

Windo Watch



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The Editor's Soapbox!

Searching for a Free Lunch!

The search engines are a bonanza! If your objective is to quickly retrieve targeted information, they can't be beaten! Search engines while giving the Internet utility, may, have reduced its potential for making a buck. When I search for motherboards using the Symantec FastFind, (see Linda Rosenbaum's product review this issue) the software returns references to pages and manufacturers concerned with motherboards. It's not the bannered links to hardware distributors that are sent back but rather manufacturers and model numbers. What FastFind, or the others like it, can't do, is send back the flavor and individuality of the pages it has scanned. That which made the page(s) a commodity has been finessed away. Like most things in life we win and lose simultaneously!

Another case in point: The Internet is slowly becoming a more diverse place in spite of the many road blocks to make it more American or Global, or International or none of the above! The ideologies of the few are being replaced with the needs of the many, albeit very slowly. The Internet has always been a study in contradictions. The installed mores of those who came first are slowly being compromised by differing and conflicting value systems. So let's spit it out! The Fed will win their fight and an encryption scheme is coming to protect the many from the few. Those who don't like it, will screech, stomp and holler. I can imagine that this is not a first. I'll betcha' there was a hue and cry when we as a nation gave up vigilante justice with accountable law enforcement.

On the one hand we shout we don't want governmental interference while on the other we expect federal services. We do want a free lunch and try to convince others that our menu is the only menu. Just as a society matures with an ever changing mix so must this sub-society. Like it or hate it, we are being hauled yelling and screaming into the main stream. The options are limited to a closed Internet Old Timers Society or adapting to the real world of an Internet being co-opted by those wanting in. This is not an immigration debate! The visionaries among us who have touted the Net PC will be likened to the railroaders of an earlier era. The land rush will leave us breathless. I for one hope that as taxes are imposed for expected services, the online community does not scapegoat the InterNIC making it the butt for the dissatisfied as has been the IRS. (Continued)

EDITORIAL

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Lean & Mean

Producing Graphics for the Web

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Lately, I've been very busy doing things on the Web producing and managing Web sites, and generally keeping out of trouble. As Webmaster and chief designer for several sites where I work and my personal site (which will be coming online to the world at large in a month or so), I have had to spend much time working on look and feel of a site, targeting its audience, and coding lots of HTML, and preparing lots of graphics.

If you've looked through the computer section of a bookstore recently, you will find plenty of books on HTML, using a browser, and even lots on Java and CGI programming. There is a noticeable lack of books on style, techniques, and samples of designing graphics for the Web. At the end of this article is a bibliography of useful books on this subject. Writing a book about the subject is harder than writing a book on HTML or learning a new programming language. There will never be a flood of books about designing a good looking web site. However, ultimately, the success of a web site depends on how it looks and feels, and so you have to learn the tricks and tips somehow. This article will get you started in taking graphics files and making work well on the web.

Just about all the sample graphics in this article won't look quite right by the time you get to see it. Lois has to massage the articles we submit and make them work properly in Adobe Acrobat. That is why I have included file name references and a ZIP file of all the images so that you can look at them yourself. To see what is going on in the GIF files, you need to be running at least 256 color mode. Anything less and the effects I am trying to show will be lost. For the JPEG (.JPG) and Targa (.TGA) images, you really need to run 24-bit color mode to see all the effects. Running 15 or 16-bit color mode allows you to see some of the effects, but there are enough added in by going with fewer colors that you won't be able to tell what is an artifact of the technique and what is an artifact of your display settings.

I did almost all of the graphics for this article using Adobe Photoshop 3.0.5, the latest and officially supported release as of this writing. By the time this article is in your hands, Adobe will have released Photoshop 4.0. I have used it for some of the images in this article. Photoshop is a powerful and expensive program. Unless you are serious about digital image editing and manipulation, you don't want to pay for it. However, it does things so much more simply than other programs that sooner or later, if you are serious about digital image editing, you will get Photoshop.

All About Size

Most people today connect to the Internet via a modem. Although the speed varies, 14.4 and 28.8 speed modems are probably the most popular. At these speeds, you can count on between 1.5K to 3.0K bytes/s transfer rates only if you have a very good Internet Service Provider (ISP) or deliberately surf the net when no-one else is. Most of the time, these transfer rates are unattainable with ordinary modem

connections. The traffic on the Internet is just too high to maintain peak rates that the line to your house is capable of.

This fact of modern life concerns you as a designer of graphics for a web site because it means that you have to worry about the size of a page in terms of download time or bytes. A rough rule of thumb is that if your pages take more than 30 seconds to load, people won't stick around to find out why. About 1.5K bytes/s is the maximum rate you should count on during the evening hours. That translates into 45K bytes for your entire page, including all its HTML, graphics, and sundry Java applets and JavaScripts. Place too many bulky graphics on your web page and people will get tired of waiting. This article concentrates on reducing the sizes of your images so that they don't take up too much room and yet still look good. A rule of thumb is to keep reducing quality until you can't stand it anymore, and then back off a bit. How you do that depends on the type of graphics you are trying to show and how much quality you need.

Headings and Clipart

The kind of images that are used in headings and simple clipart such as rules and icons do not use many colors. They are "poster-like" and when examined closely, have sharp color transitions. GIF files will reproduce the colors without loss because the 256 colors available are more than enough for the image. However, most paint programs only allow you to select either 2, 16, or 256 color palettes for your GIF files. This is very limiting. GIF files actually allow anything between 2 and 256 colors in its palette. Using an application such as Photoshop that allows you to pick the number directly can significantly reduce the sizes of your images, usually without compromising image quality. Even with images such a photographs, careful choice of the number of

colors can reduce file size more than just picking from the three standard choices.

To understand why fewer colors reduce file size even though the number of pixels in the picture remains the same requires that you understand a little about how GIF does image compression. First, GIF handles each row of the image separately, so everything I talk about applies to one row of the image at a time. Second, the LZW compression technique looks for runs of pixels with the same color pattern. In the case of Run Length Encoding (RLE) compression, which Microsoft Paint uses sometimes, the pattern is repeated occurrences of pixels with the same color. RLE remembers that so many pixels of so many colors go here. The amount of space needed to remember that is usually less than the amount of space needed to hold the pixels. LZW compression, what GIF uses, is more sophisticated in that it looks for and can recognize more complex patterns. When you reduce the number of colors in an image, you make it more likely to have repeated pixel color patterns, and so you get better compression. Better compression means smaller file sizes.

The problem with fewer colors than what you started with is that now some of the colors are wrong. How do you handle the colors that aren't exactly the same as one in the palette? There are two common techniques. The simplest is *nearest* color. As the name implies, after you have picked the number of colors you are going to use and the system has picked what those colors actually are going to be, change all the colors that don't appear in the new palette to the color that is closest by some measure. For most low color images such as headings and icons, this isn't a problem. There aren't many colors anyway. For photographs, this can be a major problem depending on how many

colors are in the original image. However, nearest color mapping does produce nice long runs of color patterns and that means good GIF compression. The other common way of picking the new color is called *error-diffusion* . This takes a pixel's color, looks at the nearby pixels surrounding it, and tries to pick a color that causes the average of the nearby colors to come close to the original color. What this does is that it smears the image slightly, but because the eye tends to do some color averaging over small distances, you see something more closely resembling the original color. However, the smearing also tends to produce fewer numbers of repeated color patterns than nearest color, and so files tend to compress less.

Effects of Number of Colors and Dithering on Image Quality and File Size of "Poster-like" Images Rendered in GIF Format

Here is a copy of the heading for this article. The original has 5250 unique colors, mostly concentrated in the shadows. The Targa file is 65KB using LZW compression of the 24-bit image. I have compressed it using both nearest color and error diffusion techniques to smaller and smaller number of colors for the GIF palette.

Number of Colors	Nearest Color	Error Diffusion
---------------------	---------------	-----------------

256



lnm_8.gif, 17KB



lnm_8d.gif, 17KB

16



lnm_4.gif, 8KB



lnm_4d.gif, 9KB

8



lnm_3.gif, 6KB



lnm_3d.gif, 6KB

As you can see, there is almost no difference in perceived image quality in these size images. In fact, error diffusion makes the 8 color image look worse because it has mixed together some of the light and dark gray. The file sizes are given only to the nearest KB but show the general trend in file size with the number of colors and with color mapping technique.

Editorial Note: I have removed some of the images in order to limit the size of this article. They will be available from the Art Gallery on the homepage for those of you who wish to see them having the same file names as designated in the article and grouped according to format.

Effect of Compression Quality on Image Quality and File Size of "Poster-like" Images Rendered in JPEG Format

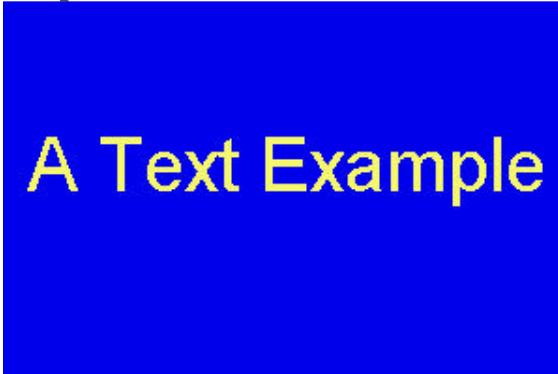
Normally, you would never render images with a few intrinsic number of colors in JPEG format. There are too many strange things that can happen with the lossy image compression technique. However, this heading started out as a high color image and as a result of how it was produced it can be compressed reasonably well with JPEG. The quality names are the ones that Photoshop 3.0 uses when specifying JPEG image quality at file save time.

Quality	Image
Maximum	lnm_x.jpg, 30Kb
High	lnm_h.jpg, 20KB
Medium	lnm_m.jpg, 13KB
Low	lnm_l.jpg, 10KB

Notice that the lowest image quality is still nearly indistinguishable from the highest quality image, but the file sizes are much different. Note also that even the lowest quality JPEG's file size is larger than the lowest reasonable quality GIF image.

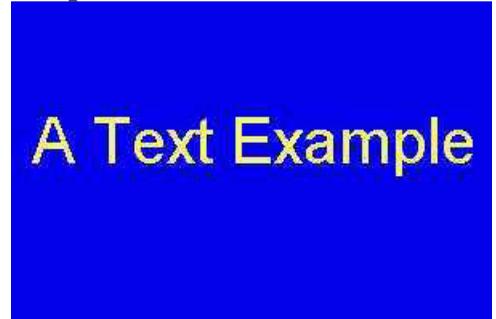
JPEG Artifacts in "Poster-like" Images

Targa 24-bit Format - uses lossless compression



Sample Text.tga, 6KB

JPEG format - using very high compression ratio



Sample Text.jpg, 5KB

Here is the main reason why you should not use JPEG for low color images. These images have only 2 colors. The one on the left was compressed using Targa LZW 24-bits. Any artifacts you see are because of the Acrobat compression. The image on the right has been compressed with a very high level of JPEG. Notice all the fringing around the text and the distorted colors. The file size isn't all that much smaller either. The GIF file is only 1K, far smaller than either, and it reproduces the colors properly with no artifacting.

Effects of JPEG Compression Quality on Continuous-tone (Photographic) Images

High or Truecolor images, ones with 16-bit or 24-bit color, are much different in how they are handled. You should use JPEG for these whenever possible. However, you should experiment with compression quality to see if you can reduce file sizes as much as possible. In most cases, choosing the lowest quality still is more than adequate for web pages.

Quality	Image
Original Targa 24-bit LZW format - over 20,000 colors	Tumbling Pass.tga, 200KB
Maximum	tp_x.jpg, 26KB
High	tp_h.jpg, 16KB
Medium	tp_m.jpg, 10KB

Low



tp_1.jpg, 8KB

Without magnifying the images, I can't tell the difference. I doubt you if can either.

Effects of Number of Colors and Dithering on File Size and Image Quality of Continuous-tone (Photographic) Files Rendered in GIF Format

Sometimes, you need to convert a high color image to a low color one for speed. The fact of the matter is that GIF files display much faster than JPEG files do and may not look correct on browsers that can't handle more than 256 colors. The problem is compounded by the fact that different web browsers and different systems handle colors differently when an image has more than the system has. To top it off, on a slow system, a JPEG might take twice or more as long to display even though the file size is the same. With all this in mind, here are some samples of reducing a Truicolor image to a GIF file with various numbers of colors in the palette.

Reference Image - Almost 27,000 colors.

“Daves House.tga”, 183KB - Note: if you are not viewing the original file while in 24-bit color mode, you are going to see banding on the ceiling of the room. The color gradation from one side of the room to the other on the ceiling is so gradual that you need plenty of colors to show it properly. This is one reason I work exclusively in 24-bit mode on my systems that can. Truecolor graphics just don’t look right unless carefully remapped to the capabilities of the hardware.

Using an Optimal Palette

The color reductions were all done using Adobe Photoshop 3.0. In each case, Photoshop was told to choose the best colors for the number it was restricted to and then the remaining mapped using either nearest color or error diffusion. I used all of the predefined palette sizes in Photoshop, although it allows you to manually choose any number between 2 and 256 for a palette size.

Number of Colors Nearest Color

Error Diffusion

256



dh_8a.gif, 39KB

dh_8ad.gif, 48KB

dh_7a.gif, 32KB

dh_7ad.gif, 41KB

128

64	dh_6a.gif, 25KB	dh_6ad.gif, 33KB
32	dh_5a.gif, 20KB	dh_5ad.gif, 26KB
16	dh_4a.gif, 15KB	dh_4ad.gif, 21KB
8	dh_3a.gif, 9KB	dh_3ad.gif, 14KB

At larger palette sizes, the quality difference between nearest color and error diffusion are not that different. Even the file sizes are not hugely different. As the number of colors get reduced though, the banding on the ceiling becomes more and more noticeably in the nearest color mapping. However, the file sizes remain smaller for nearest color and the ratio is more and more in its favor as the number of colors is reduced. Depending on your needs, the 16 color error diffusion image might be something you can use, although 32 colors will show reasonably well what the original was like.

Using Web Palette

Nearest Color



dh_w.gif, 17KB

Error Diffusion



dh_wd.gif, 34KB

Web browsers on the Macintosh and in Windows have a set of default colors which are in common. If you map a high color image to that palette, you have a reasonable chance of knowing how it will look on a very wide variety of systems. At the very least, you won't be surprised by what you see. That "Web" palette is a 216 color palette that is built into many browsers.

Effect of JPEG Compression Quality on Image Quality and File Size of Continuous-tone (Photographic) Files Rendered in JPEG Format

Using the same test image, I compressed them a various quality level in Photoshop 3.0. Without magnification, I don't think you will be able to tell the difference.

Quality

Image

Maximum

dh_x.jpg, 25KB

High

dh_h.jpg, 16KB

Medium

dh_m.jpg, 11KB

Low



dh_l.jpg, 8KB

As you can see here, and if you go to the images in the accompanying ZIP file, even the lowest quality image is higher in quality than most of the GIF images. The savings in file transmission time more than outweighs the added delay of rendering the image. For images with

large numbers of colors, JPEG is the way to go, and even very high compression levels give good results and much smaller files than GIF does at roughly the same quality.

Annotated Bibliography

The Photoshop 3 Wow Book - Windows Edition, *Linnea Dayton and Jack Davis*, Peachpit Press, 1996, ISBN 0-201-88370-8. Even if you don't use Adobe Photoshop, you need to know what is in this book for editing and manipulating images digitally. However, if you are serious about digital image editing or web graphics design, sooner or later, you will get PhotoShop.

Creating Killer Web Sites - The Art of Third Generation Site Design, *David Siegel*, Hayden Books, 1996, ISBN 1-56830-289-4. Just as good advertising doesn't look like a technical manual, a good web site shouldn't look like a resume or a prospectus. The graphics artists of more traditional media have much to show web designers about good design, metaphor, and imagery.

Designing Web Graphics - How to Prepare Images and Media for the Web, *Lynda Weinman*, New Riders Publishing, 1996, ISBN 1-56205-532-1. Although Siegel's book does spend a fair amount of time on creating graphics especially for web pages, this book goes into even more detail and goes somewhat into movies and animation on web pages.

Multimedia Publishing for Netscape, *Gary David Bouton*, Netscape Press, 1996, ISBN 1-56604-381-6. Although this book is aimed at users of Netscape Navigator, it really is a more general book on building and composing graphics and multimedia for web pages.

Graphics and Web Page Design, Laura Lemay, Jon M. Duff, and James L. Mohler, Sams Net, 1996, ISBN 1-57521-125-4. This is a new book that I haven't had much chance to go through yet. It is a task-oriented book that takes you through the process of designing a site and then filling it with material to make it look unified, communicate well, and look smashing.

Looking Good Online, Steve Bain with Daniel Gray, Ventana Communications, 1996, ISBN 1-56604-469-3.

What distinguishes these books from most other books on HTML and web authoring is that they are written by graphics artists and typographers. David Siegel designed ITC Stone and Tekton, two well known typefaces. Daniel Gray is a well known typographer who has worked with Bitstream on their typeface designs. Good web site design is an artistic endeavor combined with communications and common sense. Just as the introduction of desktop publishing software to the personal computer world immediately led to a blitz of terrible looking do-it-yourself publications, the web has let loose a horde of terrible web pages. Don't let yours be one of them.

Herb has outdone himself again. For the last two years Herb Chong has functioned as Contributing Editor of [Window Watch](#). During that same period he has introduced to those of us who are completely uninitiated to the world of digitized art. Some of his original works are simply lovely!

A Windows User Looks At Merlin

Copyright 1996 by John Campbell

Some Comparisons between Windows 95 and OS/2 Warp 4.0 (beta)

Let me begin by saying that it really isn't fair to compare IBM's OS/2 Operating System with Microsoft's Windows 95. The two OSs are rather different in construction, and are aimed at different users. OS/2 is closer in concept to Windows NT, because it is optimized for 32-bit applications, and is capable of running all applications, including DOS apps, in their own protected address space. This greatly lessens the prospect of a single ill-behaved application crashing the entire system. Windows 95 is an OS for the average user. OS/2 and Windows NT are designed for high-end power users and mission-critical applications. However, these obvious differences have not prevented comparisons between Win 95 and OS/2 Warp in the press, and endless online arguments between proponents of the two systems. So, the editor asked me to add to the fray by comparing some of the features of Win 95 and OS/2 Warp.

Note. This is **not** an exhaustive review of OS/2. Doing that would require a dozen full issues of WindoWatch, and I lack the expertise to tackle such a project. So this will be a rather cursory look at some of the systems features from a Windows users prospective.

Unfortunately, IBM declined to furnish an evaluation copy of the release version of Warp 4.0, which began shipping in September, 1996. This means my comments are, of necessity, based on the beta version, codename **Merlin**, which like most betas, was not optimized for speed or stability.

I have decided to limit this installment to an overview of installation, interface, and connectivity, stressing Internet-related features.

VoiceType - IBM's speech navigation and dictation technology is also new to this release. I plan to cover voice assist and dictation in a future installment. OS/2 Warp 3.0 was the first desktop OS to offer built-in Internet connection tools, and Warp 4.0 is the first major Intel-based OS to integrate voice commands.

First, a few words about my system and the preparation for Merlin. I installed the beta on a *Gateway* Pentium 166 computer having 48meg RAM, a 2.5 gig HD, a *Toshiba* 8x CD-ROM drive, a Gateway OEM-version *Matrox MGA Millennium* video card with 4 meg ram, and a **SoundBlaster 32PnP** sound card. I first prepared a small (2 meg) empty partition for the OS/2 Boot Manager. Without Boot Manager, OS/2 installs on Drive C - there is no other choice. Then, I created a new 700 meg partition H at the end of my HD for the new OS. This made it easy to uninstall/reinstall the beta whenever necessary, simply by reformatting that partition. An installation on C would litter it's root directory with OS/2 files that are difficult to delete. By the way, I strongly recommend *PowerQuest's Partition Magic* to anyone attempting this sort of installation. **Partition Magic** makes it possible to create, move and resize partitions without losing any data in existing partitions, a trick beyond the capabilities of FDISK. I chose to use the FAT file system, rather than the OS/2 High Performance File system, which would have offered long filename support and

better utilization of disk space, but would have made everything in the HPFS partition inaccessible to DOS and Windows.

The installation went smoothly enough - I had prior experience using Warp 3.0 - but setup failed to recognize either my sound or video cards. I settled for plain VGA video until I could find the proper Matrox drivers, which were on the company's Web site. Unfortunately, I was never able to utilize all the features of the SoundBlaster 32PnP. I had to settle for a 16-bit installation using the supplied Merlin drivers, which proved adequate. The 32-bit drivers I was able to locate either disabled the comm port, or refused to load, depending where they were placed in CONFIG.SYS. I suppose I could have played around with driver load order, interrupts and I/O addresses and maybe found a workable combination, but it wasn't worth the hassle. The TCP/IP setup was a bit confusing, but more on that later. The entire process took about forty minutes, and a cold-boot into Warp required a minute and 20 sec., 15 sec longer than Win95.

I wanted to avoid using programs that were not included with Merlin itself, but decided to add an **XTreeGold** clone for OS/2 - **ZTreeBold**, the OS/2 beta version of **Netscape Navigator**, and a screen-capture utility, **PMView** for the illustrations in the Acrobat version of this article.

The first OS/2 screen that appears is the *Workplace Shell*, similar to the Windows Desktop. A number of folders and applications can be seen. However, IBM has a different name for these items. In IBM parlance, folders, applications and documents - everything visible, in fact - are *Objects*. So, I will use that term from time to time.

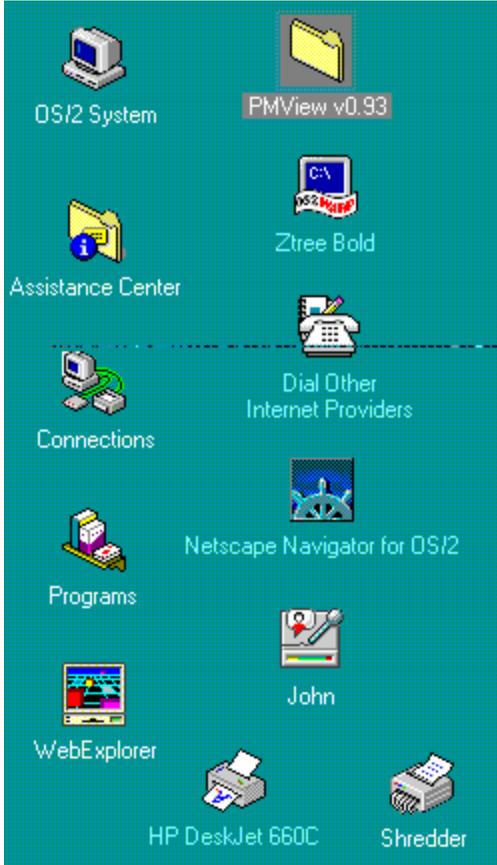
First, the interface:

The default desktop which IBM calls the Workplace Shell, is similar to the Windows 95 Desktop in functionality. Here, we find an assortment of folders and applications. A bar that serves various functions appears across the top of the screen. By the way, IBM doesn't use the



terms *applications* and *folders*. Everything that can be represented as an icon is called an *Object*. This terminology is a bit confusing to Windows users at first. But it makes sense when you consider that OS/2 is an object-oriented system.

I decided to change the appearance of the Workplace Shell by changing the background color and moving things around a bit, to make it more closely resemble the Windows 95 Desktop. I will now describe the different elements in more detail.

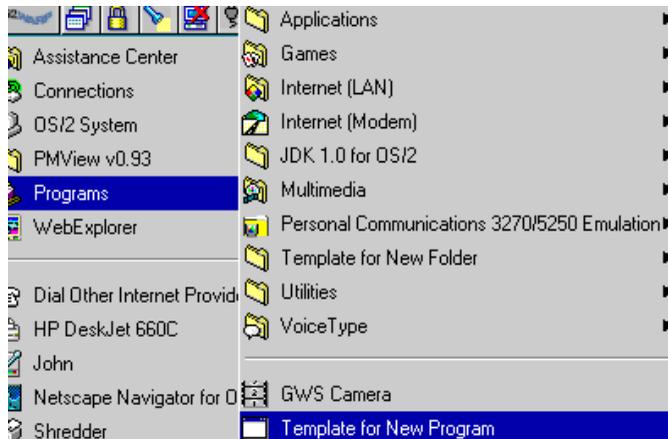


The default folders are similar to what one sees on the Windows 95 Desktop, or from the Start Button. These include OS/2 System (Control Panel), Assistance Center (Help), Shredder (Recycle Bin), and Programs (Start Menu). There also is a *Connections* Object, which allows access to drives, internet websites, network drives, and printers. As in Win 95, shortcuts to programs can be placed in the Shell, except these are called *Shadows*, and are identified by text color, instead of having a small arrow in the lower corner. I chose to create Shadows for NortonNavigator, ZTreeBold and the OS/2 Internet dialup utility. One item needs explanation. There is an icon labeled *John*. This is a copy of my VoiceType folder,

containing the voice-assist module I trained to recognize my voice. The bar that appears across the top of the Shell is new to Warp version 4. IBM calls it the WarpCenter.

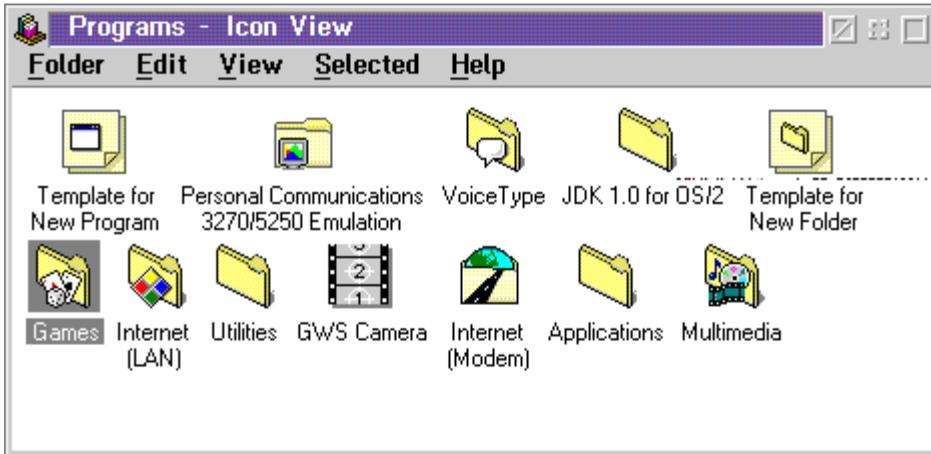
WarpCenter is a hybrid between the old Warp 3.0 **LaunchPad** and the Lotus **SmartCenter**. From left to right, clicking on a bar element pulls down a menu similar to the menu activated from the Win 95 Start button, switches between open objects (applications), initiates Lockup (a security feature), brings up a Find (search) dialog, initiates system shutdown, displays certain system information, or opens something called the “Object Tray.” Often-used objects can be placed here for instant access, and can be divided among trays. An element to the far right opens the **Assistance Center**.

The information element cycles through a display of free disk space on each drive, a dynamic graph to monitor system activity, and an indicator of battery condition when using a notebook computer.

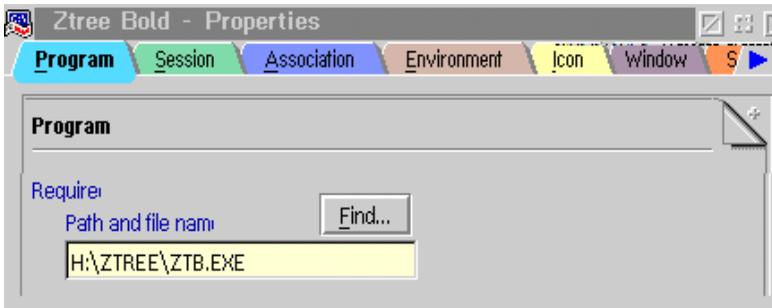


The menus can be nested, as in ‘95. Folder appear first, followed by programs and shortcuts. Note that the folders are more colorful than their Win95 counterparts. Double-clicking a folder object opens the

corresponding folder, to reveal it’s contents. Although I didn’t experiment with this feature, folder colors can be changed from the default Yellow, something not possible in Win95.



Right-clicking on an application displays the Property Sheet for that program, a portion of which is shown below.

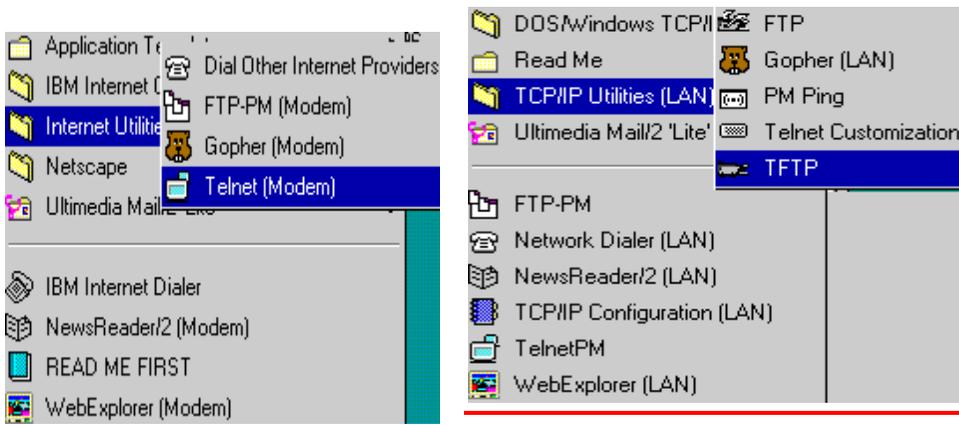


This dialog serves the same purpose as in Win95, but is much more flexible. The tabbed boxes control not only an OS/2 object's name, path, etc., but colors, icon selection and window behavior, among other things. The latter dialog determines the placement of minimized objects. The default is to remove the object's icon completely from

the Shell, forcing the user to open a minimized applications box to reopen that program. I found that it is wise to configure programs to minimize to the Shell, as in the Desktop in Windows. But that still produces clutter. It would be better if IBM devised something similar to the Windows taskbar, where minimized objects could be out of the way, but still be readily accessible.

So much for a look at the Workplace Shell and Property Sheets. Now, let's examine a few of Warp 4.0's other features.

CONNECTIVITY TOOLS

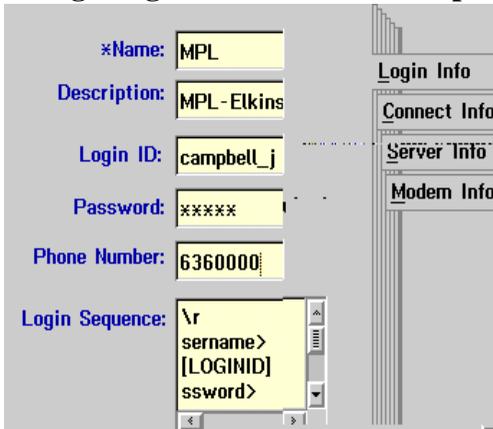


IBM's new system comes equipped with a full compliment of Network Adapters and Protocol Services, a File and Print Services Client, NetWare support, and TCP/IP. There is an AS/400 - 3270 emulator, a basic Usenet newsreader, and applets for FTP, Telnet and Gopher.

Some of these utilities are configured for both modem and LAN usage. Internet connections can be made using either SLIP or PPP, and Warp 4.0 includes an OS/2 version of *Hilgraeve's HyperACCESS Lite*, and the IBM *Web Explorer Browser*.

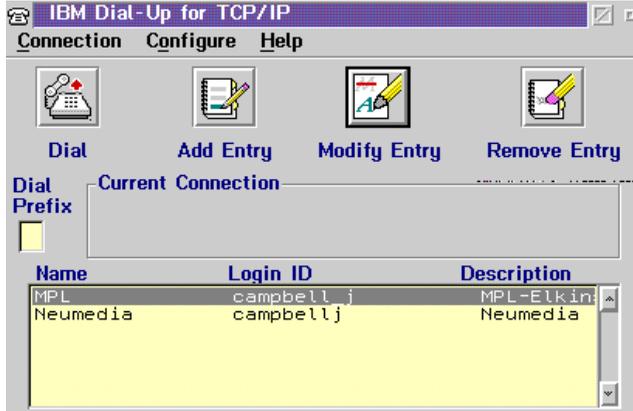
Configuring the Warp dialer for a local ISP is no harder, and no easier, than it's Win95 counterpart. Both can be frustrating, since one has to wade through network setups, regardless of whether a network is installed. One dialog calls for the type of network one is using. *None* is a possible choice, and the logical one. But Warp complains if *none* is chosen, and throws the user back to a previous screen, where, as I recall, IBM PPP has to be selected from a list, before installation can proceed. However, once past this hurdle, configuring the dialer for a local provider is no more difficult than in

Win95.



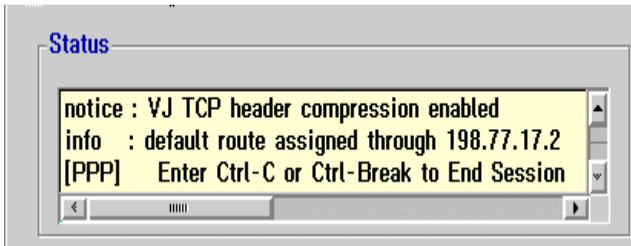
Warp, inexplicably, fails to provide a terminal window for manual login. This means that some sort of script has to be developed to feed in the necessary responses. The Help system is very good at explaining the scripting, but, in many cases, the ISP will have to be

depended upon to furnish a login script. This is because, except for logins that can be handled by a simple send-receive verb sequence,



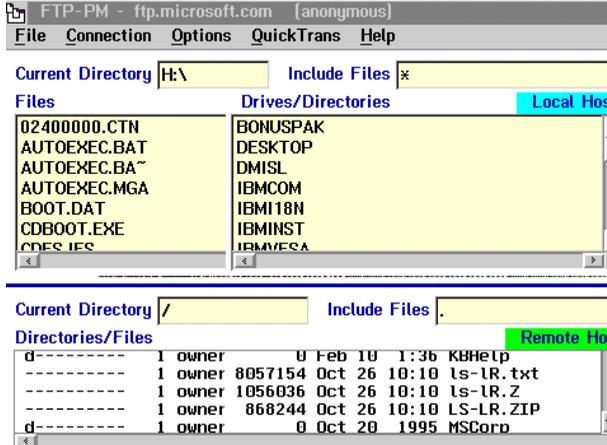
the script language is just too cryptic for non-programmers.

Multiple ISP's can be added, and appear in the dialup window in list form. To connect, one only has to highlight the desired connection, then click on *Dial*.



The connection progress is reported in a small window below the one identifying the connections, and is rather cryptic. In

the case of a PPP connection, the only indication of success is the appearance of “ [PPP] ” on the last line. As with Win95, one has to minimize the window to get it out of the way. Aside from the Browser, there isn't a whole lot to say about most of the included applets. They are similar in functionality to their Win95 cousins. They get the job done, but many users will seek out more powerful substitutes. The FTP utility deserves a closer look - it displays both the local and remote Host sides of the connection. Too many Windows FTP programs fail to show the local computer's file/directory structure, requiring that this information be keyed in. But here, one only need highlight the desired files to transfer to or



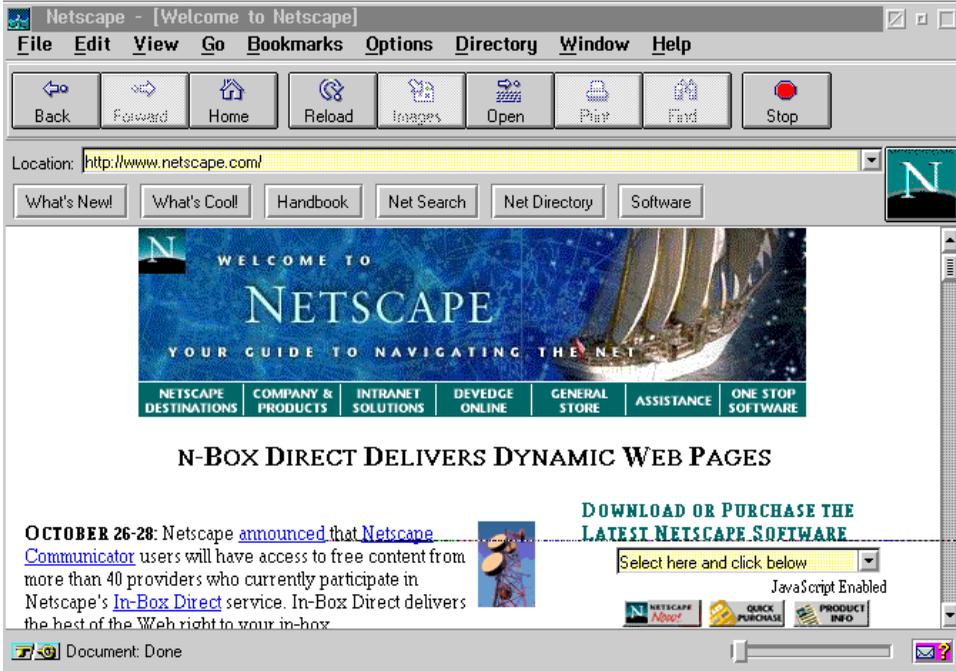
from the remote host. Multiple connections can be maintained, and files can be transferred among remote hosts. On the downside, there is no list of popular FTP sites to choose from.

The heart of the modern Internet is the World Wide Web

Browser. The **Web Explorer** browser IBM provides is certainly not up to modern standards. It claims to support HTML 2.0 specifications, but it doesn't support Frames, and doesn't support many graphics and sound formats without resorting to helper applications.

Rather than devoting any more space to IBM's software, I will describe the **Netscape Navigator** beta that was available at the time Warp 4.0 was released. Many OS/2 devotees were eagerly awaiting Netscape's first offering for their OS, and with good reason.

Although based on version 2.1 of the Netscape Windows browser, it offers considerably more than IBM chose to deliver with **Web Explorer**. The interface should look very familiar.



The beta offers image support for BMP, XBM, TIFF, JPG and GIF formats, AVS, AVI and MPG video, and WAV, AIF, AU and SND audio. No, there are no Shockwave or ReadAudio plug ins, but remember that this is a first effort. Perhaps I shouldn't be too hard on the initial beta release, but common MPG files I found on several sites refused to play. The format was not recognized as valid. Also, I couldn't save a JPG image displayed on a page - the browser crashed with an error message every time. Finally, some text appeared a bit fuzzy compared to the Windows version. On the positive side, JAVA animations and morphs came through fine. I have seen a lot of people

claim that this or that browser is faster than the competition, but I refrain from commenting on speed. Its a difficult judgement, considering that the connecting path through the Internet changes from one session to another, causing relative speed calculations to be somewhat suspect. Suffice it to say, the OS/2 **Netscape Navigator** beta I used doesn't seem slow.

This concludes my admittedly cursory look at some of the features of the OS/2 Warp 4.0 beta. There is much more that deserves a report, such as DOS and Windows support, and the power of the included **IBM Works** application suite, which is comparable to the likes of Microsoft Office. And I haven't talked about speed or stability issues. Perhaps later. I promised the Editor a report on the voice assist and dictation features. Hopefully, I can look at those next issue.

*John Campbell presently has four operating systems on his new Gateway. He is being urged to give NT 4 Workstation a whirl not to create new records in this regard, but rather bring his considerable talent to the NT arena. Perhaps when Merlin has been fully explored he can be persuaded. In any case, John continues to climb the Merlin mountain. Campbell is a regular **WindoWatch** contributing writer.*

Continued from Editorial Page: Free wheeling is a great concept. Anarchy is for the young and simplistic not for those with responsibilities. Just as the culture of the cold war was forced to change, the demonization of governmental interference is going to diminish by what we as Netizens need, want, and would like. The Internet can only function in a vacuum if that vacuum pays its own way AND carries with it guarantees of safety at many levels. Since that guarantee can neither be made in good faith or executed with even minor success it's time for the "We will not be moved" people to give it up as an option. If government regulation is not an option than privatization will fill the vacuum and ultimately rule the day with debatable results.

It's the real world folks! There really is no free lunch.

NT and UNIX
Copyright 1996 by By Jim Plumb

The wrangling over which operating system offers more has been a touchy topic for some users for many years and will continue to be a subject of debate for more years to come. Arguments continue over which is better, has more useful features, more robust, easier to use, and on and on. I think there is room for both operating system given that both have their strong and weak points for almost any organization. In any case, I'm not going to get into that, since this article is more concerned with the two systems getting along in peaceful co-existence and harmony. Can you hear them violins astrummin' yet?

Unix has its operating and file system(s) as does NT. They are similar but not compatible. Many organizations have both, usually Suns, DEC's, HP's, or IBMS running their respective flavors of Unix as servers of some sort, with PC workstations running, for the sake of this article, NT workstation. One thing they can agree upon is a network protocol as they both do TCP/IP. Unix, however, uses the NFS (Network File System) to share files. How do you access the files on Unix servers from PCs when NT knows naught about NFS. Of course NT can ftp to Unix and we could transfer files that way but we want a permanent connection. Looking at it this another way, Unix can't see the built-in networking MS uses enabling NT and WFW machines to connect to each other. It used to be called SMB Protocol and now is called the Microsoft Networking protocol.

By using these quite divergent system perspectives, a compatible solution is created. You can add something to either end of the path and achieve connectivity!

NFS

I've written about NFS before and it's still remain a weakness in any MS Windows environment. NFS for NT is a third-party proposition with several vendors producing better than adequate products. The traditional way to connect a PC to a Unix box is some form of a PC-NFS client. In the early days, the NFS client had its own TCP/IP stack and you shoehorned the package in the Windows environment with DOS drivers. Eventually MS saw the light and supplied its own TCP/IP starting with WFW so the NFS vendor needed only to supply the windows client. However, then we were a 16-bit system networking within the 32-bit world of Unix.

In a 32-bit environment, NFS networking is seamless. With NT 3.51 we are slightly constrained in our network connections by the English alphabet, meaning we can only have 26 drives, 3-6 of which may already be spoken for. Why anyone would want to have that many I don't know, but now a combination of NT 4 and some NFS clients, there exists the ability to browse all over Network Neighborhood into the NFS world on the other side without the need for drive letters. I have to qualify that because 16-bit programs cannot do this.

I can open a Word file by browsing through the Network Neighborhood, and looking through the NFS Servers section into my Sun server and then traversing its path to the directory I need to get my file. With all that, I can still map drive letters to those directories if I want to.

A sampling of acceptable NFS clients are offerings from: Hummingbird Software (Maestro Suite), Intergraph (PC-NFS originally a joint venture with Sun and now have their own product Disk Access), FTP with OnNet32 and Sun who will be taking over PC-NFS from Intergraph. As long as you know your TCP/IP, these things install very easily and have various tweakings that can be made depending upon your network configuration.

A variation of this theme is making your NT machine an NFS server, enabling the Unix users to see your NT machine as if it were just another Unix box. This approach also requires third party software, and is something I've never tried or have had the need for.

These NFS clients cost money, to the tune of several hundred dollars a whack for the luxury. What's the alternative? This is where the other view comes in. What if we looked at the problem from the Unix side.

SAMBA

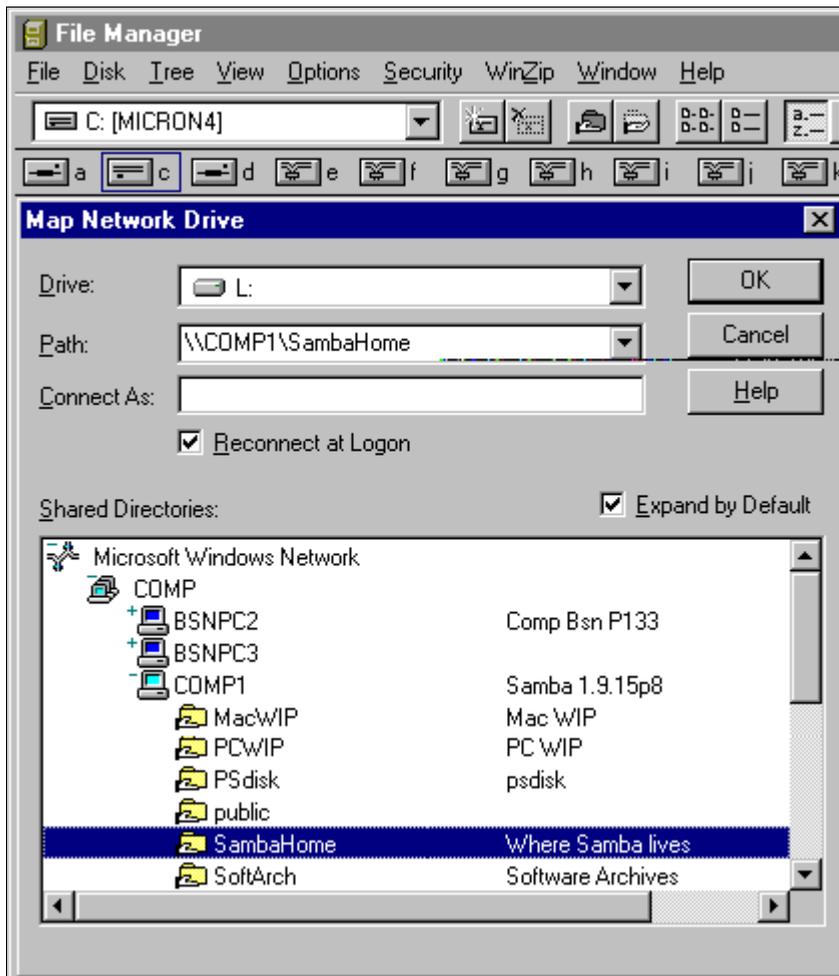
It's FREE! Now there's really no excuse. In a nutshell, Samba lives on the Unix side and for all practical purposes gives the Unix machine the ability to be cloaked as a PC when looking at a list of possible connect points when browsing the network. Samba comes from the original MS Networking term SMB and was a project of an enterprising Australian.

Once Samba is installed on your Unix system (and it can be installed on practically anything running Unix), your Unix machine will appear to be just another PC on the network. Samba emulates and broadcasts itself to be running on MS network.

Samba is installed depending on the installation conventions of the Unix system it's intended to live on. The fun part is configuration. There is some manual labor involved getting all the possible shares configured. This means file systems and printers. In Unix one must have the various permission permutations which must be specified. You'd be smart, when beginning, to start with one thing at a time until you have some grasp of what you're doing. Once installed however, it's great. The following is a sampling from Samba's config file.

```
[SoftArch]
comment = Software Archives
path = /archives/software
read only = no
public = yes
locking = no
[SambaHome]
comment = Where Samba lives
path = /export/local/samba
read only = no
public = yes
hide dot files = no
[PCWIP]
comment = PC WIP
path = /wip/comp/PC
read only = no
public = yes
create mask = 777
locking=no
[MacWIP]
comment = Mac WIP
path = /wip/comp/mac
read only = no
public = yes
locking=no
hide dot files = yes
```

Each label holds configuration info, some of which you can see displayed in the Map Network Drive window below. Note that I am browsing in the Microsoft Windows Network and I am looking under COMP1, which is a Sun machine. Displayed below COMP1 are the shares, some of which you see in the config info above. Some of these shares are not local to comp1, but are network mounts to other servers in the network.



I did some benchmarks comparing file access times using NFS and Samba. My conclusion was that NFS was slightly faster than Samba,

but other people show the reverse. It really depends upon your system.

Be forewarned, Samba is only for the adventurous. It is a free product with no technical support. However there is quite a network of Samba users available who are willing to help get you going.

Samba is available free of charge from <http://lake.canberra.edu.au/pub/samba> in source-code form. This site also supplies documentation and pointers to binaries (executables) to be found elsewhere on the Internet. The Internet newsgroup for Samba is *comp.protocols.smb*.

SUMMARY

Two workable solutions are presented here to handle your NT-Unix connectivity situation: one traditional the other a new and clever approach.

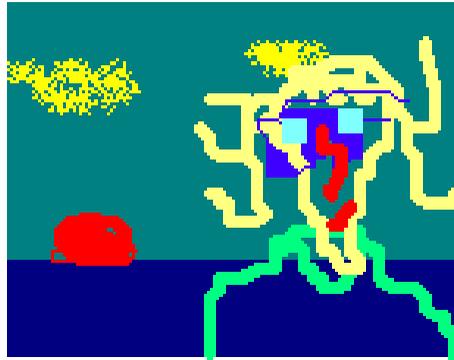
Good luck with them.

Jim Plumb is the System Administrator for a large New England printing establishment. His daily hands-on experience with multiple operating systems make his perspective an unique one. Jim has been a contributing writer for [Windo Watch](#) from the very beginning and was the original [Windo Watch](#) WebMaster.

A Matter of Taste

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Alice, my friend the Ice Cream Manager just dropped by. She has decided that ice cream must be mixed like paint, and has a database with 32000 flavors. Her software brings up a picture of what the flavor will look like, in cup or cone. A special taste electrode is included to present the taste to the customer. She says the nice thing about this is that she can mix the final flavor from her *primary flavor pool* of just fifteen basic flavors.



She says this technique can be adapted for frozen yogurt, including a computer assisted manufacturing process from specifications direct to final yogurt cup, all automated!

She is working on tomato sauce, cheese sauce, and chowder databases which offer a variety of mixtures of flavor and texture. She hopes to network the various databases together, thus having pasta-yogurt, or chowder-cheese sauce dishes.

She has adapted a studio mixer with patch cords and slide bars to uniformly mix the flavors of her products.

Her color printer prints out mouth-watering pictures to put in her window, and a state-of-the-art dishwasher fumigates those dishes that have an unfortunate odor.

Alice says she can set up an Ice Cream Shoppe for you along these lines, even if you only have a 286. Her software is basic, and adaptable across platforms.

For example, these techniques of gradual mixing can be applied to office stationary.

Peter Neuendorffer is the creator of my friend Alice and her many adventures and pronouncements. He is also a Windows programmer and a regular [WindoWatch](http://www.users.channell.com/petern) contributor. His homepage can be seen at <http://www.users.channell.com/petern>

Parables:

- **You can't tell which way the train went by looking at the track.**
- **Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.**
- **The facts, although interesting, are irrelevant.**
- **Anything worth fighting for is worth fighting dirty for.**
- **If you think there's good in everybody, you've not met everybody.**
- **All things being equal, fat people use more soap.**
- **If you can smile when things go wrong, you have someone in mind to blame.**
- **Every time you make ends meet, they move the ends.**
- **The trouble with life is, you're halfway through it before you realize it's a do-it-yourself thing.**

Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks

Copyright 1996 by Gregg Hommel

Before we get into frames, and all that stuff, maybe we had best cover the basics, for those reading this who have yet to write a single HTML page, but are interested in learning how. I will caution those of you who know a little or more HTML this is going to be *very* basic, so if you become bored easily, skip down a few paragraphs, or perhaps you should wait for the next column.

When you log onto the World Wide Web, using a browser to go Web surfing, you see Web pages, representing a remarkable collection of information. This is displayed in mostly graphical form, assuming you are using a graphical Web browser, and range from very plain text to rather esoteric visuals.

Web pages can be static, or they can be dynamic when using animations, sound or video clips. They can be extensively graphical in nature, or virtually plain text, or anything in between. They can be colourful, or plain Jane.

No matter what display your browser supports, each and every one of those pages starts life as a collection of HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) code, known as tags. These tags tells your browser what and how to display various components keeping in mind that this collection of HTML tags is a plain and simple ASCII type text file.

"Fine", you say, "but how does a plain and simple ASCII text file get displayed as a Web page?" Well, that isn't quite that plain, or even that simple. The first thing to note is that an HTML file is interpreted, generally by the browser each person is using to display the pages. However, the browser has to know that the text file it is going to display is an HTML file. That is done simply enough, by placing a tag at the very beginning of the file, as in `<HTML>`. You will note that an HTML tag is indicated in that *plain, simple, ASCII text file* by the angular brackets, as shown in the above `<HTML>` tag.

But even that is not quite enough. HTML tags are basically, and most commonly, a toggle, i.e. they turn something on, like a switch. This also means that, like a switch, they have to generally be turned off. To do so in HTML, you use the exact same tag, but precede the tag proper with a slash, as in `</HTML>`. So there you have it... our first HTML file, like so...

```
<HTML>...</HTML>
```

Mind you, this one does absolutely nothing, and would be very boring to look at, because nothing whatsoever would display. All we have done so far is told the browser that this is an HTML file. But we haven't told it to do anything with the file yet. Nor is the above all there is to simple, basic HTML files. We need at least two more items, - a header section, and a body section.

The header section tells the browser various bits of information about the file. Indeed, most of the commands which might be put in the header section are quite esoteric, and are set to pre-defined defaults, so we needn't worry about them, - at least now! The body section is

what it appears to be, simply a body of text or items to be displayed by the browser in it's view window.

The tags for these sections are just as simple. `<HEAD>` and `</HEAD>` for the header, and `<BODY>` and `</BODY>` for the body of the file, which get inserted in between the HTML toggle, with the header data, logically, first. So now we have...

```
<HTML>  
<HEAD></HEAD>  
<BODY></BODY>  
</HTML>
```

But we still have nothing displayed, do we? Don't worry, it gets better from here on!

Remember the last time you visited a Web page? Do you recall that, when you did so, the title bar of your browser changed, and displayed a name for the page you were visiting, along with the usual application title? The reason it did that is because the author of that page placed a title to be displayed for the page in the header section of the HTML file. He did this using the logical enough text construct or `<TITLE>...</TITLE>`. And we are going to do the same thing.

For the purposes of this exercise, let's call our page *The WindoWatch Tutorial Practice Page* . To do that, and have it displayed in the title bar of the browser being used to view our page, we simply put it inside the `<TITLE></TITLE>` tags, as so....

```
<HTML>
<HEAD><TITLE>The WindoWatch Tutorial Practice Page</TITLE></HEAD>
<BODY></BODY>
</HTML>
```

Finally, we're getting somewhere! At least we now have a title that will display in the title bar of the browser used to view our page, even if the page itself will display nothing. But before we go on to get something displayed on the page proper, we should note a couple of things.

In general, the case which is used for tags is unimportant. Basically, to an HTML interpreter, `<head>` and `<HEAD>` are the same thing. There are some exceptions to this rule, but none that will concern us just yet. However, for simplicity in reading our exercises, and/or an HTML file, the common convention is to put all tags in all caps, which tends to set them apart, to some extent, from the rest of the contents of the file, which generally are the contents of the page. And that is the convention which we will follow in these *lessons* as well.

In addition, you will note that, in the above example, I put two sets of tags, and some display text all in one line. HTML interpreters do not generally care about line lengths, or spacing, or whether more than one tag is on one line. The code is interpreted logically, not virtually, so the niceties of arrangement are not that important. However, again for the sake of readability, we will use the more or less conventional 75 character line length for our code with lines wrapping to the next line down. Indeed, through out these columns, there will be many items written in code to make the junk more legible and easier to read, although not required by HTML interpreters.

I'll try not to mention this too often, unless I feel it necessary to what we are working on. But without these conventions, HTML would be just as happy with everything all jumbled together. To do so would make it nigh on impossible for us to read what we are writing, so we won't.

Now that's out of the way and we are going to here put something in the body of the page. Nothing fancy for now, just *This is our very first practice page for this HTML tutorial*. This is done quite simply, by putting the text above within the confines of the `<BODY></BODY>` construct, as in....

```
<HTML>
<HEAD><TITLE>The WindoWatch Tutorial Practice Page</TITLE></HEAD>
<BODY>
This is our very first practice page for this HTML tutorial.
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

Well, that isn't much! Just a title in the title bar of the browser, and a single line of text in the body view of the page, but it's a start. There is yet another item we will touch upon in this column, - paragraphs!

As noted above, HTML is a logical display as opposed to a virtual display. You can write your text in the HTML file as nicely formatted as you wish, that is set out in paragraphs nice and neat! This will not make any difference to the HTML interpreter. It will ignore your paragraphs, and display all that text as one big paragraph *unless* you specifically tell the HTML interpreter where to break for a paragraph.

This you do with the `<P></P>` tag set. It is here, that we run into the first exception to our general rule that HTML tags are toggles that require a tag to turn on and another to turn off. Technically, this is, the case for the `<P>` paragraph tag, even tho' in reality, current browsers do not require the `</P>` ending tag to be placed at the end of a paragraph. When the `<P>` paragraph tag is seen, they begin a new paragraph, and assume that the next `<P>` tag, in effect, turns off the old paragraph and turns on a new one. This may not always be the case, but for now, you can safely use `<P>` without an off-switch `</P>` tag.

We will endeavour to use both the `<P>` and the `</P>` tags in the code we present here, since it is the correct way to do it, but if I forget, please don't jump on me and flood me with email. Old habits die hard, and although this is not a good habit to have, it is one that I am afraid I have fallen in to.

In any case, we will add now, a new paragraph of text to our file, and tell the browser this.

```
<HTML>
<HEAD><TITLE>The WindoWatch Tutorial Practice Page</TITLE></HEAD>
<BODY>
This is our very first practice page for this HTML tutorial.
<P>I know that this isn't much to read, but it is our first page, and we
needed some practice at writing the text for the body of our page.</P>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

which would display something like this....

This is our very first practice page for this HTML tutorial.

I know that this isn't much to read, but it is our first page, and we needed some practice at writing the text for the body of our page.

Next time, we will add some pizzazz to the body of our page, with graphics, and some formatting, and we will begin adding links to other pages, into the body.

Gregg Hommel is well known for his work as an Aspect script programmer and the Aspect tutorial series he developed for WindoWatch. He brings his considerable talent to the world of HTML and begins to fill in gaps in our understanding of HTML code. Gregg has been active on the nets hosting conferences and serves on the editorial board of [WindoWatch](#).

Part Four: Toolbar Time

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Introduction

One of the first things that impressed me about the move from the DOS world of word processors, namely WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS to WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows, and later Word 6 for Windows, was the graphical strength of Windows. No longer was it necessary to remember the arcane keystroke combinations necessary to perform simple formatting tasks in WP-DOS or to have hands nimble enough to engage in the finger gymnastics WP-DOS demanded on a daily—nay, routine—basis.

In a previous article in this Word 7 for Windows 95 series I talked about my requirement that keyboard shortcuts have a mnemonic consistency. As a long-time proponent of WordPerfect DOS, it's hard for me to admit today that there was absolutely nothing mnemonic about CTRL+F8 or SHIFT+F1 or ALT+F10. As proof, I barely remember any of the thirty-odd combinations anymore, though I think CTRL+F8 might have something to do with formatting.

I do still use keyboard shortcuts in Word for Windows, but I restrict their use to those combinations that make the most sense, save the most time, and are the easiest to remember. The reason I be choosy is that Windows gave us a WYSIWYG world, drop down menus and,

best of all, toolbars. Toolbars! What a concept! A natural evolution of the simple yet handy macro previously launched with a keyboard combination like ALT+P, to print, and now, most often with a tiny button whose image, if the designer has done a good job, bears a reasonable representation of the function. Yet toolbar buttons go beyond the multi-step macro idea to encompass common functions or menu choices.

Pavlovians—if there are such observers—would probably say we were probably trained for these icons from the first time we traveled down the highway and saw those warnings about deer and railroad crossings, hotel notices symbolized by the round-headed silhouette lying snug in bed, and the fork, spoon and knife combo representing a restaurant dead ahead. By now, everyone who's used Windows for any amount of time is completely familiar with the toolbar buttons for FILE NEW, FILE OPEN, FILE SAVE and FILE PRINT. The EDIT CUT, EDIT COPY and EDIT PASTE buttons aren't far behind. Even better, in the last generation of computing changes, we received the perfect gift to spruce up those less than obvious toolbar button images: ToolTips! So now, if you're unsure of what a button does, poise your mouse cursor over it, wait a second and a little yellow description box pops up to reward your patience, removing all doubt about the button's function.

Since these things called toolbars are so useful, so functional, so helpful, I'm often astounded by the number of Word for Windows users I come across who have been using Word for quite a while and yet haven't made one attempt to alter their toolbar. The same people who carefully adjust seat position and mirror angles in their car, who spend an hour to make sure the latest model in the athletic shoe wars provides that perfect fit or spend days looking for the perfect daily

planner will undoubtedly leave the Word for Windows toolbars exactly as they found it.

That's all about to change. Right now!

The Firing Line

If Word for Windows has a strength, and it has many, it would be user customization. While I tend to leave the customizable menu system alone, the toolbars are there for quick, easy access to what I do the most and as such, they're fair game for an overhaul. Rumor has it that the Standard toolbar was designed to highlight the gee-whiz features of Word, so that Mr. Gates and his sales force presenters could demo the latest bell or newest whistle to the eager throngs in attendance with a click of a button. Unfortunately, that gee-whiz feature might be something that you do once every three months, if at all.

Let's take an example. As a Word user, you may never need to insert a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet into a document—heck, as a Word user, you may not even own Excel! Even so, there is the button on your Standard toolbar. And something that you do a dozen times a day—File Close—can't be found anywhere on Standard Row.

If you've never used that Insert Excel spreadsheet button and it's still sitting on Standard row, mocking your OLE shortcomings, here's a toolbar shortcut you'll love. Hold down the ALT key, then click and drag that button from the toolbar down into the document area.



BOOM! It's gone. The most fun you've had since Space Invaders™. Go ahead, zap a few more buttons. Get rid of anything you haven't

WW

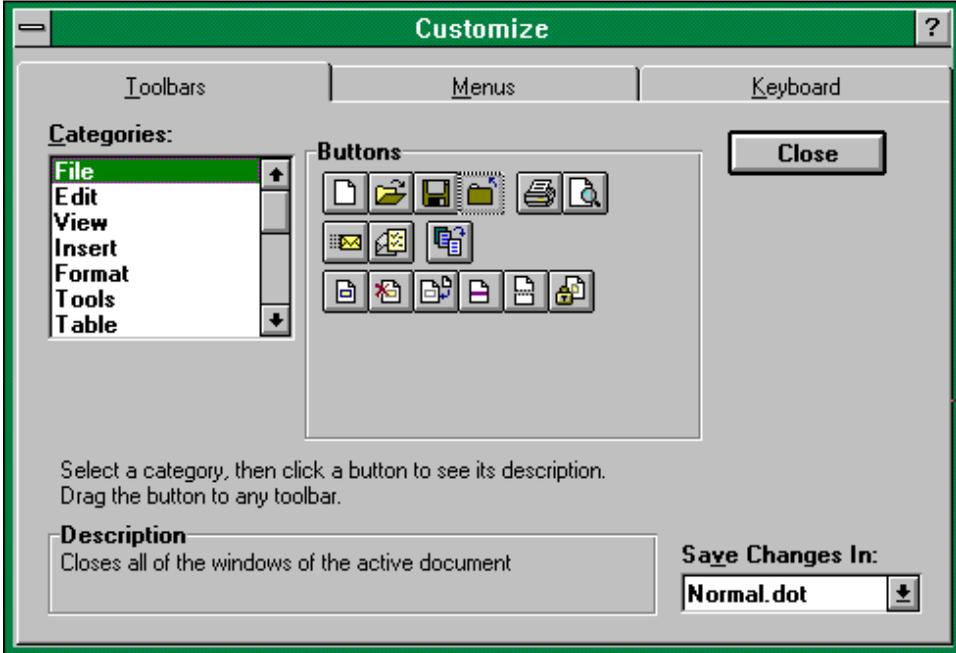
used or never plan to use. I like to call this method **The Hook**, after the vaudeville and, more recently, Gong Show device to physically and unceremoniously yank a bad act off stage. Depending on how long you've been using Word, you may have the sudden realization that there are a lot of dead-weight buttons taking up screen real estate on your Standard or Formatting toolbar. Good candidates: Drawing, Columns (unless you're editor of the company newsletter), Tables (TABLE, INSERT TABLE is the better way to go), and Format Painter (you are using Styles aren't you?)

New Additions

After you dispose of the dead weight and have some elbow room up on Standard Row, you need to consider how you work. Remember you can modify all your toolbars. Last issue, Volume 2 Number 8, I talked about creating a Bold-Italic formatting macro that ended up on the Formatting toolbar. What's missing? What do you do on a regular basis that could be best added as a button? For starters, you should add FILE CLOSE  right next to the New, Open and Save buttons.

Then you might want to add EDIT FIND,  Shrink to Fit , (to save paper), etc. I added the Small Capitals formatting button  to my Formatting toolbar, as I used those to denote menu choices in this article.

As you'll see, you're not limited to adding menu choices as buttons. You can add any Word command (from a list that pops up when you select All Commands), fonts, macros, AutoText, even styles. To get to the toolbar customization mode of Word, you can either select TOOLS, CUSTOMIZE, then the Toolbar Tab, or right-click in any toolbar area and select Customize from the context menu that pops up.



Adding buttons, it turns out, is not quite as easy as the ALT+yank method for removing them. But nearly so. With File selected under Categories: you'll see a group of file operation related toolbar buttons. Note: some of these aren't even listed under the FILE menu. Bonanza!

Notice that when you select the FILE CLOSE button, a description pops up in the Description: area below. These descriptions are like ToolTips on steroids, but perfectly legal. To add this button to your Standard toolbar click and drag it up to the toolbar right where you want it. To avoid having a little divider between the button and the others, let the outlined image overlap the button to the left just a little bit. It will link up with that File grouping nicely. If that was the only change you wanted to make, click Close on the customize dialog box

and you're done. Note: you could also remove buttons in this customize mode by clicking and dragging them from the toolbar zone into the document area.

The best thing about this customization is how easy it is. You might be working on a special project that requires a function you don't normally use. Pop a button up there! When the project's over, give it The Hook.

As I mentioned previously, menu choices aren't the only types of buttons you can add. Word 7 also has a list of commands you can select from, macros (in NORMAL.DOT or any attached template), fonts, AutoText and styles. Unfortunately, if you find and select an item from any of these categories, you are presented with a fairly meager selection of general toolbar buttons.



Or you can add the button as text. Take it from me: if you use text for these types of buttons, you will run out of screen real estate real fast. If you want to use text, click on the Text Button, then enter the text to

appear on your button in the text box below, click Assign (after you've dragged the function/macro/style/font/command to the toolbar position, this Custom Button dialog box pops up), then close the Customize dialog box and you're done. If you want to use one of the thirty-seven prefab buttons, just click it, then Assign, then Close the Customize dialog box.

What if neither of these options is acceptable? Get creative. If you have any artistic flair at all, you can click Cancel at this point, then right-click the blank button to see the context menu with the following choices: Copy, Paste, Reset, Choose or Edit Button Image. The one you want is Edit. Welcome to the 16 by 16 pixel, 16 color palette of the toolbar button artist. On the plus side, that's 256 pixels for you to color in; on the negative, you're picture is going to occupy only about a quarter-inch square of screen real estate when your done. Make it look good! Hint: use of grays can give you that elusive 3D image you're looking for.

More often than not, you might find another toolbar button that you can take as a starting point. In the Customize mode, you can Copy a button image after you right-click on it, then paste it onto the button you're working on by right-clicking on that button and selecting Paste Button Image. From that starting point, you can right-click and Edit the pasted image. Last issue, after I described the Bold-Italic macro, I took a copy of the Italics “*I*” button from the Formatting toolbar, gave it some depth and placed a faint B and I to opposite corners to remind me what the button does when a Tool Tip isn't displayed.

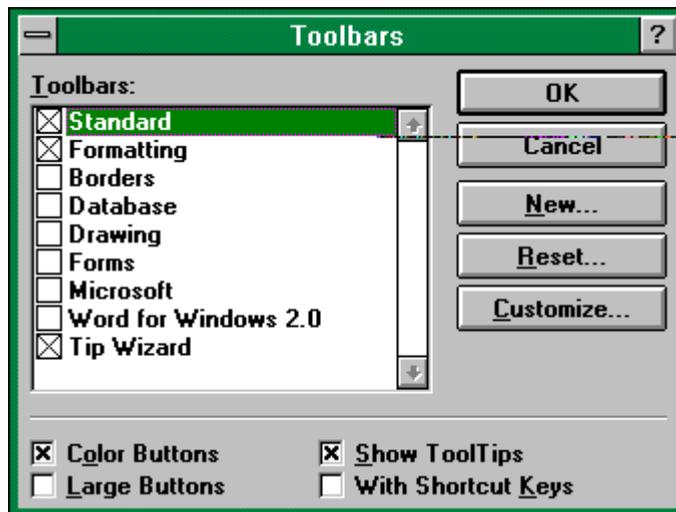
Once you've painted a new image or modified an existing one, click OK from the Button Editor, then Close to get out of Customize mode. If you modify one of the existing buttons and realize you've made a

horrible mess of it, you can choose **Reset Button Image** from the button context menu to repair things.

Toolbar Trivia

If you haven't experimented with toolbars that much you may not realize that they can be dragged and docked to the sides or bottom of your screen, or they can be left floating somewhere in the middle. The trick is to click on a space between buttons not on a button, otherwise Word assumes, and rightly so, that you were trying to execute the button function itself. The button will depress and release, but the toolbar won't budge.

If you aren't seeing ToolTips when you wait patiently with your cursor over a button, then you may have this function turned off. Right-click on any toolbar and select the **Toolbars** option from the context menu.



Here you can check-box other toolbars that you want to make visible, turn ToolTips off or on, have Word display color or large buttons, reset a toolbar or begin the creation of a brand new toolbar. Notice also, that you can get to the Customize dialog box from here.

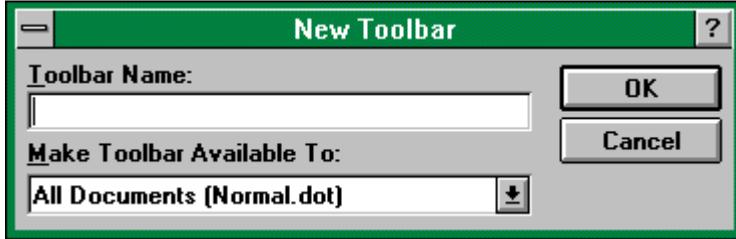
A Standard By Any Other Name

If for some reason you want to leave the Standard toolbar as is, you could create a new toolbar to use as your own personal standard with the Toolbars dialog box's New command. Give it a name, e.g., *MyStandard* or something similar. You'll be rewarded with a lone square of toolbar real estate. If you want 80% of the Standard toolbar buttons just the way they are, you can quickly (with the Customize dialog box open) clone them from the old Standard to your standard. Just click and drag the buttons to your new toolbar and watch it grow. Then add any additions you please and put *MyStandard* in the old Standard's throne.

Conclusion

Keep in mind that toolbars are stored in templates. (As are macros, AutoText and styles; all of Word's default toolbars are stored in NORMAL.DOT) Every time that Customize dialog box came up, in the bottom right hand corner was the information: Save Changes In: Normal.dot. Of course, you'll want a revamped Standard or Formatting Toolbar to reside in your default, NORMAL.DOT template.

However, when you create a template and want a new toolbar available to users of that DOT file, make sure that you select the template name from the Make Toolbar Available To: drop down list from the New Toolbar dialog box.

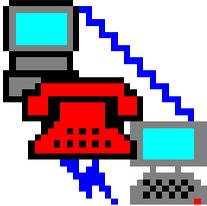


Once you do this, make sure any subsequent customization changes are being saved in your template. That way, when you distribute the template file, e.g., MYTEMP.DOT, the toolbar will be available, along with any macros, AutoText or styles you've created especially for it.

Now that you know how to use the tools of the toolbar, it's time to tinker.

Jack Passarella continue to wow our readers with these wonderful how-to Word articles. He is a systems man for a large printing establishment...among other things! He is the Host of the Ilink Word conference and regular contributor to [WindoWatch](#). He is a software author and maintains his own homepage at <http://members.aol.com/jackwpass/>

On Multitasking!



Reflections of a ModemJunkie

Copyright 1996 by *Leonard Grossman*

A few years ago I thought multitasking was rubbing your stomach while patting your head, but Gerald Ford was defeated and since then we have all had to learn to do more than one thing at a time.

The other night I walked into my study to find my daughter sitting at my desk, telephone pressed between her shoulder and her cocked head. The keyboard was clattering as she chatted with strangers by telnetting over the Internet...and the radio was on! I think she was listening, but I'm not sure. She was also chewing gum. What an example of multimedia interactive multitasking. These three words have become the watchwords of the web: multimedia, interactive, multitasking.

I confess, the addition of 16 meg of RAM has made it possible for me to keep a number of applications open which makes editing my web pages much easier. I can keep open the HTML editor, Netscape and my FTP client. I can also keep Eudora running in the background. So I have been dragged, at last, into the era of multitasking.

Additionally, I no longer question the utility of being able to do all of these things at once!

I also recognize the joy of hearing chimes on the hour or downloading a few bars of a new piece of music. Indeed, listening to the sound track on the Myst CD is a wonderful way to relax, so much so, that I've never managed to play it for more than 15 or 20 minutes without falling asleep.

I guess my computer qualifies as multimedia, although there are those who would snub their noses at the garage sale boom box connected to my sound card. The quality is greater than that on most speakers designed for use with computers. . . and for \$15, how could I resist?

It's the term *interactive* to which I draw my attention today. It seems to me that the more interactive our media become the more passive we really are. For the interactivity hyped by the media is not true engagement but involves primarily choices among entertainments -- soporifics to lull us.

Learning is interactive. A good argument is interactive. Watching television is passive. With all the emphasis upon interactivity, the real effect is to convert the interactivity that used to exist between the hacker and the computer into passivity of the couch potato.

As web pages become filled with animation and scripted activity, the creative energy that used to be associated with the online experience becomes just one more form of passive entertainment. Yes, we may be able to give input and interact with the screens but to what end?

I lean back and click on link after link. My mouse scrolls around the pad as I bounce from site to site. What a pain if there is a field to fill in. I have to sit up at the keyboard...maybe even find my glasses. I might even have to think.

No, better the clicking interactivity. Pop up an *.avi file or watch an animated banner. Listen to the opening bars of Beethoven or the Grateful Dead. Watch a slide show. It becomes lulling and deadening.

As developments in flat screen technology increase I visualize families sitting in the living room, gazing dully at the large screen before them. Who will control the infra-red mouse? Who will get up and get another bowl of popcorn. Sega and Atari write large. These screens will be interactive. But will they stimulate or merely sedate.

I don't doubt that interactive computing can be more than that. But the web is becoming commercialized, if for no other reason than to pay for the massive increases in infrastructure that will be necessary to provide the bandwidth to handle the transfer of multimedia entertainments to hundreds of millions of homes impatient with server delays and pipeline bottlenecks. Mae West doesn't just want us to come up and see her some time, she wants a new structure to handle the load. And with commercialization comes the need to reach larger and larger audiences.

I am thrilled my home page has had some 10,000 hits but that only happened because it became known as a source to download a free HTML editor. It is great that my community resource pages may have four or five hits a day or a week. But if I had to rely upon advertising, who would sponsor an in depth treatment of a set

of stained glass windows? Who would pay to list the activities of a community interfaith counsel or a combined adult studies program? I could place banner advertising on the page, but could they hold their own in the marketplace.

Just as the Oprahs and Renaldos and sitcoms have driven out drama and real news, will the common denominator drive out the creative, informative uses of the web? In mid October I heard for the first time serious discussion of the creation of an alternative high speed Internet for serious scientific purposes.

How many nets will be necessary? Will there be gateways between them? Will there be second class users? Will we have to pay for access to the basic informational sites that dominated the web only two years ago.

I try to keep my web pages as simple as possible, so that they load quickly and are accessible by the widest possible audience. But as my equipment improves, slowly and imperceptibly I *improve* my pages with features I no longer realize won't play on older equipment.

Slowly, I was tempted into adding colored backgrounds to some of my pages and, horrors, a tiled background on another. They look great on my machine. While I am careful to use ALT= statements for all of my images (I have a friend who can only view my pages through a text browser.)

It never dawned on me that there are thousands of users who don't have the latest video cards and who can't really appreciate my pages. Indeed, the other day I tried to look at my pages on a machine in a

government office. Although these machines are Pentiums, with 16 meg of RAM, they have cheap monitors and video cards. My pages were almost illegible. The backgrounds obscured the text. My magnificent images were reduced to little more than monochrome. I care. But do I want to go back? Probably not.

Heck, government workers shouldn't be spending work time looking at my pages any way!

My point is that I, too, have been seduced into increasing the non-informational content of my pages. One more drop in the flood filling that pipeline to overflowing. But I digress.

I don't really object to true interactivity, - to interaction which stimulates the mind. My objection is to pseudo-interactivity -- the inter-activity which says "Click here and let me entertain you." The *feelies* of the nineties. I listen to AOL say *Hello* and *Good Bye*, to my daughter (I may get rid of the boom box , after all. My mother's car says "A door is ajar." I can never resist responding, "No a door is a door, a jar is a jar." But no one laughs any more.)

My favorite interactive tool has become the search engine. There my input results in something new -- not someone's pre-scripted response to my stimulus. HotBot <www.hotbot.com> leads me to new sites and new discoveries. Or answers my daughter's homework questions or leads me to discover the geniuses who have linked my pages.

But real interactivity is quieter. It is pen on paper. - or fingers to keyboard! The creation of something new. I have mentioned before that I have taken to staring at my navel – that is looking at my own

web pages. At first it was just to see how many hits I have had. But then I dropped the counters and substituted htmlZine a sophisticated logging tool which lets me know where my viewers are coming from and how they got there. But eventually I wanted more.

Eventually, I wanted to improve my pages. Not make them glitzier.. but make them more useful. My original home page doesn't get much attention. It is the pages I have done for a local community organization which give me the most pleasure. For there the interactivity is real.

There are people out there who benefit from those pages or at least are affected thereby. Some leave notes of appreciation in my guest books. Some leave complaints. Some ask stimulating questions about what I have done or about something on my page that made them think. I have also heard from strangers who were once part of our community and from the grandsons of people whose work is featured on my pages. Linking the generations. Closing the circle. That is a meaningful form of interactivity.

Pass the mouse please.

Another thoughtful and original piece of work from [Leonard Grossman](#), who is an attorney working for the government. He is a [WindoWatch](#) regular and has been contributing "Reflections" for some time. Leonard's home page was chosen as a "Best o' [comp.infosystems.www.announce](#)" site during April 1996. He is also president of his local user group. Comments can be sent to grossman@mcs.com.

Looking at Quattro Pro V7

Copyright 1996 by Frank McGowan

Before I launch the *real* article, I need to do a little venting. Where in the world do they come up with names for these software programs?

Not just Quattro Pro, but Lotus and Excel, all of which have little obvious connection with the nature of the program. Sure, if we know they're spreadsheets, but if you asked someone not already familiar with them, could anyone guess what these applications were supposed to do? I mean, what does Quattro, four in Italian, have to do with anything? Once upon a time, using a number in a product name implied something.

IBM's OS 360 was called that because it was, or purported to be, all inclusive, in the sense that a circle contains 360 degrees. Of course nowadays product numbers are assigned for reasons that defy any logic but that of the marketing people. Thus we can move from version 2 to version 6, blithely skipping past the intervening digits like a numerical Humpty Dumpty. Sigh!



Okay, enough of the unsolicited editorial comments. Let's get to the review of Quattro Pro.

Evaluation

First the short version: I liked it, quite a lot. If you need a few more details, including a few negative points, read on.

Documentation

You can take the boy out of technical writing, but you can't...well, you can fill in the rest. The user manual, entitled *Corel WordPerfect Suite 7 Quick Results* (pew!), thankfully is a lot more concise inside than on its front cover. Each major feature of the program is summarized, usually on a single page. This is no small accomplishment, especially considering that ample illustrations are included providing good balance between text and graphics. In some cases, the text is a bit too concise: I could have used a little more verbiage on page 203 entitled Finding the Question When You Have the Answer but more on this further on. Suffice to say you won't get bogged down in a lot of irrelevant details. This manual is truly aimed at the person who just wants to get something done rather than at the techno-wonk who wants to know how did they do that? Overall, an A-minus for the book.

User Interface

Quattro Pro's on-screen look is clean and inviting. I was especially impressed with the intuitive nature of the formatting tools on the **Power Bar** which still makes me think of a high-energy snackfood. Even though I'm steeped in the Excel culture, with its little windows showing you the font name and size, Quattro Pro's choice of buttons that reveal dropdown lists of formatting options is just as obvious, and provides a greater range of choices. It is useful to be able to choose from two or more currency or comma styles, for example, rather than having to use the menu to get to the appropriate dialog box.

Quattro Pro also affords more ready-made choices when it comes to Zoom magnification, so you can reduce the size of your onscreen data to fit more on without inducing eyestrain. It's handy to have 90% magnification already defined, for instance.

I was also pleased to see that a keyboard shortcut is available for closing a file (Ctrl+W). It can be a bit of a drag to have to open the File menu to do this, short of creating a macro of your own. A little thing, to be sure, but indicative of Quattro Pro's appreciation of what makes a program a pleasure to use.

Features

As with its competitors, Quattro Pro provides a tool, **Speed Format** so you can apply formatting to cells. In Excel, this is called Autoformat. However, in Quattro Pro, **Speed Format** is available via a button on the Power Bar, so you can again avoid the delay of opening a menu to use it.

Quattro Pro is also equipped to make on-the-fly corrections to your typo's or spello's, by means of Quick Correct. Quattro Pro goes well beyond the Autocorrect feature on Excel by providing a much greater selection of canned misspellings to correct, notably "potatoo" and (!) "tomatoe." I guess that pretty much ensures that the memory of Dan Quayle will endure into the next millennium. I wonder at some of the choices, however. How often do you imagine the word "repentance", rendered as "repentence" in the to-be-corrected list, will be used in a spreadsheet? Nor do I see a lot of utility in including "iresistible" when the much more common error of "irresistable" is more likely to occur. There are several instances where the "ible/able" confusion was ignored.

Apart from these minor quibbles (or is it "quabbles"?), I was pleased at the range of choices. Of special note is "heighth," which is so

tempting when teamed with “width” and “depth.” That one’s starting to grate almost as much as “eck-setera” and “hone,” as in “he honed in”. Does that mean that those birds who find their way back to their roosts from great distances should be called “honing pigeons”?

You can reverse your actions via the Edit, Undo feature. Like its competitors, Quattro Pro provides just one level of undo (you can only undo the most recent action, not any earlier). Still, that’s better than none.

Quattro Pro lets you analyze data through devices such as scenario managers, “what-if” facilities, and what I call “bass-ackward” analysis, known in Excel as “goal seek”. Unlike Jeopardy©, if you know the answer, what’s the question?, Quattro Pro changes one of its other *answers* to achieve your desired outcome. If you can afford a monthly payment of up to \$300, you use **Solve For**, one of the Tools|Numeric Tools choices to figure out how much you can borrow; how low the interest must be; or how many payments are needed to keep the monthly “nut” at the desired number. So, if you have to borrow 10 large (\$10,000) and can’t get an interest rate below 7.5%, you can solve for your \$300 payment by letting Quattro Pro figure out how many payments you’ll have to make at that rate. This is certainly one of the best features included in any spreadsheet for someone who’s in the housing market. It lets you set an upper limit on your mortgage payments, and then figures out how big a mortgage you can carry. I found Quattro Pro’s version as simple to use as Excel’s, though I could have used a little more text in the manual’s description of the process. I was tripped up, and got some fantastic numbers because I assumed I had to divide the interest rate by 12, as in Excel - my suspicions were aroused when I found I could borrow enough money to pay off the national debt! Once I got past that, it was child’s play.

If you decide to display more toolbars on the window, Quattro Pro puts the toolbar up as soon as you click it in the View, Toolbars list;

that way, if it's not what you want, you can deselect it right then and there. No need to reopen the View menu.

Quattro Pro lets you rotate text in a cell from horizontal to vertical very quickly by using the Block Properties option. To get this effect in Excel you have to jump through a number of not-very-obvious hoops. How often you'd do this is another matter, but it did come up in an Excel course I recently delivered, so I guess someone cares.

Another nice touch is how easy it is to add graphics to a worksheet. Right-click the mouse, choose the Drawing toolbar, and away you go, inserting arrows and text boxes to your heart's delight.

I must also give Quattro Pro's designers credit for choosing **Locked/Clear** rather than **Freeze/Unfreeze** in the menu for immobilizing columns and rows on screen. Silly me - I've always thought the opposite of freeze was thaw. So, even though clear ought to have been unlock, at least it's a small improvement over *unfreeze*.

Kudos are also in order for making it easier to specify which rows are to be repeated at the top of printed pages. Opening | Group Name, followed by View | Group Mode seems to me more straightforward than opening File | Page Setup | Sheet and then typing in a range of cells.

Quattro Pro provides seamless compatibility with competitive products. It had no problem dealing with the Excel files I brought in for purposes of trying out the various facilities. Everything worked smoothly, as though the file had been one of Quattro Pro's from the outset.

Nit Picks

The formula window shows the cell address as not just row & column, but also the sheet number. While that's probably useful in a multi-sheet workbook, it creates a cluttered look. Maybe in this case, less is more?

Try as I would, I could find no fill handle in a selected cell. The fill handle is one of the more useful features in Excel. If it's there, and I just missed it, I apologize; but if it's not there, I think it should be. The quickest way to accomplish the fill in Quattro Pro is to select the cell that contains the data, and the other cells you want to fill, then right-click the mouse and choose Quick Fill. A simple click and drag seems faster and more convenient to me.

Summary

Quattro Pro is powerful and flexible, but still comparatively easy to use, especially when teamed with its excellent user documentation. I think even a novice user would be up to speed with just a little effort and some attention to the book.

If you're deciding which software suite to purchase, or weighing a specific spreadsheet application, Quattro Pro deserves your serious consideration.

Frank McGowan has done it again and presented what could be the dullest of the dull in an engaging and informative style. He has been a science writer and independent computer consultant. He now teaches, - guess what, - computer science! Frank has written many articles for [WindoWatch](#) on the Suites and is a contributing writer for [WindoWatch](#).

SYMANTEC'S INTERNET FASTFIND

Copyright 1996 By Linda L. Rosenbaum

In September 1996, Symantec released a new product called Internet FastFind. FastFind is a collection of programs to help the user quickly locate and access specified information on the Internet. From a single console on the desktop, tools can be launched that conveniently search, monitor and download files from the World Wide Web and FTP (File Transfer Protocol) sites.

The system requirements for Internet FastFind are as follows:

**486 minimum, Pentium recommended
8MB RAM minimum, 12MB or higher recommended
3MB free hard disk space or higher
Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0
Internet access**

The estimated street price for Internet FastFind is \$49.95 but I have already seen it for less at my local CompUSA for around \$43. As you will see after reading this review, I highly recommend this product. It works beautifully on my system with NT 4.0 and is a great enhancement for anyone using the Internet for more than just an infrequent visit.

The install itself was quite uneventful. I put the CD into my CDROM drive and autoplay kicked in to start the installation program. I did have to restart NT after the installation was finished, but again no problems were noted. The program put two new short-cuts onto my desktop, Internet FastFind and EasyFTP, and also put two new items on my task-bar, **Notify** and **WebLauncher**. In addition the installation created an Internet FastFind program group. One minor problem I did note during the installation was that page 20 of the hard copy refers to an online manual. I could not find the .pdf file referred to so was unable to install it and check it out.



The Internet FastFind console accessed by double clicking on the Inter-net FastFind shortcut on the desktop or by double clicking on the short-cut in the Internet FastFind program group is the best way to see the various options available and to become familiar with the various com-ponents. There are also alternative ways to start some of the programs within Internet FastFind.

The first thing I looked at was the Options menu. Here you can select which items are to appear on the taskbar as well as which items are to be added to the start menu, the desktop, Explorer and your browser. This works specifically with Netscape Navigator and the MS Internet Explorer. It was here that I chose to not have **Notify** added to my task-bar but did leave **WebLauncher** added to the taskbar. I have left all the other items using the installed default.

LiveUpdate is used to get updates from online for Internet FastFind. I did launch **LiveUpdate** from the console when I first installed the pro-gram. I cannot recall exactly but believe there was one new file related to **PatchConnect**, which I did go ahead and download. I like the promise of **LiveUpdate** and wish I had it for many other programs.

The concept behind **PatchConnect** is to provide an easy way to get to the appropriate Web site and/or FTP site of manufacturers of your installed hardware and software. The first time **PatchConnect** is launched it does a scanning of your system to determine what hardware and software is present. Although it did not detect nearly all of my software, I was still impressed with how much it did find.

PatchConnect can later rescan your system if hardware and/or software has been changed. After the scanning process has taken place, a listing of hardware and software appears on the left hand side. When high-lighted, it will show the Web site and FTP site, if available. You then click on the Web site or FTP site button and **PatchConnect** takes you there directly. I experimented doing this for a number of my specific hardware and software listings within **PatchConnect**. I found that some-times the URL in **PatchConnect** worked just fine while sometimes it appeared to be an older URL that was no longer available. However, even for the unavailable ones I was able to figure out the appropriate home page and then determine if patches or up-dates might be available.

A few weeks later I rescanned with **PatchConnect** because I had upgraded some hardware and found the new hardware was properly detected. While this part of Internet FastFind may not be used daily, I found myself more impressed with it than I had originally expected.

WebLaunch works off of the bookmarks in your browser i.e. Netscape Navigator or MS Internet Explorer. It is added to the taskbar, and when right button clicked on, it gives you the choice of displaying Net-scape bookmarks or Internet Explorer bookmarks. When the left button was clicked on, it shows the various bookmarks for the selected browser, - in my case, all of my Netscape bookmarks. When testing it seems that it rereads the bookmark file for Netscape each time **Web-Launch** is invoked, which means that changes made to the Netscape bookmarks were instantly available in **WebLaunch**. Once again I was impressed! If Netscape is not open and a site is selected from **Web-Launch**, Netscape is opened up and taken to the appropriate site. Even if Netscape is already open and at a different

site, selecting via **WebLauncher** gets you to the new site. I actually find that using **WebLauncher** is a bit easier than using the bookmarks from within Netscape. It seems to me that this requires one or two fewer mouse movements. In addition I have some groups in Netscape bookmarks that are very big. Netscape itself cannot show more than a limited number. If there is not enough room to display the one you need, it takes you to the full bookmark listing, which then requires a few more mouse strokes to get to the desired site.

WebLauncher is able to start another listing to the left hand side and everything within a group are available for selection. This has turned out to be a very convenient feature. I now tend to use **WebLauncher** al-most exclusively for selecting sites using the Netscape bookmarks.

EasyFTP makes downloading files from an FTP site as easy as copying from one system in a network to another system in the same network. It makes FTP sites look and act just like local or network drives attached to your system. Since I already have Norton File Manager from NT Tools, which comes with what is called an FTP client, I was curious to see if **EasyFTP** was truly easier. I have now concluded that it is, mostly because I can leave Norton File Manager in the view mode I prefer, and still have the advantages of an easy way to see and download files from an FTP site. **EasyFTP** comes with a number of predefined FTP sites, which are grouped into three categories: Entertainment, Hardware Vendors, and Software Vendors. It is easy to add either a new group or a new site by right clicking within an **EasyFTP** window and selecting new. In order to access an FTP site, one just needs to double click on the appropriate site name. After **EasyFTP** connects to that site, it will then display a listing of all the folders contained on that site. I could navigate them as easily as a

hard drive partition on my own system! In order to download a file to my system, I could drag and drop or choose copy to from a right mouse click while positioned over the files to be downloaded. I tend to do a copy to because I find I have better control over where the files will end up.

EasyFTP can perform a Quick View on files. However it seems it uses the Quick View which comes with NT 4.0 rather than the alternative Quick View Plus that I have installed in NT 4.0. I am not sure if it is possible to configure **EasyFTP** to utilize Quick View Plus instead of Quick View and have found no way to set this manually. It is possible that reinstalling Quick View Plus might make it accessible to **EasyFTP** but have not wanted to mess around with what works. Quick View Plus functions quite well from within Norton File Manager, Netscape and NT Explorer.

After doing some file downloading and looking at my available space on my C partition, where I have NT 4.0 loaded, I discovered an aspect of Internet FastFind that I don't like. It seems that it creates a folder called Temporary Internet Files under the NT 4.0 system folder. This is used, I think, as a sort of cache for FastFind files. What I don't care for is that all files downloaded via **EasyFTP** not only get copied to the location of choice but also into one of the cache folders under the Temporary Internet Files folder. If one does a lot of downloading, this could chew up hard drive space quickly! I have taken to deleting the extra copy located here once I am certain the downloads work properly. I have been unable, thus far, to find a way to either change the location or size of the folder called Temporary Internet Files.

NetFileFind is used to search for specific files when you know the name of the file, or at least part of the name, but not the location of the FTP site that has that particular file. **NetFileFind** uses Archie as its search mechanism but hides the confusing technology and mechanisms of Archie from the end user. After launching **NetFileFind**, one should first go to Options, from View Menu, to setup a few items that are not done automatically. In the general tab, one can select the number of files to be listed by **NetFileFind** in a search. The default is 100. In the FTP tab, one needs to replace *unknown@unknown.com* with one's own Email address. This is used for FTP login purposes. In addition, the choice of asking where to download files each time can be selected or a targeted download folder can be identified. In the advanced tab on the main screen, one can select the specific Archie server to use for the search. I have left this as the default chosen during installation.

I have done several searches using **NetFileFind**. It seems fairly fast but I'm unconvinced that I get all locations of the same files. It has helped inform me, however, if newer versions of the software are available. In addition, it is very easy to actually download any of the found files via either drag and drop or via launching **EasyFTP** from within **NetFileFind**.

WebFind is probably the part of Internet FastFind that most consider as its main purpose. It is the search tool that uses all of the top Internet search engines to do a simultaneous search across all of them. **WebFind** is launched from within your Web browser by clicking on the **WebFind** button which has been added to your browser. Once the results have been collected from each of the search engines, an HTML page is created within your specific browser. The results are

collated with the dup-licates removed and prioritized with the most likely candidates at the top of the list. You can access the search results with a mouse clicked on the hot link. The search engines currently supported in **WebFind** are: Alta Vista, InfoSeek, Lycos, WebCrawler, Yahoo, Magellan, and Excite.

Within **WebFind** you can set up specifications to select the search engine to use, how much time the search should take, and how many finds you would like for each search engine. These choices are found in the Options tab of **WebFind**. In addition you can also extend the search time as it is in process.

By default, the links are grouped by Web site; the site with the most links is listed first. Within each site, links are sorted according to their scores. If you prefer to view the individual links sorted by score regardless of site, you click on the “page” button near the top of the HTML document which displays the search results.

WebFind stores the HTML documents in a folder called Results located in the Internet FastFind folder. **WebFind** maintains the last ten documents it creates so you can review and use the results from previous searches. You can call up previous search results from within **WebFind** via File and then select the specific results you wish to see. I found that **WebFind** started a new instance of Netscape whenever I selected a previous search result.

I have run several searches from **WebFind**. The searches were quite fast and found many results. I have then used the results to link to Web pages and so forth. I have not used any of the individual search engines extensively in the past but having them all combined into one

search is fantastic! I cannot imagine trying to do an Internet search any other way now.

Internet FastFind also comes with Notify. I haven't actually used this myself since in order for it to function properly I would need to be connected to the Internet via my ISP all the time. What Notify does is let you specify items to track. The items it can track include World Wide Web pages, FTP sites, and folders or files on network drives. When any of the tracked items are changed, you are notified. You can also chose to have Notify automatically download the changed files or HTML page to your local system.

Internet FastFind also currently comes with EasyZip. This allows you to zip and unzip files from within NT Explorer. To zip or unzip a file, you just right mouse click on the file and choose the appropriate EasyZip option. I have not used this program either because I already have WinZip, which is an excellent 32bit zip/unzipper, and I also have Norton File Manager for NT which comes with its own built in zip and unzipper. Both of these products work better for me and have far more features than EasyZip.

Overall Symantec Internet FastFind is a superb Internet tool. It has made it easier and more fun to use the Internet. It works quite well in NT 4.0 and should be added to any system that uses the Internet on a regular basis.

Linda Rosenbaum lives and works in a suburb of New York City. She is an assistant controller at the World Headquarters for a large global manufacturing company. She has two young children and a husband whose full time job is to take care of the kids. When not at work, Linda can be found on a variety of online services and the Internet reading and writing about her experiences with NT, networking, and multimedia. She maintains a home network of four systems using a combination of NT and Windows 95. Linda is the NT Editor for [WindoWatch](#) and can be reached via Email at either lindar@cyburban.com or 71154.2622@compuserve.com.

Making a Museum

Copyright 1996 by Peter Neuendorffer

Here's a little do-it-yourself Museum using Delphi. The idea is to literally move to the right your artistic display while changing the visible properties of the images and buttons. I made mine one picture at a time which displayed each, - one picture at a time at run time. Each time you click a button, the current picture and button disappear and another one appears - to the right.

Make a new directory for your project. Then select File | New Project, then Save | Project as and save it to the new directory and whatever name you wish. I chose [art](#).

When you add each image, all but the first image should be marked visible to false. The same goes for the buttons. Each picture gets a button, and when you are all done, you can add titles.

Position a new image at the bottom left, with room to add a button and a caption below. Then position a button below the image. In the button's code window, double click on the button at design time, you have

```
button1.visible:=false;  
image1.visible:=false;  
button2.visible:=true; {this will be added later}  
image2.visible:=true; {this will be added later}
```

Now go to the main menu in Delphi Tools | Image editor, and select .bmp and 105X105 (the two-inch square picture). Draw your first picture, save as art1.bmp. Now go to the form and double click on the first image. Select Load, and select art1.bmp that you just drew. Then position the image and button1 as you wish. I had my pictures go from left to right for four images, and then I drew a much larger picture for the fifth. I chose to make my button captions all read **Next** since only one will be displayed at a time.

Next go to the Image editor and draw your second picture. This is the picture that will appear when the user clicks on button1. Button1 and image1 become invisible, and button2 and image2 become visible.

Continue this process for as many pictures as you wish, where the buttonclick method code makes the current button and image visible=false and the next button and image visible=true. The code window for button2click would read

```
button2.visible:=false;  
image2.visible:=false;  
button3.visible:=true; {this will be added later}  
image3.visible:=true; {this will be added later}
```

As you add each picture, make sure the image is set to visible=false and that the button is also invisible. Double-clicking on the visible property in the object inspector toggles this.

Before you add a large picture, you may wish to make a special **ceiling** mask. A trapezoid in black will do. Any images that you wish

to overlap this ceiling must be placed on the desktop AFTER this one. If you highlight an image, and select Alt-E-T for cut, then Alt-E-P for paste, the copied image will be placed in the front of the others. If you are only showing one image at a time, you do not have to be concerned about that.

If you set up a flag **goforward** to trip at the last button, you can go backwards, but I opted to have my last picture image7-button7 restore the first one:

```
button7click(sender:Object)
  begin
    image7.visible:=false;
    button7.visible:=false;
    image1.visible:=true;
    button1.visible:=true;
  end;
```

Once you have your pictures in place, where each button displays the next picture, you may wish to add captions for the pictures. The rule of thumb is that the first one is set to visible, all others are set to visible=false and displayed one by one when the user clicks the buttons.

When you are finished, you should get an opening picture. Clicking on the Next button below each picture causes another picture (and button) to appear, and the first to disappear.

Peter Neuendorffer is a Windows programmer who works in Delphi. Peter is a regular [Windo Watch](#) Contributor and the creator of AliceA.

Gateway Has Egg on Their Face - Again!
Copyright © 1996 by John M. Campbell

Gateway 2000, the largest PC direct-marketer in the US, has become embroiled in yet another controversy with their customers. The first incident occurred when the company's advertising led buyers of the popular 10th Anniversary Edition Gateway computer to believe they were getting the well-known Matrox MGA Millennium graphics card.

In reality, Gateway was shipping a stripped OEM version of the Matrox. The Gatrox, as it was soon referred to by customers, had a 175Mhz RAMDAC (vs. 200Mhz in the retail Matrox version). This change limited the Gateway card to lower refresh rates than they expected to see. In addition, the Gatrox lacked the hardware upgrade MPEG upgrade connector found on the Matrox retail version.

Gateway's answer to customer complaints was to contend that there was no "visually perceptible difference" between the refresh rates at resolutions up to 1280x1024, and that the lower rates met VESA standards. As for MPEG, customers could always settle for software-based solutions. In response to intense pressure from angry users, the company agreed to replace the OEM cards with real Matrox units - for an upgrade fee, of course! The company also changed its advertising to remove the impression that its Matrox cards were the same as the retail version. Gateway still sells the stripped Gatrox units!

The new bone of contention between Gateway and its customers involves the number of serial ports on many of the new computers the company is shipping. I purchased a P5-166 from Gateway in early August, 1996. I was astounded to find only a single serial connector on the case. The manual that accompanied the machine clearly showed the expected two connectors.

When I phoned Gateway, I was told the new Intel motherboard they had recently switched to only provided one serial port, and if I needed a second port, I would have to buy an add-on card. I checked the Gateway Forum on CompuServe, to see if others were commenting on this, but there were no complaints - until recently. Beginning in the latter part of September, a torrent of messages appeared demanding to know what was going on at Gateway. It seems that all recent machines are shipping with the single serial port.

Gateway first claimed that most customers didn't need a second serial port, since their machines ship with a PS/2-style mouse, and the new USB (Universal Serial Bus) technology would do away with the need for a second connector. Of course, USB isn't common yet, but they were looking to the future! (I kid you not, this ludicrous explanation was put out with a straight face.) Then, on October 2, in the face of mounting criticism, Gateway announced that they would make a kit available to anyone who asked for it. This kit apparently consists of a cable having at one end a connector to the ten pins labeled comm2 on the motherboard, and on the other end a standard serial-port connector. At this point Gateway was forced to back away from their earlier assertion that the Intel board didn't provide for a second port - as too many customers had already found the pins. It will be interesting to see how the latter connector is to be mounted to the back of

the computer's case. There are no knockouts. Perhaps it is to just dangle? I'll know when I receive mine. By the way, Gateway add-on sales still hasn't heard of the kit. I had to send an email message to the company representative who handles hardware-related questions on CIS.

I take no pleasure from reporting this latest fiasco. I like Gateway products, and I have been (mostly) a satisfied customer for the past five years. The company does build good machines at a good price. But it is apparent that they are not adverse to shortchanging customers for the sake of a few pennies. How much are they really saving by omitting the connection to the second serial connector that is already on the motherboard? And the company's feeble attempts at damage-control are more befitting politicians than a respected manufacturer.

Unfortunately, the bottom line is buyer beware. It isn't safe to assume ANYTHING when purchasing a new computer today. I doubt that Gateway is the only manufacturer to cut corners by not always giving customers what they assume they are getting. I suppose the time has come when the buyer must not only demand to know, in advance, how many serial ports does a machine have, but are there really 104 keys on the keyboard, and is an internal speaker included? After all, not everyone really uses all those keys, and sound cards with external speakers are standard now. I can even visualize having to make a trip to my local hardware store to get screws to attach the case onto my next computer - that is, if cases aren't an extra-cost option by then.

EPILOGUE

A week or so after I wrote this, I received the port upgrade kit from Gateway. It consisted of the components I described above. The serial connector was a 9-pin male unit, mounted on a standard metal cover plate - the type that covers unused expansion slots. The cable was short. The unit had to mount in place of the cover plate on the PCI slot nearest the motherboard. There were no instructions with the kit, so mating the other end of the cable with the motherboard com2 pins required a trial and error approach. Fortunately, no harm would result from a backwards connection.

Once properly connected, the new port worked normally. I now had two com ports available. But I am minus one available PCI slot. I'm grateful that Gateway did make this kit available to customers who complained. But it would have been better had the company not been so shortsighted in their decision to omit the second port on new machines.

This article originally appeared on the [WindoWatch](#) homepage during October 1996. John M. Campbell is a regular [WindoWatch](#) contributor.

Sandwich Meat and Unwanted Mail

Copyright 1996 by Daniel Christle

With the coming of technology to the Internet, there has been an increase in marketing across this yet untested media. On the surface, these trial balloons can provide easy access to shopping and services benefiting the consumer. Even so, the average netizen will react with great emotion when the great marketing vehicles target and seek him out. Why is this? Simply put, the average Internet user likes having access to online purchase of goods and services while still maintaining great anonymity. When you receive an unsolicited email either directly to your inbox or from spamming into a newsgroup, a little bit of that anonymity is taken away. As a result, some related questions often asked are: Is unsolicited mail legal? Are the claims made in some of these offers legitimate? Where did they get my name? What can I do about it when I don't want to see this information?

Is it Legal ?

In a word, yes! There is no law that says it is illegal to send unsolicited email and if you look at existing legislation, it is probably in the same category as ordinary junk mail. In terms of spamming itself, cross posting across many newsgroups is simply against Usenet rules. The issue is really one of ethics, netiquette and taste. Is it wasted band-width to broadcast marketing information to people who may or may not want to receive it? Many would think so given that the Internet seems to becoming bogged down already with anticipated

fears of an increasing crunch of resources. The other side of the question is probably best represented by Canter and Seigel who a short while ago made Internet history. They violated Usenet guidelines when they posted to several thousand newsgroups offering their legal services in the area of green card (immigration) issues. After a nasty reaction from people all over the Internet and the loss of access to several servers after repeating this offense, - they still came out on top. Canter and Seigel, a husband and wife legal team, formed a company called Cybersell. Their firm specializes in teaching other companies how to market on the Internet. They are more than happy to preach that is inevitable that the Internet will become commercial and often refer to themselves as pioneers. As it stands now receiving unsolicited mail will only get worse before it gets better.

Advertising Falsehoods

With such a wide audience on the Internet, guesstimated at somewhere between 10 and 60 million users, it is only natural that business will continue to exploit such an attractive resource. However, the Buyer Beware caution bears repeating! When doing business on the Internet one must be careful. Convenience must be balanced with the downside. Notwithstanding the really great companies who conduct business honestly, there are those that are, to be kind, are ethically challenged. You don't have to go far to discover this. Just read some of the junk mail that ends up in your inbox. If you're like me you have probably received mail on how to get rich with no effort. With a mere credit card number (loud sirens going off), offers for services that could be disastrous to you, to mild but costly scams, to pyramid schemes and of course legitimate offers for the sale of just about anything. If you want to go further just search on any search engine

and you will find web sites dedicated to all sorts of outrageous products, get rich schemes and of course general depravity. The Internet, in this case, could be compared to a circus, a flea market, black market, access to a fence and much worse. A lot of people are working the naive and the pickings are easy - just ask P.T. Barnum. The sorts of things described here are illegal with some very limited options offered for controlling them. It seems to me however, that these kinds of cons are much less pervasive than they are reputed to be by the Congress and the popular media. What really compounds problems of false advertising, outrageous claims and not so open dishonesty is that not all of these sites are hosted in your own country. A site initiated from another country where the laws are lax or simply different than your own with regard to consumer protection standards, will tend to go unchallenged. Not that there is a unified body of web cops who can investigate every site!

Where Did They Find Me?

One of the questions I get asked by people new to the Internet is how do they know about me? Lists! Companies buy lists that can include your email address and these lists come from all sorts of sources. Some people even compile their own lists using software that scours newsgroups and web pages for email addresses. Of course, everytime you fill out a form on a web page you stand a good chance of ending up on a list. You didn't think they were collecting names, addresses and email addresses just for fun did you? The sources are just about endless including a more controversial source, the cookies.txt file used by your browser. This seemingly innocuous file can be searched without your knowledge by many web servers used today. This file can be used to store information about the sites you visit and there is nothing

to prevent another server from reading it. Anything you put on a web page or in a posting on a newsgroup is fair game. Remember on the Internet you are as public as you want to be. I once had a student in an Internet class I was instructing who ignored my advice and used her home mailing address, phone numbers and of course email address as her signature lines in all of her correspondence. The volume of junk mail, emails and telephone solicitations she received from doing this were astounding. It didn't take long for her to change her naive behavior.

What to do about it?

Some of this strategy involves simple maturity, along with large amounts of cynicism. As far as web page content goes, you can always leave a site and go elsewhere if you don't like what you see. Additionally, you can also send an email to the web master of the hosting server and tell him how offensive one of his user sites is. Just don't expect a lot of action much less a reply. After all that site is paying to be there. Email and spam is an entirely different matter. This is where some action can get results. Most mailings you receive, if they are even remotely legitimate, can be easily dealt with. Many times they will include a return address that you can reply to. Just put the word "REMOVE" (without the quotes) as the first line of your message. You can also write back to the author and ask that you be removed from their mailing list. If the sender is a legitimate business person they will remove you from their list immediately and without an argument.

Sometimes you will get an email that is posted with a bogus return address. Usually these are mailings that require you engage in a shady

pyramid mailing or want something from you like money or the potentially more damaging credit card number. These emails can be a bit more tricky to stop but not completely so. A look at the email header can reveal where the mailing originated from. Once you have determined the source, email a way. Most ISP's get somewhat irate when they find out a user is posting spam or unsolicited mail from a false address. Be forewarned that sometimes it takes a little work to determine who the real poster is. You may have to trace the packet or do a whois lookup to get the information you need. If you want more information on this just do a search on the word spam at any search site leading you to countless FAQ's on dealing with this type of mail.

There seems to be an inevitable trend towards marketing on the Internet. It only seems natural that business will turn its attention to this new marketing resource. You would have to be pretty much dead not to notice that Corporate America has migrating to the Internet en masse. This is not a bad thing, however it is up to us to help define the rules. With some common sense you can make the most of this and probably increase your productivity by following some of the procedures outlined above. Remember, that the Internet is evolving and as long as people make clear what is acceptable marketing behaviour, many companies will comply. For the short term, at least, they have no choice if they want to sell to you. Until they get the message, spam and unwanted email is in your future. Just hit delete and exercise caution!

Dan Christle is currently selling for a national online service, Link Logistics, for the truck transportation business as well as involved in computer sales and support. A ten year sales veteran having worked for companies such as Pitney Bowes Lanier and small technology companies. He also provides Internet training for a local ISP and current customers. He is an active member of the Winnipeg PC User Group.

Muddies for Tea and Windows 95 for You!

A Windows 95 Conversion
Copyright 1996 by Vlad Balak

Prologue: The Deletion King!

Well, well, well! It seems I am my own worse nightmare. Having made up my mind to completely redo my drives and, with all the KAOS I created for myself, I inadvertently deleted the article I started to write.

But, no probs, the grey in my hair doesn't affect the grey manner in my head, (I hope), and can reproduce it. It'll just take a bit longer, especially since I have to keep chasing that flea bitten dingo that keeps stealing my prawn off the barby. It's a bit worn out now, the prawn that is, but I'm hungry, so THAT prawn is miine!

Glad you're a patient lady, as you need patience to put up with me. Albert Einstein I'm not, Neanderthal, closely related to, what, with having to chase and catch your dinner every night. Boy I'm glad I'm living in Australia! Life will be boring anywhere else in the world.

Chapter One

Stone the crows, after fifty installations and deletions, I have finally been converted to Win95. The main reason for all the horsing around is my obsession to have tidy hard drives. My final decision was to create two drives; (c) drive, 340 megs for Win95 and all its native

programmes and (d) drive 1 gig for all my documents, files and DOS based programmes.

This way, if the inevitable happens and my system crashes, all I'll have to do is format and reinstall (c) drive and all my precious files are safely tucked away on (d) drive. Therefore, to bring my system back to normal will take me less than hour and no information will be lost. **(Editorial Note: This wins the Nifty Notion award of the month!)**

This type of setup gives me more incentive to play around with new programmes. As most of you would know, a lot of programmes leave many residue files in your window directories, or change your ini files. The end result is that you have a bloated windows with many useless files. Further, I just don't trust the new uninstall programmes which are on the market.

I have always played with files in WFW with the result that I had a very slim Windows, which was easy to back up and with only the files I needed to run programmes I wanted on my system. The most important lesson I've learnt from Win95 is to leave the programme alone, it will then work fine. Needless to say, that's why I have it set up as described above. If too many unwanted files start piling up, I just format and reinstall. All my programmes are either on (d) drive so reinstallation is a piece of cake, with just a few adjustments to the cosmetics of Win95 for my own feel.

I must admit, took a lot to move me to Win95 and before this final result, I did install WFW and boy, it was a dinosaur.

Oh, here he comes, Jackie Jackie, the wonder boy. He must have smelt the kangaroo steaks on the barby. He's got to be the only person in Australia who can't hit the side of a barnyard with his boomerang. When he goes out to hunt, all the kangaroos line up and wink at him in defiance, almost as though they're laughing at him. He's always on the prowl during his walkabouts for that special piece of wood to make the perfect boomerang. Who cares, he's great at barbies - got more tales and jokes to tell than Bob Hope. Back soon, better grab a beer and steak, before everything is gone.

Right, the old worm is fed and watered, so back to some key bashing.

O.K., I do have one problem which I still haven't rectified, -facsimiles! I hate the one that comes with Win95 and if I chew this one over, I might help other people not to have the hassles I have had and am still having. The first one I tried was Faxworks, which performed well in WFW. Using Win95, Faxworks wants to me install share.exe in autoexec.bat and since I don't run an autoexec.bat, I am reluctant to start one just for Faxworks. The second programme I tried was Bitfax Ver2.0 and this version gave me a paper orientation mismatch, which also happened in WFW using ver 2.0 but bot with Ver 3.0. Unfortunately I can't find a copy of Ver3.0 to try! I next tried Winfax Pro, but it was just too large and complex for the amount of faxing I want to do. I am getting a copy of Winfax Lite, so we'll see how that goes. If anyone has any suggestions on small, Win95 native facsimile programmes, please let me know. My e-mail address is vbalak@ecn.net.au and just start with Hi Blacka ...yipita...yipita ...yipita... and that's me folks. We might save a lot of people including myself a few headaches.

The best thing that I inherited with Win95 is the great internet connection. I do not get dropouts anymore and can use the latest 32 bit programmes. On the whole the computer is certainly running everything quicker.

That's it, I'm off now. The creek is waiting for us, time to catch a few Muddies for tea.

That's a 250mm plus crab across the shell, with claws are big as a blokes hand and can nip your finger off. But beautiful to eat, meat is sweet and plenty of it. Cooking is the most fun, you dig a hole and get a good base of very hot embers on the bottom. Place the crabs on their backs and fill in the hole. Sink a few tinnies for twenty minutes and then start eating. The old mouth is watering already and we haven't even left yet.

Vlad is a certifiable original. We are proud to present his Windows 95 observations, bits of Australian lexicon, and it seems, culinary adventures. Vlad, with his wife, live in Brisbane, Australia where he is the regional manager of a saw milling company.

A Successful Modem Sharing Experience!
A Product Review by Lois Laulich

Every once in a while a software house comes up with a program that is so theoretically useful that one must immediately see if the claims square with reality. When the promised software does in fact deliver, then one must sing the praises of the product for everyone to hear.

The impact of Ishare.

- **It means that every PC running Windows on a LAN, except for NT, can share an analog or ISDN modem that is setup to run on a Windows 95 box. The Windows 95 box is the computer that will function as the modem server.**
- **It means that every PC on a LAN can share an ISP using built-in dial-up access tools.**
- **It means that low-vision people working on a LAN can use their expensive large monitors from their own computers to access a shared modem .**
- **It means that teeny-tiny LANs such as mine can become industrial strength power houses at a modest cost.**
- **It means there are no expensive hardware or installation costs.**

- **It means that you can test version 1 until the end of January 1997 at no cost to you.**
- **It means that there is another viable 32 bit communications developer writing windows software for small business and end users.**

We have used this software for several days and the only bug we detected on our system is a propensity for the software not to release the port at the end of an online session. The developer is aware of the problem and is working on a fix. Our short term and less than satisfactory solution is to reboot both client and server computers at the end of an online session.

The file can be downloaded from the Artisoft homepage at <http://www.artisoft.com>. The instructions are very clear and should be brought into one's system. There is also a very useful FAQ at the Artisoft site.

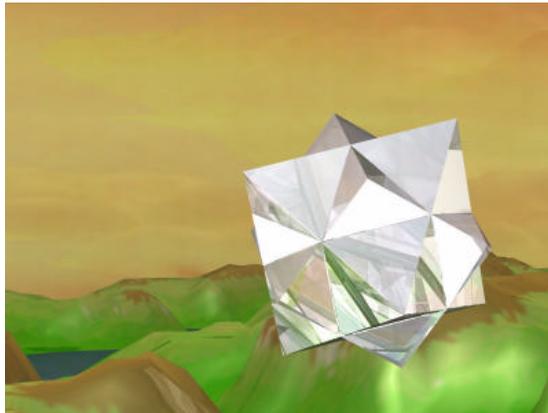
Herb's Computer Created Art Gallery!

Our cup runneth over! This month Herb Chong has served us a huge array of goodies not just size but variety. But first his latest stand alone piece of art that he calls Crystal. And then instructions to download the various graphics formats referred to in his Lean and Mean article in this issue.

This image is in the JPG format.

The graphic files for Lean and Mean downloads are sorted by specific graphic format for smaller and more reliable downloads.

Herbsgif.zip 435496
Herbsjpg.zip 196769
Herbstga.zip 305715
LnM.pdf 843694



Crystal copyright 1996 Herb Chong

Closing the Worker Technology Gap

Copyright 1996 by Ben M. Schorr

Question of the month! What is the most important part of a computer system?

- A. Monitor**
- B. Hard Drive**
- C. CPU**
- D. Modem**
- E. Keyboard**

The answer: None of the above. It's the USER! I know that some Internet junkies are going to shake their heads and insist that it's the modem, but trust me, it's the user. What is truly amazing to me, is how few people, especially in business, seem to realize that.

When I first joined this firm, one of the principle tasks given to me was to help guide it into more advanced technology. That is, replace the old DOS terminals with new Windows-based machines. Upgrade the network; Usher them into the Internet Age, they said. However, it's naive to think that management can just toss all that wonderful technology onto a worker's desk and expect an instant return.

What we have to do, is train users to productively use that technology. Problem is...some of them are afraid of it. They're afraid because they don't understand it; it makes them feel foolish. What's worse is the

barrage of manuals and tech support people who attack them with words they don't understand. When the techies finally explain, too often in a condescending tone, they persist in using still more jargon.

So, before we can even start ordering computers, I need to get our people up to speed...at least get them off their knees! The first phase of this is already under way and it consists of three parts.

1. There are certain fundamental concepts that power users and techies take for granted. Words like RAM, Windows, DOS, or Hard Drive do not have a context for the computer unschooled. The reality is that beginning users or people who've been stuck in vertical applications for a long time simply don't know those words. They may have heard them but don't really know what they mean. When you tell the average, untrained, user that you're going to upgrade their OS from DOS to Windows, you may get a blank stare as a response. So, I had to help them understand the very basics.

I have to do this in such a way that it will be used, however. You can't force feed people and you must be careful not to confuse them even more. So what I have done, so far, was to take each topic, one at a time, and write about it in a simple way making it widely available. Each of these papers has a couple of guidelines:

A. Each is limited to one sheet of paper. The reader should not be intimidated by size. I have found that if you hand them several pages they don't want to read it. One single page is not intimidating; and seems to be manageable. At a practical level, we don't want them to have to spend the entire day in reading. My goal is that they should be able to read the paper in one minute (60 seconds) or less.

B. It must be written in a style that everybody can understand. I often have one of our least experienced people read over the paper before I distribute it. If she can understand it, I figure that any of our people will be comfortable with it.

C. Each sheet is familiar and consistent: They all have the title "What is [subject]...in 60 seconds or less."

D. At the end of each one, in LARGE print, it invites them to contact me or our system administrator with any questions they might have.

I then print out the paper and I distribute them. I place two of them in our employee lounge (one on each table). I send a copy to one of our attorneys who is a computer novice but anxious to learn. I keep an eye on the copies, as people have a tendency to remove them from the lounge, and replace them if one gets taken away.

I do a new topic each week, write it on Friday; distribute it on Monday. I've been doing this for about 6 weeks and so far the response has been VERY positive. Several of our novice computer attorneys have told me how much they enjoy reading them and some of the secretaries have already expressed that they are feeling much more comfortable with the terminology.

Not everybody reads them, to be sure, but many of our people do and that makes it worth the minimal effort immediately. When we put in our new network early next year I intend to electronically publish the entire set and make them available, on-line, to anybody in the firm from their desks.

If you'd like to see an example of one of them, visit our web site at

<http://www.hawaiilawyer.com> and look under the "About the Information Services" section.

2. Along with that I try to encourage more computer reading and thinking. The ways I'm doing that are twofold. I have taken some of the computer periodicals; most notable "PC Novice" and made certain that an issue of it is always on display somewhere in the firm. Generally I leave that on a table in the lounge as well. "Information Week" is another magazine that I have set out, usually in the lobby, with the intention of getting people reading and thinking about computers more often.

The second way I'm encouraging this is by actively chatting about computers with our people. I have welcomed them to ask me questions about their home computers; about technology companies and about the future of computing as I see it. By encouraging all of this talk and reading I hope to help them to be more comfortable with the concepts and terminology.

3. I've started doing lunch time classes for our people. Three weeks ago I put out a notice that I was going to do an "Introduction to Windows95" class at lunchtime in the library. 19 people signed up immediately. I had to break them into several classes and meet with them over the course of a couple of days. We spent 45 minutes looking at the interface, explaining the task bar, scroll bars, foreground vs. background, how to resize and move windows. These are subjects that are simple to regular Windows user but not so, to someone who has worked just in a DOS environment all their professional lives.

The class was very successful; the goal was to get them comfortable with the Windows interface so that they wouldn't be intimidated when they had mouse in hand and were staring at all of the icons. We accomplished that! Further it showed them the little things like moving and resizing windows could easily be done. It was gratifying to see them excited about the possibility of working in the Windows environment helping them to begin thinking and talking about computers.

The next class, starting next week, will be an introduction to the Internet: Basics of E-Mail, the world wide web, and what a browser looks like. For some it will be a review; for most it will be their first real look.

These three steps are the heart of phase one in our training program. Next month I'll lay out the remaining steps and how they fit together. If you have questions or comments, as always, I can be reached at bms@hawaiiilawyer.com

Aloha!

Ben M. Schorr is the Director of Information Services, for now, for Damon Key Bocken Leong Kupchak in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is surrounded and outnumbered by a Netware LAN and Win95 workstations but expects WinNT Server reinforcements any time now.