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AMIGA User

FEBRUARY 1996 £3.99

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VISA

The largest and most highly praised collection of high quality DTP & DTV PD & Shareware in AMIGA history!

We have seen almost every Amiga CD title in existence and sadly, the general trend appears to be "shovel as much data on as possible and to hell with the quality". The majority of these CDs are also developed as multi-platform CDs and while this may be advantageous for the company selling them, the end user is faced with a CD containing a high proportion of files that he probably can't even use. So what is left? A CD containing loads of badly organised directories filled with low quality (in some cases even pathetic) graphics. Being a little disappointed, the user then looks in the font directories and finds... a massive task on his hands... he has hundreds of fonts (that are probably duplicated many times) and no way of knowing what he's got! The poor end user is then literally forced into loading each individual font into an application, just to see what fonts he's actually got! If that wasn't bad enough, he then, quite possibly, discovers that most of the fonts have missing and/or corrupt files!

Some of these "so called" CD developers even get away with "shovelling" data from their old CDs onto new ones and releasing the new CD as "Professional". We could go on and on and on, but why bore you with something you already know? We genuinely feel that the current situation stinks and we at EMC are aiming to set the standard on which all data CDs on the Amiga will be judged. A big claim you say? Well, here's a brief insight to what is included on the EMC CDs and how the data is organised...

Firstly, these CDs are aimed directly at Amiga users, and are not designed for multi-platform computer use. This means that you don't get CDs loaded with PC files that you cannot use! To aid in the rapid location of font, clipart and image data, each of the 3 CDs contains IFF font preview screens for every font (regardless of its format), you simply click on the preview icon to see the font! The clipart and image directories have been fully sorted and all directories include full IFF preview thumbnail index screens (and also descriptive filenames). Purchasers of the CDs will also have the option to buy a typeface book, published especially for the EMC CDs, containing font printouts!

The price for each CD is £24.99 + £1.00 UK p & p

For first class recorded Airmail to Europe add £4.00 p & p & Rest of World add £6.00 p & p

The third disc - ***EMC - PHASE 3*** - will be released on... ***Monday 15th January 1996***

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EMC-PHASE 1 CONTENTS...

FONTS	**Type1 EMC 4,5,6,7&16 - CG EMC 8,9,10,23&24 - ProDraw EMC 18,19&20 and 52 IFF Clipfonts**
CLIPART	Fully sorted into sub-directories (number of directories listed in brackets).
IFF	Animals(114), Fantasy(27), Music(12), People(73), Religion(12).
IFF Col	Birds, Cars, Cats, Dinosaurs, Dogs, Fish, Horses, LionKing, Music, Planes, Reptiles.
EPS	Animals, Buildings, Computers, Food, Logos, Office, People, Transport, USA, World.
IMAGES	In IFF 16/256 colour and HAM interlace formats.

Animals, Balloons, Blake7, Cars, Conan, Dragon Lance, Fantasy, Horses, Natural, Planes, Racing, Renders, Reptiles, SnowScenes, Space, Star Trek (TOS&Movies) Trains & over 67 MB of 736 x 566 IFF 16/256 colour Video Backdrops.

OTHER STUFF

Pagestream3 updates from 3.0 to version 3.0H, Complete Opalvision2.3b update, 19 additional third party Opalvision utilities, Typesmith2.5a update and Demo, Pagestream2 Demo, 18 really useful Utilities and heaps of other stuff!

94% AUI *"should be considered essential for the CDROM library"*

9/10 COMPUTING *"This is an excellent CD" "... it is superbly organised" "...vitually impossible to flaw" "...you need this CD"*

90% SHOPPER "STAR BUY" *"... ideal for DTP and DTV users" "This is a very useful CD" "Well polished and presented"*

90% FORMAT "GOLD" *"A dream CD for DTP fans" "This is a damned fine CD and a must for DTP enthusiasts"*

"If you only ever buy one Amiga fonts and clipart CD, E.M.C's Phase 1 is the one to go for!" **EM magazine**

EMC-PHASE 2 CONTENTS...

FONTS	**Type1** EMC 17, 27, 29 & 77 - **CG** EMC 25, 26, 30, 31 & 82 - **Colour** EMC 48 & 49 and 71 Imagine Type1 Fonts.
CLIPART	Fully sorted into sub-directories (number of directories listed in brackets).
IFF	Alphabet(4),Borders(16),Buildings(6),Cartoons(17),Computer(7),Education(5),Electric(6),Food(90),History(5),Natural(59),Space&SciFi(3).
IFF Col	Fruit, World Maps (of every country on Earth!), Ships, Vegetables.
GEM	Arrows & Stars, Borders, Buildings, Clipart, Office, OtherStuff, Photo, Transport.
IMG	Animals, Cartoons, Food, OtherStuff, People, Plants, Sports, TheArts, Transport, Xmas.
IMAGES	In IFF 16/256 colour and HAM interlace formats.

America, Babylon5, Birds, BorisV, Britain, Dogs, Egypt, EQuest, FamousPeople, Girls, Kelly, Military, NightBreed, Panorama, People, SciFi, Terminator, Textures, Star Trek (TNG), V, Water Scenes, Wildcats. World, WorldPeople & over 70 MB of 736x566 Video Backdrops in IFF 16 & 256 colour formats.

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RELEASE DATE: 15TH JAN 1996

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CLIPART	Fully sorted into sub-directories (number of directories listed in brackets).
IFF	Events(45), Military(26), Misc(33), Sport(37), Transport(35), Work(37) and World(41).
IFF Col	Flowers, Insects, Mammals, Trees, Xmas.
IMAGES	in IFF 16 colour, HAM interlace and IFF 256 colour formats.

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INDEX
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FEBRUARY 1996 Vol.10 No.2

AMIGA User International

CONSTANT FACTORS

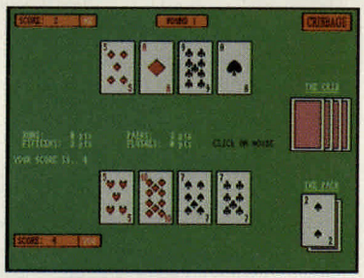
5 The Amiga Dimension
Managing Editor Antony Jacobson comments on the perils of going on line if you want people to like you and the problems of upgrading in a throwaway world.

8 SuperDisks No.75 and No.76
With this month's SuperDisks you can take the latest Fastview, speed up your Workbench, reduce your memory overheads, and even fly through the air with the greatest of ease. Oh yes, and you can control your life with EpochOrganiser. A couple of real bundles of joy say Imdad Shah and David Ward who provide the goodies and the guidance.

16 NewsFile
Ever on the look out for what's new, what's good, what's strange, what's bad, and what's not, the NewsFile team keep their ear to the grindstone, their nose to the wheel, their shoulder to the trail, and their backs to the wall, to bring back to *AUI* those titillating items that no-one else would dare to print. Laying the world of computing bare in all its fetid and feverish foolishness and fun, Anthony Mael and Martin Witton, with help from David Ward, publish and be damned - the NewsFile.

80 Amiga Answers
If you have a technical question, if your Amiga leaps about and burps, if what you want is not questions but answers, then you have come to the right place. It is Professor Andy Eskelson, Guru of the Riddles of the Amiga Sands, who will rescue you and bring calm, peace, tranquillity and other spiritual rewards to those who consult the *AUI* Amiga oracle. The Amiga Answer Machine is yours to switch on and boot up.

97 The PD Stakeout
Free gratis and virtually for nothing, PD continues to surprise and delight. Value for money? As they say in the shareware world, so David Ward assures you, you ain't seen nothing yet!



102 Write to Reply
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30 CD Round Up
Is the time coming when the floppy goes the way of the five and a quarter? As more and more software appears on the 650Mb medium, David Ward test drives the latest batch for the Amiga.

34 Hard Drive Made Easy
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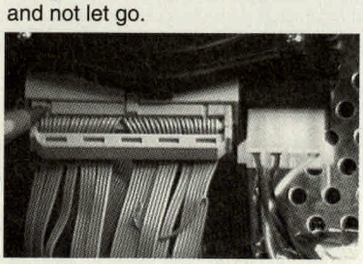
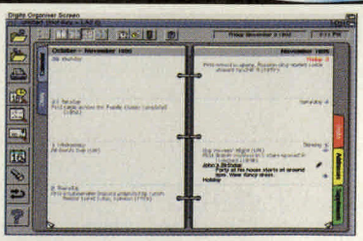
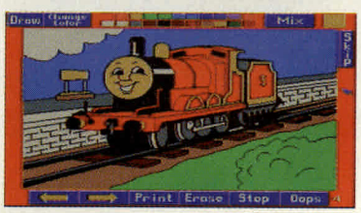




38 Organiser 2
Digita know the meaning of the word "feedback". Taking careful note of what the users have said, they have come up with a new version of their popular 'phile-o-facts' as David Ward calls it, that gives it a jump up the version ladder.



40 Character Painting
Two packages for the price of... two. Martin Witton gets Sooty and Thomas the Tank on his side in the Picasso Stakes.

41 Clipping It
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42 Cinema4D
Is it a bullet is it a bird? No, it's Gary Fenton, flying star of the screen staging a personal preview for you of what might just be the biggest Amiga graphics hit of the year - Cinema4D.

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48 Hard Driving *Part II*
Alan Lewis continues to show how the complications of the hard drive can be made simple if only you know how. In this second part of the series you should certainly learn the know how.

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94 Entertainment Now!
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46 ARexx Advice
Combining some smart programming tips with some helpful hints on how to get the best out of ARexx, Paul Overaa gives you the benefit of his expert advice on how to make it easy, and work!

AUI SERVICES

41 Back Issues
Despite being desperately ill, you crawled down the road, coughing and spluttering, to get to your local newsagent for a copy of *AUI*. They were sold out. Of course. You should have subscribed, shouldn't you? You still want that issue? Here it is - put aside just for you, and your £5.

104 Arena
The Arena has been expanded still further to fit the huge number of eager companies wishing to show off their stunning products. Peruse and choose.

111 Advertisers Index
Where you can find those who want you to know what you want to buy when you need something to help you know more about the Amiga.

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Martin Witton, ever willing to sacrifice his body and even his mind to the demands of duty and pleasure, again leads the intrepid ***AUI*** team out to investigate the strange, and stranger, happenings and products that populate the rapidly approaching TechnoWorld.

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...And What They Used

Commodore's Amiga 500, 500+, 2000, 3000, 1200, CD32, Almathera's Photogenics and Parnet, Arnor's Protext, ASDG's Art Department Professional 2.5, Canon's BJ-20 BubbleJet, Commodore's 1942 and 1084S monitors, Citizen's Swift 240C, Consultron's CrossDOS, Datel's Action Replay MKIII, Digita's Wordworth 3.1, Discovery Software's Grabbit, Epson's GT9000 flatbed scanner, Electronic Arts Deluxe Paint IV, Gold Disk's Professional Page 4, GVP's A530 Turbo, GP Software's Directory Opus 5, HiQ's 1500, John Velduis' VirusChecker, JVC's HR-D980 video recorder, Micro-System's Scribble!, Macro-System's VLAB, OpalTech's OpalVision, Paravision's SX1, Philips CM8833-II monitor, Supra's V32/288 Fax Modems.

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The Amiga Dimension

While there is no doubt that the impact of e-mail is becoming more noticeable everyday, much of the rest of the Internet activity would fail to impress an objective observer. But who is an objective observer? Most of us fall into one of two categories. Either we are avid fans of the whole on-line scene, and see it as a huge change and benefit to the whole human race, or we are left cold by the idea of communicating across the world in ways that neither seem agreeably human nor particularly useful to the rest of our lives.

Years ago when we started a communications column in ***AUI***, the first in any Amiga magazine outside of the USA, the unfortunate outside contributor - we did not at that time possess a modem, then a somewhat exotic addition to an Amiga - soon found his position extremely uncomfortable. Not only were "Comms" always bottom of the list of preferred articles in every Readers Survey we ran, but when this technically first class yet somewhat inhibited individual found himself bombarded - at home - with all sorts of unpleasant and even insulting remarks he didn't like it at all.

Those who were on-line then took it upon themselves not only to criticise ***AUI***, which they were perfectly entitled to do, but also to hold us - him - responsible for all the woes of the other magazines which, at that time, hadn't ventured onto the Net. Worse still, however, for him was the fact that apparently though Commodore had created a consciousness of the on-line communications with its encouragement of Compunet, an on-line service in which CBM was closely involved, it refused to make contact with the other on-liners. They, incensed at this, took out their fury on our less than thick-skinned Comms man.

This avalanche of badmouthing proved such a strain for him that he informed me that he was ending his association with the Net forthwith. Further, he was so severely affected by the experience that, long before the present-day trend - this was back in 1988 or 1989, he was selling his Amiga and buying a PC, where, he said with some dignity, he would look for users who were more civilized.

Now my experience of Amiga users is that they are very civilized. They are a gathering, almost a family, who are less aggressive, less grudge-bearing, than any largely youngish male group I have known. Yet let them loose, in those days, on-line and they could, and did, blow away the faith in humankind of our, it's true, somewhat sensitive Comms man.

It appears from this, and from a number of other aspects that are emerging about this "Next Big Thing" in computing, that free access to such a medium doesn't always appear always to bring out the best in people. Which is why some non-fans of the Net are still non-fans.

Someone said to me that the people who go on the Internet are like those who sit by their telephones anxious to make their frequently less than well-informed opinions heard on radio phone-ins and, he went on, "Would you really like to be in communication with them all the time or even a part of the time?" Not true?

Many people won't be convinced about the usefulness of the Net until they see a purpose that fits their normal lifestyle. And that isn't to chat to people with whom they wouldn't converse usually. That objection might be overcome by events, such as happened after the recent Budget from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was claimed that immediately following the Budget speech there was a "traffic jam" on the Net, when surfers flooded the Treasury's computers trying to get details. Apparently the servers were "utterly swamped" and, as a result, those who called up the Treasury found themselves facing frozen screens. There were, it seems, 40,000 "hits" in the first hour in contrast to 1994 when the service was first tried out when there were 33,000 during the first week, which shows the growth going on.

Now if getting all the gen on the Budget is what you want, then getting on-line will be what you will do, sooner or later. Although one of the problems is still the clumsiness of the logging-on procedures. As we report in the NewsFile, NetScape, who have made browsing easier, have become a company worth billions. If someone, NetScape or some other bright spark, invents a way that avoids all the annoying technicalities of the Net then they too will take home billions.

A PC hardware supplier recently told me that more people were buying Pentiums than were taking the trouble to upgrade their 386s and 486s, even though he was able to supply Intel "Overdrive" upgrade chips. "They don't upgrade." He said. "They don't want the bother. And that's why the modem is a problem. They don't want to mess around fitting things. They don't do it with cars."

He's right. We don't fit a new engine unless the old engine has blown up, do we? Given the choice we simply buy a new car. Until modems come automatically fitted into all computers, and they are easy to work, by no means everybody will want to go on-line.

Antony Jacobson
Managing Editor

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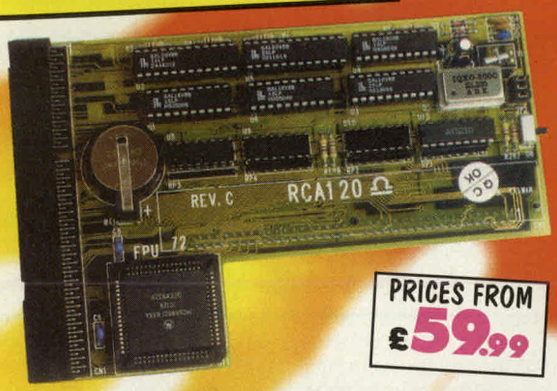

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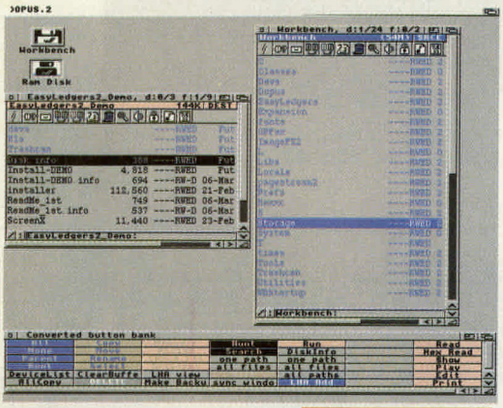

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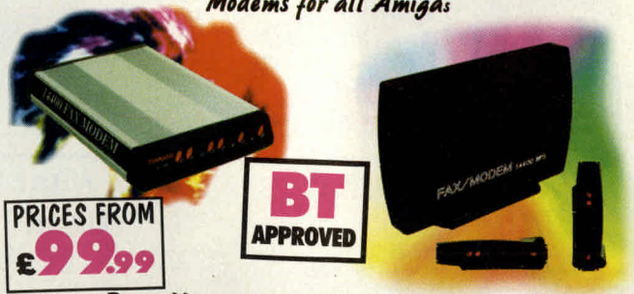

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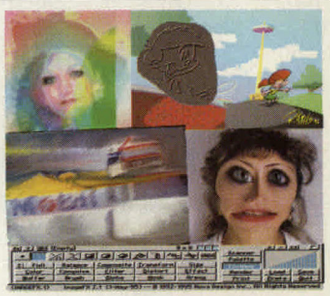

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AMIGA User INTERNATIONAL

The Great AUI SuperDisks No.75 & 76

This month we have a selection of games for those of you who have just got a brand new Amiga for Christmas, plus a load of handy utilities for all you old hands out there in Amigadom. Imdad Shah does the explaining, while David Ward provides the tea and sympathy.

AUIFEB96a

The Great AUI Games Disk No.1

Charlie Chimp Special Edition '96

Remember the 70s when platforms were popular? Don't you wish you could still wear them? Then came the 80s when you could not move for platforms on the 8-bit machines. Now we are in the 90s äand they are making a comeback. This may be the first platform game of 1996 with an added twist.

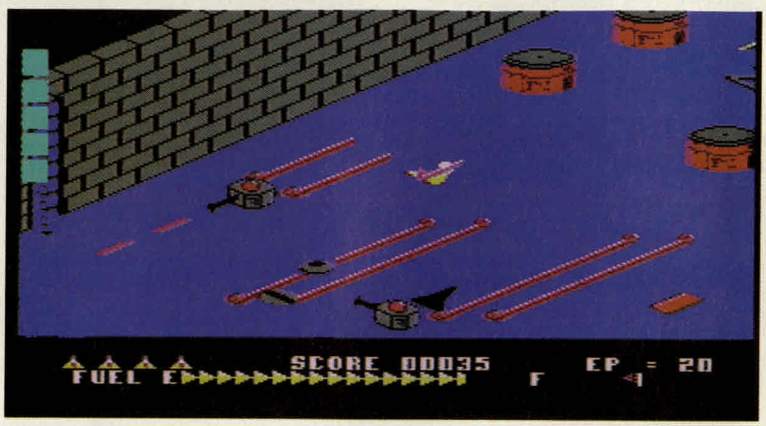
Charlie is a serious chimp with a serious mission. He doesn't like to be messed around. He has to paint every level (in order to save the world?), but he is not without his problems. There are nasties around who just cannot resist being troublesome. Obviously Charlie has come well prepared, as he does carry a weapon if things get hairy. One tap on the fire button and Charlie will thwack the nasties should they come in contact with his racket.

The main objective is to paint each level, first with primer, then with an undercoat, followed by the final coat (Are you ever a very good decorator!), and then anything else you do is a bonus. Have fun!

AUIFEB96b

The Great AUI Games Disk No.2

If you are using the following programs from your hard disk and if you have a computer with CPU caches, such as the A1200, A3000, A4000, or any other machine with an accelerator card, then be sure to switch them off.



Floppy users worry not, as they are automatically turned off in the startup-sequence.

Zaxxon

This brings back some memories. Do you remember this 8-bit classic on the Commodore C64? On the old BBC Micro, if we are correctly informed, this game used to be called Fortress.

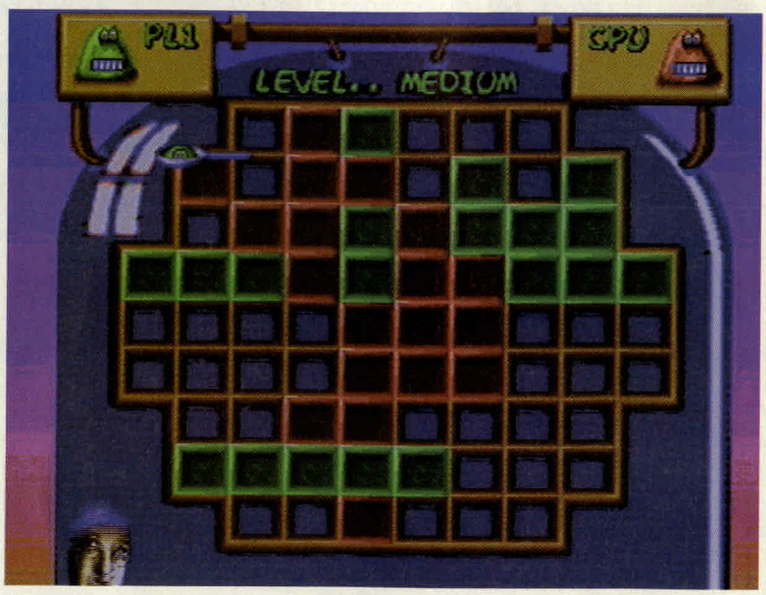
It is a shoot-em-up, but of a very original style. The screen scrolls horizontally like a shoot-em-up, but the game is played from an isometric point of view. This does make it quite difficult as it is not easy to judge the position in which you are.

The aim is to survive till the end, as most games. Since you are in a state-of-the-art fighter, remember to keep an eye on your fuel as the plane sure does consume a lot of it. Shoot everything that moves and anything that doesn't. Destroy the fuel tanks to get extra range.

Good luck and may the force be with you today and tomorrow.

Jelly-Othelly

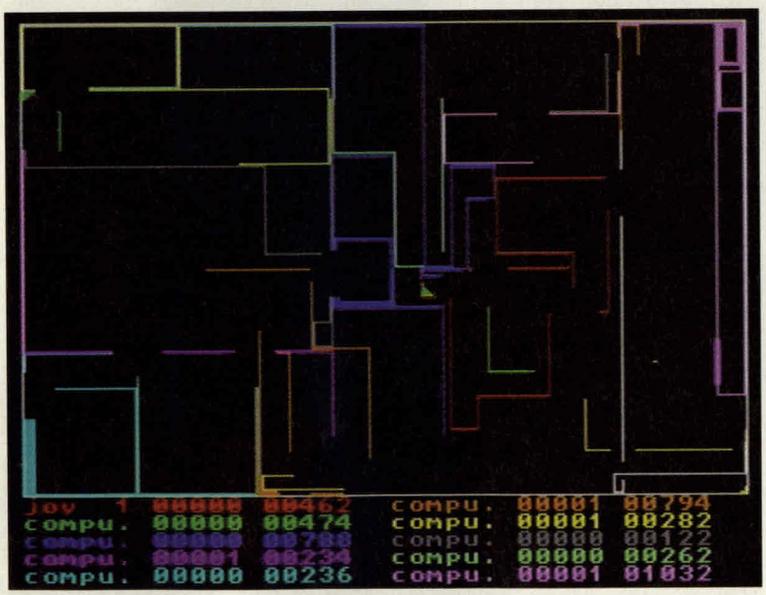
To describe this in one word - Othello. No, not the Shakespearian play, but the famous board game. So where does this jelly bit come into it? The author decided to jazz up the old classical



Othello (the board game), and bring it into the Nineties, with some gelatinous graphics. The sound effects are amusing, and you'll never look at Othello in the same light ever again.

MegaTron

It seems like this one is a blast from the past as well. Cast your mind back to the Disney film TRON, with all its visual effects, in the mid-Eighties. Marvellous in its time - they made a computer game of it, but never as good as the movie. This game was possibly inspired by the film. There is a superb multi-player feature, so you could get a bunch of your best friends over (who will probably become your worst enemies at the end of the day) to battle it out.



There are lethal weapons and other devious devices with which to equip your alter ego. Be warned not to trust anybody when you are playing this Mega-Tron. They may not look it, but you'll see that everybody has a hidden sly side to their personality.

AUIFEB96c

The Great AUI Games Disk No.3

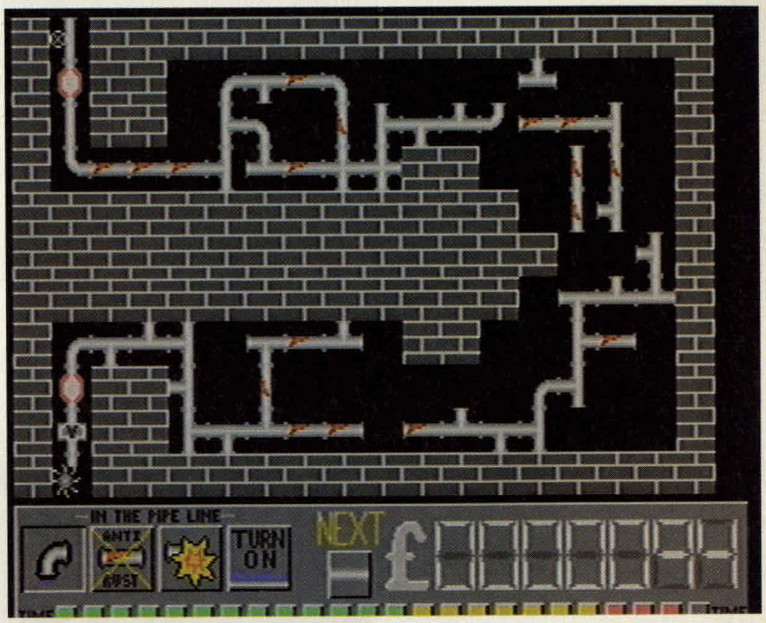
In The Pipe Line

Do you fancy a bit of plumbing? Here you have to do what most people hate - DIY. Someone's given you a plumbing job and, as you needed the cash, were silly enough to accept. Little did you know that the job is not as easy as you first thought.

You have to lay down pipes of different shapes from one end of the supply to the destination. The problem is: all the pieces are all mixed up and are given to you in a random order by your trusty plumber's mate - the computer. Seems like it is doing that on purpose, but what can you do?

If you thought that was enough to worry about, think again. While you are deciding where to place the pieces, water starts to leak and rusts the pipes. I always thought water pipes were made from lead or copper, which do not rust. Then there's the time limit in which you must complete your tasks.

Seems difficult? It is.



AUIFEB96d

The Great AUI Games Disk No.4

Coala

What? A Coala? What is that doing here? This is a demo of Empire Interactive's helicopter simulator, and not an animal as you may first have suspected.

First, you will need a 68020 processor, or better, to use the demo. The A1200 is a good candidate to run it, however, if you are running it without any fast RAM, don't expect to have silky smooth frame rates. Since it is a simulation, the game puts a lot of hard work the CPU's way, so the better equipped your Amiga is, the better the game will feel. It is a fully playable demo and a little difficult at first. Full instructions are on the disk. Open it from Workbench and load the instruction into a suitable tex viewer.

AUIFEB96e

The Great AUI Utilities Disk No.1

Atom

You have an AGA machine, how about an AGA demo then? Okay. Nuff said. This is yet another 40k demo, it seems they are getting popular these days.

Auto Assign

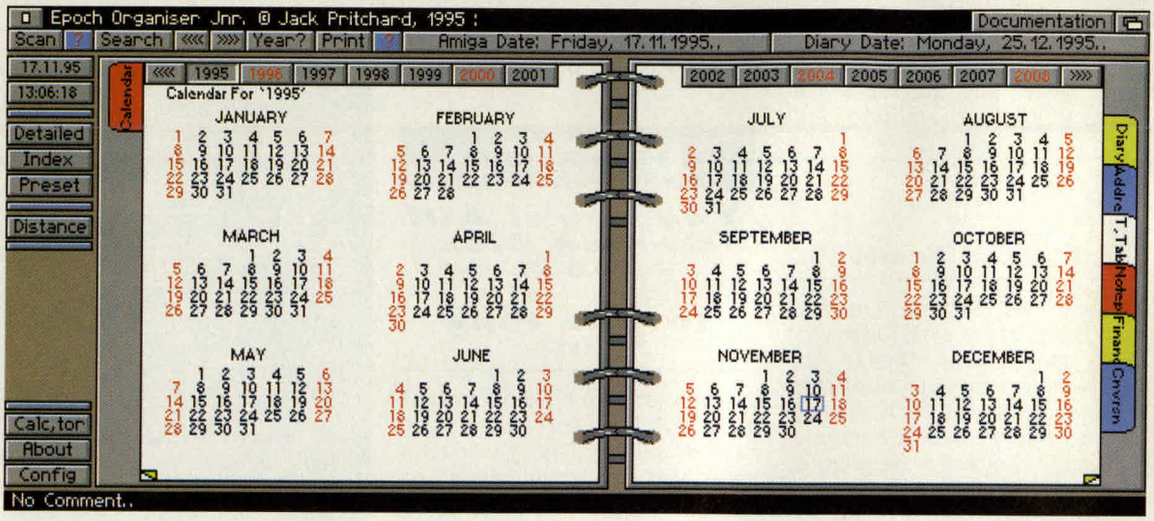
If you find that your system has too many assigns, many of which are rarely used, then AutoAssign will be the answer for you. It makes an assign for you only when an assign is referenced, or rather when it is about to be used. The idea of this program is to reduce your memory overheads as unused assigns absorb ram.

DCoMBB

DCoMBB stands for Double-Click on Middle Mouse Button. If you have a mouse with 3 buttons, the middle one becomes double click. Every time you press the middle button, a double click event will be generated. This is equivalent to pressing the left button twice.

Magic Frames

MagicFrames is a small utility which improves the look of the GUI when it is running on screens that have a 1:1 aspect ratio. Small is beautiful.



Rem Mem

If you are a programmer, then you may agree that the hardest part of any project is testing. It is very frustrating when you have bugs, but do not know how to invoke them (in order to identify and remove them). If you have a check list of conditions to put your programs through, then eventually you may find them, otherwise it's back to the source-code!

Some bugs are caused by low memory, this is a phenomenon few people consider and therefore may overlook. RemMem simulates low memory environments for you to run your programs through their paces.

Good luck, and find those nasty bugs!

FastView

This excellent utility was on a fairly recent SuperDisk, but this version is the latest release of the best picture viewer for the Amiga.

With a plethora of non-native graphics formats making their way over onto our platform, it is useful to have a single program to view them all. IFF may be the Amiga standard, but JPEG (.jpg) is beginning to challenge it for 24-bit images. And with PC images as GIF (.gif), PC Paint (.pcx), and bitmap (.bmp) files, being found on many of the CD-ROMs available to properly equipped Amiga owners, there is a need for a quick viewer.

FastView handles all of the above, along with HAM8, even on OCS/ECS machines (non-AGA for the uninitiated). A major advantage of this viewer is that it can resave the on-screen image as a standard IFF. So it is also an image conversion utility.

DFree

If you were looking for utility that tells you how much space is free on a given device, then DFree will make your day. Look no further, DFree is here, free, for you to be able to calculate just how much free space you have.

DFree

This short, but sweet, command gives you information on DMS archives. If you don't know what they are, here's your chance to find out.

Break

If you are sick of the old Commodore break command, as it does not support multiple arguments or a whole host of other features then fear not as Break - the revenge - is here. This is a direct replacement for the old command, and it contains all the features that Commodore did not include. Poor Commodore could hardly get anything right, except the Amiga.

PC2AM

PC2AM is a CLI based command which converts special character codes of PC ASCII to text so that they can be used on the Amiga.

MCCommands

MCCommands is a collection of invaluable utilities by Michael Letowski, who feels these should be part AmigaDos.

BootLog records the time and reason of a reboot.

ChangeFont replaces the dull Topaz font with one supplied by the user.

ClickStart allows you to customise AmigaDos to suit your own preferences.

DoThus is a command for multiple arguments.

Examine looks at a file using datatypes.

RXControl alters the internals of the Arexx interpreter.

Time measures the how long a command takes to execute.

Touch only allows modifications to files according date.

Lots of goodies here.

SmartWB

Feel the need for speed? ***AUI*** is not offering to buy you a brand spanking new Ferrari F40. The ***AUI*** office Ferrari is already being used. If, though, you would like to give your Workbench a bit of a boost up the carburettor, then SmartWB is your cup of herbal tea.

Once running on your machine, SmartWB will speed up the Workbench window refreshing. This, in turn, makes the Workbench run faster!

AUIFEB96f

The Great AUI Utilities Disk No.2

EpochOrganiser

If at times you are disorganised, perhaps EpochOrganiser could solve your problem.

EpochOrganiser is a neat piece of kit which makes your day to day events easier to manage. It has a built-in diary and address book, so never again will a telephone number or someone's address go missing. Also integrated into the package is a calendar and notepad if you just want to jot something down. This little bundle makes for a very clever and useful program.

Don't Get Left Behind

The 1200 is now the entry level computer and so many of the programs on the SuperDisk will not run on a basic, 1Mb, A500+. There are quite a few games that are about to come out that will not even run easily on a standard 2Mb A1200.

*Don't blame us at **AUI**. Like the rest of the world, Amiga users have to move forward and discard obsolete technology. You are unlikely to see PC software for MS-DOS only, it's all Windows 95 now. With the Amiga it is Workbench 3 and AGA. That's the way the "industry" is going and we have no option but to follow. that path*

If you are still using a stock 7.14MHz 68000-based Amiga, with 1Mb of RAM, Workbench 1.3, then tough, you'll find that precious little new software will run on your system - commercial or shareware. Come on, move forward! If you want to keep up with what is happening with the Amiga, then you must upgrade to at least the new entry level machine, otherwise, if you get left behind we can't help you.

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DISK INFORMATION

Additional Information

Floppy Users

You can install to any disk except this month's SuperDisk. When prompted, insert your spare disk into df0:, the internal drive. The time taken to install a disk varies.

Hard Drive Users

Now you can install directly to your hard drive. Boot SuperDisk No.73 as you do for floppy installation, and select the disk you wish to install. When asked whether you wish to install to floppy or hard drive, select 'h'. You will be given a list of available devices and the space on them. Bear in mind that over 2 and a half Megs of space are required to install the whole set of disks.

The SuperDisks will install an exact copy of the floppy disk, **AUI**FEB96x, to a subdirectory of that name. This includes startup-sequences et al. Delete any unnecessary files. Note also that the icon information default tool in the documents will need changing or the reader 'least' will need copying from the c directory in the subdirectory to the c directory on the partition you have installed to (not necessarily sys:c directory).

You cannot install to any path that contains the following letter sequence: "df", "pc", "ds", "ram", "cd". This is to avoid any confusion with other Amiga devices. It is not a good idea to have partitions/directories called this anyway.

Expert Users

The installation directly to hard drive should mean that manual installation would take you longer now. It therefore seems little point detailing this. Should you wish to, remember that SuperDisk No.75 is a diskspare disk and requires this device to read them and that the commands are stored in superdisk75:c/commands.lzx.

Viruses

During the production of our coverdisks the disks were constantly checked for quality. While disks are checked for viruses, it is always safer to virus check the disk prior to installation.

Shutters

Prior to installation you should check the shutter of the disk to ensure that it has not been damaged in transit. This is best done by gently sliding the shutter to the left and allowing it to spring back. Please note that ***AUI*** nor Publisher cannot be deemed liable for any problems arising from use of the disk.

Disk Return

In the unlikely event your disk is damaged or simply doesn't run, please return it to the duplicator, Tib PLC, Tib House, 11 Edward Street, Bradford, BD4 7BH, (who may be contacted on 01274 736990) together with a stamped addressed envelope. Where it is a duplication fault, the postage will be returned along with the replacement disk.

Technical Support

Ring our duplicator's technical support line on 0891 715929 (weekdays 10.00am - 12.30pm, 1.30pm - 4.40pm). They may be able to offer useful advice. Calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p at all other times. Please ensure you have the permission of the phone owner before making the call.

A Plea

We have gone to every effort to make the SuperDisk easy to use and to ensure that all the programs work on as many systems as possible.

We regret that we cannot take any telephone calls concerning SuperDisk problems. They are just too time consuming and then we wouldn't have time to put the next SuperDisk together for you.

If you do have a problem, try the docs again and refer to your manual, should you need to move any libraries or assign any programs. If you are truly stuck, please write to Amiga Answers.

BBSs

Much Gratitude to Jimbob, the supportive Sysop of the excellent Waltons' Mountain BBS, on 0181 891 5730. Faulty Towers shouldn't be omitted, available on 01235 535113. If you want to be truly international, then check out the splendid American BBS Smorgasboard, on 205 745 3989.

Readers' Contributions

AUI's SuperDisks are crammed with the cream of Amiga crop. Many of the programs are created especially for us and released into the Public Domain through ***AUI***. It's you the reader that makes it possible for ***AUI*** to continue to share top quality software with tens of thousands of avid Amiga users.

If you have a masterpiece that you think can cut it with the best, send it to: SuperDisk Contributions, Amiga User International Magazine, Unit 2, Utopia Village, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LX. Alternatively, you can send your programs uuencoded by email to amigauser@cix.compulink.co.uk.

It's best for us if you don't use Powerpacker, because we use LZX to archive, which is far more efficient. It will also help if you tell us which libraries or fonts your program requires, keeping them to a minimum if possible. So, if you're sending an AMOS program for example, try to avoid the need to have the AMOS library separately. These guidelines make life jolly for everyone.

Happy compiling!

Shareware

Just a brief reminder that some of the programs on our Coverdisk are Shareware. This means that you can try them out, but if you regularly use them you should send a registration fee to the author. Registration fees are between £5 and £20 and sometimes the author will send you the latest version in return. You can send an International Money Order, or preferably a cheque but many authors don't accept cheques if they are outside the UK. If you want to risk sending cash in a registered post, it's up to you. We wouldn't advise it but it's your money...

Note that some of the authors don't want anything more than a postcard from you so they can see how far their programs have travelled. So, why not make their day. After all, they made yours.

Compatibility

These SuperDisks are WorkBench 2 and above only, and require one Meg of Chip RAM or more. We deem this to be the minimum spec Amiga used nowadays. That doesn't mean that we aren't aware of users with 1.3 Amigas. The reason is simply that most new programs, certainly those developed by PD programmers, require WorkBench 2 and because it allows us to give about a further 300-400K of data. Getting over four Megs onto two disks isn't possible with OFS disks and decrunching them would require more floppy disks on your part. WorkBench 2 gives much more than a new WorkBench disk, it powers up your Amiga, radically renovating your Operating System. The only option for 1.3 users is to upgrade. The cost is negligible (c.£50), and is more than worth it for the wealth of new programs on offer and for the money you'll save on floppy disks!

All the programs on these disks work on an A1200 and most on an Amiga 500+. The best way to check is to read the docs and try the game. Should you require additional libraries for the program, they should be enclosed in the program directory and you need to copy them to your libs:directory on your WorkBench disk.

Read your WorkBench manual for instructions on doing this.

Should it all go horribly wrong, please WRITE to Amiga Answers at the address shown in the Answers section. DO NOT RING! We cannot answer queries over the 'phone. Sorry.

Documentation

All the plain documents can be read simply by double clicking on their icons. The text will scroll, use the mouse to control it and press Escape to quit. If the docs are in AmigaGuide format, you'll need a computer that can read AmigaGuide files in order to read them without all the nodes showing.

The docs can also be loaded into any Word Processor that reads ASCII, which is just about all of them.

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M018 MONEY FOR NOTHING - DIRE STRAITS HIT SONG
M027 BLUES HOUSE (2 disks)
M029 SAFE SEX DEMO - Very funny
M031 BETTY BOO (2) needs 2 drives (brilliant)
M058 SGT PEPPER (2D)
M072 MADONNA - Hanky Panky Song
M084 C64 GAMES MUSIC
M115 MAHONEY & KAKTUS 2 - 40 tunes compilation
M125 ADAMS FAMILY
M150 TIFFANNY - I Think We're Alone Now
M171 MADONNA - (Like a Virgin)
M173 JANET JACKSON - RHYTHM NATION
M177 PET SHOP BOYS
M184 SAM FOX (Please Me)
M186 MADONNA (Rescue Me)
M188 JOE LE TAXI
M189 MICHAEL JACKSON (Smoot Criminal)
M194 JESUS ON E's (2 disks)
M205 DAVE - More Rave
M262 A TO Z OF C64 GAMES MUSIC (4) Brilliant
M314 DICK TRACY (Madonna) (2)
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U427 PRINTER-STUDIO excellent print results
U599 PRINTER TOOL - includes typewriter, spooler etc
U792 PRINT LABELS print disk labels/banners
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U794 SEIKOS STUDIO - for all Seiko printers more specific printer driver for the above printer
U733 PANASONIC STUDIO - 9 & 24 pin printer driver & util
U734 CANON PRINTER STUDIO not A500 (1.3)
U735 PRINTER STAR 24/200 FONT DESIGNER - shareware
U782 CITIZEN PRINTER MANAGER for all Citizen printer owners containing many useful printer util & drivers
U884 CANNON PRINTER STUDIO -f or all models for use with Cannon printers
U757 150+ PRINTER DRIVER largest collection

VIDEO TITLERS/TOOLS

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U431 VIDEO APPLICATION (2 disks) many video titler prog
U250 VIDEO TOOL (3) loads of video utils. Recommended
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U965 VIDEO MAXE V4.33 .The latest in video
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U923 VIDEO MANAGER (Not A500 1.3) Video cataloging system
U925 Video Titler - very good video titler

Top Various Utilities

U024 D-LOCKS proctect your disk & files
U027 ULTRACAT + SUPER paint & 3D model programe
U029 CAN DO programming language
U046 DARKSTAR no2 (vol 2-5) load of util
U058 DISK MAG CREATOR created disk magazine
U117 NORTH C compiler (2) brill programing language
U122 SID 1.6 copy/delete/move file made very easy
U131 TETRA COPY play tetriz while copy disk great
U135 MOST USE UTILITIES (2) very useful util coll
U145 XCOPY PROFFESIONAL very powerful disk copier
U146 C-MANUAL 2(4) Teach you how to programe in C
U159 PAINT AND ANIMATE create your own animation
U170 BIORHYTHMS V4.01 display your own biorhythms
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U187 M COMPUTER AID DESIGN - Was commercial product
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U282 LAND BUILDER create realistic landscape.
U294 COPY & CRUNCH-best create disk your software
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U324 GRAPHIC util 2(3) more graphic tool
U333 SCENERY MAKER more lanscape generator
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U335 FREE COPY best copier commercial games
U337 MODEL 3D Brilliant 3d object designer
U338 MULTI VISION (2) disk/files utilities
U339 HACKER MANUAL - ultimate hacker tool
U350 POOL TOOL-predict horse with best chance
U351 RACE RATER Similar to above. but both
U358 STAR CAT 2-create catalogue disk easy
U359 SEEKER find lost file on flopy & Harddrive
U360 R.P.G (2) adventure creator
U363 DISK REPAIR KIT-salvage & repair damage disk
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U425 NIB 2 very popular copier
U436 The RIPPER COLLECTION(not WB3) lot ripper
U442 SYSINFO test & print info on your AMIGA sys
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U495 HARD DISK UTIL bril collection of Harddisk util.
U496 EASY PRINT (A500only) lot of print util
U498 WORK-MATE-15 brilliant disk util compilation
U501 THE MUSIC CONSTURCTION KIT(state amiga own)
U504 HOT-STUFF-more util disk compilation
U505 HARDDISK-FILER & DISK-RESCUE/REPAIRE KIT
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U509 ULT BOOTBLOCK 40+bootblock generator/maker
U510 ULTIMATE DISK UTIL-BLOCK collection II +more
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U555 CROSSWORD CREATOR (not WB3) crossword maker
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U569 ICON ready made (4 disk)
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U591 DEGRADER (not WB 1.3) A500 emulator
U592 KILL AGA-make older programe run on A1200
U600 C64 EMULATOR II util. & document
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U747 ASTRUM V2 planet predictor(astrology) new font
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U751 SYTEM CHECKER TOOL must for any Amiga owner
U753 HARD DRIVE UTIL+lot more Hard DRIVE UTIL
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U755 PRO CAD electronic.latest circuit board designer
U758 WB MENU LAUNCHER-menu system, easy to use
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U761 ROCKIT 1.4 latest WB1.3 emulator
U762 FAKE FAST MEMORY make more older software run
U777 TELE TEXT RECIEVER project. highly recommend
U781 DISKTRACE V2 display information why wiame programe refuse to run. also monitor Amiga activity. RECOMMEND
U783 POOL WINNER GOLD must for all gamber
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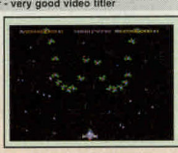

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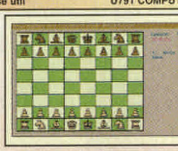

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GAMES

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G303 DIMENSION X 2 player LIGHT CYCLE GAME
G310 NEBULAR Excellent 3D shoot em up
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G320 GHOST-SHIP Very good 3D adventure
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G435 ROULETE amercan roulete excellent
G438 TRAILBLAZER C64 conversion
G441 E-TYPE 2- very good asteroid great graphic
G443 OLEMPIAD DISK (2D) Olympic sport events
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G448 PARACHUTE JOUST guite playable
G455 CARRIER COMMAND VG graphic adventure.
G460 WIBBLE WORLD GIDDY Large platform game
G467 CASH FRUIT- good fruit machines
G478 AMOS CRICKET cricket games
G488 EXTREAM VILONCE 2 player battle out
G489 ENGIMA MACHINE very challenging puzzle
G490 MEGA BALL 2 playable break out clone
G491 BOUNCE & BLAST brillant platform 10/10
G492 ZOMBIES & DEFENDER 2 fantastic games
G494 MERCENARY SIMULATION 3D wars games
G499 LIFE -simulation very interesting
G500 TRANSPLANT dozen of level fast arcade.
G501 KLANZ THE KT-great platform games
G511 HIGHWAY HELL like SPY HUNTER on the C64
G531 OPERATION FIRESTORMS-brillant
G534 CASTLE KUMQUAT similar to Alien breed
G535 BLACK DAWN brillant graphic adventure
G538 MORIA 5.4 The latest Dungeon & dragon
G539 BRIDGE Good version of bridges
G540 ORK ATTACK bloody adventure
G541 REBOUNCE 2 player futuristic breakout
G542 ROAD TO HELL brillant car racing
G544 SUPERTED CAT new platform shoot em up.
G545 KUNGFU CHARLIES mix with platform brill.
G546 RAID 4 latest vertical scroll shoot em up
G546 GUIZMASTER very good quiz programe
G552 ELEVATION games base on lift ???
G560 IMPERIAL WALKER -Base on STAR WAR games
G567 STREABALL 13 (2D) Bril like MONKEY ISLAND
G657 AMOS LOADSA MONEY best FRUIT-MACHINES
G659 MR MEN OLYMPIC (2D) many event to complete
G660 4 LCD DREAM 4 small hand held games
G664 NEIGHBOUR GAMES (2D) base on the TV series
G665 TIME RUNNER (WB2/3) Brillant graphic
G667 GOLF (2DISK) One of the first & decent GOLF
G668 AMOS CRICKET 2 New Amos cricket simulator
G669 MUGSY REVENGE gangster graphic adventure
G672 JIGSAW (2DISK) very playable jigsaw games
G673 BOBBY GARDEN + DIGGER (NEW) Brillant
G674 HIGH OCTANE Fast car racing (notwb1.3)
G675 TIME RUNNER amazing graphic adventure
G680 SPACE-INVASION 2 - Fantastic Galaxain
G681 AUTOMOBILES - PD version of SKID MARK bril
G682 BANDIT MANIA - Brillant fruit machine demo
G685 PROJECT BUZZ BAR -Brillant asteroid
G689 GUN FIGHT (not A500(1.3)
G690 THE REAL POPEYE 64 (a500 1.3 only)
G692 SYSTEM DEFEND-Brillant Defender clone
G698 AMIGA-BOY-Game boy emulaor + tetriz
G732 DETHELL IN SPACE. Recommed.
G735 OVERLANDER Brillant arcade MOON ALERT
G737 SERIOUS BACKGAMMON The best in PD BG
G771 STAR WOID (2 Disk) brillant Thrust
G772 INSENSIBLE SOCCER very similar to Sensible scoccer games. RECOMMEND

101 GAMES 2

PRICE ONLY £10.99
This is the very latest all new 101 games compilation pack 2 containing some of the very best in PD games like Zeus, Wonderland, Dragonfiles etc. Much too many to list.
COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGAS

All games are selectable from an easy to use menu & most games come with full playing instructions

G772 FRUIT MANIA -Brillant Fruitmachine.
G774 TRICKLE TREAT -like DOOM on the PC
G775 FOOT-BALL MANAGER-new version
G782 SOLO ASSAULT 3D like Elite Commander
G783 SEED OF DARKNESS-Brillant graphic adven
G784 NANO FLY Superb explore game RECOMMEND
G785 THE GREAT GOLD RAID- very addicted
G787 ANT WAR V1.9 (LATEST) not 1.3
G788 ZENO-MORPH -Great grafic
G789 TASK FORCE very good MIND SHADOW clone
G790 GREEN FIVE Amazing 3D graphic like
G791 PROFFESIONAL BINGO CALLER
G792 MARTIAL SPRIT like Street fighter II
G798 6 EXCELLENT CARD GAMES collection
G809 BLITZ 2 fast action shooting games
G810 EXIT 13 Brillant puzzle
G811 TEMPORAL MISPLACEMENT-graphic adventure
G812 ADAY AT THE RACE-V.Goodhorse racing games
G820 BOULDER ORIGINAL with 80 level
G821 BOULDERDASH cave/level Construction kit
G822 BOULDER COLLECTION 2/3 160 level (2disk)
G839 BOULDER PACK with 640 level on 8 disk
G860 ALIEN NET WORK-new Spacing invader
G862 BATTLE FORCE excellent text adventure.
G863 GNU CHESS the best chess with 10 level
G866 SWORD OF YGG Graphic adventure
G867 POWER-TETRIZ for 1 or 2 player
G868 SUPER SMASHING TETRIZ
G870 CHESS II & CHECKER One of the best around must for all CHESS or CHECKER player
G871 GRAVITY FORCE 2 1 or 2 player thrust clone
G872 SCHNEBITZ Commercial quality puzzle games
G875 DELEXE GALA v2.3(new) add new feature & bouns games + 2 player RECOMMEND get it now
G876 THE KRILLIAN INCENDENT like ELITE2/Epic
G878 QUANTUM-Maze colect & escape type games
G879 RAG TO RICHES - like MONOPLY

NEW 101 GAMES PK 3

New 101 pack 3 contains over 100 games, runs on all Amigas, only £11.99 offer buy any 2 packs together & receive a free £4 token for use with next order. This offer cannot be used with any other offer current & subject to condition apply.

G884 WIPE OUT-mindless blasting gamse
G885 GODZILLA - another shooter up
G886 SUPER MEGA FRUIT- All new Fruit Machine
G886 DRIVING MANIAC 3D (fill vector like Indi500) car racing- very fast. RECOMMEND
G889 PLANET FALL - Luner Lander clone
G891 BUCK TOOTH ADVENTURE Very good multi level shoot/collect-em up RECOMMEND
G892 PENGO 2- Maze type games. Recommend
G893 SUPER OBLITERATION Blast asteroid very similar to PANG 2 lot of weapon RECOMMEND
G894 SUPER INVASION II -New SPACING INVADER
G897 THE SHEPERD Brillant POPULUS clone. REC
G898 ALIEN ECOLOGY 2- Shoot aliens set in space.
G899 PUCKMAN. One of the better PacMan arround.
G900 SUPER-BATTLE ZONE.3D (not WB1.3)
G901 MA*S*H a (STWAR 2) play very similar to LEMMING & WORM, with load of Weapon (Brillant)
G904 LAST SOLDIER (2) multilevel platform games
G905 CUBESTECH (2) excilent ALIEN BREED Clone
G906 HANGMAN any one for a game?
G907 ACE SPACE nice Platform games
G908 COLOURMANIA slide/klatriz type puzzle games
G910 HARRY-HADDOCK- Brillant platformer games
G912 MANGLE FENDER -Brillant, Smash up other car/tank ect win, extremly addicted. get it
G913 ARCADE GAMES CLASSIC Vol 1 & 2 (2d)
G914 HELICOPTER-play like Desert strike
G915 CAPTAIN STARS -Very addicted 2 player games
G916 ISLAND -Play like Monoply.
G919 COP THE LOT Pro Latest Lottery preditor
G920 LOTTO PRO-Version 2 - Much improved version
G921 MONOPLY (board games) The best Monoply
G922 JET WILLY 3 - excellent platform games
G923 FLAMMING ENGINE-Superb car racing
G924 POWER PLATONES. Great Brillant shoot
G925 SUCIDE-MACHINE Operation wolf style
G926 ZAXXON 3D Superb C64 3D blaster games
G927 BOING V3. Great platformer, recommend
G928 PUNTER-Animate horse racing games
G929 ARCADE JIGSAW (2d) include LION KING
G930 WHEEL CHAIR GLADITOR-Very fun to play
G931 NIMBLE-Brillant New arcade puzzle.
G933 BLACK DAWN 3- THE NEW BEGINNING (2)
Superb 3D adventure. RECOMMEND
G934 R3 ROCKET (NEW)very good rockets games
G935 BATTLE SHIP- the finest PD version
G936 LAST LAP - Fast car racing

GAME HINTS & CHEATS II

Play your favourite game for age? but can't get to the end of level or game? Having problem with some games? 5 disk pack with 1000s of games cheat/help/level code action replay poke etc., should help you finish many games – suitable for all Amigas only £4.95.
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E020 WORD DATABASE require (2+meg)
E021 STORY LAND II interact puzzle games rec
E022 LANGUAGE TUTOR teach you 4 language
E023 TALKING COLOURING BOOK talking Dpaint bril
E024 EASY SPELL improve your kid spelling
E025 SCRABBLE require 2-4player. brillant
E026 WORDS can help you solve the crossword
E027 OSWALD very colourful large cartoon game
E030 EVOLUTION breed your own hybrid
E031 IQ TEST + IQ GAMES pack 1 excellent
E033 TYPING TUDOR very good typing tudor
E035 CHESS HELPER help/teach how to play
E036 BASIC TUDOR learn about Amiga basic Prog

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Collection of the very best of education programs and a 21 games pack, a very popular combination for kids (run on all Amiga) 5 disks pack only £4.95

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E039 COMPUTER CARE how to care about AMIGA
E040 GUIDE TO LOWER BACK PAIN tuition the spine & how to back pain. (recommend)
E041 KID ALPHABET display all alphabet letter
E042 FRACTION & SILOUEST maths & games excellent
E043 MATHS teach/test you more on maths
E044 STEAM ENGINE V2 graphic & tutorial
E045 PETROL ENGINE tutorial & animate graphic
E046 GAS TURBINE ENGINE tutorial & anim graphic
E047 STIRLING ENGINE tutorial & anim graphic
E050 DREAM FOR ANGEL explain the meaning of dream
E051 INSIDE WORLD brillant recommend
E052 FISH TANK turn your amiga into a FISHTANK
E054 DEMOLITION MISSION simple game for kid
E055 WORD POWER solve crossword puzzle ect good.
E056 CORK HOLE simple game ideal for children.
E057 APPLE CATCHER catch falling apple brillant
E058 CROSS MAZE & CRYPTOKING 2 excellent kid games
E059 VERB QUEST learn verb & it related. Bril
E061 KING JAMES BIBLE (4d) complete bibles excel
E066 TARROT clairvoyant in a instance
E068 GALLOW fancy a games of hang man?
E070 MATH DRILLS teach all basic math skill Vgood
E071 ERROR INFO give info why your amiga crash
E075 WORLD-WAR 2 graphics tutorial on WORLD-WAR releate program eg simulate Starprobe/ molecube/ ect
E076 SCIENCE an excellent collection of science ideal for all who interesting or studies in science recommend. this pack come on 4 disks
E080 KIDPRIX great children paint programme.
E081 ASTRONOMY PACK - This is a amazing collection of programe relate to astrony. can help to locate certain or star position ect. must for anyone who studies astromy or hobby. great (4DISK)
E073 PICTURE & LETTER learn to reads- first step
E074 AMIGA BEGINER GUIDE tutorial on Amigas
E085 NODDY PLAYTIME demo >Very good
E080 KID PIX more excellent paint programes
E081 D.T.P FOR KID easy to use, excellent
E092 SING & RYHMES sing a song
E094 HIGH WAY CODE TUTOR question on highway code
E096 READ & LEARN (2D) THREE LITTLE PIGGY Story
E097 BACK TO SKOOL vol 1 collection of the best
E098 BACK TO SKOOL vol 2 in education programe
E099 BACK TO SKOOL vol 3 & games. RECOMMED
E100 LITTLE TRAVELER imfomation on world wide
E101 WORLD GEOGRAPHY world with map & text.
E103 DISCOVERY OF THE ATOM. tutorial on the Atom (2D)
E104 DESK TOP PUBLISH V2 MUSIC(3D) guide & tutorial
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E108 HOW TO DELOVOPE PHOTO 1 (2) Excellent
E109 MR MEN OLYMPIC (2D) many event to complete
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E112 HOW TO DEVELOPE PHOTO 2 (2) delevope your own.
E115 ELETRONIC-TUTOR(5DISK) Complete Kdames BIBLES
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E121 PICTURE PUZZLE brillant JIGSAW type games
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KID DISKS 1,2,3,4,5

Excellent collection of education programs. Ideal for teaching kids various subjects while retaining the fun & game element. 5 disks only £4.99 or order separately for only 99p per disk. Order Code KID DISK & No. 1-5

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E126 CHILDREN SONG 2 contain 5 excellent song
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E161 CLI & SHELL TUTOR (help) Ideal for beginner
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E163 JAPANESE-Help you learn japanese language
E164 PAINT IT (not A500!.3) latest COLOURING BOOK
E165 KEY BOARD TRAINER An excellent typing tutor.
E166 WORD PROCESSING keyboard solver/teach
E168 CROSSWORD CREATOR-design crossword
E169 CHESS II & TUTOR brillant Chess II games
E170 HISTORY GUIDE TO COMPUTER(2D) brillant & funny
E171 CHILD FAVOURITE-Education prog
E172 ANIMAL LAND-Learn about animal
E173 FRACTAL GUIDE TO COMPUTER(2D) brillant & funny
E177 CYBER PUNK 2 for cyberPunk freak only
E178 STAR-TREK & STARTREK NEXT GERENATION GUIDE THE COMPLETE GUIDE COME WITH HUNDREDS OF SCREEN SHOTS TAKEN FROM THE STAR-TREK SERIES. SUPERB
E181 SIGINTURE CREATOR customise your own siginture.
E182 VIRUS WORKSHOP V4 comprehensive guide
E184 IMAGINES VIDEO 2disk
E185 WORKBENCH 2/3 GUIDE On line help/Complete
E210 LEARN & PLAY 3 Latest Education & Games
E240 BARNEY THE BEAR GOES CAMPING (2d) Brillant teach your child about animal
E241 COMMS GUIDE V1.1 beginner modem user
E242 GUIDE TO WEATHER (3d) superb complete guide to the weather. recommend
E245 MATH ATTACK- Maths relate games for kids
E242 ANIMAL-KINGDOM A fun amazing collection
E243 PICTURE-MATHS-Maths program for kids
E246 BEGINER GUIDE TO WB 3 (A1200 only)
E247 GLOBE FACTS (2) fact about planet earth
E248 KID ONLY. 6 excelent game to play with
E250 SANTA -Help Santa collect present games
E251 BIRTHDAY HISTORY V2.2-
E252 BAR-TEND

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Special offer C64 v3 and 45, 100, 200 games pack with extra 55 C64 games making 400 C64 games & utilities disks. Comes on large number of disks + games list and loading leaflet. Only £24.99.
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AGA A1200 & A4000 ONLY

THIS LISTING ARE FOR USE WITH AGA AMIGA

AGA001 EXTENSION DEMO Stunning demo, fast landscape anim and a rotating city, regard the best AGA demo
AGA002 FRACTAL GENERATOR fractal in 256 colour.
AGA003 WORKBENCH HACK many hack/toy/blanker etc
AGA006 NEW SUPER KILLER know kmow & kill over 316 type of virus must for all A1200 owner
AGA007 MINDWARP very first demo for the A1200
AGA008 KLONDIKE DELUXE AGA (3D) the best A1200 card games with glamours lady as cards face 18 + only
AGA011 SLEEPLESS NIGHT 3
AGA012 PLANET GROOVE Truly A1200 Demos
AGA013 MOTOR INVADER 2 (2D) Brillant INVADER gane
AGA015 POINT OF SCALE Great A1200 only demos
AGA016 CHROMAS- Fairly good demo.
AGA017 WORLD OF MANGA (4DISK) magnificent Japanese comic slide show include Japanes Chick etc recommend
AGA021 MAGIC WORKBENCH Improve the look of your WB & add some function to your WB really BRILLANT
AGA022 WB 3 UTILITIES load of Wb 3 only utilities
AGA023 U-CHESS the best chess program games so far but require 4 megbytes. Brillant graphic
AGA024 WORKBENCH 3 SCREEN Great back drop
AGA41 ADULT SLIDE Vol 1-9 (2 disk each) *see below
AGA62 BODY SHOP VOL 1-7 (2 disk each) *see below
AGA80 FITCHICK vol 1-3(2disk each) *see below
to order any disk above just state disk code & volume no? (remember 2 disk per volume)

DEGRADER

AGA090 A1200 FIX DISK COLLETCION 1
AGA091 A1200 FIX DISK 2 COLLETCION 2
AGA094 RELOCKIT V1.4a latest. run A500 SOFTWARE
AGA306 A1200 FIX DISK VOL 3 (new july 95)
All disk above are design to make any old A500-A600 Amiga programs/games etc to run on your A1200/A4000 MUST FOR ALL AGA AMIGA OWNER. RECOMMEND

AGA097 A1200 UTIL - AGA TESTER, SYSINFO etc
AGA098 ACTION REPLAY V4 Complete ACTION REPLAY.
AGA099 MADFIGHTER 2 brillant street fighter clone
AGA100 AGA BLITZ SCREEN BLANKER
AGA101 FAST GIFF 2 display GIFF pic In Workbench.
AGA102 AGA DIAGNOSTIC - NEW system tester
AGA103 BLACK BOARD AGA decent image processor
AGA105 QUICK GRAB AGA -grab AGA screen PICTURE
AGA110 WORLD BEYONDS 1 (3) stunning 256 COLOUR fantasy art. leave atari userbreathless
AGA114 SMELL LIKE CHANEL NO5 brillant demo
ray trace picture ever release on the A1200
AGA121 MAGIC FACTORY 1 STAR TREK (5 disk)
AGA133 AGA UTIL v1&2 (2) AGA util compilation
AGA135 AGA UTIL V3 &4 (2) more of above
AGA137 MULTIBOOT- 4 various version A500 EMU
AGA138 OFFICIAL WORKBENCH 3 HARDDRIVE INSTALLER
AGA139 WB3 HARDDISK PREF & INSTALLER installing
AGA140 CROSS DOS PLUS v5.1 read/write PC files
AGA142 SUPER LEAGUE 3 -latest manager games
AGA144 SPEAK & SPELL - educational software for kid
AGA145 BIG TOPS (18 + only)HMMmm
AGA146 KELOG LAND -brillant platform games
AGA150 ACTION REPLAY V5 - NEW UP DATE TO V4
AGA160 GIGER TRIZ very playable 256 colour tetriz
AGA162 FATAL-BLOW new STREET-FIGHTER 2 clone
AGA164 CINDY CRAWFORD Vol1 (2 disk) latest release
AGA166 INFESTATION (3 disk) The ultimated AGA demo
AGA170 CINDY CRAWFORD Vol II (2disk) amazing
AGA172 VIDEO TRACKER AGA-ultimate demo maker
AGA174 MAGIC WB EXTRA vol 1 & 2 (2disk)
AGA180 GIF BEAUTIES Vol (11-18) 8 more girls disk
AGA189 FRIDAY AT 8 another brillant AGA demos
AGA190 ASSASIN MULTIVISION AGA pic viewing util
AGA192 ALIEN FRENZE 2 player blasting +power up
AGA194 BIG TIME SENSUAL (2disk) SPACE BALL 2
AGA200 MASQUERADE 2disk brillant puzzle games.
AGA202 RAM JAM 94 it cat be done (2disk)
AGA203 EXPLIXIT 2 DEMO new effetc welldone.
AGA204 COMPLEX ORIGIN 2disk require 2 diskdrive
AGA206 TREASURE OF TUTANKHAMUN- eductaion tool
AGA230 LOVE 2 disk-simply brillant DEMOS
AGA231 AGA UTIL 7 & 8 (2 disk) ,More USEFUL util
AGA234 KNOTTY-Stunning AGA sliding pictre puzzles
AGA240 LOTTERY WINNER hope fully will improve your chance of winning a jack pot..GOOD-LUCK
AGA241-258 AGA GAME-GALORE AGA 01-18 lot of games
AGA251 PACKMAN AGA -the best pacman yet
AGA252 ROCKET PD - Super thrust clone brillant graphic for 1 or 2 player
AGA253 REAL DEMO stunning special effetc
AGA254 DIRT AGA Brillant 256 colour effetc.
AGA255 DELIGHT EXPLORE excllent demo
AGA256 KEFEREN AGA Demo lot of effetc
AGA257 MINOMIST RAVE great rave music.
AGA258 OXYGENE Fantastic demo
AGA259 INTEL-OUT another very good demo
AGA260 SOMEJUSTIC94 Demo of the month brillant whirl effetc. RECOMMEND
AGA262 TO THE DEATH very good STREET-FIGHTER clone with very good graphic.
AGA263 GEORGE GALAXO (2disk) brillant multilevel shoot/platform game. RECOMMEDN
AGA265 MISSILE OVER ZENON (2disk) Brillant 3D missile commander with fantastic graphic
AGA266 TEAM-HOI DINO PLATFORM excellent dino platform Note:this disk was a commercial games
AGA274 MUSIC 2 SURVIVE 2disk A excellent music master piece. well worth getting
AGA271 RAVE MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE II (2disk)
AGA278 CHANNEL Z ISSUE 1 (AGA) (2disk)
AGA base disk magazines. RECOMMEND
AGA disk magazine topic.demo/music
AGA285 WORKBENCH BACKDROP VOL 3
AGA295 DE-LUXE MONOPOLY- Board game.V addicted
AGA296 DONKEY KONG Arcade classic conversion
AGA297 BOMB PAC Extreamly good to play
AGA298 ROCKET 2 set deep underground brillant graphic. even better with 2 player
AGA299 SCRABBLE-Now fully run on all Amiga
AGA300 MAGIC WB V2. Demo of version 2
AGA302 TUTANKHAM II(2) Education-Egyptian MUMMY
AGA303 PAMLA.ANDERSON.(2) 18+ only BayWatch Babe
AGA304 BODYSHOP V8 (3) more bikini beauties
AGA305 TIMEZONE (2) V.Good graphic adventures.
AGA307 DENTAWOLF dooms demo
AGA308 NAXIS -Really show what AGA graphic co do
AGA310 FEARS (2d)- dooms clone demo
AGA312 JINX (2d) Fantastic arcade puzzle
AGA313 RAM JAM THE TASTE DEMO.very wicket demo.
AGA315 ILEX MYSTIC. New AGA demos
AGA320 KLONDIKE 3 (4disk) Hd require & 2meg +we aslo have a list of 25 cards for demos.
AGA321 HOT-BABE 1 (2) MUST BE OVER
AGA322 HOT-BABE 2 (2) 18
AGA323 HOT-BABE 3 (2) BEFORE
AGA324 HOT-BABE 4 (2) ORDER ANY
AGA325 HOT-BABE 5 (2) OF THE HOT-BABE PACK
Hundred of quality Magic wb icon & back drop
AGA388 DESK-TOP MAGIC- 32 animated screen blanker
AGA389 WAR OF THE WORLDS -full 3D games
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AGA391 PSSST Amiga version of Spectrum games
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AGA412 CLAUDIA SCHIFFER (3)
AGA413 BIG GIRLS II (3)
AGA414 GIRLS GIRLS (2)
AGA415 NIKY TAYLOR (2)
AGA417 KYLIE MINOUGE (3)
AGA418 FEMALE BODY BUILDER (3)
AGA419 EXCELLENT CARD GAMES 3 latest
AGA420 POKER & BLACK JACK DELUXE (3)4MEG
AGA421 COLOUR WB make your WB more colourful
AGA422 RIDGE RACER Demo on the Amiga,
AGA423 DRUG STORE DEMOS (2disk)
AGA424 DREAM WALKER (2) Demos
AGA425 MYSTIC DEMOS(2) 95 excellent demos
AGA426 ORIGIN 2 (2 DISK), Amazing

← SEE PAGE 1 FOR MORE SOFTWARE FOR YOUR AMIGA

HARDWARE AT UNBEATABLE PRICES

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Half Meg upgrade
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Easy installation full manual included

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Smart Star is an external Hard drive which plugs in to the PCMCIA slot in your A600 or A1200, full work bench installation (please state Amiga owned so we can install the correct WB for your Amiga ready to use.) Order before Christmas and we will include 10Mb of the very latest PD from the Aminet...FREE. Full portability... install remove only take seconds. Highly recommended.

Supplied complete & ready to use (for A600 & A1200) only

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Switch between version of Kickstart on your Amiga with ease, hugely improved software compatibility with the A500 1.3 (just like owning 2 Amiga models in 1). This is the very latest version II. Fitting is very simple, full step by step installation manual is included. No soldering required.

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U390 DATA BASE compilation - best seller to date
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U722 EASYCAL - massive spreadsheet max 92583 cells
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U900 THE MONEY PROGRAM - Accounts
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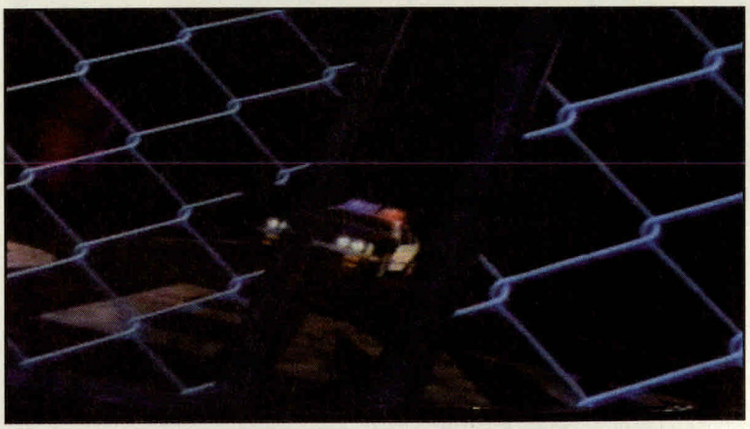
Compiled and edited by Anthony Mael and Martin Witton with help from David Ward

Awesome Amiga Animation



Craig Collins, famous for his exceptional animations on the Amiga, (remember 'Last stand on Hoth' and 'Mean CD Machine'?), has released a short demo reel of his latest work.

Six months of work with Lightwave and his trusty Amiga 4000 has led to him winning orders from a big fx company. As he says "My video proves what is possible with just one Amiga and there is no need to jump ship to the PC."

If you would like to see examples of a variety of animation techniques, including particle and character animation, then send £5 to Digital Light, 19 Jubilee Avenue, Normanton, West Yorks, WF6 1DW Tel. 01924 892726

Pure Genie-is-us

Do you need some ready made scripts to control some of the functions in Professional Page, Art Department Professional, or Pro Draw? If so then Don Cox has a solution for you.

His Genies disk, now available from LH Publishing for £3.50, contains numerous Arexx scripts, tutorials, fonts, and clipart for the serious Desktop Publisher.

Contact: LH Publishing 13 Gairloch Avenue, Bletchley, MK2 3HD

Emplant Improves

Blittersoft have announced the arrival of Mac Emulation Professional, the new module for their versatile Emplant board.

The new software/hardware combination now opens on a public screen, has virtual memory and CD-ROM support, better sound and video, improved multi-tasking and much more.

This price is £39.95 inclusive of post and packing. For more details contact Blittersoft on 01908 261466

Amiga Technologies at Cologne and COMDEX

The second weekend in November saw the first World of Amiga Show with Amiga Technologies in charge of our favourite computer. The show took place in Cologne and AT had a large stand manned exclusively by third-party developers. These included 4th. Level Developments and Interworks.

A number of A4000 tower machines were networked, and several A1200s were equipped with the ubiquitous i-Glasses.

Other companies at the show included Phase 5 with their '060 card and 2-GO DSP board, Maxon Computer with Cinema 4D and a C++ compiler, Haage with their StormC C compiler, and MS Macrosystem showing off the '060 Draco board with XiPaint.

A week or so later, and on the other side of the world, AT were at the autumn COMDEX in Las Vegas. This show, which makes Live'95 look like an exhibition in a church hall, was also blessed by their presence. But only by the courtesy of Virtual I/O whose i-Glasses stand they were sharing.

AT had four A4000 towers on display, including one fitted with an '060 card, along with as many A1200s.

Petro Tyschtschenko, the group's Managing Director, was claiming that 25,000 machines had been sold in Europe so far. And with Christmas now past, that figure should have dramatically increased.

Cumana bought out

Originally known for their Amiga external disk drives, Cumana have, in more recent years, been concentrating on other markets - notably Acorn.

Now they have been bought by Kenure Developments, a contract manufacturer based in Guildford.

Harmony update

Mode 15 have asked us to point out that all new models of their Harmony modem now come with power adaptors fitted with a proper, UK spec., 3 pin plug.

Contact: Mode 15
Tel. 01258 837398

Support. At a cost!

Digital, the huge computer manufacturer famous for its Alpha chip, have launched a hotline to help 'home' computer users solve problems with their set-ups. This could be how to install a game, fix a printer problem, or upgrade a machine. The service is limited to PC.

You have to register for just under £120 and then are allowed five calls per year.

We would like to remind ***AUI*** readers that our Answers section is free of charge. If you cannot wait three months for a printed reply then the enclosure of a stamped S.A.E. will prompt a speedier response.

PowerPC News

Apple is worried that the improving specifications of Intel's chips has eroded the performance difference it had when it first launched the PowerPC chip to be also used by the next Amiga.

To combat this it has asked its partners, Motorola and IBM, to increase their efforts in developing the architecture. They are already redesigning the 640 due to poor performance and build costs.

Apple themselves have funded a separate design company to work on advanced PowerPC designs, as we reported recently, so that it can continue its range of Power Macs alone, if necessary.

All this news comes at the same time that Apple and IBM have closed their joint development labs.

Serial Bus gets faster

In an effort to counter the Intel/ Microsoft proposed Universal Serial Bus, the backers of the IEEE 1394 Serial Bus standard are looking into the possibilities of increasing the data transfer rate to 1.2Gb per second.

The existing standard, which evolved from Apple's FireWire bus, is designed to transmit data at up to 400Mb per second over just two copper wires.

By incorporating technology developed by Sun Microsystems for use in its internal chip-to-chip links, and by switching from copper to optical fibre, it is hoped that the new rates can be achieved.

AT don't announce new Amiga

At a recent Amiga developers only conference, news leaked out of a possible A1200+ machine. The new Amiga is expected to contain a Motorola 68030 chip and have SIMM sockets on the motherboard for extra memory. Coming, but not yet . . .

My First Compaq

Fisher-Price, the giant American toy manufacturers, have allied themselves with Compaq computer to exploit the estimated six million US households that have a multimedia PC and children aged under seven.

The first products are expected mid-1996. For more information you could call Compaq on 001 800 345 118, or visit their web page on http://www.compaq.com

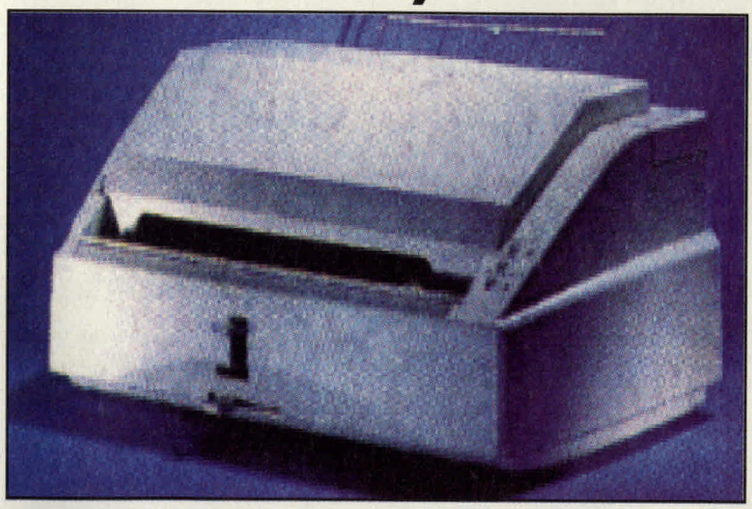
Interactive Sex!!!

Here are the winners of the Interactive Sex competition we ran in the December issue of ***AUI.***

P. Clark of Leicester and N. Duggleby of RAF Laarbruch correctly counted 10 occurrences of the word 'interactive' and 5 appearances of 'sex' in both the text of the ECTS Field Report, and the illustrations.

Congratulations, a jiffy-bagful of floppies from our lucky dip box will be with you shortly.

At last, 720.



Canon have launched a new colour printer to succeed the popular BJC-600e. The new BJC-610 is Canon's first colour 720 dpi machine and uses their four-colour bubble-jet ink technology.

The recommended price has been set at £449 plus VAT, and Canon claim it has the lowest running costs of any colour printer currently on the market.

On-line share dealing

ACL, a division of Mitsubishi Electric, has launched a new on-line share-dealing service. The system is claimed to be the first to allow you to check up on the prices of shares on your computer as they happen.

ESL also runs an on line share dealing system, but this is 'only' updated six times a day. Shares can be bought and sold through Sharelink and City Deal Services using Infotrade. The program costs £69.99, with a monthly fee of £10.

Sharelink is selling it for £39.99, or giving it free to anyone who opens a nominee account with them and puts in at least £5000.

Quick get out your cheque book.

Boost that Bass

Sony have brought out two active (externally powered) speaker systems for the PC, but that doesn't mean that the average Amiga user cannot take advantage of them.

One of the problems many Amiga owners face when they upgrade their 1084 monitor, to a multi-standard hi-res one, is the lack of sound. PC monitors, unless they are expensive multimedia ones, do not have built-in speakers.

These new Sony models, the SRS-PC20 and SRS-PC40, give out 1W and 3W per channel respectively. They are also competitively priced at £29 and £59 plus VAT.

IBM Gets Smart

In the 60s TV series, Get Smart, our hero used to call his boss on a telephone built into his shoe. (The first, personal, mobile phone?) Now IBM Chief Executive Officer, Lou Gerstner, has predicted the imminent arrival of the computer in a shoe.

The idea is that the wearer will have all his relevant data programmed into it. When they meet another 'intelligent' shoe wearer and 'shake hands', data is passed between the two computers via a low voltage connection. A 'personal network' as it has been called.

A computer in a shoe is not a new idea. Previously these devices have been custom built for Las Vegas gamblers so that they can 'cheat' at Blackjack by counting the cards. The user interfaces with the computer via microswitches situated under his toes. He receives information from actuators in the heel. Casinos don't like them!

AA On Line

The AA is now on the Internet with its own web site - http://www.theaa.co.uk/theaa. The web site consists of more than 60 pages of information, from a history of the AA to how to become a member. There are details of the AA's various products and services as well as general motoring information including fuel prices and current press releases.

"The AA's presence on the Internet is expected to grow to become more interactive with the possibility of buying AA products and services directly through the Internet and special pages for AA members only, but we are keen to get feedback on what is wanted from such a service". said Pete Johnson, managing director, AA Commercial Services.

The AA will also be looking at hot links to its business partners and European sister motoring clubs.

The mobile phone is often, these days, regarded as an ace device to have in case of a breakdown in the car, especially for lone women drivers. Now it could turn out that a portable computer equipped with a modem could get you the assistance just as quickly.

Contact: AA, Norfolk House, Priestly Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 9NY
Tel. 01256 20123

Springfield A1200 pack

Caption: Additional memory and a genlock come too.

Springfield Multi Media (SMM), training specialists in video graphics and animation have produced an Amiga pack specially created for video users. The A1200 in the pack has a 170Mb hard drive, a 4Mb trapdoor expansion board, and a LOLA L2000 YC/RGB genlock, which includes intelligent in-built switching, broadcast bandwidth custom processor chip, and professional sliders. The pack is offered together with a half day training session in setting up and using the system at SMM.

SMM told ***AUI*** "Quite often new Amiga users, particularly with video in mind are left to struggle, often buying inappropriate software and hardware and rarely obtaining the full benefit of their purchases. Our new Amiga pack represents excellent value for money by packaging it with additional memory and a superb genlock, together with our training session, to make sure that the new user is all set to gain immediate benefit".

The Amiga software helpful to video users includes Scala MM300 for titling, animation playback and scripting; Personal Paint, for paint and animation creation tasks; and Photogenics for image processing and artistic effects.

Digita's Wordworth word processor is included, as well as a spreadsheet (TurboCalc), database (Datastore), personal organiser (Organiser), and print utility (Print manager) and two games (Whizz and Pinball Mania). Quite a package. Springfield's Special videopack is priced at £1,150.

Contact: Springfield Multi Media, P.O. Box 3158, Danbury, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 4EL Tel. 01245 227588

A.M.I.G.A.

Where might you find French seagoing Amiga users - a group whose passion is sailing taking their Amigas with them? Or where might there be an all girl group called the Northern Beasts? These and others, who may have diverse interests, but have a common passion for Amigas, have banded together to form a new association to supersede the Amiga Club International.

The Amiga International User Groups Association (A.M.I.G.A.) is said to be the phoenix version of the existing association set up originally by the Amiga Club, Roberta Smith DTP, CopyCats, Dancing Frogs, Northern Beasts, Les Chats Noirs, and Amiga Maritimers.

The aims of the Association include keeping in contact with ESCOM, magazines, software houses, freelance programmers, and the exchange of relevent information to keep the Amiga the front runner for home and small business users. There are no membership fees.

Contact: A.M.I.G.A. 190 Falloden Way, London, NW11 6JE Tel. 0181 455 1626

Protect Your Knowledge

In today's portable computer environment, where the office can be anywhere from a train to the kitchen table, there is a need for effective storage of PCMCIA cards which drive laptop computers, according to Fellowes who just happened to have come up with one!

Fellowes, who claim to be the UK's leading supplier of office related products and management systems, have launched the PCMCIA case. This has been designed to organise and protect valuable PCMCIA or PC cards. The slimline case, which is said to provide airtight storage, can hold up to 6 cards and is also suitable for mini disks and credit cards.

Contact: Fellowes Ltd., Doncaster Road, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 1HT Tel. 01302 885331

More Wanted

Amiga users are crying out for more products, according to the Retail Panel of independent dealers, saying "We need more Amiga gear". The panel reported 100 pre-orders for Championship Manager 2 on the Amiga. Big deal.

According to the Panel, consumers are apparently also wanting to know more about forthcoming titles for the Playstation, while the Saturn is generating little interest. It's not surprising that the consumers are expressing opinions like that for Amiga software. New products are scarcer than diamonds in the market today and the general view is that only one company can do anything about it - Amiga Technologies.

Unveiling Will

Will King is promoting one of his products, King of Shaves, featuring a half naked Will Carling on the Internet. "I suppose it brings new meaning to turning on your computer," said King, whose firm KMI is one of the first cosmetic companies to explore global Internet possibilities.

Naked chests are obviously a popular way to promote products. We wonder if Princess Diana is on the Net yet. Keeping an eye on Carling, of course.

BeBox DeLuxe

What the Amiga should have been - could be?

No, not a pop group, the BeBox is a "new operating system and combined supercharged hardware" from Be Inc. The real time system is claimed to have a host of powerful sound, graphics, and video capabilities. It features multiple processors, pre-emptive multitasking, fast I/O, and a wide range of expansion options. Everything, one Amiga developer told ***AUI***, that the Amiga should have had.

The BeBox has been designed to run multiple, high performance, graphics intensive programs, synchronize music and sound, view and edit videos, and access the Internet - all at the same time. It features a built-in database that is claimed to continually store, retrieve, and update key information from multiple sources.

Contact: Be Inc., 800 El Camino Real, Suite 300, Menio Park, CA 94025 Tel. 415 462 4141.

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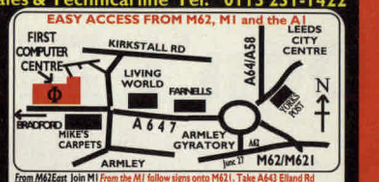

From M62/East Join M1 From the M1 follow signs onto M621. Take A643 Elland Rd turnoff from M621. Follow signs for A58. This merges with the Armley gyratory. From M62/West Junction 27, A62 to Armley gyratory. From the A1 take the turnoff for A64. This merges with the A58 (by-passing town centre) which meets Armley gyratory.

Hardware

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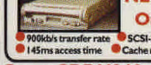

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- 900kb/s transfer rate
- 145ms access time
- SCSI-2 interface
- Cache memory 256kb

Sanyo CDR H94A x2 Speed £125.99

Toshiba 5201B x3.4 Speed £158.99

Panasonic CR504B x4 Speed £189.99

Squirrel SCSI-II Interface *£45.00

*When bought with any HD/CD ROM drive, £54.99 if bought separate

GVP 4008+ H.D./RAM card £99.99

SCSI II interface card for big box Amiga's.

New Low Price

aiwa ACD-300

- Large LCD operation panel
- SCSI-2 interface
- 300k/sec data transfer, 275ms access time
- Audio CD dedicated operation buttons
- Supports Kodak multisession photo CD

ONLY!! £165.99

FREE!! PRIMA Shareware CD ROM valued at £9.99, with every order for the AIWA ACD-300 drive.

"This is the best Dual Speed CD-ROM I've ever seen" Dave Taylor Amiga Shopper 90% Sept 95

SCSI Enclosures

PRIMA These cases are suitable for housing any internal SCSI device, eg CD Roms etc.

Single Case £69.99 Dual Case £89.99

Full range of SCSI cables always in stock, from £9.99

Hard Drives

3.5" Hard Disk Drives with A1200/600 install kit

inc. software, cables and instructions

420Mb..£143.99 540Mb...£174.99

850Mb..£199.99 1.05 Gig...£246.99

3.5" Hard Drive upgrade kit £18.99

Includes set up software, cables and full instructions, no Hard Drive.

New

External Hard Drives for all SCSI aware Amiga's

500Mb £199.99 1.0Gig £299.99

Inc. High quality SCSI-II drive, Inc. PSU, SCSI ID selector, Cooling fan and HD prepping/partitioning software

Requires SCSI interface, ie. Squirrel/GVP

2.5" Hard Drives for A600/ A1200 with installation kit

inc. software, screws, cables and instructions

Seagate FUJITSU CONNER

80Mb.....£89.99 130Mb..£109.99

170Mb..£114.99 250Mb..£139.99

340Mb..£179.99 510Mb..£254.99

810Mb..£399.99 1.0Gig...£599.99

Quantum TOSHIBA

All drives supplied by The First Computer Centre have a minimum 12 month warranty and are tested to ensure 100% compatibility.

Monitors

Microvitec Autoscan 1438

.28 dp, 15/38 KHz, all Amiga modes, AGA compatible. No audio, tilt & swivell stand.

only £274.99

*A1200's require an adaptor £6.99

Amitek 1084 S £199.99

14" Colour CGA Stereo Monitor, Composite Video, Digital RGB, Analog Inputs.

AMIGA M1438S

Amiga Branded Monitor

Same specification as the Microvitec 1438, but also has built in Stereo £299.99

Disk Drives

NEW!! NEW!! NEW!! NEW!!

Zip Drive

- Includes:-
- HiSOFT Zip Tools
- 1 X 100Mb cartridge
- SCSI interface required.

£189.99

Additional 100Mb Zip cartridges £15.99

NEW!! NEW!! NEW!!

AMITEK 1.76Mb

External Drive Only £84.99

The Ultimate Amiga Drive

Amiga External drive £49.99

A1200/600 internal drive £39.99

A500/500+ Internal drive £39.99

A4000 replacement drive £89.99

Peripherals

New Mega Mouse+ 400 dpi (3 button)	£12.99
Mega Mouse 400 dpi (2 button)	£11.49
Essential Mouse 400 dpi (2 button)	£10.99
New! Amiga mouse 560dpi (3 button)	£12.49
New!! Soccer Mouse 400dpi	£19.49
AlfaData Crystal Trackball	£34.99
ZyFi-2 Speakers (8 watts/channel)	£26.99
ZyFi Pro Speakers (16 watts/channel)	£57.99
Amiga Modulator	£34.99
Amiga PSU	£34.99
Roboshift (Auto mouse/j.stick switch)	£9.99
Kickstart 2.04	£24.99
Kickstart 2.05 (for use in A600)	£24.99
CIA 8520A I/O controller	£18.99
68882 Co Pro 25mhz PLCC	£34.99
68882 Co Pro 33mhz PLCC	£44.99

Turbotech realtime clock cartridge £17.99 fits any Amiga

SupraFAXModem

SupraFAXModem 288

- Up to 115,200bps (v42bis)
- Silent & Adaptive Answer
- V34 Standard
- NComm Software
- Class 1 & 2 Fax
- Unique LCD Display
- Flash ROM
- 5 Year Warranty

only £199.99

Is it a bargain the size of a Hippo's Bum? . You Betcha!! - Amiga Computing Oct. 1994

New!! SupraExpress 288

Only £174.99

- LED Display
- V34 Standard
- NComm Software
- Up to 115,200bps (v42bis)
- Class 1 & 2 Fax
- 5 Year Warranty

SupraFAXModem V.32bis

This modem has full 14400 baud. includes V.32bis, V.32, V.22bis, V22, V21, MNP2-5, V.42, V42bis, Class 1 & 2 commands, 9600/14400 Group 3 Fax. Includes free modem comms (not Fax)s/w & cable

only £134.99

Supra modems are not BABT approved, however they perform as well & often out perform BABT approved modems. Supra Modems have a 5 year limited warranty

US Robotics

WE ARE PREFERRED USR DEALERS

Sportster 288

only £193.99

V34, 28,800 BPS, BABT approved

If you thought V32bis was fast try V34 (28,800 bps).

Courier V34+

Dual Standard

£287.99

33,600 bps.

Tabby

only £59.99

The amazing new graphics tablet for the Amiga developed with First Computer. 94% rated in Amiga Shopper. Requires 2.04 WB or above.

Scanners

Power Scan v4. £89.99

256 g/scale on AGA Amigas, 64 g/scale non AGA

Power Scan Col. £174.99

24 bit colour scanner, 16.7 million colours

Alpha Scan 800 £99.99

800 dpi, 256 g/scale, works on all Amigas

Alpha Scan 256 £139.99

256 g/scale,full OCR software,HD req to use OCR

Epson GT 5000 £439.99

Colour flatbed scanner Parallel interface built in. Art Department scanning software, price £99.99

CD ROM Software

New!! 17 Bit The 5th Dimension	£17.49
17 Bit Collection (Double)	£28.99
17 Bit Continuation	£14.49
17 Bit Phase 4	£14.49
17 Bit/LSD compendium 1or2	£16.99
New!! 17 Bit/LSD compendium 3	£16.99
Adult Sensations II (Over 18's)	£17.99
New!! Aminet 8	£14.49
Aminet collection(Aminet 1-4)	£24.49
New!! Aminet collection 2 (Aminet 5-8)	£24.49
New!! Amos Users CD Ver 2.	£16.99
Animations (Double)	£17.49
New!! Assassins 2 (Double)	£17.49
BCI Net 2	£8.99
New!! C64 Sensations	£16.49
CAM (Double)	£22.49
CD-PD 1	£8.99
CD-PD 2	£8.99
CD-PD 3	£8.99
CD-PD 4	£12.99
Demo CD 1	£8.99
Demo CD 2	£8.99
New!! Euroscene 2	£11.99
Fractal Universe	£17.49
Fresh Fish 8	£27.49
New!! Global Amiga Experience	£17.99
GoldFish 1	£24.49
GoldFish 2	£24.49
Grafix Sensations	£17.49
New!! Groliers Encyclopedia 2	£25.99
Illusions in 3D	£8.99
Light ROM	£29.99
Light Works	£29.99
Magic Illusions	£11.49
New!! Meeting Pearls 3	£8.99
MultiMedia ToolKit 2 (2xCD's)	£27.99
New!! Network 2 CD	£12.49
New!! NFA AGA Experience	£17.99
New Price!! Prima CD Vol. 1	£9.99
Professional Gifs	£17.49
Proffessional Utilities	£17.49
New!! Sci-fi Sensations	£17.99
Space And Astronomy	£16.99
New!! Speccy Sensations II	£17.49
The Beauty of Chaos	£13.49
Ten on Ten pack (10xCD's)	£37.99
New!! UPD Gold CD (4 x CD's)	£27.99
New!! World Of Pinups 2	£14.99
WPD Hottest 5	£17.99
Weird Science Fonts	£8.99
Weird Science Clipart	£8.99
Weird Science Animation	£16.99
New!! World Info 95	£34.99
New!! Zoom	£18.99

FREE!! Prima Shareware CD-ROM worth £10 with every order of CD-ROM software over £30

Printers

Canon

Canon BJ30 Portable mono printer, 30 page ASF built in.	£184.99
Canon BJC70Colour Portable colour printer, 30 page ASF.	£289.99
Canon BJ200ex High quality mono printer, virtual 720 dpi.	£207.99
Canon BJC4000Colour High quality colour/fast mono printing 360 dpi.	£289.99
Canon BJC600e Colour Enhanced colour printer, virtual 720 dpi.	£412.99
Canon LPB460 Laser GDI printer, 4 p/p/m, HP Laserjet II emulation.	£369.99

star MICRONICS

Star LC90 9 pin mono ASF built in, push tractor optional.	£107.99
Star LC100 9 pin Colour 180 cps draft, 45 cps NLQ, Amiga drivers.	£129.99
Star LC240 24 pin mono 192 cps draft,with ASF built in.	£123.99
Star LC240C 24 pin Colour ASF built in, 4 LQ fonts.	£145.99
Star SJ144 Colour Colour thermal transfer printer, low running costs, 3 p/p/m mono, 1.4 p/p/m colour.	£229.99

CITIZEN COMPUTER PRINTERS

All Citizen printers have a 2 year warranty

ABC Colour printer £145.99

Simple (as easy as ABC) to use 24 pin printer. Comes as standard with 50 sheet Auto sheet feeder. Tractor feed optional at £34.99

New Printiva 600c

- New Micro Dry print technology
- 600 dpi Colour/1200 dpi mono
- Amiga drivers provided

£399.99

hp HEWLETT® PACKARD

New! HP340 Portable Colour upgradeable portable printer	£224.99
New! HP600 Colour upgradeable mono ink jet/ Col. Kit £41.99.	£242.99
HP 660 Colour New colour inkjet from HP.	£319.99
HP850 Colour 600x600 dpi up to 6 p/p/m mono, 3p/p/m colour	£429.99
New! HP 5L Laser printer 4 p/p/m 600 dpi	£449.99
New! HP 5P Laser printer 6 p/p/m 600 dpi	£715.99

EPSON

New! Stylus Colour II 720 dpi, 4ppm Black, 2ppm Colour.	£335.99
New! Stylus Colour IIs 720dpi, 2.5ppm Black, 1ppm Colour.	£270.99
New! Stylus 820 720 dpi, 2.5ppm Black, Colour Upgradeable.	£234.99
New! Stylus Pro 720x720 dpi, Photo-Real quality output.	£499.99
EPL-3000 Laser Printer 4ppm, 300 dpi, 1Mb memory, 150 sheet ASF	£439.99

The perfect accompaniment for a high quality colour printer

NEW! GTX-5000 colour flatbedscanner ONLY!! £439.99

We would be happy to quote you on any make or model of printer that may not be listed.

Miscellaneous

Printer Switch Box 2 way	£12.99
Printer Switch Box 3 way	£17.99
Printer Stands (Universal)	£4.99
1.8 Metre printer cable	£4.99
3 Metre printer cable	£6.99
5 Metre printer cable	£8.99
10 Metre printer cable	£12.99
Parallel port extension cable	£9.99

Consumables

Ribbons

Citizen Swift/ABC mono	£3.99
Citizen Swift/ABC colour	£12.99
Star LC90 mono ribbon	£4.99
Star LC10/100 mono	£3.69
Star LC10/100 colour	£7.99
Star LC240c colour	£13.99
Star LC240c mono	£8.99
Star LC240 mono	£5.99
Star LC24-10/200/300 Colour	£13.99
Re-Ink Spray for mono ribbons	£11.99

We stock a wide range of consumables for all printers Lasers, Dot Matrix and InkJets old and new.

PREMIER-INK Cartridge Refills

Save a fortune in running costs with your ink/ bubble jet. Compatible with the HP Deskjet series, Canon BJ10/20/80/130/200/300/330, Star SJ48, Citizen Projet and many others.

Single refills	(22ml)	£6.99
Twin refills	(44ml)	£12.99
Three colour kit	(66ml)	£19.99
Full colour kit	(88ml)	£27.99
Bulk refills	(125ml)	£24.99

Printer repair specialists call for quote

Ink Cartridges

Canon BJ10/Star SJ48	£19.99
Canon BJ200/230	£19.99
Canon BJ30 (3 pack)	£13.99
Canon BJC 70 mono (3 pack)	£12.99
Canon BJC 70 colour (3 pack)	£16.99
Canon BJC 4000 colour (single)	£16.99
Canon BJC 4000 mono (single)	£7.99
Canon BJC 4000 mono high cap.	£28.99
Canon BJC 600e mono high cap.	£10.49
Canon BJC 600e colour	£8.99
HP.Deskjet colour	£26.99
HP. Deskjet double mono	£24.99
HP. Deskjet 660 double mono	£25.99
HP.Deskjet 660 colour	£27.99
Epson Stylus mono	£15.99
Epson Stylus colour	£36.99
Epson Stylus Col. II/S/820 Mono	£17.99
Epson Stylus Col. II/S/820 Colour	£24.99
Epson Stylus 820 colour upgrade	£94.99
Star SJ144 mono/colour (single)	£8.99

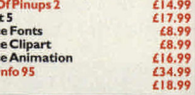
Covers

All printer dust covers £5.99

Paper

Fanfold (tractor feed) 500 sheets	£4.99
Fanfold (tractor feed) 1000 sheets	£8.99
Fanfold (tractor feed) 2000 sheets	£17.99
Single sheet 500 sheets	£4.99
Single sheet 1000 sheets	£8.99
Single sheet 2000 sheets	£17.99
Epson Stylus 720 dpi paper pack	£12.49

Disks



Bulk DSDD

10 x £3.49	100 x £29.99
30 x £9.99	200 x £54.99
50 x £15.99	500 x £118.99

Branded DSDD

10 x £4.99	100 x £35.99
30 x £12.99	200 x £63.99
50 x £25.99	500 x £142.99

Bulk DSHD

10 x £3.99	100 x £33.99
30 x £11.99	200 x £59.99
50 x £17.99	500 x £134.99

Branded DSHD

10 x £5.99	100 x £47.99
30 x £15.99	200 x £84.99
50 x £25.99	500 x £190.99

Disk labels x500 £6.99

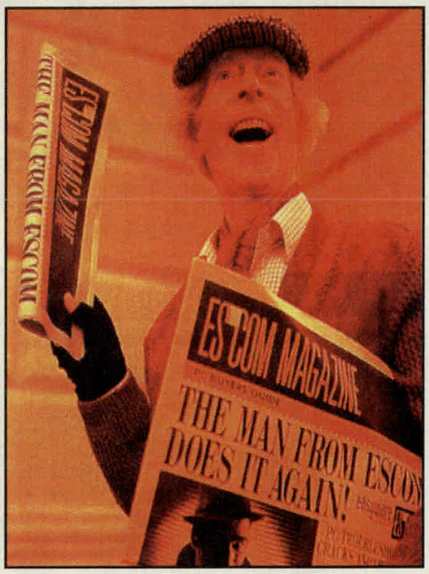
Disk labels x1000 £9.99

Don't Blame Us

According to the retail computer trade, Amiga users are returning both old and new Amiga software because it will not run on the new A1200s being sold by Amiga Technologies.

Amiga Technologies is reported as having admitted that there is a compatibility problem with the new 1200, but is telling retailers - and buyers - not to panic. Which can't be easy when you get the bright new, and not, cheap machine and it won't run the damn program. Titles being returned include the Doom-style game Fears from Guildhall Leisure.

John Smith, AT's UK Sales Manager is doubtless not a happy man, but he pointed out that only "Some older software and a few new titles won't load."



The Man from Escom does it again.

Some sources claim the whole problem comes from anti-piracy code. However Jonathan Anderson, AT's UK General Manager, thinks that the blame may well lie with developers, who won't be pleased with the suggestion that they are using "illegal software practices probably what the ineffable Mike Nelson used to call "hitting the metal". And cutting corners too.

Jonathan Anderson also said "We are making a modification to the internal drive.", which makes it likely that AT will solve the problem shortly. Another difficulty that has cropped up is that some retailers are complaining that the Amiga £499 Magic Pack comes with software that won't run without an extra 2Mb of RAM.

Amiga Technologies UK team don't sound too happy about that either. "We had no say in the matter," said Claire Jackson, national service manager, "The decision came from Germany." She pointed out that box stickers highlighting the need for extra RAM are being put on the outside of the pack.

A further nasty irritation for Amiga Technologies happened at the recent Annual General Meeting of the National Association of Computer Retailers (NASCR) - largely a body for the independent computer stores. Some of the members of the Association urged that there should be a boycott of Amiga products because any sale of an Amiga put money into the pockets of Escom, the hard-nosed chain of stores rival to the independent dealers.

No action was agreed upon, but quite few computer store owners are feeling the weight of the Escom retail drive, and are anyway worrying about getting stuck with Amigas if - or when, they say - the price comes down early in the new year.

With all the competition from the other chains of stores, the problems with the Amiga, and Escom's high retail profile, are not making Escom and Amiga Technologies the flavour of the month with the independent dealer network.

Softbank Goes Shopping

To add to the growing list of companies, banks, and products bought by Japanese companies, their attention has now turned to the magazine market.

Softbank, Japan's largest computer magazine publisher, is set to buy Ziff Davis, America's largest computer magazine publisher. Softbank is reported to be close to buying Ziff Davis in a deal worth Y145 billion ($1.45 billion). Buying up Ziff Davis would give Softbank 46% of the US PC advertising market and plenty of PC magazines in Europe too.

CD-ROM Nasties

The homo-erotic and violent images of American photographer Robert Mapplethorpe's controversial "The Perfect Moment" exhibition are available on a CD-ROM from New Media Solutions, a Virgin affiliate.

Mapplethorpe's fascination with the darker sides of life - he was reputed to shout during sex "Make it for Satan!" - are likely to arouse alarm and even fury among the Whitehouses. No doubt they will start trying to ensure that certification and even censorship will be imposed upon the CD field. As yet they probably haven't realised that CDs don't still just contain masses of text and boring data.

The video recorder shot to popularity when home pornography became available. Perhaps the big breakthrough will come for the home multimedia computer when the scandalised puritans begin shouting about its corrupting influence. Want to make computers popular? Start complaining loudly about the immorality they bring.

Killer Cards

Reveal, a multimedia peripherals supplier, is aiming to kill off conventional FM soundcards. They are planning to do it with two "wavetable" cards, WAVExtreme and WAVExtreme 32 PRO, which will be bundled with an instructional video.

Priced at £79 and £99 respectively, the wavetable cards are claimed to have a better sound quality than traditional FM sound cards. They are aimed at users wanting to upgrade from the ordinary FM cards which come as standard with multimedia PCs.

Reveal, who may be bought from their present owners Packard Bell by sound card company Creative Labs, will be providing demonstration units at large retailers such as PC World. So if you want to hear the difference...

Internet Population

Claims of mind boggling numbers of Internet users have taken a knock with the publication of a report which concludes that the active US on-line population is a relatively modest 5.8 million individuals.

It's likely that the USA is responsible for well over 50% and perhaps 75% of total worldwide Internet traffic, so these are significant findings.

In the survey, Defining the Internet Opportunity, O'Reilly & Associates Online Research Group has performed what it claims to be the 'first statistically defensible' study of Internet users, "with a margin of error of only 1%."

Almost 30,000 contacts were made with users and non-users, although actual Internet user interviews were confined to around 1,000 plus 500 commercial service users.

The study indicated that 3.9 million people subscribe to commercial services only, and 1 million use both the Internet and at least one commercial service.

The age group of users with direct access spreads quite evenly between 18 and 55, peaking between 18 and 24 and 35 to 44. Their median annual income during 1994 was between $50,000 and $75,000. The report's main findings are freely available on O'Reilly's WWW site http://www.ora.com/, but the full report is confined to the original sponsors who paid a little matter of $25,000.

Quotes of the Month

"The revolution didn't really begin until 1977, when the first really useful personal computers came to market. The best remembered of the 1977 computers was the Apple II, developed by Steve Wozniak, Steve Jobs, and Mike Markkula. Equally important were the Tandy TRS-80, championed by John Roach, and Commodore PET, the brainchild of an incredible guy named Chuck Peddle".

Bill Gates, Microsoft Boss.

Many people, but obviously not Gates, have forgotten that with the PET - and later with the Amiga - Commodore was an innovator, a groundbreaker. "Incredible guys" like Chick Peddle, Jay Miner, and R.J. Mical, took Commodore computers as leaders into the future. The Commodore PET in its time, the first desktop computer, could have been the forerunner to a computer business for CBM at least as big as Apple is today.

Gates, whatever his faults, is intelligent enough to recognise where the computer world in which we live came from. If Commodore had gone onto to develop the PET, Bates doubtless would have ensured that its CP/M operating system would have been replaced by MSDOS, and the whole history of Commodore and the Amiga would have been altogether different. Ah, if...

Kinsley plunges into the Web

Michael Kinsley, who has made a name for himself in the States shouting on the CNN slugfest TV programme called Crossfire, has been persuaded by Bill Gates to become Microsoft's 'big time' editor on the Internet. Plans for the new cybernews (paper?) are vague, but it is expected that Kinsley will edit a new on-line journal of political and social commentary via the World Wide Web.

Gates has plenty of cash to lure journalists onto the electronic media, and everyone has their price - ours has curves rather than zeros. However, big names of the press and TV, like Kinsley, command huge attention and money is what they generally already have plenty of. There has to be something else to attract them to a medium that, as yet, doesn't have the glamour of the established communications media.

So what could Gates, or anyone, offer to a Kinsley? Maybe the chance to dominate early when there is less competition than in, say, TV. And the possibility of unlimited funds to make something revolutionary and highly influential at a time when the medium is still in formation. That might be a sufficient sweetener for a media star to go on-line. It sounds familiar though, just like what is offered to anyone who comes to work on ***AUI.***

AA on route to MM

The AA has declared an interest in the CD-ROM and home PC software market in order to extend the merchandise already on offer in their 150 retail outlets.

Multimedia Solutions have already signed up with the AA to publish a range of CD-ROM titles based on its best selling books. These include the AA's Hotel and Restaurant Guide and the AA's 2000 Days Out.

Products such as Microsoft's Autoroute Express, and various driving instruction CD-ROMs, are also likely to be on sale in the future. The stores already stock a range of books, maps, and road atlases which, they believe, are tailormade for multimedia formats.

With their entry into the Internet, see earlier item in this NewsFile, the AA look like they are are taking this technobusiness seriously.

TechnoASDA

Asda, the supermarket chain, is finding that sales of language courses and gardening software on CD-ROM are doing very well in selected stores. So well, in fact, that Asda has decided to double the number of outlets selling CD-ROMs as well as increasing the range of titles.

The current stores: Bristol, Manchester, Brighton, Slough, and Edinburgh, sell games, lifestyle and educational titles. The chain will be featuring in-store demonstrations to emphasise their interest in expanding the software range.

Game Over for GamesMaster?

The current series of the TV programme GamesMaster is not nearly as popular as it has been previously in its four year history.

According to research organisation BARB, the highest number of viewers for this run so far was 1.59 million. This makes the show the 27th most popular on Channel 4. At one time though GamesMaster was notching up around 4 million or so.

What does the fall in the viewers mean? Don't ask us, we thought the programme was so childish, especially with the conceited and arrogant Dominic Diamond in it, that we pretty quickly stopped watching the rubbish during the first series. Not that any of the other TV shows that purport to cover computing are any better. What they are really is very young kids' shows dressed up in a bit of silly techohype. Boring.

Samsung UK Drive

Amid rumours of the EU imposing tariffs on imported CD-ROM drives, Samsung is preparing to make drives in the UK. If the decision goes ahead, the EU would also impose tariffs on PCs with integral drives coming from outside the European Union.

Ali Demin, UK General Manager of Samsung told ***AUI,*** "It's just talk. I don't think the EU will do it". But since the company has already opened a £450m monitor factory in Cleveland it would not be too difficult to add the manufacturing of CD-ROM drives. "We have all the manufacturing facilities we need with the new factory", said Demin. "If it gives us a competitive edge we will make drives in the UK."

Samsung has launched into the CD-ROM drive market with a £119 quad speed internal device, the SCR 630, aimed at home and business use.

Plextor Speeding Up

Plextor have produced a guide for choosing the right CD-ROM Drive, entitled 18 Questions to ask before purchasing a CD-ROM Drive. Not suprisingly their own 6Plex and 4PlexPlus meet the stated pre-requisites, such as having a system which prevents dust, scratches, and fingerprints. Plextor's drives are claimed to be dust protected by using caddies which eliminate the handling caused problems.

The three main requirements which they define are: top performance, reliability, and ease of use. That seems sensible if somewhat obvious. What doesn't seem quite so obvious is the 4 PlexPlus drive they are offering, It is not, as you might think, getting onto the accelerating bandwagon of the quad speed drives. Not exactly, because it is, say Plextor, a 4.5 speed. Pretty odd that and the first we've come across.

On the other hand, the 6PleX is what it seems, six speed. Before the quad speed has even been generally accepted along comes the six speed, and doubt us not, news has reached us of the imminent launch of eight speed CD-ROM drives. Yes, eight speeds, and it was only yesterday, or the day before, that a double speed was considered the thing to have.

Where will it all end, we hear you cry as we speed Einsteiningly off into the future? Don't ask us, we're just the same as you. It's THEM that's to blame for it.

Contact: Plextor Fax. 01032 2725 9495

Doomed to Win

The first international Doom championship was held in Seattle, and has been won by Korean-American Thresh. (Thresh what?) The world's top 25 Doomheads battled it out, with the British team being knocked out in the second round. (Doom and gloom indeed). The game was played under Windows 95 for the first time, which confused some contestants. (Not surprising, Windows 95 confuses millions). Over 90,000 Doomers applied to the early stages with contestants entering from all over the world. What is the world coming to, as Ashley Cotter-Cairns might not say?

Golden 500 CD-ROM

There are doubtless thousands, perhaps even millions of Amiga users out there around the world who are still clutching their 500s to their sentimental hearts unwilling - or unable - to upgrade to the 1200. Doubtless too they envy the CD-ROM users of the globe with all that chunk of 650Mb to play around with.

Golden Image, longtime Amiga suppliers, are intent on helping them out. So they have launched a £249 quad speed CD-ROM drive especially for A500 users. The unit requires the AlfaPower hard drive interface, which Golden Image can also supply.

Golden Image do a complete system with a hard drive for those who aren't the proud owners of an AlfaPower system already. An 80Mb AlfaPower hard drive is priced at £149, and if a quad speed CD drive is bought at the same time, Golden Image gives a discount of £20. The full price of both products together then comes down to £378.

If you have delusions of power though and think you want a really big one, GI will sell you a 1.2Gb drive for £299. Not content with all that, Golden Image are offering a kit that comprises everything but the drive - sounds like a pop group, doesn't it? The kit costs £80, but you'll still need an AlfaPower interface which will set you back just £99.

Navin Shah, GI's UK MD, told ***AUI*** "We have always supported the Amiga 500 and this new CD-ROM product emphasises our commitment to the thousands of users around the country." Good on you. GI. We can do with more like you.

Quotes of the Month

"The most successful package developers are those that rush headlong into the market with a product, often using talented hackers unhindered by development methods and software quality assurance".

Darrel Ince, professor of computer science at the Open University.

Unhindered talented hackers? Wow! Is that really how and by whom software should be developed? It sounds more like the way magazines are created. There was a time when anything in the computer business was thought to be a matter of research and planning. Does the software business, if you follow the good professor's argument, not conform to those concepts any more?

We thought that software needed very careful development and plenty of testing for quality assurance, but perhaps what Professor Ince points out is the norm in the software business today. This must account for all the bugs that there are in any new package. Unhindered talented hackers? Buyers beware!

The Crab's Comeback

It's a long time since the Commodore logos appeared on anything other than Amigas and press reports about the demise of the dear old company. But now the 'crab' is reappearing on PCs on sale in Escom stores. As reported in January ***AUI,*** the brand, with a range called Commodore Go, not Golf as was originally mooted by Escom, is being sold, we hear, enthusiastically, in the ex-Rumbelow shops as a higher specification than Escom's own brand PCs.

As well as the PCs, there are Commodore sound cards, mice, CD-ROM drives and printers. Yes, those dear things are back again. You can buy a Commodore IP - does the P stand for Phoenix? - 3300 colour inkjet for just £199. It looks a bit like... We can't remember just whose inkjet it resembles at the moment.

If you visit an Escom shop, we'd appreciate a view on the risen from the CBM ashes printer - whose model it looks like, and how it works? It is, of course, a PC printer and - sigh, sigh - not for the Amiga. Oh Escom, it's Commodore, isn't it? What about one for OUR machine? Then nostalgia could be once again be what it used to be.

CD-ROMs Save Trees

Martine Tatman of Ablex Audio, big duplicators of CDs, floppies, and cassettes, has worked out how many trees would need to be felled to provide the equivalent of a standard CD-ROM. Based on an A4 sheet of paper, and the 650Mb capacity of a standard disk, she calculated that eleven trees would need to be cut down to provide a stack of paper forty-seven feet high.

Using the new proposed standard of 4.7Gb disc, however, saves 78 trees. Even more is saved through the use of a 9Gb disk.

We think that 150 trees or so might be worth saving. Of course, it depends where the trees are. If they are in Brazil - called the "lungs of the world" because the jungle there is what we need for oxygen, fine. But, an informed source, not a million miles from the Editor's office, tells us that in Finland they harvest trees, mostly used for paper in magazines such as ***AUI,*** only after 60 years or so. Then they plant more, each year, than they harvest. Which makes the calculation of whether it's wise to tell the woodman "Save that tree!", as in the old song, a somewhat ambiguous one.

Subsidising the Superhighway

Don Cruickshank, the Government's telecommunications regulator, has announced that 25,000 schools stand to receive subsidised use of fibre-optic Superhighway services. Mr. Cruickshank told a conference on Education Superhighways in Cambridge that his scheme was tentative, but could play an important part in delivering interactive services to schools at a low cost.

The proposal is supported by the Government, but may require telecoms users to pay an additional charge to reduce the cost for schools of gaining access to new teaching services, such as video conferencing and networked multimedia material.

What a surprise that such an educational connection should be proposed now! It must be just a coincidence that the Labour Party leader, Tony Blair, announced at his Party Conference a month or two back, a similar connecting up deal they had arranged with BT for schools. Life is full of such amazing coincidences, don't you think?

DOS games may lose out

The launch of games for Windows 95, at Microsoft's Seattle headquarters in November, coincided with game publishers declaring that they are set to abandon DOS by next year. Many of the 35 game publishers at the launch, including Virgin Interactive Entertainment and Electronic Arts, said they would probably be displaying 'Made for Windows 95' logos on their boxes soon. Other companies such as Activision announced their immediate conversion to the new platform.

Alecia Bridgewater, US games manager for Microsoft's consumer division, said the company was developing four specific genres, sports, simulations, strategy, and adventure. Dreamworks Interactive, the joint venture between Bill Gates and Stephen Spielberg, is currently working on adventure titles for the group.

DOS has been called the killer format for games because not only is it complicated to program games for DOS, it is also reputed to be awfully clumsy for users to even get games to run. One of the great consolations, if you'll forgive the pun, for the console makers, Sega, Nintendo etc., had been that the PC, though increasingly accepted as the machine for business and in the home too was, with DOS, never going to challenge them for ability to run games.

With the advent of Windows 95, bummer though it might be considered by many, the picture is changing and will change even more. For Microsoft has all the cash necessary to bring it up to standard for playing games and Bill Gates makes no secret that he will spend whatever is necessary to make Win95 a fully competitive format. He is in position, though inherently weak the system might be, to greatly influence the people who count in the games world - the software companies.

He could give them subsidies of millions and not notice it on his bank statement. "Put your best talents on the Windows 95 games and here's a few million to keep you happy" could be quite a convincing argument in the software games world. When the smart money goes down on Windows96 or 97 or 98 as the format for Entertainment Now! stuff don't think it's a long shot. And, of course, as others - and we - have said - it's a tactic that Amiga Technologies ought to be following anyway if it wants the Amiga back there competing in the games market or anywhere else.

Business gets lost

British Business is in danger of stalling in the slow lane as the information Superhighway gathers speed, a report by BT has warned.

Only 25% of employees, and 27% of bosses reckon they can keep up with it, and more than 53% "are not even sure how to get on it". (Get on what? The next privatised train?)

BT's research follows a Henley Centre warning that businesses risk losing customers if they don't get to grips with modern technology. The study also found that firms do appreciate the need for modern Communications with nine out of ten saying it is essential. But only one in five firms have ventured onto the Superhighway with 36% of bosses saying they "don't need it", "can't be bothered" or, "it is too complex". Bright lot, aren't they?

BT commissioned the study before launching its latest TV advertising - a mini soap called 'The Company'. Do you need an "ology" in something to understand that too?

Tarzan kits himself out

Michael (Tarzan) Heseltine's new role as Deputy Prime Minister may be boosting the economy, but whose money is he spending? His IT acquisition costs for his new offices alone have been estimated at £150,000, with annual running costs of £10,000. This is said to be necessary in order for him to keep tabs on, sorry, in communication with other cabinet ministers. With his past brilliant "successes" in not rejuvenating the inner cities - wasn't that where he visited them in a flak jacket atop a tank? - and not "intervening before breakfast, lunch and dinner" as he promised to make British industry successful it might be that he can spend the Government into achieving at least something in the technology field which they have so messed up before.

Aminet 8

Aminet CD 8, dated August 1995, consists of approximately 1,1 gigabytes of software in 3600 archives. Since the release of Aminet CD 7 more than 540 MB new software has appeared. The current edition has a special focus on modules, more than 1000 mods from Aminet were included. User friendly access software makes the Aminet CD 8 a pleasure to use. £14.95

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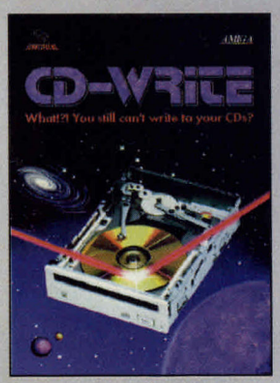

CD-Write

What!?! You still can't write to your CDs? CD-ROMs have long been an essential part of Amiga computing. Many users already own a CD-ROM drive, and the number of software packages available on CD is increasing steadily. Until now, though, it was not possible to write to CDs. We have solved this problem with our new revolutionary product: Ralph Babel and Stefan Ossowski's Schatztruhe are proud to present what can be considered a marvel of technology: CD-Write enables you to virtually write to CDs with an ordinary CD-ROM drive. From now on, you will be able to write, delete, and modify data on your CDs. This product will take you into a new era, and you will be able to utilize CD-ROM technology to its fullest. £44.95

FreshFish 10

The FreshFish CD-ROM-series, produced directly by Fred Fish, provides Amiga users with hundreds of megabytes of the latest freely redistributable software. Published approximately every two months, each volume is a two CD set containing new submissions since the latest volume, as well as an ever growing selection of tools, libraries, documentation and other useful material that is updated with every release. £17.95

CDBoot 1.0

CDBoot is a fantastic new product that enables you to use almost any CD32 games on an A1200 or A4000 (with AT- or SCSI-CD-ROM drive and any filesystem). You can create a configuration file for each CD, containing information on the Joypad emulation. You can also save the highscore of each CD32 game. The usage and installation of CDBoot is very easy, also for beginners, due to the excellent English manual. Since the compatibility is very high, you can use 98% of CD32 games currently available. CDBoot is an excellent software solution for all Amiga-Freaks, who would like to enter the world of CD32 games! £34.95

Aminet Set 1

Aminet is the world's largest collection of freely distributable Amiga software. Up to 10.000 users access the vast archives ervery day and countless programmers publish directly via Aminet. Until recently access to Aminet was restricted to international network users. With Aminet Set 1, consisting of 4 CDs, the complete archive is published the first time. This CD-ROM-collection, which is dated January 1995, offers an almost inexhaustible reservoir of top-value Shareware. A wide variety of programs is included: Applications, Games, Demos, Pictures, Mods, Animations, Developer-Material, ... It contains approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.500 archives and you will enjoy the comfortable user-interface. £29.95

Aminet Set 2

AMINET SET 2, dated November 1995, consists of approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 12.000 archives. Whether you like applications, games, communications or programming, the SET gives you all you need. Easy to use index files and search facilities make accessing it a pleasure. £34.95

Gamers' Delight II

This CD contains 1070 games for the Commodore Amiga from differing categories. Action, Jump & Run, Card Games, Puzzles, Strategy Games - a whole range of computer entertainment awaits! Gamers' Delight will hold you captivated for hours and guarantees long-lasting pleasure. 70 games are commercial versions - no public domain & no demos! This CD can be run on any Amiga with CD-ROM drive,1 MB free memory and Joystick/Joypad. £26.95

Meeting Pearls Vol. III

The Meeting Pearls Volume III contains 650 MB of the finest FD software via a special user interface, which has been created to allow you to find the program of your choice with ease. The contents: 10 MB Packer, Cruncher, Archive Programs · 3 MB CD-ROM Utilities · 21 MB Communication and Network Programs · 5 MB Debugging Tools · 29 MB Development Tools · 13 MB Floppy, Hard Disk ans SCSI Programs · 8 MB Educational Programs · 9 MB Games · 35 MB Graphics Programs · 39 MB Internet Movie Database, Updated Version · 7 MB Midi Tools and Programs · 27 MB Mods · 12 MB Music Programs · 21 MB Pictures · 13 MB AmiTCP and more for Networking · 60 MB Documentation, CD-ROM Databases, etc. · 96 MB PasTeX 1.4 - not previous available on any CD-ROM · 15 MB Utilities · 30 MB HTML-Pages · Collections of datatypes, benchmark programs, icons, programs for amateur radio and electrical/electronic engineering are also included. £9.95

da capo

The da capo CD-ROM is a source for high-quality music, both for listening enjoyment and for samples to use in creating your own music. This is not just another random collection of modules. Many modules and samples are exclusively to da capo. Included are more than 1400 of the best available modules and 2000 high-qualioty samples. £27.95

Gateway!

Gateway! offers NetBSD 1.0, a full featured UNIX-like operating system with both sources and binaries for the Amiga, i386, Sun 3, and other architectures. Go netsurfing with the large selection of supplied networking tools. Other supplied packages include a binary release of the X window system (X11R6) for the Amiga, with many additional clients, and packages such as perl, emacs, games, mail programs, and many megabytes of important text files such as RFCs and FAQs. A complete installation guide is available on the CD. There are also some AmigaDOS internet utilities, such as clients for AmiTCP and Envoy. £9.95

XiPaint V3.2

XiPaint is a leading edge, 24-bit paint program. It's suited to the demands of novice and expert alike, and within a short time, you too will be able to produce colourful and creative art in 16.8 million colours. This version of XiPaint provides a professional paint program at an unbeatable price/performance ratio.
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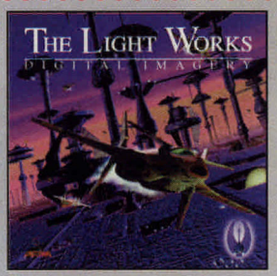
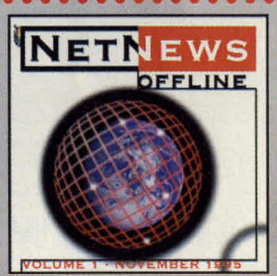


The Light Works

Raytracing - A fascinating area of the computer graphics. Pictures from the computer, perfectly rendered, fascinate people all over the world. The Amiga was the first computer to be used for raytracing, and today it is still a leader, with many high quality programs. A real artist of raytracing is Tobias J. Richter from Cologne/Germany, whose detailed objects stun the people. Especially his space ships of famous science fiction films are used to demonstrate the capabilities of a raytracing program. The objects are highly detailed and extremly realistic due to the application of complex surface textures of the models. Until now it was difficult to acquire these objects in order to create ones own scenes or animations. £29.95



NetNews Offline Vol. 1

NetNews Offline Vol. 1 is the first disk of a new bimonthly published series of Amiga CD-ROMs which contains all Amiga-related newsgroups from the internet. Every volume features about 50.000 articles which contain hot rumours, important information about all aspects of the Amiga, press-releases, discussions and flame wars, ... A newsreader is included. NetNews Offline is the cheap alternative of getting in touch with Usenet. £14.95

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BUNGED UP!

Scandal is the norm in the cutthroat world of computer games. "Sleaze" may sound like the name of the latest adventure, but it is a way of life and is well-known as the first word with which the ruthless tycoons who decide who lives and dies in the gamesworld greet each other.

"Bung" is whispered, or shouted with glee, in this business with sewerage level morals, and where "ethical" is regarded as a term for loonies and wimps. Have you seen the poster for Ocean's latest flight sim extravaganza? We don't dare mention the name of the game as Ocean are likely to charge us a fortune just for using the letters and numbers. What we can say is that the significance of the 'brick in the toilet' totally defeats us, as we are unfamiliar with the computer language in which the game is programmed.

But awful though the public exhibition of games is these days (see the NewsFile item in January ***AUI*** showing yet another out of order ad), what goes on in private is even more horrifying. We feel it our responsibility, risking law suits and sentences in Singapore is just part of the night duty on the ***AUI*** news desk these days, to report on the scandal that is shocking even the baked hard cynicism of the computer games world.

For it concerns names that are known to and previously respected by all. Virgin and Anco. And another name, not quite so respected: George Graham.

George Graham sees with delight online news of Gupta's agreement.

The story which comes to us from an unimpeachable source, Assistant Governor Felix at the Bank of England, goes like this. Anil Gupta, longtime boss of Anco, wanted to bid for the TV rights to the F.A. Cup Final, in competition with the BBC, Sky, and ITV. Known as an international industrialist of immense power, reputed at one time to have owned the whole of Dartford in Kent and having sold a zillion copies of Kick Off!, Gupta created, as a decoy and as a way to ingratiate himself with the Football Association and Ian Gloat, the Minister of Sport, a hot game called Player Manager 2.

However, Sky and ITV, who thought they had beaten off the challenge from BBC, took fright when they heard that the powerhungry Gupta was coming. So they arranged for George Graham, the ex-Arsenal manager, to approach the feared Anco magnate to discuss what is known in the business as a "bung". It is rumoured that the figure was not unadjacent to the equivalent of 1p off the income tax.

The coldly calculating Anco boss took a few days before he decided that "bunging" would fit in with the "Player Manager Project" and we have obtained, what we are told is an exclusive photo of George Graham showing his delight as he received the news over the Internet. (If you see a similar photo in an advert, it must be a different George Graham and possibly a different Player Manager too.)

Anil Gupta really didn't need the money especially as Virgin, who published Player Manager 2 for him, had given him the information that a zillion copies had been sold and that Mr. Gupta was due another billion or more in profits.

There is, though, a social dimension to the story. Sometimes these tycoons have a heart. Anil Gupta, huge sums of cash falling out of his stuffed wallets on the way to the Bank, dropped a tip off at the Treasury in Whitehall which amounted to just the sum of money that the Chancellor of the Exchequer needed to cut the tax by that 1p in the Budget. That's the scandal. The rest of the unscrupulous bosses think Gupta has let them down and disgraced the whole games business by such an unselfish act.

But we feel that we have to reveal the facts of the story anyway, even if it endangers our very lives. (They might send round Vinnie Jones!). The gamesters love Player Manager 2. George Graham has earned some cash legitimately. Virgin's profits have gone Sky high, who with ITV have screwed the BBC, and Anil Gupta and the shadowy global investors of Anco have walked, or rather dribbled, away having trousered a billion or two. And your tax has gone down a penny.

In this case of Player Manager 2 as Gresham (or was it Graham?) said "Good games drive out bad." And it all seems happy except the other games companies. And we don't care a Gillingham supporter's jockstrap about them, do we?

One last thing. If we don't get a piece of that billion or two from Anil Gupta, we may just reveal the strange story, and even publish the photo of the incident, when a certain Mr. Gupta had pink hair and was caught riding an elephant in company of a games boss who, for the moment, shall be nameless.

Bungs, via George Graham or registered post, should be sent to the NewsFile Bung Fund, c/o Player Manager Benevolent Trust, Cubicle 2, The Gents, Geneva Airport, Swizzzerland - or else it's pink hair time again, Anil. Because like the elephants, we never forget.

Windows 95 Dethroned

With all the hype, and all the millions spent on promotion, you would have thought that Microsoft's Windows 95 would have stayed top of the sales charts for the PCs. Over the first three months it did sell millions of copies, reputedly 4 million plus of which were bundled with machines.

However, just a few months after the launch, it has been toppled off the top of Charts. PC supplier Software Warehouse say that Softram's Memory Doubler has now taken the prized Number One spot. At number 3, there is another Microsoft program, First Aid. Perhaps that is just what Windows 95, or 96 as it surely should soon become, needs.

One Billion Ops Per Second

According to Intel, a processor available in 2010 will be a 1v device with a billion transistors running at 4GHz. The demands of multimedia will also be high, and for a full system capable of handling broadcast-quality video, something between one and two billion operations per second will be required.

Taking on Microsoft

Three Unix operating system companies are forming an alliance in direct competition with Microsoft. Hewlett-Packard, Novell, and Santa Cruz Operation, will merge their Unix products to create a common software base. They are planning to collaborate in the development of a new 64-bit version of Unix, designed to run on a new generation of computers. These will be based on a high-performance microprocessor, P7, that is jointly being developed by HP and Intel.

Currently Microsoft dominates the desktop operating system market through Windows NT server software, which competes directly with Unix. The partnership is aimed at strengthening Unix by combining Novell's UnixWare operating system with SCO's OpenServer version of Unix to create a merged system based on Intel's microprocessors.

Novell, as a leading developer of software for office computer networks will work with HP to produce a high-performance version of its networking technology to be included in HP's version of Unix - HP-UX.

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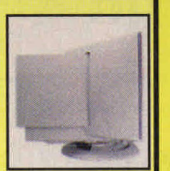
Samsung New "M" Range Monitors

The new Samsung "M' Range monitors are only for the serious Amiga User. They work at above the frequency range of the Amigas so you need to run in Double Pal mode, but the display is the best you will see from the largest monitor maker in the world!



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Nintendo sells a billion

According to Jon Peddie, speaking at the Computer Graphics Expo, the likes of Sega and Nintendo gave the public a taste of what they might be able to expect from PCs in the future. Hand held games consoles brought excitement and realism, which led to the demand from consumers for more and more advancements in multimedia with tremendous market potential.

Nintendo is still the most successful games firm in the world, having just celebrated their billionth software sale. Since the launch of the first Mario game in the early 80s, Nintendo has globally sold video games at the rate of nearly three per second every minute of the day for 12 years. The one billion total means that Nintendo has sold the equivalent of one game for every teenager in the world, and globally more than 2,000 separate games have been created to play on their systems.

Forty four per cent have been sold in Japan, 42% in the US, with the remaining 14% in the rest of the world. Now that's an awful lot of games and an awful lot of money has been made. Has it done an awful lot of good to the world?

If that much effort and investment had been put into other things we might, say, have solved the world's problem of one third being below the poverty line, or found a cure for many forms of cancer.

As Bill (shoot-'em-up) Shakespeare the well known Elizabethan games reviewer said, "All work and no Nintendo makes Mitsubishi a profitable company." Or was he referring to Sega?

Registering your interest

Registering a brand name on the Internet could lead to disappointment if you don't get there quick enough. The famous Levi jeans found that there was already a http:/www.levis.com. which is the site for Landlovers Extra-terrestrial Vintage in Space (who they?). So Levi's had to take the next best and register as http:/www.levi.com.

Their site itself includes animation as every page goes through change, with five sections inside which are deliberately cool and laid back. But then that's what you can do in Levis without worrying that they might get creased. We're not so sure what you can do with Landlovers Extra-terrestrial Vintage though. It's not one that sounds very thirst quenching or richly flavoured.

Compaq's Presario hit

Compaq sold more units in the UK in the third quarter of last year than it did in the whole of 1994. The Presario range has certainly caught the attention of the consumer, with Compaq claiming that their success is built around understanding the needs of their customers. "We know what they want for their home and family and we make sure they get it", said David Clarke, director of Compaq's consumer division.

For the July to September 1995 period, Compaq claims to have sold nearly 21,000 units to consumers, giving the firm its highest ever UK consumer market share - an estimated 14.5%. The figures are based on actual sales rather than units sold to retail, which ought to be more reliable than many company's figures of apparent "sales", which only go to shops and not the final buyers till months later.

Toshiba Drives Faster

Toshiba has launched what they claim to be the world's first CD-ROM drive to blast through the 1Mb/s sustained data transfer rate barrier. The new 6.7 speed XM-3701B drive is the first to accelerate way beyond 6x performance, according to the company. Random access time is 135ms with random seek time at 120ms. The drive's data buffer capacity is set at 256k, and average power consumption is 5.9W. The XM-3701B features dust-proofing, vertical or horizontal tray loading, SCSI-2 interface, and supports CD-ROM, CD-DA, CD-ROM XA, CD-Bridge, CD-i, and multi-session standards.

Contact: Toshiba Tel. 0181 286 5000.

OTM supports Amigas

Tamworth-based OTM has published its first title for the Amiga, Virtual Karting (reviewed in this ***AUI***). The small games publisher has declared its intention to support the Amiga format. Steven Rennocks, OTM's systems director told ***AUI,*** "Amiga Technologies have done a great job in relaunching the Amiga considering all the factors and pressure they've been placed under. Few would argue that the key to success lies heavily with the support given by individuals, stores, distributors and the software available".

Among the packages to be launched by OTM are: a database PowerBase v3.5 for £19.99; and Watchtower, a 'commando' style game fro £29.95. Starfighter and XP8 will be released for the Amiga later this year.

Netscape Shares Rocket

Netscape Communications, known for their free browser software on the Internet, have seen their shares top $100. The Internet software start-up was launched in August 1995 at $28 a share. Netscape also developed software for Internet service providers, including publishers and retailers.

The company has more than doubled its staff over the last six months to almost 400 people. Investors have responded to the potential growth of electronic commerce and information services via the Internet and picked NetScape as the company to pile into in a somewhat exaggerated way. Netscape saw its stock market value rise from $1.12 billion - about £700 million in August 1995 to $4 billion - about £2.8 billion - by the year end. A bit over the top, don't you think!

Portable Optical

Pinnacle Micro is offering what they claim to be the world's first portable optical drive, the Tahoe 230Mb. Weighing just over 800gms, it offers quick access time and fast data throughput. Each rewritable 3.5" disk stores 230Mb of data. There is an optional travel case and battery pack. But why do you need it, aren't the caartridges portable.

The Sierra 1.3Gb is claimed to be the industry's fastest optical drive. It can be used both as a hard disk replacement and an on-line archiving system. Each 5.25" cartridge is supposed to have a 30 year shelf life. It has been designed for data-intensive applications such as graphics, CAD/CAM, multimedia, and data archiving.

Pinnacle also have launched the Oray as the first optical drive to utilize multiple heads and disks similar to hard disk technology. The Oray has a 4Mb/sec sustained throughput and is, they say, ideal for digital audio/video and file server applications. Each removable optical media holds up to 5.2Gb of data.

Contact: Pinnacle Micro Tel. 01256 782566.

Firewalling and Time Wasting

The world market for software and services that provide security on the Internet, called "Firewall" software, is provided to grow from $1.1 billion in 1995 to $16.2 billion in 2000, says market analysts Input.

"Security risks associated with Internet access have businesses of all sizes scrambling to secure their local area networks," says James Eibisch of Input. "When a company puts its network on the Internet it becomes visible to millions of people and could easily become the target of an intruder seeking confidential information."

A survey of 200 executives at large UK companies, carried out by PC supplier AST computer, found that more than 60% expect to be on the Internet within one year. Of these, more than two thirds are concerned with data security. This was the second biggest concern after time wasting, which was cited by 69%.

69%? Time wasting? Who could be so crass as to think that being on-line, chatting across the world with all those other "time wasters", like having a mass phone in on Talk Radio, browsing breezily along the Superhighway, like Mr. Toad in his motor car, could be thought of as "Time Wasting". Is nothing sacred?

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Gates Strikes Again

One of the world's largest picture libraries, the US based Bettman Archive, has been bought by Corbis, a 'content providing' company founded in 1989 by Microsoft chairman Bill Gates.

Corbis plans to digitise the complete Bettman archive of 16 million pictures, and licence them to publishers and other content providers. It seems a safe bet that they will be made available in some form over the Microsoft network.

Bill Gates, as we have reported before in ***AUI,*** continues to acquire the rights for unique "content". He is supposed to have bought the "computer" rights to the UK National Gallery's pictures. He is using his immense wealth and Microsoft's power to accumulate these irreplaceable, and probably irretrievable, works of art. What he doing is by no means illegal, but is it in the public interest to place national treasures in the hands of a hugely powerful individual who controls an even more hugely powerful company?

Should the matter be considered before everything is sold off? Though it's almost certainly no use asking this Government to even think about. They'd probably sell Bill Gates the Houses of Parliament if he made an offer - and throw in the Crown Jewels too if they thought they could get away with it.

Securing Software

Much has been said about the morality of nuclear testing in the Pacific by the French government. Some have chosen to go further than mere words, preferring instead to use a new style of computer virus to get their message across.

Nuclear, a virus which prints an anti-nuclear testing message at the bottom of every twelfth copy of any Microsoft Word document it has infected, is the latest example of an interesting and somewhat worrying twist in the computer virus war.

Nucleus is a macro virus, affecting the macro hot key code of widely used packages, such as Word and Excel, rather than executable program code.

Nuclear was first distributed across Internet in a Word document which described the workings of Concept, a macro virus which emerged last summer as a result of a massive shipment of CD-ROMs from Microsoft. Concept displays the comment "That's enough to make my point".

Nuclear and Concept are both relatively harmless - or in anti-virus jargon, they carry no payload. However, the ease with which macro viruses can be metamorphosed is worrying because it makes it extremely difficult to eradicate them.

"I don't think we'll ever get rid of Concept now. It is shipped everywhere. Microsoft shipped 10,000 infected disks and it appeared elsewhere too," said Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant for Dr. Solomon's anti-virus toolkit at S & S International.

"The worrying thing is that these viruses are written in Basic and you don't have to be a bobblehat to understand them. It is so easy to make variants and they are so easily passed on."

Bill Hutton of Symantec claims that his company has discovered the first Windows 95 virus - dubbed 'WIN 95 is hungry'. "We are not sure whether it is a Trojan Horse virus or one specific to Window's 95. If it is the latter, it will be the first one in the book."

The first, but doubtless, not the last.

Keeping up with the Pentium

NexGen is rather belatedly releasing the PCI chipset for its 586 as a competitor for the Pentium. It has also revealed the design of its Nx686 product which is aimed at the mainstream market to try and improve its market share. The new product will focus on 'loopy' multimedia code as well as 16-bit instructions. Unlike the Nx586, this chip will include a floating point unit and will run initially at 180MHz and eventually at 360MHz, according to NexGen. Made using 0.35 micron, five layer metal CMOS in IBM fabs, it is expected to be out before the end of 1996.

Small Bytes

Motorola are joining with IBM, Toshiba, and Siemens to develop 1Gb memory chips.

Intel has announced 'Intercost', a board that enables PCs to receive WWW pages broadcast over spare TV channels.

Cyrix has announced the M1 Pentium class Intel compatible processor. AST Reserve is its first customer.

AT&T has asked the US Government for permission to build a 12 satellite network for carrying Internet traffic. Whew!

Know Your Pixels

To keep up to date with the very latest in computer graphics, you could visit the Special Interest Group in Computer Graphics (SIGGRAPH) at http:/ www.siggraph.org/.

This has a searchable archive plus general information, and is also the home of the "most eye popping annual pixelfest in the world." See the report on Siggraph in next month's *AUI*.

Advanced Back-up

Micro Solutions has announced the arrival of what they claim is the industry's first completely integrated parallel port tape backup drive - the Backpack 800TD. Priced at $169 (about £100), the Backpack utilizes Travan (TM) TR-1 tapes, "the new wave in quarter-inch cartridge (QIC) media."

The PC based Backpack 800TD stores up to 800Mb of data and can utilize QIC-80 cartridges.

Micro Solutions say this is the first tape drive designed exclusively for the parallel port attachment. The company says it has eliminated the components that were previously required to adapt an internal mount drive for external use.

The Backpack 800TD can be shared with other computers, and tapes from other backups can also be used with it.

Contact: Micro Solutions (Illinois) Tel. 001 312 240 2701

The End Is Nigh

The Financial Times has issued a report, "Interactive Advertising, Effectively Targeting the Consumer", in which they predict that specialist and niche media will suffer because of interactive technology.

Roger Crumpton, of the Computer Graphics Supplier's Association, speaking at the Computer Graphic's Expo, delivered similar warnings in his presentation on marketing high technology products and services. Crumpton said "This industry is moving fast, opportunities come and go, and there is a limited window of opportunity in which to make your mark."

The Financial Times report predicts that magazines covering computing, youth interest, and pop music, will face the most immediate competition from new media. It looks as if it's all up with us then, or don't we count because we put a disk on the cover. Are we already too high tech? But that's true of most computer magazines too, isn't it? Do they look at the news stands?

A Touch More Amiga Magic

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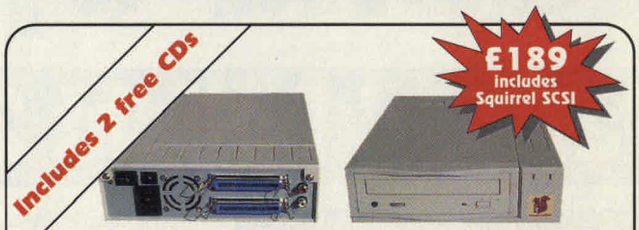
SuperDouble CD Pack



The superb SuperDouble CD-ROM is back! Using an excellent 2.4 speed drive from Sony, this CD-ROM provides outstanding performance at an amazing price. With a 360Kb/s data transfer rate and a 230ms access time, the SuperDouble CD-ROM provides all the speed for the power user.

The SuperDouble is fully compatible with the new Squirrel MPEG card, supporting the industry standard VideoCD (White Book) format.

The SuperDouble CD-ROM pack includes the award-winning AGA Experience CD-ROM - rated 93% in issue 79 of Amiga Format. This CD-ROM is crammed full of pictures, utilities, demos, animations and tools for AGA Amigas. The SuperDouble pack also includes the latest Aminet CD-ROM. This disk is brimming with the latest PD, shareware, utilities, demos and picture files from the Aminet archives on the internet.

A *full* classic Squirrel is also included in the pack. This allows easy connection of any SCSI peripheral to the A1200. The package has all the necessary drivers and software for easy connection of hard drives, CD-ROMs and removable disk drives, such as the Zip™ Drive, to your Amiga.

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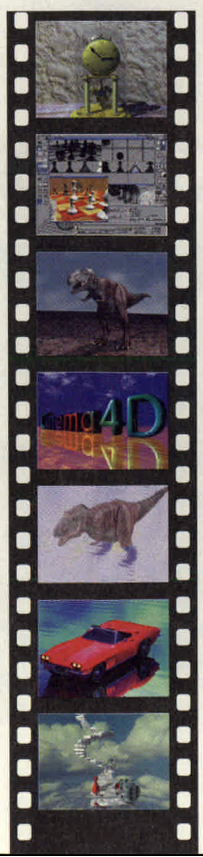

Cinema4D is the easy-to-use ray-tracing and animation system for your Amiga. Equipped with an intuition-based multi-tasking editor, Cinema4D is replete with every conceivable option including window-based real-time interactive modelling, direct modelling in 3D, basic and complex primitives with infinite variations, easy object manipulation, floating toolbars, user-defined menus, object and texture lists, definable object hierarchies, optimised versions for 68020 (A1200 etc.) & FPUs, and much more!

The Cinema4D animator brings you even closer to the world of "virtual reality", breathing life into objects and scenes. Whether you have your spaceship dock with a spacestation, or take a tour around the darkest dungeon - with Cinema4D it's so simple. Just a few mouse clicks and you will have your objects move realistically through time and space.

Cinema4D also includes MagicLink, the flexible object converter. MagicLink converts all popular object formats (Imagine, Sculpt, DXF, Reflections, etc.) to Cinema4D format & back.

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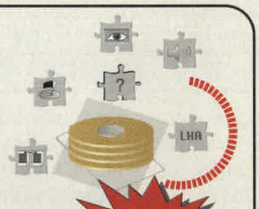

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CD Round Up

David Ward to test drives four new discs, using, to keep *AUI* up with the latest technology, a four speed CD drive.

Gamers' Delight 2

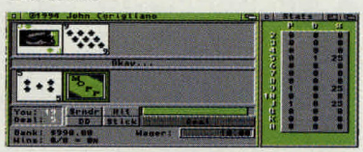
At first glance you would think that a certain Harald Muller was responsible for the entire contents of this disc. That's untrue. Some, but not all of the thousand plus on offer.

Opening the disc's icon you are confronted with a choice of access routes. The most obvious is Menu which loads a screen where you can scroll through game titles by using your joystick. As you stop at each one you are given a short description as to what the game is about. Being German in origin, the game Willi Wacker is not what you may at first think.

There are 70 ready-to-run games here, described as 'commercial' by the label insert. They include shoot-'em-ups, puzzle, and card games. All programmed by the aforesaid Harald. To be frank, I have seen better shareware offerings. The question is - where are the other 1000?

Ah. I am glad you asked that. The answer lies within the familiar (if you have Aminet) icons for FindGames and GamesIndex. These access AmigaGuide documents that will search for, and retrieve, the compressed files that make up the rest of the disc. Once unpacked to floppy disk or hard drive, you can play them as much as you wish.

There don't seem a thousand games squashed into this section. Once you have waded through the umpteen Othello, Solitaire, MasterMind, PacMan, and Minefield clones, you'll find another umpteen Klondike card sets plus demos of commercial games such as Monkey Island and their solutions.



Now if Monkey Island were on here in full, along with all those other games I've partially enjoyed - the disk swapping was a real pain - then I would have said that this disc was a Gamers' Delight. But it isn't and it couldn't be - that would be piracy. So I can't.

RATINGS

Overall Rating 68%

INFO

Price: £29.99
Publisher: Schatzruhe

Aminet Set 2

With beans, it used to be a million housewives everyday, Amiga users only do it 10,000 times a day. Do what? Access the Aminet archive on the Internet, of course.

For those of us without the facilities, or the budget, to download from Aminet, every 2 months a CD-ROM is released with 650Mb of compressed data taken from the archive. This snapshot is a fraction of what the main repository actually holds. And then it is only a selection determined by the whims of the compilers.

There have been 9 discs so far. We can discount the very early as they were put together by the American company Walnut Creek. From disc 3 the CDs have been made by Schatzruhe.

Their discs follow a routine, themes regularly appear, and repeat themselves. Aminet can be divided into four main areas: Utilities, Graphics, Modules, and Games. These areas are generally foremost in various bi-monthly issues.

Consequently we can confidently predict that issue 12 will have a preponderance of Modules, because that's what discs 4 and 8 had. By the way, 3 was Utilities, 5 - Games, and 6 - Demos.

Now what if you have just bought a CD-ROM drive and want the latest in graphics and utilities, but the current Aminet disc is orientated towards the 'music' lover? What do you do? You could wait a couple of months for the next disc, or you could buy an Aminet Set which, as it happens, is also more cost effective.

Schatzruhe have just released the second set of discs. This 4 CD pack covers the aforementioned main themes of the archive. Once again these discs are not copies of the entire archive, but rather a collection of all that's new since Set 1 was compiled.

Each disc is fronted by the excellent AmigaGuide search and retrieval engine. Know the name, but don't know which category a piece of software is in? Or, perhaps you only know roughly what you are looking for. Then AmigaGuide will find it for you, and unpack it to the RAM Disk should you so desire.

All the software is packed, usually with Lha. Although you will sometimes find images in JPEG, and MPEG if an animation, format, because they cannot really be squashed any further.

A CD-ROM drive and an Aminet Set gives you a PD library at your fingertips. Approximately 4Gb of data has been packed onto these four CDs, and that's roughly half of what Aminet actually holds.

RATINGS

Overall Rating 98%

INFO

Price: £24.99
Publisher: Schatzruhe

Contacts

Schatzruhe
Tel. 49 201 788778 (Essen, Germany)
EMC Computergraphic
Tel. 01255 431 389 (Clacton-on-Sea)
PD Soft (UK distributors for Schatzruhe)
Tel. 01702 466933 (Southend-on-Sea)

MEETING PEARLS 3

Every so often Europe's top coders converge for a marathon programming session in Germany - a meeting - and this CD is the result of their efforts - the pearls.

Angela Schmidt co-ordinates the event, and has a large group of 'administrators' to compile the CD. They all do this for free, so that Meeting Pearls can be sold for under 15DM - about £7. To make up for this there is a money transfer order within the jewel case so that conscientious software users can donate dosh to the project.

This disc is dominated by the complete distribution of PasTex 1.4. A total of 96Mb of space is given over to it. What is PasTex? It is a system that is designed to let you print documents perfectly, with page breaks and font sizes correctly inserted. Ideal for laser owners.

Next up are the text and database files, including a guide to all Internet movies. Then comes the graphics programs, web pages of German laws (?), and programming tools.

The rest of the disc is a little like the Aminet series, with sections devoted to packers, archivers, modules, comms, games, and so on. Something for everybody in fact.

All this can be accessed via an AmigaGuide interface, or a special Pearls interface that requires MUI. There is also a special version of CD-Write on the disc so that you can make virtual changes to the CD as if it were a very large floppy.

Group Pearl fishing. . .

Meeting Pearls reflects the software preferences of the people who put it together. As some of these are the top Amiga coders in Europe, then you can be assured that you are not going to be lumbered with a disc full of unwanted and flaky shareware.

RATINGS

Overall Rating 91%

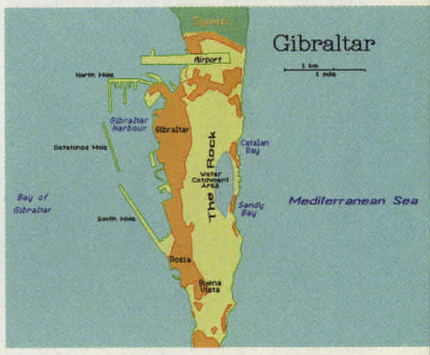
INFO

Price: £9.99
Publisher: Schatzruhe

Phase 2

In December 1995, ***AUI*** reviewed the first disc in this series from EMC Computergraphic. Once again we have collections of fonts, both colour and monochrome, in various formats. Choose between straightforward IFF, Compugraphic, and others.

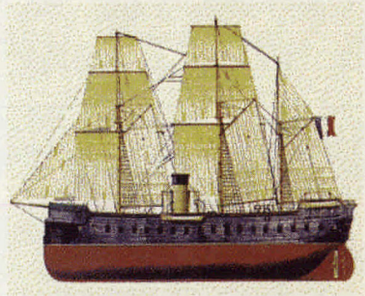
In addition there is a huge range of colour clipart for immediate use, including a good selection of maps. Europe, the World, and the States. Ideal for GCSE studies. Everything can be previewed via a thumbnail image or, in case of the fonts, an IFF screenshot.



There is no rubbish here, it is all quality stuff. In fact the compiler, Errol Madoo, complains in a textfile about the quantities of inferior CD-ROMs on the market, usually for the PC. "Shovelware" is the term used, and he warns the Phase buyer to beware new font and clipart discs that will soon appear, as they will be compiled from stuff 'lifted' from his collections.

Phase 3 will be with us soon, but the disc I am really looking forward to is the one Errol Madoo is compiling that indexes which fonts and clipart are on any Amiga CD that's come out to date.

An excellent idea for the person who owns a large selection of CDs, but cannot remember where that drawing of the mermaid was for the menu they are DTP'ing for the local chip shop.



RATINGS

Overall Rating 94%

INFO

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Ted Turner - CEO, Turner Broadcasting Inc.
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Arno Penzias - VP of research, AT&T and Nobel Laureate
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Dr John Hemming, director of the Royal Geographical Society,
The Geographical Magazine October 1995.

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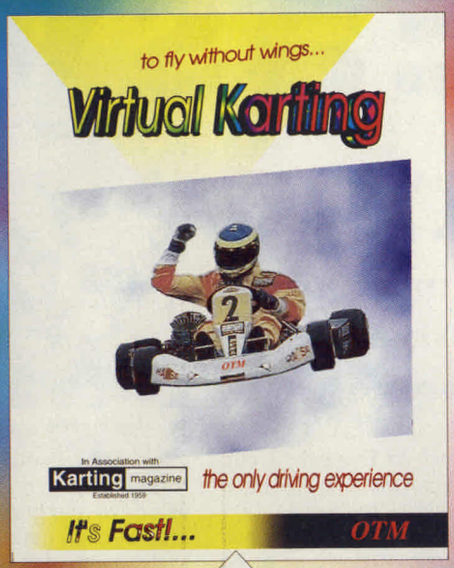

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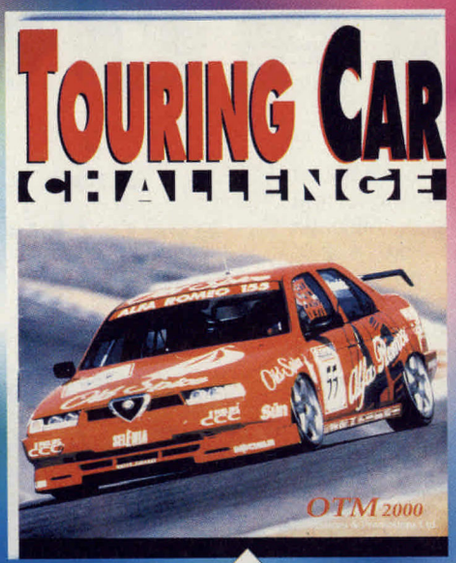

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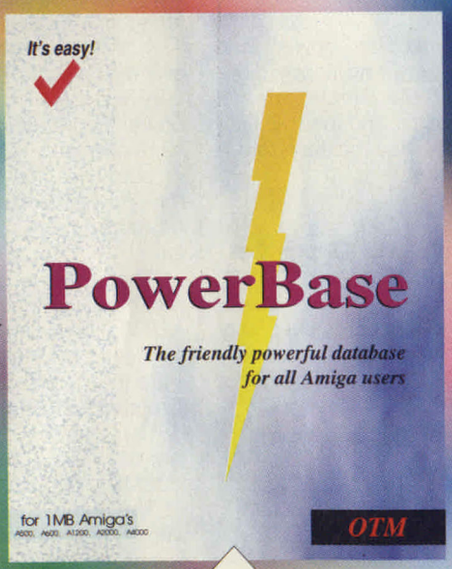

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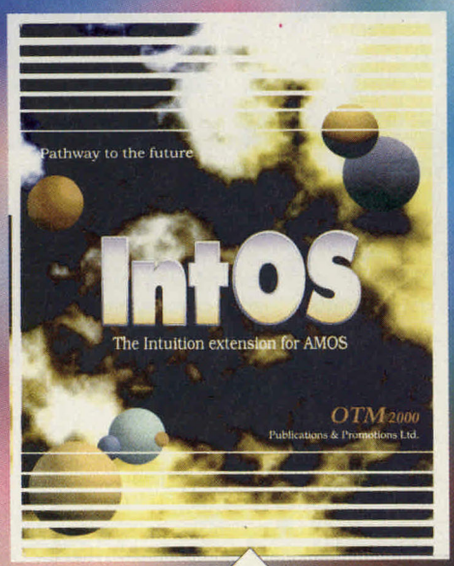

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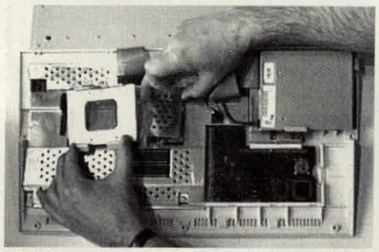
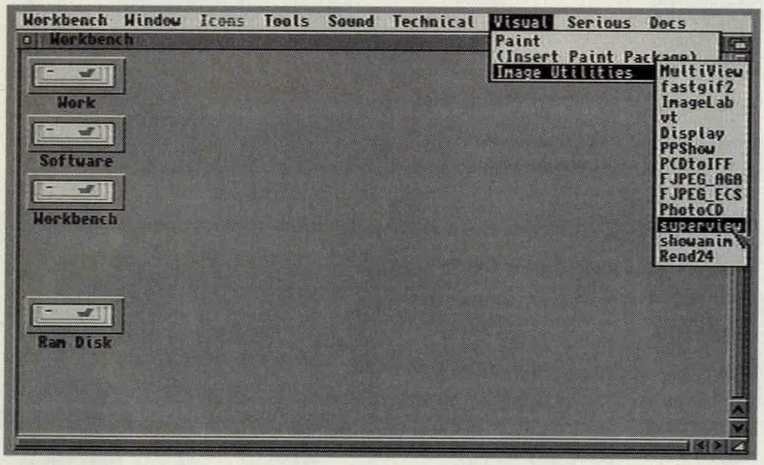
Hard Drive Made Easy

Alan Lewis test drives Eyetech's Installation Kit and finds that at last the problems of the 3.5 inch hard drive have been thoughtfully solved.



One stage in fitting an internal hard disk.

The A1200 is a computer that simply begs to have a hard disk fitted. Although designed to take a 2.5" drive, many users have shoe-horned a generally cheaper 3.5" drive into its innards. Although not an exceedingly complicated task, it is fraught with difficulty - merely opening the case invalidates the warranty, and it is remarkably easy to damage the drive, computer, or both. Furthermore, while 3.5" drives use a 40-way IDE interface, the A1200 employs a 44-way IDE connector, as 2.5" drives use an extra 4 pins for power. This cable is not commonly available. Now, though, thanks to Eyetech Group Ltd., anyone can install a 3.5" drive safely and easily into their A1200.



An example of the pull down menu setup.

The installation kit comes in two flavours, a basic version containing just the drive and power leads, or a complete kit that also has an earth lead, earthing wrist strap, foam pads, crocodile clips, drive screws, a plastic insulating sheet for the drive, and a Workbench installer disk. Figure 1 shows the kit in its glory.

In both kits, the power lead allows both hard and floppy disks to run from the single internal power connector, and the IDE lead is a proper 44-way minitech to 40-way IDC socket.

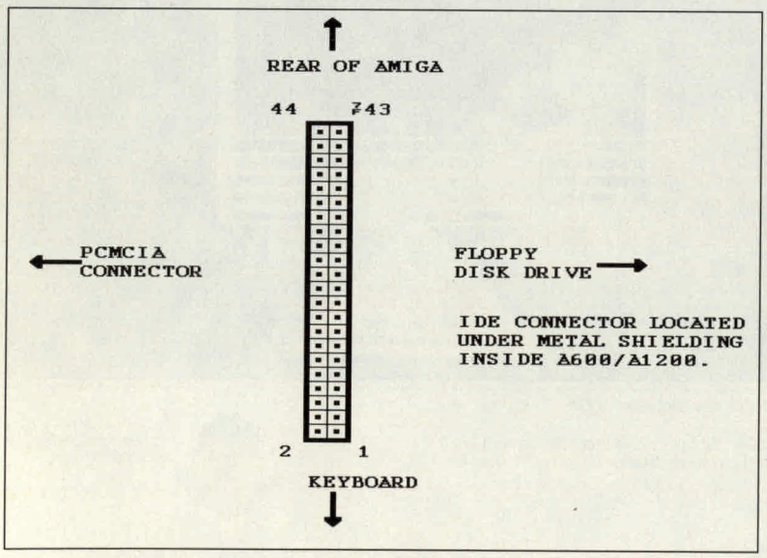
Detailed Guide

There is a 32-page fitting guide. This A5 sized manual is very, very comprehensive, and extremely detailed. Much effort has been put into this by Eyetech, and it shows. After listing everything required to fit a drive and preparing the A1200, step by step instructions are given to dismantling the Amiga, fitting the drive, and re-assembling the computer. There are even sections devoted to the usage and organisation of a hard disk. The back page of the guide serves as a template for drilling mounting holes in the A1200 casing - essential when fitting a 3.5" drive.

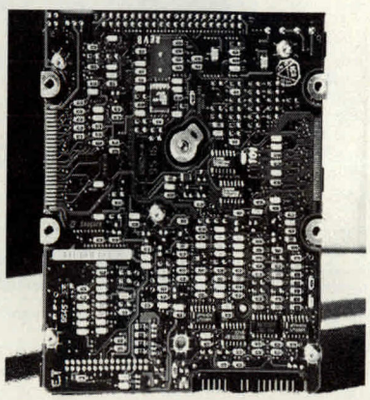
It even covers preparing yourself with an earthing strap, and - a very welcome surprise - it covers power considerations. Eyetech have precisely measured the power output of the A1200 PSU, and the power consumption of the A1200 and various hardware add-ons.

The result is a chapter dealing with how much extra hardware the A1200 PSU can cope with, and suggestions for how to power hardware that would overload the PSU. The conclusion is that the standard PSU can safely power the A1200, internal floppy, 3.5" hard drive, and a 28MHz '030 with 4Mb Fast RAM.

The guide is very well illustrated with 38 photographs of the installation procedure. Figures 2 and 3 are typical of these, and although not present in these pictures, each illustration is titled, with important components of the A1200 labelled.



The layout of the IDE connector on the motherboard of the A600/A1200.



Drives are getting smaller all the time due to great advances in surface mount technology.

Ready to Run

Eyetech also supply 3.5" drives already partitioned and formatted with Workbench and a fair amount of PD software installed. Given that other companies also do this, you

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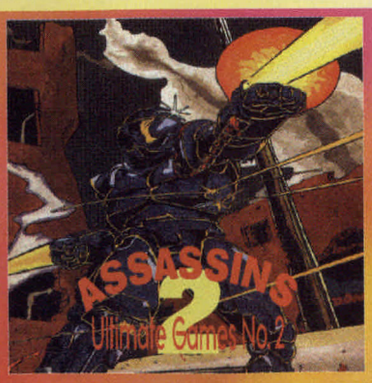

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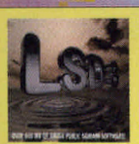

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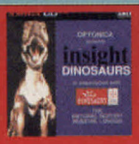

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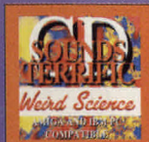

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Hard Drive Made Easy

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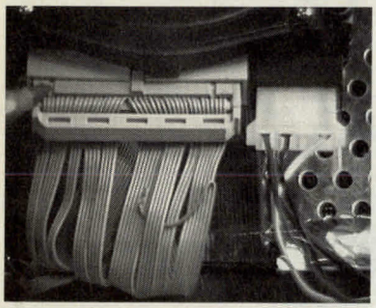
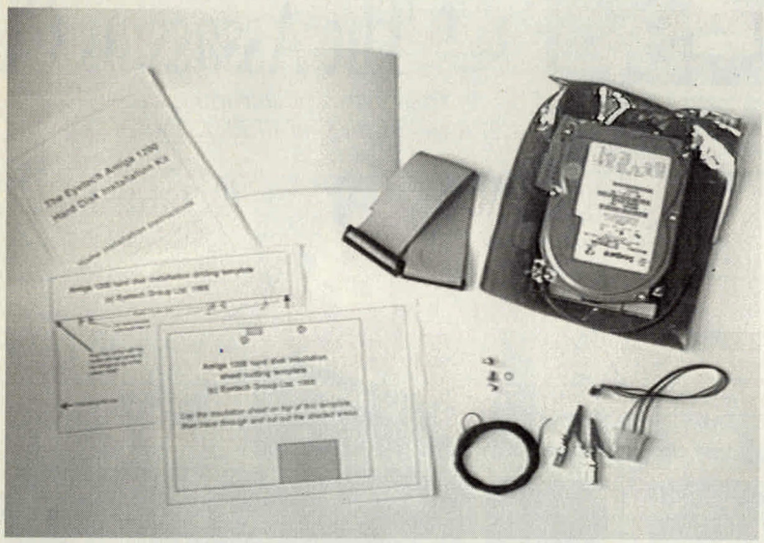


Close up of the drive leads.

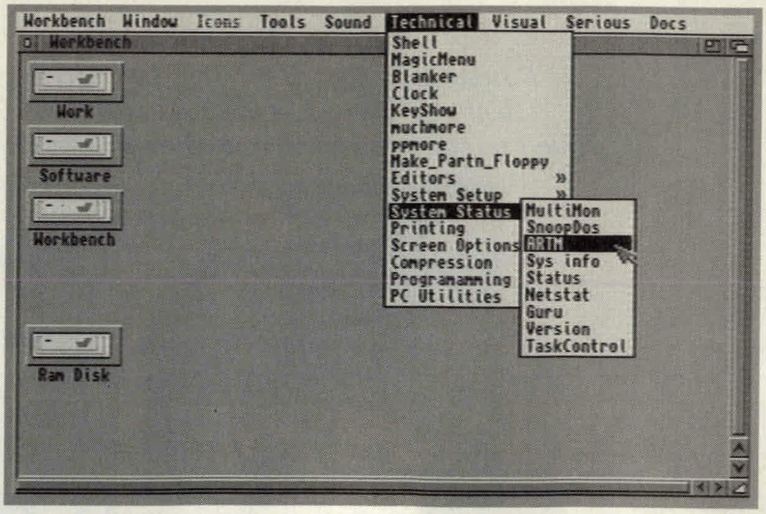
might assume it is nothing special, except Eyetech have put in some thought. Drives are partitioned in three; Workbench, Software, and Data, while those with excess of 540Mb are divided into four- Workbench, Work, Software, and Games. Instead of accepting the default HDToolbox values for the size of each partition (i.e. halving the drive), the

Workbench and Software partitions are 20Mb and 80Mb respectively, with the remaining space being devoted to the Data partition.

That's not all. Rather than merely copying the software to the drive, it has been thoughtfully installed and configured, and can be via ToolsDaemon - this drive is truly ready for use as soon as it is fitted. Software for image processing, file editing, picture displaying, and system monitoring is included.



The complete Eyetech Hard Disk Installation kit.



Another pull down menu as setup by Eyetech.

Those wishing to connect their Amiga to another are well served with Parnet, DNet and Twin-Express! Documentation for these programs is available from the Workbench menu. A highly commendable idea, and one that deserves full praise for the time and effort put into it. Figures 4 and 5 give you an idea of how the Workbench looks when in use.

The review kit came with a 1.1Gb AV drive. AV drives are designed especially for multimedia applications. They can sustain high rates of data transfer, and this drive shows it. It is blisteringly fast - it booted Workbench in less than 3 seconds! To get some idea of the speed, I ran DiskPerf, and compared it to a Conner 210Mb IDE drive: Table 1 shows the results.

Conclusion

This is one drive I really don't want to return! These figures are even more impressive when you consider that while the Conner had a MaxTransfer setting of 256k, the AV drive has to be set to 128k, and is still twice as fast! Overall, a superb and highly recommendable DIY kit for the A1200 owner. ***AUI***

Table 1

DiskPerf results

Drive: Seagate 1081 AV Drive

File create/delete:	Create 166 files/sec, delete 500 files/sec
Directory scan:	556 entries/sec
Seek/read test:	649 seek/reads per second
r/w speed:	buf 512 bytes rd 370085 bytes/sec wr 289928 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 4096 bytes rd 1429876 bytes/sec wr 873813 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 8192 bytes rd 1497965 bytes/sec wr 1084733 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 32768 bytes rd 1497965 bytes/sec wr 1187067 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 131072 bytes rd 1497965 bytes/sec wr 1534501 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 524288 bytes rd 1398101 bytes/sec wr 1700393 bytes/sec
Drive:	Conner Peripherals 210
File create/delete:	Create 100 files/sec, delete 333 files/sec
Directory scan:	626 entries/sec
Seek/read test:	389 seek/reads per second
r/w speed:	buf 512 bytes rd 299593 bytes/sec wr 247695 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 4096 bytes rd 911805 bytes/sec wr 459230 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 8192 bytes rd 748982 bytes/sec wr 515693 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 32768 bytes rd 723155 bytes/sec wr 655360 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 131072 bytes rd 715696 bytes/sec wr 670488 bytes/sec
r/w speed:	buf 524288 bytes, rd 712185 bytes/sec wr 699050 bytes/sec

All tests on an A1200 with 28MHz '030 card and 4Mb Fast RAM expansion.

RATINGS

Eyetech HD Installation Kit

EASE OF USE	98%
PERFORMANCE	98%
DOCUMENTATION	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	99%

Overall Rating 97%

INFO

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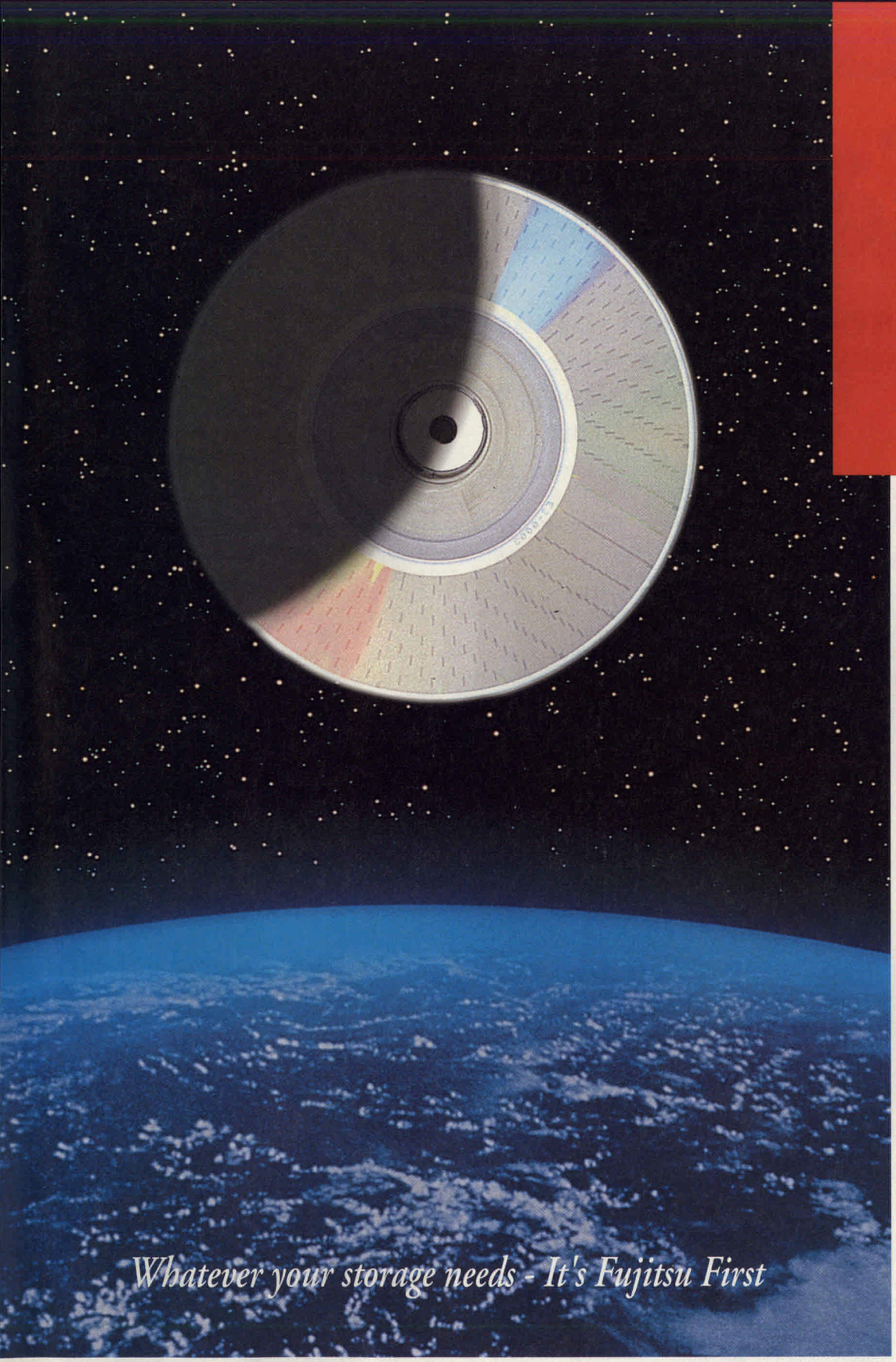

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Organiser 2

David Ward test drives what Digita have done to improve their digital diary for non-Yuppies.

In the mid-80s the ultimate accessory for the Yuppy was the Filofax, the chunky diary-cum-scheduler with add-in pages for extra information - conversion tables, tube maps, and on.

If the Yuppies lost their Filofaxes they supposedly died, or as near as. For without their scheduler, the hectic round of wine bar social events would be missed. Then along came the mobile phone, and the Filofax was relegated as a status symbol. Why even the common people were starting to use them!

Now the 'mobile' has lost its gloss as more and more 'plebs' sign-up for yearly contracts. What is a Yuppy to do..? The latest 'in' thing is either a Personal Digital Assistant linked to a mobile phone for e-mail on the move, or your own personal Web page address emblazoned on the Porsche number plate.

Going Green

As the general population moves towards a more environmental conscientiousness, and the old prophecies of the paperless office may shown some minimal signs of coming about, then the migration of paper based products to the digital domain seems more likely.

Leading the way with the digital Filofax have been Digita and their Organiser. Reviewed last year by *AUI*, and getting top marks, the Organiser has now been updated with many new features. These are features that have caused a generation jump in the version number.

This is not Organiser 1.2 or Organiser 1.5. No, Digita are confidently proclaiming that this is Organiser 2.

Feedback

After listening to users of the launch product, and adding a few ideas of their own, Digita have significantly enhanced their Personal Information Manager.

It is now possible to create links between related items, something which is not possible on paper. The most basic example is being reminded when a birthday is due, with the Organiser supplying the correct address details so that you can send a card.

Addresses can be indicated as being available, and the text entry field for them has been improved. DigiSense, Digita's intelligent 'guesser' has been given Auto Capitalisation. This will correctly identify titles and postcodes so that they can be put into uppercase. An extra title field has been added too for titles - like Dr. and Mr.

On the Diary front there is now a scrolling facility so that if there are more events than can comfortably fit on a page, you can still access them. There are also Themes.

Supplements

The 'add-ons' section - Supplements - has been speeded up and given a new set of navigation buttons, plus a new command to rescan for extra add-ons.

Say you are into Space and Astronomy, as is our esteemed Guru of the Amiga Answer Machine - Andy Eskelson, then you can set up themes for this subject. Phases of the Moon, meteorite falls, and more can be indicated as an event with a time and date in the Diary section. As these are part of a theme, they are now highlighted in grey to make them stand out from ordinary items such as wedding anniversaries.

This new version of organizer comes with a '96 Plus Pack' that contains a hundred new Supplements and twenty new Diary Themes. As well as Supplements for Religion, Sport, and Special Days, there are now topics on History, Gardening, Charities, Award winners, Health, and Recipes.

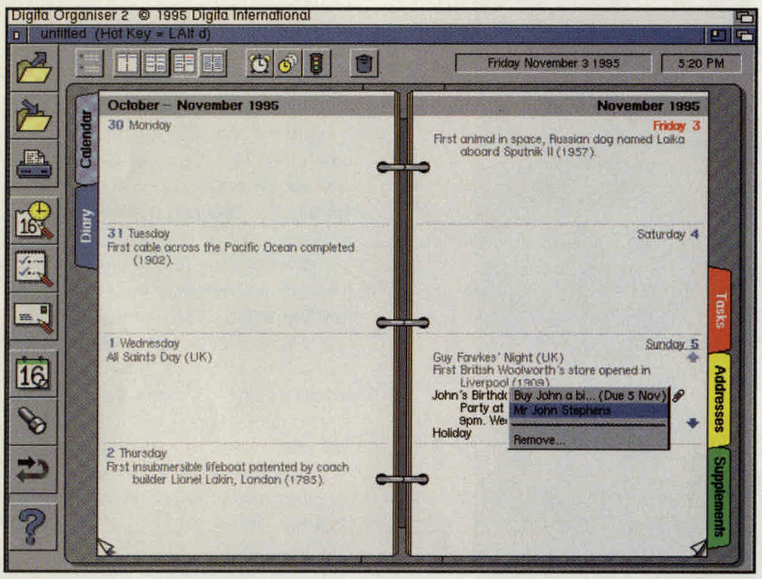
As for Diary Themes, these include Trivia, Discoveries, Disasters, (who) Died Today, and Celebrity Birthdays.

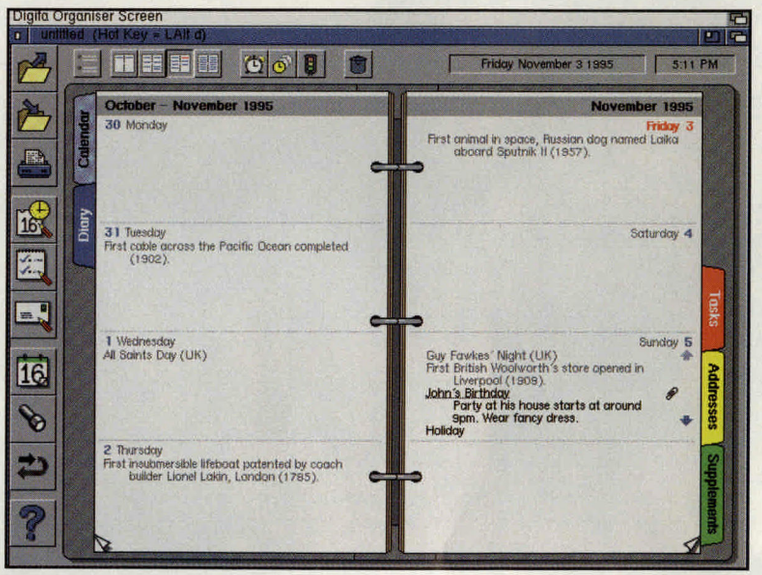
Upgrading

Existing users of Digita software (for example, Wordworth), who have registered, can get Organiser with a £10 discount. Owners of Organiser 1 can upgrade to this new version for only £14.99.

The 96 Plus Pack is available as an extra for £9.99, but purchasers of a new Organiser 2 get this included for free.

If you want to test drive Organiser for yourself, then write or telephone Digita for an information pack. This includes a nice glossy brochure and a time limited copy of the program.





RATINGS

Organiser 2

FEATURES	97%
PERFORMANCE	97%
SPEED	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%

Overall Rating 96%

INFO

Price: £49.99
Contact: Digita International
Black Horse House
Exmouth EX8 1JL

Tel. 01395 270273
Fax. 01395 268893
Eml. sales@digita.demon.co.uk

11 GOOD REASONS FOR OWNING

SPIRIT LITE

GRAHAM BLYTH'S HANDS-ON GUIDE

Spirit stunned musicians and engineers with the launch of Folio, the world's most versatile and affordable high quality personal mixer. Now there's Folio Lite, making the concept of low-cost quality mixing even more affordable.

But low cost doesn't mean we've skimped on the little details that can make the difference when you're working on tracks, playing at a gig or mixing to video.

That's because Folio Lite has been designed by Graham Blyth, a perfectionist who believes that even the smallest flaws can seriously compromise your mix.

So here are 11 things that Graham slaved over to meet the challenge of designing Lite. There's no hype, just the real reasons why Lite stands out against the competition – taken straight from Graham's notebook.

HOW AND WHERE YOU COULD USE FOLIO LITE

- Home Studio mixer
- Submixing in a Studio
- Live Submixing of Drums or Keyboards
- Location mixing direct to DAT
- Audio Visual mixer
- Multi-Media mixer
- Tape Monitor mixer

LIVE

STUDIO

SUBMIXER

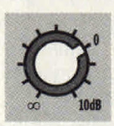
1 Quiet Inputs, with Huge Signal Handling Capacity

At -129dBu EIN, Lite's mic preamps are actually quieter than many large "pro" consoles. Our new mic preamps give you even more signal handling than before; now you get sensitivity ranging from -4 to -60dB, rather than the usual -10 to -50dB; that's **five times more** handling capacity than other consoles. This means that you can connect almost anything from low output ribbon mics to active DI boxes with headroom to spare.

2 PFL Solo System

Among small mixers, only Lite lets you monitor individual input channels. You can even monitor the stereo inputs in stereo so that you don't have to rely on a potentially misleading mono sum solo.

3 Fader Zero dB where it should be



On Spirit consoles, the "0dB" point is further round the fader's travel than the standard half-way mark. That way you get more fader resolution where you really need it for smooth, precise control instead of the annoying leaps in level that happen with even small movements. That's because other faders just don't have enough resolution in the right place.

4 Consistent Rotary Controls

Off-the-shelf controls are seldom good enough for the consistent response you need when fine-tuning a mix. Spirit consoles have custom-designed potentiometer laws that guarantee predictable response to any movement.

5 Balanced Inputs and Ground-Compensated Outputs

The combination of both of these godsends on one console is exclusive to Spirit at this price. They protect most input and output signals from interference and noise, even when ground loops, hum fields and lighting rigs try to corrupt your signals.

6 Mono Channel & Mix Inserts

You can connect signal processors like compressors and graphic equalisers to give you more creative control over your mix.

7 British EQ

For an authentic "British" sound, we've given you carefully selected, musically useful points at 80Hz for kick drum thud and 12kHz for top end sizzle or to cut through the mix instead of the typical 100Hz and 10kHz. Compare the sound with others and you will accept nothing less.

8 Dedicated Tape Return

This saves you 2 valuable inputs when playing pre-show music, and is essential for DAT mastering. By routing to mix you have a staggering total of 16 inputs at mixdown.

9 Aux 1 Pre/Post switching

You'd expect just one monitor and one effects send, but Lite's Aux 1 can be switched Pre for foldback monitors or Post to use an extra effect send at mixdown.

10 Long Travel Switches

You can see instantly whether any switch is "on" or "off".

11 Very Compact

Lite measures just 300mm wide by 266mm deep, and is only 38mm high.

12 Designed & Built in Britain

Ok, so Graham found 12 reasons for owning a Folio Lite. Accept no substitutes.

Spirit by Soundcraft
Harman International Industries Ltd.,
Cranborne Industrial Estate, Cranborne Road,
Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3JN, England.
Tel: +44 (0)707 665000
Fax: +44 (0)707 660482

For free brochures and a booklet written by pro-audio journalist Paul White on how to get the best from your mixer in a variety of situations, simply complete and return the coupon to the address below.

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What instrument(s) do you play? .....

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Please tick here if you do not want to be kept on Spirit's mailing list ☐

SPIRIT
By Soundcraft

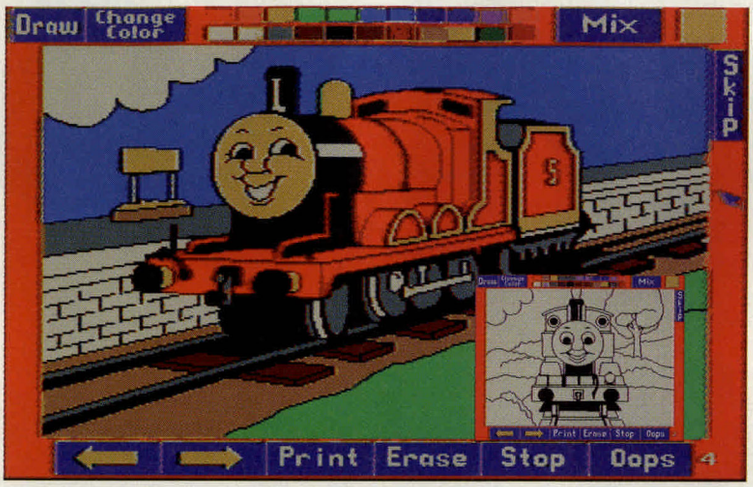
A Harman International Company

WHO IS SPIRIT'S DESIGN GURU?

At Spirit, we're all passionate about our mixers. But no-one is more passionate than the innovator behind every Spirit console, co-founder of Soundcraft Graham Blyth. Graham's been designing the world's best mixers for about 25 years and relentlessly seeks perfection (Graham will never say "I'm completely satisfied". But he might say "Mmm, that's a step in the right direction"). Every new Spirit mixer he designs makes professional audio quality and features more affordable. Audiophiles love him, other mixer designers envy him. Graham cannot abide poor design, whether it be electronic or ergonomic, and he becomes very emotional about some of the things that the competition gets away with. His philosophy is that every customer has the right to expect quality, because elegant solutions don't have to mean extra expense.

Colourfully yours, Tom and Sooty

Martin Witton gets a paint box or two that give his favourite characters a whole new brilliant look.

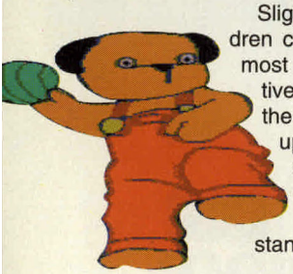


Right, are you all sitting comfortably? Hands up who can tell me what colour Percy is? Aha! Whatever you gave as your answer, it's wrong! Go to the bottom of the class! Percy, Thomas the Tank, and even the Fat Controller can look however I want them to! So there!

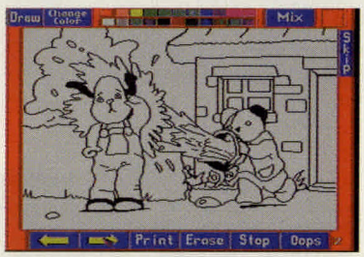
Friendly Learning Educational Software from Alternative Software, have a range of titles for Amigas (or PC floppy and CD-ROM) which feature Sooty, Thomas The Tank, Postman Pat, Popeye and other perennial favourites.

The two programs reviewed in ***AUI,*** Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends Electronic Paint Box, and Sooty Paint (sold separately), appear to have been designed by the same person, and are identical as paint programs apart from the central characters of course. That's not to say that if you, have bought one, your child (You? Oh, come on!) wouldn't want the other. They are both extremely easy to use, quick to load, and the end results are of excellent quality.

Each of the programs contains 4 or 5 pictures of the characters in different, but well known scenes. Using the program at the very basic level even a young child would be able to paint the pictures with a little help from a bigger person, and could get great satisfaction from being able to print out the finished picture. As the pictures are in colour, you will need a colour printer, but you can't be without one living next to your Amiga these days, can you?



Slightly older children can make the most of their creative skills and mix the paint to come up with interesting variations of colour. For instance, if the basic colour chosen for Thomas the Tank is blue, the picture can be shaded by mixing in any of the other colours in the paint box and the result will be the basic colour plus dots of the other colour overlaid on the basic one. It looks great.



However, no doubt purists will want to see the pictures in the original and familiar form. The paint box colours are brilliant, not only as they are right for the characters, but also because of their brightness.

Accessing the picture outlines to colour in is literally child's play, as indeed it should be for such a program. Each picture is numbered and choosing which to use is simplicity itself. Within a few minutes of opening the package you and the kid can get stuck in and choose and change the colours and, hey presto!, as Sooty would say to Sweep, you will have a brightly coloured picture.

After the initial instant gratification or satisfaction of making it work, the child's natural curiosity (or adult's for that matter) will turn to wondering what else it can do. For a start, you can create your own pictures on a blank page using circles, ovals, triangles, rectangles, straight lines, curly lines, and dots (they are big on dots in these two programs!).

These self made creations can also be coloured in using the point and click arrow on the paintbox (although you can't use 'mix' option). If you change your mind about any particular colour, or want to try out a few before making the final decision, you can use the 'oops' and the last piece filled in will go back to the basic white again. A big change of mind and you can 'erase' the whole lot and start again.

Now for the really good bit. Filling in a picture or designing a new one can be entertaining and satisfying, particularly when a lot of care is taken in getting it polished. But what can you do with your creation? Printing out the finished article will preserve it for posterity, but how about making it into a birthday card, Christmas card, or banner. Children tend to get invited to a lot of parties and just buying the present can add up to large sums of money over a year. Buying cards on top adds to the cost, so the program can save you a fortune if you use it to help your child make and print out its own.

Wrapping the present and making a card could increase the excitement of being invited out. You can even personalize the cards with a message of your own choosing with a line of text above or below the picture using the Print Message option. Even better you can produce twelve pictures from the 45 in either or both the ranges or include a mixture of your own designs and make them into a calendar printing out each one with a different month of the year. That colour printer will really come in useful, won't it?

The preset pictures are excellent reproductions of the storybook characters, and I would be surprised if the children, and yourself, didn't thoroughly enjoy both of these programs.

With so little Amiga software, especially for kids, coming out these days, Alternative have done the very junior Amiga crowd a big favour with these two programs which deserve to be successful. ***AUI***

INFO

Contact:
Alternative Software
Units 5-7, Baileygate Industrial Estate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 2LN

Artworks' Clip Art

David Ward test drives a useful new addition to the DTP armoury of ready-made design.

Clip art on the Amiga ranges from the excruciatingly awful to the excellent. The lower end of quality is catered for by cheap conversion of PC graphics originally designed for their lo-res CGA screen. At the other end, we have professional drawn clip-art at professional prices. Artworks are among these few, and one that helpfully supplies for the Amiga market.

Artworks have released three sets of disks that cover the following subjects: frames, corners, strips, and motifs; signs and symbols; and badges, banners, bubbles and bursts.

At sixteen pounds for a set of three disks, the Artworks' Set 2 is not cheap. However, as usual you have to judge what you are buying. You get three disks within the video cassette sized case. One containing monochrome IFF bitmap versions of the colour encapsulated postscript (EPS) files to be found on the other two disks.

ProPage or Pagestream

If you use ProPage or PageSetter then your software cannot make use of EPS, programs such as: Pagestream, Final Writer, and Wordworth 3.1 can. So, if you have the Gold Disk programs, you will need to order the ProDraw version of the set.

Resizeable

As these are scalable images, you can resize them within your DTP package however you wish without fear of the jaggies. Ideal for posters. And if you have a colour printer, well... watch out Maiden (The street hoarding advertising people).

There are about 100 different images on the Badges (Set 2) disks, and Artworks supplies a handy booklet showing them all for quick reference.

As well as the two other sets, Artworks also sells a range of 'MiniClips', which are designed for use in documents that only require small images. There are sixteen sets, but these are only in IFF bitmap format. They are cheaper though, at only ~~£7.99~~ per disk. The range covers all the standard themes plus 'Prehistoric life' and 'Fishing'.

If there is a subject not covered, then you can ask Artworks to design some clipart especially for you. They have professional artists standing by, ready to take your instructions, orders, and money.

Conclusion

All in all an excellent, if somewhat pricey, collection of images for the committed Desktop Publisher or Videographer. Yes, you can use these images for video work as they are in colour. ***AUI***

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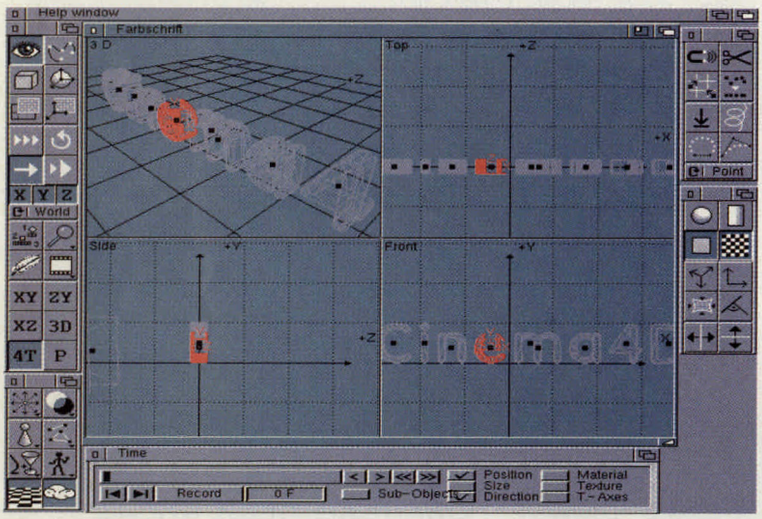
Cinema 4D 2.1

A single, affordable package with the best elements of the greatest Amiga 3D programs? Gary Fenton previews such a possibility in a new package to hit British shores.

Demos of Cinema4D have been appearing on CD compilations for the best part of a year, while version 1.0 has been available in Germany for some time. At last Maxon have translated the software and manual into English, and are about to release the latest version in the UK.

Reading down the features list I found entries like inverse kinematics, special effects, multiple format support, hard disk rendering, and so on. This sounded great, especially when the UK distributors, HiSoft, told me they're selling it for a penny under £200.



Cinema4D's interface showing four different views of the scene.

Decent Dudes

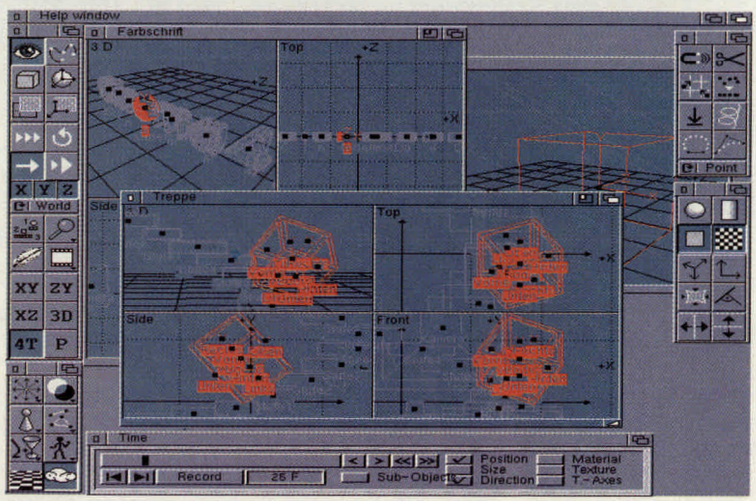
Unlike certain other magazines, ***AUI*** isn't in the business of reviewing pre-release versions of software as final product. Cine-ma4D is in such a phase at the time of writing. A few things have to be tweaked and the manual is being printed now, so we're reserving the final judgement until we get the same version to play with as you'll find in the shops. I was sent the manual as an Acrobat file which I read through using the first rate Mac emulator, Shapeshifter, on my Amiga A1200. Incidentally, the latest version (3.2a) runs up to ten times faster in colour modes making it much more useful on A1200s. There's even a 15-bit HAM8 display driver now! I'm sidetracking here, sorry, but I thought it worth a mention.

This version of Cinema 4D is practically finished and certainly impressed me in the features department. At last, could this be the 3D package which brings the latest animation features to home users and graphics buffs? Lightwave is going for at least £600 so there's plenty of room for Cinema4D to muscle in and win over enthusiasts, and possibly professionals, for the same price of a 4Mb expansion board.

First Impressions

On first double clicking the Cinema4D icon, a series of windows opened on Workbench. I was a bit annoyed with this as I don't like apps cluttering up my Workbench, but this was not a problem. Cinema4D can magically appear on any screen, like the shop keeper from Mr. Benn, or create a screen of its own. Folk with graphics cards can even use a mega high-res flicker free screen as the program is totally Intuition friendly (unlike Lightwave), and supports many graphics cards as standard. It worked with CyberVision, although wireframe objects strangely vanished when I tried to move them around. HiSoft said that new libraries will appear any day now to resolve this problem.

I chose to use an AGA DoublePAL screen mode in 8 colours for Cinema4D which looked quite agreeable, apart from the aspect ratio problem, as DoublePAL stretches the screen somewhat. Not a problem. Cine-ma4D lets you tweak the aspect ratio so round circles look round and squares look square, as opposed to elliptical and rectangular. Very good, Cinema4D, but aren't you being a bit too clever for a £200 3D package? Surely you can't be that good?



Many scenes can be worked on at the same time and objects can be labled (in red) for clarity.

Cheap Power

Cinema4D tries to keep things as uncomplicated as possible. Combining the animation/stage editor with the modelling side of things for example. From the same interface objects are born, grown, educated and exercised without loading any other programs or visiting other screens. In fact, if you want to know something really cool, Cinema4D can open several different projects at the same time, you can run more than one copy of the program at a time, and a separate rendering program can render projects independently and/or at the same time as Cinema4D is running! I guess you could run the rendering program on several Amigas, like a rendering farm to get the job done quicker. But best check with the licensing agreement to see if that's legal first.

Before I get into the basics of what Cinema4D can and can't do, you should be aware that its hardware requirements are very low for a program of its potential. Any Amiga with 3Mb RAM and Workbench 2.0. will do, but Workbench 3.0, a faster processor and at least 4Mb RAM are recommended. Now you can get '060 cards for the A1200, so people who bought their Amiga for fun can start

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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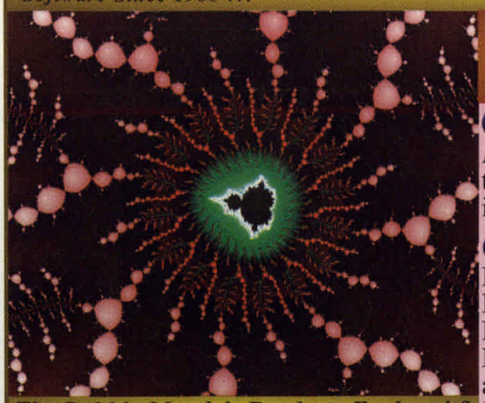

The Bubble Mandel: Ready to Explore it?

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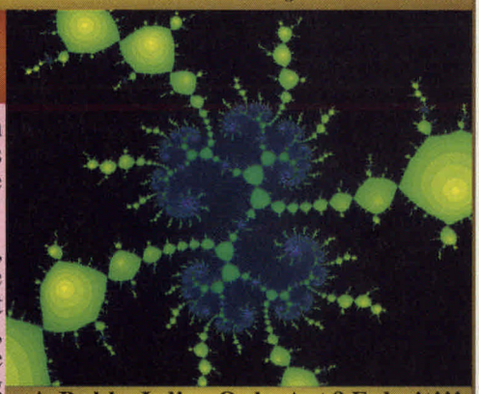
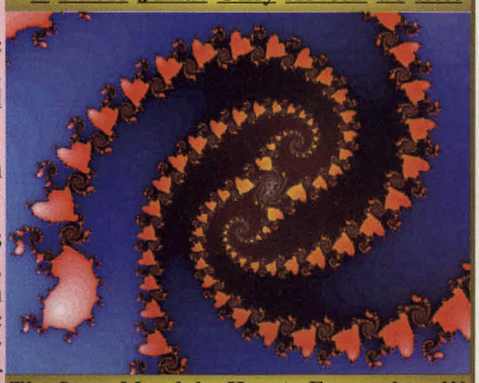


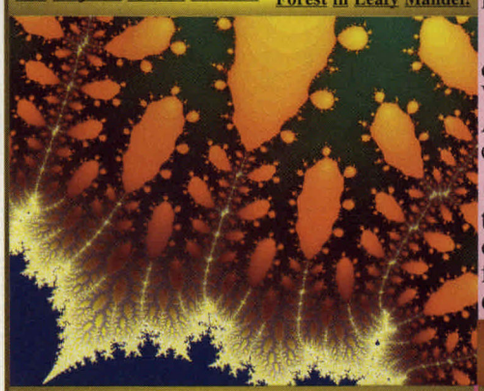
A Buble Julia: Only Art&F do it!!!

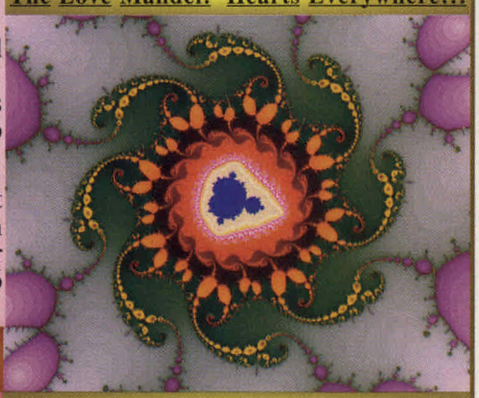
The Majestic Orchid Mandel!

Forest in Leafy Mandel!



The Love Mandel: Hearts Everywhere!!!





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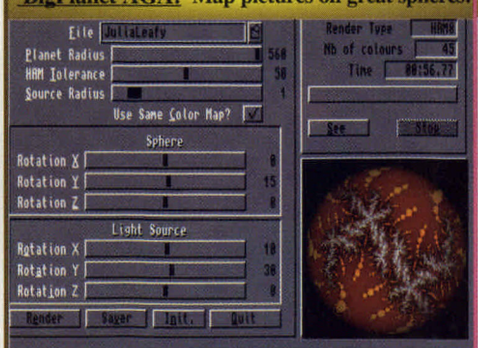

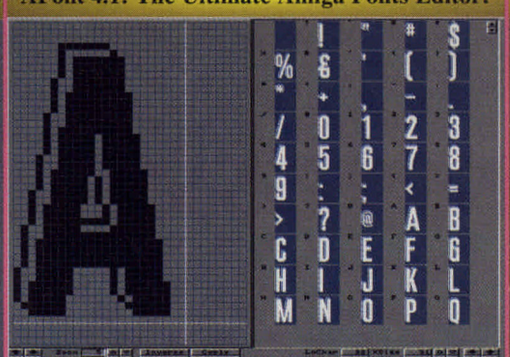

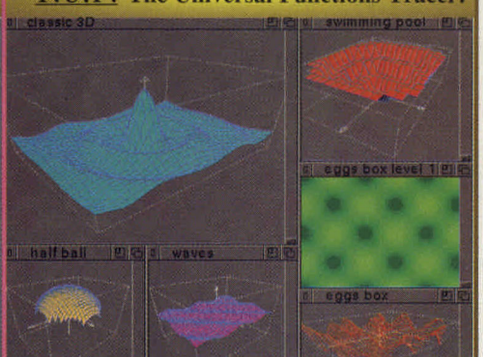

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Cinema 4D 2.1

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42

rendering and selling serious animations from their trusty home computer! Like many other Amiga addicts, I'll be wetting my pants when the PowerAmigas arrive in 12 months! (Fingers crossed. And perhaps my legs too!)

Interfacing

The interface is fairly configurable. The viewing window is rescalable and the various tool bars can be moved around as needed. There are six different view modes selectable by clicking on buttons: top, side, front, camera view, perspective view, and a split screen combination of the three perspective views including a 3D view. Objects and points can be editing from any of these views, including the 3D ones.

Functions are accessed from either the pull down menus, buttons on tool bars, or keyboard shortcuts for maximum efficiency. If you don't know what a button does then a help bar lets you know as your mouse moves over a button.

Objects and points can sometimes be indistinguishable from each other, so Cinema4D will overlay labels with the objects name for clarity if needed. Complexity of displayed wireframe objects is variable right down to a simple cube for complex object development without losing speed. And the number of objects are only limited by memory.

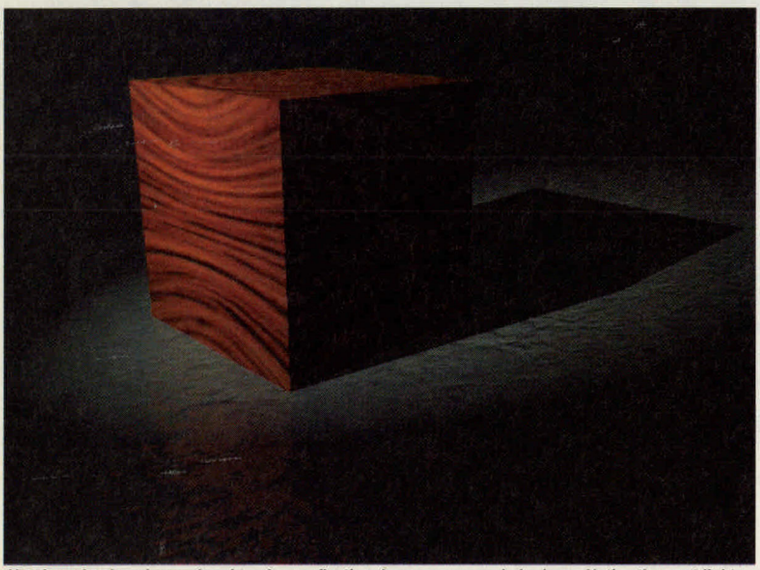
With 13 adjustable primitive objects built-in you'll spend more time creating complex objects than creating the basic building blocks, as I often have to in Lightwave. As a bonus, Cinema4D has five built-in adjustable special objects like the figure (a simple hierarchical humanoid object), fractal (good for generating basic random landscapes), emboss (traces an IFF image and creates a relief object), sun (generates lighting effects from the sun based on time of day and year and geographical location), and text (creates 3D object from text input or a file). Pretty impressive stuff with a few mouse clicks.

An unlimited number of spline objects can be created using four different spline interpolations: linear, Akima (who?), B-spline, and cubic. Of course, there are boolean operations, a magnetism tool with many options to play with, and tools like flip, warp, arrange, centre, crunch, deform, subdivide, randomise, optimise, repair, join, twist, align, smooth, and so forth.

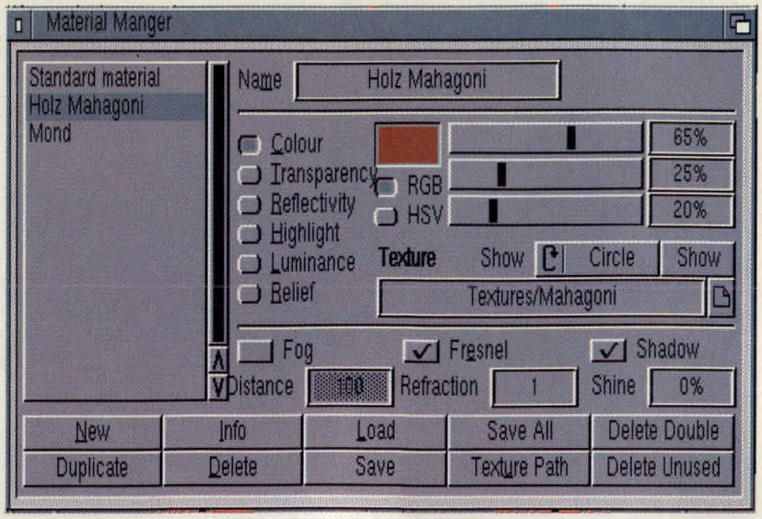
Animation

Cinema4D uses a hierarchical animation system. This means that if you create a skeleton, the foot bone is connected to the shin bone, the shin bone is connected to the knee bone, and the knee bone... dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones! Ahem! You get the drift? This is all very well, but what if you want your skeleton to take a step forward? The last version of Lightwave I used on the Amiga (3.5) wasn't very clever when it came to character animation. Moving the foot forward would detach it from the leg - not exactly helpful.

With something called inverse kinematics, Cinema4D can keep hierarchical objects connected to each other, and if you were to move the foot forward the rest of the leg would follow and automatically bend at the knee. The results are seen in real time so you can get characters to respond to your mouse movements instantly, just like poseable figurines. This can knock hours off your work and make animations appear much more realistic, and as a bonus it's fun!



Here's a simple cube rendered to show reflection, bump maps, and shadows. Notice the spot light has a soft edge but shadows are hard.



The material manager window lets you edit any of the material you have in the scene. IFF images can be used as maps for any of the materials properties.

Unlike most 3D packages, Cinema4D can use either frames or minutes and seconds as a timing method. The advantage of using minutes and seconds is that you can render the animation to run at, say, 15 frames per second for a CD-ROM animation, and then render it again to run at 25 frames per second for video without having to adjust any key frames - simply change the frames per second setting from the menu. Throughout the program, keys can be entered using seconds or frames. A time line window keeps track of what's happening in the scene, which is fully editable and similar to Imagine's. (That's a good thing by the way!)

Amazing

Built-in special effects which take a lot of misery out of animating include explode, melt, pulse, wind, morph, and vibrate. Some of these are just so cool to play around with and are easily applied to any object. Wind can be used to effortlessly generate natural effects like a flag in a breeze or jelly wobbling. Explode is similar to the effect in Imagine and is perfect for blowing up space ships, while melt does just that with impressive results.

Previews of animations are created by rendering frames to disk and playing them back through Cinema4D. This is no way as neat as Lightwave which renders previews very quickly to RAM and immediately replays them. Cinema4D does give you the VCR type controls though, but playback speeds are vaguely labelled like slow, medium, fast, and maximum, as opposed to the preferred frames per second method used in other packages.

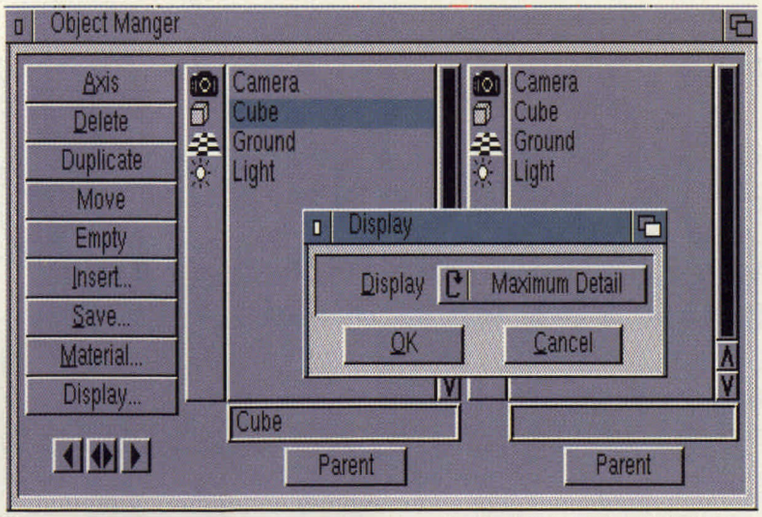
Lights and Textures

Materials can effortlessly be loaded from the included library (wood, metal, plastic, etc.) or created from scratch. It's a little similar to Imagine which is good as it offers a high degree of visual control with texture placements. Controls include colour, transparency, specularity, reflectivity, refraction, luminosity, and bump mapping.

An infinite number of lights are possible in a scene using divergent, parallel and spotlights with shadow casting. Spots are soft edged, but it appears that shadows from objects are hard edged. There are no lens flare effects, but the program is modular, which means anything can be added in the future. It does have fog effects though.

Rendering seems slower than other 3D packages, but the quality is top notch with six different modes which render to hard disk, allowing huge images to be generated without ridiculous demands for RAM.

Other noteworthy aspects include excellent anti-aliasing, selectable pixel aspect ratio (eg PAL 4:3, HDTV 16:9) and it's meant to support most graphics cards, although I'm waiting for the necessary CyberVision libraries! Elements like shadow, reflections, textures,



The object manager handles overall control of objects, such as hierarchy, materials, and wireframe display qualaties.

bump maps, and transparency can be turned off to speed up rendering, and background and foreground pictures can be keyed behind or over when rendering.

Converting

There are masses upon masses of 3D objects in the public domain which are very useful to animators and can save hours of needless work creating new objects. Why build a house or a spaceship when you can get one already made up for free? Unless you want something unique, of course.

Cinema4D uses Maxon's own file format for objects which could potentially put people off the product if it weren't for a sweet little bundled program called MagicLink which converts 3D objects from and to many different formats. It currently supports Cinema4D,

FastRay, Imagine, Reflections, Turbo Silver, Videoscape, Sculpt, Pagerender, LightWave, Real3D and DFX formats, which covers just about everything except 3D Studio, Alias, and Wavefront formats.

Conclusion

At first I was very unsure about the way Cinema4D operates. It seemed far too functional to be of any creative use. Using nothing but the standard Amiga windows, menus, and gadgets didn't make it look that inspiring either, but as I got to know the program it began to make sense and the fog gradually began to clear.

I still maintain that Lightwave is by far the easiest 3D program on the planet to use and to get into, but Cinema4D's efficient interface is only a tiny learning curve which is still simplicity compared to Imagine or Real3D, for example. I keep using the word "efficient", don't I? I guess that's because the Germans have to live with this stereotype image of efficiency and reliability, like their VW cars.

I do have a few problems with the program which should be ironed out by the time you read this. If they're not, I'll report back to you when I award Cinema4D the final ratings. One thing which worries me is the speed of rendering which I'm very sure is slower than other packages. I've been told that Maxon are just about to start work on re-writing the program which should do wonders for its speed. Hisoft assure me they will have a very reasonable upgrade policy to version 3 when it arrives later in the year.

This image shows off refraction very nicely.

For now I strongly recommend this package to anyone who can't afford Lightwave. I'm not saying it's a poor man's Lightwave because it's not. Hmmm, okay, maybe it is. It has features which Lightwave doesn't have and vice versa, but what Cinema4D offers is a serious tool for anyone to get into 3D animation which produces outstanding results. I'd like to give it a score in the mid-nineties, but we're waiting for the final release. Stay tuned. ***AUI***

The Red Barron flies over a background image for extra effect.

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F-Key Programming

This month Paul Overaa delivers some help with those often under-used Amiga function keys and, for good measure, throws in a few ARexx tips along the way.

When computers with function keys first appeared, they were an area of major interest for almost all computer users. Nowadays, where menus and icons are all the rage, things seemed to have cooled a little. I, regularly come across Amiga users who have never taken any interest in Amiga function key programming. This is rather a shame because some great opportunities are being missed. The function key approach provides, at times, some very real benefits. Unlike icons on a crowded multi-window display, function keys are ALWAYS visible and that makes them particularly fast to use.

Nowadays, the Amiga has a system utility that can be used for setting up function key definitions so it will come as no surprise that this is where we start our story.

The FKey Connection

FKey is the tool that lets you assign commands to a selected function key. You can cycle and resize windows or screens, and insert text, but most importantly you can run programs. Setting up a function key/program name combination is easy. Select the New Key gadget and enter the name of the function key (F1, F2 and so on). Then choose 'Run Program' from the command box, and enter the name of the program to be run. Finally use the 'Save Defined Keys' Project menu option to save the created function key definition to disk. You can also run ARexx scripts directly, without needing to explicitly use the RX command. Here you follow the same setting-up procedure, but use the 'Run ARexx Script' option instead. Entering the name of the script to be executed rather than a program name.

If the program you are running is going to read configuration parameters from a disk file, then it's useful to name that file after the key itself. This makes it easily recognisable, e.g. F1.config. It also helps to store all such definitions in the same directory, e.g. the system's S: directory. Good conventions to follow when naming ARexx scripts include using both the name of the associated function key and using a .rexx extension. If you're programming the F2 key then you could call your script 'F2.rexx.'

It's also best to save your scripts in the rexx: directory (usually assigned to Workbench:s) because then your scripts will always be found by the system.

Note that for FKey function definitions to be active, the FKey commodity actually needs to be running. The easiest way of ensuring this is to drag the FKey icon, or a copy of it, into your WBStartup drawer - that way the utility will always be up and running by the time your system has booted!

An AmigaDOS Oriented Example

Occasionally, while I'm programming, I'll use the RAM disk as a temporary resting place for programs being copied, or doing test-runs on newly compiled or assembled programs. Sometimes when I hit unexpected snags I'll need a Shell window open but, because I usually have other programs, like SAS C's editor or Devpac running with at least one or more files on display, space is at a premium. Therefore I don't want a Shell window, even a small one, hanging around all the time.

Using the Workbench 3 'Execute Command' menu option is not always a suitable alternative to having a Shell window available. There are a number of reasons why; it's not possible to specify a current directory so file paths have to be explicitly typed, and output from a running program can appear and the window can close before you get a chance to read it. What, in fact, to do on those occasions where I suddenly need Shell command line access to the ram disk is open a small Shell window at the bottom of my Workbench screen so that it's usable for entering run/copy type commands whilst not taking up too much space. It is convenient to have the Shell window set up so that the RAM disk is the current directory right from the word go.

The long winded way of setting up such a Shell window is to go to the Workbench, open the System drawer, double click on the Shell icon, resize it, and then move the window down to the bottom of the screen. Having done that we would need to type cd RAM: to make the RAM disk the current directory. This would be quite a lot of work - especially if all I then wanted to do was type 'run test' or something equally trivial. In practice, as most of you will doubtless already know, there are various shortcuts available.

The position of a Shell window can be predefined by modifying the WINDOW tooltypes entry in the Shell icon. However, even if you do this, and have the Shell icon out of the System drawer and visible on the main Workbench screen, there can still be problems.

If, for example the Shell icon is obscured by windows of other applications then it is necessary to resize/move one or more existing windows in order to see, and be able to use, the Shell icon.

Luckily I never have to do this - all I do is hit the F1 function key and a nicely positioned Shell window appears with the current directoryet to the RAM disk set. This is one of a number of useful function key entries that I've created by using the FKey commodity. The function key definition looks like this.

```
newshell "con:0/400/640/100/F1/close"
s:F1.config
```

Newshell is the command, the string in double quotes defines the window position, and the s:F1.config file contains AmigaDos commands that are executed immediately the window opens. The file in the S: directory called F1.config is just a normal text file created using Ed. In the case of this particular example the file really only needs to contain just the single command cd ram:. To ensure however that the prompt mirrors the name of the current directory I actually use this.

```
cd ram:
prompt %s
```

In both cases the result is the same. When the F1 key is pressed a correctly positioned Shell window opens with the ram disk being the current directory as required. It is possible to add all manner of AmigaDos commands to such a configuration file.

You might, for instance, create a set of 'Copy' commands for performing selective backup of certain important work directories, or include an 'Assign list' statement so that a list of the current system assignments can be obtained at the touch of a key.

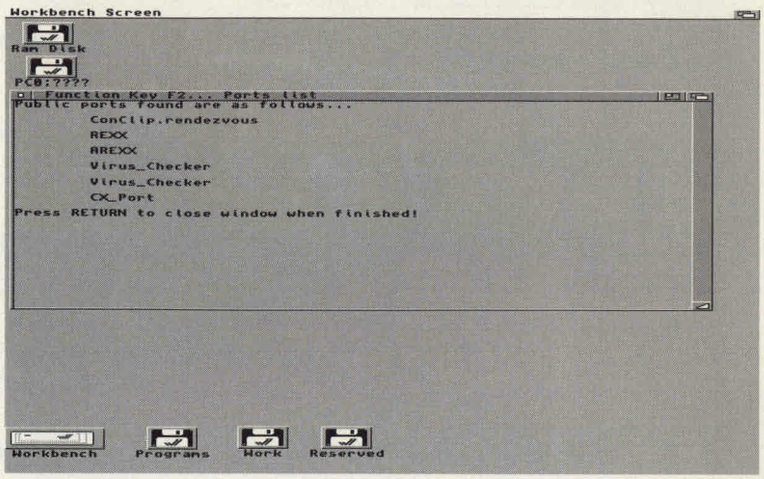
However, it is likely to be the AmigaDos script language that limits what you can do, rather than your own imagination. The answer here is usually to abandon the AmigaDos approach and go for something a little more powerful.

Doing Things The ARexx Way

So much gets written about ARexx's inter-program communication's magic that it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is also a useful general purpose programming language and, above all, an excellent replacement for the conventional scripting language provided by AmigaDos itself. ARexx offers better control structures (including sophisticated looping and select/when style case handling), a comprehensive set of file handling commands, and infinite-

```
/* showports.rexx */
if ~Show('L','rexxsupport.library')
        then do
        say 'adding rexxsupport library'
        call AddLib('rexxsupport.library',0,-30,0)
        end
port_list$=ShowList('P')
do i=1 to Words(port_list$)
        say Word(port_list$,i)
        end
```

Listing 1: A shell window runable example for listing port names



All being well, this is what you should see on screen when you've finished.

```
/* F2.rexx */
LF='0A'x
TAB='09'x
PROMPT1='Public ports found are as follows...'||LF
PROMPT2='Press RETURN to close window when finished!'
if ~Show('L','rexxsupport.library')
        then do
        say 'adding rexxsupport library'
        call AddLib('rexxsupport.library',0,-30,0)
        end
        port_list$=ShowList('P')
call Open(window,'con:0/200/640/300/Function Key F2...
Ports list/close')
call Writeln(window,PROMPT1)
do i=1 to Words(port_list$)
        call Writeln(window,TAB||Word(port_list$,i)||LF)
        end
call Writeln(window,PROMPT2)
readch(window,1) /* soak input and then quit program */
exit
```

Typical output produced by the example shown in Listing 2!

Listing 2: A version of the port listing script that does work when tied to a function key!

ly better variable and string handling facilities.

Most Amiga users who make use of ARexx will usually have not only macros available, which work in conjunction with particular applications programs, but also other useful standalone ARexx scripts that run from a Shell window using the RX command.

Unfortunately, when written in the conventional way, many of these scripts will not actually work when tied to a function key. This being so, rather than just give an example that does work, I thought it would be useful to provide a typical Shell version of a script and explain what needs to be done in order to make it run when so invoked.

One of the ARexx function key scripts I use has been particularly useful when experimenting with the ARexx control of other programs. Occasionally I'll run some ARexx macro and it will throw up a 'Host environment not found' error. In such cases the chances are that either the host isn't actually up and running in the first place, or it is up and running, but is using a different port name for communications than the one specified in the macro that caused the error. Either way getting a list of all currently available ports is a useful first step and so on my system I have set up a ARexx function key script that produces just such a list whenever the F2 key is pressed.

With ARexx it's possible to handle the job of finding the ports with the rexxsupport library ShowList() function. A typical script runable from the Shell is shown in Listing 1 and this, having checked to see whether the rexxsupport library is already active or not (installing it if necessary), uses ShowList() to place the delivered port names into a string called port_list$. A simple 'do-end' loop is then used to print out the names.

The script in Listing 1 works fine when executed from a Shell window. As it stands though nothing would happen if it were linked to a function key. Why? It's because in the first scenario the script has the original Shell window to send its output to. In the second case, where the script runs via a function key, there would be no output window available. To put matters right it is necessary to make two main modifications to the script.

Firstly, we must add additional code in order to open a window for the program's output. This is not a difficult job and a typical Open() call will use a window specification along the lines of the window definition mentioned earlier.
Here is an example:

```
call Open(window,'con:0/200/640/300/Function
Key F2... Ports list/close')
```

Secondly, the 'Say' statements in the original script need to be changed to Writeln() commands so that the specified output text can be sent to the window we've opened. This command.

```
say Word(port_list$,i)
```

would need to become

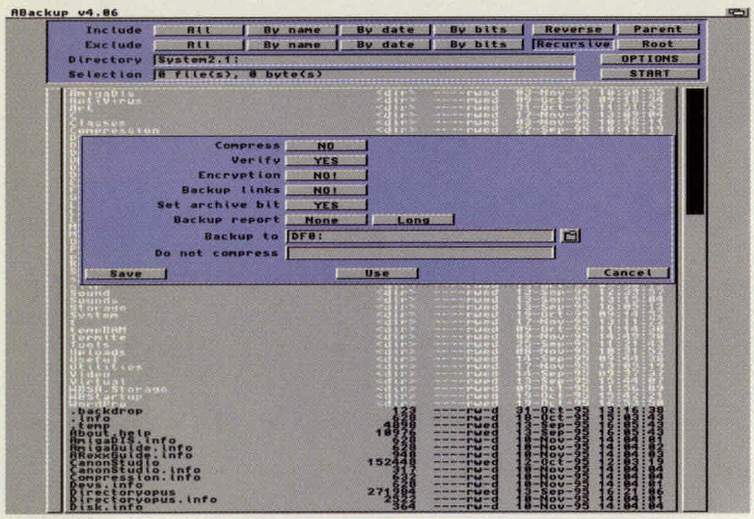
```
call Writeln(window,Word(port_list$,i))
```

I've made these changes, along with a few other minor alterations to improve the formatting of the program's output, to the script shown in Listing 2. This script works as intended when linked to a function key.

Many of you will doubtless have Shell-based ARexx scripts that would be useful if run instantly from a function key. Now that you've seen the types of changes which have to be made this might be the time to dig out some of your favourite scripts and take the plunge into function key use. Chances are you won't regret it! ***AUI***

Hard Driving Part 2

This month in Part 2, Alan Lewis offers some useful tips for installing a hard drive in your Amiga.



ABackup is one of the most versatile back-up programs.

With the A500, A600, and A1200 Amigas, fitting is rarely more than attaching an external box to your Amiga. For the bigger Amigas it is merely a case of opening the case, adding a card, and attaching two cables.

All controllers have fitting instructions. Those from GVP, Supra, and Nexus are excellent, with detailed explanations and diagrams. The Squirrel also comes with a very well written manual.

If you have just bought a drive, it may only have PC fitting instructions with it, if any. If it is an IDE drive, the jumper settings should be configured as if the drive is for a PC. These should be set for 'drive C: with no slave'. External controllers usually have a hard disk inside them already, unless you have bought a bare card.

SCSI drives are a little more complicated. These have three jumpers, to set the SCSI ID, and occasionally a resister pack. This little electronic device is sometimes necessary if the drive is the last device on the SCSI bus. It all depends on your drive and the make of interface you are using.

You don't need to back up your programs, because you already have them on disk.

The A600/1200 have a small area under the metal shield inside the case. The big box Amigas all have drive bays, ready to accept 3.5" drives, and some even have 5.25" bays for older drives, tape streamers and CD-ROM. Alter-natively you might consider the purchase of a cheap PC tower case to hold any extra devices you may wish to fit now, and in the future. There are specific Amiga versions such as HiQ Limited's PowerStation.

Key Points

You cannot realise the full potential of a hard disk unless you know how to use it properly. Once a drive has been fitted, it requires partitioning and formatting. But before you start, take some time to plan the layout of your drive.

There are two key points to successful hard disk management:

1. Organisation.

2. Backup

Organisation is the easy bit - it is the manner of storing programs and data. Backup is the difficult part. It's difficult because if you do not plan your approach to hard disk organisation, it becomes a time-consuming chore, when, with a little planning, it needn't take much time at all.

Organisation

When you start using a hard disk, don't be tempted to install every program you own on it. Before long, the hard disk is crammed with programs, and drawers take an age to open because of the vast numbers of icons on display. This is wasteful when all you want to load is a single program.

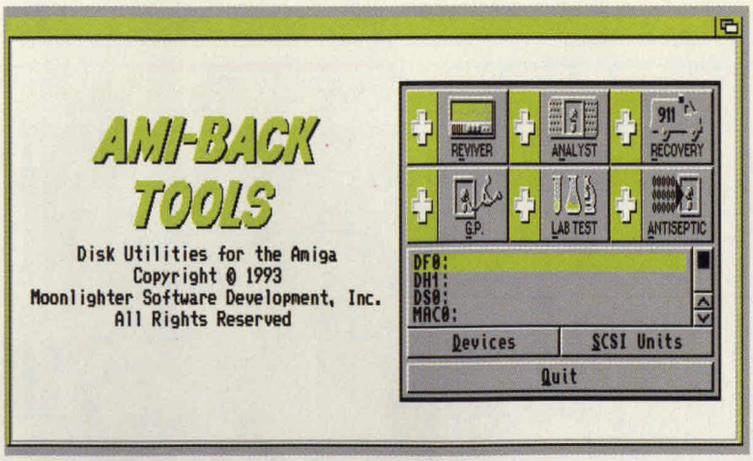
figure 1

Directory structure for Work:

dh1: - Applications

- Word Processing
- Final Copy
- Final Writer
- Superplan
- Superbase
- Pagestream
- Utils
- Comms
- NComm
- GP Fax
- DirOpus
- QBTools
- SuperCard
- Data
- Final Copy
- Pagestream
- SuperPlan
- Superbase
- Upload
- Download
- Fax
- Send
- Receive
- Games
- Dune
- UFO

All like programs are grouped. Applications, utilities, and games are all stored in directories of their own, as are their data. When I click on the dh1: icon, four drawers are displayed. Any given program is only four mouse clicks away.



Hard drive sick? Use Ami-Back tools.

After you have fitted your hard disk, spend a little time considering what you need to install, and a sensible partition and directory structure, before you go any further. We'll explain a good general structure first, and look at some specialised variations later.

Drives require partitioning before they can be used. Partitioning is nothing more than dividing the physical drive into one or more logical devices. Commodore supplied a utility to do this, HD-Prep, and it is on the HDInstall disk supplied with Workbench. The HD-Install disk was only supplied with Amigas that came with a hard disk fitted. Crazy, but not much Commodore ever did made a great deal of sense!

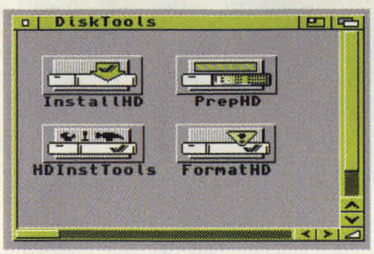
Equivalent tools can be found in the Public Domain - a good example being the Microbotics RDPrep.

Most Amiga dealers supply partitioning and formatting software with the hard disk or interface.

Older software that uses its own installer, or doesn't have one, can still be installed by hand, but make sure that if it relies on Assigns, they point to the right place.

Memory

Memory plays a part with hard drives. SCSI drives, in general, need 64k of RAM for the first partition of each drive, and 32k for each subsequent partition. This means that a single drive system with two partitions takes 96k of memory away from the Amiga. An Amiga with two drives, both with a single partition, would require 128k, and so on. If you have 2Mb or less, then do not use more than two partitions. Also, it's not really worth partitioning a hard disk that is smaller than 40Mb.



Only some releases of Workbench came with these tools.

Assuming you have enough memory, and a reasonably sized hard disk, partition your drive into two.

Make the first partition about 15Mb in size. Give this partition the logical name of dh0: and the second partition dh1: When you come to formatting the drive, name dh0: Workbench, and dh1: Work.

Once done, install the Workbench disks to the Workbench partition, dh0:. If you don't have the HDInstall disk for Workbench, see if the controller is supplied with a WBInstall or similar type program. If not, ask your dealer if he can provide one. Unless you know AmigaDos well, it is not advisable to try to install it by hand.

Software

The software for partitioning and formatting the disk should allow you to choose which file system to use. Use the FastFileSystem (FFS) for best results! Whether you use International mode or not is unimportant, but do NOT use the Old File System (OFS), or Directory Cache (DC), on hard disks. Both will slow a hard drive down; FFS is faster than OFS by a factor of four!

Your Workbench drive only needs to hold the contents of the Workbench disks, plus extra fonts, libraries, devices and handlers used by other programs, and, of course, preference settings. My Workbench: drive is 12Mb in size, and has just under 500k free on it; I use a lot of extra devices, libraries and the such.

It is down to individual choice whether you have a separate partition for Workbench, but I would always advise it. This way, you cannot accidentally delete anything that may stop you booting the drive. For instance, if you accidentally deleted the s: directory, and the all important startup-sequence, you would be greeted with a bare CLI prompt when you next booted up.

Next, consider your directory structure for Work: before you start installing software. Like programs should be stored with like, so plan on paper where they should go. The structure in figure 1 is what I have used at home and at work for the past 5 years, and also makes for an easy backup system.

figure 2

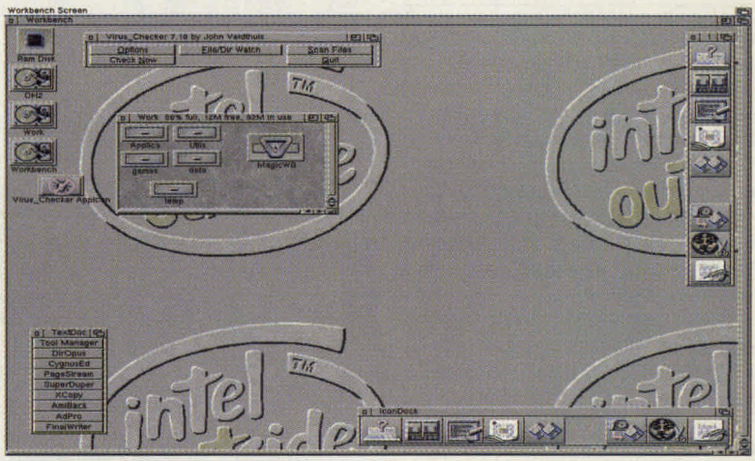
Games:

- Adventure
- Lord of the Rings
- The Hobbit
- Strategy
- Civilisation
- Colonisation
- Flight Sims
- Gunship 2000

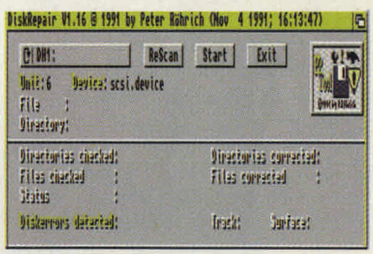
Again, like are grouped with like, and backing up should not pose a problem. All you would have to do is copy the high score tables and saved games to floppy disk every so often.

The advantages of an organisation as shown in the box are tremendous. Drawers are not cluttered up with icons, thus taking an eternity to open and display. It also makes for a tidy root directory. This is so called because it is the first directory of a drive, and the other directories branch off from it.

Thanks to Commodore's installer program, organising a hard disk like this is really very easy,



My Workbench screen. Neat and tidy.



DiskRepair can fix some problems.

especially now that most software uses it. Geenerally, all you have to do is specify the "intermediate" level, and change the default directory to one of your own.

'Assign' is an AmigaDos command that fools the computer into thinking a logical device is a physical device. For instance, my Amiga now thinks it has a drive called Applics:. It knows that it is not a real physical device, but logically, it is there, hence the term "logical device".

I use assigns quite heavily. Applications, Utils, and Data are all pointed to by assigns, thus becoming Applics: Utils: and Data: and appear as logical devices. Upload and Download, Pagestream, and Final Copy, are all also assigned as logical devices. This makes navigating around the disk easier, and means whenever I have to use a

Hard Driving

CONTINUED

path to a program, I can just use the short-cut of a logical device name. Assigns do use memory, so don't go overboard and assign logical device names to every program on your drive!

Some of you may be asking now why I store data in one directory, instead of using a data directory that is often made by the programs installer? We will come onto that when we discuss backing up a hard disk.

More Structures

My structure is good for general purpose work. It should suit 90% of hard disk users. However, not everyone is the same. If your hard disk is smaller than 40Mb, I would recommend only using one partition, called Workbench. After installing Workbench, create a drawer called Work and replicate the directory structure we have indicated under it.

If you use a lot of fonts, and find that your Workbench: partition is running out of room, create a drawer on the other partition called Fonts and use 'Assign dh1:Fonts add' so that fonts can be found on either partition.

This is only possible on Kickstart/Workbench 2 and above. You may even want to consider adding another hard disk just to hold fonts, or data, but it all depends on your controller.

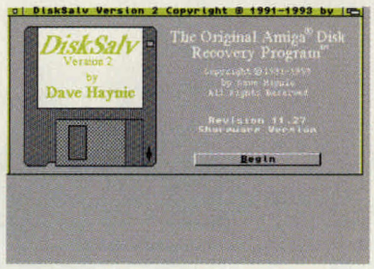
If you are planning on running a bulletin board, then the BBS software will probably use its own-unique structure. AmiExpress, for instance, uses one of the most convoluted directory structures

I have ever seen. It can be incorporated into the above, but needs careful planning and judicious use of the Assign command.

For playing games, you may feel that you only really need the one partition. The reason I gave earlier for two partitions still holds true. However, unless you have a lot of games, there is nothing to stop you from having all your games in the root level of your disk. Alternatively, consider having drawers holding games of similar type. In figure 2 I have called my dh1: partition Games:.

Again, like are grouped with like, and backing up should not pose a problem. All you would have to do is copy the high score tables and saved games to floppy disk every so often.

By saving your data to video tape, you can leave your Amiga unattended during a back-up with VBS.



Original and best - DiskSalv.

Backing Up

Backing up your hard disk is one of the most important tasks for any user. It can be a pain, but is nothing compared to the mental anguish when you boot up and a message "Volume dh0: has a disk error" appears, and you have lost everything!

What is "backing up"? One popular description is "a mythical ceremony, much discussed, but rarely seen". This is true enough. Lots of people talk about making a backup, but few do, until they lose some data. Murphy's Law tells us that it will always be the most important files that are lost.

Murphy's Law tells us that it will always be the most important files that are lost.

There are utilities that can recover data, but none that can cope with a catastrophic disk failure. Recovering data from a disk that has suffered a head crash is a very specialised - and expensive - proposition.

Backing up is no more than making a copy of the files on the hard disk onto another media, be it floppy disk, tape cartridge, DAT drive, or whatever.

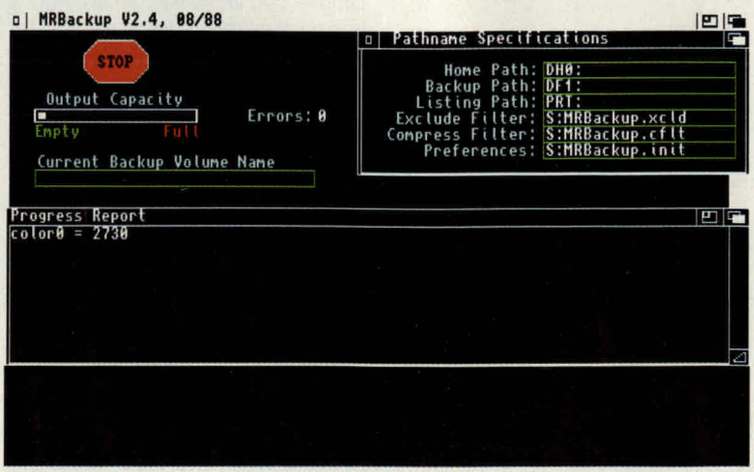
Most users are put off backing up their hard disk, citing excuses such as "it takes too much time", or "it uses too many disks". Neither is really true. Hands up all those who spotted the advantages for backup in the example organisation I gave!

One Directory

When thinking about backup, most people imagine they have to backup every single file on the drive. This is a bit daft... think about it. You don't need to back up your programs, because you already have them on disk. (What did you install from in the first place?) All you need to backup is your data, and by using my example drive layout, that means just one directory. So, we can cut down on the amount of time taken and disks used.

Consider this: if you have your data directories as sub-directories of the application programs, then you must specify several different directories to be backed up. Unless your backup software can handle multiple sources, and store these in a preference file, every time you want to make a backup you have to configure the program. Having one data directory means you only have to specify one directory.

If you are really serious about the data you produce, and have a SCSI interface, consider buying a DAT drive. These are blindingly fast, and can hold up to 9Gb of data! Other alternatives include a tape streamer, a removable hard disk - such as Syquest or Zip drive, or the popular Video Back-up System, which allows you to



For a shareware back-up util, you cannot go wrong with MRBackup.

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Hard Driving

CONTINUED

backup to a VCR. All three have the advantage that they can be left to get on with the job, and unless you have a really big hard disk, you don't need to sit there swapping tapes. Second-hand SCSI tape streamers can be found for as little as £50 for a 250Mb model.

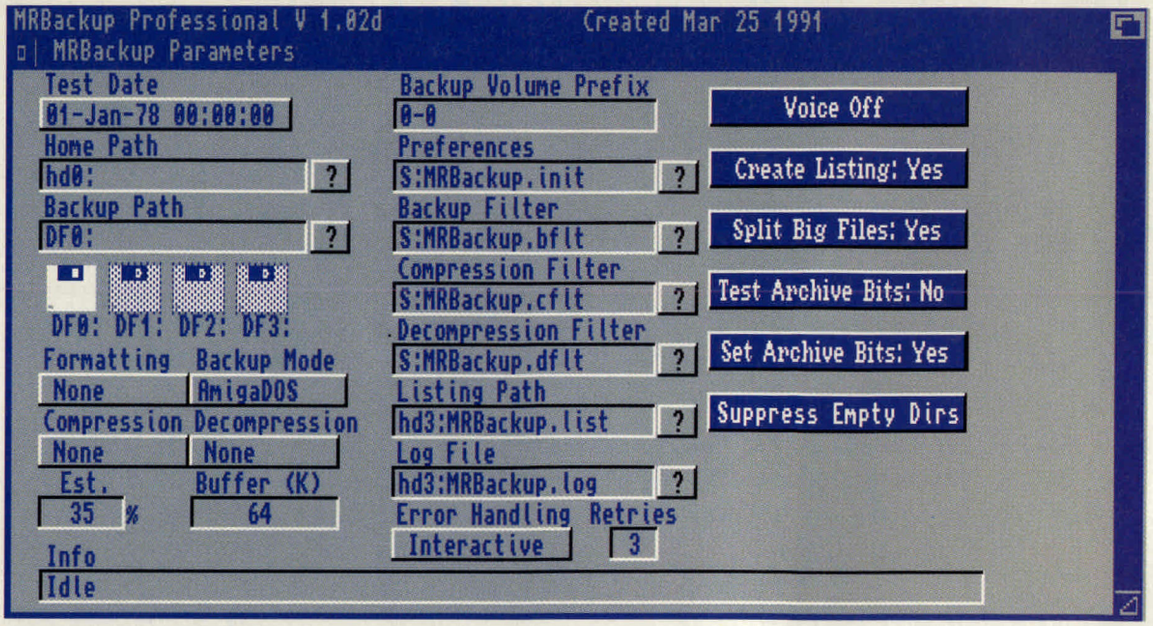
Snapshot

So what is a good approach to hard disk backup? The best strategy involves making an initial "snapshot" of the complete drive, and then backing up data on a daily occurrence. Should anything untoward happen to your hard disk you can just restore it from the backup. However, it also means that you may have to dedicate an evening feeding floppies to the beast if you can only backup to floppy disk, and we are trying to reduce the time and resources used.

Another option is to make a copy of the S: L: LIBS: DEVS: and PREFS: directories from the Workbench: partition, and the Data: directory from the Work: partition. This means that you have a copy of all preferences and settings for the software you use, any extra libraries, device drivers and, of course, your valuable data.

A handy tip - when you make a backup, make a copy of it. Backing up the backup, if you like. I learned this the hard way: backing up my data directory I ran into an error on the hard disk. None of the popular disk fix tools could recover it, and all I could do was reformat the hard disk. Not to worry, I thought, after all, I do have a backup. But I didn't. I was overwriting my backup at the time with another backup, therefore leaving me with no backup at all.

Another possible situation is that you have lost the data on your drive, and while re-installing from your backup you discover the backup itself is corrupt. Always test your backup, the best way is to create a test directory and restore to that.



The commercial version of MRBackup has many more features than the freebee one.

Families

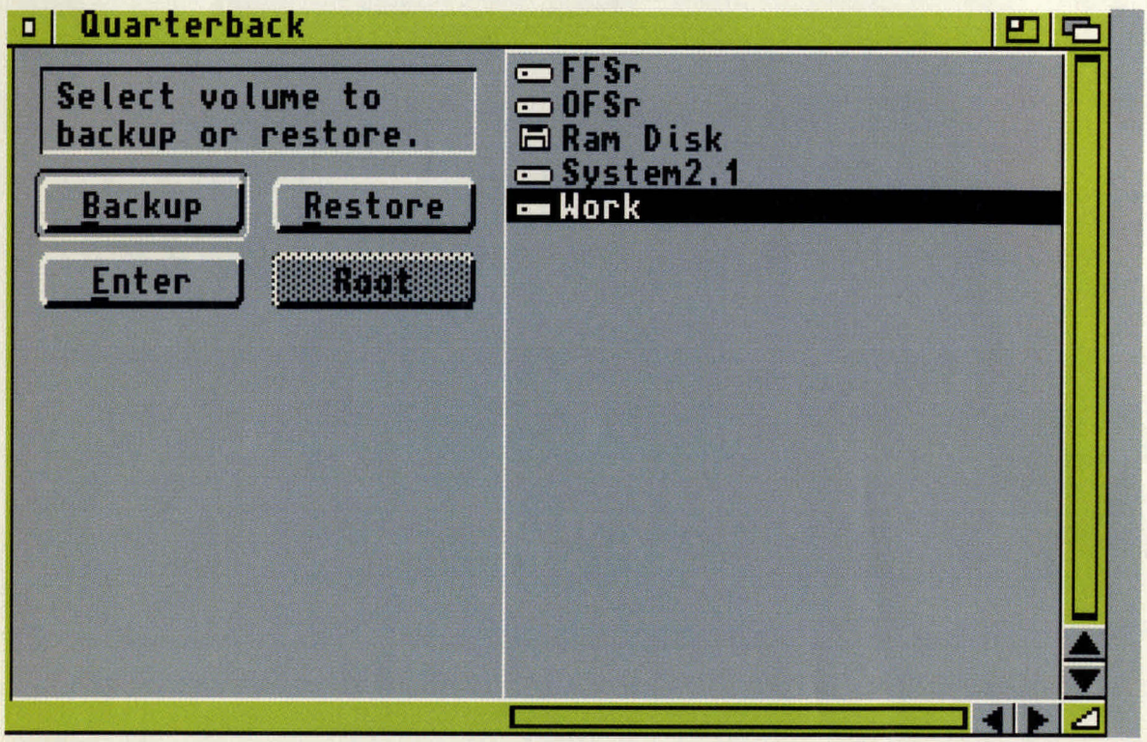
The Grandfather-Father-Son family strategy is popular in the PC world. This involves rotating through sets of backup disks, starting on day 1 with the first set of disks. On day 2, these disks become the Father set, and a new set of disks is used, called Son. On day 3, the Father set becomes the Grandfather set, the Son becomes the Father set, and a new set of disks is used, becoming the Son. On day 4, the Grandfather set is used as the Son, and the other two sets cycle back accordingly. This is a reasonable concept, and it does work. If the hard disk suffers a crash, the loss is limited to one day's work.

My preferred method was to make a backup of my S: PREFS: DEVS: and LIBS: directories, and then the DATA: directory of dh1: once a week. This ensured that all the preferences of the software I use were saved, and so was my much tailored s:user-startup file. My data was backed up once a week, limiting any potential data loss. Any really important file I was working on was saved to floppy disk as well as the hard drive at the end of each day.

Now that I have a tape streamer though, I make a complete backup of my hard disk once a month, and my data once a week. I cycle two tapes through each backup in a Father-Son cycle, and also make two copies of each backup. And I still copy important data to disk, although this is overkill!

Commodore provided a reasonable backup program on the HDInstall disk. Yet there are better offerings in the public domain, such as ABackup, MRBackupPro, QBack, and Easybackup.

Commercial software includes Amiback and Quarterback, both are excellent programs if you can get them. They can write to disk, tape streamer, DAT drives, even other hard disks! Given the falling costs of hard drives, it's worth



QuarterBack Tools is supposed to be the best back-up program for the Amiga.

Hard Driving - Easy access

Access time - The average time taken to move the read/write heads of a drive to a given track. Also referred to as Seek time. *See also Latency, Step time.*

Accelerator Board - A plug-in card with a faster processor. Some accelerators have a high speed hard disk interface, normally SCSI, either built-in or available as an optional add-on.

Backup - Something we don't do enough of! Copying data from a hard disk to another medium, such as tape or floppy disk, so that a copy exists just in case of accidents.

Block size - The size, in bytes, of a sector on a hard disk. On the Amiga, this is 512 bytes by default. The size can be changed by using HDToolBox, to 1024 (1k). Using sizes greater than 4k is not recommended. *See also Sector.*

DAT - Digital Audio Tape. A magnetic tape system that employs helical scanning to record digital data on a small cassette. Originally developed to replace the audio cassette, it has since been adapted for computer data backup purposes. Capacity ranges from 800Mb to 8Gb.

Disk Optimiser - Program that re-arranges the data on a disk so that dispersed, but related files, are stored together. This causes the data to load faster.

E-IDE - The Enhanced IDE standard, giving much faster transfer speeds, and up to four devices per controller.

File Compressor - A program which compresses a program so that it occupies less space on a disk. Some methods require the compressor program to decompress the data, others create 'self-extracting' files that run without the need for the same program to decompress it.

File Archiver - Program that compresses one or more programs and directories into a single file, generally taking less space on a disk. Very handy for sending multiple files over a modem. Before any of the files can be used, they must be unarchived.

Head Parking - Moving the drive heads to a special area of a hard drive where they rest without damaging the disk. Before the advent of auto-parking drives, the user had to run a program to tell the disk to do this every time before switching off the computer. This could lead to problems if the power were cut off unexpectedly. Auto-parking drives automatically move their drive heads when they sense the power has been turned off.

IDE - Integrated Drive Electronics. A drive standard that places some of the controller circuitry on the drive itself. Prior to this, the processor did most of the work of transferring data between the drive and computer, thus resulting in a very slow data transfers. An IDE interface is fitted as standard on A600, A1200 and A4000 Amigas. *See also E-IDE, SCSI.*

Latency - The average time it takes the hard disk to rotate though 180 degrees. From this you can work out the revolutions per minute of the platters. *See also Access time, Step time.*

RDB - Rigid Disk Block. A standard for hard disks developed by Commodore, which allows drives to be interchanged between controllers without the need to be reformatted. Providing both controllers support the RDB standard that is.

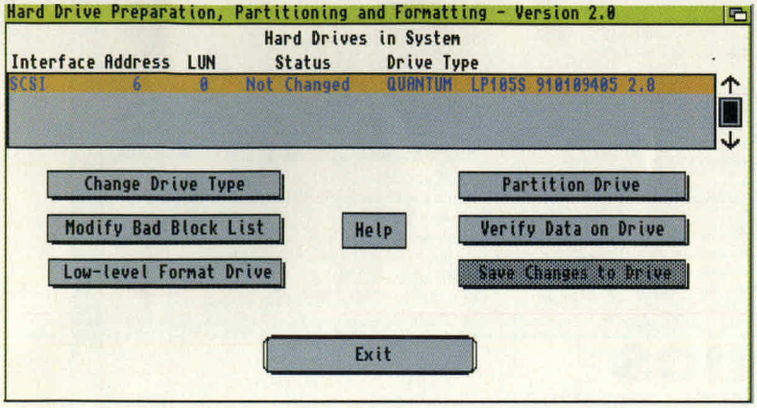
Partitioning - Splitting a physical drive into one or more (smaller) logical drives. A drive that has been partitioned in two, will appear as two different drives to the computer, but only one physical device. A drive must be partitioned, even if it is not divided into smaller logical drives.

SCSI - Small Computer Systems Interface. A standard defined to control almost any type of peripheral device from a computer. These could be hard drives, tape streamers, scanners, printers, CD-ROM, and so on. Fitted as standard to the A3000. *See also IDE, E-IDE.*

Sector - Basic storage unit of a disk. Tracks consist of sectors, which are created when the disk is high level formatted by AmigaDos. *See also Block.*

Step time - The average time taken to move the read/write head from one track to another adjacent track. Also known as track-to-track seek time.

Tape Streamer - Storage device that uses magnetic tape to hold data. Typical tape cartridges hold about 250Mb.



HDToolbox in action. Simple interface, simple to use.

considering using a second drive purely for backup reasons.

Amiback and Quarterback also allow the data being backed up to be compressed, saving on storage space, at the expense of taking slightly longer to do the job.

Quarterback offers 5 levels of compression, from 12-bit to 16-bit, or it can use device compression such as Disk Expander or a Public Domain equivalent. It can also offer significant space savings. Amiback also offers compression, as well as a memory buffer, which speeds the backup process. Both programs are very configurable and have a wide range of options.

AmiBack has a very handy scheduler, which allows you to leave your Amiga on while it is working, and run a backup at a predetermined time. Handy for BBS owners who may wish to ensure the hard disk is still backed up during their absence. A scheduler is available for Quarterback as a separate package, but you could program it to do this via its ARexx port.

Next month in Part III, Hard Driving discusses hard drive maintenance and some useful software tools. ***AUI***

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TechnoWorld

The Age of Information

The rapid growth of the Internet, Telematics (multimedia and IT through computer networks), EDI (Electronic Document Interchange), ISDN applications, teleconferencing, CD-ROM technology, virtual reality, and other technoworld developments has brought us into The Age of Information. So is the impact of information on our lives, from multinational businesses to the small child using a computer to help with the homework, under our control? Or are THEY getting us where they want us?

TechnoWorld

The Global Information Society

Martin Witton sees the global village coming into being before our very eyes and investigates what lessons are being learned from the kids stuff of technology.

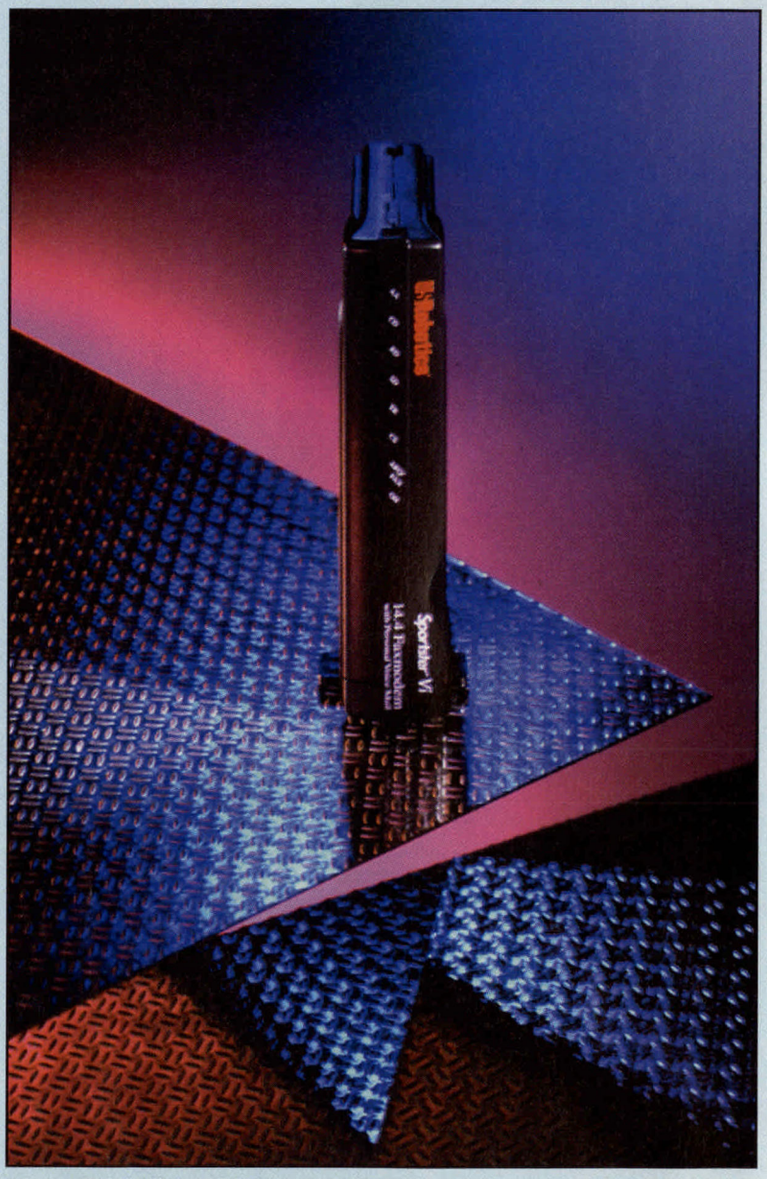
Progress in information technology and communication is changing the way we live. Revolutionary progress is having a vast impact on society as a whole, and converting the world into Marshall McLuhan's predicted Global Village - a global information society, at unprecedented speed, and sometimes, in unpredictable ways.

Connectivity developments have changed the way people live and work. This emerging global information society enables organisations throughout the world to improve service and products. Phone, fax, e-mail, voicemail. The new communication channels make co-operation inside an organisation, and between different organisations, much easier and slicker. The concept of the electronic business is becoming a reality with the emergence of the "virtual organization".

Information infrastructures are expected to connect people to one another, and to a huge array of information through the integration of technology, human, financial and other resources. Information can empower individuals to better achieve their own ambitions and goals. Technology also helps people with all kinds of disabilities to overcome obstacles, and has impacted on just about every area of health care.

Geographical distance is no longer a barrier to doing any deal, anywhere, as electronic communication shrinks the world. It has been said that "the roadblocks to inspiration and imagination are being knocked down one by one." That maybe true, though inspiration and imagination have little to do with technology. Yet the speed of information transmission has extended the reach of individuals, governments, and business organisations, through digitized technology; which is easy to spread and can be used in many different ways over and over again. We are, for

"Telecommunications and computing systems in use all over the world are increasingly being regarded as part of the Global Information Infrastructure. This infrastructure makes possible new forms of organizations which could not have existed previously and have been successful in the global information economy. Early examples of these new forms of organizations emerge in online services with a cooperation of libraries, information brokers and content providers creating global business networks". AT&T



Up, up and away with the sylish US Robotics Sportser Vi modem.

the first time in human history, starting to live in a truly global information society.

Impact

Many technological changes have entered our lives without us being conscious of their introduction. It is only when we look back at the changing world that the true impact dawns on us. Such developments have come upon us whether we like them or not. For example, most things you buy have a bar code which is `read' into an electronic till. Can you trust that whoever programmed in the price got it right? Couldn't we impact on technology rather than letting it impact on us?

There is clearly an increasing need for us to have information, and to be able to deal with it effectively, but this has always been so. A whole new business has grown up in training, as the information society leads to a greater need for education about how it works technically, and how to use it, efficiently.

Information technology continues to change the world we live in, and two areas seem to be important for development. Firstly education, so everyone, including people of different cultures and languages, can access information. The second is to establish procedures and standards for conducting electronic communication. Information flow between governments, companies, and individuals, is under threat of regulation by the establishment.

WE need to control the global technology, not leave it to huge, sometimes barely regulated, government departments or multinational corporations.

We are in the Information Age - the future will belong to those who learn to balance dreams and discipline, whose vision recognises the potential of wider opportunities, and to those who have the knowledge and skill to make it happen - and not let it happen to them.

Kids Stuff

Acquiring knowledge does not, of course, depend on technology. Information can be gathered through the spoken or written word; through observation, touch or smell; through talking to other people; through newspapers, books, radio, and TV; even from advertisements on the Under-ground.

Try notching up everything new you have learned during the day when you are trying to get to sleep.

Some information is immediately discarded as not relevant. Most, however, is retained to be searched out at the appropriate time. Deliberate learning prior to exams is, for some people at least, much more difficult to retain than incidental knowledge which the brain absorbs on a `need to know' basis. Information acquired through technology is just another means by which personal advancement can be made. This is seriously impinging on our "normal" lives with its value being exploited daily.

At the recent Labour Party conference, Tony Blair announced a deal had been planned with British Telecom to connect schools, libraries, and colleges to the Superhighway. For free. The same week the BBC said that their afternoon Radio 3 schools' programmes were to be replaced by an audio cassette service, and the Deputy Prime Minister announced a £10m project to link schools and colleges to the information Superhighway. (See Online column in this ***AUI***)

Portable computers are increasingly popular with schoolchildren for fieldwork.

Michael Heseltine told the Superhighways Serving Education Conference, at Cambridge University, that a revolution in information technology would provide "the nervous system of a new order". Pilot schemes would include a rural schools network, and connections to schools in France, Germany, and Spain. Each scheme involves a partnership between the education institutions and IT businesses such as Microsoft, Acorn, and Research Machines.

"Tarzan" Hezza apparently didn't mention training teaching staff in the use of such IT, nor whether the new technology would be accessible for all schools, but at a time when many schools are finding it difficult to provide books for every child, it is not even clear where the priorities are going to be.

Suppliers are now looking to the potential problems of linking every British school to the education Superhighway and proving a computer for every child, irrespective of which political party eventually carries out its pledge. Schools need to be able to sustain both online technology and portable computers at a manageable price, and be able to use them in the classroom.

The National Council for Educational Technology, a government advisory body, estimates that more than 1,500 UK schools (out of around 25,000) have an Internet link so far, and predicts that "virtually all" schools will be linked by September 1996.

It recognises that there are obstacles, but says "the benefits of low cost communication, mutual support and access to teaching and learning resources are proving irresistible". Irresistible to whom? The Government seems reluctant to spend on state education, except for vote buying "glamour" projects like the one mentioned above?

Soul Mates!

Proper backup and technical support will be needed for each school through schools telecommunications networks. And, as one London Head Teacher said, "The hardware is the easy bit, it's making the things work together that's the real problem."

This is borne out by Dominic Savage, chief executive of British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) who said, "The average teacher is still nervous of the computer. No country has yet solved the problem. All countries need more investment in in-service training and IT training."

Margaret Cox, senior lecturer in educational computing at King's College commented, "The main problems in integrating IT-based work into the wider curriculum is that it demands expertise in a whole range of areas. IT's main contribution is to provide an environment in which children can create models of their understanding of the subject. The application of IT often reveals what the children do and do not understand. But it also demands that the teachers change their own role from being in `information delivery mode' to collaborative mode. They have to become soul mates of the children". An idea that is easier to suggest than carry out.

The Global Information Society

TechnoWorld

CONTINUED

Palm Tops

There are some projects being worked on to provide educational materials in line (and online) with the National Curriculum. Other projects involve suppliers looking for robust, but portable hardware to meet the children's needs.

Acorn are pushing palm-top computers which each child would keep, take home, and use for downloading homework into the school network. These are really Acorn-badged Psions. Pilot projects initially suggest that such useful computers would be popular with the children who could take the palm-top on field studies, as well as for day to day learning, recording, and accessing information. Finding batteries which have a long enough life is one obstacle still to be overcome, and palm-tops cannot currently provide multimedia or online links.

The progress of schools to become truly interactive learning establishments depends largely upon having at least one staff member in the team who is up to date on what is possible in the IT world. While some nursery classes use CD-ROMs and other software as a standard part of learning from day one, other schools are still stuck with outdated stuff on their BBC Acorn computers -which once held the monopoly in schools.

Practising Not Preaching

In Australia, where distance learning has been the only way to offer an education to children in remote places, the radio is being replaced by multimedia. The government has created the Open Learning Agency, through which lessons can be bought in from all over the world via telephony and electronic mail.

Students from as far afield as Malaysia, Singapore, or the outback, can submit their essays via e-mail using computer and modem. Australia is the first country to host a Teleteaching conference. Due to be held in September 96, it will be the first in the world to explore the potential of a global information system where learners can tap into information when they need it through international communications.

The main activities will take place between delegates in Canberra and Vienna, with individuals elsewhere being able to interact from home. The conference will use the Internet and all the other technologies used in distance learning, including interactive television, radio, video conferencing, and CD-ROM. Unlike most technology conferences, which talk a great deal about technowonders, but do it in traditional personal contact ways, this one seems to be practising what it preaches.

In the UK, much interest from educationalists has centred on Acorn's Intertalk, which is an Internet tool for schools. It is one of several being developed as usage increases, and pupils and suppliers employ the Web to access information.

Microsoft has provided a home page on the World Wide Web for user technical information. Across the UK, Research Machines has got 2000 subscribers for CampusWorld, its electronic service for learning and teaching.

Yet not everyone shares the enthusiasm. According to Professor Sandra Willis of Wollongong University, "There is a danger in that the globalization of education might lose regional identity. It's one of the big issues of education in the 21st century. The costs in preparing and distributing high quality educational materials on a global basis will concentrate the packaging in the hands of the few. And in commercial rather than academic hands".

The DTI's Online project remains optimistic, with plans to bring 60 secondary schools online supported by 20 IT companies. Similar initiatives such as Link, a vocational training company which has set up multimedia training centres with schools and universities, and the Surrey Internet project, which connects 90 educational institutions at all levels, are giving an entry into education.

CD-ROM Impact

The move away from dedicated educational software started mid-80s in schools with the impact of computers from Acorn (the BBC Micro) and Research Machines. Parents, and forward thinking teachers, realised there was a lot to learn from office software. From that time the introduction of word processing packages for essays, databases for research, and paint packages for projects, entered the school curriculum.

Now there are encyclopaedias, reference volumes, and complete works of popular writers, on CD-ROM. Developments abound, and recently one of the largest distributors of educational CD-ROM titles to the schools market, Multimedia Solutions, has published a new range of titles under its own label. Six educational titles will make up the range which is based on the Geography element of the National Curriculum for 10 - 16 year olds. It includes European Weather, European Settlements, and European Ecosystems.

Now Astrion are inviting users to take a trip through the oceans of the world with Ocean Planet Smithsonian. Proclaiming that you can "Travel through the oceans of the earth from the comfort of your own home", Astrion have released The Discovery Channel CD-ROM with 30 minutes of video that explores all aspects of marine technology, and shows how environmental changes have affected the sea over the centuries. Price £39.99.

For history students, the Hulton Deutsch Collection claims to be one of the greatest sources of illustrative material in the world. Over 15 million prints, engravings, and photographs provide historical coverage suitable for all projects. Hulton Deutsch works with the major international publishing groups providing images for books, newspapers, magazines, and TV productions. Using multimedia the company is now digitising the collection, allowing images to be delivered as prints, transparencies, or on a range of digital media such as SyQuest, floppy, CD-ROM, and online over ISDN or modem.

For people taking media studies, or those people who are interested in the cinema, The Cannes Film Festival 1946 - 1994 is now available on CD-ROM. From the individual glamour of the early days with Gary Cooper and Elizabeth Taylor, to today's somewhat manufactured stars, the CD-ROM includes in-depth information on each of the 4,000 plus films ever presented at the film festival. It also covers the Awards, the critics, the evolution of film making as an art and as a business, the actors and filmmakers, the parties, and the grand hotels. Price £39.99. All a part of the great educative process that film has become over the last century.

Media studies is now a major educational subject, so we should see more CDs along the lines of the Cannes Film Festival. This subject wasn't even thought of before the cinema became considered as an art form around the beginning of the 1960s. Now education is able to spread itself across such subjects much more expansively and examine them in-depth, but to do this it needs the technology and the know how to use it. As a country and a world, we need a technoliterate population.

St. Ignatius de Loyola said, "Give a me child up the age of seven, and he is mine for life." As founder of the Jesuits, he was out to indoctrinate the unfortunate pupils with his own brand of religious dogma, but the same applies to any form of education. Give the children at a sufficiently early age the right kind of technology, and enough of it, and later they will manage their changing world with confidence and skill. Confining kids to hand-held and other electronic toys at home, and wasting a few million on some good public relations technoprojects will, in the next century, put the whole country on the dole the moment it leaves school.

Better to train them to wait on the tables in Ye Olde Englishe Tea Roome and serve the apparently wealthy Japanese tourists who have a different view of how to educate themselves to deal with the TechnoWorld. ***AUI***

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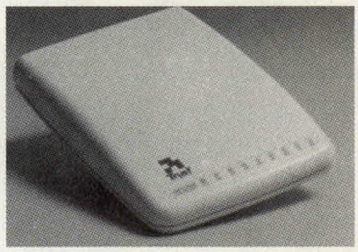

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Speak Up for yourself

Martin Witton investigates the growing use of voice processing systems.

Until recently voice mail systems, regardless of whether they were personal computer based or not, were installed by telephone companies. However, the influence of open computer telephony is now invading the telecoms market. The result of this, for users, will be a greater choice of where to go for their hardware, software, and maintenance, rather than being tied to a single supplier.

There are two levels of connection between a voice processing/voice mail system and the telephone switch. Integration is possible when the telephone system provides the voice mail with information and data on the identity of the call that is being transferred from a busy line or "no answer" extension. The divert will occur automatically if the extension user has set the appropriate divert settings on the extension. The telephone system will provide the voice system with a brief burst of data comprising the information needed for the voice system to respond with the correct personal mail box greeting in relation to the unanswered extension. This is important in voice mail only applications.

Interfacing is when the telephone system provides no data on the identity of a diverted call so that the voice mail will not be able to answer in the correct personal greeting. The best it can do is to answer with a general system greeting that invites the caller to input a mailbox number or return the call to the operator for a manual transfer to the mailbox.

However, if the voice mail is front ended by an auto attendant, then many of the limitations are overcome. If the auto attendant feature of a voice system answers the call and provides the transfer, it can monitor the progress of the call and, if the line is unanswered or busy, perform a recall and return the caller to its own voice mail module.

The biggest players in the personal computer and networking industries are launching their own systems. Both Microsoft, through TAPI and Windows unified messaging initiative, and Novell, through its TSAPI client server based standards, have launched major computer telephony systems.

Voice processing specialists, ChannelVox's VocalChat Prime Voice sees new features in the latest software version of their CCI-2000 voice processing system. They now include a voice forms module as standard, and the system is claimed to provide a seamless digital connection divert to the correct personal mail box in voice only applications. There are also options for fax mail, fax on demand, and broadcast fax.

The VocalChat Prime Voice integrates a company's voice mail system to its network, thus providing a graphic interface for the user. This means that users can control their voice mail via their PC, and retrieve messages in real time over the network.

Apple's mobile solution to being on line with their Powerbook portable PC.

Kent Social Services have installed a voice processing system of this kind. They chose a 12 line system offering 99 extensions. Callers knowing which extension they need can dial directly, leaving operators to respond to people with general enquiries. Taking the voice mail concept one step further, with telephone answering and fax on demand when connected to a PC, US Robotics has launched a new modem in its Sportster range. This includes a three month Unipalm PIPEX Internet bundle and voice mail.

The Sportster Vi is an entry level V.32bis 14.4kbps fax modem. This Internet ready voice modem, priced at £99.00 includes all the cables and phone connectors. The new version, which has been redesigned, can sit vertically on the desk top.

Personal voice mail allows the modem to receive voice messages which are then stored on the PC's hard disk. The modem can distinguish between fax and voice calls, and processes the calls as appropriate. Fax on demand is a facility in which the user can store up to 100 fax messages which can be called up remotely and transmitted to the desired destination. Users call the voice modem and hear a menu of stored faxes. They can then select the faxes they wish to receive - and discard those they don't.

Don't Call Them

The growing provision of extensions of conventional, and of new services, is transforming the way we all live and work. Yet while some people are enjoying the "benefits" of home banking and shopping, the majority of the world's population has yet to be even linked to a conventional telephone line. According to the World Bank, investment in telecoms in the developing world must double if unfulfilled and growing demand is to be met. State owned or privatised monopolies are being forced to open their networks to rival, private operators, as happened in the UK with BT and Mercury.

In the US, a Telecommunications Bill is going through its final stages in Congress. The Bill has aroused substantial controversy, with the main question focusing on how the long distance and local phone companies will be allowed to compete in each other's markets. In the original form the Bill imposed fairly strict conditions on the local companies entering the long distance market. These companies, the "Baby Bells", are the surviving individual regional monopolies of the old unified Bell US phone system. They control local access to the customer, which gives them a big competitive advantage.

Some commentators have taken the view that the Bill will leave telecoms giant AT&T free to gobble up the Baby Bells. Others see that under the new system, the Baby Bells will be strongly placed to take much of the business away from the long distance operators. However, US competition will not be confined to local and long distance phone companies. The cable TV operators also will be freed under the legislation to offer telephony to their customers, both wired and wireless, as in the UK. So the whole telecoms market is in a state of flux - and it may not settle down in this century.

Although mobile computers and telephones are nothing new, together they can produce a more effective business tool. Apple and BT Mobile have joined forces in the UK to set up the Apple/BT Mobile solution.

Apple's Mac PowerBook range can integrate with office networks. They use the digital GSM technology which, they claim, produces clearer communications with the power to send and receive complex data while on the move. With notebook technology and a mobile phone, anyone working away from the office can instantly access information, process paperwork - which can be sent directly back to the office, or even check warehouse stocks.

Connecting a GSM mobile phone to a PowerBook is done via a PCMCIA card. This enables faxes, data, and e-mail to be sent or received on the GSM network. This capability can also give access to office networks or public information services such as the Internet.

Connection and service for the Apple/BT Mobile solution is provided by BT via the Cellnet GSM digital network. ***AUI***

Easy Access

A0 - A metric paper size that's eight times bigger than A4.

CCD - Charge Coupled Device. A silicon chip that converts light levels to digital data.

CD-ROM - Compact Disc Read Only Memory. A compact disc that holds computer data instead of music.

DSP - Digital Signal Processor. A specialised chip designed to do mathematically intensive tasks in real time.

f number - A figure that gives the light transmitting power of a lens. It is derived from the focal length of the lens divided by its effective aperture.

Flash RAM - A name given to a kind of RAM chip that can retain data after the power has been removed. This advantage is at the expense of fast read/write times.

GSM - Global System Mobile. A French inspired global mobile phone digital network that uses satellites for phone-to-phone communications.

HDTV - High Definition Television. A TV standard with 400 more horizontal lines than current UK sets, and with a widescreen picture format.

ISDN - Integrated Services Digital Network. A super-dooper digital telephone line designed for carrying lots of data quickly.

JPEG - Joint Photographic Expert Group. This was a special committee that was set up to investigate the best methods for compressing still images for data transmission. The resulting algorithm, based on a combination of the Discrete Cosine Transformation and Huffman run-length encoding, took the acronym for its name.

kbps - kilo bits per second.

LCD - Liquid Crystal Display. An optical device that relies of the properties of crystals in suspension, electric current, and polarized light to produce images.

Macro - The name given to a lens is designed specifically for close-up work.

PAL - Phase Alternation Line. The picture encoding system used for UK television broadcasts.

PCMCIA - Personal Computer Memory Card International Association. The old name for credit card sized devices that were designed originally for portable computing applications.

PhotoCD - One of Kodak's range of CD-ROM based technologies for storing high resolution photographic images in a compressed format.

PMA - Photo Marketing Association. An American organization that holds a large exhibition every two years in London.

Telephoto - A lens designed to be compact, yet give a magnified image of a distant object. Not to be confused with telescope or telescopic.

SLR - Single Lens Reflex. A type of camera with an optical system that allows the photographer to see the image visible through the taking lens of the camera.

Super 8 - A home movie film size. Super, because it was better than Standard 8.

S-VHS - Super Video Home System. An improvement on the standard VHS system. More horizontal video lines and a different colour encoding method.

VAT - A Government tax that adds 17.5% to the prices quoted in Technoworld.

Wide-angle lens - A lens designed to give a bigger field of view than the standard lens.

WWW - World Wide Web. A globally linked network of over 3 million computers.

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Picture The Next Century

Digital or Film? David Ward tests an extraordinary new camera system that may change the face of photography in the next century.

Kodak have launched a new 'consumer' digital camera. Now there is nothing special in this. Kodak have had a range of digital cameras available for several years now, but the new camera is the first under a thousand pounds. £895 to be precise.

The DC40

Canon may have had their Ion camera out longer, ***AUI*** reviewed the consumer version first in 1991. The Ion was at a lower price, around £400 and stored to 2 inch floppy. Sony have launched a MiniDisk-based device, but the Kodak camera stores its pictures in silicon. Kodak's DC40 is wholly digital.

Now £895 is hardly what the man in the street would call a consumer price. Many camcorders were originally priced at this level, and, with the economics of mass production and recovery of development costs, those prices fell. Camcorders have made such significant inroads into the home market that they killed off Super 8 cine.

APS Arrives

The traditional silver based film market is not dead just yet. However, some commentators are describing the imminent arrival of the Advanced Photo System (APS) as an attempt by the major film manufacturers to revive a flagging sector.

APS involves a new film format, and a new range of 'intelligent' cameras to go with it. Not only that, but photo processing labs will have to re-equip too. This, of course, means that many of the high street one-hour developers will have to send APS films off to bigger labs for processing, losing their quick turnaround ability, until the system is established and they can afford the new processors.

Will APS grab the public's attention? There have been many attempts to bring new film formats to the consumer, with varying degrees of success. The two longest running sizes - 35mm (135) and 6 x 6 (120) - have seen others come and go, or just about hang on.

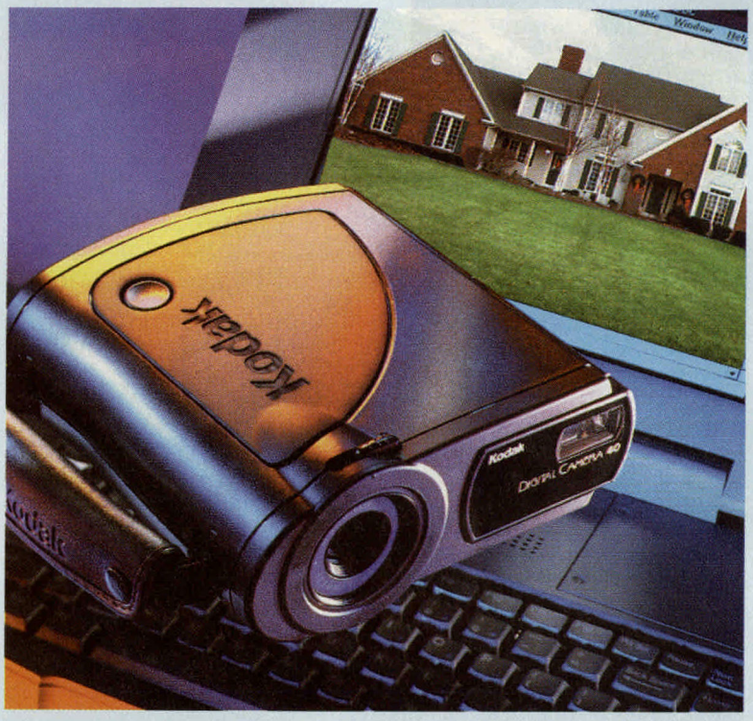
Other formats? Who remembers the roll films such as 127, 620, and 828?

Where Are They Now?

First there was 126, a 35mm wide film inside a plastic drop-in cassette. The frame size was roughly 28mm square so, theoretically, the image quality should have been comparable with standard 35mm. It wasn't. The lack of a pressure pad to keep the film flat, coupled with poor quality cameras, resulted in pictures that were not as good as they should have been. Yet the format sold well.

You may have thought the manufacturers would have learnt their lesson, but no, out came 110. A similar, but smaller, cassette to 126, the new film was only 16mm wide with a frame size of 13mm x 17mm.

The smaller frame size meant that for adequately sized prints, the negatives had to be considerably enlarged. This showed up the grain structure in the film and the inadequacies of the plastic lensed cameras. Only the Voigtlander Vitoret and the Pentax 110 SLR gave reasonable results because of their high quality glass optics.



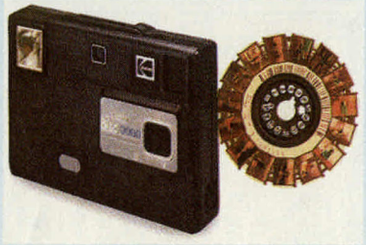
Kodak's new DC40 digital camera evolved from a joint project with Apple computer.

It Gets Worse

Not satisfied with these blunders, Kodak then thrust Disc onto an unimpressed network of photographic dealers, who immediately foresaw what the newer, even smaller, format would produce without even trying the cameras out.

Luckily the public did not succumb in the huge numbers the manufacturers had hoped, so Disc is, practically, no longer with us. 110 survives, but 126 is in its death throes.

And now we have APS. There are some 600 million 35mm cameras in the world. Are we going to change.



The ill-fated Kodak Disc camera of the 80s.

Advantages

APS uses a 24mm wide strip of film with optically encoded manufacturer data and very few perforations. It will be sold in 15, 25, and 40 exposure lengths. The cassette provides the motive power to transport the film, rather than relying on a toothed wheel within the camera to advance it.

Once the film is used up, it is

The APS film cassette showing its dimensions and indicators.

wound back into the cassette for processing. And when that is done, the resulting negative strip is stored in the original cassette which is returned to the customer.

An indicator tells you whether your film is unexposed, partially exposed - so you can change films mid-roll, unprocessed, or stored negatives. When the developed film is returned with the prints, you also get an index - a set of thumbnail images.

So far so good. It seems we have a fool-proof loading and unloading system, and with the advances in film chemistry, the picture quality from the slightly smaller frame size should prove undetectable.

The Kodak thumbnail index sheet supplied to the customer.

Magnetic Code

The big secret behind APS is the magnetic information stored by the camera on the film. Not all APS cameras will have the facility to do this, but those that do open up a whole new world for the photographic processor. That's right, the processor.

The camera may be promoted as being able to take three sizes of picture - Classic, Group, and Panoramic, but it is really the processing equipment that does all the work. The actual image on the negative is the same size regardless of the format selected by the user.

Classic yields a print which is 4 x 6 inches, Group is longer at 4 x 7 inches, while Panoramic is the longest at 4 x 10 inches. The negative image is automatically cropped and enlarged according to the size encoded by the camera on the film.

This data can also include reprint details, databack type facilities - time, date, place - for printing on the back or the front of the pictures, and exposure information. The latter feature is the most important, as it allows the automatic printing equipment to get better results from pictures taken under poor lighting conditions.

For the future it is hoped that text and/or audio information could be stored on the magnetic coating too, as currently only 20% of the available storage is used.

Backers

APS has been jointly developed by Canon, Fuji, Kodak - who admit to spending $300 million on it, Minolta, and Nikon. At the recent Photo Marketing Association trade exhibition, APS was shrouded in secrecy. Kodak and Fuji were promoting the system without any physical appearance of films or cameras. You had to rely on photographs and reading 'between the lines' for information.

Agfa, not being 'in the club' as it were, happily provided some pictures of the APS cassette with dimensions printed on it. 43 camera manufacturers have obtained licenses to use the system.

The long Panoramic shot, which was wasted by the Kodak photographer on these three.

Let's Get Digital

Meanwhile, back at the other end of the market, the major camera manufacturers are tempting the professional fraternity towards dispensing completely with film and going fully digital instead.

Kodak foresaw this market and has spent millions of dollars on developing suitable systems. PhotoCD was one product of all this money. Although the planned-for consumer take-up did not materialise, the professionals love it.

Until now the Kodak have relied on modified Nikons, the DCS 420 and DCS 460, to take the photos. These are then saved to a PCMCIA† memory card for downloading to a Mac for storage and processing. They do have a new, Canon based model, the EOS-DCS 5 which fits in between the DC40 and DCS 420 at £8,950.

Nikon has now developed its own digital camera with Fuji, an unwieldy lump with lots of buttons and switches on it, that also uses PCMCIA to store the pictures. Agfa are coming to market with modified Minoltas.

AUI couldn't get hold of the £25,000 DCS 460 because the ninety that were delivered to Europe had been sold in their entirety to a German newspaper publisher.

Group sized print, also known as H for HDTV.

A shot that would typically be taken by the target market.

Instead we had to make do with the consumer priced DC40 for a short test period. The camera weighs in at 600g when loaded with 4 AA sized batteries and is held like a pair of binoculars for use.

On-board JPEG

There is 4Mb of RAM on-board and this is able to store 48 24-bit colour images with a resolution

Graphics EXPOsed

CONTINUED

The top of the range model. No, not the girl, the camera. Kodak's DCS420 modified Nikon.

of 758 x 504 pixels. It can do this by using its default JPEG compression. By way of contrast, the DCS 460 has a resolution of 3060 x 2036 in 32-bit colour. Now you know why it's so expensive.

When you are ready, you connect the camera via a serial link to a PC or Mac. Using the supplied software, you download and unpack the stored images to hard disk. It can also enhance the saved pictures with special sharpness and colour temperature operators, or be used to operate the camera remotely.

Photoshoot

The camera is noticeably light when compared with a standard SLR. It has a fixed focus 42mm lens which gives images comparable to the field of view of the human eye. This can be augmented with wide-angle, telephoto, and macro accessory lenses.

Switching on the camera causes a protective cover to slide back revealing the main lens. This action also opens the viewfinder. There is a noticeable buzz as the camera powers up followed by a beep to let you know the system is ready.

The hour glass icon on the LCD screen is replaced by the operational icons for flash, self-timer, exposure, battery level, and picture erase. These can be activated by a combination of the feature and selection buttons.

When taking a picture there is a slight delay before the shutter clicks or the flash fires. This is followed by some more buzzing - it reminded me of the noises that emanated from the 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy' electronic book in the TV series - the hour glass icon appears, and another beep. It takes about 5 seconds to compress and store the image.

Due to its binocular shape the camera is extremely easy to hold steady. The slowest shutter speed is 1/30th, while the top is 1/175th. Apertures are variable between f/2.8 to f/16. The slow speed and wide aperture meant that we could take a flash-free photo inside Sains-burys without attracting att-ention. The camera was rested on a vacant shelf, but it would not sit flat. This is because the diameter of the round lens exceeds the depth of the rectangular body.

CompactFlash

The DC40 can store 48 hi-res, or 99 lo-res (software selectable), pictures in its 4Mb of Flash RAM. The pictures remain viable for up to a year, even without batteries in the camera.

Kodak, Canon, and Polaroid are among the twelve companies supporting the CompactFlash card developed by SanDisk of California.

The new card, which is a quarter the volume of current PCMCIA cards, comes with up to 15Mb of capacity. This means that one card could store 180 DC40 images. SanDisk estimate storage life to be 100 years.

Flash-free photographs from the Kodak digital camera system.

The flash option can be left on automatic if you wish. The auto-exposure mechanism determining whether it needs it or not. Alternatively you can switch it on for fill-in purposes, or fiddle with the exposure control when confronted with backlit scenes.

Subjects

We were astounded by the quality of the images downloaded from the camera. The supplied examples from Kodak did not do it justice - they were all a bit soft.

The first shots we took were of subjects that were to give a rough idea of the quality of the optics. A brick wall was photographed, using tripod and self-timer, to test clarity and distortion.

Kodak have aimed this camera at a particular market: estate agents, architects, insurance assessors, and so on; field operatives who need to take 'instant' pictures. I then took the sort of pictures they would. These people often require only one or two pictures, but end up having to have a 24 exposure roll of film processed which is not cost effective.

The DC40 allows them to take any number of pictures, which can then be incorporated into documents, or just printed out, back at the office - instantly.

Our test pictures, as you can see, are jolly good. Can we have one of these delightful cameras please, Editor? Please.

Conclusion

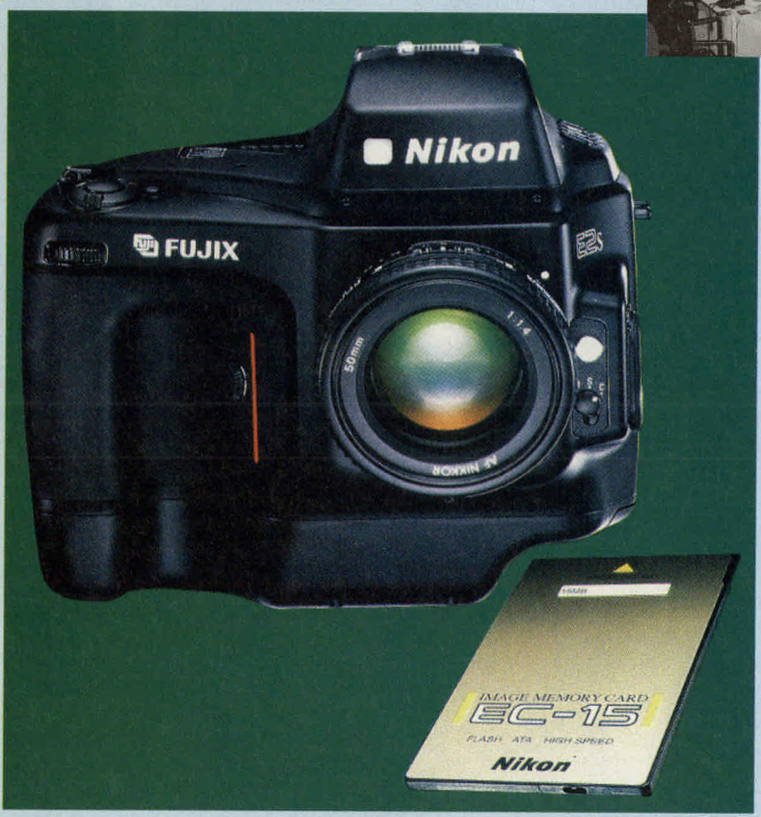
Digital cameras are the future. The hardware is too expensive at the moment, but it will come down in price. At the same time the abilities will improve.

Film is very cheap, and the consumer wants a cheap system. Sales of Film with Lens (FwL), the so called 'disposable camera', amounts to 50 million units in the US alone. APS will allow the manufacturers to bring out a smaller, cheaper, photo system that uses fewer resources than a comparable 35mm camera. Couple this with the fact that it is those same manufacturers which dominate the digital camera market and you can guess what I am hinting at.

Will digital camera prices be kept artificially high to stop the cameras falling into the hands of the man in the street, and so destroying the silver halide based film industry? The one APS relies on.

The manufacturers are certainly not going to kill off the goose that lays the silver halide egg. Digital will replace film in the studio and on the street with the photo-journalist, but for the snappers, film will continue to be the medium to use for possibly the next twenty years.

Now where did I put my Brownie 127? ***AUI***



The rather unwieldy but superb Nikon/Fuji digital combination.

Photo Me, Photo You

David Ward investigates the more obscure side of "writing with pictures" - photography.

Nikon, a famous brand of cameras, right? You might not know though that the name of the Japanese camera manufacturer is, in fact, short for Nippon Ikon. It came about because their first camera was a copy of the Zeiss Ikon from the renowned German optical company.

While on this subject of copies, the USSR did quite an extensive line in 'counterfeit' cameras. The Leica factory fell into their hands in East Germany after World War II, so they were able to copy the famous technology. The build quality was never as good as the non-Iron Curtain models, and the names they gave them were often derived from their own cities. The Kiev was a copy of an early Leica.

Leica

Leica was the brand name given to a range of cameras that a Mr. Leitz introduced in 1924. He wanted to test the film currently in use in movie cameras, so he developed a still camera with a transport mechanism to handle 35mm. The rest, as they say, is photographic history.

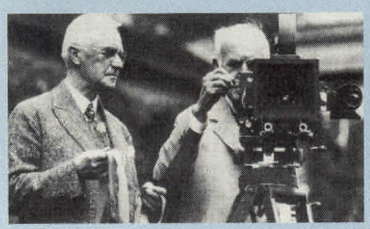
The entire Leica range is considered the elite of 35mm cameras. The Queen has a gold-plated one, but it is not known if her holiday snaps using it are any better than yours.

Kodak

Up until that time most still cameras relied on roll film. This was claimed to have been invented by an ex-bank clerk, George Eastman, in 1884. Four years later he launched his 'No.1 Kodak' camera and what was to become the leading photographic company in the world.

The Kodak instant picture cameras popular to the public but not to Polaroid.

By replacing the bulky glass plates that had been used before then, Kodak brought photography to the masses. Their factory in Rochester, New York State, turning out thousands of 'Brownie' cameras each year. Even though he was a successful businessman and philanthropist, Eastman committed suicide in 1932.



George Eastman, holding 35mm movie stock, stands to the right of Thomas Edison in this early photograph.

It may seem that Kodak dominate the world's film markets, but they are not the only manufacturer. Their main rival in the States is 3M with their Scotch brand. In the UK we have the Ilford Company. Formerly of Ilford in Essex, they now reside in Mobberly and are owned by the Swiss Ciba-Geigy chemical concern. While in Europe there is the Bayer owned Agfa, or Actien Gesellschaft Fur Anilin-fabrikation. Which roughly translated means "Joint company for the making of aniline".

Although you might think the Japanese are relative newcomers to the photographic industry, Konica, Sakura, and Fuji started life when photography was still in its infancy.

Polaroid

Photography changed little from Mr. Eastman's day. Colour film for the man in the street was introduced of course, but a major advance came when Dr. Edwin Land invented the self-developing print. The Polaroid camera was born.

So where did 35mm come from?

The roll film being made by George Eastman for his 'Kodak' cameras was 70mm in width. Thomas Edison, the great 'inventor', wanted to produce moving pictures, so he got his laboratory boffins working on the project.

William Dickson was one of them. He discovered that the best way to utilise the Kodak film for movie purposes was to split it into two along its length, and then perforate the edges with sprocket holes for a smoother advance within the cine camera. This resulted in a film that was 35mm in width, which had a picture area of 18mm x 24mm. This frame size has remained the basic movie standard ever since.

In modern 35mm cameras the frame size is 36mm x 24mm, but there was a period when still cameras used the movie standard size - the so called 'half frame' cameras.

Not to be outdone, Kodak embarked on a rival range of films and cameras. Their early cameras were, in my opinion, better designed than the cumbersome Polaroid ones, but Dr. Land's film always had the edge in terms of clarity.

In the mid-80s Polaroid succeeded in forcing Kodak out of the instant camera market by winning an important patent case in the US courts. Polaroid's monopoly will remain unchallenged until the relevant patents expire, but then new patents are being added to the list all the time.

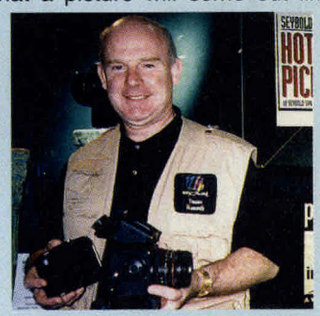
Dr. Land also invented the polarising filter to reduce glare, and discovered how the human eye/-brain combination sees colour. He found that the way we perceive an object's colour is dependant on the colours that surround it.

A simple example is that most TV set screens are grey when they are switched off. A TV set can only generate shades of red, green, and blue, which appear to give us all the colours of the rainbow plus white. So how do we see black? Dr. Land's theories explain this phenomenon.

Hasselblad

Not all the cameras that use Polaroid film are made by Polaroid. One particularly famous make comes from the factory of Victor Hasselblad in Sweden.

The Hasselblad has been the large film format, single lens reflex, camera of choice by the professional photographer for many years. By virtue of its interchangeable film backs the photographer can instantly see from a Polaroid what a picture will come out like,



Trevor Haworth, President of Dicomed, aHasselblad camera in his left hand, digital imaging back for it in his right.

before taking the final shot.

Hasselblads are not cheap. A basic outfit would see you with not much change out of two thousand pounds, however I know where there are twelve cameras ripe for the taking. The Moon. It has been 25 years since the first one was left up there, and I can assure you that it probably is still in its original condition.

In 1980 I was honoured with the chance to handle one of the cameras that did come back with the astronauts. They used 70mm wide thin-emulsion Kodak reversal film to take those historic photos. ***AUI***

Graphics EXPOsed

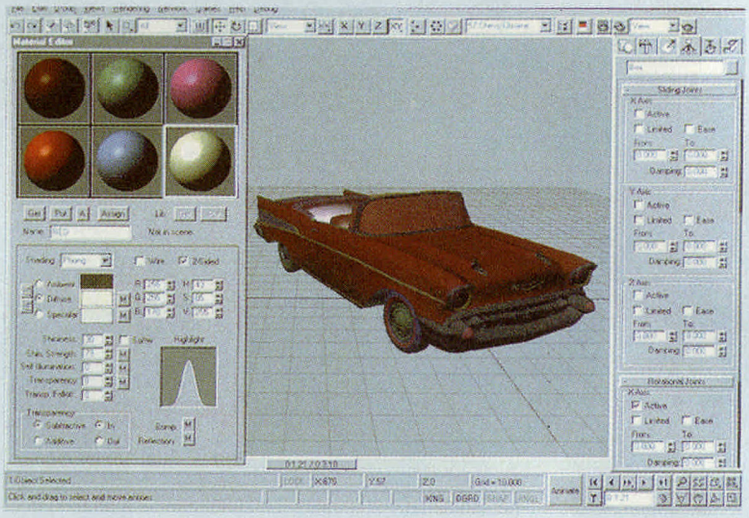
A dazzled David Ward reports on the splendours of the virtual sights and sounds at Computer Graphics Expo 95.

Computer Graphics Expo recently arrived at the Wembley Conference Centre to celebrate its second, and last, year. The 1996 event is to be renamed Digital Media World and is to take place over three days starting November 19th. So make a note in your new 3D pocket diaries now so you don't forget.

There used to be a Computer Graphics Show in the late 80s and early 90s, but that died when the then organizers, Blenheim, decided to move it to Birmingham. It wasn't much cop when it was located at Alexandra Palace either.

Then it was all CAD and plotters. Only the 1990 show really grabbed the attention because of a plethora of Amigas. After a period of enforced rest, Computer Graphics returned under new management. The 1994 show was blessed with one Amiga. That was on the

Digital Processing stand because they were showing the PAR video card. But they weren't there this nor were other well-known representatives of the Amiga graphical dimension.



Create a '57 Chevvy faster than Detroit with AutoDesk's 3D Studio MAX.

Big Stuff

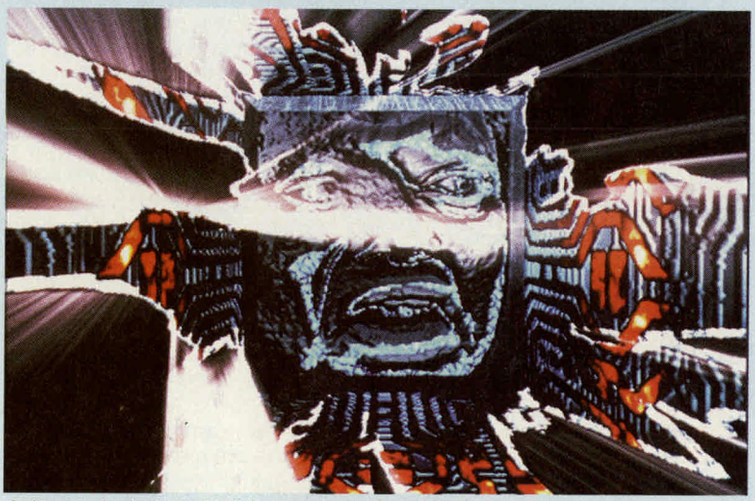
Obviously the company with the largest share of the market would have the largest stand. And Silicon Graphics (SG) did not disappoint. There were 350 entries to the London Effects and Animation Festival (LEAF), out of which 49 finalists were selected. Now 53% of those used Silicon Graphics equipment, 17.5% used PC compatibles, 14% used Quantel, and the rest... the odd Mac or Cray supercomputer.

So you can see who leads the way at the moment, and with such a large following SGI do not want to let the competition catch up. Consequently they have just brought out the Indigo² Impact.

More Impact

Now this baby has more than three times the 3D performance, and about a hundred times the complex visualization power of its predecessor, the Indigo Extreme, which used to the world's fastest desktop graphics processor.

SGI were running around congratulating themselves on being years ahead of the competition. The competition... You may remember that this appears to be the studio based Quantel mob, closely followed by the PC. And the PC clan has plans.



A virtual hacker is deleated in Cyberspace in the new film 'Johnny Mnemonic'.

Get the Max

Launched at the show was a new version of Autodesk 3D Studio. Written in Visual C for running under Windows NT, Autodesk 3D Studio MAX has been designed to take full advantage of the Microsoft operating system for multiple processors.

The demonstration to the Press was impressive. MAX can certainly do some interesting things. Real time rendering, multiple undos, particle animation, track following, you name it, MAX had it.

So for two and a half grand you should expect value for money. Then came the hardware requirements. Hmm... a dual Pentium machine with a minimum 32Mb of RAM, and high performance graphics card. Just the sort of thing you have laying about in your bedroom.

Obviously Autodesk have realised this and therefore supply each copy with a special dongle. We wouldn't want MAX falling into the wrong hands!

Yawn

Now the software can do the job in question, animation, but why do they seem to rely on computer programmers to do the anims for the demo reels.

We saw the same tired old routines. Spaceships flying about, wobbly organic things creeping around desert type landscapes, and some glitzy graphics from the upcoming "Johnny Mnemonic" film. (Oh no, not another "Net" type picture).

However, in between there were one or two really good bits. Mainly the architectural walk-

throughs done by designers for clients. The medical stuff looked good too, even though it did tend to make your flesh creep a little.

Dark Forces

Perhaps, in a dig at Autodesk, the artists who use Lightwave to produce the effects for Babylon 5 decided that an animated Autodesk logo was best to represent the dark forces about to takeover the galaxy. Have a look at the logo and see what you think.

Autodesk claim to have 75% of the market, worth about $9 billion, with 55,000 users. Or that's how it seemed to be put to us. They were telling us that the global animation market was worth that much, increasing to $25 billion in the next five years, and that they had 55,000 existing users of 3D Studio. The 75% market share probably refers to PC users, and not the total number of platforms that run anim software. Don't forget SGI.

They also claimed that the Johnny Mnemonic film had the longest bit of computer animation ever done on a PC. It turns out to be five minutes.

High Priced Amiga

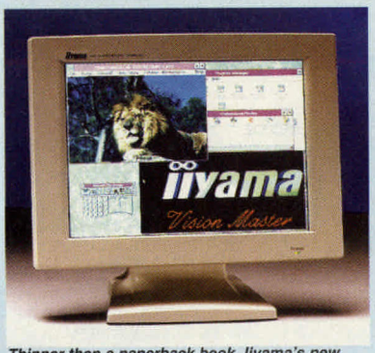
The same blurb also told us that the effects in Jurassic Park and Terminator relied on "high priced Workstations". I seem to remember that some of those effects were done on the Amiga! High priced indeed. There's also another film coming out - "Virtuosity". Draw your own conclusions.

A colourful display came from monitor manufacturer Iiyama. They were showing off almost their entire range of multi-standard monitors. The only model missing was the Vision Master 15.

Apparently it is selling in such quantities that they could not get hold of one for use at the Show. It must have been that good review we gave it in ***AUI*** a few months back that boosted sales.

Iiyama do two ranges. The ordinary and the Pro. The ordinary sets are fitted with FST tubes, while the Pro series have Mitsubishi DiamondTrons. Yet their latest offspring uses neither.

For the first time in public Iiyama had their Pro Lite 31 on view. This is a high brightness, high contrast, 12.1 inch LCD flat panel display with a resolution of 1024 x 768 in



Thinner than a paperback book, Iiyama's new LCD Hi-Res monitor.

262,000 colours.

Not cheap, it would set you back a cool £2,300, but it means a clearer, crisper, picture with no radiation problems. Many large institutions, whose staff sit close to screens all day long, have taken a strong interest in the device.

Sharp have shown a TV set using a 10.1 inch colour LCD. This set is expected to sell for around the £1,000 mark sometime this year, and was equipped with inputs for audio and video.

Iiyama's much deeper DiamondTron tubed monitor.

So what's the difference? Apart from being slightly larger, the Iiyama monitor has a higher resolution than that required for a constantly moving TV image. It also has to have a special card for the PCor Mac which is driving it. Hence it is more than double the price.

Run of the Mill

When you've seen one rendering package, you feel you've seen them all, and eventually all superduper Workstations begin to look the same. Whether they're Alpha, multi-Pentium, or SPARC.

They're all doing the same things, but for differing amounts of money and time. Computer Graphics 95 was not the same as last year's show. I could feel it in my bones. It was bigger for a start, and the crowds seemed to be more there for the entertainment factor - one stand had an array of consoles for 'play testing' - than for buying product.

Computer graphics is hardware, is software.. But it is more than that. As with any creative medium it is also, most importantly, people. One notable feature at the Computer Graphics Expo was the increasing demand for talented computer graphics artists.

Companies such as Virgin, Electronic Arts, Microprose, and others, had stands not to show off their latest blockbusters, but to gather in the recruits for their growing creative divisions.

Even The Guardian newspaper, making a point about it being the place to scan the ads for media and computing jobs, was there, equipped with a notice board for jobseekers to pin up and display their CVs, and companies to publicise vacancies.

On those CVs was generally a list of the hardware and software owned by the jobseeker. Ironically, on several we saw listed the Amiga. They train on it, use the Amiga for their own enjoyment, but will they ever get the chance now to employ it in their future profession of computer graphics? Answers on a post card please to Amiga Technologies.

Mitsubishi were showing off a new monitor and a new colour PostScript dye-sublimation printer. At only £9995 I am sure it will prove to be a big hit! Especially when punters are told that copy costs turn out to be £5.86 for each colour A3 print. The monitor is more expensive, and of a slightly lower spec. than the equivalent Iiyama set. £695 *v.* £645. Take your pick.

VR Alternative

One company had a completely different approach to VR. Cheaper too. The Spaceshot, from PAN3D Ltd., is a mechanical dev-ice that incorporates two rolls of 35mm film and a gyro.

A special camera is used to take an all-round 3D photograph of a room or whatever. If you have ever been in a group school photograph, then you will recognize the type of camera used but, instead one taking a single shot, it takes two views side by side. A stereoscopic image.

The resulting rolls of film are spliced into two loops, which are then inserted into the viewer. These are illuminated, and the user looks through the binocular shaped device to see a VR type image, but in true photographic colour and resolution.

Looking like Robot No.5. Pan3D's camera.

As the viewer rotates, the gyro senses this and runs the film past the user's eyes using electric motors. So, in effect, you can look around a room. a full 360 degree image. The price? £4000 or so for the camera, and a processing cost of £300 a film. Not one for your holiday snaps.

The Spaceshot viewer and film cartridge.

Mitsubishi's new colour dye-sub A3 printer.

Hand across the Internet

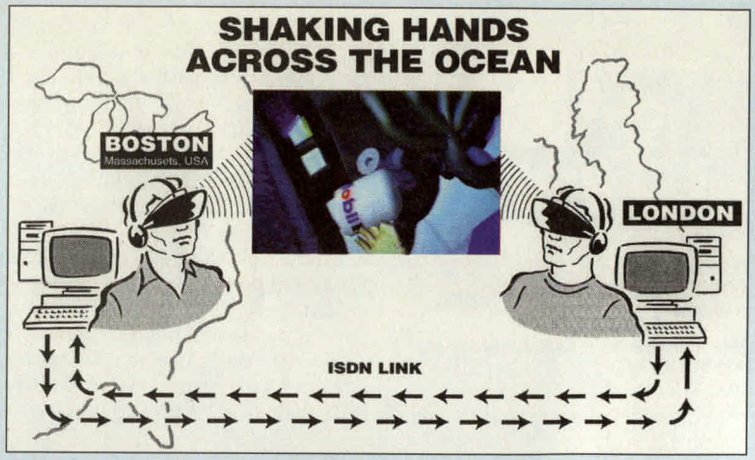
A small number of hacks had gathered in a room in the Conference

Graphics EXPOsed

CONTINUED

centre for an historic moment on the Internet. Division were going to demonstrate multi-user Virtual Reality via an Internet connection between the UK and the US.

A hushed silence fell across the crowd as we listened in to the technical talk between our man on the spot, Division's Marketing Director Pierre duPont, and the remote, disembodied voice of Doug Schiff at the VR Expo in Boston. He sounded as if he were on the moon.



Virtual car mechanics can now share experiences across the Internet.

Pierre duPont virtually shakes hands with his cyber partner in Boston.

"Okay Doug, we're gonna reboot here to get the demo up and running," said Pierre duPont in a fine American accent. Turning to the audience he commented "I must stress that Division is an English company regardless of my name or accent." We all laughed.

Doug's voice came through on a phone with a built-in loudspeaker. "I'm having problems at this end," he said. The words were passing to and fro across the Atlantic, and the slightly tense atmosphere, put me in mind of Mission Control in the early days of the space race.

After an introductory speech by Pierre duPont, he then donned a VR headset, picked up a 3D mouse, and entered cyberspace. Here we could see both Pierre duPont and Doug Schiff in a virtual room. Information on their positions and actions being constantly transmitted each way across the Atlantic via a dedicated ISDN line set-up by Division's Internet provider.

History was made. The two virtual men shook hands via the Internet - accross the world - virtually of course.

Cybernauts

Of course, the possibilities are endless. We were shown just one example, some car maintenance. Doug Schiff and Pierre duPont fitted some hoses and an oil filter to a virtual BMW. All done without a 'glove'.

By just using the 3D mouse, the computer measures its position in space relative to a fixed point. This goes for the VR headset too.

If you have a mouse, you must have menus as well. These are of the pull-down type, but they appear in front of your eyes - hanging in space. The mouse movements cause your virtual arm and hand to move in the scene you can see. You can then select items from the menu by pushing the 'button'. The mouse also allows you to pick things up.

We saw the two cybernauts (not those from the Avengers) play within the virtual room. They had a virtual radio-controlled car operated by a virtual handset, the ubiquitous teapot, and a variety of electrical items found in a normal house.

Some concern was raised by the audience with regard to the ISDN link required to run this service. Pierre duPont pointed out that it was not designed for the home user, but rather corporates who need globally positioned staff to collaborate.

Automotive engineering was the example, and this experiment proved that engineers in Dagenham and Detroit could sort out design problems.

Shown Up

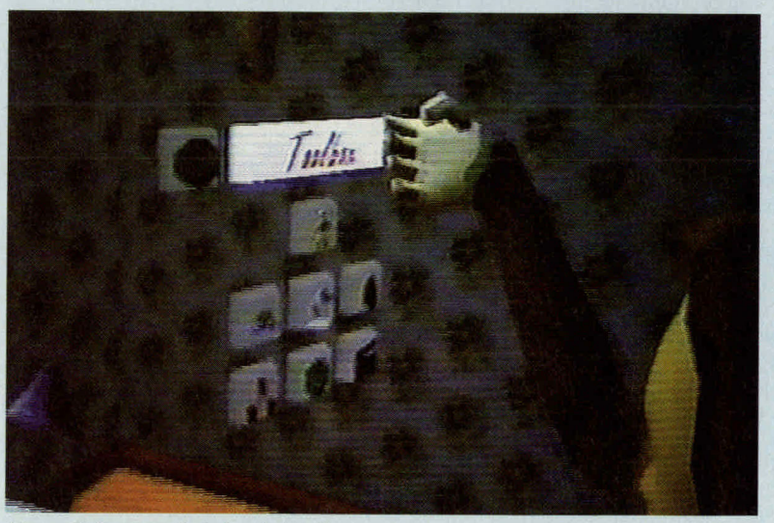
What we thought would be an ordinary Show turned out to be the venue for some ground breaking events. ***AUI*** was there to see history being made.

Was the Amiga there too? Not so far as we could see except... Yes, there was one mention. On the back wall of a stand occupied by the USA magazine Computer Graphics World was pinned their November 1995 issue. Right there on the cover was the message, delightful we hope to all computer graphicers, "The Amiga Lives!" Hooray!

Sadly the article, probably written sometime in August, did little other than report the "rescue" by Escom. Yet it shows the once strong position in the computer graphics world that the Amiga had, for its survival to be presented as a matter of headline news.

Will the Amiga ever recover that position? Amiga Technologies have to move hard and fast to catch the SGIs and other dedicated workstations who are carving up the market. From the quality of the machines and software on show at Computer Graphics Expo, that is not going to be an easy or cheap task. ***AUI***

The 3D mouse that controls all features in Division's virtual worlds.



How a pull-down menu looks in virtual reality.

David Pleasance
Ex. MD of Commodore

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Electronic Shopping

Martin Witton mounts the plastic and surfs forth to splash out on the rising Technomarket.

Buying a pair of shoes up to a few years ago was a complicated affair. Window shopping was followed up by countless visits to shoe stores, and when a style was found which appealed, invariably the shop was out of stock in your size. If you were lucky, you might have been offered the opportunity to order a pair, but retailing has undergone a quiet revolution. As soon as a pair of shoes is sold, the information is relayed to the warehouse and the stocks replenished daily. Not only have businesses been able to reduce the actual amount of stock in the shop, but information is available on high selling brands. Thus enabling buyers to target their next lines based on popular appeal, and improve marketing and customer service by increasing operational efficiency.

The Tesco club card holds a wealth of information, including the type of shopping items the customer regularly buys.

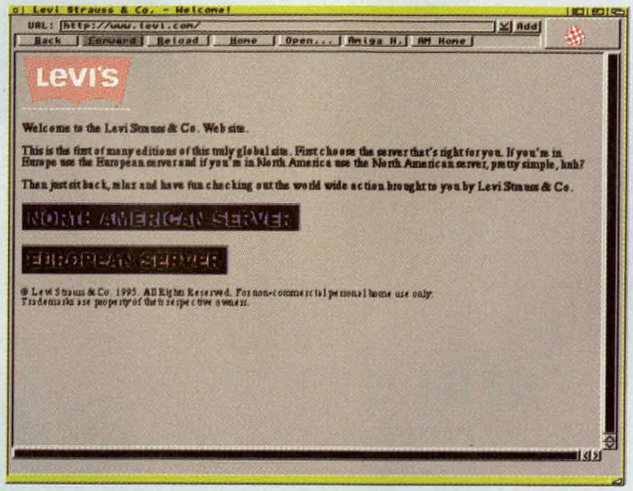
In addition, IT systems now are involved with the entire life cycle of products. Most of this has gone on behind the scenes with the only visible changes being in the introduction of bar coding, but this is moving to the fore with the introduction of loyalty cards for customers. Sainsburys, for example, are not only offering discounts to shoppers, but are targeting special offers to customers based on the information gathered about what individuals are buying.

Tesco, who were the first of the supermarkets off the mark with their Club Card, now has access to a huge quantity of information about the addresses and buying habits of tens of thousands of its customers. Big Brother may not be exactly watching you yet, but he does know what you are eating and using.

Soon it will be possible for the shopper to leave the goods in the trolley without having to unload it onto conveyer belts, as the introduction of electronic scanning of all the contents is already being pilot tested.

Trials in Swindon are taking loyalty cards one step further with the introduction of Mondex cards. As ***AUI*** reported last year, in the Swindon test, the inhabitants of the town are given these smart cards which are replacing cash. The cards can be used to pay for anything, and can be topped up with any amount, improving security and reducing the amount which can be obtained by fraud.

CompuServe, earlier this year, `opened' a new electronic shopping centre aimed at UK subscribers with services available online from 130 merchants.



Fancy a pair of jeans? No problem with the Levi's home site.

Virtual Shopping

Why bother to leave the house? Where once the bread van, milkman, mobile greengrocer, and even the Muffin Man, brought essentials and luxuries to every street, "virtual shopping" is the modern equivalent.

Interactive shopping is not just confined to food. Compuserve, earlier this year `opened' a new electronic shopping centre aimed at UK subscribers with services available online from 130 merchants. Retailers are beginning to tap into the Internet, opening up their own pages with web software. Electronic shopping malls are appearing on the Net with the launch of BarclaySquare Internet shopping in conjunction with Interactive telephony.

Tony Slater, director of sales and marketing at Barclays Merchant Services, has said "Retailers today are faced with increasingly demanding customers who want to shop at all hours and from all possible locations. Including from home".

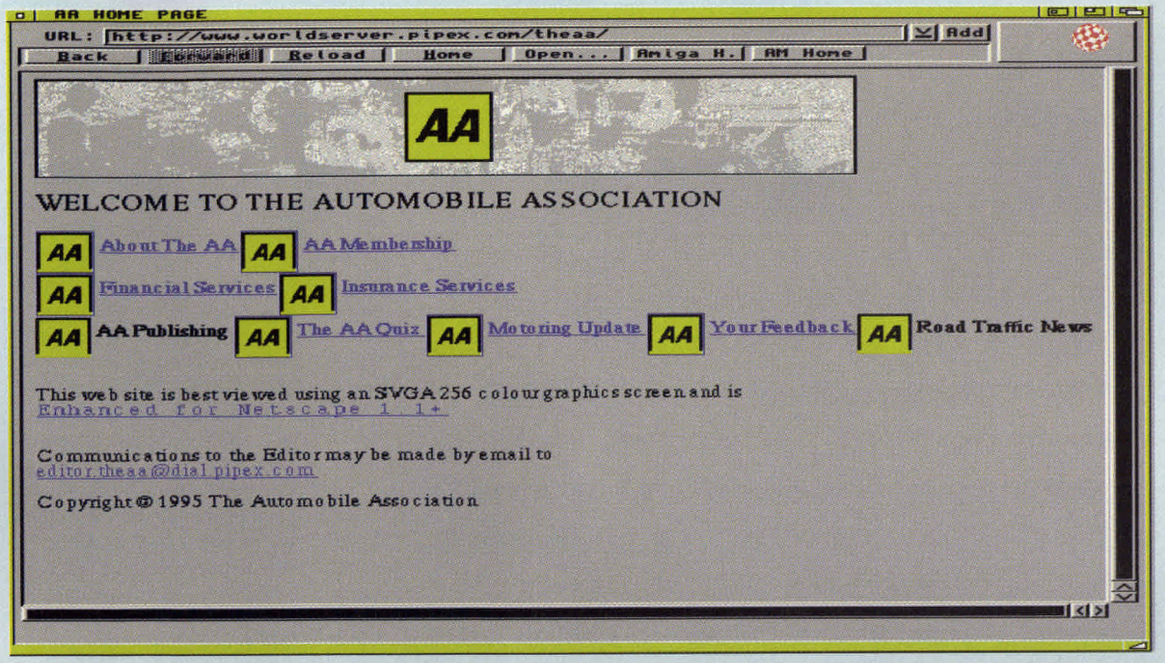
Yet the number of people who are equipped with a modem, PC, and a credit card, is still quite small. There has not been a noticeable difference in the numbers of Christmas shoppers and therefore a corresponding increase in traffic as yet. It is thought that the BarclaySquare experiment has produced plenty of "visits" to the site, but not much trade for those selling there.

Stop and Buy One

For shoppers without computers, interactive multimedia kiosks are worth looking out for. These consist of a computer with a touch screen monitor and special software displaying high resolution photographs, sound, and video. They are already available in some locations, such as Thomas Cooks, for holiday shopping.

Shopping for a holiday that is.

A cashless society is getting ever nearer, now that Mondex has arrived.



The AA home page offers all of their services, not just breakdown help.

You can not only search out the type of location to suit your requirements, but also find out more about the type of resort, surrounding areas, and even `look' into hotel rooms to see if there are enough pillows!

Multimedia kiosks include CD-ROM based shopping catalogues, where users can view videos and photographs of products, and make purchases direct from their computer, which can be delivered direct.

Fujitsu, Japan's largest computer maker, and games company Sega, are jumping onto the online bandwagon by offering network services to Saturn users. These will include network games, online shopping, and educational services. Sega's Saturn games machine can access Fujitsu's PC network by using the domestic television to display the screens.

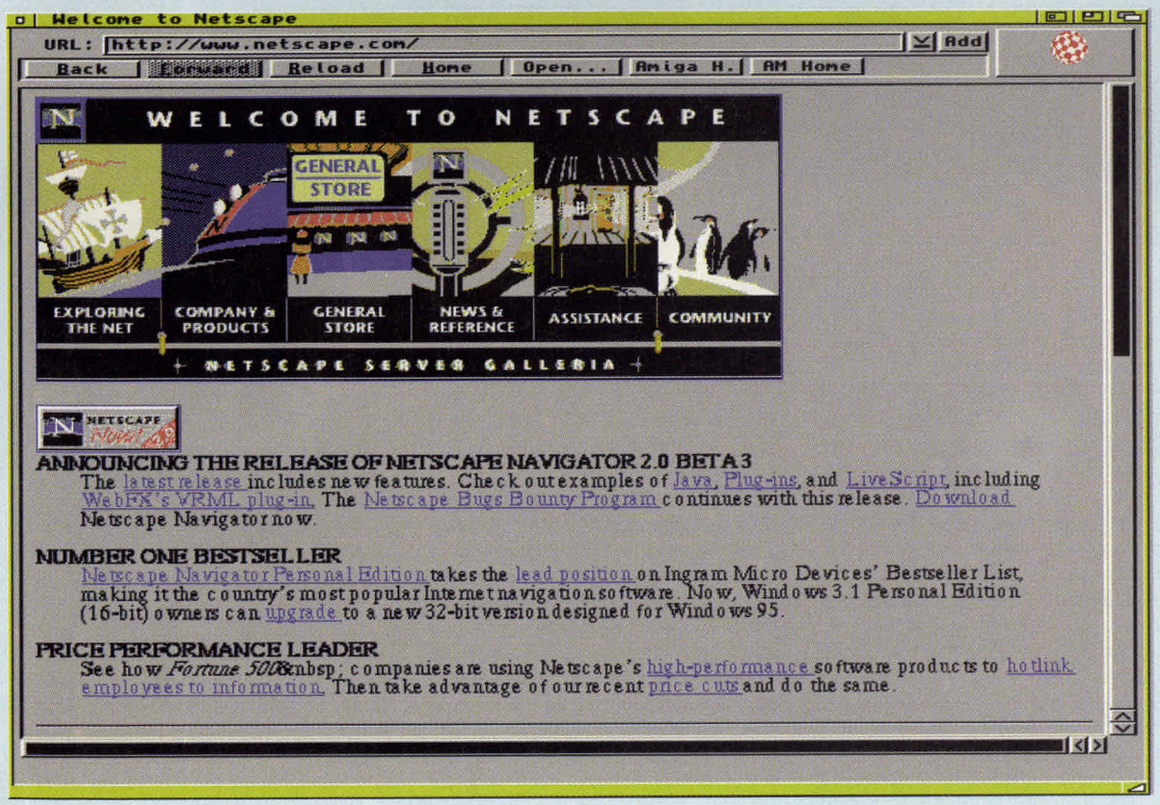
Very Special Offers

Online shoppers are not apparently confined to the retail market. Adverts are appearing on the Internet selling women from Asia and Eastern Europe to Western men for prostitution and marriage. Mail order brides can be selected from on-screen listings, with prices quoted for three plane fares - a single out there, and two tickets for the return journey! If marriage isn't what you want, Pimps 'R' Us - yes, we are not inventing this, it took hours of hard, sorry, deep, no, sorry again, thorough research! - will help you take trips to the Caribbean with call-up information available on current street prices and street by street directions.

Surfing the Porn Net may appeal to the dirty mac brigade, but with live sex shows by prostitutes now available as video footage, and no regulation or censorship, parents and politicians are voicing their concerns. Children which may accidentally get into contact with some highly dubious material.

For instance, calling up Smarties on the Net will, apparently, not only tell you about sweeties, but also may give graphical information on the Dutch Paed-ophile ring of the same name.

One young student, seeking information about tiger's eye stones, was amazed to find visuals of foreign porn star Tiger's Eye in all her glory. Oxford University students were banned from using the Net on college computers after 4000 connections to erotic video clips and footage were made in one month alone.



Netscape Navigator has become one of the definitive browser pakages available on the Net.

4000 a Month

Could this be why research by market information company GfK Marketing Services has found that 1,300 British homes a week join the information Superhighway? This number is predicted to rise to 4,000 per month by the end of 1996, with over 200,000 respondents expected to subscribe to the Internet in the next year. The research also shows that there are currently an estimated 3.4 million homes in the UK with a computer, but no Internet access. Do they know what they are missing?

Not surprisingly, in the answers given by respondents as to the type of activities they carried out using the Internet, 66% said that they used it mainly for e-mail, and 56% to access business information. Only 6% said they used it to purchase goods and services. Well, would you tell the researcher you wanted to visit the Real Girls video conferencing facility? ***AUI***

On Line

Anthony Mael reports on the hotting up of the online Wars, how three quarters of Net users couldn't escape, online romance, Virgin's error and other Internet flights of fancy.

What is astonishing to most people who are not modem-owners, a group which makes up most of the world, is the amazing interest the media now have in the Internet. A couple of years back practically no-one had even heard of the Net, and now it appears in the news every day. This happens is because it seems to be the medium which will bring telecommunications and computing together.

Paying £152 million for a hot online ticket to UK business.

The Net has acquired a glamour, especially for companies, that would seem somewhat exaggerated even if anyone had made lots of money out of it. However very few companies have - though some bright individuals in the online business have cleaned up.

Peter Dawe, the founder of a company called Unipalm Pipex, is probably unknown to you. Unipalm Pipex has some 1,000 customers and claims to be the largest corporate Internet business provider.

The company, which Dawe began in 1987 on a borrowed £6000, has just been sold to the US Internet service provider UUNet for a cool £152 million. Thus making Peter Dawe seriously rich, a millionaire many times over.

Such profitable activity has not been missed by the really big guns in the communications industry, one of whom has set up a rival company providing similar services to Unipalm Pipex. That competitor is called BTNet which is, surprise, surprise, owned by none other than your everloving "Talk is cheap" phone company, British Telecom.

Convergence

Now BT is not a very nice rival to have, as Peter Dawe has found out. BT has such huge amounts of cash it can do the sorts of things that poorer companies cannot afford. Mind you its cash has not always bought it success, as you may remember with the Telecomsoft fiasco in the computer games business.

However, though it makes loads and loads of spondula every second from our chatting over the lines, it is also aware that the future lies in the famous 'convergence' - that is the coming together of telecommunications and computing. That awareness is certainly one reason why BT has just appointed Peter Bonfield, ex-ICL boss, to the job of Chief Executive.

Other Internet providers are somewhat annoyed by BT's imminent plans to jump into the consumer dial-up market too.

This view of the future has also brought it into the online world with experiments for Video On Demand and now BTNet. Unipalm Pipex's Dawe isn't too pleased about the way BT is muscling in to what has been a very profitable market. It's not that he objects to BT being there just the way it's doing its business. He has accused BTNet, which is offering to link up the same corporate customers that Unipalm Pipex goes for, of being a "spoiler service, intended to dilute our business.. using unfair and anticompetitive practices..."

He claims that BTNet "steals" customers by offering to replace the Pipex service with free BTNet subscriptions, and he alleges that BT engineers sent to fix problems with the telephone lines for Pipex customers have suggested that such difficulties wouldn't have happened if they had subscribed to BTNet instead. Naughty that, don't you think? He does.

What really makes Peter Dawe fume is that "We are probably one of BT's biggest new business customers." Ouch!

Fair Play

Now you might think that the whole thing is just a relatively small company complaining about being bashed about by a big competitor. So what, but there is more to it than that. Oftel, the telecommunications regulator set up by the Government to make sure that we - the customers - are treated fairly, and the telecoms companies behave themselves and compete properly, is considering action against BT after other accusations that the telecoms colossus has been carrying on in an uncompetitive way.

Not only is it alleged to have fought the opposition by cutting prices to corporate subscribers of BTNet, but other Internet providers are somewhat annoyed by BT's imminent plans to jump into the consumer dial-up market.

The other, much smaller, Internet providers are hopping mad because they reckon that BT, because of its vast cash flow from its other businesses, is cross subsidising services like BTNet. In other words, they allege that BT is sliding cash from your phone bill across to cut the costs of its online services. This is against the rules of BT's licence. Naughty, naughty again.

This alleged cross subsidising could make it cheaper for a while for Internet users, both corporate and private, but it might drive out of business the other providers who couldn't afford to cut prices to BT levels. Then, the scenario goes, when the midget competitors had been crushed underfoot, the giant BT would be able to pump up its prices again and get all its "loss leader" cross subsidising cash back.

Oftel is taking the accusations seriously enough to investigate the matter, which will please the 90-odd independent service providers in the UK. Some of these, who are not business service providers, but aim their Internet activities at the consumer, are very alarmed at BT's upcoming entry into the market with a rumoured package that will give users a single flat rate per month with unlimited Internet access.

You may remember that in these hallowed pages of ***AUI***, a month or two back, we proffered the concept that the Internet would really become a universally used service if telephone customers were given what we have just reported that BT is now considering. A flat rate of possibly £10 per month, use it as much as you like. Not all that different from the way that the BBC's TV licence works.

Legal Action

BT will neither confirm nor deny that the flat rate move is one they are going to make, and they have yet to release details of what its dial-up package for consumers will be, but other Internet providers are already crying "foul" and have filed complaints with Oftel.

Peter Dawe has warned that Unipalm Pipex would take legal action to block such a move by BT. So the opposition to BT in the online world is hotting up as the other providers believe that BT is abusing its dominant position to shut them out of the fast growing Internet business. According to Peter Dawe this is "a market that is growing faster than any other in history."

Tempting

A war like this one that is breaking out over the Internet would have been inconceivable a few years back. "The Internet, what's that?" would have been the incurious reply from most businesses.

Yet today the smell of the potential gusher of profits is tempting big and

Flying too high clutching heavy wads of Wall Street cash?

Impossible To Escape

NetScape is drawing the kind of attention that used to be accorded only to the mighty Microsoft. For those who have been playing Robinson Crusoe on a desert island for some time, NetScape is the company that created the most popular browser on the World Wide Web, Navigator.

With the rise and rise of the Internet as a cool medium that has attracted increasing global interest, NetScape has become the hook on which the world has hung its curiosity, especially if, as is the case, the world didn't really understand what has been going on anyway.

One way the suspicious world is able to understand technology is through the simple medium of money. If someone is making bucketloads of the green stuff out of technosomething then that's an idea that everyone can relate to. When NetScape was floated on Wall Street's Stock Market a few months back, its shares, as we reported in ***AUI***, went sky high straight away, and made its co-founders, one just 23 years old, multimillionaires.

Now, with the rush into the Online world continuing, the shares are flying to even more improbable heights. Having started around the $20 mark, they have now hit $100. That makes the stock market worth of NetScape a nice little $2 billion - some £1.4 billion.

Now that's not bad for a company that's only been going for a couple of years, and whose turnover last year reached some $21 million with a profit of just a couple of million. As they might say in New York, we should all be so lucky - and so rich!

Of course, such fairy tale rises in price are expected to bring large and possibly quick profits back to the investors (gamblers) who have put their money where their modems are or aren't. Even if NetScape multiplies its business by, say, ten to $200 million in the coming year, which just might be possible, if unlikely, it will still be only turning over an amount equal to a mere one tenth of the value the Stock Market nutters have placed on it.

One reason for all the hullabaloo over NetScape is that it has just brought out the latest version of its browser, Navigator, which includes an e-mail system that allows users to send and receive encrypted messages. Until recently, there have been no secure ways of sending data across the Web. With its new Navigator version, NetScape has brought some encryption within the range of ordinary users.

100 Cracking Computers

Encryption - or any kind of security on the Net - is a problem that has nowhere near yet been solved. Some Net observers think that until there are really reliable ways of protecting credit card transactions through the Web, the general public simply won't use it in big enough numbers to make the commercial possibilities work. Encryption is the key to this and doubtless the high-flying NetScape is burning the midnight oil across the time zones of the USA trying to find the answer to the challenge of developing absolutely secure systems.

Some people think, with the competitive talents, sometimes genius, of the world's hackers, even relatively strong security may never be achieved. This idea was supported by what happened to an earlier version of NetScape's Navigator. A "secure" version was put up on the Net and the world was challenged to decrypt it.

A researcher at France's National Institute of Computer Science got together over 100 computers, bringing parallel computing methods to work on a program that he and other colleges had written to crack Navigator. The computer ran through a trillion or so different alternative lines of investigation before it came up with the answers that broke the encryption. It took those 100 plus computer just eight days.

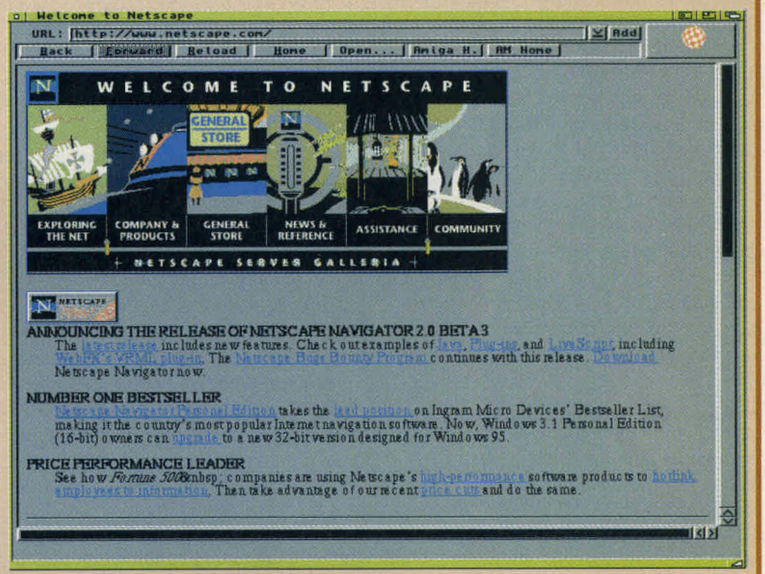
While the French team were beavering away, apparently another team in Sweden were also digging into the Navigator and, it is reported, came up with the key solution the very same day as the French. So even with the power of NetScape, nothing, it seems, is totally secure on the Net. This is especially true with devices called "packet sniffers" operating.

Packet switching is the way that data is transmitted on the Net. There are now ways of using relatively ordinary computing power to "sniff" the packets of data as they are switched around the Net for specific information that the controller of the "sniffer" wants to find. It all sounds rather sci-fi fearsome, doesn't it?

Cleverness

Making large sums of money isn't easy - unless you are lucky enough to buy into a glamour stock like NetScape right at the start - and one reason why the paper worth of NetScape has shot up is the idea that it can keep on coming out with versions of its products that everyone will just have to have, so bringing a constant flow of profitable business.

You can do all sorts of wondrous things these days through technology such as putting time limits on the use of software and so forth. NetScape wanted to do something similar when it planned to release the new 2.0 version of Navigator. It was due out on September 24th 1995. So into the previous version, 1.2 - which it is estimated some three quarters of Net users have or had



- clever dick NetScape wrote a nasty bit of code which was designed to stop poor old 1.2 dead.

The idea was to cause users to jump pretty sharpish onto the upgrade. Which, naturally, would cause a nice wodge of dollars to be added to the NetScapian treasury.

Great idea, eh? Lots of people thought so and up went NetScape shares in sympathy at their cleverness. Perhaps it should have been clevermess... For the new version - the hot 2.0 - was, like so much software, not quite so easy to get into shape as had been originally thought. September 24th arrived and the new version of Navigator didn't. Not a single one in the computer stores anywhere. 2.0 simply wasn't finished and NetScape couldn't distribute it.

A slight touch of panic set in all over the place as millions, in fact three quarters of the Net world, found that their favourite browser had packed up and gone home. Bad NetScape indeed! Another fine mess you got us Net users into.

There was probably more than just a touch of panic at Chez NetScape too as myriad Net users began to "hit" the NetScape home pages more than somewhat irately. None of the users could get anywhere on the Net - at least browsingly - except to NetScape's very own site.

As quickly as they could, NetScape came up with a temporary version that banging on the page door users could download. But the overloaded lines into NetScape took ages to clear as all the world and his wifely user queued up to get back into the action by downloading the free version.

As Rabbie Burns, the well-known software poet, wrote about the plans of keyboards, mice and men - they aft do gang agley, by which he certainly meant don't count your coded chickens before they're hatched into the computer stores.

A company as smart as NetScape has probably learnt that lesson from the 2.0 debacle and shouldn't repeat it, but have the Wall Street investors with bulging pockets who have pushed up the shares of NetScape to such unreal heights? Watch this space to find out - or the Wall Street Journal, if you prefer.

If you want to find out what NetScape has to say for itself try http:/ www.netscape.com.

small companies alike. In theory, such competition should benefit the consumer and BT's possible flat rate package could give the whole online world a dramatic lift.

Yet things never quite work out that way, do they? The small companies need to survive to provide the innovation that rarely comes from the industrial giants. "BT," says Peter Dawe, "is trying to be an innovative company in an environment that abhors innovation." He presumably means telecoms rather than the Internet.

Only real biggies like BT can provide the kind of financial muscle that will really cut the cost of getting and staying online, and achieving for the Net the popularity of, say, radio or TV.

One thing is certain, the online Wars are just beginning and while few companies have made much money out of the Internet - though clever entrepreneurs like Peter Dawe can retire to their online yachts in comfort - BT is not spending your phone bill cash for a stake in an industry that is going to stay as small as it has been up to now. BT believes that there are not millions, but billions to be made and, as the pages of this online Column show, it is not alone in that belief.

Into The Void

You Have Been Warned
What you fear, you will covet.
What you loathe, you will worship.
What you ravage, you will rule.
What you are, you will abandon.
You have been warned.

No, we have not gone off our poetic rockers. Online has not taken ***AUI*** into the realm of genuine doom and gloom. The quoted words come from the publicity for a new game, "Into The Void".

Coming from a company of whom we have not previously heard, but is neatly named - Adrenaline, "Into The Void" is claimed to be "the first net-capable, intergalactic, PC CD-ROM game of ultimate strategy".

Oh no, not another "ultimate" game, we hear you cry (in unison with the Editor of ***AUI***!). "Ultimate" has been the favourite description claimed by games companies for their products since those pingponging dots first arrived on Coleco and TV screens way back when we all felt a lot younger and smarter.

Somehow "ultimate" seems to games companies a much more exciting word than "latest" which is what it means. For even the megalomaniac tendencies of the newly rich games company bosses cannot surely have persuaded themselves that their "latest" game is going tobe the very last ever to be in that genre. Which would justify the other meaning of "ultimate".

"Into The Void" goes a smidgen further still - one might say toward incomprehensibility - by adding the word "strategy". What does "ultimate strategy" mean? Don't ask us, ask the mysterious Adrenaline people. So far we haven't been able to locate them, or a copy of "Into The Void", or any reference to it on the Net. When we do, you shall hear of the qualities - or lack of them - of this latest - oh well, ultimate - "ultimate" game.

Fame - At A Price

Perhaps the biggest problem of the Net - apart from the difficulties that new users find just to get on it - is that with so much data being poured into the Super-highway, who knows what is actually there? Yes, you could spend your piggy bank on a page or two in The Sun, The New York Times, or some Tokyo newspaper with zillions of readers, to tell the uncaring world that the most exciting stuff ever has just gone up on your very own Home page. You might find that kind of publicising a shade too costly.

Though you might want it, information about your site won't be sent to all and sundry Net users – or as it is known Netstyle, spamming.

This problem is what faces anyone, private or commercial, on the Net and no-one has solved it. There are ways though to alleviate the desperation of crying in solitude into cyberspace - where certainly no-one, or at least only very few, cares to hear you even if you scream loudly.

One such method is to use a service called Postmaster. The wittily named service updates - alerts - all the major starting points on the Web to your existence. Postmaster will get your details into such mysterious, but powerful sources as Yahoo, Infoseek, WebCrawler, and others. Yes, we assure you that there is such a thing a WebCrawler.

That's not all. Postmaster, for a fee of some $500, will also send news of your Web site to hundreds of other sources, magazines - like ***AUI***, so we can tell you about yourself - and other media outlets such as TV and radio stations.

Although you might want it, information about your site won't be sent to all and sundry Net users - or as it is known Netstyle, spamming. This, as we commented in ***AUI*** last month, is not a practice that is looked upon kindly in the cyberworld. So Postmaster will not do it for you - and if it did, you would likely get "flamed".

What Postmaster will do though, is transmit info to all those Netters - no, not nutters - who are filled with curiosity and actually want to know what's new on the Net. To those, perhaps foolhardy, inquisitors Postmaster will supply all the necessary details to inform them that you are reporting the fun you all had at the Ruby wedding knees-up of your Aunty Nell and Uncle Fred, or the results of the Under Ten Bournemouth Rugby team's tour of Devon, or even showing the snaps of Victoria's latest charred fruit cake creation.

So they should all, at once, hit your site to find out more about these and other fascinating aspects of the great and colourful pageant of Net life.

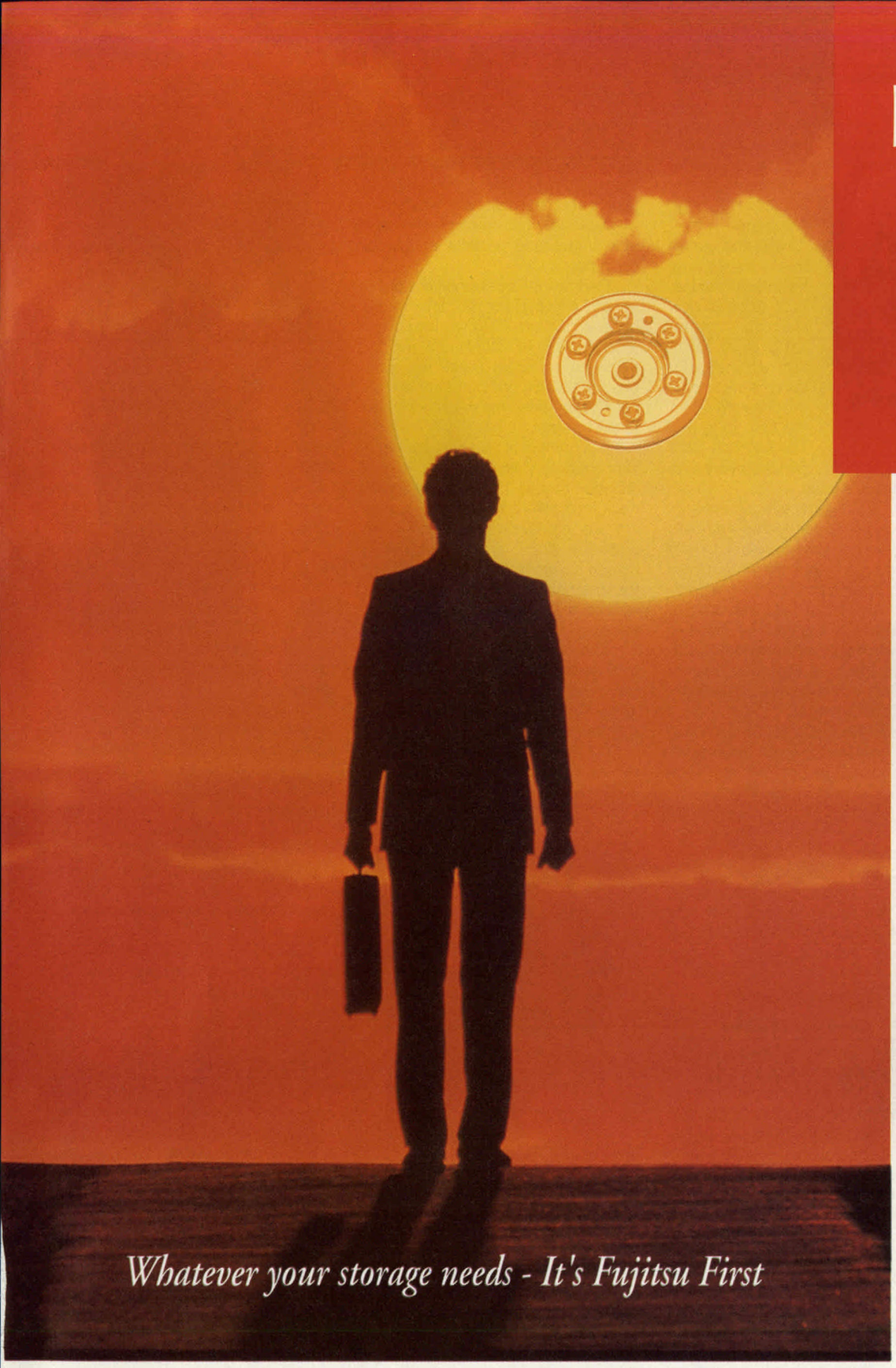
For fame - at a price - Postmaster is at http://www.netcreations.com/postmaster/

Virginal Sins

Stones and glasshouses. . . You may remember that Richard Branson's Virgin airline got into a major tizzy and ended up winning $9 million or so in cash from British Airways because big B.A had done little Virgin down in variety of ways that Branson didn't find to his taste. Apparently, and allegedly, British Airways had misled some potential passengers about Virgin.

Ah, but we all make mistakes, don't we? Virgin itself has now been fined by the US Department of Transport for putting out misleading advertising on the Internet. Early in 1995, Virgin's home pages advertised a re-

Getting – posting – your details to powerful sources.



Fujitsu drives - as sure as the sun rises in the East.

Some things in this world you can always rely on, the dawn for one and Fujitsu for another. As the sun rises every day, so Fujitsu disks and drives keep on performing.

Whether your prime need is for capacity, performance or reliability you can be sure that Fujitsu has the answer. With revolutionary Magneto-Optical technology you can store 230Mb of data on a disk little bigger than a conventional floppy. So now you can carry your own working environment, files and applications, in your breast pocket! What's more with each MO disk capable of up to 10 million read/write operations without failure, peace of mind comes as standard. Fujitsu drives are a shining example of quality, value and reliability.

Of course, Fujitsu continues to offer a full range of its legendary Magnetic drives, from the Pico bird range of low cost per Mb 3.5 inch disk drives for entry-level computer systems right up to the high performance PRML 4 Gb disk drives incorporating the lastest MR head technology. And with MTBFs of up to 800,000, hours when the sun goes down each night, you can sleep comfortably in your bed.

So if you want to be sure that your drive doesn't go West, look East, for the finest drives under the sun.

FUJITSU

COMPUTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, MICROELECTRONICS

Fujitsu Drives are available from:

AG Peripherals
Tel: 01264-336991
Fax: 01264-335199

Ideal Hardware
Tel: 0181-286 5000
Fax: 0181-286 5056

Or call Fujitsu on 0181-573 4444

ON LINE continued

turn fare between London, and New Jersey's Newark airport, for $499 if you booked 21 days in advance.

Some keen Net traveller, who had seen the page, telephoned Virgin, and waving the $499 down the phone wanted a ticket. Sorry, an unyielding Virgin replied, it's no go - in our experience, unyielding virgins often say no. Apparently the fare was no longer available because the season had changed from off-peak to peak. and the price of the cheapest fare had flown up to $518.

Some keen Net traveller, who had seen the page, telephoned Virgin, and waving the $499 down the phone wanted a ticket.

Now Virgin is saying sorry again because the US Department of Transport has slapped a $14,000 fine on it for what everone concerned says was a "genuine error". Though $14,000 is, as they say in Newark, just peanuts to a company like Virgin, it's also a history making amount. For the case begins to establish jurisdiction over the Internet, and whole office blocks full of expensive corporate lawyers will be looking at the decision, with regard to the currently unregulated activities on the Net, for profitable business.

One slip and a Virgin - and the rest of us - will never be the same again.

Window Stopping

Another affair with legal implications has emerged because a computer enthusiast, who also happens to be a lawyer, has registered a patent on what seemed to be an inoffensive bit of computer technology which was free to all. Rick Beye, who lives in New Jersey - where it all seem to be happening these days, even Frank Sinatra who was born there is 80! - has been granted a US patent that covers the use of a video image in a window on a computer screen used to talk students through a problem. This is of especial online interest because the Internet is being forecast as a major tool in a radical change in teaching techniques. Long distance learning. *See the item below.*

Now you wouldn't have thought that an instructor talking in a little window was patentable, would you? But Rick Beye says that he was surprised that no-one had tried to patent the idea before.

The technique is used by a number of programs in the US. For example, in some software for school leavers called, "Create Your Dream Job", the top left hand corner of the screen has an instructor that guides them through all the possibilities - like the choice between becoming a journalist writing about the Internet or a cleaner of sewers, whichever seems the more attractive. (Tough one that!).

For the use of this seemingly harmless device, Rick Beye is now claiming substantial upfront royalties, or a charge for the time it is used in the program. $5 for the first hour, and 10¢ for each extra minute, every time the product is used.

The US Interactive Multimedia Association has warned its members about making sure they are legally advised on whether the patent covers any teaching aids in their programs. Rick Beye says he expects the number of licences he gives to rise dramatically as multimedia training becomes an everyday part of education at all levels, particularly through the Internet.

Of course, this is all taking place in the US, so it doesn't really concern us. Except for the minor fact that Rick Beye has applied for a worldwide patent... If he gets it, perhaps he'll change his name from Rick to Rich Beye.

Then others might start jumping in and registering patents on all sorts of apparently simple bits of technology. Maybe we need a lawyer in a little window at the top of the screen to talk us through this one.

Display Computer

Distance learning through the SuperInformation Highway is a big topic now. The UK Government has announced that it is distributing £20 million between 23 pilot projects to link schools to broadband networks. Many of these projects have already started.

The intention is that the most successful pilot projects will form the model for the new broadband Superhighway that it is claimed will replace the Internet. All the pilot projects use at least "intermediate band" technology, such as ISDN and the Government is hoping for a "progressive migration" to more powerful connections.

The Government says it also "hopes - why is always hoping and not actually planning and doing? - that this new initiative will avoid the "display computer" syndrome as seen in previous well-intentioned drives to introduce new technology to schools.

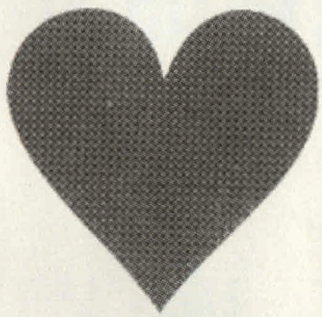
In this phenomenon, they say, schools gratefully took delivery of new computers, but there were not enough to use in lessons and generally staff didn't know enough about them anyway, so they stayed in cupboards - the computers that is not the staff. The only time that the computers would come out blinking into the light of scholastic day was when they were proudly put on display to suitably impressed parents at school open days.

Perhaps the most ambitious of the present pilot projects is a joint venture between ICL and BT. They are linking 11 schools in Bristol using a number of online services. These will have one multimedia computer per six pupils networked within the school, and to the Internet.

In a number of pilot projects, services such as video conferencing are included and all the schools will produce their own WWW pages. Teachers are intended to give lessons in multimedia form, remotely, on a large screen using techniques developed for distance learning for children in remote areas in the Australian outback.

They had better make sure that they keep to big screen stuff or Rick Beye - see the Window Stopping item in this Online - might be after them for a chunk of that £20 million.

If you are interested in finding out more about the projects, information on "Superhighways For Education" is available on the Department of Education home pages at http://www.open.gov.uk/dfeehome.html



Log On for Romance

Sex, pornography, ah yes, I remember it well... Politicians and other publicity seekers, who mostly have never even ventured onto the Net, express grave doubts about the safety of the world as we know it from what they perceive as a Netborne floodtide of dangerous material corrupting all of us.

That's as maybe, but have they thought of the lonely hearts who could use cyber-space to find their soulmates on the Net with nary a sexual innuendo to be found?

If you are one of those saddoes who glooms around the place longing for romance to come knocking on the door, cheer up, love can be no further than a modem away.

Single Search National in the US claims to be "America's Premier Internet On-Line Matchmaking Service and Single's Mall". Single's Mall? Shall we go shopping?

All you have to do to find that someone to watch over you is fill in SSN's online application form designed, they hasten to add, by a marriage counsellor and "the system matches" - appropriate word - "350 items of compatibility". They don't say how many items of incompatibility you could find though. In our unfortunate experience there could be far more.

Do not despair for if you don't live in the US your soulmate may be available elsewhere for Single Search National, despite their name, claim that they have singles internationally just waiting for you with hearts and roses, romance and friendship.

Now this is what we all knew that the Internet was created for... Mills and Boon, romance and friendship. Mrs. Whitehouse and Barbara Cartland will love it.

Shop around in the Singles Mall and put a deposit down on your romantic soulmate on http://nsns.com/single-search/

Lambasting Us

One of the projects in Channel 4's series "Without Walls", on which the egregious Janet Street-Porter works, is a programme called " J'accuse the Internet".

Janet "Sree-Porror", possessor of one of the most unpleasant accents, voices, and attitudes in today's media, was recently pushed or jumped - or "bowf" as she might put it, from the job as MD of the Mirror Group's Live TV channel.

The ex-youf BBC TV boss is now set, in the said Channel 4 programme, to "lambast the online community" claiming that the Internet is designed to keep certain undesirables away from the rest of society.

It's a pity that there aren't other, perhaps more effective methods, than the Internet media for keeping ex-TV undesirables away from our whole universe. Yet there is one totally effective way of achieving that exclusion when, if ever, the programme arrives, it's called the off switch. ***AUI***

AMIGA USER INTERNATIONAL
EXCLUSIVE OFFER

Anyone who has bought an Amiga Computer for home or professional use will recall those frequent trips to the dealer and stationers, to get the essential accessories a computer requires to function.

Now ... here's a cost-effective business solution for keeping your Amiga working in tip-top condition and includes all the little extras you will need - in one fantastic package to save you more than 40% off the recommended retail price.

THE AMIGA CARE KIT
Only £39.95 (plus p&p)

First of all there is a range of products to keep the AMIGA clean. Because the CRT display on a AMIGA generates a lot of static electricity, AMIGAs get very dusty. This is not only unsightly, but bad for your AMIGA's health as floppy disks and the machine's own hard disk can be damaged by dust particles. Included in the **AMIGA Care Kit** are wet and dry tissue packs for cleaning the screen display, a keyboard cleaner for the AMIGA's most notorious dust trap and a mouse cleaner. In addition there is a floppy disk drive cleaner which can be inserted into the drive to clean the drive's read and write heads. Most importantly, a cover is included for the monitor and CPU that will fit nearly all desktop configured AMIGAs. There is also a separate keyboard cover, which for most users is an essential item to guard against accidental spills.

Two items in the **AMIGA Care Kit** meet the needs of the AMIGA mouse. First there is a good quality mouse mat which provides traction for the mouse ball, ensuring accurate on screen pointing on a dust free surface. Secondly there is a mouse 'trap' to keep the mouse safe and tidy, when not in use. Adhesive pads secure the mouse trap to the side of the AMIGA monitor.

For floppy disks, the **AMIGA Care Kit** contains a pack of 3.5" disk labels, which avoids the need for crossing out and re-using old labels. There is also an excellent floppy disk storage box, called the Datafile 40, which securely holds up to 40 3.5" disks. A clear, smoked plastic lid shows the contents, but a secure lock prevents prying eyes peeking at sensitive data. Two keys are thoughtfully provided in case a key is misplaced.

A couple of extras, which most users will soon find indispensable, are also included. A 'Paper Clip' copy holder affixes to the AMIGA's monitor unit and holds papers firmly in place for copy typing. The Paper Clip can be angled to provide the best view for the user when typing. Finally the **AMIGA Care Kit** contains a keyboard calculator. This slim and fully functional calculator can be secured unobtrusively to the top of the user's keyboard, using self adhesive pads. When preparing invoices, or other figure work, it allows the user to instantly calculate figures on the screen, without the need to leave the current program to use an on-screen calculator, or hunting around the desk for a calculator. The Keyboard Calculator is solar powered, with battery back up for low light conditions.

You can now save more than 40% off the recommended retail price of The AMIGA Care Kit, simply by sending a cheque/postal order made payable to A.I.M. Limited for only £39.95 plus £5.00 per order for postage, packaging and insurance with the priority order form provided. Access and Visa credit cards and telephone orders are also accepted.

24 HOUR ORDER LINE
Tel: 0191 510 0201
or Fax your order on 0191 510 0155

AMIGA Care Kit Offer · Dept. AMACK · PO Box 10 · Sunderland · SR4 6SN

PRIORITY ORDER FORM

POST TO:- **AMIGA Care Kit Offer** · Dept. AMACK · PO Box 10 · Sunderland · SR4 6SN

Please send me The AMIGA Care Kit

Name _____ (CAPITAL LETTERS)

Address _____

_____

_____ Post Code _____

Telephone No. (In the event of queries) _____

I have enclosed my Cheque/Postal Order made payable to **AIM Limited** for £ _____
(£39.95 each plus £5.00 P&P per order) or debit my Access ❑ Visa ❑ Credit Card (please tick)

Card No. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

Allow 28 days delivery from receipt of order

What's New?

A round-up of products coming your way, maybe not tomorrow but they're coming.

Not On Your Lap

The high cost of office space is leading many companies to consider changing from conventional desks to allocating space for particular purposes, so called 'cellular offices'. Designs include areas private meetings, lounges for informal meetings, and libraries for quiet work. IBM are planning to achieve a ratio of four people to one desk or workstation, but that doesn't apply to the miniskirted P.A. on your lap. Desk sharing involves staff losing their right to private space and although they may have a locker, everything else is communal.

Working from home seems an increasingly favoured option, with the loss of support from colleagues possibly compensated by the ability to work in more comfortable surroundings. Many large firms are looking at a combination of teleworking with space sharing, which will cut property needs by up to 25%. This has come about because of technological developments, and requires companies to rethink their entire operational strategies.

Teleworking needs managers to be able to keep in touch with their staff, and not everyone needs expensive techno-equipment. Pag-ers are one of the cheapest ways of keeping in touch at any time, but there are now so many on the market proper research is required to ensure needs are met. One low price pager is Mercury Minicall. For £89.99, Mercury Minicall does not require a contract and there are no monthly charges or connection fees.

HP CopyJet

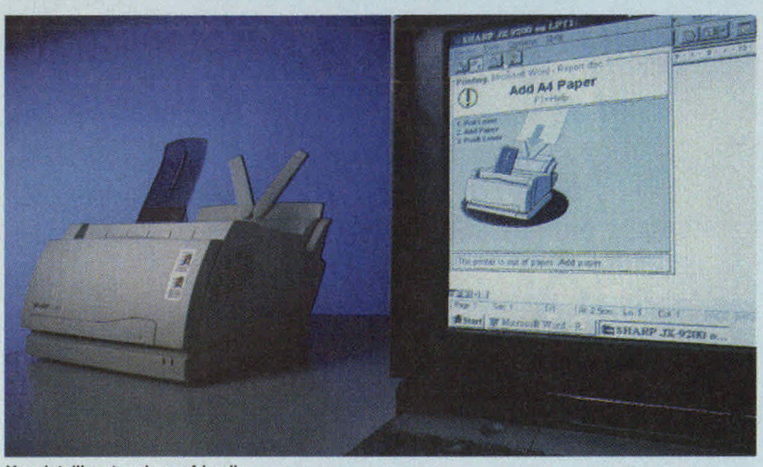
Hewlett Packard have released an HP CopyJet (£2139.00), and an HP CopyJet M (£2559.00). They are both colour printer-copiers which, HP claim are the first products to integrate colour printing and copying. The new products provide workgroups with space saving technology. Peter Urey, HP Workgroup Printer Marketing Manager said "The HP CopyJet colour printer-copier is changing the rules of the game by combining HP's proven success in colour printing and scanning to create a new category of products with greater appeal than stand-alone copiers."

Contact: Hewlett Packard
Tel. 01344 361044.

Logitech PageScan

The Logitech PageScan Color is a full page scanner for personal documents, colour, and flatbed applications. It plugs into any PC parallel port and will scan, or copy, files and faxes via a modem. The PageScan has integrated Xerox Textbridge and will read text directly into the word-processor for editing.

Contact: Logitech
Tel. 01344 894300.



Very intelligent and user friendly.

Sharp Laser

Sharp claim their new JX-9200 laser printer to be more user friendly with its intelligent thinking technology. This includes a GUI which will take the user through the entire printing process via the computer screen. The computer, it is claimed, will show up any problems and how to correct them.

Contact: Sharp
Tel. 0800 262958

Samsung SyncMaster3

Samsung's SyncMaster3 is their first monitor to be manufactured at their new industrial plant on Teeside. The facility has three assembly lines dedicated to monitor production, with a further three planned to open soon, bringing the projected annual output to 1.3m monitors.

The SynMaster3, in the range that we reviewed and raved about last year, is an RGB analogue colour monitor with 0.28mm dot pitch and a maximum resolution of 1024 x 768. It uses high-performance CRT technology, and is priced £229.

Samsung's UK-manufactured SyncMaster 14" colour monitor.

Contact: Samsung
Tel. 0181 391 0168.

Aegis Security Enclosure

Computer crime is reputed to be reaching epidemic proportions. It is affecting the large corporations, and the small businessman (particularly if you leave your laptop in the car!). It can be very depressing if you become the victim of computer

Do Not Pass Go

A different kind of security has been developed by Technology Recognition systems of Alexandria, Virginia, USA. The government has contracted the company to produce an access system, based on the unique underlying structure of veins and arteries in people's faces, to replace conventional fingerprinting.

The technique uses an infrared camera to build up a facial thermogram. Each person's thermogram is different, not only because of variations in the vessel pattern itself, but because of differences in bone and cartilage which affect heat emission. Once a thermogram is taken, it can be stored on computer for future comparisons.

Prisoners in Brixton Prison will now find themselves restricted in their movements as technology has been developed to install fibre-optic cables on the enclosing walls of the jail. When touched, the light path is disturbed. In the control unit, monitors will detect any disturbances and immediately sound the alarm.

Fibre optic technology has been used in the past on the inside walls of prisons, but this is the first time it has been installed on the outside walls. Who are they trying to stop getting in, we wonder?

Image processing the old fashioned way with brush and inks.

theft and apparently your chance of a repeat incident goes up by 50%. A world shortage of memory chips means that not only are whole computers being stolen, but thieves target the chips inside. The now notorious "RAM Raiders".

The police estimate that chips worth £100m are stolen annually. Even employees are not above blame, as it has been known for insiders to rip off companies for the sake of enhancing their home PC.

One ingenious university commissioned a company to devise an anti-theft device. Aegis came upwith their Security Enclosures which safeguard desktop computers, printers, processing and memory chips, against theft and damage. There is a wide range to protect all major desktop models, and installation can be DIY or carried out by the company. The price varies, but an average price is £100.

Contact: Aegis Security Enclosures Tel. 01582 410110.

Multimedia Cartridge Drive

The Multimedia Cartridge Drive (MCD), from Nomai of France, delivers the capacity of a CD-ROM, the speed of a hard drive, and the removeability of a 3.5 inch floppy disk.

At present, the drives are being built by IBM at a plant in the UK, while the disks are made in France. Well known companies such as Philips, Maxell, and Mem-orex, have been joined by chemical giant Rhone-Poulenc and dry-lettering manufacturer Letr-aset, in an effort to establish MCD as a world standard.

Nomai may not be a name with which you are familiar, however, they are well known professionally. If you have recently bought a SyQuest cartridge with one of the above names on it, then you have been using a Nomai product.

Contact: Nomai France
Tel. +33 1 39 46 25 59

Is it a hard disk? Is it a CD-ROM? Is it a floppy disk? No, it's an MCD.

Floppy Shots

A company called Floppy Shots is, as you might guess, an American firm that delivers your photographic images on a 3.5 inch high density floppy disk. Up to 40 can be stored at a resolution of 600 x 400 pixels in this way.

Your photos are scanned and then saved to the disk as specially enhanced JPEG files. Also on there is a viewing program that displays the images as thumbnails which can then be clicked on for the full-screen image. Mac users can get an accompanying soundtrack too.

The service currently operates in the States via franchises who charge around $10 per disk. Floppy Shots are looking for UK operatives.

Contact: Floppy Shots
Tel. 703 356 9858

Image processing the modern way with a computer and hi-res printer.

Like one of those Transformer toys, the Fuji FV-10 converts from a video camera into a slide/neg/print viewer in seconds.

TeleAdapt

One of the questions we often see on the Internet is "I'm going abroad. How do I connect my modem?" TeleAdapt probably have the answer. Not only do they provide a comprehensive range of adaptors for foreign telecom sockets, but also devices to connect you to cellular, pay, and digital phones.

On top of that little lot, there is 24-hour telephone support for e-mail, fax, and telecommunications packages, plus information on services provided hotels and telecoms abroad.

Contact: TeleAdapt
Tel. 0181 421 4444

Versatile Video

Fuji have launched the versatile FV-10 photo-video imager. This compact device incorporates a quarter inch CCD chip that has a resolution of 470k pixels. A DSP chip selects the exposure, white balance, and auto-focusing of the FV-10.

The unit can be used to view negative or positive strips of 35mm film, prints or objects, or it can be used as a straightforward mini video camera. Output is PAL in normal or S-VHS video.

Contact: Fuji Photo Film
Tel. 0171 586 5900

Image Processing

Although not new, it has been around for a couple of years now from Digital Darkroom, image enhancement at your local high street photoshop is getting a massive push as Kodak enter the market with a £1.2 million advertising campaign.

The Kodak Image Magic system can add text, borders, remove blemishes, and restore old photographs. Digital Darkroom currently use Apple Macs with Photoshop and a Kodak thermal dye-sublimation printer.

They charge £20 for simple restoration such as contrast enhancement, £40 for jobs that involve replacing missing portions of an old photo, and £50 upwards for compositing or multiple restoration of tears and scratches.

Kodak have not released details of the equipment they will be using, or their pricing structure.

Contacts: Digital Darkroom
Tel. 0181 205 7512
Kodak Tel. 01442 845228

And Finally...

After 1300 years, the abacus, invented during the Tang dynasty, is still used by schoolchildren and shop assistants in China. But it is on its way out, according to Business Weekly, as accountants are at last replacing it with computers! Yes, we live now in a growing, unstoppable, TechnoWorld. ***AUI***

The Amiga Answer Machine...

The font of all Amiga knowledge, Andy Eskelson, digs deep into his mailbag to answer your queries and solve your problems.

Answer Types

APPS	Programs etc]
VIDEO	Video related problems
COMMS	Communications
PROG	Programming
OS	Operating System
PRINT	Printer Problems
COVERDISK	Cover Disk problems
OTHER	For Anything Else

OTHER

Dear *AUI,*

I am quite proud of my Workbench (3.0) on my A1200. I have updated it quite a lot and have added a pretty backdrop and various utilities I use regularly, such as SnoopDos 3.0, PPMore, a puzzle game called 'Shift it', and a utility called ClearRam. I have also added some datatypes from your excellent SuperDisks (No.59). My Workbench looks and feels very professional with the bootpic AWS from the July 95 disks. However my customised Work-bench is let down by the lack of a decent font.

I have SuperDisk 58 and de-arc'ed the fonts disk, but was unable to find a font that looks suitable. By that I mean the font that you have on Workbench in your screenshot on page 12 of *AUI* August 1995, the top left hand corner. I would be extremely grateful if you could tell me the name of that font you used in that screenshot and perhaps even send it to me. I enclose a blank formatted disk and an S.A.E.

As you can imagine my Workbench is very similar to that referred to screenshot, but is let down by the horrible Topaz 8 font. I've got newtopaz, but found it so small as to be unreadable. I would really appreciate if you could supply me with that particular font as it would complement my custom Workbench very well. It would also stop my PC-owning friend from moaning 'Love the Work-bench, shame about the font'. I don't want to sound greedy, but please could you send me an AGA icon editor, ToolsDaemon, and possibly even a JPEG datatype? I would order them from a PD library, but I'm a bit strapped for cash at the moment as I'm saving up for a subscription to this excellent mag so I never miss an issue again. *AUI* is easily the best Amiga mag available and is definitely the best value magazine going on the Amiga. The SuperDisks are brilliant and the mag is informative, educational, entertaining, and above all enjoyable. I do try never to miss an issue of *AUI* and have been buying it for over 6 months.

I wouldn't be asking for those three utils if I had subscribed earlier. Please do send me them as it will not only improve my Workbench even further, but my friend will actually see just how slow, shoddy, and downright incompetent Windows really is compared to the Workbench on the Amiga.

William More
Lincolnshire

Dear William,

Most of what you want is on the SuperDisks, still I'll see what I can dig up from the CDs. It's strange that you like the font on page 12, Imuch prefer Topaz for normal text use. The font is Helvetica, you will find this on your fonts disk. Remember that the screen mode has a lot to do with how a font looks, especially a bitmapped font. You will find it easier to use DPaint as your Icon editor, and them clip out a brush and save that.

Don't knock Windows too hard, it is trying to do an awful lot with very limited resources. Windows has to work through DOS which is a 16 bit system, with a brain dead memory map. I'm surprised that Windows does as well as it does, when you consider the huge number of software applications that have to work with it.

OTHER

Dear *AUI*

May I say how much I have enjoyed reading your magazine. I have found it to be both informative and interesting. The cov-erdisks programs are always useful and I find the games are surprisingly good (considering they're FREE!).

First of all, before I get to the problem bit, I have a 120Mb hard drive and my Dad has a 286 PC. He was saying that when he deletes things on his hard drive it leaves small amounts of information, so he has a program to 'clean up' his hard drive. Does the Amiga have to do the same?

Right now to the problems at hand. I hope you can give me some advice. I want to make my A1200 run a bit faster and cost is a prime factor (well, when isn't it?). I'll have about £100 to spend, which isn't much, so I want the best possible deal.

First of all, what is 'Fast Memory'? How would I get hold

Memory'? How would I get hold of it and how much do you think it would cost? I've heard about accelerator cards to fit into the PCMCIA slot & accelerator boards, but I don't know a lot about them.

What about memory cards, or is that the same as 'fast memory'? Are they a good idea? Also I've heard that if I upgrade my 1200 from 2 to 3 megs of RAM, that would make it run faster. Is this true? I hope so because wouldn't I then have the benefit of extra RAM?

Questions, questions! So what do you think would be best choice? I hope you can help. I've had my A1200 for about 3 years now, but never really taken much interest in expansions, lar-gely due to the fact that up to now memory has never been a problem. I have a couple of programs and games which need my 1200 to be faster, and with this extra money coming in soon, I thought I would investigate the matter.

Phil Melrose
Southampton

Dear Phil,
Neither the PC nor the Amiga should leave bits of files hanging about, however I expect that your Dad is talking about file fragmentation. What happens is that the computer writes to the hard disk. Then some time later writes something else to the hard disk.

This goes on and on. Sometimes files are deleted and the space reclaimed. When the computer needs to write another file to the hard disk, it might use the space reclaimed when a file was deleted. If the file that the computer wants to save is bigger than the space that is left by the deleted file, the remainder of the files have to be stored elsewhere on the disk. When the disk wants to access the file, it finds and grabs the first part, then finds and grabs the second part. A file may not be split into two lumps, but into several dozen.

The point is that it is the finding of these 'lumps' that takes a long time. So what is needed is to arrange the file such that it is all in one contiguous section of the disk. Programs such as re-org will sort this out, but if you have the space, simply copying the files off or a partition, reformatting the partition and copying the files back will give you much the same results.

By reading Amiga Answers I'm sure that you should be well aware of what fast memory is.

To Recap:

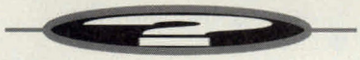
Fast memory is memory that the CPU can access, but the custom chips cannot. While the custom chips are accessing CHIP memory, the CPU can still access FAST memory.

While the custom chips are accessing CHIP memory, the CPU cannot access CHIP memory. The-refore things such as screen up-dates will slow the system down considerably. The first 2 megs of RAM on a 600/1200 is CHIP, any other RAM that you plug in is FAST. Plug RAM into the trapdoor, or onto an accelerator card directly. RAM also have the advantage that you can set up big RAM disks, and they are even faster than hard drives.

Some people think that a 20% speed increase is possible when fast RAM is fitted.

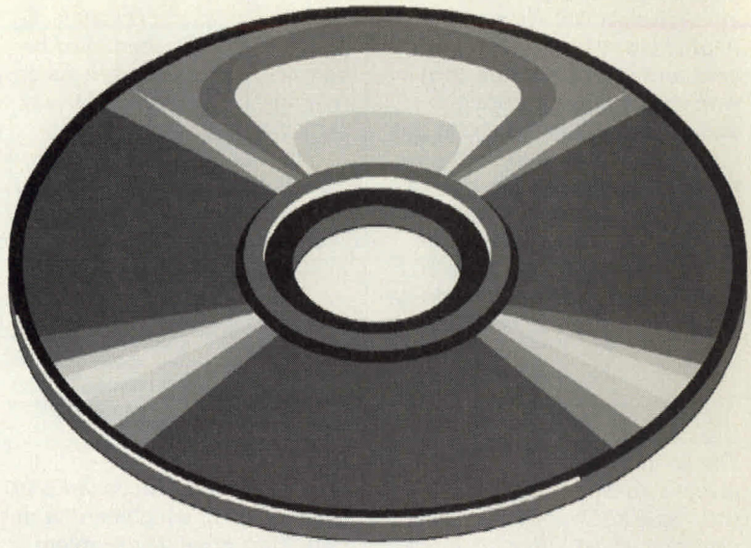
Accelerators are a big topic. ***AUI*** *has reviewed several, so it is worth looking through your back issues. They come in all shapes and sizes, it is far too complex a subject to cover in Amiga Answers.*

OTHER



Dear *AUI*,
Thanks for an informative and interesting magazine, I especially like the NewsFile pages, even though it is not all Amiga based information. I would change some of your colour combinations though, they are a little hard on the eyes.

I write in the hope that you may be able to solve an annoying problem that I have with my Amiga A1500 computer. Since losing my 210Mb Quantum hard drive (HDD) in December last year to a catastrophic crash, I have installed a small 80Mb Quantum SCSI HDD and a Tandberg 3600 60Mb SCSI tapestreamer (uses DC600 tapes). The HDD is device zero, the tapestreamer is SCSI device six.



I have a GVP HC8+ SCSI controller card with 4Mb of 16-bit RAM on it. Also on board is a CSA 25MHz 68030 accelerator card with 4Mb of 32-bit RAM and 68882 Co-pro attached. There are no other attachments to the machine except my NEC P2200 printer and a Philips 8833 monitor. I run KS and WB 2.04 software. As far as I know I have set the Bus resistors correctly, the GVP card is terminated, the HDD isn't and the tapestreamer is.

For backup I use Quarterback V6.0 with Quarterback Tools V2.0 for HDD management. Qua-rterback V 6.0 recognises that there is a tapestreamer for use and has been configured to automatically come up to use the tapestreamer. Quarterback works faultlessly if backing up my HDD to floppy disks, but it takes simply ages to backup an 80Mb HDD doing it this way!

My problem arises when using the tapestreamer. It seems that there is some contention on the Bus as more often than not (read virtually every time) the system crashes with what appears to be read/write errors on the HDD. A system requester comes up and says: gvpscsi.-device: unit 000 Unexpected Status $00/$40

This error is recoverable, and when CANCEL is pressed another requester then reports that: Block xxxxx has a read error on it, even though the file that supposedly caused the read error can be loaded from the HDD without any problem, i.e. there isn't really a read/write error at all. I have checked the drive for bad blocks, none was reported.

After a few or even after just one of the above errors, the system will then crash with no possible way of recovery except by rebooting (Ctrl/ Amiga/ Amiga).

The requesters on this occasion report as above but with a third requester informing that: gvpscsi.-device unit 006 Invalid reselection (Source ID = $8E) has occurred This time the tapestreamer would appear to be at fault. What does it all mean and can it be fixed? Is my tapestreamer possibly faulty, or is my tapestreamer not quite as SCSI as it would appear? Or is the HDD trying to stuff too much data, too fast to the tapestreamer? Or what? Help!

I have recently removed the tapestreamer from my system considering that it doesn't work correctly and added a Quantum Lightning 730Mb HDD in its place. Configured as device 6 also, this device works faultlessly and there are no problems copying back and forth from the 80Mb HDD to the 730Mb HDD. Any solution would be most appreciated.

Lastly, can my duff 210Mb Quantum HDD be fixed. It runs very, very hot. It still spins and the heads appear to still move. It seems there is a Rigid Disk Block failure. My GVP hard card can't see it at all, although the

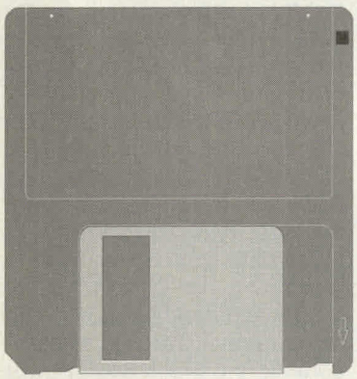
prep software says it is 0Mb. I also have an IVS Trumpcard Professional HDD controller card and I have put this card in with the 210MB duff drive attached to it. I managed to get the IVS prep software to try to format it again, but it reported 1000 block errors and gave up. Any ideas? Would it be worth trying to format it on an IBM and then on my Amiga again?

Andi Bradley
Lincoln

Dear Andi,
The short answer to your problem is that something is not happy with your tapestreamer. This could be almost anything.There are a few clues that might help.

The reselection error, check that none of your devices supports reselection. There is a check box in the drive types for this. Reselection means that the device cam be disconnected from the SCSI bus, allowing other devices to make use of it. This might be confusing things.

Check the configuration of the tape if Quarterback allows for this. There are two basic modes, synchronous and asynchronous. Sync is where the data is read into a buffer, and then dumped onto tape. The tape then stops



while another buffer load is grabbed.

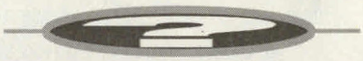
Async keeps the buffer topped up with data so the tape never stops. If something does not like switching the SCSI bus, then synchronous mode may help.

I've been using Ami-Back with a 120Mb Tandberg for a few years, and that combo (with a 2091 HD controller) works fine.

If your Quantum is getting very hot, then it is likely that a bearing or a drive transistor has failed. You will be very lucky if this is repairable. I seem to remember that the Trumpcard is very fussy about what is attached to so be careful. If you cannot see the drive with the GVP tools then I would think that it is dead.

There is no difference between SCSI Amiga and SCSI IBM. The SCSI interface built into the drive does all the work so you just tell it to format and off it goes.

OTHER



Dear *AUI*
I have recently purchased a PD Game, (ABH), which can be put onto hard drive. My problem is that it keeps asking for _Amos Swit-cher_ . I assume it is something to do with Amos. I have got Amos 1.3, but cannot find it on there. What is it, and how can I solve this problem?

I know it called for this because I had SnoopDos from one of your SuperDisks. Could you help me on this? I would be very grateful and while I am here could you please tell me how to put those wonderful start-up pictures into my start-up sequence. Sorry I am bit thick on this part of my machine. My set up is A1200 with 210Mb hard drive and 4Mb Fastram with FPU, external drive and 2135 Pana-sonic printer. If this is of any use to you.

Steve Linton
Walsall

Dear Steve,
If ABH runs from floppy, then I expect that you have not copied a library into your libs drawer, amos.library perhaps? If you get the same result when running from floppy then you will have to contact the author.

You will need to be a bit more specific on what you want to do with the start-up pictures, do you want to display them while you are booting the machine? If so it is quite easy, but you have to remember to spawn another task rather than display directly from the startup sequence. You can see exactly how this is done if you look in the startup-sequence files on the coverdisk.

Generically, the method is to use the command RUN in a script. This could be for any program, a picture viewer, a sound player, or whatever. At a suitable point in the startup script you just need to add:

RUN program-name file-name <options>

However, as you have a hard drive, the boot process will be finished almost as quickly as the picture displays. Is this really what you want to do?

OTHER

Dear *AUI,*
I have stored up a number of minor problems which I know you will be only too pleased to deal with. I'll get the grovelly, obvious bit out of the way first... You are the best Amiga publication - full stop. Your coverdisks are excellent, offering a great range of different programs, the games are good - I loved Deluxe Galaga. You had the Fears demo before anyone else had even heard of it! Just a little niggle is if when reviewing can you let us (the readers) know if the program is hard disk installable - this is because I can't be (bothered) with floppy based stuff that much.

Anyway, here goes the queries:

My setup is: A1200, Blizzard 1220/4 board: Philips CM8833 MkII monitor, Citizen Swift 24, external drives, and an 80Mb (how small?) internal hard drive.

1. The program 'blast' , in your August edition gave me the error, can't find SYS:T/blast' when I ran it. I tried to follow its activity with SnoopDos and failed! Has anyone else had a similar problem?

2. I read somewhere that it was possible to connect two IDE hard drives to one IDE interface, is this fact or fiction? If so how do you do it?

3. I have heard a rumour that the Squirrel interface and certain memory boards may conflict, especially if the board is greater than 4 meg. Is this true? If so, should I expand my Blizzard 1220/4 using the further 4 meg upgrade, or will I be unable then to use a Squirrel? On another tack how is it that Gordon Harwood can still be charging £160+ for the additional 4 meg expansion to the 1220/4 when the price of 4 meg SIMMs, on which it must be based has tumbled? Is this justified?

4. This is the big question. How on earth can I get hold of a copy of 'Alternate Reality'? Having once owned it, I played it lots, never beat it, lent it out, and lost it. Hence have followed 10 years of restless nights. I don't even remember who first distributed. I know there were two follow up games, both of which I would still like to get hold of. Any information on this subject would be as welcome as a naked hot tub session with Liz Hurley! Another problem in itself is whether I would be able to run the game on an A1200.

5. Do you think those nice German chaps at Escom will be giving an easy upgrade path for the A1200 owner to get an A1200xl? No, I didn't think so!

6. Do you know of a good statistical package on the Amiga similar to that of SUPASTAT on the PC (Hiss!)? It would make these collegy-T-test things much easier.

7. Could you explain, perhaps in an article, coz I know it's a long one, how I start off on the Net. It's been a while since I used a modem, i.e. I used to have a 1200/75 one with my CBM 64 for using Compunet! This is because I may be about to buy a Supra 28,800 scorchingly fast speed-monster!

Well that's about it! (phew!) It will probably take another 10 years for me to think up another batch of questions. If so I hope your pristine magazine will still be published, specialising in the Escom Amiga 6000s or something like that!

Paul Berry
Hampshire

Sharp lines, perfect curves, brilliant graphics. But you should see it when it's switched on.

SyncMaster	15GLe	15GLi	17GLi	17GLsi
CRT Size	15"	15"	17"	17"
Dot Pitch	.28	.28	.28	.26
Maximum Resolution	1024x768	1280x1024	1280x1024	1600x1200
MPR-II (Low Radiation)	•	•	•	•
TCO 92		•	•	•
Plug and Play	•	•	•	•
Power Management	•	•	•	•
Dynamic Focus		•	•	•
On-Screen Programming		•	•	•

After you've admired the new Samsung SyncMaster GLi series' finer features, switch it on and admire some more. It has DDC Plug and Play so you can use it the moment you plug it in, Dynamic Focus System for high resolution graphics and an EPA energy star PowerSave system for cheaper running costs. There are four monitors in the range, high and low end in both 15" and 17" screens, each one being compatible with both PC and Macintosh hardware. And because you'll spend hours staring at it there's a unique screen coating to prevent eye fatigue. The Samsung SyncMaster GLi series. It's as sophisticated on the inside as it is on the outside. For more information call Freephone 0800 454 352.

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS

Dear Paul,
I'll point out your comments to the others in the office.Odd, Blast works here OK. Have you a T: directory in your RAM disk, and have you a path to it? Open a shell and type T: return you should end up in the T: directory if it has been set up correctly. If not you will need to investigate your startup seq-uences as something has altered them.

The IDE interface allows for two drives to be fitted. You set one as a master and the other as a slave. The A1200 is NOT designed to take two drives physically, but some users have shoehorned an-other in. Various companies offer the kits to do this. The Squirrel will not conflict as it is not a memory unit, however, many other memory units do not understand the PCMCIA address space and just use it. Therefore any PCMCIA device will have problems. Correctly designed memory expansion can overcome this problem.

The price of £160 is slightly high, but prices have NOT tumbled, where did you hear this, the Daily Spot? I last paid about £145 for 4 megs some time ago, and prices have been up and down like a yo-yo ever since. The price that you will be charged will depend on when the supplier actually bought the RAM. Most adverts seem to say phone for today's prices.

I assume that Alternate Reality is a game. I've no idea other than try a game dealer. But you could try Special Reserve, they have a huge library of games. ICPUG, who advertise regularly in ***AUI****, have not only a library of shareware, games, if Alternate Reality is or has become shareware but also have very knowlegable people who have been around a long time in the Amiga world and may, among them, have the game.*

As the A1200lx is not an Escom product, why should they give an upgrade path. The official upgrade path is to the A4000. (Or whatever the big box version of the current machine is) It is unfortunate that many users think that their A1200 should be 'upgradeable' however the economics of this are very bad and not really worth anyone's time. Anyone who thinks that they will be upgrading should consider a big box machine in the first place. You normally get a better deal by selling on and then upgrading.

There are third party options, such as the HiQ tower etc., but as always you pays your money and takes your choice.

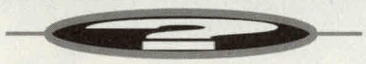
Most spreadsheets have the statistical functions inbuilt, but as I've never seen or heard of Supastat I've no idea of what you want to do.

The Net, well, Compunet is dead, so you can't access it any more.

Do you mean The Internet? If so there are two basic methods that you can use. The first and easiest is to use someone else's gateway. This will provide you with a text only system that will allow you to use ftp etc. This only requires the use of a standard comms package. The second is to go for a direct connection. You need a TCP/IP stack, AmiTCP will do the job, a modem, and an account with an Internet service provider. Run the install scripts and configure correctly (this is the tricky part) and away you go.

If you need the fancy graphical interface then you need MUI and a copy of Amiga Mosaic.

OTHER



Dear *AUI*,
First of all I would like to congratulate you for being the best Amiga magazine out there, I know everybody says that, but that either means it's true or we're all creeping b***** (probably both).**

I own an Amiga A600 with 2Meg inside, a Microvitec monitor, a Citizen Swift 240C printer, and I use KS2.05.

My first question is about the official Commodore C includes and how to get hold of them as Commodore no longer exists (at least as far as we (Amiga users) are concerned). I am just learning C, but can't get hold of them. I presume Escom will be re-releasing them or writing new ones at some time in the future, but what until then? Also on the topic of C, is there such a thing as a C de-compiler (preferably PD as I am on the dole, and therefore not exactly rolling in money). There are loads of disassemblers around on the PD market place, but nothing for C, I believe a de-compiler would be very useful to me (and anybody else trying to lean the language) as it would be possible to see some working code.

As you may have noticed from the above rundown of my setup, I have no hard drive. This is something I intend to remedy, but I noticed in a friend's PC mag hard-drives were a fraction of the price that they are on the Amiga scene. Can we use EIDE drives? I gather they are based on the IDE standard which can be used by us, so is it possible?

I am having a great deal of hassle with flicker on the higher resolutions and wonder if you could suggest a PD program to solve/-reduce this before I need to get stronger glasses .

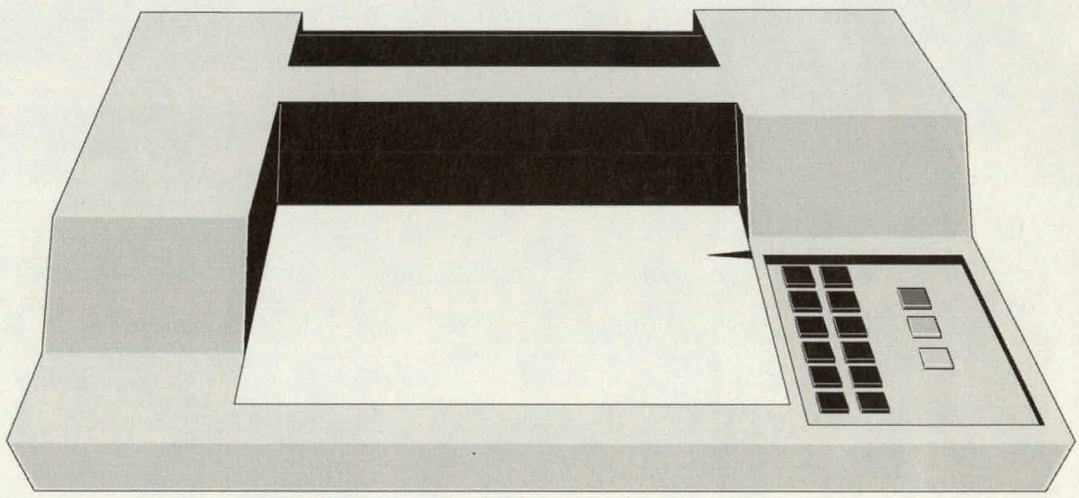
This is the first time I have ever written in to a magazine so I don't know the form, but I have included a stamped addressed envelope and a blank disk in the hope you may have something laying about that may be of use to me regarding the above.

Mr. Mex
Devon

Dear Mr. Mex,
The developer support is in the process of being set up. Keep an eye on the NewsFile pages of ***AUI,*** *as that is where you should see any announcements. Other than that the only way to get the includes, at the moment, is with a compiler package. Both SAS and Dice (registered version) have the includes. I also understand that some includes (maybe all of them) are on a Fred Fish CD, but I don't know which one.*

A good compiler will have the development tools such as disassemblers. However as C is translated to Assembler, there is no easy way of getting back to the C source. There have been attempts to do this, which have met with various degrees of success.

Amiga hard drives, are exactly the same price as PC units. (At least the units that I have bought are. The Amiga can use IDE drives, I'm not sure about EIDE, but note that the Amiga is rather fussy in the implementation of the IDE standard. Not all drives will work. I can't tell you exactly which ones will, as things are changing far too quickly. A good Amiga specialist will be able to help. SCSI is another matter, I've fitted



Applications are voracious little creatures. Satisfy them with the EZ-135.

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Forget about deleting storage-hungry applications or juggling drive space, with the new EZ-135 Drive from SyQuest, you'll have all the storage you could ever need. Each removable cartridge holds **135 megabytes** of information – that's about 100 times more than the average floppy. So transporting large files is a snap. And unlike other removable cartridge systems, the SyQuest EZ-135 Drive offers true hard drive performance – the same level of performance that made SyQuest the world leader and choice of professionals. But perhaps best of all, **the EZ-135 Drive costs less per megabyte than any other comparable system,** making it the best value around. So treat yourself to a system you can grow into, rather than out of. Get the EZ-135 Drive today! For more information, visit your local dealer. Or call us at

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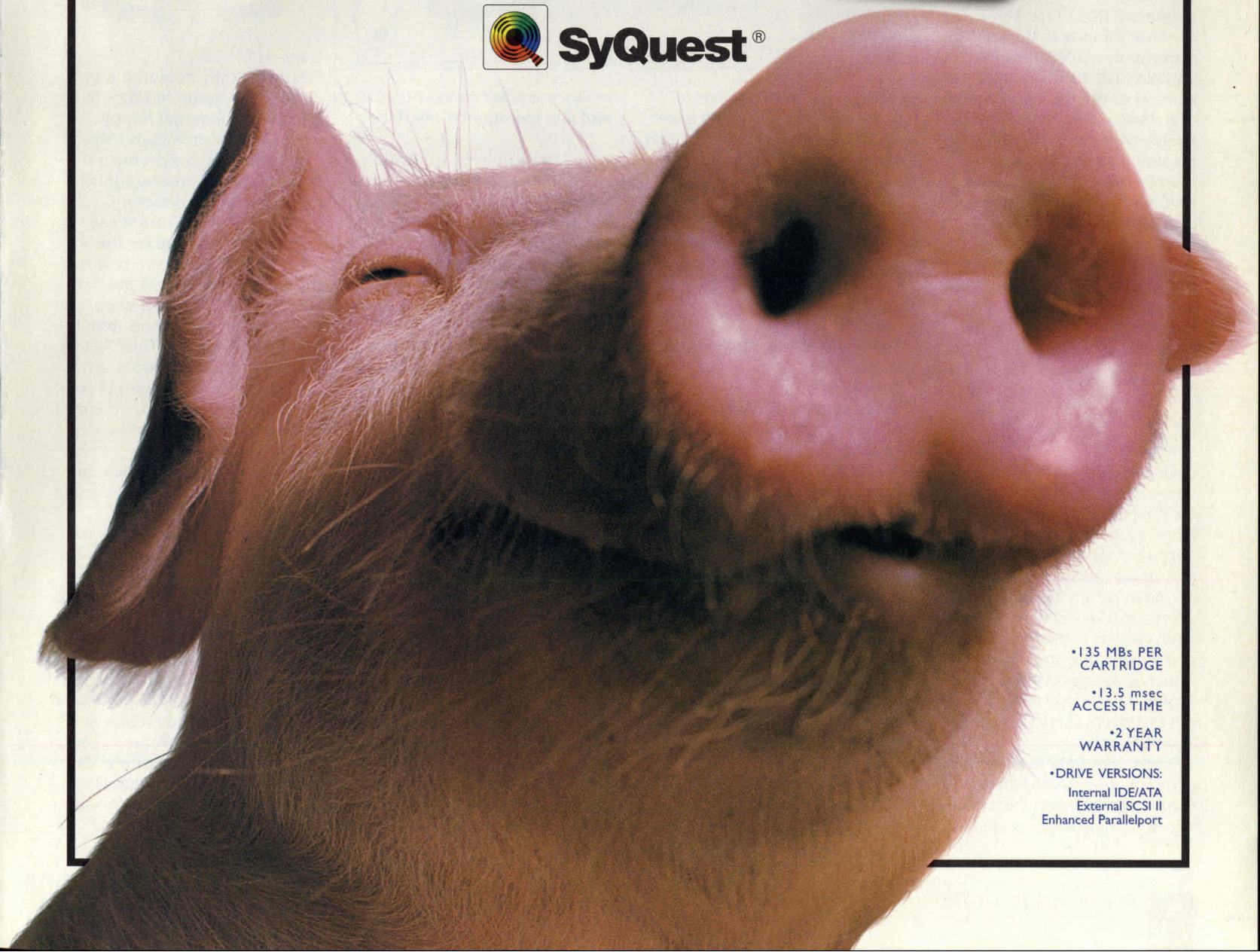

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- DRIVE VERSIONS:
  Internal IDE/ATA
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several different SCSI drives without problems.

Flicker can be solved by adjusting your screen mode settings. It is not a software problem, but a hardware limitation of the monitor.

*It is not the official policy of **AUI** to reply to readers questions directly, however as I have stated a few times, I will make use of any Stamped Self Addressed envelope provided. As you will eventually see you just get a copy of the reply as it will be printed. Note that unstamped envelopes are used as scrap paper.*

OTHER

Dear *AUI*,
I write to you as I want to know if there are any books about image processing for Amiga (to use ImageFX or Photogenics) or in general (for PC or Mac). Another thing is that I want to decompress .DMS files that contains NDOS disks (like demos) to the hard disk, instead of a floppy disk. I used the FMS device (Aminet CD4) which creates a false floppy disk on the hard disk (ff0:). It works well, but only with demos and programs that work from Workbench.

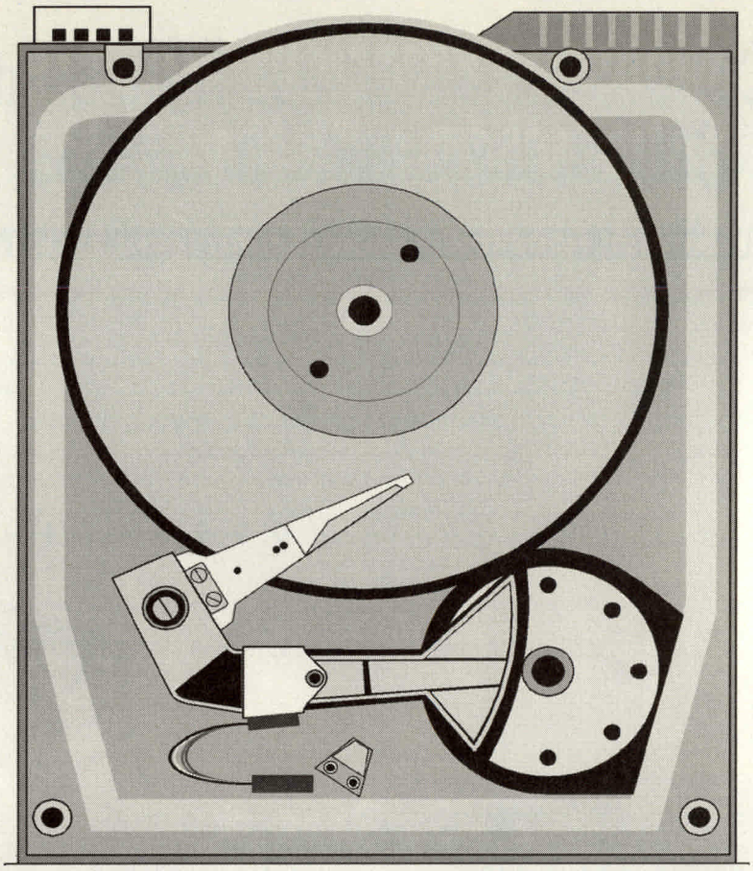
I don't know how to boot from ff0: Is there any solution that will let me boot from ff0:? Is there any way that the ff0: could survive a reset?

Claudio R Redrado
Spain

Dear Claudio,
There is not much specifically for the Amiga, but in general terms there is lots of literature about image processing. It's a massive field of research and impossible for me to list any titles. Go to a specialist bookstore, you must have them in somewhere in Spain, and have a look. In England I would go to bookstores such as Foyles, Dillons, the PC bookshop, or the Modern Book Company as a starting point.

I don't like DMS files at all, the most effective method I have found of dealing with them is to decrunch them to floppy and try to hack them about from there.

It might be worth trying to set up StatRam to do the job, as that can survive very nasty crashes.



COVERDISK

Dear *AUI*,
Thanks for some really great answers, but I have a few questions of my own.

My system: Amiga A1200, Apollo A1220 (with 68882 FPU all at 28MHz) + 4Mb ram, an 80 meg HD, a 540Mb SCSI external HD connected via a Squirrel interface, a Microvitec 1438 monitor, and last, but not least, a Cumana 354 external floppy. A Star Micronics LC24-15 printer is connected as an when required. As is an Amstrad SM2400 modem running Ncomm3.

I have MagicWB installed, and apparently this causes some problems with some PD/Shareware.

1. Is it possible that your SuperDisks could recognise external floppy drives and also HD's connected to the PCMCIA slot vial the Squirrel interface?

2. I have noticed lately that when installing programs from SuperDisk to my external HD, once they have been unarced to floppy, that there seems to be a file, the requester does not say which, which is not copied across. Yet when checked using SID2 I cannot find anything missing. The requester text is:

Sorry, an error has occurred. Copy files: couldn't copy a file DOS error type: Unable to delete a file or drawer - it was delete protected.

The two programs that this has happened to so far are ImageFX_1.51 (from a CUAmiga coverdisk), and Chaos Pro from the October 1995 issue of *AUI*. Any Ideas?

While I have a fairly comprehensive system and can dabble in odds and bits for the Amiga I am not a programmer of any sort, more's the pity.

Geoff Gardiner
Lincoln

Dear Geoff,
The installer program does not know anything about where a hard drive is. Just enter the name and path of where you want the installation to occur and things should work.

The error is not serious, it is just telling you that a file is delete protected. I would suspect one of the .info files. The answer is to find out exactly which file is causing the problem and then decide if something needs to be done about it.

Run up SnoopDos and then try the install process. SnoopDos will monitor all the files that are being copied across. When the error occurs, you should see that a fail occurred near the end of the SnoopDos window. This will almost certainly be the problem file.

I expect that it is a file on YOUR hard drive that the install process is attempting to overwrite.

COVERDISK

Dear *AUI*,
I have recently acquired an A500+. The setup is 2Meg of RAM and 2 external floppy drives and soon a hard drive from my mate. My problem occurred a few weeks ago with the Preferences directory.

I bought your (I must say excellent) magazine for the coverdisks. They were brill by the way. I snapped up the very last copy in the entire shop, yes the very last copy! And raced home to de-archive Disk 58's Magic Workbench extras. After falling asleep I managed to read the mags instructions: To view the Icons on your Workbench, first change using the screenmode editor to 8 colour.

Oh great, Mum loves Pacman (Zzz), and I like mucking around: click click where's the screen mode editor in the prefs directory? Where's Printer and PrinterGFX? Oh never mind, but it does. I can't change the screen mode, my overscan, my printer prefs, and setup, and I don't know what the Workbench config is. This bloke's gone and wiped them off the master and not made a copy of the Workbench. And I thought 'oh never mind it doesn't matter', so I loaded disk 58 and thought I would go on whatever and I

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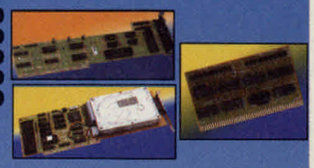

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went to the games drawer.

Football. Let me have a go. Click click "unable to open your tool Football" That's no good so I went to Lemmings "Unable ... etc. Everything I went to would not do that. Or this drawer is not really a directory So I felt so upset.

Now I have included a couple of blank disks. What I want to do is:

a) Answer this problem

b) I need Magic Workbench program, like Workbench, to run the extras. Can you put it on disk A please?

c) Put the 5 missing files of prefs onto disk B, please.

d) Print this letter, or when you send the disks back, reply.

e) Workbench 2.04

f) Please reply, this is desperate.

g) My address is ...

Nicholas Lamburn
North Devon

Dear Nicholas,
The football programs unarchive here without any problems. It sounds as if you got the icons, but not the programs. Unable to open your tool messages means that the Amiga cannot find the programs.

An Amiga program comes in two parts. The first is programname, the second is programname.info. The .info part is the icon that you click on, the programname is the actual program. Open up the disk and select show all files from the Workbench Window menu. The Amiga will then generate temporary icons for any files that are there and you will be able to see them.

This might give you a clue as to what is going on. I need more information than you have provided to be able to help any further.

*It is not the policy of **AUI** to reply to readers letters directly. However, I have no objection to making use of a stamped self addressed envelope if provided. No envelope, no stamp and the* contents of any letter will get recycled sorry.

The program files that you want are copyright Commodore Amiga (now Amiga Technology) and I can't distribute them. So get in touch with them and they should be able to help.

COVERDISK

Dear *AUI*,
Further to my letter of 2nd August, I have just purchased the October edition of *AUI* in the hope that my problem may have had an airing. I do not of course, have any idea of your deadline dates for publication or whether my enclosed S.A.E. has been thrown out or even if the problem is being looked at all.

However, as before, SuperDisk 67 boots without problem, but 68 just will not be recognised by either of my two disk drives. I have persevered for about 10 minutes just inserting it, getting the error message 'Not a Dos disk' or DF1:???, removing the disk and re-inserting it. All without any luck.

I have tried to examine the disk, but cannot. I have attempted to look at its bootblock with BootX and get an error message.

Please can you help, I can't continue to buy *AUI* if I cannot get the disks to work.

Mr. M.J.Hill
Lincs.

Dear Mr. Hill,
I expect that my reply to you and this letter have crossed in the post. I did look at your disks and there is nothing wrong with them. It's the old problem of reading the instructions. You must BOOT with the SuperDisk that says 'boot with this disk' and then the system will be set up so that the other disk can be read.

The disk that you cannot read is formatted with the diskspare system, which gives us nearly 1Mb of capacity to fill with the SuperDisk goodies. If you want to set up your system to read diskspare formatted disks, we put the diskspare archive on the coverdisks some time ago, and will soon repeat the exercise with the latest version.

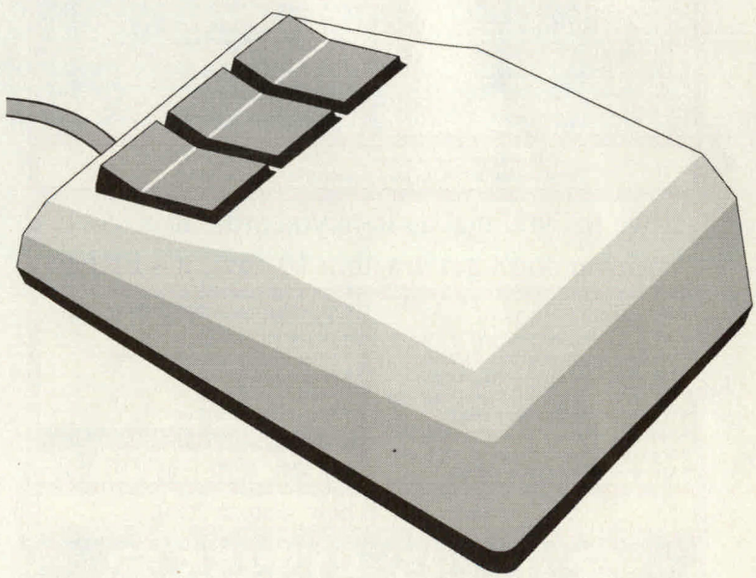
I don't really have a deadline as such for Amiga Answers. The letters arrive in a steady stream and I generally answer them as they arrive. Sometimes I get a bit of a backlog if the postbag is larger than usual, sometimes letters have to be held over for a month due to space. The Answers section has more space dedicated to it than any other part of the magazine, so almost all letters get printed eventually. Generally I am working three issues ahead, so that should give you some idea of when things will appear.

COVERDISK

Dear *AUI*,
Machine: A1200 with 2 meg Fast RAM and 85 meg internal HD. (see enclosed data sheet) Dear AUI Thanks to your magazine and its coverdisks I have some useful utilities such as GuiArc, LhA, and now LZX. When you started using LZX on your coverdisks I found it to be quicker and provided better compression than LhA. I have no problem compressing the contents of a drawer and its contents from the command line or IconX script, e.g.:lzx -r u Sim1:Files.lzx Work:FinalData_b/Files/#?; will archive my files drawer to Files.lzx on a floppy Sim1.

Using GuiArc and LhA I would select the drawer to be archived and then press Ext/Cp and type in the name of the archive to be created ending in .lha; this works a treat, but when I try this with LZX it refuses to archive the contents of the drawer. This is the entry for LZX I have added to-

```
ArcTypes:
;LZX 1.00 EC 68000/68010 version

;c 1995 Data Compression Technologies

;

;

@LZX

#?.lzx

Sys:Com/lzx %s x

Sys:Com/lzx %s u

-

Sys:Com/lzx v Sys:Com/lzx t

Sys:Com/lzx d

Sys:Com/lzx v

-1

-1

64

0
```



Sys:Com is where my external commands and archivers are kept. I realise that LZX does not offer quite as many features as LhA, but if it is possible to get GuiArc to be able to archive drawers (and their contents) with LZX this would be very useful. There is no problem unarchiving a .lzx file back to a drawer and it's contents.

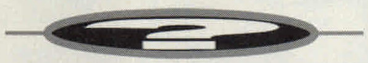
Also I tried using LZX1.01 as used on July's SuperDisk and found that when I used it to archive to a floppy it did not wait for the required floppy to be inserted unlike LZX1.00, so I went back to using that version with my IconX script.

Simon Tankard
Kettering

Dear Simon,
You have got about as far as I did. It looks as if we will have to await an upgrade to GuiArc. The only other way would be to use a script launched from a directory utility such as SID.

If you do find any bugs in the programs, remember to report them to the author. Lzx 1.20 is now available, and I'll have a word with the SuperDisk compiler about including it on a future issue.

HARDWARE



Dear *AUI*,
My systems A600 O/S 2.0 2Mb chip RAM. A500+ O/S 2.0 2Mb chip RAM, external drive, printer. A500 O/S 1.3 512k chip, 512k fast RAM.

I would be grateful if you would give me some advice on the following questions.

(1) Could you please tell me if there is a way of connecting the A500 and A500+ together so that I can use the A500 memory in conjunction with the A500+ memory? I use ImageFX a lot and find that I constantly get "not enough memory" warnings on the A500+, even though it has 2Mb of memory.

(2) By mistake I bought a Commodore 1361 serial mouse at a local carboot sale, complete with a mouse drivers installation disk (IBM PC). Is there a way of making it work on my A500+?

(3) Are there any CD-ROM drives that are compatible with the above computers. I was thinking of linking a CDTV to them, but finding one is near impossible and having a proper drive would make more sense?

Thank you for an interesting magazine, *AUI* is the only mag I buy now because of the constant high quality of coverdisk programs and editorials.

A C Barton
Wiltshire

Dear A C Barton,
First point, please don't write all in capital letters, it's hard on the eyes!

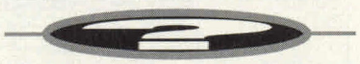
You cannot connect two computers together to make use of the memory.

Get hold of a file caller SerMouse220.lha It is on AmiNet, and on the AmiNet CDs. This gives a description, and software drivers, that enable a serial mouse to be used on the Amiga.

There are several CD-ROMs. The Commodore A570 just plugs in the side of the A500+ (if you can get hold of one). If you fit a SCSI hard drive to your A500 you will not only get the chance to add extra RAM, but also find that any SCSI CD drive will work with it.

Alternatively you could buy a Squirrel/CD-ROM combination for your A600.

HARDWARE

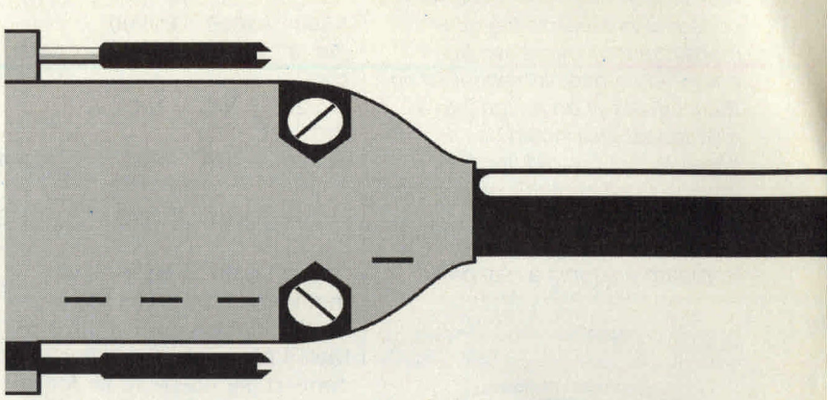


Dear *AUI*,
I want to know if it is possible to upgrade my A600 beyond 2 meg without searching for a memory card for the PCMCIA slot.

I have an idea how to do it, but what I need to know is will a A600 recognise more than one meg and would more than one meg fry the circuits?

My idea it to connect an extension lead to the trapdoor slot then fasten extra megs to it.

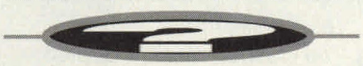
Scott Free
Leeds



Dear Scott,
If you have to ask me these questions then don't attempt to do anything, as you will break things. The Trapdoor can accept memory expansion modules anyway. Just see an Amiga dealer and they will sort you out.

The A600 can cope with almost any amount of memory, but the more you add the greater the load on the power units, and the more heat that will be produced. You should easily be able to plug in at least 4Mb without causing any problems.

HARDWARE



Dear *AUI*,
I have just read your reply to Christopher Young Gillespie, Argyll, in September's issue of *AUI*. The answer is about how simple it is to convert the PC mini tower for use with the Amiga. This is the opposite answer given by another Amiga magazine. Now I have the problem of deciding which answer is correct.

I would like to add a SCSI hard drive and a CD-ROM to my A1200. At the moment my set up is a basic A1200, a second floppy disk drive, and a GVP A1230 mk2 40MHz fitted with 4Mb. Once Power Computing get GVP products back on the market I will be getting the SCSI-2 module that fits the accelerator board.

Is it possible for you to show a wiring diagram and a list of leads required, so that we mere mortals have a clearer idea of what fits where?

Mr. S Longden
Redford

Dear Mr. Longden,
A PC mini tower case is just a big empty box, normally fitted with a power unit. All the connectors for power are standard. You just tie back the connectors that would normally fit onto a motherboard, and make use of the disk connectors. That takes care of the power side of things.

The case will come with a variety of drive bay configurations depending on the make. You fit hard drives and other devices into these bays as required. (I have three SCSI drives and a Tapestreamer fitted in my case)

All that remains is the SCSI cable. SCSI devices are daisy chained. From the SCSI connector on the controller, which MAY vary with make. For example, the 2091 has a 25 way D connector for external devices. The Warp board just has an internal connector. For the A1200 it could be either method. You will have to wait and see what the module is fitted with.

You need a daisy chain cable that will fit whatever connector is on the controller card. This cable will need a number of secondary connectors that allow you to plug other devices into it.

The exact physical method that you use will depend on how neat you want to be. I have a ribbon cable internally within the PC mini tower, which terminates on a 50 connector. I then have a short cable that is 25 way to 50 way from my A2000 to the mini tower.

Other users just use a ribbon cable all the way. The most difficult part is feeding all the cables between the two boxes neatly. There are normally plenty of cut-outs and holes in a mini tower that can be pressed into service.

It really is as easy as that. It is no different to connecting an external SCSI unit that is already

boxed. In fairness to the other magazine they may have been answering a question about fitting the internals of an Amiga into a mini tower. This would be possible, but I would not advise anyone to attempt this unless they were fairly experienced in electronics in the first place. (The keyboard presents a real pain).

HARDWARE

Dear *AUI.*
I am writing to thank you for your reply to my Guru problems. Yours is the only magazine that deigns to send out replies under any circumstances. I have checked all the chip seatings and expansions. (in fact I gave my Amiga a thorough clean out). I still continue to get occasional crashes, e.g. when I leave Wordworth 2, or when I tried to use some CGFonts in Pagesetter 3. (sometimes but not always. that is).

I am also hoping that you can give me some help with a coverdisk that I obtained from one of your competitors. Getting help from them is like trying to find a job. I have ProDraw3 and whereas I have been able to install it on my hard drive and got it to run by editing the .ini and .dflt files, I have been unable to get the ARexx Genies to work. Sometimes they cause a crash and other times they refuse to even try to work. I realise it is a bit of a cheek to ask you to help with a problem on one of your competitors products, but as I might have intimated previously, HELP !!

Another thing I would like to do is to make my A500+ more expandable, by converting it to an approximation of an A1500/2000. I have a copy of the official Commodore Amiga Hardware Reference Manual, 15 years experience and a HNC in Electronics. Appendix E, pages 300-301 show the pin-outs for the 86 pin expansion port for the A500, the A1000, the A2000, and the B2000. The only differences between them that I can see are:-

A500	A2000	B2000
pin 9	N/C	28MHz clk 28MHz clk
pin 20 /BOSS	N/C	N/C
pin 60	/BR	/BR /CBR
pin 64	/BG	/BG /CBG

Am I right in my estimate that I could, by including a 28MHz clock signal at pin 9 of the 86 pin expansion connector, convert my A500+ to an A2000 and hence use ZORRO II expansion cards (assuming that I include some ZORRO II slots)?

Assuming that I cannot convert my Amiga, I am also looking for an accelerator that will work with my system (i.e. A500+, 6 megs RAM, GVP Impact Series II A500-HD+, Workbench2.04) I know that there are a few that are not compatible with the GVP HD , can you help me here also? If you can't, then it means that I will have to save up for an A1200 or higher machine.

Peter Novakovich
Caerphilly

Dear Peter,
The crashes could be almost anything. It might be worth reverting to a very standard startup. I notice you have ploadseg in your startup sequence. Have you powerpacked any system files? Also OpenAWS should be removed as well. Some programs do not like Powerpacker at all. Unpowerpack everything and revert to a normal system.

(This might have a bearing on the PDraw problem as well). However, the actual Rexx programs should be in the Rexx: drawer, not the Pdraw Rexx drawer. Rexx is normally assigned to S: which is where all the scripts live, so copy the genies into the S:directory and see what happens then.

*Zorro slots on the A500.. if you dig out your back issues of **AUI,** you will find that a very interesting article was published on this very subject. Have a look in **AUI** Nov 1991 and all will be revealed. Essentially you are correct, but there is a small circuit that needs to be added to make everything work. It probably will not work for more than one card, as there is not much in the way of drive capacity available.*

I would contact a specialist in accelerators and discuss the matter with them, White Knight are worth talking to. David Ward tells me that he happily uses the £150 Supra Turbo on his A500+/GVP set-up. This uses a 68000 chip clocked at 28MHz - four times the standard speed.

HARDWARE

Dear AUI,
System set up:

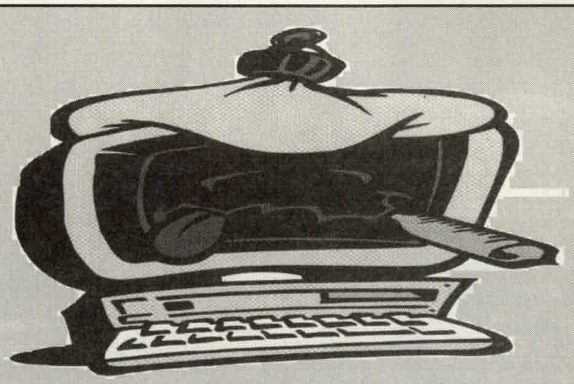
A1200, WB3.0, 30 Mb Conner HD, Commodore 25W power supply, Sony Trinitron+scart, standard 2Mb ram.

My problem it that when the Amiga is reading from hard drive, it often powers back down again.

As an example, if I am opening a large directory, i.e. C:, libs, or fonts, the HD stops whirring and then 10 seconds later whirrs back up to speed. With a large directory, or a long operation such as formatting a partition or even a relatively normal operation such as booting up, the drive will power down wait and then power up 3, 4, or more times. Often this results in the computer crashing (i.e. the display freezes). It can happen just as I select an Icon with the mouse. This often results in read errors being produced and the resultant pain of Disksalv or even a reformat. With the hard drive in and with 2 partitions there is about 1,700,000 Mb of memory left. Is this OK, or is it the action of reading information (even in booting up) causing the memory to drop too low? Or is it the drive or the power supply? I have suffered this problem for about a year so it is not a temporary blip. Please assist.

S.P.Ellis
Stockport

Dear S.P.Ellis,
You have plenty of memory for the basic system needs, so there is no problem there. It could be a drive fault, but it is well known that the Commodore Power units are a bit marginal, and the power unit would be my first guess. If you can, try an A500 power unit, as this can supply twice the output of the A1200 unit. If that cures the problem then a heavy duty power unit is called for. ***AUI***



When writing to Amiga Answers please include as much information as possible about your system and about the software/hardware you are running. This will help determine what your problem might be and its solution!
Send your questions to:

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Unit 2, Utopia Village, 7 Chalcot Road
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or E-MAIL:
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Hi there for another month, have you been keeping well? Good. Me? Oh, I'm fine thanks. I'm just here to tell you about PD. Cheap PD. Not just cheap, but horrendously, stupidly, mind numbingly cheapness, it's cheaper than lord cheap of cheap castle, Cheapington, Cheapshire. And then some. Did I mention it was cheap? Well, it is.
There's really not much you can say if you're still paying a quid+ a disk, basically because there have been companies doing this for years now, and as time has gone by, floppy disks have become cheaper, as has the equipment to copy them, so why hasn't the price gone down? Well, it has, but nobody goes as low as we do. They daren't
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We can scan art in animated on stills, any format your particular Amiga shows. Ham scans can be as good as AGA from us, and AGA can be the best quality you'll ever see. Many have seen our example scans, such as blowing up an object the size of putting an object of 3 square feet down to the same size, both pixel perfect! Digitizing is also the same high standards, sampling goes up to CD quality and is totally clear and crisp. Oh what clever chaps we are.

We aren't business minded, we treat every customer as an individual, not just a name on a cheque. So many customers are enrolling as members and never leaving us it's amazing. Thousands of customers now are of the opinion that you don't need anyone other than V12 (I wonder where they got that idea from?) You can rest easy in the knowledge that each month V12 will acquire more new PD for you than anyone else. We've been trying our damnest to get what you want, and that's why our title numbers are shooting up so fast every month. We serve the people with what they want, cheap, reliable software and no hassle. It you are one of the unlikely few that get a problem disk, we'll sort it out for you with no complaints, no moaning or hassles. If you have a problem dearchiving or setting up any disk, just ring us and we'll ask, and if you still can't cope, we'll do it for you, free.

We recently got online and now we can be found roaming around BBS's, we can be found mainly on Midnight Express BBS, which in our opinion is a superb BBS offering everything you'll ever need. If you want to get in touch with the old box with lights on the front, give us a tug and we'll sort it out. Please be gentle though, we're new to the modem game and know about as much as a person who doesn't actually know anything about modems. You see, we're human too. I think.

Midnight Express not only are selling modems for 50 quid with full software and connections and a month's free subs to their operation, they're now flogging ultra fast 33,600 BPS modems at the silly price of 189.99, that's some serious welly for a severely un-welly like price. Get in touch with them on normal telephone on the number 01384 77172, or if you have the idea of upgrading your modem and want to get in touch with their board, ring the number above. And, of course, the usual writing method can be used (shock!), their address is 21 Tiled House Lane, Brierly Hill, West Midlands DY5 4LG. We're uploading a lot of new PD onto their boards, get in touch with them for some seriously new stuff. Midnight Express are not paying us anything at all for this mention, it's just that we've found them to be so helpful and offer such bargains to all us Amiga users, we feel it's time someone did the decent thing and mention them. If you're thinking of getting into modem land, these people are V12's recommendation for the easiest and friendliest ride!

But what of us? We have the best catdisk available nowadays, without doubt. Just look at it's capabilities, optional ram installation, automatic workbench detection and modification for perfect compatibility with any Amiga you happen to be running, twin device installation for up to 50% increase in speed without using or needing a lot of that terribly expensive black stuff you humans call ram, and a hard drive installation option is being worked on as you read this! Oh that's just functional, I hear you cry, why should that impress me? What about animation, sound samples, music, graphics, custom menus, descriptions that are honest and sidesplittingly funny (V12 accept no responsibility for split sides while using this catdisk, you've been warned!), fully mouse controlled point and click usage, and now uses a modified easy to use type style. Our descriptions are now about 40,000 lines long, yes, us saddos have typed in 40,000 lines of text to amuse you, when do we sleep, eh?

Our catdisk's quality is now so relied upon to impress that we simply do not need to put lists of titles in our adverts, we feel assured that customers would rather get this and see our entire library, not a few mish mashed lists. Want an example of our quality? We recently sent in a batch of pd games to be reviewed in a leading Amiga magazine, all of them got reviewed in the same month, favourably, and we got game of the month too. Not bad for a first try, eh?

So all we ask is that you send us a 3 1st class stamps of 75p for our 2 disk catalogue, this way you can see our quality without having to buy anything else at all, a sort of trial run. There's no risks, no fuss, and you'll love the outcome. Believe me, would I like to you? Of course I wouldn't!

Let's face it, can you find any other advertisement in this or any other magazine that offers 12,000+ titles at 50p each, a one for one guarantee, a 2 disk catalogue for 75p, the complete range of services at our customary piddly prices, and more from anyone else? I don't think so, but I could be wrong. We don't claim to be experts, not even clever dicks, we're just Amiga users like you who happen to have collected a lot of PD and are offering it at a price we think you should pay for it. Can you blame us for that? Yes? Oh, fair enough.

So have we convinced you, are we worth 3 first class stamps? 3 little bits of sticky paper for something that could, and should, change your Amiga life for good, it's not too much to ask, is it? What do you want me to do, beg? Plead? Whine? Scream? Eat a large automobile while balancing on one leg and stirring custard with my free foot's toes? I will!

So, I'll see you at the V12 party soon. Remember, we may not be the most serious library in the world, but we're the best. Nuff said.

Special greeting this month go out to all the Amiga companies that stuck through the rot like we did, congrats on having faith in the world's best home computer. Also a big hello to all the companies returning to the Amiga once again. Personal greets go out to Dean Kelly of Midnight Express BBS, hi Dean! Also, hi to Rob Daviau, Stefan Mansier, North Staffs PD, Freak of NFA, Sadeness PD, No Mercy Software, and Gunterheim Laboratories. We'd also like to confirm that Coca Cola is simply the best, neighbours is interesting and dribbling in public will get you into trouble. We know, we've done tests! V12 looks forward to the pleasure of your company! Hi Mum!

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May 1995

Ten Years of the Amiga - Special Report

Explanation of file archiving and interview with author of the new LZH achive.

Reviews of Broadcaster Elite, Shablaam!, Loader 500, Epsom EPL5600 laser printer, FX2000 Analog joystick, and more.

Including Superdisks 57 & 58: Utilities feature Spondulix finance manager, LZX archiver and Drag'n'Drop. Two disk's worth of ClipArt and Fonts. Games include Zenez, SpaceJest and Sneech.

February 1995

Report on Virtual Reality

Reviews of HeliOS, Main Actor, Titling Star, Turbo Clock, Star Printers & Samsung Monitor.

Including SuperDisks 51&52: Games: Scottish Football Manager - plus, Marbles, Wipeout, VChess. Utilities: Pro-titler, Lottery, Landscape, WBFlash, ToolType... and even more!

January 1995

The AUI Awards - The Six Best Products of 1994

Reviews of Photogenics, Final Writer, Amos Pro, Video Backup and US Robotics Ready Fax modem.

Including SuperDisks 49 &50: EdWordV5 text editor. DB2 - database and more utilities. Plus games: Colonial Conquest II, Cybernetix, Revolver, Whist.

August 1994

Special Telecommunications Supplement

Reviews of Lightwave, Video Creator, Animation Workshop, GP Fax, Wavetools, Examination of Digitisers, Final Part of the A-Z Amiga guide.

Including SuperDisk 41: JcGraph. ABCDir. ResumeMaker. Games: Wipeout, Lazymines... and much more!

June 1994

Investigation into Multimedia on the Amiga

Reviews of AdPro, Picasso II, Wordsworth 3.0, SAS C3.0, TrapFax and Personal Animation Recorder.

How to get the best from your hard drive.

Including SuperDisk 38: Deluxe Galaga, DOS Trace 2.18, Multiripper 3, PPShow4, SuperDuper3.1: IconPack, RunIt 1.8

May 1994

Featuring the second great cover-mounted Amiga CD.

PLUS on floppy disk: The famous Tiger Cub music sequencer - complete and free.

Reviews of MediaPoint, Disk Expander, Quarterback, Pegger, Epson GT-6500 scanner, Typesmith 2.0, MultiFaceCardIII and MBX1200z RAM expansion card.

March / April 1994

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PLUS on floppy disk: SuperBase Personal 2 database, full and free program.

Reviews of Adorage, Citizen ABC, Star SJ-144, Clarissa, ProText6, Retina, Octamed 5, Superbase 4.0 and SyQuest removable hard drive.

February 1994

Feature on computer porn, CD-ROMs and Virtual Reality.

Reviews of Interplay, Scala, Vidi 24, Imagine and Money Matters and Final Writer.

Twin cover disks feature full copy of Personal Paint, Sound Effect editor and Pacman.

January 1994

Field reports on Scala, computers in cars and data protection.

Reviews of Montage 24, CSA 12-Guage, Pro Calc 2, Fujitsu Gigabyte Hard drive, Technosound Turbo II and Seikosha Speedjet 200 and Epson Stylus 800 printers.

Including SuperDisk 30; Angie WB customisation. FMSynth. Hyper doc reader. Galaxians clone. ToolsDaemon. VirusChecker and more.

December 1993

Investigation into the future of Amiga, National Trust use of Amigas and PAL toaster.

Reviews of AmigaSAT weather watcher, Minigen Pro L1000 genlock, Citizen Swift 90, SupraFax modem, replacement mice, Z3 SCSI controller, PIP TV tuner.

Game tests include Premier Manager 2, Overdrive, Qwak, European Champions.

Including SuperDisk 29: MAND2000, Spreadsheet, AddTools, BigAnim.

November 1993

Field reports on consumer electronic gagetry, Amiga Pasadena 93, ECTS and Inovatronics.

Reviews of hand held scanners, Bars and Pipes Professional, Real 3D! 2 & Brillance.

Game tests include Bubba'n'Stix, 1869, AV8B Harrier Assault, Ishar 2 1200.

Including SuperDisk 28: MagicMenu, Random Dot stereogram creator. CacheClock. RecPlay, AssignPrefs. Xatoms game. Module Player and more.

August 1993

Feature on MPEG development and hard drives.

Test drive of Image FX, Excellence!, VistaPro.

Tips on 3D, ray tracing, A1200. AREXX and programming.

Game reports include Lotus Turbo Challenge 2, A Train, B17 Flying fortress.

SuperDisk 25 includes Digital Illusions, Speechtoy 2, SysInfo, Trax

July 1993

Exclusive feature on David Pleasance and New York World of Amiga show.

Test drives of Professional Page 4, Pagesetter 3, A-Talk III, Quarterback, Action Replay cartridge, Real 3D 2, Fujitsu hard drive.

Tips on video, databases, programming and A1200.

Game tests include Darkseed, Lemmings II, Body Blows and Space Crusade.

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May/June 1993

Exclusive interview with Lew Eggebrocht.

Test drives of Aladdin 4D, SAS C, Prowrite 3.3, Essence, Citizen Swift 240C, SuperJam & Directory Opus 4.

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Have you misplaced those classic original cover disks? We are able to offer *AUI* SuperDisks from back issues which are no longer available. Single mount cover disks cost £2 each. Twin mount cover disks cost £3.50 a pair. All disks from 43&44 onwards are twin cover disks. They use a power packing utility to crunch many disk's worth of programs onto them, so they must be purchased used together.

Compatibility: All disks up to and including SuperDisk20 are compatible with WB1.3 and above. 80% of SuperDisks 20-30 are compatible with WB1.3 and need 1meg memory. SuperDisks numbered after 30 are WB2 and 3 only, with some programs requiring AGA.

DISK NO.	FEATURES
2	HyperBook based disk - presenting a Scamble clone from the Bitmap brothers, AdPro demo, programming tips, video tutorial and a guide to workbench.
3	HyperBook based disk - presenting Sequencer One demo, MEDplayer, the famous Missile Command game, samples, graphics and a programming guide.
4	HyperBook based disk - presenting TurboText demo, Pandaal hand scanner demo, Sequencer One songs, sound samples, and a look at Spectracolour.
5	Hyperbook presentation of Designworks, RaceTRace demo, Delux Paint IV, Jigsaw, MOSFETS explanation and a PICtoANSI utility.
6	Demo of CanDO, plus full Move-it game, IFF converter, WB hacks and JRCOmm.
10	Tons of utilities including AutoCLI, FOntCacheX, scroll, NewZAP, lens, Virus Checker, Plasma and HALtoIBM
11	Scala500 demo, virus checker 6 and Remap utility
12	SuperJam demo and utilities include Mousepress, Picbase (IFFpicture database) plus bbase (full database).
13	Caligari demo, plus biorythyms, findfast, multidos, virus checker, sound wave creator and APrf - a text file printer.
14	Virus Checker 6.05 plus ham textures, aswarm, movieclip, lacepointer, pascal, ToolDaemon and ZeroG sound samples. Including full Arkanoid clone.
15	Full AudioMaster II programme! plus samples, multiplayer, Dsound, Wizard clock and Fitness reminder!
16	A disk full of utilities including ENote, MTVhack, VirusChecker 6.15, Org2, aqwik offline mail reader, pascal programmer, dtp fonts, le-nag event scheduler, modmdraw (draw pictures over the modem), newpos and cpuclr.
17	ABackup. DragIT, Tactix game, ToolsDaemon 2, Wasp Image converter, and more.
18	AniMan: Voice recognition. Talk to your Amiga! ReOrg2.31: Disk optimiser, TinyClock: Make the time tiny, QMouse: Speed up that mouse pointer ... and much more!
18b	Rare disk. Octothello board game, wordsearch creator, realthings animation, numerical pad creator for A600 owners, MagicMenu, Epoh3, Flying Toasters.
20	WhatKick, Adorage demo, Leapfrog Puzzle game and Hyperhelpers.
21	Utilities Pack. Includes Reset, bb - workbench presentation routine, workbench degrader, typewriter mimic, FullView text viewer, Noughts and Crosses game, OneKey, Spliner screen blanker and Rend24 batch image converter.
26	2 games plus, Dash: Monitor your Amiga's performance, DiskSalv2: Disk toolkit, STP: Play modules on a Hi Fi, Translate: Convert images into different resolutions, Workbench games: 6 of the blighters, Virus Checker 6.28
27	Viewtek, Seekspeed, 3D Tips, Transplant, Virus Checkers
35	Tiger Cub: The complete, unadulterated, program.
36	Super utilities include Womble organiser, FileX file editor, Assigns, Swazinfo, AddPower, AddTools, FileM, Memclear and Vat-Check.
40	FastJPEGv1.10: View those JPEGS, ImploderV4.0: File cruncher, DiskSalv2: Save those disks, QuickGrab: Excellent screen grab utility, Games: GiegerTetris, Megaworm
43&44	Games: Shepherd, Gravity Force 2, Giddy. Utilities: Disk Manager 4: Disk database, Amiga Real Time Monitor: System analysis, Megajitter: Biological evolution simulator ... and much more!
45&46	Games: Zombie II This is THE famous one! Plus, Pengo, Pub Darts, Zut Alors, Trick or Treat.
	Utilities: Filthy Lucre: Money management, Disc Cat: Catalogues your disk collection, PhoneBill: Modem use monitor
47&48	Games: High Octane: Smooth and speedy track race, plus, Battleships, Knight. Utilities: ImageStudio: Incredible image effects package, SnoopDos3: Snoop your DOS ... and much more!
53&54	Utilities: QuadraPlayer: Module player. plus Invoicer, Fractal World, ARQ, Analysis, Crypt and more. Printer Utilities: Print Manager 2: Take control of your printing. plus, PrintSel, Labels, PosterPrint and over 70 printer drivers. 3D Graphics Disk: 3D objects for Imagine, REal 3D and Lightwave, plus three disk's worth of textures. Games: Fears: Stunning Doom simulation, plus, Dynamite Warriors, Peg It
55&56	Utilities: Dion's Disk: collection of indispensible utilities. Music Makers Essentials: Quadra Composer2: Full specification music creation plus loads of sound samples and example module Games: Insectoids from Outer Space: Shoot 'em up plus Poing!, Tetris, Pong. Disk Users' Essentials 1: ReOrg3.1: Optimize any drive plus ABackup, Artic, Disksalve2 Disk Users' Essentials 2: SuperDuper3.13: Fast disk copier plus SysInfo3.24, A-Lock, AFCopy and more.

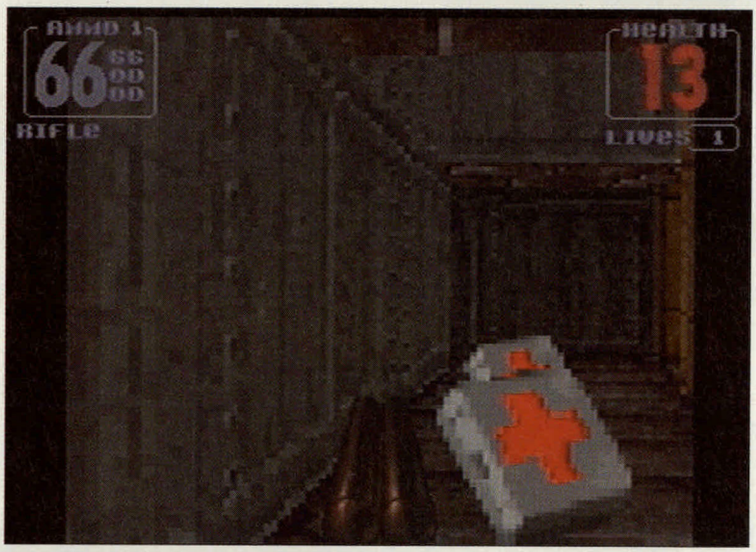
Fears

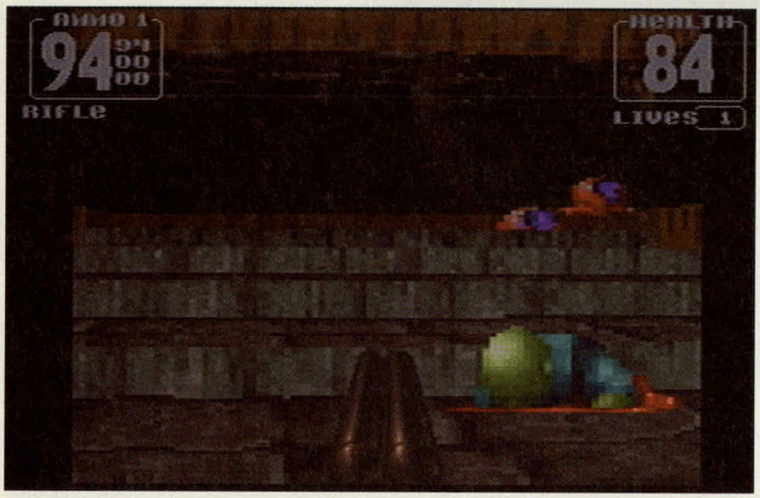
Manyk A1200 Price: £29.99

"Prepare to meet thy doom" whispers the packaging, more tongue-in-cheek than your average blue whale trying to dig bit of Crunchy Nut Cornflake out of his back teeth. For this game is Doom, or at least as close as you'll ever see on a 32-bit Amiga. Doom, for the completely isolated, "I haven't got any friends with a PC" Amiga user, is a very famous game indeed. It originally achieved success by having the first few levels distributed free on the shareware network. Hooked players then sent off for the full game and made Doom's creators very rich in the process.

Enough history: what of Fears? Well, you start with a double barrelled shotgun, 99 rounds and a hatred of all things hideous. Which is just as well, because on opening the first door in front of you, you're going to meet something more hideous than a cross between Chris Evans and John Major. Something small, chubby and red: something that gobs fireballs at interfering, shotgun-wielding idiots like yourself. So it's kill or be killed and this sets the tone for the entire game.

Those of you with longer memories than particularly retentive elephants may be reminded of Dungeon Master or, more recently by a couple of years, Eye of the Beholder. Your trusty weapon poking proudly up from the base of the screen, your view of the game is in first-person perspective (in other words, you share the 'eyes' of the hero, which for some reason can be alien or human). As you explore the levels, seeking monsters to mash, secret doors and passages - which allow you access to new weapons, medical kits, and ammo, you'll either feel seasick or nostalgic. The screen bobs around quite disconcertingly fast at times, so leave your Dunkin' Donut pig out session until afterwards.





Unlike the great roleplaying 3D games such as Eye of the Beholder, Fears doesn't expect you to have 20/20 vision and a perfect monitor, both prerequisites for completing the former (the only way to make a roleplaying game in this environment challenging, is to make the hidden objects very hidden ineed). Everything is obvious, if you know what you're looking for. Not that you'll have a lot of time to admire the somewhat dour scenery. Monsters track your every movement, giving at least as good as they get, usually better. They are alarmingly accurate with those fireballs and you'll soon find your health deteriorating more rapidly than Robbie Coltrane's.

Extra weapons include a wicked circular saw, which minces things at close range into burger meat, less appetising than those horrible things served up between insipid baps at fast food joints, a deadly bazooka that leaves big holes in big hairy things, a lethal plasma gun, a machine gun, and the piddly little knife that serves as your last resort if your ammo runs out. It's not fun trying to negotiate with something three times your size, armed only with something that might have trouble scaring a potato out of its skin.

Fears is what Doom fans have been waiting for. Although the graphics are more than adequate and very smooth, and the sound is suitably eerie and atmospheric, gameplay is what makes Fears compulsive. It's such a laugh blowing things to bits with large illegal weapons that you're liable to forget that there's a mission at stake here. The end of level monsters are huge and awesome, and Fears will keep a lonely gamesplayer shivering into the creepy, cold hours of the early morning.

However, for those of you with null modem cables (or unlimited access to a generous person's telephone), you can link two Amigas together. Imagine the fun of settling a family feud by lacing your uncle's guts with lead, or taking your kid sister's head off with a bazooka. Class.

VERDICT

Graphics:	80%
Sound:	75%
Gameplay:	86%
Overall:	81%

Coala

Empire Interactive A1200 Price: £29.99

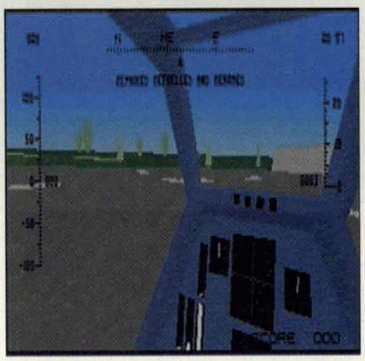
Before I get started on this one, let me get something off my chest. Simulators have never really appealed that much to me. For me, the appeal of flying is the sensation of movement, something which only the big, BIG simulators that pilots train on can provide. Anything which attempts to recreate the sensation of flying, or even driving around a circuit at 200mph, fails to impress me at all. To be any fun, so called simulators have to make themselves much, much easier to control than an average video recorder is to tune in; be more user friendly than a cashpoint machine; and come without a manual thicker than a photocopier salesman which includes, among other things, really helpful blueprints of the engine of some obscure helicopter with a name containing more characters than the Japanese alphabet.

Elitist junk like this really irritates me and ensures that a great number of people, like me, that might on occasion feel like flying a Sikorsky BNZ-X100836454-BOL-OX or whatever give up and go back to shooting ugly aliens with shotguns or building virtual amusement parks.

The manual with Coala, thankfully, dispenses with this petty nonsense and talks you through the various options plainly and without patronising you. The tone used is, "Sorry, we have to tell you how to use this thing, but don't worry, you'll be shooting things in no time at all," which is fine by me.

Question: What does it take to make a pseudo-simulator lots of fun? Answer: A well-developed disregard for diplomacy, an itchy trigger finger and a multi-million dollar helicopter, packed to the rotors with instruments of death and destruction. Oh, having a few enemies around the place helps too.

There are plenty of these available for you to vent your Atilla the Hun-like tendencies on. These range from a single enemy vehicle of your choice to seek and destroy, through offensive and defensive scenarios, a UN ceasefire, and various themed battles to the amusingly named Total War. Here, the problem is not so much finding something to shoot, it's making sure that the thing you've chosen to shoot is not on your side and that three other things haven't shot you while you're deciding. Or you can customise your own scenario with an editor. Bliss.



Four 'copters are available: an AH-64A Apache; MI-28 Havoc; MI-35 Hind; and the AH-88 Coala. Each one has its plus and minus points and, in the hands of a skilled pilot (that rules me out), each can be murderously effective. And effectively murderous. The choppers come complete with a head-up display (HUD) which allows you total control over your weapons, navigation and information systems. Or, more likely, it allows you to try to control all of them at once in an attempt to emulate chopper heroes of old, such as Whirlybirds and Airwolf, while being taken out by a deadly, killer pine tree. Oops.

There's nothing more embarrassing than finding yourself running out of fuel and stranded on the ground, shooting trees out of spite. But this will happen unless you keep a weather eye out for petrol stations en route (Coalas seem very thirsty and unfortunately a diesel estate version is not available). Landing is simply a matter of reducing altitude until you touch neatly down, though there are quick key shortcuts to any desired height. And, of course, a missile up the bottom is another quick way of finding terra firma.

Simulators usually don't get close to looking like the thing they're meant to be simulating. However, the graphics here are just about as good as they could be. There are unlimited 3D views available, including in-cockpit, slightly behind the tail, a choice of camera angles, including the legendary "Is that spec on the horizon really me?" view and a missile-eye view for when you're shooting things, which is a breeze to watch. The game is very flexible in this respect: you can locate an enemy on the radar, bring up information about him, and then assign a remote camera to follow him for a closer look.

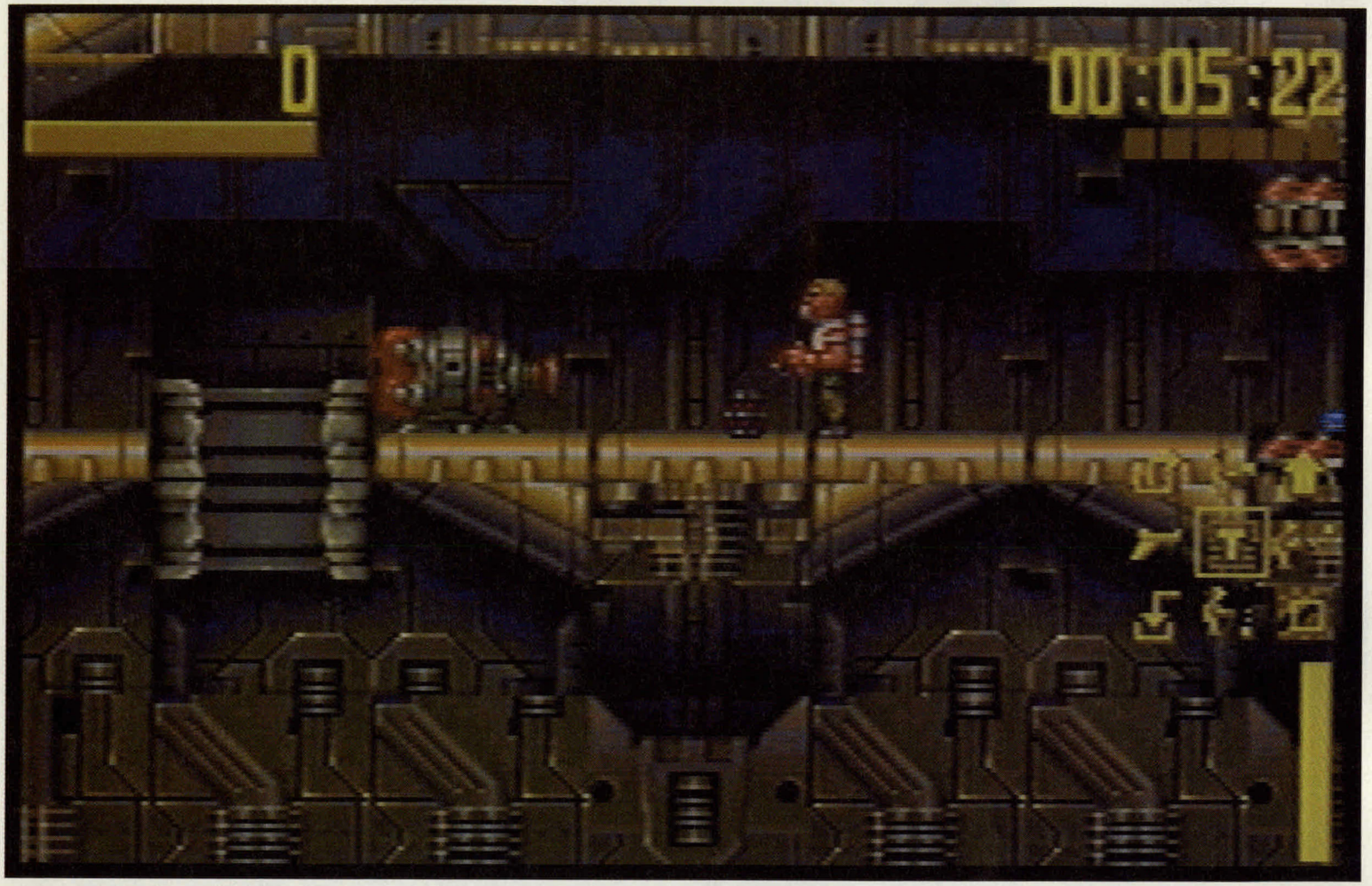
For once, you're not expected to learn a million keyboard combinations to control your vehicle and this makes Coala much more friendly than most games of the genre. Empire Interactive has clearly intended Coala to be an enjoyable blasterthon inside a realistic environment and, while to get the best from its many options and features, you're going to have to digest the manual from cover to cover, Coala can be played to the point when you're swearing loudly at them damn tricky Reds after just 15 minutes familiarisation. Which is pretty good going, all things considered.

VERDICT

Graphics:	90%
Sound:	73%
Gameplay:	88%
Overall:	87%

Exile

Audiogenic A1200 Price: £29.99



Exile is a very old game, but it's also the most enjoyable romp through space since the classic "re-entry" scene from the end of Moonraker. And in its AGA form, Exile is prettier than a Bond girl wearing nothing but a few strategically placed milk bottle tops and a couple of elastic bands.

Your spaceship is the bee's leg joints, until, that is, an alien scientist called Triax teleports in and steals your destinator. No, this is not a distant cousin of the Predator (Triax itself comes close, though): it's the thingy that makes your ship leave one place and arrive at another. For incredibly rich readers, it's that part of your Rolls Royce called the chauffeur.

Anyway, your task is to get the destinator back again. Not so easy, because Triax is a mean mother and has been experimenting on your friends, turning them into mean, mindless killer automatons. Other than that, they don't have too much in common with Luton

Town supporters, but even the mindless have a right to liberty. Quite why Triax didn't choose to attack and eat you while you're unarmed and about as dangerous as a Robson and Jerome fan is less clear: perhaps he likes a challenge. Anyway, the gauntlet has been thrown down, so pick it up (if you can catch it in the low gravitational field you occupy).

The control system takes lots of getting used to, mainly because of the damn gravity problems. Wind tunnels and the shock waves from explosions are things which will send your spacesuit careering about the planet and you with it. The game allows a very flexible approach to handling objects and this leads to some puzzles of a greater complexity than you'd expect from a platform game. However, the cost of this flexibility is reduced user-friendliness and an increased need for remembering keyboard commands. Keep the manual close to hand.

There are lots of clever touches in Exile. You come equipped with a sophisticated teleportation system, which can be used to hop about the planet and is vital in many places to progress. Frogs, birds and monkeys follow you about, annoying you more than harming you, and there are lots of puzzles to solve. Brains and blasting are needed in equal quantities. There's enough to keep the most avid explorer happy here and, while Exile won't set new standards, it does at least live up to existing ones.

VERDICT

Graphics:	81%
Sound:	69%
Gameplay:	80%
Overall:	78%

THE PD STAKEOUT

This month *AUI* bring you the best of the everflowing stream of low price, high value Amiga software. Pile 'em high, says David Ward, who feeds the A1200 and checks the results of the goodies that are selling cheap.

Scoring

The marks awarded to each PD disk are based purely upon its own merits and, of course, our personal views. Value for money and reliability are also taken into account as well as features and quality of the software.

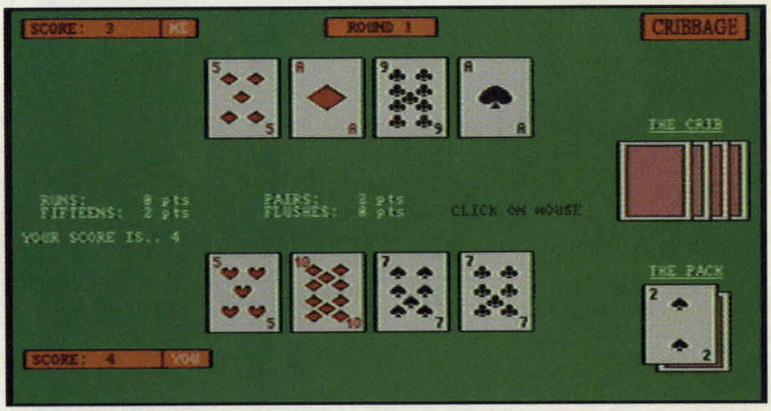
Compatibility

The PD disks reviewed in this issue were tested on an A1200 with a basic 2 megs of chip RAM. Check with your PD supplier that the disks you are ordering are compatible with your Amiga.

CARD GAMES

Your Choice PD

Three popular card games programmed in Amos by Ian Cumberlidge. These are neatly put together, and the Amiga plays a decent game. Choose from Brag, Knockout Whist, and Cribbage - my favourite. It's a pity you don't get to see the pegs going round the board, as the end of game comes up on you unexpectedly.



85%

PD or ShareWare?

All freely distributable software comes under the rather deceptive umbrella of "public domain". Quite a lot of this software is, in fact, shareware. Shareware means that if you like the software, or use it fairly regularly, the author will request a reasonable donation from £5 to £20. There is usually a note on the disk informing you if the software is shareware or regular PD.

Whether or not you send a donation to the author depends totally upon your level of conscience and morals. Remember, if you send a donation to the author, you may receive an updated version of the software. Even if you don't receive an update, you will have given the author the incentive to continue contributing into the public domain.

Iconographics

Kew-II

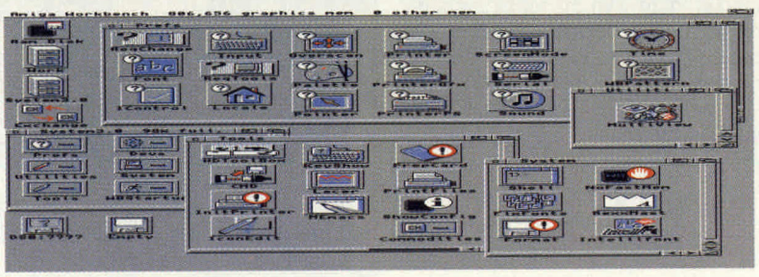
This disk, U1161, contains a set of replacement icons for you to install. But only if you can afford to run a high res, 640 x 512 or equivalent, Workbench screen in eight colours. Of course, you can, can't you?

The replacement process is extremely easy, and quite painless. You can choose to have individual icons replaced, by being given the option to choose using an old icon/new icon requester, or, you can go for broke and have the lot done automatically.

Iconographics installs a new palette, and recognizes MagicWB and its own icons. I thought the red looked a little dull, so I enriched it as you can see in the screenshot from our beloved 1200.

The software comes compressed on the disk, so you have to use the supplied GuiArc program to copy and extract it over to your hard drive. Yes, folks, a hard drive. Recommended for Power Users - a definition, I suppose, which will come true when Amigas do become Power(PC) machines and one which this magazine first used as a title of an article - though no doubt we didn't invent the expression - way back at the beginnings of the A.E., the Amiga Era.

Somewhere around 1987, we think. Now you are all, we suppose, Power Users and Iconographics is yours for a pittance.



90%

CLI_ZONE#1

Professional PD

Over a hundred Shell only utilities on this disk. Some are without documentation. There are a number that I recognised, and many that I have used on a regular basis, so they should come in handy.

This is an admirable compilation, but not as good as the Vark series. Still never mind the quality, feel the width. And in this case, the width is a hundred wide.

75%

Graphics Workshops

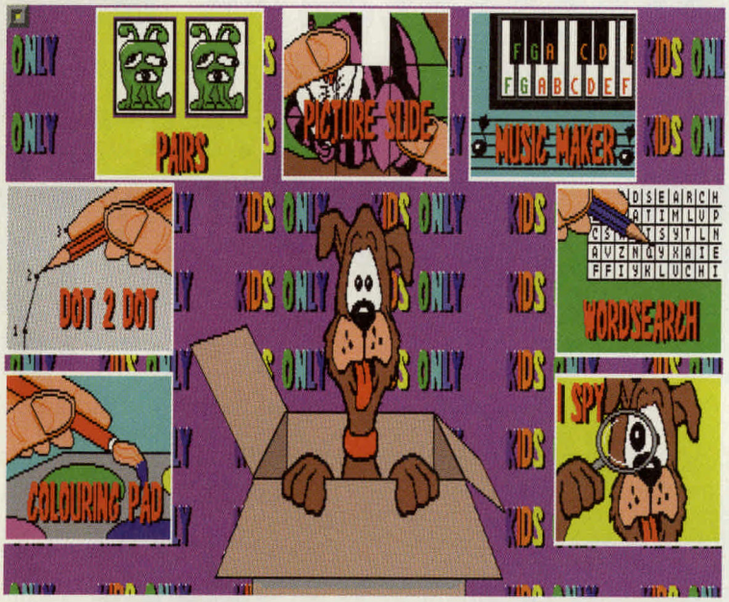
17 Bit

Another icon replacement utility, this time one that only deals with disks and drawers. Graphic Workshop has a selection of themed icons, plus a backdrop for your Workbench. From Baywatch to the X-files in this release, with additional disks of material available with various themes - Science Fiction, Fantasy, Games, Film, and TV.

Don't forget, backdrops and multi-coloured icons take up your precious chip RAM.

78%

KIDS ONLY



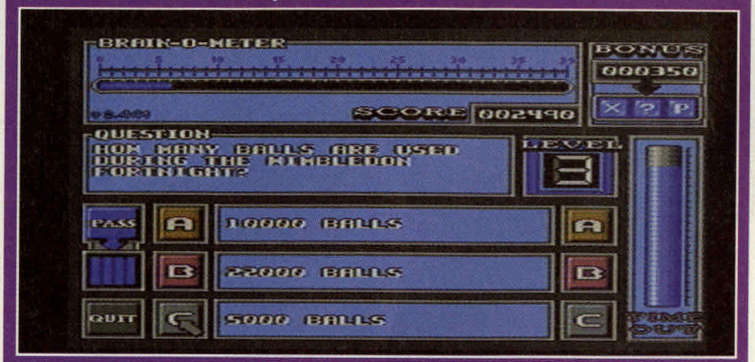
JIM, A QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE

Sean Barrasso

For three pounds you can spend hours on this arcade style pub quiz game. General knowledge questions are thrown at you with various levels of difficulty, and you must choose the correct one of three possible answers - all against the clock. Bonuses can be scored, and you are allowed two passes per section if you cannot answer within the time limit.

Rack up your score and watch the sliding scale on the 'brain-o-meter' go up in relation to the size of your ever expanding head. High scores can be saved so you can show off to your friends.

All you need to add to this is a few cans of beer, a smokey atmosphere, some background noise (like breaking glass), and you'll be well at home. Cheers!



88%

Online PD

Now this was really a surprise, especially as it's a PD program. This three disk set is designed to keep the youngsters amused for hours, well it certainly worked on Admen Charles and Nick. There are seven sections to the software: Colouring pad, Dot-2-Dot, Pairs, I Spy, Sliding block puzzle, Music maker, and Wordsearch.

The accompanying music and sound effects may drive adults up the wall if they are in the same room as the computer, but if it and the kids are elsewhere and quiet - gagged? - then this must surely be the best value piece of software around.

95%

Magnetic Action Demo

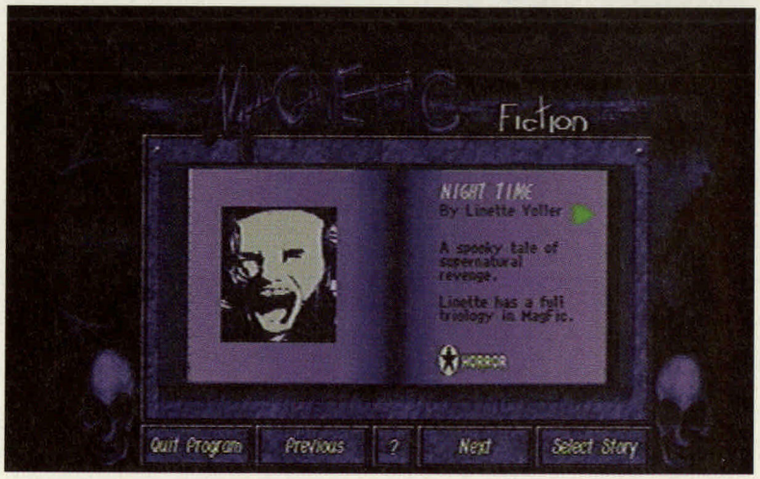
Raven Software

Magnetic Fiction is a collection of short horror stories, mainly by Andrew Campbell, accessed via an AMOS front-end. This is the demo version or, rather, a taster of what's available. There are only nine tales to chill your spine.

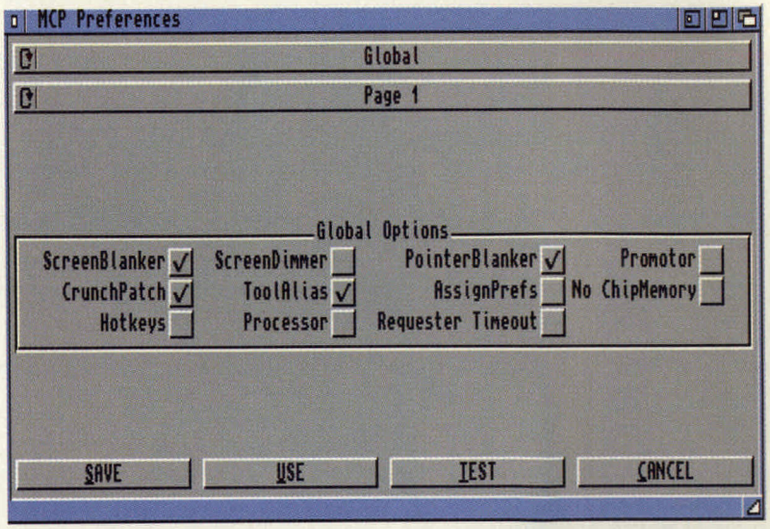
The disk opens with a voluntary age 15 rating, and so it should. We don't want to give the kiddies nightmares, or fire up the tabloid press to clamour for a ban on this sort of thing.

Ideal material to read alone, at night, in the dark.

82%



MCP - MASTER CONTROL PROGRAM



Kew=ll

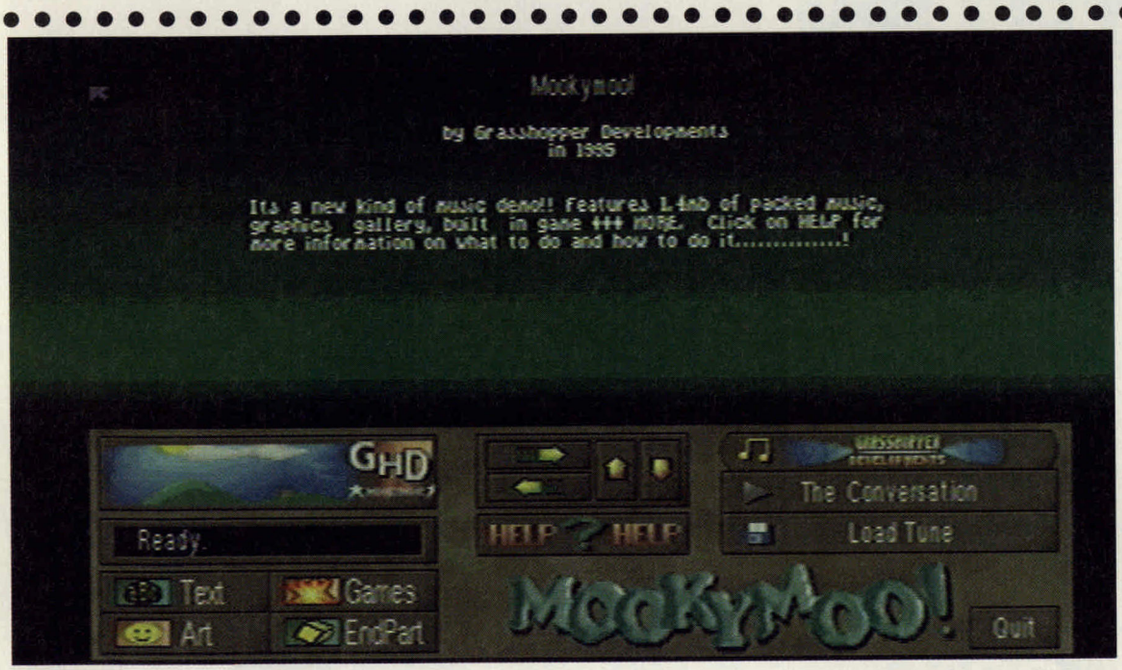
This was the name of the program that tried to delete Tron in the Disney film of the same name. However, on the Amiga, it is more benevolent in nature and does not mean, Feminist Amiga Users, Male Chauvinist Pig.

MCP is a single program that gives you push-button control over a multitude of the Amiga's internal functions and commodities. Similar to MagicCX, there are several pages of, sometimes more useful, options.

Those that caught my eye included CrunchPatch, which enables programs to load datafiles packed with PP, XPK, CrM, and others; ToolAlias, which alters default tools - such as changing Multiview to Amiga Guide, or vice versa; and a function to set the front-most screen as the Public one - ideal if you get fed up with requesters that insist on appearing on Workbench, while you sit there thinking the application you are currently using has frozen.

Full guide documentation, and a program to convert the docs from Multiview to AmigaGuide format. And in case you were wondering - PP is PowerPacker, XPK is XPK, and CrM is CrunchMania.

93%



Mookymoo

Mon PD

Mookymoo is a music demo disk with a built-in game! This AGA only production from Grass hopper Developments has about 1.4Mb of compressed music (7 tunes) on it, as well as a few Manga pictures, and some interesting articles. The puzzle section had me guessing, but the rest provides an enjoyable variety.

86%

Navigator 2

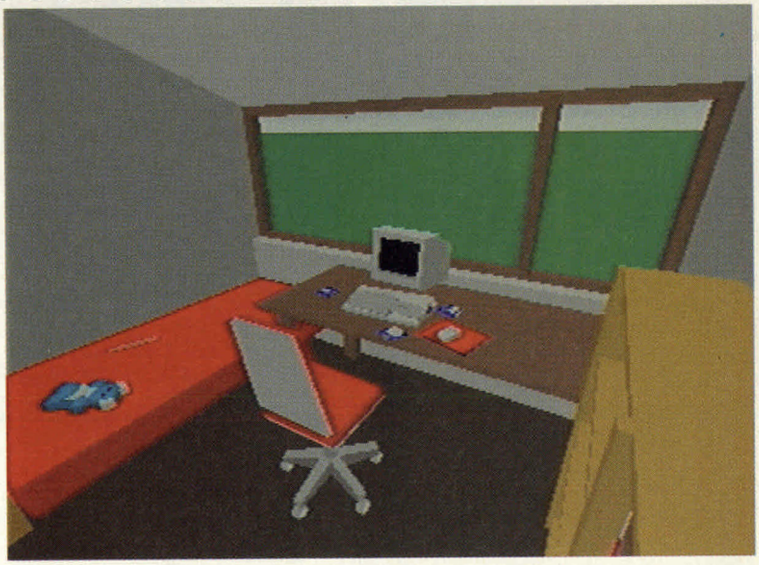
17 Bit

See, VR on the Amiga is possible. Navigator 2.0 is the viewer for specially created examples of Virtual Reality type worlds that you can enter and 'walk' around. Several environments are provided.

The viewer is freeware, but you cannot create your own worlds. To do so you must contact the author, Michiel den Outer, who will probably do them for you - at a cost.

Navigator requires a 68020 processor or better, a PAL†capable monitor, plus Kickstart 2.04 and above. AGA is not important, but adds to the colourfulness of the images. Perhaps as the VR world envelops us, this program will become a must for us all.

83%



Nothing But AMOS 6

Seasoft

In this business you get to see lots of disk based magazines. The hacker/cracker type (which we don't often review here) do have very flash front ends - lots of colours, music soundtracks, fancy fonts, and so on.

With Nothing But Amos you get none of this. This is surprising, for you would think a magazine dedicated to the Amos programmer would utilize some sort of glitzy interface written in the language to show off some of its capabilities.

What you do get with Nothing But Amos is a collection of text files read via More, some IFF images and samples to play with, music, and the game High Octane, which we looked at last year and found to be very good.

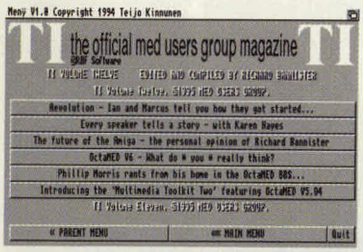
78%

TI and MIDICraft

Seasoft

It is very agreeable to come across a disk magazine that has been put together by enthusiasts, for enthusiasts, without references to body parts or functions. TI is just such a disk, and it comes with a simple front-end for access to the various sections.

So what is TI? It is the 'official' mag of the Med user group.



Compiled by Richard Bannister, issue 12 covers the 'Future of the Amiga', a buyer's guide to external speakers (not in the same league as What HiFi), and a feature on the dance group Aevolution and how they got into the Amiga music scene.

If you are into OctaMED, then I think it would be safe to say that you should consider a subscription to this publication. You even get special offers and extra discounts on Seasoft products.

Along the same lines is MIDI-Craft, which is a similar publication for users of MIDI instruments. If you are one of them then MIDI-Craft is worth a look.

88%

Your First Pony

Seasoft

Coming from the same stable (fx: laughter) as the Aviation disks we looked at last month, Your First Pony is a hyperbook product that deals with all aspects of horse care.

Whichever school I went to, primary or secondary, there was always at least one girl who was potty about ponies. While the others drooled over the latest pop sensation - it was the Bay City Rollers then - this young lass would be oblivious to it all. Her mind filled with thoughts of Gymkhanas and Black Beauty.

If you know of, or are such a girl, then Your First Pony would be an ideal gift. Informative text is coupled to a good selection of illustrations for the budding show jumper. Full marks to Greendell Technologies for coming up with such a title in a market usually dominated by male interests.

85%

Tinbin Utils 24

Mon PD

Tinbin Utils contains nine utilities designed especially for A1200 users. Readers will recognise NaeGrey and Remind, for we have had these on our Super-Disks. I liked the idea behind SpeedLoad. This is a util that lurks in the background during the booting-up process. It gives you the option to load a pre-determined program immediately after boot by holding down a key, the left mouse button, or the joystick fire button.

Some people I know launch DOpus from within their user-startup script. So if they just want Workbench, they have to quit out of it. SpeedLoad would load DOpus at the touch of a button if required, or load the normal Workbench screen if left alone. Once the boot process is over SpeedLoad 'dies'.

Tinbin also includes a JPEG and Font viewer, a Bootblock writing program, Phoenix - which you can use to alter saved game data, and Solvev. This tool is supposed to patch programs that don't like being run on A1200s.

Utils 24 is a reasonable selection, but I think PPMore should be replaced with something that can handle crunched AmigaGuide files better - perhaps XPKguide.

82%

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Write to Reply

Yet again Bud Vennos has an ever expanding letters bag, you all have so much to say!

Dear *AUI*,
I know that ALL Amiga magazine editors cannot stand criticism and love arse licking comments, and unfortunately *AUI* has had a touch of it recently. Mr. Pywell of Lincs had a valid point about frequent arse licking letters from Amiga users. (His I.Q. comment was insulting, admittedly.) All I seem to read is statements like " The Amiga is the best computer in the whole wide world and I love it". What sort of prat writes that garbage and what sort of prat prints it? Get a life.

Also the constant bad-mouthing of PC's by ALL Amiga magazines is so immature. If the Amiga is so great, why did it go broke? Most computer users probably use their machines for a little games playing, letter writing/printing, graphics and generally idly amusing themselves. No one is ever going to overtake the PC in the work-place. If it is competent for 99.9% of the business world, so who is going to take notice of people like yourselves saying what it can and can't do.

The proof is in the pudding and it only makes me ask what is your bias? Well, the more converts to the Amiga, the more magazines you sell. Looking good for *AUI*, AF etc.

So, a 486 PC cannot multi-task. You need about 4-6MB of RAM on an Amiga to multitask any decent kind of programs that I use on it. A standard A1200 can only per-form basic functions. For example, run Photo-genics with a decent size JPEG image, Final Writer with 10 pages of text with pictures, printing and then Adorage. I would guess that the main attribute of the Amiga is only used by 5% of the users. It is an unrealistic situation to most.

I am not anti-Amiga or pro-OPC. I want a cheap computer that can do the things I want a computer to do. With the Amiga I don't have to buy a fancy monitor, it's simple to use and is very competent at what it does, basically buggers about with 1 & 0's. It fills the market niche handsomely. I'm not bothered about how slow a 486 is, let the PC user worry about it. So don't compare apples to pears: the PC is a very different animal for a very different jungle. Originally it was never intended for multi-media, which was Commodores intention for the Amiga. You do not hear Sun Microsystems saying how shit the Amiga is compared to the Unix machine they supplied for the animation in Jurassic Park! Of course, its an unrealistic comparison. Market Niche.

Let us not have any more arse licking of Escom too. Go into your local Escom dealer. They will be about 8 Pentium PC's up and running (look nice they do) and all with CD ROMS etc. In the corner lying on the floor will be the Amiga 1200. The box will be upside down so you cannot read it properly and the salesman will treat you like a real asshole if you dare ask about it and not a PC.

In fact, they'd rather sell you an expensive PC!! In reality, the Amiga should be up and running, connected to a TV showing what it can do for young Nigel at very reasonable price. (One of the realistic strengths to be put forward in the marketing hype on the TV adverts, er what advertising?)

So, don't waste time slagging off PC's.

***AUI* kicks arse eh, well start kicking Escom up the arse !!**

Yours faithfully
C. Longley

Dear C. Longley,
Brown-nosing... that used to be the polite(?) expression for what in these "Age of Ugliness" times has to be spelled out in crude terms as "arse licking". But why should congratulatory, celebratory, complimentary comments be thought as something which demeans the provider of such comments? Or even make the receiver seem only able to accept such pleasant comments and not criticisms?

*Neither condition, we hope, is true of **AUI.** We are delighted when someone writes and tells us they like what we do and sorry when they make comments which, if justified, show they don't. What's wrong with that, C.Longley, are you immune to approval and disapproval? Do you reject the opinions of others so completely? We don't. And neither do we poodle-like roll over to be tickled or kicked. While all our readers are entitled to their opinions we are also entitled to ours - and I am to mine. These columns should perhaps have printed a health warning to those who feel that all letters should be uncontroversial, either in what is written to **AUI** or in reply.*

For example, I disagree with your comments on our attitude to praise and blame, but I rather approve of your remarks about the view that some take toward the PC. This egregious machine does have its place largely, until comparatively recently, a business one, in the computing world. But the reader who says to us "The Amiga is the best computer in the whole wide world and I love it." is expre-ssing an opinion in which there may be a certain justice.

For that reader may not have experience of the PC or the Mac or a Cray, for that matter. But may be looking at it from the viewpoint of a home user. And would you challenge that statement on the basis of the competing computers, the Ataris, the Amstrads, even the PCs of, say, three years ago, when the last development of the Amiga was in fact carried out?

As for the "badmouthing of PCs by ALL (Your caps) Amiga magazines" being immature. Patriotism. nationalism, tribalism, partisanship seem today to be horrifyingly rampant. Look at those grotesque gestures, facial expressions, songs and shouts on what used to be the terraces of soccer grounds. The aggression, the uncivilised competition they represent is symbol of what has been encouraged in society as a whole. They are signs of an immaturity in society far more damaging than the simple rivalry that occurs in such things as the users of a different brands of computers.

And you are wrong about it not happening with other computers. Anyone who attended the recent Computer Graphics Expo in London would have heard people from other companies like Sun or SGI being very dismissive of anyone else including the Amiga - which by the way, was also used to create Jurassic Park.

But as for Escom, there are those in the Amiga field who would not just share your view of the poor way Escom has marketed the Amiga in the months they have owned the brand but also agree with your description of the lack of drive behind the sale of the Amiga in the Escom shops too.

*You might notice that **AUI** has repeatedly pointed out all the way though, the need for Escom to strengthen and speed up both its approach to the development of the Amiga and support for its marketing. From comments we have had from those professionally involved with the Amiga in this country and elsewhere, there is a great deal of agreement with this view.*

Dear *AUI*
As a reader of *AUI* since it was a section of CCI, I thought I

would write in and say that during the last few months, I have seen and heard some worrying things on TV and radio about the getting-better IBM-Compatible PC.

When Windows 95 was coming out, you could not get through a day with having it shoved in your face. It was on TV, radio and the press. On the day before its release, roofless double-decker buses with Microsoft flags and stuff went driving around Johannesburg in a parade, with various local celebs promoting it. And then hours before midnight, there was a HUGE party in the centre of Joburg with a massive fireworks display to mark the event. It was a lot of very well orchestrated hype promoting a product that gives PC-users a lot of the features we have taking for granted for years, and therefore guaranteed that every Joe Soap knew about it, whether they used computers or not.

Everyone was raving about the now incredible 32-bit operating system (wow! - what was the 4000 and 1200 in 92 then?), and the incredible Plug-n-Play (Autoconfig for Amiga's since day 1), the all-important multi-tasking (Amiga 1000 anyone) and sporting an interface that looks a bit like an Amiga with MagicWB and ToolsDeamon and MagicMenus, although not as nice. Now we all know that Win95 offers nothing new to Amiga users, but we are small, select club compared to the amount of ignorant PC users, who know nothing of our superior machine, although we know more about their machines than they do. The point is that Microsoft have got something that Amiga Tech desperately need - MARKETING AND HYPE GENIUSES! Sure, MS have spent millions on advertising knowing sales of Win95 will pay for itself and then some. But, everyone on the planet knew about it, and that is what counts.

People are like sheep - incredibly thick, completely unable to think for themselves and just going with the flow. If you tell the public something long enough, they will believe it (politicians excluded). They have all been brainwashed into thinking that if something is not brand new, it's useless. Toss out the 486, get a Pentium - throw out your 4x speed CD drive, get a 6x speed and upgrade all your software to the latest versions for lotsa dollars (for nothing extra really). The good things with this attitude is that although it's silly, it pays off because then everyone has high spec setups, and it brings prices down for more people to afford. Also they are suckers for technically impressive sounding gadgets, the perfect example being the term 'Multimedia'. Not so long ago this meant various media eg. video machines, laser-disc players CD-players, slide-shows working together.

Now it means a CD-drive equipped computer, which could be a Commodore 64 using a CD player to load the Codemasters collection 7 years ago. The criteria for a Multimedia thingy is that it has "graphics and sound tog-ether in an entertainment presentation". Right, that could have been the Vic-20 with space invaders in 1982. But, the easiest way to flog off a PC is to have a CD-drive with some speakers and Win95 and call it the All-in-one-Super-Multimedia-Machine. If you convince people that you have something great and can sell them everything for it cheaply then you've got it made.

The problem for us is that the PC is not only a threat to the Amiga community, but also to the console market, It might all be very well having a console with all the most incredible technology and super-duper chips, but will it play Doom and how much will it cost? And they have a limited "Edutainment" market, so parents would be weary to spend megabucks to keep little Johnny happy playing games. Although £1500+ is OK for Dad to spend on a PC to play Doom and to use Excell or Word, cos he feels it's fun for games, but it has serious uses as well. So as one can easily see, people are quite willing to spend lots of money on a PC because they are told it does all they want. It has all the software needed, a massive user base and lots of products at increasingly lower prices.

So what has this got to do with anything? Well, Amiga Tech need to show the world just what the Amiga can and does do. It's all very well having Fou-ndation Imaging winning an Emmy for Babylon5 using the Amiga, but Amiga Tech should then get them to endorse the Amiga, or use it for some publicity. They should work out some deal (with Escom financing cos it is their parent company after all) with the major players who use the Amiga to blatantly and unashamedly advertise and plug it. Just imagine if everyone who watched Seaquest, Babylon5, Robocop etc. saw during the credits, "All 3-D graphics done on an Amiga". They should also find some bigshot musicians that use it and "help out" with the record so on the sleeve it says "All songs sequenced on an Amiga". Heck, Just give Pulp, Blur and Oasis (or even Take That or Michael Jackson - spew) sponsorship deals. Although not everyone will know what an Amiga is, they will be aware of it's existence and keep a look out for it. If you've seen the one episode of the Simpsons with Gabbo, the ventriloquist dummy, you'll know what I mean. A blitz of teasing adverts in every media before the main advertising would work nicely to create an awareness.

Also, Amiga Tech need to get in at grass roots and get young children using Amigas. If they donate some 1200's with very nice software to some schools with intense user-support, they could corner that market. Little kids don't care if it plays Doom or Word. If it's easy to use and fun, it is all that matters. A1200 with a digitiser, sampler, Personal Paint and some killer Educational titles would go down a treat. It would also make it great for their teachers too!

In fact, if Amiga Tech just get in touch with all the important people who use Amigas, and even ordinary people who do extraordinary things with their Amiga's, they would find some very co-operative would-be spokespersons, as many people use Amigas because they love it, not because it's the machine they have to work on. All they need to do is have a look at the Amigaguide file of famous Amiga Users and give them a call.

Another thing they should do is compile a list of the most popular and used serious software used on the PC and Mac, and compile a list of Amiga titles that do the same, and if the software doesn't exist, then contact some developers to create it. But they must make the world aware of all the great software that matches Word or Excel. But what would be an incredible asset, would be to have all Amigas Mac compatible NOW. We don't have to wait for the RiscAmiga, we can have it today. If Amiga Tech are serious about broadening their horizons, they should get heavily involved with Christian Bauer, author of Shapeshifter, and get Apple's co-operation on the ROMS. I'm sure that Apple would be keen on expanding their user base against the PC, even if it is an Amiga. If a perfect Mac-emulation does appear that is software based, for a reasonable price, than many people would get an Amiga knowing that it is not an "isolated" machine, as it could run all the Mac software and in turn use the PC emulation of the Mac (maybe).

In the end it comes down to this - people have to know about your product before they can buy it. They want to know that it won't cost them a lot, that it is easy to use, that it is fun to use, that it does all they want it to do, that they can do their budgets and letters on it, and that it can play Fears/Gloom/Alien Breed 3-D. If Escom want to make some money on the Amiga, they have to spend some on Advertising, support and development.

If the world is shown the light, they will follow. We are the children of God, Bill Gates is the Pharaoh, and Amiga is Moses come to take us to the promised land. Good shall prevail.

Yours sincerely
Darrell Hannan.

Dear Darell,
Wow! What can I say? Except double wow! Your letter is great, a better answer to C. Longley (above) than any I could have written. Good on you - or whatever the equivalent South African expression is. And good on you and your fellow countrypeople too for accomplishing one of the greatest democratic changes in history in such a civilised manner.

*While I did, and I know that other **AUI** people did also follow*

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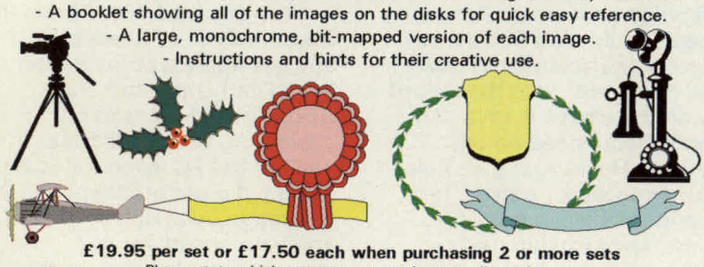

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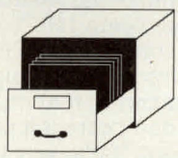

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Write to reply

*the boycott of South Africa during the bad old days, **AUI** did not itself. It was thought that as there were often multicultural and non-racial attitudes expressed in these pages, and at times, quite deliberately too with S.A. in mind, it might be doing more good to continue to try in a small way perhaps to influence people than ignore them. With readers like you, we shouldn't have worried.*

Dear *AUI*
What's happened to the support for the Amiga comms scene? I can appreciate that the internet is a massive success but there is the large number of BBS sites out there whom you seem to have forgotten! Almost all of the public domain sector software that gets reviewed in your magazine has originated from various bbs sites not on the Internet. Granted some new stuff does come from the Internet but the majority of it originates from the private BBS scene. I know as over the last two years in various magazines NFA PD/Productions has had over one hundred reviews.

When you call a private BBS the sysop has control over what files are available. The Internet is running wild with pornography, piracy and files on how to blow off your arms. Once a file is on the Internet it is almost impossible to delete as the file goes to hundreds of sites within a few days. A private system is also generally used by two to three people at any one time so the system does not slow down to a snail's pace on a Sunday! This does however restrict the number of users that can connect in a 24 hr period. But to compensate for this there are hundreds of private systems around the world including many eastern block countries.

As far as E-mail goes the Inte-rnet wins hands down. However there are some really good mail networks that connect thousands of users across Europe to name but two 'The Missing Link and Fidonet' Most private BBS sites will support one of these networks.

We should like to see a small area in your magazine to advertise BBS sites as we feel very ignored by you and we do reach many hundreds of dedicated Amiga users every day. We organise meetings of users and stands at computer fairs so we do our bit for the Amiga scene!

A point worth mentioning to parents who may be reading this article. Don't just buy your child a modem and give them 1 hour a day on the telephone. Sit with them and monitor what they are doing as there are some very strange people out there. Give them some of your time. Even if you don't really understand what they are doing you will recognise things like "Randy-nurse.jpg" and other such titles.

Well that's enough moaning on I would now like to blunt and ask for a plug for our UK bulletin boards. All the latest issues of The Word are available and people may wish to upload their articles etc that they wish to be included.

All these sites are open from 8pm to 8am and are mail linked.

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Bugged Out BBS
0116 2375147
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14400 bps

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33600 bps

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Independent
14400 bps

The Hot Rock
0116 2387710
Independent
14400 bps

All speeds of modem may connect to our sites from 300 bps upwards. We believe that a lot of people buy cheap modems for a start and if they enjoy what they see a faster modem normally follows.

We are doing our best to provide a good service to our users and most of us have invested in high powered machines and large storage devices. We leave them running throughout the night for other people to use. All we are asking is for a little support from the magazines that we buy every month!

Deck the Ripper Of NFA.

Dear Deck the Ripper,
(You're not Jack, too, are you?) Here's your plug. Those who use the Internet should certainly be grateful to the dedicated work carried out by the poor old sysops - and your idea of parents sitting down and finding out what their children are doing on the Net is probably the best way for the Internet to become a usable place for everyone.

Dear *AUI*
As a fairly new 'Amiga' user and Subscriber to *AUI*, I thought a few words of praise might not go amiss, particularly having read the most unpleasant letter you received from a self-opiniated berk from 'Lincs' called A.Pywell (refer December 1995, Write to Reply).

I was pleased at the consideration you showed him and admired your self restraint. My experience of *AUI* is quite different. Not only have I received the most excellent help and guidance, when like most 'newcomers' I was floundering about, trying to get to grips with the lovely 1200 - particularly from Andy Eskelson for whom no praise is sufficient. Not only did he answer in layman's language that I could understand, he even took the trouble to answer my letters in person, with his help all my problems are now res-olved and I am starting to really enjoy my 1200.

One tiny blot refuses to go away on my particular horizon. I live out in the sticks and lovely though the countryside undoub-tedly is, it brings its own problems of communication and access. I have noticed, even during 1995 which is no yet over, that the tardiness of 'ESCOM' in really providing backup for the 'AMIGA', is beginning to show to its detriment in firms that previously supported the Amiga wholeheartedly. Not only is there beginning to be a dearth of new software and games, a large number of retailers are actively promoting the PC to the exclusion of the Amiga and who can blame them? The ESCOM shops story is that the Amiga is dead, the 'Commodore' is their own upmarket Tower PC and as far as they are concerned the Amiga is now only for Software development and 'What is a 1200? we don't know anything about it!' All of which is very worrying for someone like myself who now has a much up-graded 1200 and worse. actually likes it and thinks for a lot less money is far superior to and more user-friendly than any PC I have come across. When I was working (I have had to take early retirement because of an industrial injury) I actually used an IBM every day and thought it was a pain in the backside!

What I am hoping to do eventually, as I run everything thr-ough an 'HiQ' Powerstation, which because of its clever design has oodles of spare bays inside to accommodate other things is perhaps to install a PC 'Motherboard' and access my Amiga internally to better run things that are designed for exclusively PC's.

That's all - thank you *AUI* for the best informed and most intuitive tutorials and for being kind to aging twits like me floundering about in our thirst for knowledge of our excellent Amiga - you might be interested to know that I recently bought, secondhand, a 1200 to give my son for Christmas!

Long may the best Amiga Magazine prosper!

Yours sincerely
Ian Aisbitt

Dear Ian,
Some people - see C. Longley's letter above - would consider your acknowledgement of the help you received from Andy Eskelson and

Amiga Answers, as they used to say, Pas comme il faut - or as C. Longley would put it "arse licking". But I thank you anyway on my own and on Andy's behalf too. We can all do with a little encouragement sometimes.

Your comments about Escom are joining the increasing band of Amiga loyalists who are beginning to feel and express this about Escom as you see from the letter above and below.

Dear *AUI*
Why is it that people are always writing into you, and complaining about your great magazine? Some people are just never satisfied are they?

Latest issue(Jan 96) is as excellent as usual, although there seemed to be a little less on the coverdisks than normal. I would like to see some tutorials on the disk, on how to install software on your harddrive, Pro-gramming in'C' etc. What about a few more 4 ok demos, and more music modules?

The other Amiga magazines have all started copying your idea of cramming the disks with useful P.D. Lets make sure that yours still has the best P.D on it.

While writing, I would like to mention V12 P.D. I am amazed how they manage to sell their P.D at such a cheap price, besides offering other services such as Colour Scanning etc. Their catalogue disk is very easy to use, and the speed which they turn your order around is great. Please mention them in your magazine, so that they might get some recognition and praise that they deserve.

Keep up the good work.
John Piper

Dear John Piper,
*Oh my goodness gracious and other unfashionable remarks, not another letter praising **AUI!** You can't all be my Uncle Jack, can you? What will C. Longley say? That I'm picking out your letters - or that I'm writing them myself? We try to keep up the standard of the cover disks and sometimes there may be fewer programs if they are individually larger. But your suggestions are being passed on to the appropriate quarters.*

As for V12 PD., it is always good to hear praise of Amiga suppliers too. As sometimes ALL Amiga suppliers haven't come up to proper standards, those who do deserve to be praised and get more business.

Congratulations V12 PD. Long may you prosper too.

Dear *AUI*
Why do you insist upon printing articles with nothing to do with the Amiga in the news pages? Usually more than 50% of your news coverage is nothing but waffling on about the PC.

How many of us Amiga users want to know how much a PCTV retails at?

How many of us want to know about Packard Bell making pizza shaped PC's?

How many of us want to know what Escom is up to with the Commodore (ESCOM spell it commoDORE!!) brand name? After all it has nothing to do with the Amiga now.

PC's don't interest whatsoever, I'm sure that all LOYAL Amiga fans (which are supposed to be the readership of your mag) don't want to know about them as well.

Anyway, your magazine is otherwise a damn good read, and the coverdisks are a breath of fresh air compared to the other serious magazines 'EXCLUSIVE, WORTH £199!!!' commercial package which doesn't interest you in the slightest.

Usually you need the 'manual at only £29.99' before you can get it working beyond the 1 page tutorial, THAT'S if you can be bothered to unpack it!

On your SuperDisk 69 last month I found an excellent program in the form of 'A1200 HDPatch', which I placed in my WBStartup drawer to cure the problem of my disappearing Conner 340A hard drive, where else would I find such a life saving program but on the coverdisks of your excellent magazine??

Keep up the good work, I hope the criticisms don't upset you too much!

Yours Faithfully
Steven Holmes

Dear Steven,
Aha! Criticism but seasoned with some judicious praise too! What should we do about that, C. Longley, censor the nice bit and keep only in the acerbic comments? What a dilemma!

But, about PCs etc. The Editor was saying the other day that he had been expecting more letters of complaint about the coverage we had given them and things not exactly Amiga. Yet your letter has been more or less a solitary cry of disgust. Do you, by any chance live in Tunbridge Wells and write to the Daily Telegraph about dissolute youth of today who think of nothing but sex and computers but not necessarily in that order?

But the point is that PCs exist. Not only exist, they have impinged and are increasingly impinging on all aspects of the world of computing. From super computers to consoles, the PC is having a growing influence. We in the Amiga part of this world can, if we choose. ignore the happenings good and bad in the PC field but you can't ignore reality for very long without it creeping up and licking your arse - sorry, biting your bum.

Whether we like it or not, or believe with some justification that the Amiga has already much of what is being hailed as revolutionary for the PC, the consciousness and probably mass use of computers is being achieved not by the Amiga but first, at the most basic level by the Nintendos and Segas and now by the PC. The PC is becoming more like the Amiga and it is just those Amiga-like qualities that are making it popular among a non-specialist audience.

*The fate of the Amiga is in the balance. Whether it survives depends on many factors, notably Escom. But the PC will more than survive for the foreseeable future, it will grow and exercise an increasing influence in the lives of a large part of the world. At **AUI** we don't necessarily expect Amiga users to buy other magazines to keep up with what is happening with the PC and other technical developments. We try to tell you about them so you can not just keep up to date but have the information to make informed choices about computers and the influence they have on your life. The PC is here and now, we may not like it or want it but we ignore it at our peril.*

Dear *AUI*
Well, the future for Amiga owners now looks good, we are told by most good magazines, but after visiting my local ESCOM shop this week I'm not so sure, read on!

While looking around the shop I noticed (albeit nearly hidden behind a poster for OS2 WARP!), 2 of the new Amiga packs, no attempt was being made to display or sell them!! I spoke to the manager about whether or not he would be stocking any other hardware or software, his reply, "I think the Amiga is crap, I didn't want to stock them but the German Company has insisted that ESCOM shops in the U.K take 30000 of them, I'll probably send them back after Christmas and say they were returned by customers as faulty." I told him that I was looking to upgrade my A1200 with a memory board and a CD ROM drive. He then replied "I think the Amiga is shit and will not be stocking anything for them." After giving him a piece of my mind about his attitude, I left the shop and wrote a letter of complaint to the head of ESCOM in Scotland.

With this sort of attitude you've got to ask just how secure IS the future of our much beloved Amiga.

I suggest we all adopt a misguided fool and educate them. For those readers who don't think this goes far enough, then any mail should be addressed to:-

The Branch Manager
ESCOM
Queensmead
Farnborough
HANTS
Yours sincerely
Trevor Arnold

Dear Sir
*Enough said. There is clearly a growing groundswell of disapproval of Escom from unhappy, loyal Amiga users. Escom, as Amiga users with the PC, may not like it but will ignore it at their peril. The loyalty of Amiga users once lost may not be recovered. **AUI***

Send your letters to:
Write to Reply
Amiga User International
Unit 2, Utopia Village
7 Chalcot Road,
London NW1 8LX

If you wish to send Email letter to Write to Reply or Amiga Answers, ***AUI*** can be contacted on CIX as

amigauser@cix.compulink.co.uk

Opinion

Michael Hanish gets his say about the coming vastness of the virtual world.

Last year I entered a technical term for consideration by the IEEE - "Overlaid Reality." An "OverLay" is what a fighter pilot sees in his Head-Up display. It is the information relevant to what the pilot is seeing or doing, without significantly interfering with his vision.

Imagine playing "OverLaid" games while wearing VR glasses. You and your chums see a soccer ball, net, and cheering crowd overlaid on what is actually an empty field. By using the position tracking and wireless communications on your beltpack PC, you play soccer.

Taking that just one step further, suppose that you have a sensor that can read tiny ID ICs, like those sold for theft prevention. These cheap tags, currently made in their tens of millions by Hughes, Motorola, and others, can return a unique code of up to 256 bits. Only 64 bits would give every person on earth enough codes to tag every single thing they presently own, with plenty left over. The readers are presently the only hold-up, as they have to emit a tuned RF pulse strong enough to power the tag to return its own ID chirp.

All it will take is a minor breakthrough in reader technology, and you will be able instantly to call up any information available on the Net for any item that has a tag. A world database of unique codes would also make it possible to track every piece of property of any significant worth. Automobile manufacturers are already starting to do this, embed-ding chips in major components, thus making it virtually impossible for a thief to fence them.

By around the year 2005 we should be used to glancing at any manufactured product anywhere and instantly getting an OverLay of contextually useful information, expandable on demand via voice input. For example, "Exactly what does it do and how much does it cost? Where is it manufactured? How soon can I get one? Give me the Consumer Reports..."

Manufacturers will be predictably cluttering up our lives with advert chips planted all over the place, with the neatest come-on 'Web pages'. Walking through any urban area would be a kaleidoscopic - or perhaps collide-o-scopic - experience, depending upon your selected input filters. Want to know who somebody is? Is there a doctor in the house? Outline all the available females or males (depending on preference) in my visual field in shades of red, scaled according to my preference match. Virtual fashion will become hot, with your boss seeing you in a conservative business suit, while you actually wear something casual. And other people see what you want them to.

This particular aspect of VR has received practically no attention, even though it will probably be the most commonplace in the near future, and may have the most profound impact.

Amiga plus 3DO

Now that the Amiga appears to be back, consider the advantages of having a 3DO card video interface and rendering system on the Amiga itself. 3DO outputs at broadcast quality and can match, and exceed, most of the Toaster capabilities. It can do true 3D sound in real time for games and surface map live video onto complex animated 3D objects - in real time. The new M2 3DO reviewed at the recent L.A. Electronic Entertainment Expo is full 64-bit, using the PowerPC chip, and provides MPEG-2 video. 3DO also runs a fully multi-tasking OS internally, so that many different special effects can run simultaneously. What a hot product this would be as a card on any computer!

3DO, as it turns out, can support VideoPlace without the limitations of colour and speed to which current PC and Amiga versions are subject.

And 3DO is hungry. Over 500,000 3DO systems have been sold to date, which is probably about as many as CD-i, but this is not sufficient to attract major retailers or the majority of developers, and the 3DO investors have backed off (unlike the foolish Philips that sank over a billion dollars into CD-i, which was obsolete before it was introduced). 3DO needs a killer app.

When Mandala appeared on the Amiga in late 1986, to rave reviews, it was unique.

3DO, as it turns out, can support, the VR device VideoPlace without the limitations of colour and speed to which current PC and Amiga versions are subject. All the hardware and software hooks exist in the original 3DO concept to do a next generation VideoPlace. The problem is that the Panasonic version of 3DO does not include video throughput, and the Creative Labs 3DO PC card does not really talk to the PC. It just lets you play 3DO games on your VGA screen.

Is there a market?

I work as the graphic artist/press representative for a company that manufactures security systems. As their press correspondent, I get zillions of security-related trade magazines. "Electronic House" magazine was a little X10 (electronic appliance controller) consumer publication until about three years ago. Now it is primarily a trade zine going out to some 30,000 dealers, manufacturers, and installers of home cinema systems that typically run to around $15,000.

The existing publications have not been sufficient to handle the market demand. So now every single burglar alarm magazine features a spe-cial monthly section on how to improve their reader's skills by installing Dolby Surround Sound, fibre optic wiring, home control software, video projection systems, and ISDN. This market is exploding!

Women love VideoPlace. They just go crazy about seeing themselves on the screen.

Penetration

When Mandala appeared on the Amiga in late 1986, to rave reviews, it was unique. The term multimedia was not in use yet, and Mandala ended up branded as a custom, high-end application, even though the technology was inherently quite inexpensive.

Since then, the multimedia/home computer market has grown up. In the U.S. more multimedia capable PCs were sold to consumers than colour TVs last Christmas. The PC sold to a home user is now more powerful than the PC sold to a corporate purchaser - because the home users love the multimedia/games/video/music/MIDI stuff that demands real power!

Especially the games, but the games market misses about 50% of the total consumer market - Women. Women do not generally like the typical arcade shoot-'em-up game. The industry figures show only about a 10-15% of the market is female. This has been an subject of much industry debate, from the first CyberArts VR conference, to the present.

Yet women love VideoPlace. They just go crazy about seeing themselves on the screen, and of all the hundreds of VideoPlace environments I have seen, only two have involved violence.

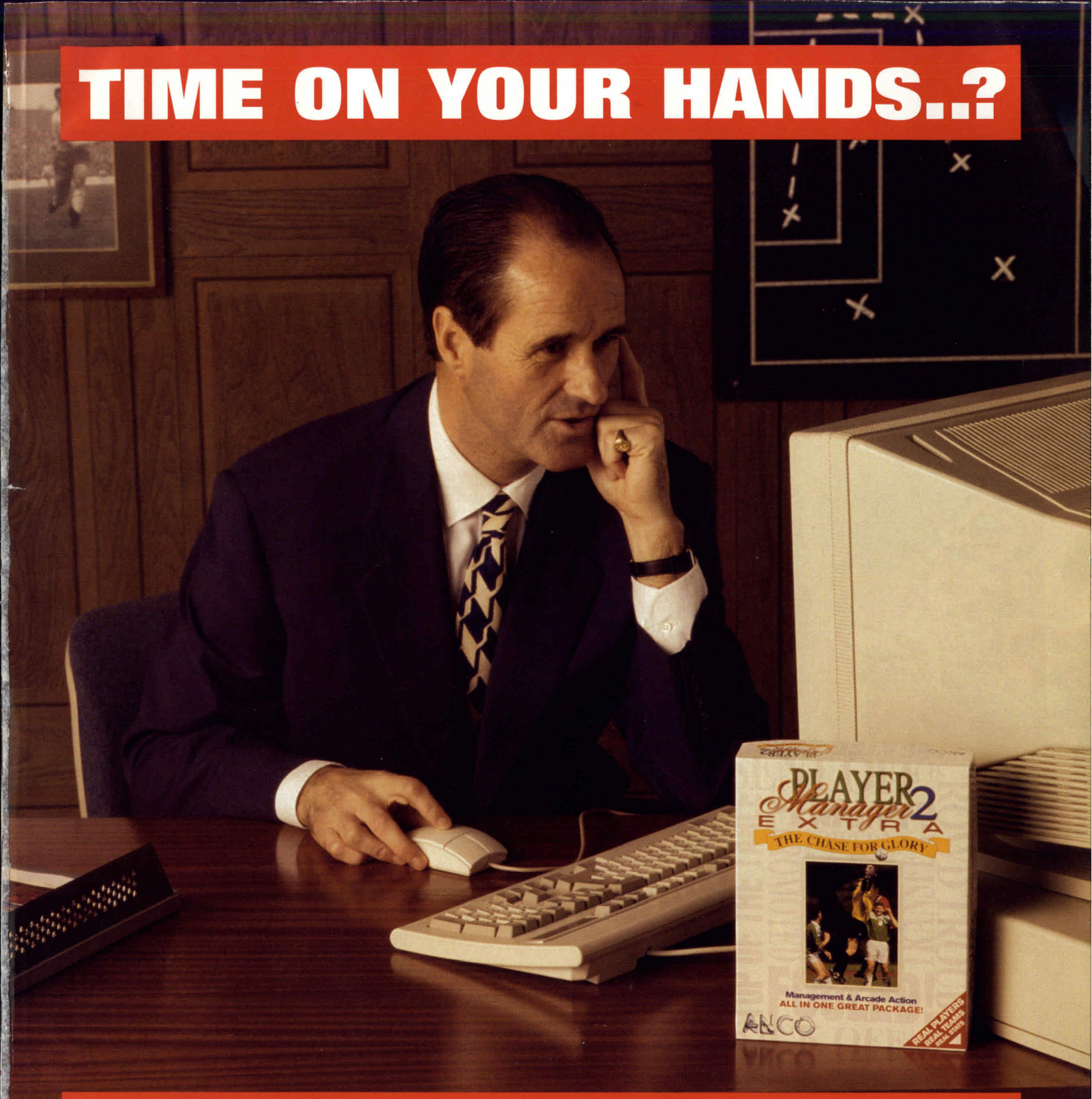
Another problem for the home environment is that parents don't like seeing their kids sitting endlessly, wearing out their wrists on some typically gory game. VideoPlace involves the entire body. The 1993 Mandala demo video shows kids interacting over phone lines and exploring each other's cities across the globe in real time.

Using cheap CD-ROM libraries (You can author a CD-ROM for about $75 today in the U.S.) a child could easily tour Moscow, or San Francisco, with a pen-pal on-line and on-screen explaining what everything was and pointing out the really cool stuff.

This is just one of the millions of potential applications in the electronic home market. What about virtual visits to your grandparents' house with the whole family on screen? Or VR tag games over the Net on the streets of London?

The prospects are vast. ***AUI***

TIME ON YOUR HANDS..?



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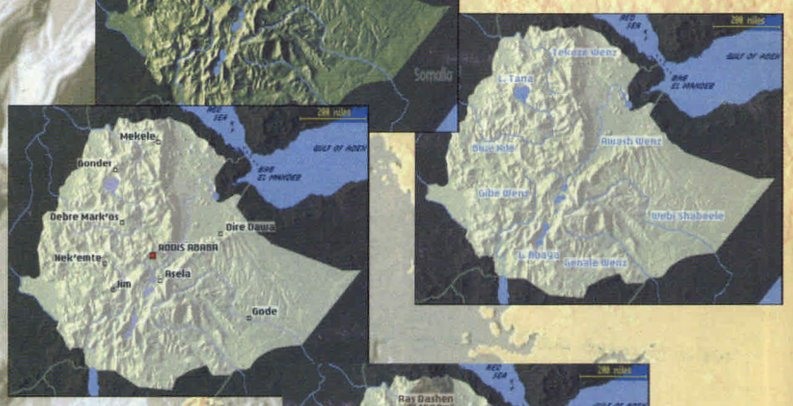

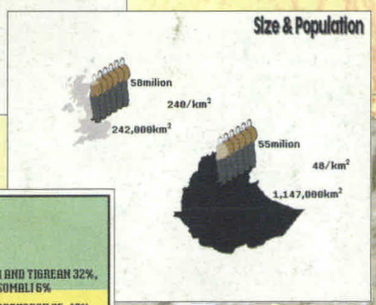

POPULATION	55,870,000
URBAN	12%
CAPITAL	ADDIS ABABA. 1,912,500
ETHNIC GROUPS	OROMO (GALLA) 40%, AMHARA AND TIGREAN 32%, SIDAMO 9%, SHANKELLA 6%, SOMALI 6%
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LITERACY	62%
LANGUAGES	AMHARIC, TIGRINYA, OROMINGA, GURRAGINGA, SOMALI, ARABIC
GDP	$22,700,000,000
CURRENCY	BIRR
STATUS	PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT
ORGANISATIONS	OAU, UN

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