

FILE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4
OCT./NOV.

SCREEN DUMP OF DTP

TOOLS LINE STYLE SHAPES TEXT STYLE GRIDLOCK CLEAR FILE

Graphics Editor: TESTING2

the graphics editor

STYLE FONT NUMBER FONTMAN ADD TEXT

Text Editor: ENVSTDY

Text can be bold or Underlined superscript or subscript
or italic bold or unbold. All styles show on screen
and can of course be mixed and matched.

SAVE AND EXIT
SAVE AND CONT
SAVE AS
LOAD
CANCEL

the text editor

PRINT PREVIEW CREATE FILE

ADD GRAPHICS WINDOW
ADD TEXT WINDOW
MOVE WINDOW
REMOVE WINDOW
REMOVE WINDOW BACKGROUND
CREATE TEXT WINDOW
SHOW WINDOW MOVE
SHOW TEXT WINDOW FONT
CANCEL

the page editor

(or most of it!)

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Issue 5 will be going to the printers on 20th Nov. 1987

Lets make it big as it will be the christmas issue!

Contributions in by 13th Nov. 1987

BACK ISSUES

Issue 1	50p
Issue 2	85p
Issue 3	£1.20p

Still a few back issues of PCWUG newsletter 50p each. Phone (0297) 20456 after 7pm for more information.

Editorial/Subscription/ Trade Adverts address is:

PCW File, 11 Havenview Rd, Seaton, Devon EX12 2PF.

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Editorial

WELCOME to Issue 4 of PCW File. First I must apologise for the big delay in Issue 3 it took 5 weeks at the printers which has completely mess up our deadlines for this issue. For people who don't know I should make them aware that I also publish another newsletter called 'CPC Newsletter'. We are fast becoming the number one newsletter so come on if you want to contribute a regular article, a Software Review, or the occasional article please get in touch. I wonder what happen to the dBase article, Fleet Street Editor Review, and the Educational packages review. Perhaps we will get them next time! Neil Olner has decided to upgrade his computer to the PC, Amiga or ST so he can not do the SOAPBOX series so perhaps someone out there might like to take up that idea. Other ideas which would go down well with members would be a Communications column, information on Languages beyond Basic and Logo, More on Mallard Basic, More hints and tips - what happen to you all this issue I not quite sure!, Locoscript 2 experiences and other word processors.

I must say HELLO to our growing overseas user base. A special hello to Harley Ristad in Los Angeles who runs the Amstrad User Group. If by any chance there are any members reading this from that side of the ocean his address is 12741 Matteson #3, Mar Vista, Los Angeles, CA 90066. Germany coming on nicely but where are the French. Amstrad are mean't to have a very good user base in France. Hello to AMSWEST in Australia I hope your PCW users enjoy reading PCW File.

Hopefully a few 9512 users will be reading this issue of PCW File. Lets have your opinions of this new and exciting machine!

For the months of October and November I have decided to offer you the chance to rejoin PCW File. If you feel your subscription is nearly up or enjoy reading PCW File why not join a little early and be entered into our £50 FREE Software Draw. If your name is drawn from our bin you will be able to choose £50 of software of your choice. Every member who rejoins at £7 for six issues will also get a FREE pageboy ruler worth £1.99. SO GET THROUGH CHEQUES BOOKS OUT NOW! Please can you make cheques payable to Amstrad Computing Newsletters.

I will leave you to enjoy this issue.

Chris Bryant

SOFTWARE DISCOUNT FROM DIGITAL INTERNATIONAL

Len Jones of PCW Users Group (Mail Order) has arrange the following discount for all members of PCW File.

DATASTORE 2 - Database retails for £39.95 members price £29.95

SUPERTYPE 2 - Print Program with 8 different fonts. Retails for £24.95 members price £19.95

CLASSIC SPACE INVADERS - Retails for £13.95 Members price £9.95

PERSONAL TAX PLANNER - Retails for £24.95 Members price £19.95

BUSINESS CONTROLLER - Retails for £99.95 Members price £79.95

Send your order to DIGITA International Ltd, Kelsey House, Barns Road, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 6HJ England. Tel: (0395) 45059 Please mention PCW File.

Mailbag

Please send in your comments about this magazine, experiences, interesting stories, and any other comments you have about the computer industry. Would people mark up the top of their letter if it is not for publication.

Poor George Firth

After 3 weeks with the PCW, I guess many of us were in the tearing hair/screaming/weeping with rage etc. state that he was in when he wrote. George's circuits are overloaded trying to cope with too much information. Word processors, in fact, all computers, should come with an Official Health Warning - Learning to use this Machine Can Damage Your Mental Health ! - and a Free Economy Pack of Patience and Clairvoyance.

I would suggest, first, throwing away the Word Processing book - WPs work in so many different ways that a general book is confusing not helpful. Second, take deep, calming breaths and do something - anything - to take his mind off it for a few days. Third, not try to write letters or anything else until the manual 's been worked through at least once (I suspect George, like me, hated the Templates given, but didn't know enough to change them). Fourth, forget the second part of the manual; apart from the bit on Diskit, I didn't look at it until I'd had my PCW for a year.

Fifth, if there is a document READ.ME on the programme disc and an Addendum Booklet, cross-reference these to the Manual so that the extra information is read. The bit about saving Phases in my Manual is pathetic, but the Addendum makes it almost crystal clear. Check, too, that the programme is LocoScript Version 1.2 or higher. Version 1.0 was exchanged free by Amstrad because of "bugs", including a Page Number bug.

NOW start again, TAKE IT SLOWLY AND PERSEVERE with the manual. When you come out the other side you will realise it's not as bad as you thought it was. Many people have long-term problems because they didn't persevere with the manual. My technique was to plod through fairly slowly, reading each chapter and then working through it as I re-read it, going back and re-doing the last chapter before going on to the next one. Time-consuming, often frustrating, but NECESSARY if you're to get the best from your investment. It take's a week or two of spare time; give the brain plenty of Rest & Recreation.

Once you're well on the way, give yourself something real to do but allow plenty of time for problem solving; don't expect anything to be simple and easy. This will have you flipping back through the manual, getting familiar with it, re-reading bits and having them "click" with what you already know. After a while the Manual goes on a nearby shelf but each time I consult it I'm amazed at what I've not noticed before, so it's worth re-reading in a few month's time.

The trouble with manuals is that Computers Are So Complicated. That goes for both the manual writer and the readers. Word processing is to typing like piloting Concorde is to driving a car. So don't expect to be the equivalent of a BA captain in a couple of weeks. (Car repair manuals are also Double Dutch to the uninitiated!)

Mailbag

I was helped by stumbling across the PCW User Group at an early stage in its life when we were all trying to solve the same basic problems. A complete set of back issues of the Newsletter might be very useful. A £ or two a month spent on magazines specifically for the PCW is worthwhile for the tips and hints as much as the articles. As some users are just beginning and others quite advanced, the mags reflect this - don't be put off by the clever stuff, just make sure that some of it is at your level. Browse in W H Smith's and try the ones that seem more relevant. If you want books, again get ones specific to the PCW. No book or mag is a magic spell but you will find that "light dawns" because different people write things in different ways.

I hope this helps. Don't worry George, there's LocoScript 2 to conquer yet!

Vicky Allen, 123 Park Road, Loughborough, Leics.

REFUND FROM SOFTWARE CITY

In order to be completely fair to Software City I should add to my previous letter (Issue 3) the fact that they have now (after a total of 14 letters and 10 and a half months) sent me a refund on my dBASE II. It is interesting to note that the cheque arrived the day before the latest issue of PCW File, is it possible they got a copy of the magazine before I did. It would be nice to think so, power of the press and all that.

Andrew K. Borland, Wimborne, Dorset

LOCOSCRIPT MANUAL EQUALS HEADACHE

I note the Locoscript manual has been giving headaches. I too did it the hard way. For the Word Processing side the easy way is to buy an audio cassette which will talk you through the system. They ought to be sold with every Amstrad. I finally got hold of the REELTIME AUDIO TUTOR (Headline Communication Ltd). For about £9 that made it all child's play.

Also very useful for quickly looking up any required feature, is Tony Johnson's WORD PROCESSING WITH LOCOSCRIPT (Clarity Guides, Broadwood Lifton, Devon PL16 0ER). For office use a very good handbook is PRACTICAL AMSTRAD WORD PROCESSING by Lawrence and England (Sunshine Book Ltd).

Even months after purchase some procedures are still going to slip from one's memory. The solution is - a notebook. Get a W H Smith Size 4, Narrow Ruled notebook. Cut a visible index down the right side. Write this up alphabetically, one page per item, starting with BLOCKS - CENTRING - CLOSING UP - and so on. It will prove invaluable.

A.L.Rogers, Walsall W. Midlands

ALADDINK

Will re-ink your PCW Ribbons for only £2

ALADDINK(CBR), 4 Hurkur Crescent, Eyemouth, Berwickshire TD14 5AP

ENVELOPE ADDRESSING - On a new file use RETURN key to space down the number of lines required to start the address in the right place on the envelope (Once ascertained it will be a constant). Type address and print envelope. Return to the same file; type in date, delete the now unwanted line spaces and proceed with the letter. This avoids using two files and direct printing, and the address is only typed once. The keying needed is very quick and time taken is halved.

TYPING NEARER THE TOP -Stick a marker line on the extension paper guides arranged so that paper is just retained beneath the bail bar rollers. Feed the paper through and then turn back the paper until its bottom edge is level with the line. This is also useful for getting the date just below the address of existing private printed memo.

SLOPING THE KEYBOARD - By comparison with a typewriter the Amstrad keyboard is disconcertingly flat. Slope can easily be increased by inserting a two inch length of wooden dowelling in the centre screw hole in its base.

RAISING PRINTER - To accommodate a wad of continuous paper underneath just place four wooden dowels in the screw hole in the base.
A.L.Rogers, Walsall W Midlands

EDITING IN BASIC - Press [EXCH/FIND] twice to jump to the end of line.
Press [CUT] twice to erase text on the right of the cursor.

BASIC AUTOSTART DISC - From CP/M, type BASIC RPED, followed by [RETURN]. Choose to edit a new f99file, called PROFILE.SUB. When you get into the rped edit screen, just type BASIC, followed by [RETURN], and then [EXIT]. Now reset by pressing [SHIFT] + [EXTRA] + [EXIT] at the same time. The disc will automatically got into Basic.

AUTO - It is useful to know that the command AUTO will only generate line numbers up to 65530. However, I don't expect many people type in that many lines !!

PLAY LIFE - Due to a mistake I made last issue, anyone trying to play "LIFE" by following my instructions in 'Hints & Tips' will have got a screendump of MAIL232. The instructions should have read '... First boot CP/M, then load MAIL232 from your Locoscript disc. Select F3, move cursor over "Transfer as ASCII" and press EXTRA and P. Use RETURN and the cursor keys to build a bacteria formation. Then press SPACE to watch the bacteria reproducing...' Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

Carwyn Cook, Perivale, Middx.

PCW HELPLINE EXTRA

Is there anyone out there who has got a copy of TURBO PASCAL up and running on their PCW who would be willing to assist with my attempts to get mine to cooperate. I am more in need, at this stage, of a good version to refer to rather than detailed compiler hacking expertise (though that might come). Every time TURBO says "Press <ESC>" the system locks up, which suggests I've got a corrupted return address or restart instruction.

Andrew K Borland, 88 Jubilee Road,
Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3TJ

Mail232-Data-Disc

by Harley Ristad

When going "on-line" with a Modem and the MAIL232 software to retrieve a lengthy document you will want to put it on a "data disc". Remember a "data disc" is nothing more or less than a disc that has been formatted, and has nothing on it but 173K of wide open data space. Briefly, the normal procedure is as follows:

(1). Load up with CP/M (Disc #2); (2). Insert LocaScip (Disc #1) and type: "MAIL232[RETURN]"; (3). Insert Data Disc. (4). Follow the menu, [f1] for protocol, and [f3] to receive a file (type in any name for your document).

The following procedure will reduce the number of disc insertions from three to two; and reduce typing of "MAIL232" to typing "M". Also, when you leave MAIL232 you will automatically get a directory print out for your data disc. Reducing the typing of MAIL232 to M is only cost effective if your usage is great; however it is a "fun" improvement and will give you practice with CP/M. Getting a fast DIR for your data disc is real neat!

(1). Load up with a CP/M disc #2 that has had the name of "PROFILE.BMG" changed to "PROFILE.SUB" --With a virgin write protected disc the typing "M" for "MAIL232" short cut will not work. (2). Insert LocaScript disc and type after A> prompt: "M:[RETURN]". (3). After M> prompt, type "PIP M:MAIL232.COM=A:MAIL232.COM[R][RETURN]". (4) Insert CP/M (#2) disc and after A> prompt type: "RPED[RETURN]". (5) Label a formatted disc: "MAIL 232 Data Disc",and insert. (6). Choose [f3] from menu. (7). For file name type: "M.SUB,[ENTER]" & [ENTER].(8). On edit screen, line 1,type "MAIL232". Line 2, type "DIR [SIZE]".(9). [EXIT],[EXIT], from "RPED". (10). Type "M:[RETURN]". After M> prompt, type "PIP A:MAIL232.COM=M:MAIL232.COM[R][RETURN]". (11). Type "A:[RETURN]".(12) Type "DIR" and read: "M.SUB, SYSTEM FILE(S) EXIST". (13). Type "DIR [SIZE][RETURN]" and read: "Mail232.COM 4K, M.SUB 1K".

Trial test your MAIL232 Data Disc as follows: Reboot with CP/M; insert Data Disc and type "M" and you should get the Mail Terminal menu. [For game of "LIFE" (8000 PLUS, Dec '86, p. 59) type: [f3], [4], [4]],[EXTRAIP.] Make a copy(s).

EXPLANATIONS

(3) Loads system file MAIL232 into RAM (disc M). Note the PIP option "[R]" which indicates that I am copying a system file. Without [R] the response is NO FILE FOUND. (QUESTIONS: Here and in (10) can the command be executed from the A> prompt? A: YES. Q: For a PIP command, must the file name be typed twice? A: NO; However, if this shortcut is seldom used its not worth learning.)

(4) thru (9) Creates the file "M.SUB" on the data disc.

(10) Copies system file "MAIL232.COM" from RAM to Data Disc.

(11) & (12) If 2 files are not on your "MAIL232 Data Disc" go back to (1)!

Dots and Dashes

By James Coleman

I run a program that requires me to enter 29 variables in one horizontal line separated, in accordance with Basic rules of syntax, by commas. One careless full-stop instead of a comma or a comma after the last variable (where it is not required by the same rules) brings up that dreaded ?Redo from start and they all have to entered again. Basic is very unforgiving in these matters. So what are the rules governing the use of punctuation?

In everyday use, one employs commas, etc in accordance with fairly easily learned rules which cover all situations. In Basic, the rules governing the use of punctuation marks vary according to where they are used so that a comma after a viable has a different effect from one after a prompt string and a different one again from the comma after a PRINT instruction.

Take the following PRINT statements and compare the output that arises in each case from varying the punctuation:

```
10 PRINT "Hello there"           Hello there
10 PRINT "Hello, there"         Hello, there
```

(the comma is part of the PRINT statement and has no effect)

```
10 PRINT "Hello","there"        Hello      there
```

(the comma is not part of the PRINT statement and operates to force the output into print zones)

```
10 PRINT "Hello""there"        Hellothere
```

(since the "" are not printed, the effect is to link the two words)

```
10 PRINT "Hello " "there"      Hello there
```

(the space between 'o' and " corrects the error of the previous line)

```
10 PRINT "Hello";"there"       Hellothere
```

(semi-colons usually ensure words are printed as close together as possible so once again the two words are linked)

```
10 PRINT "Hello ";"there"      Hello there
```

(the additional space corrects the error of the previous line)

```
10 PRINT "Hello"               Hello
20 PRINT "there"               there
```

(the absence of punctuation leaves the output in the same form as the input)

```
10 PRINT "Hello,"             Hello,
20 PRINT "there"              there
```

(the comma is again part of the PRINT statement and has no effect)

Dots and Dashes

```
10 PRINT "Hello",           Hello       there
20 PRINT "there"
```

(the comma is not part of the PRINT statement and operates to force Line 20 in line with Line 10 but separated by print zones)

```
10 PRINT "Hello";          Hello there
20 PRINT " there"
```

(the semi-colon forces Line 20 in Line with Line 10 but normally spaced - provided you remember the additional space to keep the two words separated)

Let's look at some similar examples using the INPUT statement

```
10 INPUT x,y,z,
```

(a comma is required to separate variables but a comma after a single or final variable - as shown - is wrong; if you follow the same pattern and enter 4,5,6, at the keyboard it will generate ?Syntax error; if you enter 4,5,6 you will get ?Redo from start)

```
10 INPUT x                 ?7 (input at the keyboard)
20 PRINT " squared is"x*x  squared is 49
```

(a comma after "...is" will print '49' in a separate print zone a comma after x*x has no effect)

```
10 INPUT; x               ?7 squared is 49
20 PRINT " Squared is"x*x (7 input at the keyboard)
```

(the semi-colon immediately after INPUT forces Line 20 in line with Line 10 - a comma instead of a semi-colon generates ?Syntax error)

```
10 INPUT "Enter number...";x   Enter number...?
20 INPUT "Enter number...";x   Enter number...
```

(the comma at the end of the prompt string suppresses the ? note that, in the previous example, there is no prompt string in the INPUT statement and a comma will not suppress the ?)

In summary, then, one might say something like this:

: can be used in a program lines to separate statements that could just as well be printed on separate lines.

can be used instead to create a blank line in a program but the blank line is not produced on the screen - as distinct from ? or PRINT which will give a blank line on screen.

; in PRINT statements, within a line, forces close spacing of items; at EOL, forces printing on to line above, properly spaced out.

in INPUT statements, after INPUT, forces printing on to line above.

Dots and Dashes

- in READ statements, not required.
- in DATA statements, not required.
- in control codes, separates items (eg: LPRINT CHR\$(27);"M"; for 12cpi).
- in commands, separates items in a list of objects.
- in PRINT statements, within a line, forces printing into zones; at EOL, forces printing on to line above but in zones.
- in INPUT statements, not required after (final) variable; after a prompt string, suppresses the ? prompt.
- in READ statements is used to separate items but is not used at EOL.
- in DATA statements is used to separate items but is not used at EOL.
- " " in PRINT statements, encloses text to be printed to the screen - the closing " can be omitted.
- in INPUT statements, encloses prompt strings which are to be printed to the screen.
- in LOAD, RUN, and DISPLAY enclose the name and extension of the file but the closing " can usually be omitted.
- are used in some control codes (eg:LPRINT CHR\$(27)+"4" for italic).
- are used to enclose string variables (eg:d\$="day of week").
- ' can be used, to save key-strokes, instead of REM and is useful when debugging to suspend the operation of a line or part of a line.
- ? can be used, to save key-strokes, instead of PRINT.
- ! is a punctuation mark in English - in Basic it is used to indicate a single precision number.
- () are used in some commands (eg:LEFT\$(w\$,2))
- are used in some control codes (eg:LPRINT CHR\$(27)="r" for underline)
- [] are used in some command descriptions to indicate that the items enclosed are optional (eg:INPUT[;][["prompt";] variable - here the options are to use a ; after INPUT to force printing on the line above and/or to include, within "...", a prompt string followed by a , which would suppress the ? prompt.

We do not normally think of spaces a punctuation but, in Basic, they have much the same effect and are just as unpredictable in their application as a comma or semi-colon.

Dots and Dashes

```
10 PRINT "Hello there"
```

(the space between 10 and PRINT is optional; the space between PRINT and " is also optional in this case because the " clearly separates the command from the data; the closing " is optional)

```
10 ? "Hello there"
```

(this is another way of writing the previous Line 10 and all the options are the same)

```
20 REM Enter Heading
```

(the first space is optional, the second is essential)

```
20 ' Enter Heading
```

(this is another way of writing the previous Line 20 but here both spaces are optional)

```
30 INPUT x
```

(the space between 30 and INPUT is optional; the space between INPUT and x is essential)

```
LOAD "jac1.bas"  
RUN "jac1.bas"
```

(in both cases the space between the command and the filename is optional; an additional, unwanted space between jac and 1 will generate File name invalid whereas one either side of the full-stop will be tolerated; the closing " is optional)

```
DISPLAY "jac1.bas"
```

(the space between the command and the filename is optional; an additional, unwanted space in the File name will be treated as in RUN and LOAD; the closing " is optional)

```
TYPE jac1.bas
```

(the space between the command and the filename is essential; an additional, unwanted space in the filename will generate File not found; note that this is a CPM command which is available from within Basic and therefore quotation marks are not required - "jac1.bas" will generate File name invalid, "jac.bas will generate File not found)

Except for TYPE, therefore, one can omit the space between the line number and whatever follows it but one needs to be more careful in other cases.

The full stop? Oh yes. Its most common use is to separate a filename from its extension as in JAC1.BAS. As in almost everything else, Basic is intolerant of any departure from the rules and if you either omit the full-stop or use any punctuation mark instead you will be told, in one or other of Basic's ineluctable phrases, "You have got it wrong again chum".

PCW File

Review by Stuart Coverley

Title : Dataflow III and Mailflow III
Type : Database with mail merge
S/W House : Micropower
Price : £47

This programme came free with some of the early spring special offers of the PCW 8512. It rarely seems to be mentioned in magazine reviews and is not widely advertised. Its main advantage appears to be its simple menu-style operation and its compatibility with Locoscript, though you have to produce an ASCII file to print letters for use with the mail merge. This is a separate programme though quickly put onto the drive through CP/M. The Dataflow programme is not lost and can be quickly got back when you need it again.

The main disadvantage is the extreme slowness of certain parts of the Dataflow programme compared with some other databases. You can fairly rapidly find records by number, but if you need to sort them by name and so lose your original numbering, a search through a few hundred records seems to take a long time. Deleting just one record takes even longer.

Once you have set up your database you cannot change the number of field names (up to 20) or their length (up to 255 characters) without creating a new database and using the information transfer facility. It works satisfactorily provided you have given sufficient thought to your layout.

The print-out of the contents of your data files works well when you have short items spread across the page but not so well when you try to produce a list of complete line entries. Each time you print out you get a list of the headings followed by their contents. This looks very odd. There seems to be no way of getting what you see on the screen printed except by a screen dump in very small type.

One feature of Mailflow III is a conditional facility by which you can have two alternatives in your circular letters depending on the contents of one of the fields. The example given is "yours sincerely" or "yours faithfully". Unfortunately in the version I received there was a bug and my carefully worded inserts were wiped out as soon as I exited from that part of the programme. Instead "yours sincerely" or "yours faithfully" appeared in the middle of the letters. I have been supplied with a new disc but have not yet had time to prepare some more ASCII letters to see if it now works properly.

There are some very good features in this database and it works satisfactorily, if a bit slow, for my own purposes. However, I would not buy it if I was starting from scratch as there is such a wide choice of other seemingly better databases.

Range of Features	3/5	Address:-	Micro Power Ltd.,
Ease of use	4/5		Northwood House,
Performance	2/5 (too slow)		North St.,
Documentation	3/5		Leeds LS7 2AA.
Value for money	2/5		

Scode

"All you ever wanted to know about the Universe, Graphics and Everything" is a slightly lengthy and portentous title for a software program! It's clever, all the same, people notice anything unusual. As the file is loaded simply by SCODE, we'll use that name.

SCODE is a collection of machine code routines which do a number of clever tricks with the PCW. It is produced by CP Software, The Hill, Burford, Oxon and costs £19.95. The package is neatly boxed, and contains a well written manual which, within limitations mentioned later makes it simple to use, although some would argue code is never simple.

I had better declare my own interests at this point. I wrote to CP software suggesting that a major improvement might be feasible, having read other reviews. They gave me a copy and asked me to try with a view to possibly using the amendments in a later version. I have done this, but I do not know whether my amendments will ever be used by CP. Publishing software is not as simple as most owners think, and is certainly not usually a licence to print money.

Whether the program is of interest to you depends on what language you use with your PCW. If you write all your programs in machine code or assembler, you obviously know what you are doing! You will find routines that you would have had to write yourself anyway, and you will be able to manipulate SCODE around to take the parts that you want. I am sure that you will find one or two new tricks.... unless you designed the PCW yourself!

Most of us, however, do not work on these rarified levels, and operate from a high level language, even if we occasionally write a bit of code to be called from our programs. It is here that we come up against the two major criticisms.

SCODE is long, so that if it is installed you lose nearly 14K of Basic programming space. It is certainly longer than it need be. There is quite a bit of memory that is not used, and a fair proportion of the space is used by buffers which could easily double up to do two jobs. It is also unfortunate that the most important routines come early in the coding, so that it would take a substantial rewrite to exclude unwanted routines to save say 7K of memory, which I think would be possible for most users.

Secondly, the CALLing of the routines is not user friendly, and you will have to do quite a lot of POKEing around to get the best routines. As Mallard has no multiple POKE or DOKE this makes life worse. This is the aspect that I have worked on, and more on this later.

So for Basic programmers, SCODE is interesting but not particularly easy to operate. Whether it is better than EXBASIC or the LNER and SPREX extensions which are available from the club mail order dept., I must not comment, as I have personal involvement.

There are users of the PCW who prefer Pascal or C. Both these languages would operate with SCODE, and while the criticisms above may be true, these languages are minority ones on the PCW, and as far as I know there is

nothing else that is available. It is likely that SCODE with one of these languages would provide some very useful additional facilities.

Somebody may comment that I haven't mentioned LOGO. There is good reason. Whatever LOGO's merits, (some users do like it), there is no communication with memory, and so SCODE is useless. Someday, someone may write a version of LOGO with a POKE and a CALL. I shouldn't think that this would be too difficult for anyone who has done some disassembly of LOGO.

I have written equivalents of quite a number of the 52 routines myself, but I particularly liked the fast draw line routine. SCODE does get the PCW to produce 'notes' (their quotes!) of different pitch, which is very ingenious. However the parameters of duration and pitch do not mean quite what they say, and it would certainly need some research even to get the first line of the national anthem! Anyway, I'm of the age where computers are better seen and not heard!

Everything that I tried seemed to work as it should, with two possible exceptions. The INVERSE VIDEO screen depends on disabling interrupts, and in a Basic environment only produces a flash. No doubt Basic regularly goes through a routine which enables the interrupts. There is a safer way to do this, which is quite simple. Toggling the screen print styles works, but if you use both toggles successively you don't seem to be able to get back to the original. Fair enough, but the manual should warn on this.

I happen to prefer my own sprites, but it is fair to say that you could compare and put +s and -s on both sides. There are one or two simple omissions like windows and reverse video print statements which are not difficult to include. Screen to disc save is efficient but it does take 24K of disc space. This can be considerably reduced. Overall, I do not think any purchaser would feel that the money was wasted, even if they might feel that some things could have been done differently.

As I say, I have written an amendment so that most of the routines are accessible much more simply from Basic, (some such as PRINT a STRING you just wouldn't use in Basic). I have added two or three little things like reverse video, a proper POKE and a DOKE, and a clock which is settable and readable. I hope this will be included eventually. For the meantime, if club members have already bought SCODE, (if you haven't, the amendment will be totally useless!), write to me with SAE and copying fee at your discretion and I will return a LISTing & documentation of my amendments. (G.T.Childs, 14,Gretton Rd., Winchcombe, Gloucs.)

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Edinburgh EH11 2AS**

Software Review by Carwyn Cook

Title : SILICON DREAMS
Type : Graphic Adventure
S/W House : Rainbird / Level 9
Price : about £20

Silicon Dreams is a trilogy comprising of the following three adventures, in which you play the role of Kim Kimberley, who was born in 2172 AD. (You are not told if Kim is male or female!)

Snowball

This is the first of the three adventures, and you are awoken from your sleep aboard the spaceship Snowball because there is a problem. This problem is that an extremely mad woman has hijacked the spaceship and intends to drive it into the sun. In order to save the lives of two million fellow passengers, you must stop her. But how?

Return To Eden

You have just saved the spaceship Snowball from disaster. However, the security video tape rescued from the ship shows you entering the control room of the ship and throwing a bomb, as if you were trying to destroy the ship. You manage to escape in a stratolider, but there is a risk of being caught, and the sentence against you will then be carried out. The sentence is DEATH !!! Somehow you must save yourself.

Worm In Paradise

You are now on the planet of Eden, in the city of Enoch. All is peaceful, but something is wrong. To finish the adventure, you must solve this problem. But can you?

Graphics : 9/10
Sound : N/A
Difficulty : 8/10
Overall : 9/10



You are in the body bank where gillnets are traded. Exits are east and northwest. You can see a consultant. The consultant looks up. "Greetings citizen. Would you like to sell your spare organs?"

Software Reviews for PCW 8256/851

Title : **Supernova Invaders**
Type : **Arcade**
S/W House : **Gemini Marketing**
Price : **£12.95**

SUPERNOVA INVADERS
©1986 SUPERNOVA SOFTWARE
Written by Michael Wood

(Z) LEFT
(X) RIGHT
(SPACE) FIRE

Press (SPACE) to begin
what others have bushes and hidden.
Your machine is skin
with others in a different skin.

All at once will appear
that very thing which A.S. fears..?

No prizes for guessing the plot of this one! You must save the world from a relentless stream of marauding alien types, single-handed. There is no two-player mode (though I doubt if anyone would want to play the game with you anyway - I hasten to add that it's because of the game, not you!) The game is a fairly standard, and aged, version of the first really popular arcade game. Graphics are Ok (dump below), sound is a few spot FX, Speed is Ok. There's little you can do with the game if you decide to 'stay true' to the original. Presentation is distinctly lacking - the title page is just text with a pathetic poem (left). Unless you are an idiot for Invaders or a nurd for nostalgia don't touch it with a bargepole. I suppose it's nice to have a copy of the classic in your collection but not at the price of £12.95 for 8k! Well, other than that there's little to say. It's marginally better than the Invaders I had for my ZX81 where the invaders were letter A's!

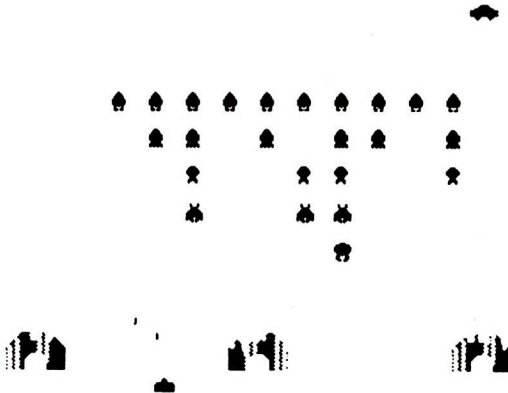
Reviewer - Neil 'The man who calls a spade a spade'
Olner

Graphics : 10/20
Sound : 7/20
Grab Factor : Grab the sick-bag
Overall : Forget it.

SCORE 006700

SUPERNOVA INVADERS

HIGH SCORE 000000



3

LEVEL 00

Software Reviews

Program: Desktop Publisher
Company: Database Software
Price £29.95: with mouse £79.95
Reviewed by Andrew Sayers

For ease of use, value for money, and availability of features this program will take some beating.

The program comes on a single density disk, both sides of which are virtually full. The main side contains the program, while side two holds files for the fifteen additional fonts, a selection of clip art pictures, and borders for your work.

It needs to be booted from CP/M, taking a little while to load. It uses the M drive for its own operation so this is not available for file saving during operation. A further requirement of the program is that the M drive must be completely clear of files and programs before DTP will load, an error message quickly appears if this is not the case, asking that the M drive files be erased.

Once loaded you are presented with a menu screen offering various choices. The manual takes you through the options available, helping you through the various pull down menus that appear as different options are selected. Generally I found this to be very straightforward and easy to learn, and was soon experimenting with pictures, pasting, fonts, freehand drawing, window manipulation and so on.

Text may be typed in directly, or entered as an ASCII file from a word processor. DTP will happily handle all the type sizes generated by Locoscript, printing out the finished page in any or a mixture of these sizes dependant upon the type size selected for that particular text window.

DTP will work from either the keyboard, or if you have one via a mouse. I personally use the AMX mouse which I find to work very successfully with the program, although the Kempton or Electric Studio mice can also be selected to run with the program. It is necessary to pull down an options menu to tell the program that you wish to use a mouse, but after the first time of use it is possible to configure the program so that it loads ready to operate with the mouse of your choice.

The fonts available for larger lettering, such as headlines, main headings etc., are produced and accessed via the graphics windows, but may be of any sensible size which is chosen by using 'elastic band' boxes. The text itself is simply entered at the keyboard in the normal way. Cutting and pasting graphics (pictures) works in the same way, as do the majority of the available features.

Freehand drawing is available using a variety of 'brushes' and 'paints'. The brush sizes ranges from a small dot, to a large circle, and may be round, square or rectangular. The paints are sixteen different patterns ranging from plain black to plain green (although for green read white on paper). No colours of course on the PCW monitor!

Software Reviews-Desktop Publisher

The mouse really comes into its own with freehand drawing, and so by selecting the 'Pad Area' option, the alacrity at which the pointer on the screen moves in relation to the mouse movement on the mouse mat can be varied, and depending upon your patience and skill, quite impressive pictures can be produced.

Overall I found DTP to be a first class program offering a wide range of features, at a very reasonable price. A package offering mouse and program for £79.95, or it is available on its own as stated above for £29.95.

A note for 8512 owners. It is more efficient to transfer all the clip art and fonts files onto a B: drive disk, using the A: drive for the program itself (although this is only accessed on loading the program). The B: drive disk can then also be used to hold your own creations, with the fonts always available. It is possible to access the fonts etc from the A: drive by turning the disk over, but this means continually changing the logged on drive as you wish to swap from accessing the fonts and clip art, to saving your own files on the B: drive.

Value for money: 18/20

Features available: 17/20

Ease of use: 19/20

Overall: 18/20

(if you want a desktop publishing program go and buy this one).

TITLE:MICROVET

COMPANY: Dogsboddy Software, 55 Cecil Road, Birkenhead, Wirral L42 9PF

Tel: 051 608 8175

Price: £25

This review will be somewhat unfair as I approached the programme from a semi-professional angle, having been working as an animal welfare officer for many years. Obviously I was looking for assistance in my line of work.

Firstly, the price of £25 is a little excessive for a programme that, rightly of course, instructs you to consult a vet every time your pet is ill. This advice is available free of charge from all manner of sources, one should always see a vet when in doubt. Presumably the limited possible sales of this item are the reason for the price.

The programme consists of one disc plus five sheets of instructions (photocopied) which are simple to follow and fairly idiot proof. The programme, once set up, is self booting.

The disadvantage (at least to myself) is that the programme only handles one animal at a time. I was looking for multiple insertions that would allow me to keep records on up to a dozen assorted cats and dogs. The only way out would be to make up the requisite number of discs.

Software Reviews – Microvet

You are required to insert pet's name, cat or dog, male or female, neutered or not, details of inoculations - and the date of entry. This last requirement enables the programme to keep a watch on the age of the animal, I would like to have seen inoculation dates included so that the programme also gave inoculation reminders.

Also, I know from sad experience that many inoculation certificates, with their various codes depending on the vaccine manufacturer, are not always clear as to exactly what the animal is protected against. (This is a fault within the veterinary drug companies rather than this programme.) After inserting the relevant information, the programme takes you through a series of yes or no questions (y or n) with supplementary questions if necessary, and finally gives three possible causes of symptoms - it is then possible to refer to a dictionary of some 200 diseases to ascertain further details and treatment.

I did manage to get a possible diagnosis of a slipped disc with an animal that was active, not in pain, and generally full of life. In fairness, however, this was only one of three alternatives and the correct diagnosis was included. It would have been an advantage to be able to print out the animal details, three diagnosis choices etc. to show to your vet when the animal is one of those occasional anti social beings who will not accept a vet's ministrations!

In closing, I would suggest that the programme would not be of great advantage in a one pet household - unless the animal was a hypochondriac- but for someone with a number of animals, particularly middle-aged and above, it might well prove an interesting and even financially rewarding investment.

Arnold Becker

Dogsbody Software reply to Arnold Becker

All but one of your comments are fair, and had occurred to me but had been the result of compromise. The one which I must ask you to correct with any publications to which you have sent the review refers to a restriction to only one animal. I must alter the instruction sheets to show more clearly that several animals can be included on the same disc. I have not tested the total capacity, but would expect it to be several tens at least, and possibly many more.

The individual animal records filed are simply name, species, age, sex and vaccinations. I considered filing some clinical records, but these would be much more demanding of storage, and not necessarily reliable as there is no method of enforcing accurate data entry. With a system which can be misinformed, it would be dangerous to carry clinical records which were referred back to by the diagnostic system. Likewise, the vaccination details demanded are purely a way of bringing to users attention the advisability of vaccination. Any system which kept dated records would rely on regular use and reliable updating of information. Whilst vaccinations against the standard infectious diseases if highly effective in providing protection, you will be aware that vaccination against a disease does not absolutely preclude the disease occurring.

The system will always try to produce three diagnoses, and these will be the best fit to the symptoms given, but there has to be considerable margin for missed symptoms.

Reply from Dogsbod Software

My main priority was to ensure that the symptoms enquired after by the programme are understandable and discernable by a lay person. A professional expert system would require considerably more data space, and a complete restructuring of the enquiry system.

I can solve the problem of the lost pet names. In fact there is a slight error in the data file dump at the end of the programme run. Here is what to do to put it right.

Load RPED.BAS from your CP/M plus disc and edit A:PROFILE.SUB. Insert an extra line at the end to read: pip a:=m:lifs.dat[v]

and EXIT from RPED. Either repeat this process on other copies of the programme you have made, or pip the corrected PROFILE.SUB to them. You should then find room for hundreds of animals on one disc.

R J Lowe BVSc MRCVS

DOUBTFUL CHARACTERS

Anybody who has used Basic for any length of time will have come across some of the CHR\$ characters and know a little about the famous CHR\$(27) which, with suitable additions, can perform all sorts of tricks. The 'tips' page in most computer magazines is a fruitful source of information (Tim Pymont, In issue 3 told us something about the use of "Y") but where is the definitive source? Who knows all the answers as they affect not only Basic but Dr Logo and other Languages? For example, you can turn off Drive is A at the bottom of the screen by using CHR\$(27)+"0" in Basic or by type word char 27 "0 in Dr Logo. While the CP/M manual gives some details in Appendices II and III, it does not help very much to find, on page 131, that ESC M changes the typestyle to 12 cpi and, on page 140, that ESC M deletes the line with the cursor on it. Someone, somewhere, must know the complete list of CHR\$ available to users of PCW. Can he be persuaded to share his knowledge with the rest of us.

James Coleman

***** FOR SALE AND WANTS COLUMN *****

WANTED TO BUY FOR PCW: Serial/ Parallel interface modem and Amstrad Manual Part 2 (BASIC) Terry Wright, 85 Chevet lane, Wakefield WF2 6JE.

FOR SALE: Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy and Starglider. Both originals and under 2 months old. Offers of £30 + £2 package and postage. Will split for £15 each plus £1 package and postage. First come first serve. Write or phone to: Mr L Lockett, 3 Florence Road, Hanford, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4QR. Tel (0782) 6557591.

FOR SALE: DR Pascal/MT+ (V 5.6.1), HiSoft 'c' with GSX drivers and SuperCalc 2. Offers or exchange for HiSoft Devpac 80 or Pascal 80 V.2. Charles Stross, 168 Stanley Rd, Wakefield WF1 4LS. Tel (0924) 361952.

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Books on CP/M

• Reviewed by Neil Olnier •

THE AMSTRAD CP/M PLUS, By David Powys-Lybbe and Andrew R.M. Clarke
Paperback £12.95; Ringbinder £14.95. MML Systems (520 pages).

CP/M THE SOFTWARE BUS (A PROGRAMMERS COMPANION), By A Clarke, J M Eaton,
and D Powys-Lybbe. £8.95. Sigma Technical Press (325 pages).

As you will see these two books have lots in common (not least their authors!) so I will look at them together. However "The Software Bus" was first published in 1983 before Amstrad had even launched their first computer and is a general book about CP/M. It covers all versions of the Control Program and Monitor from version 2.2, and earlier, to version 3.1 or CP/M Plus. By the way the Amstrad manual calls it the Control Program for Microcomputers - I wonder which is right? Also it covers CP/M's multitasking sister MP/M and the 16-bit CP/M86. In contrast, "The Amstrad CP/M Plus" covers only CP/M Plus as implemented on the CPC6128 and the PCW series.

Both books kick off with sections on the History of CP/M. If you're interested in this sort of thing it's fine but after two years of A-level History I wasn't enthralled! Next are the main chapters on CP/M for the OPERATOR. The Console Command Processor (CCP) is introduced and all the resident and transient commands are dealt with in reasonable detail. "The Amstrad CP/M Plus" uses some effective analogies to explain certain features here. Following this the main bulk of the books (particularly "The Amstrad CP/M Plus") are concerned with CP/M PROGRAMMING. This is where the inexperienced start to falter - with the introduction of the BIOS (Basic Input/Output System) and the BDOS (Basic Disk Operating System). Collectively these form the FDOS. This is explained in "The Software Bus" several chapters after it is first used. Much of the material is complex and these chapters often assume considerable prior knowledge. Jargon is introduced without explanations for example. A knowledge of assembler, and even C, is vital to understand such sections.

There are sections on various assemblers and high level languages such as CIS COBOL, CBASIC, Pascal etc. Most of this information will probably be useless to most Amstrad owners. Only one language, ALGOL/M is in the public domain. In fact, even if you do have the software, it is debatable how useful these sections would be as they often refer you to the manual with the software. "The Software Bus" also has a chapter on ED (free with CP/M) and WordStar. Its last 30 pages are 'Bug Fixes' from Digital Research - most of which have already been carried out on the Amstrad versions of CP/M. "The Amstrad CP/M Plus" finishes off with several weighty appendices.

Which book you choose depends on whether you are a beginner or Operator, or an experienced Programmer. In the latter case "The Amstrad CP/M Plus" is the book for you, with it's wealth of information crammed in. This book is more of a reference though - it will not teach the beginner or Operator how to program. For these people "The Software Bus" is more preferable though it may contain much information useless to them (and it has many typographical errors).

MICROMANIA, THE WHOLE TRUTH ABOUT HOME COMPUTERS

By Charles Platt with David Langford. Sphere £1.75.

Although this humorous book is meant as an introduction to home computers for those thinking of buying their first one, it is also ideal for anyone already suffering from Micromania. "Read MICROMANIA while you too can still see the funny side of chips, floppy disks and video games..." - Evening Standard.

The book is divided into 'Modules' A-E named, "Understanding Them", "Choosing Them", "Buying Them", "Using Them", and "Living with Them". Chapters are numbered in binary, supposedly "to create the true maddening flavour of high technology". The book is illustrated with a large number of hilarious illustrations and flowcharts such as the "Adult victim of Micromania - before and after", and the "Cockroach Survival Flowchart".

The author introduces jargon and concepts clearly using delightful analogies and sets out to prove his 15 laws of Computing - egs:

- 1 Whether a computer can do anything useful has always been beside the point. Simply fiddling with the thing is an obsession in itself.**

- 13 When you get a computer to do a job for you, the time you save will usually be spent watching the computer to make sure it works properly.**

We can all see the truth in these - Right?

The book also reviews several computers as to their suitability but here it is, of course, out-of-date, and slightly American in outlook. It is in fact written by a Briton living in America and "translated" by David Langford (who, by the way, now writes for "8000 Plus").

Also there is a chapter on video games (0111) which describes them as games involving "blips" and "blobs" and a chapter entitled "How to waste time with Word Processing" which maintains, in Platt's 10th law of computing:

It's more important to look efficient than to be efficient

Other chapters cover user groups, computer magazines, "Creatures of the Computer Continuum" (the hardware freak, the videogame nut, the end-user, and the hacker) and what is called "Electronic Escalation". Here a formula is given to work out how much you will spend over a given period on computer equipment. It is always more than you think - for example if you earn £8,000 a year and expect to spend £40 on computer equipment in that year, you will in reality spend almost £2,000!

All in all, an excellent and very funny book that deserves a place on every bookshelf. Buy it - NOW!

Questions Answered

In the last issue of PCW File we published about 3 pages of helplines. Here are the answers for you all to benefit.

Martin H Evans asked 'Does anyone know where I can get empty plastic cases for 3" discs?'

Brian Hall of the North Wales PCW/PC Club suggests you try Arnor Ltd, Protext House, Wainman Rd, Peterborough PE2 0BU. Brian brought 100 for £10 at the last computer show in London.

S.R.Dalton of Leeds suggests that you will be able to obtain a supply from the Multi-Coloured Micro shop, 8 Dundas Street, Readcar, Cleveland.

Mr B.F.Jago asked 'Is it possible to switch between discs A and B when using Basic?'

Geoff Childs of Winchcombe says OPTION FILES "B" is the answer. Clearly OPTION FILES "A" reverts back. There are two points worth noting. OPTION FILES "C" or some other irrelevant letter will not only give an error but take you back to CP/M losing your Basic and your program. A useful tip which I haven't seen published is that PEEK(64474) will tell you the current drive, 0 for A, 1 for B and 12 for M.

Thanks also to the many people that answered this question.

Mr Peter Backman asked 'How do you plot a pixel, from within Mallard Basic, on the monitor screen without using GSX and without using escape codes?'

Geoff Childs of Winchcombe says the simple (and sensible) answer is NO. You don't have to use GSX however. There are other extensions commercially available, and in the PCWUG (issue 11/12) I published SBAS which gives a method for this. Actually SBAS plots two pixels, but that's probably irrelevant.

As a challenge, however, the answer is YES! The following will plot a pixel under suitable conditions. You should not have scrolled the screen since turning on, (there are far more PEEKs needed if you do). The program and the variable storage must occupy under 1380 bytes. There is no way to disable interrupts from Basic, so you have to do things several times (the reason for the lines ending in 5) to increase the odds of success! The input is row, column, pixels across, pixels down. It is my entry for the silly program of the year!

```
1 PRINT CHR$(27)"H"CHR$(27)"E"
10 INPUT R,C,A,D
20 E=128/(2^A):F=22832+R*720+C*8+D:H=130:IF F(32768! THEN H=129:
   F=F+16384
25 R=PEEK(F)
30 OUT 242,H:P=PEEK(F):OUT 242,134
35 IF P=R AND N<30 THEN N=N+1:GOTO 30
40 Q=P OR E
45 FOR N=1 TO 10
50 OUT 242,H:POKE F,Q:OUT 242,134
55 NEXT
```

Questions Answered

Vivien Allen asked about storing 3000 old Postcards on the PCW8256

J.K.Millington says Ms Allen should consult the magazine 8000+ for September for general advice and guidance. Not mentioned there is DIMS for which Dr Paul Spicker is a reference point. He supplied my copy and no doubt will do so for others given a disc and return stamped Jiffy bag. It is quite good and is worth trying to get the feel of a simple Database before buying a commercial one. Even though this will mean re-entering the data a lot will have been learned and expensive mistakes can be more easily avoided.

R.Smart asked why his B drive reads disc full when it is only half full or less.

Charles Stross of Wakefield, W.Yorks says your problem with 'Full' discs may come from using them for Locoscript and it goes into Limbo, what really happens is that Locoscript shifts it from Group N to Group (N+8) - - e.g. from Group 1 to Group 9. It then overwrites those groups whenever it needs more space. Never heard of groups 9-15? Well, use CP/M, where there are user areas 0-15. You can use them all under CP/M, not just the first 8, and if you check the higher ones I'm pretty sure you'll find some Limbo'd files awaiting erasure.

Thankyou also to Mr Millington for sending in his reply.

Mr L. Helby asked how to turnkey disc contents automatically to the M drive.

Oliver Prezel of London says You should type PIP <RETURN> into your Profile routine. This puts pip into interactive mode. Command lines for pip should then be preceded by <, so <M:=*.* will copy the whole disc onto M:. PIP waits for input until it receives an empty line as input and in the SUB file this must be a line with just < on it. You can use that to create a pause. You do not need and cannot use J14CPM3.EMS on the M: drive.

You cannot put basic commands in a sub file, but you can load BASIC so that it chains a program. The command is: BASIC RANDOM.

Your Profile .SUB should look like this:

```
PIP<RET>
<M:=PIP.COM<RET>
<M:=SUBMIT.COM<RET>
<M:=BASIC.COM<RET>
<M:=RANDOM.BASPIP<RET>
PIP<RET>
M:=*.*<RET>
<<RET>
M:<RET>
BASIC RANDOM<RET>
```

Note that the second PIP ends with a line: "<". This causes the program to continue automatically. You can also change the second pip to pip M:=*.*<RET>.

Bernard Stedman asked Is it possible to built a DIY8256 communication interface.

Questions Answered

Harley Ristad of Los Angeles America says I have bad news for you and any others who might have the same questions. To get into Comms you must have the Amstrad CPS8256 interface. I am a retired IBM Computer engineer and before I got more information I could well have written a similar letter. The PCW8256 has microchip circuitry that converts data from parallel to serial and to build it up with discrete components would probably cost more than £55, not to mention many hours of time. He will also need an interface cable which he can build with two CENTRONIC 25 pin, cable mount, male plugs; directly wired, pin to pin, for pins 2,3,4,5,7,8,20 & 22.

PCW File Helpline

PCW FILE HELPLINE was set up to allow users who are stuck on a problem to send it in and we will print it in PCW File to allow other users who can help with the problem to write to them. If your problems are solved please send it into PCW File as we can print it in the next issue as we can all benefit.

STUDENT ERASES THE LAST 5K

I have written a long piece, some 20K in all. One of my students has managed somehow to erase the last 5K or so. The remainder will not copy and the message 'Unexpected finish' keeps coming up on the screen. Is there any way to copy out the text still remaining?

4 SPREADSHEET TEMPLATES

I have bought a copy of the '4 Spreadsheet Templates' written by Stephen Wells from the Amstrad Professional Computing magazine. Unfortunately the disk will not copy - the message 'Old format' appears when 'Disckit' is used. Any ideas on how to get around this?

T. Charlton, 2 Victoria Villas, Amble, Northumberland NE65 0LQ

CHANGING THE DEFAULT SETTING FOR BAUD RATE, DATA BITS, PARITY

USING MAIL232

How do you edit the MAIL232 program to alter the default setting for Baud rate, Data bits, and Parity. Can anyone help me? One problem is that because it is stored among the Locoscript System Files, it becomes a System File when it really shouldn't be. How can you edit System Files or how can you change one to a Utility file? Best of all would be step by step, idiot proof instructions for making the change. I want to change 9600,9600,8,ODD, to 300,300,7,EVEN.

KEYSTROKES CANNOT BE CHANGED

The PCW User Guide, CPM+, page 108, says: "The keystrokes applicable when the PCW8256 is in word processing mode cannot be changed." I say, what man can create, man can change! I am very happy with Locoscript and only wish I had it 47 years ago. However, I have two complaints (1) The User Guide is abominable. --Fortunately I am now past needing it. And (2). I use [SHIFT][WORD] very often to move the cursor from word to word, forwards or backwards and it annoys me no end that I don't know how to make the simple software change so [CHAR] is the one requiring the shift because I never use it, even though it does move from tab to tab faster than [] but [SHIFT][WORD] also moves quickly thru tabs and empty space.

PCW File Helpline

I suppose you have to edit the Locoscript Systems File, J22ALOCA.EMS. When I put this 44K file on the CP/M RPED edit screen all there is to see is two lines of funny characters and I know without counting that it doesn't add up to 44K. I can see how I could make the key #5, [WORD] for [CHAR] exchange in the utility file "KEYS.WP" as follows:

<u>OLD</u>			<u>NEW</u>		
5 N	"^D"	^D	5 N	"^F"	^F
5 A	"^S"	^S	5 A	"^A"	^A
5 S	"^F"	^F	5 S	"^D"	^D
5 SA	"^A"	^A	5 SA	"^S"	^S

There must be a file similar to "KEYS.WP" within Locoscript because all the keyboard does is output 8 serial binary bits for each keystroke and software must take the interpretation.

Thankyou for any help your members can give me. Best of all would be a step by step, idiot proof instructions for making the change.

Harley Ristad, 12741 Matteson Ave. #3, Los Angeles, CA 90066

ED: If you wish to send me the answer to the problem above I will pass it onto him. By the Way Harley calls Locoscript Locascript I am wondering whether it is the same version we have here.

Here is a list of addresses members can write to if you are stuck on a problem.

LOCOSCRIPT, SPELL, MAIL - John Bunting, 104 Cliff Gardens, Scunthorpe, S.Humberside DN15 7BN

MULTIPLAN + CONDOR - Hilary Costello, Mount St Bernard Abbey, Coalville, Leicester, LE6 3UL

CRACKER - J K Millington, 5 High St, Heathfield, E Sussex TN21 8LU.

WORDSTAR - Roger Godin, 58 Surbiton Hill Pk, Surbiton, KT5 8ER.

BASIC - Geoff Childs, 14 Gretton Rd, Winchcombe, Gloucs.

Barry Priestly, 43 Raymond Rd, Slough, (Also Pascal)

Steve Cholerton, 61 Market St, Ironville, Nottinghamshire NG16 5NJ

DIMS - Paul Spicker, 7 Malvern Close, Nottingham, NG3 5GU.

CP/M - Geoff Barnard, 39A Mill Street, Guisborough TS14 6AG.

Steve Cholerton, 61 Market Ironville, Nottinghamshire NG16 5NJ

SUPERCALC 2 & DBASE II - John Lodge, 24 Endsleigh Grove, Lancaster, LA1 2TX

DR GRAPH - J R Dean, 26 Halcyon Way, Burton on Trent, DE14 2JR.

CARDBOX, SAGE RETRIEVE, NEWWORD & NEWSTAR, SUPERCALC, COMM+ SAGE ACCOUNTS, & MICRO SIMPLEX.

Terry Biddulph, 240 Lindsworth Rd, Kings Norton, Birmingham B30 3SE.

If you are on this list and don't want to be let me know. If you can help with any software package then let Chris know and I will put you on the list.

A Domestic User's Handbook Viewpoint

by John Waddington

In 1979 I accepted promotion in my job, to an office in London, but I refused to move house. Thus I was rested in work pad in London from Monday to Friday for three years, with family life only livable at weekends. The reason for this was that I was due to retire in 1982 and wanted to remain indefinitely in delightful Ely.

When mid-week loneliness crept on I went out and bought myself a Sinclair ZX81 (under £100!) and started to be intrigued with running and writing Basic programs (Sinclair version). The bug had bitten!

Last July I really pushed the boot out, and became the proud and (reasonably) keen owner of an Amstrad 8512; this, four years into glorious well-pensioned inflation proofed retirement. Retirement is the wrong word; I ceased any longer to need to earn a living. The 'workers' don't understand about this!

So, what do I use the 8512 for? The answer is still unfolding month by month. Certainly not stupid mind-numbing games. I happen to believe that too many minds of the younger set are becoming stunted due to (i) Video games and (ii) excessive and compulsive TV viewing.

How do I get on with the Amstrad manuals? Can I understand them? Am I getting anywhere in my struggles?

The answer is a huge "Yes". What is incredibly obscure today becomes magically clear and obvious after mulling things over, almost subconsciously, for a few weeks. And what fun - in moderation. Heaven help the fanatics. Do they call them hackers?

The mental challenges and stimulation, the headaches overcome, the 8512 worthwhile uses I have found must await elucidation explanation in another issue - if it is of interest.

Supercalc 11

and a tale of mystery and suspense!

I suppose it had to happen sometime, a gremlin creeping into such a sophisticated program as Supercalc 2 but did, and I wonder if any reader has had a similar experience.

I had loaded and was running the programme quite normally. I was entering data quite liberally and all was going well. As those of you who have Supercalc will know, the cursor automatically moves in a constant direction, dependant upon the previous move, and so after making an entry moves on to the next square ready for the next entry.

Towards the end of my entering data session I suddenly found that the cursor had not moved; I thought nothing of it at first, and moved it with the arrow key, but it didn't move again next entry. I still hadn't taken it in when I closed down for the day and made my back-up copy of that particular "page". The next day, when I went to use that "page" again the cursor still would not move without direct intervention. "Why is this?" I asked myself, especially as I had already used another "page" and there was no problem there.

Supercalc-A tale of mystery and suspense

Then I noticed something else, the direction arrow, which is situated in the bottom of left hand corner of the screen and adjacent to the "cell directory number" wasn't there! Nothing at all, the space was blank. I saved the "page" to disc and re-booted. Same thing, no arrow. What next? I then decided to go back to the opening screen, so I rebooted again, and when I got the opening spreadsheet, there was the arrow indicator correct as it should be. Somehow, goodness know how, anyone any suggestions? The particular page on which I was having trouble had, while I was using it, literally LOST the arrow and/ or the command for moving the cursor, so how could I correct it.

After some thought, and a few trial runs, I decided on a course of action which just might do it; I went back to the opening spreadsheet and saved THAT to disc as "B:BLANK. Then I went to my troublesome page, B:Blank, thus overlaying the troublesome page with a new page. And, yes it worked, being a blank page, there was conflict of data, and I successfully merged the two pages as one, which I then hurriedly saved under the troublesome pages original name. After a few adjustments to columns widths I was back in business with a cursor behaving as only a Supercalc cursor should, automatically.

It certainly was a most unusual occurrence, and I hope these lines might be helpful to any reader who may suffer a similar "bug" in this otherwise excellent spreadsheet.

R.Smart, Brackendale, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 6DR.

Calling Mathematicians

If you think you have the order of precedence all buttoned up, you may well find that Dr Logo knows more about it than you. The program provides no inbuilt exponential facility but it is easy to write a simple procedure to do the job. One such is to power:

```
:x
op :x * :x
end
```

and it take little mathematical ability to see that inputting 5 would give an output of 25. In other words, power 5 is 25. So what is power 5+power 5? Obviously, 25 + 25, giving 50. Or is it? Dr Logo says the answer is 900. And if you think that power 5 * power = 25 * 25 giving 625, don't be surprised when Dr Logo insists that the proper answer is 15625. Think about it.

Have you tried the command towards in Dr Logo? The manual says it will turn the turtle towards the co-ordinates you specify in the command but in many versions, it prints to the screen instead. That number is the angle through which you must now turn the turtle to make it point to the co-ordinates such as [10 10], [50,50] or [300,300] will specify a location above and to the right of the home position along a line of 45° from Home and if you type towards [100,100] Dr Logo comes back with 45. Try towards [0 0] which, in effect, is asking the turtle to point towards the position it is already occupying. Dr Logo comes back with 1.35003119794419e-13. Can somebody please explain?

James Coleman

Firstly, like most PD ware, a lot of it does not work, but there are some nuggets buried in there. Outstanding in my opinion is NSWP. This is on the first four discs, but use the version on disc 4 which is NSWP207 and has removed a couple of bugs in NSWP205. NSWP is a complete file utility. You can list a files on a disc in alphabetical order, read them, print them, copy them, rename them, erase them, squeeze and unsqueeze and set their characteristics (system, read-only etc). It replaces and improves on pip, dir, set, erase, type, squeeze and unsqueez.

Three other potentially useful programs are MCAT, LU and DU87. MCAT catalogues your disc library and gives you an alphabetical master catalogue. Unfortunately two companion programs XCAT.COM and MCAT.SET for printing the catalogue and setting the characteristics of MCAT are missing. This is a pity, because MCAT can be set to show user areas with MCAT.SET, but does not do so as supplied. LU combines files into a single library file which can save space, but makes them more difficult to access, it has two companion programs LRUN.COM and LDIR.COM which are on the disc.

DU87 is a disc sector editor, and requires some skill to use, it is an update of DU-V86 which does not work with CP/M+. Use the documentation for DU-V86. You can use DU87 to unerase files (though if you have stored any new files since erasing, the result may be garbage) by setting the first byte of the directory entry to 00, change the user number by setting it to on and change attributes of files and much, much more.

The documentation for DU-V86 is terse and not suitable for beginners. The other three programs are well documented, but some of the documentation is squeezed to save space (this is indicated by the second letter of the type extension being a Q). You can create unsqueezed versions by using UNSQUEEZ.COM or NSWP, but NSWP can read squeezed files directly. Put disc 4 in drive A: type nswp, <ret> then put the disc with the documentation you want to read in drive A:. Type L,A: <ret>. then press <ret> until the document you want to look at is listed. Type V (for view) and it will appear pagewise on the screen. You can also use P to print it. When you have finished type X to leave NSWP.

The adventure game is the classic first of its genre which spawned many imitations such as The Pawn and The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. It is also known as Colossal Cave or Classic Adventure. If you have the time and inclination for such things, it is a lot of fun. EADVENT appears to be a compact version of the same game. <Chris, in the game the instructions say that you can save the game but by trying restore, reload etc it has no effect whatsoever. The answer is to enter: ADVENT -R (there must be a space between the T and -).

Most of the shorter utilities are either superseded by the facilities built in to CP/M+ or they don't work. UNERA190 in particular fails, because it checks the version number of CP/M and refuses to start if it is 3. FINDBAD, I/O-CAP, MAKE, SPELL_ED, UNSPOOL, QWIKKEY and QK20 don't work. I tried to disassemble UNERASE to see if it could be modified to work with CPM+ but the program would not reassemble. I am a complete beginner at assembly language programming, but it appears that there are some bugs in RASMTA.

Oliver Pretzel, 270 Haggerston Rd, London, E8 4EP

Public Domain Software Notes

How to use Banner and Gothic.

Although both are intended for a 132 character wide printer, if the PCW printer is set to condensed print, the printer is now able to print the 132 characters required across its width. As you are aware, this can be done from Basic or directly from CP/M using the SETLST utility.

Using RPED create a file called (say) GOTHIC1 as follows (I am assuming that it is already set for continuous paper):-

```
^'ESC'^'4'  
^'ESC'0  
^'ESC'3'^'20'
```

To implement, put SETLST.COM and GOTHIC1 on the disc and type SETLST GOTHIC1 [RETURN]. GOTHIC.COM can be successfully used by typing GOTHIC.

The first line sets condensed text (manual page 133); the second ensures that there is no blank line at the end of each sheet (manual page 129 - letter 0 not a zero); the last line alters the distance between the lines to improve the appearance of the finished product (manual page 126). Try changing the number 20 in the last line - start with 10 and 15, comparing the results when using GOTHIC. (If you try 36, it will get you back to the default of 6 lines per inch).

Any poor souls who do not use continuous paper can miss out the middle line and be prepared to load a lot of sheets!

To get back to your normal printer setting, just press the PTR key, and choose the RESET option.

Although I haven't used the Gothic on offer, I presume that it is the standard one as offered by Advantage. If so, it works a treat for impressing those who want to know what a computer can really do!

John L Bunting, 104 Cliff Gardens, Scunthorpe, S. Humberside DN15 7BN

NSWP with Locoscript

in addition to its many other virtues, the public-domain utility NSWEEP will help you find a Locoscript document when you have forgotten in which Group it is stored. No need to look through every Group in turn! Having loaded CP/M and NSWEEP into drive M, Insert the disk on which your missing Locoscript document might be. Depending on the drive used, just type nswEEP a* or nswEEP b* and hold down the space bar to get a listing, in alphabetical order, of all the documents on the particular disk. The Group number is also shown. Unfortunately the 'view' option of NSWEEP does not work on Locoscript documents, so that you will have to return to Locoscript to check that you have found the right one.

There is something to watch out for, however: As NSWEEP includes in the listing also documents in limbo (those with Group numbers higher than 7), the disk space shown as free at the head of the listing is often much less than that really available under Locoscript, which simply deletes limbo files whenever space is needed for new documents.

Public Domain Software List

People interested in obtaining the FREE Public Domain Software should do the following.

- a) Write clearly what you require.
- b) Mark your discs with your name and address.
- c) Make sure your discs are formatted.
- d) Enclose a S.A.E for the return of your software. If you don't then you will have to pay £1 per side copying fee.
- e) Send your disc(s) and S.A.E to one of the following addresses.

David Loveridge
55 Windsor Crescent
Harrow
Middx
HA2 8QJ

John Cockshaw
5 Duchy Close
Heaton
Bradford
West Yorks
BD9 5NL

Bob Ellis
Rowan
100 St Peters Close
Moreton - on - Lugg
Hereford
HR4 8DW

Tel: 0432-761860 from 7pm

- f) Would overseas readers please send their disc to Chris with £2.50 to cover postage (as you can not send a S.A.E).

Disc 1A

BOGGLE.BAS	CALCULATE.BAS	LABELS4.BAS	LU.COM	LU.DQC	MERCHANT
NSWP.205.COM	NSWP205.DQC	POSTER.BAS	SQUEEZE.COM	TRADE.BAS	
TTYTYPE.DQC	UNSQUEEZ.COM	WHATSNEW.COM	WUMP.BAS		

Disc 1B

BLKJACK.BAS	CHESS.COM	FOOD.COM	GOLF.COM	HORSE.BAS
MASTER.LEX	NEWPUZ.COM	ROCKET.BAS	STRTRK.BAS	

Disc 2A

/APLICAT.CRC	/COMMUNI.CRC	/DIRECTO.CRC	/FAMILY.CRC	/FAMILY2.CRC
/FAMILY3.CRC	/HACKERS.CRC	/LIBRARI.CRC	/POTPOUR.CRC	BANNER.COM
BIO.COM	CAL.COM	CAT.COM	CAT3.COM	CLEANUP.COM
COMPARE.COM	CRCK44.COM	DISK76.COM	DISPLAY.COM	FIND.COM
GOTHIC.COM	HELP.COM	IDUMP.COM	LDIR.COM	LISTT.COM
LRUN.COM	MAST.CAT	MAZE.COM	MCAT41.COM	MCAT41.DQC
NI.COM	NSWP205.COM	PASSWORD.COM	RENAME.COM	RPIP.COM
SCRAMBLE.COM	S.MODEM+.IQF	SORTV.COM	SUPERSUB.COM	TYPEL.COM
UNERA190.COM	VLIST.COM	WCOUNT.COM	XTYPE.COM	

Disc 2B

CHASE.BAS	D.COM	LOANAMORE.BAS	MBXREF.BAS	OTHELLO.COM
RCPM-052.LQT	REALEVAL.BAS	S.MODEM.DQC	S.MODEM+.COM	S.MODEM53.AQM

Disc 3A

Colossal Cave Adventure plus NSWP205

Public Domain Software List

Disc 3B: This disc has been withdrawn as all of the programs do not work. If anyone has managed to customise TTYPE would they please get in touch with Bob Ellis.

Disc 4A

NSWP.COM	QK20.COM	QK20.DOC	RASMB.COM	RASMB.DOC
RASMB+.COM	RASMTA.COM	RASMTA.DOC	README.CAT	READTHIS.CAT
TYPE.ME	UNLOAD.COM	UNLOADI.COM	WS30PAT.PQS	Z80ASMUK.COM
Z80DOCUK.COM	ZDEBUG17.COM	ZDEBUG17.DQC	ZDEBUG17.COM	ZLINK.COM
ZLINK.DOC	ZMAC.COM	ZMAC.DOC		

Disc 4B

-CATALOG.001	ANYCOD1.TST	ANYCOD2.TST	ANYCODE.ASM	ANYCODE.CRS
ANYCODE.DQC	ANYCODE.HEC	ANYCODE.HEX	COMPARE.COM	COMPARE.DOC
CONV2.RSX	CORPMEM.FRM	DSKORDER.CAT	DU-V87.DOC	DU87.COM
FORMAT.CAT	HELP.HQP	LASM.COM	LASM.DOC	LOHD.COM
LOOK.COM	LOOKAT.COM	LOOKAT.DOC	MEMSHIP.FRM	NDDT.COM
NDDT.DOC				

DISC 5A

BLKJCK.BAS	ROCKET.BAS	SCRIVNER.TXT	SCRIVNER.COM	BOGGLE.BAS
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DISC 5B

ADDRESS.BAS (LINDSAY LOCKETTS PROGRAM)	CASTLE.COM	CASTLE.DOC		
MINDREAD.BAS	COUNSEL.BAS	MONOPOLY.BAS	STARTRK.COM	BANNER.BAS
CALENDAR.BAS	FOOTBALL.COM	PRINT.COM	GOLF.BAS	

DISC 6A

COMPARE.COM	COMPARE.DOC	SECTORED.COM	SECTORED.DOC	UNERASE.COM
UNERASE.DOC	FILEMAN(NSWP)	FILEMAN.DOC	COOKFILE.DAT	SHELL.COM
UNSPPOOL.COM	COOKIE.COM	LOOK.COM	SPOOL.COM	SPOOL.TXT
Z80.LIB	DESPOOL.COM	LOOKAT.COM	LOOKAT.DOC	ERACAT.COM
TYPWRITE.COM				

DISC 6B

AMSTRAD.INC	EPSON.INC	READ.ME	STANLET3.SCR	CALCULAT.SCR
NAMES.INC	SCHOOL.INC	TELEVID.INC	CHECKBK.SCR	PETTY.SCR
SCHOOL.SCR	TOTAL.	CORREL.SCR	PETTY1.INC	SCRIVNER.COM
VOLUME.DOC	CORREL.INC	PETTY2.INC	STANLET.SCR	CORREL2.SCR
POEM.SCR	STANLETT1.SCR	DESPREC.SCR	PRICE.INC	STANLET2.SCR

DISC 7

Side A: SCRIVNER.DOC (130K) Side B: LOCOSCRIPT FILES OF SCRIVNER.

Disc 8

DBQ relational Database plus other utilities

Disc 9

Improved version of small C & Small C Optimiser

PD stands for Pathetic Documentation

A plea from Bob Ellis.

Since taking up the cry for help from the Editor for three simpletons [apologies to John Cockshaw and David Loveridge] to take on the distribution of P D Software, it has become evident that :-

- a) Some of the program's are rubbish.
- b) Some just do not work on the P C W.
- c) The Documentation in most cases is none existant / of poor quality / unintelligable or, as in the case of NEWSWEEP, unreachable.

To start the ball rolling, I would like to ask members who have experience with any of the program's to put into print an idiots guide [well I will have to read and understand it] to getting them ' up and running ', these can then be added to the disc's as .DOC files, further, a special .DOC disc could be produced for updating existing user's. In addition we may be able to convince the Editor that it would be a worthwhile exercise to print some of the more popular one's in the "File".

Would any members who are willing to help in this way, initially forward the guide's to me, ether on disc in LOCOSCRIPT .1. format [all disc's will be returned] or as a print-out. I will attempt to edit the material and adjust the current disc infomation files .All author's will be acknowledged on the disc's.

An updated report on the initial results will be in the next edition of the 'File'.

Please forward information to :-

Bob Ellis,
"ROWAN"
100 St Peters Close,
Moreton on Lugg,
HEREFORD,
HR4 8DW.
tel [0432] 761860 after 7.00 pm.

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	LEATHER GODESS	UQDIC1	21.21	
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	MAP INTERGRATED ACCOUNTS	MAP210	95.95	
	SAGE COMBO-PACK	SAGE1003	109.95	
	SAGE PAYROLL	SAGE1002	51.95	
	SAGE POPULAR ACCOUNTS	SAGE1001	73.75	
	SAGE POPULAR ACCOUNTS +	SAGE1005	109.95	
	SAGE POPULAR STOCK/INVOICING	SAGE1004	51.95	
	SAGE SUPER COMBO	SAGE1006	145.95	
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	SAGE CHIT-CHAT E-MAIL	SAGE1008	51.95	
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	FLEET STREET EDITOR	MIRP1006	51.95	
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		PLAN-IT	DBA4909	19.95
		SMART KEY	CAX002	22.50
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		POCKET WORDSTAR	MPRO200	34.75
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