F

inally I have an apology to make, as I'm sure you've noticed this issue is very late, due to several other commitments (SEAL, WoA and work related) I've been unable to find the time I usually do to work on the magazine. However now its here I hope you'll find this is our best issue yet. We have more pages (up from 36 to 40) and much better quality printing thanks to our new printers who print PostScript files rather than the printed artwork we used to supply. Because the print is better quality we've been able to reduce the type size of the body text a little while retaining readability so all in all there's much more content in this issue than the first two.

One of the reasons this issue is late is because SEAL is heavily involved in organising this years World of Amiga show which is taking place at the Kensington Town Hall Conference Centre, London on the 24th and 25th of July. I have been designing a brochure for the exhibitors and the show programme which will be given to all visitors. As you read in the news item this years WoA is shaping up to be a really great event, with a combination of exciting announcements from Amiga, seminars, games, how-to sessions and loads of bargains can you afford to miss it?

The main focus of this issue is getting the Internet, over the last few months several SEAL members have got connected and with the current state of the Amiga market and the fast moving technology of Amiga and Internet connection is a great way of keeping up-to-date. In our main Get Netted feature we explain what the Internet is, what you need to get connected and the main services that are available when you get there. There's a page on ISPs complete with a step-by-step guide to get you connected to Freeserve. We also have reviews of many of the major Amiga Internet programs and a guide to some of the best sites on the Web.

For those of you already on the net and happy with their software we have reviews of the brilliant Turbo Print 7 and the Epson Stylus Photo printer to go with it. Another perfect combination is the BIVision PPC (reviewed on page 32) and Candy Factory Pro (review on page 36) which takes full advantage of PPC and graphics cards.

In future issues of Clubbed we'd really like to expand our tutorial content, but unfortunately many people who are quite happy to write a review of a program don't feel they have the depth of knowledge required to write a good tutorial. So if you feel you could write a tutorial please get in touch and discuss it with me, it doesn't have to be a huge series stretching over several issues. In fact for a quarterly magazine a shorter series would be much better. We also want to hear from you if you have an idea tutorial (or any other type of feature) you'd like to see, write in and we'll see what we can come up with.

Finally I'd like to thank James McEwen who let us use his brilliant image (which you may remember from the Amiga Format gallery) for our cover this month, see the back page for another example of his outstanding work.

See you at WoA,
Robert.

Y

ou know that brainwashing is totally legal?... Let me tell you a story.

I have been into photography for some time now, and had decided it was time to enter into the world of digital photography, as the cameras are now more affordable and have better specifications than earlier models. Once I had researched into which drivers were available, I decided to purchase the Olympus Camedia C-1000L. On further investigation, I discovered that in this country only the Dixon Group sell this particular camera (oh oh!). So off I go to my nearest PC World (owned by Dixon's), I spotted the item of my affection on the shelf, priced at £299. The following dialogue took place:

Assistant 1: Yes sir, how can I help?
Me: I would like to purchase the Camedia C-1000L.
Assistant 1: Good choice sir, blah, blah, blah... (handing me the camera to look at) which PC will you be using it with?
Me: An Amiga actually (this is going to be fun!)
Assistant 1: (With a look of horror on his face) You're going to use an Amiga (reaching out to remove the camera from my grubby mitts).
Me: Yes I can. I have checked the software that I will need blah, blah, blah.
Assistant 1: (Reading from the box) It says here minimum spec IBM PC/AT with Windows or EVEN a Mac!
Me: Yes I know what it says on the box, I can read too! I know it will work on the Amiga as drivers are available off the Aminet or commercially (thinking to myself - what a wanker!).
Assistant 1: (Disgusted) I will hand you over to my colleague.

Assistant 2: Yes mate.
Me: I want to buy the Camedia C-1000L to use on my Amiga.
Assistant 2: They (Amiga) still going are they? (He then showed me the features of the camera). If you are sure it works on the Amiga then fine, if you have any problems just bring it back.
Me: Okay thanks.
Assistant 2: I'm sure you have checked it out yourself. I haven't got a computer myself, so I don't know which ones it will work on (Dixons well-trained staff, knowledgeable and as sharp as ever).

So I bought the camera and was chuffed with myself (I've been after one for a long time). I decided that after the weekend of using the camera (successfully), I would buy a nice case to keep it in and protect it. So I returned to PC World to see if they stocked this item (they don't), and when I walked into the store I came face to face with Assistant 1 again:

Assistant 1: (Assuming I had come to return the camera), I told you it wouldn't work on your Amiga!
Me: Yes it does, I've come here to buy a case (and showed him some photos I had printed).
Assistant 1: Wow the quality of these look really good just as good as any we've seen from the Pc's.

Assistant 1 had been brainwashed into thinking only Wintel existed in the computer world and thought he knew everything who let us use his brilliant image (which you may remember from the Amiga Format gallery) for our cover this month, see the back page for another example of his outstanding work.
SEAL Update continued...
has made maintaining the pages much easier. Gary Storm has taken over regularly updating the pages with particular emphasis on reporting important Amiga news on the News page. Gary has also been busy interviewing various Amiga celebrities, his recent visits include Andrew Korn (formerly of CIU Amiga) and Petro Tychtschenko of Amiga International (you can also read that interview on page 9 of this issue).

Another recent addition to the site is a new look Clubbed which always has the latest information on the magazine, subscription prices and progress on the next issue.

Visit the SEAL web site at: http://seal.amiga.tn

Please make sure you use the address above to access the SEAL web site as it is possible the real address will change soon as I may be moving ISP.

Meetings

Starting in May we decided to make the programme of our bi-weekly meetings a bit more organised by allocating every other meeting to a general Amiga Workshop evening where members can bring along their machines to get some help or show others their set-up. The other meetings will have an organised event of some kind, for example a tutorial or question and answer session.

The first meeting in this new plan took place in May when David gave us an introduction to shell scripting, including how to launch shell scripts from icons to run shell only programs from the Workbench. In June Mick Sutton and Robert Williams gave a demonstration of various image capture methods including digital cameras, scanners and PhotoCD.

The next event meeting is going to be an imaging processing demonstration where several different packages will be shown including the popular version of PhotoGenics. Due to work on SEAL’s presence at the WoA this presentation will take place after the show.

WoA Involvement

SEAL is heavily involved in this years WoA. World of Amiga show which is being jointly organised by PBA events (who have organised the show in previous years) and AmigaSoc (the UK usergroup representatives).

Robert Williams has designed the WoA brochure for potential exhibitors and as soon as this issue of Clubbed is finished will be working on the programme that all visitors will receive. At the show itself SEAL members will be helping out by manning areas like the Games arcade and the cybercafe as well as some less glamorous jobs.

Members of the SEAL committee have been to several WoA organisers meetings in London and everyone involved is working hard to make this the best WoA ever.

SEAL will have a stand at the show that we will be using to advertise the club, hopefully getting some new members and of course sell copies of Clubbed.

Amiga Helpline

Would you like to help other Amiga users or do you sometimes need a helping hand with your system? If so the Amiga helpline could be for you. This free service consists of volunteer helpers who specialise in a particular aspect of the Amiga. Users who need help can ring a central number and be put in touch with a specialist in the field they need help with. If you’d like to be a helper or need help give yourself a ring on (01709) 814966.

If you’re looking for the latest Amiga news on the Internet try the excellent Czech Amiga News web site: http://www.residente.cz/amiga

AmigaOS 3.5

Since the introduction of its PowerUP line of PowerPC accelerators Phase 5 has stopped production of their range of 68000 only accelerators, SCSSI modules and the CyberVision 64/3D Zorro graphics card. This has left a significant gap in the market for high performance 68k based accelerators.

In general these products had a good reputation for not only their high performance but also reliability and quality of manufacture. DCE, another German Amiga hardware manufacturer who produce, amongst other things, the Typhoon 11200 accelerator have now signed a deal with Phase 5 to produce their new range of 68k only products. Boards going back into production include:

- Blizzard 1230, 1240 and 1260 A1200 accelerators
- Blizzard/SCSI Module DMA SCSSI for the above accelerators
- Blizzard 2040/60 Accelerators for the A1200 featuring DMA SCSSI
- CyberStorm MkII 68060 for the A3000 and 4000 with DMA UW SCSSI
- CyberVision 64/3D Zorro 2/3 gfx card
- CyberVision 64/3D Scan Doubler

These products will be available from Power Computing: (01234) 851500 http://www.powerc.com/

Phase 5 68k Products

As part of Amiga’s renewed commitment to the Classic Amiga market the Amiga OS 3.5 series has been fully tested and the project has been contracted to Haage and Partner who are co-ordinating many programmes involving known PD and Shareware authors to produce the upgrade.

OS 3.5 will be released at Amiga Days under 99 in Australia on the 21st and 22nd of August.

OS 3.5 will require AmigaOS 3.1 ROMs which are currently available from most Amiga dealers, Power Computing have announced that they will offer the ROMs at reduced prices (A500/2000 £14.95, A1200/3000/4000 £19.95) if they are purchased with OS3.5.

New features of the new version include:

- New Standard GUI Toolkit
- A new GUI toolkit and interface builder application will be provided with the OS giving programmers a powerful standard GUI with features like font sensitivity and resizeable windows as part of the OS. All the preferences editors and other OS programs will be rewritten to use the new GUI system. The new GUI toolkit is based on the ClassAct system currently available. Programs using other GUI systems like MUI, GT Layout and BGUI will continue to work.

Enhanced Workbench and Icons

Built-in Internet Support

A TCP/IP stack (based on Miam). Web browser (based on AWeb) and EMail client will be provided with the OS to get users up and running on the Internet quickly. The web browser will also be used to view the new documentation that will be in HTML format. Users will be able to use their existing Internet software if they wish. The EMail client will be based on a new EMail library allowing direct EMail facilities to be built into other applications while still sharing the same mail boxes etc.

Three G3 Accelerators Announced

In March several surprise hardware announcements shocked the on-line community. Firstly there were some much needed life into discussions and debates. Some time ago the Phase 5 68k based accelerator which would plug into a Zorro III slot. This card is different to the current Phase 5 PPC cards because it does not have a 68000 series CPU and will run 68k based Amiga programs (including the OS) via a 68k emulation that is being written by Haage and Partner. All had been quiet save for a few updates on this front for a number of months when OS 3.5 with PPC support was announced. This was the springboard for three more companies to announce plans for new PowerPC only accelerators.

PowerPC G3 based Amiga accelerators to be called Amijo. The A1200 version will have local RAM and an expansion slot for either a USB or SCSSI II module, the board and module will fit into a desktop A1200 or tower. The second board will be for the A2/34000 series Amigos and we assume it must be a Zorro card to fit in this range of machines. This board will have the processor and memory plus a PCI 2.1 compatible bus plus slot for a third card called the MultiJoy. The MultiJoy will have SCSSI and a graphics card on board plus PCI slots for standard PCI cards (assuming drivers are written).

Phase 5

Phase 5 have announced they aim to produce PowerPC G3 and G4 based accelerators for the A1200 and A3000. Both the Phase 5 cards will have SCSSI and firewire ports on board and a PCI slot for a PCI backplane. P5 have not confirmed they will be producing a PCI backplane and of course any cards fitted to it would require Amiga drivers. The CPU on the Phase 5 cards is mounted on an industry standard module which will allow them to offer both G3 and G4 versions when the PPC G4 is released. It will also allow G3 owners to upgrade. Initially Phase 5 said they would require 1000 attendees to fit in a desktop A1200 or tower. The second board will be for the A2/34000 series Amigos and we assume it must be a Zorro card to fit in this range of machines. This board will have the processor and memory plus a PCI 2.1 compatible bus plus slot for a third card called the MultiJoy. The MultiJoy will have SCSSI and a graphics card on board plus PCI slots for standard PCI cards (assuming drivers are written).

Improving Printed

An all new printing system with support for 24bit printing to the latest printers will be included along with a brand new integrated printer preferences program.

PowerPC

PowerPC support using Haage and Partner’s Workbench system. This will provide support for the current Phase 5 PowerUP accelerators and for the recently announced G3 and G4 based cards as they come to market. Also included will be a PPC preferences editor which will make setting up PPC accelerators much more user friendly.

Further details are on the Amiga website at:

http://www.amiga.com/
When Phase 5 released its PowerUP PPC accelerators everyone hoped that a PowerMac emulator would come directly on the PPC would be released.

It’s been a long wait but it now looks like we will see a PPC version of Fusion in the next few months.

Microcode Solutions, Fusion’s developers asked for 500 pre-orders of the program which costs about $90 by the end of this target was reached and it will be released during the next month. Once the money has been collected they promise to deliver Fusion PPC in no more than 60 days. If all goes to plan we should have Fusion PPC by the end of September.

Alternatively you can call the ticket hotline on (01369) 708004.

Fusion is sold in the UK by Blitzzed (01908) 261466
http://www.blitzzed.com

Harry Storm reports the latest happenings at Amiga and speculates on what the future might hold.

Amiga have been fairly active over the last few months, mainly in part to due to the direction eventually being cemented by Jim Collins. Since he’s been on board the Amiga love boat has been setting sail out of the Gateway icebergs, and heading towards clear water. Let’s just hope it hits a rich and verdant land.

There’s been much stuff happening:

Amiga International, & Co. are no more… simply AMIGA now.

We met Jim in London at the end of April, and it was very interesting. He’s a down to earth guy, who doesn’t seem to sprout crap.

The Amiga range will consist of ‘information appliances’, controlled by a central computer, all connected via wireless technology and controlled via a ‘tablet’ hand held PDA-like device. Apparently wireless technology is being pursued by many technology companies as it is, and they will all be trying to make 4mb per second for the home network, and is seen as the future of computing and communication (and just think of all the wonderful things you can use a mobile phone for now; Internet, TV, sending pictures and e-mail). The business version of Amiga technology will run via cable and offer much larger rates of transfer, for the office networks.

During our chat, Jim also let it be known that Amiga are trying to find out if it’s possible to have a version of ‘AmigaSoft 1.0’ (the next-gen operating system) on PPC’s, to give the current Amiga market a lot more life, and an easier upgrade path. It may not be possible to do this, but at least they’re trying to get it right, which is good. Even more reason to go PPC, apart from getting the best out of OS3.5 (which will be previewed at WoA ’99, and released 21st of August, in Australia).

Pentagon have been assigned the task of making the next Amiga range look nice and (hopefully) funky. They’re an international, aware of the PC hardware, company who have been responsible for excellent efforts like the Toshiba range of PCs, and BenQ-Neoware (which are ultra-cool). Pentagram also have

fantastic design concepts for computing, which include a space-saving design of having the main unit (with things you don’t need to access much like the modem, hard-drive, cabling, power etc.) in an elongated, wall-hugging frame, and the bits you do need to use often (CD-ROM, floppy drive, etc.) placed in an arch which your keyboard can sit under when not in use. Nice. You may have seen the designs in August’s Amiga Format… doesn’t that ‘Starck’ design look so cool, and so much like the Star Trek logo?

Amiga have been recruiting a fair amount of talented staff recently, especially C++, Java, and os environment experts. Foremost amongst the engineers would have to be the former IBM and Apple (amongst others) head of hardware design and development Rick LaFevre. They’ve just recruited Dave Curtis (CORBAL expert) as ‘director of object technology and transaction services’ and Jim Miller (also ex-Apple) as director of user experience (the way we and the computer interface). With people like Rick, Jim Van Holle, Dr. Havemose and of course Jim himself, there would have to be some pretty brilliant stuff being done in the Amiga building, as these guys have just left some very large head hugunthumming.. Jim especially must have oceans of faith in the new Amiga technologies otherwise he’d work his glowing reputation and career down the drain. Oh how Gateway to be CEO of a little, oft ignored, credibility lacking Amiga?

Jim’s focus during May was to break away from Gateway, to become a semi-independent company free of the parent company’s clutches and politics. Ted Waitt also very interested in seeing Amiga be a success, and realised it needed to be a separate entity to increase the speed of development. Ted Waitt was in an interview with ‘The Guardian On-line’ recently, where he stated that the Amiga development process was interesting but that it won’t be computer related. This of course, freaked out a few Amigians, who aren’t used to this kind of information, so Jim had to issue a statement re-iterating Amiga’s resolve to bring out the revolutionary software and hardware by the end of the year, and that it would definitely include a computer.

Our strategy for implementing the new Amiga is to integrate the best technology in the industry into a new, efficient, exciting, and revolutionary computer platform focused on the future... On the CPU side we have selected a CPU that will bring exciting new capabilities to the At this time I hope to disclose all of our technology choices and partners... In order to pull this great technology together and develop our next-generation platform, we are also developing our own technology in key strategic areas. This technology will allow us to make the product unique, integrate 3rd party technology and create the next evolutionary product. For example:

"We are putting together a five to seven page press release about a new technology that will be released to the Amiga community within the next week. This brief will help you better understand our overall plans by giving you more details on our new Amiga Operating Environment (OE) and Multimedia Computer (MCC). This technology will also talk about new and exciting Amiga technology. This brief will also disclose some of our 3rd party technology choices. We have spent the last four months evaluating technology and defining the new generation hardware architecture and software architecture. We have now finalized the architectures and structure. We have also looked at our major technology and partner choices. A significant amount of effort and resources went into this assessment of the technology you may be surprised at a few of the decisions but I am confident you will agree that they did not disappoint our choices" [if possible, we’ll try and include a supplement if this brief arrives before we send out the mag].

Jim then went on to give a few hints...
And what if AmigaSoft 1.0 wasn’t the only Chameleon with red-and-white checked eyes? There have been murmings of SOC (system on a chip) processors under development, such as Java on a chip. I’m not a techie (as you know), but this sounds like Java will be AmigaSoft (also possibly on a chip) that has different ‘departments’ assigned the task of communicating and interpreting the commands from the reachable test chip. At the end of the day, you’d have a computer that would be able to utilise nearly every bit of software from all the Linux; MacOS etc.). Changing over to this new computer platform would be as painless as possible (all the benefits with...)

The new Amiga range will be a true Chameleon on it’s own hardware and overshoot their deadline by too much, the end of this year (or early next) will...

So what’s looking hot at the moment? Industry during the next ten years. The report also suggests that hardware importance will be equalled, then outweighed, by service and support contracts. We know Amiga are going to release various ‘information appliances’, con redefining the Amiga/Apple/IBM/Central computer, connected via wireless radio technology. But the computer won’t be much good if there isn’t software to run on it. I believe (contrary to what they would have us think) that Amiga have

The Amiga people aren’t stupid. If they were stupid, they wouldn’t be seen (individually) with such respect. As they have the respect of a hugely critical and accomplishment-driven industry, we can assume that they are, in fact, pretty bloody clever. Given that obvious intelligence and respect, it can’t possibly be a bad move to work for Amiga, and there must be a pretty good reason to put your faith (and that hard-won respect) in a small company like that, what could have attracted them?

First, let’s look at what the marketplace is now, over 80% Wintel PC domination. Not a bad thing, it is generally agreed. Mac’s are better, but are too insular and expensive. The computer industry is in decline as people become jaded with having to put up with dodgy software and upgrading every 6 months (and re-installing their system every year).

So what’s looking hot at the moment? Could it be mobile phones, the Internet, and digital TV? Yep, and collectively these technologies and other products like PDA’s (personal digital assistants - Psions, PalmPods etc.) are, according to a major report by 4thWt, going to be the focus of the computer industry during the next ten years. The report also suggests that the individual importance will be equalled, then outweighed, by service and support contracts. They should keep on doing what they have done always... making propaganda for our AMIGA...

What do you think there are so many Amiga users who still stick with the classic Amiga? Why does this particular collection of PCB and solder engender such passion? Jim Collas will telling some more details today. Why do you think there are so many Amiga users who still stick with the classic Amiga? Why does this particular collection of PCB and solder engender such passion? As they have the respect of a hugely critical and accomplishment-driven industry, we can assume that they are, in fact, pretty bloody clever. Given that obvious intelligence and respect, it can’t possibly be a bad move to work for Amiga, and there must be a pretty good reason to put your faith (and that hard-won respect) in a small company like that, what could have attracted them?

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Get Netted!

Robert Williams helps you get on Line

Contrary to popular (PC-user) opinion, the Amiga is not stuck in the past while the late 80’s and they’re not all Amiga 500’s. Also contrary to popular opinion, the Amiga is a more Internet efficient computer than a PC, thanks to it’s multi-tasking architecture and less crash-prone OS and software. You can even get your A600 on the net. Thanks to free software and free Internet service providers, there has never been a better time to get your Amiga connected.

But what is the internet? What’s the point?

The Internet, and World Wide Web (WWW), is a gargantuan network of computers, all connected to each other in the same way a spider-web is, except this web transfers Information, which can be pictures, sound, text, and programs. Think of the net as the biggest library in the world, where you can make as much noise as you want. Whatever you’re interested in, you’ll find it, and other people who are interested in the same things. 

Prospective Amiga owner, one must connect to get online. Connectors with other computer’s is all over the world, up to date and even influence the direction of the platform and software. We even have the world’s single largest online shareware archive, in Aminet. Downloading heaven!

One of the best things about the internet is that it’s an immediate resource. As soon as someone has heard about something, you hear about it first. As soon as a programmer has finished the latest version of his software, the internet is where you’ll get it first.

Communication

E-mail is a fantastic thing. Keep in touch with your relatives, friends, work or anything from all over the world as long as they’re connected too. You save a fortune on postage and non-local telephone calls. You can even chat real time to them by using Amirc and STRicq (more about them elsewhere). An invaluable tool in being able to get help and advice from users all over the world, and even the authors themselves of the programs you use (who better to ask how to do something?).

Invest a hundred or so on getting connected, and you can save money by getting the best prices for stuff you want to buy (from all over the world), saving petrol (you don’t have to go to the shops), postage (shareware and letters), and information (there are plenty of people to ask for advice on what you should and shouldn’t do). You save time (as you know) time is money.

Money

Money

Time

The Internet saves you time, because instead of waiting for (eg) a shareware program or update to appear on over the air or being posted to you, or trawling through your local library in the hope they’ve got a picture or information you want in one of their out-dated books, or hoping the news has the details of that win by Gillingham (etc etc), just hop on the net and search for that program/picture/music/video/information that you want.

Get Connected

So, for a small fee, you can have all the information in the world at your finger tips, and build up a huge collection of whatever you want (music, graphics, software, video etc). What are you waiting for? Read on and find out about the most popular internet services, how to get on-line and the best software to use to get you there!

What you need to get on-line to connect to the Internet you need four things:

1. A Suitable Amiga

All Amigas can be connected to the Internet via a standard Internet Service Provider, but there are a few minimum spec’s you’ll need to use Internet services successfully. The processor you have is not that important (even a 68000 can get connected), but for browsing the web a 68030 would be the minimum I’d recommend. Also a web browser and many other Internet applications you’ll need at least AmigaOS version 3.0. 4mb of Fast Memory is about the minimum recommended for reasonable use of most Internet programs, although the more you have the better. Pre-Amiga software isn’t good enough for webbrowsing as they only have 16 colours on higher resolution screens... a graphical user makes the world of difference of course.

2. A Modem

A modem is a piece of hardware which is used to connect computers together over the phone. To get the benefits of an Internet connection your conencted to you Internet Provider and thus the Internet. Fortunately for us Amiga users almost all modems use a common set of basic commands called Hayes commands. This means most modems you can buy will work with your Amiga. As usual though you have to be a bit careful... many modems are designed to fit internally to a PC and can’t be used. Another type are the so called ‘Win’ modems which only have the particular Windows software (hence the name) and can’t be used for the Amiga. What we need is a standard external modem. All external modems plug into the serial port of your Amiga, and when you buy your modem you need to make sure it comes with a 25pin connector (some come with a 9pin one which needs an adaptor).

Modems are rated by the maximum speed they can transfer data in bits per second. The most common standards you’ll see today are 3360bps (33.6k) and 14400bps. Before the actual speed you achieve depends on the quality of your phone line and how far you are from the exchange. 56k modems in particular are very sensitive to line quality and very few people get much over 50k with between 40 and 50 being quite common.

You can expect to pay about £70 to £90 for a brand name 56k modem. Shop around you can find unb孺ndable deals for many less but in general these seem to be less tolerant of poor lines.

3. An Internet Service Provider

To access the Internet from a home computer you need an Internet Service Provider (commonly abbreviated to ISP), these organisations have a network permanently connected to the Internet and allow you to connect to their network and thus the Internet via a dial-up (modem) connection. Before you can connect to an ISP you need to set up an account on their system, during this process you choose a username and password so only you can access your account and thus EMail and other personal services. Different ISPs handle setting up accounts in different ways.

About This Feature

The main text of this feature (on the white background) explains what you might want to get connected to the Internet and what you need to do.

The grey side columns explain the most popular Internet services and how you can access them with your Amiga. At the top of each section is a selection of the available programs along with the address of their website and the page where they are reviewed in this issue (if we have any). Please note that the lists are not definitive there are more Amiga Internet programs than we could possibly list but hopefully this will give you a good starting point.
Apart from the traditional produced a service where you pay £1.75 a month but all your Internet calls at the weekend are free. Depending on your level of Internet use and if you are willing to restrict your usage to the weekends this could ISP!

As most Internet services can be used on the Amiga it’s well worth keeping your eyes open for the service that best suits your usage pattern. Over the next few months I expect we’ll see far more different options for getting on-line as the multitude of ISPs try to differentiate from their competitors and the traditional ISPs attempt to win customers back... that you can always sign up for a free account, see how you use the Internet then move to another ISP that better restrict your usage to the weekends. This approach is that you will lose your EMail and web space addresses.

Once You’re Connected Once you’ve got your connection to an ISP sorted out you’ll then want to start using actually some Internet services. Take a look at the grey side columns in this feature to learn about the major services you can use and the software you’ll need to install. I would suggest that you first try setting up a web browser (working demo’s of all the common ones can be found on cover CDs) so you can visit the home pages of the various ISPs and download their trial software. There is one other factor you might be concerned about once you’re connected however...

Phone charges Almost all ISPs provide you with a local call number (usually starting with 0845) which means wherever you call them from in the UK, the phone call is charged at no more than the standard rate. The call is charged from when your modem connects to the ISP until you disconnect it doesn’t matter whether data is being transferred or not. Remember that in internet programs can multitask so you can, for example, browse through a list of newsgroup postings, download files and chat all at the same time... limited only by the size of your monitor and how quickly you go crazy, but can also send (and receive) files as well.

IRC (Internet Relay Chat) IRC is a tool that lets you communicate easily with friends on the Internet. It works by connecting to a central server on which you register your name, email address and other details. If a friend runs IRC they can connect to this server. You can then search for their name or email address and add them to your ICQ contact list. When you’re connected to the Internet the ICQ client will highlight any person in your contact list who is currently online. You can then contact them and commuicate using a text chat window. It is also possible to send files and URLs and leave messages which will be delivered to the recipient when they next connect.

IRC Tips

1. Don’t type whole words or sentences in capital letters if you really need to, it’s SHOUTING.
2. Don’t “flood” the channel, which means don’t keep sending messages thick and fast like a tidal wave, as it means no-one else can get a word in.
3. Try not to swear.
4. Just treat people like you would like to be treated yourself.

Apart from that if you use Genesis make sure it has your name selected, and not the default ‘root’ before you go on a channel, as many won’t let you.

Be careful about the phone bill... it’s very easy not to notice the hours go by, until BT send you an invoice you love you so much. You’ll get to know many commands and other things once you’ve had some experience on IRC for a while... have fun!
and when it goes on and off-line, this means loading Miami can start your entire Internet system. For example I have Miami set up so it tries to dialup my ISP as soon as I load it, then when it connects and goes on-line my EMail is automatically collected and StrICQ is run. Finally Miami iconifies itself on the Workbench out of my way.

In this review I've mainly concentrated on Miami's Internet features however it works equally well connecting to a local network using any hardware with SAN2A (Standard Amiga Networking Architecture) drivers and even has its own faster native MINI drivers for many Ethernet cards. Compared to Genesis, Miami is considerably less powerful, it can only run one interface at a time so you can't connect to a local network and the Internet simultaneously and it also lacks Genesis' user security and usage monitoring features. Miami on the other hand is explicitly designed to get people connected to the Internet in the simplest way possible and it does this extremely well. Compared to Genesis the average surfer and fortunately a external package is available on Aminet which reads MiAmi's log files and tells you how much time and money you've spent online. For those who need more features Miami have thrown in everything you need to run your own local network with Internet access in development and is now in final public beta testing.

Miami will get you connected to the Internet with minimum fuss, in the two years I've been using it Miami has been 100% reliable and has never caused me any problems, highly recommended.

Robert Williams reviews this easy to use TCP/IP stack.
Robert Williams reviews this comprehensive Internet package with the help of Michael Hunt, Jeff Martin and Gary Storm.

Installation

Installation, which uses the standard Apple Installer, is mostly completely automatic and asks you only a couple of questions. If you already have any of the Netconnect programs installed individually it allows you to copy over your old data so you don’t lose any information such as EMail messages, addresses, bookmarks and ISP settings. All the programs in the Netconnect suite require the MUI GUI system, which the installer will install if you don’t already have it. MUI is shareware and the copy on the Netconnect CD is unregistered but you can use it for as long as you like without registering as long as you don’t mind missing some of the configuration features. Once the installer has finished and all over the files it then gives you the option to register yourself by entering your details, you can then choose to transmit this information to Active Electronically or send in the registration card. From your details and the serial number provided a unique keyfile is created which unlocks the Netconnect programs.

Wiz Bang!

The final step of the installation is to actually setup your Internet connection, for this the installer runs the Genesis Wizard which configures the Genesis TCP/IP stack to connect to your Internet Service Provider. The Wizard consists of a number of pages where you enter all the requisite information. You can move through the pages with Next and Back buttons so it’s easy to correct something if you make a mistake. Each page has plenty of explanatory text and all the information needed should be given to you by your Provider when you open your account or in the case of dial-free ISPs is easily available. The Wizard includes a long list of pre-configured modem settings from which you can choose, if your modem isn’t listed then you can enter the correct initialisation string (a generic string is provided which should get you on-line). Once you’ve filled in the basic information it needs the Wizard then connects and gathers the rest of the configuration data from the ISP’s network. All ISPs are different but here at SEAL we’ve set Netconnect up with a few of different ones and the Wiz has worked every time (make sure you are using the latest version of the Netconnect though as we have had problems with the original 2.0 version). When that is done the Wizard will save the configuration and if you wish print a copy of the settings it found for future reference. Now you are ready to go online for the first time!

Netconnect Dock

The Netconnect program itself is a small program launching utility which allows you to control all the programs in the package from a central point and gives you access to some of the configuration options. It comes setup with a twelve button window which you can place anywhere on the Workbench screen allowing you to quickly go on-line, run any of the programs or read the documentation. Although this seems to be a simple task, the dock bar docked icon if you open its references window from the menu bar it’s actually a powerful little utility. You can add your own buttons to the Netconnect dock (the button for the button down) and remove or re-order the existing ones if you like. You can create as many dock windows as you like and use it as a shortcut for all your programs. Each dock can have a key to pop it up or hide it. Order can be turned off so the buttons which can be displayed as text, icons or both together. There is also the option to add items to the Workbench Tools menu. Each button or menu item can run Workbench programs, CLI (shell) commands, Shell scripts and AREXX scripts.

Connecting

Clicking on the Genesis button in the dock opens the connection window ready to put you on-line, if you have several ISPs you can set them all up in Genesis and quickly choose between them in the connection window, if you have several users you can choose who you want to be here too, you’ll be prompted for a password if security is setup (more on that later). When you click connect Genesis will dial up your ISP and establish a connection, the connection window has a status list which shows when you go on and off line and why, and there is also a useful on-line timer. Even better than this is the built in cost calculator which calculates the cost of your on-line time based on the phone rates you set in Genesis preferences. This will even draw a graph of how much you’ve spent on calls over the year and shows each user as a separate line!

Pack Contents

Here are all the full programs you get with NetConnect, for more information on what each type of program does see our main Get Netted! feature.

- Genesis
- The TCP/IP stack that connects you to your Internet Service Provider.
- Voyager
- World Wide Web Browser
- Microdot II
- EMail and News reader.
- AmFTP
- File Transfer Protocol client with Aminet mode (full review on pg 20)
- AmIRC
- Internet Relay Chat client
- AmTelnet
- Allows you to connect to remote computers, somewhat similar to bulletin board systems but over the Internet
- AmTalk
- Chat (text) directly with other AmTalk users across the Internet
- NetInfo
- One utility which combines several Internet fault finding tools
- AmTerm
- Connect to real Bulletin Boards and other services directly over phone lines (not Internet)
- XAr
- Explore, extract and create ila, lzx and zip archives
- Contact Manager
- Keep all your EMail, Web, FTP and IRC addresses in one place

What Next

So now we’re on-line with Genesis (easy wasn’t it) what can we do? The Netconnect comes supplied with so many programs that almost every Internet service is catered for. ANS explore the programs one by one and see what we can get up to.

Voyager

I’ll start with Voyager which is the web browser supplied with the Netconnect package. Voyager does a good job of displaying web pages and supports frames allowing access to most sites, however it doesn’t currently support JavaScript which is becoming a requirement on more and more sites. Table layout seems rather slower than IBrowse with some (admittedly quite large) pages taking a long time even on an ‘060, and subjectively image decoding also seems slow. SSL support is provided for secure on-line transactions and I believe Voyager is the only Amiga browser to support SSL Certificates which confirm that the server you are sending your details to is genuine. Voyager has a wide range of other security options so you can browse sending the information about yourself to the sites you visit.

Printing in Voyager is pretty comprehensive, you can choose between full graphics, graphics without backgrounds (useful for those black backgrounds) and plain text. It definitely has the advantage over IBrowse here which can only print text at the moment. In text mode Voyager makes an effort to mimic the page by passing styling (bold, italic and underline) and size information to the printer, unfortunately it doesn’t seem to re-wrap the text very well for printing so if the page has long lines in the source you get a ragged printout. Graphics printing is very good even though there is no screen resolution so it looks a bit blocky. The only exception to this is for pages with a dark background and light coloured text, if you switch the background off to avoid wasting ink Voyager will still print the text in the original colour which is often too light to read.

Other useful features include: A ‘find’ button which searches four of the most popular search engines for the keyword you enter. Help bubbles that tell you how to do things are built in spoofing allowing you to access pages that are setup for Netscape only.

Voyager does have a couple of features that seem rather poorly implemented... it has a Network Status window that allows you to see what files are downloading but you cannot stop individual files.

Microdot II

Both EMail and Usenet News are handled by Microdot II which is discussed by Thomas Hurst in His EMailer roundup on page 24.

When used as part of the Netconnect package Microdot II is very well integrated having direct links to Contact Manager and Voyager. If a mail item has a URL in it you can click in the link and this will open up Voyager and take you to the page. As mentioned elsewhere you can also use Contact Manager to store all your EMail addresses and URLs for use, at a later date, by other programs such as the Micronet Info!
as the afore mentioned Voyager.

As a stand alone program Microdot is comparable to other Amiga mailers/newsreaders but when used as part of the Netconnect package it really comes in to its own. Each family member can have their own account set up so that only one copy of Microdot is needed but each member has their accout

Contact Manager

Contact Manager allows you to organise your browser hot lists, EMail address book, favourite FTP sites and IRC servers all in one utility which you can then access from each application . For each type of entry you can organise the items into sections and sub sections so for example you could have a group for Amiga websites and a sub group for the software related ones. In Contact Manager you can right click on an item to get a context menu allowing you to send data from that item to one of your internet programs this allows you to not only send someone's EMail address from their entry to an EMailer but also send the URL of their website to the

MIME Preferences

This program provides a central point where you can configure how most of the Netconnect programs deal with the files they download. Many filetypes come setup as standard and you can easily setup your own. Filetype configuration is based on the file extension, for each filetype you can choose to have it saved directly to disk, viewed with any application that can handle the file format or passed as a shell argument (most

AmIRC is another very highly rated client and you can easily find people who will call it the best IRC client on any platform, you can even find PC users who say it’s the best there is.

When you load AmIRC the first window you see allows you to pick an IRC server to log-in to and a channel to join. Several servers and channels are setup for you and it’s easy to add additional ones, you can also split the list into groups.

AmIRC’s user interface is very flexible and allows you to open as many channel windows as you like (and your brain can cope with). There are also many other windows you can open so along with the channels you could have several private chats going on along with file transfers too!

which you can customise so your most used IRC commands (a favoured word in the PC archives and has a modular system so more types could be easily added. If you have Macros on your IRC server (one you’ve downloaded, found on a CD, made yourself, whatever) XArc can show you the contents without de-crunching it. You can view individual files and setup viewers for different filetypes in the preferences. Programs that have an installer script can even be installed from within XArc without de-crunching the archive! You can also use XArc to build your own archiver plug-in (developed to Amiirc perhaps) and it makes rearranging your archive much easier than using the separate archiver programs which are all shell based. One hidden gem in the user interface is the mysteriously named Palette window which allows you to drag files from the archive to your hard disk and vice versa.

The way XArc comes setup with Netconnect by default can be rather annoying if you like to download several archives at once. It’s not so bad to download an archive which is split into many parts, but as soon as you get so many you download an archive it is saved as a temporary file and loaded into XArc for de-crunching. From this point there’s no way to save the archive with its original name so you have to use your own time saving hows you to it somewhere useful. See our tips box out for how to disable this action if you don’t like it. That said for working with archives XArc does a fine job.

AmFTP This FTP client is generally regarded as one of the best on the Amiga and will let you access the many FTP sites across the world including the famous AmiFTP sites of Amiga shareshare, it even has an excellent Aminet Download Tool built in for even easier use of these great resources. See my full review on page 20 for more details.

AmIRC

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viewer programs) or have a requester popup up to ask you what you want to do with the file. MIME prefers allows you to use your choice of viewers that best suit your system and way of working. As most Internet applications tend to have there is a real good idea to centralise them like this.

Genesis

Genesis is an evolution of AmiTCP which was a Unix style package full of scary text configuration files and cryptic documentation. Thankfully all that’s been replaced with a comprehensive MUI preferences window. It’s quite easy to use although there are lots of options. I’m not going to go into detail here as we’re already reviewing Netconnect as a way to get on to the Internet however Genesis has powerful features like multiple interfaces which will allow you to run your Amiga on a network (ethernet for example) and connect to your ISP at the same time. However all most users will need to do is run the Wizard and click Connect!

Family Values

One big benefit of using Genesis over miami is that it offers user environment (as much as is possible on the Amiga) and you can control and monitor the access of different users. This can be useful for individuals as it allows you to keep an eye on the amount of time (and therefore money) you spend online. You could setup a group for a family who all want ’net access but only want to use it at certain times. You could also setup a system where users have a time allowed online and then they have to access the ‘net using their settings. The password system gives you the option by allowing only certain users to access their EMail in Microdot and hotlists in Contact Manager. You can set times when each user may access the Internet and the maximum amount of time for each session. To prevent fiddling with the clock to overcome time limits Genesis can get the time from an Internet time server of your choice. Now obviously this isn’t going to stop the little darlings downloading and installing Miami but it will be useful for the less Amiga aware.

Once the users are configured you can use the Genesis report tool to see how much time each user has been on-line and if you configure the ‘net access in Genesis preferences it can tell you how much their calls have cost.

Results

18 Pros

Most packages included outstanding Excellent Value

Good integration

Cons

Software may not be your 1st choice

Some setup integration could be improved.

Conclusion

I would rate all the programs in Netconnect as at least good with many of them being arguably the very best available on the Amiga. The flexibility of Genesis itself is great and the multi-user, multi-ISP and costing features surpass Miami (which I love and use myself), I was really impressed. However there are areas which new users will find tricky mostly this is the nature of Internet software. At this price Netconnect is very hard to beat, I’d recommend it to anyone who wants to get on the Internet.
AmFTP

A

mFTP does the none too glamorous job of transferring files from one computer to another using FTP (File Transfer Protocol) however it does it so exceptionally well that you may soon find it an essential part of your Internet tool kit. Before you can connect to an FTP site you must set up a server profile which contains the address of the site, any login information required and the default directory both on the server and on your harddisk for uploads and downloads. Once you’ve entered this information AmFTP will remember it so you don’t have to enter it every time you want to go to a site. You can also set it to remember the last directory you visited on the server and the last directory you used on your hard disk and go straight back there next time.

When you connect to an FTP site AmFTP can show you the files on the remote server in two ways, Directory Tool mode is similar to a filemanager like Opus 4 with one file list for the download directory on your hard disk and one for the current directory on the server. You can then choose files on either side and copy them to the other (upload from you hard disk to the FTP server or download from the server to disk). You can also delete and rename files and even view them directly using a user configurable viewer. This option means you can read readme files on the server before you download a file. If you’re using AmFTP to manage your websites there a couple of limitations which could be improved, firstly you cannot transfer directories so you have to manually make the directory on the server across to it. Also date check files so the whole load of files and ask that only the updated (and therefore more recent) files be copied. If both these features were added updating a website would just involve uploading the root directory, any required directories would be created and only the newer files transferred. The jewel in AmFTP’s crown is the brilliant ADT feature. ADT stands for Aminet Download Tool and is unique to Amignet servers. If you set a server for ADT mode AmFTP retrieves a list of the files uploaded in the last seven days or since you last looked. If you use Aminet regularly this just shows you what’s new. You can sort the list by date, name or size, directory and description of the file and you can use the Readme button to view the .readme file within AmFTP. While you are logged on to an Aminet server in ADT mode there is also a find function which means you can read readme files on the server within AmFTP before downloading a file. If you’re using AmFTP you cannot transfer directories so you have to manually make the directory on the server then copy the files across into it. Also there is no feature to date check files so you can’t choose a whole load of files and ask that only the updated (and therefore more recent) files be copied. If both these features were added updating a website would just involve uploading the root directory, any required directories would be created and only the newer files transferred.

WebVision

W

ebvision …does what it says on the tin. Progammed by Troels Wansenstad, and previously known as WebTV (until the PC WebTV people objected), this allows you to view web-cams from anywhere in the world (as long as they’re connected to the Net, of course). Web-sites that have web-camera’s are diverse, but they’ll have either (most commonly) a digital camera taking a picture every 30 seconds or so, or a video camera sending streaming video. You could already view these sites with (most) normal web-browsers, but not as conveniently, quickly, or with as many cams on-screen at a time.

There are multitudes of web-cameras to look at, with many diverse subjects, including wildlife, sex (another form of wildlife I suppose), landmarks, tourist icons, shows, and just normal people reaching out to touch you (in a metaphorical sense, of course).

On starting the program you have the choice of having it appear on it’s own screen, or the workbench I prefer a dedicated screen). You’re invited to choose from the plethora of categories and the sites listed in the sub-directories. There are cameras everywhere, it seems (even in a toilet (!?!)).

One of the best things about WebVision, is that it’s the registered users who make the site-list what it is. You can download the current site-list at any time through WebVision (it will save your old site-list for you), and upload any new web-cam sites that you discover. For instance, I uploaded a few sites I had discovered (A couple of Perth cams, and a few African wildlife cams), and two days later, when I downloaded the updated list, my discoveries were included. You can also download the latest WebVision updates from the Ultima Thule site.

I can’t really fault WebVision at all. Troels has done an excellent job of making web-cams even more of a pleasure to view, and there are plenty of interesting sites out there, and a few web-cam directory websites too.

A Voyeur’s legal paradise.

Results

Pros

Easy to use

Brilliant ADT mode

Cons

Not ideal for complex websites
Robert Williams explores the web with IBrowse, one of the Big 3 Amiga browsers.

A few years ago when I first got connected to the Internet the Amiga only had one graphical web browser, Amosaic which was a port from Unix. The port was buggy, difficult to set up and very limited in the HTML it supported. However the coding of that port didn’t give up and started work on a brand new browser, IBrowse. Seven public releases later here we are with version 1.22.

Main Features

Browsing most websites with IBrowse is a very painless experience as the program supports the most important HTML tags, the only real problems I have found are with tables on some sites. Even on sites where these problems the content is still viewable but the layout is slightly incorrect. In the soon to be released version 2 the table parser has been rewritten hopefully overcoming these flaws. IBrowse supports frames but currently not JavaScript (or Java).

The speed of HTML display is generally very good but the main limitations being large tables which take a long time to render and graphics decoding if you have a slower processor all images decode instantly on my 060, but there is noticeable lag on 030 machines. I think the graphics speed is pretty much par for the course however table handling does seem slower than it could be. Even on the 060 very large tables like those on Eyetech’s product pages can take a very noticeable time (about 10 seconds) to appear and during this time the browser is apparently hung. One of the features of the recently announced version 2 is a re-written table parser which will be up to ten times faster so there are obviously large improvements to be made.

Support for all the common web image formats is provided by built-in decoders, this includes GIF, JPEG and PNG, you can choose to use data types for any of the formats if you prefer or even disable images altogether for faster browsing. Progressive JPEGs and GIF animations are fully supported, in the case of GIF anims you can choose to let them run all the time, only if your window is active or switch them off completely. If you have a graphics card IBrowse supports CyberGraphX so images can be shown in all their 24bit glory on a suitable interface is ort configurable on the Amiga any platform, not the MUI which customise most UI It also has ration options of an choose which it displayed in window, if you so have just the and choose all the menus. When what you can move inter ding and drop four edges of the you like your as the bottom of buttons on the have it that way. of the windows up and snapshot them using MUI functions. Take a look at the screen shots scattered around this page to see some different IBrowse setups. When you’re viewing a page IBrowse has context menus which pop-up when you press the right mouse button with the pointer over a particular item on the page. If you click with the pointer over a blank area of page the Page context menu allows actions such as saving the background image or viewing and saving the page source. If the page is in a frame the frame page menu allows you to view the frame in the full window (useful if a site traps you in its frames even if you link to a new site) and reload the individual frame too. The Image context menu allows you to save images on the page to disk or reload them. The link context menu allows you to open the link in the current or a new window, download the linked file directly to disk, or add the link directly to your hotlist.

Another useful option in this menu is to copy the link’s URL to the clipboard so you can paste it straight into another web browser window or a menu item. The hotlist is a hierarchical list so you can sort your links into sections and add them to a section in your hotlist and inside this I have separate sections for software, hardware and magazine related links.

IBrowse provides several ways of quickly accessing your favourite websites. Quickest is probably the bank of Fastlink buttons which can be shown in each browser window, clicking on a button takes you straight to the website you configure in the Fastlink Preferences window. Once you’ve been on the Internet for a while you’re sure to have a wide range of sites which you want to keep handy but a button for every one would soon take up too much screen space and become disorganised. As with most browsers IBrowse provides a hotlist to help you organise your favourite sites. The hotlist manager can be accessed from a button in each browser window or a menu item. The hotlist is a hierarchical list so you can sort your links into sections and sub-sections, for example I have an Amiga section in my hotlist and inside this I have separate sections for software, hardware and magazine related links.

Adding a site to the hotlist is as simple as clicking on the Add button in the browser window while you’re viewing the site, you can also enter links manually quickly retrieve the page and images from disk rather than having to load them over the slower Internet link. You can choose how big the cache should be and configure the program to check if the site has been updated before using the cached version. The cache manager in the status bar tells you if you’ve viewed a cached page so you can immediately tell if you’ve seen it before. Probably the best aspect of the cache is that it allows you to view sites you’ve visited off-line, if you’re interested in a site with a lot of content you can visit all the pages you’re interested in then go off line and read them later, the links to pages still in the cache continue to work. The cache browser window allows you to look through all the pages in the cache, when you find what you want double clicking on the item loads it into the browser window.

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Adding a site to the hotlist is as simple as clicking on the Add button in the browser window while you’re viewing the site, you can also enter links manually or drag hotlinks from a browser window straight into the hotlist. You can then arrange the hotlist using drag and drop. Once an item is in the hotlist double clicking on it will start IBrowse loading the page, you can drag and drop links from the hotlist into browser windows too. If you use IBrowse with NetConnect it also has support for Vaporware’s Contact Manager.

SSL support for secure Internet transactions (such as sending your credit card details to an Internet based supplier) is implemented in two ways, users with Miami as their TCP/IP stack can use its built in SSL support which is available for both European and US based users, IBrowse also has its own built in SSL support but this can only be used outside the US.

Nice Touches

Drag and Drop of URLs is implemented anywhere you see a URL you can drag it to anywhere that needs a URL. A couple of examples include dragging a URL straight off a page into the Fastlinks preferences section and dragging a URL from one page into another browser window to view it there.

Although very similar to a feature first seen on AWeb the Network Status window is an extremely useful addition to IBrowse, this window lists all the files that are being downloaded at any one time with a display showing the number of bytes downloaded and the size of the file. If you see a file downloading you don’t really need you can select it and stop it downloading while the rest of the information carries on, it’s a selective stop button.

Right clicking on the back button brings up a context menu which allows you to instantly jump back through the links you followed to get to the current page, there is also a History window which shows you all the pages you’ve visited in this session. Finally the Global History window shows all the sites that have been visited in a user definable time.

When you download files in IBrowse a window opens a list showing the progress of the download and the rate in characters per second. Rather than opening a window for each file you download the program simply adds downloads to this list as you start them. You can arrange to abort an individual download at any time or abort them all.

If you accidentally shut all the browser windows while downloading the download window stays open preventing you accidentally cancelling a large download.

One feature of IBrowse that HTML authors will love is the View Source window (what’s so good about that, every browser has one I hear cry: ) this not only lets you take a look at the code of the page you’re viewing but also lets you edit the page on the fly (told you you’d like it) so if you come across a site with a silly mistake which means you can’t view it you can simply edit the HTML and go on your way.

Conclusion

While IBrowse does have a few limitations in its HTML display abilities it copes with the vast majority of sites very well. Currently the lack of JavaScript is becoming more and more of a limitation but hopefully this will soon be solved.

Where IBrowse excels is its ease of use combined with wide ranging configuration options and fast operation which for me makes it my browser of choice.

Results

Pros

Fast, good quality rendering of most websites, very flexible interface and config. Many useful extra features.

Cons

Minor problems with some tables. No JavaScript yet.

www.omipresence.com
Greenfield Bed ford, MK45 5DE
£29.95

Product Information

Developer: Omipresence Intl. Distributor: HS Ltd.
Tel: (0500) 223660
WWW: www.hsitg.co.uk
Address: The Old School
Bedford, MK45 5DE
Price: £29.95
Thomas Hurst takes a look at three of the most popular Amiga EMail programs and finds there's something to suit everyone.

**MicroDot-II**

Current Version: 1.6
Available from: http://www.vapor.com/
Price: £20, shareware

Similar to Thor, MicroDot-II (MD-II) can do both email and news transparently. Unlike Thor, however, MD-II does not attempt to take this any further, so if you’re after a complete messaging system for use with FidoNet, BBS’s, and the Internet, it might not be the best choice.

MD-II is a very simple to setup client - similar to Yam, only with fewer immediate options. This makes MD-II a very good choice for an inexperienced user, because they aren’t flooded with options, and yet more experienced users benefit from having quick access to things such as it’s powerful filtering system without having to fight their way through millions of other options as with the likes of Yam.

One of MD-II’s most distinguishing features is it’s excellent threading - you see replies to messages linked to it in a follow conversations. MD-II has a decent message database format, which makes it excellent for “I never delete mail” types, as this lets you keep the speed up even when you have thousands of mails in a folder. Unfortunately this is based on storing fragmented over time.

Overall, MD-II is an excellent emailer and newsreader - very stable, responsive and easy to use, but it does seem to be limited in a number of areas, and includes certain mis-features which can cripple it in certain situations such as the ability to show who each mail is from as it is downloading, which increases download times by 1.9/3.

**Thor**

Current Version: 2.6
Available from: http://www.thule.nu/
Price: £21, shareware

The first thing you see when you start Thor is the GUI. Some people would describe it as “ugly”, but I prefer the name “functional”. In it’s current incarnation (2.6) it uses a mixture of Class Act and it’s own GUI system, neither renowned for their looks, but are renowned for their memory efficiency and speed. After a user poll, future versions will now use MUI, unfortunately the timeline for this actually happening is likely to be rather long...

The thing that hits you most when you first install Thor is the GUI. Some people would describe it as “ugly”, but I prefer the name “functional”. In it’s current incarnation (2.6) it uses a mixture of Class Act and it’s own GUI system, neither renowned for their looks, but are renowned for their memory efficiency and speed. After a user poll, future versions will now use MUI, unfortunately the timeline for this actually happening is likely to be rather long...

Overall, Thor is a very industrial strength mailer - probably the best if you expect to deal with a lot of mail, or you want to do both email and news transparently. Unlike Thor, however, MD-II does not attempt to take this any further, so if you’re after a complete messaging system, for use with news numerous BBS systems. However, most people, it’s TCP (email and news) abilities will be all that matters.

**YAM**

Current Version: 2.0 preview 7
Available from: http://www.yam.ch/
Price: Free

Yam (short for Yet Another Mailer) is probably the most well known and most popular email package in use on the Amiga today. It’s the only one of the three reviewed here that is free, and this is likely to attract many of you to it straight away.

There are two major versions of Yam available - 1.3.5 and various flavours of 2.0. 2.0 is still in development, with view versions periodically being released to keep it’s users happy. 2.0 is by far the most popular.

The first thing you see when you start Yam is a nice splash window, with a progress bar telling you how far though loading Yam is. On a heavily loaded copy of Yam you’ll be seeing a lot of this window, because Yam has a tendency to slow down the more mails and folders you have set up.

After a few seconds loading you’re presented with a large window with an attractive row of big, friendly buttons on the top, and two lists - one of your folders, and another showing the emails in what ever folder you’ve selected. Double clicking on an email brings it up in a new window, again with nice friendly buttons to reply, forward etc. With this sort of design, almost anybody can set up a working system quite easily.

As with all good emailers, Yam has powerful filtering abilities, making it an excellent choice for the average user who wants to filter mail from several mailing lists, or certain important people. Yam also has a relatively powerful ARexx interface, however, it has yet to compare with Thor’s in either flexibility, or in the number of scripts which actually make use of it.

Yam is not without its downsides. It stores emails as individual files, causing a lot of disk fragmentation and restricting performance - this is especially obvious on searches, which can take over 10 times as long as Thor.

Also, being only a preview, Yam has a tendency to crash rather a lot on many systems, and although it’s often rock solid, affected systems can expect to be rebooting and reinstalling a lot...

Overall Yam is a nice emailer, and is probably the most well known and most popular email package in use on the Amiga today. It’s the only one of the three reviewed here that is free, and this is likely to attract many of you to it straight away.

In most EMail programs you can send a message to several recipients at the same time, using a To: box by commas. In MicroDot-II you have separate fields for the From, To, Cc and Bcc fields, so you can send a message to multiple recipients straight from your address book too.
Some people gripe that the Amiga lacks a decent web browser, but in actual fact the Amiga is currently blessed with three that are well worthy of their own. Yvon Rozijn’s AWeb-II is one such browser, and I’ll confess straight away that I’ve been a big fan of it since the very early days. AWeb is unique amongst current Amiga browser offerings in that it uses ClassAct in preference to the more widespread MUI – a pro or a con depending on who you are. AWeb feels, to me, like the fastest browser out of all three, renders everyday pages correctly (not that there is much ‘correctness’ on the WWW), and is very stable.

Minimum requirements are suitably slim: OS 3.2, 2 MB of RAM and a TCP/IP stack if you want to access the Internet (obviously). In reality, more Fast RAM, a graphics card and a faster processor all enhance your software in leaps and bounds, and AWeb is no exception. Certainly Fast RAM is a serious must if you want to get the most out of web browsing.

Despite criticism about the user interface from various people, I find AWeb to be very well arranged in contrast to IBrowse and Voyager, with plenty of options, a sizable amount of customisation capability and a clean, cluttered environment. The hotlist page example is a joy to use. Far better than that found on heavyweight NetScapesh, the hotlist page is laid down by presenting the whole bookmark list as a page - for someone with a lot of hotlinks this can get a little awkward. The cache manager is unsupervised, and it use a lot to read material offline (saving on phone bills), save out interesting pages or make efficient use of my cache space. I’m fussy like that.

The optional network status window is another handy feature I tend to use a lot when browsing, keeping me informed about downloads, transfer rates and so on - and it gives me a quick route towards terminating everything in one quick click, or selectively stopping things such as a rather time-consuming download. A further sign of AWeb’s powerful environment and support for the power user.

Being a web developer, a change things such as HTML capability, rendering of particular tags, and even break or debug errant JavaScript applications is a real boon that puts NetScape and Internet Explorer to shame. Speaking of JavaScript, this is currently the only Amiga browser to support the popular client-side scripting language. Compatibility is for the 1.1 version of the language, though a few niggles do crop up with some scripts from time-to-time. Considering the fact that JavaScript capability between even the various versions of Netscape (who created the language) is surprisingly poor in places, AWeb makes an excellent effort and you’d be hard-pressed to discover these niggles in practice.

AWeb also provides good support for a wide range of facilities many now expect as standard on contemporary browsers: the ubiquitous FTP and mailto: support, as well as a more-than-adequate online newsreader, and SSL capability through miamissl. Full colour printing of pages is also provided, for which a proper browser with good support for various Internet services - equally suitable for the World Wide Web newbie as it is for the more experienced surfer. If you’re looking for the best Amiga web browser, look no further than AWeb.

In conclusion, AWeb is unashamably regarded as the little brother of the big three browsers - Voyager, IBrowse and AWeb. It’s a fast, customisable, highly capable browser with good support for

STRicq is not without it`s bug`s though,it`s regarded as the little brother of the ‘big three’ browsers - Voyager, IBrowse and AWeb. It’s a fast, customisable, highly capable browser with good support for various Internet services - equally suitable for the World Wide Web newbie as it is for the more experienced surfer. If you’re looking for the best Amiga web browser, look no further than AWeb.

In general use AWeb holds up well in the face of a Web dominated by NetScape and Internet Explorer running on the WinTel platform, and the only pages I’ve ever encountered problems with have

STRicq is the Amiga version of Mirobilis’ ICQ, on the PC. Those of you who have ever seen or used a chat room or AmIRC will become familiar with STRicq very quickly, as it’s fundamentally the same type of thing, but on a more personal (and in some ways, more powerful) level.

Whereas IRC (Internet Relay Chat), is a virtual chat held on internet channels between many people, or private chats between two, STRicq is a private chat and message service between two people over the Internet.

So, what’s the difference, I hear you cry?

ICQ is a strange abbreviation, isn’t it? It stands for exactly what the program does. I Seek You. When you register for your ICQ number, your details are added to Mirobilis’ huge database of ICQ users from all platforms. Then (if people know your name, nickname, or e-mail address, they can find you for and add your details (so they can contact you) to their ICQ address book. The huge advantage of this over IRC programs, is that whenever you go online with STRicq, it will check with the ICQ network to see who else you have listed in your address book is online, and tell you about it (you can assign sounds to practically anything, so you needn’t be glued to the STRicq screen, go browsing or whatever and STRicq will ‘keep you when a friend is online’).

Even if no friends are online for a chat at the same time as you are, you can still read any messages they’ve left for you, and you can send messages to them (which are saved on the Mirobilis network for them, until they come online).

This is a fantastic communication device with a much more personal touch than IRC (when you initialise a chat, a new window opens up where you can see every letter and mistake they type in real time, as they type it), with all the power of IRC as well (you can still send pictures etc to each other through STRicq).

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TurboPrint

Mick Sutton and Robert Williams find out if the latest release of TurboPrint can help them get more from their printers.

If you want to use a modern printer on your Amiga, the supplied Workbench printer drivers just cannot cut the mustard. You can find PD drivers for most printers that will do an adequate job of printing text, however if you wish to output high quality graphics then you will have to part with some cash and purchase a commercial printing package. TurboPrint is one such package and version 7, that we are looking at here, has just recently been released.

So what do you get for your money? First and foremost the whole Workbench printer system is effectively replaced by one that supports modern printers. Graphics Publisher is an application that allows you print all your graphics in simple layouts. Turbospool is a utility that queues print jobs whilst the printer is busy. And finally Ghostscript, which allows 24 bit printing from many applications that support postscript.

Installation

Installation is very straightforward using the standard Amiga installer. You only have to answer a few questions such as where to install to, what printer you have, do you wish Turboprint or Turbospool to be activated on start-up etc. Turboprint installs all its files into its own directory except icons in the WB start-up drawer if you chose it to be active on start-up. Because it replaces the printer device on the fly you can return to the Workbench printer system simply by not running Turboprint, or using the supplied NoTurbop program.

TurboPrint-The Driver

Even with the latest 3.1 release of AmigaOS the printer driver system has remained unchanged from when the Amiga was released in 1985. This means that the drivers only support antique printers and worse still, can only print the palette of the original chipset, that is 4096 colours or 16 greyscales.

TurboPrint on the other hand supports most up to date printers and can print in 24 bit (16 million colours) or 256 greyscales. This is achieved by replacing the printer device (in memory not on disk), so TurboPrint receives the data when applications print. Unfortunately, applications not designed with Turboprint in mind will only send the 4096 colour data for the normal Workbench drivers, however TurboPrint still manages to get far better results than the Workbench system.

TurboPrefs replaces the Workbench printer preferences programs while TurboPrint is active, and provides far more control over the print than the standard prefs. This includes an option to choose the type of media you are going to print on, ranging from standard copier paper through to inkjet paper, glossy paper to specialty media like OHP film. You can also choose the resolution you will print at, as TurboPrint supports the full range available on any particular printer. One very useful feature is that you can set up several different drivers at once, so if you have several printers or several sets of options you commonly use, you can define and name each one and then simply pick it from a list when it's needed. Although there are lots of options you can set within TurboPrefs, the default settings supplied are excellent. In most cases you simply need to pick the type and size of paper and resolution you want, then TurboPrint does the rest. Unless you have a very particular application in mind you will probably find you will not need to change most of the other settings, however even if there is something out of the ordinary you need then there are loads of options such as different dither patterns, colour correction, and smoothing. Other features include built in poster printing, and screen dumping.

Graphics Publisher

Graphic Publisher is a printing application that shares Turboprint in 24 bit resolutions and is optimised to give the best colour output. Pictures of various formats (iff, jpeg, gif, PCD, and many others) can be loaded directly without memory limitations, because Graphics Publisher has its own virtual memory system - this means that you can print huge images at full quality even on an Amiga with little memory. Pictures are previewed in colour, and Graphics Publisher supports CyberGraphX for 24 bit display if you have a graphics card. Several images can be placed on the same page and one can be sized and cropped independently.

Another great feature is the PhotoOptimize function that can be applied to an image, which is designed to get the absolute best quality from photographic images, in particular skin tones. Besides doing a great job simply printing pictures and photos, Graphics Publisher also has some limited DTP facilities that make it ideal for many print jobs where images are the main content. You can add multi-line text boxes to the page that can use any Compugraphic font installed in your Fonts: drawer. Although all the text in the box must be in the same colour, you can have as many boxes as you like. You can then give the text, the box background, and outline (different colours, or leave them transparent). One useful feature is that you can change the dimensions of the box independently of the text (I've found this useful for making cassette and CD covers).

Once you have got a layout set-up as you want it Graphics Publisher allows you to save it, yet this does not save the images into a huge file, just the layout information and a printer to each image so they can be re-loaded. You can use the saved file as a template by simply selecting the image you want to replace and choosing Load… from the Picture menu. Then you can change the image in the same position as the old one (after asking you if you want to replace it). Although it doesn’t have an AREXX port, Graphics Publisher accepts some options when run from a shell that enables you to automate printing a single image. You can specify the size of the print and if it is centred. Unfortunately, you cannot choose an exact position.

Ghostscript

Even with TurboPrint installed the best quality prints can only be obtained when printing from programs that specifically support TurboPrint. The reason behind this is that programs designed with the original AmigaOS printer system in mind do not pass 24bit data to the printer device (because it does not support 24bit printing). TurboPrint is very good at making the most of the data that is sent and achieves far better results than the standard drivers but it still can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.

There are a few programs, including Graphics Publisher, Photocongenics and DrawStudio that can use TurboPrint directly and thus output at full quality, but the vast majority of applications do not. In version 7 IrseeSoft have come up with a very cunning solution to this problem which uses the postscript output which most professional applications have. TP7 comes bundled with Ghostscript which is a freeware postscript interpreter that has the capability of rendering postscript files to 24bit bitmap data. TurboPrint then takes this 24bit data and prints it at the highest quality. Unfortunately setting up several popular applications (PageStream, Final Writer, Worthworth etc.) to print using this method is supplied but it is very simple to use. Ghostscript uses a device called PS: and is set-up to print, via TurboPrint, any postscript file sent to that device.

Anyone who has tried to install Ghostscript will already know it’s quite a job but the TP implementation is simplicity itself. Being all part of the main installer all you have to do is choose where you want to put it. Configuration is then carried out on a new PS page in the TurboPrefs program and any prints sent to PS: use the paper size, quality, and other settings from TurboPrefs too. Because most applications send 24bit data to Postscript printers the quality of the printouts is much improved. In my case I can now print brilliantly from PageStream 3 to my new HP DeskJet. As with the standard printing the Ghostscript method can only print what is sent by the application, and Worthworth causes a problem because it only seems to send greyscale image data to postscript (presumably assuming a Postscript printer will be a black and white laser), so all images come out in shades of grey. However the postscript method does work well with many programs.

Conclusion

TurboPrint brings the Amiga into the 90’s regarding printing, in fact in some ways surpasses the drivers developed for other platforms. So to sum up, if you in-print to a modern printer on your Amiga TurboPrint really is the way to go.

Results

Pros

Fantastic output quality
Support for a wide range of printers
Powerful Graphics Publisher

Caviar

Frais
Epson Stylus Photo
Mick Sutton finds the perfect companion for his digital camera

Hardware
When I got the printer home, on inspection I noticed that there were no DIP switches to “fiddle” with and there were two ink cartridge supplies with the machine, one a large pure black and the other a 5 colour job. Installation of the cartridges is very straightforward just a matter of slotting them in the right way round and closing the small footprint which I measured to be 43cm x 25cm with the paper tray folded away. Installation of the printer entails finding a space to locate it, a power socket nearby, and a centronics parallel cable to connect it to your Amiga.

Usage
Now the printer is ready to use, put some paper in and switch on, at this point the printer goes through its own test procedure which seems to last forever but in reality is probably only a minute or two.

Epson have made this printer very user friendly, it indicates when ink levels in the cartridges are getting low (about 5 full A4 pages to go) with a flashing LED. In fact there are only three buttons on the printer, power, page feed and head cleaning (held down for 3 seconds to replace cartridge).

As I said earlier, I have Turboprint so it was easy to select the appropriate driver from within Turboprint’s program, this provides a good set of defaults for high quality printing, so good in fact that I have not changed many settings.

With the right driver chosen it was time to try printing something, I selected a scanned photo of my daughter and loaded it into Graphics Publisher. I then chose the 720 x 720 DPI resolution with the Photo enhance option selected. Printing speed is quite impressive, I printed the picture on 720 DPI inkjet paper (A4) in about 6 minutes and the quality was astounding with hardly any sign of dithering whatsover, in fact even at this resolution (maximum resolu-

This quality is achieved by a combination of high resolution and five colour inks compared to the normal three found in most inkjets. The extra colours reduce the amount of dithering required, particularly in light shaded areas such as skin tones and skies. The final print has no sign of banding whatsover and this is due to the microweave system employed.

Good results are obtainable from all good quality paper, but for better results I found Epson 720 DPI paper gave good sharp images showing vibrant colours and because it is coated absorbs less ink, but for ultimate quality you can use Photo Glossy paper which produces astounding output very close to a real photo.

Conclusion
So in conclusion this printer is absolutely brilliant, it produces the best photo quality output I have seen anywhere and I must add, also produces sharp clear text output from such programs as Final Writer or Pagestream.

The price of the Photo 700 is comparable to many 3 colour inkjets, but there is no comparison with photo quality this printer is streets ahead.

Reviews

Caviar

PROS
Excellent Photo quality
Easy to use
Great value

RESULTS

WRONG!

WORMS BUNDLE

Price: £11 + £2 P&P (UK)
Contact: Worms Directors
Cut & Ch. You More Worms CD2.

FORE-MATT Home Computing
Dept. C, PO Box 835, Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4 8RX
(01793) 853802 sales@forematt.idps.co.uk

Pay by credit card and get a free CD-ROM
(for details) Stop Amiga install when ordering.

 Prices: 30

31
mick sutton looks at the ultimate a1200 graphics card.

the BVision and PPC card installed.

Usage
You now have to reboot your Amiga to make the BVision monitor driver active.

Conclusion
The quality of the hardware is faultless, but I was a little disappointed with the supplied manual (if you can call it that) - one sheet of paper, as seems to be the standard these days. The manual is just about adequate in explaining the installation but only has two short paragraphs on usage which in my opinion is just not enough, particularly with new graphics cards to come. Fortunately I belong to a user group and had lots of help and advice. Many users invest in a faster processor of one type or another, but few seem to care to update their Amiga's graphical capabilities. I tell you now that once you have taken the step to get a graphics card and have used it, you will be thinking to yourself how did I ever manage before.

Results

Pros
- Huge range of screenmodes.
- Fast in all resolutions and depths.
- High build quality.

Cons
- No pass-through for AGA.
- Minimal documentation.

WARNING!
Making changes to your Amiga's startup files, in particular the startup-sequence, can cause problems with other software. Take care when changing these files and always have a backup handy. For example if you make a backup called "startup-sequence-bak" and left it in the "S" directory to restore it you would:

1. Switch on or reset your Amiga while holding down both mouse buttons (this only works if you try and execute a command without specifying where it is. This includes setting the screen mode and the background patterns etc.

6. Path
The system path is a list of the directories in which your computer looks when you try and execute a command without specifying where it is. For example if you type a command name in a shell the system will first check the C directory because it is on the path.
Several times in this feature I’ve talked about the shell and entering commands. You are probably used to running programs and dealing with files from the shell window. But it’s also possible to do all these things (and some things you can’t do with Workbench) by entering text commands into a shell window. The instructions you enter into the shell window are called AmigaDOS commands and each one is a separate program, usually called the “C” directory of you Workbench disk. Once you’ve learnt some AmigaDOS commands you can string them together in a text file to make a script. Scripts can then be executed at any time, even when the commands in turn, this is exactly what the startup sequence (or your user startup) file is.

Malice, Air Quake, Quake Rally and the "Object is in use" error. So before you can delete the drawer you need to remove the assign command from your user-startup, here’s how:

- Open a shell (see the Shell box out for how to do this).
- Make a backup of your user-startup file by typing "copy user-startup user-startup-backup" and press Return (see the WARNING section for more details).
- Type "end user-startup" and press Return. This loads the user-startup script into an editor.
- Using the cursor keys move down the file until you find the portion related to the program that you want to delete. Usually this is marked by BEGIN and END lines, for example:

  BEGIN MyProgram
  Assign MyProgram: work-applications/utilities/myprogram/END MyProgram

- The safest way to remove this to put a comment ("//") in front of it which stops the line executing. As you then need to run the line back you simply edit the user-startup script and move the comment back as the file changes from the current file to the backup file (and remove the comment). After you reboot you should be able to delete the drawer which was assigned.

Once it’s deleted and you’re confident everything is still working properly you can delete the lines from the script, this is often done by deleting the line from the script so it can’t be read by the program when it runs. This will simply delete the line from the file. If a file is assigned to a particular directory it will no longer start up. You can delete the assign command from the script the next time you boot up.

Once you’ve learnt some AmigaDOS commands you can string them together in a text file to make a script. Scripts can then be executed at any time, even when the commands in turn, this is exactly what the startup sequence (or your user startup) file is.

Ex. startup-sequence :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Quake Launch Sequence 39.9 (9.9.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>SetPatch QUIET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>AddBuffers NIL:DF0:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>MakeDir RAM:RAM:Cliboards RAM/ENV:RAM/ENV:Sys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Copy NIL:ENVAR:RAM/ENV:ALL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident NIL: Assign Pure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident NIL: Execute Pure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: ENV:RAM/ENV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: RM:RAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: CUPS:Cliboards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: REXX:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: PRINTERS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: KEYMAPS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: LOCAL:SYSPRINTS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: LIBS:SYSGraphics:ASSOD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign NIL: HELP:LOCAL:HELP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEFER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF NOT EXISTS SYS:Fonts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign Fonts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fonts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BirdDrivers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Mount NIL: DEVS(DDIV:7,-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEX</td>
<td>IF EXISTS DEVS:Monitors VGADoors:VGAVGA:EndIF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C:List NIL: DEVS:Monitors/9754/ VGADoors/754 TO TM: LFROMMAT DEVS:Monitors/754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execute TM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Delete NIL: TM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EndIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SetEnv Workbench WBworkbench Kickstart KickstartStart UserWorkbench UserStartKickstart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C:Prefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path NIL: RAM: C:SYS:Utilities</td>
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<td>SYS:Rexx:SYS:Utilities:SYS:Prefs</td>
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<td>SYSTEM:Startup:SYS:Tools</td>
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<td>SYS:Tools:Commodities</td>
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<tr>
<td>IF EXISTS User-Startup Execute User-Startup EndIF</td>
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<td>Resident Module REMOVE Module Assign REMOVE</td>
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<td>LoadWB EndCLI NIL:</td>
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CLUBBED - Issue 3

Summer 1999

The Shell

Several times in this feature I’ve talked about the shell and entering commands. The shell is another method of giving instructions to your Amiga. You are probably used to running programs and dealing with files from the shell window. But it’s also possible to do all these things (and some things you can’t do with Workbench) by entering text commands into a shell window. The instructions you enter into the shell window are called AmigaDOS commands and each one is a separate program, usually called the “C” directory of your Workbench disk. Once you’ve learnt some AmigaDOS commands you can string them together in a text file to make a script. Scripts can then be executed at any time, even when the commands in turn, this is exactly what the startup sequence (or your user startup) file is.

If you’re good at Online Quake, you might want to consider joining a Clan - a team of Quake lovers who hold battles against other Clans from all over the world, including a number of Amiga ones (two are to be found in the boxout).

But all is not lost. The source code to Quake is published under the GNU Public License. You can, with the help of someone good at programming, compile it and create a version of Quake tailored to your needs. This is exactly what we are doing with the source code to Quake. We are now working on a version of Quake for Amiga, called Amiga Quake. The source code is available from the following sites:

http://crisen.home.pages.de/ - Clan Risen, home of Amiga Team Fortress
http://home4.swipnet.se/~w-46939/AQM/ - Amiga Quake Mercenaries, Amiga clan
http://www.goigoi.com/ - Goigoi, the definitive Amiga Quake site.
http://www.planetquake.com/ - Planet Quake
http://www.planetfortress.com/ - Home of Team Fortress

Deadly URLs

http://crisen.home.pages.de/ - Clan Risen, home of Amiga Team Fortress
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Candy Factory Pro is best used with a PPC accelerator and graphics card, but is also great for 68k (just slower). The best way to illustrate Candy through, is to eat it, let’s start munching.

Loading a Background Picture

On starting Candy, the default ‘canvas’ of 320x256 appears. To do a poster or card, you’ll need to know the size of the picture you’ve decided to use (write it down).

Select ‘New Project’, and type in the size of your picture (800x600 in this case).

Select ‘Windows’ - ‘Color Texture’. This let’s you load pictures and textures on the foreground and background. Click the ‘Edit’ gadget so that it reads ‘Background’, and then click the ‘?’ gadget. Choose your picture to load, via the lister. You won’t see anything but black at first... don’t panic :) Close the ‘Color Texture’ window to save screen-space.

Select ‘Windows’ - ‘Materials’ to bring that window up. Click the ‘Edit’ gadget to read ‘Background’. Then click on the three lighting controllers, adynd drag the sliders all the way to the right (255 = white). Voila! Your picture is then seen, as you just turned the lights on.

The lighting controls are also handy for making a picture moodier, as you can tint it any colour(s) you want (experiment). ‘Color’ is the main light, and affects everything, ‘Specular’ is the background in your favourite paint pro-

‘Shading’ gadget is handy for different effects - try them (I like ‘normal + metal’ the best), but we’ll leave the background as ‘none’. ‘Glossiness’ is another sort of brightness, and is useful for the lighting mode on shiny text, and ‘Environment’ is if you want to load another texture on top of the picture/text you already have loaded, and mix them together for even more weird and wonderful effects.

When the projects loader appears, there are a lot of options to have, or not to have, depending on your purpose, back-

Text

Select ‘Project’ - ‘Add Text’. A lister of all your fonts will appear. When you buy the CD, it has LOADS of Compugraphic fonts ready to install with Intelligent (which is in your System drawer), so in-stall the ones you like (or all of them if you want to slow down your project).

Click the ‘?’ next to the ‘Fontname’ field to load and choose a nice font. ‘Candy’ appears in the canvas as default, so type in the word(s) you want, and press ‘Return’ (don’t click on ‘OK’ yet).

If you want to change any of the effects, (as I did with BlueMetallic’s Glow, bump and lightsource) load up their particular windows. Remember to select and leave the materials’ window open, as you need to select between ‘background’ and ‘object’ for whichever you’re manipulating via effects. Leave the ‘object’ (text) activated in this case.

When there’s no ‘shadow’ then select ‘Maskpath’ on, as it will also load any text associated with the project settings (i.e. ‘you’ll lose your new text), as a general rule, ‘Glow’ and ‘Shadow’ don’t normally go together as it’s unnatural, but remember... rules are made to be broken (and we have!). If you’re going to be putting text onto a picture you’ve already selected, then make sure you un-

In Conclusion

At the end of the day, Candy Factory is a brilliant program for the artistically challenged. It’s quick and ridiculously easy to get great graphics, logo’s and post-cards etc. together. It could definitely be improved upon (drawing tools/adding masks to an existing pic-

Useful Hints

To do a bit more than just text, you can draw your own white object on a black background in your favourite paint pro-

When you save an image the ‘Save Image’ item in the ‘Project’ menu. Make sure you save the image in a ‘Truecolor’ format such as IFF24.

Pros

Ultra easy to use. Outstanding results very quickly. Brings out the hidden artist in all of us.

Cons

No GIF support for web graphics. Hasn’t use different effects on the same image. No drawing tools.

Effects

In ‘Project’, ‘New Project’ clears the cur-

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Results

Ultra easy to use. Outstanding results very quickly. Brings out the hidden artist in all of us.

Cons

No GIF support for web graphics. Hasn’t use different effects on the same image. No drawing tools.

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Lost on the World Wide Web with no where to go? Gary Storm finds some pages to call home.

The Internet is so vast that it can be hard to know where to start surfing. So on this page we’ve listed the URLs of some of our favourite websites.

If you can’t find what you want then the search engines on the left are a good place to start looking. However be warned that a ‘Search Engine’ only looks for the text you type on the web pages it knows about. This means that using search engines can be pretty much hit and miss, and instead of finding sites about apple pies, you’ll find everything you ever wanted to know about the I-Mac and pythagoras’ theorem. Varying the words you input and trying different search engines often helps get better results.

Within SEAL there are many years of Amiga experience, including the fitting and configuration of countless pieces of hardware and the installation and use of numerous software packages. So if you need a helping hand there’s almost bound to be someone with experience willing to help. In particular we’ve become expert at installing hard drives, CD-ROMs and other common upgrades.

Several SEAL members have scanners and many have colour printers, if at any time you need some pictures scanned or documents printed someone is always available to help.

3 SEAL members have clubbed (groan!) together to buy a CD writer and they offer a hard disk backup service to other members at a £5 fee plus the cost of the CD-R (about £1). Simply contact Mick, Robert or Gary to arrange a backup session.

Here are some of the things we’re planning for Issue 4, as you can see many of these rely on releases that are promised in the next month or so, if these don’t happen then we won’t include them!

• Reaction to any WoA Announcements
• First look at AmigaOS 3.5
• Photogenics 4.1
• ImageFX 4
• STFax Pace Solo 56k
• Modem Olympus C1000L Digital Camera and CamControl

Back to Basics: DosDrivers
Installing a CD-ROM

Plus much more including all the usual news, interviews and support.

Our target date for this issue is mid October 1999, look at the web site for our current status.

http://seal.amiga.tm
Cover Artist: James McEwen

Vagabonds

James has let us use his brilliant Redskies image on our cover this issue, above is another example of his work, below are his comments on the images:

These images were created using just an A1200-030 AGA 34M, using Photogenics 1.2, Real 3d & Draw Studio Lite. They both took several days to produce from my initial sketches, although Photogenics allowed me to experiment using its painting system.

In Red Skies, Summer 1998, I was trying to comment on the uncertain rebirth, either a red sky at dawn or dusk. OS 4 & 5 had just been proposed, & I expressed my own expectations of what type of the future there might be for the new Amiga.

Candy Factory Pro

In this image Gary Storm used some of the techniques he describes in his Candy Factory Pro Review/Tutorial on page 36. Notice the different texture and flow settings used on the text and the Bong Ball texture inside the word Amiga. Gary also used Candy Factory to add the text to the image on this issues cover.

Eventually I might create an animated-multimedia version of Red Skies in Cinema 4d using animated textures & material opacities, although this would take a long time to produce & might approach another subject.

I am currently producing a completely new scene, but using Cinema 4d as the base tool. I’ll upgrade Photogenics soon to allow for multiple layers, which should make spontaneous creation & composition easier.

My profession is that of a Graphic Designer, working on a wide variety of work on various systems, although, it’s on my Amiga that I get to produce pieces purely for fun. I’m never completely satisfied with what I produce, if I ever do I’ll know that it is time to retire.

Jim - 01509-211052 - jim@red.prestel.co.uk

Space Warp

By Michael Hunt

Mike used Newtek’s recently freely released TV Paint to create this image. This really shows off TVPaint’s subtle gradient handling and the tornado special effect. The background and foreground were composited using the layers facility.

You can download TVPaint (which requires a graphics card) from http://www.newtek.com

Hubcap

By Tony Kinnear

Tony Rendered this fun image in Cinema 4D