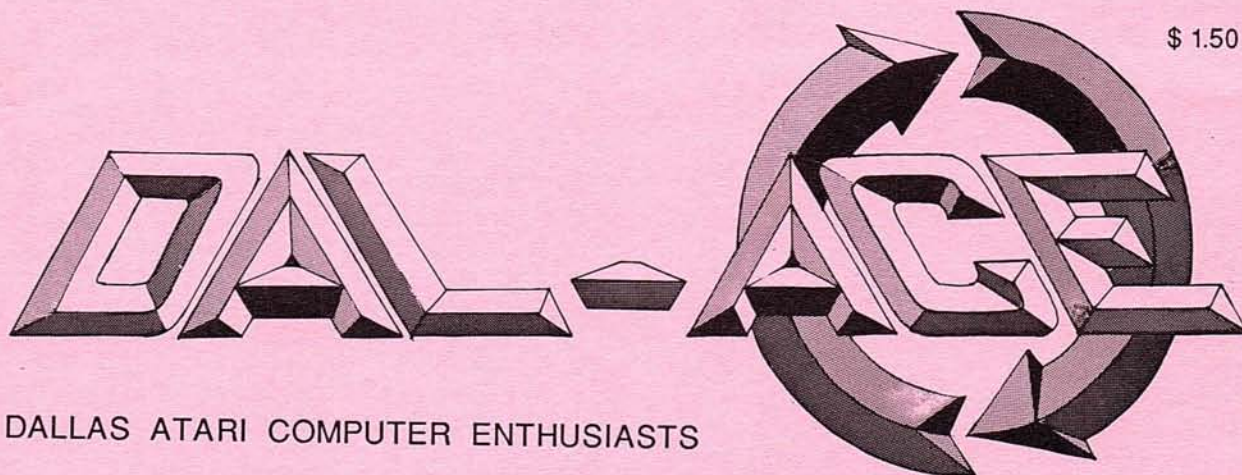


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DALLAS ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

September 1987 Issue

INSIDE: Adding a 2nd drive to your Atari Hard Drive

Atari News More on PC Ditto Hard Disk Primer

REVIEWS IMG Scan Karate Kid II

Pha\$er Alternate Reality Publishing Partner



Picture Scanned With the IMG Scan From SeyMor - Radix
And printed on an Apple LaserWriter With IMG_PS3.PRG

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Editor's Notes

Well, it is now September. Where has the year gone?? It is hard for me to imagine that I have been editor for 9 months. Let me take just a moment to reflect on these past 9 months.

When I took over back in December, the newsletter was being produced on an Atari 130xe using Paperclip xe and a lot of cutting and pasting. That was fine, but I wanted to improve the quality of the newsletter. My first issue, I did something that many people have wanted to do for a long time - remove the borders!

Over the next few months, we made minor changes here and there. Then one day John Pellet submitted an article done with Publishing Partner. I thought that this was great, and that I wanted the entire newsletter to look the same way. Since that day, the newsletter has been produced on a 1040 ST using Publishing Partner.

With this advance in technology and power, we have been able to produce the newsletter without cutting and pasting articles and in about one-half of the time it used to take. Not bad for nine months, is it?

Well, here we are now. It's up to you, the users and readers, to decide what you want out of YOUR newsletter. If you want to see something or have any suggestions, please let us know. We are always willing to listen to even the most absurd idea.

Now it is time for me to get up on my soap box. I would like to see more user contributions to the newsletter. Every month, I see the same people

contributing articles (John Pellet, for example, contributes 4 or 5 articles per month and sometimes more. While they may or may not be his own articles, at least he is contributing!!). All that I am trying to say is that this is YOUR newsletter, and it is what YOU make it. My philosophy is that if you know English, then you can write an article or a review of something. If you are unsure how to write an article, turn to page 15 of the February newsletter. It contains a step-by-step instruction on how to write a review. (Stepping down now.)

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to Jim and Rachel Duke and Angela Burns for their continued effort put into the newsletter. Without the common meeting place (jim's house), the newsletter would probably not have been put together. I would just like to let them know that the blood, sweat, and tears that they have put into the newsletter are appreciated by me.

Until next month,
Scott

Computer Council of Dallas NEWS

By John Pellet

August, 1987

The July and August User Forums were slightly less crowded than expected. Attendance, both vendor and member, appears to be suffering some summer doldrums. But not enough to make parking easy.

At the August forum, 45 vendor tables were sold, plus 14 tables were used by affiliates. CCD needs new vendors. Remember, they are what pay the rent. So if your favorite retailer isn't there, let him, and us, know about it.

The reduced table rentals has caused CCD to operate at less than break-even for the last two months. If revenues (number of tables rented) do not increase, CCD may be forced to levy fees against affiliates.

Each User Forum contains over 100 individually scheduled meetings. The hours of 9 AM and noon are the busiest. They have become so busy that groups using several rooms at 9 AM will be asked to move at least one of their SIGS from the 9 AM hour. Noon also is a busy time. If you can schedule your meetings at other than these two times, CCD scheduling will be easier.

PLEASE remember that unattended minors (under 16 years old) are NOT permitted by INFOMART. Families are very welcome, but children should not be left unattended. Please register minor children when you enter so that you may be contacted if a problem does occur. This is a necessary commitment by CCD and each affiliate to use INFOMART's facilities. Please act accordingly.

Two organizations were made full affiliates at the August CCD board meeting: the Chinese Information Resources Association and the North Texas Association for Artificial Intelligence. Additional information about each group is available from any CCD Representative.

Unfortunately, the MIDI group is no longer affiliated with CCD. The group would not meet the simple rules necessary, nor even make someone available to answer questions. Their CCD affiliation was reluctantly terminated at the July board meeting.

Volunteers are urgently needed during both setup and breakdown. If you happen to arrive early (before 9 AM) or stay late (after 4 PM), drop by the Information Booth and see if you can help. It doesn't take too long, or involve much effort, but would be greatly appreciated. Affiliates have been requested to provide one or two volunteers on a rotating basis to help. At the September User Forum, the TI-Home group will help with setup, and NTPCUG (IBM...) will help with breakdown.

Dal-ACE (Atari) announced that they would be having a swap meet after the September business meeting. Emphasis will be on Atari related computer products. There will be a nominal fee for table space. Visitors and guest are very welcome.

Dal-ACE also announced they would be sponsoring a Toys for Tots benefit in December. It probably will include games, door prizes, and an auction. Admission and all proceeds will be donated to the Toys for Tots charity.

SCOPE (Commodore) announced that they are planning a major show in March of 1988, hopefully to coincide with the March User Forum. Details as they become available.

Meeting dates for the next three months are: September 12, October 10, and November 14. See you there!



August Atari Conference Highlights

Downloaded from Delphi

The following quotes come from a formal conference that took place on GENie on Wednesday, August 5, 1987. The conference was attended by many Atari Corp. employees (noted in the text). Hopefully, a full transcript of what occurred will be uploaded, but for now, I wanted to pass on the highlights. Here it is...

Regarding the Mega pricing, Neil Harris relayed:

"The Mega ST2 will sell for \$1699 with Monochrome, \$1899 with RGB; The Mega ST4 is \$2399 with mono, \$2599 with color. Please keep some things in mind regarding these prices:

1. They are suggested list,
2. We're improving dealer margins, so the numbers may seem a little high now,
3. These are the numbers today..."

Jim Tittsler (Atari Hardware Group, PC project, et al): "The Mega STs are shipping, at least to Europe. I was very pleased to see a note on Usenet this morning from Simon Poole (of UNITERM fame) that said that one of the dealers in Switzerland had sold something like 10 Mega4's in his first 8 hours."

Neil Harris: "Can't exactly say when we'll have them out in the US. Imminent... Certainly within 60 days for retail. Systems for developers arrive any day, if not here already."

Regarding the Tandy PCs that were announced this week, Jim Tittsler said:

"I have only heard the description via the San Jose Mercury News. The pricing seemed better than their old pricing... but still not incredibly aggressive. I still think for an EGA/serial/parallel machine the PC is a good deal."

Concerning the Blitter as an upgrade to the existing STs, Neil said:

"The Service Dept. wants the upgrade to be a board swap because they don't like the idea of dealers doing heavy soldering to the motherboard. Not sure what the final outcome is... The blitter upgrade should be around \$120."

Entertainment update, passed on by Darryl May (Atari Cust. Service):

"Well, ST BattleZone is out, and the 8 bit version is being worked on, plus many more titles for the 8 bit side including some old and new titles."

Neil Harris: "The XE Game System is providing the motivation to get lots of 8-bit games going. Most of them were out on disk before and are now being converted to cart. But some were never available for the 8-bit Ataris before, like Gato."

Mark Jansen (Atari Technical Documentation; West Coast Editor for Atari Explorer): "It's also the easiest game system to develop new software for."

Can memory chips just be plugged into the Mega 2 to make it a Mega 4?

Neil Harris: "There seems to be some controversy over that right now, we've been told 2 different things by the manufacturing folks. So we'll defer the answer on that one for now..."

Is the PC emulator still viable, and if so, what is pricing and availability?

Jim Tittsler: "The hardware PC emulator is still under development... but there are now 2 additional viable alternatives: (1) a software solution and (2) the Atari PC... [The PC emulator] will always end up costing more than a purely software solution, but hopefully the performance will make up for it. It will have to be for the hard core PCer since, from what I am hearing, the software solution meets a lot of needs... No real idea on pricing... that is up to the gang downstairs. I would imagine it will be a little less than an Atari PC, but if you look at what it takes to do a complete hardware emulation, it is not all that much less than just building a PC (and of course we are getting lots of practice at that now!)"

Hard Disk Primer

Curious about hard disk drives?

Here's an explanation of them by an authority
- the president of ICD, Inc.

by Tom Harker

Once you've tried one, you'll never want to give it up. That's the problem with hard disk drives: they're psychologically addictive. A hard disk drive will move your computer into a whole new class of productivity machines. Whether your use is telecommunications or a database for your business,

a hard disk drive will double your efficiency. There are a few issues we'll discuss that should help you select the hard disk drive that's best for you. First, a little inside information.

What's inside.

The Winchester type or "fixed" hard disk drive operates like a floppy disk drive from which you can't remove the disk. The disk and heads are inside a sealed chamber that should never be opened. A hard disk is much faster, more reliable, and stores many times the capacity of a floppy. The speed and precision of a hard drive results in greater density and shorter access times. An Atari 1050 turns the disk at 288 rpm (revolutions per minute). A fixed hard disk drive spins at 3600 rpm. There are also removable hard disk drives available, which usually have the disk in a plastic cartridge. These generally run at 1800 rpm, and head movement is considerably slower.

The hard disk drive head is aerodynamically designed to float on a cushion of air several microns (millionths of an inch) above the platter or disk. The platter is accurately machined and very rigid, unlike a floppy. There are usually two or more heads in each fixed drive (20-meg drives usually have four), with one or two heads on each side of the platter. Many drives have more than one platter. The platters are divided by concentric circles called cylinders. These are like the "tracks" on a floppy disk. A 5.25-inch platter will have from 150 to 640 cylinders, compared to 40 tracks on a formatted Atari 1050 disk. As you may have already surmised, precision stepping (head movement) is required.

Density.

There are currently two commonly found density schemes (also called data packing or encoding) used. The most common and least expensive is called MFM (Modified Frequency Modulation). MFM is the standard encoding method used with double-density drives. MFM is what 1050 disk drives use for dual density (FM is used for single density), and what US Doublers use for "full double" density. A standard 5.25- or 3.5-inch hard disk drive using 256 byte sectors with MFM encoding will format 32 sectors per cylinder.

Recently, a newer encoding scheme called RLL (Run Length Limited) was developed. This scheme packs one and a half times the data of MFM in the same amount of space. A standard 5.25- or 3.5-inch hard disk drive using 256 byte sectors with RLL encoding will format 48 sectors per cylinder. Since RLL packs more density, it requires special media. RLL controller boards only put out RLL encoding, and MFM controllers only put out MFM. You cannot mix the two types on the same controller.

Drive manufacturers have modified their standard MFM-rated drives to handle RLL encoding. An example is the Seagate ST238 30-meg. It is identical to the ST225 20-meg, except that it has been certified for RLL use. The company probably uses a higher quality magnetic coating on the platters and may also be adjusting the data timing electronics.

If you format an ST238 drive with an MFM controller, you'll end up with 20 meg. If you format the same drive with an RLL controller, you'll end up with 30 meg. It is not recommended that you format an ST225 with an RLL controller. It will probably give you 30 meg, but the data integrity is not guaranteed-and that's very important with hard drives!

Speed.

The interface is another area of major difference between hard and floppy drives. High-speed SCSI or SASI interfaces are used with hard drives and are capable of transferring 5-meg bps (bits per second). The computer architecture, operating system and DOS usually slow the actual transfer rate considerably. Atari 1050 disk drives transfer data at 19.2K baud, while Atari SF354 drives work at near 250K baud. These are all burst rates (the fastest transfer rate hypothetically possible); actual data transfer is much slower, due to head seeking and settling times as well as DOS overhead. See the following chart for actual calculated speeds done under test.

The test procedure was to copy a large file from a device (RAMdisk, floppy disk, hard disk) back to the same device. In this comparison, baud was converted to bytes per second by dividing by 10, which should give a more meaningful value to these numbers. TOS was used with the 520ST, and SpartaDOS with a 130XE was used for the 8-bit tests.

| Type | Burst Rate | Actual Rate |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1050 Double Density | 1.9K | 0.9K |
| 1050 DD UltraSpeed | 5.4K | 2.5K |
| MIO RAMdisk | 56.0K | 54.0K |
| MIO Hard Disk | 42.0K | 14.0K |
| SF354 | 25.0K | 4.0K |
| ST RAMdisk | 500.0K(est.) | 200.0K |
| ST Hard Disk | 500.0K | 30.0K |

Size.

The fixed hard disk drive is a high-speed storage device which holds 5 or more megabytes, depending on the size you purchase. The 20-meg is the most commonly sold size today and is the

equivalent of 222 single-density disks on an 8-bit, or 55 single-sided ST disks.

Parts breakdown for an external drive.

Case and Power Supply - The case should have metal shielding to keep the RFI (Radio Frequency Interference) noise down. Power connectors and mounting brackets are required. The case needs a quiet fan to keep things cool inside. A well-filtered switching power supply, around 45 watts with 4 amps of +5 vdc and 2 amps of +12 vdc, is important.

Host Adapter - This is the MIO hard disk port for the 8-bit Ataris. The ST computers need a host adapter board to convert the DMA port to a standard SCSI or SASI interface. A host adapter may also have other functions which add versatility to the computer (like a real-time clock or other ports).

Controller - This is the complex device which actually controls the hard disk drive. It's an intelligent, high speed device with a CPU, ROM, RAM, and interface circuitry including a well-tuned analog section. The controller has an instruction set which interprets commands from the computer and performs the functions on the drive units. Most controllers are capable of handling two separate hard drive units (some restrictions on multiple drives will vary, depending on controller design). Controllers also have a device ID, which means that a well-designed host adapter can handle up to eight controllers at once. The controller also requires power, usually derived from the drive's power supply inside the case.

Hard Drive Unit - This is the heart of the system... and the part people always discover deals on, in magazines like Computer Shopper. Yes, 20 meg for \$300 or 10 meg for \$200 sounds like a bargain, but you also need the other parts mentioned here to make your system fully functional. The hard drive unit is the delicate sealed mechanism where all the data is stored. It has a circuit board, usually with an ST506/ST412 interface. This is identified by a 34-pin and a 20-pin male edge connector. It also has a polarized plug for DC power (like the controller). The hard drive units are commonly available in full-height and half-height configurations in the 5.25-inch disk size, and the half-height configuration in the 3.5-inch size. The advantage of the half height models is that you can usually fit two of these units together, sharing one case and power supply. Some of the newer 3.5-inch drives also have automatic head unloading when power goes off.

This is a nice feature and can extend head life. A hard disk unit should be expected to give at least two full years of continuous service. Since they are sealed units, it is not recommended that you attempt any service on a bad unit. Any dust allowed inside can destroy reliability.

DAL - ACE

Cables - There are several cables required for an external drive assembly. The first set uses 20-pin and 34-ribbon cables to connect the ST506/ST412 interfaces to the controller. The next is the 50-conductor cable to connect the controller's SCSI port to the host adapter. (An ST also requires a cable from the host adapter to the DMA port.) Of course, the others are the AC and DC power connectors. When building your own system, most problems stem from improperly connected equipment.

Program - A good format program allows versatility with the use of different drives (if any). It also sets the sector skew (interlace) which can affect access speed. The control program can also affect speed. The ST currently requires a handler to be loaded into RAM from floppy disk.

Low-cost drives for the IBM PC and compatibles.

This breakdown has shown the requirements for an external ST or 8-bit Atari drive, and why they are more expensive than the "cheap" IBM-type hard drives sold for the PC and compatibles. An open architecture, and enough space and power for an internal hard disk drive saves \$\$\$\$. Fewer cables and less expensive controllers (due to the sheer volume of PCs with hard drives) are also used with the PCs, resulting in a lower cost.

Reliability.

Hard drives can be very reliable if properly designed and used. The design should include a heavy-duty switching power supply. These are smaller and run much cooler than do their linear counterparts. (Linear supplies work okay, as long as they're properly cooled, and you don't mind the added weight and size.) Proper cooling is a major factor in hard drive reliability. A fan is still considered a necessity by most. Some 3.5-inch drives can be run without fans, but they do seem to run a bit warm. No one really knows how much of a wear factor this will add over the next few years.

Hard disk drives should be left on 24 hours a day, or turned on and off just once a day at most. They are not meant to be cycled on and off many times a day, like a light switch. It takes a tremendous amount of torque to get the platter spinning and speed up to 3600 rpm. This torque creates wear on the bearings--and the heads--on most drives. Another good practice is to park the heads before transporting the drive. This positions the heads to the inside of the data area, where damage is least critical.

Probably the worst thing you can do to a hard drive is move it or bump it while it's turned on. This is where some real damage can occur. At 3600 rpm, if the head touches the platter (from shock), both

can be instantly destroyed. Just remember to exercise care; treat it gently, as you would a baby.

Hard drives are very reliable if properly used, and can provide years of continuous use. They're much more reliable than floppy disks; you just lose far more data if damage occurs. With good design, proper operating procedure, and with regular backup, you'll enjoy a hard drive immensely! I know I wouldn't work without one.

Conclusion.

I hope this article has taken some of the mystery and confusion out of the hard disk drive issue. It is my belief that anyone who's considering using a computer for a business application or a serious BBS should also consider purchasing a hard disk drive. You'll be amazed with the performance.

Author's Biography:

Tom Harker is President of ICD, Inc., manufacturers of SpartaDOS, the US Doubler, RAMBO XL, the MIO, the R-TIME 8 cartridge, the P:R: Connection and the Printer Connection.

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Karate Kid II and World Karate Championship

Reviewed by Bill Sheppard

Require 1040/520ST, color monitor

Ever since 'Punchout' appeared at the video arcades several years ago, all sorts of fighting games have been popular for home computers. One of the most common has been in the form of karate matchups. World Karate Championship (WKC) and Karate Kid Part II (KK2) are the two prime entrants in the ST arena. Both are well-executed, graphically excellent games.

Both games use similar control schemes, where each of the eight possible positions of the joystick, with and without the button being pressed, represents a different move. However, the moves for WKC and KK2 are entirely different. For instance, moving the joystick to the lower right without the button pressed is 'kneel and punch' on KK2, while on WKC it is 'high kick'. Therefore, switching between the two games can be quite difficult for the first few minutes.

Both games have stupendous background graphics. The animated figures of WKC are more detailed, although they move more fluidly on KK2. Overall, I rate both games equally excellent in terms of graphics.

Each game has bonus screens, reached by defeating a certain number of opponents. I found the first bonus screen on KK2 to be quite frustrating, as it involves attempting to catch a fly with a pair of chopsticks. You are given several minutes of time to catch the fly, which I feel is entirely too long, because it becomes monotonous very quickly. The bonus screens on WKC are much quicker, yet still interesting.

Both WKC and KK2 allow one and two player competition. WKC also allows two players to simultaneously compete against the computer.

If there is a single factor by which you might decide which game to purchase, it might be difficulty. I was able to solve KK2 (reach the final level) after several hours of play, at which time there was nothing further to be gained by playing the game. WKC does not have a final level, but will continue to grow in difficulty until you are killed. For this reason, if forced to choose, I would recommend KK2 to the younger or less skilled set, and WKC to those who are more adept at arcade-style computer games. I believe you will find both to be enjoyable additions to your program library.

IMG Scan Image Acquisition Without the Price?

Review by James Duke

The IMG Scan is a low cost image scanner for the Atari ST. With it you can scan black and white pictures, save them as a DEGAS or NEO file and then import them into your favorite publishing program. The scanner consists of a PC board that fits into the cartridge port, and a light pipe that attaches to the print head of almost any printer. By using your printer the IMG Scan costs hundreds of dollars less than traditional stand alone scanners.

Installation of the unit is fairly simple. Just insert the cartridge into the ST and secure the light pipe to the print head of your printer. For optimum results you should position the light pipe so that it is as close to the page to be scanned as possible without actually touching it. You will have to comprise your own means of securing the light pipe to the printer. A piece of tape is supplied for this purpose.

Now you are ready to run the scanning software. Currently there are two versions, one for high resolution, and one for low rez. A future version should incorporate both versions into one program. I will concentrate my review on LOSCAN since best results are obtained in low rez at this time. After booting the software for the first time you should configure it for your printer. If your printer is EPSON compatible you should not have to change any of the settings. If it is not completely EPSON compatible then you will have to make some changes. The two parameters that you will probably have to change are the Scale factor and the return delay factor. (note: I have found that a scale factor of 40 and a return delay rate of 207 work perfect for the STAR NP-10)

From the main menu screen we have several options. You can select the enlargement, centering, and grey scale sliders, and you can select SCAN, RESCAN, RECALC, and VIEW. After placing a picture in the printer to be scanned you will want to select the enlargement and centering to obtain an image of the desired portion of the page. Then selecting SCAN will start the scanning process. If the image that appears on the screen is not the desired portion then simply press any key to stop the scan, adjust the centering and/or the enlargement and select SCAN again. This will restart the scan where it left off. Do this repeatedly until you have zeroed in on the area that you wish to scan. Then press a key to return to the main

DAL - ACE

screen.

Next re-position the picture if necessary and click on RESCAN to clear the screen and start the scanning process again. When the scan is complete you will be returned to the main menu. The IMG Scan actually scans 256 grey levels. Unfortunately the low rez ST screen can only show 8 levels of grey. Using coloring you can obtain 16 shades. The AutoGreyAdjust command will scan the page and examine the grey levels contained on that line. It will use this information to determine which colors are used to represent a series of grey levels. If you are not satisfied with the programs selection of ranges simply hit the AutoGreyAdjust again and the entire image in memory will be analyzed and the picture will be re-adjusted. Clicking AutoGreyAdjust will flip between these two states.

If you are still unsatisfied with the representation you can manually adjust the grey scale by dragging the grey scale sliders in the appropriate direction. When you are finally satisfied with the picture you can save it as a DEGAS or NeoChrome compatible file. Or you can save the actual raw data for further processing with other programs.

Unfortunately, at this time, the full potential of the scanner can not be utilized with any current software packages. You can save DEGAS or NEO pics and import them into your programs, but the IMG Scan is capable of much greater resolution than just those types of pictures. With a 9 pin printer it can scan up to 216 dot per inch, and with a 24 pin printer, over 300 dots per inch. Hopefully future publishing programs will be able to import bit images of varying dot densities to take the full advantage of scanning technology.

Even though the software is very powerful, it does have some flaws. The program contains no disk function aside from saving the image. Any program that must save data to disk must have at least a format disk command, and possibly delete, rename, and drive free space. Also I feel that it might have been better to enclose the PC board somehow, an unprotected board makes me a little nervous about static discharge damaging it. From my conversations with Seymour-Radix, they are very open to suggestions and very interested in trying to make their scanner the best one available. In just the last month there has been 4 revision all making considerable improvements to the programming. Now I call that support.

IMG Utilities and AIM

When I first got my IMG Scan, and after the initial thrill that accompanies any new computer purchase(at least for me anyway)I started to wonder, what else could I do to improve the quality of my

scanned images. Then I found AIM. AIM is a public-domain gem based image processor, that up until now had no way of importing pictures. So about all you could do was play around with the sample pictures. Since the image formats are very similar (but not exact) I decide to write a utility to convert my scanned images to AIM. The results were actually better than I expected. IMG_AIM is a utility that will convert from IMG raw data to AIM and back. I have found AIM to be invaluable for enhancing my scanned images. Especially the LAPLACE command. Please note that since the file formats are not exactly the same 32 bytes are lost from each side of the scanned image.

IMG_PS is another utility that will convert an AIM or IMG raw data file to a postscript file to be printed on a laser printer. It will also let you send the data to a laser printer directly through the RS232 port if you have one connected to your ST. Coming soon (to a PD library near you) will be CONTRAST which will perform an auto or manual contrast on the IMG raw data in case you don't have AIM. This will also support the new larger raw data format for high rez that you should see in v 1.5 of the IMG software.

CONCLUSION

The IMG Scan definitely lives up to the Atari tradition of "Power Without the Price". If you need to get pictures into your documents and drawings, but you are not an artist then the IMG Scan is for you. And the manufacturer, though a small company, seems committed to keep improving an already fantastic product. I would heartily recommend this product, and this company, to any ST owner.

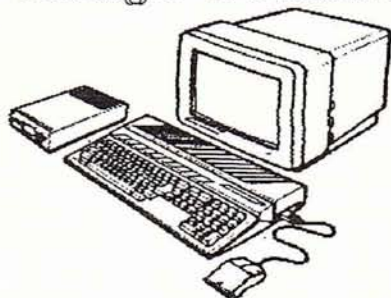
The IMG Scan is available for \$99.95 from
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Image Scanner



What Is IMG Scan?

IMG Scan is a simple, inexpensive device which turns your dot matrix printer into an image scanner allowing you to scan any page that can be put into your printer! Keeping in line with Atari's power without the price philosophy, IMG Scan finally makes image scanning simple and affordable. This brings powerful graphic capabilities to desktop publishing, image processing, and graphic art applications on the Atari ST! At \$99.95, the IMG Scan opens doors that were closed by expensive and inferior video digitizers.



fig 1. This image was scanned from a photocopy of a *National Geographic* cover with IMG Scan and printed on an Apple LaserWriter.

This entire brochure was created on an Atari ST using a desktop publishing program and IMG Scan. All images and line drawings were reproduced with IMG Scan, imported into the desktop publishing program, and printed on an Apple Laserwriter. This is how easy IMG Scan is to use.



fig 2. This image was scanned from an original cover removed from *Vanity Fair* magazine with IMG Scan and printed on an Apple LaserWriter.

How It Works

The operation of IMG Scan is very straight forward. A small cartridge (approx: 1.6" X 1.9") plugs into the Atari St's cartridge port and is connected to the printer's head via a thin, flexible image cable. This image cable can be attached most anywhere on the print head using nothing more than a piece of adhesive tape. The user is at option to use any method he may come up with to mount the cable, but is not encumbered by an inflexible mounting bracket. This is one reason that IMG Scan can be made to work on most any printer. With the image cable attached to the print head, the printer is controlled by the IMG Scan driver software. The software can be set for sizing the scanned image among 20 different levels of magnification or reduction. Since 256 gray levels are recorded, and the ST is capable of displaying only 16 colors at a time, the contrast of individual gray level ranges can easily be adjusted and assigned to color palette positions. The image may then be colorized or saved to disk etc.

Applications

IMG Scan is an indispensable tool in desktop publishing. It is very useful in things like adding photographs, charts, clip art, line art, or anything that can be scanned, to newsletters, business cards, letter heads, etc. You could for example, put your own picture on your own letterhead! Also it can be used to create a computerized photo album. Send pictures of family and friends over the phone lines. And of course, IMG Scan is perfect for use with art programs to enhance your art creations.

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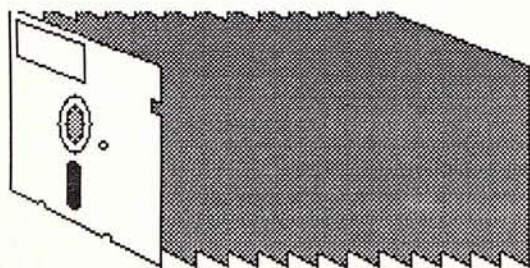
Walls

Reprinted from P.A.C.E
Potacello, Idaho

This is a short little program for 8-bit computers. After typing it in and run, WALLS draws in a blue border and gives control over to you. Use your cursor in the middle and a joystick to draw all the walls you want on the screen. Big ones, little ones, crossing ones, bending ones, etc. They have to be either horizontal or vertical (no diagonal), but other than that it's up to you. After you finish drawing all of your WALLS, press the START button. A white ball will bounce around in the boundaries you drew, leaving a trail as it goes. As stupid as it might sound, it really is a lot of fun. When you're tired of watching that ball in that pattern, press the OPTION key to start over again.

```
10 CLR:GRAPHICS 23:COLOR2:POKE 709,1
48:DIM S(15,2):FOR Z=5 TO 15:READ X,Y:
S(Z,1)=X:S(Z,2)=Y:NEXT Z:K=53279:X=80
20 Y=48:PLOT 0,0:DRAWTO 159,0:DRAWTO 1
59,95:DRAWTO 0,95:DRAWTO 0,0:FOR A=1 T
O 9999:COLOR 2:PLOT X,Y:Z=STICK(0)
30 COLOR 1-STRIG(0):PLOT X,Y:X=X+S(Z,1
):Y=Y+S(Z,2):X=X-(X>157)+(X<2):Y=Y+(Y<
2)-(Y>93):IF PEEK(K)<>6 THEN NEXT A
40 X=80:Y=48:COLOR 3:M=1:N=1:COLOR 3:P
OKE 710,15:DATA 0,0,0,0,1,0,0,0,0,0,0,
0,-1,0,0,0,0,1,0,-1,0,0
50 LOCATE X+M,Y,Z:M=M*(Z=0 OR Z=3)+(Z=
1 OR Z=2)*(-M):LOCATE X,Y+N,Z:N=N*(Z=0
OR Z=3)+(Z=1 OR Z=2)*(-N)
60 X=X+M:Y=Y+N:PLOT X,Y:POKE 77,0:ON (
PEEK(K)=3)+1 GOTO 50,10
```

[EDITOR'S NOTE: I typed this in as it would appear on you screen. I could not get it to justify correctly because of Publishing Partner. Sorry for any inconvenience. Scott]



© Copyright 1987 Font Factor

Alternate Reality

Reviewed by Bill Sheppard

by Rick Mirsky and Jim Ratcliff
512K Atari ST, color only
\$49.95

The premise: You've been kidnapped by an alien spaceship, you find yourself in a room with only one exit. Through this doorway is The City of Xebec's Demise. Mystery and danger await you in the streest. Your ultimate goal - return to Earth or seek revenge on your abductors.

Alternate Reality - The City is the first of a planned series of role-playing games. Future releases will include The Dungeon, The Arena, The Palace, The Wilderness, Revelation, and Destiny. Many aspects of AR are similar to the phenomenally successful Ultima series. Each character has certain traits determining the makeup of his character. These traits include Experience, Stamina, Charm, Strength, Skill, Intelligence and Wisdom. Hit points and Wealth are also recorded. Unlike Ultima, however, these traits are not chosen by the player, but are randomly set upon entering the city for the first time.

The City contains many of the businesses found in real life. There are inns, where your character may lodge or get information. There are taverns for food and beverage as well as making acquaintances, banks for investing money and selling jewelry, smithies for purchasing weaponry, shops for clothing, and guilds, similar to today's lodges or fraternities. Magic is also present, in the form of spells and potions. Of course, there are also all forms of critters and unpleasant folk just waiting to ruin your character's day.

Alternate Reality has superb graphics. Both highly detailed and colorful, all views are from a first-person three-dimesional perspective. Music is also well done.

AR has good documentation. A fourteen page parchment-style booklet explains the various aspects of The City and contains a grid to be copied and used for mapping. A reference card and artist's rendition of The City are also included.

AR has several annoying shortcomings. Each time you boot, you are forced to sit through a five minute presentation of credits and then a sing-along song. Amusing the first time, this quickly becomes obnoxious. I wasn't able to find any way to bypass this. A more serious fault is the lack of a way to restart the game upon dying without totally rebooting. Because of the previously mentioned

theatrical presentation, you'll quickly learn to dread death. Also, only one character may be saved per data disk.

For role-playing fans, Alternate Reality promises a challenging, long-lived adventure. In spite of its shortcomings, it is worth checking out.

MORE on PC-DITTO

By Bill Teal

Avant-Garde Software
pc-ditto general support information

Bugs are fixable in the field. We're just gathering all the bugs, before we issue a patch.

DOS 3.3 may have strange bugs concerning the fixed drive. We have not run into them ourselves yet. Be cautious of booting DOS from the hard drive with 3.3. Let us know if you have any random problems with disks and directories.

Regarding the 5.25" drive, we're not engineers. So, we hesitate to recommend anything about connecting drives. Rather, we refer you to I.B. Computers for their drives, or others here may be able to provide you with complete info.

The SF354 will format an 80-track single-sided DOS disk under pc-ditto. However, if errors are causing formatting problems, our next patch should fix the problem.

We change the precomp write for use with 5.25" drives under pc-ditto. (Incidentally, this is one reason why we ask for the type of drive in our pc_dmenu configuration program).

Field error corrections policy:

We plan to notify dealers shortly of error corrections for several products. They will have a disk which will patch the pc-ditto disk. We are currently researching the copyright provisos for this online system, before uploading patch programs here. (This system may copyright our material, which is a no no. If this is true, we may provide alternative field update procedures for owners not near dealers. If this system, however, does not copyright our material, then we will upload here our patch systems.)

This is not an update, only a bug fix to original versions (2.0). Updates contain product enhancements. The next update is due this fall. Sorry, we forgot something...

Definitions:

Update Version of product is the number before the period (currently that is a 2). Minor version is number after the period (currently 00). Updates increase the Version. Patches increase the Minor Version.

Updates are issued on new disks to owners of the product. Dealers with old versions are asked to return their packages on hand and are provided with replacements.

Patches are provided to dealers and consumers in various forms. No replacement of packages are performed. Instead, the consumer or dealer may use the patch to revise the product. For example, if you purchase version 2.00 from a dealer, and version 2.01 patch is available, you may apply the patch to a backup of your product.

The main reason for this approach is to provide fast, economical fixes for bugs and other minor problems (such as disk documentation) in the widest medium format possible. Fixes do not add to a product's features. Updates do. Fixes are short, but enhancements are usually long and involved. Hopefully, this will meet most of your needs.

The following is a status update on current problem field reports we have received to date:

Some DOS operating systems do not work:

Currently so identified include Zenith, Blue Chip PC's, Limited Hitachi's.

We originally tested DOS's which were widely available and which are assured to provide fully compatible system interfaces. IBM, Compaq, and Eagle were found to provide this without exception. We realize that other manufacturer's provide DOS. Regretfully, we have not been able to provide a DOS ourselves, ...yet. In the mean time, we will test some of the more popular DOS's. But, let us caveat that some versions just may provide too much difficulty to make compatible with standard DOS applications.

Avant-Garde has to define some standard of compatible with which we will provide. We use the IBM PC XT, for now. You can imagine the impossible task if we tried to become compatible with all other compatibles on the market, as well. This is why some DOS-es may never work completely on pc-ditto. If nothing else comes of our exercise, at least we will let you know which DOS-es to definitely stay away from.

Therefore, here's how we will proceed. Let us know of your favorite DOS maker. (we'll try to get as many as we can, but some may only be bundled with

hardware -- and, DO NOT, please, send us your DOS -- you may break your vendor's license).

If the DOS does work correctly on a stock IBM PC XT, then it should work on pc-ditto. But, the DOS may not work correctly on pc-ditto. So, we will fix pc-ditto.

Hard drive owners:

Drive letters on start-up screen show assigned to partition 0. Reading files on any hard drive letter still gives only drive C: files. Accessing drive letters on 3 and 4-partition drives gives disk error message ("Bad sector...", "I/O error on drive...", etc.)

The reasons for these problems are varied: they depend upon the DOS used, the type of hard disk and controller, and how the disk is partitioned and formatted. Some of the problems have been duplicated and are being corrected and tested. This and the next field report are the highest priority.

Single-sided drive owners (SF354):

Disk errors on reading disks written and formatted on single-sided drives are occurring occasionally. There appears to be no special case causing the error (i.e., 520 and 1040, one and two drives, etc). We have found the following error messages to be caused by the this problem: "Boot disk failure," and "I/O error." However, we have received one of the offending drives and have duplicated the problem.

PC_DFMT:

Unusable is the common complaint. The cause is the program can not format a virgin disk (i.e., never formatted disk) without an error. Some users tell the program to retry the error several times, and the program formats successfully. But afterwards, the system locks up. Other users find the program never formats or does anything at all.

There is a bug. In our production testing environment, our test matrix said format a blank disk. We did not realize until we began getting reports from you that the testing had been done with blank, but pre-formatted disks. Virgin disks, were never used. Thus, a bug to be fixed in an upcoming patch.

A note for some DOS users: the format programs used by DOS are very sophisticated. That is, they perform more than what on the surface may appear to be simple formatting. Furthermore, format programs cannot be interchanged. One manufacturer's format should not be used with another's DOS. This should be a word of warning.

Therefore, pc_dfmt was designed for IBM, Compaq, and Eagle DOS. Other DOS-es may cause it to hiccup. We will do what we can to broaden pc-dfnt's usage, but we may be limited to purely practical needs, time, and whether we can quickly learn a manufacturer's DOS internal's (which is tough without the source).

Multimate (version unknown):

Supposedly, there is a lockup on the file selection screen. We have not duplicated this, but are trying a new version. We will notify when we have found the problem.

Screen colors change after using certain programs:

Some applications, such as Turbo Pascal and the pfs: series, change the screen colors. After exiting the application, the original colors are not always restored to their original settings. This occurs on an IBM and compatible also. This is the fault of the application. We have found that the clear screen command (cls) to correct for this.

Atari black and white monitor does not work:

You're right. And, we hear you loud and clear. Please be patient. It's not supposed to work right now. There will be a FREE update this fall for it and other enhancements. Also, the black and white monitor will support the IBM Monochrome Display Adapter (MDA) and the Color Graphics Adapter (CGA), just as the color does now. Color will be 16 levels of grey scale.

Directory listing are different in DOS and GEM:

DOS uses the file attributes in the directory. Specifically, hidden and system attributes cause a file not to be shown under the DOS. You may have to change the attributes, using a public domain or commercial utility. Let us know if you need more specifics on the attribute or special utilities for this problem. By the way, since we're not GEM programmers, others here may provide help for you with GEM programs (to whom we owe our gratitude in advance).

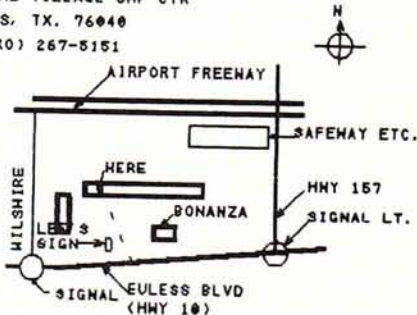
Untested (!) Patch:

To those who have bought pc Ditto and want to run it on monochrome, here's how you can patch out the monochrome 'off' routine. Using Disk Doctor go to sector 124 and search for this hex string, 670A19405E1C. Change the 67 to 60 and save the sector. This changes a conditional jump to a jump. The video quality is strange (you are in the wrong rez) but it does allow it to run. Richard Morris, sysop Chem-Link BBS 918-437-3837 90 megs 9600 baud.

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Pha\$ar

Reviewed by Bill Sheppard

512K Atari ST, monochrome or color
(also available for Amiga, IBM)
\$89.95

While competent home financial packages are available for virtually all computers, the biggest handicap to getting full use out of them has been the owner. Sure, for the first few days you'll religiously boot up your program and enter all your transactions. Then, you'll miss a day or two, and before you know it you've given up! With Pha\$ar (Professional Home Accounting System and Register) you stand the best chance yet of staying

up to date.

Phasar is billed by its ads as being fast, sophisticated, and containing the best programming interface design seen in any ST applications program. Phasar lives up to these claims, and more.

Using intelligent but friendly input routines, Phasar makes data entry a pleasure. Combine this with a plethora of features, and you've got a definite winner of a program.

Phasar can track 130 expense/income categories, 40 accounts (checking, savings, VISA, etc.), 500 transactions/month, print checks (even your existing ones), keep your budget, and reconcile your accounts. Other functions include analysis of multiple loans, a date/address organizer, and a complete tax package designed never to become out of date. Phasar can also print many reports, including account and category summaries, net worth, total income/expenses by month or year-to-date, and data graphing. For more extensive graphs, data files are compatible with A-Chart.

Phasar sets itself apart from the many other home accounting programs by its excellent input design. For example, suppose you've written a \$200.00 check to Macy's for a new suit. There are several methods by which to enter the expense category (clothing). You can simply press return if the last transaction you entered was also a clothing expense. You can type the word 'clothing'. You can type just enough letters of 'clothing' so Phasar can distinguish it from all other expense categories. If more than one category exists matching your letters (for instance, you type 'cl' and there is also a category 'clarinet supplies') Phasar will present you with a list of matching categories and let you choose by typing one more letter or with the mouse. Finally, you can press 'HELP' or F1 and be presented with a list of all categories, then press the number of the proper category, or point to it with your mouse.

As you can see, Phasar has no shortage of input options. While the procedure may sound overwhelming, it is actually a breeze. Incorrect entries can be corrected at any point, and Phasar protects you from entering inappropriate data, or attempting to exit at an improper moment. Context sensitive help is available from ANY point in the program by pressing F1 or 'HELP'. A four-function calculator is available at any point by pressing F2.

Phasar can also fill in many transactions automatically. If you make a payment to VISA from your checking account, you need only enter the check to VISA. Phasar will record this transaction, as well as record a second transaction reducing your VISA balance by an equal amount. Most programs require you to enter the payment from checking as one transaction, and the payment to VISA as a second transaction.

Phasar's documentation is excellent, if not a bit corny at times. Nine of the eighteen chapters are devoted to a tutorial using Egbert and Eloise and

their EggFarm as examples. All features are covered in detail and illustrations are spread liberally throughout. There is also a complete index.

Phasar is without question the finest home budgeting/accounting program I've had the pleasure to use. It includes all features essential to this type of program, as well as many not often found. Due to its flexibility, it promises to remain useful long into the future. I strongly recommend it.

Atari SH404?

or...

How to hook up another logical drive to your SH204 without another controller.

By John White

DISCLAIMER: Warning! While opening up your SH204 may not void your warranty, this does. DON'T do it unless you know what you're doing. (JLP NOTE: NO ONE but YOU are to blame if you fry your hard disk!)

Now, on to the good stuff!

Required Tools:

- Phillips screwdriver
- Soldering Iron
- Ribbon Cable Connector Crimper
- Needle nose pliers
- Wire cutter/stripper

Materials:

- Hard Disk drive (media only) *
- 10-20" 34 conductor ribbon cable
- 10-20" 20 conductor ribbon cable
- 34 position card edge connector
- 20 position card edge connector
- 20 position dual header connector
- 4 pin power connector and cable
- Electronic solder **
- Supra's hard disk software

I used another Seagate ST-225 (20Mb), but I think this can be done with other similar drives, like the 30Mb ST-238, (JLP NOTE: The ST-238 is a 20MB drive using a standard controller. You get 30MB only with an RLL-type controller) maybe even with a Miniscribe (or any other of your choice) drive, but don't count on it.

** Nobody else's lets you set the logical drive number.

At this point, it's probably a good idea to backup your entire hard disk drive. Hooking up another drive shouldn't destroy what's on your first one, but...

Park your heads too, just in case...

Disconnect the drive from the ST and the power cord. Remove all 8 screws from the sides of the SH204, and pull the case straight up, but not too far, the LED is attached to the front of it. There is a 50-pin cable connecting the DMA interface to the controller which you must unplug. Pull it STRAIGHT UP or you will bend the pins. Now remove the four nuts, the cardboard insulator and the four plastic washers that are attached to the controller. Carefully lift the controller free of it's four mounting bolts and disconnect the power cable and the two drive cables. Now you can get that nasty cover out of your way. Now, unplug the power cord and the 34 pin cable (the bigger one) from the drive.

Making the cables...

Take apart the 34 pin cable by prying the sides out of the connectors (both of them) and pulling off the back. Be careful, if you break them then you'll have to buy new ones. First, make a longer version of this cable, i.e. looks the same, only longer. Now, about 2.5-3" from one end, connect your new 34 pin connector to the cable facing the same way as the others, and that's one cable. The other one is easier, if you bought new parts. Connect the 20-pin card edge connector to one end of the 20 conductor cable, and the 20 pin header connector to the other. That's two. (JLP NOTE: Or you can simply BUY a set of cables to support 2 HD for the IBM. Ours are the same.) Number three is a power cable, and you're gonna have to get out the soldering iron (JLP NOTE: Or buy as above.). You need to connect the new power cables the same way the existing ones are connected. I found it easiest to pull the pins out of one of the existing ones and solder the new one's wires to it. This avoids soldering directly to the power board or cutting the wires. Just make sure you get the polarity right...hook it up so it plugs in with the same wires in the same orientation. If you do this wrong you can kiss your SH204 and your new hard disk good bye.

Hooking it up...

On the controller board you will see two 20-pin headers side by side. The one on the outside is for drive 0, the one on the inside is for drive 1. Plug the new 20 pin cable into the inside one (drive 1). There is another 20-pin connector in the middle of the controller board ignore it. Plug the end of the 34 pin cable that has another connector close to it into the existing drive and the controller board, and the short 20-pin cable into the drive and the outside 20-pin

DAL - ACE

header on the board. Make sure there are no twists in either cable. Connect the power cables to the drive and the board (they only fit one way). Re-mount the controller board, and plug the 50-pin cable back into the DMA interface. On the back of your new drive (at least if it's a Seagate) there is a 20-pin header like the ones on the controller board. There should be a jumper across the two pins on the left hand side (from the back). Use the needle-nose pliers to move this jumper one position to the right. This is the drive select jumper. Now, hook up the 34-pin, 20 pin and power cables so that when you place the new drive on top of the controller and facing forward there are no twists in the cable. Hook the SH204 up to the computer and plug it in.

Booting it...

Turn on the SH204. The lights on both drives should come on and you should hear them coming up to speed. If you do not see this, turn the drive off, you have hooked up something wrong, and you had better hope it wasn't the power cable. Both drives should boot, but one may take longer than the other. Wait until both drives are up to speed and all lights are off before you turn the computer on. When you boot your system, do it with the Supra software and watch the drives while it is booting. Both drive lights should flash. If they don't, check for a twisted cable and check the drive select jumper on your new drive.

Up and running...

Run SUPFMT.PRGM. Click on DRIVE NUMBER and set the LOGICAL UNIT NUMBER (not the SCSI number) to 1. Click on OK and the program should say hello to the new drive. If it already has an Atari ST format you won't need to re-format it, it's partitions should be good. Otherwise, set the drive type to whatever type your drive is and format the drive. If you have problems at this point, like the drive won't format, you may have to hook the new drive up as logical unit 0 (in place of the old drive) and format it. I had to do this because the old format on my new drive was not Atari ST format, and for whatever reason, the Supra software couldn't format it. I eventually had to use HDX, then hook up the drive as unit 1, after which it worked fine. Maybe this was because I mucked up the drives format before I had it hooked up right.

One more problem...

For some reason, SUPBOOT makes all drives from C-P available, whether they are valid partitions or not. This makes it extremely difficult to use a Ramdisk. I had to modify my custom configuration program to shut off the invalid drives by changing the system variable DRVBITS (at \$4C2-4C5). After this it worked fine, and I now have 40Mb. (JLP NOTE: I have NOT had this problem. It sounds

like Mr. White was not using the most recent version of the Supra software. If true, this could explain the format problem above.)

Some advice...

Build a new box for your drives, one with a fan in it so that your drives don't overheat. They are very prone to this, since they need adequate ventilation. And don't make the cables too long, the drive's peak data transfer rate is 5 megabits per second.

If you have any trouble you can call me in Ottawa after 6 at (613) 825-1499, or leave me a message on the Atari Access BBS in Toronto.

John White
July 28, 1987
Oop Ack!

P.S. Please excuse my spelling and my grammar. I used to use a Mac and am now a little warped. (JLP NOTE: I think I got most of them.)

(JLP NOTE: If you have more dollars than dexterity, I think most of the clone shops in the Dallas area would be happy to sell you a new case and power supply, with the boards mounted, using stock cables, for a reasonable price. My one concern about his modification is the power supply. I have NO specifications for the SH204 power supply, which Mr. White taps into, but I am concerned about long term reliability if you double the designed power supply load. There are hard drives that consume MUCH less power than the ST-225 series.)

DAL - ACE

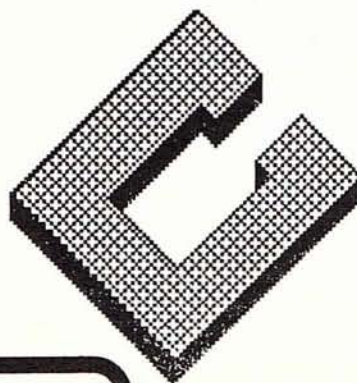
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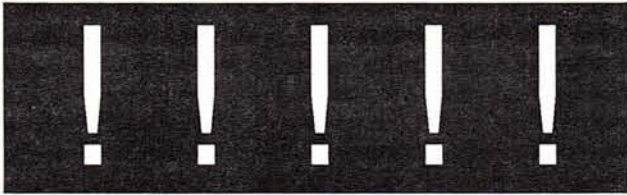
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RAM



ATARI BUYS FEDERATED!

REPRINTED FROM THE DALLAS TIMES
HERALD BUSINESS SECTION TUESDAY
AUGUST 25, 1987

Atari Corp., the personal computer and video game producer, announced Monday that it will make a move into electronics retailing by acquiring the Federated Group in a deal worth \$67 million.

Federated Group, based in City of Commerce, California, operates 67 stores in California, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Kansas.

The chairman of Federated, Wilfred Schwartz, said its purchase by Atari means expansion for the retailer.

"Our aspiration is to become a national retailer. Atari not only brings a national, but a global perspective to our business," he said.

"The change in ownership will not change our commitment to Texas or Dallas. It will enhance it," Schwartz said. "We plan to stick and stay in Dallas."

Schwartz added that Texas will have a part in the firm's national expansion plans. Federated currently has eight stores in Dallas, eight in Houston, two in San Antonio, and one in El Paso.

The move into retailing marks a dramatic change for Atari, which has found recent success with a new line of high-powered personal computers introduced by new owners. Its new owners are led by former Commodore International Ltd. chief Jack Tramiel, known in the industry as a cost slasher who produces low-priced computers and not as a store operator.

"Mr. Tramiel is known for his skill in electronics ... and I'm sure he's going to put the same energy into this new venture," Schwartz said.

Federated sells Atari products now and Schwartz forsee increased marketing efforts on behalf of Atari. "If Atari is my papa, you can assume that there will be a good presentation of Atari products," he said.

Tramiel's group bought the assets of Atari in 1984 after its previous owner, Warner Communications, racked up big losses after the

computer video game business went sour and its pioneering home computers lost favor to more versatile models.

Personal computer sales account for about 10 percent of Federated's sales. Atari did not say how it would incorporate its computer business with Federated stores and company officials could not be reached for comment.

Federated markets home entertainment products, deriving 28 percent of its revenues from video playback equipment. Audio systems contribute about 21 percent of sales, television and TV-related products some 14 percent.

The money-losing Federated property will represent another challenge for Tramiel, a hard-driving executive who made Commodore into the biggest and most profitable maker of cheaper home computers before he left to launch his own company.

Federated had a loss of \$895,000 in its first fiscal quarter ended May 31 on sales of \$91.1 million.

Although a partnership led by Schwartz has agreed to tender its 55 percent stake in Federated, Schwartz will remain chairman of the firm. He said current personnel will remain in force.

Atari said it will offer to buy remaining shares at the same price of \$6.25 a share.

Publishing Partner

From Softlogik

Reviewed by Bill Sheppard

512K Atari ST, monochrome or color
\$149.95

Desktop publishing (production of typeset-quality documents with a PC) is without question becoming one of the most important areas of business and home computing. With a laser printer resumes, sales forms, newsletters [Editor's note: newsletters like this one], and business cards can all be created to a level of quality indistinguishable from professional typesetting, while a decent dot matrix printer can produce just slightly less polished results. The Atari ST, because of its excellent high resolution display, ample memory, and speedy microprocessor promises to be an ideal machine for desktop publishing. With Publishing Partner, this promise has been fulfilled.

Upon receiving the package, I immediately booted it up, ignoring the 165-page spiral-bound manual. I was greeted with a large grid covering most of the screen and a column of icons along the right edge. There are seven drop-down menus, each containing an impressive number of options. There are several varied examples on disk, all very impressive. With a document loaded, the screen can be set to show various levels of detail. If the full page is displayed, smaller text will not be readable.

Any level from 15% to 999% of the actual size may be displayed. Moving around the page is accomplished through GEM-type scroll bars.

The beauty of PP is the ease with which a layout may be designed and modified. The most common method would be to draw a box on-screen, representing a column. Text may then be entered from the keyboard (PP contains the most commonly needed word processing functions) or imported from a file created by other methods (such as 1st Word). The text will automatically position itself within the boundaries of the box, perfectly aligned on both sides, with even spacing between all letters/words (unless, of course, other options are selected). If there is more text than can fit in the box, a symbol will appear at the lower corner. You may then designate another box for overflow. In this manner a whole series of boxes may be specified for the layout of a page. If, after filling a box with text, you decide it is too wide, simply click on the box. 'Knobs' will appear on each side. You may then drag a 'knob' in any direction to make the box taller, shorter, wider, or thinner. Upon releasing the 'knob', the text within the box will automatically reposition itself within the new edges. If the new box is smaller so that less text fits the extra text which no longer fits will be put into the next designated box.

Once text is laid out, you may then import a picture in Degas, Neochrome, or Tiny format. The picture may be resized as necessary to fit the available space, and color pictures will be converted to monochrome. You may also create your own images with a variety of drawing tools supported including circles, ellipses, boxes, rounded boxes, lines, polygons, freehand drawing, fills, various line patterns, and more. These tools differ from a standard paint program in one important manner, however. Each object drawing is a separate object. It may be moved, deleted, or resized without affecting anything else on the page, even if it is directly on top of some other object. All parts of the page may be controlled this way, from columns of text to imported pictures. They may be reshuffled at will, resized, and manipulated in many other ways.

I've not even begun to scratch the surface of the features available in Publishing Partner. Some additional features include tabs, snap to guides, measuring system, full page numbering, rulers, many font styles (bold, italics, mirror, outline, etc.), super/subscripting, character justification, word justification, manual kerning, line/character spacing, search/replace, and many, many more. Printer support is excellent. Because GDOS was not completed at the time of PP's release custom print drivers have been provided for Epson, C. Itoh (Prowriter, Imagewriter), and Postscript printers. More printer drivers may now be available, and GDOS will be supported upon its release. Print output may be sent to the parallel port, serial port, or a disk file (which can then be transferred to an Apple Laserwriter, for example). Print quality is superb, even on a dot matrix printer. All characters are

perfectly rounded regardless of size, and the output is very dense. Several font disks have been released, with more promised for the future.

At a cost roughly one fifth that of a comparable IBM publishing package (not to mention the even greater hardware savings) Publishing Partner offers nearly every feature its more expensive cousins do. Free support to registered customers is provided from 10AM to 8PM Central time, and any other time that someone happens to be around to answer the phones. Upon calling the non toll-free number I found myself talking directly to one of the authors of the program, who was very helpful. Publishing Partner - it's a blast to play with, it's a breeze to use, and it produces fantastic results. I give it my highest recommendation.

TOYS FOR TOTS

This year we will once again sponsor a TOYS FOR TOTS event at our December meeting. Last year was a lot of fun, and we raised some money for a good cause, too! So we're hoping to make it even better than the last one.

There will be an auction of the products received by the club for review throughout the year, as well as any that club members thoughtfully donate.

Marc Salas, who also ran the TOYS FOR TOTS meeting last year, will be in charge again this year. He needs volunteers for set-up, etc. Contact him either via BBS or corral a board member to let us know you'll be volunteering.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: MPP 1000e 300bps mode, Atari 800 (doesn't work, but has spare boards), CX85 keypad, lots of 8 bit software, and blank disks.

CONTACT: Scott Phelan

FOR SALE: Atari 800 (2), Indus GT drive, 1050, Xm301, 820 40 col. printer, Axiom At-100 printer, Koala pad, Basic XI, Microsoft Basic II, CX85 Keypad, 410 Cassette recorder, Lots of Misc. software and blank disks.

CONTACT: Tony Williams (214) 642-9015

SURVEY RESULTS

The 1987 survey results have not yet been tabulated. If you have not turned your survey in, please do so at the main meeting (sept.12). The results will be printed in the november newsletter.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submissions are welcome in ANY form. It is, however, extremely helpful if submissions conform to one of these formats:

1. ASCII files with no formatting information.
2. On ST disk format.
3. Uploaded to either of the DAL-ACE BBS's (Sig 12 on ST board).
4. Publishing Partner file.

It is requested from any 8-bit user that he/she upload articles to either of the club bulletin board systems. (Numbers on back page). Articles will also be accepted if they are printed out. Please submit them to either Scott Phelan or Jim and Rachel Duke.

CURRENT DAL-ACE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday September 12 Main Meeting

Sunday September 27 Newsletter Production
Scott Phelan's house
1809 Clear Creek
Carrollton, TX 75007
11:00 AM

Saturday October 10 Main Meeting

Sunday October 25 Newsletter Production
Scott Phelan's house
11:00 AM

Saturday November 14 Main Meeting

As always, all dates more than 30 days in advance are tentative. Please call for more information.

INFOMART DIRECTIONS

From North Dallas, take either Stemmons (I-35E) or the Dallas North Tollway. From Stemmons take the Oak Lawn exit, turn east and park at the Infomart. If you're using the tollway, exit right on Wycliff, go left on Harry Hines to Oak Lawn and turn right. From the South, take Stemmons north, then follow above. Infomart is the big, white steel and glass building south of the other 'marts. GUESTS ARE WELCOME!!!!!!

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

Personal sale ads are free to current members. Please see the editor for details.

COMMERCIAL AD RATES

| | |
|--------------|---------|
| Full Page | \$35.00 |
| Half Page | \$25.00 |
| Quarter Page | \$15.00 |

Ads must be CAMERA READY. Copy must be recieved prior to the production meeting. Mail copy to the address on the back page, or contact the advertising manager. Copy recieved after the deadline will be run the following month. For contract advertisers, if no new copy is recieved by the deadline, then the most recent ad will be run.

SPECIAL THANKS!

We would like to express our appreciation to Megamax, Inc. for allowing us to use their laser printer for our newsletter.

Special thanks also to our advertisers for supporting ATARI and DAL-ACE. Be sure to let them know how much we appreciate their support.

DISCLAIMER

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MEETING INFORMATION

10:30 - 11:00 Disk Sales
11:00 - 11:30 Main Meeting
11:30 - 12:00 BBS Users
New Users
Newsletter Exchange
12:00 - 1:30 ST Sig
1:00 - 2:30 8 Bit/Turbo Basic Sig

DAL-ACE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Larry Dineen 817-668-7296
VICE-PRES Michael Trombley 255-9832
VP Comm James Duke 404-8569
SECRETARY Rachel Duke 404-8569
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8 Bit Library Michael Duke 414-1132
ST Library Joe Camblin 221-7825

Dal-Ace BBS #1 214-255-8833
Dal-Ace BBS #2 214-255-8256

DAL-ACE Dallas Atari Computer Enthusiasts

DAL-ACE is an independent user education group not affiliated with the ATARI Corporation. This is the official newsletter of DAL-ACE and is intended for the education of its members as well as for the dissemination of information about Atari computer products.

DAL-ACE membership is \$16.00 per year. This newsletter is written, edited, and published by volunteers. Its availability and/or distribution may, at times, be subject to circumstances beyond the control of the club officers. Members will note that their renewal date appears on their address label. A pink label indicates that your membership expires this month.

Other user groups may obtain copies of this newsletter on an exchange basis.

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DAL-ACE

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