



July 1998

Volume 9, Issue 7

<http://www.dacs.org>

Meeting Preview

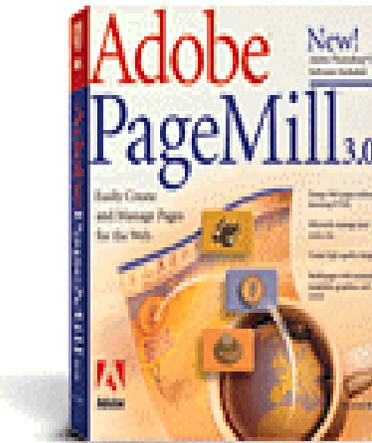
Web Your Site Page Mill 3.0 does it all

IF CREATING A WEB SITE is on your list of priorities, be it a personal Web page telling about your hobbies or a business Web page with all the bells and whistles of online commerce, attend the next DACS general meeting on July 7. Adobe will demonstrate Page Mill 3.0, its latest Web page creator and manager.

Adobe PageMill 3.0 for Windows provides the easiest way to get your personal or business site on the World Wide Web. And it's a great tool to help you design, build, post, and manage your Web pages. There's no need to learn HTML or master complex applications. With its drag-and-drop simplicity, PageMill integrates seamlessly with your current office

and graphics applications, including Microsoft Word, Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Excel, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and many others. After your site is built, delivery to the Web is convenient using the built-in Uploader. And PageMill's integrated site management features enable you to keep your site up to date almost automatically, with advanced link management and site-wide search and replace.

Adobe PageMill 3.0 makes it easy to create and maintain a professional-looking Web site. In fact, it's similar to using word-processing software. Adobe Photoshop LE, animation, sounds, templates and clip art are all included to enhance the look of your site. And Adobe SiteMill (also included) makes site maintenance simple.



Page Mill Continued on page 4

Meeting Review

Affordable Animation and Special Effects Inspire 3D graphics package

by Jack Corcoran

WE SEE THEM EVERYWHERE. Computer-generated effects appear in TV commercials, movies, logos, Web pages—they're even seamlessly integrated into Ally McBeal. And we've all wondered, "Is it just high-end software packages that's generating all these effects?" and "Would I ever be able to do some of that stuff?"

The answer to both questions is a thumbs-up "yes," according to presenter Ralph Messana from NewTek, who mesmerized a rapt general meeting audience at the Southbury Hilton on June 9 with a dazzling display of Inspire 3D, his company's latest—and most affordable—animation and special effects software.

Though we may have always assumed that the graphics animation of these effects is created by gifted artists in Hollywood on expensive workstations, Ralph proved us wrong by creating an impressive assortment of them right at our meeting from his laptop.

It seemed like Ralph designed his presentation just for us—DACs user groupies and ordinary folk—showing us just how we might use the new package (it came on the market just a month ago) to enhance business applications, logos, graphics presentations, and Web pages. His examples and demos were DACS relevant and the audience responded enthusiastically. At the start of the meeting only a few knew anything about animation or

Inspire 3D Continued on page 4

President's File

For user group leaders, the annual InterGalactic Officers' Conference, held on the eve of PCExpo, is a combination of ashram, gold rush, and holy grail. Sponsored by the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG), the event is a great opportunity to share ideas and information with other groups, particularly its co-sponsor, the 2,300-member New York PC Users Group (NYPC).

DACS takes Gold—and Silver

For geeks seeking gifts, it is an occasion for getting free software and interacting with more than a dozen leading application vendors. But most important for DACS, it is a chance to compete for recognition from among the more than 300 constituent groups and 300,000 computer users that make up APCUG's worldwide membership.

The ribbon proudly displayed at the bottom of this page commemorates our 1994 IG award for best newsletter. In subsequent years we've received additional kudos for our Web page and for our reporting of user group events. The fierce competition for the top prizes has led IG to move the awards to the gnawed-nails end of the conference day to heighten suspense and anticipation. Finally, *dacs.doc* was heard among the awards for midsized publications: Best Design; runner-up for Best Newsletter; runner-up for Best Feature Articles; runner-up for Best User Group Coverage.

Our award-winning design goes back to 1993 when co-editors Tom McIntyre and

Dick Sperry turned *dacs.doc* from a ragged handout into a professional publication. But special recognition must now go to Frances Owles and Marc Cohen for their tireless efforts to mold a distinctive mix of text and graphics, and their steadfast persistence in making every style consistent and every column line up at the bottom of the page. Of course, it would be all style and no substance without our dedicated writers, and for group coverage, there's little that could be done to improve on Dan McLeod.

All these efforts have one profound result—a publication that says more about DACS, its professionalism, and its commitment to its members than any award can possibly convey. With *dacs.doc* in your outstretched hand, you need no further introduction.

Voice for Joanie Community outreach model

In 1994 DACS and Voice for Joanie won the national REACH Award (Recognizing Exceptional Achievement in Community Help) sponsored by Ziff-Davis and the APCUG. So it was not a surprise when I was asked by our hosts at InterGalactic to talk about VFJ and our other community outreach programs. Although I abhor speeches, all I had to do was give a brief outline of our efforts and then show a ten-minute video presentation from Ziff-Davis produced for the award ceremony that tells it all. What did surprise me was that I was to talk to the entire IG assembly of more than 600, rather than the small discussion group I had anticipated. It was also hard to anticipate the overwhelming support and enthusiasm other user groups have for this small Connecticut-based service organization.

Although DACS offers technical support and volunteers, Voice for Joanie owes its enormous success to Shirley Fredlund and her tireless efforts to give a voice to the paralyzed victims of Lou Gehrig's disease. That's why I could offer other user groups only one suggestion on how to establish their own outreach program—to look to the community for individuals or organizations with a special vision, and then offer their group's special skills in helping to make that vision a reality.

Our area has many such organizations with a vision. Besides Voice for Joanie, DACS has been able to help the Danbury Senior Employment Center provide hands-on computer training; we have provided re-

dacs.doc

Membership Information

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The editors welcome submissions from Dacs members. Contact Frances Owles, at 860-868-0077 (jones@ct1.nai.net) or Allan Ostergren at 860-210-0047 (dacseditor@aol.com). Advertisers, please contact Brad Altland 203-357-4007 (brad.altland@gccapital.com)

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Applications & Hardware to enhance
dacs.doc are always welcome.

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Resource Center: (203) 748-4330

Web Site: <http://www.dacs.org>

HelpLine

Volunteers have offered to field member questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours indicated below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; evening means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are calling. HelpLine is a free service. If you are asked to pay for help or are solicited for sales, please contact the *dacs.doc* editor; the person requesting payment will be deleted from the listing. Can we add your name to the volunteer listing?

d = day e = evening

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
AOL	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(e)
AutoCAD	Peter Hylenski	(203) 797-1042	(e)
C/UNIX/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430	(d e)
C + +	Reg Charney	(914) 833-0762	(d e)
Clipper	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
COBOL	Charles Godfrey	(203) 775-3543	(e)
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Internet	Nick Percival	(203) 438-9307	(d)
Lotus 123R5W	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
Macintosh OS	Bob Constantine	(203) 730-1634	(d e)
Magic PC	Hira Suri	(203) 748-2473	(d e)
Microsoft Access	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
Multimedia	Ed Fitzgerald	(203) 222-9253	(d e)
OS/2	Rich Chernock	(203) 270-0224	(e)
Paradox	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
PASCAL	Duane Moser	(203) 797-2716	(d e)
Publishing & PR	Elaine Chacho	(203) 426-5493	(d e)
Q&A ver 3/4	Anthony Telesha	(203) 748-4478	(d e)
R:BASE	Jerry Frieárich	(203) 740-7175	(e)
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Windows 3.1	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)
	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
WordPerfect	John Heckman	(203) 831-0442	(e)

furnished PCs for schools through Computers 4Kids and other municipal organizations; we have helped to organize the Connecticut Special Olympics; and we are working to help area communities post their adult education activities on a local Web page.

All these efforts need your assistance, in whatever way you can provide it. By pitching in, whether in community outreach, in organizing and running special interest groups, or in helping with *dacs.doc* or *dacs.org*, your contribution help enhance the image of DACS and all its members.

—ALLAN OSTERGREN
dacsprez@aol.com

Directors' Notes

The monthly DACS board meeting was held at the Resource Center on June 8. Present were Messrs. Bovaird, Buoy, Cohen, David, Gingras, McIntyre, Ostergren, Preston, and Setaro. Also present were vice president Marlene Gaberel and Brad Altland. Chairman Wally David presided and Secretary Larry Buoy kept the records. The minutes of the prior meeting of the May 11 meeting were approved.

Finance and Membership

Treasurer Charles Bovaird reported checking and postal account balances of \$11,300.79 and postage on hand of \$215.52 for a total cash position of \$11,516.31. Current membership stands at 617.

dacs.doc

The board discussed the rising cost of producing *dacs.doc*, and agreed that increasing advertising to offset production and distribution would be preferable to either increasing membership dues or reducing the size and/or quality of the newsletter.

InterGalactic and PCExpo

Jeff Setaro informed the directors of arrangements for DACS representation at the InterGalactic, APCUG, and PCExpo events to be held in New York City from June 13 through June 18.

Media Library

Subjects previously considered or authorized were reviewed. Regarding the establishment of a media library on technical and software subjects, it was felt that members should be advised what would be expected of volun-

Directors' Notes Continued on page 4

NewTek. But by the end, we all had a realistic grasp of how Inspire 3D could help us. And I am quite sure that the lives and careers of at least a few of us will be changed because of it.

Over the history of the computer industry there have been several unique technical developments that have produced cults of devoted followers. The first took place in the mid '60s when Burroughs built a series of mainframes in which memory for programs and data was stored in a stack architecture rather than as conventional random access. In the '80s came Apple's innovations and the first of the MAC True Believers. Then in the early '90s NewTek developed a software program for generating composites of videoclips, computer-generated graphics, and sound clips enhanced by special effects and transitions, outputting everything to standard videotape.

NewTek developed electronics for a computer to work with TV signals and packaged everything in the Commodore Amiga PC. Calling the system the Video Toaster, they kept the price low enough for two guys in a garage to set up shop and do some real cool stuff. The Video Toaster so spawned a new generation of computer artists and catapulted the careers of many, who remain faithful NewTek devotees.

IN THE MID '90S Commodore went belly-up. But NewTek survived and adapted to Intel, RISC, MAC, and SGI platforms. The company upscaled its signature software to Hollywood standards and called it LightWave 3D, which is now used by many professionals in Twinkletown but particularly by those who rode to town on the Video Toaster. LightWave generated many of the effects in the movie Titanic, but its \$2K price tag, though cheap by professional standards, is out of the ballpark for the rest of us.

Happily, NewTek is going back to its Everyman roots. The company took LightWave 3D, stripped out the more advanced features (which few people use anyway), and repackaged it as Inspire 3D. Selling it for less than \$500 (actual street price about \$370), NewTek is pitching its economy player at the creative team upstarts who can now play their own ballgame.

JACK CORCORAN is a retired computer programmer who has abandoned his Fortran and Assembly background for the fun stuff.

The latest version provides all the necessary tools to get your site on the Web quickly and easily. It includes an intuitive WYSIWYG interface, drag-and-drop page creation, Photoshop LE, Internet Explorer, integrated site management features with advanced search and replace capabilities, and over 10,000 Web-ready images, animations, sounds and more. Adding frames and tables to a site is a simple task with Page Mill 3.0.

There's no need to bother with typing in long and cumbersome URLs or hyperlinks. Simply drag and drop from your desktop. Adding sophisticated media elements such as animations, sounds, movies, and Java applets is just as easy. Enhanced frame features let you create borderless frames. Microsoft Internet Explorer OCX controller lets you preview pages as they appear in Internet Explorer and provides live Web browsing capabilities.

With the help of Adobe Photoshop LE 3.0.5, the easy-to-use Internet version of the industry-leading image editing software that is included in the package, you can create high-quality images. Use Photoshop LE to adjust scanned images, correct colors, and apply filters for special effects. You can also create logos, buttons, icons, navigation controls, and background textures all with drag-and-drop simplicity.

PageMill 3.0 has support for Web Commerce with a built-in link. Learn how ICentral ShopSite Express software lets you add secure online commerce functionality to your Web site. Drag-and-drop order buttons from ShopSite Express into your Web pages to create a convenient shopping cart so your customers can shop directly from your site. You can also automatically calculate shipping and tax charges and e-mail receipts to your online customers. More information about Adobe Page Mill is at <http://www.adobe.com>.

The DACS general meetings, held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Danbury Hospital auditorium, 24 Hospital Avenue, are free to the public. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. with casual networking. At 7p.m. join Random Access, a short question and answer period about computer problems. This is followed by a short business meeting and the main presentation at 8 p.m. For more information about DACS and its SIGs (Special Interest Groups) that meet throughout the month to discuss specific topics, see <http://www.dacs.org>.

teers to administer such program. Frances Owles being absent, discussion of procuring a server to augment DACS' online presence beyond that available to us through the Danbury Public Library was tabled.

Digital Camera

Stewardship of the digital camera purchased for use in production of the newsletter, etc., was discussed. It was the consensus that a responsible individual with central access be sought and that use of the camera for other than DACS-related business be limited to reasonable requests.

HelpLine Update

Larry Buoy reported no significant progress in updating the Help Line.

Random Access Online

It was announced that DACS members had expressed interest in online access to the Random Access feature of the general meetings. Bruce Preston agreed to implement the project within certain limitations using DACS' America Online address.

Year 2000

It was suggested that a capable specialist be sought from within the general membership to present at an upcoming general meeting the Year 2000 problem as it pertains to the computer world as a whole or to standalone PCs, and/or to write an article about it for the newsletter.

Media Liaison

It was also suggested that a willing DACS member well versed in computer technology be designated as contact for News-Times personnel seeking technical information for news stories or articles.

New to...

Due to lack of proper publicity for Ed Heere's "New to..." program and its imminent date, it was agreed that Ed be offered the alternative of canceling the event.

Presentation Reviews

Chairman David suggested that software reviewers and reviews be actively sought to replace or augment his own reviews of presentations at general meetings.

The meeting was advised of overtures from the Association of Computer Support Specialists toward intergroup cooperation. Discussion of same was tabled for a future meeting.

— LARRY BUOY

User Groups

DACS Wins Honors at InterGalactic

For the past four or five years DACS' officers have attended the annual InterGalactic user group conference, generally held the weekend before PCEXpo. The purpose of the gathering is to provide user groups from around the country an opportunity to share information about and brainstorm solutions to their common problems. This year seven DACS officers attended InterGalactic: Marc Cohen, Wally David, Marlene Gaberel, Dick Gingras, Allan



President Ostergren discusses community service with Voice for Joanie.

Ostergren, and Bruce Preston, and Jeff Setaro.

The conference began with a networking breakfast session followed by several one-hour breakout sessions covering such topics as Member and Volunteer Recruitment, Surviving Group Politics, Newsletters and Web Sites, Arranging Presentations.

Lunch was followed by a short vendor trade show and a round of afternoon discussion groups. The day ended with a parting supper and awards presentations.

DACS was honored with several awards this year: Best Newsletter Design, runner-up for Best Newsletter, Best User Group Coverage, and Best Feature Articles.

To represent user groups' participation in Community service, DACS President Allan Ostergren discussed

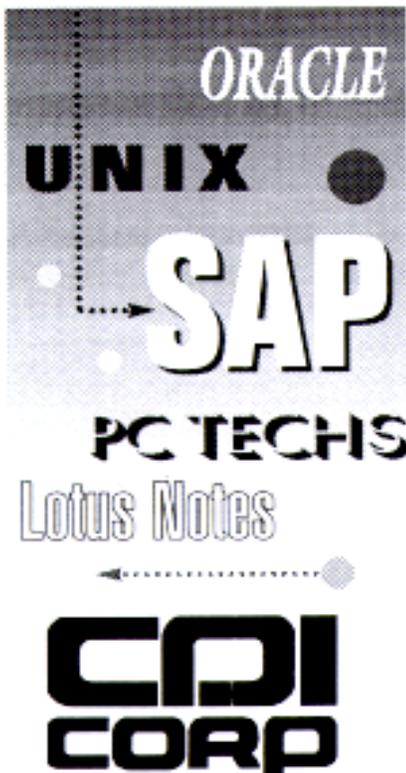
our involvement with Voice for Joanie and shared information about how other groups might pursue such services.

Wally David and Marc Cohen attended the APCUG (Association of PC User Groups) meeting, which followed this year's InterGalactic.



DACS revelers at InterGalactic (back, l. to r.): Dick Gingras, Allen Ostergren, Jeff Setaro, Marc Cohen; (front, l. to r.): Wally David, Marlene Gaberel, Bruce Preston.

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EDE

BashGates v.nxx

(Reprinted from the Internet)

At a recent computer expo (Comdex), Bill Gates reportedly said, "If GM had kept up with technology like the computer industry, we'd be driving 25 cars that get 1,000 miles/gal." GM released the following response:

"Yes, but would you want your car to crash twice a day?"

And:

1. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you'd have to buy a new car.

2. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason and you'd just accept this, restart, and drive on.

3. Occasionally, executing a maneuver would cause your car to stop and fail and you would have to reinstall the engine. For some strange reason, you'd accept this too.

4. You could only have one person in the car at a time unless you bought "car95" or "carNT," then you'd have to buy more seats.

5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, was five times as fast and

twice as easy to drive but would only run on 5% of the roads.

6. Macintosh owners would get expensive Microsoft upgrades to their cars that would make them run much slower.

7. The oil, temperature, and alternator warning lights would be replaced by a single "general car fault" warning light.

8. New seats would force everyone to have the same size butt.

9. The airbag system would ask, "Are you sure?" before going off.

10. If you were involved in a crash, you would have no idea what happened.

11. Finally, for most problems, the procedure would be as follows:

- a. Close all windows.
- b. Turn off the engine.
- c. Get out of the car.
- d. Get back in the car.
- e. Restart the engine.
- f. Reopen all windows.

Unless, of course, you get a message that says: "This car has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down ..."

Local Area Internet Providers

AT&T WORLDNET	800-967-5363
CLOUD 9	914-682-0384
CONCENTRIC NETWORKS	800-745-2747
C. P. CONNECT	203-734-6600
DELPHI INTERNET	800-695-4005
EARTHLINK	800-395-8425
MAGS-NET	203-207-5695
EROL'S	888-463-7657
GTE INTERNETWORKING	800-927-3000
IBM/ADVANTIS	800-888-4103
INTERNET84	203-830-2122
INTERRAMP/PSI	800-827-7482
LOCALNET OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY	203-425-3535
MCI	800-550-0927
MICROSOFT NETWORK	800-386-5550
NETAXIS	203-969-0618
NETCOM	800-353-6600
NORTH AMERICAN	800-952-INET
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TIAC	203-323-5957
WEB CONNECT OF RIDGEFIELD	203-438-7650
WEBQUILL INT. SVCS	203-750-1000

List for informational purposes only, not an endorsement of any service.

Further information?

Call Jim Finch @ 203 790-3654

DACS NewMembers

05/25/1998 thru 06/23/1998

- 1) Betty Brosius
- 2) Robert Scott Dayton
- 3) Henning A. Hjerpe
- 4) Lois A. Lombard
- 5) Lori D. Scott

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Trade Fairs

PC Expo for Fun

by Marlene Gaberel

MY OBSERVATIONS of this year's PCExpo fill many lines based on just one day's journey through the endless aisle-mile tech show-and-tell at the Jacob Javits Center in New York. I spent six loooong hours there, during which I saw lots of stuff but missed even more. And I walked ... and walked. Thank you very much, my feet hurt.

This year, with no specific computer purchase in mind, I did not make a concentrated effort to visit particular booths. Instead I went for the entertainment and the marketing pitches.

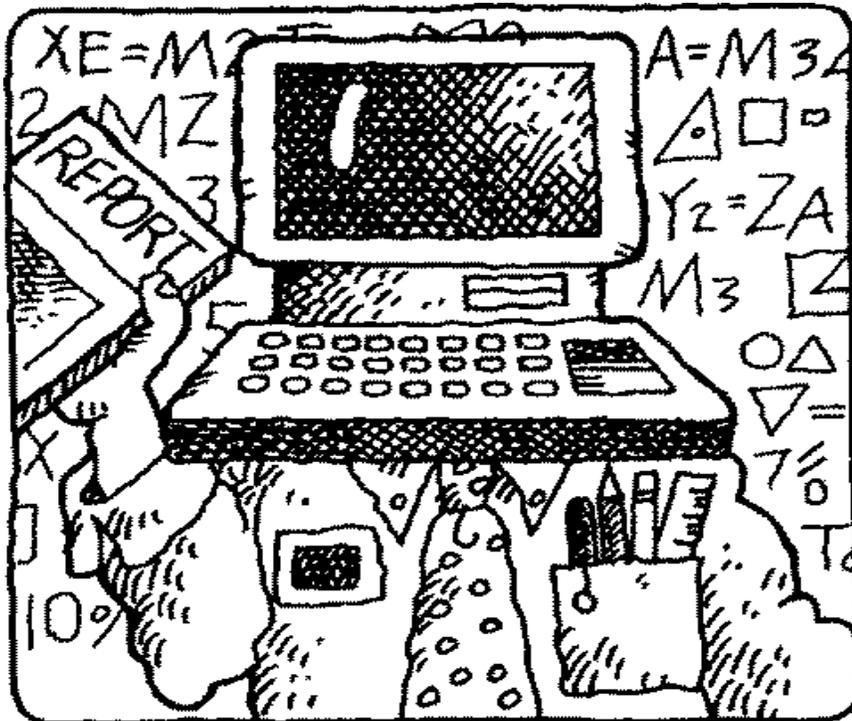
Fun booths

The most entertaining presentation I came across was by Compaq, who produced a mini medieval/circus-themed Broadway Show-like extravaganza with acrobats. Another creative winner was Hitachi, who hosted a rock-climbing competition pitting users of their own laptops against those of all the other brands. Guess which climber got to the top first?

I also had fun in the Micron Electronics flight simulator, which mimicked a roller-coaster, and enjoyed another original presentation, by On Command CCM. The host, decked out in bunny sleepers and nightshirt and snoring in his bed, had a nightmare about the Year 2000 bug. He dreamt he had to spend all night at the office to fix up every single computer on the network. It was well done and very funny.

New chips

Last year at the Intel booth I educated myself about the Pentium II processor, still the current chip for high-



end PCs. This year I learned about the Celeron, the new chip for less-demanding PCs, and for servers, the Pentium II Xeon.

Recruiters marketplace

Upon arrival, I visited the lower level and came across a series of recruiting booths. These days many recruiters have Web sites, which is a great conduit for informing and screening potential employees.

Shrinking laptops

One trend I noticed was that laptops are getting smaller and smaller, with features comparable to desktop models at prices that are not outrageous. Ultra portable notebooks, as portables are now called, will fit just about anywhere.

Surfers want jazz and interaction

Another trend is that Internet surfers are expecting more than the stiltedly static sites that were only a short time ago the only ones that existed. Now they want animations, moving objects, and interactivity. At a Compaq booth I saw demonstrated an interactive program that lets buyers and sellers "talk" to each other, and lets merchants keep all the details about a particular customer's likes and dislikes. The demonstration featured a travel agent who knew the preferences of a specific customer who was calling the Web site to inquire about travel arrangements. One purpose of the program is to reduce the volume of 800-calls. Another booth about electronic commerce was *Pctoday.com*, which lets buyers purchase hardware online from local retailers. This site is located at <http://www.pctoday.com>.

Web animation

At the Microsoft booth I saw a presentation about Liquid Motion that let Web designers create simple animations. The product is targeted to end-users that want to make their site more interesting and creative. It is available for download for a free 45 days examination at <http://www.microsoft.com/liquidmotion/>

Even though I saw many presentations this year, I still did not get a chance to check out all booths, and like every year, I was tempted to go back for another day. A DACS member once said that at PC Expo we are like kids in a toy store, wanting it all. And I did.

MARLENE GABEREL is a DACS vice president, director of publicity, and assistant Web master. You may contact Marlene at mgaberel@ct1.nai.net.

Special Interest Groups

ACCESS. Designs and implements solutions using Microsoft Access database management.

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920. Meets on 2nd Tuesday at 7p.m. at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level).

Next meeting: July 14, 1998.

ADVANCED OPERATING SYSTEMS. Uses, explores, and develops OS/2, BSD UNIX and NT operating systems.

Contact: Don Pearson, 914 669-9622.

Meets on Wednesday of the week following the general meeting, 7:30 p.m., at Don Pearson's office, North Salem, NY.

Next meeting: July 15, 1998.

EDUCATION. Coordinates DACS education classes.

Contact: Charlie Bovaird, 203 792-7881. Meets as needed.

FINANCIAL. Discusses various investment strategies, emphasizing careful selection to maximize profits and limit risk.

Contact: Will Toll, 203 270-1519, or Paul Gehrett, 203 426-8436.

Meets 3rd Thursday, 7:30p.m., Edmond Town Hall, Newtown.

Next Meeting: July 16, 1998.

GRAPHICS. Create and print high-quality graphics and images.

Contact: Ken Graff, 203 775-6667. Meets on last Wednesday, 7p.m., at Best Photo, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: Fall 1998.

INTERNET. Acquaints members with all aspects of the Internet.

Contact: Diane Greenwald, 203 797-4505. Meets on 3rd Wednesday, 7p.m., in the Danbury Public Library Community Room, 170 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: Fall 1998.

MACINTOSH. Discusses Macintosh hardware and software.

Contact: Chris Salaz 203 798-6417. Meets on 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: July 21, 1998.

VISUAL BASIC. Focuses on developing Windows applications using Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 or Jim Scheef, 860 355-8001. Meets on 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: July 1, 1998.

VOICE FOR JOANIE. Provides and supports people with Lou Gehrig's disease with special PC computer equipment.

Contact: Shirley Fredlund, 860 355-2611 x4517.

Meets on last Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at Datahr, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: July 28, 1998.

WALL STREET. Examines and demonstrates new Windows stock market software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway, 203 367-1202. Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at A. G. Edwards office, 42 Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury.

Next Meeting: July 27, 1998.

WEB SITE DESIGN. Designs and maintains *dacs.org*, the DACS Web site.

Contact: Jeff Setaro, 203 748-6748. Meets on 2nd Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level),

198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: July 8, 1998.

WINDOWS. Explores all aspects of Windows 95 and 3.1.

Contact: Ben Carnevale, 203 748-1751. Meets on 2nd Friday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: October 9, 1998.

SIG News

The SIG Notes and Calendar are available on the Internet on Dan McLeod's home page. Changes from the SIG Notes and Calendar printed in dacs.doc will be shown in red and italics. The Internet address for the SIG Notes and Calendar is: <http://www.concentric.net/~dwmcleod/signotes.htm>. Please type it precisely as shown and use only lowercase letters. Send your comments on the Internet SIG Notes by E-mail to dwmcleod@concentric.net.

MACINTOSH

In June we discussed the Power PC. On July 21, Han Van Ostendorp will present and discuss CAD on the Macintosh. We will have a CAD giveaway door prize. Spread the word for the enrichment of all. E-mail Chris Salaz at crsalaz@kami.com.

VISUAL BASIC

At the well-attended June meeting, we continued our discussion of COM and DCOM. During the open-access session we talked about the implications and possible methods used to convert a VB application to the Web. Creating an active server page (ASP) Web application will be the topic of a meeting sometime this fall. The VB SIG discusses topics of interest to both new and experienced developers. The group voted to meet through the summer.

WEB SITE DESIGN

The next meeting will feature a guided tour of Web site design led by Annalisa Oswald, a producer at New Haven-based Blowtorch Studios and creator of the CT chapter of Webgrlls. Annalisa earned a BFA in drawing, painting, and photography from Ohio State in 1995 and began her professional career as a digital designer with MC2 in Columbus, Ohio, where she designed consumer Web sites for Dirt Devil and Lane Bryant. In 1997 she moved to the East coast to continue her digital career. At Blowtorch, she is responsible for graphic and interface design, multimedia, HTML, and "organization."

Annalisa's personal Web projects are true labors of love. Residing at anaphase.com are some of these: the Webgrlls Connecticut site; Pretty, her personal site; and Creep, an upcoming Wevb zine with minimalist tendencies. Annalisa has an affinity for shiny objects, science, and the Fifties.

WINDOWS

The Windows SIG will take a long break for the summer and resume on Friday, October 9, at 7p.m. In the meantime, any DACS member with questions about Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 may check the HelpLine or contact Ben at 203 748-1751 or e-mail FFJM69A@prodigy.com.

July 1998

Danbury Area Computer Society

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Calendar and SIG Notes are available on the Internet at <http://www.concentric.net/~dwmcleod/signotes.htm>

Sergeant April's Secret Files— Part 3

By April Miller Cripliver

THINK you're a Windows 95 know-it-all now? Well, here's more, but alas, the final installment of April Miller's file of handy tricks for the ubiquitous MS Gates OS. But don't think we've scraped the bottom of the bucket. Win98 is on site and moving in fast, so stay tuned for April's newest collection. Oh, we'd love to hear from any of you who have discovered your own Win98 tricktips — or opinions about the the system. Let's hear from you!

Dragging To The Start Button. Dragging any application or document onto the start button will place that item on the start menu. To rename it, right-click on the Taskbar, choose PROPERTIES/ START MENU / PROGRAMS/ ADVANCED. Find the option you want to rename, right-click, and rename it. (The F2 key will also work to rename).

For instance, to add My Computer to the Start button, drag the icon My Computer on top of the Start button. To add MS Excel to the start button, use the FIND command to locate EXCEL.EXE and drag that on top of the Start button. Click on START / FIND / FILES OR FOLDERS. Type in EXCEL.EXE and then choose FIND NOW.

Deleting an Item from the Start Button. Right-click on the TASKBAR and choose PROPERTIES. Click on the START MENU PROGRAMS tab. Click on REMOVE. Scroll down to find the item you want to remove. You might need to click on the plus sign (+) of a group if your item is in a subgroup. Select your item. Click on the REMOVE button. Click on CLOSE.

Renaming an Item on the Start Button. There may be many times when you drag an item onto the START button only to realize that you do not like the file name. To rename it, RIGHT-CLICK on the Taskbar. Choose PROPERTIES / ADVANCED. Find the option you want to rename and select it. Press F2 to rename the item. Click on OK. (Instead of the F2 key, you can use the right-click and chose rename).

Properties Quickly. Bring up the Properties dialog fast by holding down the ALT key and double-clicking on the object of your choice.

Avoid The Startup Programs. Hold down the CTRL key while entering Windows. This will keep items in the STARTUP folder from launching.

Caps and Num Lock Warning. Did you ever accidentally hit the CAPS or NUM lock keys. If you want the system to



“beep” when you use these keys: Open START / SETTINGS / CONTROL PANEL / ACCESSIBILITY OPTION. Select USE TOGGLE KEYS. Click OK. Now press the CAPS LOCK key and hear the beep. Press it again and hear a different beep.

Making the Start Menu User Friendly. Here's how to put top-level start-menu items in the order you want and also launch them with keystrokes: Right-click on the START button and select OPEN. Rename each item by placing a number in front of it. (Press F2 to rename the item.) Now you can open the start menu by pressing CTRL +ESC and launch a program by pressing its associated number.

Running The Pack. If you have not done so already, download the WIN95 service

pack (<http://www.winmag.com/win95/software.htm>). Posted in late February, the service pack contains bug fixes, new device drivers, and other goodies that bring your copy of Win95 fully up to date. And it's FREE.

Don't Do that Rename—Oops! If you rename a File, Folder, or Icon and change your mind, press ESC key BEFORE hitting the enter key.

Get System Info on Paper. Right-click on the MY COMPUTER icon and select PROPERTIES. Click on the DEVICE MANAGER tab, then the PRINT button. Select the ALL DEVICES AND SYSTEM SUMMARY radio button, then click on OK. This will give you additional information about your hardware, IRQ's, ports, memory usage, devices and drivers than you ever wanted to know. It would be a good idea to keep this printout handy for future reference.

Bypass the Windows 95 Logo — This Time. Temporarily move the WIN95 screen that pops up during bootup by pressing the ESC key while booting. You'll see what's going on behind the Win95 curtain.

Bypass the Windows 95 Logo — All the Time. To prevent this from occurring all the time, edit the MSDOS.SYS file and add the line LOGO=0 to the 'options' section.

Disable Call Waiting. If incoming phone calls disconnect you from your online sessions, you probably have call waiting. To disable it, open the CONTROL PANEL, double-click on the MODEMS icon, and select DIALOG PROPERTIES. Choose the code that disables call waiting on your phone line.

How Much Hard Drive Space is Left. To find out how much hard disk space you have, Double-click on the MY COMPUTER icon. Right-click on the C: drive icon and select PROPERTIES.

Close All Apps Fast. Select SHUT-DOWN from the START MENU and pick the "Close all programs and log on as a different user" option. Then log back on as the same user.

Two Explorer's — Seeing Double. Since Explorer cannot open multiple windows, trick it. Open two instances of Explorer. Click on START/PROGRAMS/EXPLORER. Click on START/PROGRAMS/EXPLORER. Right-click on task bar, and choose TILE HORIZONTAL.

Fun with Run. You can drag documents and folders into the run dialog. Windows will type the path for you. You

can then modify and launch with your changes.

Fun with Run: Part II. The four most recently launched RUN commands are still available by clicking on the down arrow in the Run dialog or by using the down arrow key.

Prog Man and File Man. Program Manager and File Manager are still a part of Windows 95. Open up MY COMPUTER / C: / WINDOWS. Find WINFILE.EXE and PROGMAN.EXE. Double-click on either one to run them.

Drag and Print. Create a shortcut to a printer on your desktop so that you can

simply drag any document on top of the shortcut to have it print. Open the printers folder (START /Settings / Printers). Right-click and drag your printer icon to the desktop. You can then drag documents onto the shortcut and print instantly.

Send It to the Desktop. Moving files to the desktop is a good way to keep them in sight but a pain when your desktop is covered with open windows. A simple workaround is to create a shortcut to the desktop folder in the SENDTO FOLDER. Now, whenever you right-click on an object, the desktop will appear in the SEND TO menu. Open MY COMPUTER / C: / WINDOWS. Select the DESKTOP folder and choose EDIT / COPY.

Open the SENDTO folder (C:\windows\sendto), and choose EDIT / PASTE. Close all windows. Now whenever you right-click and choose SENDTO, the desktop will be a choice.

A File With A View. For a light and fast file-viewing utility, check out Quickview, which ships with Win 95. By default, Quickview only pops up as an option for certain types of files, so if you change a .TXT file extension, Quickview will no longer show up as an option. But you can enable it for any type of file you want by going to VIEW/OPTIONS in any folder window and selecting FILE TYPES. Select the type you want to change, click on the Edit button, and check the box marked Enable Quickview. You can also put Quickview in the SENDTO folder to view any compatible document on the fly.

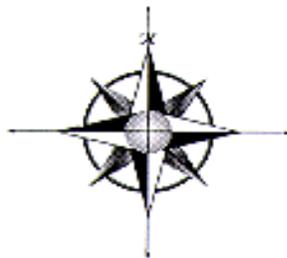
A Shift Maneuver for Explorer. If you click once on a folder (using My Computer), then hold down the shift key and double-click on it, you'll open the folder with a two-pane Explorer view.

Select Only Some Files. Sometimes you want to select most, but not all of the files in a folder. Open up the folder you want to select the files in. Select all the files you DON'T want. Choose EDIT / INVERT SELECTION.

Free Phone Tips Call 1-800-936-4200 for free tips.

APRIL MILLER CRIPLIVER, a regular contributor and creator of our Boot Camp columns, is Director of PC Applications at Computer Education Institute in Chesterton, Indiana. Contact April at userfriendly@bigfoot.com.

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Get Digital with a Scanner So cheap now you can have work and home versions

By Mike Kaltschnee

I GET ASKED ABOUT SCANNERS a lot, especially now that the prices have dropped. "Do I need a scanner?" "What kind should I get?" or "How much should I spend?" I hope to answer all of these questions in this article.

I started working with scanners about ten years ago, when the "cheaper" scanners cost several thousand dollars and took several hours to set up and configure. Scanners are much cheaper now, and the setup is a lot easier. The price has dropped so much that I purchased a scanner for home and spent only about \$100. I just saw a rebate offer from CompUSA for \$30 on the scanner I purchased, so the price is about \$70 now.

Before you rush out and buy one, make sure you need one. If you're trying to get photographs into the computer, you may be better off purchasing a digital camera. The price has dropped to several hundred dollars, and with an inexpensive inkjet printer, you can get great results at home, saving money on film and developing.

If you have old photographs or plan on scanning printed materials for work, a scanner is a great idea. You can get a 4x5 photo scanner, a small scanner specifically designed to scan photos up to 4 x 5 inches. Or you can purchase a flatbed scanner, which can scan books and documents up to 8 1/2 x 11 inches or more. Most flatbed scanners can add a document feeder, so you can scan stacks of documents unattended.

I bought a UMAX Astra 610P, which came with all of the necessary cables and software, and was set up and scanning in about 15 minutes. The scanner hooks up to my parallel printer port and has an additional printer port so I can attach my printer to the scanner.

Some scanners require a SCSI port, which on a Windows computer can still be a challenge to set up and configure. If you have a Macintosh, it's easy to add a scanner because SCSI is built in and simple to work with. Since I own a Notebook computer and want to be able to hook up the scanner to other computers, parallel was the easy choice. Keep your

eyes on the new USB port, which should make adding scanners and other devices even easier.

The software that came with my scanner included Adobe PhotoDeluxe and Presto! PageManager. I have to admit that I quickly deinstalled Presto! because I have no need for an OCR program (OCR stands for Optical Character Recognition), which enables you to scan documents into the computer, converting them back into editable text so you don't have to retype them. If you find yourself re-typing documents a lot, you should look into OCR.

I like the bundled Adobe PhotoDeluxe, which is a great image editing program. When you scan images into the computer, PhotoDeluxe lets you edit them, change the contrast and brightness, crop, or apply special effects. The software will even remove red eye from your photos, saving previously ruined ones. Make sure the scanner you purchase includes software, the best of the bundled software being PhotoDeluxe, PhotoShop LE, or even the full version of PhotoShop.

HOW MUCH should you spend on a scanner? Although I purchased a UMAX for home, we purchased two Hewlett Packard IIC scanners for work. We spent the past two years designing Web sites for companies and needed the high-quality optics, speed, and reliability that HP delivers. You'll spend up to three times as much for an HP scanner, but it's worth it if you're serious.

One confusing thing about scanners is resolution. Resolution is simply the number of pixels per inch. If you want to create Web pages with scanned images, you need only 75-150 dots per inch (dpi). This is because your computer screen is only 90 dpi. If you want to print graphics you have scanned on your inkjet or laser printer, you'll need 300 dpi. If you're doing professional print work, you'll want at least 300 if not a higher resolution. Some scanners claim 2400 dpi, which is much more than you'll ever need. Make sure your scanner resolution is "true" resolution, because software or hardware

interpolation means that they are really scanning at a lower resolution and "faking it" using software.

Be gentle with your scanner and be sure to read the manual. Almost every scanner I've used required it to be "locked" before moving it. These devices are very precise, and forgetting to lock your scanner can cause it to become misaligned and unusable (and may even void your warranty!). Locking it is can be as simple as pushing a button or moving a switch.

There are a lot of scanners out there, so be sure to do your homework before rushing out to buy one. You can find great reviews of scanners on <http://www.zdnet.com>.

Mike Kaltschnee is a founder of DeMorgan Industries, the leading developer of Web graphics (<http://www.webspice.com>), and also teaches Webmaster and Internet marketing classes at the Internet School in Naugatuck Valley Community Technology College. You can reach Mike at: mikek@demorgan.com.

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Contact Systems
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Windows 98

Windows 98 ... Hmm

Windows cleaned its act, but wait before you buy

By Mike Kaltschnee

BY NOW you've all heard about Windows 98, and the Microsoft machine hasn't even started promoting it. The newest version of the Windows operating systems, Windows 98 will be available on June 25, but by the time you receive this newslet-

ter you will already have been be barraged with ads telling you to upgrade from 95. But should you? Our company is a Microsoft Windows developer, so we've actually had Windows 98 for about six months. So why did we wait to install it? Past experience with Microsoft software has made me gun-shy. It usually takes them several tries to get things right. When I was



testing Windows 95, I lost the entire contents of my hard drive—twice. Of course, I was running it for almost a year before it shipped.

I'll give you the same advice I gave my dad a few weeks ago. Don't. Well, at least not yet. I've been running Windows 98 for about a month now and have been using the same version you'll be able to buy at the store. But it's installed on an extra computer, not on a machine I rely on daily for productive work. Win 98 has some neat new features but still needs some fixes before I'll even think of installing it on my work computers.

Microsoft is actually promoting Windows NT 5 to their corporate customers. It is expected to be available sometime next year, depending on who you speak with. Windows NT is the true upgrade to Windows 95, and I've been running NT 4.0 Workstation for some time now on one of my computers. I like NT. It's a lot more stable than 95 and is faster and more capable of handling the brutal graphic tasks that I throw at it. But it won't run Quake (or other popular games), so I'm stuck with 95.



Browse Web and hard drive the same way.

What's new?

So what's new in Windows 98? Not as much as I expected. A lot of its new features are already included in "service packs" and "hot fixes." These are software patches you can download today without the cost or hassle of purchasing a installing Windows 98.

The installation took longer than Windows 95 but was a lot smoother. Microsoft appears to have expanded the hardware auto-detection utility, so it was a lot easier than Windows 95 to get up and running. The system also takes up a lot more disk space, which varies based on your installation settings. Here's a quick run-down on the new features:

● **Support for large hard drives.** FAT32 is a feature that lets you create partitions larger than two gigabytes. Windows 95 can support

only two gig, but most computers come with larger drives. FAT32 can also use your hard drive space more efficiently, giving you more space for storage.

● **Internet Explorer 4.** The Windows 98 version is basically the same one that you can download for Windows 95. My Computer now looks like Explorer, and has different options if you're online or browsing your computer. It's also easier to get online, and the Internet is better integrated into Windows 98.

● **Free FrontPad.** This is the basic editor from FrontPage, and the one I use when I want to create a Web page. Nice freebie.

● **Multiple monitor support.** Hmm ... Something the Mac has had since 1987, but it's still nice to finally have it under Windows.

● **USB support.** Universal Serial Bus is a new port for your computer that can simplify adding new devices such as scanners and digital cameras. But you can already get this support in a free patch for Windows 95.

● **Faster program loading and startup.** I didn't notice any major improvements, but Windows 98 did seem a bit perkier than 95.

● **Bug fixes.** There were far too many bugs in Windows 95, so Microsoft has released the OEM Service Release 2 version that is much more stable.

WARNING: Back up your computer at least once before installing Windows 98. The chance is small, but you could lose everything. I don't have a vendetta against Microsoft; I just speak from experience. I'd do a full backup before making any major change to my computer, and it's a good idea to do incremental backups often.

Don't get me wrong, I use a Windows 95 computer every day and actually like it (but I still *love* the Mac, and that's the difference). I just recommend waiting until Microsoft works the bugs out of the first version of Windows 98. If you don't have to upgrade, don't, at least you until you need it

MIKE KALTSCHNEE is a founder of DeMorgan Industries, the leading developer of Web graphics (<http://www.webspice.com>), and also teaches Webmaster and Internet marketing classes at the Internet School in Naugatuck Valley Community Technology College. You can reach Mike at: mikek@demorgan.com.

Random Access

Instant replay: June 1998

Bruce Preston, Moderator

This month we are initiating a new service for the many DACS members who would like to participate in the Random Access sessions but are unable to attend the general meetings. Now you may now e-mail your questions to askdacs@aol.com. Questions will be presented to the membership and responded to via this column. Please submit your questions by 6 PM the evening before the general meeting, and try to provide about the level of detail as in the questions in the column. We regret that we will not be able to answer individual questions personally.

Ask DACS: I have a Pentium computer running under Windows 95 and am using an HP6L printer. This is the only printer on my system. When I print, a status window appears created by the HP software. Sometimes at the start of printing, a message appears in the status window that says "printer not found." My system does not lock up because of this, but I have to reboot anyway to get the printer to work again.

A. First, make sure that you have the most recent driver, available from HP's Web site. If that doesn't work, try using the HP LaserJet III driver, which is very stable and supports all of the standard functionality of the HP family of laser printers.

Ask DACS: Recently my HP LaserJet III printer has started printing a single graphic character-to-peer networking.

A. If the machine to which the printer is attached has SCSI devices, it is probably the SCSI software looking for a SCSI device attached via the printer port. This could happen if you have a SCSI tape drive, or perhaps if the machine has access to a ZIP drive, either directly or via sharing. You might try not turning on the printer until the machine has completed the boot process.

Q. Is anybody using ProComm Plus to transmit Electronic Data Interchange files? The software I am

currently using does not let me automate the transmissions.

A. EDI is a highly structured protocol, but the files are essentially ASCII. If you are looking for a terminal emulation program that lets you control it programmatically, you might look at HyperAccess from Hilgraeve. It uses a subset of the C language and also has an API (Applications Programming Interface), which lets you embed communications functions within your application. Note, however, that it does not provide any EDI-specific capabilities. For an EDI application, you might call the APL Group in Wilton, CT, who have an excellent EDI product.

Q. Does anybody have any experience with rewriteable CDs? I want to transfer stuff from a ZIP drive. Do I need to worry about access speed for the ZIP?

A. The SCSI version of the ZIP drive (and perhaps the EIDE internal version) have transfer rates roughly equivalent to an older hard disk. The parallel port version is not as fast and might not be able to feed the CD writer fast enough. Lastly, according to various reviews, the drives themselves are comparable in capabilities, but the software that comes with them varies widely.

Q. A number of online services will back up your hard disk for about \$15 per month. Has anybody used these centralized backup services?

A. Doing it over the Internet could take a long time unless you have a high bandwidth connection (not a dial-up line). It is not cost effective compared to using a local tape drive.

Q. In Windows 95 Explorer, is there a way to delete multiple files without having to select and remove them individually?

A. Click the first file. Then Shift-click the last in a range, and it will select all between. Or to select non-contiguous files, click the first one,

then Ctrl-click additional files. Selected files will be highlighted. If you want to unhighlight a file, Ctrl-click it. Control-A will select all files in the window. Shift-End will select from the currently selected file to the bottom of the window.

In the "details view," clicking on the column header will sort the window by that column—by oldest file, for example. Click again, and it will do a reverse sort, for example, by newest file. Be careful: These short-cuts may also select folders within the current folder. For those who like to live dangerously, shift-DELETE will delete files without placing them in the Recycle Bin.

Q. Where are these [keyboard shortcuts] documented?

A. Take a look at START / HELP / INDEX / KEYS. By the way, here is a neat one. If you use the "detail view" in Windows Explorer, your right window contains a directory listing with file type, size, modification date, etc. Click in the window and then press Ctrl++ and the columns will resize to "best fit."

Q. Has anyone used the ISP SmartNet, which advertises in the local paper? It has a one-time sign-up fee of \$60, and from then on it is all-you-can-eat.

A. We believe that you must use their provided browser, and if you don't mind a lot of advertising when you start up, it may be for you.

Q. What is the latest version of AOL's browser?

A. The current "published" version is 3.0, but there is a 4.0 beta available for download.

Q. When I am using PC-Network (a news-feed push service), it takes control of the whole machine. Is there a way to have it run in the background?

A. The current version is not multithreaded and doesn't support background processing. The 2.5 beta version was reported to be fine. Watch for its release, or see if you can get the beta.

Q. I installed the Brøderbund 3D Home Interiors application, and now when I boot I am asked whether I want

the original configuration or the Brøderbund 3D Home Interiors configuration. The boot will not proceed without a response. How do I get rid of this prompt?

- A. The application installation has created a hardware profile, which is most normally used on notebook machines which can be connected to a docking station. The "mobile" configuration typically doesn't have network access, so network support might not be loaded, while the "docked" configuration will make use of the network card in the docking station. Why Brøderbund added a hardware profile is hard to say, unless they added a Web browser or other software to support dial-up networking so you can get templates (furniture, etc.) from their Web site. You can delete a hardware profile via My Computer / Control Panel / System - Hardware Profiles tab. If you go into device manager and look at the individual devices, you may see some hardware that has been added for the profile, perhaps the Dial-Up Networking Adapter, which is actually software. You probably should call Brøderbund to ask them what they are doing.

Q. Could people comment upon V.90 modems?

- A. The following is distilled from several respondents: The ITU is expected to ratify the V.90 protocol which many modems are already supporting via "flash ROM" updates. Some of the things that will control your maximum data transfer rate are: distance from your central telephone office (CO) and line condition, whether all links between your CO and the ISP's CO are digital, and most important, which terminal handlers your ISP is using.

The ISP's hardware must be capable of driving the line at 56K and might be using any of three possible standards: X2, which was developed by 3Com/US Robotics, K-flex, which was developed by Rockwell and AT&T Bell Labs, or V.90, which is the ITU standard. If the ISP hasn't converted to V.90, and/or your modem hasn't been upgraded to V.90, then you will get 56K only if your modem matches

the ISP's configuration (i.e. X2 talking to X2, or K-flex talking to K-flex). Otherwise the connection will be made at a nominal 33K.

Note that the higher speed is only for data moving from the ISP to your system. You will not get 56K if you dial into another V.90 modem since they are capable of receiving only at the high speed—the transmit speed tops out at about 33K. Note also that even in perfect conditions, the best connection is more likely to be about 52K or so, since the FCC has restricted the signal strength that may be applied to the communications line. Lastly, if you experienced significant telephone line quality problems with your previous modem (e.g. line noise), then a V.90 is going to see the same noise and have to retransmit more data, possibly making the connection actually slower.

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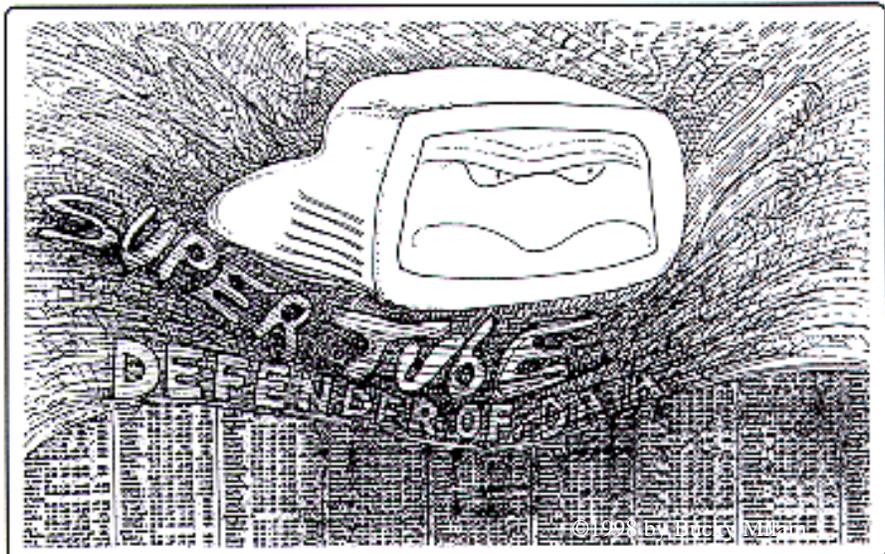
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