THE AMIGA INFORMER

ISSUE 7 - APRIL/MAY 1997

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A summary of information and support for Amiga users

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Amiga Sold! Gateway 2000 Buys Amiga Technologies

On March 27, a bolt from the blue struck the Amiga community. In a press release posted to the internet, it was announced that a bid placed by Gateway 2000 for the assets of Amiga Technologies was accepted. This agreement is pending regulatory approval.

Gateway 2000 is a Fortune 500 company founded in 1985 with annual revenues of $5 billion and a net income of $250 million in 1996. Headquartered in North Sioux City, South Dakota, Gateway 2000 employs over 9,700 people worldwide.

In the press release, Gateway President and CEO Rick Snyder said, "This acquisition is good news for Gateway and customers of Amiga. It will strengthen our intellectual property position and invigorate a company that has been a pioneer in multimedia solutions and operating systems technology."

The press release went on to say that Amiga Technologies will be renamed Amiga International. The statement indicated that Amiga International will retain Petro Tyschtschenko as president and will operate as a separate business unit, working to develop new products for the Amiga market. "Gateway 2000 will give us new life and energy for the future," said Tyschtschenko.

Steve Johns, Director of Corporate Development for Gateway 2000, made one other poignant comment. In response to an email inquiry, Mr. Johns said, "We are going to work on new products for the Amiga marketplace and leverage existing relationships as well as create new ones."

The news of the sale turned electric and began circulating throughout the Amiga community within minutes. Outside the Amiga Community news also spread. On March 28, MS-NBC ran a headline story about the Amiga sale. The Investors Business Journal also ran a brief news piece about the sale as did CNN and other major newspapers and news programs.

The tight lipped Amiga bankruptcy proceedings never leaked any news of Gateway's interest in the Amiga, and the news of their accepted offer caught most off guard. The mood of the Amiga community is positive. After three years of inaction, most Amigans feel there may now be real hope for the Amiga's future.

"I'm thrilled that the Amiga technologies have finally been purchased, more so that they have been bought by a company with such tremendous resources, visionary management, and customer-service orientation as Gateway 2000," said Intangible Assets Manufacturing President, and former Commodore-Amiga Software Engineer, Dale L. Larson. "I trust that this will reinvigorate the Amiga community and renew interest in our markets," Larson added.

QuikPak, believed by many to be the

continued on page 2

To Subscribe by Credit Card See Page 23

Phase 5 Offers Best of Both Worlds

There's no lack of companies in or around the Amiga market which have their own visions of what new Amigas, or an Amiga successor computer, should be like. Right at the top of the list is Germany's phase 5. Phase 5 can't be accused of not communicating their ideas to the Amiga community. There has been a steady stream of announcements, statements, position papers and information in general coming out of Oberursel for some time. The cornerstone of phase 5's vision of the Amiga future is the PowerPC processor, seen as a modern replacement for the aging 68000 line of chips which has powered the Amiga since its inception. This vision finds its expression in two product lines - PowerPC accelerators for existing Amiga models, and an entirely new PowerPC based computer called the A/BOX.

On February 25, phase 5 presented press releases for two upcoming models of their PowerPC accelerators. These are the BLIZZARD 603e for A1200's and CYBERSTORM PPC for the A3000 and A4000 machines. The BLIZZARD 603e accelerator actually will provide Amiga owners with two processors - a 68030 CPU as well as the 603e model of PowerPC. This dual processor approach

continued on page 5

In This Issue . . .

News — 3
BYTES — 4
Developments — 5
New Companies
Announcements — 6
Enhancements — 12
Workbench Extras
Site Seeing — 14
Evaluations — 15
Reviews
Contacts — 23
Marketplace — 24

From the Editor's Desk:

Greetings:

April once again proves to be a fateful month for the Amiga. With the announcement that Gateway 2000 is on its way to owning the Amiga [the deal should be completed in April], expectations are running high. Gateway is going to be the third owner of the Amiga in as many years. Let's hope the third time is the charm.

It seems fitting that the Amiga's sale came just days before we went to print. With issue 7, The Informer is marking the start of its second year in production. News of the sale is invigorating, and I feel better about the future than ever.

Some of you may notice we have a new look. As the office grows, we are adding new software titles to our system and are finding additional ways of using existing applications. All this is in an effort to enhance The Informer by using the best Amiga programs available.

We are proud to announce some new staff members and titles. First, columnist Brad Webb is now also our News Editor. Brad's easy style and attention to detail will certainly add a lot to our publication. Likewise, Robert Pigford has taken on the role of Tipster, providing the useful tips found throughout each issue. Starting with issue 8, we will also welcome Colin Thompson to the staff as Field Editor. Colin has a knack at getting unique Amiga news and should add a great deal to The Informer's flavor.

As The Informer grows, we will continue to add useful columns, qualified staff, and additional pages to meet what readers require-hard facts about the Amiga, what it is doing and where it is going. Through aggressive and responsive reporting in both the print and electronic medium, we intend to be receptive to our readers' needs and will do our best to meet the desires of the Amiga community. I hope you will let us know what you want and join us in the next chapter of the Amiga's legacy.

Fletcher Haug, **Editor**

Amiga Sold con't from page 1

front-runner for the Amiga prior to the Gateway announcement, expressed their thoughts in an internet post. "While we are understandably disappointed that our own bid was unsuccessful, we at QuikPak remain as committed as ever to the future of the Amiga," said QuikPak Director of Business Development, Dan Robinson. "The Gateway 2000 purchase may represent an excellent opportunity to breathe new life into the Amiga platform," offered Robinson.

Kevin Hisel of the Amiga Web Directory had similar comments. "While it's a little early to judge just what Gateway 2000's long-term plans are for the Amiga, there are a number of very positive things that can be said," states Hisel. "This is a company-unlike Commodore-which is not afraid of marketing and advertising computers. This alone will be a strong dynamic in the Amiga market," he added.

Indeed, Gateway 2000 is a master at advertising and marketing. With regularly appearing 10 page magazine ads and slick TV spots, Gateway provides tremendous exposure for their products. Their black and white cow is one of the most recognized corporate logos around. On March 21, Gateway announced the appointment of Darcy, Masius, Benton & Bowles as their worldwide advertising agency. DMB&B Communications is the largest operating unit of the MacManus Group. The MacManus Group posted 1996 worldwide billings of more than $6.5 billion and serves clients in 158 offices in 70 countries.

However, in spite of the encouraging, if limited, statements by Gateway 2000, there is some justification for concern. Gateway is a PC manufacturer. They sell their machines not through dealers but by direct mail order, and it is not clear if they will use the same approach with the Amiga, a move that would hurt dealers. One must also question why a giant PC manufacturer wants the Amiga. Will they produce a machine that will potentially compete with their PC sales? Do they want to put the Amiga on a card to be inserted into a PC? Will they be liberal in Amiga licensing and allow companies like phase 5 and PIOS to use the Amiga OS and other technologies?

These troublesome questions will remain unanswered until Gateway makes its intentions clear. Until then, Amigans have a reason to be hopeful, but they must temper their expectations with caution. Gateway may prove to be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

In spite of these concerns, most Amigans will tend to agree with Dale L. Larson when he says, "Gateway has a lot of resources and they have a management that understands technology. If they apply these things to Amiga, it can only be a good thing."

For more information, contact Steve Johns, Director of Corporate Development for Gateway 2000: johnsste@gw2k.com, or Angela Peacock, Corporate Communications Media Contact: (605) 232-1686. Gateway 2000 URL: www.gw2k.com

✍FH

The INFORMER Prize Drawings

Each Issue of The Amiga Informer will feature a random prize drawing for an Amiga product (software, hardware, book, etc.) and subscribers are automatically entered to win for the duration of their subscription. [*No purchase necessary. If not subscribing, send one postcard for each drawing with your name, address, phone number, Email address and date to: The Informer, PO Box 21, Newburgh, NY 12551-0021. Postcard must be titled "Free Informer Prize Drawing Entry" and received at least two weeks before each drawing. Drawings held bimonthly.*]

Congratulations to Darreck Lisle of Sioux City, IA winner of an Avalon CD and Capital Punishment!

Next Issue will have TWO WINNERS:
One will receive an assortment of games from Turtle Lightning & one will receive MoneySmart by Grafica

To Subscribe See Page 23

AMIGA NEWS

LightWave Mag Hits Newsstands

There's a new LightWave users' magazine available called LightWavin. It started production in September 1996–before LightWavePro folded–and is published by Prollenium Multimedia Group of California.

According to editor Manuel Coats, LightWavin is published bimonthly and is a full color, advertising based publication. Issue 2, due out in April, will contain 48 pages. LightWavin already has a strong advertising base and is being distributed to newsstands by IPD. One year subscriptions are available for US $48 w/CD and $24 wo/CD. The CD is available separately, and reduced 2 year subscriptions are also available.

LightWavin is program specific and is not platform dependant. It will feature all around coverage on the creative use of LightWave for any platform, be it Amiga, SGI, Alpha, MIPS, Mac or Windows NT. However, there will be Amiga product reviews and information, and the available CD contains a great deal of Amiga animations, plug-ins, images, etc.

LightWavin accepts article submissions and welcomes animations and images. This should be a cue to all Amigans. Show LightWavin that the Amiga is still alive by sending in your LightWave created material. Always attach a text file with information about your submission and do not send large animations via email.

For more information: Phone (US only) 800-764-8696 or 805-726-3546; FAX 805-726-3544; Email: lightwavin@qnet.com; URL: www.webcom.com/lghtspd. LightWavin, 2763 W. Avenue L Suite #172, Lancaster, CA 93536

✍FH

Developers Powwow

A Developers Conference was held at the Amiga 97 Gateway show and many ideas were discussed and put into motion. Organization and cooperation is important in the Amiga community, and developers are eager to move in a forward direction.

There has already been results from the conference. An email list was started as a way to share ideas among developers. This mailing list is for anyone, programmer or not, who would like to present their ideas or to just read about what is being discussed. To join the list, simply send an email to: newdev-request@lists.best.com and type "Subsingle" in the body of the message. Likewise, a developer web site was created to hold published texts such as the ROM Kernel Manual, hardware information, and newly suggested Amiga related standards. This site is just underway and can be found at: www.amiga.org/developer. Visit the web site to read about the many other good ideas discussed at the conference.

✍FH

MOca Brings JAVA to the Amiga

MOca, from Finale Development of Belgium, is a software implementation of a JAVA Virtual Machine (JVM) for the Amiga/pOS line of computers. When it is released, it will open up a big door that has previously been closed to Amigans by allowing JAVA based programs to run on the Amiga.

The JAVA language is developed by Sun Microsystems and is considered to be 'the next big thing' in computer programming. All JAVA based programs operate independent of a computer's operating system and can run on any computer that uses an implementation of a JVM.

MOca uses a compiler to turn the JAVA language into byte code. This byte code is designed to be executed on a virtual CPU–the JVM. JAVA byte code is a special kind of machine language that allows for re-compiling. So, instead of emulating the code - which is a slow process - MOca converts it to native machine code with a powerful optimizing compiler. MOca does not waste time converting JAVA byte code that will never be executed. Instead, it converts the code at the moment it is first executed, making the process fast.

MOca uses the ClassAct development system and requires Amiga OS 2.1+, 4 Mb RAM, and a 68020+ CPU. It is due for release in the summer of 1997. For more information email: JAVA@Finale-Dev.com

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Mission: To provide an accurate and reliable resource of information pertaining to all things Amiga®, and to connect readers with developers, their products and the Amiga community at large.

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A1200, Blizzard 060/50 Mhz, 32 Mb RAM
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HP Scanjet IIp scanner
Epson Stylus Color printer
PageStream 3.2
DrawStudio 1.1
Image FX 2.6
Final Writer 97
IBrowse 1.1
Plus many other commercial and freely distributed programs.

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BYTES

RBProductions announced the creation of the Scientific Amigan web site. Scientific Amigan is dedicated to scientific and technical use of the Amiga platform. The Scientific Amigan web site offers software, links and articles of interest to the technical Amiga user. The web site is constantly being expanded and includes many items of interest such as: the full contents of the original Scientific Amigan disk library, plus new additions; the full text of each published Scientific Amigan magazine, available for download, on-line reading, or hardcopy order; information on technical uses of the Amiga throughout the world; and, information and links regarding hardware and applications of interest to the technical Amiga user. Visit the web site and see how the potential technical uses of the versatile Amiga platform abound.

Originally billed as "The Key to Technical Productivity With Your Amiga" and published by Walt Lounsbery, Scientific Amigan suspended publication in August, 1995. RBProductions secured the rights to republish the Scientific Amigan material while Walter A. Lounsbery retains the original copyright. URL: http://www.goodnet.com/~cyrano/; Email: cyrano@goodnet.com. RBProductions, 835 West Warner Road, Suite 101-251, Gilbert, AZ 85233

✍FH

The first part of the REBOL Reference Manual, entitled "REBOL Values: The Building Blocks" is now available on-line at http://www.sassenrath.com. REBOL is the programing language by Carl Sassenrath that was formally called LAVA (See issue 6). This manual, written for both novice users and programming experts alike, serves as an introduction to the first and most important concept of the language. It also includes seven example scripts written in REBOL that clarify the use of the language.

An "educational pre-release" of the REBOL language is expected to be out this April and is intended for people who want to try a few examples of their own, using what they have learned from the manual. Incremental releases of the language will be made over the next few months, with a 1.0 version slated for June 1997.

The development of the REBOL language is being supported by contributions and will be freely available for personal non-commercial use on a range of computer systems. Corporate licenses and custom versions will be available for a fee. REBOL is a trademark of Carl Sassenrath.

✍FH

The Amiga Education Network (TAEN) has recently been launched in Australia, but with a world wide focus. The February announcement states it's intended as a means of supporting the Amiga platform in schools that are using it. A second goal is to help the Amiga survive in the very important education market.

At this point TAEN is seeking national representatives for the various countries where the Amiga is used-or could be used-in the education system.

Success of the TAEN initiative depends on the new owners of the Amiga maintaining an interest in the education market and on participation by educators and persons willing to be National Representatives.

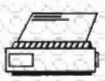
You can learn more about TAEN from Basil Flinter, Convener of TAEN, at The Amiga Education Network, PO Box 353, Armidale, NSW, 2350, Australia.
Phone: 61+ 67 72-2100
Email: flinter@tpgi.com.au

✍BW

Amiga developer, Almathera Systems Limited, announced on March 17 that it is out of business. Almathera was responsible for the highly regarded graphics manipulation program Photogenics.

The end came for Almathera as a result of problems faced by another Amiga related firm. Last year Almathera undertook a project for Chicago based VIScorp, developing a software library for VIScorp's set top box product, which was designed to use the Amiga's operating system. At the time VIScorp was a leading bidder for ownership of Amiga Technologies. Citing lack of payment from VIScorp, Almathera stated they had suffered cash flow problems from which they could not recover. VIScorp itself has run into cash flow problems and has largely faded from the Amiga scene.

✍BW



True to their word, clickBOOM and PXL computers will indeed convert some of the biggest games from other machines to the Amiga. ClickBOOM and PXL computers created Capital Punishment in 1996 and have now purchased the rights to develop and publish an Amiga version of MYST! Myst is the bestselling CD-ROM game ever, and was the bestselling game of 1996 on both the PC and Mac. Amigans will now be able to enjoy Myst on the Amiga. A firm release date has not yet been announced but is aimed at the summer of 1997. The required Amiga system to run Myst is: AGA or Video board; 4Mb Fast RAM; and a CD-ROM drive (no floppy release). Myst will be OS-friendly and multitasking. For more info, contact clickBOOM at: clkboom@ican.net or http://home.ican.net/~clkboom/

✍FH

If you're an Amigan owning a 040 CPU Amiga who longs for the 060 chip-desiring the potential increase in speed but not liking the price tag attached-you should know that there is a way to more than double the clock speed of the Motorola 68040/25 processors to upwards of 57 MHz. A product called the Sonnett Doubler replaces the old 040 chip with a fast-clocked 040 that proves 99% compatible with all software. The Sonnet was originally designed for the Macintosh computer, but the creators-seeing a market in the Amiga-made some minor changes to the Sonnett, allowing it to work flawlessly on Amigas. It retails for around US $425. Contact your local dealer for further info. If that fails, call Seismic Business Systems at 914-462-8356. They have first hand experience with the Sonnet and will be happy to place your order.

✍FH

What is probably the first Amiga-only TV show in the United Kingdom, or anywhere else, was scheduled to air for the first time on Monday, March 17. The program, called "Chips with Everything," features a panel of noted British Amiga personalities from magazines, user groups and dealerships.

Topics for the first show in the series include, "Why the Amiga has gotten on just fine without Commodore" and "Why the Amiga is such a good tool for surfing the Internet."

The program will be featured on Britain's BSkyB's Computer Channel. If response to the first few shows is good, it could become a regular feature.

The home page for the Computer Channel is at http://www.computerchannel.co.uk/. You will need a Frames capable browser such as IBrowse 1.1 or Voyager beta pre-release 2. Both may have some problems with the site.

✍BW

Phase 5 con't from page 1

means you can run existing 68000 series Amiga programs on one chip, and proposed PowerPC programs on the other for the best of both worlds. In fact, both chips can be operational at the same time, each running it's own set of programs. Phase 5 has developed a software library to allow the PowerPC processor to be integrated into the Amiga's multitasking environment. Running at a speed of 120 MHz, the PPC chip will provide an incredible boost in processing performance for the Amiga. The board also offers room for memory expansion for your computer, and a Fast SCSI option for users who want to attach Fast SCSI peripherals. The basic accelerator board is priced at only US $399.

Similar in concept is the CYBERSTORM PPC board for the A3000's and A4000's. This accelerator uses a more powerful PowerPC chip, the 604e, at speeds of 150, 180 or 200 MHz. Compatibility with existing Amiga software is achieved through either a 68040 or 68060 processor, which by itself is an upgrade for most Amiga models. Prices are appropriately higher than for the BLIZZARD, running from US $698 to $1,069. Phase 5 is promising a special graphics board for the expansion slot on the CYBERSTORM PPC, to be delivered later in the year. It uses a subset of the custom CAIPIRINHA chip (see issue 5) which will power the graphics engine of the A/BOX computer system phase 5 is developing.

Note that neither phase 5 accelerator includes the 680x0 processor. If you don't already own one, you'll have to obtain one. A1200 owners will need to supply a 030 chip, A4000 owners either a 040 or 060. Most A4000's have 040 chips installed. Everyone else will have to find a source for the processor, which may not be easy. Most Amiga dealers are not prepared to sell individual processor chips. Expect to pay anywhere from

continued on page 14

If your removable hard drive doesn't auto-recognize cartridge changes, here's a workaround: Use HDTool-Box to give every cartridge the same physical device name, like 'SYQ0:'. Then a re-mount is not required and cartridge swaps are auto-recognized.
RP

Developments

Company Profile

Vaporware is one of the new successful development companies producing cutting edge products for the Amiga. Recognizing the Amiga's natural strength as a web tool, Vaporware develops Amiga telecomunications software. Started in 1996, they are based in Germany and have been producing what can arguably be called some of the best internet software available on any platform.

Net savvy CEO, Oliver Wagner, markets Vaporware products solely on the web. Through a comprehensive web site, demos of all Vaporware products are available to download and try out. These demos are available on Aminet and therefore, are also found on many of the Aminet mirror CD ROM's that are available.

If you like the demo version of a Vaporware product, you can easily register for the full version. This registration process is done with a provided registration utility. There are many registration sites throughout the world, including Germany, UK, USA, Canada, Australia, France and Sweden. This allows registering with your own currency, and often within your own country. On-line registration by credit card or First Virtual payment is also available at: http://www.vapor.com/order/.

The products Vaporware currently has available are as follows:

Voyager: Web Browser with HTML 3.2 extensions, Frames support, and Plug-ins. This was the first Amiga web browser to support Frames.

AmIRC: Internet Relay Chat Client that makes for easy to use and easy to connect chatting fun.

AmFTP: Integrated FTP, Archie and ADT (Aminet-Download) Client. Full featured client with the familiar feel of an Amiga directory utility.

AmTALK: Unix ntalk compatible Point-to-Point talk system that allows on-line chatting.

AmTerm: Terminal program for Modem usage. For BBS use or direct computer to computer connections.

AmTelnet: VT100/ANSI compatible Telnet client that allows you to connect to and use remote computers.

AmigaNCP: Connectivity package to link Psion S3/S3a/S3c palmtop computers to the Amiga.

MicroDot II: An integrated News/Mail reader with full MIME support. This program is expected to be available the end of March 1997.

Tech support for Vaporware products is handled strictly by email and public mailing lists. These mailing lists are available for every product and are for any user to discuss issues related to the various programs. To obtain a roster of mailing lists, send email to: "listserv@vapor.com" and

continued on page 6

New Companies

GVP Rescue

GVP Rescue is a start-up company that specializes in the repair of Great Valley Products. GVP Rescue also sells refurbished GVP items. G-Force accelerators, TBC Plus cards, iV-24 systems, 4008 cards, PhonePaks, etc., are all in stock. As a courtesy to the Amiga/GVP community they also provide technical support (by email only) for older GVP items as well. GVP Rescue does not deal in new GVP-M items, and likewise, are not licenced to work on GVP-M products. Phone: 910-790-3465, mailbox #2; Email: 73143.231@compuserve.com; Temporary URL: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/rswagner

Oshawa Amiga

Oshawa Amiga is a Canadian Amiga mail order company located just east of Toronto, Ontario. They carry hardware and software including hard drives, CD-ROM drives, removable media, memory and more. As an added bonus, on-site service is offered for customers in their local area. Oshawa Amiga is a registered authorized reseller of Amiga computers.

Oshawa's hours are 10am-6pm E.S.T. Monday through Friday and 9am-4pm on Saturday. They can be reached at: (905)728-7048 or by email at mjacula@idirect.com. Weekly specials and the latest pricing can be found at: http://web.idirect.com/~oshamiga

Vaporware con't from page 5

put "HELP" and "LONGINDEX" in the body of the message.

Some Vaporware products require your system to be running certain programs to work properly. Most notable is TCP/IP software such as AmiTCP or Miami, which have public demos available, or Termite TCP, which is commercial. MUI is used extensively by Vaporware programs (with the exception of AmigaNCP) and is available on Aminet.

New product announcements are posted to the Vaporware web server, announcement mailing lists, Usenet, and various print publications, like The Informer.
Vaporware, Oliver Wagner, M=E4rkische Str. 24, D-42281 Wuppertal, Germany. Email: info@vapor.com; URL: http://www.vapor.com/

EVER NOTICE THAT LITTLE 'E' IN THE LOWER RIGHT CORNER OF A TEXTAREA IN IBROWSE? CLICKING IT SENDS THE TEXT TO THE EDITOR ED, AND RETURNS THE TEXT TO THE TEXT AREA UPON SAVE & EXIT. YOU CAN TELL IBROWSE WHICH EDITOR TO USE BY SETTING AN ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLE, EDITOR, TO THE ONE OF YOUR CHOICE. USE THE COMMAND 'SETENV EDITOR [EDITOR]'. REPLACE [EDITOR] WITH THE COMMANDLINE TO RUN YOUR EDITOR.

RP

Note to Subscribers: If you have a new Email address–or have just joined the Internet–please make sure you let us know so you can take advantage of automatically receiving the latest news from Amiga Update by Brad Webb. See Subscriber Benefits, Page 23, for more details.

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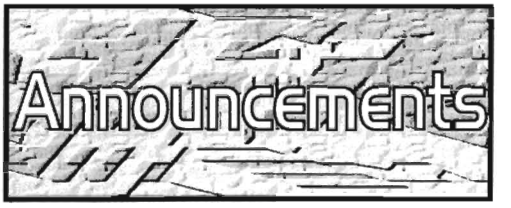

The descriptions and opinions stated in this column are not necessarily those of The Informer. We are not responsible for the validity of these announcements.

New York Newsreader

From: Finale Development
Email: newyork@finale-dev.com
URL: www.finale-dev.com
New York is a Newsreader for the Amiga, authored by Christopher E. Aldi. Newsreaders allow you to read, post, reply and follow messages posted on Usenet. The Amiga has several programs capable of doing some of this, but New York promises to be head and shoulders above the rest. New York's important features include: easy configuration; progressive article retrieval option; keyboard navigation; news posting reply via News follow-up or private email; configurable external email program; RFC 977 compliant; NNTP User Authorization; automatic self correction of data & cache files; a program "SpeedBar"; UUDecoder; font and screen mode preferences; ARexx interface; bookmarking; optional "low-memory" configuration mode for 2Mb users; and much more. Expected release is March 1997.
Requirements: Amiga OS 2.1+, 2 Mb RAM

Finale Web Cruiser

From: Finale Development
Email: finale@finale-dev.com
URL: www.finale-dev.com
The Finale Web Cruiser is a new full-blown World Wide Web Browser for Amiga and pOS computers. Finale Web Cruiser will come with 4 more internet clients: Mail, News, FTP and Gopher clients. FTP and Gopher are built into the browser and will provide an easy to use HTML based user interface. Mail and News are provided as stand-alone clients. Finale Web Cruiser's features will include: full HTML 3.2 support; support for Frames; support for the most important Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer HTML extensions; fast rendering; built-in graphic decoders; progressive image display; support for Datatypes; ARexx interface; in-line Java applets when available; the newsreader NewYork; and, a lite version of the Voodoo email program. Scheduled for release the first quarter of 1997.
Requirements: Amiga OS 2.1+, 4 Mb RAM and 68020 + CPU

continued on page 7

Announcements con't from page 6

Air Mail V4.2

From: Toysoft Development Inc.
Email: toysoft@spots.ab.ca
URL: http://www.spots.ab.ca/~toysoft
Toysoft of Canada announced the immediate availability of Air Mail v4.2. Air Mail is a powerful internet email client for POP/SMTP servers. Features include: 5 minute configuration; intuitive User Interface; comprehensive user guide and HTML docs; support for AmiTCP V4.0+, Miami and TermiteTCP; icon interface with WB3.0; multiple windows; automatic encoding and decoding of files; unlimited custom folders and message filtering; support for external and internal text editors; unlimited static and dynamic tags; ASCII or custom bitmap signatures; mail spooling for off-line reading and mailing; speech and sounds for mail notification; localizations; automatic receipts; Forms; and hot keys. Requires Amiga OS 2.0+ and MUI 3.2+. Price is US $40 plus $5 S&H in North America, and $7 for international orders. If you order now you will receive a free Air Mail plug-in for any web browser. Toysoft Development Inc., 131 64 Ave. N. W., Calgary, Alberta, T2K 0L9 Canada.
Phone: 403-680-1656

Amiga Enforcer v37.70

From: IAM (written by Michael Sinz)
Email: info@iam.com
URL: http://www.iam.com
Enforcer v37 is an advanced debugging tool for Amigas equipped with a 68020+ CPU and MMU. The Enforcer archive includes tools to help identify the exact location of bugs, including the line of source code in most C or Assembly code, as well as some other languages.

The original Enforcer was instrumental in the development of Amiga OS 2.04 and in the improvement of the quality of software for the Amiga. Enforcer v37 is a completely new set of code designed to provide even more debugging capabilities across more hardware configurations and with more options. New Enforcer features include: 68060 CPU support; new MMU dump tool; large on-line manual; and a large amount of new documentation that is a "must read" for Amiga system hackers and CPU hardware vendors.

More information about Enforcer is available through the Enforcer web page at: http://www.iam.com/amiga/enforcer.html. Questions about Enforcer should be directed to: enforcer@iam.com. Michael Sinz, replies to mail sent to this address. For orders only, phone: 610-853-4406; Fax: 610-853-3733

Final Writer 97

From: Softwood
URL: http://www.softwood.com/
SoftWood announced the most recent upgrade to their popular word processor, Final Writer, called "Final Writer 97." The new version adds new desktop publishing features. Described as a document publisher, "Final Writer 97" was designed to be used for both word processing and creating more complex documents such as newsletters, brochures and forms. Softwood claims Final Writer 97 can be used for at least 95% of all work for which Amiga owners currently use a dedicated desktop publishing package.

Softwood emphasizes the ease of use and bug free nature of its product, which

continued on page 8

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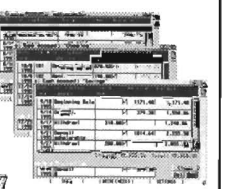
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Thank you!

We appreciate all the support of those who organized and attended the Gateway Computer Show/Amiga 97 in St. Louis March 15-16. Your energy boosted our spirits, your purchases further our continued support of the Amiga.

-Dale L. Larson, *el Presidente*
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Announcements con't from page 7

is one of the two most popular word processors for the Amiga (along with Digita's WordWorth). Current Final Writer owners can upgrade for a special low price and receive a 'no questions asked' money back guarantee.

Wasted Dreams

From: Vulcan Software
Email: paul@vul-soft.demon.co.uk
URL: http://www.vulcan.co.uk
Vulcan Software developers are releasing another forthcoming addition to Vulcan's Miniseries range called Wasted Dreams. It will be a suspenseful adventure set in a violent alien reality. A screenshot preview program is on Aminet at: Pics/illu/aawasgfx.lha. Some features of Wasted Dreams are: more than 300 animated sequences for various characters; all animations are filmed and processed; 8-way dynamic scrolling; all characters have their own personalities; more than 10 playing areas with several playing zones; one or two players, cooperative or deadmatch; action, adventure, communication; and 3D animations.
Requirements: all Amigas with 2 Mb of Chip RAM, hard drive installable.

SBase 4 Pro Upgrade Offer

From: Mr. Hardware Computers
Email: hardware@li.net
Mr. Hardware Computers is offering a special upgrade price for anyone currently owning SBase4 or SBase4Pro Amiga. Mr. Hardware purchased all rights to the Amiga version of SBase4Pro from Oxxi, Inc.

SBase4Pro v1.30n includes many new features. Depending on the version, these features include: support for asl requesters; better screen mode selection; AGA support; ability to run on any processor including the 68060; an improved forms editor; full DML programming language; and many bug fixes. SBase4Pro v1.30n doesn't need a dongle.

Upgrade pricing varies depending on the program you currently own, but range from US $20- $60. Call or fax for full details. Your current registration number (found in the Project Menu About selection) or dongle, is required. The upgrade doesn't come with documentation because Oxxi has not yet provided it.

Work continues on new Mr. Hardware labeled versions of all SBase4 products and new ideas and development programs will be implemented in the future. If you have developed any SBase4 applications please contact Mr. Hardware regarding a possible licensing agreement. Mr. Hardware Computers, 59 Storey Avenue, Central Islip, NY 11722-2332. Phone or Fax at 516-234-8110.

Amiga Legacy Magazine

From: The Editors of Amiga Report and The Vantage Point
Premiering in June 1997, will be Amiga Legacy, the newest resource for Amiga information. Legacy is a video magazine that will bring you the latest info about the Amiga. Editor Jason Compton promises great Amiga tips, helpful tricks, complete tutorials, reviews, expert analysis and all the news about the Amiga's future direction. Everything is produced using Amiga technology. Being a video magazine, Legacy will allow viewers to see for themselves how a product works. Legacy tutorials will provide viewers with second to none instruction by giving virtual hands-on guidance.

Presently, Amiga Legacy is being produced in NTSC. However, there is interest for the magazine in PAL nations. Discussions are under way for a European partner to assist in distribution to PAL countries.

Amiga Legacy will deliver 90 minutes of coverage about the Amiga 5 times a year (3 in 1997). Single issues are $14.95 each + $2.05 shipping in the US. 1997 Sub - 3 Issues: $12.95 each + $2.05 shipping/each ($45 total). 1997-1998 - 8 Issues: $11.45 each + $2.05 shipping/each ($112 total).

To subscribe to Legacy call: 773-465-5158. For more information email: jcompton@xnet.com or visit Legacy on-line at: http://www.xnet.com/~jcompton/legacy.html

MCC Mailtext v3.0

From: Olaf Peters
Email: olf@informatik.uni-bremen.de
URL: http://home.pages.de/~Mailtext/
The Mailtext MUI custom class package is especially designed to display electronic messages. Its main features cover: the handling of font attributes; highlighting of quoted passages; highlighting and handling of URL's; supports mark & copy to clipboard; and more. Developer's info is *only* available on request from the author, Olaf Peters. More info and reference applications are available at the above web site.
Requirements: Amiga OS v2.0 or v2.1+ for localization; MUI v3.6+; MCC NList.
Available on Aminet: dev/mui/MCC_Mailtext.lha

Ever accidentally delete your hard drive's disk.info file when cleaning out a directory? Simply unset the 'delete' protection bit and you'll never accidentally delete it again! Use the command 'PROTECT -d [dirname]'. ✍RP

WCi *Distribution* is proud to present, on behalf of *Quasar Distribution* of Australia, the North American release of PC Task 4.0!

PC-Task 4.0 is the fastest software PC emulator for the Amiga range of computers. Using advanced software techniques, such as Dynamic Compilation, you are able to experience major speed increases over previous versions. With 80486 compatibility, you are now able to run that much needed PC software. PC Task 4.0 is a necessity for anyone wanting to get more from their machine. SRP $129.99 Canadian, $99.99 USD.

The following features are included in this release:

- 80486 compatibility
- Uses Dynamic Compilation for speed.
- High density floppies and CD-ROM support
- Support for up to 256 colours on AGA machines
- Transfer files between your Amiga and MS-DOS
- Compatible with MS Windows 3.0 - 3.11 *
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- The fastest software PC emulator for the Amiga
- Up to 2 floppy drives and 2 hard drives supported
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- Parallel, Serial and PC speaker emulation
- Select from MDA, CGA, EGA, VGA and SVGA (512K-2MB) video modes
- Run MS-DOS applications in a window on a public screen (eg. Workbench)
- Compatible with graphic boards (eg. Cybergraphics, EGS Spectrum, Picasso)

System requirements: an Amiga computer with AmigaDOS 2.0 or greater, a 68020 or faster CPU and a minimum of 2MB memory.
* Windows 3.1 requires 1.5 MB contiguous RAM and sufficient hard disk space. NOTE: MS-DOS is NOT included.

Apollo Accelerators
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WC*i Distribution* is now shipping the Apollo line of accelerators for the Amiga from ACT of Germany. These high-performance accelerators have a proven track record in Europe where they have already been available for several years. The Apollo combines high-speed and stability with a truly aggressive price making it one of the hottest new Amiga products in North America for years. The Apollo line caters to nearly all Amigas providing them with, in some instances, a thirty-fold increase in speed over that of a stock machine, while maintaining a very impressive price.

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Apollo 2030-50Mz
Apollo 2060-50Mz
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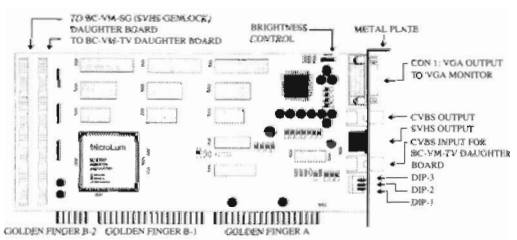

Also available: Super Scan external Amiga scan doubler for all Amigas, and the BC1208MA 8MB RAM card for A1200.

- Internal Amiga to VGA double scan rate converter for A2000, A3000, and A4000 computers
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- Flicker switch equipped, if you want to have a look at the original flicker image of the Amiga. Normally records the Amiga video signal into VCR so you can see the quality of display on a VHS monitor as a preview.

Please support your local dealer. *If none is available in your area, please contact either:*
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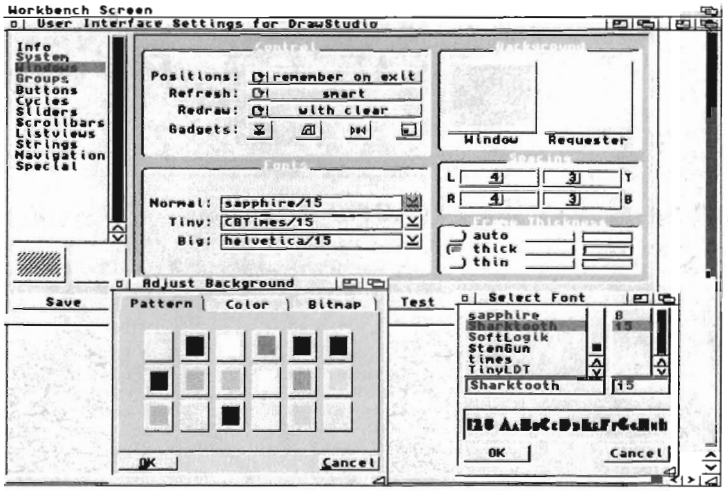
Workbench Extras

By Brad Webb

One of the most interesting enhancements for the Amiga operating system has also been one of the most controversial. This is MUI, or Magic User Interface. Currently at revision 3.8, Stefan Stuntz's remarkable software system has become the underpinning of many good programs. An Amiga owner without it is severely limiting his or her access to software.

The following quotation from the MUI Readme file best describes what MUI is and why we're looking at it this month: "MUI is an object oriented system to create and maintain graphical user interfaces. From a programmer's point of view, using MUI saves a lot of time and makes life much easier. Thinking about complicated terms like window resizing or font sensitivity is simply not necessary. On the other hand, users of MUI based applications have the ability to customize nearly every pixel of a program's interface according to their personal taste."

Basically, MUI allows programmers to easily incorporate advanced user interface features into their work. With MUI installed on your Amiga, you can then access these features when you run the programs. Without MUI installed, you aren't able to run MUI based applications at all. If MUI provides benefits to programmer and user alike, why is it controversial? The reason is mostly historical. The older versions of MUI required a lot of resources from the computer. On 68000 systems especially, a MUI based program could be a strain on the computer's ability to perform. Recent versions seem to cause far fewer problems.



MUI allows complete customizing of the user interface, from colors to gadgets. Additonal Custom Class programs add even more features.

The feature of MUI most useful to the user is simply the ability to run programs that require it. These include Miami, IBrowse, Voyager, and many other commercial, shareware and freeware programs. Other specific features available when you load MUI are: "balloon help"–moving your mouse cursor over a button on a MUI program pops up a mini-instruction in a cartoon style talk balloon; the ability to add gadgets, such as an iconify gadget, to MUI windows; opening MUI applications on the Workbench screen, their own screens, or other public screens; and on and on the features go. In general, MUI based applications are more sophisticated and user friendly than non-MUI programs.

Once installed, you can double click on the MUI icon to bring up the preferences program. It provides you with a menu from which you can adjust aspects of the graphical user interface for MUI programs. Selections comprise: System (iconification, bubble-help, ARexx, and screen to use); Windows (many features, including fonts, frame thickness and spacing); Groups, Buttons, Cycles, Sliders, Scrollbars, Listviews and Strings. Only the first two items (System and Windows) are active in the freeware version. Besides the MUI Preferences program, which affects MUI's overall functioning, each MUI program allows its own customization. Note that early versions of MUI programs don't have a menu for changing the settings for just that program. You have to work through the MUI Preferences and set up a gadget from there for these early programs.

The features MUI adds to Amiga OS would make good permanent additions. Many of them are already available in non-Amiga operating systems as standard features. It's my hope that once the Amiga ownership issue is settled, the new owners will consider adding MUI to the operating system.

MUI is shareware and registered users get access to all the MUI features. The nice thing about MUI is that you can use it as an operating system extension as is, then increase its value by paying the shareware fee. Currently, that fee is only US $20. A very nice registration program comes with MUI to help you get your order written properly.

MUI is available from any Aminet site. It's in the util/libs/directory. As of this writing, look for archive mui38usr.lha. There is also a free developer's kit, mui38dev.lha.

MUI requires Amiga OS 2.0+, 512K RAM, and works on all processors. It installs with the standard Amiga installer program. The documentation itself is supplied in an AmigaGuide format and is reasonably well written.

"Hey, what the heck is a 'MUI Custom Class' program?"

MUI is arranged as a shared library, that is put together at run time, and composed of a main graphics routine (MUI) and a set of different types of MUI subroutines (MUI/libs). A MUI Custom Class (MCC) is an addition to the set of libraries. They are either nonconfigurable (no fun), or come with a MUI custom preferences file. If the latter is true, when you call up the MUI Preferences program it will have a new page regarding the new type of MUI screen or data types, and how you want them set up. Here's a cool example - get the MUI HTML text mcc, and install it (put the *.mcc and *.mcp files in MUI:libs, or click the install icon). Then run your MUI Prefs program (in the MUI directory). Run the slider down to the bottom of the list on the left hand side of the window, and the new prefs screen will be clickable from there. Then call the HTMLtext reader demo and give it some HTML to read. It shows pictures, text, most tags, etc., and the program is *real* small. Although MCC's aren't used in standard MUI programs, they probably will be in future releases.

✍ Davis Sprague

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By Davis Sprague

The Telnet Link

What is "telnet?" Well, for starters it is arguably the oldest and most basic form of network communication protocol. The protocol is a way to gain access to a distant computer as if you were sitting in front of it, using its keyboard. This means that by using telnet I could log onto your computer over a network, and begin typing on my keyboard, with the result being that your computer would react as if you were using it yourself. Sounds like a definite security risk, doesn't it? Still, this is one way that computer networks are established, and it is in widespread use.

You probably are using a telnet connection somewhere in your internet server's network without even knowing it. For example, when I sign onto my provider, a computer called "Annex" handles the sign-on and telephone maintenance information, and presents a menu. My provider offers BBS, PPP and shell type accounts, and when you choose the type of account from the menu, "Annex" telnets you to a different machine that services each type of account.

Telnet connections require an address and a port number to allow connection to a distant computer. The address is the IP address of the computer you wish to telnet to. The port number is used by the distant computer to determine what type of log-on to use and to setup the computer for your specific use. This allows the distant computer to automatically configure itself differently, and to run different programs automatically when you connect by telnet. If you don't give a port number the default is chosen and the distant computer assumes you want to sign-on as a standard user. This allows a computer to send weather information if telneted on one port, and sign you on to handle your personal finances if telneted on a different port.

Once the telnet connection is made, the text that you type is sent transparently to the distant computer. Screen output from the distant computer will be sent to your computer and displayed on your terminal. Depending on how your computer handles this, it appears that you are working on the distant machine. There are two exceptions. The first is that files need to be sent via a transmission protocol to be accepted as files to be saved by your machine. This can be any of the common file transmission protocols such as Xmodem, Zmodem, etc. These are just schemes the dis-

continued on page 15

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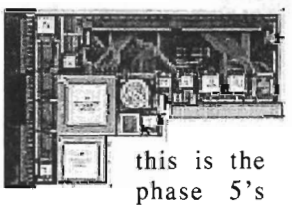
Phase 5 con't



near $100 for a low end 030 to several times that for a 060.

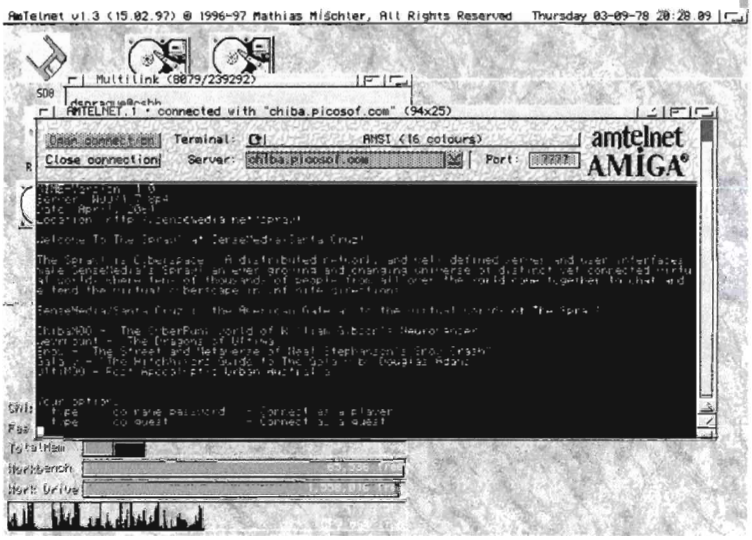
The A/BOX - this is the crowning glory of phase 5's view of Amiga-like computing. And Amiga-like is the correct term-the A/BOX may be Amiga inspired, but it is not an Amiga. Rather, it's an all new hardware platform, based on the PowerPC processor, and running a Unix kernal as the core of the operating system. The term "kernal" is used by operating system designers to describe the most fundamental, central components of an operating system. On top of this kernal will be built the rest of the operating system, with an Amiga look and feel. A "virtual Amiga" -an Amiga in software-will be included to run existing

continued on page 15

Telnet con't from page 14

tant computer uses to tell your local machine that the data it is sending is a file, and not pages and pages of screen data to be displayed. The second exception is the telnet control character. Depending on your system and your telnet program, this character can be set to any standard ASCII character, but it is usually given the value of CTRL-] (hold the Ctrl key and hit the square-end-bracket key). This tells the local computer to stop sending your keystrokes to the distant computer, and lets you type commands to reconfigure the telnet program you are using. You should almost never need this, but if your fingers are a little clumsy you could activate it accidentally. If you do, check the documentation of your telnet program to see how to re-establish the transparent telnet link.

That's all there is to telnet itself, the interesting things come when you use it. Telnet allows me to run programs and download the output from a Sun SPARC some twenty miles from my home and housed in a building I've never seen. Telnet allows me to run database searches on another business computer, again about twenty miles from my home. Telnet is also the main protocol that allows access to MultiUser Domains on the internet for recreation and socialization around the world without leaving the safety and comfort of your own home.



Telnet allows you to access a distant computer by modem and use it as if you were sitting in front of it. AmTelnet from VaporWare makes it easy.

from page 5

Amiga software.

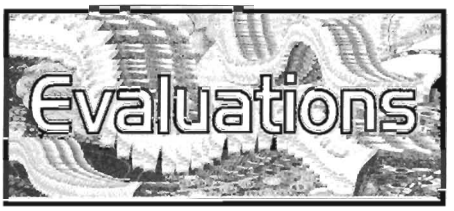
All this presents a rosy picture of future Amiga-like computing, without leaving your existing investment in software behind and without requiring you to give up the attributes of the Amiga itself which make it such a special machine.

There are a few concerns, however. First, the PowerPC is not a direct replacement for the Motorola 68000 line of chips. No software will work on both processors. It all has to be recompiled. That includes the Amiga's operating system - there's no operating system for these boards at present. Phase 5 claims many top Amiga developers are committed to port their software and we see no reason to doubt them. Also, the dual processor scheme for the accelerator boards and virtual Amiga for the A/BOX should help greatly.

Of more concern is the number of other companies with visions for the Amiga's future. There are a number of forces pulling the already small and fragmenting Amiga community in different directions. The longer this goes on, the less likely is the establishment of any clear path to the future. Cooperation between the Amiga's new owners and phase 5 will be necessary for all their visions to become reality. Right now, that cooperation can't be guaranteed. If the new owners see phase 5 as more competitor than collaborator, it might never happen. Only time will tell whether phase 5's creative approach to the future will work for all our benefits.

Full details on all phase 5 products and plans for the future can be found on their web site, http://www.phase5.de

By Brad Webb



Reviews

PCx

The first thing to say about PCx is that it works as advertised. That's not always guaranteed when you're dealing with a software emulator. In this case, I'm writing this review under MS/DOS using PCx on my Amiga 3000, just to prove it works. I am, however, using an old MS/DOS word processor rather than Word for Windows as my standard A3000/030/25 MHz is not fast enough to run Windows at a usable speed, nor does it have the recommended amount of free memory. That's the bad news. The good news is I haven't out-typed this word processor yet, which, for me at least, means an emulator quick enough for running MS/DOS programs.

Those MS/DOS programs run a bit more slowly on my A3000 than they do with my 386 Bridgeboard. With a more powerful Amiga, you should see usable speed from most any software you load. There isn't a software PC emulator made which will run as fast as real hardware. That's why emulators are best used for occasional tasks rather than day to day chores.

Compatibility is another concern whenever you work with emulators. So far, I've found good compatibility with MS/DOS applications I've run. I've had worse luck with games and educational software. The first program I attempted to load and run is an old spelling game called "Spelling Fair." While it works perfectly on the Bridgeboard, it proved unusable on PCx. The venerable program "Expert Astronomer" ran acceptably. Newer programs will probably fare better than older, but it might be worthwhile obtaining the demo version of PCx and testing any package you're interested in before you invest in the commercial version.

Some games do work well. We've successfully run "Brix" and "Alternate Reality, the City" at speeds good enough to be playable on a 030 processor. "Wolf 3D" also ran, but not quickly enough to be playable on the machine used for games testing–a 030/26 MHz based A1200.

Windows will work if you have enough

continued on page 16

PCx con't from page 15

free memory-at least 6 Mb of fast RAM. I can actually get Windows to run on my A3000 with 4 Mb of RAM free. It runs, but very, very slowly. It was also necessary to copy the Windows files to my machine from a hardfile created on a computer with more memory-without the 6 free Mb of RAM. I was unable to run Windows Setup to completion. Because of limitations in the emulator to date, you have to launch windows with the /S switch (e.g., type WIN/S at your MS/DOS prompt). This will run Windows in the "standard" mode. Also, you are restricted to using Windows 3.0 or 3.1. Windows 3.11 and 95 will not work.

On a fast enough Amiga, you should be able to run Windows at a genuinely usable speed. I would recommend at least a 040 CPU, although you should probably have a 060, and as much RAM as possible. Keep in mind both these recommendations are due to Windows, not PCx.

Configuring PCx is very easy. When you first launch it, a simple to use configuration program is started. You can actually create several different configurations for different purposes. There is no manual, all documentation is presented in AmigaGuide format, complete with illustrations. I'd have preferred a printed manual, but what's provided is quite adequate.

PCx also offers a good deal of versatility. There are several different graphics drivers, including one that will work with graphics boards. There are two different ways of providing your emulated PC with a hard drive. You can use either a "hardfile" or a dedicated Amiga partition. A hardfile is a large Amiga file that is treated by the program as a PC hard drive. Dedicating an Amiga partition to the emulator can speed things up considerably. During testing, we ran Windows setup on two A3000's, one with a hardfile and one with a dedicated partition. The "copy files" portion of the setup took between four and five hours to complete using the hardfile, and about a half hour with the dedicated partition.

PCx v1.1 installs easily using the standard Amiga installation program. It works quite well, and I can certainly recommend its use for occasional PC work. (That's the most I'd recommend for any emulator. If you need to use PC software constantly, buy a PC). If you wish to use MS/DOS programs only, you will need a 020+ CPU, 3 Mb free RAM, 3 Mb hard disk space, and Amiga OS 2.04+. If you run Windows substitute at least a 040 processor (in theory a 020 or 030 would work but it would be painful) and 6 Mb free RAM. That's just for the operating system. You may need additional free RAM for your programs. This is, after all, PC emulation we're dealing with. I also recommend a dedicated Amiga partition rather than using a hardfile. 50 Mb is a good size to start with, especially if you're considering using Windows. Price is US $59.95.

Overall this is a fine product. I expect it to be even better over time. Right now I'd give it a grade of "B-" mainly due to compatibility problems with some software, especially the inability to run the newer versions of Windows. It does have real prospects of improving to "A" in the future. If you have the system resources to run PCx properly, you'll be pleased with it.

Rating: B-

By Brad Webb

Imagine v5.0

Imagine is a full featured 3D graphics design and rendering engine. Version 5 of Imagine sports a new ARexx interface and is said to work with DCTV and the standard CybergraphX library interface. Imagine has always supported the Firecracker 24 graphics card. However, graphics card features were not tested in this review. ARexx, which is included with Amiga OS 2.04 and above, is required for use of the ARexx interface.

The program requires a standard Amiga and at least 1 Mb of RAM to operate. More RAM is recommended, and will be necessary for most rendering projects. Imagine runs on a standard Amiga with 68000 CPU and no FPU, but operates much better with an accelerator and FPU. It installs to hard drive, and requires neither dongle nor original bootdisk to run. The program installs easily with the provided installer script.

The program was installed and tested on an Amiga 1200 with a GVP 1230 accelerator, 2 Mb chip RAM, 20 Mb fast RAM, and OS 3.0. It was also confirmed to run by ParNet from the A1200 to an A2000 with MMR 68030 33 MHz with FPU, 1 Mb chip RAM, 6 Mb fast RAM, 122 Mb SCSI hard drive running Amiga OS 2.04.

The evaluation copy of Imagine 5.0 included only the Imagine ARexx manual, but the full distribution is reported by Impulse Inc. to include a program manual and some example files. The prior Imagine manuals could be confusing, tending to be written for someone already familiar with the software. The last manual that I've seen (that for 3.0) had improved significantly, but still remained a difficult read. Luckily, it was written in more of a tutorial style, allowing you to work through the program's features. However, this made it quite difficult to find specific information quickly.

Imagine is an excellent and versatile 3D design and rendering program. It is geared to the intense user of graphics software, and has a steep learning curve, but the overall approach is flexible. As a beginning user, the tutorial lets you make renders easily, but the vast array of advanced features allows for remarkable image manipulations. The optional use of algorithmic textures or image maps is a great plus. The speed of rendering is in keeping with similar programs on the market, and the renders are of good to excellent quality.

My main complaint with Imagine 5.0 is the arrangement of the interface with the more complex functions in the 3D object creation. This part of the program is used to build objects for rendering. The menus for the complex functions are several layers deep, and these pull up more levels of option windows. Remembering the path to a desired function can be very frustrating. Trying to remember the name of a function, let alone what menu it can be found in, leaves me frazzled. To counter this, Imagine allows common commands to be accessed by user menus that send ARexx commands, as well as by a user configurable button bar at the bottom of each screen. Still, these require some expertise to arrange.

I experienced several system crashes with this version of Imagine, but I assume this was due to incompatibility with my background tasks. Since the crashes were not consistent or reproducible, I have not attempted to locate the program at fault.

In the past, support from Impulse was variable, with their tech staff not seeming very familiar with the program. This has improved, but with the arrival of the IBM compatible version of Imagine, the Amiga support is threatening to disappear.

In conclusion, Imagine is an excellent program, but the learning curve is steep and the layout of the tools is difficult to master. The addition of ARexx will help those wishing to automate and

continued on page 20

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DrawStudio v1.1 CD

DrawStudio is a hybrid illustration package that blurs the borders between a structured drawing program (such as ProVector) and a traditional paint program (such as PersonalPaint). With the release of DrawStudio, desktop publishers and graphic artists alike will find a program that fills a need long neglected.

The CD includes DrawStudio v1.1, ImageStudio v2.3.0, and TextureStudio. These programs are not covered by this review, but their inclusion more than makes up for the higher cost of the CD version. Also included on the CD are a wealth of textures, photographs, postscript fonts, clip art, special effects and more.

DrawStudio requires a minimum of 3 Mb RAM, 020+ CPU, Amiga OS 2.04+ and a hard drive. I recommend a decent 030 CPU for anything greater than 8-Bit work, an FPU and 6 Mb of RAM. This review was conducted on an A1200 with a 060 CPU w/FPU, 4X CD-ROM and 32 Mb of RAM.

Installation couldn't be easier, just drag and drop the program icon from the CD to your hard drive. The program cannot be run from the CD. The supplied 96 page manual is well written and informative. DrawStudio requires Magic User Interface to run. By now, most Amigans realize the benefit of MUI, and it should be installed on every Amiga system.

There is so much to DrawStudio I don't know where to begin. Unlike a traditional paint program, every single object you create has it's own attributes. Once an object is created, you can go back to it at any time to change any feature. Object attributes are changed through menus that allow everything from pen thickness to pattern fills. Objects and text can be filled with gradients, patterns, or any bitmap graphic image. Areas of bitmaps can be made transparent, allowing the background to show through. Text handling (Adobe Type 1) is superb, allowing for warping, text on a curve or along any line. Bezier line manipulation is extensive with editing, cutting and joining features that can make any shape.

Multiple projects can be opened at one time and DrawStudio supports multiple pages. A powerful feature is layering. Layers are like transparent sheets placed over a page, enabling you to see the layer (and its objects) below. This allows you to, say, draw a background on one layer and then add foreground objects on the next layer. There is also a snap feature that helps you connect any shape or line to the exact point on any other object you want, without overlay. The align feature gives you many ways to align objects to themselves, or to the page. Full ARexx support and included scripts provide automatic shadowing and multi-shaped boxes. Hotkeys make often used effects a snap.

The program offers many display options. You can work in 1-Bit (black and white and very fast), 8-Bit gray, 8-Bit color or 24-Bit. All objects are stored internally in 24-Bit, providing smooth printing output. File support is strong with the ability to load and save IFF-ILBM, GIF, JPEG, TIFF, BMP, and PCX bitmaps. DrawStudio can also import DR2D-IFF (Amiga standard structure format) and save PostScript and EPS. There is also promised support for illustrator 88 and illus (PageStream 3+) import/export filters. DrawStudio bitmap exporting is superb with DPI resolutions adjustments and powerful anti-aliasing.

I could continue with the many features, but must now turn to the dislikes. If I must complain, I think that some of the object attribute features are too deeply buried in menus, but configuration of Hotkeys solves

continued on page 20

✔ Personal Paint 7.0

0 — 100

Amiga Format 2/97 90%

"As usual, the software on the CD is perfectly presented. PPaint 7 is the finest palette-based graphics package for the Amiga today. Superb value for money."

Amiga Computing 2/97 86%

"...The program is better suited than any other Amiga art package to building Web-based designs that combine maximum image quality with a compact size."

CU Amiga 1/97 89%

"Straight forward operation but the documentation needs some more work. Excellent specialized graphics package gets even better. ...Highly worthy of a purchase."

✔ TurboCalc v4

CU Amiga 2/97 90%

"No printed manual, but half the price of opposition and there are special deals on upgrades. Real user-friendliness combined with real power."

Amiga Computing 2/97 93%

"TurboCalc is an exemplary Amiga program – easy to learn, quick to use and yet has the power for even the most demanding user."

Amiga Format 2/97 91%

"60 New functions included with 33 macros mean there is nothing I can think of that you are likely to want to do in a spreadsheet that TurboCalc can't do."

✔ Meeting Pearls 4 CD

Amiga Format 3/97 80%

"The interface is brilliant. It has all the information and functionality you need and the program integrates seamlessly. ...This is a diverse collection with everything from games to utilities. Ideal if you need a really good general collection."

CU Amiga 3/97 88%

"Thousands of software titles, sorted into Aminet-like directories of subject matter, with an Aminet-like front end. This CD is aimed at the more technical user though...A large selection of programmers' utilities...A strong selection of utilities..."

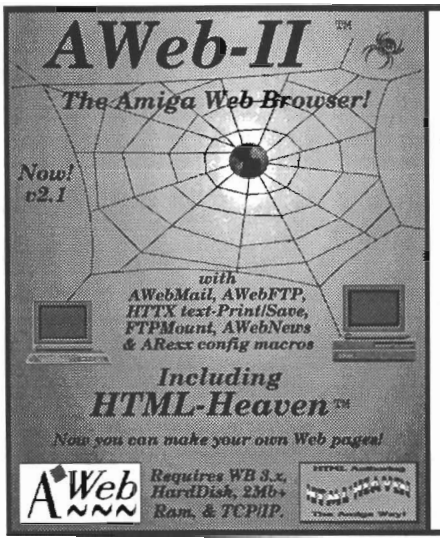
✔ Graffiti Card

Amiga Shopper 8/96 82%

"It's hard to imagine that a little black box that fits onto the RGB output of any Amiga model could actually be a powerful video card, but that's exactly what this Graffiti 'card' is."

Amiga Format 8/96 82%

"Getting The Graffiti to work is simplicity itself. The chunky pixel mode is ideal for quicker animations and areas where graphics need to be calculated quickly, like the Doom clones. Programmers will definitely get their money's worth."



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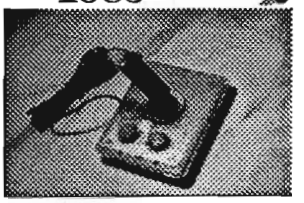

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DrawStudio con't from page 17

this. The amount of provided ARexx scripts is quite limited also. I ran into some strange intermittent pixel interference at the bottom of pages when changing between various screen display modes. Finally, the manual could use a better index, but since many programs don't even provide a printed manual, I shouldn't really complain.

DrawStudio is a fabulous program. For an early release version it contains a wealth of features. It ran flawlessly, without a single crash or hang. It will take a long time to find the limits to this program's potential. In the DTP/webpage development area, DrawStudio is a godsend, and I expect to use it extensively. The authors are devout and long time Amiga developers and have designed a top quality program that deserves our support. While not a replacement to a traditional paint program, it is an essential supplement to any serious graphic artist's set of programs. Once you use it, you will wonder how you ever did without. This program deserves an A.

LH Publishing offers the following support: phone: +44 (0) 1908-370-230; Fax: +44 (0) 1909-640-371; Email; larry@em.powernet.co.uk; URL: http://www.ajdean.co.uk/studio/ds/html. The website will offer new import/export filters for free when available. A demo version of DrawStudio is also available at the web site. The retail price for DrawStudio is Approximately US $120. LH Publishing, 13 Gairloch Ave. Bletchley MK2 3DH, England

Rating: A

By Fletcher Haug

Imagine con't from page 16

integrate their rendering systems, but adds little for the casual user. The cybergraphX inclusion will mean a lot to anyone using a graphics card, and probably adds more in the long run to the program's usability. Impulse was a long time Amiga only software company, and deserves our continued support for their efforts to offer state of the art Amiga graphics tools. Imagine rates a "B-" on the Informer's rating scale.

Imagine Version 5 is available directly from Impulse for US $100. A demo version of Imagine 4.0 is available at the Impulse web site. Impulse Inc., 8416 Xerxes Ave. N, Brooklynn Park, MN 55444. Phone: 800-328-0184; Email: sales@coolfun.com; URL: http://www.coolfun.com

Rating: B-

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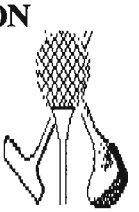

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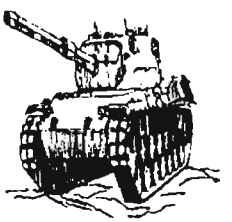

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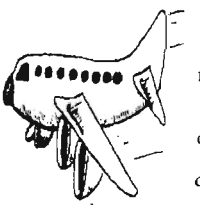

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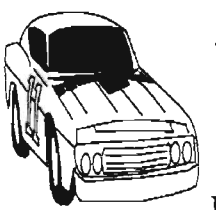

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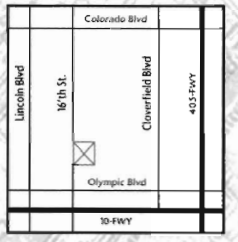

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$395 Siamese System

RTG Software Now Shipping!

The Siamese System is many things. You are probably aware that it totally integrates an Amiga with a PC, allowing you to control both computers with a single mouse, keyboard and monitor. However, did you know the Siamese System offers the fastest Amiga to PC networking solution in existance? With scsi networking support, you can share a scsi drive so that both computers can read and write to it at full speed. The Siamese Software will also use the shared drive to transparently buffer data, for example if you copy a file from C: on the PC to dh0: on the Amiga, the software will automatically copy the file from C: to the shared drive, and then from the shared drive to dh0:. This results in the fastest file transfer speeds around, with speeds upto 3 megabytes per second achelvable, far faster than ethernet. The Amiga has access to all of the PC's drives, including floppy, cdrom, and networked drives, via a virtual drive called PC: that appears to the Amiga like any other drive.

"The Fastest Amiga To PC Networking Solution In Existance!"

Main Features:

- Integrated Amiga, PC and Mac system possible.
- Single Monitor automatically switches to display PC as if Amiga Screen.
- Single Keyboard and Mouse operation across all platforms.
- Built in Serial networking with all PC drives mounted on Amiga.
- Siamese uses high speed SCSI network with suitable SCSI interfaces.
- Read/Write on any PC Drive at high speed, including Networked Drive.
- Text Clipboard, Cut and Paste between Amiga and PC applications
- Share Printers, all Amiga output sent to PC printer.
- Amiga MCI controller from AmigaDos or Arexx, (Media Control Interface)
- Access to Low cost PC products:-
- 16 bit Sound Card with Wave Synth chip.
- MJpeg Video Recording cards.
- PC Ethernet Cards.
- Use Cheap PC SVGA monitor with AGA Amigas
- Plus Optional extras : Sharing of PC Modems, MJpeg based, SVHS Anim software TCP/IP networking support.
- Full Arexx support built in.

What the Press have to say!

Matt Bettison: CU Amiga's-Aug'96
"I never expected the Siamese to pull off PC and Amiga integration to this degree."
"I consider this to be the most revolutionary product of the year for the Amiga.
CU Rating 93%

Larry Hickmott: EM-Issue 11
"the Siamese system has not only helped to make things much more efficient around here, it is also bringing different types of computers together"
EM Rating 90%

David Taylor: Prototype Preview-Mar'96
"Now you can have the best of both worlds, using each machine for the areas they excel in. This is the beauty of two independant machines working together." Cut and Paste text between Amiga and PC Applications. Read PC devices from within Amiga applications Control PC Video and 16 bit Sound from the Amiga...."

Is This Your Idea Of An Integrated Multi Platform Amiga Based System . .

AMIGA SUPERSTAR 93%

AMIGA GOLD FORMAT 93%

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http://web.idirect.com/~oshamiga

Systems For Tomorrow 816-833-4738
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http://www.SystemsForTomorrow.com
FAX: 816-252-3611

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4545 E. Tropicana Ave. #15
Las Vegas, NV 89121
shirleyv@ix.netcom.com

Slipped Disk 810-546-3475
170 W 12 Mile Road
Madison Heights, MI 48071

Imagine Computers 804-243-0540
331 Laurel Place
Birmingham, AL 35209-5415
Pwm5k@virginia.edu
http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~pwm5k/imagine

Even now, some public-domain programs are available in DMS (Disk-Masher) format. DMS files may be extracted to the hard drive (rather than a floppy) by using any of the following programs found on Aminet: disk/misc/fmsdisk.lha; disk/misc/VirtualFloppy.lha; disk/misc/fms 20.lha; disk/misc/FmsDisk.lha. ✍RP

Internet Sites

www.nfinity.com/~amicom/blitz.html
Club Blitz. Excellent resource page for Blitz Basic programmers
www.amigsupport.com
Nice site hosted by Robinson Consulting
www.ozemail.com.au/~cyberwlf/CyberAm.html
Home page of Amiganaught Guy Nathan
www.amiga.org
Up to date news, cool links and info
www.geocites.com/siliconfalley/9636/authored.html
Get your Amiga web site listed as "Made on the Amiga"
www.iworks.com
Amiga multimedia networking applications
www.sasg.com
Slick, professional web site of the Standardized Amiga Shareware Group
www.dejanews.com
Search, read and post to Usenet from this site
www.geocities.com/hollywood/3146/index.html
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FS: Retina Z2 24-Bit display card with original software and external composite/SVHS video encoder. Good display board for the 2000. Perfect condition. $250 for both. Currently selling for $325 new from Software Hut. If interested e-mail dhaslup@erols.com

For Sale: Used Amiga games. Over ninety titles from $1 to $5. For a catalog send your address to: Patrick Gee, PO Box 95, Cairo, NY 12413 or emal: edward@francomm.com

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Toaster 2000 w/2.0 software - $800. Personal TBC2 - $350. Buyer pays shipping. Call 203-348-6158 or Email: 102035.1677@compuserve.com

For sale: Video Toaster 4000 V3.1 card, rarely used with original box, 12 CD's of Club Toaster and Sync Strainer monitor adapter. $1,200 obo (419)872-2274 or 76072.220@compuserve.com.

3000 25 MHz, 2 Chip / 4 Fast RAM, 100 Mb HD, $650.00. Videos: Toaster Essentials and LightWave, $15.00 each. Gamer's Guide, $10.00. A1200 Insiders Guide, $15.00. Magazines w/ disks. .50 - $2.00. CineMorph, $20.00. Call 205-729-8867

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- ✔**Zipperware, Seattle, WA** (Lost lease, unable to relocate)
- ✔**Wentek, Phoenix, AZ** (Untimely death of owner Rob Wendling)
- ✔**Software Supermart, Edmonton, AB** (Alleged embezzlement of funds caused bankruptcy)

Using Simon Richardson's LogiMouse (Aminet:hard/drivr/LogiMouse1053.lha) and a serial three-button mouse, drag-select doesn't work in MUI applications. A quick workaround is to set up your middle mouse button as a shift key. Then simply right-click, move, mid-click+right-click to select ranges.

-RP

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