Script

Issue 22

THE LOCOSCRIPT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Issue 22 of *Script*, the first issue in 1992. In this issue we look at a wide range of facilities available with LocoScript on both the PCW and the PC.

In previous issues of *Script* we have showed you how to print addresses on 'n' across continuous labels and also on single sheets of labels. Both these methods required a Master document to take the information from your datafile. But if you are printing on single labels, you can do it without a Master: our first article shows you how.

Paper Types are LocoScript's way of 'seeing' the paper you are using, so if this information is wrong, then your documents won't be printed correctly. In our next article we show you how to avoid this by setting up your Paper Types correctly.

When LocoLink 2 was released it became possible to move files from the PC back to the PCW. Transferring ordinary documents is straightforward, but if you want to transfer a datafile you need to do it in a number of steps. In the article on page 8 we explain this process.

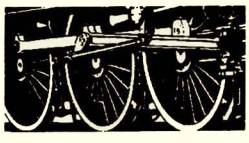
LocoScript PC's Database and LocoFile on the PCW are not just for storing names and addresses. They can also store other types of information, therefore providing a powerful way to catalogue collections of books, stamps or anything you want. In the article on page 11, David Chambers describes how he set up his own system.

Our final article is for PC users who would like to be able to add short notes in an 'action column' in the right margin of their documents. This is particularly useful when writing the minutes of meetings, for example, because it allows you to put things like initials next to relevant paragraphs. LocoScript can't create an action column automatically, but you can get the effect of one by using different Layouts.

In the last issue of *Script* we told you about the Printer Support Pack Update. In this issue you'll find a list of the new printers supported by the Update. This brings the number of printers you can use with LocoScript to a grand total of 534!

Contents

Script is published by:



LOCOMOTIVE SOFTWARE

Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1YL

News

LocoScript courses

PCW/PC A number of local authorities are now offering evening classes on using LocoScript, covering both the PCW and the PC, from the basics through to advanced applications.

If you know that your local authority is offering LocoScript courses, or if you've attended such a class yourself, we would be interested to hear from you. We'd like to build up a reference list of these courses and then publish the details in a future issue of *Script*.

New printers

PCW In the News section of Issue 21 of *Script*, we told you about the new version of the Printer Support Pack. This will allow you to use download characters on printers that use the 'IBM Proprinter' style of downloading, and also to print italics on all printers that are driven in download mode.

This means you can now print all LocoScript's characters and use italics on the Canon BJ-10e and other BubbleJet printers.

The new Pack also has improved support for the Hewlett Packard LaserJet III, so you can use more of the fonts offered with this printer.

In addition, the Printer Support Pack supports a number of new printers listed below. Printers marked * require the new Pack for the best results, while † means it is possible to print the full character set with this printer.

Simple Typewriters and older Dot Matrix printers

Panasonic KX-R191
Tandy CGP–115
Tandy Daisy Wheel Printer II
Wang PM015

Daisy-wheel Printers

Canon AP-810

9 Pin Dot Matrix Printers

Citizen MSP-40 *
Citizen MSP-45 *
Citizen MSP-50 *
Citizen MSP-55 *
Seikosha SP-1900 *
Seikosha SP-2000 *
Tandy DMP-300 *

24 Pin Dot Matrix Printers

Brother M-1324 * †
Epson LQ-570 * †
Epson LQ-870 * †
Epson LQ-1070 * †
Epson LQ-1170 * †
IBM PS/1 Printer
Mannesman Tally MT82 * †
Mannesman Tally MT222 * †
Olivetti DM 124 * †
Olivetti DM 124C * †
Siemens HighPrint 3100 * †

Ink-Jet/ Bubble-Jet Printers

Canon BJ-10ex * †
Diconix 150*
Diconix 150 Plus *
Hewlett-Packard ThinkJet *
Olivetti JP 350 *

Laser Printers

Epson EPJ-200 * †
Epson EPL-4100 * †
Olivetti PG 208 M2 *
Ricoh PC Laser6000 *

Non-UK PCWs

PCW/PC A version of LocoLink has been released to help users with non-UK PCWs transfer files to a PC.

Many PCWs made outside the UK have a different type of interface on the back of the machine instead of the standard expansion port. This meant that it was impossible to use the old version of LocoLink with these machines. So a version of LocoLink has been produced with a special 'D-Type' connector that will fit non-UK machines.

The special version of LocoLink costs £44.95 + VAT and can be ordered direct from us.

Simple address labels

PCW/PC

In previous issues of Script, we have had articles on how to print addresses from a datafile on n-across continuous labels, or on sheets of labels. To do either of these things effectively, you need to use a Master document to take the information from your address datafile and lay it out properly on your labels. However if you just want to print your addresses on single labels, you can do it without using a Master. In this article we tell you how.

If you just want to print address labels which are simply one across, you don't have to use a Master document if you don't want to. Instead you can set up the printer ready to print on your labels, then simply take the address information straight from the datafile and print it out on your labels by using the Print Extract feature.

However there are limits to what you can achieve using Print Extract. Basically the main thing you have to remember is that the output is not very sophisticated. The text is taken from each record in whatever order it appears and is simply placed on each label, starting from the top left hand corner. So if you want to print labels using Print Extract, you have to make sure that your datafile is arranged in a suitable way.

Arranging the datafile

When you use Print Extract, the items are taken in the order they appear on the card working from left to right and top to bottom. So you need to ensure that the items are in a suitable order on the cards. In addition, only items that appear in your datafile can be printed on your labels, so if you are going to want titles like 'Mr' and 'Mrs' on your labels you must include them in your datafile. Similarly if you want the initial instead of the full first name, this must also be reflected in your records.

When using Print Extract to print out an address, you must make sure that every line ends in a carriage return. Also if you have a very long line, you will have to divide it

Using a Master document to produce labels

In past issues of Script we have looked at how you use a Master document to help you produce address labels. By setting up a Master to extract the information you want from the datafile, your labels can be more sophisticated because you can then control how the information is laid out more effectively. In particular a Master is necessary when you want to print on labels that are more than one across, because this requires special organisation of the datafile information before it can be printed on the labels. The full method is explained in Issue 15 of Script, with a revised version of the Master document needed in Issue 16.

As well as rolls of labels, it is possible to get labels on separate sheets for use on printers that cannot use continuous paper. The method used to print addresses on these labels is a little different to the one used for n-across labels, and this was covered in an article in Issue 18 of Script.

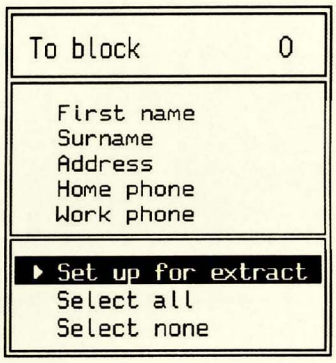
yourself to make sure that it will fit on the label, because Print Extract does not wrap the text at the right margin. However most addresses won't have enormously long lines, so it won't usually be a problem!

The index you use in your datafile is also important. If the current index is one with multiple Main Keys or multiple sub keys you could find that you will print the same record over and over again, once for every time the record appears in the index.

You should therefore select an index that doesn't cause this problem, like Surname only or Record number.

When you use Print Extract, the printing starts in the position of the left margin, which is set as part of the Datafile Set-up. If this margin is too big for your labels, you can go into Datafile Set-up, press F5 and then change the margin measurement given here to what you want.

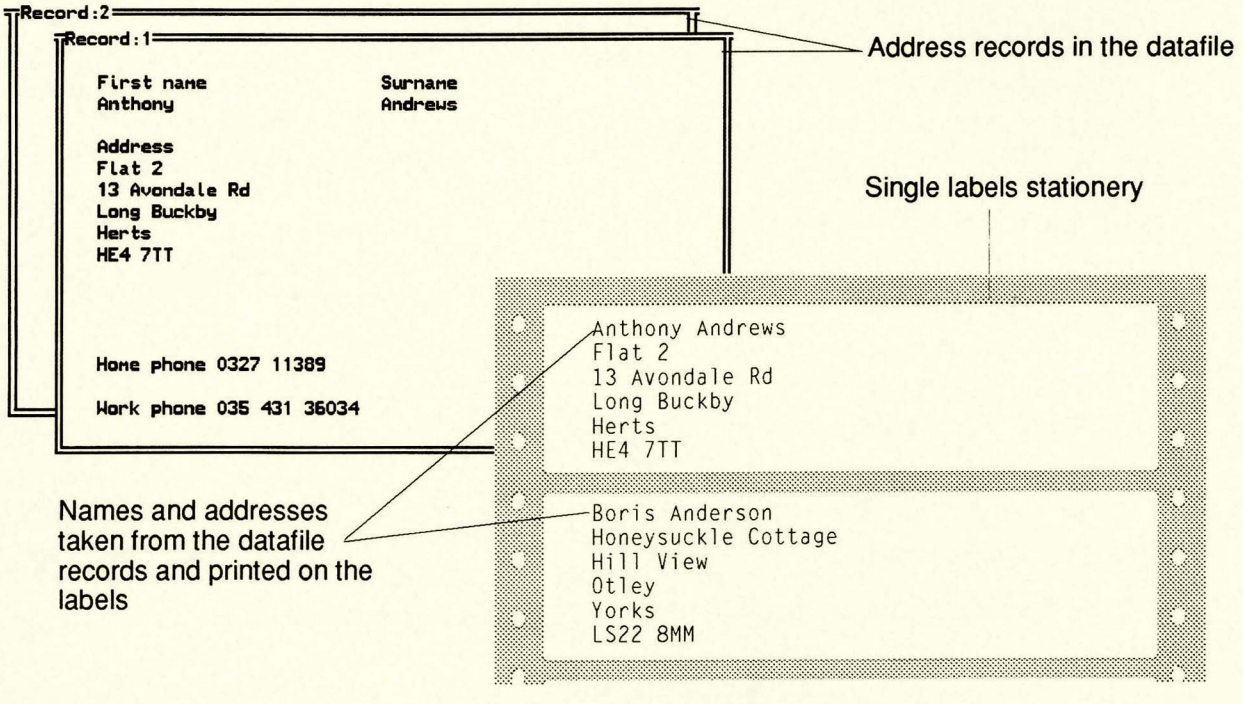
While you are in Datafile Set-up, you can also pre-select the items in your datafile that you will want to extract for your labels, to save time later. Press F7 and the Extract menu will appear on screen.



This menu starts with a Block number because when you are using Extract to put the information in a document, you have to specify the number of the Block you want to store the information in. This Block isn't used when you are selecting items for Print Extract.

Just pick out the items you want either by selecting each one individually, or by using the `Select all` or `Select none` options and adding or deleting the items using the + or - keys as you require. Check that `Set up for extract` is selected, press Enter and then you can leave Datafile Set-up. The items you have chosen will now always be selected whenever you call up the Extract menu.

Producing labels using Print Extract



Setting up the Paper Type

In order to print addresses on labels stationery you have to do two things. First you have to set up a Paper Type with the relevant specifications for the labels you are going to use as one of your Standard Paper Types. Then once you have done this, you must set up this Labels Paper Type as the Current Paper Type in the Printer Control State.

Begin by working out the height of the labels, by measuring from the top of one label to the top of the next label, including the space in between the two labels. If you just use the height of the label itself, you will find that the labels are not fed into the printer correctly, so the printing will begin in the wrong place.

As well as the height of the label, you also have to tell LocoScript the size of the Bottom Gap you need. This should be at least the size of the space between the labels, because then LocoScript won't print on the backing paper. But be careful not to make it too big, because then your addresses might not fit on the labels. The Top Gap should be set to 0, as you can position the labels exactly where you want printing to begin yourself.

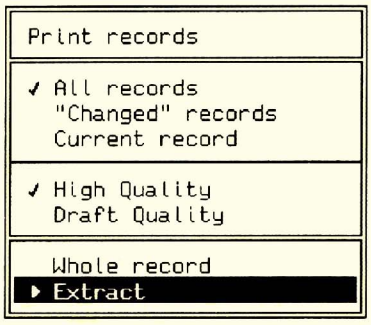
Full details on setting up a Labels Paper Type is given in Issue 15 of *Script*. Setting up a new Paper Type is also covered in Session 19 of the LocoScript 2 User Guide (Session 20 for 9512 users) while PC users should refer to Chapter 26 of the Reference book.

Once you have set up the Labels Paper Type as one of the Standard Paper Types, you need to go into Printer Control State and select it as the Current Paper Type. Press [*] on the PC or [PTR] on the PCW. Call up the Paper menu by pressing [F5] on the PC, or [f3] on the PCW, then move the cursor to the Labels Paper Type and press [+]. `Use Paper Type` is selected as the default option, so simply press [Enter]. Then exit from Printer Control State.

The Labels Paper Type is now set up as the Current Paper Type.

Printing the labels

Before you can print your labels you must go into your datafile and display one of the records on screen. But it is not important which this is unless you just want to print this particular record. Check that a suitable index, ie. one without multiple main/sub keys, is selected and press [F4] to bring up the Print menu.



You have a couple of options to choose from: you can print out the changed records, the record on the screen, or you can print all the records in the datafile. To select the option you want, simply move the cursor to it and press [+]. You also have the choice between Draft and High Quality – just as you do when printing an ordinary LocoScript document.

When you have picked the options you want, move the cursor to `Extract` and press [↵]. If you didn't pre-set the items you want as we described earlier, select them now using the [+] and [-] keys. The Print option is automatically selected (shown by the ▸ next to it), so once the items you want are selected just press [Enter].

The printing process now begins in the same way as if you were printing a document. The current paper and printer is compared with the intended paper and printer and if LocoScript finds any differences, the usual alert message is shown on the screen. If this happens you *must* choose the option to use the Current Paper, which is the Labels Paper Type. Printing will now begin, and the addresses will be printed out on your labels as you have requested.

LocoScript's Paper Types

PCW/PC

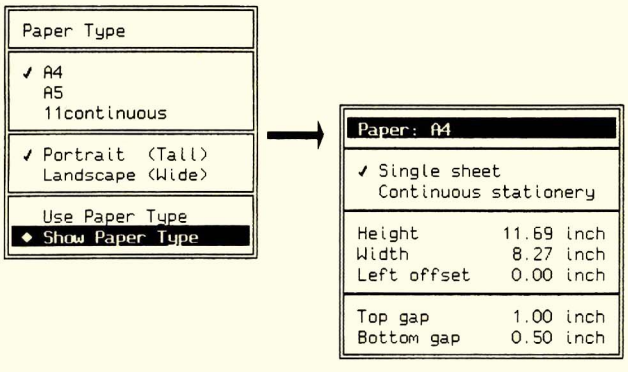
One of the most common problems on both the PCW and the PC is documents printing out incorrectly, caused by not setting up the right Paper Type. The Paper Type is LocoScript's way of knowing about the paper you are using. If this information is wrong, then the document probably won't be laid out in the way you wanted.

In this article we will show you how to make sure that you select the correct Paper Type.

The Paper Types are LocoScript's way of 'seeing' the paper you are using. The details of both LocoScript's Standard Paper Types and any special ones you have set up for yourself are held in the Settings, and they allow LocoScript to work out how far to feed the paper before printing, how long and wide the paper is and so on. Providing the details are correct, LocoScript's Paper Types ensure that your documents are printed correctly.

Much of the confusion with Paper Types is caused by the fact that there are *two* places where you pick out the Paper Type you want to use. The first place is in the Document Set-up of your documents. This lets LocoScript know what paper you want to use for this document, so it is called the 'Intended' Paper Type. The second place you must set up the Paper Type is in the Printer Control State. What you select here is the paper that you are actually using in your printer, the 'Current' Paper Type.

The Paper Types menus



To print your documents properly, the Current Paper ought to be the same as the paper actually in the printer. Additionally this should be the same as, or compatible with the 'Intended' Paper Type set up in your document.

In this article we will look how to set up both the Intended and the Current Paper Types and how to make sure that your document is printed on the right paper.

The Intended Paper Type

The Paper Type you want to use in your document is set as part of the Document Set-up, and it tells LocoScript where to put the page breaks etc. Go into Document Set-up, by pressing [f1] on the PCW or [F9] on the PC, then press [F5] to call up the Page menu. Select `Paper type` from this menu, press [↵] and the Paper Types menu then appears on the screen (see the box on this page).

This menu shows a list of the Paper Types available, with a tick next to the one that you are using at the moment. If this is not the one you want, just move the cursor to the chosen Paper Type and press [+]. `Use Paper Type` is automatically selected for you, so press [↵].

The paper you have chosen now becomes the Intended Paper Type, and the page breaks in your document will change accordingly. When you change the Intended Paper Type in LocoScript PC, you'll also find that the right margins in all Layouts will be adjusted automatically to ensure that the margin width remains the same, but on the PCW you have to do this for yourself.

The Current Paper Type

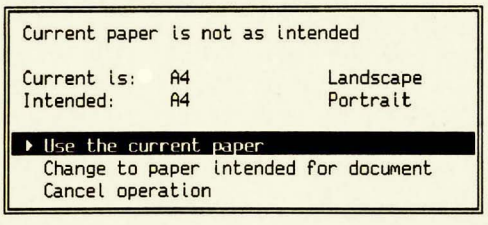
Whenever you change the paper in your printer, you must always tell LocoScript what you have done. You do this by re-setting the Current Paper Type in Printer Control State. Go into Printer Control State, then press [f3] on the PCW or [F5] on the PC to bring up the Paper menu.

This menu is exactly the same as the one we described in the previous section, so simply move the cursor to the Paper Type you want and press [↵] to select it in the same way as before. `Use Paper Type` is again selected automatically so just press [↵]. The paper you have chosen now becomes the Current Paper Type.

However it is more usual to wait until you want to print and let LocoScript set the Current Paper Type for you – as explained in the next section.

Printing the document

When you ask LocoScript to print a document, it begins by comparing the Paper Type held as the Current Paper Type with the Intended Paper Type you've asked for in the document. If they match, LocoScript simply prints the document. But if they don't match, LocoScript stops and puts up the following message on the screen:



If you choose `Use the current paper`, you are telling LocoScript to carry on printing on the paper you have in the printer, even though it is not the paper you actually specified for your document. This means that your document might not be laid out correctly. For example, the Top and Bottom Gaps may be too big or too small; you may lose text from the right hand edge if the paper is too narrow for your document; or LocoScript may have to finish a page on another sheet if the paper is too short.

If you are simply printing a draft copy of your document, these changes in layout are probably not important, so you can just continue using the paper you have in the printer. If you are printing the final version then you will want the layout to be correct, so you should change to using the Intended paper. But before you can choose `Change to paper intended for document` you have to put this paper into the printer – LocoScript can't do this for you! Then select the option and LocoScript will automatically update the Current Paper Type.

Alternatively if you don't want to print on either the Current or the Intended paper, you simply pick `Cancel operation`. Then you can return to your document and set up the Paper Type you do want before trying to print again.

What's in the Paper Type menu

Each Paper Type contains all the defaults LocoScript needs to know about a particular type of paper. These include all the measurements of the paper and also whether the paper is single sheet or continuous. You can see these details by selecting the `Show Paper type` option in the Paper Types menu.

The first thing LocoScript needs to know is whether the paper is single sheet or continuous. With single sheet paper LocoScript feeds the sheet out at the end of the page and waits for you to insert more paper. But with continuous paper LocoScript simply moves to the top of the next page and starts printing automatically. So it has to know which your paper is in order to treat it correctly.

The kind of paper you are using affects the Top and Bottom Gaps required. In order to get a good grip on single sheet paper, the printer will feed in the top of the paper past the print head: this section can't be printed on. Similarly the printer can't hold the paper properly to print to the very bottom of each sheet, so it will stop printing about half an inch from the bottom of the paper. However when you use continuous paper this problem doesn't occur, so the Top and Bottom Gaps only ensure that you don't print on the perforations between the sheets.

The Paper Type menu also holds the details of the height and width of the paper. The height measurement tells LocoScript where to put the page breaks in a document, and the width measurement tells LocoScript how far across it can print without printing on the platen of the printer. With A5 paper for example, you would find that LocoScript automatically puts a page break approximately every 41 lines. On the PC, the ruler line is also shaded beyond 5¾" to warn you that this is the limit of the paper.

The height and width settings also interact with the Portrait and Landscape options. With single sheet paper you can either print with the paper upright (Portrait) or you can turn it on its side and print that way (Landscape). When you select the Landscape option, LocoScript knows that the height measurement has become the width, and width has become height, so it changes the settings accordingly.

If you select the Landscape option on the PCW, you also have to remember to re-set the right margin in your document to correspond with the new measurements – LocoScript 2 won't do this automatically. However LocoScript on the PC automatically moves the right margin for you when you select the Landscape option.

Transferring datafiles to a PCW

PCW/PC

With the release of LocoLink 2 it became possible not only to transfer files from the PCW to a PC, but to also take files from LocoScript PC and transfer them back to LocoScript 2 on a PCW. With ordinary documents the transfer from the PC to the PCW is straightforward, however you have to go through a number of steps to transfer datafiles. In this article we show you how to do it.

LocoLink is a special cable and program which lets you transfer files between a PCW and a PC. The first version of LocoLink could only transfer files in one way, from the PCW to a PC. But LocoLink 2 will let you move files the other way, from the PC to the PCW. Providing you are using v2.30 or later of LocoScript 2, you can read and edit the LocoScript PC files as if they had been created on the PCW.

When you join the two machines using LocoLink 2, the PC sees the PCW as an extra disc drive called Drive Z. So on the PCW you just select the disc you are using, either Drive A, Drive B or the hard disc, and the files on this disc will be shown on the PC Disc Manager Screen.

To transfer a file from the PCW to the PC you simply move it from Drive Z into one of the PC's directories. To transfer a document from the PC to the PCW, you first put it into LocoScript 2 format (see later) then just move it to Drive Z. More information is given in the article about LocoLink 2 in Issue 19 of *Script*.

Because the datafiles on the PC are held in a slightly different format to those on the PCW (see the box below), it is not possible to transfer a datafile from the PC directly to the PCW, although you can transfer a datafile from the PCW direct to the PC. It is therefore better to store any datafile that you'll want to use on both machines on the PCW, then simply transfer a copy of it to the PC and squash it whenever you need it.

But if you do need to transfer a datafile from the PC to the PCW, you can get round the problem by carrying out the transfer in a number of steps. In this article we will show you what these steps are.

Extracting the data

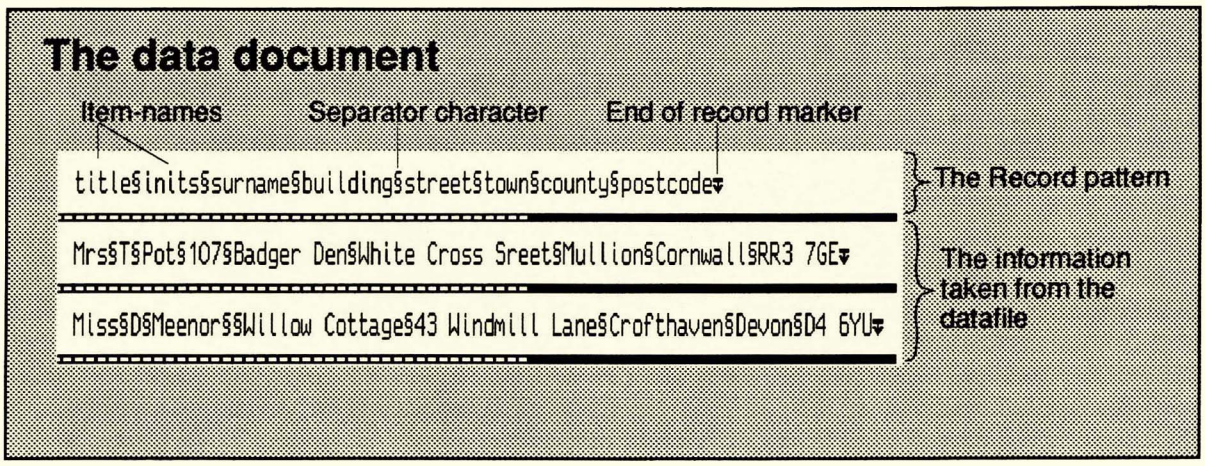
The first step in transferring your datafile is to take all the information contained in the datafile and put it into an ordinary LocoScript document which you can transfer easily. This document is known as a 'Data document'.

Differences between PC datafiles and PCW datafiles

Although the Database program on the PC works in basically the same way as LocoFile on the PCW, there are a number of differences you have to be aware of when attempting to transfer a PC datafile to the PCW.

The record cards on the PC are slightly narrower than is possible on the PCW. On the other hand you can have up to 250 items on the PC cards, while you can only have up to 50 on the PCW. So if you have over 50 items on your PC records, you will have to reduce the number before you can transfer data to the PCW. (You can do this automatically by changing the Master document: see Section 11.5.2 of the Database and Mailmerge book.)

Another thing to consider is the difference in available disc space. There is typically more room on a PC than on a PCW, so the datafile could be too big to fit on a PCW disc. If your datafile is too big to use easily on the PCW, it is a good idea to split the data document up before transferring it. The easiest way to do this is to copy the original data document, then edit each version so it only contains a portion of the information. Each edited data document can then be put into a separate datafile on the PCW.



The information in the data document must be laid out in a special way. Each section of the data document holds the information from one datafile record. The items are divided up by special characters known as a Separators, and after the last item of each record there is an End of Record marker.

The best way to create a properly laid out data document is to merge your chosen datafile with a special Master document. This will then extract all the information and lay it out correctly in a document for you. The Master document which will take information from an example datafile is given in the box on the next page: you can readily adapt this to fit your own datafile.

The first thing in the Master is the 'Record Pattern'. This simply gives the names of the items such as Initial, Surname etc divided by the characters you are using as the separators. More information about Record Patterns is given in Chapter 10 of the Database and Mailmerge book.

To adapt this section, simply replace the item-names given in the example with the names of the items in your datafile, adding more items or removing them as you require. For instance, you might have the street and town stored together in one item called 'Address', or you might want to add a 'Country' item to the list. We've used an § as the separator character throughout: if you use this character in your addresses you'll have to use another separator, but it's unlikely that this will be necessary!

As long as the item-names in your datafile are single words without numbers or special characters you can use them in the Master. But if you have used multiple word names or characters other than the letters A to Z, you'll need to work out the 'Equivalent names' to use instead. More details are given in Section 18.1 of the Database and Mailmerge book.

You will also have to change the names given in the Loop instruction to make them match the item-names in your datafile, just as you did for the Record Pattern. Once you have done this you are ready to merge your Master with the datafile.

The result will be a properly laid out data document, with a correct Record Pattern at the top and all the information you had in your datafile laid out after it, as shown in the example below. Save the document and give it a name that will be easy to pick out later.

Note: This Master will not be able to extract unnamed items from your datafile. If you have any unnamed items, you should go into Document Set-up and change the datafile to give them suitable names before trying to create the data document.

Transferring to the PCW

Before you can transfer your data document to the PCW, you have to convert it into LocoScript 2 format. Select your data document with the cursor and press [F9]. From the menu that appears, select `Export document` and you will see a choice of different formats. Select `Convert to LocoScript 2`, and your data document will be put into LocoScript 2 format.

Any really exotic characters in your datafile will be lost in this process, because there are some characters you can use on the PC that are not available on the PCW, but this shouldn't be a problem for most people.

Now you are ready to transfer this document to the PCW using LocoLink 2. As we mentioned earlier, LocoLink 2 works by making the PC see the PCW as Drive Z. So you just move your data document into Drive Z on the PC Disc Manager screen, and it will then be transferred to the PCW.

The Master document

```
title§inits§surname§building§street§town§county§postcode ↧
(+Mail)↵
eor="↧
"↵
sep="§"↵
↵
loop="↵
title:sep:inits:sep:surname:sep:building:sep:street:sep:town:sep:county:sep:postcode:eor ↵
$+↵
"↵
↵
%loop @ $#↵
(-Mail)↵
```

The separator character used here to divide the items is §, while the separator between each record and the next one is the ↧ symbol. However you can use other separators if you wish, as explained in the Database and Mailmerge book.

As all the records have a record number, this is used as $# to control the loop so that it stops when the end of the datafile is reached.

Note: This Master document will extract the information from the PC datafile in record number order. If you would like to have the records in another order, you can insert an extra instruction to select an appropriate index. Instructions on how to do this can also be found in the Database and Mailmerge book.

Setting up a datafile

The next step is to create a LocoFile datafile on the PCW, so you can re-insert the information stored in your data document. Set up this datafile with a matching item for every item listed in the Record Pattern of your data document, making sure you use exactly the same names. The instructions for this are given in Section 8.2 of the LocoFile User Guide.

You can also set up the same indexes as you had in your original datafile. But you may find that the record numbers of the individual records are not be the same in the new datafile as they were in the old one. Record numbers of erased records in a datafile aren't re-assigned, but when you put the information into a new datafile, any empty records are removed. (If the current record numbers are important, you could use a $# command in the Master to set up a new 'Record number' item. Details on how to do this is are given in Section 9.4 of the Database and Mailmerge book.)

Inserting the data

The first thing to do is make a copy of your new datafile. Then if something goes wrong when you insert the data, you'll have a copy of the original datafile to use for another attempt once you have solved the problem. When you have made the copy, display one of the new datafiles on the screen and press [f1]. Move the cursor to the option `Insert data` and press [ENTER]. The following message appears:

```
Merge documents:

select merge data document
then press ENTER
or CAN to abandon
```

Move the cursor to the data document and press [ENTER]. A selection menu appears giving you the details of the file you picked out: press [ENTER] to confirm your selection.

As long as there is a matching item in the new datafile for every item listed in the data document, LocoFile will go ahead and insert the data, and a message will appear on the screen saying `Processing record`. When all the data has been entered, LocoFile finishes by showing the last record on the screen.

Finally you should check through the new datafile. If everything has been entered correctly, finish by saving the new datafile to your chosen disc. If there are mistakes, you should go back to the data document to sort them out, then try again with the copy of the original datafile.

Cataloguing with LocoScript

PCW/PC

The following article was contributed by Mr David Chambers, who has used LocoScript to catalogue his book collection. His advice on setting up a suitable datafile to hold the information, and also the mailmerge programs he has written to produce print outs from the catalogue will be useful for anyone thinking about cataloguing their own collections – whether it's books, CDs or stamps.

This article first appeared in a longer form in Volume 3:3 of 'The Private Library'; the quarterly journal of the Private Libraries Association.

"Originally my catalogue was kept on small, rather unorganised, cards, as most other amateur catalogues are kept. A simple list of the books was made from it every year for insurance purposes with just the name of the book and its value. But the catalogue itself could not be used away from home and the list was difficult to keep up to date as the most valuable volumes were re-valued each year.

When I retired, I acquired a PCW8512 with LocoScript software and this opened up the chance of a much better system. Now ordered catalogues of the whole, or parts of the collection can be prepared, the list for the insurers can be updated and freshly totalled all at the touch of a few buttons.

Though I have only just completed the first part of the detailed catalogue, it seems worth offering my amateur approach to other users, so those who have been uncertain how to start their own system can be persuaded to set to.

It would be possible to produce a system using just LocoScript 2 alone, but obviously it is much more effective to use a LocoFile datafile which can be ordered in any way you want and then printed out, using LocoMail to select and organise the data into the form you want.

The datafile

Each record consists of a number of items which hold the information. Each item is given a name, for example 'Author', 'Value' etc. The size and number of these items and the information you put in them is up to the cataloguer, it simply depends on the catalogue being prepared.

According to the amount of information entered, there may be room for up to a thousand fairly detailed records on a single 720k disc. However it is probably best to limit the number of records to about 500 on one disc, to allow for later additions.

Example of a catalogue record

Item-names

Catalogue information

```
Record:1
Locker..... 1..... MINOR PRIV PRESS
Press                Pressno

Title Memoirs of the Distinguished Naval Commanders...
contd whose Portraits are Exhibited... Greenwich Hospital
Authr Locker, Henry Algernon.....

Date 1842....  Edition: Greenwich.....
Notes
Bp Henry S. Richardson. Mss insc: 'Mr. H. S. Richardson from  ..
H. A. Richardson.....
.....
Provi Richardson, Henry S.....
Prov2 .....
Prov3 .....
Acquis      Price     Insce     Source          Date Bgt
6669.....   50.....   70.....   Deighton Bell.....  20 8 86.

.....
space
```

Examples of the catalogue lists

List 1

WILLIAMS 7062
Journey into England 1807
Hentzer, Paul
One/50. Williams' own copy, dated June 1st 1807, interleaved, and with a two page printed addendum of his MSS notes.

WILLIAMS 7061
Journey into England 1807
Hentzer, Paul
One/50. 'To Mrs Williams this book is presented as a small token of affection by her husband, T E Williams Aug 7. 1808 Reading.'

List 2

7206	GREAT TOTHAM Bookplates	40
7207	GROVE PARK Genealogical and other Works	5
7209	WOODWARD A Trip from Crewe	25
	TOTAL	£70

You should also bear in mind the memory limitations of your machine – a big datafile might exceed the available space on Drive M. So if you have a big catalogue, a RAMPAC or another memory expansion would be a good idea.

Alternatively you can break down your catalogue into separate parts according to, say, subject, and store each of them as separate datafiles. I find that it is faster to work with a datafile with a fairly small number of records than it is to work with a datafile with a large number of records.

If you already have a card catalogue, it may be easier just to list the most important sections which need printed lists. But if there is no existing card system, then you can create them all on the computer. One important point to remember is that a disc can be lost with surprising ease and can also be damaged. COPIES ARE VITAL – at least two in fact, so that when disaster strikes (and it will) it won't cast the cataloguer into blank dismay matching the emptiness of the screen!

Ordering the catalogue

When all the books have been entered they will have been recorded on the disc in the way they were listed. Other ways of ordering them, either on screen or on a printed list can be arranged by the means of indexes. Personally my books are listed by accession number, by the press that printed them, and in order of the date of production, but they can be arranged by any of the names which have been given to the items on each card.

A supplementary section to the main index allows the books within a group of similar headings to be further ordered within themselves. For example, when the books are indexed by their different presses, a sub-index can list them by date of publication.

The index can also be used to search for books by the same author, or owned by a particular earlier collector simply by changing the name of the index to the item you want; the records then appear in the requested order as you go through the file.

Printing the catalogue

One has, at this stage, simply a series of records on disc, which can be printed one at a time on sheets of paper. You can get up to 61 single line entries, or 10 or so lengthier entries on a single sheet of A4 paper. The next step is to arrange for the records to be printed in order. To achieve this, a new file is created and within it you put a carefully laid out set of LocoMail instructions, as shown in the box opposite. The items that are to be printed are placed within LocoMail codes; `(+Mail)` at the beginning and `(-Mail)` at the end. Outside these are the indications as to where the item shall be placed and tabs can be inserted to ensure that all the titles start one above the other, or set numbers of spaces between items. Bold face or italic instructions can be added, and standard external text typed in.

The result of all this gobbledegook was, I thought, and still think, quite remarkable – a listing of books in proper annotated order, ninety or so printed out on nine pages of A4 paper. It took me two days to get there, but other people fluent in computerese will find that it can be made to work within a few hours. A second list of books can be easily prepared from the main datafile with reduced details so it can be used for insurance purposes. The figures can be altered as necessary and automatically added up again each time.

Eureka, as that chap said, though bath water would damage the computer rather completely!

The Master documents

The Master to produce List 1

```
(+Mail)$="Press"(-Mail) ↵
↵
(+Mail)Prog_unit="(+Mail)Press(-Mail)(RAlign) (+Mail)Acquis(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)Title(-Mail) (+Mail)Date(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)Authr(-Mail) ↵
(+Italic)(+Mail)Notes(-Mail)(-Italic) ↵
(+Mail)space(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)$+(-Mail)"(-Mail) ↵
↵
(+Mail)%Prog_unit@Press(-Mail) ↵
```

The first line (`$="Press"`) indicated that the list was to be organised according to Press (and within that, date order).

The succeeding lines, following '`Prog_unit`', show the order and placing of the data, completed by the code '`$+`' which instructs the system to move on to the next card.

The final instruction, on the last line, indicates that the program is to end when the Press item becomes empty.

The Master to produce List 2

```
(+Mail)total=0(-Mail) ↵
↵
(+Mail)$="Acquis" ↵
$$"7206" ↵
↵
(+Mail)Prog_unit="(+Mail)Acquis(-Mail) (+Mail)Press(-Mail) (+Mail)Title
(-Mail)(RAlign)                                    (+Mail)Insce(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)total=[total+Insce](-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)$+(-Mail)"(-Mail) ↵
↵
(+Mail)%Prog_unit@Insce(-Mail) ↵
↵
TOTAL(RAlign)                                      £(+Mail)total(-Mail)
```

The second and third lines required the list to be arranged in the order of the acquisition numbers (`$="Acquis"`) starting at the number 7206. The next group shows the details required. The '`$+`' indicates that the next record is then to be used; the following instruction `%Prog_unit@Insce` tells the program to continue until Insce is empty. The first and last set of instructions and the `total=[total+Insce]` line provides for the addition of all the values.

'Action' columns on a PC

PC

In some documents it is useful to be able to add notes in the right margin to form an 'action column'. For example, when producing the minutes for committee meetings, it is helpful to have people's initials or titles next to relevant paragraphs of the main text.

Like LocoScript on the PCW, LocoScript PC cannot create an action column automatically, but it is possible to get the effect of one using Layouts. In Issue 14 of Script we showed you how to set up an action column on the PCW. In this issue we give a version of that article showing the slightly different steps involved in setting up an action column on the PC.

Putting a note in the left margin, for example a number on the first line of a paragraph, is very easy with LocoScript. The Indent Tab ↦ (produced by pressing Alt and Tab at the same time) lets you move an entire paragraph to the right. To add text in the left margin you simply position the cursor in front of this Indent Tab and type in the text you want.

Adding text to the right margin is not quite as easy as putting text in the left margin, but it is possible do it using LocoScript's Layouts. The 'action column' for the notes in the right margin is produced simply by swapping between Layouts, which have been set up so they have different right margins.

There are three places you might want to put text in the right margin to create an action column. Firstly you might want to add notes in the margin so they are next to the first line of the paragraph. Secondly, you might want to add them at the end of the paragraph. Lastly, you might want them positioned somewhere between the first and last lines.

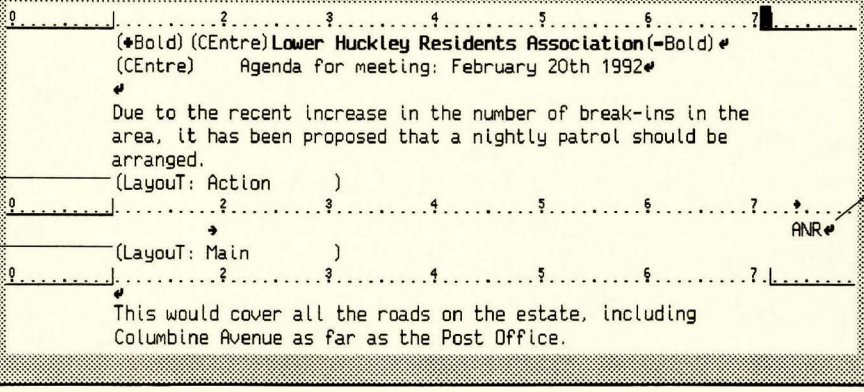
The basic idea of creating an action column by using two Layouts in a document is the same for both the PCW and the PC. However the way that margins in Layouts are applied on the PCW has been slightly altered in LocoScript PC, which means the way that the Layouts are used in each case is different.

Setting up the Layouts

You will need two different Layouts to produce an action column – one for the main body of your text and one for the notes you want in the right margin. The best thing is to set these Layouts up as Stock Layouts so you can just type in the appropriate codes wherever you need to put a note in the margin. (For more about Stock Layouts and setting them up, refer to Chapter 20 of the LocoScript PC Reference book.)

The settings for the main Layout you want may already be held as Stock Layout 1 because this is the default Layout used at the start of every document. Any alterations you make to

The text on the screen



Setting up the 'Action' Layout

Go into Document Set-up, press [F2] and select `Amend Stock Layouts`. A menu then appears on the screen listing all the Stock Layouts. Stock Layout 1 is the Layout used for your body text. We are going to set up Layout 2 as the Layout for the margin notes. So move the cursor to Layout 2 and press [↵]. You are now put into the Layout Editor to set up the details you want in this Layout.

The first thing to do is set the right margin. Move the Ruler cursor to about 10 characters further along than the position of the right margin in Layout 1 and press [F6] to show the Margins menu. Select `Set Right margin` and press [↵]. Alternatively you can simply position the Ruler cursor at the old right margin and keep pressing [+] until it reaches the position you want.

Now you should set up a tab, to position your note text a little beyond the old right margin, so there will be a small space between the main text and the note in the final document. Position the Ruler cursor 6 characters to the left of the new margin (ie. approximately 4 characters beyond the old right margin) and press [F7] to display the Tabs menu. `Set Simple tab` is already selected, so just press [↵]. Alternatively you can keep pressing [+] until the correct tab marker is shown.

Finally it is a good idea to give your new Layout a suitable name, to distinguish it from your other Layouts. Press [F8], then press [←] to clear away the old name and type 'Action' (or whatever you like) instead. Finish by pressing [F10], then press [F10] again to leave the Stock Layouts menu and return to Document Set-up. The new Layout is now available to use in your document.

this Layout using the `Amend Layout` option on the f2 Layout menu automatically updates Stock Layout 1.

The other Layout you need can be set up as Stock Layout 2. In this Layout the right margin should be further to the right than the right margin in the main Layout. On the PCW it was necessary to move the left hand margin too, but on the PC you don't have to do this. Instead you set up a tab slightly beyond position of the right margin in Layout 1. Detailed steps on how to set up the Layout are given in the box on the previous page.

Adding the notes

When the required Stock Layouts are set up, you can go back to your document and start adding your notes. How you do this depends on where you want the note to appear.

Next to the last line

Position the cursor at the end of the last line of the chosen paragraph. Then insert a copy of Stock Layout 2 by pressing [+] and typing `lt2`[↵]. You can see the effect of this more clearly if you show the codes and rulers by ticking the options on the f8 Options menu.

The right margin in your document now changes to the one set in Stock Layout 2. Press [Tab] to move to the correct position, then type the note you want – for example, the initials or title of the person taking the action. Press [↵] and return to the original Layout by pressing [+] followed by `lt1`[↵].

Next to the first line

The difference between adding a note to the last line and adding a note to the first line is that the note needs to be inserted *before* the main text on this line rather than after it, to avoid breaking the paragraph. Although this causes the margin note to appear on a separate line, you can add a Line Spacing code to 'fool' LocoScript into printing the note text next to the first line.

Type the `lt2` code first, then type [+]`LS0` to make the line spacing of the note 0. Press [Tab], type the text you want in the margin and press [↵]. Then insert the `lt1` code, and you can start to type the first line of your main text.

In the middle

To add a note to the middle of a paragraph you simply use the instructions for adding a note to the last line. But adding the note in the middle of a paragraph has the drawback that it effectively splits the paragraph into two. If your text is justified, this break means that the line immediately before the note becomes unjustified – producing a very odd effect!

There are ways of getting round this, but they are not at all easy to control. Even if your text is unjustified you might find that having a note in the middle of a paragraph causes difficulties, particularly if you want to change the main text in some way.

So generally it is best not to put notes in the middle of a paragraph.

Letters

Misplaced files

PCW I have recently started to use LocoScript 2 and I wonder if you can help me. On the enclosed disc you will see that in the top left hand box marked Drive A, there is a file called CATALOGA. 7 which should be with all the other files. I don't know how it got here and I'd like to move it back with the other files.

Mrs BR, London

The name CATALOGA.7 in the top half of the screen is not the name of a file – it is the name of the disc itself. The top half of the screen shows the names of the drives, discs and groups, while the names of files are shown in their groups in the bottom half of the screen.

What has probably happened is that you pressed f2 instead of f3 when you were renaming a file, and accidentally gave the name you intended for that file to the floppy disc you were working on itself. To change the name of the disc, press f2 and select `Rename Disc`. **A menu appears with a space for you to type in the new name. When you have done this, press** ENTER **and the new name of the disc will appear in the relevant place on the screen.**

It is a good idea to give all your discs names because you can then identify them more quickly. Every time you put a disc in a drive its name will appear on the screen, so you'll know immediately whether you have the right disc or not. If you name your Start-of-day disc after the version of LocoScript that you are using, this name will also be given to Drive M when you boot up. This makes it easy to check that you have the correct version.

Note: Once you have given a disc a name, you can't clear it to make the disc have 'no name' again. However you can re-name the disc as many times as described above.

Using Print Extract

PCW/PC I am trying to use 'Print Extract' to print some text from my datafile with little success. For some reason I only get one line from each of the paragraphs I am trying to extract, and this line runs right to the edge of the paper and is cut off mid word. Why is this happening?

Mr AH, Telford

The output from LocoScript's 'Print Extract' feature is arranged very simply. All the text from each paragraph is taken as one long line and there is no text wrap at the right hand edge of the paper. This means that you will only be able to print as much of the line as can be fitted onto the paper – just as you have described in your letter.

There is no way to avoid this happening when you use Print Extract, so it would be better to use another method to extract your text from the datafile. One way would be to copy the required text to Blocks, then you can simply paste these Blocks into a document. This process was explained in the article "Using Blocks" in Issue 21 of *Script*.

But probably the best method would be to use a 'Master document' which could extract all the text you want from the datafile and put it into a document for you, laid out in the way you want. Instructions on how to create such a Master are given in LocoScript PC's Database and Mailmerge book. On the PCW you need the LocoMail program to do this, and instructions on creating a Master document are given in the LocoMail User Guide.

There is an article about using Print Extract on page 3 of this issue.

Setting up a phone list

PCW/PC We followed the instructions given in Issue 18 of *Script* to set up a phone list on our Amstrad FX 9600T fax. But when we tried to print it out, the list had 'P' characters on every other line. The article said that this happened when the pitch of the document was not 10, but the pitch of our document was definitely set to 10. A later issue said that slashed zeros might also cause difficulties, but we aren't using any of those either!

Mr PC, Ashington

The problem that you are experiencing with your Amstrad fax machine can be caused by having the wrong pitch in your document, but it also happens when the left margin in your phone list document is set to something other than 0.

So you should go back to your phone list document and make sure that the left margin is set to 0. Save the document to disc, and then when you send it to the fax machine as described in the article, your phone numbers should be correctly stored in the memory, and you will be able to print them out.

Letters

Printing a User dictionary

PCW/PC Having used LocoScript since it was first produced, I have over the years made up a Welsh language dictionary using the USERSPEL.DCT facility. At the moment it is 80k in size.

I am now eager to look at all the entries in the dictionary in order to correct any mistakes which I have made. However unless I use 'User Dictionary Upkeep' which is slow, there does not appear to be any way to get at it. Is it possible to print it out?

Mr GT, Cardiff

You can get a print-out of your User dictionary if you are using LocoScript v2.28 or later, or LocoScript PC. Just create a LocoScript document, press f1 on the PCW or F9 on the PC and select the option to `Insert Text`. You will then see the Disc Manager screen. Select the file USERSPEL.DCT and press ENTER. Your Welsh dictionary will be inserted into the document, with all the words arranged alphabetically, and you can then print this document out as normal for checking. Once you have checked the list and corrected any mistakes in it, you can put it into a new USERSPEL.DCT using 'Automatic addition' and use this new dictionary when checking the spelling in documents. These features of User dictionaries are covered in more detail in Issue 11 of *Script* and Chapter 22 of the LocoScript PC Reference book.

If you have a version of LocoScript 2 which is earlier than v2.28, you can upgrade to the latest version by sending in your Master disc and a cheque for £14.95 + VAT (£17.57).

Separators in a Master

PCW/PC I am using a Master document to take information from a datafile and put it in a data document. However I get the message 'Syntax error'. I have checked my Master and it has a Record Pattern with separators and all the items to extract have got separators and an end of record marker. I have defined the symbols used and the item names are the same as in the datafile. What is going wrong?

Mr GN, Ravenshead

Your Master document won't work simply because you have omitted a double quote mark in the definition of the separator you have called 'cent'. When this is added your merge should proceed without any problems.

However from the print outs you have sent, we can see that you have used a different separator to divide every item, which has made your Master rather confused. This is not necessary: if the separator character you have used for one item is also suitable to use with another item, then you can re-use the same character. In fact it is possible to use the same separator to divide all the items in the Master, which means that you only have to define one character as the separator. This makes the Master much easier to set up and understand.

We recommend that you decide which separator character you want to use, then take out all the other definitions and only use the chosen separator in your Record Pattern. For more information see the article on page 8, which explains the steps involved in setting up a Master to create a data document.

Printing columns

PCW/PC In Issue 17 of *Script* you had an article on setting up columns in LocoScript. You suggested that you print your document one page at a time, but I have developed the following method instead.

Set up your documents as described in the article, but then make as many copies of it as you have columns. Edit each copy in turn, deleting in the first copy all the pages which are not in Column 1 format, in the second copy all those that are not in Column 2 format and so on. Now print out the Column 1 document. Once you have done this, feed the paper back into the printer in the correct sequence and then you print out the Column 2 document. Keep doing this until you have printed all your Columns documents on the same paper.

If you are careful with your page lengths, this method should work for both 'snaked' columns and for tables and it is much quicker than issuing several print commands for the same page. If you only have 2 columns and LocoScript PC, you can of course first print all the odd pages and then all the even pages on the same piece of paper from the original document which is even quicker still!

Mrs C P, Milton Keynes

Thank you for your tip. This method for printing columns works best when the text in your document is unjustified – justified text will be printed rather oddly. Also the last line of each column has to end in a carriage return, so it isn't possible to split paragraphs or sentences between one column and the next.

Letters

Installing LocoScript PC

[PC] I have recently bought LocoScript PC for my Tandon 386N PC. When I try to load LocoScript using the 'install' command at the first stage of the checking, I always get the message 'Bad command' and I am unable to proceed further. Is there something wrong with my disc?

Mr RG, Newport Pagnell

The message you get saying `Bad command or file name` **when installing LocoScript means that the command you are typing is incorrect, not that the disc itself is faulty.**

When you switch on your PC and load DOS, if you have a hard disc the prompt that appears on the screen is `C>`**. To load the LocoScript PC Installation program you need to execute a program from the Root directory of a floppy in Drive A.**

So after making sure that you have your LocoScript PC Master disc 1 in Drive A, you should first type `CD A:\` **and press the RETURN key, then type** `A:INSTALL` **and press the RETURN key again. These commands will always work, no matter which version of DOS you are using or what you were doing before. The Installation program will now begin to load as detailed in the Installation Booklet.**

Be careful not to include a space between the `A:` **and** `INSTALL`**. If you do this you will get the** `Bad command or file name` **message. The layout of the text in the very first version of the Installation Booklet (marked APR 90) seemed to suggest a space, but this has been changed in all the later versions.**

LocoLink

[PCW/PC] I am having problems using LocoLink. I have gone through the procedure described in the LocoLink manual to upgrade LocoScript PC, loaded the program on the PCW and I have performed the test which shows that all four signals are working correctly.

The problem is that pressing f7 on the PCW after inserting a disc in Drive A has no effect and it does not make the disc drive spin, which is what happens when using LocoScript 2. The PC still appears to ignore the PCW. What should I do?

Mr JG, Pinner

Pressing f7 on the PCW while running LocoLink is not supposed to have any physical effect. All pressing f7 does is tell the PCW that there is a new disc in the drive, so the disc drive will not spin as it does when using LocoScript 2.

After pressing [f7] on the PCW, you should go to the PC. At the beginning, the PC ignores the new Drive Z – just as it ignores all the other floppy disc drives until you say that you want to use them. To this, all you have to do is move the cursor to Drive Z which is shown with '- - - ' beside the name and press [Ins] on the numeric keypad. This will tell the PC to read the PCW drive, the disc in the PCW will spin, and the PC screen will change to show the files on your PCW floppy disc.

There was an article on using LocoLink 2 in Issue 19 of *Script*.

Removing an indent

[PC] I use LocoScript PC and I have a query. How on earth do you clear an indent margin from a layout? The 'set' and 'clear' keys just seem to move it; the space bar jumps to the right margin, and there doesn't appear to be a menu option to clear the indent when editing the layout. What should I do?

Dr DL, Oxford

All you have to do to remove an Indent margin from your Layout is move it back to the position of the left margin. Go into the Layout Editor and select the particular Layout you are using. Then position the cursor on the left hand margin, press [F6] to display the Margins menu and select `Set Indent margin`**. (You can also move the position of the Indent to the left margin by using the [+] and [-] keys as you mentioned in your letter).**

Once the Indent margin is moved to the same position as the left margin, it will move with this margin until you want to set up another indent.

When you return to your document you will find that any text in the altered Layout that was previously indented will now be lined up with the left margin.

Letters

Creating boxes and lines

PC I am a frequent user of LocoScript 2 on my PCW8512. Quite a lot of my work involves the construction of vertical lines, logos and boxes. For this purpose I have designed my own special characters using LocoChar and I can print them out on my Star LC24-200 printer.

I have now an Amstrad Laptop PC and I am keen to transfer as much work as possible from my PCW to the new machine. However I have been told that you can't transfer LocoChar characters to the PC.

Is this true, and if so is there a way of producing the character and boxes I need using LocoScript PC?

Mr CD, Hamilton

As explained in our literature, it is not possible to move your own character designs set up with LocoChar from the PCW to the PC. However LocoScript PC has a more extensive range of characters than LocoScript 2 which you could use to create logos and shapes.

In particular, LocoScript PC has a set of box and line characters, so you could build up the boxes you want. These characters are grouped together in the 'Boxes and lines' keyboard layout. The details of this layout are given in Appendix III of the Reference book.

You can call up these characters by holding down Alt +Ctrl together as you type the appropriate keys, or by you can press Alt F5 to call up the Boxes and lines supershift.

Alternatively if you are using v1.5 of LocoScript PC you can press Alt F9 and a keyboard display appears on the screen. This shows you the position of the characters, and you select the supershift you want by pressing the relevant Function key. By using combinations of the Shift, Alt and Ctrl keys you can then type in this supershift.

If you want to put large letters in your boxes, you can print them using LocoScript PC's Printer codes. These were explained in more detail in Issue 19 of *Script*.

Temporary files

PC Whilst using LocoScript PC I have noticed various LocoScript files on the Disc Manager screen that appear and disappear while I am using the machine, and I presume that they are part of the system files. They all start with an '$$LS' and a number and have a '.$$$' filetype on the end.

Just recently a file called $$LS3696.$$$ has turned up in one of my directories and has stayed there. I can't find a list of exactly what these files are and what they do in the LocoScript PC manuals. Is it possible to erase $$$LS3696.$$$ from my disc without causing any problems?

Mr GT, Margate

The files that you have noticed on the Disc Manager screen are temporary files created by LocoScript. They are created when you change something in a document you are working on, and they are only left on your disc when you leave a document without closing it up correctly.

Some of these temporary files won't have anything in them, but some may contain useful information. You can recover this information if you want to by renaming the relevant file. To do this, just pick it out with the cursor, press F3 to display the Files menu, then select `Rename file` and press ↵. Type the new name for the file into the menu that appears on the screen, press ↵ and the file is renamed. You will now be able to edit this file as normal.

If you are sure that you do not need them, you can erase the temporary files from your system whenever you want. To avoid creating these files, you should always close a document properly once you have finished with it by calling up the F10 menu and choosing to `Finish edit` or `Abandon edit`.

Blocks are also held as temporary files with names like `$$LS`*xxxx*`.BLK`. If you are erasing unwanted temporary files, you should be careful not to remove these Block files at the same time.

PostScript

Sometime this year there will be a General Election, and even those not usually interested in politics are being caught up in the excitement. But the prize for the most enthusiastic observer must go to a LocoScript user, Mr Robin French, who has created a Parliamentary Datafile using LocoFile.

"I have always had more than a passing interest in politics, and like many people I sit glued to the TV on Election Night following the results and computer forecasts of the experts. As I have kept the press cuttings of all the General Elections from 1966 to 1983, I decided to organise them in an ordinary card index system, to help me to work out the individual constituency voting patterns. However, not surprisingly, I never got round to the mammoth task!

I then thought I would list every MP alphabetically with their constituencies, Party and respective majorities in a simple LocoScript document. This however took hours and hours to complete, was 13 pages long and not very practical. Even before the cramp had gone, I realised that I also wanted a list of all the Constituencies arranged in alphabetical order with another one listing them in order of vulnerability.

Even though I now had all the information I needed typed in, the Cut and Paste job which faced me seemed horrendous. Then I realised that the solution was to return to my first idea – but using LocoFile instead of a manual card index. This would allow me to arrange all the MPs and their constituencies in any order I liked simply by setting up a suitable index and I could then get a print out whenever I needed it.

It was then that I became really ambitious! If I could do all this, couldn't I find some way to indicate the 'Percentage Swing' required to lose each seat from the 1987 results? Using GOTO it might then be possible to ask for the constituencies with, for example, a 3% or less swing against (or whatever the Polls indicate) and instantly see the places where the controlling party were vulnerable – and therefore of most interest in an Election.

To do this I found that I needed to calculate the actual percentage of votes cast for each party in the 1987 election. This meant calculating the percentage of **all** the votes cast for **every** party in **every** constituency – 650 records multiplied by approximately 4 parties per record!

Once I had done this, I created a new field in my LocoFile records for the 'Percentage swing against' and set about entering the percentages correct to two decimal places for greater accuracy.

Originally I had added the suffix 'Con' or 'Lab' or whatever in the same field as the MPs name. I now put this in its own field so it became possible to index by party. Then by using the percentage as the sub-index, I could scroll through the datafile to look at, say, the Conservative seats in order of vulnerability and so on for all the rest of the parties.

As a further refinement I also decided to put the second placed party in every constituency in their own field, so it was now possible to create an index to find the constituencies which the various parties hoped to win – in other words the 'Target' constituencies for each party.

The datafile was now nearing completion, but there was some more information I wanted to include, for example the details of the previous elections. So I created a fairly large 'Additional information' field where I could enter previous 'swings' and any other notes about the MP and the constituency that might be useful – for example saying where obscurely named constituencies such as 'Mole Valley' actually were.

Finally I have a field in my datafile for the results of the 1992 election – so I can see how my predictions work out!"

Mr French will supply a copy of his datafile for £14.95 + postage to anyone using LocoScript 2 and LocoFile on a 8512, or a 8256 with a B drive. His address is : 45 Storr Gardens, Hutton, Brentwood. Essex. CM13 1HT.

Printed by Ashford Colour Press, Gosport, Hampshire