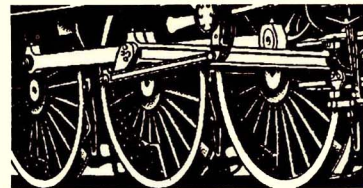# Script

THE LOCOSCRIPT NEWSLETTER

We start this issue by heralding the release of LocoFont 24 – two new discs offering a range of typestyles for 24 pin printers. With the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc, this new product means that the support we provide for these printers is now comparable to the existing support for the built-in printer for the 8000 machines. We've printed samples of the new typestyles on the News page.

On the same subject, the article on page 3 looks at getting the most out of 24 pin printers. From the letters we receive, it's clear that there's some confusion about the different ways in which we support 24 pin printers. Now you have a choice of discs – the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc and the Printer Drivers Disc. The Printer files on each disc give different results and the article discusses these differences and gives advice on when to use each disc.

We continue our LocoFile/LocoMail series by looking at another way of printing lists from LocoFile. In the last issue, we saw how to print a simple list using LocoFile's print options. The article on page 8 investigates how LocoMail gives you more sophisticated results. With a few simple instructions you can control not only the amount of information you print but also the layout of the list. Don't worry if you're new to LocoMail. This article looks at the problem from the the point of view of someone starting from scratch with LocoMail, although some familiarity with LocoFile is assumed.

In the last issue we asked John Blandford to give an account of his experience as a LocoMail consultant. As this proved popular, we've asked another expert in the 'Loco' field – Dave Smith – to tell his story. As you may remember from previous issues, Dave salvages information from corrupted discs so by the time you contact him you need more than just advice! The article traces the growth of his salvage operations from a hobby to a Limited Company.

Another article in this issue marks the start of a new series for a particular breed of LocoScript user – authors. The 'Scripts' article on page 6 focuses on the work of playwrights. It gives general advice on using LocoScript to organise documents and then looks at the particular techniques a playwright can use to lay out scripts.

Contents

$\mathcal{N}$ews

LocoFont 24

Typestyles for 24 pin printers...

This month we announce the release of LocoFont 24 – two new discs which let you print in different typestyles on a 24 pin printer.

The typestyles are for use with the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc. Together they give you the freedom to use a faster, better printer *and* print all LocoScript's characters in a range of typestyles to match different types of documents.

Like the Standard and Sans Serif typestyles already supplied on the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc, all the LocoFont 24 typestyles are based on the typestyles we produced for the PCW8256/8512 9-pin dot matrix printer. We've even used the same names – as you can see from the samples printed in the next column!

As these typestyles take a while to produce we're releasing them in two stages. What we've done is to divide up the typestyles into two sets – a Text Set and a Display Set. The Text Set contains the Roman, Finesse, Definite, Capitals and MiniPS typestyles. This disc will be available before the next issue of *Script*.

The Display Set includes the more decorative typestyles: the Script and Penman 'joined up' typestyles, the Copperplate and Deco typestyles and the ever popular Old English. This disc will be available later this year.

Each disc costs £24.95. We are currently adding the finishing touches to the Text Set and we are happy to take orders for this disc. If you are concerned about a firm finishing date for the Text Set or you want to know about the availability of the Display Set disc, you should ring us for more information. (Don't forget, you can only use LocoFont 24 typestyles if you already have a 24 pin printer and the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc).

...and LocoChar 24

The LocoFont 24 discs will also include a new version of LocoChar – the program which lets you redesign up to 16 of LocoScript's characters. So if you already use some of your own characters on the built-in printer for the 8000, you can design even better versions to print on your 24 pin printer.

A feature of LocoChar 24 is that you can copy any existing LocoScript character to form the basis of your own design. So we won't have to print the grid patterns of the characters a-z and 0-9 in *Script*!

(The article starting on the next page describes the advantages of using the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc, LocoFont 24 and LocoChar 24 on a 24 pin printer.)

Capitals

IF ANY ITEM PROVES TO HAVE A MANUFACTURING FAULT WITHIN 30 DAYS WE WILL REPLACE IT FREE OF CHARGE OR REFUND IN FULL.

Definite

I am pleased to inform you that the book you ordered from us two weeks ago has now arrived. If there are any other books or catalogues you wish to order, please do not hesitate to ask.

Finesse

HOW TO JOIN: Simply fill in the coupon and return to the address shown above along with your payment. We'll send you your membership discount card AND a free introductory gift.

Roman

This brochure shows the range of computer accessories available in your local Oddbods store. Simply use the price list to order by ticking the appropriate product.

Mini PS

At the Annual General Meeting of Abbott Gardens Residents Association it was decided that full consideration would be given to the proposal to re-decorate the exterior during the next financial year.

Changes to Installation

Since version 2.20 of LocoScript, upgrading to the latest version has been made much easier. You simply run an Installation program which creates a new Start-of-day disc for you. From version 2.24 onwards, we've made some changes to the way the Installation program works which makes updating to the latest version even easier.

Before version 2.24, the Installation program created a new Start-of-day disc (or several start-up discs) and then left you to sort out which support files – such as templates, extra Printer files or LocoSpell dictionaries – you needed to add to the new discs.

With the new version, the Installation program does all the work for you. It automatically produces updated versions of all the software on your old start-up discs (both Drive A and Drive B discs for PCW8512 owners) and then copies **all** the support files it finds onto the new start-up discs.

Another change that we've made concerns the LocoFont files. On versions prior to 2.24, you had to update your LocoFont Character Set files separately from LocoScript and the other add-ons by running Stage 2 of the Installation program. On the latest version, any LocoFont files found on your existing Start-of-day discs are automatically updated for you where necessary. This new feature means you can create a completely new set of start-up discs using just one option on the Installation program's main menu.

New suppliers in USA

Our products are now being distributed in the USA by SinoTech Limited. They have taken over from Datamension who we believe are no longer trading.

SinoTech are also an established Amstrad dealer who can supply you with peripherals and spare parts for your PCW.

SinoTech's address is:

SinoTech Limited
25975 Diamond Lake Road Suite 105
Mundelein
Illinois 60060

Their phone number is 312/566-0504.

Getting more from 24 pin printers

For speed and quality of output, 24 pin printers are fast becoming the best value for money. These printers are dot matrix printers with a 24 pin printhead and so can print better characters than 9 pin dot matrix printers, such as the one supplied with the PCW8256/8512. They also tend to be faster than the built-in printer for the 8000 machines.

The release of the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc means that we now support 24 pin printers in two ways – with the special Printer files from this disc and with the standard Printer files on the Printer Drivers Disc. In this article we clarify the differences between these two discs and allow you to decide which one you want to use or, indeed, whether you need both!

If you use, or plan to buy, a 24 pin printer, then we recommend that you use the 24 Pin Printer Drivers disc. This disc lets you print the full range of characters in any of LocoScript's print styles. However, it doesn't fulfil every need. For example, those people who want to use the extra fonts or typestyles built into their 24 pin printer will find the Printer Drivers Disc useful as well.

We start by describing the support provided by the 24 Pin Printer Drivers files and then look at the occasions when you might prefer to use the standard Printer files. A section on the next page gives particular advice to the owners of Amstrad 24 pin printers.

Full range of characters

All printers offer certain basic features, but whether you can use different combinations of characters, pitches and Print styles depends on each printer. For example, you would expect to be able to print the characters 0-9 and a-z on all printers, but you may have to look far and wide for a printer which lets you print the whole range of Greek characters or special mathematical symbols. The ability to print characters in different Pitches and Print styles also varies from printer to printer.

With a 24 pin printer and the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc, you're no longer restricted to the characters supported by the printer. The 24 Pin Printer files work by "downloading" characters into the printer's buffer so you can send any character, in any shape or size, to the printer. As a result, it's possible to print all LocoScript's characters, use any Character pitch available and add all the emphases (such as Bold and Italic) that you can select in your documents.

Previously, the only printer that LocoScript supported in this way was the built-in printer for the 8000 machines. Now it's possible to offer full support for a range of 24 pin printers.

On the 8000 printer the character shapes are produced within the constraints of a 9-pin printhead although in High Quality, LocoScript simulates an 18 pin printhead by printing each line twice and moving the paper a fraction of an inch between each pass. Printers with a 24 pin printhead give you a double advantage: quality of print and speed. The larger number of pins allows you to produce characters with greater resolution and therefore higher quality. And because the resolution is so good, each line is printed in a single pass of the printhead, in both High and Draft Quality printing.

Adding extra typestyles

As well as providing full support for all LocoScript's features, the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc also gives access to a range of typestyles.

Since version 2.16 of LocoScript, you've automatically had a choice of typestyles to use on the 8000 printer. We've duplicated this arrangement on the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc so that you get a choice of Standard and Sans Serif styles. In fact, in response to customer feedback we've gone one better by providing lighter and darker versions of both these typestyles.

Now there's an opportunity to expand the range of typestyles used with a new product – LocoFont 24. As the name suggests, this product gives you a selection of typestyles based on those already provided for the 8000 built-in printer. To see a sample of the quality of some of these new typestyles, see the opposite page.

Designing your own characters

We're also adding a new version of the LocoChar character design program to the LocoFont 24 disc. LocoChar 24 lets you redesign up to 16 of LocoScript's characters and print them on a 24 pin printer. PCW8256/8512 users who have already designed their own characters on the built-in printer can now take advantage of the larger print matrices to produce better characters on a 24 pin printer. Unfortunately, it isn't possible to transfer designs directly from the 8000 printer to 24 pin printers so existing characters will need to be set up afresh.

LocoChar 24 also means that, with the addition of a 24 pin printer, PCW9512 users now have an opportunity to produce their own special characters. Previously PCW9512 owners had no scope for

3

designing their own characters because the built-in printer on this machine is a daisywheel printer.

Like the latest version of LocoChar for the 8000 machines, you'll be able to transfer the new characters between different 24 pin Character Set files, without redefining them each time.

Using the built-in fonts

In spite of the full support provided by the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc, there is one drawback to using this disc – you can't use these files to access the printer's own fonts. The solution to this problem is to switch to the standard support provided by the Printer Drivers Disc.

The difference between the 24 Pin Printer files and the standard Printer files is that whereas the former "downloads" all the information, the latter relies solely on the features built into the printer. With the 24 Pin Printer files, you can be certain that your documents will print exactly as you want. The price for swapping over to the Printer Drivers Disc is the loss of this certainty. For example, if the standard Printer file doesn't have information about the PS widths of the printer's characters, you won't be able to print in PS. Instead, the printer may substitute one of its fixed pitches.

One occasion when you have to put up with this uncertainty is if you want to use the printer's built-in fonts. To do this, you need two things: the most suitable Printer file from the Printer Drivers Disc and a Character Set file to match the font you want to use. (If you're not sure what a Character Set file is, you may find the article 'Solving problems with printers' in Issue 7 of *Script* helpful.)

For some printers, installing the appropriate Character Set is simply a matter of copying a suitable .#xx file from those already provided on the Printer Drivers Disc. For example, we already supply extra Character Sets for the Helvette and Times Roman fonts on the NEC P6 Plus printer. We also cater for the range of fonts found in the Epson LQ2500, and, in response to several requests, we're planning to produce Character Sets for the four built-in fonts on the NEC P2200 printer. We'll have more news in the next issue of *Script*.

For space reasons, we can't provide a full range of Character Sets for all the printers we support. So for those whose needs are

Amstrad LQ printers – a case for standard support

In the last issue of *Script* we looked at the problems faced by owners of the Amstrad LQ3500 and LQ5000 printers. To recap, these printers handle "downloaded" characters by printing each line in two passes, so printing is very slow. With underlined text, four passes of the printhead for each line are required! Unfortunately, this is beyond the control of our software so there's nothing we can do to speed up the printing on these printers.

Of all the printers we've tested so far, these are the only two to show this problem. With other 24 pin printers, the printhead only passes once over each line so there's no comparable loss of speed with the 24 Pin Printer files.

The only difference you may notice with most 24 pin printers when using the 24 Pin Printer files is a slight pause before the document starts printing. Because it is "downloading" the characters, a lot of information has to be sent to the printer before the first lines can be printed. However, as the characters are only downloaded as they are needed, a 'working set' is quickly established in the printer and after a few lines, printing resumes its normal speed.

If you own an Amstrad LQ printer and are concerned with the speed of output,

we recommend that you sacrifice the full range of characters and use the Printer Drivers Disc in place of the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc. Standard support for both the LQ3500 and the LQ5000 printers is already supplied on the master LocoScript disc in the form of the LQ3500.PRI file.

However, there is now a better file available on the Printer Drivers Disc – the LQ3500X.PRI file. With this file, you can print in proportional spacing. It also gives you faster printing of High Quality justified text. With the old LQ3500 file, the Amstrad LQ printers printed justified text slowly, moving back and forth over the line in order to cope with LocoScript's spacing commands. The new LQ3500X file uses a better technique for spacing which means that the printhead moves smoothly over the line and therefore gives faster printing.

You can, of course, use both the standard Printer file and the 24 Pin Printer file and get the best of both worlds – speed from one and all LocoScript's features from the other. The only problem is that you can't get both at the same time. You have to opt either for speed (from the Standard Printer file) or for all the features (from the 24 Pin Printer file) for each document you print.

not met by a ready-made Character Set, we've produced CHARKIT. This program lets you access certain features of your printer not supported by the standard Printer file. Its main purpose is to allow you to create Character Set files tailored specifically for fonts built into your printers. (You should note that CHARKIT can only be used with the standard Printer files and not with the 24 Pin Printer files.)

CHARKIT is a powerful program which can be used to overcome other problems such as printing in PS by defining a Character Set file with the correct PS widths. However, using the program for its more esoteric applications is a time-consuming and complex undertaking and one thing we can't provide is individual support on this product.

CHARKIT used to be supplied for 9512 owners on the Printer Drivers and Character Sets Disc and for 8000 owners on the Printer Character Sets Disc but, following our re-organisation of products

earlier this year, it's now supplied as part of the Printer Drivers Disc for both machines.

The range of features supported by the 24 Pin Printer Drivers is far greater than those you can produce with the standard Printer Drivers Disc. So if you want to take advantage of LocoScript's full range of characters, and you're happy with the typestyles provided, we recommend that you use the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc. If, on the other hand, you want to use the printer's own fonts along with the 24 Pin Printer typestyles, you'll need to invest in the Printer Drivers Disc as well.

In fact, there's nothing to stop you from installing both the 24 Pin Printer file and the standard Printer file on your Start-of-day disc and then swapping between the two at will. All that's needed to switch between the two is simply to select the appropriate Printer and Character Set files on the Printer menus.

24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc vs Printer Drivers Disc
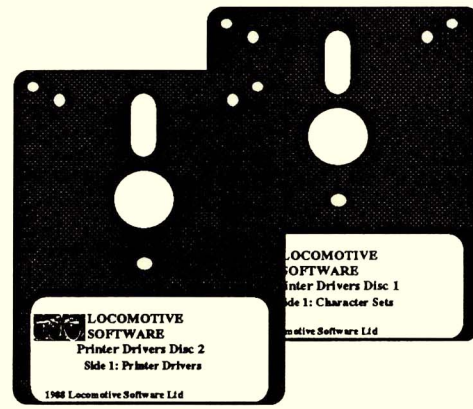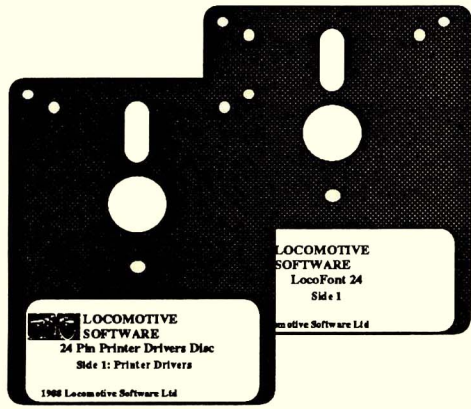
To help you decide which disc to use with your printer, we've summarised the pros and cons of using the special 24 Pin Printer files and the standard Printer files:

24 Pin Printer files – the advantages

✔ all LocoScript's characters and accents
✔ all the pitches
✔ all the Print styles
✔ a range of typestyles (on the LocoFont 24 disc)
✔ user definable characters (using LocoChar 24)
✔ the certainty that your documents print exactly as you set them up

– the disadvantages

✘ can't access printer's built-in fonts
✘ slow printing on the Amstrad LQ printers

Standard Printer files – the advantages

✔ access to printer's fonts
✔ faster printing on Amstrad LQ printers

– the disadvantages

✘ limited range of characters
✘ fewer Character pitches
✘ limited Print styles
✘ restricted choice of typestyles
✘ no user-defined characters
✘ the loss of certainty that your documents print as you intend

The complete LocoScript 2 set printed with the 24 Pin Printer file on the Epson LQ500 printer.

All the characters that the Epson LQ500 can produce using the standard Printer file.

Behind the scenes

Authors make up a very large proportion of the PCW's users, and so we've planned a series of articles to cover the word processing needs of the whole range of creative writers. This first article concerns some of the special needs a playwright or scriptwriter might have.

As with any form of creative activity, writing plays is easier if you don't have to worry about the mechanics of laying out their text, but can concentrate on the play in hand. LocoScript allows you to set up a framework in which to write so that you can think about how you want the text to appear at the very beginning and then forget the details.

To set up LocoScript in this way, you need to think about two things. The first thing is the tools you need to produce the layout you want. The answer to this problem is layouts and, in particular, Stock Layouts – those layouts that you store permanently in your document so that you have them available on tap.

The second problem is to find a way of making the Stock Layouts that you use in one document available in other documents. As the Acts and the Scenes of a play are likely to be spread across several documents, it will be convenient to set up the Stock Layouts just once and use them wherever you need them. The solution is to set up all the Stock Layouts in a Template.

We've covered Stock Layouts and Templates before in *Script*, but in this article we'll see how a playwright might use them.

The role of Layouts

The box below shows the sort of result a playwright might aim for. You could get the results you want by using individual word processing codes to get the various Character Pitch and Line Spacing effects you want. But that would mean a lot of work remembering where to turn on (and off) the different emphases and commands and you'd end up with a lot of codes in your document! Instead, you're better off using LocoScript's Layouts.

A Layout is just a way of gathering together the items that control how LocoScript text is printed and laid out on the paper. You can change from one layout to another at any point by inserting a Layout code containing details of the layout you want to use from there on.

One way of doing this is to press ⎡f2⎤ and select New layout. LocoScript puts you into the "Layout Editor" so that you can change the values. But if you had to change each of the features by hand every time you changed from say speech to directions, this would be rather laborious.

For this reason LocoScript lets you first set up a whole set of special layouts and simply call these up when required. These are called Stock Layouts. To make it easy, you can give each Stock Layout a name and when you want to swap, call up New layout as before, but just press ⎡f5⎤ Stock and LocoScript will present a menu of the Stock Layouts available. When you're really familiar with your range of layouts, you can insert a Layout code simply by typing ⎡+⎤LT followed by the number of the layout you require.

The role of the Template

You can set up all the Stock Layouts once and for all by creating them in a LocoScript Template. This initialises every new document you create (subject to LocoScript's rules) so whenever you start a new play, all your Stock Layouts will be available automatically.

A template is just a LocoScript document with the name TEMPLATE.STD. When you create a new document LocoScript looks for a template to copy – firstly in the same group on the same disc as the document you are about to create. If it can't find one there it looks in the *same group* on Drive M. If it still can't find one it looks in group 0 on the same disc (no matter what group name you may have given it), or group 0 on Drive M. LocoScript uses the first template it finds as the basis for the new document.

To make it easy, templates from your Start-of-Day disc are automatically

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The desired result

This scene by a well known early playwright shows how the text can be organised:

```
Scene I. A public place.

Enter Mercutio, Benvolio, Page and Servants.

Benvolio        I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.
                The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
                And if we meet we shall not scape a brawl;
                For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.
Mercutio        Thou art like one of these fellows that, when he enters the
                confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and
                says 'God send me no need of thee!' and by the operation of
                the second cup draws him on the drawer, when, indeed, there
                is no need.
Benvolio        Am I like such a fellow?
Mercutio        Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in
                Italy; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to
                be moved.
Benvolio        And what to?
Mercutio        Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly,
                for one would kill the other. Thou! why, thou wil quarrel
                with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard
                than thou hast.
```

● **Titles:** These have to stand out clearly from everything else, so they have been put in double width proportionally spaced text, with an extra half line space between lines. They use the standard margins (ie 1 inch from the edge of the page).

● **Stage directions:** These too have to look distinctive, and so have been typed in italic, proportionally spaced text, again between the standard magins.

● **Speech:** This is in normal text, proportionally spaced for the most pleasing appearance. Each new speaker is identified by a character name at the left margin and the rest of the text is indented about one and a half inches. The text is justified to give it a straight right edge.

copied to Drive M when you load LocoScript. They are then available to all your data discs.

All you need for your scripts is a template containing the Stock Layouts you require, stored in a suitable group. We can't give a hard and fast rule here: if different publishers require work laid out differently, then you'll need lots of groups each with its own template. (You'd probably give the groups suitable names to identify different commisioning agents.) On the other hand if you always lay out your scripts in the same way, you'd just put a single template in group 0 on your Start-of-Day disc. This will be copied to group 0 on Drive M when you start up and so will be picked up no matter where you create the document.

Setting up the Template

We'll assume that you deal with a number of different commisioning agents requiring you to have a different TEMPLATE.STD file in each group on your data disc and that the layout we've described is required by "Globe Productions".

You first need to create a group on the disc for Globe Productions. Select an empty group on one of your data discs and use the Rename option on the f4 Group menu on the Disc Manager screen to give the group a suitable name (in this case we'll use GLOBE).

You now need to create a template for the GLOBE group. One thing to watch out for is that you don't inadvertently create a template that 'inherits' unwanted details of another template. The rules for how LocoScript hunts for a Template mean that creating a template in group 0 on Drive A may give you a copy of a template sitting in group 0 of Drive M. You can solve this problem by always creating a new template in group 0 on Drive M – erasing any existing template first, of course! This trick allows you to set up your template from scratch – you won't have to have to undo any unwanted effects first.

Once you've created the template you need to set up the Stock Layouts you require. This is done from Document Set-up, called up by pressing ⌷f1⌷ to get the Actions menu and then ⌷ENTER⌷.

The screen changes to show the horizontal bars of the Pagination screen but it's actually the new menus that we're interested in. These let you create Stock Layouts to match the structure of the scripts. (The box gives the details.)

Creating the Stock Layouts

The Globe Productions scripts have three distinct layouts for Titles, Directions and Speech, so you'll need a separate Stock Layout for each.

In Document set-up, press ⌷f2⌷ to get the Layouts menu and move down to the Change Stock Layouts option. Press ⌷ENTER⌷. This displays a menu listing the ten Stock Layouts. We're going to use Layouts 2, 3 and 4 to hold our three special scriptwriting layouts. Layout 0 and 1 have a special use so we'll leave them alone to avoid confusion.

To set up Stock Layout 2, move down to the line Stock Layout 2 and press ⌷ENTER⌷. The main part of the screen is unchanged (and indeed is not relevant at this stage), but the information lines at the top show a new series of menus. These can be used to set up different features of the Stock Layout.

We suggest you start by changing the name. This ensures that it's easy to pick out the correct Layout later, and is always displayed at the top left of the screen when you're editing text using this Layout. Press ⌷f7⌷ to set up a name for this layout. As this is for titles we'll call it Titles, but we'll also add some spaces and a 2 in the rightmost character to remind us that it's Stock Layout 2. This is useful as there's a quick way of calling up Stock Layouts using their number.

Then set up the special features – double width proportional spacing and an extra half line gap after each title line. These are all set up from the Size menu, so press ⌷f4⌷ to display the menu and then use the cursor keys and the ⌷⊞⌷ key to set up the features you require. (The extra half space after each line is set by moving to CR Extra Space and selecting ½.) Then press ⌷ENTER⌷ to confirm this choice. Press ⌷EXIT⌷ to return to the Stock Layouts menu. Now repeat the process for

Stock Layout 3 and Stock Layout 4 – setting the particular values we will require for each.

We'll call Stock Layout 3 Directions   3, and set proportional spacing in the Size menu. To set Italics we use the Options menu – press ⌷f8⌷ and move to Italics; press ⌷⊞⌷ to tick this option, followed by ⌷ENTER⌷ to confirm it. Again, press ⌷EXIT⌷ to return to the Stock Layouts menu.

Finally, call Stock Layout 4 Speech   4 and set it to proportional spacing too. To set this to Justify the text (ie give it a straight right margin) once more use the Options menu, but this time tick the Justify option.

The special feature of our Speech layout is that only the first line of each paragraph starts at the left margin – all the other lines start about one and a half inches in. To do this we need to set a tab position at one and a half inches from the left margin. In the text, we'll then use an "indent tab" to start all lines but the first at the tab position.

It's easy with LocoScript 2 to set up a tab. We're already in the "Layout Editor" and there we can use the left and right cursor keys to move the cursor on the ruler line at the top of the screen across to the position we want a tab. Simply pressing ⌷⊞⌷ sets a tab at that position! To work out the position we just need to know what the divisions in the ruler line mean. You'll see the words Scale Pitch at the top of the screen, followed by a number. This is the number of divisions on the ruler line equivalent to an inch on paper. So to set a tab at 1½ inches, multiply the Scale Pitch value by 1½, move that number of divisions right from the margin and press ⌷⊞⌷.

Press ⌷EXIT⌷ to return to the Stock Layouts menu. Now save the template to disc. Then copy it to the GLOBE group on the data disc and it's ready for use.

Using the Structure

When you want to create a play for Globe Productions just create a document in the GLOBE group. Then everything you've just set up will be available.

When you want to set out your text using the layouts you've just created, simply select New layout from the Layouts menu and press ⌷f5⌷ to get the menu of Stock Layouts. Move the cursor to the name of the layout you want a, press ⌷ENTER⌷ to select this and then ⌷EXIT⌷ to return to editing. Note how LocoScript also inserts a carriage return (↵). The return is necessary because the new margins and tabs in the Layout only take effect on the *next* line.

Just type as normal to get the effects of the Title and Directions layouts, but you'll have to type in a special way to get the required indentation in the speeches.

In the Speech layout, each new paragraph starts at the left hand edge. This is where

we'll put the character's name. Then we want the text to move to the position 1½" from the margin. We can do this by an ordinary tab – simply pressing the ⌷TAB⌷ key – but then the next line will start back at the left margin again. Instead we want to use an "indent tab" – press ⌷ALT⌷ and ⌷TAB⌷ together. Subsequent lines will start at the tab position, in line with the first line. You will see the special symbol ↦ indicating where you've typed the indent tab character. If you want a single character's speech to carry across several paragraphs, start each new paragraph with just the indent tab. Then only the character names will be seen in the "margin".

If you use Stock Layouts it's a lot easier to change to a different set of layouts. Rather than changing every single Layout code by hand, you can use Layout Replacement to automatically update copies of the Stock Layouts in your document with just a few keystrokes (see Issue 2 of Script).

Printing lists the LocoMail way

In the last issue, we showed you how to print lists of information from LocoFile datafiles using LocoFile's Print Extract feature. We also pointed out the limitations of printing lists using this technique.

In this article, you will see how using LocoMail to tackle the same job doesn't involve any trickery and, in addition, gives you a great deal more flexibility in the content of your lists.

LocoMail is LocoScript's mailmerge program. Its job is to pull information into a pre-prepared document known as a Master document. This Master document is just a LocoScript document containing special LocoMail instructions. These mark the places in the document where information is to be inserted, specify what information is to be inserted and, if appropriate, say how the information is to be processed before it is inserted.

The ways in which the Master document can manipulate your information are endless. As well as the simple instructions that insert information into the document, there are LocoMail instructions to select just the data records you want, to do calculations on numeric data, combine items of information, repeat groups of instructions or omit them under certain circumstances. In this article, we are going to look at some of the ways in which these instructions can be used to advantage in producing lists of information.

Simple lists

Producing lists of information from a LocoFile datafile is a very easy task in LocoMail, requiring just four types of LocoMail instruction.

The first instruction that is needed is the simple (+Mail)*item-name*(-Mail) instruction. This instruction copies into

the finished document the information in the datafile associated with the given name. For example,
(+Mail)Name(-Mail) copies the Name information from the datafile;
(+Mail)Phone(-Mail) copies the Phone information.

These instructions are positioned at the actual point in the document at which this information is to be inserted. Suppose, for example, you wanted to prepare a much more sophisticated phone list than the simple one we produced using LocoFile's Print Extract feature – made up of Names on the left and Home: followed by Phone numbers on the right:

Joe Bloggs→ Home:01-123-1234 ↵

All you need to represent this layout in your Master document is:

```
(+Mail)Name(-Mail) →Home:
            (+Mail)Phone(-Mail) ↵
```

(Of course, you'll also need a suitable tab stop on the Ruler line.) The line with (+Mail)Name(-Mail) replaces the actual name and (+Mail)Phone(-Mail) replaces the actual phone number. Notice how the → sign remains *outside* the Mail instructions. You must always be careful to put any tabs and styling or positioning codes (such as (+Bold) and (RAlign)) outside of Mail instructions: otherwise they'll be taken as part of the instruction and won't make their way into the finished document.

The information that is copied at any time is taken from one record – the Current record. When you are preparing a list, you need to take information from a number of different records so another LocoMail instruction you need is the $+ instruction that tells LocoMail to move on to the next record in the datafile. This needs to follow the (+Mail)*item-name*(-Mail) instructions as follows:

```
(+Mail)Name(-Mail) →Home:
            (+Mail)Phone(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)$+(-Mail)
```

The (+Mail)*item-name*(-Mail) and $+ instructions take the required information from the current record and move on to the next record. To take the information from all the records in the datafile, you need LocoMail to repeat these instructions once for every record in the datafile. The way to do this is to save these instructions as an item in its own right (known as a Program Unit)

```
(+Mail)Prog_unit="(+Mail)Name(-Mail)
    →Home: (+Mail)Phone(-Mail) ↵
(+Mail)$+(-Mail)"(-Mail)
```

and then use the Perform command % to Perform this Program Unit over and over again until the end of the datafile is found (signalled, for example, by the Name item becoming empty):

```
(+Mail)%Prog_unit @Name(-Mail)
```

(@Name tells LocoMail to keep on performing Prog_unit until Name is either empty or zero.)

Simply putting all these instructions together gives us a Master document that will produce the list we want. However, this Master document is more of a mass of (Mail) codes than it needs to be. In practice, we would recommend using the following set of instructions in which the → sign and the word Home: have been stored as Text and the carriage return at the end of each line of the list is stored as cr:

```
(+Mail)Text = "→  Home:" ↵
cr="↵
"↵
Prog_unit="(+Mail)Name:Text:Phone:cr ↵
$+(-Mail)"↵
%Prog_unit@Name(-Mail)
```

As you see, this simple ruse has made the Master document much clearer to read.

This Master document gives you lists like the one shown in the box below – without recourse to any of the 'false' Paper Types that we needed when using the Print Extract feature. All you have to do is set up the document for the printer and the type of paper you want to use and merge it with a suitable datafile.

Ordered lists

The list produced by the above Master document has one disadvantage compared to the lists produced by Print Extract – it's just sorted in record number order.

This is easily remedied by using another LocoMail instruction – the $= instruction. This is a new LocoMail instruction, introduced specifically to allow LocoMail to take advantage of the indexes in LocoFile datafiles. It can only be used with LocoFile datafiles and it is only available in versions of LocoMail that have been upgraded to work with LocoFile. (If you have got LocoMail already, this upgrading will happen automatically when you install LocoFile on your system.)

The $= instruction selects an index set up in the datafile – in other words, it lets you choose the order in which LocoMail works through the datafile. The box overleaf explains how the command works. Phone lists are normally in Surname order, so the $= instruction you would want is:

```
$="Surname"
```

(The quote marks are needed to tell LocoMail that the name that is being given is the actual name of the index that is required: without the quote marks, LocoMail would take the current contents of the Surname item as the name of the index it was to select.)

This instruction simply needs to be put at the top of our LocoMail master document as follows:

```
(+Mail)$="Surname" ↵
Text = "→    Home:" ↵
cr="↵
" ↵
Prog_unit="(+Mail)Name:Text:Phone:cr ↵
$+(-Mail)" ↵
%Prog_unit @Name(-Mail)
```

To produce the Phone list in, say, Firstname order (assuming the datafile has such an index), the instruction simply needs to be changed to

```
$="Firstname"
```

while you can leave the choice of the index to use until the Master is merged with the datafile by changing the instruction to:

```
$=? ; Type the name of the
             index you require
```

Selective lists

Further changes to this Master document will let you be selective about the records that you include in the list.

Suppose, for example, that the only people you wanted to include in your phone list were people living in London. One way of making this selection is to pull up the records one by one and test whether the address in the current record is in London – if it is, include the information; if it isn't go on to the next record. The way you make this test is by using the LocoMail # command to specify the conditions under which you include or exclude records from the list.

If you have a specific Town item in the datafile, you would use the condition:

```
# Town = "London"
```

to test if the current Town item is London and if so, and if so, insert the name and phone numbers:

```
#Town="London":<:Name:Text:
                    Phone:cr >
```

To ensure that this test is carried out on every record, this # instruction needs to be put in our Program Unit as follows:

```
Prog_unit="(+Mail)#Town="London" ↵
<:Name:Text:Phone:cr:> ↵
$+(-Mail)" ↵
```

The Program Unit now tests whether the Town item in the current record is London: if it is, then LocoMail adds the Name and Phone details to the list and then advances to the next record; if it isn't, then LocoMail skips the instructions to insert the Name and Phone details and simply advances to the next record.

Even if you don't have a specific Town item, you can still use this approach – only this time you need to take advantage of LocoMail's 'wildcard' * to ask the question "Does the Address item include the word London?".

When comparing two pieces of text, LocoMail interprets * as meaning 'any number and combination of characters'. If an address includes the word London, then it can be thought of as some combination of characters (the details don't matter), followed by London, followed by some other combination of characters (again, the details don't matter). Also it doesn't matter what combination of upper case and lower case letters you've used – LocoMail will pick out London, london or LONDON. So, the records you want are the ones in which the Address item matches *London*, making the # instruction you need:

```
# Address = "*London*"
```

The Program Unit you need in this case is therefore

```
Prog_unit="(+Mail)#Address="*London*" ↵
< : Name : Text : Phone : cr : > ↵
$+(-Mail)" ↵
```

Selection using the keys

If you keep Town as a separate item in your datafile, there is another way of generating a phone list just for the people living in London. This is done by working directly with the keys LocoFile stores in an index.

To use this approach, you need to set up your datafile so that Town appears as an item in its own right and not as part of the

---

An example of the simple phone list

Sheila Maynard	Home: 092 214830
Fred Connell	Home: 0311 189982
Sally Owen	Home: 0923 12497
Eric Carlton	Home: 08251 25976
Anthony Andrews	Home: 01 127 1138
Ruby Peters	Home: 043 51 5958
Belinda Andrews	Home: 0228 12247
Ursula Gilbert	Home: 01 142 1596
John Smith	Home: 01 102 1035
Jack Richards	Home: 0693 16 7854
Nicola Smith	Home: 01 103 1031

address item. Then you can create a special index – one that has Town as the Main Key item andName as the Sub Key item. Such an index orders the records primarily in alphabetical order of Town name but where the Town is the same, the records are put into alphabetical order of Name.

The advantage of this index is that it automatically groups together all the records for people living in London – so once you have found the first record for London, you then know that all the other records for London follow this one. (As we will see, LocoMail has an instruction that will go straight to the first record with a given key.)

This can save you a lot of time as LocoMail jumps straight to the first of the records you want without having to plod through the datafile, abandoning unwanted versions.

Moreover, once you find a record that doesn't have London as the Town, you know that you have processed all the London records and you don't need to look at any more records. You can ask LocoMail to go straight to the end of the datafile so you don't have to waste time with the records which come after the London records.

To use the keys of this special Town index to pick out the records of people with addresses in London you use a $$ instruction – another new LocoMail instruction introduced specifically for processing LocoFile datafiles. This instruction allows you to tell LocoMail to go directly to the record with a specified key in the current index – in much the same way as you can use the Goto feature in LocoFile to go directly to a particular record. The box adjacent explains how this command works.

As with Goto, the record picked out by the $$ command is the first one in the index with the key you give, so using the instruction:

$$ "London"

will pick out the first record in the index that has the Main Key London.

This instruction needs to go at the start of the Master document, immediately after the instruction that picks out the index LocoMail is to work with. Notice that we don't suggest putting this instruction in our Program Unit. If it were included in the Program Unit, the $$ instruction would tell LocoMail to pick out the first record with London as the Main Key each time the Program Unit is executed. The list you would get from that would simply contain the details from this first record repeated over and over again – hardly the result you want!

The new LocoMail commands

Two new commands have been introduced to allow you to use the indexes in a LocoFile datafile from LocoMail, $= and $$.

$= *index-name*
$$ *main-key* $ *sub-key*

(with the $ *sub-key* part of this instruction optional).

As you might expect, you can give the *index-name, main-key* and *sub-key* details either explicitly in the instruction (as "*details*") or you can give the name of an item holding this information or you can simply put ?;prompt to tell LocoMail to stop and wait for you to type in the name you want.

However, while you can use $$? $?;prompt to fetch the details, the drawback to this instruction is that you can only add ; prompt for the Sub Key. A better solution is to set up a couple of instructions to store the details as items and use the item-names in the $$ instruction. For example:

```
mainkey=?; prompt
subkey=?; prompt
$$ mainkey $ subkey
```

Possibly the best way of thinking about the $= and $$ commands is to compare their actions with using indexes in LocoFile itself.

The $= command is like using the f2 Index menu in LocoFile to set the current index. You give the name of the index that you want to work with and this then defines the order in which records are picked out from the datafile. For example, the instruction $="Surname" selects the Surname index. When LocoMail moves on to the next record either at the end of a pass through the document or because of a $+ command, the record to which it moves is the next record in the specified index – just as if you were using the Page key to step through the records in LocoFile.

The only difference between $= and the f2 Index menu is that $= automatically moves to the first record in the specified index (unless this index is already the current index, in which case the record you are on doesn't change). When you select a different index in LocoFile, the record displayed on the screen doesn't change.

The $$ command is like using the Goto menu to tell LocoFile to display a particular record. You give the key in the current index for the record you want LocoMail to select and LocoMail jumps straight to this record. For example, $$ "Smith" tells LocoMail to go straight to the record in the current index which has the Main Key Smith. If the current index is one that has both Main Keys and Sub Keys, then you can give LocoMail both the Main Key and the Sub Key for the record you want – again, just like Goto. You do this by tagging the Sub Key on the end of the $$ instruction as follows: $$"Smith"$"John"; $$"Smith"$"Joe" etc.

One important thing to note about using the $$ instruction is that, as with Goto, if the record you specify isn't found, then the program picks out the record that would follow it in the datafile. For example, if there were no record for Joe Smith, then the record actually picked out might be the one for John Smith. With Goto, you can see immediately whether the record you expected has been found. When you are using LocoMail, you don't automatically see this information and so, as a rule, you need to use further LocoMail instructions to check that the correct record has been picked out (for example, by using suitable # instructions).

Another thing to note about jumping directly to records is the effect of specifying a record which is after the last record in the index. Unlike using the Goto menu in LocoFile, this doesn't position you on the last record. Instead, LocoMail positions you on a 'Null' record at the end of the datafile, in which all the items are null.

In other words, instead of starting (+Mail) $="Surname" ↵, the Master document to use here starts with:

(+Mail)$="Town" ↵
$$ "London" ↵

The $$ "London" instruction skips all the records that come *before* the records you require. We also have to consider how to skip the records that come *after* the required records such as those for Newcastle and Norwich etc.

The solution to this problem is to change the item used to control how many times Prog_unit is performed. The Name item used so far was chosen to ensure that LocoMail would work through to the very end of the datafile. (We assumed that the Name item wouldn't be empty in any record.) You now want to use an artivicial item that you can set to null once all the 'London' records have been processed.

Suppose you used an item called Control. This Control item would have to be set to some value before the data records start being processed, so you would need some instruction like:

Control = "Not null"

before the Perform instruction. (We've used "Not null" and "" representing null, but you could equally well use 1 and 0 as 0 and null have the same effect here.)

To make Control null at the end of the batch of London records, you need to add instructions to the basic Program Unit so that it tests whether the Town item is still London and if it isn't, set Control to null. Again, this involves using the # Town = "London" instruction, but this time you want LocoMail simply to set Control to "" (the way null is signified in a LocoMail instruction) when Town is not London.

To complete our program, we've added one more instruction :

(+Mail) $="":$$ 9999999(-Mail)

This is simply a way of tricking LocoMail into jumping to the end of the datafile once all the 'London' records have been found. What it does is tell LocoMail to select the record number index and then move to a very high record number – in practice, the end of the datafile.

In the next two columns we've given the complete LocoMail program, along with sample records from a datafile and the finished result.

The LocoMail program

```
(+Mail)$="Town" ↵
$$ "London" ↵
↵
Text="→                        Home: " ↵
cr="↵
"↵
Prog_unit="(+Mail)# Town = "London" ↵
 < : Name : Text : Phone : cr:$+↵
 >< : Control ="" : >↵
(-Mail)"↵
Control = "Not null"↵
%Prog_unit@Control(-Mail)↵
(+Mail) $= "" : $$ 9999999 (-Mail)↵
```

The datafile

```
┌Record:19════════════════════════════════    f2=Index
■
                                            ┌───────────────────────────┐
   Name Anthony Andrews                     │Index name:  Town          │
                                            │Main key:    Town          │
  Street Flat 2, 13 Avondale Road           │             Alphabetic, no case│
    Town London                             │Sub key:     Name          │
  County                ┌Record:20═══════   │             Alphabetic, no case│
Postcode SW4 7TT        ■                   └───────────────────────────┘

                           Name Ruby Peters
     Phone 01 127 1138    Street 6 River Lane
Work phone 01 198 8372       Town Maynard
                           County Lincs
                         Postcode CB15 6DX


                              Phone 043 51 5958
                         Work phone 043 51 7373
         ┌Record:21══════════════════════════════Changed═══┐
         ■                                                  │
                                                            │
            Name Belinda Andrews

           Street 30 Wickham Road
             Town Rockcliffe
           County Devon
         Postcode BA3 9II


             Phone 0228 12247
        Work phone 0228 28372
```

The 'London' numbers

Anthony Andrews	Home: 01 127 1138
Ursula Gilbert	Home: 01 142 1596
John Smith	Home: 01 102 1035
Nicola Smith	Home: 01 103 1031
William Drew	Home: 01 166 1563

● *The lists we have described in this article represent just one of the many ways in which LocoMail can be used to process the information stored in LocoFile datafiles. In future issues, we will be looking at using LocoMail to produce reports based on the information in LocoFile datafiles and at how you can use it both to split datafiles that have become too large into smaller more manageable portions and to combine separate LocoFile datafiles into one.*

Dave's Disk Doctor Service

by David Smith

Since he first started salvaging damaged discs, David Smith (the Disk Doctor) has raised over £7000 for the Cancer charity BACUP. What follows is his account of how he became interested in retrieving data and how the demand for this service has made it more than just a time-consuming hobby. On the opposite page he gives practical advice for avoiding damaged discs.

❝ Despite using PCs at work I had resisted the temptation to buy a home computer largely because of cost, but along with many other people this barrier was broken with the release of the Amstrad PCW.

I'm not a good programmer and I hadn't the slightest idea how CP/M worked, but I enjoy learning and problem solving of one form or another has always been an interest. At work, I had already gained a lot of experience in file and data formats through helping others to move data from one computer to another.

Out of curiosity rather than need, my first commercial software purchase for the PCW was a sector editor. It had promised to be much more friendly and versatile than the ubiquitous DDT (or SID as it is on the PCW).

Weeks of correspondence with the author of the program concerning bugs in it prompted me to acquire a range of other alternative disc editing tools from the Public Domain, though at first these were not put to any practical use.

Most "missing address mark" errors, I was satisfied, were caused through the omission of a "warm boot" (Alt-C) in CP/M when changing disc types in the PCW second drive. However, one day a colleague at work sought my help on a problem of this kind which seemed more persistent.

At that time the absence of a disc copy routine which would cope with disc errors was a major gap in my armoury. Despite this, and with a degree of ingenuity, I was able to salvage most of his files despite the damaged region. Profusely grateful, he offered me payment.

Finding a worthy cause

I felt most uneasy at accepting this, having had a good deal of fun devising the solution to his problem, and instead resolved to send the money to a worthy charity. With a flash of insight another colleague suggested BACUP, a name with an obviously relevant connotation.

Naturally BACUP were delighted at the idea. On hearing of the scheme one of the PCW computer magazines generously donated a free advertisement.

At first I had relatively few discs to salvage, but I realised that the circulation of the magazine was small compared with the sales of the machine and in a rather rash moment I rang Amstrad and told them of the idea. Immediately the number of discs needing salvage increased and it soon became clear that I would have to contain the workload somehow.

Advertisements in the local newspaper and an appearance on Radio Kent didn't yield suitable helpers, although I had a lot of offers from elsewhere in the country. The problem is that it needed someone living very close to me to be of practical use. However, one retired businessman with an interest in programming saw my advertisement and has helped enormously by writing programs to my specification.

I am also grateful to Locomotive Software who have been most helpful in the provision of technical information. I have read this avidly and scoured every available book on CP/M. As a result, although I had no previous experience of Z80 assembler language, I have now also written a range of specialised disc salvage tools in Mallard BASIC with machine code subroutines including a damaged disc copying routine of my own!

The result is that the workload is now containable again as a spare time activity. Whereas I sometimes used to spend up to 15 hours salvaging a full double density disc with lost directory this is now possible in about 3 hours, sometimes less. On the other hand, other problems soon became apparent. Having worked on about 500 discs with a very high success rate over the last year or two, my taxman began to take a strong interest.

Changing status

The borderline between "earning and then donating" and "inviting donations direct to BACUP" became the worrying subject of debate. Fortunately, he ruled that this was a spare time hobby intended to raise money for charity rather than to earn it.

The PCW is now getting rather old and weary and is not insured. As a result of these pressures my wife and I have now set up a Limited Company to take on the work. This also limits my personal liability, although fortunately I have never actually had a "disc disaster".

The intention is that the Company will make a 100% profit covenant to the Charities Aid Foundation, hence also recouping tax, from which donations can be made to BACUP and other charities at our discretion.

Whilst I am fortunate enough to have a full-time job I will continue to work part-time and unpaid for the Company. As the tools are further developed the possibility of employing someone local to reduce my workload will be investigated.

I didn't intend to become a Disk Doctor, but fate often doesn't always follow the obvious path. My wife and I get great satisfaction from being able to demonstrate that it is possible, even in the present materialistic society, to provide a service to help others with problems without exploiting their misfortune for personal gain. ❞

Dave's tips on preventing disc problems

Looking after the hardware

● If you suspect a hardware error or fault, get your machine checked out immediately. **Do not use it in the meantime.**

● Physical damage to the discs can be caused through touching the brown surface, moving the computer while the discs are in use, or by inserting/extracting the disc from the drive while it is being accessed. Wait a few seconds after the little red light has gone out – you can hear the disc spin to a stop.

● **Never** switch the machine on or off with disc(s) in the drive(s). Don't leave the discs in the drive for long periods. The screen has strong magnetic fields. If your business makes you do this, recycle the older discs frequently, reformatting and verifying as necessary.

● Remember, discs wear out eventually. Use plenty: they are cheap in comparison with your time. Keep plenty of backups. Use the "grandfather, father and son" cycle of backups (see below), every time you make a significant change to a file, and backup anyway every week or so even on discs which you only make small changes to. Remember too that a backup disc has one function only – to make copies from. Never use one for a real application. Use only good quality discs like AMSOFT, Maxell or Panasonic.

● Problems may also be caused by magnetic fields (X-ray machines, telephones, speakers, children's toys & magnets). So may extremes of temperature and humidity. Keep the discs out of the sun and rain. Another problem is dust. Clean your drives if transient errors keep occurring.

Static electricity is another culprit.Try to earth yourself before touching the computer or get an antistatic mat, wear clothes containing less nylon, etc., and keep a pot of water in the room (away from the machine!) to reduce the problem.

● Try to get a mains smoothing device, or at least try to avoid using a ring main with other devices on it which switch on and off, for example fridges, freezers, etc., or which carry heavy loads.

Everyday use of discs

● Always write-protect master discs or discs you don't intend to alter. This is particularly important when making backups. If you leave the write-protect tabs closed, pressing ENTER too quickly could mean that you overwrite the information on the source disc. If you always write-protect your discs you'll avoid this problem.

● Always use the latest version of the software you are running. It's like a tramp's bed – there are always a few bugs lurking!

● Try to keep your LocoScript documents short – never more than ⅓ of the remaining free space on the disc. Don't use the same disc for LocoScript and CP/M programs.

● **Never** turn a double density disc **over** for **any** reason. The machine uses **both** sides automatically.

● When you format a new disc or reformat an old one, use or LocoScript 2 to Verify it. This takes longer, but may avoid a problem later. It checks if the disc is OK to start with.

● If something goes wrong, always try to make a copy of the disc (with the write-protect tabs on!) before you try to recover from it by working on the disc. Do **not** ignore errors and resave to disc. Otherwise you might erase or damage hidden but valuable information on the disc. For example, if you have completely erased a file acccidentally, do **not** use the disc to save any more files on. If you can't copy it and you don't have the expertise to tackle the salvage, don't dabble.

Getting help for a damaged disc

Anyone wishing to avail themselves of Dave's Disk Salvage services should telephone on 089283 5974 to ascertain the state of my workload before sending the damaged disc in a "jiffy bag". Enclosing return postage and a spare formatted and verified disc will be appreciated and will keep the charge down. Invoices will in future be returned with the salvaged disc rather than requesting donations direct to the charity as before.

Backups – the generation game

The 'grandfather, father and son' cycle of backing up discs is a good way to ensure that you always have a recent copy of your documents or datafiles in case anything goes wrong on the disc you're working on. Essentially it involves keeping three discs, and at any one time using one of them and keeping the other two as backups.

Before backup

The ← 'working' → disc

Son

Father

Grandfather

After backup

Grandfather

Son
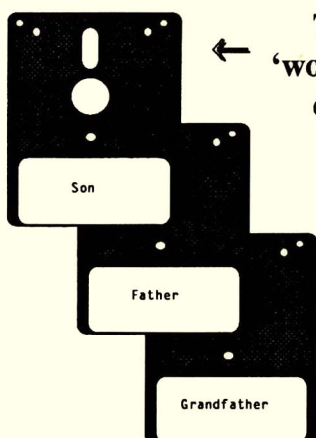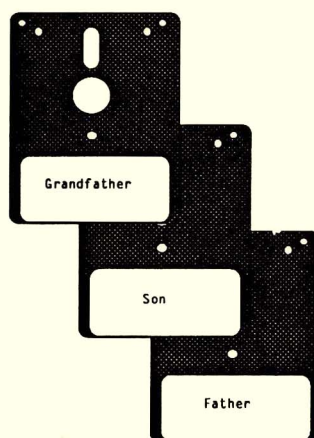
Father

When you make changes to your working disc, use the 'grandfather' disc to make the backup. This replaces the 'son' as the working disc.

The 'son' then becomes the 'father' and the 'father' becomes the 'grandfather' ie with each backup, every member of the family moves in rotation to the next generation.

Keeping just one backup disc may seem sufficient but it doesn't cover you against any problems that may arise while backing up a working disc. With this 'grandfather, father, son' cycle, if you only discover a disc fault whilst in the process of making the backup, you've still got the most recent backup to return to.

Letters to the Editor

Installing LocoFont

I've recently upgraded my PCW8512 to version 2.22 of LocoScript but I'm having some difficulty with the LocoFont files that I use. When I load the software from my Start-of-day discs the font files refuse to copy to Drive M even though they're definitely in the same group as the MATRIX.PRI file. Can you tell me what's wrong?
Mr IB, Luton

We suspect that you cannot use your LocoFont files because they haven't been updated to work with version 2.20 or later of LocoScript. The old versions of the LocoFont files are incompatible with your current version of LocoScript and so aren't loaded.

There's an easy way to check whether the problem is one of compatibility. You can inspect the Identity text of a LocoFont Character Set file, using the f5 Document menu. If the message 'Incompatible LocoScript file' appears at the top of the

description then the Character Set file is not suitable for the version you're using.

To solve this problem, re-run the Installation program supplied for the 8000 machines and select the option to Update font files. *Follow the instructions on screen and when the program has finished, copy the updated files to your start-up discs and reload the software.*

One thing to note about the latest version is that it's no longer necessary to keep your extra Character Set files in the same group of the same disc as the MATRIX.PRI file. What you do have to ensure is that when you load the software, LocoScript is fed the disc with MATRIX.PRI file before the disc with the Character Set files.

On version 2.24 we've changed the Installation program so that old versions of the LocoFont files on your old start-up discs are automatically updated for you.

Screen dumps

Why didn't you tell us that we can now do a Screen Dump again? It was a very useful feature of LocoScript 1. But why does a Screen Dump sometimes produce a full screen print and sometimes only half?
Mr TJ, Hull

You have always been able to produce a screen dump in LocoScript 2 (with the single exception of the very first version 2.00 where we accidentally left it out).

There are several possible reasons why your screen dump sometimes stops short.

You'll find that whenever anything unusual happens to the printer, the screen dump is abandoned. For example, pulling back the bail bar or accidentally pressing [PTR] *will have this effect.*

Another possibility is that LocoScript has detected the end of the paper. Again, the screen dump is abandoned so you can't continue by simply putting in a fresh sheet of paper. In all cases where the screen dump is aborted, you'll have to start again from scratch.

A vote of thanks!

Thank you for your letter offering to upgrade our 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc with the darker typestyles. We enclose our disc for upgrading with this letter, but would like to say that we consider this to be an excellent example of good service. Although we were aware that an upgrade was available we did not expect you to actually write to us and, what is more, to

provide a pre-paid envelope. Well done!
Mr CH, Didcot

Thanks for your thanks! This is one of the advantages of registering as a user of our products. If you have bought any of our products (with a registration card included) and haven't yet registered, you should do so now!

Record numbers

I've set up a datafile and in so doing, I've erased a number of records. However, LocoFile still thinks these records exist, although I can't display them. I can only look at records from record number 11 onwards. Is there any way of displaying the records 1 to 10?
Mr SP, Newton Abbot

LocoFile does not think that the erased records still exist. The effect you've noticed is simply a result of the fact that LocoFile does not re-use record numbers.

When you create a record, LocoFile gives it a unique record number. The reason for this is that whereas re-allocating the record number serves no particular purpose, using unique record numbers is important in many applications, for example, for accounting purposes.

The number of records in the file at any one time is recorded in the datafile. So if you simply want to know how many records you have, you can find out by using the Edit identity *option on the f1 Actions menu.*

Once you've erased records, they are deleted from the datafile. The only time you can retrieve a record you've accidentally deleted is by using the 'Recover from limbo' option on the f1 Actions menu. You should note that this option is only available for the last record you deleted – there's no 'bulk' recovery option.

LocoScript only!

I've bought the 24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc and whilst I have no problem using it with LocoScript 2, I don't know how to install the files on my desk top publishing package. Can you help me?
Mr RS, Cambridge

I'm afraid the answer is no. The 24 Pin Printer files only work with LocoScript 2. If you want to use your 24 pin printer with other packages, you'll have to contact the makers of the software to find out what provision they have made for using alternative printers.

Letters to the Editor

Finding a match

I'm trying to set up Main Key and Sub Key indexes for my LocoFile address file. Everything seems to be set up correctly with a Fullname index consisting of surnames for the Main Key and first names for the Sub Key. However, I am still in difficulty because when I use the Goto menu using both names, I get a "No match found" alert, and nothing I do alters this. When I practise the same routine with one of your sample files, there is no problem.
Mr HW, Oxford

Unfortunately, without seeing the datafile on disc, it's only possible to guess the answer to this particular problem. However, we think there are two possible causes.

The simplest answer is that although you've set up the index correctly in the Datafile Set-up, you have forgotten to select the Fullname index in the f2 Index menu in the body of the datafile. You should check this and tick the Fullname index if necessary, before using the Goto menu again.

If the right index is already ticked then the other possibility is that there is a discrepancy between what you're typing on the Goto menu and the actual information in the item of the record. LocoFile looks for an exact match of text between the Goto menu and the item, including spaces and punctuation marks such as commas.

The chances are that you've typed in the name and accidentally pressed the space bar so that the text on the menu no longer matches the text in the item. Alternatively, there may be a spurious character, such as a space, at the beginning or end of the item in the record itself.

The solution is to check what you typed on the Goto menu and then compare it with the information in the actual item. Once you've corrected the error, you'll have no problems.

LocoScript and Drive M

I've recently expanded the memory of my PCW8256 to 512k and purchased LocoScript 2 so that I could make full use of LocoSpell and LocoFile. However, when I load the software from my Start-of-day discs, I don't get the same display that appears in the User Guide. In addition, I seem to have lost over 200k from Drive M as the free and used space only adds up to 284k. Can you throw any light on this?
Mrs EL, Reading

There's no need to worry if the files displayed on the Disc Manager on your version don't exactly match the screen dumps in the User Guide. The User Guide only shows the display after loading LocoScript 2 on a PCW8256. If your PCW has 512k of memory and/or you install extra add-ons, such as LocoSpell or LocoFile, you will probably have a different amount of space in Drive M. The screen dumps are only intended as a guide and don't affect the way you work through the Tutorial.

You haven't lost any space in Drive M. When you start up LocoScript, the files that it needs to use are copied into the computer's memory. What's left after LocoScript has taken all it needs is called Drive M. So the amount of space available is 512k less the space used by LocoScript.

Multiple keys

I'm using LocoFile to store my addresses and on the whole it works very well. However my reason for writing is that sometimes LocoFile refuses to move when I press the Page key. On some occasions it takes three presses to get LocoFile to move grudgingly to the next record. I've only noticed this effect on some datafiles so it seems to be a random problem. Any suggestions?
Mr MAH, Haxby

We suspect that your problem with the Page key is caused by using an index with multiple Main or multiple Sub keys where the keys for a record happen to be consecutive in the index.

The purpose of multiple keys is to allow you to display the same record more than once. A typical example of their use is keeping the details of a family on one card in an address datafile. To ensure that a record appears for each member of the family, you can set up an index with surname as the Main key and first name as the Sub key. For example, a card with John and June Bradbury-Smythe's details will appear twice – once for John and once for June.

On later versions of LocoFile, we've added a feature which helps you to see the effect of multiple keys more clearly. As you 'page' to a record with multiple keys, the cursor automatically jumps to the 'keyed' item. So the effect of pressing PAGE is to position the cursor on the next item in the sorted order.

Printing a letter heading

I use LocoScript 2 to print a range of letters and reports and quite often it would be useful to print one-page documents with just the letter heading. In trying to do this, I've come up against a problem. I keep my letter heading on the Pagination screen but LocoScript won't print a document which has no text on the editing screen. Is there a way round this?
Mr RL, Rochester

You have correctly noticed that if there is nothing in the body of the document LocoScript won't print anything. The solution is to make LocoScript think that there is something to print. Simply typing a space or a carriage return in the body of the document will be enough to prompt LocoScript to print the document.

PostScript

An interesting article appeared in the April issue of 8000 Plus, previewing our new product LocoToy. It was described as a series of electronic executive toys such as Newton's Cradle, Reversi, Date blocks and a growing plant. Although the version they reviewed was incomplete, the magazine reported favourably on the overall impression given by the new product, though they weren't so sure about the Snowstorm scene. Whilst admitting it was better suited to the PCW9512 because of the white-on-black background, they felt that having to turn the monitor upside down to get it to work was likely to damage the printer cable if not disable the PCW completely!

Perhaps this feature and the fact that there's no mention of the product in the News page in this issue of *Script* gives the game away. LocoToy was an April fool.

In fact quite a lot of thought and effort went into this joke. Once we'd come up with the idea, we contacted 8000 Plus to see if they would be willing to do a spoof review of the product. They've co-operated in the past over April fool tricks and were happy to get involved.

Once they'd agreed our next job was to produce some evidence for LocoToy that would make the review more plausible.

All reviews of new products are supported, where possible, by pictures of screens with suitable text and menus. Of course, producing screen dumps from a non-existent product isn't that easy! Our solution was to knock up a couple of BASIC programs that simulated Newton's Cradle and Date blocks. These gave an impression of typical LocoScript screens with suitable menu names (such as f1 Gravity and f6 Speed for Newton's Cradle) and card images of the games – just like LocoFile cards.

We sent these to 8000 Plus in time for publication. To make it even more authentic, we placed an advertisement for the product in the same issue. Those who were interested in finding out more were asked to return the coupon to Isabel Ringing!

We waited to see what sort of response the ad and article would provoke. In fact, it proved to be a more successful April fool than we had expected. We received quite a few telephone enquiries including one from a journalist of another popular PCW magazine who wanted to know why we'd sent a preview copy of the product to 8000 Plus and not to her magazine! A hopeful software dealer wanted to place a bulk order for LocoToy. A number of other people wrote in requesting more information, some of whom appreciated the joke. One person returned his coupon to 'Abel Hasrun'.

Of course, LocoToy only exists in the imagination at the moment, but if a large enough number of people are interested, who knows what might be available in the future!

John Blandford

In the LocoMail article in the last issue of *Script*, we accidentally misprinted John Blandford's address. The offending line was **15 St Albans Way** which should have read as **15 St Albans Road**. The complete address is:

> **15 St Albans Road**
> **Sandridge**
> **St Albans**
> **Herts**
> **AL4 9LA**

His phone number is: **0727 59913**.

In spite of the misprint, he's received a number of enquiries about LocoMail consultancy. The latest one came from as far away as Wagga Wagga in Australia!

Future issues

The LocoMail article in this issue should give you a taste of LocoMail's power to manipulate LocoFile datafiles. In the next issue we'll tackle the problem of producing selective mailshots from LocoFile datafiles. In future issues, we plan to have a special Hints and Tips page, where we'll look at solutions to common LocoMail problems. If there's a particular problem you want to solve or you have a solution to a common problem that you want to pass on to others, write and let us know.