

NEW: Lazlow's Technoraves • WebBoard • QmodemPro for Win 95

BBS

THE
BULLETIN
BOARD
SERVICES
MAGAZINE

September 1995

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5th Anniversary Issue

how to Launch a BBS the right way

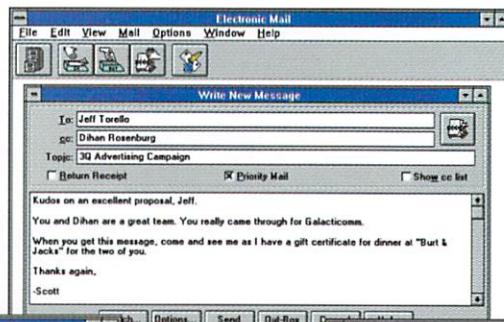
by John Hedtke

WWW
Telnet BBSs
Shareware
bbs.notebook

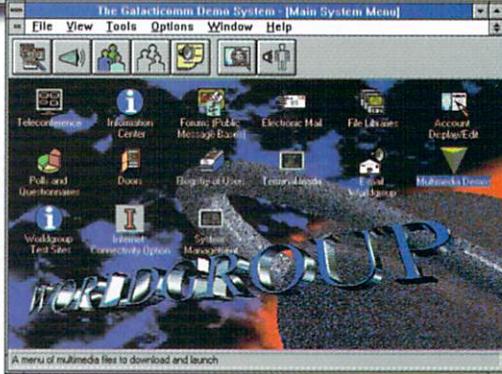




Worldgroup Manager: Users access and navigate your system with Worldgroup Manager, a Windows client. With the click of an icon, users are connected and logged in to your system.

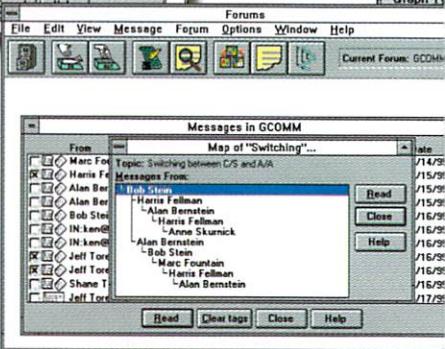


E-mail: Users can easily manage their mail with their own in box, out box, multi-folded filing cabinet, address book and more.



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

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



Open Your Windows to the

Worldgroup™. Bring the World a Click Away.

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

beyond. With the click of an icon, you can network your entire business world — customers, stockholders, prospects, field staff, distributors, vendors, the press and more — together online!

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

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

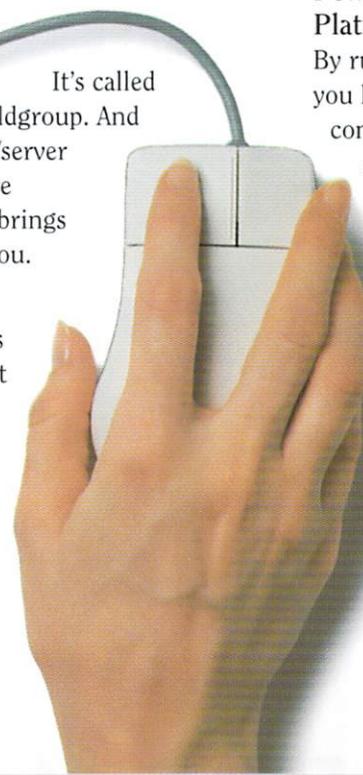
The client runs under Windows on your users' machines. Its multi-threaded architecture lets them do all sorts of cool things simultaneously. Like download files in the background, while reading new mail. Or auto update

new versions of applications transparently. Local caching, "look ahead" and client-driven intelligence maximizes performance at 2,400 or 28,800 bps.

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

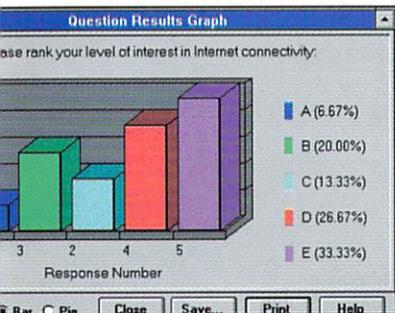
There's even a "launch" client/server utility that downloads and launches files for your users, such as Adobe Acrobat files, Word documents and PowerPoint presentations, in one easy step — while the user is online.

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

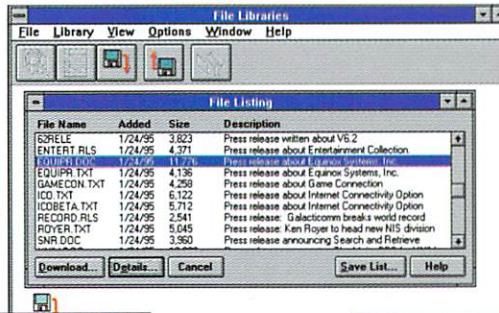


It's called
Worldgroup. And
it's a client/server
online software
platform that brings
the world to you.

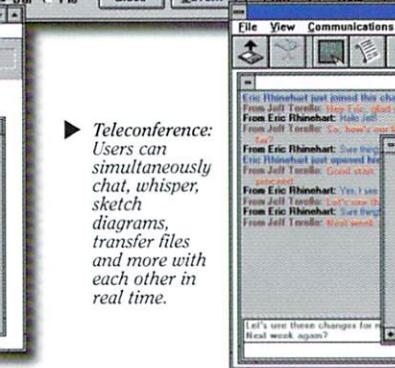
Think of
Worldgroup as
the bridge that
links the
people and
resources
within your
company to
the world



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



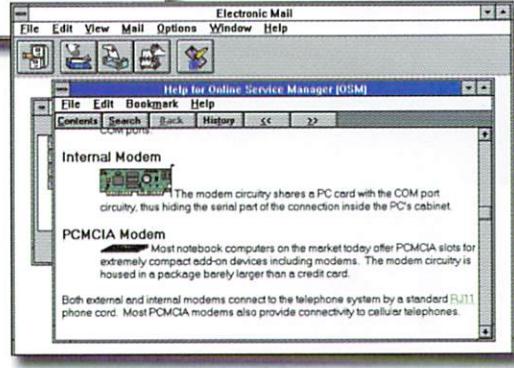
File Libraries: Users simply tag the files they're interested in and select the download icon. Files can be downloaded in the background while users enjoy your other services.



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



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



World of Online Computing

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

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Worldgroup. Beyond the World-Wide Web.

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

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Excalibur BBS

convenience to all users, even those without error-correcting modems.

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



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SEPTEMBER 1995



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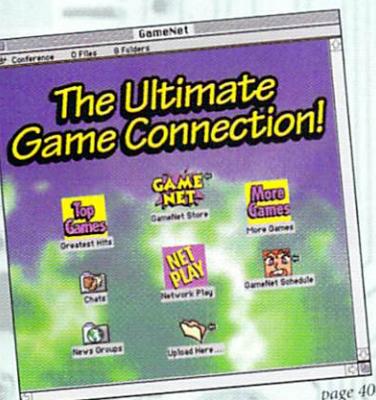
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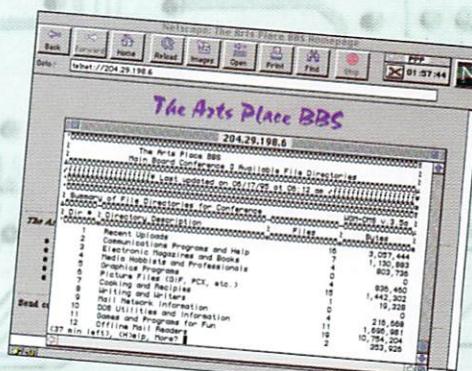
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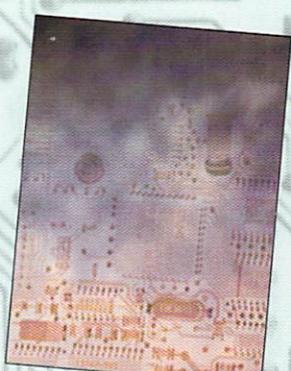
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readme.txt

Getting On Board

We should do this more often.

With (insert four-digit number) sysops born each month 'round the world, we'd be smart to offer on a regular, cyclical basis the kind of timely advice saturating this issue's feature story. The report, in case your cover was torn off in the mail or at the newsstand by a Luddite (see Technoraves below), details author John Hettke's revelations on how to start a bulletin board service.

Hettke not only looks into the practical and technical aspects of starting a BBS (for starters, should you even bother?), he likewise offers first-hand tips on how to deal with crazy callers, ways to manage your ego, and what it takes to keep a BBS fresh — perhaps the most vital task of all these days.

With years of experience in BBSing, and with a book on the subject heading toward its fourth printing, he's someone worth listening to. And maybe we'll ask him for an update in a couple of months.

Elsewhere this month, we talk to



Chris Duke of Duke Engineering about a little project he's been working on to change the face of World Wide Web sites.

Oh, haven't heard of him? Well maybe O'Reilly rings a bell — they're that book publisher-cum-software promoter partly behind a little thing called

WebSite. Duke's WebBoard claims to bring BBSing to WebSite, and we bring a touch of both to you on page 9.

A welcome should go out to a fellow named Lazlow Jones who joins our line-up this month. He'll be writing under the Technoraves heading, where humor at the expense of the online world

will mingle with serious ideas and iconoclastic rants... we think. Truth be told, we're never quite sure what Lazlow will do next, so follow him as we do, beginning on page 20.

And BTW, this is our fifth anniversary issue. There's no pomp, no circumstance, but there is an embarrassing picture of our early days on page 6. Cheers... gulp.

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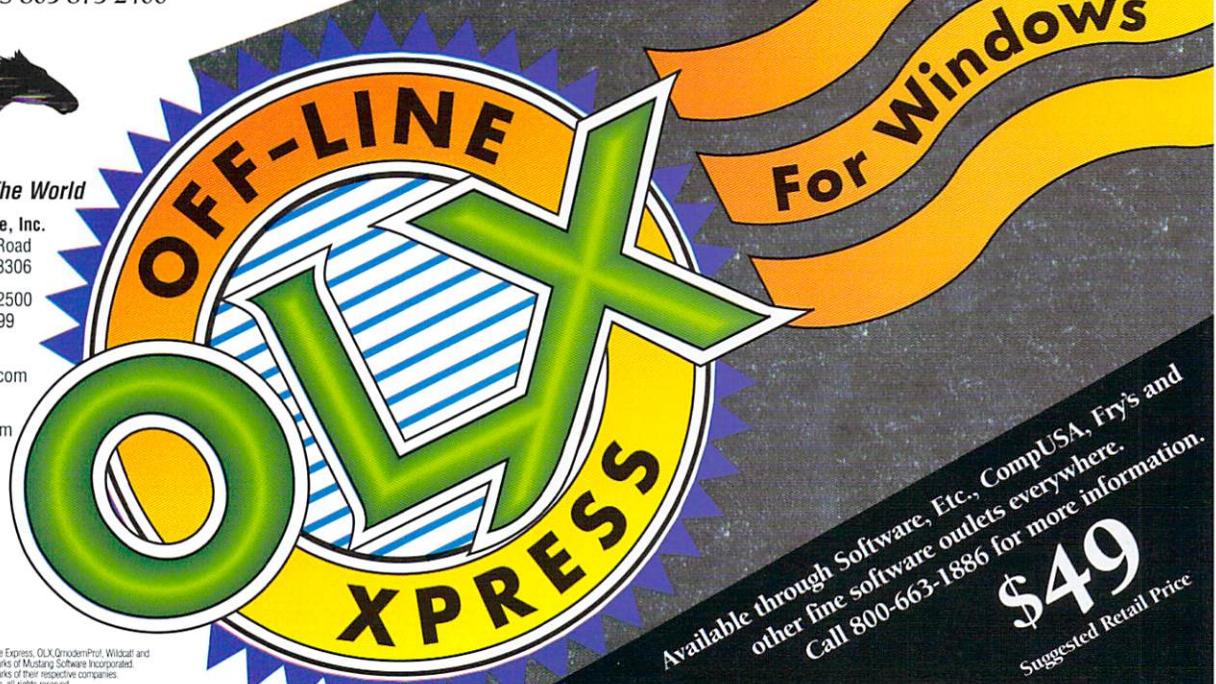
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Worldgroup's Their Oyster: Galacticomm's ISVs Deliver the Goods

As promised, Galacticomm's Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) are serving up new applications for the Worldgroup client/server software with an initial batch of 24 cool tools and apps that offer both sex appeal and hard-core functionality.

"...basically, client/server extensions of every nature can be linked through the Internet or via regular dial-up modem or ISDN lines," said Scott Brinker, Galacticomm CEO. "And this is really just the first wave of Worldgroup extensions. We're aware of a number of incredible new products that are in the early development stages."

Says Brinker, with the openness of Worldgroup's client/server platform, "ISVs — or an organization's own staff — can create these applications easily using our Client/Server Developer's Kit with Visual Basic and Borland C++."

Some of the Worldgroup extensions include two online shopping packages (with JPEG photo support) that permit credit card orders to be processed while the caller's online — MEGA Market by American Banking Systems and Omni-

Happy Birthday, BBS

Half a decade ago, a little monthly magazine was born with just 40 pages, no staff writers, two colors and a meek system of distribution — word of mouth. Called *BBS Callers Digest* in those days, the magazine's original goal was to inform the growing number of BBS callers about the best ways to access this new online world. (The more things change...)

"We hope to bring you the most up-to-date information concerning your next call to a local or long distance BBS," wrote publisher Richard Paquette in the first issue. "We will try to inform

you of ways to make each and every call more productive, but mostly more efficient."

The feature story christening issue one looked into Mark Herring's Qmail 4. Columns covered PCBoard, Wildcat!, TBBS, RelayNet, Interlink, and Intelec; there was an "Answer Man" fielding heavy questions about the difference between extensions ARC and GIF.

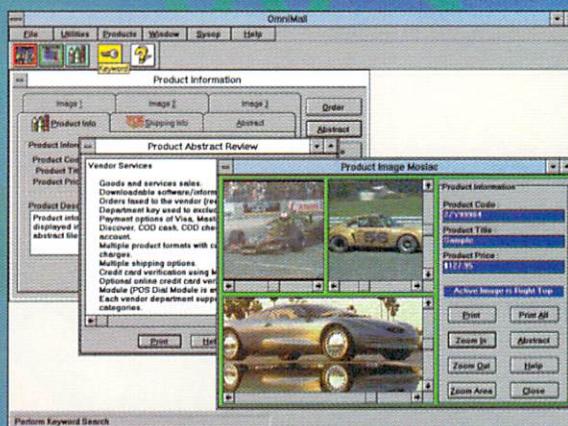
A utilities column looked at programs like COPYDISK and FormatQM while a "What's New!" story discussed the entrance of BBSers into the fax

age when sysop Andy Keeves' first BBS/Fax gateway transmission succeeded.

Five years on, the magazine's got a new name, broader focus, more pages, flashy color, and a worldwide distribution.

It's nearly impossible to enumerate the changes the magazine has experienced since 1990. Even more difficult would be to predict what will happen in the next five, except to say we'll still be offering readers a choice of the best ways to communicate, inform, play and learn in the non-physical world.

NEWS



Mall by DataSafe. A new document archiving database with support for Adobe Acrobat files, giving publishers the tools to display documents online in their original format — ALEX

Document Management by Parallax Development. A voice/image conferencing package lets users speak in their own voices with other users around the world, accompanied by their photograph — TeleTalk by CineCom. A new xBASE compiler allows organizations to design and implement relational database applications, with photos and WAV sound files, to be accessed online — xBasic by BSI Technologies.

Other applications include paging software for integrating personal pagers with Worldgroup, multiplayer games and various utilities.

Though ISVs (third parties) have been known to make a mediocre product a good one, their task here is significantly different, as the Worldgroup package itself is a brilliant and graphi-

Volume 1, Issue 1 September 1995

BBS Callers Digest

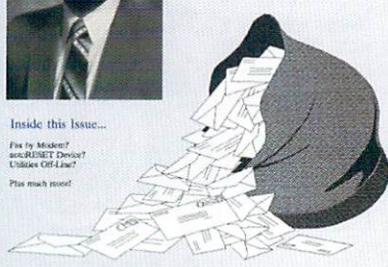


Who is ...
Mark Herring

What is ...
Qmail 4

Inside this Issue...

Fax by Modem?
get a MODEM Device?
Unlatch QMail?
Plus much more!



Cover Price \$1.95

WIRE

cal client/server environment with loads of extras already built in.

Each of the latest 24 applications developed simply take advantage of this home base and allow them to take their products to a sometimes stunningly higher level.

G-TV — Galacticomm has teamed with TVData to jointly market their online products to newspapers and other publications.

TVData is the leading supplier of television listings and features to the publishing industry.

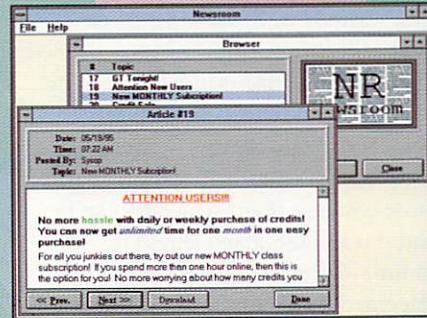
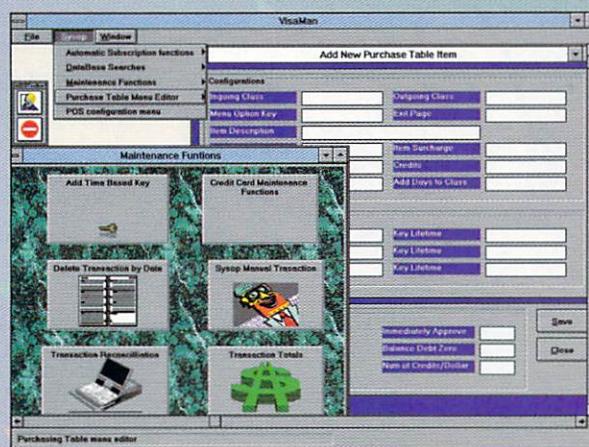
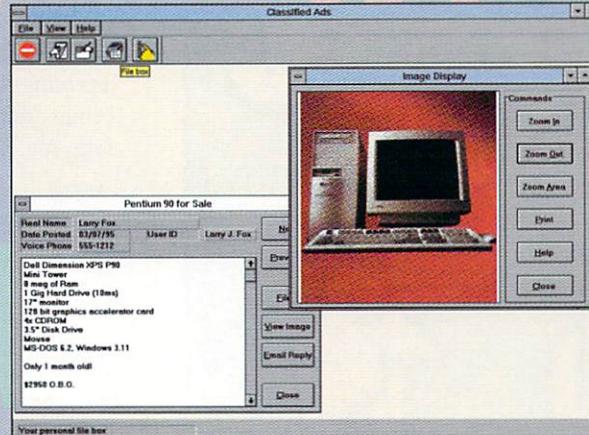
"The online products available from Galacticomm and over 150 independent software vendors, such as TVData — along with the systems integration services of our Network and Integration Services division — can offer these publications a comprehensive solution for creating an online service," Brinker said.

TVData's PC-based program, TVData Online, allows end-users to receive cable system-specific daily television listings and features from an online service running Worldgroup.

Says TVData's President and CEO Art Basin: "With so many newspapers running the Galacticomm platform,

we're very excited that we can bring our content and knowledge of the newspaper industry to this market. Worldgroup provides everything newspapers need to launch an online service, and TVData Online provides them access to the most accurate and comprehensive database of television information available."

Over 100 million TV viewers already



use TVData's listing in 2,700 newspapers, print and electronic cable guides, PC-based online TV Guides, and on-screen interactive listing guides. And many newspapers already utilize Galacticomm's software, including the Raleigh, NC *News and Observer*, Albuquerque Tribune, Tacoma Tribune, Daytona Beach News-Journal, Miami Herald, Scripps-Howard Publishing, The Houston Chronicle and The Hartford Courant.

For information on the TVData deal, or to receive a free brochure detailing ISV products, contact Galacticomm at 800.328.1128.

QmodemPro for Win 95, New Wildcat! From Mustang

Two big releases from Mustang Software come galloping into stores this summer: Wildcat! 4.11 and Qmodem-Pro for Windows 95 (version 2).

The big news with the new Wildcat! BBS software is its support for the add-on wcBILLING, which allows sysops to track callers' activities and bill them only for what they use.

Old Wildcats forced sysops to bill on a flat rate or on a pre-paid basis. Now sysops can design a board that asks callers to prepay, postpay, or pay for "itemized resources used, such as reading and writing messages, uploading and downloading files, using doors or

CONTINUES...

chat sessions.... Sysops may also bill their callers for each minute connected to their BBSs," according to Mustang.

Other uses of wcBILLING are to track and create reports on the popularity of particular BBS resources and those who use them. The data can be sent out to DBF, fixed length or comma-delimited ASCII format for placement in accounting software.

Another addition to 4.11 is a secure Internet log-in. Wildcat! boards connected to the Net can offer incoming Telnetters security through something called an MD5 secure password system, developed as a result of lack of data security across the Net. In other words, it's a defense against crackers who sniff out things like passwords.

Wildcat! 4.11 also incorporates the standard DIZ (Description In Zip) style

file listing mode for file descriptions. And the message editor has been beefed up to include an automatic quoting system that wraps (instead of truncating) previously unquoted material in message replies. Callers can also set Wildcat! to automatically spell-check messages as they are saved.

The upgrade price for 4.11 stands at \$30. A new system runs \$129, \$149 with wcBILLING.

Que the Pro — Taking full advantage of Windows 95, Mustang is set to release the next generation of its powerful QmodemPro.

Callers can look for standard functions like file transfer and terminal emulation, but also TAPI (described below) and OLE 2.0 — all utilizing 32-bit multithreaded technology.

"As communications specialists, we

immediately recognized that consumers weren't going to be satisfied with the terminal software included in Windows 95," said Jim Harrer, Mustang CEO.

In fact Qmodem will offer a phone book (which can be dropped directly on the desktop), Telnet client, programmable toolbar (customized from about 50 program function icons), graphic viewer (GIF, JPEG, BMP), OLE 2.0 drag-n-drop handling, script language, macro keys, host mode, 35 (yes, 35) terminal emulations, and 11 file transfer protocols.

Following are descriptions of some of the new features:

- **TAPI** — Telephony API support enables the sharing of communications devices between multiple applications like Microsoft Exchange Fax system, Qmodem's Host Mode, Dial-Up Networking and other applications that need to share the modem.

- **MAPI** — Mail API support allows callers to transfer text, images and files to many of the major email programs such as Exchange, MS Mail and cc:Mail.

- **Telnet** — Callers can establish Telnet sessions right from the phone book by replacing the phone number with a Telnet address. Callers can transfer files with, say, Zmodem over the Net.

- **MD5** — This encryption algorithm codes a caller's password (when connected to a MD5 supported site) and makes for secure sessions.

Current cool functions are still active, too, like attached sound (WAV) files, configurable scrollback buffer size and scores of macro keys definable for each dialing entry. And look for a File Clipboard that permits callers to grab file names from a terminal window for later use. When a BBS prompts the user to download, he can bring up the Clipboard instead of typing in each file name.

"To benefit from the 32-bit horsepower provided by Windows 95, computer users need applications specifically designed to harness it. Using your old 16-bit communications software in a 32-bit environment will work, but it

Offline

by John Bayham



With so many traveling across BBSs on their way to the Net and vice versa, that proverbial light bulb was bound to shine in some programmer's head: "Hey, build a board for the Web!"

What's the oft-used saying, Build it and they'll come? Well, build it, get the backing of a big-timer like O'Reilly & Associates, and yes, they'll probably come in droves. (Even if "it" amounts to just a working promise of things possible.)

Chris Duke is counting on it.

Duke's the 26-year-old behind Duke Engineering, who in the past busied himself developing a dozen or so third-party apps for a handful of BBS companies. Now he's into the Web. Actually he's into WebBoard.

WebBoard — Duke's creation — was developed to run with O'Reilly's WebSite, the slick and comparatively simple-to-use 32-bit WWW server software offered for under \$500. Through an arrangement with Duke, they'll also be handling the marketing of WebBoard (likely to be released by August).

So what exactly is it? Some would argue WebBoard poses a threat to traditional BBSs.

In reality WebBoard is a conferencing system (developed as a Windows CGI application with Microsoft Access 2.0 for data storage) for WebSite where users log in with name and secure password. Other traditional BBS functions like email, top-10 lists, caller logs, bulletins and files are also present.

Duke's goal with WebBoard, as he says on his page (and echoed in our interview), is "to bring the largely popular and time-proven functionalities of a bulletin board system to the World Wide Web."

The point is not just to bring surfers in, but to keep them there. So far WebBoard seems to do that, judging by early activity on some of the test sites.

Still, one has to wonder if WebBoard offers enough to be compared to a BBS. There's no uploading, no real-time anything, and you can forget about opening a door to an interactive game... at least not yet, anyway.

But with a little (OK, a lot of) tweaking by a third-party, Duke admits many of the simpler interactive elements of basic BBSs could theoretically be adopted to WebBoard.

"WebBoard has a very open architecture. Anything can be plugged in anywhere through very easy-to-code CGI applications," Duke said. "CGI apps can be Windows programs or DOS programs (albeit not very efficient since a DOS VM must be loaded to run it). There are sample Visual Basic CGI applications that come with O'Reilly's WebSite and they are very easy to figure out."

Duke sees a number of developments for

A Board for Your Web?



Chris Duke

WebBoard, including its becoming a 32-bit multi-process application with, perhaps, real-time audio conferencing and a file system.

Some of the key features currently included are:

- Threaded messaging system.
- Public, private and moderated conferences.
- Remote maintenance.
- Top 10 lists.
- User listings, profiles and profile editing.
- Listing of "who logged in today"

In the conference, features include:

- Threaded messaging system.
- Moderated conferences.
- Public and private conferences.
- Message preview.
- Text "button bar" for navigation between messages and threads.
- Show follow-ups toggle.
- Message creation supports pure HTML and AHTML.

Requirements for the Web-op include Windows NT or Windows 95, O'Reilly & Associates' WebSite, a dedicated Web server (at least a 486/66DX), 32 megs of RAM (recommended), and at least a meg of hard disk space.

Pricing for WebBoard was not set at presstime. To get a look at a site with the system, check out <http://www.duke-net.com/webboard/>. Or email at duke@duke-net.com. ■■■■■

The screenshot shows a web-based bulletin board system titled "Welcome to the Willow Glen Graphics W". The main menu includes "List Conferences", "Today's Users", "List All Users", "Personal Profile", "Post a Message Posters", "Top 10 Lists", and "Bulletin". Below the menu, there are several user icons and names. On the right side, there is a list of users with their last login times and IP addresses. The overall design is from the late 1990s.



aunchtime

So you want to be a sysop?

For business or pleasure, an online service of your own can bring power, a little wealth, and more than a few gray hairs. Author John Hedtke looks into whether it's worth the effort, and just how much effort it takes to do it right.

by John Hedtke

Let's face it: you're a god of BBSing. You can identify the different versions of Wildcat! just by glancing at the default screen layouts, you download a 500K offline mail packet every day, and you haven't logged on at 2400 baud in 5 years. Setting up a BBS is the logical next step....Or maybe you just figure that it would be fun to run a BBS of your own, for fun or profit (hopefully both).

CONTINUES...

Why Set Up A BBS?

Before you do anything else, you need to be very clear on what you hope to accomplish with your BBS. Identify the BBS's theme and purpose. As Paul Magid of the Flying Karamazov Brothers says, it doesn't matter how you get there if you don't know where you're going.

You should also decide if you're running your BBS to make money or just to have fun. To successfully charge access fees, you have to offer something to your users, such as extensive files, chatting, networked messaging, or Internet access. One of the most popular services in recent years is to provide the latter, Internet access, email, newsgroups, FTP, Telnet, and so on through a BBS gateway.

Many BBSs offer a range of services for as much as \$200 for an annual membership. Almost all profitable BBSs these days have at least a few incoming lines.

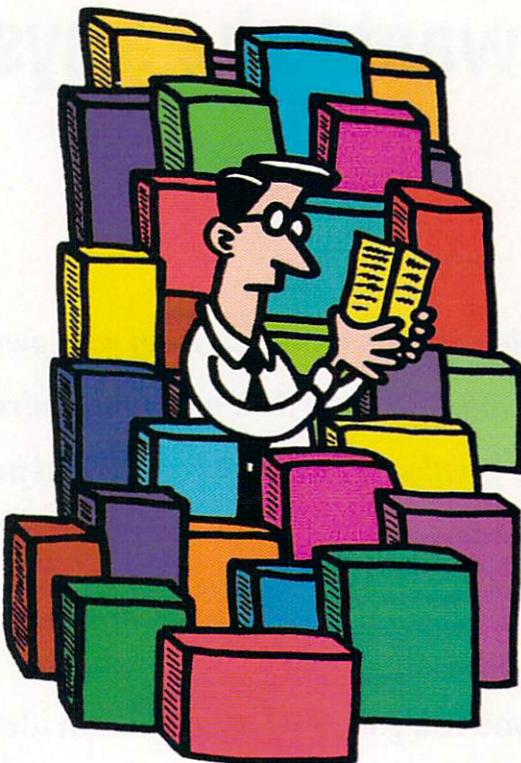
Running a BBS for profit is frustrating and time consuming. And it may be quite a while before you even recover your operating expenses on a regular basis. On the other hand, if you're willing to pay for your BBS out of your own pocket, you don't have to be commercially viable; you can have it do anything you want. A good rule is that if you are setting up a BBS to have fun, don't plan to make much profit. If you are setting up a BBS to make a profit, don't plan to have much fun.

Choosing Software

One common mistake new sysops make is to get BBS software that is easy to set up rather than easy to use. Although you, the sysop, don't want to fight with your BBS software, be very careful not to make your BBS users work harder just to save you a little time. Evaluate BBS software as a BBS user first, then as a sysop. I've always personally enjoyed Wildcat! BBSs, but PCBoard, Searchlight, TBBS, and The Major BBS are all very good BBS packages as well, as are some of the newer Windows-based client-server boards.

TIP: You may still set up the kind of BBS you most enjoy using, but it's a good idea to examine some of your alternatives before making a decision. I've been a huge fan of shareware and freeware since the very first shareware (PC Talk III). Besides the commercial BBS packages above, I recommend that you look at some of the shareware and freeware BBSs. RBBS-PC and FIDO are some of the best BBS programs in this category, but there are several dozen others worth considering.

Besides the BBS software itself, there are add-ons and other features. For a large multiline BBS, you'll need a multitasking software package such as



DESQview. Windows is still not used much for large BBSs because it doesn't effectively support multiline operations. Windows NT and Windows 95 may make inroads in this market, but DESQview is currently the multitasking software of choice among sysops. You'll also need to consider what email and gateway options, doors, games, and other features to start out with, as well as possible options for growth. Be careful that you don't choose BBS software that doesn't network easily.

Choosing Hardware

When selecting the computer to run your BBS on, remember that you don't need to run a BBS on any particular type of computer for exchanging messages and files. Eighty to 90 percent of the BBSs in operation today are running on some type of DOS/Windows computer because they're inexpensive, durable, reasonably easy to work with, and there are a lot of options in DOS/Windows BBS software.

However, there are also good Macintosh BBSs, such as Hermes, FirstClass and Second Sight.

Whatever computer you choose, make sure your software can run on the computer and that you have enough hard disk storage. For a DOS/Windows BBS, I'd recommend starting with a 486/66, eight to 16 MB of RAM, at least a half gigabyte hard disk, a 4x CD-ROM, and a built-in tape drive (there are drives for \$250 that record up to 420 MB on a standard tape).

You should also make sure that your serial ports all have 16550 UARTs so they'll support speeds higher than 9600 baud. This configuration, with a decent monitor, mouse, and keyboard, will cost you maybe \$1,600 to \$1,800. You don't need to buy a bigger computer because the horsepower will be wasted on a typical BBS, and 386 computers aren't worth the price for their performance compared to 486s these days. (If you're planning on running a one- or two-line BBS, you could even use a spare 8088 or 286, but don't expect the best possible performance.)

There are many good modems on the market today. Buy the best and fastest modems you can afford.

Most modem manufacturers offer substantial discounts on their products to sysops. 28.8K modems that list for \$179 may have a retail street price of \$129 and a sysop price of \$99 or less. Plan on buying 14.4K or 28.8K modems exclusively. There are so many good modems being made, it's hard to recommend one particular brand (see Modems in this issue), but you should

make sure that the modems have a lifetime warranty (many do) and that they're up to a 24x7 duty cycle — some cheaper and off-brand modems overheat under constant use.

Phone Service

It is still possible in many areas to get a second residential line installed in your home for the purpose of running a BBS as long as the BBS does not charge money. If the phone company thinks you are running the BBS for profit, it may demand that you switch to a business line, which can cost you considerably more per month.

However, business customers frequently get better service than residential customers, which may make this a worthwhile investment. Check with your local phone company for details of their business service and see what the advantages are. And build a good relationship with the phone company representatives when you start your BBS.

Always remember to put your name, P.O. box, and BBS phone numbers in the logon information and a bulletin. Also list networks, the BBS's network IDs, and the Internet address. New users usually read the logon screens when they dial in for the first time. This information will tell them what they can expect of your BBS and make them feel more comfortable. Be sure that your users always know where to find the BBS's policy statement, too.

BBS Policy

Write your BBS's policy before you set up the bulletin board. The BBS policy should tell your users what you expect of them and what they can expect of you. The policy should also be easy to find, read, and understand. Be clear and direct.

Good BBSs should evolve with their users. Review the policy frequently before and after setting up the BBS to make sure that the policy remains an accurate reflection of what you want the BBS to be. And don't be afraid to change the policy if you can make it more workable.

Your BBS policy may limit your legal liability as well. The best defense against legal problems is to develop a

good user base. As a sysop, you should also make it a point to review the messages and files uploaded on your BBS. For a detailed analysis of legal issues for sysops, contact EFF (the Electronic Frontier Foundation) or purchase a copy of a book called *Net Law*.

Building a User Base

The most frustrating thing for a new sysop is waiting for the first few callers. Expecting people to phone immediately is not realistic — it usually takes three to six months before a BBS has a regular, devoted user-base. If you are offering interesting or unusual features



such as an extensive library of software downloads or online games, word of mouth will help. Advertising can also speed up this process.

The best way to advertise is by putting announcements on other BBSs and in magazines like this one. Most areas have a local BBS list that's available online or in print; find out who is in charge of the BBS list for your area code and follow the procedure for getting your BBS added to their list.

You should also put ads in the newsletters of local computer clubs and special interest groups. And if you have

a special interest BBS (such as one dealing with stamp collecting or ham radio), consider advertising in magazines and newsletters that cater to those interests.

Dealing with Murphy's Law

There are three kinds of problems you may encounter: technical, user, and ego. The most common technical problem is having your BBS's hard disk fail, which can cost you your messages, files, userlog, and BBS configuration. To avoid this you should do a full backup (everything on the hard disks) about once a week, and incremental backups

(everything that has been added or changed since the last backup) daily. 250 megabyte tape drives can be had for as little as \$100 these days, and they're much easier to use than inserting 200 diskettes one after another.

Occasionally, you'll have to talk to a user who is making trouble. Deal with such users quickly: one idiot can embroil a whole BBS in pointless turmoil. As soon as you spot someone getting out of line, send them private mail that outlines what they are doing and why you want them to stop. Do not make it a public issue and don't let them make it a public issue. Give them one chance to change their behavior. If they don't, kick them out. A BBS is not a democracy; it is a benevolent dictatorship. You must strike a balance between giving your users enough freedom to be creative on the BBS and keeping the BBS on track with its stated goals. You are the final judge of appropriate behavior on the BBS. The most effective sysops never have to make this point to anyone.

But the biggest problem you'll likely face is your own ego: you're going to get criticism from people who don't like the way you're doing things. The success of a BBS is not measured by the number of detractors it has, but by the number of people who call. Be ready to change, but don't take criticism personally. Anything you do is bound to annoy someone.

TIP: A BBS that doesn't offend somebody can't possibly interest anybody.

Keep it Fresh

BBSs must change to continue to attract and keep users. Make sure that the BBS is continually exciting. Add message and file areas as necessary to reflect the BBS users' current interests.

Cultivate your users. First, offer as many help files as you can. If you get a whole bunch of new users involved and make them feel welcome, you'll soon have a large group of helpful, experienced users who are incredibly loyal to you and the BBS because of the support you've given them. You can't buy that at any price. For the same reasons, be helpful and considerate to the users who are very new to telecommunications, even when they ask "dumb" questions. Remember, at one time you didn't know much about BBSing either. Everyone needs a little help now and then.

Summary

Running a BBS is no bed of roses. BBSs cost time and money, and they'll always cost you more time and money than you thought they would. Once you have made your best estimate of how much setting up a BBS will require of you (time and money-wise), double it.

If you're not a power user, you may want to triple your time estimate for the first six months. After the first six months, you'll either be a power user or you'll have given up.

A sysop is generally viewed by the users as a combination of genie and servant, although a career in food service may get you acquainted with what it's really like being a sysop at times. Always treat your users with respect — after all, you work for them. Without users, the BBS would be just you and the computer.

If the job of sysop is too big for you alone, enlist the aid of friends or a user group. Be very careful to spell out everyone's rights and responsibilities in advance.

Be logical and consistent when planning your BBS, particularly your message and file areas. Your BBS commands and menu structure should be

clear and easy to understand (unless you're running a fully graphical environment, in which case lines should be clean and clutter kept to a minimum). Establish clear, concise goals and limits for your BBS before going online, and tailor your policies to meet those goals.

Don't make the BBS harder for users to use just to make your job as sysop a little easier.

Good BBSs require careful planning and a lot of effort. They don't just happen.

setting up your own BBS. Fellow sysops can be very helpful in solving technical problems. If there is a local sysop's association, consider joining it. Listening to sysops swapping stories about the history of the local BBS community can help you avoid making spectacular mistakes of your own. (Every sysop makes a spectacular mistake now and then.) They can also be a strong support network when you are facing a problem user.

Finally, remember that good BBSs are exothermic: they generate heat, in the form of fun and enthusiasm, in everyone who uses them. If you build a better BBS, the world will beat a path to your door... or at least give you a call. Take pride and satisfaction in what you are doing and make sure that your BBS is a reflection of that.

Recommended Reading

I recommend the following books for your library:

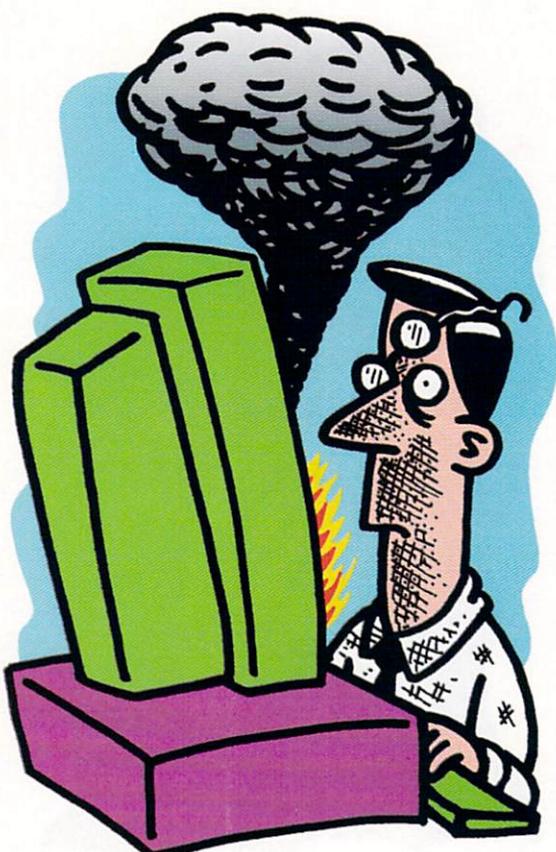
Don Aslett, *Clutter's Last Stand* Writer's Digest, 1984. Light, fun, very useful for BBS design and other things. \$7.95.

Alan Bryant, *Creating Successful Bulletin Board Systems* Addison-Wesley, 1994. The best book you can buy for complete details on setting up your own BBS. \$39.95.

John Hettke, *Using Computer Bulletin Boards* (3rd Edition) MIS: Press, NY. Gives extensive information on fundamentals, types of BBSs, and applications for BBSs. \$29.95

Lance Rose, *Netlaw* Berkeley, CA Osborne/McGraw Hill, 1995. Lance Rose is an attorney with expertise in computer communications law. ■■■■■

John V. Hettke is a columnist and the award-winning author of 12 books, including the 3rd edition *Using Computer Bulletin Boards*, Peachtree Accounting for Windows Made Easy, and Windows Shareware 500. He can be reached at jhedtke@aol.com or jhedtke@oz.net.



Listen to what your users say about other BBSs as well as your own. Log on to the BBSs of the sysops who get consistently favorable reviews and incorporate the desirable parts of their BBSs into yours. Be prepared to spend a lot of time getting things the way you want them.

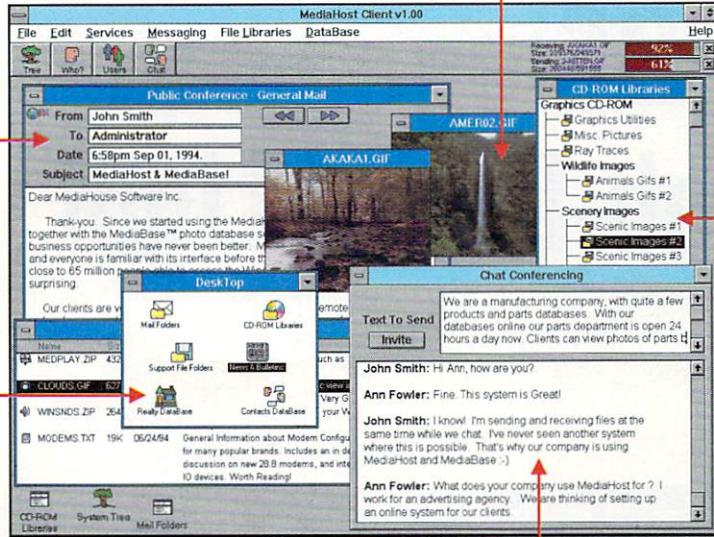
The best way to deal with problems is to be ready for them before they happen. Start by talking to the other sysops in your area before, during, and after

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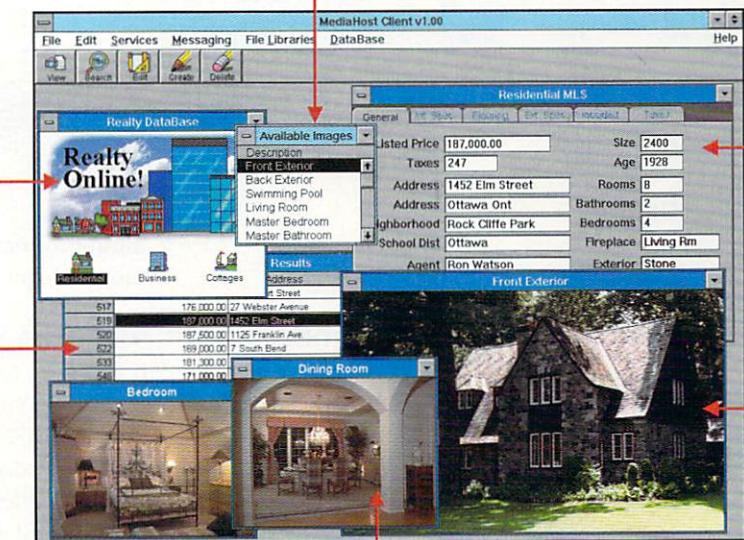
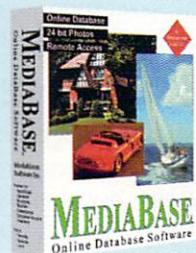
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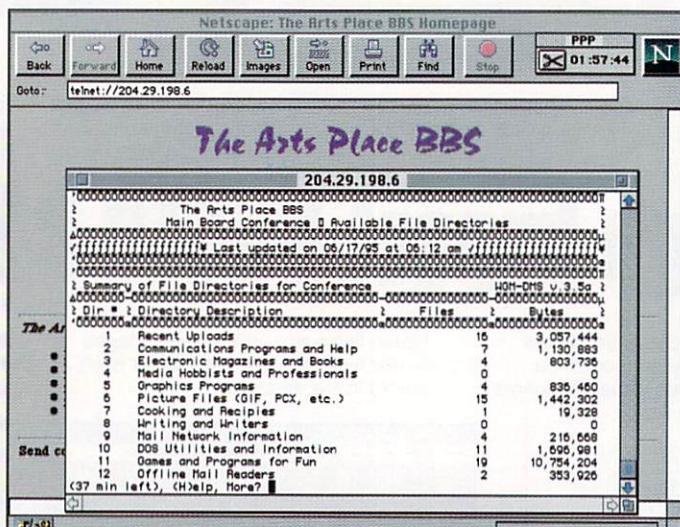
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BBSing by the Web-Board Light

Face it, one of the reasons you got Internet access in the first place was to cut down on long-distance charges. Am I right? You send email because it's cheaper than a phone call. You post queries on Usenet... And, for an increasing number of users, the World Wide Web is a cheaper alternative to by-the-hour online services.

KEY WORDS

Where the boards are
Telnetting to exotic lands



So, why are you still dialing into BBSs in different time zones?

Before you start this month's column, you're going to need a Telnet client. For Macintosh, NCSA Telnet will work just fine, and Windows users can't get by without Trumpet Telnet or its equivalent (or Galacticomm's Worldgroup client). Most Web browsers will deliver Telnet URLs to

the appropriate tool if you set your preferences right, or you can just login directly to sites once you have the Telnet address.

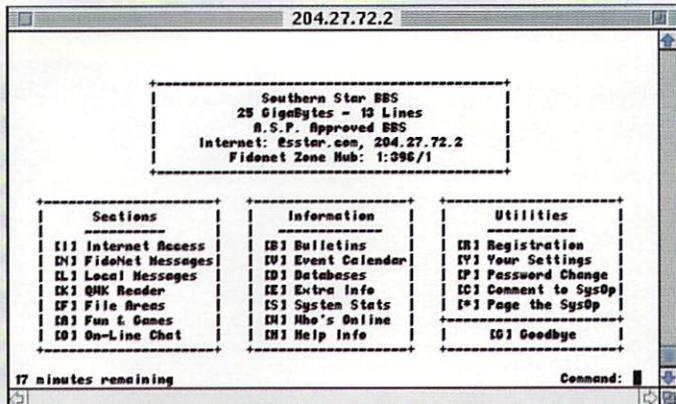
OK, so let's surf the Web for some BBSs!

If you want to track down Internet-accessible bulletin board services on your own, go no further than EverClear's Vicious Book of BBSes at <http://www.dsv.su.se/~mats-bjo/bbslist.html>. This long-winded site by Dan Vishnesky profiles Telnet-accessible BBSs and offers links directly to the sites. (Also, check out the extensive list and source sites in the telnettable boards later in this issue).

Some highlights: Notes on etiquette, tips on how to sign on to a strange BBS, and rankings of "The Biggest Userbase," "The Most Files Available," "The Most Unpredictable," and "The Most Political." My only criticism is that the names of the ranked and rated BBSs aren't anchored to their entry in the master list (which would make best use of hypertext to help the

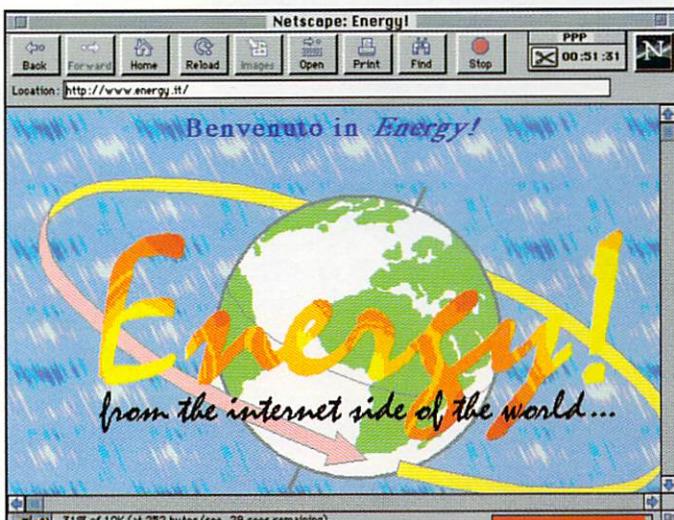
user of the site). Also, the site hasn't been updated in awhile, so there are bound to be cobwebs. But, the site is one of the more comprehensive for Web surfing BBSers and all of the Telnet links that I tried were still valid, so have at it!

Note to newcomers to Telnet: You generally will be greeted with a text login prompt. Fortunately, Dan's list tells you how to sign in initially (often "BBS"). From there, you should get guidance on how to sign in as a guest and what sort of validation is required — for instance The 9th Floor (Dan's pick for "Weirdest BBS," located at <telnet://leccata.nmsu.edu>) requires you to first visit <http://leccata.nmsu.edu/users/Techs-Misc/bbs.Qaire.html> or Finger <bbs@leccata.nmsu.edu> to get an application to fill out.



Another quick warning: Some of the BBSs you can Telnet to are in, gasp!, non-English languages, like Korean, Spanish, or Finnish. This is great if you speak those languages, but can be disorienting otherwise. Fortunately, Dan lets you know what boards are in what tongue.

Speaking of foreign sites (one of the advantages of using the Internet is that overseas phone bills can become a thing of the past), there are several Italian sites worth visiting on the Web. The Energy BBS is at <http://www.energy.it/>. Much of the site is in Italian, but there's enough English to get you through the login



process if you're not a native speaker. Another Telnettable Italian site is InfoSquare BBS at <http://www.infosquare.it/>, but they only offered English prompts for RIPscrip, which is not an option on my Telnet client. Oh well.

Korean-speaking BBSers will find a goldmine at <http://korea.stanford.edu/home.html>. The Hana BBS is an easy Telnet in, and even has an English option for those who don't speak Korean. The BBS is geared toward chatting and topical discussions, although the Web page also links to an FTP file area and a sophisticated map of Web servers in Korea.

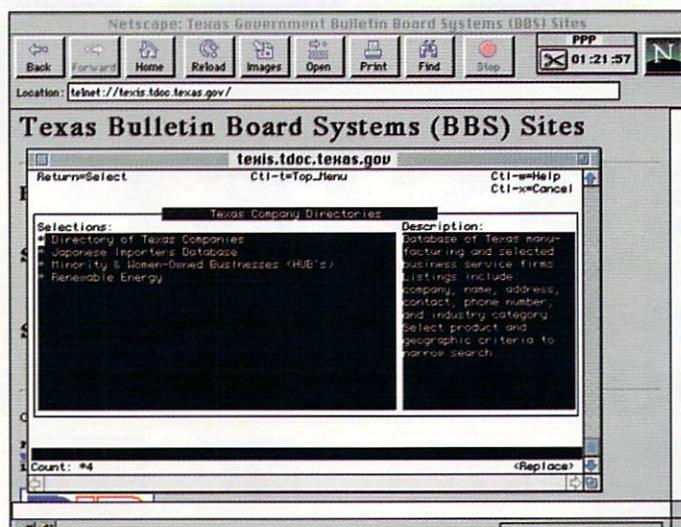
Planning a trip to New Zealand? Be sure to take along Craig Shore's dialup BBS list for the Christchurch area at <http://helium.dosli.govt.nz/lists/christchurch/>. Sadly, none include Telnet addresses, but there you are. Maybe the next update will offer some clickable access.

A little closer to home (for me at least) is the New Orleans Big Easy BBS site found at <http://bigeasy.com/bbs.htm>. The BBS was easy enough to get into, but I wasn't going to shell out \$15 per month without a preview. At least the Web site includes a list of other local BBSs. I found a little more Southern hospitality at the Southern Star BBS, at <telnet://204.27.72.2>. The site offered me a free look around, although the only files I could get to were lists of the files available for paying members. Still, the BBS offered database searches of the CIA World Factbook, drug interactions, CEO phone numbers, and other useful and interesting info on my trial visit. Cool.

As a former Texas-based reporter (now East Coaster), I am always interested in the state of the government there. So I checked in at <http://www.texas.gov/bbs.html>. What I found there was both cool and useful: The Texas Marketplace BBS, replete with a directory of Texas companies and a database of Japanese importers. The Web site also offered a full listing of state government BBSs, some of them reachable via Telnet.

The Arts Place BBS in Arlington, VA., offers a free login with access to files, chats and conferences on all things creative. An interesting twist is that the site has international appeal, with options for English, Spanish, French and German visitors. A great site at <http://www.arts.org/>.

If this isn't enough for you, remember that Yahoo is a Web



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Global Destruction	\$ 125.00	AutoRate	\$ 99.00	GalactiBox (16 port intn'l)	\$ 1289.00
Game Connection	\$ 239.00	HelpMan	\$ 49.00	PC XNet Card (X.25)	\$ 1039.95
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Chess RIP	\$ 99.95	WorldLink Jumble Madness	\$ 29.95	ISK 115K - 32 line	\$ 3175.00
Othello RIP	\$ 99.95	Charge Card Manager	\$ 69.95	ISK 115K - 64 line	\$ 4825.00
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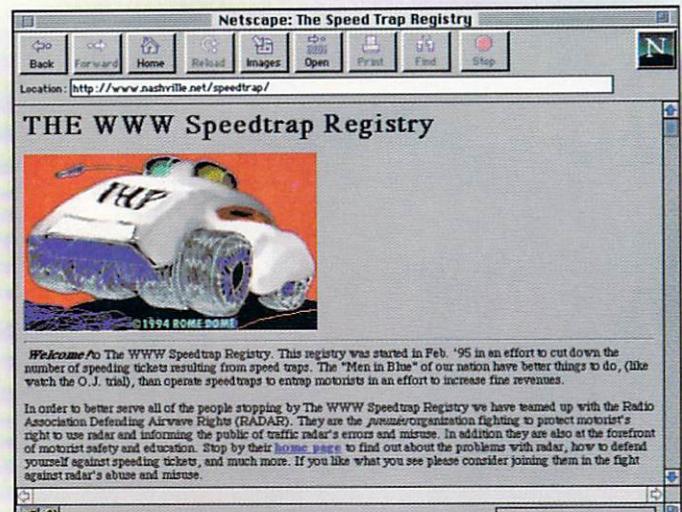
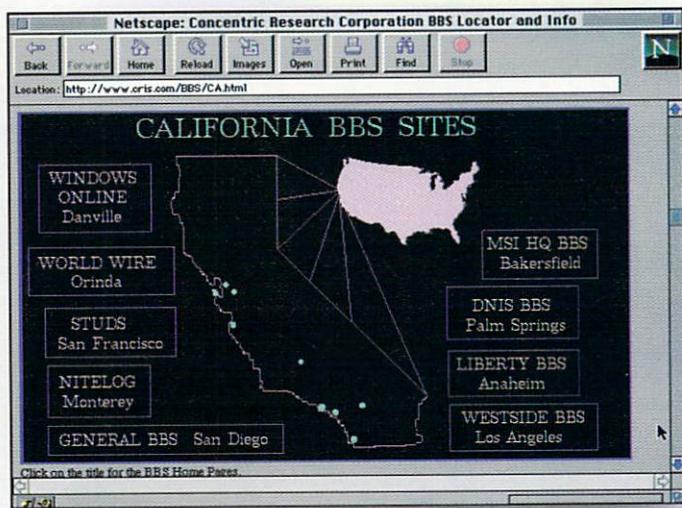


C.O.D.

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crawler's tool, and searching for BBSs is no exception. Surf directly to http://www.yahoo.com/Business/Corporations/Networks/Bulletin_Board_Systems/ for a short but sweet listing of boards and BBS-related sites on the Net. I was pleased to find a BBS that was actually in my local calling area, PICS Online at <http://www.pics.com/>. But for every local BBS you find, there will be a dozen or more in exotic locations you'll be longing to Telnet to.

Surfing about, I also stumbled on Concentric Research Corp's BBS Direct site at http://www.cris.com/BBS_Direct.html. This is access you must pay for, allowing you to bounce to the many boards who are members, but unfortunately their site, although well planned, was in a state of reformation (?) when I dropped by. Email requests for information on whether they planned to ever complete their site yielded no reply. At presstime it was another pretty face on the Net with not much body. Still, the Telnet access does work. With more than 30 BBSs available to the committed hypersurfer, it's really not a bad deal. Just don't expect the pretty maps on their Web page to offer information about member BBSs and you'll be OK.

While not exactly a BBS, the Speed-Trap Registry has the trappings of a well-kept, moderated conference. Web surfers are free to contribute their own reviled speed traps on the real highways and byways of the United States so that others may try to avoid them. Kind of like CB Radio for '90s, only without the immediacy of a "Breaker 1-9, there's a smokey on the west-bound side of Highway 5 just past the 120 mile marker." Tune in your Web browser to <http://www.nashville.net/speedtrap>.

The Mother of All BBSs is not a BBS in the traditional sense, either. It's more of a user-updated repository of links to Web sites on the Internet. In other words, YAWIS (or Yet Another Web Index Site), but with a bit of a twist. The top level of this site is more than 150K and, all in all, the site is not easy on the eyes. The BBSs, as sub-levels are called, tend to be fragmented and all over the place, and there's very little order. But it can be a diverting place to surf new Web links for awhile. Check out Oliver McBryan's wayward brainchild at http://www.cs.colorado.edu/homes/mcbryan/public_html/bb/summary.html.

Of course the hard-core BBSer will be at home in Usenet, the land of 14,000 or more conferences. And, I've found, using Netscape as a Usenet mail reader is really not a bad option.... Of course, that's fodder for another column.

Overheard on the 'Net

"Make love, not flame wars."

Dave Kramer can be reached at reeltime@omni.voicenet.com.

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OF THE NIGHT**

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Ludd Online

Commercialization,
over-mechanization,
frustration, sabotage —
to embrace the dataway,
or to crush it?

Sabotage in the electronic world indicates now more than ever a determination by the rank and file to make their own decisions. The reaction by the core users to the online explosion explains more about the movement than the mass enrollment on commercial online services does. The early 90s might be described as a transition from a socially diverse network of BBSers to a shared online experience that reverberated through society and prompted the masses to adopt a commercialized version.

With this scurry to get online or die, frustration levels run high, already prompting some to beat their machines senseless. One person threw an unresponsive modem from a 50-story Manhattan apartment window; another group of teenagers took baseball bats to a slow 286.

With the seemingly inevitable commercialization of the online world, comes a clear reaction. What was once an exchange of ideas, morphed into an exchange of money.

The new saboteurs, many of whom frequented BBSs for nearly two decades, tout understanding of the computer world. These seasoned pros strike fear in the hearts of the masses who scream at the sight of a C:\ prompt and type w-i-n to return to "reality." Now as computers surpass TV sales and with the transition of the computer into a consumption mechanism, many have undertaken reinvestigation of a school of thought called "Luddism," recently ridiculed in a jazzy pop-techie lifestyle magazine from San Francisco.

The term "Luddism" in the 90s is quickly depicted as referring to barbaric opponents of technological progress and the American way. The original Luddites in the early 19th century were not opposed to machinery; they were opposed to autonomy and control over their own labor.

Reaction to domination by mechanization puts labor on the defensive, which has resulted in social unrest since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. Pinpointing machine breaking as the hallmark of a movement minimizes the intense reaction by labor to mechanization.

This trend did extend past the era of Ned Ludd. Sabotage surfaced at Volvo plants in Sweden, Australian reactionaries in the 1970s panted industry giants with "smash this machine" stickers, and in the pre-dawn hours of Oct. 1, 1975, Washington Post pressmen — whose jobs were threatened by computerized cold type technology — disabled 72 units of the Post's nine presses in 20 minutes.

Beyond the mechanical destruction, it is apparent that something bigger is going on here: Workers are reacting to a drastic change in labor relations. The

core of a genre or movement is always subordinated by the commercialization of their movement.

Many artists refused repeat performances at the second go-around of Woodstock — "This revolution is brought to you by Pepsi."

The commercialization of the music industry left many of its founders dazed, wondering how they could have been so easily displaced.

Such is the transition of the online environment from a dusty pile of Commodore components to a tiny Pentium in the corner sending and accepting messages across the globe. The seasoned online veterans' plight becomes quite visible. And as corporations fly head-first into a paperless world, integrated automation systems render management/corporations themselves more vulnerable to sabotage than ever before.

Enter Luddism.

Sabotage is a beautiful thing to those outmoded by the means of production. Who doesn't smile when someone socks it to an oppressive monopoly?

Regardless of right or wrong, the virus writers and the crackers are screaming a battle cry: I AM HERE.

Destruction of machines doesn't seem like a sensible solution to change, and I'm not averse to someone making a buck. Technology saves lives, and frankly, it's cool downloading files from the far reaches of the earth. But it is interesting to examine reactions to technology, too.

The Tofflers, Gingrichs, Gates and AOL executives will continue to thrive off of the technological transcendence. Our online future is pretty with advantages. But the headlong advance by the masses into an online utopia has a reaction: the sysops, the code writers, the bulletin board frequenters who started a revolution are now either adapting willingly to the new culture of the online environment, or are reacting against it through sabotage. ■■■

Lazlow Jones writes and produces the Underground Technofile for the Underground Network, an alternative radio satellite network in New York. He can be reached at lazlow@undernet.com and www.undernet.com.



Rusty Edie

Dual Eliminator

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



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

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7393 California Ave.
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Games, Finance, Entertainment and Free Web Pages!

Culture Club

America Online continues to improve its offerings with new forums, Web pages, services and faster access locations.

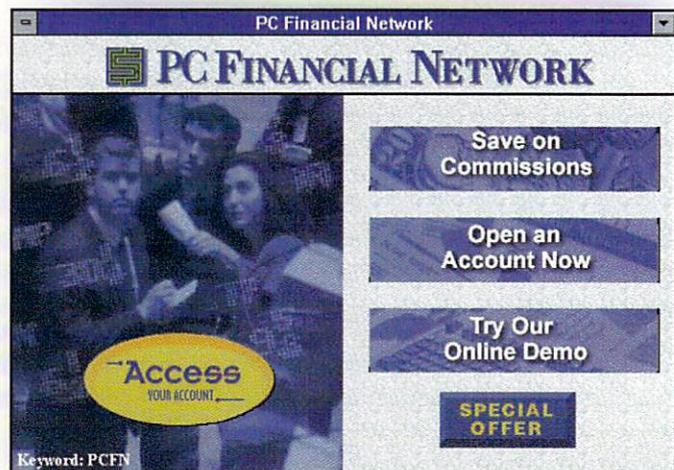
Netnoir — One especially interesting new feature of the service is Netnoir, a forum that aims to digitize, archive and distribute Afro-centric culture in cyberspace. Afro-centric culture is defined as Afro-Caribbean, Afro-European, Afro-Latin, Continental African as well as African-American. Culture is defined here as literature, music, fashion, history, art, cuisine, etc. It also includes individuals, groups and organizations that are of direct or indirect African descent, as well as information which relates to some aspect of African culture.

The service launched this summer with four departments: Music, Sports, Education and Business. There will be a total of 18 departments included over the following year-and-a-half, including Film, Travel, Games, Health, Women, Politics, Lifestyles, Religion/Spirituality, Comix, News, Literature, The Arts, Communications, and Shopping.

Since the cultures of so many people are being represented, certain aspects of the service will be available in English, French and Spanish. Further, content/information is broken into two categories: "above the line" and "below the line." Above the line content is made up of original articles and interviews exclusively for NNO in each respective department.

KEY WORDS

Afro-centric online
Play the market
Web pages, gratis



Below the line content/information is where NNO creates areas online for existing brand name content/information providers such as magazines, newspapers, record labels, etc.

PC Financial Network — With this new AOL service, PC Financial Network investors can instantly open an account (Individual, Joint, Partnership or Corporate) using up to \$15,000 dollars with which to trade.

PCFN offers a wealth of services including "Alerts," an up-to-the-minute recap of the events related to your account; "Trading," which gives you two simple stock trading formats designed to meet your trading comfort level (plus online option and mutual fund trading screens); "Accounts," easy to use monitoring of your Portfolio Holdings, Executed Trades, Transaction History etc.; and "Quotes," free real-time quotes for stocks, indexes and options.

AOL members have the option of test-driving a practice

PC Financial Network - Commission Calculator

Commission Calculator	PC Financial Network
Compare our commissions* by entering the number of shares and the purchase price of a trade you might make. Then click the "Calculate" button.	Regular..... \$50.00 Frequent Trader..... \$40.00
Quantity: <input type="text" value="1000"/>	Full Commission Broker ... \$149.44
Purchase Price: <input type="text" value="2.50"/>	Charles Schwab & Co. Regular..... \$90.00 Electronic..... \$81.00
Calculate	Fidelity Regular..... \$85.00 Electronic..... \$76.50

*based on published schedules as of 5/1/95

Training **Commission Schedule** **Close** **Help**

account to get a feel for how the online service operates. Members can use the commission calculator to check PCFN's commission rates against other discount brokerages.

PCFN, which was started in 1987 and claims to have over one million online trades, might be a great way to do your investing if you like the convenience of 24 hour access and no pushy brokers with high commissions.

Other new services on AOL include Tower Records, one of the worlds largest sources for audio media, and The Free Shop Online — a place for the thrifty among us to get something for nothing, or almost nothing.

Web pages — AOL has also announced users will be able to create and publish their own Web pages (or "sites") on the World Wide Web. Two services, "My Home Page" and "My Place" are free to AOL members and should be available by the time you read this.

My Home Page offers members an easy to master format for creating their own customized multimedia personal home page. My Place offers members two megabytes of space (about 25-40 Web pages) to publish on the Web. My Place will also provide a feature which allows members to send and receive files.

Prodigy — It's In The Mail

Prodigy has made some of the much needed improvements to its mail interface, and if you're running the latest version of the software for Windows you now can catch and correct typos in messages via a built-in spell checker, select the style and size of message type fonts, mark your messages as "Urgent" in the recipient's in-box, send and receive messages

up to seven times the current maximum length, deliver real and blind carbon copies of outgoing messages, and enjoy native Windows functionality like scrolling text, list boxes and resizable windows.

Looking for cool shareware while on Prodigy? Check out the ZD Net Shareware Club where you can get membership for free (for the first month anyway, \$3.50 per month after that) and two downloads, gratis.

ZD Net Shareware Club is for members only and gives you over 6,000 of the best shareware programs, plus daily shareware highlights, weekly feature articles and newsletters from shareware "experts."

Get games on the cutting edge of 3-D technology, puzzles, utilities to help you and your computer work more efficiently, business programs, plus a great selection of media.

The club is a Prodigy timed (plus) feature, with no surcharge for modem speeds up to 14,400 bps. The two free downloads are the ZD Net Download Manager (this makes it easier for you to store, track and use the programs that you download) plus Alan Friedman's Computer Glossary, the award-winning reference of choice for both industry experts and lost-in-the-lingo novices. It provides over 6,000 definitions covering the entire computer industry.

ZD Net Shareware Club Today's Highlights

- 1 Stay Out of the Red with Loan Advisor
- 2 Enjoy Summer with Capture the Flag
- 3 Keep Your Finances in Order
- 4 Software Reduces Interest Payments
- 5 Organize Your Personal Affairs

PRODIGY CHAT Real-Time Conversations See what guests and events are scheduled for June and July **Look**

ZD Net Main Menu

ZD Net PRODIGY Edition

ZD Net Main Menu

SHAREWARE CLUB Join our Club! There's 6,000 programs at your fingertips

Subscribe to Ziff-Davis magazines

PICK shareware a la carte from Selections

ZD Net on the World Wide Web

SATURN Have you heard what they're saying about Saturn? Check out the free Saturn Bulletin Board in "Saturn On-Line." **Look FREE**

Look

Look

CompuServe Offline

Ashmount Research has updated and enhanced WigWam, a CompuServe offline reader, and given it a new name — **POWWOW**.

POWWOW 3.03 offers a standard Windows multiple document interface, user-definable toolbars, definable icons for favorite places, and iconized tool tips with context-sensitive help. Among other things, the program can automatically download messages from forums and mail while you're off browsing the Internet with the new CompuServe NetLauncher.

POWWOW 3.03 presents forum messages and other online information as conversations, allowing you full control of the storage, retrieval, and management of your information. New

CONTINUES ...

features include improved Internet functionality, including support of Telnet connections, making access to the Net easy. And newsgroups are viewed as threaded conversations — just as in CompuServe forums.

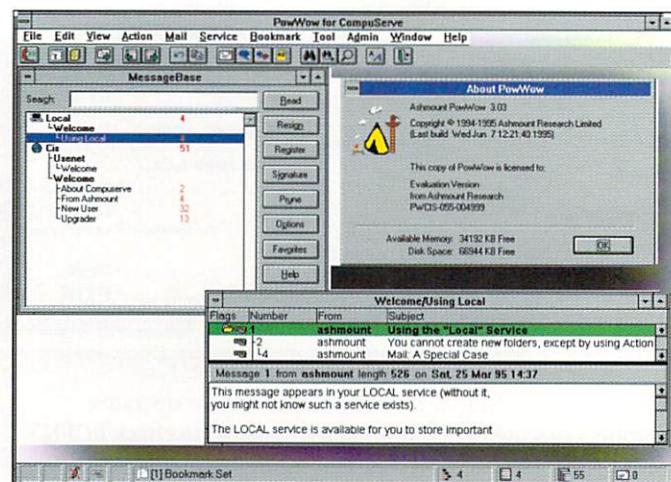
Download POWWOW 3.03 from the UK Communications (GO UKCOMM) Forum's Library 12: "POWWOW" is in the file POWWOW3.EXE. Support for the program is offered in message sections 12 (POWWOW Help), 13 (POWWOW Wishlist), and 14 (POWWOW Chatter).

CSCD — CompuServeCD, the award-winning CD-ROM multimedia companion to the information service, now offers single-click hotlinks to the World Wide Web in the Windows and Macintosh Edition.

In the "Big Fun" issue, CompuServeCD subscribers get a free copy of NetLauncher, CompuServe's previously mentioned Web browser, as well as Trouble Shooter, the program used by CompuServe Customer Service to track down connection problems.

This issue has also been loaded down with plenty of free-ware and shareware, including a big grab bag of screen savers, utilities and games. Hear music from the latest Annie Lennox and Jacky Terrasson albums. Cruise the highway with Bob Dylan in his new "Highway 61" interactive section. Preview summer blockbuster movies. Get a sneak preview of the upcoming WorldsAway role playing game. Check out cool sites on the Web.

These are only a few of the things you'll find packed into 650 megabytes of information and pure fun, delivered in a really swell '50s retro theme that includes everybody's favorite



commercials and images from the 1950s.

Phone*File upgrade — Phone*File, a database of over 80 million U.S. households containing names, addresses, and telephone numbers searchable in several ways, has been enhanced with flexible new features to make searching faster and easier than ever.

Some of the new features include:

- Search for surname by metropolitan area. Previously, searching was only available by geographic area. For example, if you tried locating an individual in Philadelphia, you either searched Philadelphia and each surrounding town individually or the entire state of Pennsylvania. Using the new metropolitan area feature, you can search the primary city and all surrounding cities in one pass.

- Search by first name and/or first initial with surname. Pretty much what it says. You can now search for all James Jones's at ZIP, city, metropolitan, or state level without having to review every Jones at the geographic level requested.

- Search for a surname on a particular street. For example, you could look for all Joe Does on Elm Street in the state of Wisconsin.

Phone*File is a great tool to help you locate long-lost friends, school buddies, business associates, distant relatives, and even those who might not want to be found.

X-Delphi

Focusing on the creation of imaginative and interactive content tied to the launch of its new online service in the fall of this year, Delphi Internet Services Corp., in collaboration with sister Fox Broadcasting Company, has launched the official 'X-Files' Web site. The site, which previewed at the first official "X-Files" convention in San Diego on June 11, can now be accessed by the public via the Delphi Internet home page at <http://www.delphi.com>.

"The 'X-Files' Special Interest Group on the current Delphi Internet service has been so popular with Delphi members that we wanted to create something fresh and original specifically for the Web," said Dr. Alan Baratz, CEO of Delphi Internet. This new 'X-Files' Web site is a great example of the exciting and

Online Income

Free Report on how to go from \$0 to \$5,000 a month in Online Income in as little as 120 days!

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- 5 proven ways to generate income from your callers... even with no subscription fee.
- 9 specialized techniques for increasing your subscriber base.

Achieve \$5,000 per month in as little as 8 more weeks

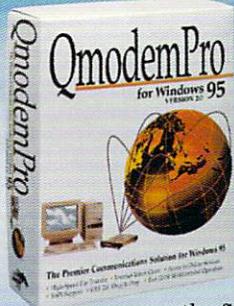
- 11 marketing secrets to multiply your income rapidly (and at little or no cost).
- 4 little known hidden revenue producing sources that could take your income up to \$10,000 per month. Limited availability.

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CONTINUES ...

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the first communication software that delivers all the features and performance you need to get the most from the new 32-bit Windows platform. And since you demand performance, you'll like the fact that QmodemPro's communication and Internet capabilities go way beyond the standard terminal software included with Windows 95. So whether you're connected to the office, company mainframe or BBS for data/file transfer, you'll get the powerful, 32-bit technology in QmodemPro to satisfy your "need for speed."

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Available at Software Etc., Babbages, Computer City, CompUSA, Electronics Boutique, Egghead and other software outlets for \$129 or less. Registered Qmodem/QmodemPro customers call for upgrade pricing.

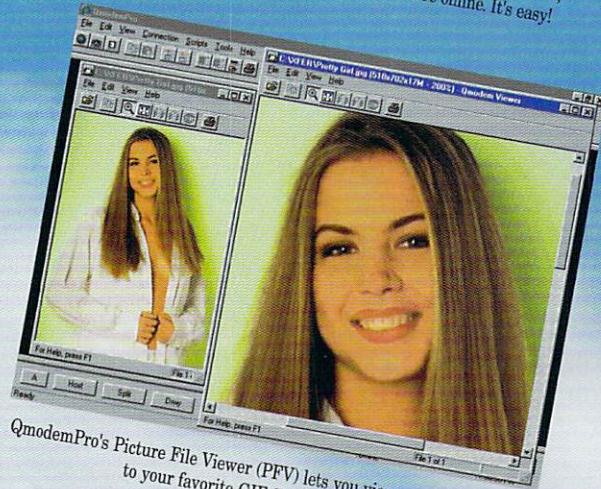


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- 35 Terminal emulations, including ANSI, VT100 and IBM 3270 to get you on-line quickly while the programmable keyboard will satisfy the needs of any system administrator.
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- TAPI support for sharing communications devices between multiple applications.
- MAPI support for transferring text, images and files to major mail applications including Exchange, Microsoft Mail, and cc:Mail.
- Telnet support with MD5* secure passwords for Internet access to your favorite sites.

* RSA Data Security, Inc. MD5 Message-Digest Algorithm
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engaging content we will be producing for our new service, which will be launched in the fall of this year."

Similar to the "X-Files" area on the current Delphi Internet service, the official "X-Files" Web site is loaded with exclusive, up-to-date information provided by the show's creator, Chris Carter, the creative team behind the series and the show's stars. This arrangement allows Delphi Internet to be the first to offer fans of the series the latest news, sound files, video clips and official "X-Files" merchandise online. Hats, T-shirts, jackets, mugs, tickets to "X-Files" conventions, and official fan club membership kits are available for purchase at this site.

The "X-Files" site also provides users with episode guides, background on the cast, creator and producers of the show, and links to other "X-Files" sites and related areas covering the paranormal. Additionally, fans of the "X-Files" with access to the current Delphi Internet SIG can download photos of the

The Briefing Room

These files contain Top Secret intelligence on a Fox Television show known as The X-Files. This television show is about two FBI special agents who are teamed up to investigate a series of unexplained cases called "X-Files." The topic material of this show and its popularity have been classified as a potential threat to certain organizations within the government, and a team has been assigned to monitor and track the content of the show and the

events at the June "X-Files" convention.

"The X-Files" is a one-hour drama about an unconventional FBI agent, Fox Mulder (David Duchovny), who investigates unsolved cases, known as the "X-Files," which he believes involve paranormal phenomena.

To keep tabs on his work — and in the hope of debunking his theories — the FBI teams him up with Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson), a young, skeptical agent who has a degree in medicine and a strong bias toward the scientific.

Delphi Internet's home page on the Web also contains links to the FX cable network, HarperCollins Publishers,

Twentieth Century Fox feature films such as "Die Hard With A Vengeance," and the latest from Delphi UK's Camden Lock, Europe's most innovative Web site.

Now all we can hope for is that the new Delphi service debuts on time, and in grand fashion (as it appears no effort is being made to improve the current service). ■■■■■

BBS Software & Hardware

This Month's Specials

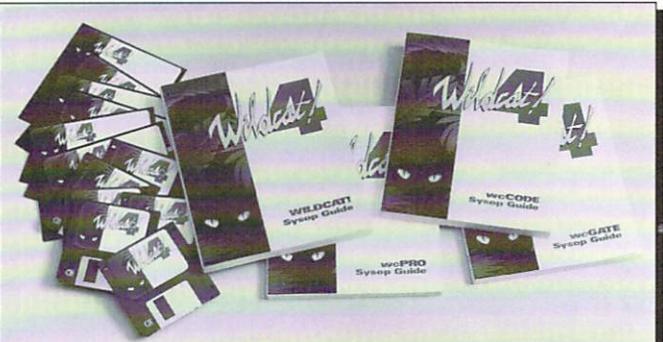
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bbs . notebook

BY STEVE JANAS

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

The Transom

Sysop: Michael Collins

BBS Location: New York, NY

Voice #: 212.274.0444

Modems Supported: Up to 14,400

A transom, in case you didn't know, is a small window placed over a door. Contemporary tastes haven't really embraced them, but there was a time when a doorway was naked without one. In fact, it became quite popular for fictional characters to hold whispered conversations through them with unseen counterparts, or to receive mysterious letters delivered clandestinely from strangers who would disappear once the door was opened.

That's the association that Michael Collins (not the astronaut) exploits with his board, a banquet of information and opinions presented in a unique, point-and-click graphical style that incorporates proprietary client software developed by New York City-based Reach Media, a partnership formed by Michael and a telecommunications company.

The front-end software, by the way, is the only way into the board. Because it is so heavily dependent on graphics, Michael says, the software can't support any of the common

communications programs. Call the voice number to get a copy of the Client. At the moment, only the PC format is available, but Michael says he's hard at work on a Macintosh version.

Like many large boards, The Transom occupies a middle ground between large online services that serve millions and small, one-node hobby boards that link a circle of friends. It's not Prodigy or America Online, with their vast reservoirs of information presented without editorial filtration of any kind, and it addresses a certain community of like-minded individuals.

Those individuals want information — current events, entertainment news, sports, etc. — but they believe in contexts. Hence, The Transom provides the news, gleaned from the Associated Press and Reuters wire services, but frames it with pithy essays and off-kilter rants by a stable of talented writers that includes some former staffers of *Spy Magazine*.

The opinions have an earnest, Gen-X feel that may seem a bit off-putting to those over 30, or to anyone who's just interested in scoring the latest shareware HTML editor. In fact, providing large file areas is probably the least important part of The Transom's mission: when I logged on, there were a grand total of three files ready to be downloaded.

But if you expect to come away from the board loaded down with all

kinds of software goodies, you've really missed the point. Michael's set it up to encourage the exchange of ideas, centered on the important issues of the day. That's the kind of experience you should equip yourself for.

Probably the board's greatest strength is the clarity with which it presents information, which makes up for its lack of graphical flair. There are no RIP-roaring images leaping out at you from the screen, but there is a nifty AOL-style interface, consisting of 10 buttons that take you to the board's major components.

Three of the buttons are devoted to email or Net access. The mail button opens up a screen that allows you to compose email and compile mailing lists, either from the directory of registered users that appears, or from Internet addresses you provide yourself.

The gateway button, as you might guess, connects to an Internet gateway that offers a choice of FTP, Gopher, Lynx and Telnet. Web access is provided through a Web button, which launches a version of Netscape that comes bundled in the client software.

The real meat of the board is behind its news button, which opens up a grid of subject areas you can click to see related text files. Thematically, it's a wide-ranging selection, with cells devoted to news, censorship, and geographic locations, among other topics. Click on one, and a list of wire stories appears. A notable feature allows you to link

several keywords together to build searches, which you can then save for future use.

Probably the board's greatest strength is the clarity with which it presents information

Unfortunately, the variety of topics belies a shallowness of content. Most of the text files have been cross-referenced between cells of the grid, so they appear quite frequently in different places. When I logged on, I saw the same Reuters story about an Egyptian judge censoring live belly-dancers under three different topics: Censorship, Entertainment, and Strange Stuff.

Reflections on the news—and whatever else seems appropriate—is contained in the Discussion and Topics sections. There are regular columns by professional writers, which provoke a string of responses from readers, all of which are contained in the same file. There are also ruminations on music and movies, plus a "virtual water cooler," where members post essays on whatever strikes their fancy. The O.J. Simpson trial was a popular subject here, as it is virtually everywhere else in the universe.

Finally, there is the newsstand, which features online versions of paper magazines, as well as KGB, an all online publication. This is the one area where the board's lack of graphics is felt most. All the files are text, and as you page through them, you start wishing for some kind of visual cue to distinguish one publication from the next. Besides, an online service is really not the best way to deliver text-heavy information. You can't curl up in your favorite chair with a computer screen like you can with a paper magazine, so something a little more graphic and interactive is called for. (That criticism is, of course, not directed solely at The Transom. Many services have yet to catch on to that simple fact). On the

plus side, the writing here is as uniformly strong as it is everywhere else.

The best thing about The Transom is the effort made to take the virtual community of a BBS and get it talking about relevant issues. Every generation has had a medium they have called their own, and because of that medium, a shared consciousness has emerged. Sometimes great things have been the result.

Here's hoping that The Transom in particular, and BBSs in general, will stitch the many voices of Gen-X into one.

Dazed and Confused

Sysop: Bunny McElwee

BBS Location: Charleston, SC

BBS Main Access #: 803.873.5797

Voice #: 803.821.9214

Modems Supported: Up to 28,800

BBS Software: PCBoard v.15.2

The story of Bunny and Robert McElwee is the story of BBS lust that borders, perhaps, on obsession. What started four years ago as a pastime for Robert, who got hooked on MUD games while calling around to some of the boards in his area, has now taken over the McElwee's house. Thirteen 486 PCs hum and buzz all day, fielding calls from 25 telephone lines. The monthly phone bill averages about \$800. The couple has even sold all their living room furniture to make room for their operation.

And, Bunny says, they're perfectly happy with the situation. They wouldn't have it any other way.

"We had a power outage for a couple nights a few weeks ago," she says. "And for that little bit of time, I was bouncing off the walls. There were no sounds from the computers and we couldn't talk to all our friends. It's deafening silence when there are no computers running after three years of having 13 of them."

The McElwees actually run two boards — his and hers matching BBSs — that perform two distinctly different functions. Dazed and Confused is the original board, a file-and-message BBS launched from a single 1,200-baud modem in 1991.

Then, last year, Robert began a chat board called Carolina Chat that, as the name suggests, hosts multi-node conversations on South Carolina topics, or on other topics treated with a Carolina flair.

When Robert began his board, he turned over operation of Dazed and Confused to Bunny, who, prior to 1991, knew as much about computers as she did about brain surgery. That is to say, nothing.

"When he started the board, he talked so far over my head, I had to take an adult night course just so I could know what he was saying," Bunny says. Now, there is almost nothing in her life that is not touched by the board.

"When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is check the

Bunny says she and Robert ... host monthly face-to-face meetings attended by between 15 and 40 registered users.

board," she says. "And when I'm ready to go to bed, that's what I'm usually doing. And in between, everything I do is in front of the computer."

The couple's social life is also conducted within the context of the two BBSs: Bunny says she and Robert met most of their friends through the boards, and host monthly face-to-face meetings attended by between 15 and 40 registered users. In addition, there are picnics, bowling nights, and the pair is trying to organize a Lazer-Tag tournament, inspired by the games of Doom often played on Robert's board.

Over the years, Bunny's board has become enormous. She now boasts hard disk space totaling 9.5 gigabytes, plus an extra eight on CD-ROM.

The mail area includes over 3,500 Usenet newsgroups, plus access to a number of networks, including

CONTINUES...

Fidonet, an international genealogy network, and Chaznet, a Charleston area network. One of the nine nodes (which, incidentally, were rather quiet the Tuesday night I logged on) is linked to Planet Connect via satellite dish.

Aside from that, however, mail options are fairly basic. Users get email accounts, but with the exception of the news groups and a limited FTP capability (send email to the site of your choice and you get the file back in a message) there are few Internet options.

Another potential drawback (whether it is or not depends on your personal taste, I guess) is the board's rather unspectacular look. All the graphics are ANSI, which is somewhat unusual, given the eye-popping look some sysops have given their boards thanks to Remote Imaging Protocol.

Bunny says the issue really hasn't come up.

"Maybe two people have asked about it," she said. "Most seem to be at a point where it really doesn't matter to them. They like it in the games, but as far as menus, most didn't really care. Most people said ANSI was just as good. That's why we didn't bother. There just wasn't much of a call for it."

Robert's board, Carolina Chat, does have an arresting RIP interface, inside Galacticomm's Worldgroup software. However, I couldn't get past the first couple of new-user registration prompts without being dumped from the system, which is why I'm not writing more about it. Maybe next time.

Access to Dazed and Confused is free for the first 14 days, after which you can choose one of several subscription options. The cheapest is \$15, which gives you two months of full access. The most expensive is \$50, which will get you a year's membership, although your online time is restricted to two hours per day.

Bunny says the fees pay the bills — sometimes. About three months out of the year, the board shows a small profit. Even though it hasn't been a goldmine, she says she quit her job as a manager of a pizza shop

to run the board full time. Her reason? Just love of what she's doing.

"The profits aren't great. I can't say we make more than \$10. Just to pay the phone bill is fine with me," she says.

The Berlin Wall

Location: Berlin, CT

Sysop: Tom Mucha

Data Access #'s: 203.829.1697
203.828.8824

Voice #: 203.828.6577

Modems Supported: Up to 28,800

BBS Software: Remote Access Pro. 2.02

Why don't more high schools have BBSs?

It seems they would make a perfect match: some of the most committed and knowledgeable voices in the online world belong to people who aren't old enough to vote. And shepherding the curious and talented

• • • • •
**Berlin High School's students
have been willing to take over
the day-to-day operations of
The Berlin Wall...**

into an activity that could become a career would appear to fit right into any public school mission. But school boards are still the exception rather than the rule.

One reason for that, says Chris Wolfe, faculty advisor of Connecticut's Berlin High School BBS, is time. He knows first hand how much time, effort and frustration goes into setting up a board after he and a team of dedicated students got The Berlin Wall off the ground four years ago.

"It doesn't take long to get it up and running," he says. "But to get to the point where you like it takes maybe six months."

To help other schools along, Chris and his students developed BBS in a Baggie, a shareware version of Remote Access software distributed

in a mailer and equipped with an install program. Type 'install' at the prompt, and the program sets up a bare-bones BBS on your hard-drive, ready for tweaking.

Even with such user-friendliness, Chris reports there have been few takers for the program among other high school teachers. Again, the problem is time, he says.

Fortunately, Berlin High School's students have been willing to take over the day-to-day operations of The Berlin Wall, making it a rather low-maintenance proposition for Chris. Much of the initial work was done by a student, Joseph Annino, who has since graduated and bequeathed the board to succeeding classes.

Thanks to the students' work, the board has developed to the point where it won an award from the Connecticut State Council on Vocational Education. It was then granted \$3,300 from the local Baby Bell to add a second node to the system and install dedicated phone lines to each of the Berlin School District's five schools.

Student membership is not as universal as in some other BBS-equipped districts — about 60 technology education students have memberships, whereas the Princeton, New Jersey school district, for example, provides accounts for its FirstClass board to each of its 2,800 students.

And The Berlin Wall's member files don't consist exclusively of students' names. About 60 percent of the board's callers are non-students, drawn by the games and shareware utilities stored on its one gigabyte hard drive and two online CD-ROM drives. The board keeps a pretty respectable collection of files for Macintosh users on hand, reflecting the taste many schools have for the format.

The mail features on The Berlin Wall are fairly basic, with standard email available to members of the system, and a UUCP connection on the way. Chris says the latter will open the board to the Internet and a sampling of Usenet Newsgroups.

Of course, being a school-sponsored board, The Berlin Wall is sub-

ject to fairly tight content controls. Needless to say, there is no adult section, and posting off-color material can lead to a user's account being deleted.

But there are plenty of other outlets for consumers of that fare. While the board is open to all comers, a portion has been set aside strictly for school use.

Called The Berlin Information Turnpike, this section is reserved exclusively for students and teachers, who must verify their status before they are granted access. Files here consist largely of correspondence between students and teachers — not just in Berlin, but in other schools, to which the board is linked via Fidonet echo. There are also students' computer-graphics projects uploaded for the rest of the school community to see, plus sound files and picture files of one format or another.

One drawback to the board, which could conceivably drive students and other thrill seekers away, is its reliance on text and rather staid ANSI graphics. Chris says he's considered remedying that problem by switching to software with elaborate front-end GUIs, such as that offered by Galacticomm and its brethren. Chris says the movement by sysops in general toward more graphic systems may make a switch inevitable.

"The board's been up for four and a half years and I hate to change things, but maybe it's time," he says.

The Cosmos

Sysop: Joe Handle

BBS Location: Keyport, NJ

BBS Data #: 908.264.3023

Modems Supported: Up to 14,400

BBS Software: Wildcat! v.3.5

This is your basic message board, with a slant toward UFOs and free speech issues.

Sysop Joe Handle's set up a pretty neat graphic interface that pops up to greet you when you log on: it's a yellow pyramid under a starry sky, with a moon hanging low over the horizon. Think of it as a visual cue, cluing you in to the realms Joe is reaching

for with his board.

That's not to say everything here is all that woo-woo. Sure, there are conferences on UFOs and the X-Files and Pagan religions, but that's nothing more exotic than what you would find among the outer fringes of the Usenet newsgroups.

Among the conferences accessible from the main menu (which, incidentally, does not offer a mail option) are discussions of amateur radio, Star Wars, religion, substance abuse and music. There are conferences on more intriguing topics as well: Dinosaur Talk, Languages of the World and Mind Power. There is also a conference on business cards, listed in close proximity to the conference on CB radios. Quite a mixed bag.

From the main menu, you can also make a selection that will take you to one of 30 Doors offered. They're mostly games; I was in a raunchy mood when I logged on, so I picked the one and only adult selection and found myself in a role-playing game called Fantasy Land.

The game's a bit verbose to accomplish what most people expect from online blue entertainment — namely, to provide a perverse thrill shared by you, your computer, and whatever aliases you encounter in your travels through the digital wild side. Basically, the point is to wander through a simulated suite of rooms and either dominate or submit to whomever you find there. All the action takes place verbally, which is a bit of an anti-climax (if you'll pardon the pun) if you're used to graphics.

Moving back out to the Door menu, I chose next to take a look at the Graffiti Wall. In keeping with the free-speech sensibilities of the board, this feature provides users a space to leave whatever slogans, axioms and sundry sentiments that are occupying their minds at the moment. Unfortunately, the postings were rather vapid, pointing up a critical flaw in the concept of unrestricted free speech.

Here is a sampling, to illustrate my point. From one user: "Dark Forces RULE!!!!!!!" (I don't think I reproduced quite as many exclama-

tion points as accompanied the original, but you get the point); from another: "This Sucks!"; And another: "I have a brother!!!"; and still another: "Fluffy, you've come home!!!!!"

One posting was nothing more than an advertisement for a local

The board appears well-suited for users with broad interests and strong opinions about them.

landscaping service, which I doubt fit the spirit in which the Graffiti Wall was offered.

More or less the same thing as the Graffiti Wall is provided as a Door leading from the main menu. Called Free Speech (the application is available from Pinnacle Software), the Door opens up a full-screen text editor the user can use to say whatever's on his mind. The difference between this and the Graffiti Wall appears to be that, whereas the wall seems reserved for short, pithy quotes, the Free Speech door is designed for longer treatises, on any subject.

There weren't all that many postings when I checked in, however.

Generally, the board appears well-suited for users with broad interests and strong opinions about them. A scan of the user list revealed a few hundred names, mostly from the New Jersey area. I left several postings to Joe to leave me more information about the users and his hardware setup, but, unfortunately, we kept missing each other. He has since put up a second, more ambitious board called Cosmos II, which may be occupying the bulk of his time.

We'll see. Tune in for more info on that later. ■■■■■

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

Summer's the time for fun and relaxation — at least it's supposed to be. But if you're like me, you're completely bogged down with work that keeps you near your computer. Solution: take a break with one of the shareware games covered below, while summer's still here.

DOS

Capture the Flag 3.1

CAPFLAG4.ZIP
by Carr Software
P.O. Box 3919
Merced, CA 95344-1919
EXEC-PC BBS:
414.789.4360 (14.4 bps) or
414.789.4500 (28.8 bps)

If you're running DOS and looking for a game that combines strategy with arcade graphics and animation, Capture the Flag might just be the ticket. This full-color shareware game, which was modeled after the outdoor game with the same name, offers hours of challenging play against another opponent or your computer.

The two teams in Capture the Flag each have one objective: to find and take the other team's flag before the other team takes theirs. An illustrated playing field that includes trees, farmland, streams, roads, and rocks, is divided into two equal territories. Each team's flag is positioned in its territory. Players take turns moving their eight team members through the playing field, searching unexplored territory, which appears as black squares on the playing field grid, for the opposing team's flag. At the same time, players must position and move team members within their own territory to defend their flag by finding and capturing opponents.

Capture the Flag offers a wide variety of options to help new users learn the game, including a demo game



mode, pop-up instructions, playback mode, and complete online help. It includes full mouse support and features pull-down menus that can be activated with the mouse or Alt-key combinations. Sound Blaster-compatible card users will enjoy the sound effects built into the game.

If you like to play against other players connected by modem or network, Capture the Flag has you covered. You can even play against other players by email — Capture the Flag's home BBS offers lists of other players you can contact for games.

Capture the Flag requires a DOS-compatible computer with at least 640K of RAM, a 640x480x16 VGA monitor, and a 286 or better processor. A mouse and sound card are optional.

If the shareware version isn't enough for you — although it should be, at least for a start — a commercial version of the game is available for \$32.95. It adds a wide variety of features, including 200 scenarios with from two to 24 people per team, 10 different Capture the Flag games, 40 playing fields, eight computer opponents, a map builder to create your own terrains, and a cheat mode. Either version offers plenty of challenging fun for anyone.

Windows

Crossword Mania 1.01

CWM101-1.ZIP and CWM101-2.ZIP
by Saturn Software
P.O. Box 5292
Glendale, AZ 85312-5292

If you like solving crossword puzzles, you'll like Crossword Mania. But if you like creating crossword puzzles you'll love Crossword Mania. This Windows-based shareware game lets you solve, build or edit crossword or diagramless puzzles on your computer.

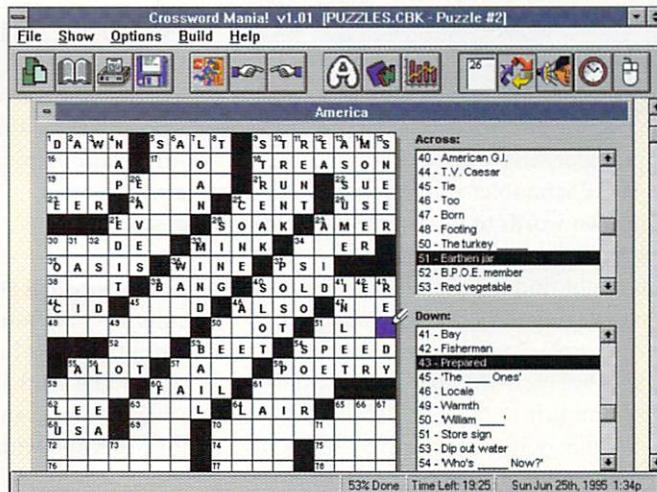
Crossword Mania stores crossword puzzles in puzzle books on disk. It comes with one puzzle book containing five different topical puzzles. Open one of these puzzles to edit or solve. If you need a hint while solving a puzzle, peek at a letter or an entire word. You can save puzzles you've begun solving so you can complete them at a later time.

In the shareware version of Crossword Mania, you can create and edit puzzles, but you won't be able to save them — this seems like a fair way to let you fully explore the creation features before you register the software. Set a size and grid pattern for the puzzle, then add words by typing them into the grid, creating a list of desired words to add; asking Crossword Mania find words that will fit.

Crossword Mania includes an 85,000+ word dictionary you can use to find words for the puzzles you create. It also has the amazing ability to create puzzles to fit your grid in the amount of time you specify. When you're finished filling in the grid, enter clues for the puzzle, give it a name and description, and you're done! Completed puzzles can be solved on-screen or printed in a variety of ways for solving the old-fashioned way — with a pencil.

Crossword Mania includes search-

able online help. Its toolbar buttons display their purpose when you point to them, so it's easy to figure out what each button does. A Puzzle Stats window displays statistics about an open puzzle, including its name and description, how many times it has been solved, and the amount of time you've



already spent working on it.

Crossword Mania requires a DOS-compatible computer running Windows 3.1 or later, two megabytes of RAM, and a '386SX or better processor. For best results, use a '386DX or stronger processor with four megabytes of RAM. A mouse is recommended but not required. You're free to use the shareware version for 15 days; after that time, register for \$25.99 and get a reduced price for upgrades, removal of registration reminder screens, enabling of all puzzle building features, more puzzles, and free support. If you're crazy about crossword puzzles, I think you'll find Crossword Mania enough to satisfy your crossword cravings.

SOLO 0.06

SOLO0-06.ZIP
by Dan Reed
Bad Elf Software

Bored with the usual collection of solitaire games? Wish you could create

your own card game? SOLO may be the answer. This freeware graphical solitaire game maker and player for Windows 3.1 includes 35 different solitaire card games, and lets you create your own games — without knowing a single word of programming code.

SOLO has two modes: Play and Edit. In Play mode, you can choose from among the 35 different solitaire card games built into the software. Customize the game by choosing a different card illustration, screen size, background color, scale, operation of left mouse button. SOLO supports a tourney mode and keeps track of high scores. An Undo command lets you reverse the last card you played.

In Edit mode, you create your own card game from scratch or edit any of the games built into SOLO. Specify locations for the tableau, reserve, foundation, waste, stock, hold, and other cards. Change the name of the game and the kind and number of card decks. You can even define your own custom deck of cards, including graphics you provide. When you're finished, save your changes and play your game. You can even create text files with game instruc-



tions to be included in online help.

SOLO includes searchable online help for playing and creating solitaire games as well as complete rules for each of the games that are included. You'll definitely need the online help feature when creating your own game from scratch — edit mode isn't exactly intuitive. SOLO requires a DOS-compatible computer running Windows 3.1 or later.

CONTINUES ...

Macintosh

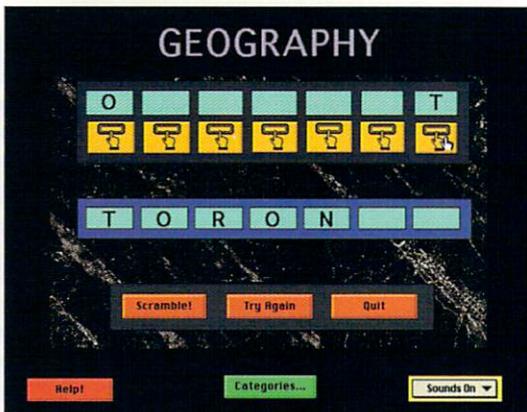
WordScramble! 1.1.1

by Allan Trautman

If your daily newspaper's puzzle page doesn't include enough scrambled words for you to decipher, check out WordScramble! This freeware Macintosh game contains hundreds of words in a variety of categories for you — or your kids — to unscramble.

You'll get an idea of how WordScramble! uses sounds when you first launch the program and it welcomes you by trying to read a scrambled word that unscrambles itself on screen. In the main window, click the Category button to choose from among six categories: Animals, People, Transportation, Foods, Science, Body Parts, Geography, and Things. Then, in the scrambled word screen, click the Scramble! button to have WordScramble! display a word.

To unscramble a word, click the buttons beneath each letter in the order in which they belong. One by one, they're added to boxes below to (hopefully) spell out the scrambled word. If you get it right, you're rewarded with a congratulatory sound effect. If you get it wrong, you'll hear "oops!" and get an



opportunity to try again.

WordScramble! also lets you enter your own words to unscramble. While this isn't much of a challenge for you, you might find it a useful learning tool when playing the game with children. For example, you can enter a spelling or vocabulary word, then let the child unscramble it.

WordScramble! requires System 7 or later and a 13-inch color monitor. A HyperCard-compatible version is also available; that version takes up less disk space but requires HyperCard 2.2 or the HyperCard 2.2 Player to run. Online Help is limited to a list of words in a category that could match the currently scrambled word. A DOCMaker document that includes instructions is included with the program.

WordScramble! is distributed as freeware, but if you're feeling generous and really like the program, the author suggests that you send a donation to the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. Although designed for the author's six-year-old son, the list of words included in WordScramble! is beyond the vocabulary of any six-year-old I know. Don't think of this as a kid's game — it's certainly challenging enough for the whole family!

Make \$3k a month, Become a PC Consultant

Can you hook up a modem, printer, install ram or software? Then I can show you how to make good money helping people with their computers in your local area - call 800-330-9112/714-838-0387, E-Mail Profitopp@aol.com. Ask for offer BBSM795 for free info on the new home study course/manual "How To Make \$3,000 to \$5,000 A Month Working As A Part-Time Computer Consultant" by Matthew Ferry.

Solitaire Till Dawn 2.0.3

by Rick Holzgrafe
Semicolon Software
P.O. Box 371
Cupertino, CA
95015-0371

If you're a solitaire lover with a Macintosh, Solitaire

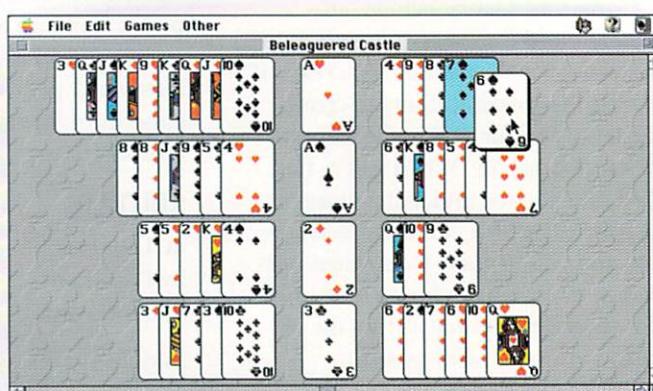
Till Dawn is a shareware package of 24 solitaire games that can really keep you up all night.

Choose from among standard games like Klondike, Canfield, and Golf or more exotic games like Beleaguered Castle, Miss Milligan, and Pyramid. If you don't know how to play, no problem — a Rules command displays concise rules for the currently selected game so you can learn. Solitaire Till Dawn will keep track of player statistics like the number of games played and won, as well as the current score. An AutoPlay command will automatically make all obvious moves, saving mouse drags, especially near the end of a game.

Solitaire Till Dawn can be played on color or black and white Macs. The amount of RAM required varies depending on the number of colors your monitor can display, from 500K for black and white monitors to two megabytes for millions of colors. A preferences option lets you set the card size so you can even play on an old compact Mac. Online help is provided through Balloon Help and two PocketDoc documents that completely explain how to use the program and play the games. Unless you don't know the rules for a specific game, however, you won't need any help playing — the interface is completely intuitive.

Solitaire Till Dawn is distributed as shareware. Use it for a week or two for free. After that time, register for \$20. ■■■■■

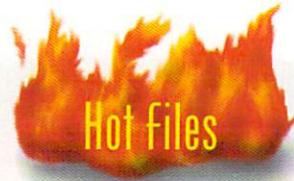
Maria Langer, a freelance writer running a BBS since 1989, is currently at work on the Excel for Windows 95 Visual QuickStart Guide. She can be reached at gilesrd@intac.com.



**Authoring
HTML:**

**Master
Web Page
Design**

**October
BBS Magazine**



By Hank Hurteau

Following is a list of some of the most downloaded files as recorded by various BBSs.

Files such as QWK packets have been omitted, as have any graphic files. Descriptions are generated by author or bulletin board.

Programs carried in the "Top Ten" download list don't necessarily denote a good program, of course — just one that's frequently downloaded. You'll have to be the judge when it comes to quality.

And keep in mind: always look for the latest program, as one of the advantages to using (and registering) shareware is that you'll be privy to the frequent updates.

unregistered shareware version	
Benchmark	
H - Hardware	Speed compared with IBM-PC.: 5150x
M -	Dhrystone, KWhetstone...: 19200, 4318
S - Software	VideoRAM throughput (text): 1427 KByte/sec
B - Benchmark	Chars per second via BIOS.: 32240 Byte/sec
D - CD-Benchmark	Chars per second via DOS.: 9620 Byte/sec
P - Programs	EMS speed.....: 70%
M - Devices	RAM disk speed.....: M/R
I - Info	DOS disk speed.....: D: 1560 KB/sec
U - Compare	
C - Chips-Info	
M - Mem-Timing	
G -	
Q - IRQs	Harddisk test:
L - Drives	Rotations per minute.....: HD1
R - Restart	Linear read.....in KB/S: 3310
E - Exit	Maximum throughput...in KB/S: 1802
X - Notes	Interleave seems to be...: 1
	Average access time.....: 13.1 ms
	Track to track.....: 2.8 ms
	Maximum access time.....: 20.6 ms

PC-CONFIG U7.27
(c) 1989-94 by Michael E Holin

Pioneer Valley Computer Club (PVCC) — 413.737.4501

- 1 **AC-A.ZIP** 469466
ALIEN CARNAGE v1.0 — An Apogee action/arcade game for the IBM PC. Cool cinematics, Sound Blaster music/sfx; animation.
- 2 **AC-B.ZIP** 433866 ALIEN CARNAGE v1.0 Part 2
- 3 **AC-C.ZIP** 419877 ALIEN CARNAGE v1.0 Part 3
- 4 **AC-D.ZIP** 429568 ALIEN CARNAGE v1.0 Part 4
- 5 **BOPPIN.ZIP** 1292341
BOPPIN' v1.0 from Apogee is an arcade/puzzle game. In an alternate "arcade game" universe, you must free dozens of imprisoned enemies from other video games.
- 6 **SCN-222E.ZIP** 401500
VirusScan for DOS by McAfee, Inc. scans and cleans PCs/LANs for known and new viruses. Always a Top 10 download, look for latest version.
- 7 **CONF727.ZIP** 109668
PC-CONFIG V7.27 detects all the hardware in your PC and displays it on the screen. One of the best sysinfo-programs going, with a CD-ROM benchmark routine.
- 8 **WINZIP55.ZIP** 585260
WinZip 5.5 w/built-in ZIP+UNZIP. Drag & Drop brings the convenience of Windows to Zipping. Updated regularly.
- 9 **ACDC2.ZIP** 50891
Audio Compact Disc Controller v2.00. A resident audio CD player for DOS.

unregistered shareware version	
Installed hardware	
H - Hardware	Machine.....: AT 486
M -	BIOS.....: (c) Sony Corporation, 1991-1992.
S - Software	BIOS date...: 08/08/93, ShadowRAM: active
B - Benchmark	BIOS extension: C000h
D - CD-Benchmark	Bus system...: ISA
P - Programs	CPU.....: 80486dx (80386 Mode) 40.00 MHz
M - Devices	ROM access...: cache: 1st Level: 8 KB, 2nd Level: 256 KB
I - Info	Main memory...: 640 KBByte, free: 599 KBByte
U - Compare	Extended Mem...: 3328 KBByte, free: 1984 KBByte XMS
C - Chips-Info	Expanded Mem...: 3616 KBByte, free: 1984 KBByte
M - Mem-Timing	Videocard 1...: UESA-UGA (TRIDENT) 16 Bit-Bus, 1024k RAM
G -	VGA chipset...: Trident 8980CL
Q - IRQs	UGA-BIOS....: 01/28/94 , ShadowRAM: active
L - Drives	Gamecard...: found
R - Restart	Floppy drives...: 2 : 1.44 MB, 1.2 MB
E - Exit	Ports.....: LPT1 COM1 COM2
X - Notes	

PC-CONFIG U7.27
(c) 1989-94 by Michael E Holin

HD 1: 405.6 MB, 15 heads, 989 Cyl, 56 Sect/Cyl.

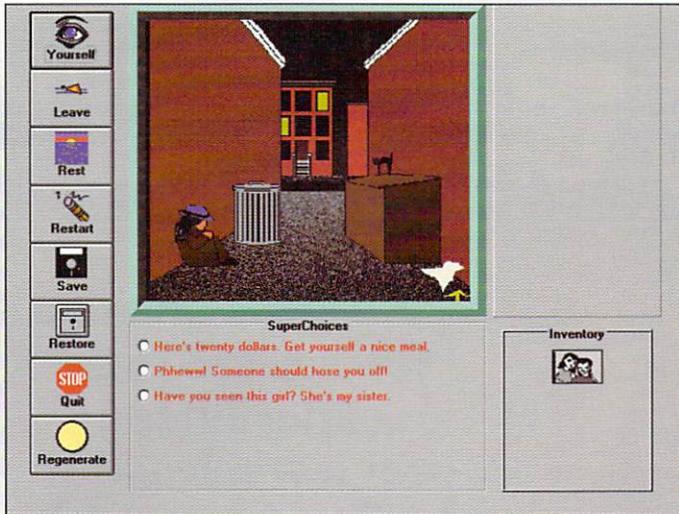
With full background control, play favorite tracks while running almost any other program.

NVL9504B.ZIP 204892

Shareware NeverLock Spring '95 — Unprotects over 400 games.

Channel 1 BBS — 617.354.3230

- 1 **TM420-1.ZIP** 166870
TELEMATE 4.20. Powerful multi-threading communication program. Featuring ANSI/Avatar/VT52/VT102 terminal, editor, viewer, backscroll, clipboard and many unique functions. Built-in mouse support provides access to all functions.
- 2 **TM420-2.ZIP** 231202 TELEMATE 4.20, 2 of 4.
- 3 **TM420-3.ZIP** 171305 TELEMATE 4.20, 3 of 4.
- 4 **TM420-4.ZIP** 229984 TELEMATE 4.20, 4 of 4.
- 5 **TM420UP.ZIP** 445716
TELEMATE 4.20, upgrade files for v4.xx. This ZIP contains the files required to upgrade from Telemate 3.xx, 4.xx to 4.20.
- 6 **PWRESL15.ZIP** 9526
Updated WinMag Resource Probe version 1.5 — shows you what's using conventional memory when you're running Windows.
- 7 **SUPER11A.ZIP** 1369852
SuperHer for Windows by HomeBrew Software. Adventure game where you play SuperHer in combat, gain abilities and objects to assist you in finding your lost sister.
- 8 **SCASTLE1.ZIP** 391925
CASTLE OF THE WINDS for Windows. The quest begins with a question of vengeance, as you try to discover the secret of your mysterious past, and why it has proven so deadly to those you love.
- 9 **TWSK20A.ZIP** 178226
Trumpet Winsock for Windows.
- 10 **2SHOW106.ZIP** 187355
Release 1.06a of CompuShow 2000. A new interface and all the graphics capabilities of CompuShow, the full-featured graphics display system for all your graphic files.

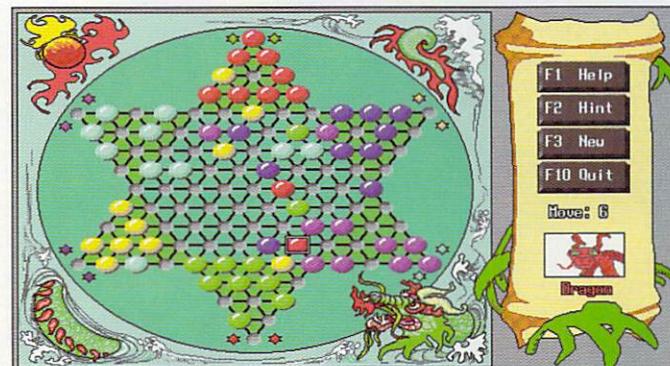
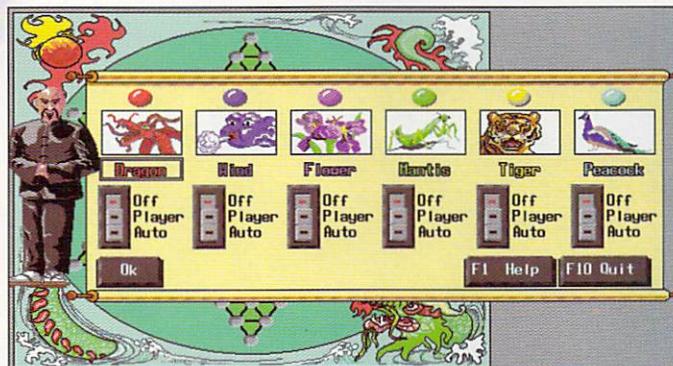


Uncle Hanks BBS — 413.527.8977

- BDLFS5.ZIP** 23798
FS5 scenery: Bradley International and Springfield, MA area. Also covers Westover AFB and the Connecticut River.
- DOSEDITR.ZIP** 49231
New version of Microsoft Editor (EDIT.COM) for the DOS. Can load text larger than 1 MB and also features Split windows editing.
- MEMFIX10.ZIP** 27520
MemFix provides a work-around for Windows allocation of DOS memory, and allows more Windows programs to run simultaneously than would be possible without MemFix.
- CCHECK23.ZIP** 316086
ImagiSOFT's Chinese Checkers Classic Board Game v2.3. April '95 update to this ever popular game.
- FNA317S.ZIP** 878211
FIRST NAME ALMANAC for Windows. Makes a commercial quality printout of the meaning of more than 14,500+ first names in calligraphy script — suitable for framing.
- TBCWIN.ZIP** 1108373
THE BIRTHDAY CHRONICLE for Windows makes a commercial quality printout of a mini newspaper front page of when you were born, graphics and all.

- GDS31G.ZIP** 381278
Graphic Display System v3.1g. Views, gives thumbnails, converts, flips, rotates, crops, scales, dithers nearly all graphic formats.
- 3DTV-A.ZIP** 745737
TERMINAL VELOCITY from 3D Realms. A 3D shooter that's part Star Wars and part Descent. Take flight in this futuristic action game with huge levels, insane weapons, modem/Net support, and 10-channel digital music and sound effects.
- 3DTV-B.ZIP** 1442163 TERMINAL VELOCITY Part 2.
- 3DTV-C.ZIP** 1448808 TERMINAL VELOCITY Part 3.

If you're a sysop with a Top Ten bulletin on your BBS and would like to see your BBS listed here, please contact me at unkhank@crocker.com.



**For Sexy, Adult Fun
On The Information
Super Highway . . .**



Lifestyle OnLine:

Meet 3000+ sexy couples & singles on the world's hottest & most active adult chat system.

Modem: 516-689-5390 (local access from 1000+ cities)
Internet: Telnet lifestyle.com (166.82.150.22)

The Male Forum:

Where men meet men every day. Absolutely the world's most erotic GAY CHAT system.

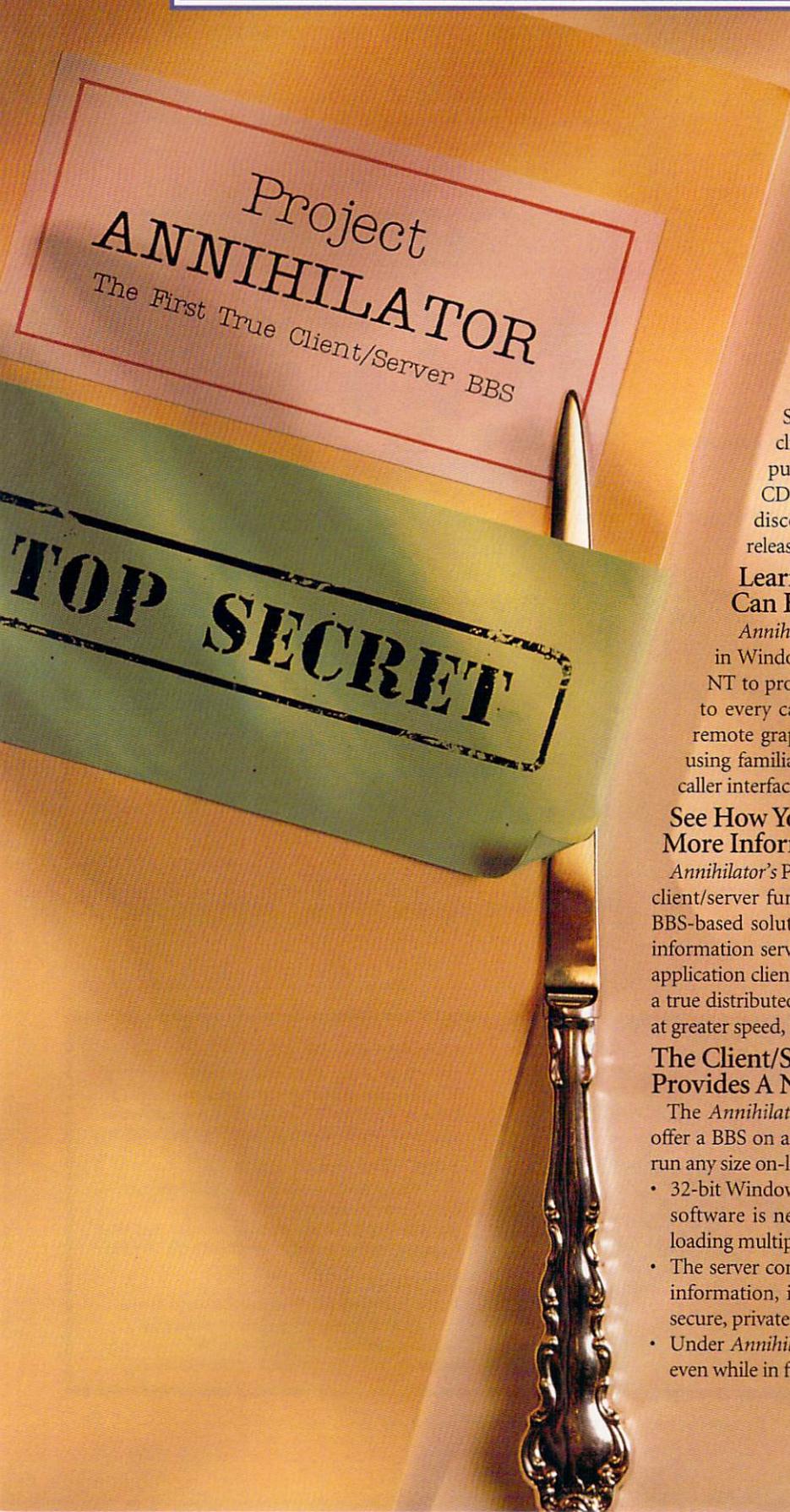
Modem: 516-689-0286 (local access from 1000+ cities)
Internet: Telnet mforum.com (166.82.150.41)

Grafix:

XXX-rated computer pictures hot enough to melt your modem. Every file is worth downloading.

Modem: 516-689-2853 (local access from 1000+ cities)
Internet: Telnet grafix.com (166.82.150.31)

We Can't Keep The Future Technology Under Wraps



Become one of a few select SYSOPS to experience a preview release of the first true 32-bit client/server BBS

The seal on Mustang Software's top secret project Wildcat! BBS re-write, code-named *Annihilator*, has been broken to allow 5000 "leading-edge" SYSOPS a glimpse of this breakthrough 32-bit client/server BBS technology. Your reward, when you purchase one of the limited Pre-Release *Annihilator* CDs for only \$49 and learn the inside story, is a 75% discount off the purchase price when *Annihilator* is released later this year.

Learn How Interactive Multimedia Can Expand Your On-line Experience

Annihilator takes full advantage of the new multitasking in Windows 95 or the robust server operations in Windows NT to provide a solution that brings full on-line multimedia to every caller. See how you can use *Annihilator*'s built-in remote graphics to provide an exciting multimedia greeting, using familiar JPEG and GIF graphic editors to customize the caller interface.

See How You Can Deliver More Information At Greater Speed

Annihilator's Preview CD will demonstrate how the true power of client/server functionality can be unleashed to provide a broad, BBS-based solution. Learn how to implement a BBS with a core information server, and route that information using a number of application clients at the Sysop's location. You'll be able to establish a true distributed processing system that delivers more information at greater speed, now even on a single PC.

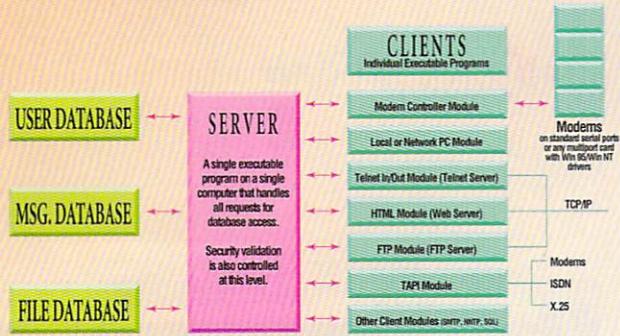
The Client/Server Model Provides A Number of Advantages

The *Annihilator* Preview CD will show you how a SYSOP can offer a BBS on a desktop platform with the expansion capability to run any size on-line service.

- 32-bit Windows multitasking means no additional multitasking software is needed and 16-32 lines can be run easily without loading multiple copies of the BBS.
- The server controls all access to messages, files and other system information, isolating the core of the host activities to provide secure, private system access even to local users.
- Under *Annihilator*, the entire BBS configuration can be modified even while in full operation, but only by authorized personnel.

Of 32-bit BBS Much Longer

Single PC Running Windows 95 or Windows NT



The client/server model of Annihilator can be easily installed with the server and all clients running on a single PC. The computer can operate under Windows 95 or Windows NT Workstation or Server. This configuration offers the most compact system and allows for total management from the single BBS computer.

Build A Powerful New BBS With Annihilator Server And Client Modules

Standard Annihilator modules included with every BBS create a foundation for the new client/server BBS:

Server Module – functionality for processing all database and configuration requests and operational characteristics of the BBS.

Local Client – a fully graphical connection for anyone connecting at the host PC or over a LAN.

Modem Client – answers the phone for all dial-in lines and presents the BBS in ANSI, ASCII or in full graphics.

QWK Client – handles QWK mail exchange between the host and other BBSs.

TAPI Client – provides a link to the Windows Telephony Application Program Interface and a mechanism for ISDN, X.25 and other connectivity.

Graphical Remote Client – a set of freely-distributed Windows programs for callers to experience full multimedia when connected. This 16-bit program suite operates on Windows 3.1, Windows 95, Windows NT and any OS/2 release with Windows support.

Optional Annihilator modules increase the power of a client/server BBS:

UUCP Client – handles dial-up Internet e-mail and news-group support.

Internet Package – accessories to handle TCP/IP support: Telnet Module, FTP Module, WWW Module, IRC Module, SMTP Module and NNTP Module.

MAPI Client – a mechanism to exchange messages between applications such as Microsoft Mail, cc:Mail, Lotus Notes, etc.

wcCODE Package – a new high speed, 32-bit development language so powerful that all standard BBS functions are written in it.

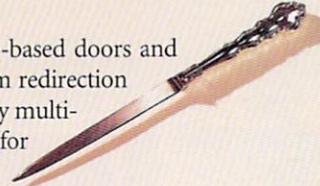
Source Code – for total customization of online activity, the wcCODE source for the BBS is also available for purchase (requires wcCODE).

SQL Database Client – provides full remote connectivity to distributed database processing using the SQL language.

Reports Client – reports BBS usage and statistics, and provides a means for manipulation, export and selection of database records using match criteria.

Billing Client – bill callers for any action performed on the BBS, includes report and invoice generation, pre-pay and post-pay models.

Annihilator fully supports all DOS-based doors and includes a program for DOS program redirection to any line. It can be connected to any multi-port serial card that includes drivers for Windows 95 or Windows NT.



**Buy The Pre-Release
Annihilator CD For \$49*
And Save Up To 75% Off
The Purchase Price**

Instructions and information on the Pre-Release Annihilator CD provides SYSOPS with an inside look into the future of BBS technology.

Purchase of the Pre-Release Annihilator CD establishes eligibility for a 75% discount off the manufacturers suggested retail price when *Annihilator* is released later this year.

Only 5000 Copies Of The Pre-Release Annihilator CD Will Be Mastered. Get The Inside Track And Stay On The Leading Edge Of BBS Technology By Getting Your Copy.

**Call Today To Reserve A Copy
1-800-208-0616**

*Add \$10 for shipping and handling

Product	MSRP*	75% off*	66.6% off*	Availability
Annihilator M2 (two node + local)	\$149	\$37	\$49	4th qtr. '95
Annihilator M16 (16 node)	\$349	\$87	\$115	4th qtr. '95
Annihilator M32 (32 node)	\$699	\$174	\$230	4th qtr. '95
8 Pack Node Increase	\$199	\$49	\$65	4th qtr. '95
UUCP Client (dial-up)	\$149	\$37	\$49	4th qtr. '95
Internet Clients (Telnet, FTP, WWW, UUCP, IRC)	\$799	\$199	\$265	4th qtr. '95
MAPI Client	\$799	\$199	\$265	Early '96
SQL Database Client	\$799	\$199	\$265	Early '96
Reports Client	\$149	\$37	\$49	Early '96
Billing Client	\$149	\$37	\$49	Early '96
CODE Development Language & IDE	\$149	\$37	\$49	4th qtr. '95
BBS Source Code	\$799	\$199	\$265	4th qtr. '95

MSRP (manufacturers suggested retail price), 75% off to purchasers of the special Pre-Release Annihilator CD, 66.6% off to Wildcat! SYSOPs with valid registration number.



Connecting The World

Mustang Software, Inc. • 6200 Lake Ming Road • Bakersfield, CA 93306

805-873-2500 • FAX 805-873-2599 • BBS 805-873-2400 • Internet: http://www.mustang.com

Although the BBS on the CD will be operational, it is not intended to be used as a commercial BBS because it will not have completed testing nor will it include full printed documentation. Each CD contains Annihilator M16 plus all modules available in 1995. Some modules, including the Graphical Remote Client are not yet completed, but will be made available electronically to Preview purchasers as they are completed. This Preview CD requires either Windows 95 or Windows NT v3.51 for operation. © 1995 Mustang Software, Inc. All names are trademarks of their respective companies.

Class Distinctions

A coach-class tour of FirstClass BBSing

As a caller, I find graphical user interfaces fun to work with (as well as to look at). Who doesn't? The downside is that once you have the client software, you have to download the configuration file for each BBS you call — d-r-a-g. It would be nice if we could just compress that type of info and send it along for the ride (much like RIP graphics and some Windows boards).

Unfortunately, we probably won't, as users, see this sort of thing happening any time soon due to the large number of callers still using slower modems, such as 2400 baud (even the occasional 1200 baud). Because of the sheer amount of overhead, this method would make the 2400-baud group feel like their modems had gone south for a holiday.

You may wonder why I'm jabbering about interfaces. Well, I've had so many people asking me to take another look at the FirstClass boards, that I finally relinquished and did something about it.

For starters, I found numbers for several boards by looking on America Online. Some of these, however, had disappeared since they had originally posted their config files. (If you're a former sysop, please go back and make sure all references to your defunct board are erased in the various lists).

I tried retrieving the client from a local board here in Atlanta; however, they had their software configured to allow new users only 20 minutes connect time per day, then only allowing transfers in 128 byte blocks. Needless to say, the 372K download of the client software did not transfer completely. I

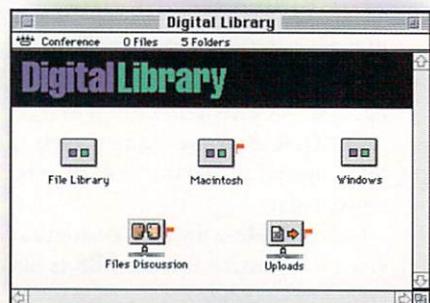


finally went and pulled a copy off an FTP site (version 2.6 of the client).

Sysop Hint: Allow new users enough time to download your client software. Oh, and set your software for 1K block transfers; 128-byte transfers are way too slow for our error-correcting modern modem devices.

The boards

One of the FirstClass boards I checked out was Orbit One, based in Tampa, Florida. Orbit One offers such features as Internet connectivity (mail and Usenet news), local conferences, Mac



The Mac 25				
File Type	File Name	Date	Size	Last Modified
Macintosh Forum-Leader	170K Versatile Textures	3/3/95	9:02 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	250K Versatile Pro	3/3/95	8:58 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	77K ShareWare 1.3.2	4/20/95	11:19 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	51K Reset Serial Port	2/16/95	3:25 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	77K QuickEncrypt 2.0	2/16/95	3:44 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	132K New Utilities 5.0.1	2/16/95	3:44 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	65K Menu Bar Patterns 1.2.2	2/27/95	11:37 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	23K MakePreview 1.0	2/20/95	10:38 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	764K Macstrom 1.4	2/19/95	5:56 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	27K KeyClicks 1.0.3	2/16/95	3:39 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	46K HoverBar 1.0	3/13/95	9:54 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	101K Greg's Buttons 3.7	4/20/95	11:21 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	217K Greg's Browser 2.5.4	5/28/95	11:39 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	891K GraphicConverter 2.1.3	6/17/95	11:49 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	26K GbaView 4.1.2	2/16/95	3:52 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	324K GF Converter 2.3.7	2/18/95	12:09 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	756K DarkSide 4.2	2/19/95	6:23 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	35K clip2ifn v.0.3	2/18/95	12:05 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	1236K Chiral	2/19/95	5:54 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	161K CD Tracker PRO 2.2	2/18/95	12:04 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	112K CatFinder 1.53	2/19/95	11:41 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	227K BulkRate 2.0.2	2/25/95	12:33 AM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	229PK Apeiron 1.0.0	2/18/95	9:40 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	350K Address Book 3.7.0	3/13/95	9:52 PM	
Macintosh Forum-Leader	126K 3/10/95 Update to Apeiron 1.	3/13/95	9:47 PM	

software, and *The Weekly Planet Newspaper*, Tampa Bay's third largest newspaper. When I first logged into Orbit One, I had to fill out my user information. You will have to do this with all FC (FirstClass) boards.

Orbit One has lots of information online. *The Weekly Planet* is entertaining and chock full of news, but only in a local sense. If you live in Florida, this would be a great resource — but not for someone in Butte, Montana.

However, their Digital Library has many files available for both Mac and Windows users (FC has both a Mac and Windows client available, thus many FC boards are multi-platform).

There is a useful feature called the Mac 25 in the Macintosh section that offers the top Mac files on the board — great for new callers.

Bottom line: Orbit One is a good local board for Florida users offering lots of local information, local conferences, online chat, and access to many of the different Usenet newsgroups.

Reach it at 813.281.0277.

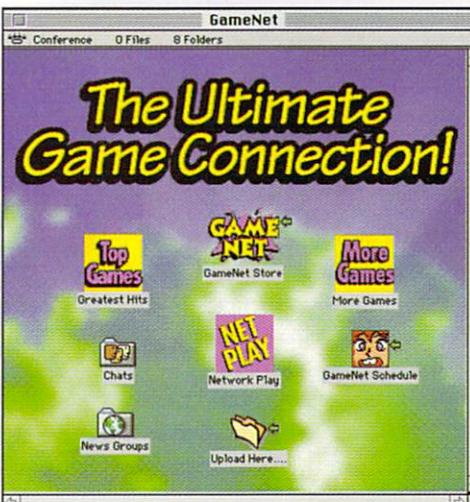
My next FC board is called GameNet, located in New York City. GameNet is a subscription-based BBS with an extensive collection of commercial game demos, game cheaters, bug fixes, updaters, FAQs and discussions of commercial games. Subscribing to GameNet also allows users to log on to GameNet's ARA (AppleTalk Remote Access) server and play games over the modem against other live users. They currently offer three games: F/A-18 Hornet, Power Poker and Links Pro (a golf game).

The schedule includes three game nights a week starting around 8 o'clock. Users pre-register 24 hours in advance with the sysop, then check their email several hours before game time for confirmation. Those users who don't have a copy of ARA can buy it at cost through the board. GameNet also allows the use of SnapMail, a Shareware package that allows you to communicate across networks during game play so you can "verbally" abuse your fellow players (GRIN).

Besides just the gaming tips and demos, GameNet also has Internet, Fidonet and OneNet conferences.

OneNet is SoftArc's internal network that FC boards use to exchange messages, files, etc. (similar to Fidonet).

GameNet may be reached at 212.254.5883. They offer technical support Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at 212.254.5300. Subscriptions run \$14.95 per month, with unlimited access to the BBS and ARA server.



Our final stop on the FC tour is a board in California called the Peninsula Information & Bulletin Board System, Pibbs for short. Pibbs is a BBS for the Monterey Peninsula, offering something for both Macintosh and Windows users. Online, you'll find the latest news for Macintosh and Windows, three gigabytes of current

CONTINUES...

File Digging in the eWorld

Looking for some good programs and utilities? Check out some of these files available through eWorld.

Anarchie 1.5.0 is an Internet application that will poll Archie servers and help you find and retrieve files available from anonymous FTP sites.



Anarchie

Pull up the dialog box to find the filename, and then double-click on the desired found file to download it to your machine (or drag it to a folder if you have System 7.5). Simple and straight forward.

Disinfectant 3.6 is a FREE virus prevention, scanning, and repair program. Created by John Norstad of Northwestern University,



Disinfectant

Disinfectant is rather easy to use. Simply run the application and Disinfectant will automatically install its protection extension for you. In addition to its ease of use, Disinfectant comes with built-in online help.

Version 3.6 detects a new clone of the nVIR B virus, and allows modification of Disinfectant's memory partition and icon.



MacHTTP 2.2

MacHTTP 2.2 (Fat) allows you to establish your Mac as a World Wide Web server. MacHTTP opens up the Internet architecture in a way that may well bring the Mac to the forefront of Internet connectivity. Version 2.0 contains dozens of improvements over the previous released version, 1.3. Most of these correct bugs, but also add significant functionality (such as a background-only option).



uuCD

uuCD 2.3 is a freeware uuencoder/uudecoder that's small and fast. It supports standard drag-and-drop on its Finder icon and drag-and-drop directly from the Finder into its window (for those with System 7.5 or later). It automatically strips headers and footers from the text files you load (which is a godsend when you have a file divided into 34 segments). It allows easy, visual drag and drop rearrangement of the files within its window, and will automatically assign whatever creator you want on files lacking the originating application information. For encoding, uuCD will automatically segment a file according to the line limit you specify in the preferences.



Rusty

Edie

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

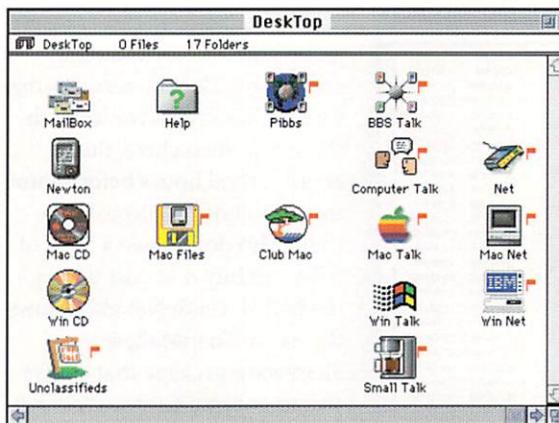
We live by three no's: "No Censorship, No Rules, No Hassle."

You'll find us like no other BBS:

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

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

Voice 216-726-4217
HST only 216-726-1804
Compucom 216-726-3584
Hayes V-Series 216-726-3619
All (V32 etc.) 216-726-2620
Fax 216-726-3595



files for Macintosh and Windows, and information on local Internet providers, Internet files and one-step Net installers and switchers.

Pibbs is quite nice because it makes things easy to get to for the first-time caller. Some of the conferences you'll find on Pibbs include:

BBS Talk — information, questions and answers, comments, and news about Pibbs and other BBSs and computer services in the Monterey Peninsula (such as the Monterey City Library online catalog.)

Computer Talk — information and news about the latest products for both Mac and Windows computers, such as Zip drives and ISDN.

Net — Information, questions and answers, comments, and news about local Internet service providers.

Club Mac — Information about Club Mac of Monterey, a local Macintosh user group.

Mac Talk — Info about Mac programs and using Macs, from Pluses to PowerMacs.

Unclassifieds

— Items and services for sale, though not necessarily computer-related.

Small Talk — Chit-chat with your neighbors.

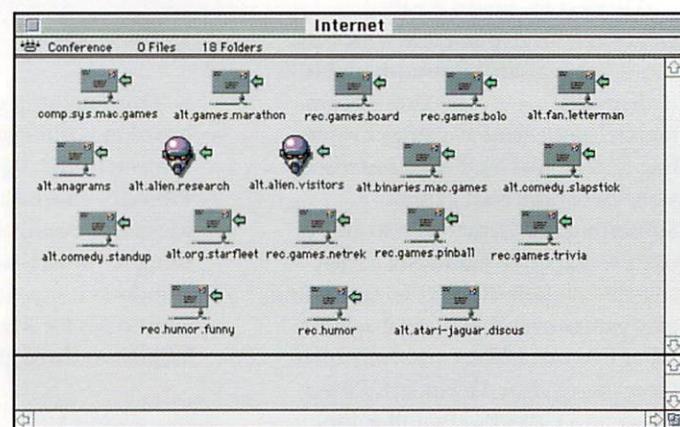
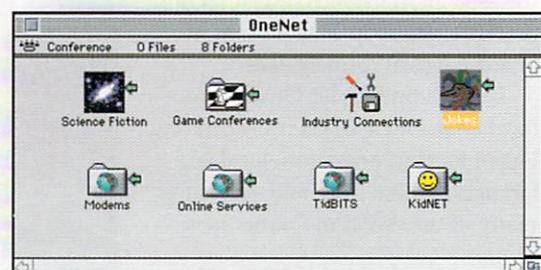
There are also lots of public domain and shareware files available through the conferences, such as Mac

CD, with over two gigabytes of PD files for Macs, current as of April, 1995; Mac files, new and hot PD files for Macs; Mac Net with files and simple one-step installers and switchers, useful for surfing the Net; Win CD, with over one gigabyte of PD files for Windows; Win files, new and hot PD files for Windows; and, Win Net, which carries the best recent Windows files for accessing Internet.

The subscription-based Pibbs can be reached at 408.899.4822. Users who pay a yearly fee get a much greater daily time limit. Subscribe online or through snail mail.

This concludes our calling tour of FirstClass boards, though obviously there are many other FC services out there waiting to be discovered. If you have any boards you'd like to recommend for review, please send along the Telnet address or number. Until then, keep on Mac-in'. ■■■■■

Michael A. Kuykendall can be reached by sending mail to Macintosh Online via the sysop, or to his email address at andykirk@aol.com.



The Professional BBS Service Bureau

Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) are fast becoming a vital tool for information exchange in corporations, associations, government and other professional organizations. Yet the learning curve and related costs for an in-house installation are steep. Not to mention the staffing required for continuous user support.

APDI has the solution!

APDI will implement and operate your BBS at our state-of-the-art Service Center. We provide all of the hardware, software and communication facilities required to make your system successful. APDI also provides a fully staffed "help desk" to assist your callers in connecting to the service and navigating its functions. All you worry about is providing the data, keeping it current, marketing the service and reaping the benefits.

APDI operates dozens of successful professional BBSes. We assist in all phases of the project from BBS design to implementation to user support. APDI selects the BBS software which best fits your application. We also provide your users with multiple connect options including toll call, 800 number, Internet, and CompuServe's x.25 packet switching access. We can even allow access to your BBS via a World Wide Web Home Page! We have hundreds of fiber optic phone lines and will assign to your system the number you need. Call us today and find out why APDI is the nation's leading Professional BBS Service Bureau.



Online Full Text Searching

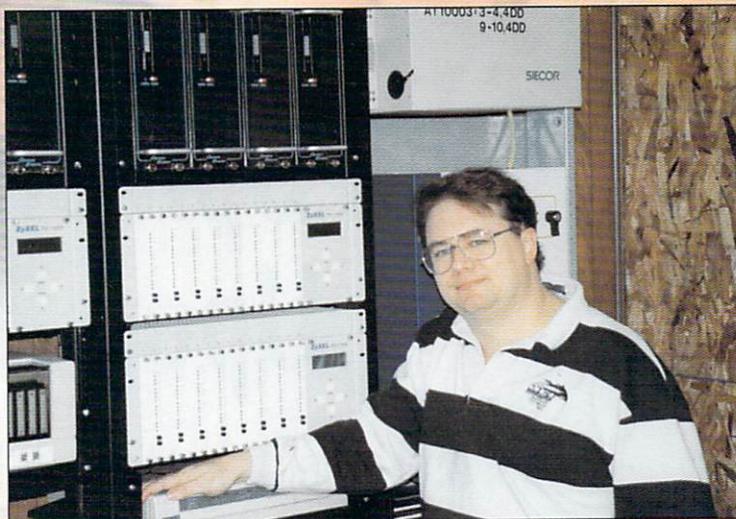
Need full text indexing and searching on your BBS?

APDI has the answer! APDI has developed Cheetah, the world's fastest and most powerful full text search program specifically designed for online systems.

Cheetah enables you to search online data collections using Boolean and proximity search phrases, searching megabytes of data in fractions of seconds. And Cheetah's interface, menus and setup are fully customizable to present your board's look-and-feel.

Searches may be conducted across one or multiple databases. Images may be attached to the data and unlimited hitlists are supported. Cheetah works with virtually all popular BBS programs.

Call us today to learn more about Cheetah!



Mark Burnett at APDI's BBS Service Bureau

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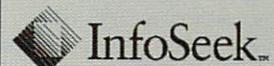
Wolf Spiders Fetch Pizza Upon Request!

... And other true tests of three Internet search engines.

A few weeks ago one of my co-workers asked me about this "Internet thing" she was getting herself involved with. Apparently one of her friends taught her to read news with a really old, archaic news-reader. (Funny how these friends disappear when it's time to actually install Mosaic or teach how to use electronic mail.) After explaining to her the scope and content of the Internet ("really big and lots of stuff") I left her alone, hoping she would share my enthusiasm. She did.

KEY WORDS

Crawling, stalking, searching the Net
Who's fast, and who leaves you hanging



InfoSeek is a new full text search service that makes finding information easy. You can search WWW pages, Usenet News, over 50 computer magazines, newspaper newswires and press releases, company profiles, medical and health information, movie reviews, technical support databases, and much more.

Internet Magazine called InfoSeek the best search tool on the Internet. [Here's what they said.](#) We invite you to see for yourself. You can try InfoSeek for free.

- [Search \(if you have an InfoSeek account\)](#)
- [Free demo and basic information](#)
- [Open a new account \(FREE for up to a month\)](#)
- [What's new and cool at InfoSeek](#)

The next day she showed up wanting Mosaic, Netscape, Eudora, Telnet, FTP, (and just about every other utility I'd ever heard of) installed on her computer... pronto.

Unfortunately that was my job, so I installed the batch of programs and gave her the manual on how to use each. This was soon followed by a multi-hour, hands-on tutorial of how to use all these programs. Next, of course, she wanted to know how to find all that "stuff" I boasted about. Have you ever heard of a search engine?

I think people get overly concerned about computers. If I ask someone to order my dinner, they'd probably find out what I wanted (pizza), look in the Yellow Pages for several pizza restaurants, find the best one closest to us, and order. Yet if I ask the average person to find information about pizza on the Internet, can you imagine what kind of looks I would get?

This should not be the case, as these days there are plenty of good searching tools on the Web. I'll look at three of the more popular ones to give you an idea of what's out there.

InfoSeek

Unlike the other two services I'll discuss, InfoSeek is a charge service — that's for-pay, money, dough (although a limited freebie search is allowed). You can use a wide variety of viewers, such as Netscape and Mosaic to launch a search. However

there is a stated notice that Lynx (the text browser) is no longer usable for the pay service, since Lynx is not secure even when started in secure mode.

Using InfoSeek, you can search 10,000 Usenet newsgroups, 80 periodicals, and 400,000 Web pages. InfoSeek claims to support multiple languages, but I was unable to test this portion.

The following databases are available with InfoSeek:

10,000 Usenet newsgroups,
400,000 WWW pages,
Computer Select,
Computer World,
InfoWorld,
Newsbytes,
Frame Technical Support notes,
Cinema Syndicate (movie) reviews,
Medline,
PR Newswire,
Business Wire,
Advanced Systems, and
Internet RFC's.

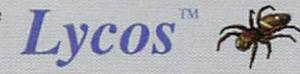
InfoSeek appears to be making a commitment to bringing high-quality service and a wide range of information to its subscribers. Pricing ranges from a straight \$0.20/transaction fee to a monthly plan of \$9.95 + \$0.10/transaction with 100 free searches. To find out more information, contact <http://www.infoseek.com>.

Lycos

Lycos is the first five letters of the Latin name for Wolf Spider, and it so happens to be what I consider the most comprehensive Web database available. This simply fantastic tool, maintained by Carnegie Mellon University, is free!

You can search over 3.4 million Web pages, limiting your search based on various needs. Every day, the Lycos Web explorer goes out and finds fresh pages (new or changed sites are updated weekly).

CMU estimates that the Web currently consists of over five million documents, so you can quickly see why



The Catalog of the Internet

A 1993 CNN Best of the Net Nominee. Over 16 million queries answered.

- Search the Lycos catalog with [Nightly](#), for more details see the [Carnegie Mellon press release](#).
- Search the [big Lycos catalog](#) (3.74 million web pages), or if you have forms, use the [Lycos search form](#) to set the number of hits, and other options. You can also try the experimental [Windows NT-based big Lycos catalog](#).
- Search the [small Lycos catalog](#) (50k web pages), or if you have forms, use the [Lycos search form](#) to set the number of hits, and other options.

such a search tool has become vital. You can use Boolean logic in your searches (AND, NOT, OR, etc.) and Lycos will spit out the top 10 hits by default. If you don't have a graphical browser, Lycos works just fine with Lynx.

If you have your own Web page, you can add it to the Lycos library, as well as remove any old links. There are a few limitations to the library, but basically anyone's home page can be placed.

Once you add your "top-level" page, Lycos will find it and all the sub-level pages. (This can take months, however, because of the sheer number of pages being added).

Lycos may be slow, but it's not without good reason: the system runs on seven computers handling up to 150,000 requests a week.

An average search of the more than three million pages takes perhaps 10 seconds — you do the math.

CMU recommends searching between 6 p.m. and 11 a.m. EST. Another time-trimming trick is to request using one of the reduced-sized catalogs, which holds about 750,000 documents, and are frequently below capacity.

Lycos has become so popular that Microsoft has licensed it to be used with its new Microsoft Network. Don't worry, though, 'cause you'll still be able to use Lycos as is, since Microsoft's license is not exclusive. CMU actually suggests this is a ben-

efit (i.e., MSN users won't contribute to the load) but that assumes the MSN will be a success.

WebCrawler

An alternative to Lycos is the WebCrawler. Developed by Brian Pinkerton, a Ph.D. student at the University of Washington, it allows you to access Web information through a full-text searchable interface.

WebCrawler was started before Lycos, and as such has a larger client base — approximately 250,000 people use the WebCrawler each week.

To connect to the WebCrawler, go to <http://webcrawler.com>.

You can access many thousands of sites, with almost 2,000 new ones being added weekly.

Recently, America Online acquired the WebCrawler and plans to continue offering the service as a public interest.

In a typical WebCrawler search, I looked for the occurrence of the word "Dilbert." In about two seconds, I got a list of 20 sites, ranked by importance. This ranking, although not very scientific, gives the user a relative feel for which document more closely matches their search terms. In my case, it found "Dan's Dilbert Stuff" to be the #1 document (<http://mmm.mbhs.edu/~dsandler/dilbert>).

WebCrawler has a very simple interface, and it is fast. For simply playing around, I'd recommend using it. But if you want a more complex or comprehensive search, try using Lycos. Either way, you'll find hundreds of new sites to explore each time you use one of these easy Web searching tools. ■■■■■

Mike Robinson can be reached at mrobinson@wharton.upenn.edu

WebCrawler Search Results

The query "dilbert" found 641 documents and returned 25:

Document ID	Document Description
0100	Dan's Dilbert Stuff
0475	Dilbert Lives!
0417	read-comics, a gateway to the ClarNet comics
0348	GPO's Home Page
0244	http://badblue.math.slu.olympia.ca/DN4.0
0204	Comic Relief
0204	Fun Page
0194	Delta Kappa Epsilon
0194	Smit och Gott
0194	Files for public FIP access
0189	Mike's Nifty Links Page
0185	Pete's Home Page
0185	Björn Sjöholm - Home Page
0169	Björn Sjöholm - Home Page
0169	Sjölin.Com
0169	Cool Links
0169	Jerry Youngman's Home Page
0169	Home Pages
0155	Who's that Dagon guy?
0152	WorldWide Access (SM) Commercial Services

To search the WebCrawler database, type in your search keywords here. Type help to uniquely identify what you're looking for. Last update: June 11, 1995

AND words together

Number of results to return: 25

[News](#) | [Home](#) | [Search](#) | [Help](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Top 25 Sites](#) | [Submit URLs](#) | [Discussions](#)

Recent News: The WebCrawler has been acquired by America Online! See a short [Q&A](#) about the acquisition, the [press release](#), and [The WebCrawler News](#) for more information.

Download Bulletin

New and updated programs for the Commodore

Keeping up with new files is one of the most enjoyable aspects of BBSing. There's nothing more fun than downloading a new program or discovering that one of your favorite programs has been updated with bigger and better features. That said, here's the skinny on the latest releases and announcements in the Commodore 8-bit world.

KEY WORDS

BBSing in your sleep

New fax software

A protocol to blow you away?



BBSing and Commodore Computing — Automated

EZ Loader v3.0

Ever BBS while you're asleep? David Schmoll does this on a nightly basis using EZ Loader v3.0 to load his term program and download the mail from his favorite BBS. The menu program then unzips his mail and has it ready for reading when he awakens. EZ Loader V3.0 can be found as EZLDR3.0.SFX on 221B Baker Street BBS (904.862.8643), or via FTP from ccnga.uwaterloo.ca in the directory /pub/cbm/util64, or directory /pub/cbm/util128.

EZ Loader is a shareware menu program written to reduce many of the mundane tasks of loading files from varying disk devices, but now offers more features for registered users. The registration fee is \$20, and until registered, several features of the program are locked out. Disabling the features was not something Schmoll wanted to do, but felt was necessary due to poor registrations in the past. The screen-sav-

ing routine has been changed to include the current date and time. Registered users are rewarded with their name shown in the screen saver and all the features operational.

The menu program now has an autoboot feature to load a program within a user-specified number of seconds (up to 90) after the program starts.

Another new feature is the ability to use "script" files which are basically menu entries that will load programs one after the other.

This option can be very handy when several programs are usually run in sequential order (which many BBS users who use offline mail readers often do), such as terminal program, followed by the mail unpacker, the offline reader, and finally the term program again to upload the replies. The scripts can be set to start at a specified time and allow up to 15 programs to be loaded in this manner. EZ Loader will make use of the RTC (Real Time Clocks) found in many CMD devices or allow the user to input the current time.

Another new feature is the ability to maneuver within the menu system "point and click" style using either a mouse, trackball or joystick.

Even Creative Micro Designs' latest

SmartMouse and SmartTrack (ball) devices, which have a built in RTC, can be used by EZ Loader as it accepts the time and date from these devices as well.

The SmartTrack and SmartMouse are available from Creative Micro Designs for \$69.95 and \$49.95, respectively. For further information, contact Creative Micro Designs at 413.525.0023.

GeoFAX

Announcements concerning geoFAX were made at presstime by Maurice Randall, with apologies for the delay. It seems the programmer found what he originally thought was a bug in his software, but has narrowed it down to a bug inherent in some fax modems involving slower software/hardware. While Commodore users have some very fast devices such as the REU and RAMLink, Randall has made every attempt to have geoFAX ready for all users, including those with unenhanced 1541 disk drives. It should be available "any day now" from either Creative Micro Designs (413.525.0023) or direct from Maurice Randall (517.543.5202) for \$39.95 plus \$4 shipping.

A new phrase now in vogue is "soft-80," the software implementation of 80 column video on the Commodore 64. Both Nick Rossi and Craig Bruce have released programs which offer this feature, but implement it differently. These follow:

- Novaterm v9.6 — Rossi, author of the Commodore 64 term program which allows 80 columns and ANSI as well as top modem speeds of up to 38.4 Kbps, has announced the shareware release of Novaterm 9.6. This version incorporates the use of an REU (Ram Expansion Unit) for fast soft-80 screen scrolling and for capture-buffer use. It also has a new, user-friendly configuration file. At presstime the names of the download files were not yet available, but should be similar to his previous releases. Try looking for NOVA96-x.SFX, "x" of course being the number of files from one through as many as four or five. Rossi posts the current files for Novaterm on GENie, Delphi, and via FTP from [ftp.eskimo.com](ftp://ftp.eskimo.com), in directory /voyager/Novaterm.

This site contains the most recent Novaterm version, archives, the individual files, the documentation in both CBM and standard ASCII, and any other information, news, new modules, or bug fixes that come along.

Novaterm has a \$25 (\$33CDN) shareware fee. Rossi can be reached at voyager@isumataq.eskimo.com, or at his mailing address: 10002 Aurora Ave. N. #1159, Seattle, WA 98133.

Registered users receive notification of new versions and updates, and can receive the upgraded versions on disk as long as you provide Rossi with a floppy in the mail. Documentation is also available for an additional \$15.

- ACEterm — Bruce's ACE 64/128 version 13 is an alternative operating system for the Commodore 64 and 128. ACE (Advanced Computing Environment) is very similar to UNIX and now features a term program.

The ACE system allows both 40- or 80-column use in either 64 OR 128 modes. Yes, this means 64 people can use this operating system by utilizing the soft-80 feature. ACEterm includes a device driver for the SwiftLink cartridge allowing modem speeds of 38.4 Kbps. A configuration program lets the user define the size allowed for the receive-buffer, and auto-flow control for when this buffer is near full.

Craig calls the term's VT-100 emulation "pretty good," and mentions in the documentation that some of the VT-100's features were not implemented for technical reasons. The program does not auto dial, so the BBS phone number needs to be typed using the modem's commands. It also doesn't—at this time—have any file transfer facilities, but the author says that he will be implementing transfer protocols such as Raw-Text transfer, Z-Modem, and a new protocol, "B-Modem," about which he says he guarantees one thing: "it will blow the doors off every other protocol in existence." This could be a real boon to Commodore users who exchange files via modem with other Commos.

Craig says the next release of ACE will have a fully implemented version of Zed working within the ACE environment.

Zed, a text editor which allows the

"It will blow the doors off every other protocol in existence."

— Craig Bruce on B-Modem

editing of very large files by making use of the REU, has been available for 128 users for some time now as ZED-128.007. Its only downfall has been that it splits text in lines which are longer than 80 columns. The new version will be functional for both 64 and 128 users, have word wrap, unlimited line length, and horizontal scrolling of up to 240 characters. Zed has been one of the few text editors which allows you to import and save text in a variety of ways, such as PetASCII, Speedscript, ASCII with CRs (carriage returns) and/or LFs (linefeeds). It also allows very large files to be edited when used with an REU.

This program is described as free-ware, with a request for postcards from users. Craig Bruce can be reached via email at csbruce@ccnga.uwaterloo.ca, or at his postal address — 4-249 Cedarbrae Ave., Waterloo Ontario, N2L 4S8, Canada. ACE13A.SFX through ACE13D.SFX can be downloaded from 221B Baker Street BBS (904.862.8643), or via FTP from ccnga.uwaterloo.ca in the directory /pub/cbm/os/ace.

Compression and OLR Utilities

QPE v1.70
UNZIP128 v1.70

Those of us waiting patiently (well, some of us anyway) for a means to decompress PKZIP 2.04g packets will have to remain that way. No, this isn't the announcement of a PKZip 2.04g unzip program for the Commodore, but an improvement on the existing Commodore unzip program for PKZip 1.xx is still good news. Even better news is this software will inform you if you're trying to dissolve a 2.04g file, which is better than being left in the dark.

David Schmoll has announced the

CONTINUES . . .

release of NZP12817.SFX, and although the filename specifically mentions the 128, 64 users will also benefit from QPE v1.70, particularly Commodore 64 users who use the offline mail reader QWKie. QPE offers a streamlined approach to dissolving mail packets for either QWKie or QWKRR128 users, but in the past was limited to only allowing 64 users the option to unARC mail while 128 users could dissolve either style, arc or PKZIP 1.xx QWK packets.

Now, thanks to permission from the 64 unZIP developer Bill Lucier, QPE

will also decompress QWK packets archived with PKZIP 1.xx for 64 users. It still requires the use of the files contained in CSX01.SDA to unARC packets, because the modules for this are copyrighted by someone other than Schmoll or Lucier. Further changes to QPE include the option to unZIP only selected files, an option to reset to BASIC or to the offline mail reader after dissolving mail. The option to force lowercase filenames has been removed and made a standard of the program.

UNZIP128, which is included in the

NZP12817.SFX archive, is a stand-alone 128 (40 or 80 column) utility to unzip PKZIP 1.xx archives. It attempts to fix an elusive Unshrink bug on files greater than a few thousand bytes. As with QPE, lowercase filenames are now forced.

NZP128-17.SFX, and the included files are freeware, with a suggested \$10 (U.S.) donation for each program. David Schmoll can be contacted at dschmoll@manwe.fmssoft.com; Fido, 1:104/518; or at 1703 Pagosa Way, Aurora, Colorado 80011.

As enjoyable as it is to download new releases and check out new programs, keep in mind that many of the programs mentioned here are either shareware or freeware, and it is up to the individual user to read the documentation with each new program to find out how to register it. ACE13, for example, is freeware but the author requests that users mail him a postcard with something interesting on it.

Schmoll accepts donations for his freeware releases (QPE and UNZIP128) but has made EZ Loader a shareware program and removed features for non-registered users. Some may think this is the wrong road to travel, but when one takes into consideration the amount of time and effort that go into a program, the author should be reimbursed for their time if you use the program on a regular basis.

Were it not for the programming efforts of many individuals who rely on shareware and/or the purchase of commercial programs the "impossible" (which we Commodore users have been enjoying for quite some time now), would still be but a dream, and we'd not have the use of the devices which give us the "impossible." So the next time you load an unregistered program for the umpteenth time, do more than simply think about registering it — do it! We need to encourage our programmers with more than lip service. ■■■■■

Gaelene Moranec is a freelance writer who can usually be found in the Fidonet CBM echo. Comments or suggestions can be sent to 1:239/200.999, 3:800/809.128; Internet: gaelene.moranec@aftrs.edu.au. Or sent in care of BBS Magazine.

**Pics
OnLine!**

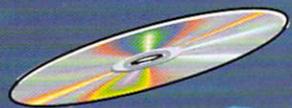
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Q & A

Q: After running a BBS on my PC for a few months to exchange ANSI graphics drawings among my friends, word seems to have gotten out that the BBS is an entertaining place to visit. I've started charging a fee to new callers, so I can get enough money to put in a second phone line. This is going well, but it's also bringing me more email than I have time to deal with. I've noticed people lose interest pretty fast when they don't get their questions answered almost immediately. There's got to be a better way! Ideas?

Carleton, from California

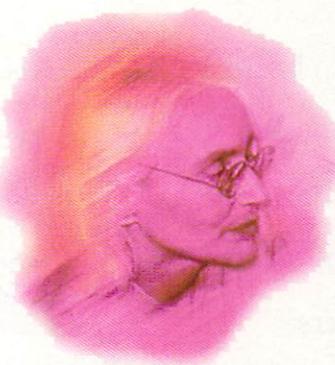
A: Congratulations, Carleton, to you and your friends for creating an online place that folks want to visit—one that is apparently attracting new callers by word of mouth. It takes talent and originality to stand out in a field like this. Having been lucky enough to have lived through times where demand for our BBS exceeded available supply (or hours in the day), here are some of the things that help. When it comes to saving time writing email, you can set up a series of pre-written messages that answer the questions you get most often. Odds are you'll be able to call these up to your message base by hot key.

Most folks really like to get email, especially if you can make it colorful with ANSI! Try welcoming new callers with a canned welcome email. They'll love it. And maybe anticipate one or two of their questions with a start-up explanation message.

And certainly try to make time to read your callers' mail daily. But when you don't have time to answer the messages in detail, return a hotkey message that acknowledges reading their mail and let them know that you'll get back to them soon (then be sure and do so).

If you haven't already, you can see to it that your Bulletins menu develops so as to answer the questions your callers ask most often, keeping in mind that a lot of callers will not check Bulletins no matter what information you've got there. Each of your Bulletins can, however, do double duty as a hot-key message. This hits the spot sometimes. And last but not least, callers appreciate "short" forced communications from you on your login or log-off screens.

You can tweak the amount of time you allow each call,



even paying callers, until you have more than one line. This is easy to do with most BBS software.

As long as you realize that no sysop can be expected to do all of the above, adding one or more to your bag of tricks may help you manage your time, and keep your callers connected while your BBS grows.

Q: Can you tell me some economical ways to advertise the BBS I am starting this fall?

Joe, from Washington state

A: Get listed! Get your BBS on a BBS list...all kinds of them. Nationwide, there are several extensive lists that circulate BBSes online. Call the sysops who maintain current BBS lists for your metropolitan area, area code and/or local calling area and put your BBS on each and every one of them. Tell your friends! Enlist the help of your early callers—ask them to spread the word. If you have any interest in attracting new callers from out of state as well as local, start listing your BBS in the magazines, too. *Computer Shopper*, *BBS Magazine* and others maintain free listings. You may be eligible. Call and find out.

If your BBS will be accessible via Telnet, don't forget to put it on the "BBSs on the Internet" lists, too.

If your BBS is geared toward a special interest, send press releases to trade publications and to your local newspapers. It's a good habit to get into early on. Hob-knob with the staff, if you can. And give them access. When your BBS generates what you consider a news story, you'll be in the groove to get it published.

Flyers aren't very expensive to produce, can usually be multi-purpose, and will serve you well. Mail them as follow-up to folks after they call your BBS, scatter them around your local user groups, computer societies and software shops. You'd be surprised how many people ask clerks at their local software stores, "What's a good BBS to call around here?" So cultivate friendships with your local software store clerks. Give them access, too. If you can get them enthusiastic about your BBS, they will tell others.

Please address your questions, comments, problems or concerns to:

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<i>Email:</i>	tess.heder@channel1.com
<i>Fax:</i>	617.354.3100, Attention: Ask TESS
<i>Snail Mail:</i>	Channel 1, Attn: Ask Tess, 1030 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Tess Heder is co-founder of Channel 1® BBS, winner of the Dvorak/Zoom Award of Excellence in Telecommunications and the 1992 Best General Interest BBS.

Modems

BY MODEM MAGE

Modem Spins

A little chaos is a good thing now and then

After a few millennia, one can build a special affinity for certain spells.

Take the one currently cast over the modem industry — a real thing of beauty. The way the spell ties all the players together, manipulating them so subtly, few actually realize their decisions are not their own.

The hex currently cast is called the Spell of Chaos. It has the industry spinning in so many interesting directions, few seem to know what to believe, what to anticipate, and most importantly, what to buy.

Let's take a brief look at a few of the news breakers of late and how they prove the Spell of Chaos is well in force.

Just when you had a handle on the major modem players, AT&T attacks the market with a low-cost V.32bis desktop modem. Yes, the folks who crank out data center products and high-end modems have put forth an under-\$100 product. It can be found on most store shelves, but somehow seems out of place with the other brand names.

Is AT&T hoping to grab their small share of the burgeoning first-time modem buyers market? This sure seems to be the case, as the product offers nothing new compared to others already in the game.

If you think AT&T is an odd entry, how about Motorola?

Motorola has always delivered top-notch data-center products and typically offers high-end desktop systems. Now they, too, have tossed their chaotic hats into the ring with the "Lifestyle" modem. A less than \$250, the Lifestyle seems a direct attack on USRobotics, Practical Peripherals, Zoom, and others in the low-cost market.

Motorola obviously has plenty of cash to throw at the effort, but will people be willing to think of Motorola outside the pager/cellular phone arena? I think they face the same challenge AT&T does: name recognition vs. brand-

name recognition.

If "name" is the primary issue, AT&T and Motorola have an advantage. If "brand-name" is the bigger factor, these big guns are going to be left in the "also-rans" slot.

OK. These are interesting examples, but look a little further for even more testimonial to the real power of the Spell of Chaos.

Many have been following the Hayes financial situation with professional and perverse curiosity. Since last October, Hayes has been struggling in the midst of Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Rumors had them coming out in April, and then again this summer. Now we toss in a pinch of Chaos and poof! BOCA announces the purchase of Hayes!

Yes, BOCA, a company with sales of \$82 million last year, purchased Hayes, a company ringing up \$230 million during the same period, and currently in the throes of Chapter 11. Isn't Chaos a thing of beauty!

Working with this tempest is a bit like gambling: it's sure to bring the unexpected to light (which isn't necessarily a bad thing). For instance, AT&T and Motorola entering the market will surely drive the price leaders to cut again. The marketing campaigns have clearly been gearing up lately, so keep an eye out for the game to get pretty competitive.

The marriage of Hayes with BOCA is harder to read, but there are safe assumptions: BOCA will benefit from the Hayes distribution channel and has the cash to dig Hayes out of debt, while Hayes (lacking freshness the last two years) may find some needed research dollars headed to its engineering department again.

On the other hand...

Well, we'll just have to wait and see what Chaos does next.



Sysop/Provider programs

I've included a couple of basic charts for those who believe a picture (well,

CONTINUES...

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

VENDOR/ PRODUCT	14.4K V.32bis INTERNAL	14.4K V.32bis EXTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC, V.34 INTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC V.34 EXTERNAL
AT&T	3721-B1-001*	3710-A1-201*	\$175	N/A
Paradyne	\$150	\$165 PC; \$190 Mac		
CPI/ ViVa	ViVa 14.4 \$180	ViVa 14.4 \$196	N/A	N/A
Hayes Corp	Optima 144B* \$179	Ultra 144 \$249	N/A	Optima 288+FAX v.FC 28.8k \$259
		Optima 144+FAX* \$179 PC; \$179 Mac		
Intel	SatisFax/400 \$249	14.4 EX \$269	N/A	N/A
	Faxmodem 144i \$99	SatisFax/400e* \$245		
		Faxmodem 144e \$109		
Microcom	N/A	N/A	N/A	DeskPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k \$249
				TravelPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k \$249
MultiTech	MT1432BC \$400	MT1432BA* \$400	N/A	N/A
	MT1432ES \$400 MCA	MT1432MU* \$300		
		MT1432BL* \$450		
		MT1432PCS \$575		
Practical Peripherals	N/A	PM14400FXSA* \$215	N/A	N/A
		PM14400FXMT* \$155		
Supra Corp	SupraFAXModem* \$109	SupraFAXModem* \$139	\$159	Supra V34 \$179
USRobotics	N/A	N/A	N/A	HST V.Everything V.34, VFC, FAX* \$249
Ven-Tel	PCM144FAX* \$195	EC144FAX* \$215	N/A	N/A
	PCM.V.32bis* \$480	ECV.32bis* \$525		
	MCM144FAX* \$380 MCA	RMV.32bis II* \$425		
Zoom Telephonics	VFP V.32Bis* \$99	VFX V.32Bis* \$119 PC; \$130 Mac	VFP V.FC 24k \$99	VFX V.FC 24k \$119 PC; \$130 Mac
			VFP V.FC 28.8k \$139	VFX V.FC 28.8k \$159 PC; \$170 Mac
ZyXEL	U-1496B* 16.8K \$299	U-1496E* 16.8K \$299	N/A	U-1496E* v.32terbo 16.8K \$299
	U-1496B+* 19.2K \$389			

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

Notes on Table I:

- All internal modems are assumed to be PC-AT ISA bus unless otherwise noted. Some manufacturers do not offer internals; be careful when ordering.
- Consult manufacturer for details on availability of Caller ID or voice-mail processing options (any modem above).
- These prices NEVER include shipping and handling, which is always extra. Typically \$5 - \$15 U.S. dollars.
- V.34 is International (ITU-T) standard for 28.8K. This is not the same as V.FAST (generic name) or V.FC (Rockwell based 28.8K standard).

TABLE II — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

VENDOR NAME	CALL THEIR BBS AT THIS NUMBER AND...	...DOWNLOAD THIS FILE.	IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL...	CONTACT VIA EMAIL
AT&T Paradyne	(813) 532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800) 554-4996	t.bradshaw@paradyne.com
CPI/ViVa	(805) 499-9646; (215) 746-9948	CPIA.TXT	(800) 854-7600	
Hayes Corp.	(404) 446-6336; (800) USHAYES	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404) 840-9200	rlacy@hayes.com
Intel	(503) 645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503) 228-9707	
Microcom	(800) 822-8224	SYSOP.TXT	(617) 762-5134	
MultiTech	(612) 785-9875; (800) 392-2432	PRICE.TXT	(612) 785-3500	
Pract. Per.	(404) 734-4600	SYSBBS.TXT	(404) 840-9966	GO PPIFORUM (CompuServe)
Supra Corp.	(503) 967-2444	SYSOP.TXT	(503) 967-2400	orders@supra.com
USRobotics	(708) 982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708) 982-5151 (800) 550-7800	support@usr.com CIS 76711,707
Ven-Tel	(408) 922-0988	SYSDEAL.TXT	(408) 436-7400	
Zoom Teleph.	(617) 423-3733	ZOOMBBS.ZIP	(617) 423-1076	CIS 71333,1527
ZyXEL	(714) 693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714) 693-0804	sales@zyxel.com

chart) is worth a few pages of rambling text.

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

I recommend only V.34 for sysops. End-users can economically afford to now live by the same standards. The V.34 ITU-T standard offers 50 percent more throughput than v.32bis, at only minimal cost increases. It also offers a better chance at a high-speed connect (24,000–28,800) than VFC under minimal line conditions. Beware of upgrade plans to v.FAST/v.34 modems; various manufacturer programs vary greatly.

More than a modem

Some vendors offer more than just modems to the sysops joining their program. For example, US Robotics offers substantial discounts off their CommServer 486 LAN product. Other vendors, such as ZyXEL, offer big discounts on modem rack-

mounts. A rackmount reduces the tangle of multiplying power supplies and becomes economical for sysops planning on larger, multi-line systems.

Buyers' restrictions

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

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

Nearly all of the modem vendors are accepting VISA and MasterCard for orders. Some also accept a cashier's check or money-order for prepay orders. Personal checks often

require additional clearing time which just holds up your order. C.O.D. is becoming less common, and is rumored for phase-out by several of the larger players over the next few months.

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

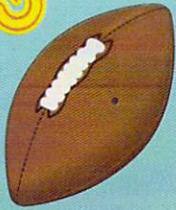
Order processing and availability

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

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

ModemMag@ais.net

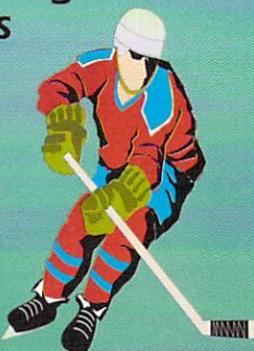
REALTIME SPORTS



Now Planet Connect brings realtime data within the reach of every BBS. Our sports data is delivered to your BBS via satellite as the news is created, so its always the latest most current information. Your users can learn about important sports events and news hours before they appear on TV or make the newspapers.

No other sports information source can match the completeness of Sports Connect. Players, teams, leagues, and more are completely covered with over 4 megs of data daily. Scores are reported as the games and events are in progress.

A variety of doors are available for most brands of BBS software and the system is designed to be fully automated.



Our satellite data systems also provide the latest files and nets plus Internet Usenet Newsgroups. Our 19,200 baud system can deliver 150 megs of compressed files daily. If you already own a satellite dish you can get started for only \$299.00..

Weather and sports are now available, Stocks and News are coming soon.



Winner of the Dvorak "Best Product of the Year Award"

We're changing the way Sysops think.



Instead of thinking of their BBS as a place to store and distribute information that may be hours or days old, the progressive Sysops that have Planet Connect can now deliver data in real time. Highly desirable data such as Sports, Weather, News, Stock Quotes, and more can be obtained from Planet Connect via satellite.

These Sysops are finding many new users who want to obtain information as soon as it happens. People that need time sensitive data will come to you, since you'll be hours ahead of newspapers, and other media. Whether at work, school, or at play your users needs only a modem and computer to quickly locate the exact data they want.

With satellite delivery, your BBS can be almost completely automated to provide services that only the big on line services have traditionally provided. Planet Connect negotiates with quality data providers to obtain data at excellent prices, and passes these savings on to you. You'll be amazed at how inexpensive a satellite real time feed can be.

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Contact: Planet Systems, Inc.
1065 Cosby Highway
Newport, Tennessee 37821
Voice: 615-623-8300
Fax: 615-623-8751
Info@NS1.Planetc.Com
BBS: 615-623-8111
FIDO: 1:3615/50



The A-List

If you're a sysop and would like to be considered for the list, contact one of the following sites. Posting to the USBBS List at these sites will place you on the A-List.

BOBsBBS — 916.929.7511

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

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

Call 609.953.9110 (voice) for help.

Derived from the USBBSSLIST.

LEGEND

BBS TYPE	BAUD	MODULATION	SIZE	NODES	SUBSCRIPTION	INTERNET FEAT.
B	29	D	50+	3	\$	3
BAUD						
O = 300						
1 = 1200						
2 = 2400						
9 = 9600 or faster						
MODULATION TYPE						
V = V.32 or V.32bis						
U = USRobotics HST						
H = Hayes VSM						
F = V.Fast, V.34 (1/25/95)						
O = Other proprietary method						
D = USRobotics Dual Standard (V32 and HST)						
B = Hayes Ultra (V32 and VSM)						
SIZE						
Indicated in 100s of megs.						
+ = CD-ROM.						
NODES						
Number of lines						
SUBSCRIPTION						
\$ = subscription; blank = FREE						
INTERNET FEATURES						
SERVICES CODE						
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 A B C D E F						
Mail X X X X X X X X X X						
Usenet XX XX XX XX						
FTP XXXX XXXX						
Telnet XXXXXXXX						
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS						
Must support 2400 bps or greater						
100 MB of disk capacity						
24hr/7 day service						
Sysop must give REAL NAME						

201-585-0957	NJ Fort Lee	208-734-3544	ID Twin Falls	216-324-6410
Phantom	Mark Bellew	Faze V Tech	Ken Vaughn	Comm. Netlink
FidoNet, Freedom Net.		Echomail, prgrming, medcl, wrting.		K. Stevenson
B 29 FV 2 1		W 29 V 1 1		
201-729-2602		209-224-9310	CA Fresno	216-345-5623
Chuck's Attempt	Chuck Ammann	Revolution BBS	Brian Watters	OH Wooster
		Full featured 44 node PCBoard.		Chris Butdorf
201-904-9781	NJ Prospect Pk	B 29 F 100+ 10	7	
Deredain'sRealm	Ron Lotterman			
EMS related, games, Wildcat.				
W 09 D 10 2				
202-234-0750	WashingtonDC	209-277-7979	CA Fresno	216-639-9508
Absolute Bliss	P. Willow	LegacyNet	Sean Rutledge	Scientist's BBS
Games, files, adult discussion.		Chat, game, full service.		Soo Kurz
M 29 V 15+ 20 \$ 8		M 29 FV 10+ 38 F		
203-397-5225	CT Hamden	209-323-6835	CA Clovis	216-665-4551
CONNect BBS	Rico Gattilia	Clovis Connect	Rod Jessen	AIE BBS
Utilities, games, graphics.		Genealogy, AIDS/HIV, OS/2.		Justin Spies
W 09 D 47+ 1		W 29 FD 14+ 3		
203-443-3857	CT New London	209-437-9903	CA Fresno	218-376-4590
BEYOND BBS	Shawn Brogan	Hunter's Den	Rick Hunter	The Darc Tower
Geared towards the family.		Paul Revere Network & SurvNet.		Roger Soular
B 29 VF 800 1		W 29 VF 10+ 2		
203-487-6134	CT Ashford	209-439-5934	CA Fresno	218-525-7520
Stonehenge BBS	Dave Swift	Revolution BBS	Brian Watters	Wizard's Tower
3D action games & general comp.		Business related, Internet.		Sheldon Aubut
X 29 VO 10 2		B 29 F 14+ 44 \$ F		
203-488-2315	CT No. Branford	209-956-6751	CA Stockton	218-729-7026
Interstate BBS	Lewis Reid	Cheers BBS	Jeff Lee	TBNT
Messages, files, games.		Latest WareZ.		Roger Martell
X 19 VO 14+ 1		V 09 VB 15+ 2 F		
203-646-8990	CT Manchester	212-749-3268	Walter's BBS	218-878-0642
Dungeons/Doom!	Mike Pennington	Walter Parrish		MN Cloquet
Doors, files, message bases.				Echelon MLS
X 29 VF 19+ 1 2				Ed Miller
204-475-5199	MB Winnipeg	214-223-8268	TX Desoto	Entertainment, game revue.
Generic BBS	Victor Laking	The PAIN CAVE	Jeff Goldstein	M 09 D 10+ 10 \$ 3
General chatter, text files.		Erotica, art, and games.		
I 09 V 1 1		W 29 V 13 2		
205-574-6841	AL Scottsboro	214-245-9315	USS Inverness	301-293-0320
Power Station	Allen Godwin	Jonathan McGirr		MD Hagerstown
Files, games, Planet Connect.				The Berean BBS
X 29 VF 5+ 1 \$				Bob Coss
205-751-9890	AL Hartselle	214-288-6826	TX Mesquite	Christian files and ministry.
Paragon OnLine	Richard Creel	The DarkRoom	S.Hubbard	O 19 V 40+ 2
Graphical Windows based.		Public access.		
X 09 V 14+ 1 3		I 29 V 11+ 1		
205-759-4817	AL Tuscaloosa	214-351-9859	Collector's Ed	301-498-8729
FloydACDogHse!	Lyle Osborne	Len Hult		Razors Edge
Files and online gaming.				Bob Kelly
W 09 VO 14+ 1				Music, comics, games, adult.
205-871-9678	AL Birmingham	214-355-1835	Lonesome Dove	W 29 D 14+ 1
Lions Den BBS	M. Sieniawski	Matthew Peacock		301-620-1401
Games and files.				The Berean BBS
W 19 D 50 1				Bob Coss
206-584-4309		214-641-6292	TX Grand Prair	Christian files and ministry.
The Wolf's Den	Keith Shinkle	Hogard Software	Chuck Hogard	O 19 V 35+ 2
		Software support, shareware.		
W 09 FD 80+ 1		B 29 FV 30+ 5 \$ 9		
207-288-2712	ME Bar Harbor	215-321-1873	PA Philly	301-808-7233
Acadia Online	Derek Sheppard	After-Hours	Tony Reesby	Capitol City
Mt. Desert's information util.		Games, fun BBS.		Norris Sydnor
T 19 F 60+ 4 3		W 09 FD 80+ 1		Windows, Internet, news, games.
208-664-2983		215-985-4326	PA Philadelphia	X 29 FV 70+ 3 3
The Third Mill	Jim Fromm	Metrotron	Mike Knerr	
		Urban Interest, film noir.		
S 29 B 10+ 2 \$ 3		B 19 VF 30 3 \$ 3		
216-248-1891	OH Cleveland	216-248-1891	OH Cleveland	303-456-1642
Mip Online	Brian and Dan	Mip Online	Pagan oriented messages.	C SportsBoard
Internet messaging with files.				Gary Hawley
S 29 B 10+ 2 \$ 3				Sports forecasts & data.
J 29 V 10 1 3				Q 19 VO 2 1
216-964-8559	CO Denver			303-964-5372
Silver Moone	Nythcar			RU BBS
Pagan oriented messages.				Kate Secret
J 29 V 10 1 3				University board.

304-725-1957 WV Charles Twn
Fly By Nite Gary Mace
 Aviation, Home of ATCnet.
 X 09 FV 14+ 2 1

304-728-0884 WV Charles Twn
The Bit Bank J. Willingham
 Full-featured BBS.
 Q 19 F 11+ 2 1

305-344-9584 FL Coral Spring
Digital Abyss Scott McCarthy
 IBM support, files, etc.
 X 29 FV 12+ 4 1

305-432-2223 FL Pembrk Pines
SunShine PCB Michele Stewart
 Over 3000 ANSI's, online games.
 B 19 D 24+ 2 3

305-964-3463 FL Miramar
John's Playpen John Slater
 Downloading BBS, adults.
 W 29 FU 50+ 2 \$ 7

310-212-7605 CA Torrance
Beginners Club Vince Sheu
 Dos & Windows files.
 I 09 V 10 1

310-392-3981 CA Santa Monica
Moroni Joe Fasbinder
 Mormon-oriented text files.
 R 09 V 5+ 1

310-425-5710 CA Lakewood
aussie M.Szabados
 Chat, files, games.
 M 09 V 100+ 18 \$ 3

312-284-7133
4th Dimension Jeff Jones

312-665-7319 IL Chicago
HOME AGAIN! William Johnson
 Free Internet email and usenet.
 B 09 FV 36+ 2 3

313-582-0888 MI Dearborn
bloom county Gary Gilmore
 A little bit of everything.
 O 19 FV 62+ 1 1

314-281-8598 MI Megabiter II
 George Belcher

314-282-4216 MO St. Louis
Ajax Cat Grind George Smith
 FIDO, chess, games, legal.
 W 09 VO 11+ 1

314-351-7150 MO The STL CATII
 David Russo

314-664-6877 MO St Louis
CITADEL BBS Lee Young
 Alternative lifestyle.
 M 09 D 14+ 4 \$

314-770-2342 MO St. Louis
The Shoe-Me BB Bob Patel
 Adult images, chatting.
 W 29 BV 14+ 4

315-458-3482 CA Dreamscape
 Scott Brennan

315-475-3250 NY Syracuse
Bytronix! Mike Bettua
 Variety/general interest.
 X 09 VO 5 2

316-267-5125 KS Wichita
Elysian Fields Chris Schroeder
 Internet service.
 M 19 VF 12+ 65 \$ F

316-788-7520 IN Griswold's Priv
 Jim Kelland

317-359-5199 IN Indianopolis
TCON C. Hanrahan
 Classified ads, Internet.
 X 19 FV 500 120 \$ F

317-455-3703 IN Kokomo
Grim Reaper's George Borg
 Games, Fidonet, Internet soon.
 R 29 BV 14+ 2

317-756-7956 IN Indianapolis
The Stargazer Ken Johnson
 Programming C/C++, Obasic.
 B 19 F 10+ 1

317-889-4274 IN Greenwood
Eagle BBS Ralph Moore
 Genealogy, shareware, Internet.
 B 29 DF 45+ 2 \$ 3

318-323-7882 LA Monroe
Bayou Internet Jerry Scroggin
 Broadcast radio related.
 M 19 FO 14+ 6 \$ F

334-409-0956 AL Montgomery
Homeowners Hvn Alison Gwin
 Real Estate information.
 I 29 F 1 1

334-675-8406 AL Saraland
The Anchor Inn Jim Wilson
 Fidonet, many doors, Filebone.
 B 29 FV 11 1 1

334-677-7316 AL Dothan
sandstorms bbs Kim Gransden
 games adult.
 W 29 VO 5+ 1 1

334-809-0270 AL Brewton
TSE Russ Haag
 Motivation, psychology, games.
 F 29 D 13+ 1

403-459-3270 AB St. Albert
Second Reality Earl Potter
 Tech support, games files.
 Q 09 VO 65+ 2 \$ 3

404-476-7880 Late Nite BBS
 Bobby Nowell

404-478-9700 The Night Shift
 Bill Hardy

404-516-0048 GA Woodstock
AtlantaWindows Warren Royal
 Windows and OS/2 shareware.
 B 29 FD 70+ 13 \$ F

404-773-7966 Warp Factor
 Mark Stewart

404-819-6860 GA Mableton
Mountain BBS Shawn Cannon
 Christian BBS, Star Trek.
 W 29 V 8+ 1

404-825-0841 GA Norcross
BrightStar Bob Naumann
 Business-related.
 B 19 B 0 0

404-936-0550
Music Connection David Coleman

404-994-0612 GA Atlanta
ABBS Ron Miller
 Many SIGs including law enf.
 T 09 VO 10+ 6

405-354-6937 OK Yukon
Chamber32Doors Dave Mather
 Music & games.
 X 29 V 6+ 1 3

405-372-5658 OK Stillwater
CooKoo's Nest Eric Jansen
 World wide networks, and files.
 X 09 VF 5 2

405-478-8250 OK Edmond
Medicus BBS John Gilliam
 Medical computing.
 B 19 FD 60+ 3 3

405-728-7124 Hotel California
 Lloyd Lawson

405-949-9769 OK Oklahoma City
Eternal Pwr II Kevin Kuhlman
 Games, files, amercomm net.
 V 29 VF 1+ 1

406-256-1301 MT Billings
Great Escape! S. Richardson
 Games, files, lots of confs.
 W 19 D 11+ 2

407-375-8530 FL Boynton Beach
ECL Robert Heyen
 travel & cruise, gen. entertainment.
 T 09 VO 2 7 \$

continues...

The A-List

Surf The 'Net On A Better Board.™

Full Internet access & 1/2 million ad listings in dozens of ad papers. Download the latest software, no dubs or viruses. Play 70 hottest interactive games, chat worldwide on 100 lines. No long distance charges from any of our 600 local phone #'s.

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 (Info via voice)

1-800-FUN-TCON
 (Info via modem)

1-317-359-5199
 (modem info & local access #)

telnet:trader.com

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Major BBS v6.25 - \$129.95

Special Price for Limited Time Only! Call for the full line of Galacticomm Products
Valuable Applications for The Major BBS!

Global Monitor - Split screen monitor users by key, class or user id & still use bbs.	\$79
Chat-Now - Split screen one on one chat & still use the bbs! Sysop forced chat too!	\$125
Lost Caverns - Open Ended Mud - your users build the game as they play it!	\$399
Pick Up Artist - Lets see if you're as hot as you think you are! Careful not to get dumped.	\$99
Bartender - Make drinks for computer controlled customers & manage your own bar	\$99
File Viewer - Let users scroll up down and keyword search any length textfile on your bbs.	\$79
Accounting Automation - Accept 900#, Credit Cards and other forms of payment.	\$39
Anonymous Teleconference - Nobody knows who said what in this teleconference.	\$49
Colorifie - Let your users color coordinate messages, registries, pages, whispers and more.	\$25
Credit Exchange - Allow users to swap days for credits or credits for days, totally flexible.	\$39
Dual Password Security - Give users a second password for certain areas of your bbs.	\$39
Executive Informer - Send News, Bulk Email by key, class, sex, age & more.	\$49
Global Teleconference - Talk in 36 channels at the same time from anywhere.	\$49
Graffiti Wall - Our colorful Graffiti Wall is globally accessible for extra usage.	\$15
Modem-To-Modem - Play modem to modem games or transfer files directly to users	\$29
Not Keys - Negate the effects of keys in personal or class keyrings - give to users or classes	\$49
Major Pager - Let users make their beeper go off when receiving email, pages and more!	\$79
Ultra Globals - The most useful package of Globals available, many unique features.	\$79
World Wide War - formerly World Conquest, strategy game of world domination.	\$139
Autopost - Leave a message for the next user, can hold configurable # of messages.	\$15
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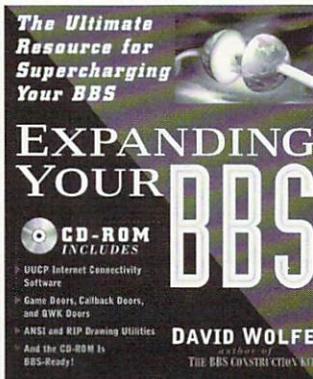
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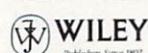
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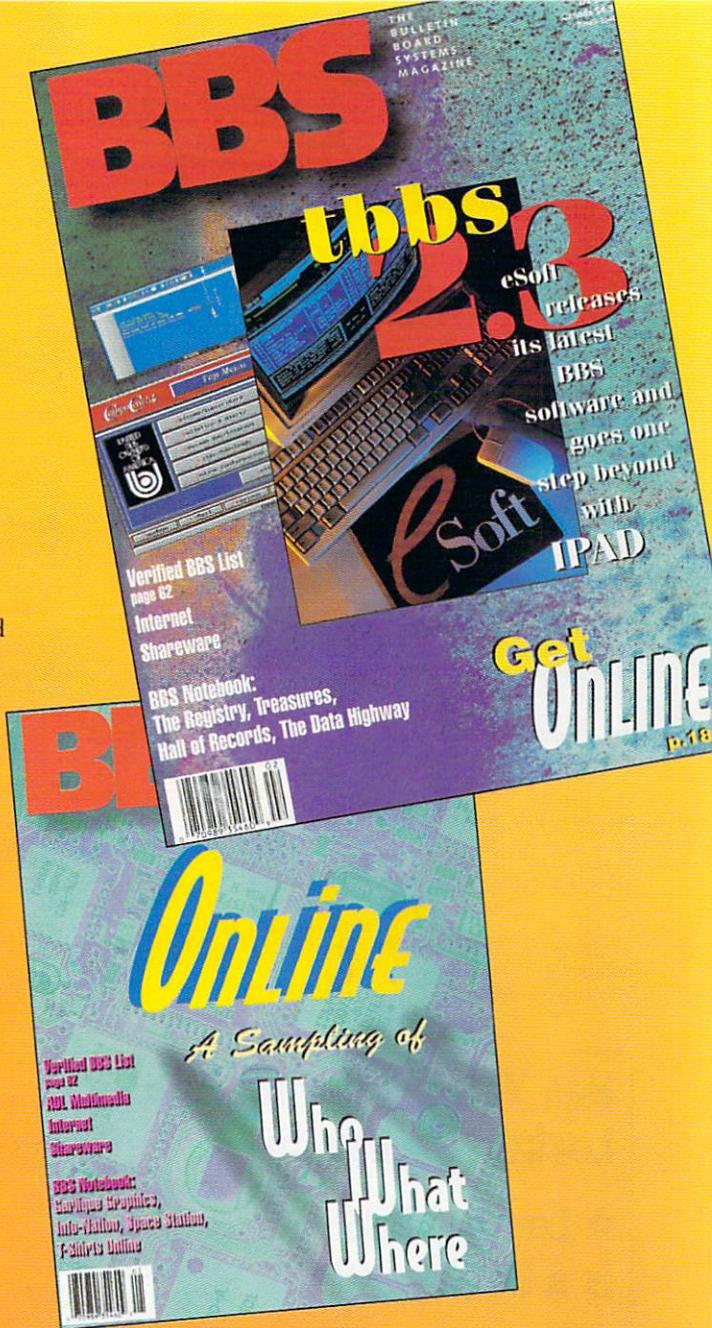
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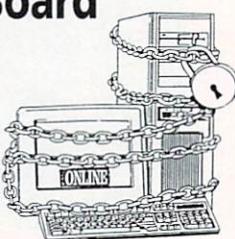
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B 99 F 34 3

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VacationTravel Ron Ablang
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Q 09 FO 5 1 \$

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* = New since last revision

A World Locally	204.119.47.5
Absolute Connection	199.0.62.164
Access Nevada	spillway.accessnv.com 199.2.253.3
ACE InfoSystems	aceinfo.com 199.190.76.2
AdeptXBBs	adeptsoft.gate.net 199.227.57.1
Advanced Data Services BBS	bbs.adisinc.com 199.190.73.3
*AECNET (tm)	The Electronic Resource Network of Architecture, Engineering, & Construction aecnet.com 198.4.60.200
After Hourz BBS	ahbz.com 204.134.204.10
Afterimage Information Matrix	aim.novasys.com 204.178.181.2
*Albuquerque ROS	Daily news, weather, sports, movie reviews, etc.; no adult material. abq-ros.com 204.68.29.244
Aladdins Palace	aladdin.bc.ca 204.174.112.252
Alien's SpaceShip BBS	aliens.com 199.190.82.2
Almac BBS	almac.co.uk 193.114.248.3
Amateur Radio INTERNET BBS	wb3ffv1.sed.csc.com 20.2.1.80
America's Suggestion Box	asb.com 165.254.128.1

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Includes a "Guided Tour of Internet," BBSs from around the world.

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login:anonymous
gcomm.com (in /internet)
login: anonymous
ftp.rahul.net (in pub/wco)
login: ftp

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(Information about the SBI List)
sbiq@dkeep.com
("Quick" Guide to Select BBS's on Internet)
sbi-info@dkeep.com
(Revision Information for current list)
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Barter America BBS	barter-usa.com 192.207.47.72
BBS One Online Service	bbs.prgone.com 199.18.119.129
Big Easy	bigeasy.com 204.27.71.10
Black Gold BBS	bgbbs.com 198.65.131.18
Blitzkrieg Information BBS	blitzinfo.com 199.190.90.2
Boardwatch Magazine BBS	boardwatch.com 198.211.187.1
Boston Dungeon Society	bdsbbs.com 199.242.194.90
Brainstorm BBS	bstorm.bgs.com 198.84.216.1
Bryant Software	bryant.com 199.45.158.193
Canned Ham Bulletin Board	anarky.tch.org 199.173.244.1
Caribbean Online Network for Info	204.183.157.10
Castle BBS	castlebbs.com 199.190.83.2
CCS World	ccsnet.com 199.172.47.2
Cetys BBS	cetysbbs.mxl.cetys.mx 158.122.1.9
CHANNEL 1 (R)	bbs.channel1.com 199.1.13.5
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*Columbus Online	Internet, chat, files, forums, games. cols.com 205.133.92.2
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COMM Port OS/2	juge.com 199.100.191.2
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Compu-Plane	198.68.17.57
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CONNECT 2000 BBS	204.177.193.251
Connection BBS	connection.com 204.138.111.2
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Cyberspace7 BBS	cyberspace7.ptd.net 204.186.240.1
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Cyberverse c	yberverse.com 134.24.3.50
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deltaComm Online	delta.com 204.32.41.2
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Digitec Online	bbs.digitec.co.za 196.11.62.106
Doctor's Office BBS / Falken Supp	docs.dgsys.com 204.97.64.6
Dragon Keep International	dkeep.com 198.79.54.10
Dream Link Online Information Ser	auburn.maine.com 204.176.0.14
Dreamscape BBS	dreamscape.com 199.67.38.67
*Dreamscape Entertainment Service	Home of West Coast Creations — "MajorMUD" for MBBS. dscape.cyberstore.com 204.244.18.12
DSC BBS / Voicenet (Datamax/Satal)	dsc.voicenet.com 192.204.28.9
DSP Information & Entertainment	dsp.com 199.4.121.1
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Exchange BBS	exchange.org 204.89.181.2
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ExecPC	bbs.execpc.com 204.29.202.4
Executive Network Information Sys	gateway.execnet.com 198.232.143.136
EXIT 13	vegas.roc.servtech.com 204.181.3.147
Eye Contact BBS	bbs.eyecon.com 204.94.37.2
Eyes of Time BBS	eyesoftime.com 198.6.201.206
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S & H Computer Systems BBS	sandh.com	199.1.88.68
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SIO Support BBS	199.248.240.2
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Starship II BBS	starship.com	192.204.28.48
Starship Sirius	sirius.america.com	199.170.102.6
Strategic Online	156.46.30.2
Studio PC Information Services	studio.com	199.231.128.235
Sun.One	news.jou.ufl.edu	128.227.230.225
Superlink	bbs.superlink.net	204.97.320.5
*SuperStation BBS	Great chat.	dias.diro.com
	204.94.162.82
SVIS	svis.org	198.77.8.11
Synergy Entertainment Network	sen.com	199.190.79.2
Synergy Online Communications	bbs.soc.com	204.117.97.2
*TDS Online International	Peoria's largest online entertainment network since '92.	dstar.com
	205.139.177.3
Techlands BBS	bbs.techlands.com	199.67.37.132
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UNCLE HANK'S SHAREWARE REVIEW NEWSLETTER

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

For a sample issue, send \$2 to: Uncle Hank's Shareware, 8 Hendrick St., Easthampton, MA 01027

Send \$10 with this ad, you can subscribe for 1 yr. (6 issues) & save \$2.

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WorldCHAT BBS	bbs.wchat.on.ca	204.138.239.20
WorldWorks Symposium	worldworks.com	204.119.163.23
Zagreb	zagreb.gcomm.com	199.227.15.33

will adversely affect the performance of the entire system," said Harrer. "The new QmodemPro delivers advanced features and performance in a specially designed 32-bit package that keep other Windows 95 applications humming."

Both QmodemPro and Wildcat will be available in most major retail software outlets. QmodemPro will retail for \$129. Current users can upgrade for \$69; \$49 for those doing so by September 30.

For more information, contact Mustang at 800.999.9619.

A Mall In Every Home

Why bother with traffic, parking and crowds when you can do your shopping online? That's the question Primeline Communications Corp. is asking with the release of its Online Business Works, what it refers to as an amalgam of the online industry and home-based businesses. With Business Works a sysop can become a new breed of virtual mall manager, renting out space to retailers or offering up their own products for sale. Callers (customers) get the benefit of shopping in their slippers, from their bedrooms.

"Our products make online commerce easy, affordable and highly visible," said Primeline chief Carl Farrington. Online Business

Works/Shopping Mall affords anyone with \$795 and a little ingenuity the ability to market products online by establishing a "turnkey" electronic shopping mall (based on RIP 2.0 graphics from TeleGrafix).

The software has callers pointing and clicking their way through photos (displayed in under seven seconds) and information about products in 255 pre-definable store types. And an accompanying offline database manager allows sysops and their customers to update inventory without tying up the lines.

The system can run on a 386 PC as a standalone or with BBSs and Net servers.

Future Online Business Works modules will include Real Estate, Auto Sales, Auction House and Matchmakers.

For more info contact Primeline at 704.648.1298.

The Case Against MSN

America Online President and CEO Steve Case recently took aim at Microsoft suggesting the company step back from packaging the Microsoft Network (MSN) client in all copies of the long-delayed Windows 95. The battle cry? Put the power of choice back in the hands of consumers.

"We have no quibble about Microsoft's plans to enter the online market," Case said. "They have every right to provide an online service and consumers have every right to choose to subscribe to it. But consumers should be free to choose. By only bundling MSN with Windows 95, Microsoft is depriving consumers of choices."

Case says all his company seeks is a "level playing field" and that "Microsoft should either agree to unbundle MSN from Windows 95, or they should provide equal access within the operating system to other providers of interactive services."

In response, a Microsoft spokesperson said, "First, MSN is not included in Windows 95. All Microsoft has done is to include access software in Windows

95 that will enable users to subscribe to MSN if they choose to do so."

Further in the prepared response, MS said "The playing field is level.

Approximately 93 percent of U.S. households do not subscribe to any online service. All of them are potential customers for online services that provide the best value to consumers."

Still, don't expect an AOL client to ship with Win 95 anytime soon.



Get a Jobb

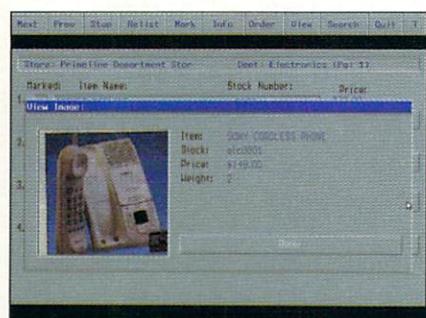
If you're in the construction or computer industry and have found yourself without work, you might need to look no further than JOBBS.

IBEX Enterprises, led by President Steve DeHanas, himself an architect, has launched JOBBS (BBS) with the Excalibur for Windows software to offer up-to-date applicant/employer searches.

According to DeHanas, the concept is to allow callers to place resumes within the appropriate category on the board (there are 12 for each industry), with each kept current through caller re-submissions.

Companies seeking applicants can scan and download resumes for free (available only to companies; other appli-

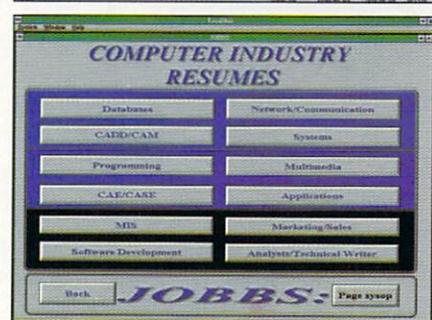
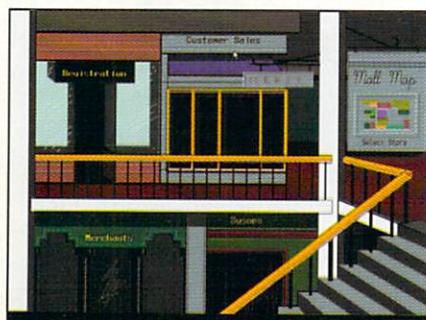
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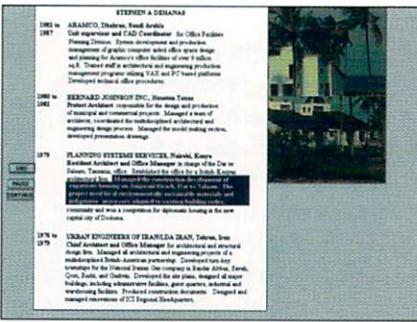
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cants cannot view "competing" resumes), write want-ads, and send and receive messages.

DeHanas says later this year visual resumes will be available with queryable databases.

"I estimated that in more than 23 years of professional practice in America and nine foreign countries I have sent out over 2,000 resumes," said DeHanas. "Assuming a 15 cent average price for a stamp, the cost of postage alone would be \$300."

Compare that to \$50 per year for a JOBBS membership and you start to get the picture.

The BBS in Fairfax, VA, can be reached at 703.503.8440.

The Well-Rested Wrist

I'd rather have a waterbed for my body than for my wrists, but \$19.75 beats a grand.

That's \$19.75 for Waveco's Waterbed For Your Wrists, the squishy and "ergonomic" gel-filled-pillow-snake that lies in its own plastic bed, held in place by that wonderstuff Velcro.

"Put it in front of your keyboard and surf the Net all night," I can almost hear the infomercial screaming (hey, Waveco DOES roll off the tongue like "Ronco").

Truth is, it does relieve fatigue on wrists better than some of the other "wrist rests" because it serves as a prop while you type, and not just while you've paused.

The inventors suggest the Waterbed not only gives support but also absorbs shock, a major contributor to Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

In addition, the cushy device can be tossed in the fridge to give aching wrists a little cool relief.

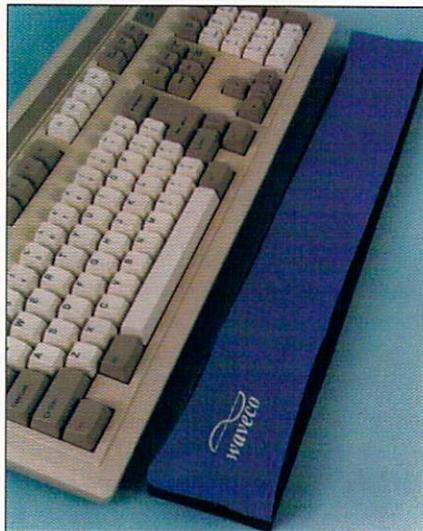
Our test run revealed a little difficulty with typing at first, and we started to

have some aches in new places, like the forearms. But this is likely due to the sudden change in habits. After a while, we adjusted.

And, if nothing else, the bed is great as a buffer between your forehead and desk after a long day.

The fabric cover is machine washable and comes in different colors.

All this can be yours by calling Waveco, 813.723.2229.



USR ISDN

US Robotics is rolling out a line of products based on ISDN for what it calls telecommuting, branch-office connectivity, remote access, and point of presence applications for online services, Internet service providers and value-added networks with high-bandwidth data transmission needs.

USR says it plans a "two-in-one" approach: Due to inherent restrictions of installed analog devices, the company will release all new ISDN products with both analog and ISDN capabilities, "allowing customers to take advantage of ISDN's increased bandwidth while also providing access to the much larger and still growing installed base of analog applications."

ISDN products will include:

- Courier I-Modem products.
- Total Control NETServer eight- and 16-port remote access servers with BRI (Basic Rate Interface) ISDN capabilities.
- Total Control eight- and 16-port

CONTINUED ON PAGE 74

BOOK SHELF

The Usenet Handbook: A User's Guide to Netnews

By Mark Harrison
388 pages, \$24.95

As anyone tapping the forums on Usenet knows, there's something for everybody to, er, Use.

Discussion ranges from Barney to Uzis to pedophilia to God. There's fine art photography, music, pornography, answers to questions about how to buy computer memory, and the smallest details on semi-obscure Latin pop singers.

Of course most of what's available is only as good/reliable/worthwhile as the sender (who sometimes leaves a good deal to be desired). And none of it's of any use if you don't know how to find it.

Mark Harrison's *The Usenet Handbook: A User's Guide to Netnews* (O'Reilly & Associates) looks at all aspects of Usenet and breaks each of them down into tender morsels for consumption.

Newcomers will find handy guides on where to find what, and even the experienced benefit from in-depth chapters on popular news readers for Unix and Windows, such as Tin, NN, GNUS, Trumpet and Web browsers.

The book offers a discussion about

etiquette and the language of the so-called newsgroups, along with the history of some of the better practical jokes to appear on Usenet, including a \$295 cookie recipe.

U.H. is peppered with examples of what you might see when accessing Usenet, depending on your software (although more graphical examples common these days would have been nice), and the author frequently gives sample commands while precisely describing the expected outcome.

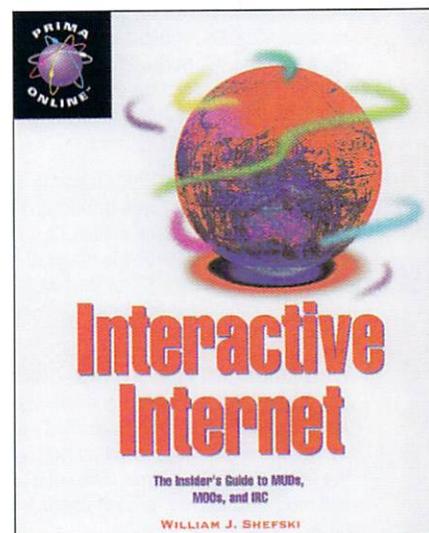
And there are plenty of helpful hints throughout: "Typing CTRL-l (that's an el) refreshes (redisplays) the screen. This is handy if the screen is garbled for some reason."

Overall, *The Usenet Handbook* upholds a tradition of excellent soft-bound Net tools from O'Reilly. The language is instructive without being pedantic and nearly any Usenet question (technical or otherwise) is paired with an answer somewhere in its pages.

based interaction in his *Interactive Internet* (Prima Publishing), interviewing people who frequent the sites, those who provide access (including *BBS Magazine's* Terry Rossi) and by giving a little history along the way.

The book is clearly for the beginner, as it provides lots of diagrams and sample screens of what users will see once they enter an interactive arena.

Many of these areas are text-based

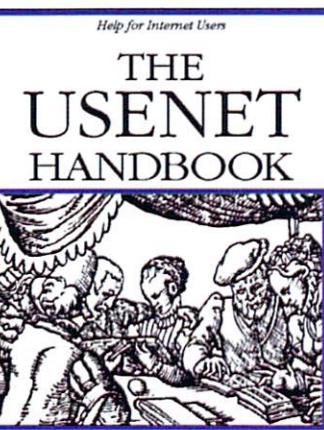


environments, requiring a good imagination on the part of the user, and thus is reflected in the somewhat bland design of the book's pages. But this is actually a plus, as users are given a true illustration of what to expect when online.

The chapter on IRC (Internet Relay Chat) is especially informative, replete with warnings ("Don't trust anyone"), real-world uses (cheap business conferencing), and nuggets of information about things like "netsplit" and "lag."

Newcomers who read *Interactive Internet* will enter the cyberworld wiser for having done so. And they'll be much better equipped to use commands such as "sleep" and "wish" and "tellback."

And, more importantly, with 17 pages of MUD addresses, they'll know where to go. ■■■



Interactive Internet: The Insider's Guide to MUDs, MOOs, and IRC

By William J. Shefski
202 pages, \$19.95

MOOs, the MUDs, MUSEs and real-time interaction of all kinds—it's all there; you just have to find it.

"There" is the Internet, and it's teeming with people chatting, flaming, ranting and raving; some are doing it in real-time chat areas while others dive into the maze of other-worlds like multiuser dimensions.

But without a guide, getting to these netherlands and navigating them can be a bit trying.

William J. Shefski takes on the task of explaining the ins and outs of Net-

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ADULT PREVIEW PLUS, 818.997.3888, Preview adult videos, online picture viewing, largest adult video library, online product catalog, view adult video stars, adult novelties, strip club listing, monthly 'pixel princess', internet email, chat, personal ads, usenet, plus much more.

AMERICAN ATHEISTS ONLINE 512.302.0223, Resources and information for Atheists. Files on Atheist thought and history, religion, state/church separation, the religious right. Home of the echo Theist_Watch. Sponsored by American Atheists, PO Box 2117, Austin TX 78768.

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JOBBS, 703.503.8440, Job Opportunity Bulletin Board System, computer and construction industry professionals. Display your resume electronically for access by organizations searching for employees and consultants in your specialty. 24 categories. Take the free tour and find out more.

KBBS LOS ANGELES 818.886.0872 Telnet 204.96.25.7, 1000's single adults, weekly parties, shareware, GIFs, Games, and DOOM wads, 24/hr Worldlink chat. Online games, TradeWars 2002, Erotica, Trivia, DOOM game Connection. Internet: Telnet, Rlogin, IRC, FTP, WWW, Gopher, MUDs etc. Free Trial.

THE LIVEWIRE BBS 609.235.5297 (v.everything), support board for BBS Magazine both the print and online version. Home of Livewire Door Collection. Internet, Fidonet, Throbnnet, ILink, Usenet. Register Livewire Doors online using your Visa/Mastercard. Support and home for Doorframe (door writing kit) available for Quick Basic 4.5, BasCom and Visual Basic.

MAC LINE, 608-233-1798 FirstClass system at 14,400bps. Mac files, messages, news, chat etc. Playmaker Football league. Mac Guru Conference.

MODEM KOMBAT BBS, 512.328.6328, Austin, TX since 1/95. Sysop: Philip Cole. Using Major BBS (Game Connection) with 12 lines and 1 Gig online. Over 400 megs of DOOM files! Practical Peripherals at 14400 bps. 4 Player Doom online. 1 hour free. Online Doom league. Supported: Doom, Doom II, Heretic, Descent.

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modem pool products with BRI ISDN capabilities.

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For more information, contact USR at 800.USR.CORP.

PCBoard Client/Server to be Unveiled at 'Communications Conference'

Clark Development Company, the makers of PCBoard software, have announced details of its "1995 PCBoard/Online Communications Conference," scheduled for September at the Prospector Inn Resort in Park City, Utah. The company plans to use the event to unveil its new graphical, client/server online technology.

According to CDC, the conference (Sept. 21-24) will include technical sessions covering all facets of setting up and running a successful PCBoard BBS, third party vendors exhibiting PCBoard add-ons, and loads of outdoor activities at the mountain resort like hiking, mountain biking, motorcycle/ATV riding, horseback riding, hot air ballooning, and Alpine sliding.

"In the current business and hobbyist environment, there is a ground swell of activity in setting up a BBS system to handle the many types of applications needed in today's competitive electronic community," said Fred Clark, president of Clark Development. "We felt it was appropriate to get back to the basics of how and why to set up a successful BBS operation and therefore decided to sponsor the conference."

Several conference sessions and in-depth presentations are scheduled for the four-day event. Some of these follow:

Thursday, 21 — CDC will host a keynote dinner on "The Future of Online Communications and PCBoard" covering the next generation of online communications software.

Friday & Saturday — These days will be dedicated to learning about BBSs and online communications from

the experts at Clark. Technical sessions will cover how to set up a BBS, linking a BBS to the Net, multitasking procedures and operating systems, FIDO, UUCP, and how to write PPL (PCBoard Programming Language) applications.

On the non-technical side, Association of Online Professionals Executive Director Dave McClure will give a legislative update, while Stevens & James marketing will be dishing advice on how to make money with your BBS.

Additionally, Clark plans crash courses for programmers on the architecture of the new client/server software and how to use their APIs to develop add-on modules and device drivers.

Both afternoons and Sunday morning, session rooms will be open for vendor demonstrations, topical meetings, and one-on-one hands-on training by the programming and support teams from Clark Development.

Registration is \$249 before August 31 and \$299 for late-comers. Hotel rooms, studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom condos are available for between \$50 and \$160.

For more information and registration, contact Clark at 801.261.1686.

ONLINE UPDATE

FROM PAGE 76

have an important advantage: They can also be used to call local BBSs or to access the Internet through a true service provider.

The primary advantage of a PDA is cost: The average wireless PDA hovers around \$700 to \$900, depending on the what, if any, extras are purchased with the item. Mobile computers cost twice that much on the low end.

And remember, PDAs are supposed to be small enough for purse or pocket — although I doubt many people actually carry them in either place. The PDAs I've used would never fit comfortably in a man's pocket — if at all — and the devices reacted so badly to gentle rocking that a trip in the average woman's purse is out of the question. Instead, potential buyers should figure in an extra \$25 to \$50 for a carrying case. (Both Apple and Motorola sell carrying cases for their systems.)

The latest PDAs are generally bundled with one or more online service clients (AOL, CompuServe and/or PersonaLink). Individual software packages also are available through electronics boutiques in major U.S. and European cities. The RadioMail personalized service can be ordered directly from RadioMail Corp. by calling 800.597.6245 (U.S. only).

Postscript: Just to set the record straight, the Newton MessagePad 110 could ace the spelling part of the SAT, despite the well-publicized problems of its forefathers. When I tried one out earlier this year at a trade show, the Newton was able to spell my oddly configured first name — Jacqui — without missing a beat. The device had a little problem with Kramer, however. After a few moments of deep thought, the device offered up "crammer," a legitimate word according to the dictionary.

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PDA Redux —

They're baaack

It's been a scant few years since Apple Computer rushed its Newton MessagePad to the marketplace, and the company has been repenting at its leisure ever since.

You remember Newton, don't you? The device that cost thousands of dollars and still couldn't spell? Perhaps the terms "Personal Digital Assistant" and "PDA" ring a bell. Still fuzzy? Okay, one more try: Mobile computing.

The term mobile computing actually refers to mobile computers (think Apple PowerBook or IBM ThinkPad). However, many of today's PDAs are being marketed as "mobile computers" (or some variation on the term), presumably to avoid being associated with the original Newton, which had a serious handwriting recognition problem. (Newton's illiteracy was lampooned mercilessly for a week in the Doonesbury newspaper comic strip, among other places.)

By now you are probably wondering what this all has to do with you, the BBS and online services consumer. If Apple, Motorola, and their manufacturing brothers have their way, the answer will be: Everything.

Spelling problems aside, the greatest problem that has faced PDA manufacturers until recently was its lack of portability. Early PDAs could be used as notepads and money managers (courtesy of the obligatory copy of Intuit's Quicken), but little else. In order to actually do anything productive — say, going online or communicating with the office — PDA users had to find a telephone jack. Needless to say, this lack of mobility was not a major selling point.

Motorola was the first out of the gate with a pair of wireless portable devices, Envoy and Embarc, both of which offer pretty much everything found on the Newton, but with better screens and improved spelling capability. The company later introduced a third wireless PDA, Marco, despite the market's generally weak pulse.

Apple's primary contribution to the wireless PDA industry has been an adapter that can be attached to one of Newton's PCMCIA card slots. The company has yet to introduce a wireless Newton, but one is believed to be in development.

Judging by the advertising and publicity released within the past year, the PDA industry is hopeful wireless access to various services will single-handedly save the sagging personal assistant market. Correction: The industry is hanging its hopes on email. The PDA companies' main argument in favor of

wireless access is the possibility that you, the consumer, will miss the BIG MEMO from your boss because you couldn't access your America Online/CompuServe/Internet address before the BIG MEETING. (Prodigy users are out of luck in the PDA world.)

First runner-up in the marketing blitz is news, with "sports scores" and "financial updates" cited endlessly (and breathlessly) as a reason to have a Newton/Embarr/Envoy/Marco in your pocket or pocketbook. Online shopping, once thought to be the savior of the wired world, comes in a distant third.

So what, exactly, is available in the PDA world? Well, Newton, Envoy, and Embarr all come bundled with special America Online (AOL) client software that allows users to do essentially everything a PC-based user can while online. Although this is nice in theory, it does not translate well in reality. PDAs are designed to fit in a pocket or purse, as mentioned, therefore ensuring portability. This means the screens are tiny, making prolonged visits online to, say, the Sports chatroom an unlikely event. Instead, the real benefit here is immediate access to the real world — namely, well, email and news.

The AOL-phobic can access essentially the same information from CompuServe Information Services (CIS) by purchasing River Run Software Group's Magic Genie, a sort of PDA Friday. Magic Genie can be configured to automatically go online to send and retrieve email at specific times daily or whenever the urge strikes the user. Magic Genie also can grab information from certain CIS services, including the news feeds and stock information. The PDA alerts the user each time information is received from CIS, be it email or a weather forecast.

PDA users who want to buck the trend but still have access to a full-fledged online service, should consider AT&T's PersonaLink service (if it's still around by the time this goes to print). Despite the financial strength of its sugar daddy, PersonaLink is, for lack of a better word, non-existent in most minds. PersonaLink is designed to be a giant online shopping mall, complete with store fronts and pictures of the merchandise. However, few people have been willing to spend good money on clothes they have seen only on a screen the size of an adult hand.

Cybersurfers who have graduated beyond the basic online services may be more interested in RadioMail, a personalized service that can include an international wireless fax service, an operator-assisted messaging service, Internet email, a news feed, an interactive stock service, and a directory service. Envoy, Embarr and Marco users also can access the service via ARDIS' national wireless network, which can be accessed by more than 80 percent of the U.S. population.

All of these services can be accessed by using mobile computers (e.g., PowerBooks), of course. But mobile computers



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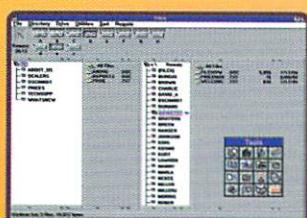
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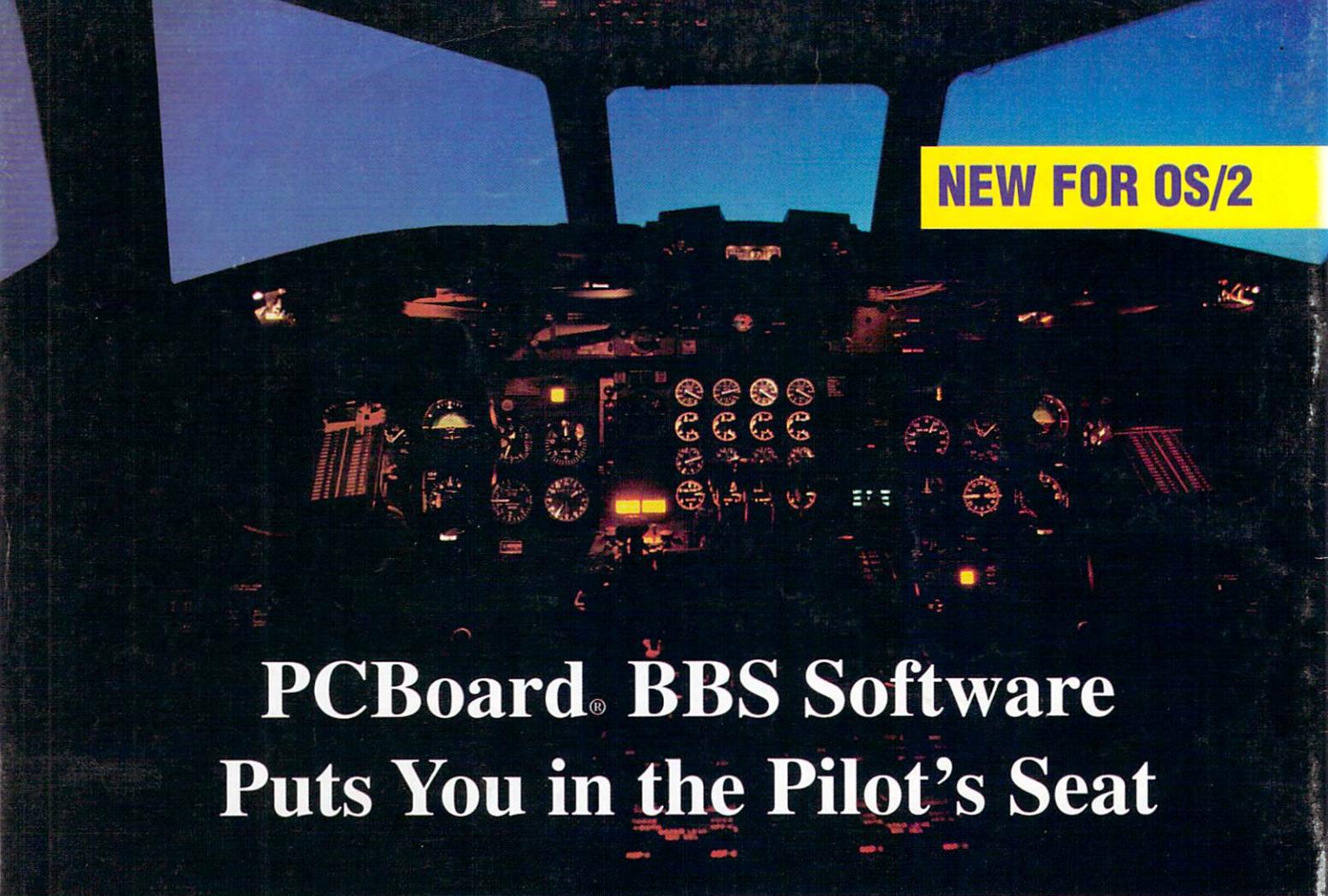
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