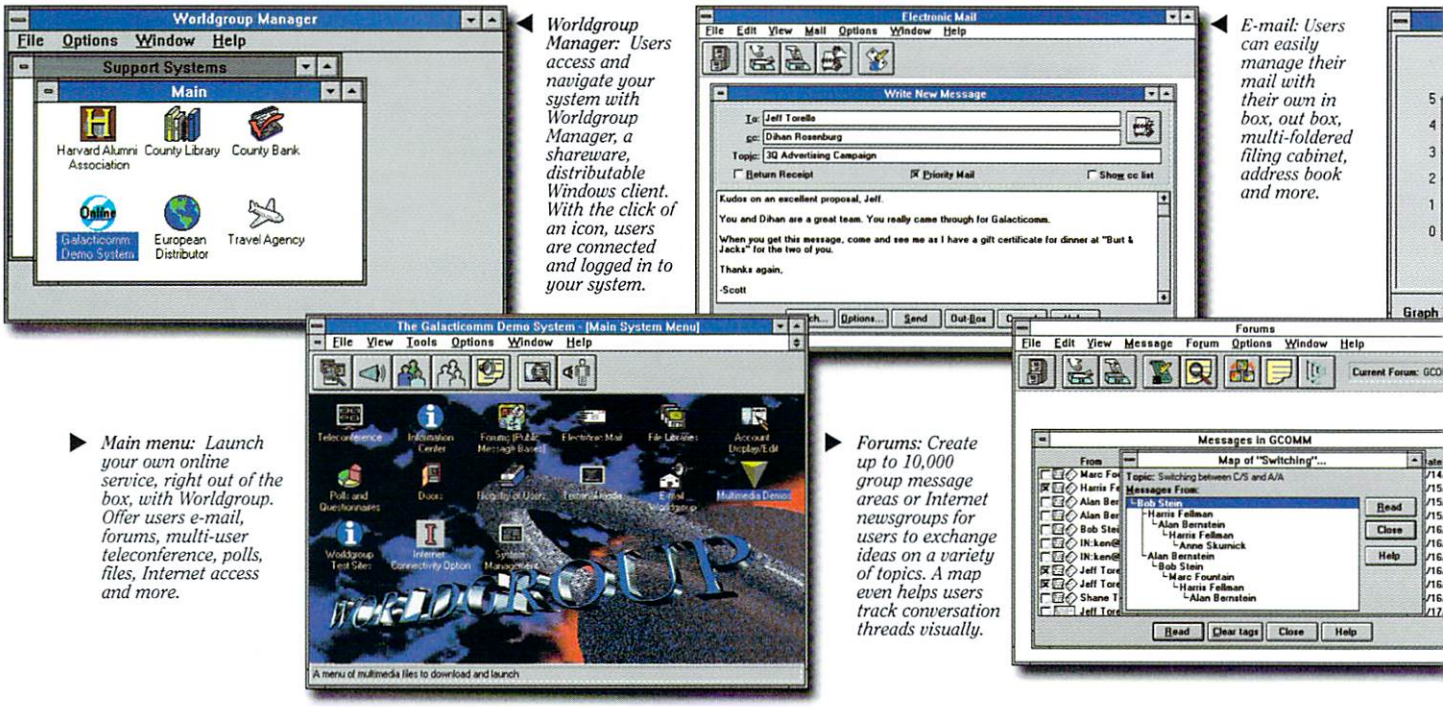


Worldgroup Manager: Users access and navigate your system with Worldgroup Manager, a shareware, distributable Windows client. With the click of an icon, users are connected and logged in to your system.

E-mail: Users can easily manage their mail with their own in box, out box, multi-foldered filing cabinet, address book and more.

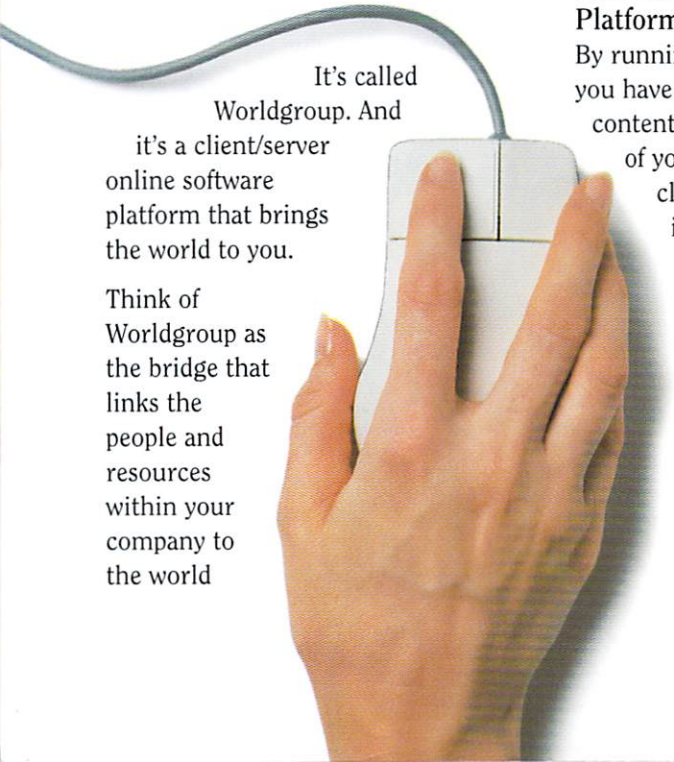
Main menu: Launch your own online service, right out of the box, with Worldgroup. Offer users e-mail, forums, multi-user teleconference, polls, files, Internet access and more.

Forums: Create up to 10,000 group message areas or Internet newsgroups for users to exchange ideas on a variety of topics. A map even helps users track conversation threads visually.

Open Your Windows to the

Worldgroup™. Bring the World a Click Away.

The newest, smartest generation of online software isn't coming from Microsoft. Or CompuServe. Or America Online. It's coming from you — and Galacticomm, the creator of The Major BBS®.



It's called Worldgroup. And it's a client/server online software platform that brings the world to you.

Think of Worldgroup as the bridge that links the people and resources within your company to the world beyond. With the click of an icon, you can network your entire business world — customers, stockholders, prospects, field staff, distributors, vendors, the press and more — together online!

Worldgroup. The World's Most Powerful Client/Server Online Platform.

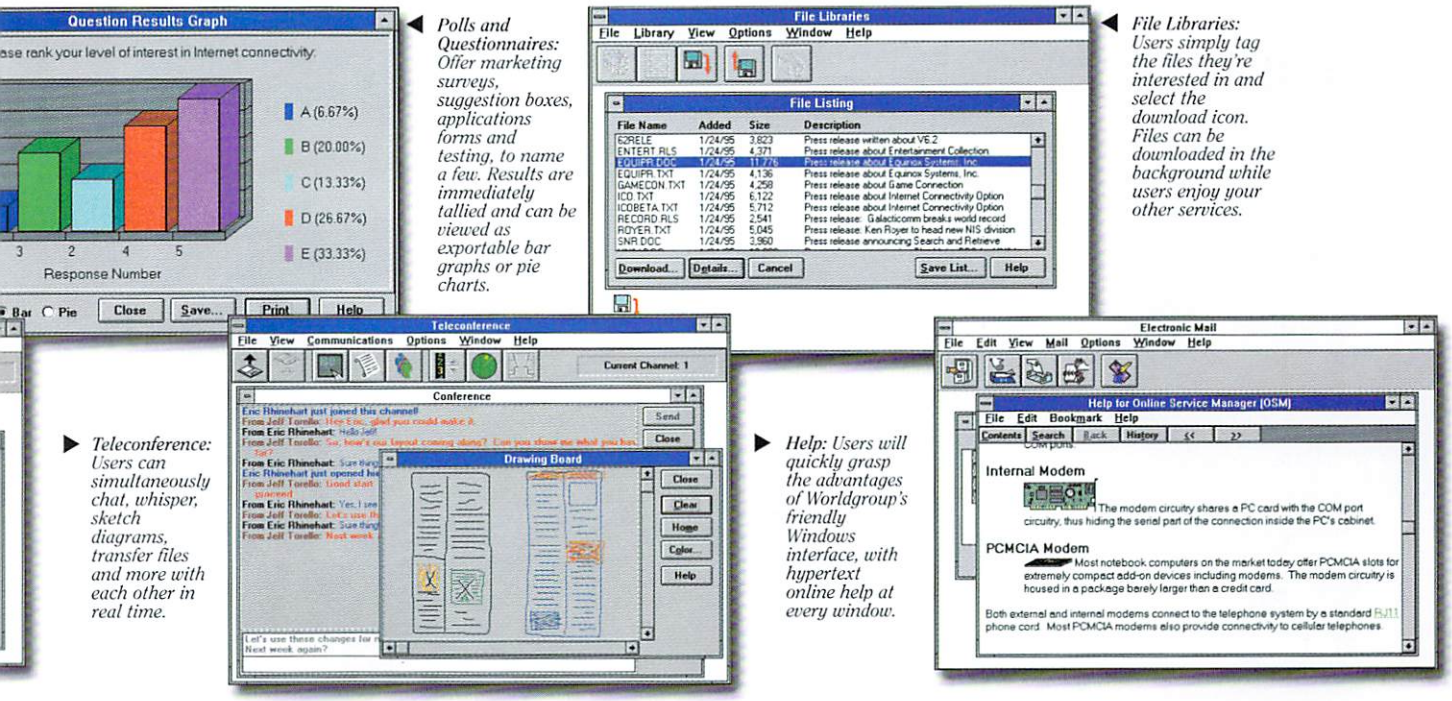
By running your own online service, you have 100% control over the content, presentation and revenue of your system. And Worldgroup's client/server approach makes it easy for anyone to use.

The shareware client runs under Windows on your users' machines. Its multi-threaded architecture lets them do all sorts of cool things simultaneously. Like download files in the background, while reading new mail. Or auto update new versions of applications transparently. Local caching, "look ahead" and client-driven intelligence maximizes performance at 2,400 or 28,800 bps.

You can customize all the icons and menu pages out of the box. With Worldgroup's multimedia features, you can have a "splash" screen with a BMP image and a WAV or MIDI file, graphic menu backdrops, real-time video and more.

There's even a "launch" client/server utility that downloads and launches files for your users, such as Adobe Acrobat files, Word documents and PowerPoint presentations, in one easy step — while the user is online.

You can use Visual Basic and C to create your own custom client/server applications (we provide source code). Or, just plug and play dozens of add-on applications from our network of Independent Software Vendors.



Polls and Questionnaires: Offer marketing surveys, suggestion boxes, applications forms and testing, to name a few. Results are immediately tallied and can be viewed as exportable bar graphs or pie charts.

File Libraries: Users simply tag the files they're interested in and select the download icon. Files can be downloaded in the background while users enjoy your other services.

Teleconference: Users can simultaneously chat, whisper, sketch diagrams, transfer files and more with each other in real time.

Help: Users will quickly grasp the advantages of Worldgroup's friendly Windows interface, with hypertext online help at every window.

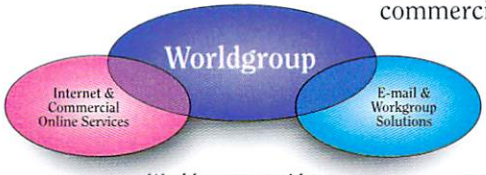
World of Online Computing

The server runs on a single 486 or Pentium DOS machine and can handle up to 256 users online at once. Locks and Keys™ security provides airtight access control.

Full system accounting and reporting is built in. And in addition to client/server users, you can still support ASCII/ANSI/RIP terminals.

Worldgroup. Beyond the World-Wide Web.

Worldgroup's client/server interface works just as well over the Internet as it does with dial-up modems. We're talking full-fledged interactive applications, not just documents. In addition, ftp server and basic WWW server capabilities are also supported.



Worldgroup provides a communication model that brings the inside world and the outside world together in a secure, productive environment.

But it doesn't stop there. You can make your service accessible via modem, serial ports, TCP/IP, Novell LAN, ISDN and X.25 networks such as CompuServe and SprintNet.

Worldgroup. The Best of Both Worlds.

Worldgroup gives you the best of workgroup software and commercial online services. E-mail, group discussion areas, file libraries, teleconferencing, surveys and more are all built-in. You can gateway to existing message systems via MHS or UUCP. And that's just the beginning.

Worldgroup. A World of Resources... A Phone Call Away.

As a Galacticomm customer, you'll also receive excellent documentation and world-class support. In every way, we will work with you to make your online venture a success.

So open your Windows to the powerful, smart new Worldgroup of online computing today. Call your Galacticomm dealer or call us at 800-328-1128 (or 305-583-5990 outside the U.S. and Canada). You can also send e-mail on the Internet to sales@gcomm.com and access our home page by pointing your Web browser to http://www.gcomm.com.

WORLDGROUP™
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GALACTICOMM
Bringing your vision online

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Excalibur BBS

Excalibur is the bulletin board system taking the world by storm. It was the first system of its kind to run entirely under Windows™ and continues to set the standard of measure. Because Excalibur is built around an accelerated bi-directional protocol, users can upload and download files, chat with other users, and compose messages ... *all at the same time!* Utilizing our proprietary graphical interface, users are able to design their own menus and screens incorporating object oriented graphics, bitmapped graphics, and TrueType fonts. This means no two Excalibur based systems are the same! Advanced error correction and data compression offer reliability and convenience to all users, even those without error-correcting modems.

As for expandability, Excalibur offers true Plug'N Play abilities. Imagine doors that are both hassle free and easy to use. By using Excalibur's *Application Programming Interface* (API), third party developers have created everything from Internet gateways and databases to shopping malls and interactive games. The possibilities are endless. Modem into Excalibur HQ/USA at **918.496.8113** or call 800.EXCAL.BBS (800.392.2522). In Canada, modem into Excalibur HQ/Canada at 905.508.8872. Find out what users worldwide are heralding as "*the next generation in BBS software*".

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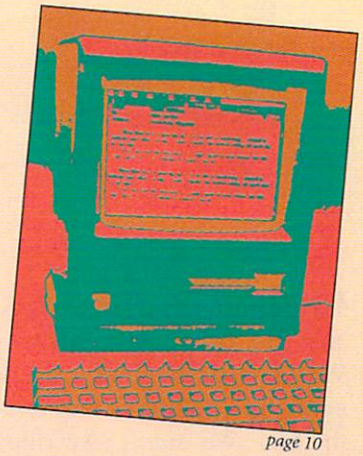
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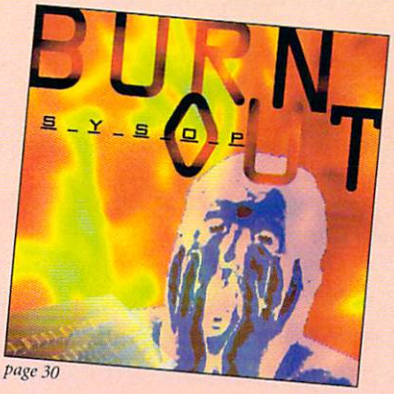

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Rusty Edie

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

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

You'll find us like no other BBS:

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- We answer your on-line pages.
- We post our address.
- We post our voice phone number.

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HST only 216-726-1804
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All (V32 etc.) 216-726-2620
Fax 216-726-3595

readme.txt

Pssst... Hey Mac, Can You Get Online?

A bit overlooked in the ongoing intercontinental quarrel over the best way to navigate the ever-more peppered landscape of BBSs have been those cute little boxes with a name: Macintosh.

Though they started life as oversized toasters with a brain, Macs are looking more and more like PCs every day — only they're delightfully appointed, optimally equipped and act like no DOS-driven personal computer I've laid hands on: same species, different animal. That's why we asked Maria Langer, noted author, consultant and Mac sysop, to figure it all out for us.

Langer explains what it takes to put a Mac online — as a BBS or simple terminal — and what to do once you get there. She reviews the software you'll want to use and the boards you need to call, with contact numbers, costs and plenty of tips. Page 10.

After you get that Mac board up and running a while, you'll likely be overwhelmed by it all and forced to crash and burn. That is, unless you follow our own Michael Kuykendall's advice on how to deal with, not die from, sysop burnout. The prognosis is actually pretty good, according to Kuykendall, if you just do a little re-energizing now and then. His comments for Mac *and* PC sysops begin on Page 30.

Starting with last month's installment about accessing online services via cable, Jacqui Kramer will be covering the latest technology affecting the lives of anyone going online — pretty much everyone drawing breath. Whether it's voice communication over the Net (bye-bye, MCI) or talking BBSs, Jacqui will likely be there before it's here.

This month she talks to a Microsoft insider about what to expect from the most anticipated software/service this side of the millennium: Microsoft Network. Page 68.

Do you have a BBS/Net question regarding something you read in our pages? Please send a note and we'll be glad to help out, or at least point to where help can be had. The address is right there below.

Rick Robinson
Editor
editor@bbsmagazine.com

FEATURES

FLEXIBLE USER INTERFACE

- Complete flexibility in design of data-entry, searching, browsing and detailed viewing
- ANSI, RIPscrip & WIP graphics protocol support for all database functions (DOS & Windows Access)
- Complete entry screen validation via pick lists
- Easily jumps from browse to detail viewing

PHOTOGRAPHS IN SECONDS

- Support for the following image formats: JPG, CMP, PCX, BMP, TIF, TGA and GIF

RELIABLE MULTI-USER CAPABILITIES

- Support for multiple users running separate copies of DC GENESYS on the same computer (ie: DESQview) or on separate computers on a LAN network
- Seamless sharing of data with concurrent dBase/FoxPro applications on the same LAN

DC GENESYS V1.1

Online Multimedia Databases

Imagine creating a beautiful 24-bit color multimedia database that will run with any BBS. DC GENESYS™ allows everyone to easily develop robust graphical online informational applications and services. Durand Communications Network (DCN) specializes in providing interactive software for the online industry that is affordable, easy-to-configure and easy-to-use. DC GENESYS comes with CONTACT PHONEBOOK™, a turnkey photographic directory application. Additional turnkey applications include: CATALOGS PLUS™, AUTO SELLER™, RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE™ and MATCH MAKER™. With DCN's all new Windows Interface Protocol™ (WIP), created with the DC INTERFACE BUILDER™, your end-users will be able to access your database with a true all Windows® interface. Your applications can have embedded compressed graphics, text files, sound files and more. DC GENESYS can be accessed through a free terminal program for DOS and Windows.

A WIP Main Menu
create beautiful native Windows menus with sound, text, icons and compressed images for users to view

B Notepad
after creating menus in ANSI, RIP or WIP, create an application in GENSCRIPT to link menus with the GENESYS Database

C DC COMPRESS
DC COMPRESS for Windows can compress TIF, TGA, BMP, PCX and GIF images to CMP or JPG

D Detailed Output
users will see online 24-bit color WIP menus

E WIP Navigator
displays the status of your current online WIP session

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NEWS

Mustang's OLX: Doing Mail in Windows

We've all faced this dilemma when reading mail on a BBS: Hammer out a quick (insufficient) reply to the sender to hold down online costs, or open our wallets, sit back and enter an appropriately thoughtful response.

Usually we end up somewhere in between, in mediocrity.

But one way to skirt the problem altogether is to get a hold of Mustang Software's new email reader Off-Line Xpress (OLX) for Windows.

The QWK-compatible mail reader lets callers to any BBS supporting the QWK standard read and reply to messages off-line, and save some bucks in the process.

"OLX for Windows saves time and connection charges by allowing callers to disconnect from the BBS as soon as they have received their mail packet," said Mustang boss Jim Harrer. "This takes only a fraction of the online time they would ordinarily need to read and answer email messages. It also allows callers the freedom to read and answer mail at their convenience, while taking advantage of lower nighttime phone rates or access charges."

OLX's point-and-click interface is well-suited for BBS novices, too. Its nine-item pull-down menu system and context-sensitive toolbars rush up to meet most users' needs and preferences. For instance colors and fonts can be changed according to the caller's desires, and help is served up almost intuitively — if the cursor lingers on a particular item for more than a few seconds, for instance, context-sensitive help automatically presents itself.

In the program's Editor function, users can engage a toolbar for cutting, pasting, copying to the Windows Clipboard, pasting from the Clipboard, saving the message, spell checking and canceling. Additionally, users can edit message header information before and after editing the message. The To:, From: and Subject: fields allow up to 255 characters apiece for accommodating long Internet addresses. And messages themselves can run up to 16,000 lines of text.

OLX also supports UUDECODE for decoding messages sent in the common Internet encoding format. And sound files (Windows .WAV) can be attached to 20 events such as personal mail, spelling errors, delete mail, etc.

For the more advanced callers, Multi-Packet Handling is provided, which means mail can be read from different BBSs at once. Finally, a handy address book is included for saving addresses.

Other OLX features include:

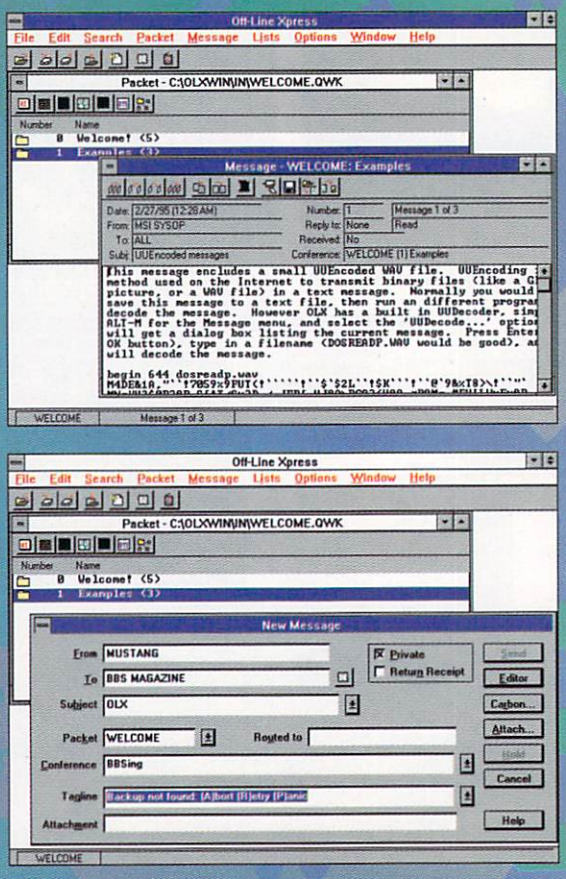
- Internal ZIP/UNZIP support.
- Search function.
- In and Out boxes for personal email.
- Sort messages by thread, number, to, from or subject.
- Sort packets by date or file name.
- Programmable function key macros.
- Save messages to folders or text files.

The addition of OLX fills out Mustang's product line making it the first company to offer a BBS package (Wildcat!), telecommunications program (Qmodem) and an off-line mail reader.

OLX retails for $49 and is available by calling 800.999.9619.

Going Public: In other Mustang news, the company said it plans to make an initial public offering of 1,000,000 shares of its common stock. It's expected the initial offering price will be between $5 and $6 per share.

Cruttenden Roth, Incorporated is the managing underwriter. For information or prospectus, call 714.757.5700.



WIRE

Peeling Off Another BananaCom

People are bananas for BananaCom. Quite possibly the simplest little terminal program around, BananaCom's newest version, 1.5, installs automatically, finds your modem, determines port and speed, and can even pop up a number to try.

With v1.5, callers will find an improved ZModem among the upgrades.

Three different custom setups can be provided to sysops by Banana Programming, giving them the ability to distribute the program with an ANSI ad for their board and with their phone number that will be auto-dialed upon opening.

And regular registered users will now find an auto-redial function.

BananaCom does not support RIP or Windows, but that's the way its author Paul Wheaton likes it, suggesting that more roads are open for callers using just ANSI.

Site licenses are available, as well as different BananaCom packages, which can prove lucrative to individual BBSs, Wheaton said — the idea being that you get BananaCom into the hands of every modem newbie within your calling radius and let the term package do the rest.

Could work. Try it by writing for a copy to Banana Programming, 1916 Brooks #205, Missoula, MT 59801 ($2). Or call 406.543.8234 (BBS), 406.543.1928 (voice).

MUDdying the Boards

Get out of those boring Net MUDs and dig into Continuum Software's latest BBS version of MUD Magica.

Run as a door in almost any board, MUD Magica (a Multi-User-Dungeon fantasy role-playing game) now includes graphics and sound support — adding a bit of realism to your fantasy.

Though you still have a lot of pretending to do, version 2.0 allows for things like JPEG pictures added by sysops to anything created in their MUDs, including monsters, places, and non-player characters. And callers can upload pictures of their characters, which can be viewed by other players.

All this has become possible with the long-awaited RIPscrip 2.0 from TeleGrafix Communications. But don't fret, ANSI boosters, Magica supports you and your straight-text cousins.

"Before MUD Magica, there were a lot of obstacles to running a MUD," said Eric Olsen of Continuum. "You needed to not only be a system administrator of an Internet site, but you needed a great deal of technical knowledge, which definitely limited the number of people who could join the fun."

M-Magica can run either as a Door on a BBS (using the standard DOOR.SYS drop file format) or as a stand-alone, using any standard DOS multitasker including DESQview and Windows.

The MUD comes in three versions: four-line ($99), 16-line ($199) and unlimited lines ($299). Try it out at 404.627.4161.

For more information call 404.635.0931 or eolsen@free.org.

In Synch

Digital Dynamics has loosed its latest version of the Synchronet multinode BBS since last June.

Synchronet 2.1 (now 2.11) is being called a "level three" implementation of the software (Digital Dynamics' SMB, the message base, has seven levels of implementation apparently designed to carry email storage into the future) with a message base that includes real-time compression/decompression using the LZH algorithm. Compression here averages 50 percent (hmmm, what to do with all those extra bytes.) And performance remains unhindered because the message index and header files are stored in uncompressed form; message data not well-compressed is automatically stored uncompressed.

Also new to 2.1 is the "Hyper Allocation" message storage for speedy message tossing. Digital Dynamics says this is specifically designed for systems importing mail on a near-continuous basis.

SBBSECHO is another development. The native SMB Fidonet packet echomail program is available in 16-bit

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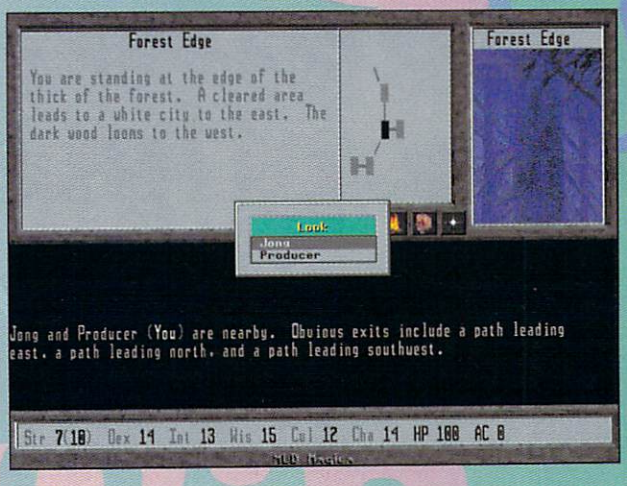


DOS, 32-bit DOS and 32-bit OS/2 versions. And SBBSFIDO, a Fidonet FTSC-1 to SMB import/export program, is included free with Synchronet and also available in 16- and 32-bit.

Digital Dynamics points to its own addition to the QWK network standard as a high point of the new release. Version 2.1 has extended its abilities to include routed point-to-point Netmail, circular message path detection, and originating time zone information. Synchronet even automatically builds and maintains a local route map, node listing, and user/address look-up table. Callers and sysops can route mail through QWK network nodes to destinations on the Net and Fido.

The SMB specification is available free to developers and includes a free C source code library.

Version 2.1 is a free download for current users. Newcomers pay $99 for two nodes, $199 for four, $299 for eight, $399 for 16 and $499 for 250 (plus shipping). A free demo version can be downloaded from 714.529.9547. For more information call 714.529.6328.

Sysops: Generate Your Own Power

Windows is where it's at these days, and few know that better than the folks at PowerBBS Computing.

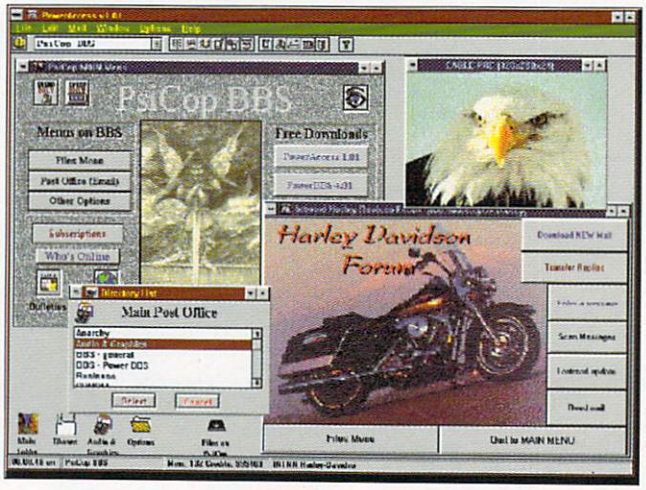
The company's recently updated PowerAccess terminal program/Windows client for the PowerBBS 4.0 (its Windows-based BBS) have caught on with callers and sysops like pogs.

Now comes PowerGenerator.

The latest release, a joint venture between Brad Friedman and PowerBBS Computing, merges the functionality of PowerAccess with a visually based design environment.

PowerGenerator allows sysops to convert existing PowerBBS menus into completely customizable 3D screens for use in PowerAccess that feature 24-bit color images (in 15 file formats), full support for live WAV and MIDI sounds, real 3D Windows command buttons, icons, edit boxes, captions, and shapes.

For more information, call 516.822.7396.



DCN Slashes Genesys Price

So you've been aching for a cool database for your BBS — something slick like Durand's 24-bit multimedia database kit DC Genesys — but haven't been able to cough up the grand? Quit sulking because Durand Communications Network has lopped $400 off the top.

Still a hefty $595, DC Genesys is probably worth it, what with the great applications you'll be creating, each loaded with images, sound, text and tables.

And included with Genesys is Contact Phonebook, a turnkey application designed to serve as a general purpose photographic directory. (Other turnkeys include Auto Seller, Residential Real Estate, Match Maker and the new Catalogs Plus.)

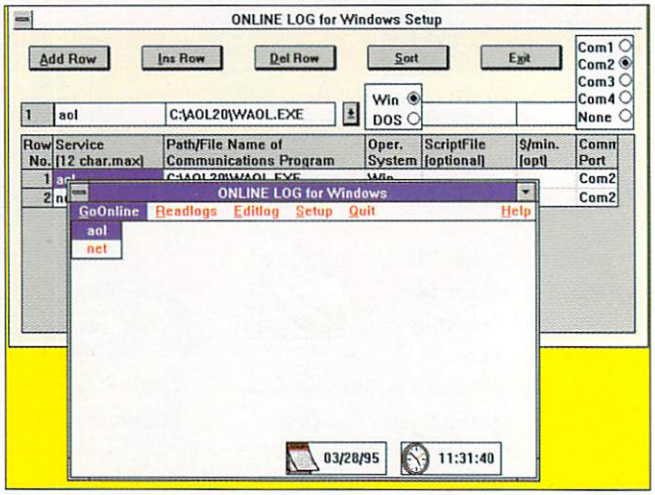
DC Genesys is an open architecture database platform supporting dBASE and FoxPro database file formats as well as superior image compression for rapid image file transfers.

Call 805.961.8700 for more information.

Logging Logons from Windows

If your online time has fertilized your phone bill to the point where the thing has grown taller than you, it might be time to get Logged.

Online Log from Et Cetera, Inc. is



now delivering a Windows version of its popular DOS-based bean counter.

And like its DOS cousin, the Windows software tracks and logs online sessions on BBSs, online services and the Internet including vendor, date and time, database, subject or client designation, connect time, file name and session cost. It also monitors DOS-based communications software and keeps track of time spent searching CD-ROMs.

Online Log does more than just track, though. The software can produce various output cost analysis and management reports, and records can be stored chronologically, alphabetically, by vendor, database, client, or project.

To check it out, come up with $59 (regularly $79) or $20 for current Online Log for DOS users, and contact Et Cetera at 302.736.5110.

NETCOM Goes USR

NETCOM On-Line Communication Services, Inc. and its 100,000 users have chosen the U.S. Robotics Total Control

Enterprise Network Hub as the nationwide standard for direct Internet access.

The Total Control Hub will be used in NETCOM's 68 points of presence (POPs) nationwide — they plan 175 by year's end. NETCOM is the first publicly traded Internet service provider and one of the leading providers of Internet direct access.

"We evaluated other equipment, but our choice of U.S. Robotics was primarily based on reliability," said Don Hutchison, NETCOM vice president of sales and marketing. "We operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and because of the nature of our business, reliable dial-in access is a critical component."

U.S. Robotics' Total Control Enterprise Network Hub has quickly become adopted by many commercial service providers, universities and larger carriers because of its high density, ability to consolidate a variety of components in a single product, its flexibility and expandable architecture.

Top 10 downloads from SPACE BBS for March 1995

	TITLE	SIZE	FILE DESCRIPTION
1	SUPRT502.ZIP	20668	Tech Support BBS List for February 95. Lists over 550 BBSs run by commercial & shareware hardware/software manufacturers.
2	1MBF.ZIP	38713	1MBFORT is a free Windows Magazine utility. Can fix your "Out of Memory" problems.
3	SHEZ106.ZIP	286862	SHEZ v10.6-<ASP>-Premier compression shell. ZIP, LHA, ZOO, ARC, ARJ, SQZ, PAK, UC2, HAP, RAR, WINDOWS COMPRESSED supported.
4	SYSCHK41.ZIP	117024	SYSCHK v2.41 <ASP> - System info checker. System information utility provides complete details on devices installed in your system.
5	QTW200.ZIP	1212601	QuickTime For Windows V 2.00.32. Now supports MPEGs — plays .MOV files faster than before, and supports many compressions.
6	95_GUIDE.ZIP	36249	Wholesale magazine subscription price list. Contains over 600 magazines (50 computer).
7	V14N06.ZIP	272959	V14N06.ZIP contains all files mentioned in the March 28, 1995 issue of PC Magazine.
8	INADBK10.ZIP	347684	The (Ultimate) Internet Address Book v1.0. Allows you to search the Internet offline.
9	PSP30.ZIP	1407899	Paint Shop Pro v3.0 <ASP>. The complete WIN 3.1 graphics program for image manipulation.
10	RM_W?.ZIP	Varies	Roadmap for the Information Superhighway. Internet training workshop. A six-week series. Files are RM_W1.ZIP through RM_W6.ZIP

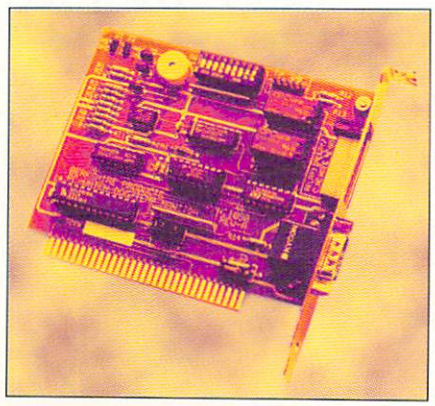
List courtesy of Space BBS (415.323.4398) — 15-line PCBoard West Coast ASP Hub.

Locked Board = Useless Board

Would you wait more than a day for a locked BBS to get back online? Not with thousands of others out there to call. If you don't know this by now, sysops, learn it: Locked BBSs are useless BBSs.

So you can either pay someone to babysit the board every time you step out, or you can look into a couple of cheaper solutions — PC Watchdog and Teleboot BB-100.

The Watchdog ($144.95–159.95, Berkshire Products) is a system monitoring board that will restart a malfunctioning or overheated PC. Sysops have control of programming and timing parameters, as Watchdog monitors PC activity and temperature through I/O addresses and can generate an NMI interrupt first to allow the PC to "clean up" the system, attempt recovery or log critical information before a reset occurs.



From U.S.A. Communications Corp. comes the Teleboot BB-100

($189), hardware designed to automatically reboot a locked up or hung CPU. The action is triggered by an incoming call — one that goes unanswered after four rings — during which time all incoming calls will be blocked out until the system is rebooted and ready. For Teleboot call 516.244.6851. For the PC Watchdog call 404.271.0088.

new.at.galacticomm

Linux and SCO versions of The Major BBS for UNIX released, prices reduced

Galacticomm, Inc. furthered its commitment to the UNIX environment early this spring with the introduction of Linux and SCO versions for The Major BBS for UNIX. The BBS software powerhouse also unveiled a limited-time price promotion for its UNIX software, offering customer savings of up to 35 percent.

And just for good measure, Galacticomm also unveiled a Spanish language add-on option and Entertainment Collection for its UNIX products.

"With our added compatibility for Linux and SCO, the vast majority of UNIX facilities will now be able to run our software on their current operating system," said Galacticomm's President and CEO Scott Brinker. "SCO has a large share of the UNIX market and is the leading choice for government agencies,

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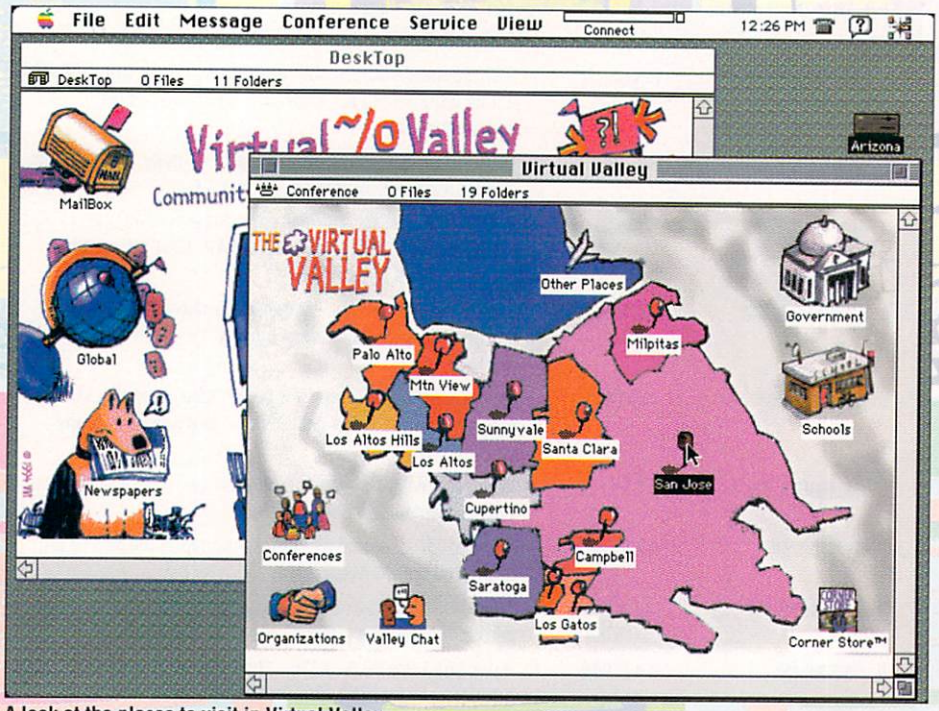
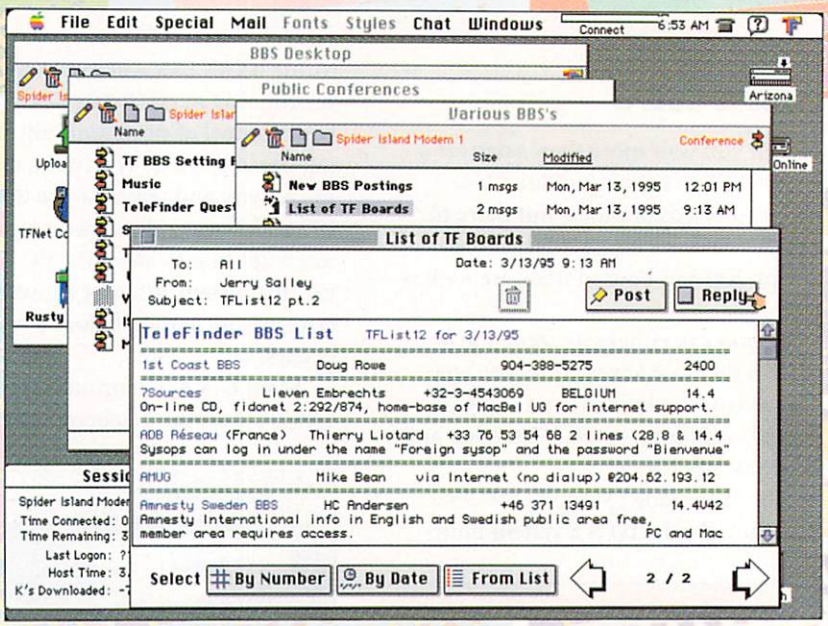


A look at the places to visit in Virtual Valley.



Finding a list of TeleFinder boards at Spider Island BBS.

kin' a Mac Going Online

BBSing the Macintosh way

BY MARIA LANGER

Everyone's going online. You hear about it every day at work, on the news, in the car pool, from your friends. Now you want to join the fun and see what you've been missing.

Or maybe you're already online at work and you want to explore the world of BBSs in your own time, without the boss looking over your shoulder — a wise decision that could save your job.

Or perhaps you've heard so much about this Internet thing that you've decided to investigate on your own. You've heard that the Internet is accessible through many BBSs and figure you'd start there (since you don't know a SLIP

CONTINUES...

account from a Web browser). Whatever the reason, you want to explore the world of BBSs. But unlike so many of the BBS-savvy folks you know, your computer is a Macintosh.

Well, as you and I both know, you're the one who made the right computer purchase decision. And in the next few pages I'll tell you how you can take your Mac and a modem online, and what you'll find on Mac-based BBSs around the country.

What You'll Need

To connect to a BBS, you need a modem and telecommunications software.

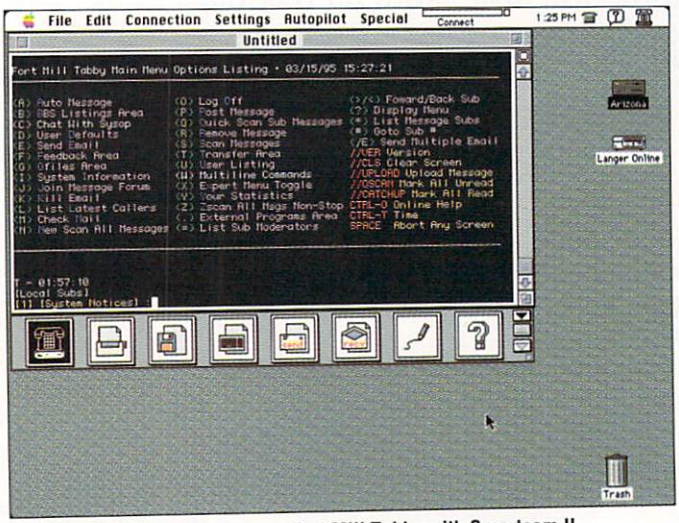
Modem: A modem is a device that lets your computer "talk" over the phone. It does this by turning the computer's digital signals into analog signals and then sending them over a phone line. On the other end of the connection is another modem that turns the analog signals you sent into digital signals that computers can understand.

If you don't have a modem, you'll have to buy one. Prices range from under $100 for slower models to over $500 for faster, feature-packed models. These days, you can get a perfectly good 19,200 bps modem (quite fast) for less than $200. Check the ads in this magazine, as well as those in Macintosh-specific magazines like Macworld and MacUser, for an idea of what's available. Generally speaking, you want the fastest external modem you can afford. Be sure to specify that the modem will be connected to a Mac so it comes with the correct cable (an IBM-compatible cable will be worthless to you). Then follow the instructions that come with the modem to connect it to your computer and a phone line.

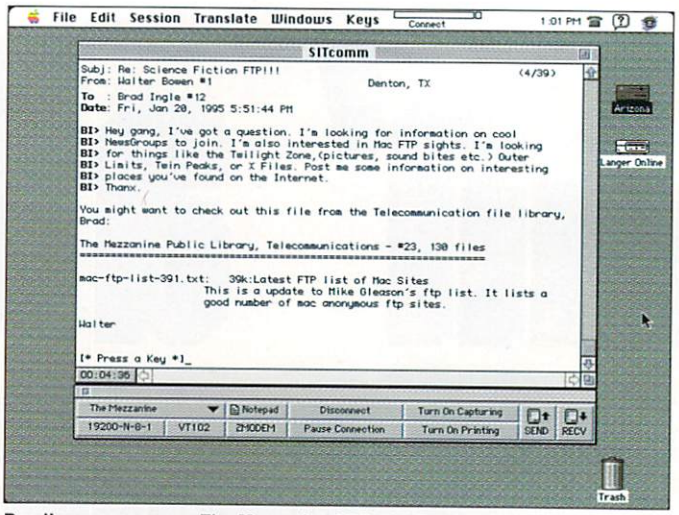
Telecommunications Software: Telecommunications software tells your Macintosh how to use the modem. There are basically two kinds — standard or command-line user interface (CLUI) and graphic user interface (GUI) telecomunications software. I'll tell you about GUI software later. For now, let's look at standard telecommunications software.

If you bought a modem packaged for use with a Macintosh, chances are it came with some kind of basic telecommunications software. This software enables you to connect to a remote system like a BBS right away.

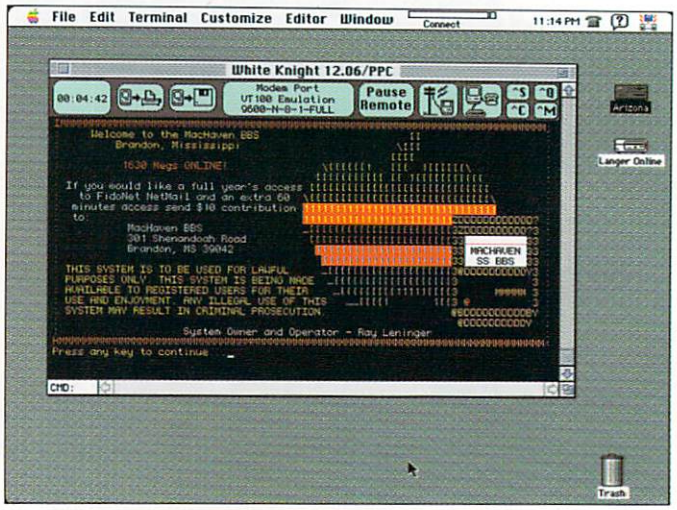
With standard or CLUI telecommunications software, you can dial into just about any BBS, as well as the Internet and



Checking what's on the menu at Fort Mill Tabby with Smartcom II.



Reading messages on The Mezzanine BBS with SITcomm.



Visiting MacHaven BBS with White Knight.

certain commercial online services like CompuServe, GEnie, and Delphi. The drawback — which may be especially painful for Macintosh users — is the fact that once connected, you're presented with an old-fashioned command-line interface with scrolling menus and the need to type in commands. Still, if you have a modem and plan to go online, you really can't do without at least one standard telecommunications software package. Here are some suggestions:

- *ZTerm* is a shareware package by Alverson Software. It is available on most BBSs and is often bundled with modems sold to Mac users. It's a simple program that includes a surprising number of the features found in commercial products.

- *SITComm* is a simple package distributed by Aladdin Systems, Inc. (the same folks who make the popular StuffIt compression software package). Designed to make telecommunications easy, especially for beginners, it has many useful features that appeal to all users.

- *SmartCom II* is a package by Hayes Microcomputer Products, Inc., a major player in the modem market. It combines an easy-to-use interface with an impressive feature set.

- *White Knight* is a package by The FreeSoft Company, makers of Second Sight, a Macintosh-based BBS software package. It's

a full-featured program that includes its own programming language and compiler so users can create their own programs to automate online tasks.

• *MicroPhone,* from Software Ventures Corporation, comes in three different packages for different levels of users: MicroPhone LT, MicroPhone II, and MicroPhone Pro. MicroPhone Pro, the top of the line package, includes everything you need to connect to just about any system — including systems on the Internet — via modem or direct network connection.

I can't recommend one of these products over any of the others — each has its own set of features that appeal to a different group of users. Do a little research and find out what other Macintosh users you meet online are using. Then decide for yourself.

What's Out There to Explore

The first thing you have to remember when you're calling a BBS is that platform boundaries disappear. A Macintosh user can connect to any BBS, no matter what kind of computer it's running on.

Don't believe me? Try it for yourself. Pick any BBS mentioned in this magazine, fire up your standard telecommunications software, and dial in. You'll see just about the same thing any other caller sees. You'll be able to read and write messages, upload and download files, chat, and play online games. That's because when you call a BBS, you use its hardware and software — not your own. Your Mac is nothing more than a dumb terminal on someone else's computer.

There are, however, certain exceptional benefits to calling a Macintosh-based BBS if you've got a Mac:

A Mac-based BBS will offer more files of interest to Mac users. Although you can dial into a DOS-based system and download files from it, let's face it: most DOS systems have DOS files. COOLGAME.ZIP isn't going to be much fun on a standard Macintosh if you can't run it. (Although as Power Macintosh users have discovered, DOS and Windows software work fine on a Power PC.)

A Mac-based BBS will offer message areas or conferences of interest to Mac users. Through links to Fidonet, the Internet, and OneNet (a network of FirstClass systems), sysops can carry message areas shared by other BBSs around the world. A Mac sysop is a lot more likely to pick up Mac message areas than a DOS sysop.

A Mac-based BBS not surprisingly attracts more Mac users. That means there will be more people online that you can consult for help and information about your computer.

Since non-Mac systems get most of the press (there are so many of them, they're tough to ignore), I'll concentrate on the Mac-based systems.

Command Line Systems

A CLUI system is one you can dial into with any standard telecommunications software package using any computer. When you connect, text scrolls up your screen, providing information and menu options. To navigate the system, you

CONTINUES...

So you want to be a sysop...

If you'd like to take control and start your own Mac-based system, following are some things to consider:

Hardware Requirements

To start with, you'll need a computer and at least one modem. Although a BBS can run in the background on a Macintosh, provided you have enough RAM, consider getting a dedicated machine. This way, you don't slow BBS operations down — and BBS callers don't slow you down.

You'll also need at least one modem of the fastest variety you can afford. No one wants to dial into a 2400 bps BBS anymore, so discard any thoughts of giving an old modem new life. Of course, you'll need one modem for each phone line you want to run.

If you want more than two phone lines, you'll have to buy a serial card. Hurdler Cards, which can add two or four serial ports to any Mac with a NuBus slot, are commonly sold by BBS software developers like SoftArc Inc. and Spider Island Software. You'll also need a separate phone line, preferrably one with a "hunt" feature, for each modem you install.

Software Possibilities

There are a number of possibilities as far as software goes:

FirstClass Server — Although SoftArc, Inc. cringes when you refer to its GUI software as a BBS system, it's commonly used for hobbyist, user-group, and commercial BBSs worldwide. In fact, at least four of the top Macintosh user groups — BMUG, BCS•Mac, NYMUG, and AMUG — use it as a BBS.

NovaLink Professional — ResNova's software package offers an easy to use GUI and all the features you'd expect in a professional-level information server.

TeleFinder — Spider Island Software's GUI software package was one of the first of the GUI packages to emerge for Macintosh users.

Second Sight — In the old days (pre-1988?) of Macintosh computing, this Scott Watson package was known as Red Ryder Host. Scott now sells his command-line interface BBS from The FreeSoft Company. It has highly configurable, ANSI-compatible menus and plenty of features.

Hermes II — Available through shareware distribution channels, Hermes II by Compuer Classifieds is a command-line interface package widely used by Macintosh sysops. It features ANSI-compatible graphics and other standard BBS features.

Reality Check

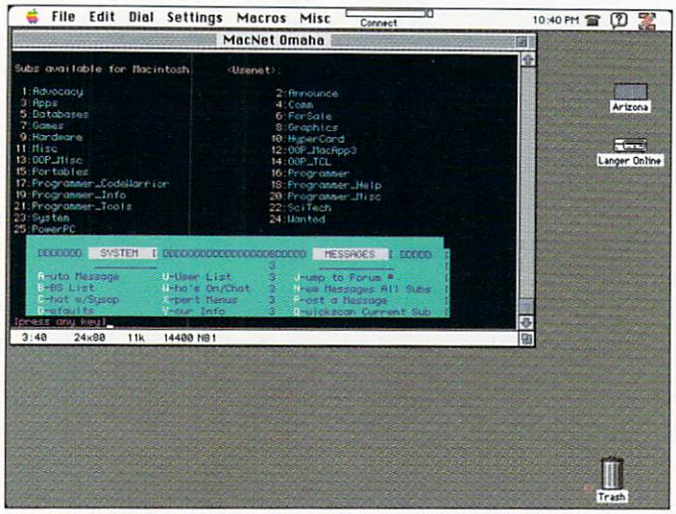
As someone who has been running a BBS for over six years, I can speak from experience when I say this: building and managing a BBS is a time consuming and sometimes costly endeavor. Many people start pay BBSs thinking it'll earn them enough money to live a life of leisure managing an online community. Most of these people are sorely disappointed. Other people start free BBSs only to find their systems plagued by leeches who use up all the available time downloading files under multiple aliases. These people are frustrated that all their efforts are wasted on callers who don't seem to care.

While it's true that there are many well-run, profitable BBSes out there, the people who run them have made serious investments in time and money. For an idea of what it's like to run your own BBS without investing too much, look for a position as a co-sysop on an existing system near you. If you're still anxious to run your own system after six months, go for it.

enter menu letters or numbers or text commands. Put your mouse aside. The only time you'll need it is when you have to send a command to your own software — like to upload or download a file, or disconnect.

Many Macintosh users are intimidated by CLUI systems because they've never been exposed to that kind of computing environment before. As Mac users, we depend on icons, scrolling windows, and menu commands. It's tough sometimes to adjust to a more basic way of communicating with a computer.

But that doesn't mean Macintosh users should avoid CLUI systems. After all, you shouldn't be calling a BBS for its interface. You should be calling for its content. Some of the largest and best run systems in the world are CLUI systems, offering more features than a caller could use in a lifetime.



Using ZTerm to browse the Usenet newsgroups on MacNet Omaha.

Here are the CLUI systems I called while working on this article. You might want to give some of them a try to get started.

Command Liners

MacHaven BBS in Brandon, MS (601.992.9459) is a one-line system accessible at speeds of up to 28.8K bps. It runs on Second Sight BBS software and offers ANSI color graphics, Macintosh files, and access to Fidonet.

MacNet Omaha in Omaha, NE (402.289.2899) is a two-line system with both lines accessible at speeds up to 19.2K bps. Utilizing Hermes II BBS software, it offers Fidonet, Usenet newsgroups and plenty of Macintosh files.

Fort Mill Tabby in Fort Mill, SC (803.548.0900) is a one-line system accessible at speeds up to 19.2K bps. With Hermes II software, it offers local and Fidonet message areas and Macintosh files.

The Mezzanine BBS in Denton, TX (817.565.9165) is a one-line system accessible at speeds up to 28.8K bps. It's the home of The Mezzanine Online Macintosh User's Group. Running on Hermes II software, it offers local and Fidonet message areas and files.

The GUIs

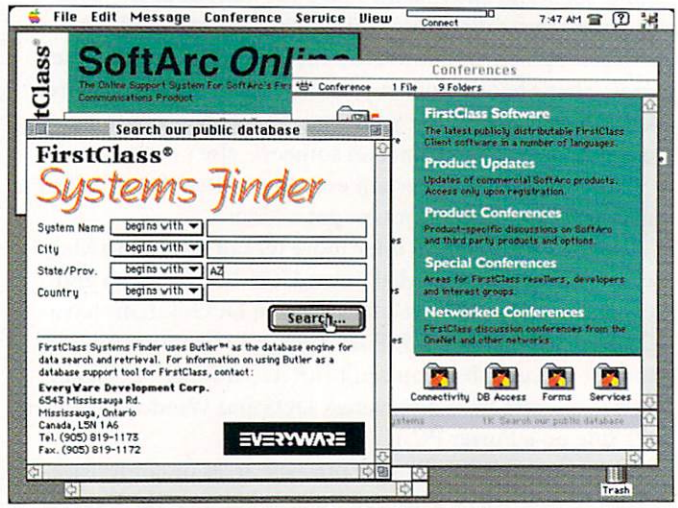
Graphic user interface (GUI) systems are more in line with what a Macintosh user expects. Rather than offering users an on-screen text menu, GUI systems display intuitive windows, icons, and menus. The drawback: in order to take advantage of a GUI system, you must obtain and use a GUI telecommunications software package specifically designed for that BBS or server package.

Fortunately, all the user or client software packages are freely distributable so it won't cost you anything (except disk space) to collect them all. But no matter how much you like the interface offered by one package, you can't use its user or client software to call a BBS based on a different package.

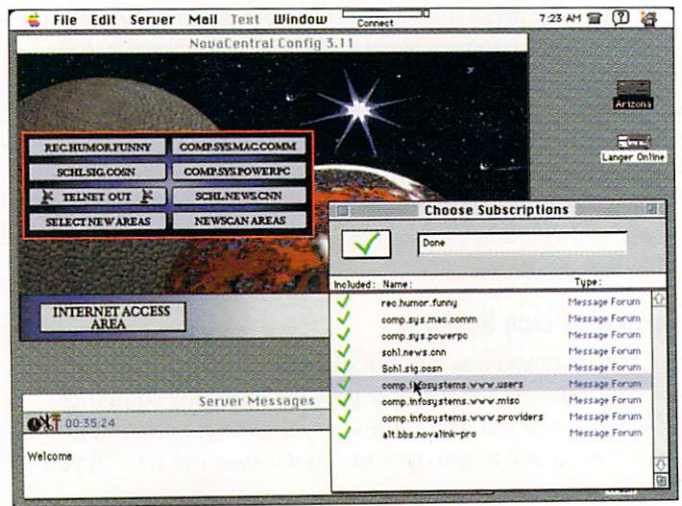
How do you get this software? In most cases you'll be able to dial into a GUI system with standard telecommunications software. You won't see the GUI, of course, but you can use the CLUI to navigate the system, find the software, and download it. Then log off, load and configure your new software, and dial in again to use the GUI.

Here's a list of the top three GUI software packages for Macintosh BBSs.

• *FirstClass Client* is a software package for use with SoftArc Inc.'s FirstClass Server software.



Searching for FirstClass systems on SoftArc Online.



Checking out the Internet newsgroups on NovaCentral.

• *NovaTerm* is a software package for use with ResNova Software, Inc.'s NovaLink Professional server software.

• *TeleFinder User* is a software package for use with Spider Island Software's TeleFinder BBS.

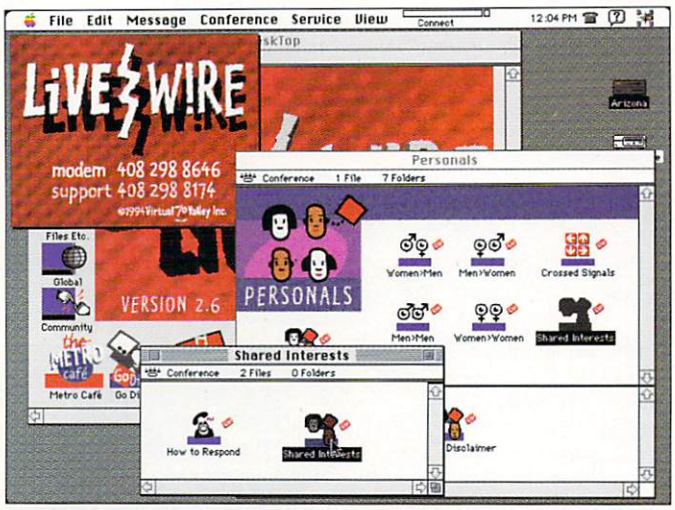
Which is the best? Again, it's a matter of personal preference. In addition, since all of these packages offer the sysop the ability to customize his system — usually through the use of configuration or settings files you can download and use on your Mac — no two systems based on the same package will be exactly alike. Like CLUI systems, the overall appeal of a BBS relies heavily on the sysop's imagination, organization, and system management skills.

Here are some GUI systems you can try:

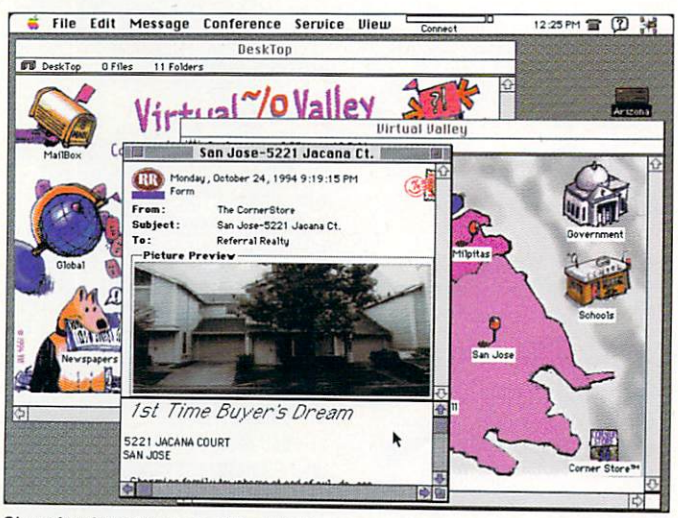
SoftArc Online in Markham, ONT (905.415.7070) is a multi-line system that's home to SoftArc, Inc., makers of FirstClass Server and Client. It features product support conferences and files, and an online database you can use to find FirstClass systems all over the world.

☎

Livew!re in San Jose, CA (408.298.8646) is a 26-line FirstClass-based BBS that offers local, OneNet, and Usenet conferences,



Exploring the personals areas on Livew!re.



Shopping for a home on Virtual Valley.

files, chat, and a wide range of community-related features. Its funky, extremely well designed settings file really gives the BBS a distinctive look.

Another San Jose BBS, *Virtual Valley* (408.999.0966), is a 16-line FirstClass system run by the same organization, Virtual Valley, a subsidiary of Metro Newspapers. This system has a number of schools, goverment agencies, radio stations, and television stations online. Its settings file gives it a completely different look. These two systems provide a great example of what can be achieved on a Macintosh-based system.

☎

The Electronic Pen in Harrington Park, NJ (201.767.6337) is a FirstClass-based, two-line system supporting speeds up to

Browsing the file libraries on The Electronic Pen.

19.2K bps. (I've been running since 1989.) It offers Fidonet and OneNet message areas and over 15,000 Macintosh files. To browse the system, you must log on as Guest with a password of Guest. To set up a free account, follow the instructions online.

☎

Spider Island BBS in Irvine, CA (714.730.5785) is a multi-line system for the support of TeleFinder BBS software. On it you can find numbers for other TeleFinder systems, as well as TFNet and other network message areas.

☎

NovaCentral in Huntington Beach, CA (714.379.9004) is the home of ResNova Software, Inc., developers of NovaLink Professional and NovaTerm software. It's a multi-line system that features tasteful images, graphics, and sounds when you access it with its configuration file (which you can download on your first call). It also offers some files and a gateway to the Internet.

☎

AppleSeeds BBS in Cary, NC (919.481.4896) is a 3-line TeleFinder-based BBS accessible at speeds of up to 28.8K bps. It is the home of the Triangle Macintosh User's Group, which

CONTINUES...

reserves one line for member use. Its settings file, which you can download on your first call, provides custom sounds, backgrounds, and icons. It features Fidonet message areas and files.

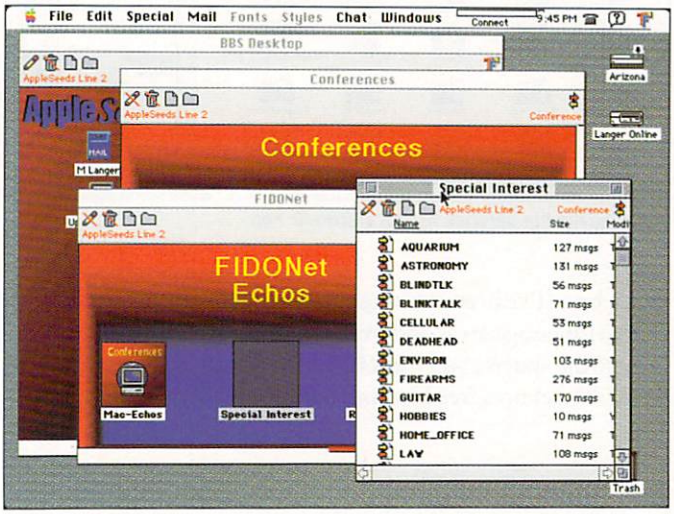
FreeThinkers BBS in Miami, FL (305.821.1909) is a single-line TeleFinder system accessible at speeds of up to 14.4K bps. It offers Mac, DOS and GIF files, conferences, and a place to "practice your First Amendment rights."

Acculex Online in Tacoma, WA (206.566.9768) is a single-line system using NovaLink Professional software. It features message areas on a variety of topics.

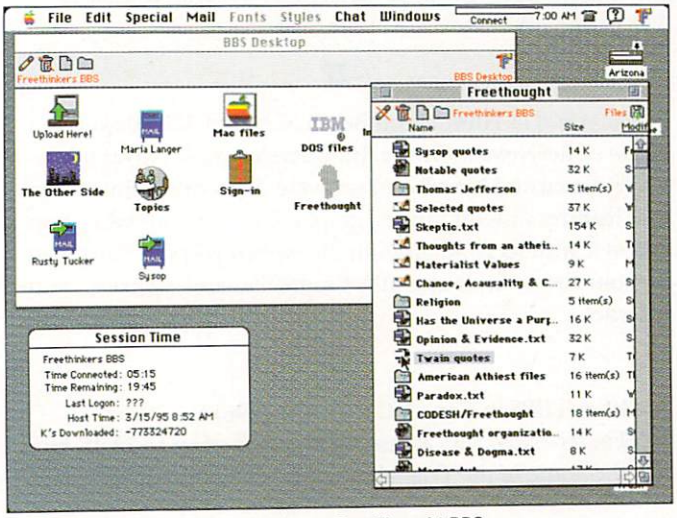
The send-off

With the right tools — modem and telecommunciations software — anyone can explore the world of BBSs. Even Mac users like us.

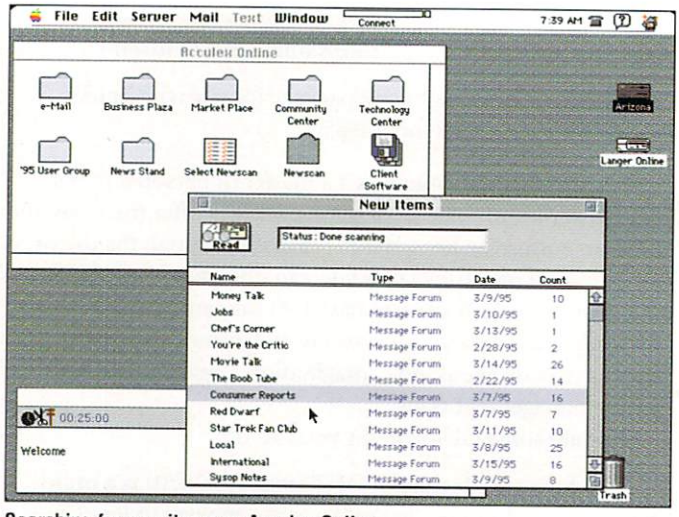
Maria Langer is a freelance writer and Macintosh consultant who has been running a Mac-based BBS since 1989. Her most recent book, The Macintosh Bible Guide to Word 6, *is available in bookstores now. Contact her online at gilesrd@eworld.com.*



Exploring the Fidonet special interest areas on AppleSeeds.



Practicing First Amendment rights on FreeThought BBS.



Searching for new items on Acculex Online.

Product and Vendor Information

(all prices are retail)

Aladdin Systems, Inc.
165 Westridge Drive
Watsonville, CA 95076-4159
408.761.6200
408.761.6206 (fax)
email: aladdin@well.com
SITcomm — $120

Alverson Software
5635 Cross Creek Court
Mason, OH 45040-2448
ZTerm — $30; $40 with disk

Computer Classifieds
12819 SE 38th #101
Bellevue, WA 98006
206.643.2316
206.643.7830 (fax)
206.643.2874 (BBS)
email: lloydwoodall@ces.wa.com
Hermes II — $125

Hayes Microcomputer Prod. Inc.
P.O. Box 105203
Atlanta, GA 30348
404.441.1617
404.449.0087 (fax)
404.HI.MODEM (BBS)
Smartcom II — $149

ResNova Software, Inc.
5011 Argosy Drive, Suite #13
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
714.379.9000
714.379.9014 (fax)
714.379.9004 (BBS)
email: jon.kantor@resnova.com
NovaLink Professional — prices vary based on configuration.
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Spider Island Software
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905.415.7151 (fax)
905.415.7070 (BBS)
FirstClass Server — prices vary based on configuration.
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email: jack@svcdudes.com
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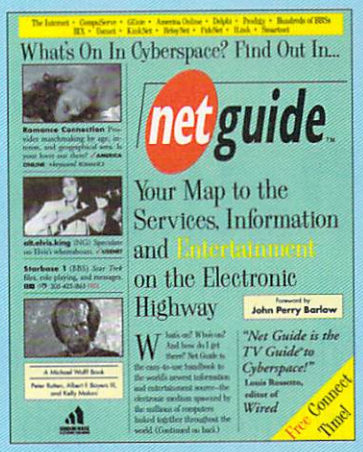
412.846.5312 (BBS)
White Knight — $139; 68K, $169
PPC Second Sight — $199

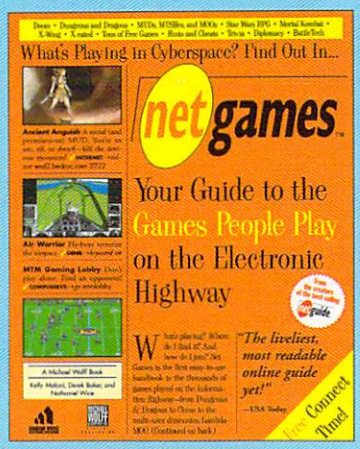
The Bestselling Guides to Cyberspace

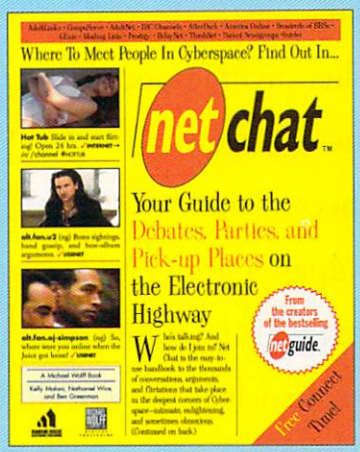
FIND IT!



It's 1954 and your family has just bought a television set! Along with millions of others up and down Maple Street you want to know one thing: *what's on?* Now that same question echoes out in Cyberspace. As the Net becomes an entertainment as well as an information medium, a program guide becomes an essential tool and a must-have part of the experience. That guide is the bestselling book *Net Guide*—"The TV Guide to Cyberspace!" according to *Wired* Editor Louis Rossetto. "The book people keep stealing off my desk," says *Time*'s Joshua Quittner.

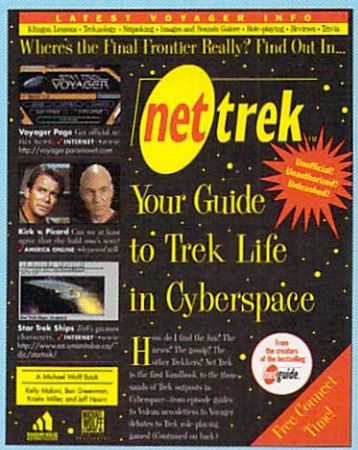
We're mapping a new world.

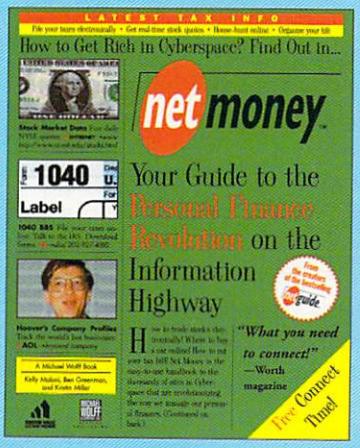




But that's not all! As Cyberspace grows exponentially, whole new obsessions and passions are born. Thousands of games are suddenly available online and so now there's *Net Games*—your "map to the playing fields of Netdom," says *Newsweek*—and with millions of conversations to join in Cyberspace, you'll need *Net Chat*, "The best surfer's guide out there," writes *Entertainment Weekly*. Every other month, there's a new Cyber-baedeker attracting what the *Wall Street Journal* calls "a wide and devoted readership." This month there's *Net Money*, here to tell you how the online world can make your life easier and richer! And if you really want to visit the final, final frontier, you'll need *Net Trek*—truly the ultimate guide! And watch for *Net Sports*, *Net Tech*, and *Net Music*, all coming in 1995! In bookstores everywhere!

Net Books—From Michael Wolff & Company and Random House





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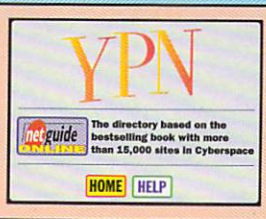

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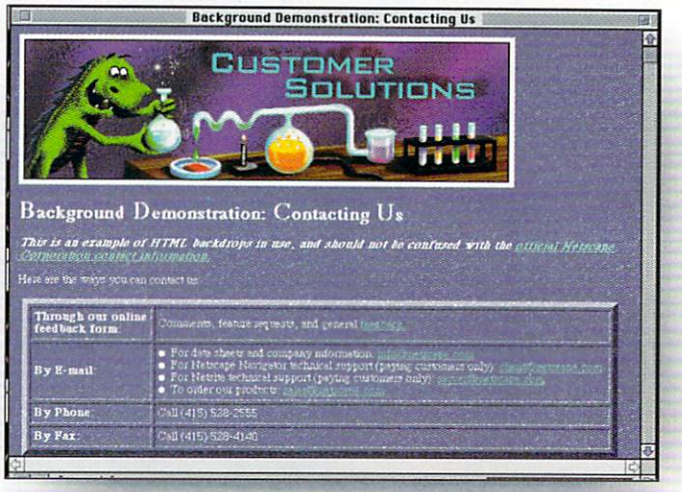
Try a free electronic excerpt of the Net Books at http://www.ypn.com/

BY DAVE KRAMER

Patterns! Color! Texture!

Netscape enhancements brighten the Web

One fine day — perhaps you remember it as you do other pivotal moments in personal history — the nature of the World Wide Web changed. It became fuzzy, soft and at times rough as sandpaper. It became purple, and blue, and even fuchsia. It took on the appearance of a mossy rock, a piece of cloth, and old-fashioned papyrus. Yup, it was as if a batch of textural graffiti artists were set loose with a can of 3-D spray paint, leaving trails of multicolored magic across the walls of the datajungle.



The day in question came when Netscape Communications released its first public beta of Netscape Navigator 1.1 (or when you managed to get through to ftp.mcom.com, download it and boot that sucker up). Within hours of the release, pages across the Net became "patternized." For the price of a few extra seconds of download time, pages were infused with a fresh-faced appearance that literally transformed the Web.

Since the HyperText Markup Language (HTML) coding for patterns is part of the HTML 3.0 standard, other browsers will support them, too. But Netscape, as usual, was the first one out of the box with it. While other companies were beta-testing software that attempted to catch up with disk caching, JPEG support, and image loading that doesn't hold up the text, Netscape had fancier fish to fry. We're talking about tables, encrypted data, dynamically updated animation and those too-hip browser background patterns.

Tour starts here

Of course, there is no point in using a souped-up Web browser if you don't know where to point it. So here's a guide to where the wild pages are, the ones taking advantage of these ultra-cool features:

Naturally, there are myriad examples at http://www.mcom.com, the Netscape site. But you can only watch Mozilla pop out from behind the corporate logo so many times before you're ready to move on past the greasy kid stuff.

My first stop after Netscape's site was the Cool Site of the Day, at http://www.infi.net/cool.html. In true form, the pages here were duly patternized. Not just the splash screen, but the FAQ as well. This collection of Networthy morsels is a great place to view patterns, particularly via its archived links. One cited site that I found was the inimitable Moon City, at http://www.euro.net/5thworld/moon.html — page through the

KEYWORDS

Netscape blossoms
"Secure" sites
Overheard on the Net

former Cool Sites and you'll find some other gems.

Another good place, if you have an Internet service provider that allows free Web pages, is your neighbors' personal home pages. Unlike corporate sites, individual users need not consult the vice president before changing everything to suit their latest fetish. So these pagemongers tend to be early adopters. If your provider doesn't offer this, check out some college sites and large providers. You'll find some neat stuff. For one, visit the adventurous souls (including a few Net celebrities) at the WELL in San Francisco, located at http://www.well.com/Community/. While you're at it, check out this interesting link: http://204.156.22.13/.

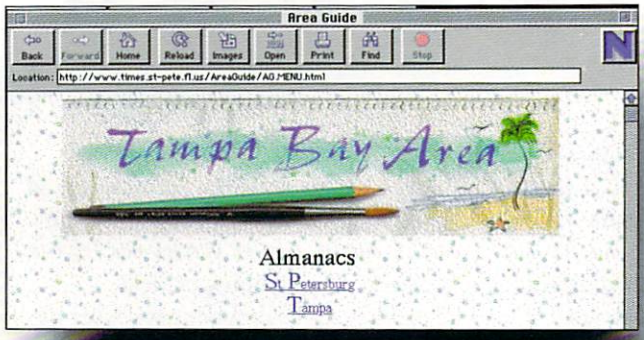
Speaking of interesting, how about some cream of the patterned crop. The Tampa Bay Area Guide, at http://www.times.st-pete.fl.us/AreaGuide/AG.MENU.html, is one of my early favorites. I may never visit Tampa Bay, but I'll page through this guide until I feel I've lived there my whole life. On the arty front, the WebMuseum link includes one of the most skillfully laid out home pages, not to mention classic art from the Louvre. High art and pop art meet at http://sunsite.unc.edu/louvre/.

Enough patterns. Have you ever noticed that broken key at the bottom left-hand side of your Netscape browser? Take a visit to software.net, https://software.net, and enjoy the encrypted security of Netscape's own Secure Sockets Layer session protection. More importantly, you'll see that dang key graphic isn't broken anymore!

You can buy encrypted wine from Virtual Vineyards (https://www.virtualvin.com/), or apply for an encrypted credit card (to pay for all of your encrypted purchases) at Capital One, found at https://www.capital1.com/CapitalOne/c1-home.html.

On the more exciting side of the Net, "push/pull" is a buzzword you've just begun to hear too many words about. This nifty Netscape feature allows dynamic updates of data IN YOUR BROWSER WINDOW. Yes, it's the Internet equivalent of video on demand, Web style. It also can be used to update stock values, sports scores, and any other kind of data. Really, the bounds are limitless. Look for some exciting and previously un-thought of implementations to appear in this space in future months. In the meantime, for a wholly useless diversion, check out the fishtank at http://home.mcom.com/fishcam/fishcam.html. Hours of fun watching the fish swish by.

Now there are some who say Netscape's enhancements have gone too far. I'm not one of them, but I do admit that the people who insist that you can't enjoy their pages without Netscape's browser are usually full of hot air (among other things). Someone who agrees, Charles B. Owen of Dartmouth College, has set up a page devoted to deflating the hype and pointing out the foibles of pagemongers who make these claims simply because they bothered to center a few headlines, or use those incessant (and annoying) <blink></blink> tags. To see if you agree, jump over to http://www.cs.dartmouth.edu/~cowen/netscape.html.



Rolling the dice

Once again you're all logged on with nowhere to go. You scan all of those links in your hotlist and go, "What was I thinking when I saved these tired links?" You just have no place to turn, and if you see another search engine you'll probably lose it. (Besides, those things are always busy these days, and it's frustrating waiting to get your turn.) Why not just play a nice game of URouLette. This nifty little toy at the University of Kansas will spin you round and round and shoot you over to some places you probably never dreamt of. There is the occasional broken URL, but what do you want for nothing? Besides, when you're done (provided you're not too dizzy) you can always add your own favorite hot spots.

Give it a try. Maybe you'll stumble across my home page. Guess what: It's patternized.

Overheard on the Net:

"That URL was, like, so five minutes ago."

If you'd like to suggest a unique Web site, flood Dave Kramer's box at reeltime@omni.voicenet.com. Include a nifty original quote in your .sig, and you'll be a future "Overheard" candidate.

BY TERRY ROSSI

CNN Bites! Or is it *Biting?*

You Decide on CompuServe

Plus: AOL's Growing Pains and Delphi's Educating Weaves

New to basic services on CompuServe are the weekly CNN and CNN International programming schedules. If you like the 24-hour news network, be sure to check out "Today on CNN" and "Today on CNN International" under the programming section for a complete list of the day's live events, specials and guest appearances.

You can also "Talk to CNN" without charge and offer your comments on CNN programming. Did you like a particular story? Do you want to see more about the topic? Tell CNN what you don't like as well and the changes you think should be made.

"What's New on CNN" is the place to find the latest forum information, such as the most recent library additions and upcoming conferences with newsmakers, experts, or CNN anchors and reporters. When you are tuned to CNN, click here for the latest programming schedules and bulletins about upcoming specials.

The full list of CNN Online basic services are Introduction to CNN Online, CNN Programming Schedule, CNN News Quiz, Talk to CNN, and What's New on CNN.

Cable News Network Online's extended services include the CNN Forum, CNN TalkBack Live Forum, O.J. Simpson Forum, CNN News Capsules, The CNN Sports Calendar, The Hollywood Minute, The Washington Notebook, The Entertainment Beat, Earth Matters, and Motor City Memo.

An email apology

On AOL, users who want it can get an online apology for the email and connectivity problems at America Online during the beginning of 1995.

Steve Case, President and CEO of America Online, explained in his monthly online letter to the user community that AOL's email volume recently went from a few hundred thousand emails per day to over 1.5 million per day. Case also apologized for the lateness of AOL's Web browser, explaining that AOL wanted to integrate the content on the World Wide Web right into the service so that users could browse AOL and the Internet at the same time (with like content grouped together).

Currently (as of March, that is)

KEYWORDS
"Talk to CNN"
AOL overload
Prodigy's Multi-mail

AOL's WWW offering is slated for late May and the service's two million members, I suspect, are more than ready.

Case did relay some good news, too: AOLNET, America Online's high-speed (28,800) network is up and Sprint has added many more 14,400 modems throughout the U.S.

Additionally, AOL's European arm is getting off the ground to (finally) bring callers overseas into the fold.

New to the service is Entertainment Weekly OnLine, the interactive counterpart to the popular television show. The EW Online section features the latest news, information and schedules from the world of the stars.

What struck me about the EW Online section was the menu layout. Taking full advantage of the AOL version 2.0 menu structure, EW is organized with image maps that allow the user to click on a picture-like icon which takes them to a underlying menu item.

For example when entering the Entertainment Weekly "Guide" section, the menu is organized like a bookshelf, each spine of a book with different menu choices. The choices include, Television, Movies, Books, Multimedia and others. Clicking on a spine revels the hyperlinked, underlying section of the service. Nicely done.

Delphi's Webucation

Delphi Internet has launched its Young America Electronic Adventure online education program. Through this program, Delphi Internet will conduct a trial run of its Web-based educational services, to provide easy access to the Internet and its wealth of resources directly from the classroom.

Delphi Internet has teamed with three partners for the project: PACT 95, one of three American syndicates competing for the America's Cup; Scott Foresman, of the educational division of Harper Collins Publishers; and Ocean Challenge, a company which interactively links ongoing expeditions with classrooms (to introduce the Young America education program).

Designed for grades K-12, Delphi Internet's Young America Electronic Adventure "online field trips" aim to motivate children to learn about science and technology through the excitement generated by the America's Cup race. Delphi Internet will offer its 300-page Young America site on the Web free to anyone with a SLIP or PPP connection. The address is http://www.delphi.com/young-america/homeport.html.

Participating schools will also receive from Delphi free, trial graphical Web access software and classroom memberships to Delphi Internet's service.

The Young America launch — which follows Delphi Internet's technology licensing agreement with Netscape Communications last month — marks a key step toward implementing its strategy of publishing exciting new media properties for World Wide Web-based environments.

"Partnering with Scott Foresman, Ocean Challenge and PACT 95 has enabled us to take an innovative approach to publishing on the World Wide Web and offering educational programming on Delphi Internet," said Dr. Alan E. Baratz, Delphi Internet's CEO.

"The Young America online educational program has also afforded us an opportunity to give something back to the Internet community, which has provided such valuable resources to us in the past."

"Raising the scientific literacy of young Americans is an important part of our overall mission as we work toward an America's Cup victory," said

CONTINUES ...

Rusty Edie

Dual Eliminator

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

A light emitting diode, also mounted on the front of the unit, glows whenever the device is eliminating noise from the phone lines. This device can solve the majority of noise problems associated with telecommunications today, and is sold with a 30-day, money-back guarantee. They sell for $25 each plus $4 shipping and handling. To order, call Rusty n Edie's at 216-726-4217, fax to 216-726-3595 or call their BBS number 216-726-2620; they will accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

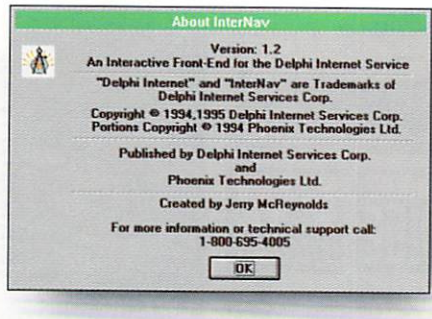
Rusty n Edie's BBS
7393 California Ave.
Youngstown, OH 44512

John Marshall, President of Partnership for America's Cup Technology (PACT) 95. "Together with Delphi Internet, we have created an unparalleled, hands-on educational environment for students and educators throughout the world."

Developed to augment general classroom curricula, the Young America online activities explore physics, computer technology, oceanography and other sciences that underlie sailing and boat building. The program also focuses on nutrition, teamwork and sportsmanship.

The online activities available through the Young America Electronic Adventure on Delphi Internet are designed to demonstrate the practical applications of science and math in the real world.

By accessing the Young America Web site, participants can communicate with the members of the Young America crew and design teams, keep up to date on America's Cup news, and take part in interactive learning adventures such as weather prediction games, contests for best boat design, treasure hunts and other online activities. Each week, the crew and design team will post personal journals providing insight on the races and exchange questions and answers with students and teachers as the races unfold. The email address for inquiries to the crew is youngamerica@delphi.com.



Multimedia in your mailbox

You may recall some time ago I raved about the neat integration Prodigy had done with sound and photos. Well, the coolness continues.

Prodigy has signed an agreement with Seattle-based FilmWorks to join forces and offer a new multimedia email service over Prodigy. The new service would allow members to send their photos and sound clips along with text messages. It should all be under way when you read this.

Mutlimedia email is a hybrid of voice mail, answering machines and video conferencing. When a Prodigy member receives email, he will be able to actually see a picture of the person who sent it and hear a pre-recorded greeting, in addition to the text of the message. This is the signature file of the next generation.

Here is how the system operates: FilmWorks will develop rolls of 35mm film and digitize the photographs onto a floppy disk. Prodigy members simply put the diskette into their computers and send the photo along with their email.

The service will initially be available on email sent or received by a Prodigy member only, but the company is working on enhancements which would allow the messages to be sent to any Internet address.

The Prodigy members need Windows to send or view pictures, and a sound card and microphone to hear or record sound clips.

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BY SHARI STEELE

Under Decency Amendment, We're All Criminals

On March 23 of this year, the United States Senate Commerce Committee passed telecommunications legislation that included an amended version of the Communications Decency Act of 1995, commonly known as "the Exon Amendment."

KEYWORDS

Sysops at risk
More laws on deck?
How to join the cause

This draft was introduced by Senator Slade Gorton (R-VT) for his absent colleague, retiring Senator James Exon (D-NE). There are some serious problems with this bill, which I will enumerate, and readers are urged to make their dissatisfaction known in order to help kill the bill.

It's unconstitutional

The ambiguity of the coverage and defenses included in the bill leaves gaps that raise serious constitutional questions. In 1989, the Supreme Court in Sable Communications v. FCC established that indecent material cannot be banned entirely, and that prohibiting indecency to protect minors is an unconstitutional violation of the free speech rights of adults. Yet the Gorton/Exon bill attempts to criminalize all speech that is "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy or indecent." The prohibition of "filthy" speech listed in the bill has no legal authority whatsoever.

The Communications Decency bill further attempts to apply to online media many restrictions that do not apply to printed or verbal expression. Transmitting an online version of a "lascivious" book could subject the sender to unreasonable fines and imprisonment, while mailing the book in hardcopy or reading aloud from the book would be protected under the First Amendment.

The Gorton/Exon amendment also fails to distinguish between consensual and non-consensual activities, and between private and public communications. A steamy love note sent privately between spouses could be a criminal violation of this statute, and there may be a potential for system operators to be held liable for failing to label users' private email as "filthy."

Small BBSs are virtually unprotected

While the version of the bill introduced on March 23 seems to attempt to protect large information service providers, such as America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy, by including a list of available defenses, small BBSs and other information services that cannot afford to assert these defenses in court are left without any protection at all. Operators of smaller, local systems will be unable to test the line where constitutional speech ends and crimi-

nal speech begins. These small businesses of the online world are therefore put at a competitive disadvantage.

And while protections are included for systems that lack "editorial control" of the materials being sent, these protections may not apply to the majority of bulletin board systems and many other online services that provide content as well as conduit, nor to systems that present certain types of moderated forums.

Definitions are vague

The bill does not define "obscene" communications, leaving individual states to assert their own definition of community standards and to prosecute system operators maintaining systems anywhere in the country.

U.S. v. Thomas, a case currently under appeal in Memphis Federal Court — in which two system operators running a BBS in California were convicted of obscenity charges after a federal officer dialed in from Tennessee and downloaded material from the BBS — clearly illustrates the danger of leaving terms like "obscenity" undefined in an online world.

Also, passages of the bill such as "to provide users with the means to restrict access to communications" are so vague that the entire Internet is already either in violation or in compliance, depending upon interpretation. Such failures to express clearly the extent and nature of the defenses would allow prosecutors to claim and "prove" virtually any lack of such means to restrict access given a sympathetic court, leaving system operators attempting to comply with the law little guidance on how to avoid being brought up on criminal charges.

Restrictive laws not the answer

In general, passing restrictive laws is not the way to solve problems with rapidly evolving technologies like telecommunications — particularly when the laws are based on obsolete regulations of wholly different media. It is ironic that the Gorton/Exon amendment, which would chill the development of online services and communities, has been attached to a bill deregulating communications infrastructure. This deregulation has been presented as a boost to the pace of development of the very technology to support these services and communities.

A more reasonable and realistic model for dealing with potential problems of online subject matter would be to permit online communities to establish their own standards and to self-regulate content. Parents can direct their children to areas of age-appropriate material online, where participants, including parents, engage in "neighborhood watch" activities to limit possibly offensive content. "Filtering" technologies already in development and use by online services can further help to ensure that parents can restrict their own children's access to electronically-distributed materials.

Transmitting an online version of a "lascivious" book could subject the sender to unreasonable fines and imprisonment, while mailing the book in hardcopy or reading aloud from the book would be protected under the First Amendment.

Parents, not Congress or the FCC, have the right and responsibility to determine what is appropriate for their children to see, and we do not think Congress should make outlaws out of adults for engaging in speech that may not be suitable for minors. As Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter ruled in Butler v. Michigan in 1957:

The State insists that, by thus quarantining the general reading public against books not too rugged for grown men and women in order to shield juvenile innocence, it is exercising its power to promote the general welfare. Surely this is to burn the house to roast the pig... The incidence of this enactment is to reduce the adult population of Michigan to reading only what is fit for children.

The "incidence" of the Exon Amendment is to overly burden the free speech rights of users of the networks. Please make your voice heard and tell your Senators that you disapprove of this piece of censorship.

Make your voice heard

1. Contact the Senators from your state and all Senators on the Commerce Committee expressing your disappointment with this terrible piece of legislation. Thank Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Larry Pressler (R-SD) for not including the Gorton/Exon amendment in his proposed bill, and urge him to support action on the Senate floor to remove the anti-cyber amendment.

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

On the Internet, Senate directories including fax numbers may be found at:
gopher://ftp.senate.gov:70
gopher://una.hh.lib.umich.edu:70/0/socsci/polscilaw/uslegi

2. Contact your online service providers (i.e., AOL, CompuServe, Prodigy, etc.), and ask them what they have been doing about this Exon/Gorton assault on your liberties. Urge them not to support any legislation that violates your free speech rights. Urge them to oppose the modified Gorton/Exon amendment.

3. Contact all the Senators and urge them to support deletion of the Gorton/Exon amendment when the bill comes to the Senate floor.

For text of the Gorton/Exon amendment, as well as updates and action alerts, see:
ftp.eff.org, /pub/Alerts/
gopher.eff.org, 1/Alerts
http://www.eff.org/pub/Alerts

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

bbs.notebook

BY STEVE JANAS

To qualify for possible review in BBS Notebook, call The Liverwire BBS at 609.235.5297. From the main menu type ADDBBS and follow the prompts.

ECHO

Sysop: Stacy Horn
Location: New York, NY
BBS Main Access Number:
Up to 14,400 BPS: 212.989.8411;
14,400 BPS and above: 212.989.3142

On Echo, it's ideas, not GIFs, TIFFs, text files or shareware, that serve as currency among members.

Founded five years ago — it celebrated its fifth birthday this March — Echo has grown from a cozy round-table discussion attended by a about 20 friends to a 3,500-member electronic convention with a growing reputation as the online distillation of downtown hipness. And it's all built on conversation, not gigabytes of downloadable files.

"We're not a very traditional bulletin board in that sense," says sysop Stacy Horn, a former art student. "That's why we don't call it a BBS; we call it a salon. It's not about sending and receiving files, it's about conversations."

And the conversations run the gamut, taking both the high and low roads thematically. There are about 60 forums, Stacy says, in which anywhere from 12 to 400 conversations can be running at once.

She says the forums addressing books, movies, television and other media are among the most popular. But the most popular forum discusses culture, in all its manifold forms.

The conversations can get pretty heady, she says.

"A big topic right now is ecstasy and transcendence," Stacy says. "It's pretty ethereal. People are talking about how the current mode of thinking is really ironic. How there are movies like The Brady Bunch and The Flintstones, where people celebrate ecstasy, or irony, rather than transcendence. That's the high brow. We also have forums on body piercing and tattoos — it goes both ways."

For those who wish to venture beyond these deep waters, Echo provides the Net services standard on the bigger boards: telnet, FTP, and an Internet gateway, although telnet and FTP cost extra.

For an additional charge, members can get their choice of the Netscape or Mosaic Web browsers. Stacy says the hypertext and hot button capabilities of the World Wide Web intrigue her, so she is looking to install a web-based conferencing set-up that should be online in about a year.

"I just think it's cool to have a conversation and have links within it," she says. "You may be talking about music, and may have a link to a piece of music. Or you could be talking about a painting and link to a database with the picture somewhere."

Aside from its emphasis on wetware (as in thought) rather than hardware and software, Echo is distinctive for another reason. It is one of the few boards run by a woman, a fact Stacy says she is well-aware of.

"I have the highest percentage of women online," she says. "Forty percent of our members are women."

A New York native, Stacy majored in photography at a Boston university and returned to New York with few job prospects. She stumbled into the online world after answering an advertisement seeking candidates who worked well with machines.

"I had actually never worked with machines, but I liked the ad," she says.

The job turned out to be a trainee's position in a telecommunications company. It was a field she would stick with for ten years, before she dropped out of the corporate world and went back to being a student, at New York University's Interactive Telecommunications graduate program, in 1986. Now she's a teacher. A colleague of pioneering multimedia artist Jamie Levy, Stacy teaches a course at NYU in electronic networks.

She says running Echo became a full-time job within six months of its launch. Its Manhattan office houses three full-time and three part-time employees, as well as a bank of three Pentium PCs and a 486. Several 1.6 gigabyte hard drives contain the operation software, but because of Echo's emphasis on talk rather than file transfers, there are no plans to install CD-ROMs, Stacy says.

One of Echo's employees, dubbed

Ms. Outer Borough because of her Brooklyn address, is charged with overseeing the forums. Stacy says she was an Echo regular who eventually became a staff member.

Anyone can start a conversation, Stacy says, but ideas for forums have to be submitted to Ms. Outer Borough in writing.

"An actual forum is kind of a big deal, and we want it thought out," she says.

In addition to all the art and culture forums, Stacy says a popular forum covers the ins and outs of life in New York. She says the talk of the trendy night spots, restaurants and art galleries lends the board an urban flair that's accessible even to callers from the heartland.

"The board definitely evolved an East Coast flavor," Stacy says. "So even if you're not from New York, it feels like you're visiting. It definitely has that flavor."

Echo patronizes the arts, as well as talking about them. The board has sponsored a number of what Stacy calls "face-to-face" events throughout Manhattan. Among them have been a performance art series co-sponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art, and a series of readings that featured such plugged-in personalities as Chi Chi Valenti, publisher of *Verbal Abuse* magazine; Kyle Shannon, editor of the Web-based magazine *Urban Desires,* and Steve Levy, who read from his book *Hackers.*

One of the more intriguing projects Echo has involved itself with is the experimental interactive television show *Electronic Neighborhood,* which airs on Manhattan public-access cable television Thursday nights.

Sponsored by Nynex and the NYU graduate telecommunications school, the program is a call-in show that accommodates up to five callers at a time. Each one is represented as a head, which is guided through a computer-generated "neighborhood" by a caller acting as a pilot.

Using the telephone key pad to control the journey, the callers can go in and out of buildings, each of which contains a new environment the callers can interact with. Scrolling along the bottom of the screen is an ongoing Echo chat in which participants offer comments to the on-screen callers and to each other.

The heads can originate anywhere, but on the show they're together in a single electronic domain.

"It's a really neat way to make an electronic community," Stacy says.

E2B2

Sysop: Bill Taggart
Location: Overland Park, KS.
BBS Main Access Number: 913.897.1040
Modems Supported: Up to 28.8
BBS Software: eSoft's TBBS

Environmentalists say the green business is a growth business, and E2B2 is there to capitalize on that trend.

Sysop Bill Taggart says the board is meant to be a clearinghouse for information on environmental issues, an electronic shopping mall for environmentally-themed products, and an Internet-connected forum for environmentalists to get in touch with one another.

A short list of organizations represented on the board's membership rolls includes the Academy of Natural Sciences, Cornell, Indiana State and Louisiana State universities, and the U.S. Forest Service. Bill says the board is targeted — for now — at the "environmental professional."

"But eventually more and more individuals will be seeking to understand the environmental issues of the day and find E2B2 very interesting," he says.

The board is an offshoot of JT&A, a Washington, DC-based publishing and consulting firm founded by Bill's mother, Judy Taggart. It has branch offices in Philadelphia and Bill's hometown of Overland Park, a suburb of Kansas City.

Besides echoing the name of a certain famous movie 'droid, E2B2 gets its handle from a foreshortening of its official name: the Electronic Environmental Bulletin Board (" 'E' twice, 'B' twice," Bill says).

It operates as a for-profit service, with a rate structure that covers ranges from individual to group memberships. You can try it out for free for up to an hour, but after that, you're asked to join.

Bill says the board began about a year ago, after he was approached by his mother's company to set up the service. Up until that point he had been working as a programmer for a large financial services company — a job he still holds — but had no experience with BBSs.

Researching the ins and outs of the BBS world took about a year, Bill says. He says he chose eSoft's TBBS program for its "reliability, configurability and security."

Security is not an overriding issue, Bill says, but eSoft's multiple security levels provide peace of mind against unauthorized forays by dedicated hackers.

"I've never had it happen, but if someone could drop to DOS, they could have lots of fun," he says.

When it started, the board was limited to one phone line, Bill says. Over time that has grown to four lines, feeding into a single 486-66 PC outfitted with a 1.2 gigabyte hard drive. He says there are plans to expand to 96 lines, although no timetable for that is in place yet.

Another addition planned for the board is the installation of IPAD, eSoft's Interment protocol software, Bill says. That move depends on eSoft releasing the software; when it happens, Bill says he hopes to open up E2B2's files to the world via telnet. In addition, there will be FTP, SLIP/PPP, and World Wide Web access available, he says.

Bill says he's assembled his file database from government sources and from member uploads. Many of the files have been gleaned from the Internet, having originated from such government data wellsprings as the Environmental Protection Agency, the White House and the Federal Register.

There are a handful of environmentally oriented newsgroups as well.

CONTINUES...

As so often happens on Usenet, these groups tend to pursue their chosen topics into some pretty arcane territory. One group in particular sported 61 postings, constituting a running dialogue on the possible contamination of Great Britain from platinum ejected by catalytic converters.

The board also contains databases addressing specific concerns within the environmental movement. One, called the Watershed Information Resource System (or WIRS, for short) holds over 4,000 text files devoted to wetlands and other water-related environmental issues.

Bill says he hopes eventually to set aside areas of E2B2 as "mini-BBSs" run by some of the organizations now represented there. He says the ultimate goal is to make the board a global forum for environmentalists.

"Our society is quickly becoming a global environment. We think it is important to provide all of the environmental information that is available for all to see and respond to," he says. "And with our anticipated move to the Internet, folks from all over the world will be able to come to Kansas City, see E2B2 first hand, and it would be nice if their information was presented here also."

Starbase International BBS

Sysop: Dave Tracewell
Location: Lodi, CA
BBS Main Access Number: 209.339.0220
Voice Line: 209.367.0750
Modems Supported: Up to 28.8
BBS Software: Wildcat! 4.01

If you tend to deep read things, you might well drive yourself batty trying to find the link between Boy Scouts, astronomy and genealogy. For Dave Tracewell, the connection's obvious: those are just the things he's interested in. And what else should a board be?

Dave started his BBS, Starbase International, back in 1988, mainly as an attempt to bring the scouting movement into the online world.

"Boy Scouting is changing like the rest of the youth programs to meet the needs of today's youth," says Dave, a 20-year scouting veteran whose son Jason received his Eagle Scout badge in 1992. "We have to keep up with the technology that's out there. We're competing not only with basketball and softball, but also with Nintendo and Sega for the youth aged 11 to 17. In order for us to compete in that arena, we have to have something boys like. And computers are obviously becoming popular."

From those beginnings, the board has evolved into what Dave claims is the largest scouting board in the world, and the nexus for a nationwide scouting web which he runs.

He has more competition now than when he started. Back in 1988, he says, there was one other scouting BBS, operating from San Jose, CA. Now there are 200 worldwide. Dave says he now has 1,000 registered users spread among 11 countries. The genealogy and astronomy areas sort of crept in as the board grew and began taking on more aspects of Dave's personality. An astronomy minor at San Jose State (his major was business), Dave used to run astronomy lectures at a local park. Dave also calls himself his family's "genealogist," and maintains on his system a database of 100 family trees that stretch back to the 1600s.

Lately, the board has taken on even more personalities. Dave says he's installed doors leading to listing services for central California real estate, and the board has become a semi-official resource for information on the municipal government of the town of Lodi.

Dave says he runs his system from a 486 PC with file areas split between a pair of 540MB hard drives and a pair of CD-ROMs. There are two phone lines leading in and he says he plans to eventually install an ISDN line, which would boost his data rates to 112 Kbps from 28.8.

Dave says Wildcat is well-suited to the many demands he places on it, and the ample technical help sitting a phone call away provides a distinct advantage over the Opus shareware he used for the first five years of his board's life.

"Even though there are lots of Opus boards out there, they just don't have the support a professional BBS has," Dave says.

The board is organized into 20 scouting conferences, 12 realty conferences, and seven genealogy conferences, Dave says. In addition, there are Usenet newsgroups dealing with society, the Civil War, telecommunications and, of course, scouting.

Dave says he started his scouting network, Scout Net, in a partnership with sysops in Switzerland and the Netherlands last December. Members upload their files to him, he says, and he distributes them to 15 regional scouting hubs in North America and several more overseas.

The files are typically blueprints for scouting activities of all shapes and sizes. If members want to know how to stage a court of honor, a ceremony during which scouting awards are handed out to meritorious scouts, they can download a text file describing the event from the Net. The same goes for a camporee, a program of games and competitions that can involve as many as 100 scouts.

There are also 2,000 GIFs, TIFFs and WPGs of the myriad badges and icons used in scouting available for troops to download, Dave says.

In the genealogy areas, the board's family trees are open for callers who want to research their family history and the way it intertwines with the history of other families, Dave says.

"Say, if somebody in my family had married someone with the name of Bonnifield," Dave says. "Well, one of the Tracewells back in my line married into the Dorcas. That happened to be a general during the Civil War. Going back, we found they had seven children. Someone else in the Bonnifield family might be one of the seven children. It's really fascinating to get into this stuff."

The astronomy areas contain mostly programs for tracking stars and planets, as well as text listings of BBS programs around the country. One thing they don't have are Space Shuttle shots and the breathtaking

Hubble Space Telescope images available on many Web sites.

"I don't have the cash to do that," Dave says.

Despite the diversity built into Starbase International, Dave says he's careful to screen out some of the spicier Usenet newsgroups and other features that populate the online world's thriving counter-culture. The board, he insists, is meant to be a family board.

"Its a family bulletin board you wouldn't mind your 13-year-old daughter going onto and getting into," he says.

Cult of the Tentacle

Sysop: Mike Zier
Location: Smallwood, NY
BBS Main Access Number: 914.583.6237
BBS Software: RemoteAccess 2.02
Modems Supported: Up to 28.8

The tentacle of the title belongs to a beast with which a player has to tangle in the first of the Maniac Mansion series of computer games.

That should give you some idea of what this board is all about.

Mike Zier, the 17-year-old sysop of the Tentacle, as the board is known colloquially, first got hooked by the gaming bug at the age of 11 and has spent the intervening years hatching new and devious schemes to beat them.

The board's got loads of files — over 700MB worth, plus an online CDROM — devoted to games. But if you ask, the first thing Mike will tell you about is not a game at all. Rather, it's a database of ways to cheat at them.

Called, appropriately enough, Cheat, the file contains advice on how to find shortcuts in over 260 games, Mike says. He's been collecting the cheats for over a year, he says, and has just uploaded version 21.5 of the program.

Mike says he has cheats for games sold by most of the big manufacturers, including Apogee, Sierra and Maxis.

"These are codes that they put in for beta testing purposes, or sometimes they're put in as neat things to find," he says.

A cheat for the phenomenally successful walk-through adventure Doom, for example, shifts the player into God mode, so that his character is impervious to bullets. Another cheat allows you to conjure up cash to use in SimCity Classic.

"If you hold down the shift key and type 'fund,' you get $10,000," Mike says. "But if you do it too many times, it will cause an earthquake, even if the disasters are disabled. If you're going to do it, do it before you build. Then do it 15 million times."

Aside from the cheats, the Tentacle also has the games themselves — or at least the shareware versions, culled from various distribution networks. Mike used to offer them from his high school's BBS, for which he is also the sysop, but about a year ago he moved the operation to his home 486.

The Tentacle has about 380 registered users, Mikes says, but Cheat has been downloaded hundreds of times. Mike says callers have logged on from as far away as Venezuela and Australia to seek the answers offered by Cheat.

Access to the Tentacle is free, but new users are restricted to 45 minutes on the board. One way to gain more time online is to send Mike a picture of yourself, which he then uploads.

"Call it strange," he says, "but when I started, I wanted to see what people look like. I wanted to see the face behind the name."

Only about ten users have taken the plunge, Mike says. The pictures submitted tend to be rather staid headshots.

"There are no real strange pictures," he says. "But then again, I scan them and put them online. And you wouldn't want to be seen doing something strange there, would you?"

Steve Janas is editor and co-founder of Nexus Six *magazine, the journal of gutter-tech. He welcomes news of new and noteworthy boards. He can be contacted at janas@aol.com.*

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BBS

BY MICHAEL A. KUYKENDALL

BURNOUT

How to deal with it, not die from it

Recently two fellow Mac sysops here in Atlanta bid farewell to their BBSs. They decided the boards were taking too much of their time, so they closed them down for good.

One wanted more time for school and his girlfriend. The other was in the process of buying a house, doing a lot of freelance work, etc. — nothing unusual, just the everyday taxes on time. And though I understand their motives, this does highlight a serious problem facing many sysops, and begs the question: How does one deal with the stress of running a BBS, and the dreaded "sysop burnout"?

One method I suggest is trying to get together with other sysops. Many towns already have groups of this kind. Here in Atlanta, for instance, we have the OAS (Online Atlanta Society) and MOSA (Macintosh Online Society of Atlanta). While the OAS tends to lean more toward the "PC heads," those running DOS or Windows boards, you can still learn a lot from these kinds of sysops.

Each of us has to deal with problem callers, promoting our boards, working on interconnectivity issues. But it'll do you no good to discuss these things with sysops out only for themselves, their boards (as some are), or a quick buck, so seek out sysops who've been around a couple of years making an honest go of it.

Find out what they do to promote their boards, how they deal with the stress, problem users, etc. They can also help give you ideas about features for your board, where to get supplies, Internet providers, and more — a great big brotherhood of sysops, J. Pierpont Finch!

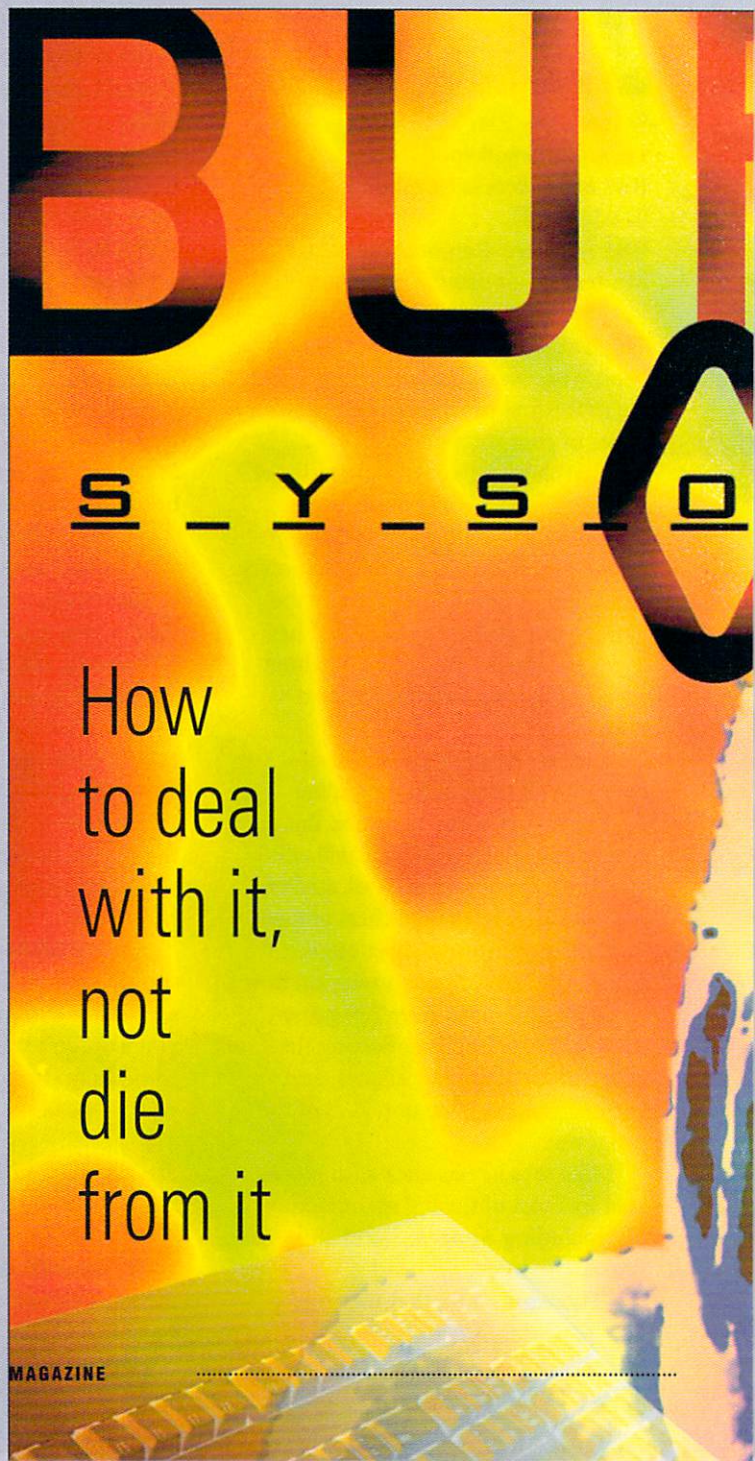
Another way to re-energize is to visit a local user group (I know I push them a lot, but they're a great source of info). The user group meetings give you a chance to promote your board, maybe meet some of the users of your board in person, and an opportunity to show off your expertise with modems and telecommunications. Playing guru makes you feel good, and helps remind us all why we got into BBSing in the first place.

It also gives you a chance to get some honest feedback about or solicit ideas for your board.

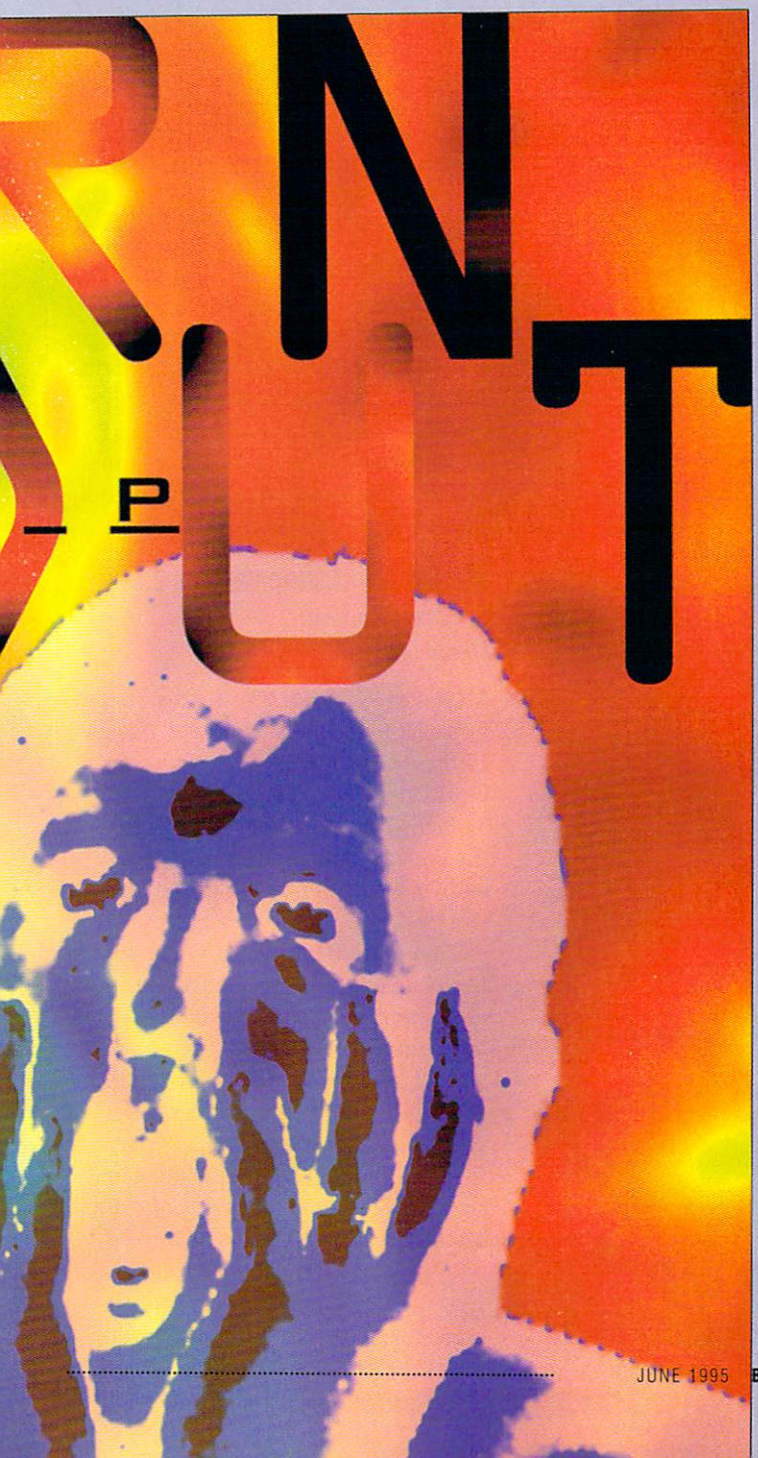
If you are hooked into Fidonet, you can go to one of their meetings for sysops as well. This is where you'll meet people who are even bigger tech-heads than you (making you feel pretty cool in comparison). Some of these people know more about telecommunications than should be allowed, but if you have a tough technical problem holding you back, this is a great forum to get help in solving it.

Other burnout suppressors include going to trade shows or computer swap meets.

Make up some business cards, pass them out to users, dealers — promote your board. You can talk to the dealers about selling equipment through your board, getting discounts on hardware or software, or maybe make them aware of your system's existence so they can recommend you to some of their customers.



The passing out of business cards and talking to dealers will remind you that even a single- or two-line BBS should be treated like a business. If you just run your board as a hobby or as a community service, it still never hurts to promote and find new sources for equipment. I enjoy going to the bigger shows, like COMDEX, as well. It's here I find out about some of the newer advances in Mac technology, as well as get ideas for things to improve my board.



TIM ENGLE, EYES RIGHT DESIGN

Eight days a week

Again, the biggest gripe most sysops have about running their board is the time it demands. The startup period of a new board is always going to take some serious time to get up and running, so the best thing you can do there is plan way in advance on what you want your board's emphasis to be, and design your system out on paper before you even launch your host software. After you get your board up and running, set up a schedule for the different activities that you have to do for your board, such as purging old users or messages, and such — this will help in budgeting the time you have.

Many packages these days have most of that type of activity automated. But there are still some things you have to do yourself, such as answering email. Set up a certain time each night that you answer mail and do your administration. Stick to that schedule! Save your bigger tasks for the weekend, such as designing new areas of the board. Or better yet, maybe spend 10 to 15 minutes a day thinking about ways to improve your board so you don't have as much to do on the weekends.

There are also some things you can do to help make your BBS and Mac more stable (and less of a time-strain).

Every two days or so, you need to rebuild your desktop by rebooting your Mac with the command and option keys held down. This will speed up your system by helping the Finder keep track of files on your system. Also, each month you'll need to defragment and optimize your hard drive. When the drive writes a file, it looks for the first available block of free space, and if there's not enough room there, it scans the drive for the next available block and writes the rest of the file there.

With files and messages being added and deleted all the time, files can become highly fragmented. I suggest you use either Norton Utilities or MacTools Pro, both excellent packages for the task at hand.

The important thing to remember is that even though you love your BBS and working with callers, you need to set your schedule so that you have a chance to spend time with your wife, husband, girlfriend, boyfriend, kids, or friends. Many sysops have their spouses help them with their boards, or even work trade shows together. (I know my wife enjoys going to the shows and getting free T-shirts — the ultimate freebie for us computer geeks — or receiving those nice umbrellas at COMDEX.)

The main thing is to avoid getting all wrapped up in the stresses of running a board, and instead just have fun with it.

If you have any anecdotes or stories on how you deal with sysop burnout, please send them to the email address listed below and I'll share them in a future column. Until then, keep the faith.

Michael A. Kuykendall can be reached through the Online Macintosh Users' Group BBS, Macintosh Online, at 404.988.9904, or at andykirk@aol.com.

Dragons + Math = Fun

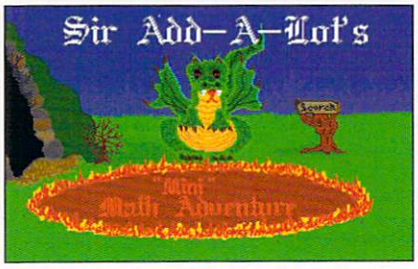
Summing up a cool learning game; go to the next level of 'breakout'

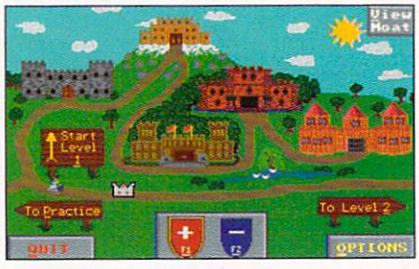
Sir Addalot's Mini Math Adventure

ADDALOT.ZIP
by Landmark Solutions

Here's a great game to help your children, brothers or sisters learn math. The object is simple—beat the dragon named Scorch at his own game, a contest known as "Scorch's Castle Math."

Once the program is loaded, the player/student must choose one of four difficulty levels, then select the speed at which the game moves along (these settings allow players to customize the game to suit their abilities). After speed and difficulty is selected, you are then shown a map of Scorch's kingdom. From here you select level 1 or 2, or the practice field. Now it's on to one of the castles to begin your adventure.





Players are presented with a grid containing numbers and equations. They must move Sir Addalot to an equation, click the mouse, then move on to the answer and click again—all the time avoiding Scorch's fireballs. When they're finished with that castle, players can move on to the next for more problems. And once a level is finished, they're rewarded with plants, fish or sea creatures to fill the moat.

This is an interesting and imaginative way to practice math. The program is loaded with colorful graphics and lots of sound effects, and should keep the young one's attention for more than a few minutes.

A 386 or higher is recommended and a mouse makes the play much easier, though keyboard control is fine. A registration fee of $19.95 brings 15 more castles, extra creatures for the moat, the "Story of Addalot" activity book, and the added ability to do multiplication and division (the shareware version only does addition and subtraction).

Modem Workshop version 2.0

MODWKS20.ZIP
by Steven Woas

MODEM WORKSHOP is a disk-based book created with the popular WRITERS DREAM program. Not another basic "How to get online" text file, MODEM WORKSHOP is a complete tutorial on modems, how they work, and what to do once you do get one working.

The tutorial begins with the basics like choosing a modem, selecting and determining COM ports and picking the right software. It then goes on to detail how to hook up to a BBS and the best ways to find your way around when you get there. MW also delves into the finer points of uploading and downloading, email, using commercial services, and even the Internet.

At first blush this might seem like reading for the neophyte, but it's so loaded with information that it will

probably prove helpful to just about anyone.

In fact this could well serve as a complete course on modems and modeming, at user group meetings or in the classroom. Check it out. Registration is $19.95.

Digital Audio Executable ver. 1.0

DAEXE10.ZIP
by Tag Software

DAEXE is a nifty little program that will take a host of different sound files and turn them into executable, self-playing sound clips.

Working with .VOC, .WAV, .SND, .AU, .IFF, .DAS, and raw sound files, converted sounds can then be played with Sound Blaster, Adlibs, Disney Sound Source, or the basic PC speaker by running the file as an ordinary executable.

To use DAEXE, just type DAEXE FILENAME.EXT. The resulting playable file will have the same name as the original, but with an .EXE extension. Wildcards are accepted so you can convert a whole directory at once.

Frankly, I can't think of many reasons why you would want self-playing sound files, but I'm sure there are a few practical applications out there, like using them in batch files such as your AUTOEXEC.BAT. Or maybe you've got a .WAV file and no Windows? Either way, DAEXE (though nothing to sound off about) is fun to toy with.

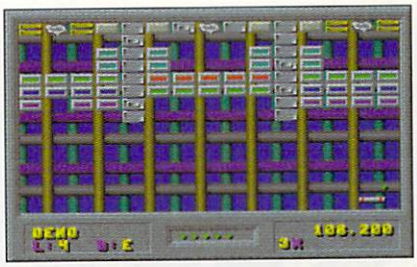
Gemstones III

GEMS311.ZIP
by William D. Rinehart

So you think you've had enough of the breakout games? I urge you to take a look at just one more before dismissing them all for the last time. You'll have to agree this one is among the best of the breed.

GEMS3 is like all the others in that it's plenty easy to play—move your paddle with the mouse or keyboard and try to eliminate all the blocks (gemstones) in each level (ZZZ).

But in GEMS3 there are several different types of gems that, when struck,



will activate all kinds of different things—more balls, for example, faster or slower balls, transporters, and more. The documentation tells you what each one will do, but playing a few rounds is the quickest way to learn.

Another things that makes GEMS3 different from other breakout games is the "Random Level Concept." What that means is there isn't a set pattern to the way the levels follow one another. So each game is different, and you never know what level will be next.

Great graphics and sound effects also help make this game a must to take a look at. Registration is $19.95. GEMS3 requires a VGA monitor.

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A centralized, PC-based system, Wildcat! lets callers send, receive and view messages and files, access external applications and chat 24 hours a day. Wildcat! 4 BBS software is available in four configurations, from single-line up to 250 total connections. So whether you're a home office-based entrepreneur with a single modem or a corporate system administrator running a multi-line customer support hotline, there's a Wildcat! version to fit your needs.

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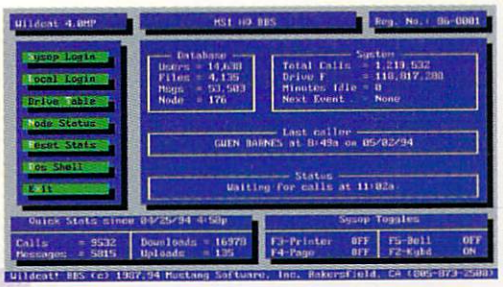

"If you're looking to set up your own electronic bulletin board service (BBS), look no further than Mustang Software's new Wildcat! BBS Suite, version 4.0."

- Padraic Boyle, PC Magazine

"Mustang deserves credit for creating a superb successor to its already impressive BBS program."

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Mustang Software also offers powerful collections of add-on utilities. You'll enjoy wcPRO's powerful user, message and file database maintenance capabilities, including wcFAX, a fax-on-demand processor that lets callers request data and receive literature via fax. Tap into the Internet and Usenet Newsgroups with wcGATE, a sophisticated Internet/MHS messaging gateway. wcCODE, a custom online development engine, helps the sysop to quickly develop custom applications or change Wildcat's operation. BASIC-like syntax combined with an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) make it easy to use more than 200 built-in functions.

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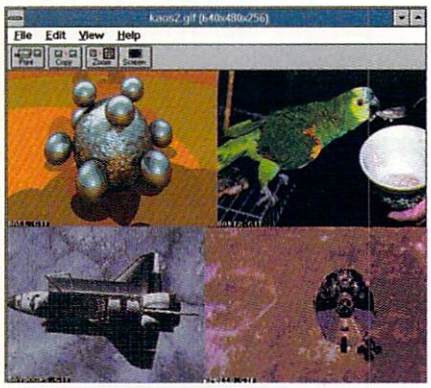
Mustang Software can help you get online faster with our special CD-ROM offer. This FREE limited-edition CD-ROM contains Wildcat! utilities plus popular shareware programs that you can make available to your callers, all of which can give you a jump start to the world of online communications. No other BBS software manufacturer makes it this easy for you. Get started today!



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BY GAELYNE R. MORANEC

Catching Up

New BBSs to scout, software ownership changes, hardware announcements, new programs to check out, Net mailing lists, and a term program gets its original programmer back at the helm

Loadstar BBS

318.425.4382, 300-2400 baud
C= C/G, ANSI, ASCII

Loadstar, the disk magazine, is now providing a support BBS for callers.

Running on a Commodore 64, RAMLink and hard drive using Image v1.2 software, the BBS offers networked mail with other U.B.A.N. (United BBS Alliance Network) systems, as well as local mail. The download areas include Loadstar disk samplers and other Commodore files, many of which are compressed using the new CKit 94 compression utilities (the file dissolver is available for download here). Also, keep an eye out for software and magazine specials — they are announced on the BBS's news system.

Phoenix Network

612.537.5077 (voice support)
612.537.5147, 9600 baud
612.537.0199, 300-2400 baud
ANSI or ASCII

The Phoenix Network, an all-platform system that's become a refuge for former Q-Link users, has undergone some financial problems, bringing an end to their use of SprintNet lines and

the 1-800 voice support line.

But games, download libraries, Internet email and Usenet groups are available here. The pricing structure is currently undergoing change, too, and at press time was $20 a month for unlimited usage. And if a user doesn't call during a particular month? No charge.

FD4000 Drives — Get 'Em While You Can

Recently Creative Micro Designs' Doug Cotton posted a message in the CBM Fidonet echo announcing CMD's FD4000 drives were unavailable, explaining that the manufacturers of the mechanism used in the drive had discontinued their production. Murphy's Law was in full force, as not long after the message was sent out, CMD found a cache of the mechanisms in its storerooms.

As it stands, the drives are currently available, but once the mechanism supply runs out, the FD4000 will be done, gone, finished. The FD2000 drive, which uses 3.5-inch DD and HD disks will continue to be produced, however. It's recommended that those who own or purchase the FD4000 drives stock up on the 3.5-inch ED (Enhanced Density) disks this drive uses. The FD4000 will also use DD or HD disks, but is most noted for it's ability to use the ED (3.2MB) disks.

CMD also announced price reductions on its HD hard drive series, RAMLinks, and a telecommunications package which includes a Swiftlink cartridge and Boca 144EW (14.4k) modem.

Desterm

C128 Term Program
Shareware: $25.00
Matthew Desmond
Email: mdesmond@can4.rcl.ray.com

Matt Desmond has taken Desterm back (from the programmer who had taken over for him) and says he will soon begin work on adding RTS/CTS flow control for high speed modemers in his shareware term program for C128 users. The new version is not yet available, but those who wish to try out Matt's original version 2.0 can look for DES200-1.SFX (thru -4.SFX). Desmond says not to ask him for ZModem (he has no plans to write any more protocols) or ANSI music, but is open to other suggestions.

Dialogue128 Term Extension Programs Announced

Henry Sopko, who last year introduced a small program to blank the screen when using Dialogue128, has recently come out with three more extension programs. SLIDER.EXT is a game that you can play while downloading or uploading, or while waiting for your favorite BBS to clear its lines.

It's a "put the numbers in order" game with a display that can be made inactive without erasing the game from memory.

Sopko found that Dialogue128 SL (Swiftlink) users of his screen blanker and slider game had garbage appearing on the screen when used above 4800 baud, so released SLIDER SL.EXT and BLANK-IT SL.EXT to solve the problem. These files should be on most BBSs that support Commodore users, and on the online services.

Interface!

C128 Program,
Shareware: $10
Lee Cooper
Fidonet: 1:3613/11

Interface! is a program that acts as bridge between the QWKRR128 v4.3x offline mail reader and the software used to unpack QWK mail packets. Interface! allows users who have more than one registered version of QWKRR to have all programs on the same directory. For those who have more than one BBS they read mail from, Interface! gives more flexibility over some of the aspects of offline mail reading.

The program "drives" the currently available programs to unpack the mail (NZP12813.SFX, CSX01.SDA) and lets the user predefine the disk drives where the mail can be accessed (both unpacking and reading) for up to ten different <BBSID>.QWK packets. The user can define different defaults such as intros, taglines and macros for each mail packet.

Interface! can be used for both unpacking mail or reading mail that's been previously accessed. Look for 1INTERF.SFX and 2INTERF.SFX (or possibly INTERF1.SFX and INTERF2.SFX).

C*Base 64 BBS Software Under New Ownership

C*Base 64 v3.x
Jerome P. Yoner
#4-361 Maryland Ave
Brandon, MB
R7A 6R6 Canada

Jerome P. Yoner, the person behind Phantom Software, has added C*Base 64 BBS to his list of software he supports. An established programmer, Yoner runs his Talisman BBS with C*Base v3.2 and over 450MB of files for downloading, and has just recently taken the helm from C*Base's original author, Gunther Bierznieks.

Currently, Yoner is working on updating the BBS's network module to reduce long distance costs for C*Base sysops. He stated that any person who purchased C*Base v3.x will receive full support from him and a re-registration fee will not be required. The full BBS package, including BBS, Tech Guide, special compiler, network module and all the online games he has available goes for $65 U.S.

Commodore Mailing Lists on the Net

Commodore users with Internet email can subscribe to mailing lists and receive news, information and all kinds of support.

Although not strictly Commodore related, C/PM is just one of the C128's operating systems. For those interested in receiving the C/PM list, write to "listserv@vm.its.rpi.edu" and leave the subject field blank. Type the following in the message: "subscribe cpm-l firstname lastname".

Most mailing lists have two addresses: one which you use to subscribe to mail and one to use when sending a reply or message to all users on the list. To find out more about other things you can do and access through any list you join, try sending a message to the administration address with the word "help" as the message.

Also, be sure to save the message you receive once you join a mailing list. This tells you how to unsubscribe from the list if it grows old in your mailbox

CONTINUES ...

(many people forget to save this information and then have a hard time unsubscribing — don't make this mistake). Other lists include:

CBM-UNIX, a discussion group concerning alternative operating systems for the Commodore that have a UNIX look and feel, such as ACE.

Admin address: mailserv@lists.funet.fi

Body of message:
subscribe cbm-unix firstname lastname

Send mail to the list at this address:
cbm-unix@lists.funet.fi

OLD-CBM is a list concerning older Commodore equipment such as PETs, the VIC-20, Plus 4 and C16.

Admin address:
mailserv@lists.funet.fi

Body of message:
subscribe old-cbm firstname lastname

C64-HACKERS concerns programming issues dealing with topics such as timing and special opcodes used in programs.

Admin address:
mailserv@lists.funet.fi

Body of message:
subscribe c64-hackers firstname lastname

Mail list address:
c64-hackers@lists.funet.fi

COMMODOR is for all Commodore 8-bit computer conversations. The list is supposed to mirror the discussions on the comp.sys.cbm newsgroup, but it doesn't always do so.

Admin address:
listserv@ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu

Body of message:
subscribe commodor firstname lastname

Mail list address:
commodor@ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu

C65LIST Yes, there really WAS a C65 computer, though it was never put on the market. Still, a few thousand people were able to buy the prototypes when Commodore started dumping their stockpiled equipment. This list is for the owners of such systems, and there are files available through this list to C65 owners.

Admin address:
C65list-request@robin.dce.vic.gov.au

Subject (NOT body of the message):
subscribe

Mail list address:
c65list#robin.dce.vic.gov.au or
c65@dce.vic.gove.au.

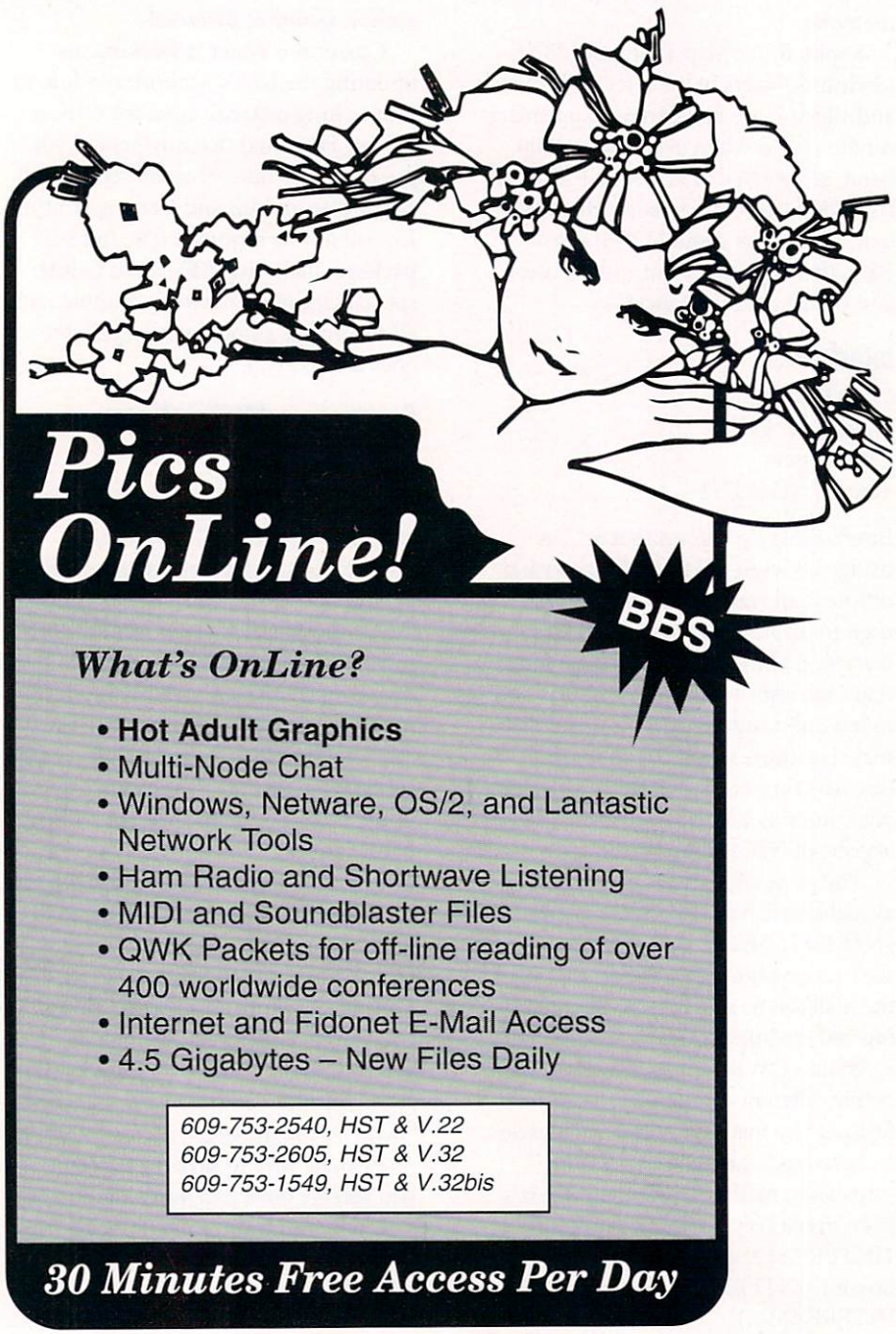
C=HACKING is a Commodore online magazine, put together by Craig Taylor. By subscribing to the mailing list, you can automatically receive the latest copy of the magazine as it is published.

Admin address:
duck@pembvax1.pembroke.edu

Subject:
MAILSERV

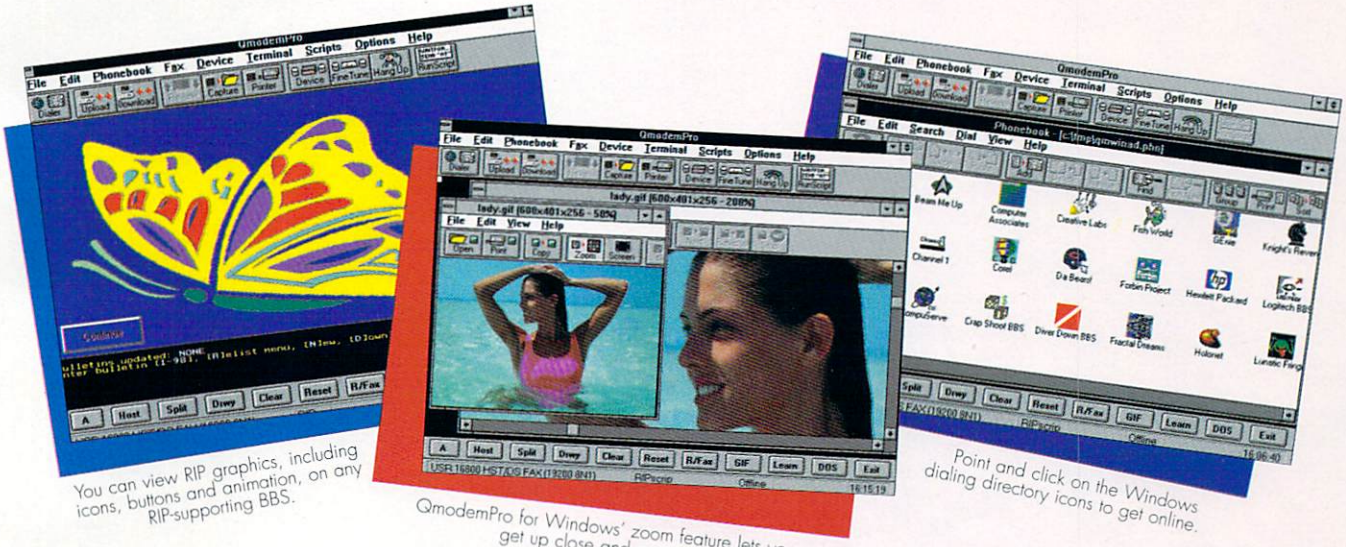
Message body:
subscribe

Gaelyne Moranec is a freelance writer and co-sysop on Ancient Heart BBS. She can usually be found in the Fidonet CBM echo. Comments or suggestions can be sent to 3:800/809.128; Internet: gaelyne.moranec@aftrs.edu.au, or sent in care of BBS Magazine.



WARNING!

This Product Contains Material Of An Extremely Graphic Nature.

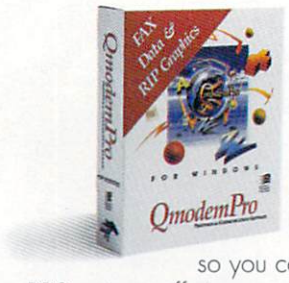


You can view RIP graphics, including icons, buttons and animation, on any RIP-supporting BBS.

QmodemPro for Windows' zoom feature lets you get up close and personal.

Point and click on the Windows dialing directory icons to get online.

QmodemPro for Windows delivers more advanced graphic features than any other communications software.



When it comes to graphics, nobody does it better than Mustang Software.

Our award-winning QmodemPro for Windows communications software has all the cool graphics features you've been looking for. It's "RIP" ready, so you can plug into the thousands of BBS systems offering graphics and full mouse support online.

QmodemPro for Windows was the first commercially available product in the industry to support RIPscrip. QmodemPro for Windows also has a built-in GIF viewer that lets you view GIF graphics files as you download them. You can even ZOOM in for details. And QmodemPro has Windows icons for dialing directories, a true Windows phonebook. All you have to do to get online is double click on an icon.

No other communications software delivers graphic features like QmodemPro for Windows.

Recommended by Sysops everywhere.

But graphics aren't the only reason Sysops around the world recommend QmodemPro for Windows. They like it because it's powerful and easy to use, and can launch both data and fax calls. What they like most, though, is the fact that QmodemPro for Windows is packed with performance features that have been specifically requested by BBS callers.

At Mustang Software, we listen to our customers. And build their valuable comments into our products. All the outstanding features in QmodemPro for Windows today came from callers just like you.

If you're looking for graphic features, pay attention to the warning. QmodemPro for Windows by Mustang Software.

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BY MODEM MAGE

Against the Clock

The Mage lines 'em up for a contest of 0 to 28.8

Part of the fun of being a Mage is the ability to travel both forward and backward in time. I mention this because while I'll mainly look at modem horsepower and throughput this month, I'd also like to re-visit a previous article where I probed connectivity and its variables.

Modem code has gone through several revisions and I feel compelled to give a second look at basic connectivity figures. Let's take a look at some real bit crunching, baud-breaking tests and see which performers shine and which trail behind.

The tests, as detailed below, were performed under two methods. One was a real-world shake-down. To simulate Joe User I called my local telco, ordered a new telephone line, ("yes operator, billed to Modem Mage") and jacked in.

I also tested under a controlled environment using an LS-100 line simulator set to an ideal line level. Under these conditions I tossed each modem into the grinder and waited to see what came out. The net results are enlightening.

These new connectivity tests make it quite apparent that folks in dark corners of programming labs are catching on, but many are still more in the dark than they should be.

The modems tested are representative of what you may find on shelves today, and also reflect what mail to the Modem Mage indicates are the current modems of choice for sysops and other information providers. Modems were tested in the most scientific order possible...randomly. Which is also the order in which they appear below.

Each modem was subjected to at least 900 connection attempts (good thing I have all of time at my disposal), some longer if I fell asleep at the test bench.

What this all boils down to is a few interesting trends, the result of which places the Microcoms and the USRs as real contenders for the Mage's "Modems of Choice." Boca, Supra and Hayes all come close, but fall short in connectivity and especially in protocol negotiation.

(For this test I disqualified any non-28.8K capable modems. I used two of the ITU-accepted file transfer test files — 5X16.TST is a highly compressible file and shows the compression capabilities and real horsepower of the modem; 4X04.TST is a highly compressed file and should give you a feel

CONTINUES...

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

VENDOR/ PRODUCT	14.4K V.32bis INTERNAL	14.4K V.32bis EXTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC, V.34 INTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC V.34 EXTERNAL
AT&T Paradyne	3721-B1-001* $160	3710-A1-201* $180 PC; $190 Mac	N/A	N/A
CPI/ ViVa	ViVa 14.4 $180	ViVa 14.4 $196	N/A	N/A
Hayes Corp	Optima 144B* $179	Ultra 144 $249	N/A	Optima 288+FAX v.FC 28.8k $288
		Optima 144+FAX* $179 PC; $179 Mac		
Intel	SatisFax/400 $249	14.4 EX $269	N/A	N/A
	Faxmodem 144i $99	SatisFAX/400e* $245		
		Faxmodem 144e $109		
Microcom	N/A	N/A	N/A	DeskPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
				TravelPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
MultiTech	MT1432BC $400	MT1432BA* $400	N/A	N/A
	MT1432ES $400 MCA	MT1432MU* $300		
		MT1432BL* $450		
		MT1432PCS $575		
Practical Peripherals	N/A	PM14400FXSA* $215	N/A	N/A
		PM14400FXMT* $155		
Supra Corp	SupraFAXModem* $129	SupraFAXModem* $149	N/A	Supra V.FC 28k $169
USRobotics	N/A	N/A	N/A	HST V.Everything V.34, VFC, FAX* $249
Ven-Tel	PCM144FAX* $195	EC144FAX* $215	N/A	N/A
	PCMV.32bis* $480	ECV.32bis* $525		
	MCM144FAX* $380 MCA	RMV.32bis II* $425		
Zoom Telephonics	VFP V.32Bis* $99	VFX V.32Bis* $119 PC; $130 Mac	VFP V.FC 24k $99	VFX V.FC 24k $119 PC; $130 Mac
			VFP V.FC 28.8k $139	VFX V.FC 28.8k $159 PC; $170 Mac
ZyXEL	U-1496B* 16.8K $299	U-1496E* 16.8K $299	N/A	U-1496E* v.32terbo 16.8K $299
	U-1496B+* 19.2K $389			

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

Notes on Table I:

1. All internal modems are assumed to be PC-AT ISA bus unless otherwise noted. Some manufacturers do not offer internals; be careful when ordering.
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, Ttypically $5 - $15 U.S. dollars.
4. V.34 is International (ITU-T) standard for 28.8K. This is not the same as V.FAST (generic name) or V.FC (Rockwell based 28.8K standard).

for how a typical ZIP/ARJ type file would transmit.)

These tests were all done at the highest speed I could get from a real-world (live telco) connect, and was averaged out over a minimum of 10 such file transfers. Throughput figures were rounded to nearest 50. All figures are representative of Characters-Per-Second (CPS).

Modem	5X16	4X04
Boca V34	8100	2700
Supra V34	8200	2750
Microcom ES VFC	8550	2825
USR Sportster V34	8200	2800
Microcom LCD VFC	8250	2750
USR Courier V34	8750	2850
Hayes Optima V34	8700	2850

When we compare these results with the above connectivity figures, we paint a much clearer picture for modems of choice. There are clearly some performance issues to analyze. Balance between horsepower and modem smarts (connectivity) is crucial, especially for the sysop.

Are you willing to sacrifice performance and/or connectivity for price? Is cost no issue when compared to reliability? Next month we'll take a look at some other key issues to consider as a BBS sysop or information provider. As you read this, the Mage is becoming a regular on the Online Support offerings from Hayes, USRobotics, BOCA, Supra and Microcom. I'm also running the stop-watch on their customer support lines. The results are coming next month.

Sysop/Provider programs

I've included a couple of basic charts to help those who believe a picture (well, chart) is worth a page or two of rambling text.

The minimum performance level is v.32bis (14,400 bps), but will soon be displaced by V.34. All modems also must have v.42bis for error correction and data compression to make this list. The rightmost column of Table I shows all modems faster than 14400 bps that support at least v.32bis standards.

I recommend only V.34 for sysops. End-users can economically afford to now live by the same standards. The

Modem	Good	None	Lost	SPEED 28800	26400	21600	14400	Other	PROT LAPM	MNP	NONE
Boca V34	99.35	0.1	0.55	99.2	0	0.8	0	0	94	3	3
Supra V34	99.9	0.1	0	99.3	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	100
Microcom ES Deskport VFC	97.1	2.9	0	99.4	0	0	0.6	0	100	0	0
US Robotics Sportster V34	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	0	0
Microcom LCD Deskport VFC	99.8	0.2	0	97.5	0	0	2.5	0	99.9	0	0.1
US Robotics Courier V.34	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	0	0
Hayes Accura	100	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	98	0	2
PPI LCD 144	99.2	0.8	0	0	0	0	98.4	0.8	94.9	0	5.1
Hayes Optima V.34	96.5	3.5	0	96.8	3.2	0	0	0	95.3	3.3	1.4

Modem modem tested
Good CD still up after 15 seconds
None No CONNECT message in 45 seconds
Lost CD lost within 15 seconds of connect
Speed percentage of connects at the indicated rate
Prot percentage of connects which negotiated at the indicated protocol
All numbers are representative of a percentage.

V.34 ITU-T standard offers 50 percent more throughput than v.32bis, at only minimal cost increases. It also offers a better chance at a high-speed connect (24,000–28,800) than VFC under minimal line conditions. Beware of upgrade plans to v.FAST/v.34 modems; various manufacturer programs vary greatly.

More than a modem

Some vendors offer more than just modems to the sysops joining their program. For example, US Robotics offers substantial discounts off their CommServer 486 LAN product. Other vendors, such as ZyXel, offer big discounts on modem rackmounts. A rackmount reduces the tangle of multiplying power supplies and becomes

CONTINUES ...

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WorldGroup by Galacticomm .... CALL!

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TABLE II — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

VENDOR NAME	CALL THEIR BBS AT THIS NUMBER AND...	...DOWNLOAD THIS FILE.	IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL..	CONTACT VIA EMAIL
AT&T Paradyne	(813) 532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800) 554-4996	t.bradshaw@paradyne.com
CPI/ViVa	(805) 499-9646; (215) 746-9948	CPIA.TXT	(800) 854-7600	
Hayes Corp.	(404) 446-6336; (800) USHAYES	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404) 840-9200	rlacy@hayes.com
Intel	(503) 645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503) 228-9707	
Microcom	(800) 822-8224	SYSOP.TXT	(617) 762-5134	
MultiTech	(612) 785-9875; (800) 392-2432	PRICE.TXT	(612) 785-3500	
Pract. Per.	(805) 496-4445	SYSBBS.TXT	(805) 497-4774	GO PPIFORUM (CompuServe)
Supra Corp.	(503) 967-2444	SYSOP.TXT	(503) 967-2400	supra@supra.com
USRobotics	(708) 982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708) 982-5151 (800) 550-7800	support@usr.com CIS 76711,707
Ven-Tel	(408) 922-0988	SYSDEAL.TXT	(408) 436-7400	
Zoom Teleph.	(617) 423-3733	ZOOMBBS.ZIP	(800) 666-6191 (617) 423-1072	CIS 71333,1527
ZyXEL	(714) 693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714) 693-0804	sales@zyxel.com

economical for sysops planning on larger, multi-line systems.

Buyers' restrictions

If you maintain a system operating 24-hours per day for the last six months, then you're eligible for any of these discounts. Some manufacturers only require that you are currently running a BBS at time of ordering. A few may actually waive the current operating requirement.

Once you receive your modem, you're expected to keep the BBS up and running between six and 12 months (requirements vary). Generally, the modem is yours to do whatever you want with after this period expires. Some manufacturers may ask you to never sell modems purchased on a discount plan. Modem resellers, such as computer stores, are generally excluded from participation in discount plans.

Nearly all of the modem vendors are accepting VISA and MasterCard for orders. Some also accept a cashier's check or money-order for prepay orders. Personal checks often require additional clearing time which just holds up your order. C.O.D. is becoming less common, and is rumored for phase-out by several of the larger players over the next few months.

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

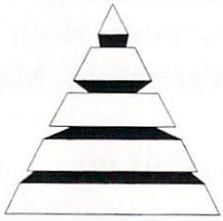
Order processing and availability

Delivery times and schedules vary radically, so your mileage may vary. Many manufacturers are placing orders on hold until they release V.34. Hayes typically shipped in 48 hours, and to the far extreme, US Robotics guarantees a two to six week waiting period.

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

The Modem Mage
ModemMag@ais.net
http://www.cl.ais.net:80/~modemmag/

FrontDoor provides the automated connection to FTSC networks such as FidoNet, bringing the world of network data telecommunications to your door step. Provide the added interest of world wide message and file exchange to your BBS!



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$149
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Why pay $1500/month for X.25 connections from other companies when the same connection costs you about half with us.

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***$935/month**

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INTERNET SOFTWARE
MAJOR TCP/IP

- Telnet, Rlogin, FTP
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- Over 40 BBSes Linked 24 Hours a Day
- Deluxe Bulletin Forum Interface
- Full RIP Support in all Modules
- Constant Upgraded Features FREE
- Standard Forums & E-mail
- File Attachment Supported
- Full Online Configuration
- Uses Standard Galacticomm Actions
- Link via Hubs, Internet or SprintNet
- Over 350 BBSes using WorldLink
- Adds 250-350 Users to your Tele
- Time not used is not LOST

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entertainment collection

dial-out
x.25 software option
fax/online
shopping mall
internet connectivity

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AVAILABLE ADD-ONS FOR WORLDGROUP AND THE MAJOR BBS

Trivia Forum RIP	$ 129.95	BBS Listing	$ 39.95	Major TCP/IP	$ 700.00
Oltima 2000	$ 249.00	Global Actions	$ 39.95	Major Pro	$ 199.00
Jumble Madness	$ 89.95	Match Maker	$ 159.00	VisaMan	$ 149.00
Horse Track RIP	$ 129.95	Online Employment	$ 109.00	Global Power	$ 49.00
BBSopoly RIP	$ 139.95	Happy Birthday	$ 49.00	High Velocity Utilities	$ 100.00
Mouse Trap (Maze)	$ 39.95	Major Agenda	$ 149.00	Major Goose	$ 100.00
Liar Card Game	$ 39.95	Omni-Mail	$ 299.00	Auto Validator	$ 60.00
Hearts Card Game	$ 39.95	BBS Lister w/ MajorNet	$ 69.00	Form Editor	$ 75.00
Pig Dice Game	$ 39.95	ADP Phone Lister	$ 99.00	Menu Magician	$ 100.00
NovaTrek	$ 99.00	City Search	$ 39.00	Metakeys	$ 50.00
Crossroads	$ 250.00	Major Stats	$ 75.00	GalactiBoard (8 port extn'l)	$ 449.95
Global Destruction	$ 125.00	AutoRate	$ 99.00	GalactiBox (16 port intn'l)	$1289.00
Game Connection	$ 239.00	HelpMan	$ 49.00	PC XNet Card (X.25)	$1039.95
Trade Wars 2002	$ 400.00	The Newsroom	$ 80.00	Galacticomm's Intelligent Serial Kit	
Backgammon RIP	$ 99.95	WorldLink Cross-Wordz	$ 49.95	ISK 115K - 16 line	$2250.00
Chess RIP	$ 99.95	WorldLink Jumble Madness	$ 29.95	ISK 115K - 32 line	$3175.00
Othello RIP	$ 99.95	Charge Card Manager	$ 69.95	ISK 115K - 64 line	$4825.00
Checkers RIP	$ 99.95	Major CD	$ 129.00	ISK 115K - 96 line	$6425.00
Tic-Tac-Toe	$ 19.95	Major CD Lan	$ 89.00	ISK 115K - 128 line	$8075.00
Board Package (5 above)	$ 299.95	Major CD & Major CD Lan	$ 199.00	ISK 230K - 16 line	$2195.00
Cross-Wordz RIP	$ 150.00	CD Express	$ 49.95	ISK 230K - 32 line	$3250.00
Yahtzee	$ 19.95	900 Service	FREE	ZyXEL Internal 16.8	$ 259.00
MicroMind	$ 39.95	Chat-on-Demand	$ 89.95	ZyXEL External 16.8	$ 259.00
Instant Lotto	$ 29.95	Remote Console	$ 90.00	Linux Slackware V.2.1	$ 49.95
Video Poker	$ 59.95	AMS DOS Shell	$ 89.00	Dr. Linux Book	$ 39.95
Video Blackjack	$ 69.95	Line Monitor	$ 49.00	Vue-it	$ 99.00
Mega Madness	$ 49.00	EZ Fax	$ 59.00	FT-Fax Protocol	$ 149.00
Card Sharks	$ 69.95	The File Library Extension	$ 149.00	Motorola Routers	CALL
Pulse	$ 69.00	Mountain Mail	$ 149.00	CSU/DSU's	CALL
Log Master	$ 39.95	Real Time Cleanup	$ 149.00	Terminal Servers	CALL

Prices subject to change without notice

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The A-List

If you're a sysop and would like to be considered for the list, contact one of the following sites:

BOBsBBS — 916.929.7511

Livewire/CD SUB — Download CDSUB.ZIP from The Livewire BBS *(BBS Magazine's* support board) at 609.235.5297 and register the CD SUB Door program for a permanent listing.

FTP — Download USPUB103.ZIP from oak.oakland.edu, create USBBS.DAT and send the completed file to BOBsBBS or update@bobsbbs.uucp.netcom.com.

Call 609.953.9110 (voice) for help.

Derived from the USBBSLIST.

LEGEND

BBS TYPE	BAUD	MODULATION	SIZE	NODES	SUBSCRIPTION	INTERNET FEAT.
B	29	D	50+	3	$	3

BBS TYPE
A = Auntie
B = PCBoard
C = Phoenix/Collie/Collosus
D = dBBS
F = Spitfire
G = GAP
H = PC-Host
I = TriBBS
J = SuperBBS
L = Telegard
M = OraComm/Major/Galacticomm
N = Genesis Deluxe
O = Opus/Maximus
P = GT PowerComm
Q = QuickBBS/RemoteAccess
R = RBBS
S = Searchlight
T = TBBS or TCOMM
U = UltraBBS
V = WWIV
W = Wildcat
X = BBS-PC, RyBBS, ROS, Fido, Citadel, Osiris, etc. or custom, unverified or unknown type
Y = T.A.G.
Z = TPBoard

BAUD
0 = 300
1 = 1200
2 = 2400
9 = 9600 or faster

MODULATION TYPE
V = V.32 or V.32bis
U = USRobotics HST
H = Hayes VSM
F = V.Fast, V.34 (1/25/95)
O = Other proprietary method
D = USRobotics Dual Standard (V32 and HST)
B = Hayes Ultra (V32 and VSM)

SIZE
Indicated in 100s of megs.
+ = CD-ROM.

NODES
Number of lines

SUBSCRIPTION
$ = subscription; blank = FREE

INTERNET FEATURES

SERVICES	CODE 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
Mail	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Usenet	XX		XX		XX		XX								
FTP		XXXX				XXXX									
Telnet				XXXXXXXX											

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Must support 2400 bps or greater
100 MB of disk capacity
24hr/7 day service
Sysop must give REAL NAME

201-481-4108 NJ Newark
KA2HHB HAM BBS Ruben Echevarri
Ham radio, UFO, Wildcat! 3rd-party, games, utilities, online ham call lookup, online scanner freq. database.
W 19 V 10+ 1

201-585-0957 NJ Fort Lee
Phantom David Hathaway
Anarchy, the obscure, Fidonet, Freedom Net HUB, TradeWars and other door games, uncensored messaging.
B 29 VO 2 1

201-633-9346 NJ Paterson
First Class Timothy Chin
Fidonet. Over 150 conferences, CD-ROM with over 11,000 files. Wildnet HUB. Free BBS.
W 29 FV 14+ 2

201-635-5726 NJ Chatham
The Machine Rob Knierim
Games and chat. ChatLink nationwide chat, multiplayer games (Doom), technical support info, Majornet and other echoes.
M 19 V 50+ 8 $ 2

201-659-8032 NJ Hoboken
Vital COM BBS Jose Negron, Jr
Electronics, computer programming, games.
F 29 VF 1 1

201-729-2602
Chuck's Attempt Chuck Ammann

201-731-6416 NJ West Orange
Get A Life! Marc Gaylen
All adult BBS specializing in adult graphics and games, thousands of files and all lifestyles.
F 29 VF 60+ 3

201-941-7778 NJ Ridgefield
rockpile.com Tom Heffernan
Multi-user chat and games; Gopher, Archie, IRC, FTP, Telnet, Rlogin, Finger, SLIP, Fidonet, Majornet, Internet, NetAccess forums, and chat.
M 19 DF 5+ 12 $ F

203-227-8975 CT Westport
The Edge Nick Bath
Mostly files and door games. Friendly sysop and users. ANSI graphics.
O 29 FV 13+ 1

203-228-9814 CT Hebron
CyberiaSystems Nathan Mcmullen
IBM compatibles, utilities, games, Fidonet messaging echoes, Ravenet, DPUnet, and ComNet networks.
X 29 VO 4 1

203-250-0938 CT Cheshire
OPAL Network John McCaffrey
Scientific, education, games.
X 09 D 18 2

203-257-1960 CT Wethersfield
Libertarian Jim Hock
Politics, Hartford-area issues, IBM compatible utilities, etc. Up and running once again after a brief intermission.
Y 19 V 5 1

203-264-9482 CT Southbury
EmergencyMedical Tom Patierno
Emergency medical services, IBM compatible, Fidonet, 425MB online.
X 19 V 4 2

203-269-2843 CT Wallingford
Prime Conxtion John Lappie
Shareware, seven CDs online, multi-line chat, Internet email.
W 19 FV 12+ 3 1

203-429-6338 CT Storrs
The Pink Rose Michele Dalene
Fidonet, general IBM interest, 280MB online. SEMS mail hub.
Q 19 VO 3 1

203-488-2315 CT No. Branford
Interstate BBS Lewis Reid
General interest. Member of Fidonet. Lots of messages. 700MB online; member of CT_BBSADS Bulletin Board Listings Conference.
X 19 VO 7 1

203-651-9730 CT Simsbury
CyberConnectn Chad Thompson
Comnet and Fidonet member. IBM files and messages. Member of CT_BBSADS.
X 19 VO 3 1

203-744-0179 CT Danbury
Hatters Park Bill Hausler
Support areas for AIDS, alcoholism, religion, PODSnet, Fidonet (PODSNET and Fidonet hub), 250MB online, Internet email.
O 19 V 2 1 1

205-478-8599 NY Glens Falls
The Thing Dave Jaswaye
Games.
W 09 V 4 1

205-665-7924 AL Montevallo
Pirate's Cove James Acker
General purpose board, online games.
X 19 D 7+ 1 3

205-675-8406 AL Saraland
Anchor Inn Jim Wilson
Files and echo mail, new area code of 334 is in effect. USBBS list door still will not reconize new area codes.
B 29 FV 6 1 1

205-859-4696 AL Huntsville
Independent NWS Randy Hearn
Political discussion, conservative/Christian. Full Internet access.
M 09 V 02 0 F

206-353-3013 WA Everett
Snohomish Sys Mark Henderson
System support and utilities for the DOS user. Excellent file libraries. No ratios. Catering to the mature and sophisticated DOS/Windows user.
B 29 D 14+ 2

206-584-4309
The Wolf's Den Keith Shinkle

206-747-6397 WA Bellevue
SEANEWS Bill McCormick
Free Usenet/Internet access, public service, free access to Usenet, email, and other Internet services.
X 09 FO 34+ 3 B

207-764-0788 ME Mapleton
Vacation Land Darcy Lovley
User based, 6 CDs, 120 online games.
B 09 V 10+ 1 1

207-777-5085 ME Auburn
High Five Jim Hart
Community network.
X 19 V 250 1 3

207-945-2612 ME Bangor
Check Six! BBS Paul Bussiere
General interest, on-line games, USA Today News, live satellite feed, Internet email, over 1,000,000 files.
W 19 VF 14+ 4 $ 3

208-664-2983
The Third Mill Jim Fromm

209-255-9110 CA Fresno
Program World Scott Smith
Programing, automotive info, code generators, 30 programming netted subs, home of VBBS Auto Info. Sub, Home of VBBS Qbasic Sub.
X 19 V 1+ 1

209-323-7583 CA Clovis
Clovis Connect Rod Jessen
OS/2, 10 Shareware CDs, AEGIS AIDS support, Fido, AEGIS, OS2NET, IBMNET, RBBSNET, IGANET.
W 29 FV 14+ 3

209-339-0220 CA Lodi
Starbase BBS Dave Tracewell
SCOUTING, genealogy, & astronomy. Family oriented BBS, largest scouting BBS in the world, 2 CDs online, Fidonet, ScoutNet, Internet.
W 19 FB 11+ 1 3

210-656-0109 TX San Antonio
Neon Jungle Amy Moody
Family oriented, something for everyone. Fidonet member, always the latest in shareware/freeware, help for the novice BBS caller, over 100 Fido echo areas.
B 19 D 12+ 2

212-627-0531 NY New York
FPX2 Kevin Freeman
New users, fun, tech support. Fido, RIME, ThrobNet, P&BNet Internet (fpx2.com), games, offline mail.
Q 19 FD 40 2 $ 3

212-749-3268
Walter's BBS Walter Parrish

212-989-8411 NY New York
Echo Stacy Horn
General conferencing, Mosaic, WWW, and Paper, MS, and High Times mag.
X 09 FV 50 50 $ F

213-225-5474 CA Los Angeles
ThunderVolts 16 Harvey Woien
Engineering, business, administrative. echomail, games. Member ASP. ASP CD ROM online.
W 29 V 0 0

213-771-7515 CA W. Hollywood
Heaven West BB Mike Sulewski
Gay and lesbian community contact and outreach. Matchmaker, classifieds, international net, shareware. AIDS info, 12-Step support, chat.
M 19 D 20+ 16 $

214-245-9315
USS Inverness Jonathan McGirr

214-351-9859
Collector's Edition Len Hult

214-355-1835
Lonesome Dove Matthew Peacock

215-230-0920 PA New Britain
Road Runner BB Ryan Pankoe
Files, messages, games, 6 CDs rotating with 2 online at a time. Internet email.
X 09 V 24+ 1 1

216-296-2244 OH Ravenna
Blue Parrot Joe Rinehart
CD-ROM support, Internet email, news.
B 09 V 12 2 3

216-296-7016 OH Ravenna
Groucho's Grot D. Beyers
3 CD-ROMS online, free access first call. 40+ games, 50+ message areas, 20+ file areas.
V 09 V 14+ 1 3

216-324-6410
Comm. Netlink Kassie Stevenson

216-349-8698 OH SOLON
ALLEN TELECOM Marv Grossman
Business-related, bulletins, programs and patterns for antenna plotting.
B 19 B 5 2

216-398-7275 OH Cleveland
TIMS Machine Tim Holt
Swap-n-shop.
B 19 BV 1 1

216-639-9508
Scientist's BBS Soo Kurz

216-868-7627 OH Minerva
StarNet I.D.G. D.Morton
Internet Development Group tech. support & general interest.
W 29 BV 14+ 4 $ 3

217-359-0436 IL Champaign
DataQuest Melvin Stevens
Entertainment, 4-player Doom, Heretic, interactive games, teleconferencing.
M 29 D 120+ 4

217-423-7430 IL Decatur
STARFLEET HQ's Terry Ortman
Star Trek theme, trek trivia, games, online shopping, online doors, home of Starfleet Net.
I 09 FV 10+ 1

219-325-3655 IN La Porte
Rob's Arcade Rob Swanson
Files, 7 CDs online, 4 mail nets, doors.
B 19 VF 61+ 1

219-563-1738 IN Wabash
Wabash Norm Benjamin
Computer user support.
B 19 V 9+ 1

219-744-4908
The Play Board Jay Tipton

301-495-2774 MD Silver Sprin
Desolation Row Don Blackford
An offshoot of Outsider's BBS. Also located on Highway 61.
X 19 V 1 1

301-587-2277 MD SilverSpring
Deaf New World Ken Glickman
Entertainment, investment, special communications needs. 175+ conferences, 35+ doors, stock quotes by automatic email, live chat.
W 09 V 15+ 5 $ 7

301-587-5922 MD Takoma Park
Outsider's Don Blackford
Social engineering, Discordian/Buddhist slant, tolerant.
X 19 V 5 2

301-596-7693 MD Columbia
Prog. Corner Gary Smith
Programming source code, tools for programmers, files, Internet access, All 15 lines support V.34 28.8K.
X 29 FD 75+ 15 F

301-834-5110 MD Knoxville
SierraClubInMd E Whitenton
Environmental & local issues, Frederick, Wash., government data finder system.
W 09 V 1 1

301-840-8998 MD Gaithersburg
Route 66 Bill Johns
General, games, cars, Internet, Windows
X 29 V 150+ 2 1

301-916-0991 MD Germatown
Staging Lanes Eric Cary
Drag racing, RBBS-PC, small businesses. Where drag racing fans and drivers can interact. Startup businesses can network and advertise.
R 19 BV 3 1

303-244-8420
Mirror Image BBS Mark Feil

303-932-1308 CO Morrison
EOTD BBS Caetal Teneiaeh
Philosophy, art, RPG's, graphics, sound, emerging technology. 5 lines all 28800bps, v.34, v.FC,HST,v.32ter, v.32bis, v.32.
M 09 DF 21+ 5

304-727-6733 WV St. Albans
Blue Powder Greg Hively
Support system for Apogee, id, Impulse, & ARJ. RAH Distro.
B 29 V 7 1

304-728-0884 WV Charles Town
The Bit Bank J. Willingham
Full-featured. fresh files, game & utility doors, Fidonet & PCLink networks, Internet mail, easy to navigate.
Q 19 FV 7 1 1

305-388-3456 FL Miami
Fencer's BBS Frets Olivares
Fencing-related and general. QWK packet, chat section, doors games.
X 19 0 4 2 $

305-669-1295 FL Miami
Tropical BBS Rob Joseph
Internet communicating for free. Internet, Fidonet, Codersnet, files, chat,
W 29 F 13 3 3

305-941-7574 FL Pompano Bch
ALLIANCE Vedat Gurtan
Files & Fido mail, South Florida.
W 29 FV 30+ 1

307-674-7329 WY Sheridan
BBSBIGHORN Mike Donohue
Property search with color pictures and Internet email. 900 TABS, unlimited send/receive.

T 09 VF 13 8 $ 7

309-792-2663 IL Silvis
Ancient Marner Michael Castro
MS-DOS shareware, gamedoors Fidonet 1:232/19 mailer to Internet gateway. All files Freq'able. Request alias files.
F 29 V 14+ 2 1

310-434-2933 CA Long Beach
pLaNeT ZeD MikE ZeD
Files, hockey, music, graphics, OC sports conference Home BBS, Los Angeles Kings and Mighty Ducks Hockey News, 28.8 Hayes, ZeD RecorDs Home SiTe.
B 99 F 14+ 2 $

310-436-1311 CA Long Beach
Why Not David Scott
Shareware, doors games. Great for new bbs users.
W 29 DF 72+ 4

310-515-3673 CA Torrance
PC Heaven BBS Tony Reeves
Ham related, general, online games. For hams, the US and Canadian callbook is online for use. Fido message areas.
S 19 D 10+ 1

310-598-8460 CA Long Beach
Appian Way BBS Mark E. Johnson
Philosophy, current events, religion, TWINS. User-freindly and professionally run board. USA Today, PCM Magazine, government access information, help.
T 99 FU 14 4 $ 7

310-827-8171 CA Los Angeles
LACS BBS Fran Ames
Los Angeles Computer Society, IBM Users Group.
W 99 V 11 2

310-835-4800 CA San Pedro
AuSSie BBS M.Szabados
Games, chat, files. Play Tradewars with up to 18 users at once.
M 09 V 100+ 18 $ 3

312-248-0900 IL Chicago
Chi Compu Soc Irwin Romanek
PC User Group open to all beginners. PC User Group BBS for members open to the general public. Group focus is helping computer novices.
W 29 DF 8 8 3

312-284-7133
4th Dimension Jeff Jones

313-582-0888 MI Dearborn
bloom county Gary Gilmore
Full-range basic, friendly BBS.
O 19 F 50+ 1 1

313-963-2666 MI Detroit
The TAXI STAND Dan Groske
9 CDROMS online. 70,000+ Files, Fidonet, 150+Bases, Synchronet BBS Support, Synchronet software available online. No fees, no ratios. Type Guest for limited 1st call access.
X 19 FV 14+ 4

314-281-8598
Megabiter II George Belcher

314-351-7150
The STL CATII David Russo

314-443-1874 MO Columbia
The IWLA 2X4 Kim Palmer
RTKBA and gun related issues, NRA, IWLA, education, files, All of the profit press releases of the MEGA-CDs. Megadoor and hypersearch online to all CD-ROM Drives.
X 09 D 100+ 2

314-481-7600 MO St. Louis
The GrapeVine Graham Bloy
Games, tech advice, shareware, communications, fun topics. Active in the area scince 1982. Special attention to learning/teaching.
W 19 V 2 2

315-458-3482
Dreamscape Scott Brennan

315-773-6501 NY Fort Drum
Mountain Ken Yinger
Support Soldier/Families of Fort Drum.
Q 19 D 26+ 1

315-789-1061 NY Geneva
Dimension.Rift M.J.Sears
Shareware, OS/2, Windows, gifs, mods, midis, chat. Fully graphically, and works in Windows 3.1 exclusive.. U/L and D/l at the same time.
X 09 FV 10+ 2

316-264-7857 KS Wichita
BJ'S M. Littlejohn
Games and game related files for adults only. Originated in California and was recently moved to Kansas. Free access with comment to Sysop.
W 29 D 2 1

316-788-7520
Griswold's Priv Jim Kelland

318-862-3100 LA Shreveport
PCA BBS J. Kinney
MSDOS, MS Windows, Novell, Unix, 150+ download areas.
W 19 V 70 8 $

334-335-3968 AL Luverne
Crenshaw BBS Ed Welch
New user board for the general user. Non-high-tech. Free Internet access. Large general interest selection of zip files. Game doors.
B 29 FV 15 2 1

334-675-8406 AL Saraland
Anchor Inn Jim Wilson
Files, Fidonet.
B 29 V 6 1

360-263-1117 WA La Center
CountryComputng Keith Buckbee
Files 160,000 with 18 CD-ROMs online at all times.
G 29 F 14 0 $

360-493-6881 WA Olympia
Worldview BBS Tomas Hood
HomeBased resources (business, education, etc.). Content oriented.
B 09 D 40+ 2 $ 3

401-848-9069 RI Middletown
Terminal Madne Chris Mathis
Totally free multinode system, doors, Internet email and News, CD-ROM, WWIV BBS also running as a door off PCBoard.
B 19 F 11+ 3 3

404-442-6748 GA Woodstock
MAILDROP Gary Sandow
2nd Amendment Issues, RTKBA. Users consist of thoughtful people who discuss computers, politics and other issues.
W 19 V 0 0 1

404-476-7880
The Late Nite BBS Bobby Nowell

404-478-9700
The Night Shift Bill Hardy

404-579-1170 GA Marietta
Atl SpiderWeb Dennis Brown
General info, entertainment, public service, teens, adoption info, magazines, forums, sports, Atlanta info.
M 19 V 4 2

404-773-7966
Warp Factor Mark Stewart

404-934-4515 GA Stone Mtn
Flagship Expr Harvey Pierce
Current USBBS Listings online, PCBoard utilities, ILink conferences, Planet Connect feed.
B 19 F 91+ 5 $

404-936-0550
Music Connection David Coleman

404-941-0746 GA LithiaSpring
Thompson Towers Raeann Thompson <ASP> & genealogy, Fidonet & IGA-NET Access, 6-month old file limit.
B 29 VF 14 0 $

404-967-2200 GA Flowery Br.
S/Ware Monster R.P. Meggs
Latest files from around the world, Internet, Usenet, Fidonet, FlyNet, DDS, WGA, SCN-Net, over 200 conf, NEGCUG support system.
X 29 FV 200+ 4 7

405-438-2496 OK Cleo Springs
KnightsFortress Alva Kingcade
Business-related, games, windows, hobbies, etc., large file base and message base.
X 29 V 2+ 1

405-485-9300 OK Blanchard
Dark Ages BBS Randy Henderson
Cool BBS, with lots of files, messages, and doors.
X 29 F 14+ 1

405-677-8174 OK Okla. City
DateLine Bbs Daivd Ivers
Call Dr. Death.
X 29 V 14+ 1

405-728-7124
Hotel California Lloyd Lawson

405-737-4932 OK Midwest City
First Response Bill Astafan
Health related.
X 29 V 14+ 1

407-687-9355 FL W. Palm Bch
Benjamin Comp John Benjamin
Genealogy plus Mustang! software (QModemPro) for sale. Fidonet, Internet-UseNet, IGA Genealogy Net, CardNet, FlyNet, 7 CDs of files. Online shopping door.
W 19 D 14+ 2 $ 7

407-691-9125 FL Palm Bch
Satellite BBS Miguel Orama
Doors, messages conferences and files CD-ROM.
T 99 FV 30+ 1

407-859-7428
The Death Star Nicholas Seabury

408-241-0722 CA Santa Clara
PDSE Curtis Garcia
Quality, certified files, friendly.
T 19 D 10+ 8 $

408-364-2789
PereLine BBS Tom Serface

408-394-2839 CA Seaside
Hard Drive Cafe Ronnie Young
DOS shareware, bulletin board files, on-line games. Novice and expert users alike can get information, share ideas, and have fun.
W 29 V 10+ 1

408-577-0509 CA San Jose
Ground Zero'86 Jerry Hubbard
General interest. Free from the first call. New uploads every day. No ratios. Relay Net, Internet coming soon.
B 19 V 9+ 1

408-636-0508 CA Hollister
e.BABYLON Albert Gabrial
Educational, cultural, social, Assyrian history, language, TV & radio programs, magazines, clubs and churches.
W 19 H 2 1

continues...

408-654-8911 CA San Jose
Exodus/BDPASVC Willie Mackey
Afrocentric, BDPANet.
W 19 FV 5 2 3

408-956-7942 CA Milpitas
Bid Source Pearl Regis
Provide information on construction projects out to bid, bid results and requests for sub bids, also numerous forum.
M 29 V 5 2 $

409-589-3312 TX Bryan
The Hot Spot! Pat Butler
Shareware, games, graphics, Renegade, files.
X 19 VF 11+ 1

409-842-3044 TX Beaumont
Triple Threat Mike Chambers
Computer sales, genealogy, sports.
R 99 FO 72+ 1 1

409-769-4249
Wayne's World Wayne Belvin

410-730-5624 MD Columbia
MarylandGatewy Paul Bitterli
General purpose.
B 19 U 2 1

412-226-9549 PA Natrona Hts
JABS Talk BBS Todd Simmers
Helping local users with problems, UFO, paranormal, utils.
W 09 VO 20+ 1 3

412-567-6782
entertain me bbs!! Shawn Cupec

412-767-7068 PA Pittsburgh
Doberman Gang Tom Bing
Games, files, adult areas, email, PittNet, Firewire, something for everyone.
W 09 FD 180+ 5

413-525-2804 MA E.Longmeadow
The Archives M. Muise
Technical support BBS, home of Tech-Net email network and lots of fun for all.
B 29 FV 20+ 2

413-527-8977
Uncle Hank's BBS Hank Hurteau

414-423-0441 WI Milwaukee
Dig.Data.Exch. Jeff Katerinos
Huge CD-ROM collection online, adult, Internet, newsgroups, Matchmaker, Timedoor, 35 intense online games.
W 09 D 14+ 2 3

414-654-5878 WI Kenosha
The Psyclone Bill Mattocks
Occult, community-oriented, local issues, PODSnet, adult areas.
T 09 V 14+ 2

414-656-1073 WI Kenosha
PsYcHoTiC Mike Dunnington
Madness, anarchy, T-1 & 56kb connections for sale.
T 99 FV 30+ 16 $ F

415-961-6911 CA Palo Alto
INTERACT Eric Knight
Interactive entertainment: Live chat and multiplayer games. The Interactive Entertainment System. 16 lines. 18 and over only.
T 19 V 5 16

416-770-6917
Platinum Express Glenn Jarvis

417-889-8381 MO Springfield
Hey Bubs House Steve Kelley
File areas, telecomm. issues.
S 09 VF 5 1

419-522-1378 OH Mansfield
Polaris Drew Sprang
Wildcat utilities, general software, adult, over 50 doors, over 62,000 files, 4 CDs on line all the time, Home of ASISTEC Software for Wildcat 4.01 systems.
W 29 V 14+ 1

501-234-5596 AR Magnolia
NOT (the BBS) Trever Brackett
General DOS based, games, sound & graphics. CDROM access, door games, message areas, & friendly people.
W 19 D 14+ 1

501-596-2696 AR Magnolia
the GAMEROOM Bill Norris
Over 40 onlines games (puzzles, interactive) messages, files, 4 conferences.
R 29 V 1+ 2

502-339-8978 KY Louisville
Bill Board Bill Phelps
Adult access with paid subsciption over 18 only, shareware files and online games.
W 09 F 11+ 2 3

502-443-6014
The Data Center Jeff Burton

502-732-9209 KY Carrollton
Slow-•-Easy Marty Souder
Wildnet, MSInet, RIPnet & NLEMS.
W 29 F 45+ 2

502-868-9385 KY Georgetown
Thoroughbred G. S. Glass
Two online CD-ROMs, online games.
Q 99 BV 4 1

503-393-5580
Chemeketa Bob Hunter

503-741-1091 OR Springfield
The Potential M. Blackwelder
Shareware, adult files, on-line games.
B 09 FV 62+ 8 3

503-955-1705 OR Grants Pass
The Lost Island Dennis Recla
Desktop publishing, still video, photography and graphics. Large collection of PCX images available for download. Discussions of graphics, photography, and the environment.
W 19 V 9+ 1

504-356-0790
Southern Online Russell Jackson

504-542-9600
Computer Solu Sidney Egnew

504-885-5928 LA New Orleans
Southern Star John Souvestre
Technical, Internet, Fidonet, shareware. Technical focus, 22 GB, 13 lines, ASP approved, since 1988. Internet email and news, Fidonet Backbone and Filebone.
T 09 VF 220+ 13 $ 3

506-459-0973 NB Fredericton
Omni Net Sean Ryan
Virus utilities, tech support, user support.
W 09 V 2 2

508-287-0311 MA Concord
VIDEODROME Michael Lammons
Total movie information. All kinds of movie and movie related information and images including local theatre listings, fanclub info.
T 09 D 3 2

508-456-6881 MA Harvard
Shorty's BBS Justin Seger
15 online door games, 3 echomail conferences, SLS Linux files, Apogee distribution site.
B 09 FV 14+ 1

508-468-9091 MA Hamilton
SYSENGGROUP Mike Riley
ASP Approved BBS. Source of support Systems Engineering Group, RIME, FIDO, ASP oriented BBS.
W 99 VF 10+ 2

508-478-0153 MA Milford
Gadge'-Tronics Wayne Anderson
Internet NewsGroups, helping new users, files, doors, etc., 6 CD-ROMS, ANSI/ASCII/RIP autodetect, 20000+ files, Internet email, newsgroups, door games, Apogee dist. site.
B 19 OF 60+ 3 $

508-528-2295
Computer Conf. Edward Zdrok

508-686-5994 MA Methuen
GRYPHON's Lair Mike Dube
VNSI tech support, sales, service, 70+ doors, 350+ Confs., Dist site for Parole, T&J, Apogee, raffles, lottos, restaurant listings, LORD, USURPER, Role Playing.
W 29 BF 26 2 2

508-746-6010 MA Plymouth
Adult Hangout Tom Williams
Local access #'s in 1510+ cities worldwide.
M 09 DF 160+ 38

508-853-0340
Schunix-Pub UNIX Robert Schultz

508-881-6912 MA Ashland
The IMPosium Micah Imparato
Sports, RPGs, multiuser interactive games, chat. Online RPGs, sports, and games with enough users online to keep you busy.
M 19 V 14 14 $

509-545-9879 WA Pasco
Sigma Iotia][Del Bice
Files and Conferences, RelayNet RIME, Fidonet, no restrictions, no file limits or requirement for download. Extensive messaging system.
R 09 VF 35+ 6

509-735-3710 WA Kennewick
THE SCITEC BBS Ed Haack
Lead-based paint testing, soil testing, EPA issues. Support for SCITEC Corporation's Products (MAP-3, ARM Software, etc.
W 29 V 3 1

509-891-6148
The Moonflower Peter Link

510-521-0281 CA Alameda
Aaron Const. Aaron Moarefi
Construction & PC oriented. Q & A regarding construction issues. Paul Revere Network echo conferences.
W 29 FV 10+ 2

510-689-3256 CA Concord
PDSE East Bay Ron Berg
General discussions, information, files, games. One of 3 BBS PDSE operates in California.
T 29 D 14+ 2

510-794-9788 CA Fremont
Callisto Tower Gus Damian
General interest, echomail based, programming and tech stuff. Large echomail base with local and out of state nets, runs under OS/2 WARP, lots of files and registered doors.
W 29 V 3+ 1

510-799-2921 CA Hercules
Code 3 Outfitrs Kim Leong
Law enforcement, ham radio, general. WCLawNet Hub, NLEMS, AR-Net, RiderNet. No adult files.
W 19 FD 0 0 3

510-803-5967 CA San Ramon
GrndCntrlStatn Scott Schluer
General files, messages, games, mature environment. Mature environment, online Tradewars/LORD competitions, constantly improving and making additions.
X 29 V 20+ 2

512-392-9489 TX San Marcos
Home Business Steve Strahl
Home-based business, books, opportunities, classified ads. Dedicated to the home-based business entrepreneur. Good source of information.
W 19 B 3 1

512-836-4262
The Night Owl II Danny Dyess

512-850-8255 TX Corpus Chris
C.C. ONLINE John Spofford
Business-related, jobs, real estate, international trade. Free Trade News electronic edition, business directories, class. ads, jobs from around the world.
T 29 BV 2 4 $

512-945-9304
Ranch House BBS Larry Easley

513-848-4288 OH Dayton
AuthorsNet HQ SandraGreenwood
Writing-related, international echo forums, files, featuring AuthorsNet[tm], P&BNet(tm), MediaNet(tm), EPubNet, CentipedeNet, Fidonet, Internet email, 17,000 files.
W 09 FO 10+ 1 5

514-279-5145 QC Montreal
STAT! Medical JF Vaillancourt
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W 19 DF 12 2 3

515-628-3101
The Main Street Steve Jansen

516-385-4383 NY Melville
ESI Sales BBS Gregg Smith
Online sales, games & files. Accept Amex, orders taken online, Lowest prices on CD-ROMs. Inter BBS Door games.
W 19 FV 4 1 1

516-437-1659
Defron BBS Mike Christiansen

516-736-6662
Your Software John Woodstock

517-279-7530 MI Coldwater
D.C. Online Doug Lytle
Old England type setting. RIME mail network, Planet Connect Satellite system.
X 19 VF 12 4

601-276-7374 MS Summit
Mindless BBS Gilbert Aponte
Games, files, echo mail.
Q 29 FV 14+ 2

601-781-3100 MS Southaven
Med Link Wade Adams
Medical, business, and computer files & messages. Registered Tw2002, Lord, Usurper Doors. 100 messages areas, fido net, health care net.
J 19 V 10+ 1

601-977-8421 MS Jackson
Backtracker Kevin Orkin
Wide focus. Online shopping, files, doors, chat, messages, 2+ GB, CDROMs, 2000+ messages daily.
I 09 FV 20+ 2

602-241-1475 AZ Phoenix
Darkel's Manor John Cessor
General support.
W 29 VB 5+ 1

602-258-7113
The Wish Book Lorne Shantz

602-525-2238 AZ Flagstaff
S. Silhouette David Dewey
Business/variety, online games, files, message echos. All NEW users are call-back verified. Then, free access.
I 29 FV 9+ 1

602-655-7771 AZ Mesa
Az I-net Gate Robert Basil
Internet gateway for local BBSs $30 per year. All that is needed is a working front end mailer.
B 29 FV 14 4 $ 3

602-964-5796 AZ Mesa
Cutting Edge Andrew Bartels
General. Amateur Radio Net, and Programming Net available. Also have registered Tradewars 2002 and Kannons & Katapults.
I 09 FV 10+ 2 2

603-627-0916 NH Manchester
T.D.B. BBS Peter Martineau
General interest BBS, Echomail. ZOOM 28.8k modem in effect. Renegade 10-31 up and running.
X 99 FV 2 1 1

603-666-0108 NH Manchester
Cricket System Ron Le Blanc
Meet-a-Mate, games, general discussions. Formerly the Cosmopolitan, now a Meet-a-Mate, games, and general discussions board.
W 19 V 2 1

606-441-2130
The Ghost House Michael Haley

606-441-5517 KY Cold Spring
Intermax Dan Spoonamore
Dedicated to business in Greater Cincinnati Area (513 local). This service is local to the Cincinnati (513) calling area. We can offer custom services for your organization.
M 09 FV 110 8 $ 7

606-886-2881 KY Prestonsburg
Michael's Mess Michael Chaney
Home of the Mess-Scape (Experiment in Virtual Reality).
X 09 V 2 1

606-886-8403 KY Prestonsburg
EKUG BBS Tommy Shelton
Night Owl shareware.
F 19 VO 14+ 1

607-937-8547 NY Corning
a-a-a Steve Huels
Shareware.
I 29 VO 1+ 1

608-274-5720 WI Madison
Sterling Tom Williams
Files, doors, messages, adult section, etc. CD-ROM, 1.2 GB HD, 2 lines, 3 networks, 4 doors.
X 09 FV 13+ 2 3

609-235-5297
The Livewire BBS Richard Paquette

609-324-9187 NJ Columbus
Bible BBS Tony Capoccia
Christian files/prog, church software.
R 09 D 3 1

609-467-1206 NJ swedesboro
Al's Wrld Cmpt Alex Mastrando
2 nodes (This is a list for node 2) Other node 609-467-5540.
G 09 U 5 2

609-467-5540 NJ Swedesboro
Alex Wld Comp Alex Mastrando
2 nodes, 609-467-1206, many online games.
G 09 D 5 2

609-482-7345
Next Generation John Carcione

609-582-9546 NJ Pitman
Star Trek Chuck Walker
The largest Star Trek file base anywhere. 35 online games & 60 echo mail forums (conferences). The latest Night OWL CD-ROM online 24 hours.
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Tao BBS Bob Watson

609-764-0812
Radio Wave BBS Tyler Myers

609-768-6585
BB's BBS Bob Browne

609-778-4442
Computer Gaming Gregory Moore

610-369-8081 PA Boyertown
The Sanitarium Andy Rosen
The newest files.
Q 29 FV 10+ 2 $ 3

612-488-5112
P.C. MegaMall Michael Wielenberg

614-387-2762
The Vault BBS Keith Ketcham

614-766-7931 OH Columbus
Power Station Tom Power
General, something for everyone. Over 100 conferences, RIP, 10GB online.
W 29 VF 100+ 8

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GC-BBS! D. Morrison Jr.
Family oriented, Christian and ham radio files also. Amateur callbook online, Hamfest lists, Hamtests list.
W 09 V 11 2

614-885-8511 OH Columbus
Anderson's BBS Bob Anderson
Utilities.
F 19 F 16 1

615-399-0707
The Lebanon Link Bruce Richardson

615-478-2890
PC Junction BBS Doug Carpenter

615-533-2021 TN Pikeville
R*KOM Ray Kienle
Business software, classifieds, free demos, classified listings for sales only.
W 19 V 1 1

615-572-9164 TN Clarksville
The Snake Pit Keith Jacobs
Message, online games. Home of Dominion Tech, makers of the best scripts available to VBBS SysOps.
X 09 V 5+ 1

615-573-1257 TN Knoxville
Sanctuary BBS Ed Lowe
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B 29 VF 6+ 1 $ 1

615-791-5638 TN Franklin
SAFTEK Stephen Tenhet
Occ. safety, risk mgmt, science, engring, hobby. Large occupational safety file collection. Many regulatory, industry, and insurance users.
W 19 VO 9+ 1 3

615-870-0794 TN Chattanooga
The Registry Bill Kern
Registry of nuclear and computer professionals. 100 registered door games, 40,000 files, recently featured in *BBS Magazine* (February, 1995).
W 29 FV 35+ 3 $

615-895-7737 TN Murfreesboro
Heart Of Tenn Larry Reeves
Connectivity around the world, all type CPUs welcome. Something for the whole family (no adult material). ISDN (615) 893-1372.
B 09 FV 170+ 8 F

615-966-3574
Data World BBS Sean Dudley

615-977-9385
WNMFS BBS Michael Walker

616-668-2391 MI Mattawan
Shadow Castle Jeff Harvey
General support & conversation, several networks available. CircuitNet, StormNet, and Fidonet areas available. Some limited Internet access also. Node 2 is V.FC (616) 668-2612.
F 19 VF 12+ 2 3

616-842-1471 MI Grand Haven
FireRight BBS Gene Warner
Tech support for FireRight Controls + local community service.
W 29 V 10+ 1

617-354-8873
Channel 1 BBS Brian Miller

617-582-2223 MA Kingston
Mass OnLine Brad Carver
Adult BBS, adult services directory - 30,000+ files, public & private chat rooms, Internet access, CD-ROM sales.
S 99 VF 14+ 6 3

617-846-7394 MA Boston
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M 19 V 14 14 $

618-439-9629 IL Benton
Outer-Limits Joseph Hayes
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B 19 FV 150+ 5 $

618-529-7272 IL Makanda
The real Conne Frank Peng
Info, files, games, news.
M 09 V 14+ 2

619-758-9774 CA Oceanside
Megatech Chris Ablang
Anime and software updates.
W 29 B 12+ 1 F

690-324-9187 NJ Columbus
Bible BBS Tony Capoccia
Christian and church files/programs.
R 09 D 3 1

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The Spectrum Dale Hill

701-772-5399
City Lites John Lundell

703-331-1710 VA Dumfries
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Newest shareware files, on-line games, RIME and FIDO nets. Sysop supports RBBS-PC 17.5.
R 09 FD 14+ 1 1

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703-360-1172 VA Mount Vernon
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3-D Gaming. (DOOM(1/2), Heretic, Descent, ROTT), Id Software distro. Also distro for Apogee, Epic, Raven, SWC, JAS, LORE, and WarSoft. Home of WarSoft/GalactiChaos.
W 99 FD 14+ 4 3

703-427-0226
Mountain Air BBS Edward Wood

703-435-8644
The Last Resort Derek Figg

703-490-4184 VA Woodbridge
CommCapsule Jim Davy
Home schooling, games, political files. Support for home schooling, 2 CDROMs online.
W 19 V 14+ 1

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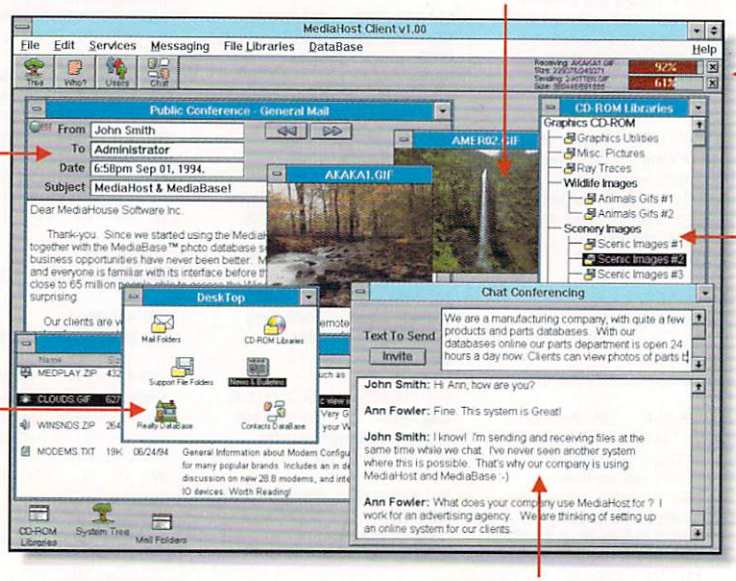

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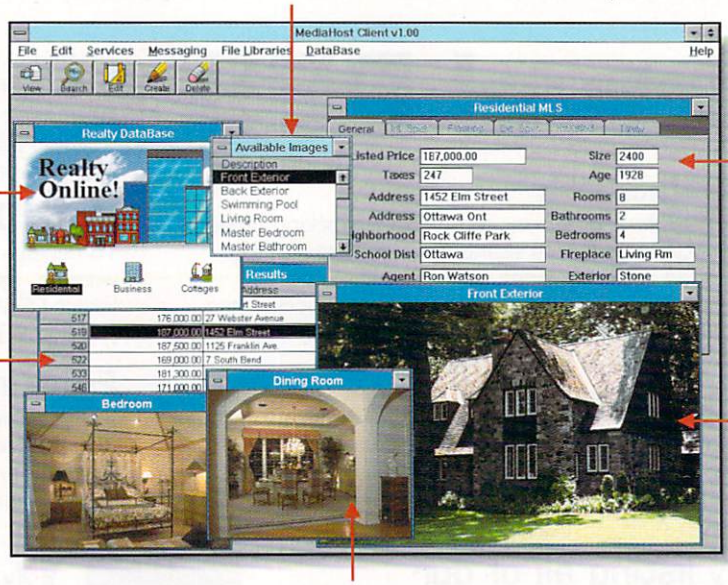

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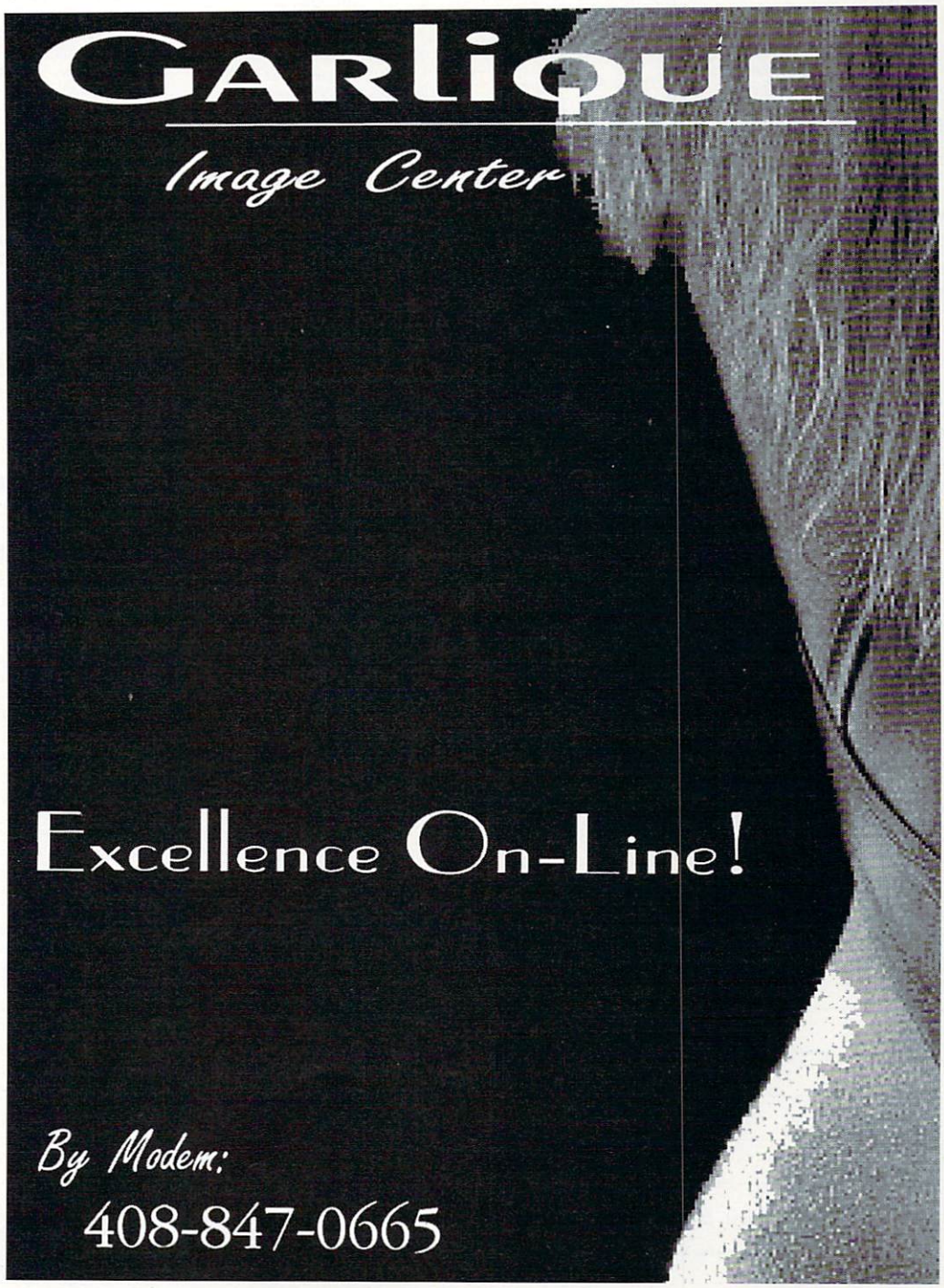

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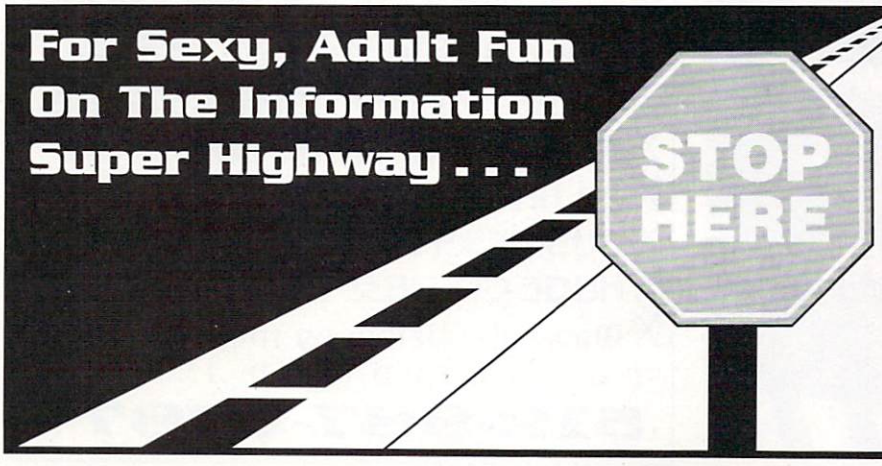

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while Linux is top-quality freeware with a tremendous following among Internet users."

The Major BBS for UNIX began shipping in January with support for two operating systems — BSD/OS 1.1 for the PC architecture and Solaris 2.3 for SPARC platforms. New versions are now available for the following: BSD/OS 2.0, Solaris 2.4 x86, Linux 1.1 and SCO6 ODT 3.0.

As a limited time promotion, Galacticomm is offering special "get-acquainted" prices on all editions of The Major BBS for UNIX, with the new four-line Linux edition priced at $995, for instance. The eight-line versions are $1,695 ($855 less than usual) and the new 16-line version runs $3,195 during the promotion.

The Major BBS for UNIX's multilingual/multiprotocol architecture supports up to 50 simultaneous languages or graphical protocols, and the Spanish Language Add-on Option ($295) capitalizes on this by allowing users to choose Spanish as the language for messages and prompts they see on the system.

The Entertainment Collection ($495) turns The Major BBS for UNIX into your personal entertainment system, with a suite of text adventure, ANSI-graphic and teleconference games. And Action Teleconference enhances the teleconference with action verbs for users.

The UNIX division can be reached via email at unix@gcomm.com. For a hands-on demonstration of The Major BBS for UNIX, telnet to Galacticomm's UNIX Demo System at unix.gcomm.com.

Motorola-Galacticomm Sysop Deal

Motorola Transmission Products Division has partnered with Galacticomm to offer discounts of up to 40 percent on selected modems and ISDN terminal adapters for qualified BBS operators.

Galacticomm is currently the only company in the online industry offering sysops a complete compatibility tested, modem-software BBS.

"Our focus is to deliver the highest performance platform for launching an interactive online service on a single 486 or Pentium-class machine," said Brinker, who pointed out that late last year they "partnered with Equinox Systems Inc. to deliver the power and performance of multiport hardware to our software. Now, with the addition of Motorola's technologically advanced modem products, we can offer a complete plug-and-play solution for supporting huge numbers of simultaneous users on a single PC."

Under the program, Galacticomm will supply qualified sysops, Internet access providers (IAPs) and World Wide Web (WWW) providers with Motorola V.34 modems or ISDN TAs in a single purchase — eliminating their need to specify, purchase and test modems, TAs and software separately when launching services.

The program allows for the purchase of a Series 28.8 modem for the retail market for $225 — a 40 percent discount off the list price of $375. A 40 percent discount is also available for the Macintosh model that lists for $395. Under this sysop program, the Motorola V.3400 commercial/industrial modems that lists for $895 will sell for $537. For ISDN access, the program offers two ISDN terminal adapters, the TA210 and UTA220, for $297 — 40 percent off the list price of $495.

Eligible sysops and providers must be in continuous operation for at least six months from the time of purchasing the Motorola hardware and have purchased software from an approved vendor such as Galacticomm and comparable companies.

"The Internet and online BBS services are major driving forces in PC communications, from the corporation to the individual home user," said Dave McNamara, director of product development, Motorola Transmission Products. "The teaming of Galacticomm and Motorola...will give Internet access providers, Web site providers and BBS sysops the best of both worlds in hardware and software to meet this exploding demand."

Galacticomm products are available from resellers or by calling the company direct at 800.328.1128, or 305.583.5990 outside the U.S. and Canada.

Multimedia Extensions Added to Worldgroup

Galacticomm plans to include a free collection of multimedia extensions with the Worldgroup online interactive platform, giving sysops the ability to run an online service — with multimedia effects matching the best of World Wide Web — from their desktop PC.

The extensions also include a "launch" client/server module that

CONTINUES...

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downloads and launches files, such as Word documents and PowerPoint presentations, by clicking an icon on the menu.

The Worldgroup Client/Server Development Kit enables system operators and independent software vendors to create plug-and-play client/server add-ons using Visual Basic on the client side and Borland C++ on the server.

To prove the flexibility of the client/server model and to demonstrate the ease of Visual Basic extensibility, two Galacticomm engineers took a three-day weekend to explore the possibilities of multimedia enhancements to the first release of Worldgroup. The result of their 72-hour adventure is a new collection of multimedia extensions.

"The real power of Worldgroup is its extensibility," said Brinker. "In a very short period of time, we created stunning multimedia effects with WAV or MIDI sound files, a configurable splash screen, real-time video and more. The power of Worldgroup as an online development platform is just beginning to be unveiled."

In case you missed the March issue of *BBS Magazine,* Worldgroup's shareware client runs on Windows and includes: email, group message forums, file libraries, multi-user teleconference, and polls and questionnaires. In addition, RIP, ASCII and ANSI users can also access the system, providing the widest possible access.

When a caller first contacts the system using the client software, a "splash" screen will display a graphic image. The system operator can use any Windows BMP file, Windows Metafile (WMF), or Windows DIB file to create welcome screens with the organization's logo, an animated design with colors that change and swirl in real-time, etc.

These files can be designed using off-the-shelf programs, such as Corel Draw, PC Paintbrush and Adobe Photoshop. System operators can also convert images from other formats, such as PCX, TIF and JPEG, using programs such as Paint Shop Pro, (if the sysop has the proper license to distribute those images).

Sysops can also configure WAV and MIDI sound files to be played when the user sees the splash screen. For example, a corporation could play the company jingle, while an online university could play the school song. A timer and/or user-clickable button can transition from the splash screen to the main menu. BMP, WMF and DIB files can serve as graphic backdrops for each client/server menu.

And the main menu can be "pseudo-maximized," to take up the full area of the main menu applications window, as a backdrop for child menus.

Sysops can also choose to have all menus maximized, but callers have the option of changing this default if they wish. When the system operator changes the backdrops, the client will automatically download the new one in the background while the caller moves on into the service.

A new Windows file launcher module lets the system administrator post a file for client/server users to download by clicking on a menu icon. After the file is downloaded, this module launches the application associated with that file's extension (e.g., launches Microsoft Word to display a Word document). If the user doesn't have that application on his machine, a window will pop up.

This feature makes it easy for users to access files right off the menu — AVI movies, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, Adobe Acrobat files, PowerPoint presentations, WAV and MIDI sound files, and Write files.

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Offline reader support	Yes	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra
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DOS door support	11 types	2 types	2 types	No	No
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Offline/Remote file requests	Yes	No	No	No	No
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Features and prices compiled from vendor supplied information 2/94, are subject to change without notification. Wildcat!IM, PCBoard/M, MajorBBS, TBBS, QWK, FidoNet, PostLink, RIME, RIPscrip, Novell, and DOS are trademarks or their respective companies. Third party utilities may be required for some message network technologies.
* for 8 nodes Wildcat!IM requires a 250 node license, PCBoard/M requires a 10 node license, TBBS requires a 16 node license.

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

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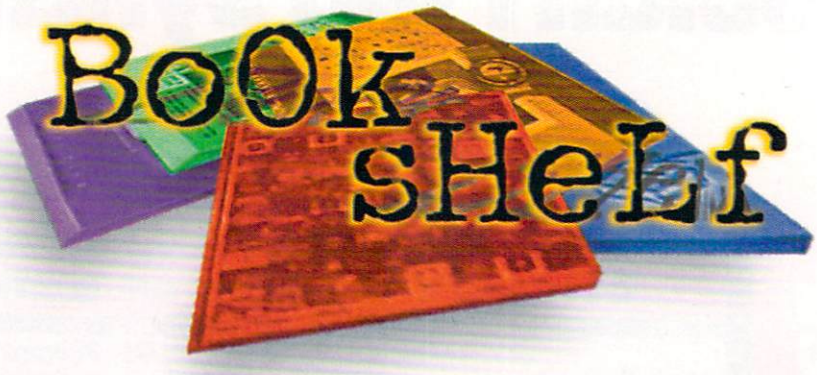

It's Not a Bug, It's a Feature! Computer Wit and Wisdom

by David Lubar
202 pages, $9.95

You don't have to be a computer geek to get a kick out of compiler David Lubar's "It's Not a Bug, It's a Feature!" (Addison-Wesley). Certainly there's a point of reference necessary to understand or put in context some of the notable quotables he's collected, but not with prescient jewels like: "There is no technical reason why someone like Sears Roebuck should not come out tomorrow with an appliance selling for less than a TV set, capable of being plugged in wherever there is electricity, and giving immediate access to all information needed for schoolwork from first grade through college." — Peter F. Drucker, 1968. Or "I see a world market for about five computers." — Thomas J. Watson, Sr., former leader of IBM, 1947.

The book is divided into several chapters such as Software, Bugs and Glitches, Kids, and The Age of Information. And all are not necessarily knee-slappers. For instance in the chapter Waiting in Line to Go Online David Martin complains "The Information Superhighway is a misnomer. First, there's no highway — there are no roadmaps, guides, rules. And second, it ain't super." That was in 1994. To show how near we've come in 25 years, Lubar follows that with a statement from Nigel Calder in 1969: "Like a new road that can bring fresh life to a remote area or merely make it easier for the local population to leave, the information network is a two-way system."

Many are not as pithy as these, but Lubar does a nice job of assembling funny, surprising and sometimes head-shaking morsels. And some come across today as near absolute truths.

"The impact of cheap, reliable, fast and universally available information will easily be as great as the impact of electricity." Drucker, 1968.

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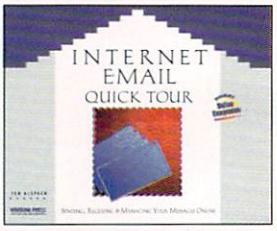
Sean Carton
224 pages, $14

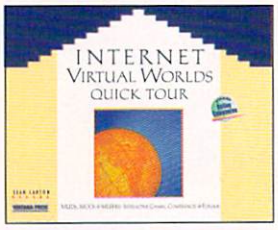
Ventana has released three more in its line of Quick Tour paper-bound handbooks, which left off with Mosaic Quick Tour. This time the subjects are email, chat and virtual worlds.

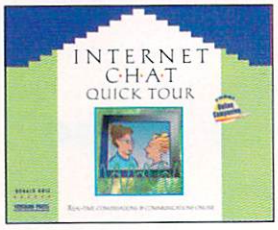
The Quick Tours are written for newbies and the moderately interested, with non-technical advice, graphical overviews and a little history.

The E-Mail Quick Tour looks at setting up an email account, locating email addresses, security, etiquette, mailing lists and newsgroups. Chat covers IRC (Internet Relay Chat), where participants from around the world hold group discussions in real time, and IRC resources like chat clients and servers, as well as IRC Yellow Pages.

The Virtual Worlds Quick Tour takes on some of the fringe activities of the Net: MUDs, MOOs and MUSHes. These Multi-User Dimensions, MUD Object-Oriented and Multi-User Shared Hallucinations are environments in cyberspace where thousands come to play games, role play and basically goof off.







Each of the three volumes is integrated with an Internet-based Online Companion — a continually maintained site on Ventana Online's server that offers access to free utilities and links to current resources on the Net. Also, Chat and Virtual Worlds include hyperlinked versions of chapter listings on the server. Check the home page at www.vmedia.com/.

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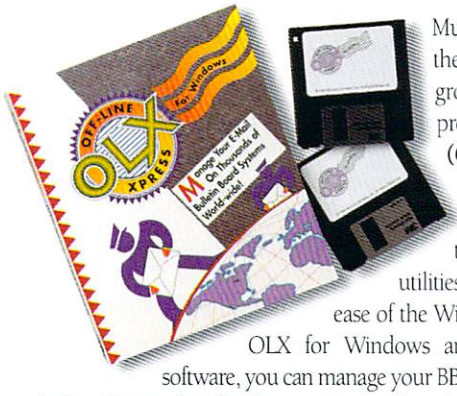

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BY JACQUI KRAMER

The Skinny on MSN

Microsoft Corp.'s first foray into the online services market has been a hot topic of discussion among computer users in recent months, due in large part to a carefully orchestrated series of information leaks from the company itself. However, now that the Microsoft Network (MSN) and its parent software, Windows 95, are both well into the beta stage, Microsoft officials are ready to start tantalizing modem users with hints of things to come.

"On day one, we will be a worldwide service," said Naveen Jain, senior technical marketing manager for the Microsoft Network. He noted that the MSN will be available in 20 languages and through local dial-ups in 47 nations on launch, which is scheduled to take place in August.

The MSN will be available only to Windows 95 users in the beginning, leading many computer analysts to conclude the service will be little more than an advertisement for its platform of choice. However, the service is shaping up to be essentially another version of the popular online service formula: e-mail, live chats, access to vendors, and, of course, free software. More than 50 hardware and software vendors have already agreed to set up shop on the MSN, Jain said. Each company will decide what goods and/or services to include on its site. However, most companies are expected to offer general information sites and technical help at the very least.

In addition to these services, early MSN customers will be able to access Usenet newsgroups and send and receive mail via the Internet. The service is expected to introduce full Internet access before year's end. The MSN will also offer a news resource.

"We are going to be collecting stories from the existing news feeds rather than having our own reporters writing news stories," Jain said. "We will be adding value to the existing news by adapting them to the online world."

Microsoft's plan to adapt stories for redistribution has been misinterpreted to mean that the company will place its own spin on the news, Jain said. But he stressed that the company will not be rewriting history or otherwise changing the gist of the news stories.

Windows 95 users are likely to have a heavy influence over the service early on, if for no other reason than they will be the only people who can access the service for the first few months. Microsoft does plan to expand the service to include other popular platforms, however. A Windows NT version will be available approximately six to nine months after the service debuts, and an Apple client is scheduled to debut next year. However, Microsoft does not plan to import the service to OS/2 at this time, Jain said.

MSN will naturally be accessible through local dial-up numbers, Jain said. However, the company plans to experiment with several other modes of online access within the next few years. Early subscribers (e.g., Windows 95 users) will be able to access the service at speeds of up to 14.4Kbps. Microsoft plans to add 28.8Kbps and ISDN access by year's end — possibly making it the first of the major online services to offer an ISDN-quality connection (AOL now offers AOLnet, ISDN service through a regular dialup, with a limited coverage area).

ISDN offers better speeds and transmission qualities than traditional telephone lines, both attractive features for those who spend a lot of quality time with their modems. Microsoft believes ISDN access will appeal to more than just business users.

"A lot of people who use online services get a second line (specifically for that service), and they pay $30 to $40 for that line," Jain said. "From what the telephone companies are saying, for about $30 to $40 per month, you can get an ISDN line."

ISDN lines have indeed become more affordable in recent years due to lower rates at the local level. The Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs, better known as the "Baby Bells") have dropped their basic ISDN rates substantially in recent years, bringing the high-speed access within the reach of the average residential user (in some places). Ameritech, an RBOC serving the Midwest U.S., charges less than $35 per month, plus 5.2 cents per minute (for prime time access) for an ISDN line in Illinois. Bell Atlantic, which serves the Atlantic seaboard, charges around $36 per month, plus five cents per minute, for an ISDN line in Maryland. (The rates generally fluctuate by state and/or area.)

Microsoft officials are also exploring cable-based access with partner Tele-Communications Inc. (TCI), the number one cable service provider in the U.S. The companies are jointly developing cable-based delivery of the MSN, Jain said, and early tests of the service could begin as early as next year. (CompuServe, America Online and Prodigy are all now testing cable-based delivery services as well.) There are several major advantages to cable-based delivery of online services, including near-flawless transmissions and incredible access speeds. Both aspects are due in large part to the digital fiber-optic lines used by major cable companies to deliver video. For the online service user, these lines can translate into faster download speeds and a generally satisfactory online experience.

For now, MSN is available only through plain old telephone lines to Windows 95 beta testers. The final version will definitely ship in August with Windows 95, Jain said, followed by the other platforms into the next year. Microsoft, of course, expects the service to become nothing less than a major hit.

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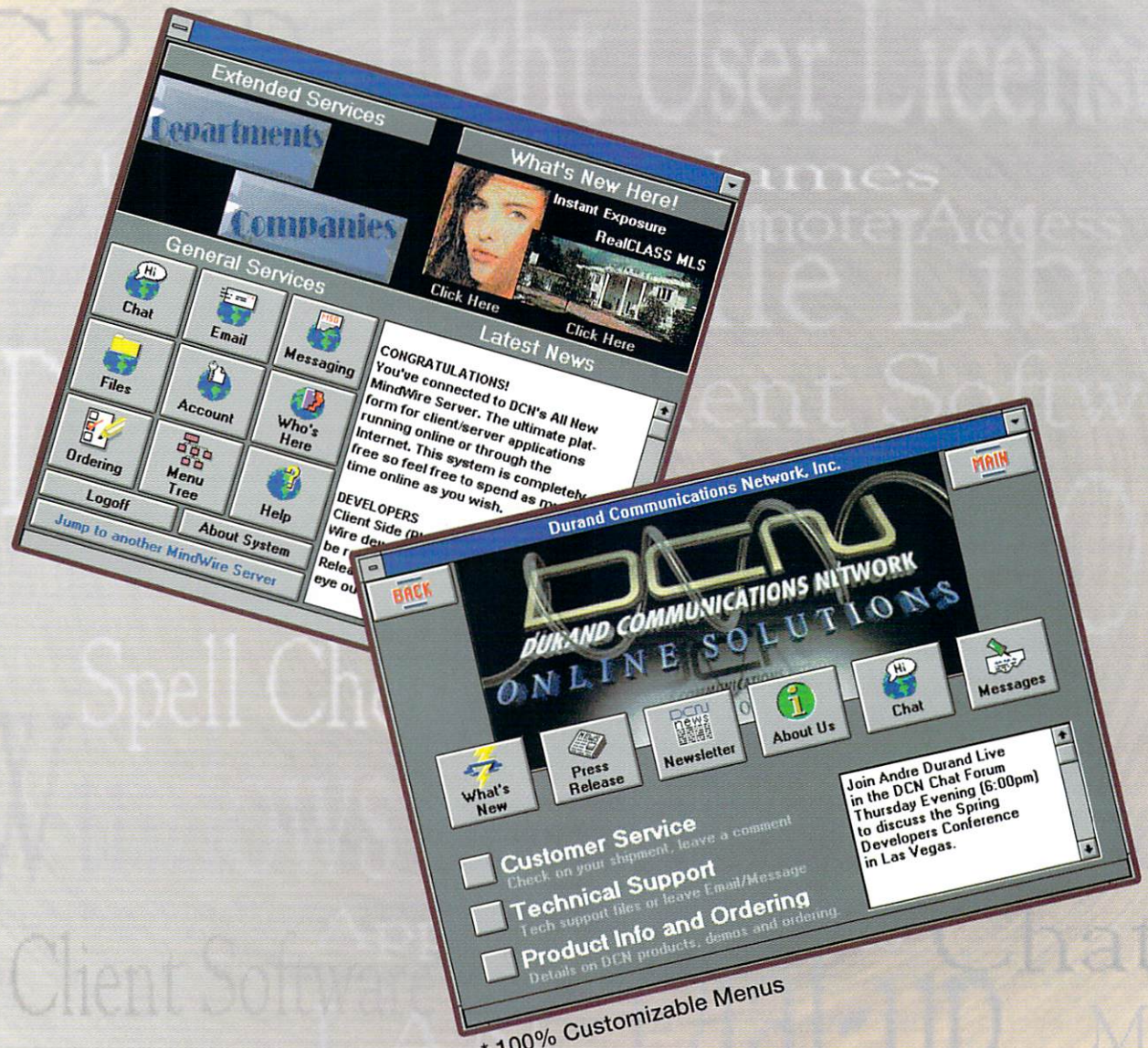

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