

LocoScript User

May 95 Issue £2.50

incorporating

**PCW
USER**
FOR USERS OF THE AMSTRAD PCW8256 • 8512 • 9512 • 9256 • 10

The Essential Independent Monthly Magazine for all LocoScript Users

LocoClinic

Six pages of help from Liz Bruce

Writers News

We interview editor
David St John Thomas

LocoLink For Windows

PCW-PC file transfers
made easy

RAINBOW Warrior

Seikosha's new colour printer reviewed

putting on the

STYLE

How to improve your writing skills



A TO Z

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We guarantee to offer the **BEST** prices & services in this magazine. **REMEMBER:** Prices exclude VAT but include 1st class delivery.

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3" or 3.5" Disk Drive Head Cleaning Kit	£4.50	£13.00	

LOCOMOTIVES

A = 8256, B = 8512, C = 9512
D = 9256, E = 9512+, F = PCW10
+ = 512K memory required

The specialist committed to enhance the power of PCWs.

LocoScript 3 (ABDF+)	£34	LocoSpell 2/3	£23
LocoScript 3 + LocoSpell (ALL+)	£40	LocoMail 2/3	£28
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LocoScript PC Prof V.2 + LocoLink Prof			£99
MiniRam Pack (A-Z) (512K + Printer Port)			£44
3" Thesaurus (512K) works with LocoFile			£12

BOOKS

The Essential Selection

8000 Plus Guide to MicroDesign wdisk	£14.95	LocoMail 9512 + Handbook	£21.95
8000 Plus Tips Collection wdisk	£16.95	LocoScript 2 & Mail Spell File	£13.95
15 Hour Word Proc Amstrad PCW	£11.95	LocoScript 2, 9512+	£21.95
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Easy Access to LocoScript 2	£9.95	Mallard BASIC PCW (Intro & Ref)	£16.95
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LocoScript 2 User Guide	£21.95	Using Amstrad Word Processor	£11.95
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GAMES

* 8256/8512 only
● All 3" & 3.5" PCWs
+ 8256/8512/9512 (3" only)

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+ Catch 23	£12	Ingrid's Back	£12
● Classic Game 4 Compatible	£20	Minifighter	£14
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FOR ALL 3" & 3.5" PCWs

Crossgrid (word puzzles)	Double Agent (Adventure Game)
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Thunder Basic (Add-on Graphic commands)	Top 20 Games Vol. 2 (Lots of fun)
High Quality Clip Art Vol. 1	Top 20 Games Vol. 3 (Lots of fun)
High Quality Clip Art Vol. 2 (For MicroDesign 2 & 3)	

● £11.00 per title ● ● ● ● ●
Lightening Basic 93 (Add on Commands) ... £24

PRINTERS

Canon BJ10x	£169
Canon BJ200 (with sheetfeeder)	£225
Hewlett Packard HP520	£250
New Original Amstrad 9512 Daisywheel printer (with sheetfeeder)	£150
Epson stylus Bubble Jet with B-1 Sheetfeeder (Special)	£210

TO RECOVER YOUR FAULTY PCW in 3hrs, Yes!

in 3 hours if you deliver to us or in 8 days we collect from you £8 courier charge e/w



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Micro Maths (GCSE)	£16	School	
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PCW 9512/9512+ Black Fabric	£2.70	£2.60	£2.50	£2.40
PCW 9512/9512+ Colour Fabric (Red, Blue, Green, Brown, Purple)	£4.60	£4.50	£4.40	£4.30
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PCW 8256/8512/8256/PCW10 Black Fabric	£2.70	£2.60	£2.50	£2.40
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LO 5000 Black Fabric	£5.00	£4.80		
StarLC10, Pan KXP 1180/090, Taxan Kaga; PCW 1080A				
FX/M/RX 80; M1009; Can GLP 120D, 180E	£3.00	£2.80		
P2200, P2+, KXP 1124, LC24-10, L010000, Swift 24, KXP 1524	£4.50 (3+)			
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Star S148 Cartridge	£16	£15.50		
HP500 Deskjet Cart. (long life) HP51626A	£20	£19.00		
Inkjet refills x 2 (Canon, Star, HP)	£9	£8		
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Inkjet refills for HP long life	£10	£9		
Cartridge x 2 per (black)				
Cartridge Cleaning fluid x 2 per pack	£9	£8		

PRINTER UPGRADE

SPECIALS PACKAGE!

- 512K mini RAM pack & Centronics Printer Port.
 - Printer Support Pack 3
 - LocoScript 3
 - Printer Cable
- With Canon BJ10 OX Bubble Jet printer £279
With Epson Stylus Plus Ink Jet printer (with sheet feeder) £309
With supply new S.O.D. disk FREE

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INTEGRATED		Stop Press	£22
Mini Office Professional	£26	Desktop Publisher	£20
		PCW/AMX Mouse + Micro Design 3 (DTP Package)	£73
WORD PROCESSING		PCW/AMX Mouse + Stop Press (DTP)	£52
New Word 2	£44	PCW/AMX Mouse + Desktop Publisher	£50
Protext (full version)	£42		
SPREADSHEET		GRAPHICS	
Supercalc 2 (Comp Assoc 3" or 3.5")	£44	Datafax/Jeeves Desktop (Kempston)	£20
Cracker 2 Turbo "Plus"	£26	Interface (C.T.I.)	£125
Rocket	£34		
ACCOUNTS		UTILITY	
Money Manager	£41	Easy labeller 8526, 9512, 9256	£26
		Personal Exchange (lansyst)	£15
		Flipper 3 (NEW)	£26
		Forward	£26
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Two finger conversion (lansyst)	£15		
Crash Course Tutor (lansyst)	£15		

3" software data transfer, PCW 3" to and from PCW 3.5" with cable £35
Stockmarket 2 £40
PCW/AMX Mouse + Desktop £45

PERIPHERALS - ADD ON

Keymouse (Creat. Tech)	£41	INCAS Silver Plus Glas Filter (Top Quality)	£38
PCW mouse + Interface	£35	A4 Metal Copyholder (Desk)	£14
Original Amstrad Parser, Interface (cps 8/9) SCA		2 pieces Universal printer stand	£5
PCW Interface Prof	£47	9512 Daisywheel	£7
SCA parser, Interface Plus w/lock + cal	£50	Printer cable (D25-Cen 36)	£7
PCW SCA 512K RAM Pack	£54	Printer cable (Cen 36-Cen 36)	£8
PCW SCA 768K RAM Pack	£64	2 way Cen, 36 switch box	£14
PCW SCA 1.0Mb RAM Pack	£75	4 way serial D25 switch box	£14
PCW SCA 512K RAM Pack Plus	£85	4 way Cen, 36 switch box	£18
PCW SCA 512K PRO 8256	£77	4 way serial D25 switch box	£18
PCW SCA 512K PRO 9256*	£75	9512 autosheet feeder	£25
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PCW M&J Interface Mouse and Amstrad JY2		Stampion self adhesive labels (1 1/4 x 3 1/4 per 1000)	£7
Joystick	£52	Mouse mat (standard on/off)	£2
PCW Joystick Interface	£15	Mouse mat (strong thick rubber)	£5
Quickshot Turbo Joystick (micro-switch)	£9	Printer Extension lead 8256/8512/9512/9256/9512	
Anti Glare Screen Filter	£14	+9512 + (BJ)	£12

PCW 9512 Plus (VJ10)

£543 + VAT (=£638.03)

The PCW9512+ with Canon BJ-10e Bubble jet printer offers the speed and versatility of a dot matrix printer with similar quality to a daisywheel printer.

PCW 9512 Plus

(Full width Daisy wheel Printer)

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Complete system with LocoScript

2, Spell, Mail software 512K

RAM

Plus FREE Starter kit £50

NOW WITH BJ10SX PRINTER

Complete system with LocoScript 2, Spell, Mail software

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● 3.5" Drive cleaning kit

● 3.5" 80 cap storage box

● BJ10 Ink Cartridge 1

● LocoScript(BJ) software

or £50 A to Z Computers Good Voucher

● Dust cover set (3pcs) Monitor, Keyboard & Printer (st)

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● 3.5" Drive cleaning kit

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ABOUT PUBLISHER DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS

Founder of publishers David & Charles as well as WRITERS NEWS and best-selling author in his own right, David cares passionately about writing and writers... and it shows. Out of the money he earned from writing, he established the charitable trust that funds many of the prizes. Backed by a friendly staff on the Moray Firth at the edge of the Scottish Highlands, he provides old-fashioned value... like well over 500 large pages for your trial £10. Each week he enjoys reading the letters received from those helped in their writing careers. There is probably not a more caring business in Britain!



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WIDE COVERAGE

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ALL KINDS OF WRITING

Short stories, novels, articles, non-fiction books, children's poetry, religious writing, technical writing... every kind is covered by our formidable team of regular contributors with points of substance, style and marketing. There is also an opportunity to contribute one-off articles or become a news correspondent. And no youngster hoping for a journalistic or publishing career should miss our career coverage.

FOR THOSE LIVING OVERSEAS

Many of our keenest readers live overseas. In addition to WRITERS NEWS and WRITING MAGAZINE, each month they are sent a newsletter containing more overseas news than can be accommodated in WRITERS NEWS, and they are automatically enrolled in the British Overseas Writers Circle (BOWC) which helps keep overseas writers in touch and provides a number of valuable services.

PROFESSIONALS TOO

Roughly a third of the membership of WRITERS NEWS have been earning at least part of their livelihood from writing for years. They include authors, freelance journalists, editors and agents. Their verdict is that there is nothing like WRITERS NEWS for information and advice.

PERSONAL HELPLINE

Both magazines have special question-and-answer features. In WRITING MAGAZINE, several themes are chosen each issue. But for members there is special interest and value in Helpline which answers individual questions and adds comments both from ourselves and other writers. Even bestselling writers say they always learn something extra.

SPECIAL MARKET NEWS

If one of our many ingredients stands out above the rest, it must be our market news... pages and pages of it making up the first half of WRITERS NEWS every month. A team of reporters bring you the latest market opportunities, developments in the world of book publishing, magazines and broadcasting, details of a host of competitions, awards and other financial opportunities and forthcoming events. There is no other service for writers even vaguely comparable.

CASH PRIZES GALORE

Both magazines run an extensive competition programme, but this is naturally greater for our members who, for example, have exclusive entry to a free competition every month and the greater number of competitions with £1,000 first prizes and trophies (plus substantial runner-up awards) available to them. Many readers have already started successful writing careers through winning.

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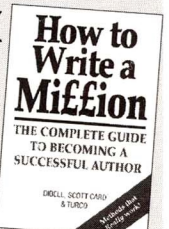


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All printer supplied with standard cable. Advice and support given to PCW users wishing to add an alternative printer to their system.

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8512 LOGIC CPU	94.00	75.00
9512 LOGIC CPU	175.00	102.00
9512+ LOGIC CPU	182.00	126.00
9256 LOGIC CPU	75.00	59.00
9512 HAMMER/ ARMATURE	5.00	
8256/8512 HEAD (M)	59.00	
8256/8512 HEAD (S)	45.00	
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5.

DATATWIN 8 or DATATWIN 9 with cable remote control £185
The ultimate in 3.5" drive conversions, for people who envisage using 3" discs for as long as possible. They can be switched at any time, to use any two drives from those available. For convenience the switches are brought out to a small box that sits next to the keyboard. Includes built in power supply as standard.

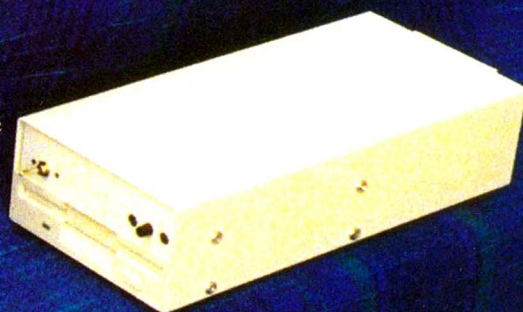


4.

DATATWIN 8 & DATATWIN 9 £165
The DATATWINS are the complete floppy conversion. They leave 3" drives accessible. Can copy existing 3" software and run it entirely on 3.5" or you can upgrade and run new 3.5" software. Easy backups of 720K discs from one drive to another in either size. Includes built in power supply as standard.

3.

DATADUAL 8 (8256/8512) £110
The DATADUAL 8 is a unique drive. It can, at the press of a button change from being drive 'A' to become drive 'B'. It means that an 8256/8512 user can have access to 3" 180K discs or 3.5" 180K or 3.5" 720K discs without changing their software.



2.

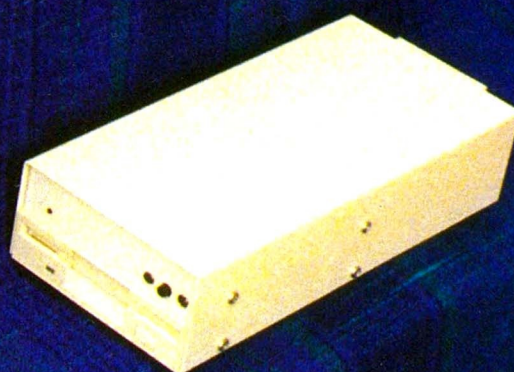
DATADUAL 9 (9512) £110
The DATADUAL 9 can at the touch of a button be drive 'A' or drive 'B' and the 9512 '3"' drive always becomes it's opposite. This makes copying 3" to 3.5" discs easier using Locoscript. You can copy your existing software to 3.5" and boot from it. A light shows which is 'A' to avoid back up mistakes.

1.

3.5" SWITCHABLE DRIVE £75
Leave your 3" drive in place and switch between the two. You can copy your own software to 3.5" and change over to 3.5" in your own time. Can be ordered as an alternative 'A' or an alternative 'B'.
3.5" DRIVE NON SWITCHABLE £65
Ordered as an 'A' or a 'B' drive. Just unplug the corresponding 3" drive and plug on the cable extension. The 'A' drive will need either new 3.5" software or your existing 3" software copied for you.

From the lowest price simple non-switchable 3.5" drive at £65, to the ultimate in floppy disc drives for the PCW, the self-powered DATATWIN with cable remote control at £185, you can choose the price and facility level that suits you. Similarly WITH SWITCHABLE DRIVES YOU CAN CHOOSE WHETHER TO KEEP AND RUN YOUR EXISTING SOFTWARE OR UPGRADE IT. You change your software for the facilities it offers not just because you change your drive.

Send for our *FREE* leaflet on which disc drive to choose.



OPTIONS

Built in power supply £15; Locoscript 3 £37; CPM 1.15 or 2.15 £7.50

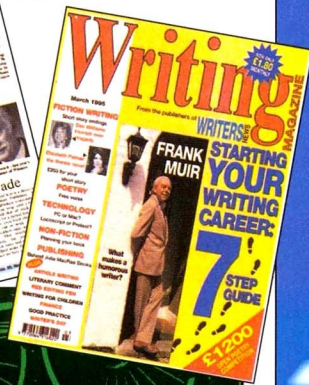
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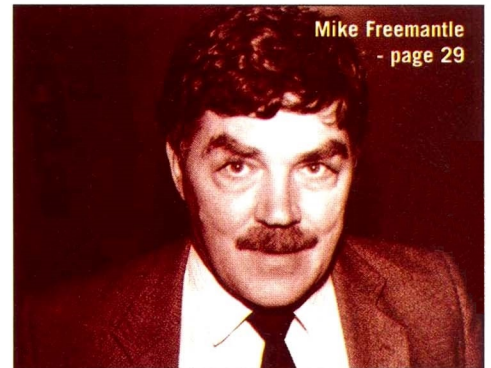
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The Facts File deals with our Cover Story - it's a complete checklist on punctuation for you to keep



Mike Freemantle
- page 29

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

For our cover story this month, I've chosen our series on good writing style. We take the view that this aspect of word processing is one of the most important and at the same time sadly neglected of all. There are pages of help and information on the technicalities of word processing: there certainly is a key role which they play, otherwise no one would be able to master the mechanics of the system.

But there is hardly anything in the computing press about how to master the English language at all levels, without which there is no point in learning about the technical aspects of the system.

For this reason, we have given style a high profile, and we have started off looking at the details of punctuation, which are often overlooked. At the same time, Stephen Wells is writing an entertaining series for us on business letters and the right form of words to use.

Colour printing

It never ceases to amaze me how the price of hardware is tumbling. When I had a BBC micro, which cost - if I remember correctly - around four hundred pounds at prices as they stood fifteen years ago - the price tag on a disk drive was a couple of hundred pounds.

Now you can get disk drives for the PCW - or any other machine for that matter - at well under a hundred pounds, and all the other bits and pieces that go to make up a computing system are costing less by the week, it seems.

The most remarkable price drop has been in the cost of printers, and it's been matched by a parallel increase in quality, ease of use and features. The Seikosha colour machine we're looking at this month costs under two hundred pounds.

I did a little dip into my archives of past issues of computer magazines I've been involved with, and found that we

would be talking over three hundred pounds at 1987 prices to get a macho 24-pin machine. Colour was unheard of.

The technology is getting cheaper and cheaper and at the same time more and more powerful. I sometimes wonder if these huge advances in computing for all are outstripping our ability to cope with them. There are worrying signs on the Internet, for example, of the information superhighway being used for purposes which have the potential to be extremely destructive: from child pornography to terrorist details.

Every advance has the potential for good or ill, and it's up to us to police the system and ensure that the positive outstrips the negative.

Rex Last

News Focus

+ The Wordsmith PC Range +

The range of PC computers from Wordsmith for 1995 has been further enhanced, and bears the ergonomic needs of writers and office users in mind. The system consists of a PC plus a printer and word processing software from LocoScript.

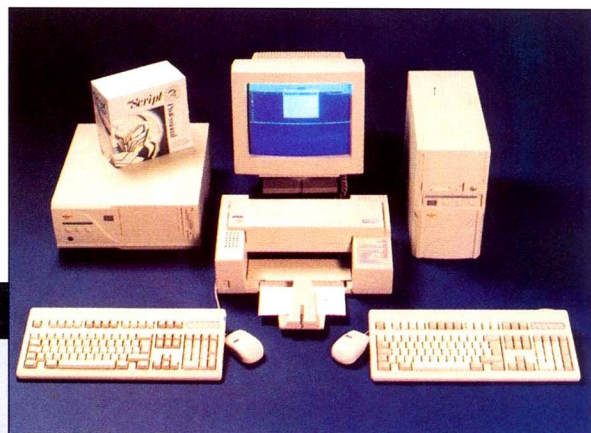
Key features include a top of the range Cherry 102-key UK keyboard, which should be of great benefit to users who input large amounts of data. There is now a low radiation monitor of a type now recommended for those who spend long periods at the computer.

Each of the 386 and 486 systems avail-

able comes bundled with LocoScript Professional 2 Plus and an Epson Stylus 400 or 800+ inkjet printer. Windows 3.1 is available as an extra with the 386 machines, and comes as standard with the 486.

Should you wish to upgrade or expand, each Wordsmith PC has two spare disk bays for the inclusion of CD Rom or back-up drives. A fax/modem can be fitted at the time of ordering.

The computers are also available without the printer or LocoScript. All computers have a one year full parts and labour



This is the Wordsmith 486/800 System. The printer is the Epson Stylus 800+ inkjet. There is a choice of normal desktop case or mini-tower - both are illustrated here.

warranty. On-site and extended warranties are also available.

The 386/400 system costs £895 and the 486/800 costs £1159. For further information, contact Wordsmith Computer Systems, St George House, Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4NE. Tel: 0121 4408141. Fax: 0121 4408303.

+++ A Taxing Time +++

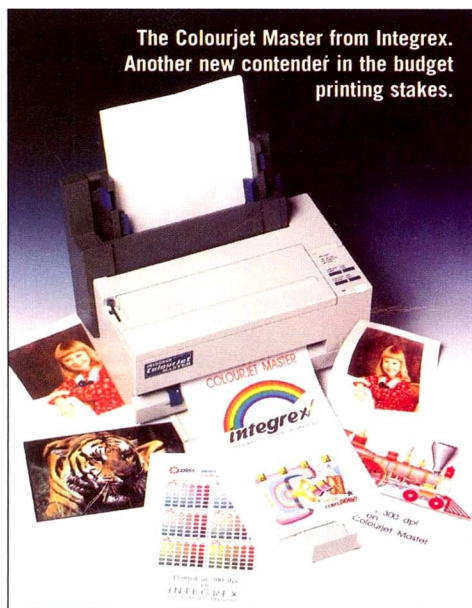
Derek Rogers Professional Software have upgraded their Total Tax package to deal with the tax year just ending (1994-5). This is the tax year for which most people will soon be filling in a tax return, and shortly thereafter many will be receiving assessments.

Total Tax helps with both these processes. The hardest part of checking your assessment is knowing what it ought to be. Total Tax removes the uncertainty by calculating it for you. This makes it easy for you to challenge any discrepancy in the Inland Revenue assessment.

It also lets you see the effect of choosing various tax options, such as transfer of allowances between spouses. And, as far as your tax return is concerned, it saves you having to enter the same information year after year. Much of the information on the tax return is the same each year, and Total Tax stores it for you.

Total Tax runs on all PCW models as well as on the PC. The price is £29.95 inclusive of VAT, post and packing, but if you bought it last year, you can upgrade to this year's version for only £12.92 inclusive. Total Tax can be obtained from Derek Rogers Professional Software, 21 Hamilton Drive, Glasgow G12 8DN. Tel: 0141 3348902.

+++ New Colourjet +++



The Colourjet Master from Integrex. Another new contender in the budget printing stakes.

There's another contender in the increasingly competitive world of budget colour printers. UK printing and scanning specialist, Integrex Systems Ltd, has launched the new Integrex Colourjet Master, offering the latest in thermal inkjet technology.

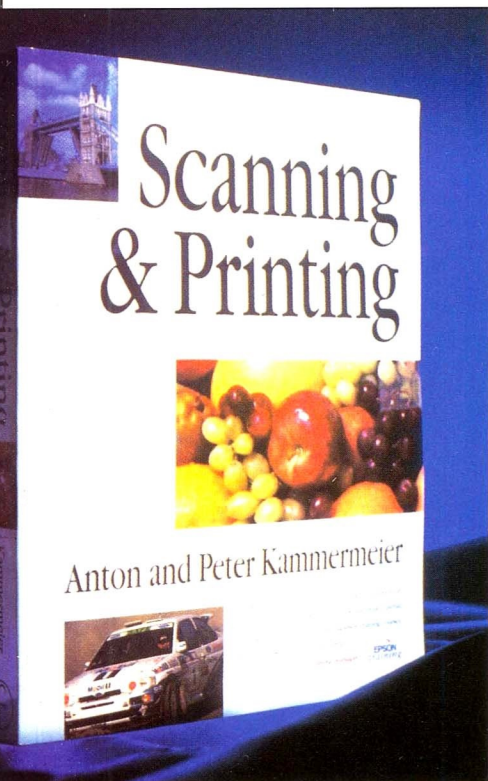
Combining vivid high quality colour

reproduction with significantly lower running costs, the Colourjet Master is able to print on a wide variety of paper stock, including plain and coated A4 cut sheet paper, envelopes, labels and transparencies.

Easy to install and use, the printer offers 300 x 300 dpi resolution in colour and 600 x 300 dpi resolution in black, to provide quality graphics and text. Of robust construction with a duty cycle up to 2000 pages per month and operating speeds varying between 2.5 to 7 minutes per colour page, the printer is efficiently fed from a built-in 150 sheet feeder.

The Integrex Colourjet Master is available at an introductory price of only £249, plus VAT and carriage. An optional extended three-year warranty is available. Integrex Systems Ltd, Church Gresley, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 9PT. Tel: 01283 550880.

+++ Scanning & Printing +++



Epson has announced that it is offering the definitive *Scanning and Printing* book at just £12.50, half the RRP price.

This one-stop scanning and printing 'bible' written by Anton and Peter Kammermeier, cover the complete desktop publishing process from the scanning of pictures through to phototyping and printing.

It details everything from types of scanners to scanning pictures from video cameras. There are also printing hints and tips.

Commenting on the offer, Treve Wearne, Epson Systems marketing manager, said: 'This offer echoes our commitment to comprehensive and clear IT training. We use this book extensively on our renowned theory of scanning training courses.'

A half price copy can be obtained by faxing your address and credit card details to Yvonne Myhill at Epson UK, fax number 01442 227412.

+++ Total Recall +++

Instant Recall from David Landers is now available for the PC versions of LocoScript as well as across the PCW range. The price is £9.50 inclusive.

For further details contact David Landers, Garden Cottage, Brinkburn, Longframlington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 8AR. Tel: 0166 5570662. See also the interview with David Landers on page 24 of this issue.

+++ Whatever the Weather +++

Rowansoft report a lot of interest in their neat little Weatherman program. Feed in the current weather details, and it will tell you which way the wind will be blowing - and if it's going to rain, shine or snow.

The boat handling simulation program Cast Off is also still available, and Rowansoft also offer disk or file transfer facilities and data recovery. For further details contact Rowansoft, Rowancraig, Ardfern, by Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8QN. Tel: 01852 500257.

+++ New Catalogue +++

DGC Software have just released a new catalogue of software of all shapes and sizes for the PCW.

Just under 35 different items are on offer, from games to BASIC extensions, Clip Art to the well-received Essential Guides series.

There's something for everyone, from

the user in search of a brain-teasing game to relax with to a guide to using the new facilities of LocoScript 3. And there is a five pounds off voucher for orders over £25, and double that for orders over £40.

For your free copy, write to DGC Software, 12 Stonecroft, Eccleshill, Bradford BD2 2HW or telephone 01274 636475.

News items

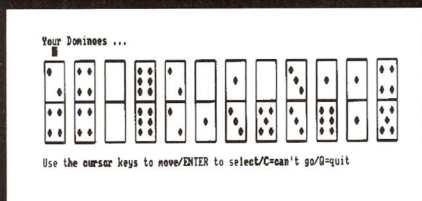
The products announced in the news pages are for the information of readers. Inclusion or exclusion of a particular product does not constitute a positive recommendation for that product.

Our policy is to provide the widest possible information on all new hardware, software and other relevant products for the PCW and for the PC and related equipment.

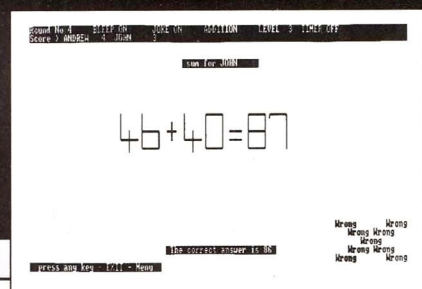
Give us a mention

When you reply to advertisers, do tell them that you saw their product or service advertised here in LocoScript User magazine.

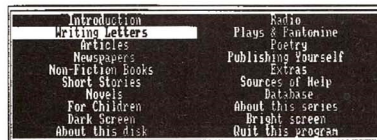
Sample screens from leisure and educational items in the new DGC Software catalogue



A version of dominoes from the popular Top Twenty Games disk



The Essential Guide to Writing for Profit



Use the cursor keys to highlight the program required
Press the RETURN key to select
Press the EXIT key to quit this program

DGC Software

The main menu of the Writing for Profit guide
Can't add up? Try the Ultimate Sums disk

SCA / SILICON CITY

Simply The Best for Disk Drives, Programs and Add-Ons.

Programs,

Rocket The Spreadsheet **£44.90**

"As close to perfect as PCW Spreadsheets get" - PCW Plus. Over 5 times as much space as other spreadsheets. Very quick. Easy to use. User-friendly manual. Brilliant graphics.

Rocket Plus NEW! **£49.95**

The Locoscript 2/3 pop-up Spreadsheet. As Rocket above, but hidden in 256K RAM until required. No re-booting. Now with Screen-Saver.

Flipper 3 **£34.90**

Loads two or more pop-up programs at once (memory permitting, up to eight with a 1.5M RamPac). Switches instantly between Locoscript 2/3 & CP/M.

Foreword **£34.90**

The Ideas Processor. Ideal for authors. A fast easy to use editor for heavy duty typing, with an outliner. 20/20 - 8000 Plus.

LocoScript 3 **£39.95**

LocoScript 3 + Spell **£49.95**

LocoScript 3 + File **£54.95**

Printer Support Pack **£24.95**

PcWOffice NEW! **£99**

The complete Locomotive business pack. Locoscript 3 + LocoFile + Mail + pop-up Spreadsheet (Rocket + Flipper). Separately costs **£170!**

3½ Disk Drives

The Best Costs Less NO NEED TO ALTER PCW CASE

Reduced Prices. We now use a very new, even *higher quality* but lower cost TEAC 3.5" drive.

PROFESSIONAL, Copyright kits, recommended by Locomotive Software, Amstrad Plc. and Amstrad User Groups.

ALL kits run off the 12 volt supply, instead of 5 volts - *essential* to prevent computer crashes.

Standard kits are supplied with Locomotive, FIB Files, 3.5" CP/M Upgrade Disk and COPYAB program.

Budget versions available without software - Save £8.

Foolproof software switched A/B drives. No confusing toggle switches.

Convenient. You have to open you computer to fit any external drive so why not fit a quieter, smarter and much more convenient

Drive Accessories

10 TDK disks + Box. **£8**
when ordered with drive. (Separately (£10))

PCW2DOS PC Transfer software with drive **£4**
(Separately (£9) Needs 3½" Drive B.

Add-ons and

RamPacs* **from £64**

Extra Memory and a through-port for other add-ons. 512K **£64**, 1M **£85**, 1.5M **£109**, Ideal for PCW9512s.

PamPac Plus* **from £79**

As RamPac, plus printer interface. Ideal for PCW8256/8512, 512K **£79**, 1M **£99**, 1.5M **£124**.

MiniRams for all PCWs **from £39**

Extra Memory with no frills, smaller box, less money, 256K **£39**, 512K **£49**. Through-port adaptor **£14.95**. Ideal for PCW10.

MiniRam Plus **512K £59**

As MiniRam, plus printer port and CP/M upgrade & printer test. Ideal for PCW9256, 1M **£85**, 1.5M **£109**, subject to availability.

256K Memory Upgrade Kits

Britain's best-selling internal kits for the PCW-8256 and PCW-9256 **£14.95**

MiniPrint for all PCWs **£25**

Printer interface for LocoScript 3 users. CP/M upgrade **£12**.

Pro Interface **£49.95**

Printer and serial interface. Equivalent to Amstrad CPS8256. Printer cable **£8.95**.

*suitable for 8256/8512/9512. 9256 needs adaptor.

SPECIAL OFFERS

Limited stock of 3" disks.
Guaranteed top quality & new.
Box of 10 **£24.95**
Buy a 3.5" Disc Drive and get
Rocket, Flipper or ForeWord
for half-price.

PCW 9512 Drives

Locoscript, most programs and all of your data can easily be copied onto 3.5" disks.

3 Inch Drive Adaptor **£5**

Makes old 3" A Drive become Drive B

FD-9 Replacement Drive A or B **£85**
Internal 3.5" drive replaces 3" Drive A or B

FD-9SW software switchable **£99**

As above but will software switch. Boot up from either drive.

Packages

ProLink Plus for all PCWs **£59.95**

Links NC100, PCs, modems etc. Two way file transfer. Easy to use, with serial interface, program, manual and all cables. Already have a PRO/CPS interface? Cables and software only **£24.95**

NEW! PROLINK+ 512K* **£99**

As ProLink Plus above, but with 512K RAM and Printer Interface.

Printer Packages **from £199**

Canon BJ10sx Bubblejet. Small quiet and fast. Laser quality text and graphics **£199**. With MiniPrint interface, cable and Locoscript 3 & Printer Support Pack just **£269**. With 512K plus interface, cable CP/M upgrade, printer test, Locoscript 3, and Printer Support Pack - just **£299**.

Modem Package **£169**

2400 Baud modem, ProLink Plus interface, manual and easy to use E-mail software.

Fax Modem Package **£299**

High speed data communication for E-mail. Fax direct from disk. Receive onto plain paper or disk, both Modems are BABT approved and include free introductory membership to CompuServe and Internet.

PCW8256/8512 Drives

The supplied 3.5" CP/M Disk and FIB Files are *essential* for 3.5" Drive A and switchable kits. Without them you will only be able to use your 3.5" 720K drive as an inferior 180K Drive A. **N.B.** Most programs and all of your data can be copied onto 3.5" disks with the software supplied (Locoscript 1 as 180K only).

FD-8 Internal 3.5" 720K Drive **£85**

May be manually set to be Drive A or B.

FD-8SW software switchable **£99**

Will software switch allowing you to boot up from either drive.

FD-8A TWIN case **£95**

A 3.5" Drive A in a special internal TWIN case that can hold a second 3.5" disk drive. Tools included for modification to PCW case.

FD-8A+B. TWIN DRIVE **£145**

As above with second 3.5" drive

PCW8512 Only: **FD-8512SW SuperDrive:**

The perfect answer for the 8512 owner! Remove your 180K 3" drive and fit our 3.5" switchable drive. Now you have two 720K drives, one 3" and one 3.5" and you can boot up from either one. **£105**

SCA / SILICON CITY

Prices include VAT & post. Please make cheques payable to SCA Products. Disk Drive Technical Support to: Silicon City, 58 Saxon Street, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 9RS

SCA Products, 146 Ham Road, Worthing, Sussex BN11 2QS.

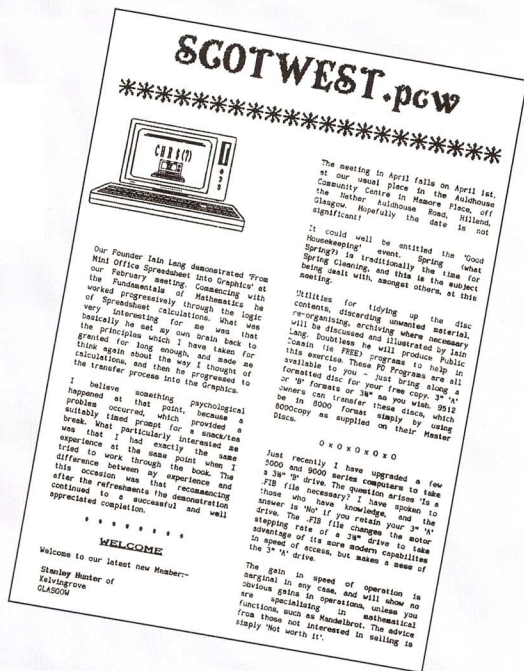
Tel. 01903 821128 Fax: 01903 821120



SCOTWEST PCW CLUB

We have just received a copy of the latest newsletter, including an impassioned defence of the CP/M prompt, and a useful exchange and mart feature of software and hardware for the benefit of members.

For more details of the Club, contact David Williams, 32-4 Carfin Street, New Stevenston, Motherwell ML1 4JL. Tel: 01698 732403.



LEEDS AMSTRAD PCW CLUB

A little while ago, we invited Paul Newmark of Leeds Amstrad PCW Club to write in and give us a potted history of his Club. Here is the result.

This informal and friendly group of PCW owners goes back to 1991, when Simon Mitchell and Dennis Major wished to meet other PCW users. At that time, there were three or four PCW magazines, and they featured news of PCW clubs. Following an invitation through the pages of the magazines, a meeting was held in Leeds in April 1991 at Dennis' house.

A dozen or so PCW owners turned up. At that meeting, Paul Newmark volunteered his house for meetings until such time as more space would be required. The intention was to keep the atmosphere informal, by calling themselves a 'group of friends, interested in the PCW'.

There were to be no committee meetings, or read any minutes of previous meetings, and the like. Normally, meetings are used for solving PCW problems, gathering round two or three PCWs for demonstrations. Occasionally, an outside speaker is invited.

Over the years the membership has grown, with attendances peaking at well over twenty. Now the Club meets at the Adel Club in North Leeds, on the first Monday of each month. Members come as far away as Goole in the east and Rochdale in the west. We levy no membership fee, but just charge a small amount to meet the room hire and refreshments.

New members are always welcome. Contact Paul Newmark, 18 Caythorpe Road, Leeds LS16 5HW. Tel: 0113 275576.

SOUTH ESSEX PCW CLUB

The Club's next meeting will take place on 11 May. This will be in the form of a seminar on Mallard BASIC by Nick Chaundy, who lectures on BASIC programming at Loughton College.

The date of the meeting has been put back by a week because of the local elections. The June meeting is scheduled for the first of the month, when Mike Elliston returns to continue his exploration of CP/M.

Meetings take place on the first Thursday every month at 7.30 pm at the Basildon Centre, Pagel Mead, Basildon. For further details contact Secretary Jim French, 14 Wheatfield Way, Basildon SS16 6SN. Tel: 01268 415255.

HEADS OF THE VALLEYS

The Club newsletter for March contains information on comms, how to sort out gummed up matrix printers, and resolves that old argument as to what the M in CP/M actually stands for. As we have always maintained, it stands for 'microprocessor'.

Membership fees have remained stable at £10 per annum over the last three years, and the annual sub is now due. Meetings are on the first Friday of each month at 7.30 pm at Birchacre, Croes Bychan, Llwydcoed. For further information contact Roy Underwood (Tel: 01685 874972) or Anthony Hill (Tel: 01222 618012).

CRAWLEY PCW CLUB

The Club continues to prosper, with its next meeting due on 1 June. Silicon City will give a talk on installing a 3.5 inch internal drive. On 6 July, there will be an extra meeting, the topic for which has yet to be arranged.

For further details contact Secretary John Fisher, 'Pradines', Four Elms Road, Edenbridge TN8 6AF. Tel: 01732 863062. Meetings are on the first Thursday in each month (except July and August) at 8pm, Christ Church (United Reformed), Three Bridges, Crawley.

Correction

We have to grovel a little to Ansible Information for getting our telephone numbers in a twist in our news item last month. Apologies for any inconvenience caused. The correct address and number should: read **Ansible Information, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU. Tel: 01424 719739.**

Are you in? If your computer club doesn't get a mention on this page, simply write to us at our editorial address, giving details of your organisation, how to contact its offices, where and when it meets, and - if you have one - a copy of your magazine or newsletter. We shall be delighted to incorporate any information you wish to offer, including photographs if they are of sufficient quality.

The Highest
Quality Products
& Service

PINBOARD COMPUTERS

2 year warranty
on 3.5" drives

"WYSIWYP" - What you see is what you pay - Includes VAT & UK Carriage

COME TO THE EXPERTS

We were producing bootable 3.5" disc drives when the magazines and the major software companies were still saying it was not possible. Now the inevitable demise of the 3" disc approaches, they realise that the future of the PCW lies in 3.5".

Thousands of happy users have realised that the conversion to 3.5" can be simply accomplished at their own speed and with no changes to their familiar software, by fitting a switchable drive; leaving them free to concentrate on their work, knowing that they have the security of identical 3" and 3.5" systems and knowing that they can upgrade their software as and when they want to for genuine reasons - not just because they changed their disc shape.

A PINBOARD COMPUTERS ADD-ON 3.5" SWITCHABLE DRIVE PROVIDES EXTRA FACILITIES NOT INSTEAD OF.

Flexibility - Expandability - Upgrade Ability - Easier to fit - No cutting or filing the case - No bodging to get a 3.5" pint in 3" pot. Leave the existing drives where they are - still in use and add a smart custom-made unit outside. The cables just 'Piggy-Back' onto the 3" drives. All drives unplug for easy transit.

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BUILT IN POWER SUPPLY OPTION

After the demise of the 3" disc and the 3" drives the next component to need attention in your PCW, to keep it going will probably be the power supply. All our external drives can be supplied with their own power to lessen the load on the PCW Power Supply.

THE BEST DOES NOT COST THE MOST

Add up the items and compare our prices e.g. to upgrade from an 8256 3" 'A' running LOCOSCRIP 1 to a 3.5" 'A' drive plus LOCOSCRIP 3 plus a CPM/FIB upgrade disc

TOTAL PRICE £109.50

To upgrade a PCW already on LOCOSCRIP 3 requires a switchable 'A' drive

TOTAL PRICE £75.00

Telephone and fax support at normal rates, fitting services, disc transfer services, help with Locomotive and Non-Loocomotive software and repair facilities all adds up to the best 3.5" drive upgrade you can buy.

FREE INFORMATION LEAFLET

Fortunately choosing which disc drive suits your needs best is harder than buying, fitting or using it, so send for our free information leaflet on disc drives.

DATADUAL 8 (8256/8512) £110.00
DATADUAL 9 (9512) £110.00

DATADUALS are single drives that work as either an 'A' drive or a 'B' drive and still allow access to all 3" drives or another 3.5" or 5.25" drive. With no new software you can copy start-up and data to 3.5".

The **DATADUAL 8** can work as two drives even if it is the only drive left on the system. It can copy files or complete 3" 'A' or 'B' discs to 3.5" or copy files from 3" 'A' to 3.5" 'B' and vice versa. As an 'A' drive it can run 180K copies of your existing single sided software and at the touch of a button it is a 720K 'B' drive. Alternatively you can upgrade to new 720K 'A' software.

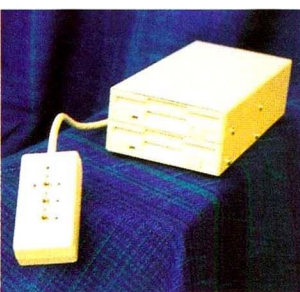
DATADUAL 9's on single drive 9512's change the internal drive from 'A' to 'B' when the DATADUAL is set as 'A' so copying can be done from 3" to 3.5" in LOCOSCRIP.

DATADUAL's have forward facing controls; indicator lamps to show when set as 'A' and on 8256/8512's in single sided mode, which side of an 'A' 183K disc is in use.



**TRADE ORDERS
WELCOME**

DATATWIN 8 (8256/8512) £165.00
DATATWIN 9 (9512) £165.00
DATATWIN NSP £130.00



Complete 3.5" conversion. Two disk drives and a power supply in one case (104mm wide 55 high x 235 deep). Your PCW can run any combination of 3" or 3.5". (Reviewed in the October 1992 PCW PLUS "DOUBLE DECKER" and Feb 1992 "OPEN DRAWING" how to fit guides).

With your DATATWIN you copy your existing software (Both 'A' and 'B') to 3.5" and you only need to use your 3" occasionally again. Because you can change from 3" to 3.5" any time without rebooting, you can load from one and save to the other. The 'A' drive can run either as a 183K single sided duplicate of your old 3" or as a 720K 'A' drive, with the new LOCOMOTIVE upgrades and LOCOSCRIP 3.

The whole package is only about the price you can pay for one internal 3" 'B'. If you think you may be swapping from 3" to 3.5" for some time then for an extra £20.00 a DATATWIN can be supplied with a cable remote control unit to sit beside your keyboard with the switches and indicator lamps on. The DATATWIN NSP is a non switchable unit with no PSU, which replaces the original drives completely with two external 3.5" drives, and only run 3.5" software.

3.5" 'B' DRIVES AND 'A' DRIVE SWITCHABLES



EXTERNAL 3.5" DRIVE NON SWITCHABLE. Just 26mm high and normally used as 'B' drive it can, later on, be simply altered to become drive 'A' if the internal drive 'A' fails and is disconnected.

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Most other 3.5" 'B' drives to a DATADUAL

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NEW LOWER PRICES FOR OUR 3.5" DISK DRIVES AND DRIVE UPGRADES

A plague of locusts?

Our beginners' series continues to explore all those nasty things that can go wrong in your computing environment

'Aren't you being too pessimistic?' asked one of my colleagues when I went round the office asking what people thought the perils of computing might be. 'Fire, flood, lightning?' one of them responded. 'What about a plague of locusts or an invasion from outer space?'

As I keep repeating ad nauseam, there's nothing so boring as security of any kind - until something goes disastrously wrong for you. Precautions aren't something you can take after the event. And accidents aren't things that just happen to other people.

So I make no apology for continuing with my words of doom - if it saves even one of you from a loss of data or equipment, it will be well worthwhile. There's no point in saying: 'But I'm just a home user. It's different in an office environment.'

Oh no it isn't: fire is just as hot, water just as wet, lightning just as striking in the home as it is elsewhere. So let's take a look at some

+ Safety Tip +

If you are not using the computer for some time, particularly if you are going to be out of the house, say, on holiday, do disconnect the computer from the mains. That also applies to any equipment linked to the computer: printer, modem, or whatever.

simple measures to help protect you against disaster. We look this time at fire, flood and lightning. The killer bees from outer space will have to wait until another time.

FIRE! FIRE!

Here's a simple fire prevention checklist:

Smoke detectors: Install an appropriate number in the right locations and test them regularly. Put a note in your diary to test the alarm on the first day of every month.

Do note, though, that an electrical fire in computing equipment can cause serious damage before the detector senses it.

It has been proved time and again that smoke alarms save lives, and they can often save equipment, too.

Extinguishers and blankets: For electrical fires, carbon dioxide or Halon extinguishers are recommended. Dry powder can cause more damage to sensitive electronic equipment than it prevents.

Never use water on an electrical fire. A sprinkler system is not recommended. A fire blanket is also valuable to help to localise the outbreak and starve the flames of oxygen.

Fire traps: Perform a visual check of the location where computer equipment is installed. Piles of discarded continuous stationery adjacent to cables or computers, boxes full of paper and documents, or simply an untidy clutter are all potential danger points.

Smoking: I personally would ban all smoking in a computing environment, for health reasons as well as to minimise the risk of fire from discarded cigarette ends and smouldering matches. There's also no evidence that smoking is good for computers, either.

Data storage: When the location is unattended, disks and other storage media should, if it is considered necessary, be stored in a fireproof data safe. Backups should be taken regularly and stored at a different site. A metal filing cabinet is not sufficient protection.

Heat damage: Fires can be caused by the gradual build up of temperature in equipment that is fan-cooled where the vent is blocked in some way, or if the fan fails. As with all electrical equipment, computers should be checked to ensure that there is no clutter round the fan vent.

Insurance: Check that your home or business insurance policy offers adequate and appropriate cover. It is surprising how quickly the cost even of a fairly modest computer installation can mount up. If you are working from home, you should have a separate insurance for business equipment.

FLOOD

Here's a flood prevention checklist:

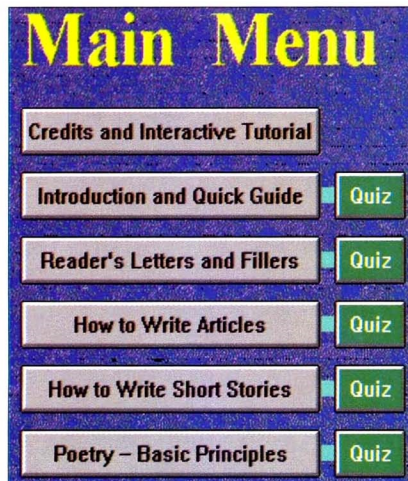
Pipes: Are pipes properly cladded against winter freezing conditions?

Taps and valves: Are they functioning properly - and do you know where they are if you need to switch off in an emergency?



Two of the government's leaflets on fire prevention

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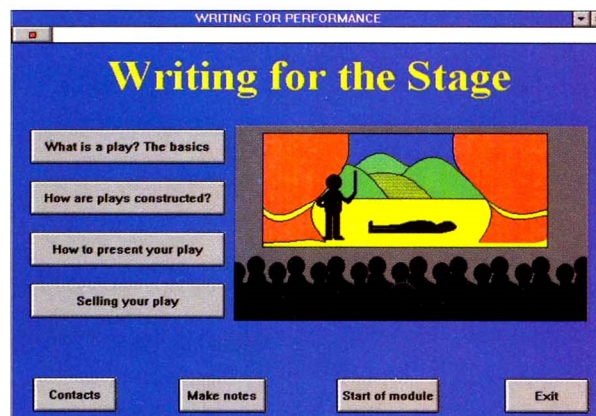
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Fires Happen to Other People

Of all the risks to property and life, fire tends to be disregarded more than any other. Few people who have not seen the devastating human and physical damage that can be wrought even by a relatively small domestic outbreak can really comprehend the impact which it can have.

Fire can ruin a business, however well insured you may be. On the stock and equipment side, you may well be able to re-equip without too much difficulty and find temporary accommodation to continuing operating from. Think, however, of the effect of losing your entire customer order list, or, if you are in the software design business, all the work currently under development.

Still, fire is something you read about in the newspaper and see on the evening TV news. It happens to other people. One day, however, you might be that other person. It only takes a combination of factors to bring about disaster.

Let me offer a brief example from my own experience. My son, fifteen years old at the time of the incident, had a bedroom

full of computing and MIDI equipment. In one corner of the room a newly-installed fused switch box controlled the three-phase supply to the house, and in the hall immediately outside the bedroom was a smoke detector.

At one o'clock in the morning, the fused box - which, unknown to anyone, had four separate manufacturing and specification defects - shorted out, causing the bakelite to emit fumes and become conductive.

Additionally, the smoke detector in the hall had developed a defect which caused the connector to the battery to become loose. If a relative in the next bedroom had not been awake and smelled the smoke, the outcome to life and equipment in that room, not to say the whole house, would have been destructive in the extreme.

Fires do happen. They are not inevitably caused by direct human error at the location of the incident, such as falling asleep with a lighted cigarette or allowing clothing or curtains to come into contact with an open heating element. Even the best preventative measures can fail at times.

damage is that the workshops will most likely be inundated with similar requests for repairs to be carried out, and that will cause considerable delays before your machine is back up and running.

The solution is simple. At the end of the working day, ensure that the computer is unplugged from the mains and from the RS232 cable, if any, which links it to the outside world.

It is also advisable to power down computing equipment during an electrical storm, not only because of the possibility of direct lightning damage, but in the event of mains interruptions caused by lightning strikes in the power distribution system.

A Department of Trade and Industry Security Awareness case study refers to a mini-computer installed in an office complex in order to service payroll and local government and health service administration needs.

The computer room was struck by lightning during a violent thunderstorm, and the British Telecom line connection box was destroyed. A huge surge of current caused the destruction of modems, cabling and the backplane of the DEC computer. The damage was estimated at more than £100,000.

In this case, the management of the centre had prudently kept the software and programs in a fire safe at a different location, which meant that a contingency agreement to share

other computing facilities elsewhere caused only a two-day delay before the restoration of the service.

A less fortunate company, Damart, suffered slightly less damage in money terms but possibly greater disruption when lightning struck their NCR on-line system. The main problem in the case of Damart was the tall chimney which forms part of their office and factory complex, and which had only one outlet for lightning discharge. Lessons learned included protecting all long cable runs and taking other preventative measures.

What emerged from the Damart experience is that although there is a British Standard to protect individuals and property from lightning, no such provisions exist for the protection of electronic equipment. This means that none of the computing equipment currently on the market is necessarily protected against lightning attack.

The University of Dundee, where lightning strikes are not unusual, a serious strike occurred on a September night a few years ago. It faced a bill of over £2000, plus - much more importantly - many man-hours of time to repair the damage.

Over 300 lines to the mainframe computers were damaged, and several users' PCs were damaged. Protection devices would cost over five times as much as the original damage, and there is no guarantee that they would be completely effective.

MELTING BOARDS

Bradford Royal Infirmary's system crashed when lightning charges entered the comms line through the back of the computer, causing circuit boards to melt and metal cabinet casings to fuse to connecting plugs.

One of the more unusual aspects of the situation was that the hospital had moved to NHS Trust status, and had taken out insurance against just such a contingency. If it had not opted out, as Crown Property, it would not have been possible to insure it, and the hospital itself would have been faced with a substantial bill.

As it was, it meant that for a period of nearly two months, only a reduced service was available while waiting for replacement equipment to be delivered.

It is clear that lightning strike is not a common occurrence, but that reasonable precautions can be taken against it by these means:

- physically disconnecting equipment from mains and other wiring, including that to modems
- taking out the appropriate insurance
- ensuring that copies of data and programs are stored in firesafes in a different location
- and that there is a contingency plan in place for having access to other computers while your own are being repaired or replaced. ■

Location of computer room: If it can be avoided, do not locate your computing equipment immediately below a suite of toilets or water tank in the room or loft space above.

FLOOD HERE?

Contrary to popular mythology, you do not have to live on the sea front or on the bank of a river to be at risk of flooding. Apart from rare natural disasters such as typhoons, or dams collapsing, water damage can occur just about anywhere.

All you need is a burst water pipe or a faulty stop cock valve to create a spectacular amount of damage. A sprinkler system which malfunctions can be even worse in its effect.

LIGHTNING STRIKE

Of all the hazards a typical computing system might be exposed to, lightning seems the least likely to cause damage. Agreed, the possibility is not strong, but as a former employee in a university whose computer systems (including the PC on my own desk) were seriously damaged by lightning strike twice in three years, it is a contingency not to be ignored altogether.

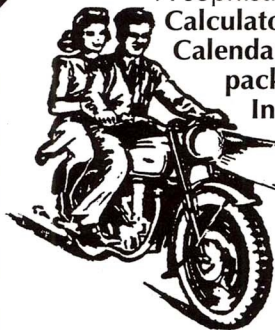
The most immediate danger - apart from possible secondary damage through lightning-induced fires - is that of lightning striking power supply cables or wiring connecting a terminal to a remote computer.

This can and does damage PC equipment, and one of the more serious side effects of such

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External 'B' drive (upgrade/replacement)	EXT8	£69.00
External 'B' drive (8512) - switching version between external 3.5"	EXTSHN	£85.00
The 'ABBA' drive - enabling booting from either existing 3" 'A' or 3.5" & drives. Fip with a simple toggle switch.	1-ABBA-8	£89.00
Internal Version	1-ABBA-8	£89.00
External Version	E-ABBA-8	£89.00
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2. 9512 USERS

Internal 'A' drive (to replace faulty 3")	INT9A	£79.00
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External 'B' drive (upgrade/replacement)	EXT8	£69.00

The ABBA drive - the ultimate drive for your 9512 - 3.5" drive that is normally configured as 'B' data drive but with a simple flick of a switch acts as 'A' (Boot) drive and the existing 'A' 3" is configured as a 'B' (Data) drive. Either drive can act as a boot drive or a data drive.

Internal Version	1-ABBA-9	£89.00
External Version	E-ABBA-9	£79.00

3. 9256+/9512+ USERS

External replacement/upgrade	INT+A/B	£89.00
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PCW9256 256K RAM Upgrade kit RAM+		£17.00

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Merging with

LocoMail

Hazel Underwood marches on in her exploration of LocoMail and examines the ins and outs of merging

This month we will be taking a break from LocoMail's FILL mode and introducing MERGE mode which allows a LocoMail master document to use information stored on disk in the form of a LocoScript data document or LocoFile datafile.

We will be describing how to set up a LocoScript data document containing names, addresses and telephone numbers, and then giving examples of LocoMail master documents that can use these details to produce standard letters, labels and lists. ■

Typing it in

If you are finding it difficult to type in the examples in this series, we are offering as a service to our readers an opportunity for you to acquire all of them on disk from the February episode of the series up to the June episode.

Simply send a blank, formatted disk and four first class stamps to cover post, processing and packing to DGC Software, 12 Stonecroft, Eccleshill, Bradford BD2 2HW. Please indicate clearly which PCW version of LocoScript you have, or if you are a PC user. And do remember to include your own name and address.

+ Step 1 The Data Document +

All LocoScript data documents have a special section called a record pattern which defines the names under which the various details contained in the document are stored, the order in which they appear and the characters used to separate pieces of information. This pattern can either be placed at the beginning of the data document or stored as a separate document.

The data document in our example starts with the record pattern. This shows that the first line of each record contains the SURNAME followed by a slash and then the FIRSTNAME. The second line contains the HOMEPHONE and WORKPHONE numbers which are also separated by a slash.

The ADDRESS starts on the third line and ends with the end-of-page character which is used to mark the end of the record. (The end-of-page character is obtained by pressing F5 and taking the End page here option.)

The three name and address records that follow all stick to the record pattern, in other words, two names separated by a slash on the first line, phone numbers separated by a slash on the second, and the address starting on the third. Although the

home phone number is missing from the third record, the pattern remains the same. A slash separates the missing home phone number from the work phone number.

In order to try out the examples given in this article, you will need to create your own data document. To do this, create a new LocoScript document and type in the record pattern and name and address details exactly as they appear in the illustration.

When you have finished press Exit, or F10 for PC users, to Finish Edit and return to the Disk Management Screen.

Note that LocoMail works through the records in the order in which they are stored on the document. If you are setting up your own data document and intend to use it to produce an alphabetical list of names and phone numbers, you will need to ensure that the records are stored in alphabetical order.

```

M11:014/ADDRESS 141 Editing text Printer file, Jcong 41M
Layout 1 Fil12 ISI CB10 IP8 Times 1027 Page 1 Line 1/61
G1=Actions 12=Layout 13=Scale 14=Size 15=Page 17=Spell 18=Options EXIT
-----
SURNAME/FIRSTNAME
HOMEPHONE/WORKPHONE
ADDRESS
-----
Adams/John
0116 2452142/0116 2453652
6 The Ridings
North Fultons
Leicesters
LE2 4NB
-----
Burton/Jane & Tom
0116 2345678/0116 2345679
Cher House
7 High Street
Leicesters
LE10 7HU
-----
Cotton/Sam
/01234 785432
Wiggs & Co
Canestones
MK42 7UH
-----

```

+ Step 2 Standard Letter +

Our first example of a MERGE document is a standard letter that needs to be sent out to everyone whose name and address is stored in the data document. Simple instructions like:

(+Mail)FIRSTNAME(-Mail)

- are used to take the relevant details from the data document and place them into the letter.

To try out the example, create a new LocoScript document and type in the letter exactly as it appears in the illustration. The (+Mail) and (-Mail) codes are obtained by pressing the [+] or [-] keys followed by the letter M. (On a PC, use the + or - keys on the numeric pad). Now press Exit, or F10, to Finish Edit and return to the Disk Management Screen.

With the cursor still on the document you have just created, press M to use LocoMail in MERGE mode. Move the cursor to the data document you created in Step 1 and press Enter.

A LocoMail menu will now appear giving you the chance to check the names of the documents, the print quality and num-

ber of copies. Unlike the menu in FILL mode, it will also give you a choice between having a manual or automatic merge.

As a manual merge gives you the chance to check each letter before it is printed, leave it on this option for the present. When you have checked all the details, press Enter to continue.

The letter should now appear on the screen along with the name and address details stored in the first record of the data document. A LocoMail menu will then appear giving you the chance to edit, print, save or discard the result of this MERGE.

Once you have made your selection, a letter containing the name and address details from the second record of the data document will appear on the screen and be followed by the LocoMail menu as before.

This process of producing a letter and then displaying the menu will continue until there are no more records, in other words, LocoMail has reached the end of the data document.

```

# 19950504/00:12:18  MFG Editing text  Printer idle. Using B/M:
Layout  I F10  ISI  CR+0  LP8  Times 10pt  Page  1  Line  1/61
f1=Actions  f2=Layout  f3=Style  f4=Size  f5=Page  f7=Spell  f8=Options  EXIT
-----
(Align)                                     20th May 1995
(+Mail)MURPHY(-Mail) (+Mail)MURPHY(-Mail)
(+Mail)ADDRESS(-Mail)
Dear (+Mail)MURPHY(-Mail)
We will be moving house on June 5th 1995. Our new address
will be:
→      3 Hanble Drive
→      Loughborough
→      Leics
→      LE16 8JU
→
→      Phone (0116) 3458765
Yours sincerely
-----

```

+ Using LocoFile +

All the LocoMail MERGE documents described in this article can also be used with a LocoFile datafile set up to store the same items of information. If you are a LocoFile user, you have a distinct advantage when it comes to producing the telephone list; you do not have to worry about the order in which the records are typed into the datafile.

If you have set up a SURNAME index in your datafile, you can call this up from within the LocoMail MERGE document. Simply

add the instruction:

(+Mail)\$="SURNAME"(-Mail)

- to the start of the MERGE document to ensure that the list is produced in alphabetical order of surname. Just by changing this instruction to:

(+Mail)\$="FIRSTNAME"(-Mail)

- you can use the same datafile to produce a list in first name order, assuming once again that a FIRSTNAME index has been set up.

+ Step 3 Producing Labels +

```

A: group 0/LABELS .MAG Editing text. Printer idle Using A: H:
Layout 1 P112 L91 CR+0 L96 No Set 10pt Page 1 line 1/ 9
F1=Actions F2=Layout F3=Style F4=Size F5=Page F7=Spell F8=Options EXIT
#Mail)SPACE=" "RETURN="
"ENDOFFPAGE="
#
#
#OPEN(#Mail)
#FIRSTNAME="" AND SURNAME=""KRAINSHEOF
#FINISH=1 <:FIRSTNAME:SPACE:SURNAME:RETURN
ADDRESS:ENDOFFPAGE:>
#
(-Mail)"(-Mail)(#Mail)
#
#FINISH=
#LOOP#FINISH(-Mail)

```

This master document has been set up to produce address labels. Instead of using the Step 2 method of producing and then printing each label separately, it saves time by producing labels for all the names and addresses stored in the data document before printing them off at the end.

On the first line, the space and carriage return characters are stored under the names SPACE and RETURN respectively. The end-of-page character is then stored under ENDOFFPAGE.

At the end of the document we have the instructions:

```

FINISH=1
%LOOP#FINISH

```

The first instruction tells LocoMail to store a 1 under the name FINISH. This is followed by a 'perform until' instruction which tells LocoMail to keep repeating the instructions stored under the name LOOP until it finds that a zero has been stored under the name FINISH. Thus LocoMail will loop round, first performing the instructions and then checking FINISH, until a zero is found.

The group of instructions stored under LOOP appears in the middle of the document. Notice that the name LOOP is followed by an equals sign, a quotation mark and a (+Mail) code. On the next line we have a conditional instruction:

```

#FIRSTNAME="" AND SURNAME="":<:FINISH=0:>

```

All conditional instructions follow the same basic pattern; a condition is followed by an action which is only carried out if the condition is true. In this case the condition consists of two parts:

```

#FIRSTNAME="" AND SURNAME="":

```

- and literally means 'if whatever is stored under FIRSTNAME is equal to nothing AND whatever is stored under SURNAME is equal to nothing'.

The condition is followed by the action, FINISH=0, which tells LocoMail to store a zero under the name FINISH. Notice

the <: and >: characters which indicate where the action starts and where it finishes.

If the condition is true, in other words, both the first name and surname are missing, LocoMail stores a zero under FINISH thus stopping the loop. We are assuming that if both the first name and surname are missing, we have reached the end of the data document.

If the condition is not true, that is, if LocoMail finds that either the first name or the surname is present, the number stored under FINISH is not changed.

On the next line we have another conditional instruction:

```

#FINISH=1 <:FIRSTNAME:SPACE:SURNAME:RETURN
ADDRESS:ENDOFFPAGE:>

```

This time LocoMail only performs the action if the number stored under FINISH is still equal to 1.

The action starts with the <: characters. These are followed by instructions placing the first name, surname and address into the labels document. The ENDOFFPAGE instruction ensures that the next set of name and address details are forced onto a new label. The >: characters mark the end of the action.

The \$+ instruction on the next line tells LocoMail to go on to the next record in the data document. This is followed by the a (-Mail) code, quotation mark and pair of (-Mail) and (+Mail) codes which mark the end of the group.

To try out this example, create a new LocoScript document and type in the instructions exactly as shown in the illustration. Remember to select a paper-type suitable for the labels you intend to use.

Now merge this document with the data document created in Step 1. Once all the name and address details have been placed into the labels document, LocoMail will move on to the closing menu so that the labels can be printed.

(continued on page 31)

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Telecottage industries



Expert Dave Osborne continues exploring the growing phenomenon of working from home with your computer

WORK WE MUST

OK, so we're in a bind. We feel we have to work, but at the same time we don't want to do it. In cases like this what do you do to retain your sanity? Well, as I suggested in last month's article, you might try cutting out one of the major irritants of our modern working society - having to travel to work each day.

For a large majority of us - the majority is actually larger than you think - it's perfectly possible to carry out large chunks of our working activities at home or in some kind of centre that is totally removed (geographically) from the central organisation.

No more travelling to work each day, and the buzz-word for it is telematics. By using very basic communication facilities like the telephone and fax machine, probably linked up to a personal computer of some kind, and maybe with a printer hanging around somewhere, your work can be transported to you - rather than you having to commute somewhere else to do your daily drudge.

Over the past couple of years, teleworking has hit us and the clever ones amongst us have realised how easy it is to shuffle off at least some of the mortal toils that disrupt our lives.

THE IDEAL WORKPLACE

Unfortunately, though, there's no such place as Utopia. You've probably guessed already that for many this idyllic scenario is far from possible. It requires at the very least two things: first

that you do the kind of job that can be worked at a distance from your central organisation (and use telematic systems to bridge the gap), and secondly that you have the basic equipment necessary to do the communicating.

Well, the first problem is not actually as much of a problem as you may think. Most jobs contain elements that involve communicating information in some way or another.

No one suggests that you would work at a distance from the central organisation all the time - just on days and at times when you want to do the kinds of jobs that are amenable to teleworking. But we'll look in more detail at this part of the vicious circle in another article.

No, the main problem facing most potential teleworkers starts at in the beginning, with the equipment side of things. Acquiring the 'right' computer, knowing how to connect the computer and printer to the telephone system so that you can send information down it, making sure that the telephone technology is up to the job, and so on.

These are the initial problems facing the tentative teleworker. And if you want to engage the service of mobile telematics so that you can work on the move, as it were, or from different places, well..!

Paradoxically, given the world's sophistication in information engineering, 'infrastructural' issues like these can make or break any fledgling attempts to start teleworking operations.

Work is one of those four-letter words that can mean both pain and pleasure. For many it implies drudgery, boredom and oppression. It's something to be endured for a large part of our lives, and many look forward to its end.

But at the same time there are few of us who, given the opportunity not to work, would actually take up the option (even with limitless funds to keep you in the luxury to which you had become accustomed during your working days).

In short, despite its negative connotations, work is something we all need to do. For most of us productive activity is central to our existence - we need it in order to show that we're worth something.

+ Faxback +

The Telecottage Association operates a faxback service for the latest information about the Association. Simply dial 01279 432747, with your fax machine connected, and follow the instructions to select document number 191.

TELECOTTAGE TECHNOLOGY

But don't despair. As with most things in life there are people out there who can help you on your way. In the case of teleworking, your first port of call may well be to talk to a telecottage in your area.

What are these? Simply put they are information technology centres that are often located in rural parts of the country. They provide users with all of the facilities that they're likely to need to conduct their business: computers, software, printers, fax machines, and networking capabilities.

Many are even connected up to the world-wide telephone network with ISDN, which stands for the high tech cabling systems that enable complex documents and images to be transported around the globe in matters of minutes.

Fully functional telecottages, in short, provide a kind of half-way house between working in the central office and working at home. At the same time they provide the hardware, software and training support that users often need to move into teleworking in a bigger way.

Currently there are about 130 telecottages dotted around the UK and Ireland, most of them being concentrated in the more rural areas of the countries like mid and west Wales and the South West of England.

Many are privately operated while others have been developed as part of rural and other enterprise consortia that have got together to

encourage work to an area. Remember, teleworking brings work to people and it reduces the need for people to travel to work.

There's even a thriving association that was set up a few years ago to help telecottages and their putative users realise the potential of teleworking. Along with advice when needed, and their bi-monthly magazine *Teleworker*, the Telecottage Association provides training courses dealing with such skills as IT and business studies.

In addition, sponsored by such companies and organisations as BT, the Rural Development Commission, the National Rural Enterprise Centre, Apple Computer, Kays and Co., and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, a few years ago the telecottage Association appointed the country's first Teleworking Advisor.

A teleworker himself, Alan Denbigh has developed an information and referral service for both existing and prospective telecottages and teleworkers. Having contact with a wide range of different projects and organisations means that he is well-placed to comment on the common experiences and factors affecting the development of telecottages in the UK.

ON THE PLUS SIDE

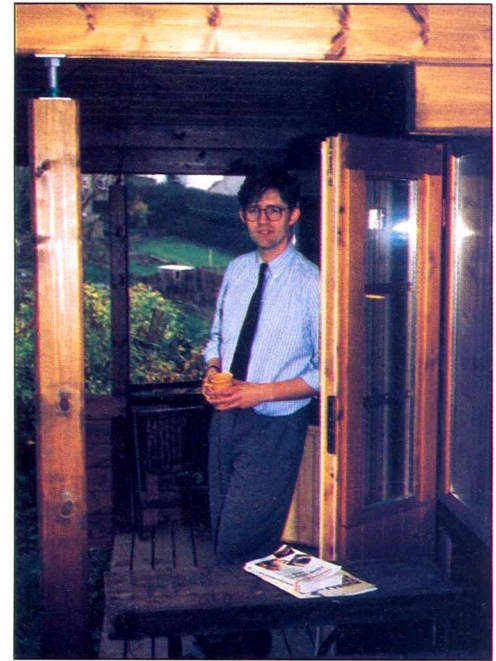
So telecottages provide an easy route to teleworking for people who, because of their job, location, or access to facilities wouldn't necessarily have had the opportunity to start this new way of working. But the telecottage movement represents more than just the passive provision of much needed facilities.

By being community-based organisations they often become part of the life and work of the community itself. They can provide a focal point for community-based activities, advice and support.

From this stems other advantages. The informality of telecottage existence can lead to reduced techno-fear among users and to increased opportunities for technological expansion.

By taking advantage of informal training and assistance opportunities, for example, the initial phobias that surround both the low and the high tech use of telematics can be reduced and even removed altogether.

Indeed, these training possibilities themselves can lead to other potential benefits, like increased employment opportunities. One



Alan Denbigh of the Telecottage Association, editor of *Teleworking*

telecottage in North Wales, for example, Antur Tanat Cain (Antur is the Welsh for Enterprise) which is based in Llangedwyn, Clwyd, has been in operation for over 12 years.

Over the past few years it has been providing employment training for members of the local community in Information Technology, with part of the course including paid work entering data for ICL computers. ATC, therefore, offers teleworking in training and practice.

So telecottages can provide some very real value-added features to the community. They are not just somewhere for work, though they can be invaluable in facilitating work.

They are not just a place where you can find the right equipment to telework, though they can provide the most up-to-date equipment without the costs of purchasing it up-front. And they are not just centres for community cohesion, though they can certainly help to bring people together.

Telecottages are all of these things together. For the budding teleworker who wants to dip the proverbial appendage into the water they provide an ideal halfway house. For the technophobe they provide an opportunity to learn that technology isn't the great Satan after all. And for the community they can provide opportunities for cohesion and advancement that few other enterprise initiatives can match.

FURTHER DETAILS

The Telecottage Association can be contacted at The Other Cottage, Shortwood, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire. Freephone 0800 616008.

Alan Denbigh can be contacted at the Telecottage Association and on CompuServe: 100272,3137@compuserve.com. ■

The cover of a recent issue of *Teleworker*



Extending

We asked Bill Ratcliffe to interview David Landers to persuade him to tell us how he put the Instant Recall routines together

Disks containing LocoMail routines appear from time to time - although the program's inherent limitations ensure that this isn't exactly a crowded market sector. We asked David Landers, Instant Recall's author, why he had chosen to follow the LocoMail route.

David Landers: I use my PCW as a writer's tool, and I like LocoScript - it may not be as fast as some other word processors, but it suits me fine. Unfortunately though, since LocoScript on the PCW isn't compatible with CP/M, it means that you're locked into this finite world.

There are all sorts of utilities available in CP/M and BASIC - but very little for LocoScript. However, LocoMail offers a possible way out, being effectively a programming language in its own right.

I'd played around with LocoMail for years;

producing routines for merging with LocoFile datafiles, and so on. I'd also written some fill routines as desktop utilities - including a simple calculator and a couple of metric converters.

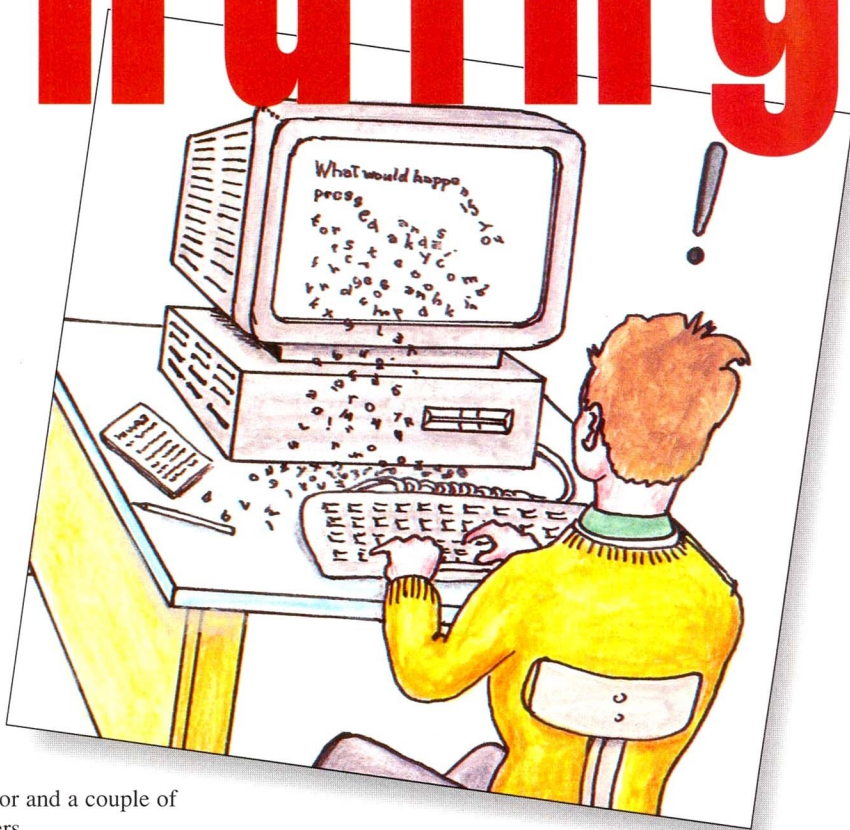
These were primarily to help me in my work as a motoring writer - it's handy to be able to pop into LocoMail and calculate engine capacities, compression ratios and suchlike. I copy and paste the results into LocoScript documents, which saves time when preparing technical articles.

Bill Ratcliffe: Calculators and metric converters are already available for LocoMail - so why write your own?

David Landers: I was aware that there were other LocoMail utilities on the market. In fact, I'd used a couple of them - and, to be frank, I didn't find them that impressive. For instance: metric converters that allow you to do one conversion and then chuck you out of the program.

The calculator that I tried forced you to choose whether you wanted to add, subtract, multiply or divide - and thereafter wouldn't let you do anything else. I needed something more sophisticated.

My own routines eventually worked quite well, so I decided to polish them up and offer them for sale. I completed a little Accounts Package that I'd been experimenting with, and I also wrote some full-year calendars - concentrating on good screen presentation in particular.



A screen dump of sorts: one of the few tricks which Instant Recall can't persuade LocoMail to perform - yet!

ON-SCREEN MAGIC

Bill Ratcliffe: 'Instant Recall's screen presentation is nothing like 'normal' LocoMail. Can you tell us more about it?'

David Landers: LocoScript's screen facilities are available in LocoMail, so there's no excuse for routines to look primitive. However, I've developed certain techniques that don't seem to have been used before - they exploit LocoMail's 'prompt text' facility.

As you know, a LocoMail keyboard-input instruction can include a semicolon followed by text. The text appears on screen as a prompt, which is discarded once a response has been made to the instruction.

This prompt can consist of any valid LocoScript characters, plus most word processing markers (apart from a Return, which would signal the end of the instruction). By using the (UniT) code instead of a Return - and by including underline characters, tabs, (ReV) codes and so on - the prompt text can be moulded into pretty much anything you like.

It can become a menu, for example. It's

Instant Recall +

The Instant Recall disk is a series of routines using the facilities of LocoMail, including a calculator, metric conversion routines, calendars, and a useful accounts package. It's available for PCW and PC users of LocoScript. David Landers is the brains behind the program and we thought it would be interesting to ask him how and why he devised these ingenious routines.

There's also a hint of a new version of Instant Recall, Instant Recall 2, with various barcharts, schedules, cascade diagrams and the like. Instant Recall costs £9.95 and is available from **David Landers, Garden Cottage, Brinkburn, Longframlington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 8AR. Tel: 0166 5570662.**

LocoScript

even possible to create a reasonable replica of a LocoScript dialogue box - where the answer to the prompt is actually typed within the box itself.

HIDE AND SEEK

Bill Ratcliffe: The Instant Recall routines don't appear to contain any conventional LocoMail commands. Presumably they are hidden?

David Landers: Yes, that's something I've been trying to achieve for ages - those lines of code crawling all over the screen aren't strictly necessary. When LocoMail is used in 'Fill' mode, you can make it store its instructions in memory, in LocoScript's edit buffer.

Having defined any necessary values, all the commands are written as program units. These will be nested loops, of course, featuring conditional commands linked to user inputs, for anything other than the most basic routines.

Finally, you tell LocoMail to run the main program loop while the relevant test condition remains true. That's the (+Mail) % loop @ test (-Mail) - 'perform loop at test' - type of instruction.

What happens is that LocoMail reads through the routine - storing its commands - until it hits the very last 'perform loop' command. From then on, it works entirely from the memorised instructions.

Bill Ratcliffe: But that's a standard LocoMail procedure - and you'd still expect to see the commands as they're read.

David Landers: Special LocoScript layouts ensure that the commands are off screen when LocoMail reads them. If you edit an Instant Recall v1.10 routine, you'll see that the right margin has been pushed out - the commands are all there, but you're never aware of them because they're not normally visible.

However, this created a new problem: with the screen staying blank while the routine loaded, you tended to think that the computer had crashed! But by changing layouts at certain points, and experimenting with the (+Mail) ; comment (-Mail) facility, I was able to include suitable 'Loading... please wait' messages, to reassure users.'

CLEVER ACCOUNTS

Bill Ratcliffe: The Accounts Package involves a Merge as well as a Fill. Perhaps you can talk us through the procedure and explain the thinking behind it.

David Landers: The intention was to produce a fairly straightforward credit/debit system that would provide a bank balance when it was fed information from (say) cheque book and paying-in book stubs.

As well as automating the arithmetic, I wanted to include a text description of each transaction - not just its cheque or slip number. The final result being a printed statement that would be more informative than the bank's 'official' monthly statement.

The easiest route would have been to demand that all the information be entered in a single session at the end of the statement period - one Fill document would then have sufficed.

But that wouldn't have been a very useful system - most people, naturally enough, want to know their bank balance part-way through the month. In other words, they need the flexibility to be able to input data and obtain a current balance at any time - which makes the programming task more difficult.

Bill Ratcliffe: It implies that data has to be stored and then accessed at a later stage - something that's tricky to arrange in LocoMail.

David Landers: Initially, I tried to design a Fill routine that saved the data and then actually re-wrote itself for the next session. It can be done, but the user has to be instructed, via screen prompts, to tap in various LocoMail codes. There seemed to be potential for operator error, so I opted for a safer, (albeit more pedestrian), method.

My Fill routine asks the user whether this is the first session of that particular accounting period. If the answer is [Y], account information is requested - account number, balance carried forward and so on.

The routine then writes a LocoMail Record Pattern at the head of the document, followed by that account information.

Transaction details are now requested - date, description, credit or debit, amount, and so on. This is on a 'More?' loop, and each transaction is added to the data accumulating below the Record Pattern.

The Record Pattern and its related data conform to the familiar 'item' 'separator' 'item' 'separator' 'item' terminator' format. When the filled document is saved, this is all it contains.

Or, I should say, it's all that it is meant to contain! One or two superfluous processing codes crept in, but they don't affect anything. The saved document is, therefore, a standard LocoMail Data file which can be Merged with the Master form file.

Bill Ratcliffe: Which, in turn, produces a bank statement giving the balance at that point. What about subsequent sessions, though?

David Landers: The user answers [N] to the 'First session?' question. That triggers a conditional command which bypasses the account information section - so the routine jumps to the transaction section.

No Record Pattern is written this time, just transaction data. Obviously, the newly filled document can't be Merged in isolation - it needs to be added to the earlier Data file containing the previous transactions plus the all-important Record Pattern.

LocoScript's 'Insert text' facility is used to add the new data to the end of the first file. This is done whenever further transactions are recorded - thereby keeping the file up to date and allowing a new statement to be obtained (by Merging) at any stage.'

WHY TWO VERSIONS?

Bill Ratcliffe: Buyers receive two versions of Instant Recall - LocoScript/Mail 1 and 2. Why is that?

David Landers: Compatibility. I'd written the routines in LocoScript 2, intending that LocoScript 3 users would convert the files by editing. Unfortunately, though, certain features didn't transfer - and I found that very early versions of LocoScript 2 could also hit problems.

So it made sense to cover the field by duplicating the routines in LocoScript 1. Most LocoScript 2 users will be able to access the original routines.

Everyone else uses the LocoScript 1 routines - either directly (LocoMail v1 users) or indirectly, via an edit conversion.

Bill Ratcliffe: Thank you for explaining about Instant Recall. It all sounds pretty ingenious to me. I wonder if there are any other users out there who have persuaded LocoMail to jump through interesting hoops? ■

A well-worn phrase or saying

Stephen Wells helps you create effective business correspondence on your word processor

You may have thought me simplistic in this series when I've harped on about the importance of writing letters which you would like to receive. Sooner said than done, you say.

Well, you can start right there and ask yourself if you can rephrase 'sooner said than done'. Look at the adjacent list of clichés. They became over-used phrases because they had an immediate attraction in the first place. They still have uses today.

A good advertising slogan is often more easily remembered if it's based on a cliché. Politicians love them because their audiences are familiar with them, making it easier to establish a passing rapport.

The man on the street, interviewed for the first time on television, can be forgiven for starting every sentence with, 'at the end of the day'. He's under pressure in an unfamiliar situation.

But the business letter writer has time to stop and custom-design a phrase which will convey a personal thought more accurately.

Bear in mind that a cliché which has a positive association for you, may have a negative one for your reader. If nothing else, he or she may think you boring and unimaginative.

A letter represents you. In the same way that you make friends by being friendly to others, the best way to approach the creation of an effective letter is to enjoy writing it.

TWO TOP TIPS

The two best tips I can give you to turn writing from a chore into a pleasurable activity are to write often (my daily exercise walk is to a post box a mile away) and to develop a new interest in the English language.

You can probably distinguish between a metaphor and a simile. But do you know the difference between a euphemism and a euphuism, for example? A mnemonic and an acronym? The other adjacent panel offers a guide to fifty types of speech. Think of them as some of the tools of the trade, although some are tools left over from grandfather's day.

Although it's important to be friendly, one

should avoid being flippant. There's a family story about my father. Years ago, he worked for British Petroleum as a regional sales representative.

He had to write a report that one of his customers had died. On the end he added, 'no flowers by request'. This whimsy was not appreciated at head office and he was cautioned about it.

SLIP OF THE TONGUE

It's hard enough to clear up the mess after slipping in a conversational barb, but a letter can lie on file for years and remind the recipient of your insensitivity, tastelessness or even unintended cruelty.

And what about those personal matters which can't be ignored? Actually, good

manners recommends that they are. You may be writing to confirm details of a sale made over lunch with an important client. During the meal, your client confided that he has suffered some personal tragedy. You really like the chap and feel sympathy for his situation.

The best thing to do is ignore the matter entirely in the business letter. But either enclose a short, personal note as written from one friend to another, or phone him a few days later and express your feelings verbally.

It is also important to be clear. I recently received a notice of a meeting of a local association to be held on a certain date: no mention of a time, nor location, nor a phone number. After several phone calls, I traced the writer who explained, 'Our meetings are always at The Red Cross Hall at 7.30pm.' ■

+++ 50 Clichés To Rephrase +++

Letters are much more interesting to read if they avoid clichés. By all means include them in your first draft if they help you to write faster. But the delight of a word processor like LocoScript is that you can repeatedly fine tune your work, replacing the hackneyed phrase with something more stimulating.

A phrase would never have become a cliché if it wasn't a good choice of words originally. But that's no excuse to borrow it. You can take a delight in creating your own fresh phrases. Have a go with this collection of not so bons mots:

All things considered	Golden opportunity	Older and wiser
At the end of the day	Ground to a halt	Own worst enemy
Auspicious occasion	High and dry	Palpable nonsense
Blanket coverage	Horns of a dilemma	Part and parcel
Blissful ignorance	Ill-gotten gains	Prime candidate
But I digress	Jump on the band wagon	Rings a bell
Callow youth	Just not on	Roll out the red carpet
Call the shots	Keep your head above water	Skin of our teeth
Cast of thousands	Knocked into a cocked hat	Splendid isolation
Dark horse	Large as life	Suffer in silence
Despite misgivings	Living in the Dark Ages	This day and age
Doom and gloom merchants	Long arm of the law	To all intents and purposes
Drives me up the wall	Make a killing	Up to his neck in debt
Eternally in your debt	Method in his madness	Utter rubbish
Every stage of the game	Not a scrap of evidence	Wedded bliss
Fine-tooth comb	Not to put too fine a point upon it	Without fear of contradiction
Finger of suspicion		X marks the spot

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Designed particularly for those users who have a 'dicky' 3" A: drive or those who are worried that their 3" A: drive is getting the worse for wear, the ABBA drive is the ideal solution. The ABBA drive is installed in the right hand drive bay of your PCW9512. Its incorporated ABBA switch allows it to be logically swapped over with the 3" A: drive so that your 3.5" drive becomes your A: drive and your 3" drive becomes your B: drive. You can then boot up from whichever drive you prefer, depending on the position of the ABBA switch. You can copy all your 3" discs to 3.5" discs so that if your 3" drive fails you do not lose any valuable data.

INTERNAL £79.95

Our internal drive for the PCW9512 is designed to be installed into either the right hand or left hand drive bay of your PCW and incorporates a switch so that you can select whether you wish to install it as an A: drive or a B: drive. When fitted as a B: drive you can copy all your 3" discs to 3.5" and then should your 3" A: drive fail it is a simple task to change it to a 3.5" A: drive. You will be up and running again in no time at all.

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Our internal drive for the PCW 8256/8512 is designed to fit in either the top or bottom drive bay of your PCW and incorporates a switch so that you can select whether you wish to fit it as an A: drive or a B: drive. If it is fitted as a B: drive you can copy all your 3" discs to 3.5" discs then should your 3" A: drive fail it is a simple task to change your 3.5" drive to an A: drive. We will copy your Start of Day discs for you, FREE OF CHARGE to enable you to boot up from your 3.5" disc drive. You will be up and running again in no time at all.

ABBA 8 DRIVE £89.95

The ABBA 8 drive, INTERNAL or EXTERNAL, is effectively a FOUR IN ONE drive. (1) Initially it is a B drive, used in conjunction with your 3" A drive, and will format to 720K. (2) It can also be used as a SWITCHABLE 'A' DRIVE, allowing copying between the 3" A drive and 3.5" A drive. (3) It can be used as a 3.5" bootable A drive and then switched to become a 720K B drive. (4) When replacing a 3" A drive in a PCW8512 it will work as a SWITCHABLE 'B' DRIVE, allowing copying between the 3" B drive and the 3.5" B drive. The Internal model is designed to fit in the bottom drive bay, but if preferred can be fitted in the top drive bay.

256k RAM Upgrade £14.95

Our 256K RAM upgrade kit, to increase the size of your M: drive, is suitable for the PCW8256 and PcW 9256, and will substantially increase the working capacity of your computer. The kit comes with full 'step by step' fitting instructions so that the non technical user can cope. The PcW upgrade is not supplied with "an essential spanner". We find that a small pair of pliers can do the job equally as well.

TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

We have industry standard 3.5" disc drives to suit your every PCW need. We have internals and externals, basic types and switchable types and we have them for all PCW and PcW models. All our 3.5" drives incorporate the world renowned TEAC 1.44Mb mechanism to ensure the maximum reliability. To further assure you we also offer our unique 2 year RTB guarantee. All our drives are designed and manufactured 'in house' to suit your needs and use only top quality parts and materials. They are supplied with full 'step by step' fitting instructions so that even the non technical user can fit them. In the unlikely event of difficulty we have a very experienced technical help line to assist with your queries. Our external drives take their power from the 12 volt line for reliability and are housed in 1mm sturdy steel cases and finished in a fine ivory texture. External power supplies can be supplied and fitted if preferred. All our external drives detach outside the PCW for ease of transportation and to allow them to be used on other computers e.g. PCs. We supply extension lead adaptors for this purpose.

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Special MFD1E

EXTERNAL DISC DRIVE

£59.95

The specification for this drive is the same as our MFD1 but without the cable break, and is powered from the 5 volt line of the computer. This will not cause any harm to your computer.

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We make a full range of 3.5" disc drives, Hard Drives, and memory upgrade kits for the Amstrad PC1512/1640 computers. These drives will fit any PC XT/AT computers and are fully interchangeable with the PCW range of external 3.5" disc drives. PLEASE PHONE FOR PRICES AND DETAILS

3.5" Disc Drive Summary Table

DRIVE MODEL	PRICE	PCW 8256	PCW 8512	PCW 9512	PcW 9256
Internal 8	£79.95	*	*		
Internal 9	£79.95			*	
Internal ABBA 8	£89.95	*	*		
External ABBA 8	£89.95	*	*		
Internal ABBA 9	£89.95			*	
External ABBA 9	£89.95			*	
External MFD1	£69.95	*	*	*	
External MFD1+	£69.95				*
External MFD2	£79.95	*	*	*	
Ext MFD1DD	£124.95	*	*		
Ext MFD2DD	£149.95	*	*		

EXTERNAL DRIVES

EXTERNAL MFD1 £69.95

Our original external 3.5" for use with the PCW8256/8512/9512 with only one disc drive fitted. When connected as a B: drive it will format to 720k giving much more storage and flexibility to your computer. It is suitable for those users who do not wish to 'hack away' at the cabinet of their PCW and fit an internal 3.5" disc drive. Measuring only 4" side to side, 1" high and 7" front to back, the MFD1 sits very neatly at the side or on the top of your PCW. The MFD1 is detachable outside your PCW making it easier to transport, and allows you to use it on other computers, e.g. PCs. We supply extension lead adaptors for this purpose.

EXTERNAL MFD2 £79.95

Our MFD2 is the switchable version of our MFD1, for use with the PCW8256/8512/9512 with two disc drives already fitted. When connected, it becomes an alternative B: drive to your internal 3" B: drive. Its incorporated drive selection switch allows the selection of internal 3" or external 3.5" B: drive. We chose the more reliable manual switch, which makes disc copying easier, than the less reliable auto switch which can cause inadvertent formatting of important discs.

EXT. MFD1+ £69.95

Our MFD1+ is the equivalent of our MFD1, for use with the PcW9256/9512/10 with only one disc drive fitted. When fitted as a B: drive, our MFD1+ will give you more storage and flexibility. In the event of your less reliable Citizen A: drive failing, it is a simple task to disconnect your internal drive and convert your external drive to be an A: drive. You will be up and running.

EXT. ABBA 9 £89.95

Our external ABBA 9 drive is the equivalent of our internal ABBA 9 drive. It is particularly useful for those users who do not want to install an internal drive.

MFD2DD DOUBLE DECKER £149.95

Our TOP OF THE RANGE MFD2DD Double Decker for use on the PCW8256/8512 with either one or two internal drives fitted. The MFD2DD incorporates built in switches to allow the selection of internal 3" or external 3.5" A: drive and B: drive. Booting up can be from either your internal 3" drive or your 3.5" external drive. You can choose to store your data on either your 3" or your 3.5" discs whether A: drive or B: drive. The addition of this TOP OF THE RANGE model will give you all the versatility and choices that you will ever need.

MFD1DD DOUBLE DECKER £124.95

Our MFD1DD is designed for those users who do not require switching between internal and external drives. All other specifications are the same as our MFD2DD above.

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+++ 50 Types Of Speech +++

Acronym - A pronounceable word made up of the initials of other words: AWOL, Laser, Radar, Qantas.

Afflatus - A divine creative impulse or inspiration: Ezra Pound's non-use of capital letters.

Agnomen - A nickname: Dusty, fatso, four-eyes.

Alliteration - Repetition of a beginning sound in two or more words of a phrase: Onward glided Dame Ursula, now in glimmer and now in gloom.

Allusion - An indirect reference: A feather in one's cap.

Anacoluthon - An unconscious departure from the grammatical scheme with which a sentence started: While on board ship the crops failed.

Anachronism - Anything out of its proper time in history: Good Queen Bess adjusted her bra.

Analogy - Comparing with something similar: Think of yourself as a bee approaching a hive.

Archaism - An obsolete word, phrase or expression: A coiner or smuggler shall get off tolerably well.

Argot - The jargon of a group or class, especially criminals: Here come the fuzz.

Brachylogy - Over-conciseness of expression: The CEO spent the PM in the WC with his PA.

Caconym - A bad choice of word. The Queen was snooty.

Caesura - A pause in a line of verse. In modern verse it's usually near the middle: And so, at nightfall - he gently passed away.

Cant - Insincere talk or fashionable catch words. It was brilliant. I was gutted.

Circumlocution - Evasive talk or verbosity: He is taking active measures for the prompt preparation of material for the study of...

Cliche - A hackneyed phrase: Part and parcel, by the skin of his teeth.

Dithyramb - Passionate or inflated speech: I'm standing here with my heart in my hand.

Elision - The omission of a vowel or syllable: I'm, let's, e'en, it's, they'd, we've.

Enclitic - A word pronounced with so little emphasis it forms part of the previous word: Not in cannot.

Enumeration - Naming items one by one: Apples, pears, bananas, grapefruit.

Epigram - A short poem or statement with a witty point: It wasn't the cough that carried her off but the coffin they carried her off in.

Epithet - A word or phrase expressing a quality; usually abuse: He was thick as two short planks.

Eponym - A person after whom something is believed to be named: Braille, Biro, Boycott.

Euphemism - A mild expression used instead of a harsh one: He's joined his ancestors.

Euphuism - An affected or high-flown style of writing: Night hath a thousand eyes.

Idiom - An accepted phrase which is not taken literally: He was

over the moon.

Irony - An expression in which the intended meaning of the words is the opposite of the usual sense: There weren't many soldiers like him.

Jargon - The specialised vocabulary used by a particular group or profession: She had contusions on her nates.

Macaronic - A burlesque verse containing foreign words:

*As Mozart composed a sonata,
The maid bent to fasten her garter;
Without any delay
He started to play
Un poco piu appassionata.*

Malapropism - The use of a word by mistake instead of one sounding similar: It was a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Metaphor - A figure of speech that suggests a likeness of one thing to another: A storm of protest, a glaring error.

Mnemonic - An aid to the memory: Every Good Boy Deserves Favour reminds us of the notes on a music stave.

Neologism - A newly coined word or a new meaning for an established word: bonkers, mouse, omphaloconeosis, yonks.

Nom de plume - A pen name: James Herriot. Mark Twain. Emily Bronte.

Onomatopoeia - A word formed by the sound with which it is associated: Buzz, cuckoo, oompah, sizzle.

Paralipsis - Giving emphasis by professing to saying little on a subject: Not to mention their absence in prison.

Paraphrase - A rewording of a passage: Shall I or shan't I? (To be or not to be.)

Periphrasis - See circumlocution.

Pseudonym - A fictitious name assumed by a real person: Cary Grant, Twiggy, Elton John.

Rhetoric - Language designed to persuade or impress, often with an implication of insincerity: My friends, it is a great privilege to visit this magnificent city.

Shibboleth - Something said or done that is a sign or test of belonging to a certain group: Are you on the square?

Simile - A figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another: Sharp as a tack. A voice like thunder.

Slang - Very informal words or phrases, usually colourful and often short-lived: Up yours. You and whose army? On yer bike.

Sobriquet - See agnomen.

Solecism - A violation of conventional usage of grammar or idiom: We was robbed. I don't know nothing about it.

Spoonerism - The accidental transposing of the beginnings of words: The cat popped on its drawers.

Syllepsis - A word applied to two others in different senses: She raised her glass and his hopes.

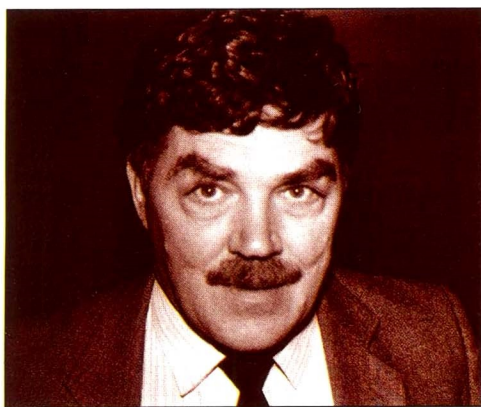
Synecdoche - A figure of speech in which a part is meant to represent the whole or vice versa: New faces arrived.

Synonym - A word having the same meaning as another, usually derived from different roots: agnomen and sobriquet.

Tautonym - An unnecessarily repeated word or phrase or a fact

Get it Written!

Marian Hardless interviews Mike Freemantle about his textbooks and offers more help and advice to writers



Author Mike Freemantle

Have you ever thought about writing a school or college textbook? It can be a well-paid field for those whose books have wide appeal, especially if they're well-enough used to need several reprints.

For advice on this subject, I put some questions to Mike Freemantle, author of *Chemistry In Action* (Macmillan), a standard textbook used at A Level and in further education. Originally published in 1987, the second edition came out earlier this year.

Question: Did you have the original idea for *Chemistry in Action* or were you asked to write it by Macmillan?

Mike Freemantle: I had already written several chemistry books for other publishers when I sent Macmillan an idea for a book for younger students. They didn't need that at the time, but asked me to prepare a proposal for a book aimed at A Level and further education students.

Question: What did you include in your proposal?

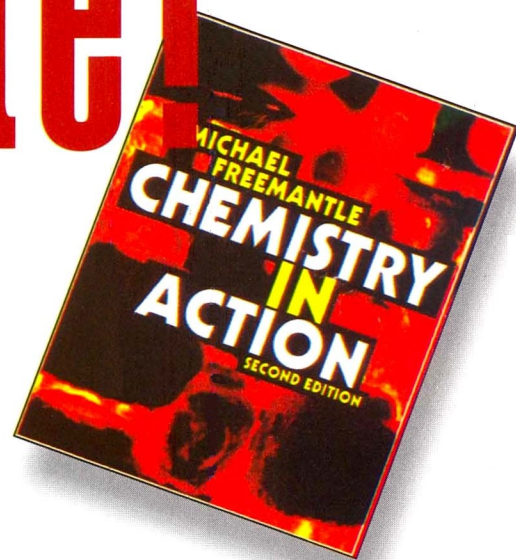
Mike Freemantle: The basic ingredients of any book proposal are the same. You need to state the aims and objectives of the book and give an

outline of its proposed contents.

In my case, this involved a list of chapter headings and some detail on the content and structure of each chapter. I also included a page on myself, saying what my qualifications were for writing the book, and a couple of pages outlining the books already in print in the same field and saying how mine would be better! And finally, I included a specimen chapter written out in full.

Question: What makes one particular proposal stand out from all the others, do you think?

Mike Freemantle: You must be offering something new or something better than what has already been done. My book was one of the first chemistry textbooks with lots of pho-



tographs and illustrations, and I think that had appeal. In addition to all the standard examination course material I used, I included lots of examples of how chemistry is relevant to the modern world.

I used some themes which were quite unusual: I put quite an emphasis on the role of women in chemistry, which I don't think had been done before, and I gave examples of chemistry in action in the third world.

Also, I decided to begin each chapter with

+++ Textbook Publishing +++

Finding out about Publishers

The main educational publishers include:

- A & C Black
- Cambridge University Press
- Oxford University Press
- Cassell
- Mary Glasgow Publications Ltd
- Harper Collins
- Longman
- Macmillan
- Thomas Nelson & Sons
- Scholastic Publications Ltd

Browse in bookshops and talk to teachers and pupils to see which publishers specialise in your field. Write to each publisher which might be of interest and ask for their current catalogue and a copy of any author guidelines they issue.

Their addresses are listed in the *Writers and Artists Yearbook* and *The Writer's*

Handbook, both of which should be available in the reference section of libraries. Once you've identified a gap in the market and think you've found a publisher who may be interested in your idea, send them an outline proposal of the book or series you have in mind.

You need to convince the publisher that you:

- have specialist knowledge of the subject
- have detailed knowledge of current National Curriculum requirements and examination board requirements in the subject
- can present your material logically and in a way suitable to the needs of pupils and teachers
- can see a book through from the planning and drafting stages to delivery (on schedule!) of the final manuscript.

+ Courses Coming Soon +

The following course fees include tuition and board and lodging for all courses lasting more than one day, unless stated.

19 May Writing for TV £131 Led by TV scriptwriter Tony Wheatley. The Earnley Concourse, Earnley, Chichester, Sussex. PO20 7JL. Tel: 01243 670392.

19-21 May Creative Writing Course concentrating on the short story and poetry. £92.50 Burton Manor College, Burton, South Wirral, Cheshire, L64 5SJ. Tel: 0151 3365172.

20-21 May Travel Writing - Make Your Holiday Pay. £94 Urchfont Manor College, Urchfont, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 4RG Tel: 01380 840495.

22-27 May Writing Fiction £250 Ty Newydd, Llanystumdwy, Cricieth, Gwynedd, LL52 OLW Tel: 01766 522811

31 May - 2 June Travel Journalism £92.50 Burton Manor College, address as above.

4-9 June Creative Writing Workshop. £334 West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex. PO18 OQZ. Tel: 01243 8113014.

9-11 June Southern Writers' Conference at Earnley Concourse, Sussex. For details send a large SAE to Mrs Lucia White, Stable House, Home Farm, Coldharbour Lane, Dorking, Surrey. RH4 3JG.

5-10 June Poetry £250 Ty Newydd, address as above.

12-17 June The Short Story £250 Ty Newydd, address as above.

The Arvon Foundation run many writing courses at their three centres in Devon, West Yorkshire and Scotland. Telephone 01422 843714 for a brochure. Courses coming soon include Fiction, Poetry, Murder Mystery, TV Drama, Starting to Write, Writing for Children, Thriller Writing, Playwriting, Novels and The Serious Business of Comedy.

an 'interest piece', something to hook the students before I presented them with the very factual material. So, for example, one chapter began with the Wilfred Owen war poem which begins 'Gas, boys...' and another had a quotation from James Joyce on the subject of water.

Question: Was the structure of each chapter the same?

Mike Freemantle: Yes. After my 'hook' I gave a list of learning objectives for each chapter. Again, in the early and mid-eighties when I was writing the book, that was quite a new approach. Following the learning objectives, came the standard text and illustrations.

I used a series of boxes in the margin for anecdotes and other asides which I hoped would help keep the students interested. The text of each chapter was broken into sections - varying in number from about two to five - and at the end of each section was a summary of key points to remember. Finally, each chapter ended with questions, carefully graded in difficulty and building up to questions at examination level.

Question: How did you assess the other books in the field before planning yours?

Mike Freemantle: I had been a chemistry teacher and had worked with pupils of all ages, so I knew a lot of the books already. But I'd advise people to visit a good bookshop which sells a lot of textbooks to see what's around and what's selling well.

Books which are piled high in the shop are

the ones they expect to sell well and if you check the publisher's details and see that the book has been reprinted, preferably several times, then that's another good sign. Note the characteristics of the books which sell well.

Then note the weaknesses of the books which are in direct competition to the one you plan to write - those aimed at the same age and ability level of student - and when you tell your publisher about it you can say how your own book will be better!

Question: Presumably you need detailed knowledge of examination syllabuses and National Curriculum requirements before you can write a relevant textbook?

Mike Freemantle: Yes. When I was writing my book I had copies of as many syllabuses and examination papers as I could find. I read them all thoroughly before deciding what material to cover in my book.

You can get examination board addresses and suchlike from the library and then send off for the papers you need. You usually have to pay for them, but you must have them if you're to do a good job.

Question: Can you summarise what you see as the main ingredients of a good textbook?

Mike Freemantle: It must contain all the information necessary to cover the core syllabus which your target students are working to. All the information given must be accurate. It's surprising how often I find factual errors in the textbooks I review for various publishers!

The book must be precisely targeted at students at a particular level of study and you must know before you begin what things they already know and what you want them to learn from using your book. And, like any other successful book, it must be well written.

Question: What do you mean by that?

Mike Freemantle: It's not easy to say in a few words. On my shelves at home I have 30 or 40 books on writing and I re-read them from time to time and continue learning from them. The basic points include things like using the active rather than the passive, keeping your sentences fairly short but still varying them in length and making sure your work follows a logical sequence.

Question: You use a detailed plan for your books. Does that mean you write them in one draft?

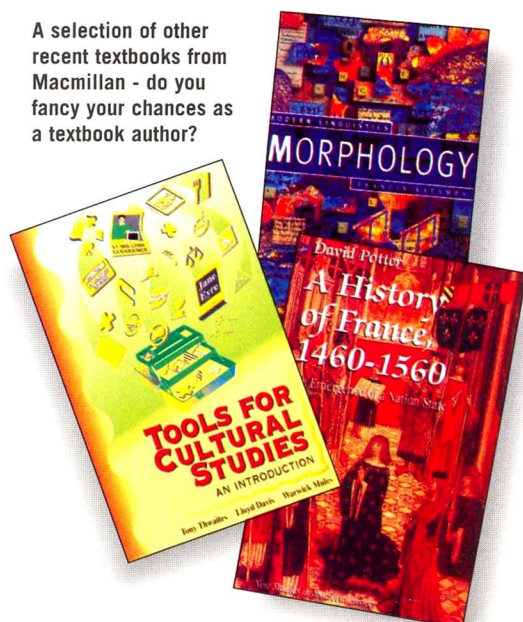
Mike Freemantle: Essentially yes. I write straight onto the screen and print out each section as I finish it. I re-read it, making minor changes and print out a final copy when I'm satisfied.

But when I wrote the first edition of *Chemistry in Action* there was an extra stage. My editor sent the manuscript out to various 'expert reviewers' who wrote comments on it - some useful and some not so helpful! - and then I re-worked the text in the light of those comments.

Question: Finally, do you find it satisfying to write textbooks?

Mike Freemantle: I do, yes. I wasn't sure when I began whether it would be worthwhile, but I've come to realise over the years that textbooks can generate an income over a long period of time. I've written fourteen, although not all are still in print, and the ones which sell well mean I still get regular payments for work I did some years ago. That's very satisfying! ■

A selection of other recent textbooks from Macmillan - do you fancy your chances as a textbook author?



Coupling up Locos

We review the latest package from Locomotive Software offering Windows support for file transfer



Once upon a time, it all used to be very simple. You had a PCW8256 sitting on your desk with 3 inch disks. If you wanted to make a back up or copy from one disk to another, there was no problem. Life was a breeze.

Then came the first turn of the screw, with the PCW8512, which had two drives - but, so as not to make it too easy for you, one of the drives was single sided and single density, and the other, Drive B, was double sided and double density.

And, as we all know, two into one doesn't

go too well. Complications and potential disasters abounded, like people turning over the double sided disk to format the second side. That's something you shouldn't try at home, or anywhere else for that matter.

After that, things got rapidly worse, first with the PCW9512, then with the 3.5 inch drive machines, and finally with the need to transfer data between PCW and PC.

At the same time on the software front, things were little better. LocoScript 1 became 2, then 3, then PC, then PC Easy, then Script Professional,

and so it went on. Copying back and forth wasn't just a matter of reconciling disk sizes and formats, but also of LocoScript types and versions.

Now the cavalry has come charging over the hill to the rescue of those of you who want to use Windows to copy files from LocoScript format to other formats, Word for Windows, Word Perfect, dBase, and so on.

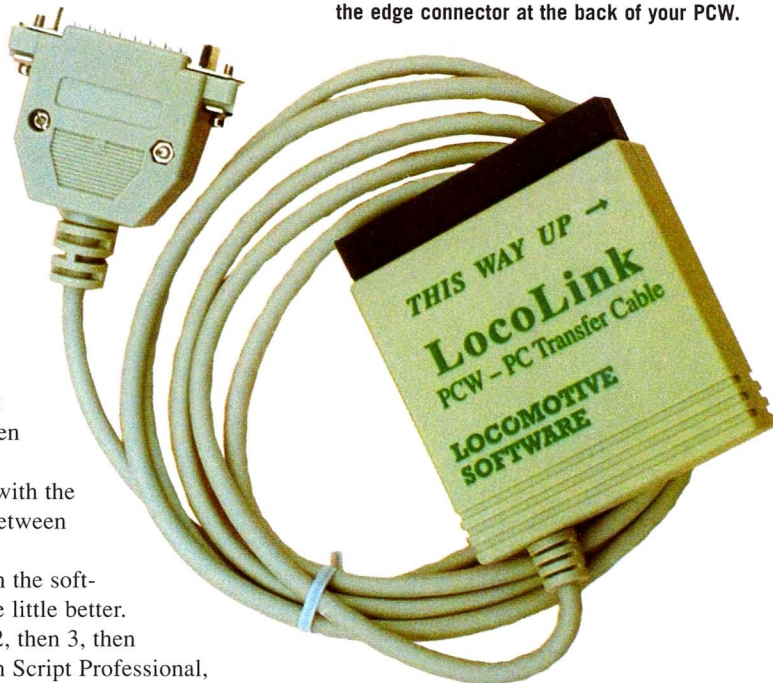
If you are just wanting to copy from PCW to PC and keep with LocoScript, you should use LocoLink for LocoScript Professional, which controls the PCW from your PC. It pops up as an extra drive, and copying across is no problem at all.

Once you have been through the setup process, transferring files is simply a question of telling LocoLink which files you want to transfer, and then clicking the Transfer button. Help on screen is always available.

There is a variety of different conversion options on offer, including Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, dBase and FoxPro. The full list of options for a particular class of file can be seen by clicking on the arrow to the right of the current selection.

It's a powerful, flexible, user-friendly add-on which many users will find essential to their PCW/PC transfer requirements. ■

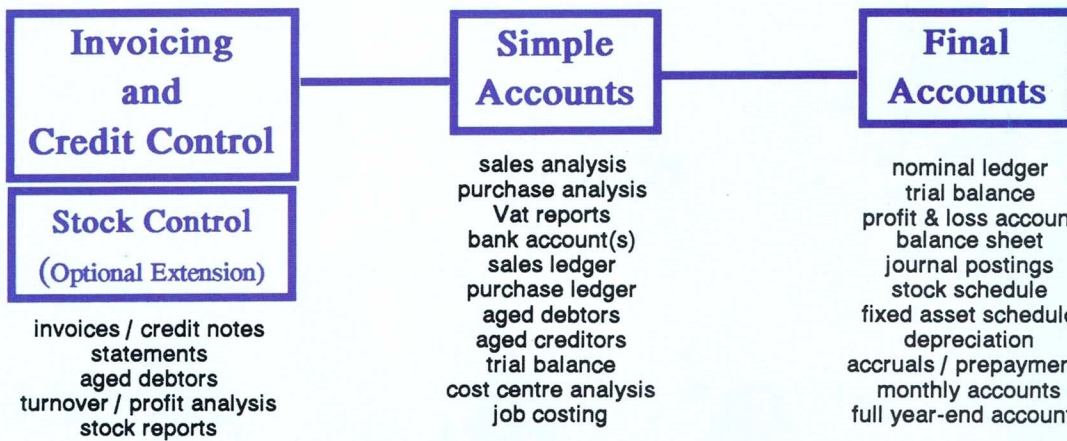
The all-important LocoLink cable which fits on to the edge connector at the back of your PCW.



+ Facts Box +

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The program includes many helpful features, such as pop-up calculator, context-sensitive help windows and macro commands. The Money Manager package has over 25,000 users in the UK alone. It is the ideal program for people who find that traditional accountancy programs are too complicated, unwieldy and time-consuming for their requirements.

- Any number of data files: Personal, Business, Accounts etc.
- Budget and cash-flow forecasts - which may be updated.
- 12 months per file, up to 500 entries (transactions) per month
- Move a file forward a month at a time when required
- All options selected from the main menu
- Up to 20 user-defined accounts: Bank, Cash, Visa, Savings etc
- Up to 50 user-defined classes of income and expenditure
- A reference of up to 6 characters for each entry
- Your own descriptive text of 18 characters for each entry
- All the codes are displayed on-screen whilst entering data
- Add, modify and delete existing entries at any time
- Quick insertion of standard entries and standing orders
- Entries can be sorted into date order at the touch of a key
- Single character 'mark' for extra reporting selectivity
- Statements showing each entry in detail with running balance
- Reports may show classes merged into logical groups
- Spreadsheet type table showing class totals in each month
- Report showing class totals for each account
- Bar chart for up to 4 selected categories
- Pie charts of up to 20 selected 'slices'
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- Totals for each class of transaction for any period
- Report of monthly income, expenditure and cash-flow etc.
- Report of account and class totals (eg profit & loss)
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- Detailed VAT reports showing taxable, VAT and gross amounts.
- Summary VAT statements in the same format as a VAT return.
- Simply ignore VAT features if they are not required
- Print any report to built-in (or separate) printer.
- Print any report to a file for word-processing (eg in Locoscript)
- Data search facility to find 'lost' items
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COLOUR prints

LOCOSCRIPT USER
RECOMMENDED

We review the new
Seikosha colour dot
matrix printer and rather
like what we see

+ Facts Box +

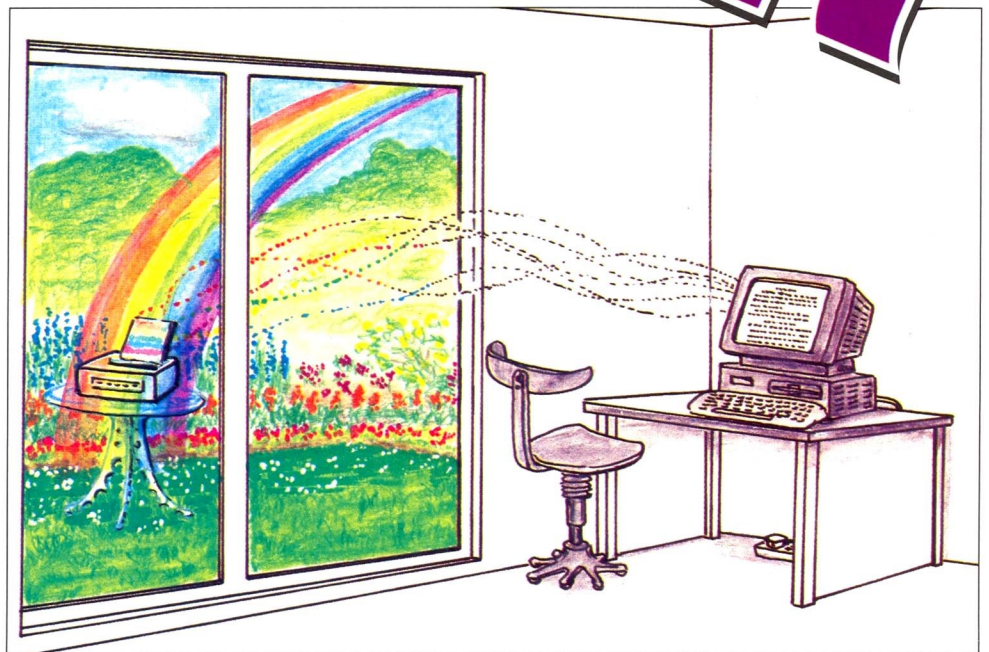
The Seikosha SL-96 is available through the normal outlets, and also from SD Microsystems as a package costing £199 including a cable for connection to a PCW or PC. Help is also available for printer installation.

Note that some PCW owners will require an additional printer interface, which can be provided from £25 for a basic Centronics port.

Super Labeller Version 2.2 costs £25 inclusive. Super Labeller Picture Disks 1 and 2 are also available at £5 each.

SD Microsystems also offer the Tasword word processor at £25 for any PCW. It has strong colour capability, and if you order that package at the same time as printer, a colour printer driver for Tasword comes free of charge (it is available separately for £10). Combined with the font capabilities of the Seikosha, a range of striking special effects can be achieved.

SD Microsystems, PO Box 24, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1HL. Tel/fax: 01953 483750.



It used to be the case that you could have your print out any colour, so long as it's black - unless you opted for a single-colour ribbon for special effects (brown looks nice on good quality paper for letters, for example) or had a very deep pocket indeed.

Nowadays colour printers are falling out of the skies and their prices are tumbling down as well. You can now get a half decent colour printer for less than a mono machine a couple of years ago.

And there are competing technologies, too: inkjet, dot matrix and heat transfer, as well as laser printers. The issues now boil down to what you want colour printing for, and what kind of quality you want to go for.

If you need an office printer with multiple

copies options and occasional colour then a dot matrix may well suit your purpose. The colour isn't as good as an inkjet, but the consumables are a lot less pricy.

One great advantage of this machine is that you can use it as a standard black printer (black ribbons cost £6.95 each), and do not need to use the more expensive colour ribbon (£12.50 each) when just printing in mono.

OPEN THE BOX

When you open the box, you'll find inside a stylish and solid-feeling machine, with a manual, colour ribbon (why is the black ribbon just an option?), and detachable paper holder and sound-proofing cover.

It's got a reasonable footprint (just over 16



A view into the printer, showing the colour ribbon cartridge in place. The front panel controls are simple to use

inches wide and a whisper over 14 inches from front to back), so it shouldn't gobble up too much space on your desktop.

It's a 24 pin machine (not 9 pin, as one of our mentions last month inadvertently claimed) with Epson emulation, and there's an optional automatic cut sheet feeder.

In setting up the machine, my only complaint is the one I'd level at just about every printer manufacturer. Why isn't there one simple, bog standard ribbon and method of fitting? Even if you are not a green extremist, it does seem pretty wasteful to have all these variations in moulded plastic, few if any of which are genuinely re-usable, and none of which fit anyone else's product.

+++ Questions, Questions +++

Before you go out into the market place with your bulging wallet to buy a printer, you need to ask yourself quite a few questions.

The first is: How much money can I afford? If you are really strapped for cash, the only option open to you is the dot matrix, both on grounds of initial cost and the price of consumables.

If you are a little better off, then the choice becomes bewildering. You really have to work from your requirements, and you should consider the following, among other things:

- Office or home?
- Heavy or light use?
- Importance of quality
- Multipart essential?
- Cost of consumables
- Colour capability?



+++ Going Dotty +++

Resolution is a key part of the quality of output you obtain from your printer, but all is not so simple as it seems at first sight.

First, a technical term to explain: dpi = dots per inch. This is the number of tiny dots which are deposited on the paper during the printing process.

You might assume that 360 x 360 dpi is 'better' than 200 x 300 dpi, but it isn't necessarily so. You have to compare like

with like. A laser printer, for example, places its 'dots' more accurately than an inkjet, so it beats the inkjet for quality.

However, this objection can be overruled if you are using your output for making a master for, say, a newsletter, pamphlet or book. If you reduce the copy by an appropriate amount, you will more than overcome any problems of resolution.

For example, an A4 page reduced by 72 per cent will end up as A5 size.

+ Need Colour? +

Before you take the great leap forward into colour printing, do pause and ask yourself: Is the gain worth the pain? Do you really need to have colour in your output? The Seikosha certainly gives you the chance to have colour printing at a mono price.

If you want a halfway house, think in terms of buying in a ream or two of different coloured paper. Combined with mixed fonts, that can have a really powerful impact. Additionally, you could try a single coloured ribbon for those special letters.

Those two factors could enhance your output greatly without making you dip into colour - but if you do need it, go for it. The results nowadays can be pretty striking. But don't expect photo quality unless you are after a laser printer with lots of noughts on the end of the price.

Inserting paper is simple, and there is a push tractor, which has now become more or less universal. For those of you with the built-in PCW matrix printer, a push tractor allows you (a) not to waste a page of continuous stationery every time you start something new and (b) you don't have to virtually dismantle the machine to switch between cut sheet and fanfold.

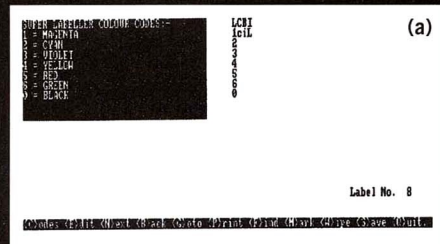
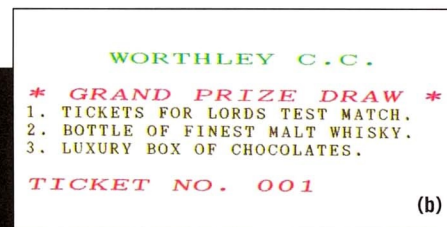
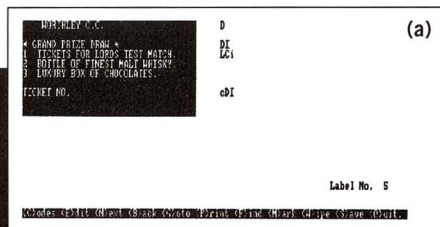
I had no difficulties in using the machine with different types of paper. Push tractors are much better behaved than their pull counterparts, and like the rest of the machine, it performed without fault.

It's not too noisy in operation, and for whispering printing there is a quiet mode, which also slows down the print speed.

+++ Label Printing? +++

One of the real pains for most users is that of printing out labels, usually names and addresses. Just about anything can go wrong, from slipping stationery, information 'missing' the label, to the dreaded label that decides to peel off the paper and end up on the platen roller, from which it is just about impossible to detach it.

Do check if you want to print labels that the printer you opt for has the right feed path and equipment for the labels you want to use. We'll be covering this contentious issue in a later issue.



Two example labels (a) on the screen and (b) in their printed form. Note the codes on the screen which convert into different colours and effects.

Measuring Up

Do remember when allocating space for any printer that the external dimensions do not tell you the whole story about how much space the machine will take up on the desktop. There are three important considerations which will cause your printer to be bigger than it actually seems at first sight.

The first is the cabling connected to it. The Centronics (parallel) interface is a whacking great plug which needs to be securely fitted into place, and even if you bend the cable right round, it can project up to three inches out at the back.

The second is that the paper holder or other mechanism can stick out beyond the printer body itself. Our otherwise tiny

office inkjet adds five inches to its depth when the paper feed arms are extended, and that is no mean amount when you are short of space.

Finally, if you are using continuous stationery, you have to work out a sensible path for the paper - not just where the incoming paper should stand, but where the printed paper should go.

I use the expedient of a surplus kitchen stool, on which sits my dot matrix printer, with the pile of fanfold paper sitting on the floor behind it. A word of warning: in my experience, it is not wise to leave the paper in its box, as it can - and Murphy's Law states that if it can, it will - stick to the side of the box and cause paper jams.

COLOUR ME

The colour ribbon, as you can see from the illustration, consists of four parts: yellow, blue, red and black. It works by printing one of the colours, or combinations thereof. Green and violet, for example, mix two of the ribbon colours to get the right result.

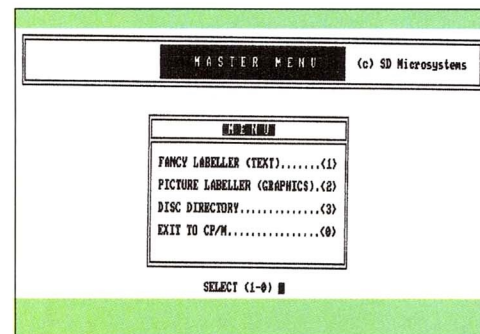
That's all very nice, but LocoScript is strictly monochrome. What applications are available on the PCW for colour printing? (The PC has too many to mention.) One recently-developed package is a colour version of the labeller packages from SD Microsystems.

It's called Super Labeller Version 2.2, and adds colour to the ability to create striking labels and letterheads with graphics images, too. It's just a matter of creating your text with codes added for bold, condensed, and so forth - and colours as well.

It's an easy to use package with a clear and well-written manual, which gives you easy access to colour capability as and when you require it.

VERDICT

The Seikosha SL-96 Color is just the thing for occasional colour use. Neat, solid enough to cope with a serious work flow, no problems that we could find - and at a price which a couple of years ago would have undercut a mono printer by some distance. We are grateful to Seikosha for the loan of the review machine. ■



Super Labeller for the PCW - main menu

Loco Clinic

This month Liz Bruce covers common problems - but first asks the question: Are we free?

A few readers have asked if we are part of Locomotive Software. The answer is absolutely not. See the word 'independent' on the cover, and that's the way we like it - and Locomotive, too.

There are times when Locomotive aren't always too pleased with me. If I don't like something, think there's a mistake, wish they'd done something differently or don't think they have the best answer to a particular problem, I say so. I'm sure they also disagree with some of my solutions to your problems.

They, of course, know the innards of LocoScript inside out and often don't appreciate that you don't. What may seem a long-winded and convoluted solution to someone who writes LocoMail routines in their head and could solve the problem with a simple LocoMail routine, may be the only way I can solve the problem for someone who can only just use LocoScript 2.

I think I know why the confusion has arisen, though. Of course you've recognised the logo on the title. You may not have noticed the 'independent' message underneath and even if you have, you may wonder.

The logo and the stylised LocoScript is, of course, there with Locomotive's permission, but you're going to have to take my word for it: Locomotive have no control over and no input to this magazine.

Locomotive let us use the logo because it was in everyone's interest to make it instantly recognisable and because they've known those of us involved long enough to know that although we occasionally say something disapproving, we always strive to be fair.

Yes, of course I know and speak to people at Locomotive and other software companies. I couldn't do my job if I didn't. I also have an open offer from several to let them check anything for technical accuracy. Sometimes I take them up on that, sometimes I don't bother.

INDEPENDENCE IS ALL

The relationship I have with those few companies I deal with regularly has been built carefully on both sides over several years and is based purely on trust. I've turned down offers to work for companies, or to do something exclusive, because my independence is worth more to me than anything else. It's certainly cost me in

financial terms but it's worth it to me.

That fragile relationship has all sorts of benefits. I may know about something I can't tell you, because I've promised not to, yet, and I've only been told because someone trusts me to keep that promise. But because I know about it I can use that knowledge to slant what I do write. Which is why my crystal ball, though often wildly wrong is sometimes amazingly right!

READ THE MANUAL

I have an unusual way of dealing with new products. When I get something new to play with, I switch off everything I know and work from scratch. That means I read the manuals.

That may seem obvious, but most reviewers don't. Neither do most of you when you upgrade, as I know from your letters. Most of you, having mastered, for example, LocoScript 2, buy LocoScript 3, maybe take a brief glance through the installation notes then barge ahead.

Needless to say, you get into trouble and usually blame Locomotive. Or Amstrad, if you're really confused. Or you look at the index and find you can't solve the particular problem you've come across, which may well have been dealt with under another topic altogether or in the introduction. Then moan about that to me, again blaming Locomotive.

No, I'm not getting at you. I've done it that way too, desperate to see what the new box of tricks can do. But looking at something and knowing I'm going to be getting letters about it or have to review it is different, so I retire to bed with the books and a couple of days later, I load the new software.

The result is that because I do have such an accumulation of knowledge, what I often pick up on are the mistakes/misprints/omissions in the manuals. What follows is another phone call.

The producers can be far too close to it, they often don't see the mistakes. You must know how difficult it is to see your own mistakes in something you've written yourself. As I often see pre-release copies, any errors can often be dealt with by an erratum slip, it's far too late to change the manual.

I ought to add that there are other companies I have no relationship with at all, which shall remain nameless. What to bear in mind is that I am on your side. If I think someone is exploit-

ing or ripping off there'll be no mercy from me. I may be privileged to pick up the phone and speak to someone who is actually involved in hard or software, but I bear in mind I'm doing it for you.

That works the other way too. Some of the complaints computer companies get are well deserved. Others definitely are not. Because people write to me complaining about anything and everything, I usually have a pretty good idea who's actually at fault.

That may make it look as if I'm defending companies sometimes but that's because I'm aware of a particular problem users are having due to misunderstanding or misuse. I'm still on your side! ■

+ Rebooting +

Everyone ought to know that Shift+Extra+Exit resets the computer exactly as if you had switched it off and on again, but doesn't shock the electronics as using the power switch does. Just remember, though, that if you do that, you will lose anything stored on Drive M exactly as if you had switched off the power.

Useful if you want to go from one Start of Day setup or version of LocoScript to another or for those situations we all occasionally get into where it seems the only thing to do is start again.

Another point which rarely comes to the surface is what happens if you switch on your PCW and you load a disk which isn't a Start of Day disk by mistake. Well, what happens is that the screen goes white (or green as the case may be), the machine squeals and then it sits waiting.

What you do then is not to turn the PCW off - that's unnecessary - but to remove the data disk, insert a Start of Day disk and press the spacebar. That will get you up and running once more.

Sins of Omission

Liz Bruce confesses that she really ought to have gone into a little more detail...

In the first issue of this magazine I did a terrible thing. When I introduced the clinic I said I'd deal with anything you asked me, however silly you might think it. I told you to cast your minds back to your earliest PCW days and remember the distress caused by the simplest things, from the difficulties of copying to the forgetful dictionary on the PCW9512.

Well, of course there are still people just starting out, some of whom sighed in relief and read on avidly. Then they wrote indignant letters, because I didn't explain how to resolve either of these problems.

I mentioned them because they're both notorious for confusing people, for reasons which are so obvious when you know but anything but when you don't, and not terribly obvious in the manuals.

I should have put these problems into print, and now I'm going to make up for the omission.

COPYING FILES

The nasty problem here is the conundrum of the invisible Groups. The PCW Disk Manager Screen shows you four columns in the lower part of the screen, the most it can at a time. Rather than wasting that space on empty Groups, it reduces them to a double line, in the

middle of the dividing line.

If you move the bottom cursor, the file cursor, by using the arrow keys alone, the cursor passes straight over the empty groups. If you're trying to copy or move a file into a previously empty group - which they all are on a new disk - you're going to become extremely frustrated, unless you know how to gain access to empty Groups.

Yet all you need to know is to look at the upper part of the screen and move that cursor by using Shift plus the arrow keys. That will move you from Group to Group in the Group section, including the empty ones.

When you're working with files and copying or moving them, it is only at the start of the operation that the bottom, file, part of the screen matters. You have to put the file cursor on the file you want to do something to, then select F3 to see the list of actions you can perform.

If you want to copy or move a file, you don't need to look at the bottom section again. You are asked to pick the destination, and that means which Drive and Group you want to move to. What the bottom, file, section is showing does not matter.

If that file cursor happens to be on top of an existing file it doesn't mean that file will be replaced by the new one. It will be added to the

+++ Missing Subdirectories On The PC+++

A similar nightmare for PC beginners arises when one of your subdirectories apparently disappears, as in the illustration. The name is there in the listing at the top, but LocoScript behaves as if it isn't there - and a cross has appeared against the name.

The reason for this option is for you to skip over subdirectories which aren't relevant to LocoScript or which you don't want to have in use and their files displayed.

But how do they disappear, and how do you rescue them from wherever it is that they've gone to? First, don't worry - the contents of the subdirectory are still there. It's just that they have been made invisible to LocoScript.

They are made invisible by moving the directory cursor bar (using Ctrl+arrow keys) over the name of the subdirectory and pressing the minus key on the numeric pad. To get the subdirectory back on display, move the directory cursor over the subdirectory with a cross against it which you wish to restore, and press the plus key on the numeric pad. Panic over.



+ Formatting a Disk +

If you haven't worked that one out, it's on the F2 Disk menu. If you're using LocoScript 1, you have to come out of Loco and use the CP/M Diskit utility. This is one very, very good reason for upgrading.

Ideally, you should always have a spare formatted disk but what if you don't and you suddenly find your disk full or going

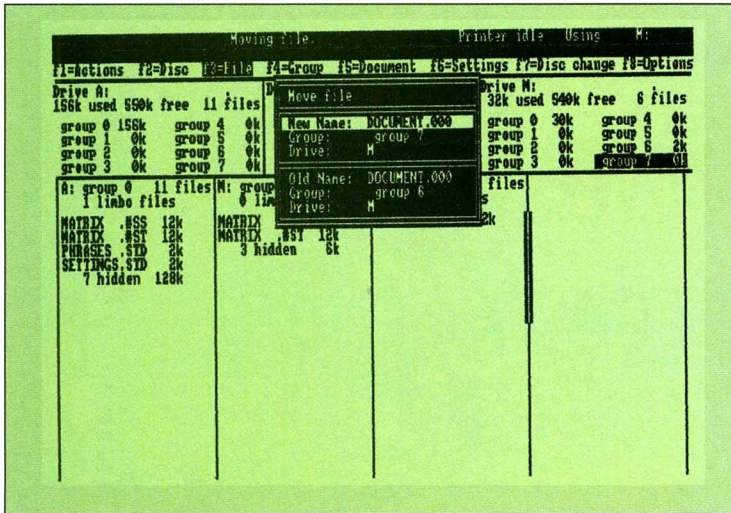
funny on you? If you can format a disk without leaving Loco you can save the situation. If you have to re-boot into CP/M you lose anything not properly saved.

Now just go through that process again, this time copying or moving that file from Drive M to a Group on Drive A. It's so easy when you know how, but not so simple if you don't.

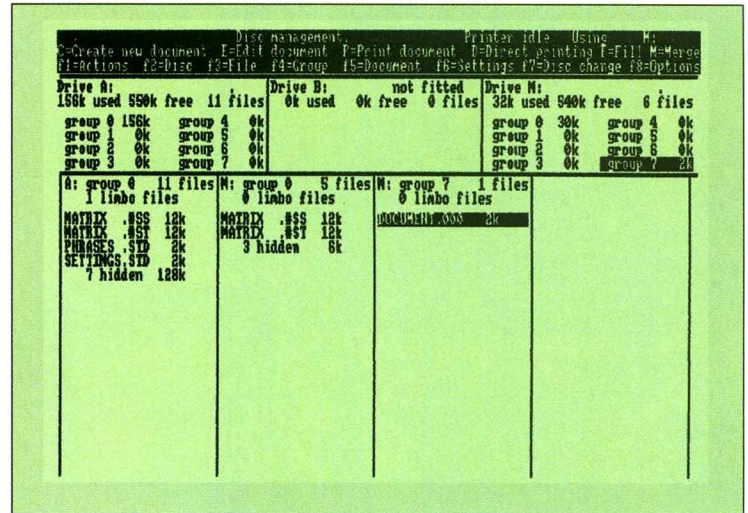
files in that Group in the appropriate alphabetical order.

If you move the top - Group - cursor, to an empty Group, the file column will open up ready for you. Even if it didn't it wouldn't matter. The file will be moved/added to the Group you choose with that top cursor, not the bottom one.

LocoScript will help, guide and protect you all the way. When you choose your option from that F3 menu, let's say to copy a file, a message will appear in the middle of the



Moving a file to an empty Group. The Group was selected with Shift+ arrow key. Note the double vertical bar which indicates that the Group is empty.



The file has been moved. Note how LocoScript simply displays those Groups which have a file or files in them.

screen, asking you to select the destination for the copy. That message disappears pretty quickly but you don't need to hurry: it's repeated on the top status lines for you.

Most PCWs are single drive which means you have to copy to Drive M and from there on to a backup disk. Now you understand about the empty Groups, you'll find it easier if you copy to an empty Group. When you don't know, you have to put the file in with the exist-

ing files in a Group, mixing it up with system files.

If you put it in an empty Group, it's very much easier to see what you're doing at the next stage. Press Enter and you'll see a confirmation message. This is LocoScript's way of saying, 'Are you sure this is what you want to do?'

It shows where the file is at the moment, and where the copy will be made. If you're sat-

isfied, press Enter again and after a whirring minute, the file will appear in that destination Group.

Now the file is on Drive M. To get it to your backup disk with a single drive machine, you have to take the source disk out of Drive A and put your backup disk in. Press F7 to tell the machine you have changed disks.

Remember, you have to format a disk before you can use it. ■

+++Where's That Dictionary+++

This is the second little problem which I trumpeted in our launch issue but didn't describe in detail. User dictionaries are handled differently on different machines. If you're using the 8000 series, for instance, the user dictionaries - that is, words you add to the dictionary - are stored in the group you're using. If you're using the PCW9512, with its 512k of memory, there is only one User Dictionary.

When you load the machine the main and User dictionaries are copied to Drive M, do have a look. You'll see them over in Drive M. One confusion relates to which Group the dictionary is in, depending on version. Some manuals tell you it's in Group 7 but it may be in Group 0. You're looking for a file called USERSPEL.DCT.

You know, (at least I hope you know) that Drive M is electronic memory, meaning when you switch off - or someone pulls the plug out or you reboot the machine - you lose anything there. The fancy term is volatile memory which is pretty well self-explanatory.

It therefore follows that the words you have added to your dictionary disappear every time you switch off. Next time you load up it's 'forgotten' whatever you put into it. And that is more than a little annoying and frustrating, particularly if you're doing technical work where you want to add a lot of specialised words.

The answer is simple. Before you switch off, you must copy the USERSPEL.DCT from Drive M back to your Start of Day disk, using the F3 menu and the copy option.

In this case, though, as in backing up a file you have worked on before, you will see a warning message. This will tell you that the file you are copying onto the destination disk already exists and you are given options.

The cursor is on the option to replace with the new copy, and this is what you want to do. It usually is, but just be careful if you use fewer back up disks than you do working disks. You might have given a file the same name on two working disks and you'd better not mix them up when you back them up.

With the dictionary there's no problem. As the updated copy is made from your SOD disk each time you start, your additions are added to that and you simply overwrite the old copy on your SOD disk each time.

The other snag is that I always recommend write protecting your SOD disk. If you then try to copy that dictionary, you'll see the message telling you it is write protected. You must take the disk out, slip the little tab open, put it back and re-try.

This may sound like a great deal of hassle. However, I was very surprised at just how many words the main dictionary did know. When you first start you will have to Add frequently, mainly from names and addresses, but you may be surprised at just how many technical terms the main dictionary can handle.

The other thing which surprised me was what a small amount of space a User dictionary takes. I built one up which consisted of aviation acronyms and abbreviations. It contained several hundred entries and it took up the princely amount of 2K.

One last thing. When you choose to add, you will make sure you did spell the addition correctly, won't you? Check it in a book type dictionary if in any doubt.

There are other ways of being clever with dictionaries, for both PCWs and PCs, but I think that's enough for our confused beginners.

+++Far Too Bold+++

There you are, printing out your document, and it suddenly goes into bold or italics and stays there. What do you do? The first thing is to press the Ptr key to get into the printer control state, press F1 and opt to Abandon printing.

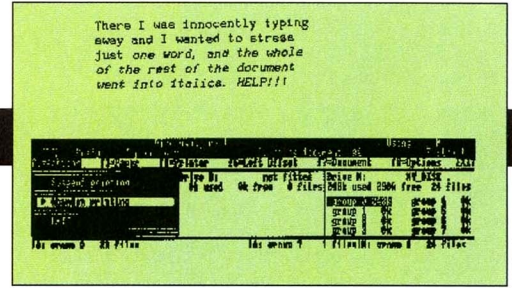
The PCW screen is limited in what it can show. It cannot show characters in any style. Again, it tries, there is a little flag which appears at the top right but it's easy to miss. You put one word in italics and didn't switch italics off again, and you don't realise until you see the printout.

The answer to this is to switch on the codes, F8 and tick Show Codes, and check through the text on the screen before you print. You've probably already found that leaving the codes switched on all the time is not helpful, as it pushes the text beyond margins and so on.

But you'll find the codes catch your eye easily if you run your

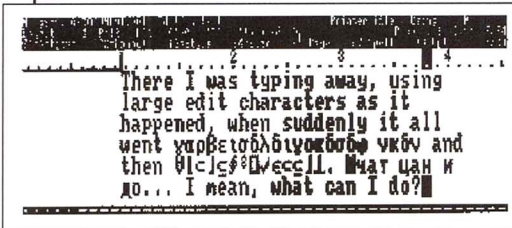
eye down the screen, partly because they do push the lines around. You'll be able to see the (+Italic) sign easily, and see whether you remembered to add the (-Italic) code to match.

The other method is to type nothing but text to start with and add codes deliberately later, as part of your editing process. See which method you prefer and you'll save a lot of time, paper and frustration. This is the sort of problem which always seems to crop up when you're under time pressure, with an essay due the next morning, for instance. Developing the habit and discipline of applying one of my suggested methods can save sanity!



A piece of text all running to italics - and how to abandon printing after you have pressed the Ptr key.

+++Screen Garbage+++



Garbage created by pressing Alt+ a function key. Alt+F1 restores normality.

Have you been merrily typing away and then suddenly found that your screen suddenly fills up with garbage?

Let me introduce you to the Alt key. This is extremely useful when you know what you can do with it, but it can cause all kind of problems if you use it by mistake.

For most of the time, you will be using the standard QWERTY keyboard. Alt allows you to select three other types of keyboard, which you will find explained in your manual.

Alt+F1 is Normal- and that's what you press if you get into a situation like that in the illustration. If your text bursts into symbols, Cyrillic, or Greek, you know that you have inadvertently hit Alt plus one of the other function keys to generate what's known as the supershifts.

- The supershifts are:
- Alt+F3, giving you a Greek keyboard**
- Alt+F5, which produces Cyrillic**
- ALT+F7, which creates Symbols**

There is actually a little note at the top right of the status lines telling you if you are in one of the non-Normal supershifts, but in

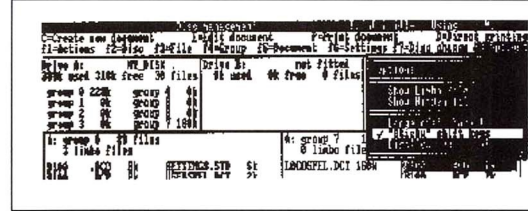
your panic you're unlikely to have noticed. If you've picked them deliberately, that's fine - it's when you hit Alt plus a function button by accident that the panic sets in. Just remember that Alt+F1 will restore Normal service (in every sense of the word!).

It's also worth mentioning sticky shift here, if you have a version which provides it. You'll find it on F8, Options, from the Disk Manager Screen. You put a tick beside it and nothing obvious happens immediately.

When you're working in a document, though, Sticky shift lets you use key combinations as separate strokes. To get a capital U for instance, you can press Shift and then U. The same goes for other combinations, such as Alt and DOC. This is extremely useful if you have a bad hand, or if you want to rest your aching head on one hand while you edit, but it also makes it more likely you'll select one of these odd combinations, like the Super shift, by mistake.

When you're using Sticky shift, there is a note in the top right hand corner of the status lines, such as *A to show you've selected Alt and the next key you hit will operate in combination with Alt. This is all fine if you know - it is far from fine if you don't and do this by accident. You can cancel a Sticky shift by hitting the selected key again.

While we're on the subject, that same F8 Options menu allows you to do two other things, again depending on which version you have. These are Large edit characters and Disallow key repeats.



The F8 menu on the Disk management screen - if you have the right version of LocoScript - will give you the Large edit, Sticky shift and Disallow key repeats options.

The first, although not altering the screen messages such as status lines and menus, puts anything you type in large characters. I've used large edit characters in the supershift illustration. It's very useful if you have eye problems or you've broken your glasses.

The second option - Disallow key repeats -allows you to stop keys running characters across the screen if you're slow at releasing the key. Normally, if you hold a key down for more than a second or two it will start repeating on screen.

This option is particularly invaluable for anyone with poor motor control. Locomotive really bother about people with handicaps, which is one of the reasons for my allegiance and why I find it so useful for working with people who do have problems.

Again, these options are great when you know about them, but can be more than a little bewildering if you've switched one on by mistake or someone else did and you don't know why these things are happening.

Odds and ends

Here is a collection of points which can't half cause weeping and gnashing of teeth if you don't know your way round them, plus a few which can make life very much easier on the lines of 'I wish I'd known that' uttered through gritted teeth. This first batch is for PCWs.

+What Alt Can Do For You+

That Alt key does several other useful things. Ever had to type addresses with post codes? Or a list of capital letters and numbers? If you use Shift, instead of DD5 9KJ, you get DD% (KJ. Annoying. Try using Alt+Enter. This will shift the letters but only the letters. The numbers will still be numbers. Pressing Alt+Enter.

In other words, the Shift on the PCW is a Shift lock, whereas Alt+Enter provides a true Caps lock as on the PC.

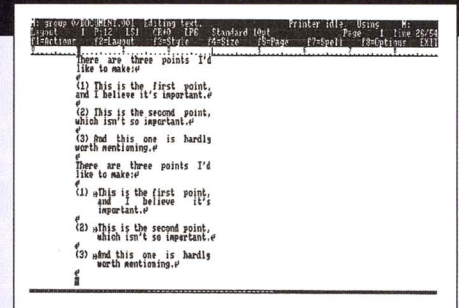
If you have a list of numbers to type, doing it from the top numbers line of the usual keyboard isn't ideal and prone to mistakes.

Over to your right you have a numerical keypad which even has numbers on it, but it also has all the cursor keys which is what you operate if you try to use it. Alt comes to the rescue again. Alt+Relay sets or un-sets that pad to work as a number pad like a calculator or back to cursor functions, so it acts as a NumLock key on the PC.

The other useful thing Alt does is to turn an ordinary tab into an indent, or hanging, tab. If you've ever tried to indent a whole paragraph without knowing that, you'll know what a mess you can get into using Return at the end of one line and a tab at the beginning of the next, let alone what it does to justification.

Alt+Tab will wrap your text back to the tab stop until the next time you press Return, which will return you to the margin. That's marvellous for numbered paragraphs. Type your number, then Alt+Tab and start typing. This will give you a much easier and much neater result, as it will even preserve justification, if you have it switched on, as the illustration shows.

Alt+'' creates an open double quote, Alt+Shift+'' a close double quote, and the single open and close quote is created in the same way. Even less well known is the fact that Alt+Return will act as a form feed without having to go into printer mode.



Here are two versions of a piece of text, one without and the second with Alt+Tab hanging indents. The difference in clarity of layout is quite evident.

+Real Garbage+

If you haven't pressed the Alt key plus a function key, as described earlier, but still get total gibberish, what on earth have you been up to this time?

It's a problem which is most commonly found on the PCW9512 machines. You create a document in a Group, for example, Group 7 which you have not used before. And, to your utter horror, you see a screen full of weird and wonderful text including Mailmerge commands.

Panic not. This is because everything is on your Master disk. That 'everything' includes all the tutorial files and several examples. Those examples include a template in each group for different purposes. What you're seeing through your aghast eyes is a mail merge routine for invoicing. Not too helpful if you wanted to type a letter.

You can just delete everything on the screen, using CUT, and carry on. But it's better to sort the situation out properly. Ideally, make two copies of your Master disk. One is your Start of Day disk, and this is the one we're about to - cautiously - start deleting files from.

You can get rid of all those templates - you don't need them, certainly not at the beginning and you can always copy them back from your other copy or the Master if you decide later you do. That will dispose of those templates causing those very odd screens.

When you're starting - and probably for ever, I still work this way - it's helpful to put your own TEMPLATE.STD in each and every Group you use, even just by copying one from another Group.

That way you know exactly which template you're working with

and don't need to worry about how the machine chooses a template. I'll explain that another time because there are ways of exploiting this feature, but for the moment, always have a template you put there in every Group you use.

On that Start of Day disk you can also get rid of all the tutorial files. They're just taking up room, which slows the loading process, and take up room on Drive M, which can be a nuisance.

Do it a file at a time, carefully. Most of them you can tell by their names but there are ways of checking. You could edit any file you're considering erasing to check it, but there's a quicker way. Put the cursor on the file and press F5, Document. You'll see a menu with a choice to Edit Identify, which the cursor is on.

Press Enter and you'll see another menu. This summarises the document, telling how many pages it has, and so on, but more importantly, it displays a few lines of text describing what's in the file. It will do that if it has been put there by Locomotive, or if you've inserted a brief description yourself.

All those files on your Start of Day disk have a description, saying things like 'Tutorial file for Spell Checking'. Or, 'Not a LocoScript Document, Printer Support File'. This second lot are the ones you do not erase!

You can use that Identity text on your own files, which we'll discuss another time, but it's the quick way of cleaning up your cluttered Start of Day disk. If you want to use the tutorial files, you load with the other, unaltered copy, or simply change disk to it and use the files.

Writing in...

If you want to send in a letter asking about any aspect of LocoScript, please include the following details as a checklist with your letter. If you like, you can either cut out or photocopy the form set out here and send that in. Important: If something goes wrong with LocoScript, do if at all possible stop for a moment and write down exactly what happened and what the precise circumstances were when the blip occurred. This information can be crucial to resolving the problem.

You may not think some of the questions are relevant to your particular problem, but I often cannot answer questions because I just don't have the information I need. And it may well be one aspect of your system and set-up which you have not thought was necessary to include with your request for help.

Don't worry if you can't find all the information, give me what you can. And, in looking for that information, you may well end up by solving the problem yourself!

+++ Enquiries Checklist +++

Please ring where appropriate, or fill in details requested.

TYPE OF COMPUTER:

PCW PC

MODEL: Amstrad PCW8256 / PCW8512 / PCW9512 / PcW9256 / PcW9512+ / PcW10 / PC

If PCW, is a Sprinter fitted? Yes / No

If PC, please give details of make and model

.....

If PC, please give processor: 8088 / 8086 / 8026 / 8036 / 8046

If PC, clock speed:

(You should find this in the manual, expressed as MHz.)

If PCW, RAM size: PCW 256K / 512K / Other (please specify)

If PC, RAM size: 512K / 640K / 1Mb / 2Mb / 4Mb / Other (please specify)

Number of floppy disk drives: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4

Disk sizes and capacity:

Floppy drive A: size 3 inch / 3.5 inch / 5 inch

Floppy drive A: capacity 180K / 320K / 360K / 720K / 1.2Mb / 1.44Mb / 2.88Mb / Other (please specify):

.....

Floppy drive B: size 3 inch / 3.5 inch / 5 inch

Floppy drive B: capacity 180K / 320K / 360K / 720K / 1.2Mb / 1.44Mb / 2.88Mb / Other (please specify):

.....

Floppy drive C: size 3 inch / 3.5 inch / 5 inch:

Floppy drive C: capacity 180K / 320K / 360K / 720K / 1.2Mb / 1.44Mb / 2.88Mb / Other (please specify):

.....

If you have a hard disk, please give capacity: 20Mb / 40Mb / Other (please specify)

Please indicate any add-ons you have fitted:

Mouse / Type:

Flash Drive (PCW only) / Capacity: 1Mb / 2Mb

CD-ROM (PC only)

Scanner / Type: mono/colour / hand-held / sheet fed / flatbed

Sound card (PC only)

LocoLink / LocoLink for Windows

Modem / Type and speed:

Other add-ons (please specify):

If PC, operating system and Version: MS-DOS / Other (please specify) Version number

(If you are not sure which version, type VER from

the prompt.)

Type / Version of LocoScript (note that the version number appears on the loading screen):

LocoScript 1 / Version

LocoScript 2 / Version

LocoScript 3 / Version

LocoScript PC / Version

LocoScript PC Easy / Version

LocoScript Professional / 2 / Plus / Version

.....

If PCW, which add-ons do you have:

LocoSpell / Version

LocoFile / Version

LocoMail / Version

LocoChar / Version

LocoFont / Version

Other (please specify):

(please specify, including Fonts disks):.....

If PC, do you have any other programs loaded when running LocoScript? If yes, please specify

(These may well be TSRs, terminate and stay resident programs, which can affect the running of LocoScript. They may include pop-up diaries or virus checkers.)

If PC, which system do you run from: DOS / Windows Version ...

(If Windows, do you have other parts of Windows running at the time (fax or comms, for example)? Please specify:

If PCW, type of printer(s): PCW dot matrix / PCW daisywheel / PCW Canon bubble jet.

Other printers (please give make, type, and whether 9-pin, 24-pin, inkjet, laser printer or other, also if mono or colour):.....

.....

.....

Printer software: Printer support pack / Other

(please specify):

Note: In your letter, please give the fullest possible details of what the problem is, how it happened, and anything else you feel is relevant.

Send your enquiries to:

LocoClinic, Nexus Media Communications plc, Warwick House, Azalea Drive, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8HY.

(Please note that it is not possible to answer questions individually)

User Direct UPDATE Special Offers

We have top bargains galore for the very best products for sale by mail order just for you

Straight To You. These offers are specially designed for *LocoScript User* readers, and we shall be adding to them in the coming months. Please note each product's availability (whether for the PCW, the PC, or both).

Margin Maker

This excellent little self-assembly product for ensuring that your paper feeds neatly into the printer is available for the PCW built-in dot matrix printers only. It is simplicity itself to assemble, as the illustrations show. The price of the Margin Maker MM4 is £14.99, RRP £19.95.



Want To Write Fiction?

Another popular offering is the Essential Guide to Fiction Writing, with a special bonus additional guide to essay writing, now available for the PC as well as the PCW.

Moe Sherrard-Smith is a well-known name in the world of those aspiring to break into published print, and her book - *Write a Successful Novel* - has helped many hopefuls along their way.

The Guide is a completely new introduction to the art of writing fiction, which takes you through all the stages from the original idea to the final manuscript and how to send it on its successful road to publication. This part of the Guide is divided into these sections:

- 1) Ideas and using them for a novel
- 2) The important differences between theme and plot

- 3) Planning the synopsis to work from
- 4) Sub-plots and their necessity
- 5) Creating living characters
- 6) Essential and natural dialogue
- 7) Viewpoint - who's telling the story
- 8) Gender - male/female emotional differences
- 9) Conflict makes a book readable
- 10) Beginnings and endings
- 11) Writing techniques
- 12) Revision

These sections look in turn at what is required of the writer when the idea first comes, how plot, characterisation and viewpoint must all be considered and interwoven before any writing is done if the novel is to have a good strong storyline and believable characters. Novels don't just happen, they are created.

Also available

For the PCW only, the Essential Guide to CP/M covers all basic aspects of the PCW's operating system. The Advanced Guide to CP/M is for the more experienced user, and contains a straightforward introduction to assembly language programming. There is also an Essential Guide to BASIC, with a unique on-line help system which

you can summon up while BASIC is running.

For the PCW only (but soon to be released in a different form for the PC), there is the Essential Guide to LocoScript, which is strictly for beginners, and the Essential Guide to LocoScript 3, which offers an indispensable introduction to the use of fonts and how to lay out your text effectively.

New Essential Guides

This highly popular series for the PCW has now been relaunched, with some titles already available for the PC, and others in the pipeline.

+++ STOP PRESS +++

Here's a very special set of offers from Albany UK Ltd exclusive to PCW readers of *LocoScript User*.

There are four 'bundles' of programs on offer at vastly reduced prices for a limited period only. Here are the details:

Pre-School Bundle

Includes ABC-123, WordPlay and Easy Draw. RRP £29.85. Special offer price only £15.95.

School Software Bundle

Includes Better Maths, Better Spelling, Maths Mania and Magic Maths. RRP £39.80. Special offer price only £19.95.

GCSE Revision Bundle

Includes French, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. RRP £39.90. Special offer price £19.95.

Cornix Business Bundle

Includes Simple Accounts II and Invoicing. RRP £39.90. Special offer price £24.95.

Games Compendium

Includes Trivia Quiz, PCW draughts, Applejack, Slider, PCW Challenge. RRP £25. Special offer price £15.95.

The prices shown are for 3.5 inch disks. For each title on 3 inch format add £1. Post and packing £2 per order.

TO ORDER THESE ITEMS ONLY CONTACT ALBANY UK DIRECT, QUOTING THIS SPECIAL OFFER. Orders can be accepted by post or telephone, using cheques, postal orders, Access or Visa. Albany UK Ltd, 20 Regent St, Cheltenham GL50 1HE. Tel: 01242 224340.

Called To Account

Are you fazed by accounts? Puzzled by figures? Confused by cash flows? Then this is just the thing for you: the Essential Guide to Accounting. This is an area of vital importance for so many of us, especially if we run a small business.

The whole subject seems to be cloaked in an aura of mystery, and I half wonder sometimes (perish the thought) whether or not this is a smokescreen created by accountants to prevent us mere mortals from doing the work ourselves and saving a whole heap of money.

Created by Derek Rogers of Total Accounting, this is a lively and well-written general introduction, not specific to his package, together with a demonstration version of his program. The good news is that the Guide is available for both PCW and PC machines.

It falls into two parts. First, there is a book on a disk, with Chapters on the following topics:

Chapter One: Introduction and explanation of the disk's contents.

Chapter Two: Why keep accounts? An explanation of the compelling need to keep your accounts in order.

Chapter Three: The balance sheet. Keeping track of your assets and liabilities.

Chapter Four: Bank reconciliation. This vital monthly exercise ensures that your version of your current balance agrees with that of the bank.

Chapter Five: Debits and credits. How to ensure that you put income, expenditure, assets and the rest on the correct sides of the balance sheet.

Chapter Six: Double-entry bookkeeping. Why it is so important to have a system like this which balances out the pluses

and minuses.

Chapter Seven: Harry Fastbuck. Demonstrates the Nominal Ledger at work using the example of a fictional entrepreneur with ten grand to invest.

Chapter Eight: Integrated ledgers. How to ensure that all your transactions are properly recorded and cross-referenced.

Chapter Nine: Miscellaneous topics. A round-up of various items relating to the Nominal Ledger.

Chapter Ten: Monthly routine. How to establish and maintain a regular habit with accounting practices.

Chapter Eleven: Nominal Ledger. How to maintain this essential part of any accounting system.

Chapter Twelve: The Profit and Loss account. One half of the Nominal Ledger recording day-to-day trading activities.

Chapter Thirteen: The Purchase Ledger. Recording dealings with your suppliers.

Chapter Fourteen: The Sales Ledger. Recording sales to your customers.

Chapter Fifteen: Take-on. The hairy business of setting up a new accounting system.

Chapter Sixteen: VAT. The dreaded value added tax and how to cope with it.

Then there's a database of accounting terms, which you can use to check up on those baffling accounting terms. On the PC, this is in the form of a LocoFile file. For the PCW, a special database program has been written. All in all, this adds up to an extremely impressive piece of software for a bargain price.

The RRP for all the New Essential Guides is £14.95, but it has been trimmed down exclusively for us to a mere £11.95.

Database, too

That's not all you will find on this disk. There's a special database, too, with scores of topics arranged in alphabetical order, including valuable question and answer sessions. On the PC version, this is in the form of a LocoFile file.

All in all, a top value new software product for the aspiring writer. But there's more to come too - there's the added bonus of a full-scale study skills Guide to Essay Writing covering every aspect of this important area of school and college work.

The Guide covers everything from the planning stages to all aspects of writing the essay, from punctuation to general overall style, to revision and submission.

It's worth the price of the disk alone, and it was written by Rex Last after years of experience in marking and correcting college and university essays by generations of students. The Guide is based on the text of his book Making Sense of Essay Writing.

The RRP for The New Essential Guide to Writing Fiction is £14.95, but it has been trimmed down for us to a mere £11.95. Please use the order form in our PCW User Direct pages.

Back issues

There are back issues available for the magazine which has now been incorporated into *LocoScript User*, *PCW User*. Please note that only copies from January 1994 to January 1995 are now available.

Details of the contents of these magazines were published in the March issue of *LocoScript User*.

+++ User Direct Special Offers +++

Please send me

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ Please tick disk size required 3"disk 3.5"disk

Name Please state machine PCW PC

Address

Daytime telephone number (in case we need to contact you) Please allow 28 days for delivery.

All prices include VAT and postage. Make cheques payable to LocoScript User.
Send to: LocoScript User Direct, Nexus Media Communications plc, Warwick House, Agaha Drive, Swanley, Kent BR8 8HY

please tick this box if you do not wish to receive information from other companies.
The specification of the products advertised is subject to change without notice

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- Essays & Reports
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- Menus & Price Lists
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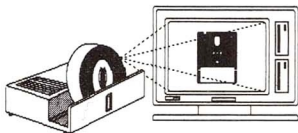
...and more - the only limit is your imagination!



Desktop Publishing means combining your word-processor text with pictures and diagrams to create spectacular pages like these - this advertisement was created and printed using *MicroDesign3* and a Bubblejet printer. *MicroDesign3* lets you lay out your text in columns, combine it with graphics, and even draw your own pictures and diagrams straight onto your PCW's screen.

MD3 is a powerful program, but it is also simple to learn: PCW Plus Magazine gave *MD3* five marks out of five for "ease of use" in their review. The *MD3* package comes complete with a comprehensive Beginner's Tutorial, and we also provide a Technical Support hotline free of charge between 4pm and 7pm every weekday.

Micro Display v3.0



- DISC MANAGER PROGRAM**
- On-screen alphabetic listing of disc files;
 - Copy/Move/Delete/View/Format commands;
 - Fast display of all CUT/MDA/MDP images on a disc;
 - Display Locoscript2/3 documents from CP/M;
 - File "Tagging" for fast operations on multiple files.

- SLIDE-SHOW PROGRAM**
- Display a sequence of images on the PCW screen;
 - Special effects for fading & scrolling between images;
 - Interactive keyboard control for quizzes etc.

PRICE LIST

PCW Software (3" or 3 1/2")

MicroDesign3 (requires 512Kb memory)	£49.95
MD2-MD3 Upgrade (Registered Users)	£29.95
The Network (requires 512Kb memory) †	£25.00
Font & Shade Designer	£25.00
Tweak3 †	£25.00
Micro-Display	£25.00
MD3 Extra Fonts Discs (each)	£16.00
Program Upgrades & 3"/3 1/2" disc change	£10.00
CP/M Upgrade to latest version	£12.50

†Not compatible with CP/M v1.4, v2.1 & v2.9

PCW Hardware

MD3 Scanner	£120.00
KeyMouse	£50.00
CT-RAM Memory Expansion	
512Kb	£59.95
1Mb	£79.95
1 1/2Mb	£99.95
RamPort Memory + Centronics Expansion	
512Kb	£75.00
1Mb	£95.00
1 1/2Mb	£115.00

PC-Compatible Products

ViewPoint PCW-PC Conversion Program	£35.00
PCW-PC Scanner Upgrade	£45.00
MicroDesign2-PC	£40.00

Prices include VAT & Postage
Credit Cards welcome

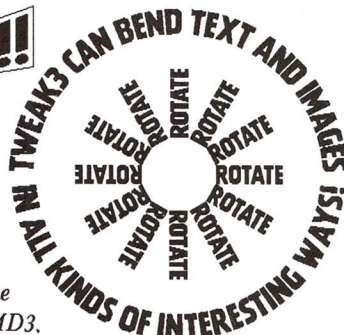


Creative Technology (MicroDesign) Ltd
10 Park St, Uttoxeter
Staffs ST14 7AG
Tel 01889 567160
Fax 01889 563548

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Tweak3

ZOOSH!!



TWEAK3 is a powerful graphics manipulation program which can transform your *MicroDesign* text and pictures in all kinds of spectacular ways - these illustrations show only a fraction of what can be done with this remarkable program. *Tweak3* accepts images from *Stop Press* and *MicroDesign2* as well as *MD3*, and when used in conjunction with the *Network*, it becomes instantly accessible from within *MD3*.

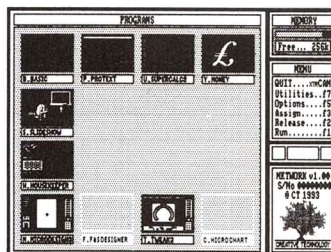
THE NETWORK

"A PCW REVOLUTION" (PCW Plus)

- A modern Graphic User Interface for your PCW.
- Arrange up to 16 CP/M program icons on the "Desktop".
- Full menu-driven mouse and keyboard control.
- Stores active programs in memory for instant access.
- Links *MD3* and *Tweak3* together automatically.

Please Note:

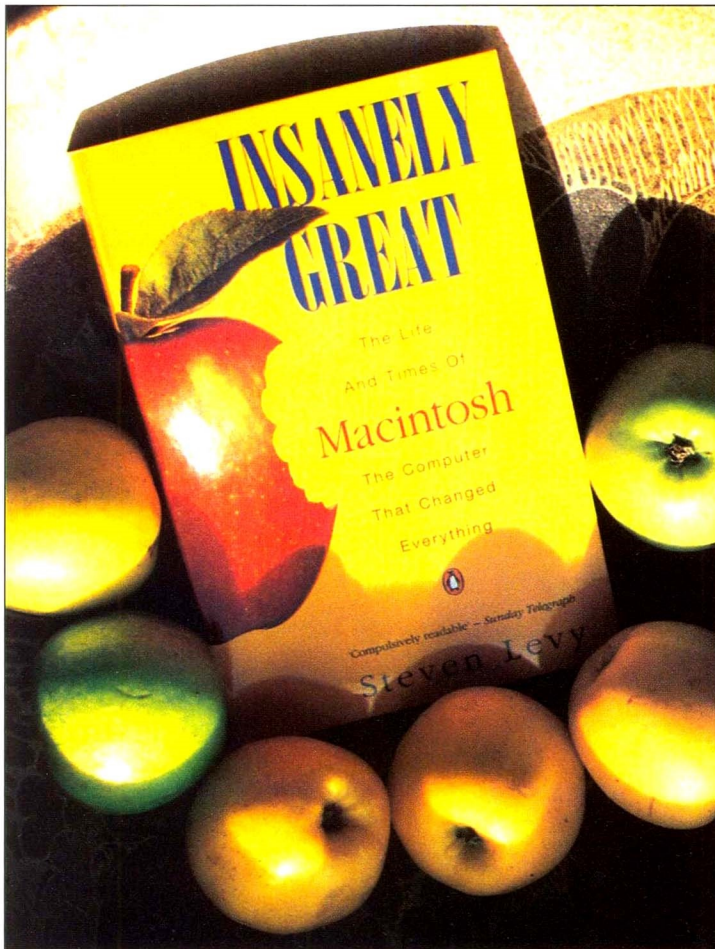
The *Network* is compatible with most CP/M programs and versions, but you are welcome to contact us with queries about compatibility.



An Apple

We review a history of the PC's biggest challenger and a disk-based writing course

a day...



Stephen Levy has turned in an interesting if somewhat partisan account of the other contender in the computing market place. The book expresses a certain resentment of the dull PC overtaking the magical Macintosh with its hobbyist roots.

And, so it's claimed, the user interface of the Mac was hijacked by Microsoft for their Windows GUI. Steve Jobs, the originator of the Mac and other Apples, regarded himself as something of a

computing guru cum prophet cum benefactor of mankind.

The strange title of the book comes from his description of the Mac. The tale of its creation and the behind the scenes conflicts which accompanied it are familiar stuff in the history of the personal computer, as are the failures - like the overpriced and underpowered Lisa - which fell by the wayside.

The Mac aspired to beat IBM but failed. The one really significant achievement which gained it access into a vertical market was PageMaker, the desktop publishing package which was to the Mac what the spreadsheet Visicalc was to the birth of the micro as a whole.

It's a tale well worth reading of what might have been in personal computing.

LEGAL EAGLES

Computers and Law is a more academic book, a collection of essays on various aspects of computing and legal matters.

If you are passing by a library shelf with this one on it, pick it up and at least read the introductory chapter. You'll need pretty steady nerves, because the tale it has to tell is pretty frightening.

The editors have selected three main areas for examination: (1) electronic data interchange (EDI) and data protection, (2) EDI and computer crime and (3) implications of applying artificial intelligence in the legal processes.

Why frightening? Well, not only is the law limping way behind the technology, we get into murky waters as soon as the international nature of the problem becomes apparent. It's all well and good having data protection in this country, but what if the EDI is between here and Greece, or Pakistan - or anywhere else?

What are the rules and regulations in those countries? Are they compatible with the UK - or do they exist at all?

In fact, we don't have to wander beyond the UK frontiers, since there is no systematised control of the users of sensitive data in the first place. In its genteel way, the introduction to the book is telling us that the whole situation is a mess.

Maybe I'm living in a parallel universe, but I thought it was the IBM PC which changed the face of personal computing. Now along comes a book which tells me I got it all wrong - it wasn't the PC after all, it was the Apple Macintosh.

+ Facts Box +

Book: *Insanely Great. The Life and Times of Macintosh, The Computer That Changed Everything*, by Steven Levy.

Price: £7.99

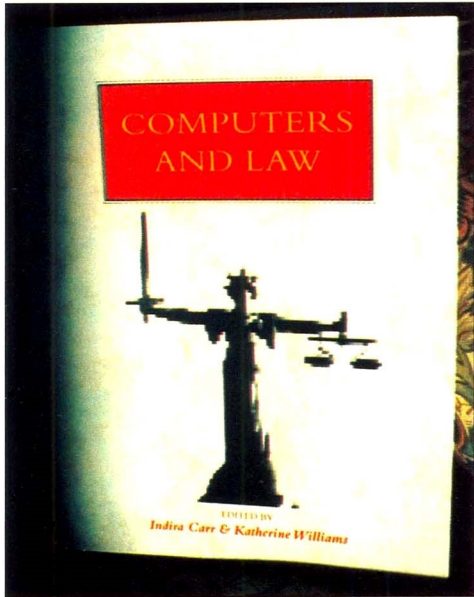
Publisher: Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex

+ Facts Box +

Book: *Computers and Law*, edited by Indra Carr and Katherine Williams.

Price: £19.95

Publisher: Intellect Books, Oxford



One sentence among many gives the game away: 'A way out of this conundrum would be to harmonise the laws in relation to private and data protection [across the EC].' A clear recognition of the fact that European legislation hasn't even got as far as fire-fighting, let alone predicting what is going to happen if the information superhighway really takes off.

And as for crime: 'In Britain, as in many other countries, traditional criminal laws seem unable to cope with certain kinds of computer related crime.'

The law, it seems, has no problems when someone nicks a silver tea service. That's property - you can see, touch and feel it (and steal it, too, if you've a mind!). But data is a quite different matter. Invisible electronic blips on magnetic media are beyond the scope of conventional legislation, it seems.

This isn't a book for everyone, but if you are fascinated by the legal problems which have been thrown up by the computer and its ever-present impact, it will give you a clear - and frankly worrying - overview of the present situation.

WANT TO WRITE?

If you put all the books on how to write end to end, they'd probably stretch to the moon and back (several times). So many people aspire to write that there is a lively market out there for those who want to see their names in print.

So it's not surprising in this computer age that some of these guides are crossing over from text to computer screen, and we have taken a look at one which exists in two versions: for the PCW and for the PC.

The advantages of computer-based material are that you can hop back and forth through the text with the greatest of ease, and that tutorial material based on questions and answers can be made available.

In addition, there's something to be said for learning about the craft of writing through the actual medium - the computer - on which you will be putting your own writing skills to the test.

Creative Writing have come up with two versions of their tutorial material for the aspiring writer - one for the PCW, the other for the PC.

As you can see, the PC has the great advantage of colour and graphical presentation, but the PCW version does measure up pretty well, given the limitations of the low resolution monochrome screen.

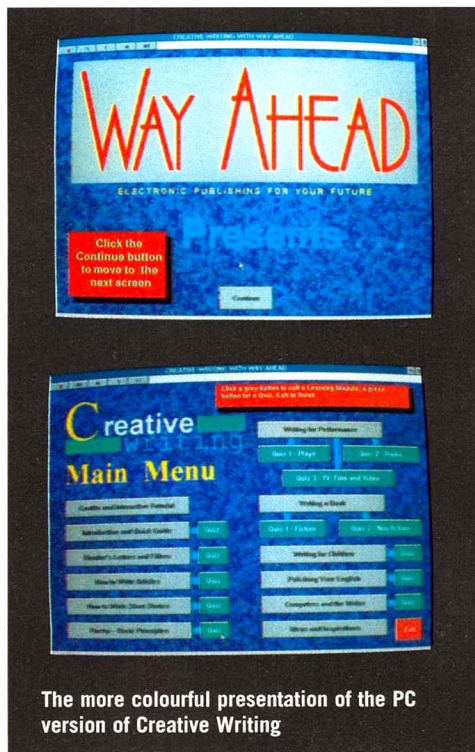
PCW VERSION

The PCW version uses a technique rather violently called COMBAT, which is mercifully short for Computer Based Tutorial Software. It enables you to answer questions and record your progress as you follow through the lessons on various aspects of the writing process.

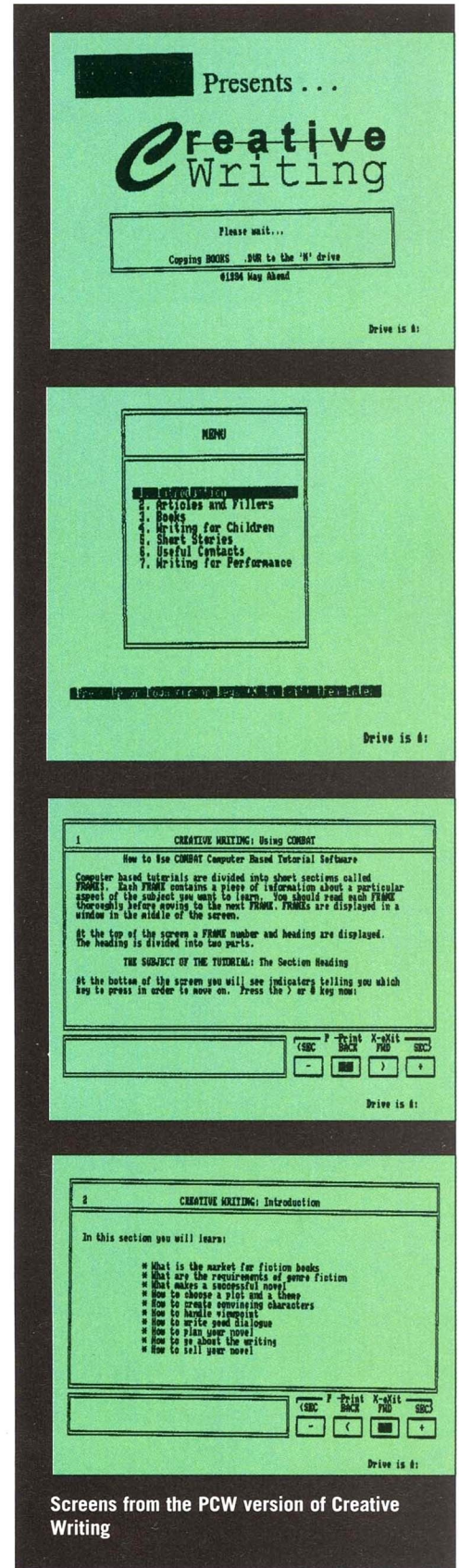
On the PC, you'll need to install the package. Note that you will require a 386SX running Windows 3.0 as a minimum. You also need VGA graphics.

For each subject area, you can go either for a learning module or a quiz. You can print out tutorial material, and make notes with a notepad facility. In addition, there's an ideas and inspirations section, to allow you to explore a whole range of possibilities for your writing.

It's a package well worth considering if you feel you require help along the way to that magical moment when an acceptance slips through your letter box. ■



The more colourful presentation of the PC version of Creative Writing



Screens from the PCW version of Creative Writing

+ Facts Box +

Creative Writing

For full details, see the advertisement in this issue.

Good News

We interview David St John Thomas, a top name in the business of helping aspiring writers to get their work into print

Naim on the Moray Firth in Scotland is the attractive but unlikely location of perhaps the best-known monthly publication for writers: *Writers News*.

It's a glossy, 28-page magazine packed, as its title suggests, with news and information for the writer. There is information on all aspects of the world of publishing and writing, including:

- news of recent publications, including new magazines
- articles on wordprocessing, with a fair helping of LocoScript and PCW information
- items flagged 'markets' to highlight potential areas in which you might be able to place your material
- competitions for readers to enter
- a question and answer session based on readers' enquiries
- classified advertisements

It's just the kind of thing both to help writers along their way and to give them the feeling that they aren't just lonely figures sitting at a solitary wordprocessor staring at a blank screen. They're part of a wider community of like-minded dedicated souls.

And to enhance their service to readers, the magazine has now spawned a new offspring, called *Writing Magazine*, which is a newsstand offering and has quite a different, but complementary, slant to it.

DAVID AND CHARLES

The founder of *Writers News* is David St John Thomas, founder of David and Charles, the well-known publishing house, which he ran for thirty years. He has always had an interest in



David St John Thomas, founder of *Writers News*.

the craft of writing, and as well as his journalistic and railway books also penned a book on the craft of writing.

He sold David and Charles in 1990 to Readers Digest, at the time when he founded *Writers News*. He moved to Scotland because he liked the area and the climate, and on the east coast near Inverness the communications are good and the scenery splendid.

He leads a busy and active life, still writing books on railways and also finding time to give writing courses once or twice a year on the QE2.

When I spoke to him recently, the first thing which became evident was that his enthusiasm for writing and for helping others to master the craft had not waned over the years. Quite the contrary.

My first question was a pretty obvious one: Can anyone write? Many people aspire to get into print, but few of them appear to have the necessary talents or gifts. This is David St John Thomas' reply.

'Are writers born or made? I believe that we all have some creativity within us, and that may

express itself in gardening, sewing, painting, and in a variety of other ways. But writing is a very common outlet for our creativity.

'It has one disadvantage, though, and that is that whereas you can show off a painting or a garden, you can't actually hang a piece of writing on the wall. A few people may get satisfaction from the act of writing itself, as in the case of someone writing a personal diary, for example, but the vast majority want to see that writing communicated. In other words, the object of the exercise is to get your text in print.

'Can anyone be a writer? No, not everyone. But if you are able and keen to communicate, to express yourself, then the chances are that you will be able to write.'

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

My next question concerned the market opportunities available to writers. Has the recent depression, I wondered, reduced the number of publishing outlets for writers as it has for just about every other occupation - except, perhaps, insolvency consultants and the like.

'Surprisingly, no - but the name of the game has changed quite a lot. There are many more niche magazines - *LocoScript User* is one example - which specialise in particular subject areas. Many writers make a comfortable living writing about their particular hobby or interest.'

And what about the word processor? Has it helped writers - and if so, in what particular ways?

'The word processor has in many ways made life easier for the writer. One important advantage is that many men, who may have regarded the typewriter as a woman's or secretary's tool and as such rather beneath them, have accepted keyboarding as a legitimate male activity, so many more men are writing now than in the past.

'But the word processor does not excuse you from working correctly. Here's an illustration of what I mean. When I was a fruit farmer, I was told to prune apples on the tree, not after they have been picked. In other words, preparation is just as vital when you put finger to keyboard as it is when you used to put pen to paper.

'It is important to recognise that the word processor is just something which facilitates the writing process. In no way does it take the place of basic skills.

'Writing courses are valuable if that is what

+ Facts Box +

For further information about *Writers News* and its sister magazine, *Writers Magazine*, see the advertisement in this issue.

for Writers



The busy office of *Writers News*. And what's that machine in the foreground, running LocoScript?



Taken at a *Writers News* seminar from last year, Richard Bell, editor of *Writers News*, is sitting in the centre, with David St John Thomas on the right of the picture.

they concentrate on: the nitty gritty of writing rather than generalisations about markets and getting into print. You have to be able to write first.'

My last question was about complete beginners. How can they break into the writing business, and how can they determine what kind of writing suits them best?

'How does a raw beginner get into the writing business? The first thing to do is to take a magazine - possibly, *Writers News* - and find out what writing is all about. Then ask yourself what you want to write, what your interests are, whether you are interested in fiction or non-fiction.

'I believe that to become successful in writing you need to have a desire to communicate, to be a natural communicator, to have a desire to share things with other people. If you have that basic desire, you too can learn the craft of writing.' ■

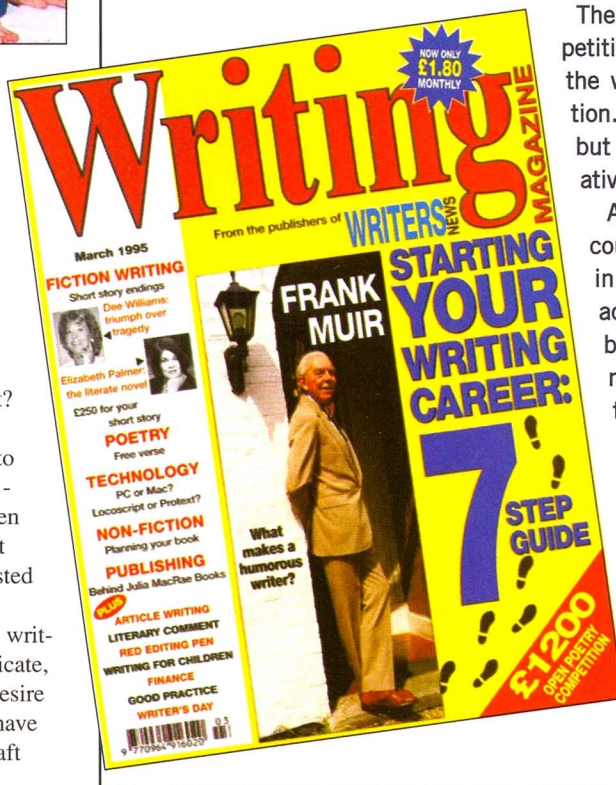
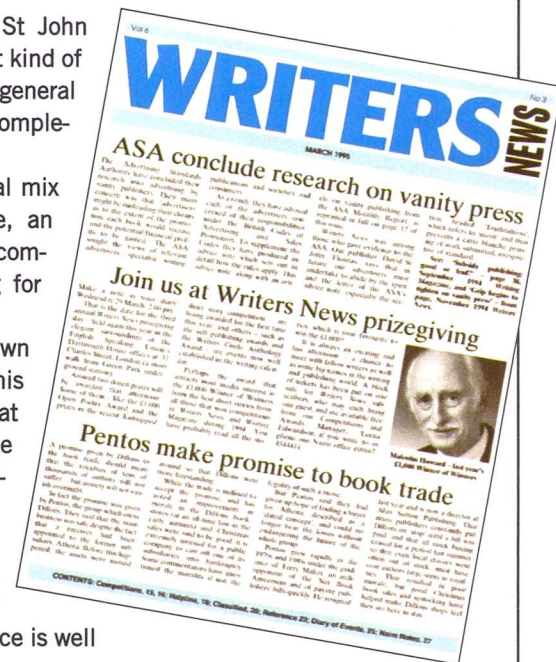
+ And Now - Writing Magazine +

Not content with *Writers News*, David St John Thomas has recently burst into a different kind of print. *Writing Magazine* is more of a general magazine for writers, and it admirably complements its elder sister.

The March 1995 issue offers a typical mix of interviews, profiles, help and advice, an article on technology (PC versus Mac), competitions, as well as articles on writing for children, finance, and non-fiction.

The interview is with that well-known writer and humorist Frank Muir, and his recipe for successful comic writing is that what you put down on paper must make you laugh. In other words, write for yourself - or you won't please anyone.

Next, Margret Geraghty comes to the rescue of short story writers stuck for an effective ending. It's one of the most challenging kinds of writing, and her advice is well worth pondering over.



Then there are a couple of features on competitions. Particularly valuable is a critique of the winning entries in a free verse competition. Everyone seems to want to write poetry, but it's the most elusive of all forms of creative writing.

And, if you are a real beginner, there are a couple of pages on how to break into print in the first place. It's all valuable, sensible advice, underlining David St John Thomas' basic philosophy that it's practical information and help specifically targeted on the craft of writing that matters most.

One of the most important features in the magazine is the market survey, which in this issue focuses on the growing number of magazines targeted at the motorist.

And so it goes on, page after page of compelling stuff for both the successful writer and the newcomer. It's a valuable addition to any writer's armoury.

Say Goodbye to 3" Disc Problems

If you have a PCW with 3" disc drives you may be concerned that your drive is wearing out, and 3" drives can be difficult to repair or replace. And of course, 3" discs are becoming expensive and often difficult to buy.

Adding a new drive so that you can use 3 1/2" discs means you can go on using your PCW for years to come. We are offering an easy to install 3 1/2" drive kit. This includes LocoScript 3 (if you have LocoScript 1 or 2), CP/M Upgrade and a FIB file, to give you the best performance from your new drive. And we'll exchange your 3" Locomotive Software Master discs for new 3 1/2" ones free of charge.

So moving to your new drive will be trouble free and you can say goodbye to 3" disc problems.

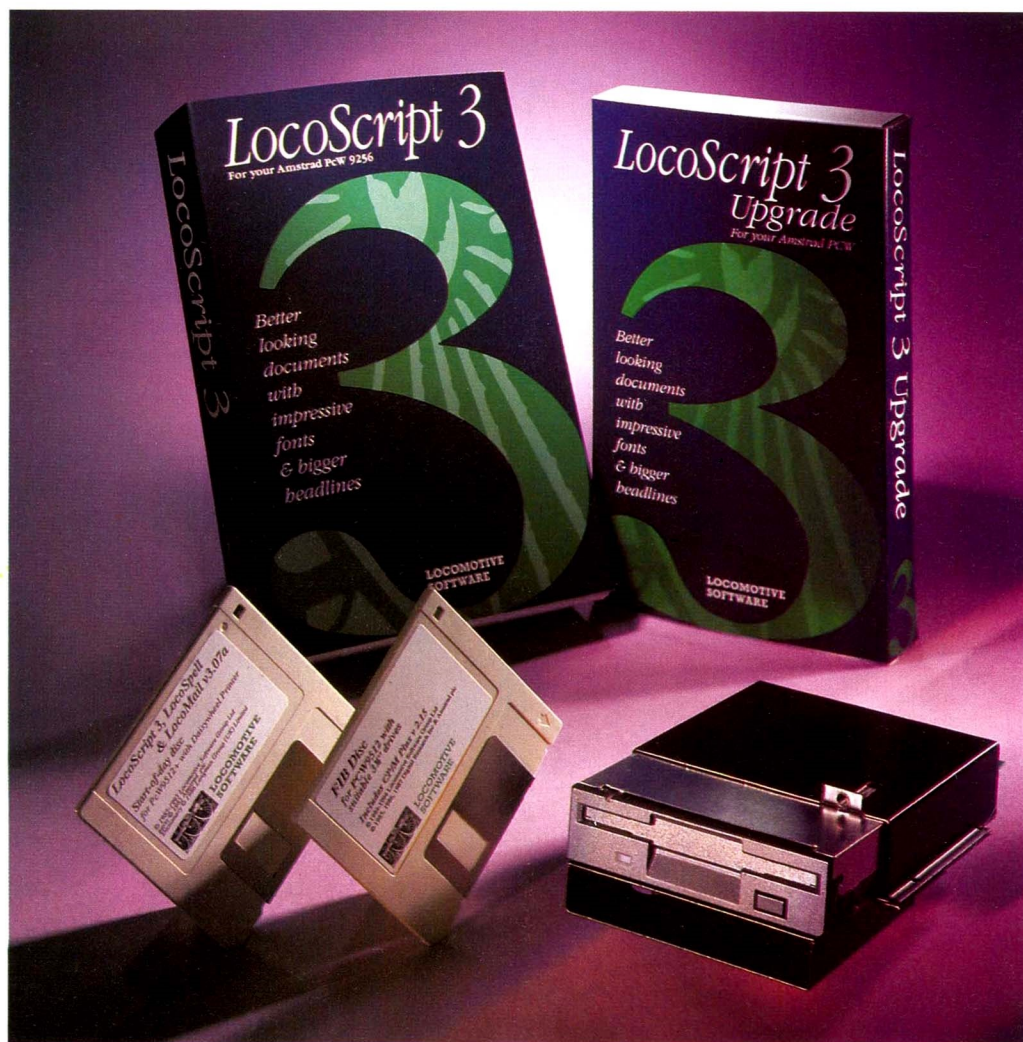
Our internal 3 1/2" drive kit is easy to fit and, unlike other kits, replaces your existing drive, so there is no need to modify your PCW case.

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- **NEVADA COBOL TUTORIAL** £9.95
The essential companion to the Nevada COBOL compiler for those who want to get the most out of their programming. Covers all topics in a friendly and practical way with examples. Copyright
- **NEVADA PASCAL COMPILER** £9.95
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- **NEVADA FORTAN COMPILER** £9.95
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- **MIX C COMPILER** £39.95
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C A P S

Jayne Carson continues her exploration of style with more of those little things that add up to good English

Our series on style began in the first issue with punctuation, which we are continuing to explore here. The idea is to start small, then build up via the word to the sentence, the paragraph, and finally (if and when we get there!) to the structure of the text as a whole.

But that's a few months off yet. In the meantime, here is a brief recap of what we have covered so far. Order back issues via our User Direct pages (pages 43-44).

In **February**, we looked at the colon, the semicolon, and the full stop.

The **March** article covered the ellipsis and quotation marks.

And in **April** the items on the menu were apostrophes, genders and cases, exclamation and question marks, and forms of the plural as an additional item.

TO CAP IT ALL

This episode in our survey of good English style explores the question of when to use capital letters and moves on to brackets. Note that, for convenience, I am including numbers, capital letters and other odds and ends under the general umbrella of punctuation.

Let's start with the most obvious application of capital letters. They are used, as we all know, to begin sentences. They are also used

to begin a quotation: 'To be or not to be', unless it's just 'part of a sentence'.

When introducing direct speech, the first word spoken has an initial capital. In other words, he said, 'The first letter of this sentence spoken is capitalised.'

Next in line are proper names, days of the week and months of the year. There are exceptions, like the American poet e e cummings who insisted that his name began with lower case letters, and you will see the same kind of thing in display type over some shop fronts and in the name of some products.

AN EFFING ANOMALY

Some names beginning with f have apparently acquired a lower case double f: ffoulkes, for example, but the anomaly is more apparent than real, since in the medieval past capital F could be spelled ff.

On the subject of poets, lines of poetry tend to begin with an upper case letter (with the exception of some modern poetry):

The boy stood on the burning deck,

A string of sausages round his neck...

The tricky cases, though, are those where the same word can appear with an initial upper or lower case letter. How do we sort out the following:

0fff!

One of the kings of England was King Charles I.

I knew a Venetian who bought a venetian blind.

I knew an Alsatian who bought an alsatian.

I went to Chihauhau in Mexico and bought a chihauhau.

The most recent prime minister is John Major, Prime Minister.

The odd thing about the state Rhode Island is that it isn't an island.

Did you hear of the Frenchman who put in french windows?

When I was in India I couldn't buy an india rubber.

The rule, more or less (since you can also write Venetian blind), is that if the word is a title or acting as an alternative to a proper name, then upper case is the rule, otherwise not.

Most words used in senses which have become detached from their original proper name meaning, like alsatian, wellington,

+ Did You Know? +

Here are a few odd facts about punctuation which you probably didn't know - and probably don't need to know, but they're fascinating anyway.

The punctuation we use today first came into full use in the seventeenth century. The word 'punctuation' comes from punctus, the Latin for point.

Inscriptions in Classical Latin used points to separate words. Nowadays we use the invisible punctuation sign, the space,

between words.

Before the last century, Chinese text had no punctuation marks because of its grammatical forms.

In German, most punctuation is syntactical - marking off parts of the sentence - than, as in English, used for pauses for breath. Spanish has for the last two centuries used an inverted exclamation mark and question mark at the beginning of an exclamation or question, with the conventional mark at the end.

sandwich, now begin with a lower case letter. When staring anomalies in the face, though, I suppose that you could argue that, while brussels sprouts have nothing to do with Brussels, Yorkshire puddings do retain a distinct Yorkshire connection.

Or you could go a bit further and argue that no one would dare to write yorkshire like that without a capital letter, as you'd have the whole population of that three Riding county baying for your blood. (Incidentally, Riding comes from treading or trithing in Old English, meaning a third part.)

A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOC

So we refer to the Eastern bloc (or, to be politically correct, we used to), but the eastern part of Europe. We would also refer to the Bishop of Durham as Bishop (as a form of address), but he is just one of the bishops of Durham over the centuries.

If you relish the oddities of the English language, ponder on the following. If you have a secretary and he or she is at home, you do not capitalise either. However, if you are in government and are appointed Home Secretary, things are a little different.

So, if it's a title, it's upper case, if it is not, it is most likely to be lower case. The easiest example to bear in mind is that Regent Street is one of many London streets.

This refers to institutions and organisations, like the NSPCC, which spells out as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and causes some of us to wonder why it's only 'national' whilst the parallel society for animals bears the title Royal.

Pronouns are lower case - he, she, hers and so on - with the exception of I, which presumably would look odd as an isolated lower case letter, and references to the deity, so that He is distinguished from mere mortals.

But there's another source of confusion, too, which comes when the same word has an upper or lower case according to its meaning. We know that the London Underground goes underground for most of its route, and that the Christian Church has many churches.

In such cases, it is the function of the word which determines whether it is upper or lower case. The Church with an initial capital is an institution, whereas a church is a building in which Christian worship takes place. The capital in Christian comes from the fact that it is an adjective based on a proper name, Christ, like Freudian from Freud, Copernican from Copernicus, and so on.

Religious references tend to hold on to capital letters. As I said a couple of paragraphs back, God tends to be referred to as He, and the Bible is usually granted an upper case initial, like the variation The Good Book. (That's appropriate enough, since the

word comes from the Latin biblia, book - hence bibliography, amongst other things.)

CAPITAL GOODS

Apart from oddities referred to earlier, products like Hoover and Ansafone are capitalised, but when the product name becomes the generic term for the item concerned, then you refer to the hoover whether it's Electrolux, Vax, or whatever make.

Some products are even perverse enough to have capital letters in the middle of the word. Now where can I possibly think of an example relevant to this magazine?! (That's one instance where a question mark plus an exclamation can be pretty well justified, I think.)

Capitals can also be used ironically, as in: A healthy constitutional each morning can be regarded as a Good Thing.

BOOK TITLES

The question of book titles can cause a few problems. The general rule appears to be either that the first word plus the nouns in a book title have a capital initial, or the first word plus the 'main words' in the title.

While we are on the subject, book titles are generally italicised, and subtitles are separated from the main title either by a full stop or a colon.

Let's look at all these in practice. Here are a few titles which don't pose any real problems: *Gone with the Wind*, *The Day of the Triffids*, *Great Expectations*, *Sense and Sensibility* - I don't think I need to go on.

But it's not always so easy. One of the books on review this month on pages 46-47 is about the Macintosh computer. The title is *Insanely Great*, which capitalises an adjective, Great, mainly because it would look odd if it wasn't.

So a scattering of upper case letters to taste appears to be one of the general rules. When it comes to the two subtitles of this book, however, we end up in really murky waters. Here's the full title as it appears on the cover, with full stops added:

Insanely Great. The Life and Times of Macintosh. The Computer That Changed Everything.

The copy editor who had to cope with this little knotty problem decided that, as the tail of the subtitle didn't have any nouns in it (everything is a pronoun), it makes more sense to put a capital letter in front of the lot.

So in most cases, book titles don't present problems, but where they do a touch of common sense and good judgment is called for, plus a sense of how it looks on the page. Too Many Capitals Are Not A Good Thing, whereas too few can make the title look odd.

FOREIGN TONGUES

If you have a word beginning with æ (alt+A) or œ (Alt+Z), then use the capitalised form (Shift+Alt+Z) as in *Ædipus Rex*.

Alternatively, use the equivalent of o + e, which you would in English when referring to a nun in French: Soeur Marie, rather than Sœur Marie.

With accents, you can get away in French without putting an accent on a capital letter - in German, though, you should: Österreich - for Austria. Alternatively, use Ae, Oe or Ue - that's where the Umlaut (diæresis) comes from originally.

In German, the 'scharfes S' - ß (Alt+S) - can be written as 'ss'. It comes from the combination of the old hooked s plus s: fs.

What to do with foreign accents

What happens with non-standard initial letters? English rarely poses a problem, unless you are quoting from a foreign language. See the illustration for examples.

On the subject of other languages, if you quote from them - or cite book titles in a foreign language - do follow the convention of the language concerned. In French, for example, book titles tend to be lower case except for the first letter of the first word and proper names.

More importantly, in German, all nouns begin with a capital letter.

While we are in this neck of the woods, we might as well pause and consider foreign accents. When the foreign word becomes part of English, then the accent tends to disappear, as in naivete (also written naivety), and a naturalised German import like kindergarten loses its initial capital.

The same applies to bete noire, where the circumflex over the first 'e' of bete would be just a bit pretentious.

There's another point to watch with foreign imports, and that is that they can be italicised, like *carpe diem*, *lapsus linguae*, *Lebensraum*, *je ne sais quoi*, and so on.

However, here common sense should tell you what to do. And do follow the golden rule: If you are not sure what the foreign import means, don't use it. Otherwise you might show yourself up. Pretentious, moi?

PROGRAM LISTINGS

Computer programs are a special case when it comes to capital and lower case letters. BASIC

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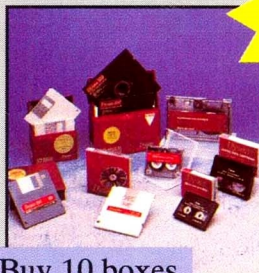
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Welcome



requires keywords (or compound basic symbols, as one language used to call them) to be in upper case. The language C on the other hand, requires them to be lower case, and some languages - particularly operating systems languages like CP/M and MS-DOS - don't really care whether you type in upper or lower case.

The same tends to apply to file names. When you type in a filename in LocoScript, you don't have to convert the name to capitals, since the word processor does it for you.

There is an important point to bear in mind if you are presenting program listings, and that is the fact that a source of confusion exists with a couple of capital letters. I and O have always caused bother, and here are a couple of tips about dealing with them - and other potential problems, too.

I and O - the capital letters, that is - can easily be confused with 1 and 0 - the numbers, that is. It's an even richer source of confusion in that many typefaces don't distinguish between either one or, even worse, both, on the printed page.

One solution as far as the letter I is con-

cerned is not to use it in the program for the names of variables, and if you must, put them in lower case:

```
FOR i = 1 TO 10
```

Here there should be no doubt as to which is which. However, there is one point here which program lists (us included!) tend to overlook, and that is that to our eternal wonderment, there are people out there who like to type in programs even if they don't know the first thing about programming.

Which means that there should be a warning of some kind with your listing that explains this likely pitfall.

Second in line is the capital O. Here we are a bit more fortunate, as there are options in computer and typesetting printout to put a slash through the zero to distinguish it from its letter counterpart.

Of the other sources of confusion amongst typers-in of programs the worst is the old line number problem. Take the illustration as an example. What happens in BASIC is that our beginner types in the first program line for line.

When he or she gets to the line:

```
10 REM Disaster!
20 x = 1
30 print "x = ",x
40 x = x + 1:IF x =
10 THEN GOTO 60
50 GOTO 30
60 END
```

```
10 PLAN B
20 x = 1
30 PRINT "x = ", x
40 x = x + 1:IF x =
    10 THEN GOTO 60
50 GOTO 30
60 END
```

How to get a BASIC program wrong - and right

10 THEN GOTO 60 - if that is typed in as a separate line, the original line 10 is overwritten and the program will crash! So the moral is, as Plan B shows, to indent any continuation lines to minimise the problem. It's also advisable to add a word of explanation to the reader as well.

That's about it for this time. Next month we consider the problem of (brackets), or was that [brackets] or {brackets} or even <brackets>? ■

Next Month...

in *LocoScript User*

Another packed issue coming up, including:

- **Rocket power** - LocoScript doesn't have a spreadsheet, but here is the next best thing for the PCW owner
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CP/M Corner

Dave Greenhough takes a dip into his postbag and answers a pile of readers' questions

This month I'm turning the column to a round-up of readers questions. So let's get down to business first with some BASIC questions.

+++Clip Art Transfers+++

A lady phoned the other day asking if it was possible to use clip-art from the Stop Press DTP program to MicroDesign. The simple answer to this question is yes. MicroDesign and Stop Press both use the PCW cut graphic file format for small images.

For larger images Micro Design will import the Stop Press canvas SPC files although MicroDesign calls this 'screen format' and insists that the file extension is changed from SPC to SCR.

If you need to exchange graphic file in the other direction things become a little more complex. Stop Press will not accept any MicroDesign MDA files, although a limited MDA to Stop Press file conversion program is available on the Clip Art 2 Disk from DGC Software (01274 636475).

The program is limited in the sense that if the MDA file is larger than the fixed size of the Stop Press canvas file only the top left hand corner of the MDA file is converted.

+ Keeping Accounts +

I've received many questions about accounting software over the past couple of months, so here's a very brief round up what's available.

Money Manager PCW from Connect Software (0181 743 9792) offers what is perhaps the easiest program for anybody who has never operated an accounting program before, and would be suitable for domestic accounts and very small businesses.

There are two business account packages available: Cornix Accounts (01234 219969) and Total Accounting (0141 334 8902). While both of these packages offer a full range of features to organize the accounts any small business, Total Accounting may appeal to the user who may have already mastered traditional bookkeeping.

Before buying any of these programs you may be interested in our exclusive Guide to Accounting (see the reader offers page for full details), which was written by

Derek Rodgers the author of Total Accounting. The guide covers all aspects of computerised accounting and is not specific to the Total Accounting package.

Whilst thinking of accounting programs, the importance of keeping back-up disks springs to mind. Ask yourself how important the data stored on your disks is worth and what would you do if any your important disks were suddenly lost.

While it may be possible to recover data from a damaged disk the job is never easy and always takes lots of time. If anybody tries to tell you that recovering data from a damaged disk is easy don't believe them.

I remember once being given the job of salvaging the data from a badly damaged disk which took a little longer than four days and wasn't a complete success even then. The charge to the customer is more than the original cost of the PCW. Never overlook the importance of keeping back-up disks.

Lottery Fever

Robert Johnston of Larne is attempting to write a lottery number selector program.

Robert writes that 'every so often the program throws out two similar numbers. I have tried all sorts of ways to counteract this without success.' The program as it stands is:

```
400 seed=PEEK(64504!)
410 RANDOMIZE(seed)
420 FOR x=1 to 6
430 PRINT INT(49*RND(1)+1)
440 NEXT
```

One way to solve this problem is to store the random numbers in an array and test for a duplicated number, and repeat the number selection if necessary until an unused number emerges:

```
400 seed=PEEK(64504!)
410 RANDOMIZE(seed)
420 FOR x=1 to 6
428 ok=0
430 num
(x)=INT(49*RND(1)+1)
432 FOR y=1 to x-1
434 IF num(y)=num(x) THEN
ok=1
436 NEXT
438 IF ok=1 THEN GOTO 428
439 PRINT num(x)
440 NEXT
```

What I've done is to store the random numbers in the array num(x). The new loop, lines 432-436, then checks the previous numbers for a duplicate and if a duplicate is found the variable is used as a flag to force the program to choose a new random number. And good luck with the lottery!

+++The Great Escape+++

Bill Smith of Orpington has a quite different problem. He is using the screen escape sequence to print to specific screen positions. Bill explained that the first three lines printed correctly, but the fourth line printed at the beginning of the next screen line.

The cause of this problem lies with the programmers at Locomotive Software solving a different problem. Mallard BASIC maintains a logical character count so that BASIC will automatically preform a carriage return and line feed after printing the number of characters set by the WIDTH command.

The next character starts on a new screen line. The logical counter is reset by the carriage return. In normal circumstances this system works well enough, that is, until screen escape characters are used.

This is because although an escape code moves the cursor to a new position on the screen to Mallard BASIC the code is no more than a certain number of characters.

Try this:

```
10 esc$=CHR$(27)
20 PRINT esc$+"E"+esc$+"H"
30 PRINT
40 DEF FNat$(r,c)=esc$
+"Y"+CHR$(r+32)+CHR$(c+32)
50 PRINT
60 FOR i%=0 TO 19
70 PRINT FNat$(r+i%,40)
;STRING$(20,"A");
80 PRINT POS(0);
90 NEXT
```

When you run the program you will see that although each line should be positioned at column 40, some of the lines are in fact positioned at the left hand edge of the screen. The solution to this phenomenon is the semicolon at the end of the print statement in line 80.

Normally BASIC adds a carriage return to a print command. However, a semicolon at the end of a print statement tells BASIC not to add the carriage return so the logical position counter is never reset. If you remove the semicolon from the end of line 80 the program will behave correctly.

By the way, the command POS(0) in line 80 simply returns the logical screen position counter and to quote the Mallard manual this value 'may bear no relation whatsoever to the current position of the cursor!'



+++Entering The Lists+++

Jim Devine of Sunbury-on-Thames writes that he is having problems with a program we published way back in October 1993. 'Perhaps I am doing something wrong but I can't get this program to even LIST correctly. Time after time, line 20 persists in producing an exclamation mark after 64502.' Here's the offending listing:

```
10 DEF FNT(x)=x-INT(x/16)*6
20 POKE 64502!,0:POKE
64503!,0:POKE 64504!,0
30 PRINT CHR$(27)+"E"
40 WHILE z$=""
50 hrs%=FNT(PEEK(64502!))
60 min%=FNT(PEEK(64503!))
70 sec%=FNT(PEEK(64504!))
80 PRINT CHR$(27)+"H"
90 PRINT hrs%;min%;sec%;
100 PRINT CHR$(27)+"R"
110 z$=INKEY$
120 WEND
```

Although the exclamation marks were not printed in the listing when this program was first published, the exclamation mark is needed by BASIC but will be automatically inserted if omitted, so Jim, you are not doing anything wrong and the program would work correctly as

originally printed.

The reason for the exclamation mark is a little more complex. So that memory is not wasted, BASIC stores numbers by three different methods:

- an integer which is a whole number in the range -32768 to 32767
- single precision numbers which are accurate to approximately seven significant numbers
- double precision numbers which are accurate to approximately sixteen significant numbers.

By default, number variables are always single precision but the default can be altered by the commands DEFINT, DEFSNG and DEFDBL. Otherwise an integer is indicated by a % as the last character in the variable name, a single precision number is indicated by an exclamation mark and the double precision numbers are indicated by the hash (#) character.

As you will now probably realise the number 64502 is a single precision number and hence the exclamation mark.

+++Divide & Rule+++

Stuart Baker of Bogner Regis wrote asking how to type the integer division symbol, the \ (backslash) character, in the BASIC program editor.

The answer to this puzzle is quite simple. Hold down the extra key and press the key with the half on it twice. By the way the term integer simply means a whole number. Integer division means that both values are forced to an integer and the result is also truncated to an integer, for example, the result of 9\4 is 2 rather than the result of normal division which of course is 2.25.

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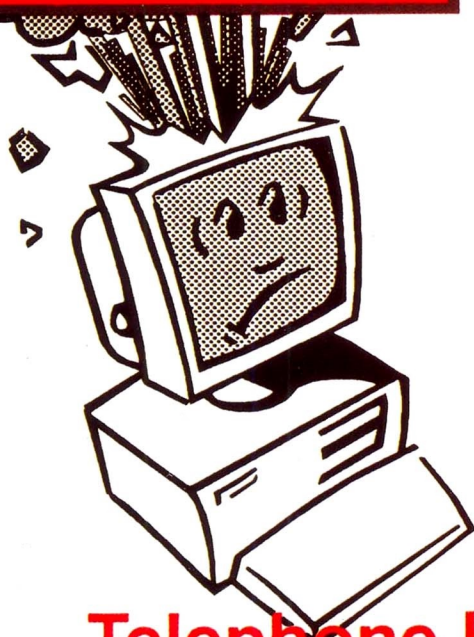
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MS-DOS Corner

Help and advice beyond LocoScript for PC owners

Last month we put together a routine which turned making back-ups on to floppy disk a simple, automated task. If you read that article - and if not, why not? - you'll remember that it involved the use of DEBUG, which I promised to explain next time around.

Now, I'd like to link that with a couple of letters which have come in over the last week or so. The first was a plea for more examples of DEBUG in use, which we originally covered in the launch issue of the magazine, and the second asked if it was possible to design a menu using a batch file.

Batch files are like SUB files on the PCW, except that the commands which drive them are more powerful than CP/M allows, although they are hardly user-friendly, as you'll see.

So here is a little COM program which allows you to interact with a batch file. In other words, if, as our reader requested, you have a menu, you had no easy way of achieving something like this until Version 6:

You can now do one of the following:

- (a) Run LocoScript
 - (b) Load QBASIC
 - (c) Play games
- Please press a, b or c

The idea is for this to pop up every time you switch on the computer, and we'll deal with that aspect later.

Version 6 of MS-DOS provides CHOICE, a rather fiddly routine which will enable you to halt the batch file at this point and wait for a response. Here, though, is a method which works for all versions and which is created using DEBUG.

RUNNING DEBUG

From the C:\ prompt (or with your MS-DOS disk in your drive, if you don't have a hard disk), type:

```
DEBUG UC.COM
```

Please note that I have put the commands in the text in upper case for the sake of clarity, but either upper or lower are accepted. You will get a message telling you that it can't find the file UC.COM - but don't worry about that,

we are simply telling DEBUG we are going to use that name to put some commands into later.

Next, you will see a minus sign, which you may remember is the prompt which DEBUG uses to tell you it is ready to receive commands.

But what commands? If you type a question mark (plus Enter every time, please) you will see a pretty inscrutable-looking list of what DEBUG has on offer, as you can see.

Basically, DEBUG uses a set of one-letter commands, some of which may be followed by numbers, which tell it what to do. We'll use just a few of them here, and explain things as we go along.

EXAMINING THE INNARDS

DEBUG is designed to allow us to peer inside the innards of your computer, to inspect areas of memory, to alter them, and to save them to a file, amongst other things. It's an essential programming tool at the machine code level.

What we are going to do is to insert into memory a few assembler instructions and then save them to the file UC.COM.

For the next bit, do type exactly what you see. If anything goes wrong, type Q for quit, then press F3, which brings up the DEBUG command line again, and Enter. Then retype.

Here we go (explanation in a moment):

```
A
```

At this point, you have told DEBUG that you want to assemble, in other words, you are going to key in some 8086 assembler instructions. What comes up

```
MOV AH, 8
INT 21
AND AL, DF
MOV AH, 4C
INT 21
INT 20
```

After the last instruction, press Enter twice.

Then type:

```
U100 10C
```

```
R CX
50
W
Q
```

The program asks for input, and the character you type is left as an exit code, as it's called, for the batch file to examine and take the appropriate action.

USER-HOSTILE

Remember that I said a while back that some of the batch file commands were not particularly user-friendly? Here comes one that certainly isn't in this batch file fragment:

```
:MENU
ECHO You may now do one of
the following:
ECHO (a) Load LocoScript
...
ECHO Type a letter or X to
exit to the prompt
:AGAIN
UC
IF ERRORLEVEL 65 IF NOT
ERRORLEVEL 66 GOTO LOCO
IF ERRORLEVEL 88 IF NOT
ERRORLEVEL 89 GOTO EXIT
...
ECHO Please type a valid
letter
GOTO AGAIN
:LOCO
LS
:EXIT
```

The dots indicate additional batch file lines you can add to fit your requirements. Note that labels are preceded by a colon in batch files.

The ECHO command puts text up on the screen. Then comes UC. That's our UC.COM file, which must be in the same directory - usually the root directory of the hard disk - as the batch file.

The program waits for you to type a character, which it converts to upper case for you. The ERRORLEVEL mouthful says: if that character is decimal 65 but not 66 or higher then we've found an A and go to the label LOCO, which runs LocoScript. For Script Professional, you should type LSPRO instead of LS.

The next line looks for the exit code 88 for X and exits. Otherwise, you get a rap on the knuckles and the batch file loops round to UC again.

More about batch files and what you can do with them next time around. ■

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Facts File

Our regular back page of information for our readers focuses on our cover story this month with a checklist of punctuation features

+++ Punctuation Checklist +++

Here is a complete rundown of the punctuation and related items to be covered in this series of articles, together with a brief explanation of each term.

Abbreviation: Shortened form of a word or words, with full stop usually only if part of the word is used, so Cpl for Corporal but Capt. for Captain.

Accent: A mark placed over - or sometimes under - a letter to indicate a change in sound or value. Also known as a diacritic.

Angle brackets: Less than and greater than signs <like this> used in some programming languages and sometimes in French as an alternative to quotation marks, when they can also appear doubled: <<Comme ceci>>.

Apostrophe: That little mark which stands for an omission, doesn't it, of one or more letters.

Bold: A thicker version of normal typeface used for emphasis, as at the head of each of these items.

Braces: See brackets.

Brackets: These can be (round), [square], <angle> or {curly/braces}. For every open bracket there must be a closed bracket. (Complete sentences in brackets have the full stop inside.) If you have brackets within brackets, the inner ones are square, for example: (Charles Dickens [1812-70]).

Bullet: Normally taking the form of a filled circle, a bullet is used to highlight one of a series of items in the text.

Capital: An upper case letter used at the beginning of sentences, for proper nouns and acronyms (like RAF or NATO). See lower case.

Colon: Used to indicate that what follows it is an explanation or expansion of the first part of a sentence.

Comma: Used to separate distinct clauses, or items in a list.

Curly brackets: Also called braces. See brackets.

Dash: A horizontal stroke between words -

used, like this, to split up a long sentence.

Date: Formats vary. In British English, you have day, month and year. In American, you have month, day and year. In good style, avoid the 14th of July. Write July 14th or 14 July and be consistent.

Diacritic: See accent.

Double quotes: See quotation marks.

Ellipsis: Three little dots denoting that in a 'direct quotation something ... has been omitted'.

Endnotes: Notes at the end of text, rather than at the foot of an individual page. See footnotes.

Exclamation mark: Delightfully known also as a shriek in computing, it is used at the end of a statement which is exaggerated or emphatic in some way. Damn and blast! Come here, boy! Avoid multiple exclamation marks: Aaargh!!!!

Footnote marks: Conventions for footnotes (or endnotes) vary. The traditional approach was for endnotes to be numbered consecutively and usually be used for bibliographical references and the like. Footnotes offered an immediate explanation of a point at the foot of the page, and were indicated by a dagger and double dagger if there were two of them.

Full stop: Known in American English as the period, it comes at the end of a sentence, or marks a decimal point in English (continentals use a comma).

Hyphen: Generally used to link two or more words together which form a single sense unit, but practice varies so much it's always best to check if you are not sure.

Italics: Text slanted to the right for emphasis. Also used for book titles. Avoid underlining - that's oldfashioned manual typewriter stuff.

Ligature: Combining two letters, usually ae and oe.

Lower case: Normal text is usually lower case. Sometimes capitals are used for effect - but if you have a small caps face, that is less oppressive than LARGE CAPS.

Numbers: Conventions vary about whether numbers should be spelled out in letters or shown as digits. Be consistent is the best advice, and follow common sense.

Question mark: Used after a direct question. Avoid double question marks or combinations of question and exclamation marks: What are you doing!?!?

Quotation marks: Used for direct quotations from speech or written material. Standardise on single or double - single looks less cluttered.

Parentheses: See brackets.

Period: American for full stop.

Round brackets: See brackets.

Rule: See hyphen.

Single quotes: See quotation marks.

Slash: Stroke used in computing, to denote fractions, and also in old currency: 3/6 = three shillings and six (old) pence.

Square brackets: See brackets.

Stop: See full stop.

Underline: Avoid unless you are using it for subheadings. See italics.

Writing In

We welcome readers' letters and unsolicited contributions to the magazine. We are particularly interested in hearing from you if you have an unusual hobby or business application for your word processing. Submissions of this kind should be around 1500 words with illustrative material if possible.

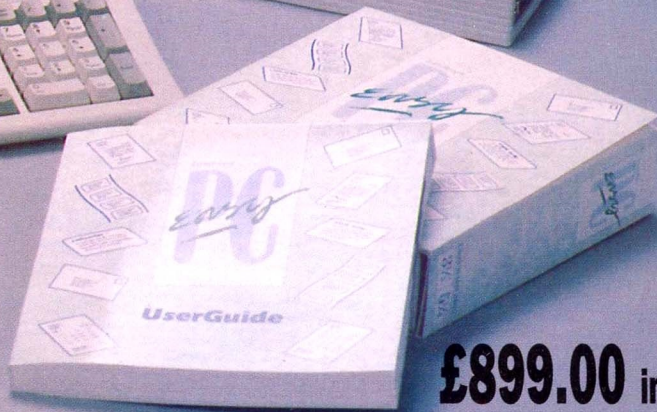
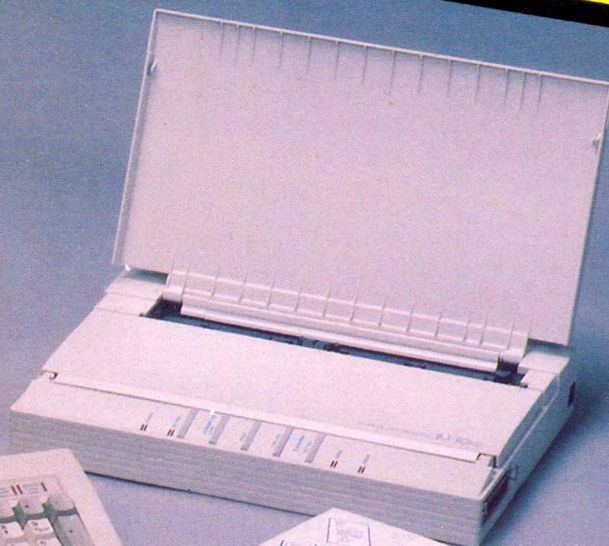
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