

Getting it to the consumer . . .

The manner in which software is purchased and supported by the publisher is of *extreme* interest to everyone involved in the electronic entertainment industry. We, the consumer, want to be able to purchase our games quickly, at the best pricing possible, and to receive good technical support, should we need it. (Of course, in the latter case, with the variety and number of different sound boards, our encounters with IRQs and DMAs and other addresses can leave one bereft of all senses when trying to install such peripherals in a PC/MS-DOS machines. Thankfully, companies like **Dell** and **Apple** now offer superior telephone support for their machines as well as full year warranties on their products. Not that you'll run into IRQ or DMA difficulties with Macintosh, but maybe that INIT you preloaded with System 7 Pro is the cause for your operating dilemmas.)

Publishers want to ensure happy customers—this results in repeat sales and an increase in their ability to negotiate better and better margins with mail order houses and retailers. The more units you sell, the more leverage you possess. It is *critical* that titles be successful, as development costs are constantly rising. New, multimedia, interactive titles can cost upwards of \$1 million to create, and that's not chump change.

To ensure a happy consumer, software companies are increasing resources committed to technical support. Almost all of the major publishers sponsor direct technical support telephone lines, run their own bulletin board systems (BBS), or publish a forum on-line with such information services as **America On-Line** or Apple's **eWorld**. Their newsletters, whether monthly or quarterly, also offer technical advice.

Most game title purchases are completed via retail stores or by mail order catalog. A new player has joined the fray—CD-ROM distribution. The software is encoded onto the disc. Consumers can play a variety of demos, read and view data sheets, screen shots, and the like, and may then dial a toll-free number to have their locked software “unlocked,” enabling the consumer to download the title to their hard disk drive. Such distribution methods, in spite of the hundreds of thousands of dollars of research into such methods, aren't gaining much in the way of consumer support. What seemed to be a natural method of distribution is, in fact, lacking substantial research into *what* consumers want when they buy a game.

What has been forgotten is that most gamers are also *collectors*. As collectors, we do more than simply collect the code for the game. We also enjoy collecting the packaging that surrounds the title. This includes the colorful packaging, the manual that comes with the disks (or discs) inside the box, and associated warranty registrations and bundle offers. We want to feel as though we have purchased something *substantial*. And that means we want all of the materials associated with the bits and bytes that comprise the game itself. There are thousands of dollars invested in creating a package that'll draw sales inside your local software retail store—we want that package. There are thousands of dollars invested in creating an interesting user's guide/manual—we don't want to print that from the CD-ROM distribution disk to our own printer. We normally don't own color printers, and we sure as heck don't enjoy buying lots of paper! We want what's coming to us—we want the whole package that anyone walking into a retail store can obtain. We want *everything*. Perhaps CD-ROM distribution gurus better re-think their strategies and learn more about the consumer and less about the technology.

Blooperville

The super digital highway is not without its potholes—in issue five, we goofed! If you'll recall the **Capstone BridgeMaster** review, we indicated in the header it was a PC/MS-DOS review. Well, it wasn't. The version reviewed was for Macintosh computers. And to top that off, **MECC's Amazon Trail** review's header indicated it was the Macintosh version, when actually it was the PC/MS-DOS reviewed. Are our faces *red*! We hope the misinformation didn't cause anyone grief. Our thanks to Gary for uncovering these errors!

Thanks for joining us. Until next issue, GAME ON!—*Mudgeon*

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—Mudgeon's Distillations—

With talk about whose going to be the owner of the code, RISC or otherwise, that controls the set-top box, the raucous voices remain unsure of whose standards is gonna do what! The digital superhighway is sure becoming more and more congested!

On a roll . . .

When the largest combines with one of the largest, you receive gargantuan! Heading toward the steamroller aspect of electronic entertainment, **Electronic Arts** (EA) and **Brøderbund Software** have agreed to merge their powerhouses. This momentous deal is said to be worth in the neighborhood of \$400 million—yep, that's correct, a figure hard to conceive. Brøderbund will become a wholly owned subsidiary of EA.

If you are one of Brøderbund's shareholders, expect your well-positioned group to glom on to over 1-1/2 million shares of EA stock for distribution amongst you. If you're Brøderbund, the company will obtain about 25 percent of EA's common stock . . . nearly 15-1/2 million shares!

Current chairman and CEO of Brøderbund, **Doug Carlston**, will join EA's board of directors and he is expected to retain his management duties with the company he founded in the late 70's in Oregon. **Ed Auer**, who is the president and CEO of EA, had planned on a retirement this spring. He will now, however, remain with EA until this merger is completed.

This acquisition is of great import to all involved in the electronic entertainment industry. Electronic Arts is certainly the powerhouse when it comes to not only locking up the major distribution channels, but also with the power of the

buck to garner the finest programmers and producers available for their projects.

Certainly other companies that produce top-level entertainments should keep their eyes and ears open as EA seems unstoppable in their acquisition of leading entertainment publishers. For some, such an acquisition may be the recipe for success, for others . . . well, that remains to be seen.

Prizes, prizes, prizes . . .

The folk who brought interactive play to consumers in the homes while watching sports or game shows has reached an agreement with Sega to provide awards for Genesis gaming at home. Yep, **Interactive Network** and the **Sega Channel** seem to be one of the few really addressing the convergence of interactive entertainment to the set-top box. After completing a title, the gamer will be able to learn right away how well she or he stacks up against the millions of others gamers who have also registered their final scores.

This agreement certainly adds more value to the Sega Channel environment, which had already planned to bring their library of video games to the home consumer via cable, while working with **Time Warner**

Entertainment Company to bring this capability to fruition. The Interactive Network functionality enables a gamer to transmit their scores directly to the company's computer via a telephone call through telecom equipment already installed in the gaming device. This call takes about 20 seconds, and the score is analyzed immediately.

All scores are assumed to have been

reported to the IN computer within five minutes later. A report is then generated and transmitted to each unit listing all

winners' names and how well the player's score fared with everyone else.

A test of this service is being conducted in 12 cities nationwide, with a nation-wide rollout expected during the first half of this year.

More gratuitous violence . . .

If you enjoyed, or detested, the environment within *Mortal Kombat*, wait 'till you see *Mortal Kombat II*! *GamePro* magazine is pretty excited by this title, which contains such graphic delights as decapitation. Yeah, it's certainly disheartening to see such fury and hatred infest the video gamer with such titles, but an entrepreneur can certainly publish what he or she feels will make them a profit.

Parents and guardians, the only way such titles become less popular is by ensuring that the developers of such titles feel your displeasure—in their pocketbooks and wallets. Take the time to become familiar with the games your children are playing. If the games are unsuitable because they teach inappropriate ethics and morality, assume responsibility and take the title away from them! A lack of sales will certainly result in developers taking a long, hard look at what they produce.

Additional development obtained . . .

Obtaining information on the form for the **Genesis' Saturn** video game platform—the 32-bit wonder that's supposed to debut this year—has been pretty tough. Tight lips, shredding of memos, all lead to speculation instead of specs. However, we do know that development agreements have been signed by Sega with over 200 Japanese software publishers. That's a hellatious number of titles to accompany a rollout—especially when you recall **3DO**'s pathetic single title bundle and title availability when that machine hit the retail shelves.

The times sure have changed!

During the 60s, the youth were filled with ideals and an anti-capitalistic ideal that lead to radical changes in music, politics, and freedom. Now it seems as though those who drove these changes, especially in the music environs, have decided capitalism ain't so bad after all. Advertising has called to some of the 60s heroes for ad themes. Here are a few of the new deals:

The Byrds' *Time, Time, Time* for Time magazine

Steppenwolf's *Born to be Wild* for the Mercury Cougar

The Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction* for Snickers

and one of the most astounding—**Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's** *Teach Your Children* for Fruit of the Loom underwear!

New player in entertainment software

Take a company well-versed in graphics apps for PC/MS-DOS and Windows machines and have them take an interest in consumer titles and you have a potentially important player.

Micrografx, long a power in the office software channel, is signing an agreement with the **Crayola Division of Hallmark Inc.** to produce software products! Called the **At-Home** unit, the first titles'll play off Micrografx' graphics acumen, for they are a painting and drawing program for kids and an art studio that creates everything from posters to fliers. The company states that eventually their products will migrate from floppy disk to CD-ROM media. After all, wherever the fun is, that's where the young-at-heart can be found—spending money!

Rating the ratings . . .

The Software Publishers Association (SPA) is drawing near to a rating system (voluntary, of course) for electronic interactive entertainment titles. Basically, the grouping breaks down into:

- all ages
- adults, 17 years of age and up
- younger consumers, age 6 to 13, with parental guidance
- older children, age 13 to 17, with parental guidance

Prediction: watch for lawsuits when blame-someone-else consumers feel the posted rating for the game was incorrect and resulted in a younger child's inappropriate social behavior!

An interesting sidelight to this story is word that *David Miller*, the **U.S. Toy Manufacturers of America** president, claims sales of video games have risen, due to the publicity over rating video games that's everywhere in the media of late! How about

|that? Try to

pass the buck on your own responsibilities and those who *shouldn't* profit from asinine titles **DO PROFIT!** Seems that the temptation afforded "you can't have 'em" games really draws even more attention from video game players!

What a combo . . .

Bringing these two together results in a massive blockage for others to obtain Intel chips! **Sega** and **Intel** now have a basic agreement for the former to use the latter's semiconductors in business game machines. The business game area is a genre not previously attacked by Sega and now they're not only considering Intel's 486 silicon, but also the Pentium as well. Could be some powerful stuff just around the corner, as the agreement also enables Intel to design dedicated "special sets" for Sega.

As I said . . .

Last issue, I made mention that **Dynamix** would not be pursuing a sequel to their fantastic *Betrayal of Krondor* fantasy role-playing game. Well, now it's definitely official—the company has decided to definitely "delay" their work on the sequel, which was to be called *Thief of Dreams*. The reason, as stated in their official press release, is due to "the development team is reassigned to other projects that are due for release in 1994."

Tony Reyneke, President and CEO of Dynamix, stated, "I have taken these steps because in the four months since the release of *Betrayal of Krondor* the sequel was not far enough along in development to consider that it could be a creative and financial success for both *Raymond Feist* (the author of the fantasy book itself) and Dynamix, in 1994. We will now be able to re-evaluate the development effort to be certain of the product's creative and competitive edge. The final course of action regarding the sequel will be decided within the next eight to ten weeks." Better call the company if you want this title as badly as we do!

Little bits of stuff . . .

Still anxiously awaiting the release of *Planetfall* from **Activision**? You know, the game that features a bunch of SAG talent? Look for its release Fall of this year . . .

☞ . . . Another title that is garnering a great deal of press interest, and therefore consumer interest, is *The Dig* from **LucasArts Entertainment**. This is a collaborative title by the company with the Hollywood undervalued film director *Steven Spielberg*. Expect its release also later this year. . . ☞ . . . Not only is **Revell** getting into the computer and video game biz, but **Playmates** is also entering the fray. Look for *Exo Squad* and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* carts this year . . . ☞ . . . Did you know that **Sega** is planning on spending around \$15 million this year in their advertising campaigns? With this loot out buying ads, they figure on selling at least two million titles and one million CD systems. In fact, they've even got *Deborah Harry* starring in an interactive movie game entitled *Double Switch* scheduled for release late this year. Also on tap are a boxing simulation and a science-fiction title. . . ☞ . . . Yet another launch partner has signed on for the **Sega Channel**. This time, it's **Colony Communications** in Providence, Rhode Island. This means an additional 790,000 or so subscribers for this service's launch this year. . . ☞ . . . More bucks being filtered into **Interplay Productions**. Now it's **MCA, Inc.**'s turn, jointly announced by *Brian Fargo* of the former and *Sid Sheinberg* of the latter. . . ☞ . . . That set-top box is becoming more and more important to a number of computer manufacturers. **Apple Computer** and **Oracle** have now signed an agreement whereby the latter's servers will work with set-tops all based on the Macintosh! And the race is on. . . ☞ . . . Coming for the **Apple PowerPC** line, **Domark's Super-VGA Harrier**, set to be available in April of this year. . . ☞ . . . Here's some stunning facts for you. Last year, according to **Dataquest**, nearly 5 million CD-ROM players were sold, most of them to the

consumer-home market. With Macintosh slotted to become the largest CD-ROM platform by the end of 1994, even DOS '386 and '486 users are upgrading their systems to include CD-ROM drives for pricing ranging from the low \$200s upwards to \$700. Seems as though folk are deciding to upgrade their computers rather than dump their money into either 3D0 or CD-I platforms. The impact of such buying is even seeing those who once were strictly 3D0 developers turning their creative juices to Mac and DOS machines as well . . . ☞ . . . The finest astronomy title we've experienced, *RedShift Multimedia Astronomy* from **Maris Multimedia Limited** and distributed by **Maxis**, for Macintosh computers, has won the special jury prize award at the first French multimedia awards held at Milia. Congrats! A Windows version will be released shortly. . .

☞ . . . Latest info from **NPD Research, Inc.**, leaves no doubt—**Sega** has become the year-end leader in 16-bit game hardware sales! All this, even while **Nintendo** states they're going to bypass the CD-ROM market. Their focus is going to be on solid-state computer cartridges. Hmmmm, have they missed the boat, or have consumers been misled in purchasing the millions of units now incorporated into Macs and PCs and Sega units? . . . ☞ . . . Sega, Sega, everywhere . . . now they're going to introduce a new, hand-held computer into the US sometime this coming fall. It'll pack storage for your telephone numbers, games, even a drawing program. Their *Pico* toy computer is also going to be sold here and abroad this summer. They sure are busy folk!

—WITHIN THE CELLOPHANE—

NEW PRODUCTS OF NOTE

DEADLY/GAMES
A CHAOS TECH COMPANY

Rene Vidmer, a founding partner of the now-famous **SPI** war-game publisher in the 80's, has been developing sims for the Macintosh for several years. These titles have included

Bomber, *Battle of Britain*, and *M4*, a tank simulator. His company, **Deadly Games** (516/482-4000) has now released their first submarine simulation, *U-Boat*.

This is an authentic recreation of W.W.II's lethal hunter/killer of the North Atlantic. You captain your own U-Boat, fighting the Allies in the North Atlantic, the North Sea, and the Mediterranean from the outbreak of W.W. II to the mid-40's. The crew communicates through digitized voices, and the entire sound portion of the game is accurate down to the condensation in the control room. The title is now available for Mac gamers!

Ebook, Inc.

Ebook (510/429-1331), the Union City, CA, interactive media developer, continues to surge forward with numerous new titles created internally and published from other developers.

From **BeachWare** comes *A Zillion Sounds!*, a CD-ROM loaded with sounds for both Macintosh and PC/MS-DOS platforms. These sounds can be used for system responses, multimedia titles, presentations—and they're all royalty free. This title contains 2,127 sounds.

Hot Lines is a multimedia mind bender, offering logic and graphic brain teasers. The title presents many collections of game objects and surprising sound effects. Common sense is all you need to understand the rules. And, as you can alter the difficulty level, the title is suitable for all ages. This title is available for both Macintosh and MPC platforms.

The White Horse Child is a multimedia storybook by *Greg Bear*, the Hugo and Nebula award winning science fiction author. Colorful illustrations and lively music not only assist children in becoming better readers and help develop stronger vocabularies, but new computer skills are also acquired. The music and narration are on separate CD tracks and can be enjoyed on any stereo CD player.

Ebook's *Goferwinkel's Adventures: The Lavender Land* is a multimedia Comic book that is a new kind of classic style cartoon character. Goferwinkel was conceived to give children their own generation of comic book

characters. The title is presented in classic panel form with 256 color graphics, synchronized speech and text, music, sound effects, animated sequences and interactive elements which allow the user to take the story into different directions. For MPC and Macintosh computers.

Electro Brain International

The Activator—what a great movie title! Starring Arnold S. and Van D., the ultimate action flick. Uh, sorry, not in this case. The Activator happens to be a new full-body peripheral from **Sega** that uses infrared beams to control video games. Whenever one of the beams is broken (say, by moving a leg, or swinging a fist), the action is results in on-screen activity.

There are four "Activator" titles currently in the works. The first is software from Electro Brain International entitled *Best of the Best*, a martial arts simulation that incorporates digital video of karate champions and 55 of their moves. Plus, this title can be played with the Sega Genesis system, with the Activator capabilities an option for those gamers who possess the Sega peripheral.

French developer and publisher Loricel is the developer of *Best of the Best*—the SNES version continues to sell well in the U.S. and Europe.

KONAMI®

One of the leading publishers of video game carts is **Konami**. They are expanding their library of offerings for Sega Genesis and SNES titles.

Rocket Knight Adventures (Genesis) offers an opossum named Sparkster. This is no ordinary critter, as he packs a sword, armor, and a jet pack. He must rescue Princess Sherry and save the kingdom of Zebulos from the forces of the Devotindos Empire. The game features side-scrolling, 17 different boss screens, difficulty settings that are adjustable, plus an outstanding sense of humor. One key to success is to constantly improve your rocket pack skills . . . in the long run, you'll find the combo jump-rocket-sword attack is a talent worth acquiring.

Zombies Ate My Neighbors (for both Genesis and SNES) contains a character few other games possess—a giant baby. Add in 48 stages, over 25 different weapons, a plethora of unseemly characters such as werewolves and chainsaw maniacs, and some awesome bonus stages, and you have a title bound to attract attention. You can play solo or simultaneously with a friend. Even become this invincible purple beast to defeat the levels.

Lethal Enforcers (Sega CD, Genesis, SNES) is a fast paced action game that is a conversion of the smash arcade hit. The package comes with its own gun and you must wipe out crime on the streets. With five stages, each one divided into three parts with

a vicious crime lord, you'll find yourself engaged in high speed chases, hijackings, and bank robberies. There's also an optional two-player game so a friend can help you clean up the garbage littering the streets.

For SNES gamers comes *Sunset Riders*, another arcade conversion. This time, you and a friend must select one of four gunfighters to clean up the wild west. Firing six guns a' plenty, clear passes, towns, and plains of the rotten varmints who are up to no good. You'll even find the original arcade's horseback sequences intact, as well as the digitized voices.

Into the arcades comes *Metamorphic Forge*. Seems as though the Evil One has invaded every pore of the world, and Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, has called upon four warriors to combat the evil. Armed with awesome powers and even Metamorphic Force, you'll confront half man/half ram beasts, ice robots, even a chicken man that bursts into flames. This game will be available in both two player and four player consoles.

The second arcade title is *Martial Champion* which finds ten of the world's best fighters competing to claim the title of champion. Travel around the world to the first round sites competing in head-to-head competitions. The battle is awesome!

MAXIS

Affiliated label **ScreenMagic, Inc.**

(415/648-8056) has released *Doodle Pad* for the Mac. With about 90 percent of adults engaged in doodling on a regular basis, this title provides a video board look with interactive, push-button controls, animation, and sound to work with . . . it's a quick and easy way to engage in a lot of fun. Hundreds of creative and fascinating doodle patterns can be generated easily.

You select the shape you wish to doodle with, such as a star or arrow. Then, set a behavior for that shape, from paths and growth rates, to rotations and spiral paths. Bring in color cycling or blending—even change the behavior while the pattern is being drawn. Add sound for doodle events, create Wallpaper, or save a doodle as a screen savor. The SRP is a reasonable \$29.95.



A new underwater simulation has debuted from **MECC** (612/569-1500). Entitled *Odell Down Under*, this program challenges players to develop an understanding of the food chains as they fight for their lives as inhabitants of Australia's Great Barrier Reef. You must survive, thrive, and move up the food chain.

You use a database of more than 70 life-forms from which you select a real fish. You then explore the undersea environment through role-playing in one of three game modes: practice, challenge, or tournament. This database contains information on predators, prey, special abilities, and social behavior. You've got to learn how to identify friend from foe as well as acquire survival skills. If you can't hide or what can safely be eaten, the next gulp could be you, gone in a flash.

You can also create your own life-form which has its own special attributes, such as squirting ink, using sonar, or the ability to poison or shock those who would make you their dinner. You must carefully balance everything you do. This title is for Macintosh and there are school versions available. The SRP is \$59.95.

MULTICOM PUBLISHING

Addressing both Macintosh and MPC consumers, **Multicom Publishing** (415/571-7171) has announced four CD-ROM titles.

The first is *The Legends of OZ*, featuring brand new, narrated and animated stories by *Roger Baum*, the great-grandson of *L. Frank Baum* who wrote this classic tale. Children join Silly OZbuls who teach and entertain them in the land of Oz. Dorothy and other Oz characters tell their stories, as well. Even the full text of the original story and illustrations are included on this disc.

The second title is *Dandy Dinosaurs—A Max the Dragon CD-Storybook*. This is the first title in Multicom's *Better Homes*

and Gardens CD-ROMs for children. *Dandy Dinosaurs* entertain and teach with games, stories, and full-motion video crafts projects. Narrated color video sequences show other children working through and completing projects. Also included are a read-along animated story and four games that teach dinosaur facts and jokes, counting and observation skills.

Other titles include *Wines of the World*, providing information on more than 20,000 individual wines, and *Astrology Source*, which creates natal and horoscope charts for anyone whose birthdate and birthplace are known.



Bringing W.W.I dog fighting to your PC/MS-DOS computer is *Wings of glory 1917-1918* from **Origin** (512/335-5200). This entertainment is reminiscent of the silver screen classics *Blue Max* and *Dawn Patrol*. You'll fly with the British Royal Flying Corps or the Americans in any of five historically accurate planes: the Sop with Pup, Sopwith Camel, SE5a, SPAD XIII and the Fokker Dr. I.

Using Origin's RealSpace™ graphics engine, the game features realistic detail. As you improve your skills, you'll also be sent on more difficult missions, such as attacking behemoth zeppelins. With newspaper headlines constantly updating you on the progress of the war, you'll soon know the good and the bad aspects of your position.

An Instant Mission generator lets you fly against any combination of enemies you wish, with a Mission Recorder allowing you to save your favorite battles and watch them from multiple camera angles. These files can also be traded with other aces over your favorite on-line service, such as eWorld. The SRP is \$79.95.

Also enroute from Origin is the *Ultima VIII*

Clue Book: Pentology, the guide to the realm of Pagan. The book contains complete descriptions of all gods, sages, domestic, and wild creatures as well as allies and enemies. Cross-referenced are statistics and items, and detailed maps will help you through this mammoth adventure. The price is \$14.95.



Sega CD gamers should be delighted to learn that *Revenge of the Ninja* is enroute to their video game machine from

Renovation (408/982-2700). This title was developed by Wolf Team, the development division of Renovation's parent company, **Telenet Japan**. With three difficulty levels, there's over 30 minutes of fast-paced animated video producing 18 levels of arcade action.

Those who master the game will receive recognition from Renovation. You'll need to practice your skills to complete the game in the hard mode and then there's a special ending for you. An on-screen certificate appears that allows you to fill in your name. Send Renovation a picture of this completed screen, and you'll receive a special *Master of the Ninja Arts Degree* certificate.

The story centers on a young man named Hayate. He's been summoned home from his studies in the art of Desmo, a discipline of martial art training and philosophy. He finds that his father is dying after a failed attempt to rescue the King's daughter from the evil Louigi, who now inhabits the Castle of Evil. Lougi and his army of nightmare creatures have not only kidnapped the princess, but are ravaging the kingdom. Hayate must take his father's place and honor the family's sacred oath to defend its King and country by rescuing the princess and destroying Louigi.

Your scores are based on your reaction times and how quickly you can complete a level. The game has 2 continues with up to five lives per continue.



Coming down the line is the third title from **Revell** (708/966-3500) in their *Power Modeler* CD-ROM software line, *Operation Airstorm*. This kit finds an F-15E

Strike Eagle model kit with multimedia software that shows consumers how to build plastic models of four of the most advanced aircraft (F-15E, AH-64A Apache Attack Helicopter, F-14A Tomcat and F-117A Stealth Fighter).

Additionally, this package gets you into the cockpit to fly eight combat missions to defend the Novian Republic which has just declared independence from Beluga. You'll engage in bombing runs as well as dogfights with jet fighters. Select from a variety of offensive weaponry. Even the villain, as well as the beautiful Novian Princess, appear in motion picture videoginettes to provide additional fun and realism throughout the game. With difficulty level settings from easy to hard, you may also select weather conditions and also have a co-pilot onboard who can warn you of threats and offer other advice about the aircraft's weaponry.

The model portion of the software features step-by-step instructions that show modelers how each piece fits together in their proper sequence and position. Advice regarding the best way to glue, paint, and detail a model like the pros is also included.

This title is for MPC platforms and the SRP is \$69.95.



The fourth adventure of Victor Vector & Yondo has debuted from **Sanctuary Woods** (415/578-6340). Entitled *The Cyberplasm Formula*, the title is on CD-ROM for both Macintosh and MPC platforms.

Our two heroes are trying to save the life of their boss, none other than the cybernetic Curator of the Museum of Fantastic Phenomena. The Curator's supply of life-giving cyberplasm has been exhausted. Victor and Yondo must return to the era before the Great Crash (n 2093 A.D.) to secure the formula in time to save him from certain demise.

As the game unfolds, you'll learn more about the history of Victor and Yondo and how

world government was relinquished to robots after the failures of the 20th Century. You'll learn the secret origins of Delta Mode, the female heroine that meets your heroes in each adventure.

And you'll receive information about RAM Axis, the arch-nemesis.

The game features 80 pages of interactive adventure, an original soundtrack, original artwork by comic book artist Ken Steacy (of Spider Man fame!), a large cast, skill testing games and activities, digital video versions of classic science fiction movies, plus information on real and historical robots. The SRP is \$39.95.

Sanctuary Woods has also announced their new *I-laugh* product brand. For CD-ROM platforms, these titles will appeal to older audiences with interactive media. You can sort through topics, and later, performers and skit types to choose how and when you want to be entertained.



Sierra (209/683-4468) has now officially announced this product as **OUTPOST CD**. The title was created by Bruce Balfour, a former NASA employee and co-designer of the award winning **Laura Bow in The Dagger of Amon Ra** title, also from Sierra. Greg Tomko-Pavia, formerly a member of the Galileo Navigation Team at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, provided programming assistance for this title in the form of orbital calculations, relativistic effects, and spacecraft design.

An international coalition has starting construction of the mother of all motherships, a craft capable of discovering new worlds and rebuilding human civilization in nearby planetary systems. The reason for the unprecedented cooperation is a meteor, heading directly for Earth, which will destroy mankind. An attempt to destroy the meteor has failed and all resources are committed to saving humanity.

You decide which planets to explore and what to pack on the ship before the mission starts. Once you land on a planet, you control research, colonization, and growth. Almost ever aspect of Outpost is based on current NASA research in planetary science, robotics, terraforming, and interstellar spacecraft design. The SRP is \$69.95.



SNES, 3D0, and PC CD-ROM are the platforms of choice as **Spectrum HoloByte** (510/522-3584) prepares to debut **Star Trek: The Next Generation**. The entertainments are based on Paramount's Emmy-Award winning syndicated **Star Trek: the Next Generation** television show. All three versions of this title retain the look and feel of the TV series. You can play any one of seven main characters, either as a team or individually.

The SNES offering, **Future's Past**, requires you to solve the mystery of the Derandmozier, the most powerful device in the galaxy. It was thought to be a myth—but it's returned from the past to threaten the future of the Federation. Seems as though the Romulans have cross the forbidden Neutral Zone and the mysterious alien Chodak fleets are also on the move. You've got quite an adventure to undertake!

The 3D0 title is **A World for All Seasons**, finds the U.S.S. Enterprise involved in a civil war on the planet Pallarius, which threatens to destroy civilization. You must unite warring factions and save an ancient, endangered race. Included are three action games, including a 3-D space encounter. Each **Star Trek : TNG** cast member that appears in the game is actually a 3-D rendered image with which you must interact.

The PC/MS-DOS title is **A Final Unity**, wherein you embark on a quest for the Fifth Scroll to maintain the integrity of the galaxy. You maneuver the Starship Enterprise within a 3-D tactical space. Beam down the Away Team to investigate alien planets and explore hundreds of stars to meet the challenges that confront you.

For Sega Genesis gamers, Spectrum HoloByte is debuting **Tinhead**. This is an action-packed, puzzle-solving game. Seems the evil mastermind Grim Squidge has robbed all of the stars from the sky. There's only one who can stop these dastardly deeds, and that's Tinhead, a turbo-boosted, morphing robot who must battle Squidge through four levels of weird alien landscapes, shiny space ports, star-cruiser wrecks, and jungle-covered alien planets. To add in his just cause, Squid collects various power-ups and then releases the imprisoned stars. Although the opposition will try to stop him, our hero and his head-mounted poing pong cannon can blast his way through enemy forces. Use gadgets built into the landscape to either reach the level's exit, find hidden rooms or collect extra bonuses. There are four levels and over 30 landscapes to explore.

There are also two new CD-ROM packs for PC CD-ROM flight sim's: **Falcon Gold** and **MiG-29 Gold**. These CD compilations of Spectrum classic sims include three additional campaign theatres that were included in *Operation: fighting Tiger* and in *Art of the Kill*.

Another air combat experience is **Wild Blue Yonder**, a multimedia showcase that encompasses aviation from the dawn of flight to the modern jet era. You'll experience dozens of jet aircraft, from the F/A-18 Hornet to the Russian MiG-29 to the YF-22 fighter. You can experience and interact with the aircraft, their pilots, and designers, and delve into their history. You can examine any aspect of the aircraft and see how instrumentation works and hear it described. Watch a full-motion video of the aircraft in action and hear an interview with a test pilot or designer. There are over 80 hours of exploration on this CD-ROM product, which will be released for Macintosh and PC CDs-ROM platforms.



Two new products plus new versions of already shipping software have been

announced by **Walt Disney Computer Software** (818/973-4015). The first title is *WOLF: A True-Life Adventure*. You are drawn into the alpine world of the timber wolf, from birth onwards. You immerse yourself in the life of the wolf and increase your knowledge of this natural environment.

The second title is *Let's Have A Ball*, a skill and challenge game for children aged seven and up. This title puts players into the world of the animated feature film, *Beauty & the Beast*, in a series of arcade-like encounters. The popular characters are back, testing children's memory, observation, and sequencing skills.

Disney's Animation Studio and *Mickey's ABC's* and *Mickey's 123's* are also going to be released in new, improved versions, with new graphics, sound, and peripheral support. Expect Disney's home software title library to expand over the next year.



An affiliated label of **Compton's New Media** is **Westwind Media** (800/937-8555). with their Cross-Platform Development System, their CD-ROM titles operate identically, no matter if you run them on a Macintosh or Windows platform!

Beginning readers will enjoy *Tales of the Wild Zeep*, a zany interactive storybook. The three stories in this title incorporate "hot-spots," on-line access to hundreds of definition, and 3-D rendered graphics. Each tale conveys important morals and lessons drawn from the life of the Wild Zeep.

The second title is *Heroic Theseus—Caught in the Maze of Minos* is both a reference work and a storybook. This is an original retelling of the Theseus myth with extensive information about Greek mythology.

The three-hour long, narrated story also contains a large cross-referenced glossary with easy access to maps, definitions, and even genealogical charts of the gods.

Future releases will include *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, an interactive retelling of the Rudyard Kipling story, and *Constitution*

Hall, a multimedia exploration of the Constitution of the United States.

• First Impressions •



—Software just received that we immediately opened and believe is toooooo cool to await an in-depth review—

Something truly unique has occurred, something exciting and wonderful. **Ebook** has released *Interactive Records*. These high quality CD-ROM title music tracks may be played on a standard audio CD player and the audio and audio-visual portions of the disc may be operated on by your MPC or Macintosh computer.

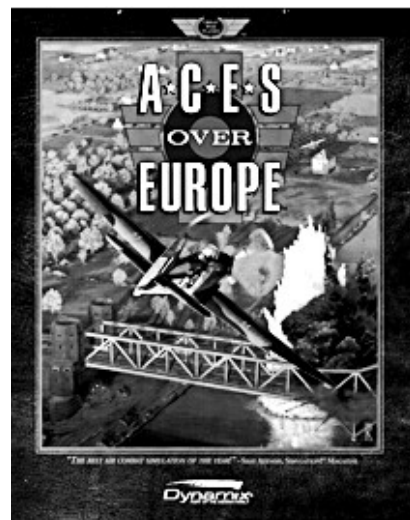
The dual platform operability is due to the company's new Ebook Engine. This technology can synchronize digital video and audio with text and graphics and still allow for maximum interaction and speed. The Ebook Engine requires no data be loaded onto a computer's hard drive in order to allow simultaneous interactivity with photo, animation, text, wave audio, and other types of data.

What's really cool are the titles, however. Under the editing and production eye of Dr. Wong, member of the Jazz Hall of Fame and himself a world renowned jazz scholar, these titles will focus on contemporary and legendary jazz artists. The likes of Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, and Woody Herman are going to be released. Each CD will pack video clips of classic performances, video interviews with friends and players from bands, historical photos, styles analysis, and more music consisting of important selections in CD Audio format.

The two titles we've viewed and heard include *Benny Goodman* and *Billie Holiday*. For audio consumers, you simply skip the first track on the disc and listen to your hearts content to these classic jazz sound. Billie Holiday's *God Bless The Child* and *Lover Come Back To Me* are restored from masters and really bring back to present day the power of this entertainer. Our favorite disc was *Benny Goodman*, which includes a "live" performance that's as delightful to listen to now as it was when it was recorded.

When it's time for some more information to pour into your brain, simply slide the disc into your MPC drive and devour the video interviews with numerous jazz personalities, such as Clark Terry, Dave Brubeck, and others. The biographical essays on each talent by Dr. Wong are a marvelous addition to each disc. For the jazz enthusiast, music devotee, or CD-ROM collector, these discs are truly a marvelous addition to your library.

• Product Perusals •



Featured Flight Simulation
Aces Over Europe
from Dynamix
— PC/MS-DOS —

Recommendation:
Pretty good! Check it out!

We've been flying over enemy territory for more than an hour, when out of the gloom appears the

target: a German Aerodrome. Despite this being
my tenth mission, I'm still a little scared. I've never
flown this deep

into Kraut land. But fear is for Germans. I look to port and see the wing leader give the OK sign.

"Party Time." I mumble, and nose my trusty P-38 into a dive. Deadly blooms of ack-ack blossom all around me, but I remain unscathed. My turn, I drop my payload on the hanger below, then bank hard for a strafing run. Just another day at war....

When I made my move from the Amiga to the IBM, I enthusiastically played Aces Over the Pacific—I was instantly hooked. The ease of control, depth and variety of missions, and number of different aircraft made for almost infinite replay value. It was truly a landmark game. So it was only natural that I eagerly awaited the release of the much ballyhooed sequel, Aces Over Europe. After what seemed an endless delay, the title is finally here. How is it you ask? My reactions are mixed.

Cool Stuff

- Once again, Dynamix has released a solid, bug free flight sim. The wealth of information, planes, missions, and scenarios show that the producers care about quality over rapid release.
- The flight model has changed little, if any, over their Aces Over the Pacific title.
- This game is ideal for newcomers to the flight sim genre, and offers scalable difficulty levels to challenge even the most seasoned fighter jock. I really enjoy this feature, as it allows you to customize the game to your particular talents.
- I also find that the wide variety of mission types, more than found in the previous Aces, gives the game higher replayability.
- Another plus, something carried over from Red Baron and Aces Over the Pacific, is the autopilot feature which lets you jump straight into the action. Let's face it, if I want to enjoy the scenery, I'll load up MS Flight Simulator 5. I play combat flight sims to kick butt, not sightsee.
- Not having to land the plane is also a bonus. Landing takes too much time. But for you purists, you can still fly the whole mission straight and land the plane if you so desire.

Negative bits

- I was hoping for improved graphics. Aces Over the Pacific was written with 386 machines in mind. These days, 486 machines are a dime a

dozen, and Aces Over Europe, in this writer's humble opinion, could have been spiced up in the graphics department.

- Enough with the bomber escort missions! I hate being responsible for the safety of others! I don't mind an occasional escort mission, but in some of the campaigns it seems that all you do is guard bombers.

Whether you're a first time combat flier, or the most experienced pilot on the block, Aces Over Europe offers the right blend of authenticity, challenge, and just plain fun that will make this sim one of your all time favorites. So what are you waiting for? Go buy it!—**Steve Wright**

System requirements:

PC & compatibles, 486, 4MB RAM with 1MB EMS available, hard drive, mouse, DOS 5.x or later, joystick with game card.



Featured Flight Simulation
F/A-18 Hornet
from Graphic Simulations
— Macintosh —
Recommendation: Buy it!

Just when you thought the Mid-East conflict was over, here comes *F/A-18 Hornet*, the newest arcade flight simulator from **Graphic Simulations Corporation**. View the action from a completely different view—the view of a strike fighter pilot! Fly state of the art equipment as you choose from any of the 28 missions involving air-to-air and air-to-ground objectives. You can even fly against your friends

over an AppleTalk network!

F/A-18 is the modern day version of “Hellcats
Over the Pacific,” a W.W.II flight

simulator from Graphic Simulations. Just like Hellcats, F/A-18 provides amazingly fluid animation, even on slower computers. The real fun begins when you have nice toys to hook up to your Mac, such as a 16-inch monitor for starters and perhaps a responsive joystick. A speedy Mac really adds to the excitement.



Although the instrument panel is not extremely realistic (there are dozens of buttons and switches that you never come into contact with), the realism of actually flying the Hornet is as close as you'll ever get without having to actually buckle up. Four air-to-air and air-to-ground radars provide firm firing control over the many AA and AG weapons you may select from in arming your aircraft.

Cool Stuff

- Amazing fluid animation, realistic flying, great sounds.
- Multiple cockpit and external views.
- Network feature; fly against your friends.
- The airbase seems to come alive; helicopters and jeeps constantly speed around the screen!
- A save feature that allows you to decide whether or not to keep the previous mission.
- Difficulty is quite customizable.
- There's a lot of sight seeing to be done when you're not engaged in combat.
- Hook up three monitors for a "panorama" view.

Negative Bits

- Annoying copy-protection forces you to pull out the ol' manual every time you play (until you register your software and receive your particular code to permanently unlock the sim).
- The manual doesn't possess an index!
- The interface for the film replay is not great.

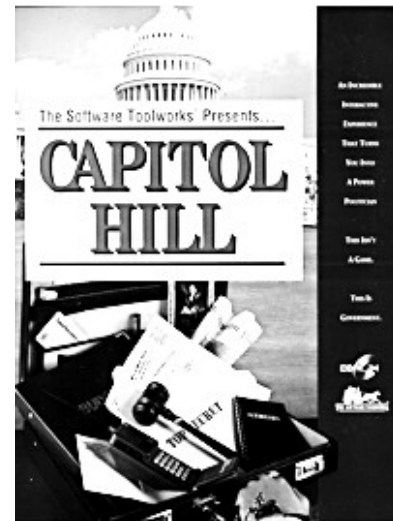
- Still waiting for a theatre disk with more missions.

In conclusion, F/A-18 Hornet is probably the best "war" flight simulator I've ever experienced for the Mac, extremely well designed and executed. I would even go to the extent of paying the \$50 simply for the incredible, in-depth, manual. Great job, Graphic Simulations!—*Tudor Popescu*

System requirements:

Runs on any Macintosh EXCEPT: 128, 512, Plus, SE, Portable, Classic, or PowerBook 100.

REQUIRES: Macintosh System Software v. 6.0 or higher with a minimum of 4MB of RAM.



Capitol Hill from The Software Toolworks —Macintosh—

**Recommendation:
Try it before you buy it!**

Have you ever thought about running for a political office? How about a job as a representative from your state? You know, cushy office, no-limit checking accounts, hidden diaries, plus all of the other perks that go along with being an elected official. This is the basic premise behind Capitol Hill as you play the role of a freshman representative in the United States Government. As you start the program, you're presented with your

own Personal Digital Assistant (PDA—which, by the way, looks nothing like a Newton). With this PDA you begin your role in government.

You can start with an orientation that lets you enter the office lottery (my lottery number has ALWAYS come up 5) and then select your office. From there, you can continue your path of orientation or move back to your PDA to select another path. For example, you can go to your office, field phone calls, make appointments, talk with other representatives. You are even greeted by California Representative, Lynn Woolsey (who?) in a series of QuickTime videos. These clips are supposed to add a more “humanistic” touch to the program. In fact, Capitol Hill is laced with video clips of historians providing information about the capitol building and about historical figures.

Unfortunately, Capitol Hill is more glitter than guts. While there is a good deal of information in Capitol Hill, the program suffers from far too much digital narration. EVERYTHING is narrated. There is no escape for the ever present, over dramatic male voice. The result of this narration is a lack of meaningful interaction. Essentially, all of the interactions are passive. That is, it takes no real higher level thinking skills to decide what to click on. The graphics are this program’s saving grace. They are excellent and add a great deal to the appeal of the program.

Cool Features

- Good QuickTime movies
- Excellent graphics
- Simple navigational interface
- Power Play game adds some more interactivity and is fun.

Negative Bits

- Very little interaction.
- Some of the sections force you to use the PDA to get out of the area you are in. This can be awkward if you option to not use your PDA (a choice on the PDA itself).
- Some of the video clips are trite and add nothing to the content.
- Need more content information on the topics that might be of value to a student.
- No glossary of terms.

Capitol Hill is well done program that lacks in

some areas. In this day and age of mistrust of our elected officials, Capitol Hill could help to provide a better understanding of the job. However, with the type of information provided, the best you can hope for is an overview. *Mark and Eli Veljkov*

System requirements:

Any Macintosh computer with 4MB RAM, 2MB free.



Feature Aquarium Sim Title
El Fish from Maxis
— Macintosh —
Recommendation:
Love fish? Love this game!

Ever entertained the thought of having your very own aquarium filled with exotic fish? Do you already have an aquarium with fish in it, but thought they weren't exotic enough? Well, El-Fish comes to the rescue.

Maxis, who has brought us many odd-but-wonderful simulations from ants to the evolution of Earth, has released yet another whimsical toy for our imaginations to play with. This time it's fish, or rather, El-Fish. With this simulation, your computer becomes an instant fish factory, allowing you to do virtually anything with your electronic ocean-faring creatures short of eating them (which can cause deadly tingling sensations; caution is advised).

El-Fish is VERY computation-intensive, crunching numbers and taking up gobs of processing power from your machine in the

process. As a result, you'll probably find yourself
literally leaving your computer on

overnight in order to have all 256 professional renderings of EACH fish completed so they can occupy your tank. To give you an idea of how complex the computations can be, Maxis had the Animatek (A Moscow based animation group) team program the simulation. Among the staff at Animatek are Alexey Pajitnov (inventor of Tetris) and three Ph.D.'s--in Psychology, Physics, and Mathematics. That answer the question? Such brain power was required to produce realistic and "fluid" animation, which is immediately evident as you watch your pets swim around your tank.

As they say, "Good things come to those who wait," and El-Fish is no exception. When you wake up the next morning, you'll find your "fishy" creations ready to go. Now all you need is a place for them to swim in, and thus: Welcome to Fishtank Decor 101, a course in interior-aquarium design. Here your imagination can flow freely as you prepare an ideal home for your pets to roam.

Cool Stuff

- Awesome animation! You can actually see the scales on your fishes glitter as they swim around! The graphics are so lively that your cat will flatten it's face time and again trying to jump into your computer screen.
- In El-Fish, you can evolve or breed fishes to your heart's content. You can indirectly control the shape and color of the offspring, but be careful, if you vary these two characteristics too much, a mutant fish can result. Mutant fish can't breed or evolve, but can possess extremely beautiful features or funny-looking ones: experimentation is the key.
- Full-featured tank editor. You can: choose from 48 patterns of gravel, 60 backgrounds, 54 types of plants, pick from libraries containing various fixed, moving, and animated objects (from castles to sunken ships) or import your own artwork, and 8 styles of music to accompany your aquarium. Ability to place objects 3-dimensionally, giving way to depth perception and allowing your fishes to swim "in front of" and "behind" objects.
- Ability to translate your fishes (which can take up a lot of disk space) into Roe language to reduce the file sizes so you can more easily exchange them with others.
- Other cool features include: An entertaining and well-documented manual filled with hilarious

puns and amusing tid-bits, ability to create exhibitions of various aquariums, dropping fishfood into tank for your hungry pets, option for "automatic shutdown" when rendering is complete and you're not around to turn the machine off.

Negative Bits

- Takes too much processing power and requires long waits when animating your fish. Fishes cannot be placed into tanks without first being completely rendered. My IIsi took 4 hours to render one normal sized fish. But anyone with 040 machines can expect much quicker times (around 7-10 minutes for a Centris 610, according to the manual).
- Background activity is virtually nonexistent when simulation is rendering fishes. Moving within the simulation (time it takes to do something) is sluggish, and the music is somewhat cheesy.

Those with any interest at all in fishes will undoubtedly dive right into the El-Fish experience--just remember to shake yourself dry when you're through. --Gary "Neo" Le

System Requirements:

Macintosh:, 68020 and above, 5MB RAM (3.5 minimum free to run), 10MB of hard disk space, 8-bit color capability, Macintosh System Software v. 7.0 or later.



**Feature Arcade/Action Game
Jump Raven from Cyberflix
— Macintosh —
Recommendation: GET IT!**

Your craft shudders as debris from a near miss by a seeker missile impacts your Jump Raven. Nosferatu helicopters emerge from the fire cloud you just created with your High Explosive shells, so you'd better kick in those hover thrusters and arm your defensive weapons. You bring your Jump Raven hovercraft to a standstill, arm your argon laser for some rock 'n roll destruction of neoplastic skin heads, when suddenly your co-pilot screams "Incoming!"

Cyberflix comes through with a bang with their second generation, action CD-ROM game entitled *Jump Raven*. Raven possesses some similarities to its predecessor (*Lunicus*), but, by and large, this title is an original with fantastic animations and finger-blazing game play. Bill Appleton at Cyberflix is a master at creating smoothly animated sequences that blend into the actual game play. No Macromedia Director interface here, folks. This is all original stuff, with super graphics and an easy to use interface.

The story begins in futuristic Earth where global warming has caused most animal species to become extinct. The weather is very wet. Unfortunately, some Neo Nazi's have stolen the pods that contain the genetic information for the extinct species. As Raven, you are charged with the task of rescuing the DNA of all the Earth's wildlife. You must face off against some really nasty folk in various cities, so you'll have to load up your Jump Raven with the latest in technology.

The pods have been hidden in the ruined urban jungles of the worlds biggest cities and if you think the Skin Heads are gonna just hand 'em over, I have some real estate in the Everglades to sell you. Many a laser battery will be totally spent by the time you've [hopefully] completed the task. As you progress through the streets, you can stop in at "Jiffy Wrench" for repairs, or push on to a base to buy more armaments.

Cool Stuff

- Great soundtrack, with realistic sounds and voices.
- Your craft can be configured with 20 different weapons.
- Outstanding animation (such as when enemy craft blaze into the ground after being hit).
- Great action—the best on any CD-ROM.
- The comments by your co-pilots are absolutely hilarious.

- The computer can take over some tasks for you when you're learning the game.
- Plenty of variation thanks to various craft configurations and co-pilot selections.
- Outstanding on-line help system that includes background info.
- Easy to use, ultra-smooth interface

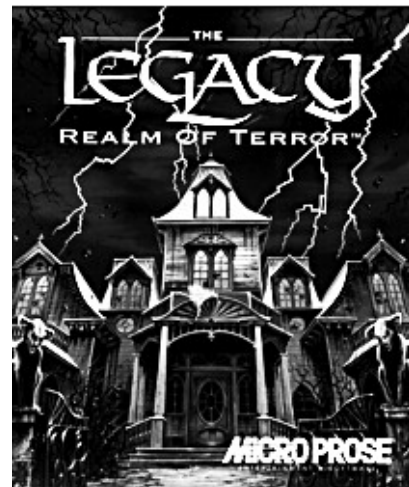
Negative Bits

- You need at least 6 MB of RAM and a color Macintosh.
- Ideally needs a fast machine (LC III or Better), although it is playable on LC, albeit slowly.
- Grid type play area is mildly repetitive.
- Background music can be annoying (although there are four choices of music)

This is the best action CD ROM game out there. If you have the hardware to drive Jump Raven, you must have it!—**Bart Farkas**

System requirements:

A color Macintosh with color monitor, CD-ROM drive, and at least 8MB RAM, of which 6MB must be available.



**The Legacy: Realm of Terror
from MicroProse
— PC/MS-DOS —
Recommendation: None**

It was like a convoluted plot in a mystery story. As I inserted Disk 3 in the installation process, I turned the game box over and admired the screenshots; they looked impressive. Then the computer requested Disk 4. . . just one problem, where the heck was Disk 4? A frantic search through the innards of the box revealed a second package of disks. A relieved sigh followed, but was quickly replaced with gasps of disappointment and confusion: the second package contained the EXACT SAME disks as the first, with the same serial number no less. Disk 4 was nowhere to be found.

Apologies to those who expected a review, but as you can see, one wasn't possible. You'd think MicroProse would go through certain lengths to make sure the proper disks, docs, etc. were packaged in the game, especially when it's submitted to a consumer-based publication like IGU for a public review. Too bad, the game looked like it had potential. If such a careless blunder can occur with the reviewer, it can certainly occur with the consumer and gamer. So, if you do decide to purchase the game, make sure you look INSIDE the box before you buy.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to tack "Missing: Disk #4: black, high density, 3 1/2 inches" flyers around town. Maybe the disk will somehow find its way back home years from now like in one of those amazing lost pet stories. . . --

Gary "Neo" Le

System Requirements::

PC & compatibles; 386/16 minimum; DOS 5.0; 2 MB Ram; VGA Graphics; 16-25 MB of Hard Disk Space; sound boards supported: Ad Lib, Roland, SoundBlaster, and Covox; 33MHz and mouse recommended.



**Feature Simulation Game
Oceans Below
from The Software Toolworks
— Macintosh —
Recommendation:
Great title, but . . .**

A One-of-a-kind experience into the underwater world of SCUBA diving. A real WOW opening. There's no software around today that can compare with *Oceans Below* due to the title's uniqueness. The authors combined a compelling and spell-binding combination of music, speech, photographs, and over 200 QuickTime movies. Oh yes, and a Treasure Hunt. Therein lies the rub.

This CD-Ware is like a diving seminar—you're always learning. The 'Diving Information' provided is everything a Novice would have to know in order to become a successful SCUBA diver. As a novice, I learned the difference between a wet suit and a dry suit. I learned about my diving equipment, from regulators and tanks to the screen diving manual.

You can bypass the *Introduction to Diving* on startup and get right to the action. There is a choice of 17 dive sites around the world to explore. I visited Truk Lagoon to see the WW II relics. Before diving, I chose "Topside Information" for a QuickTime biographical movie of the area to enhance the flavor of the dive. Prior to any dive, you can select a video selection that displays the local aquatic life you may encounter on your dive.

Once down under, you can click on any item you see for a real QuickTime movie of that item. The title features very interesting underwater photography plus nice camera work. Added to the scenes are random treasures. You may have to descend more than five or six times at each site to get all of your treasures. There are 68 treasures scattered around at the 17 dive sites for you to acquire, including a working Timex watch.

Cool Stuff

- The graphics, music and QuickTime movies are quite exceptional.
- The animation is smooth, even when run on Apple's original CD Drive.
- No manual to learn.
- Excellent diving tips during your descents and ascents.
- No copy protection as the title is CD-ROM based.

Negative Bits

- No saves possible. Real Bummer!

Ah, yes, the rub. What really bothered me about

this wonderful experience is that after I finally located 67 of the 68 treasures, I had to quit for the night. You select Quit and —Ding-Dong—no saved file! Only one thing to do—yep, restart. I lost all of that time and all of my treasures as I couldn't save the game! Really, quite a nasty oversight by The Software Toolworks... —

George M Engel

System Requirements:

Macintosh System Software v. 6.0.7 or later. CD-ROM drive (150 KB/sec transfer rate or higher), hard drive, 4MB RAM (2.5MB free), plus a 13-inch, 256-color monitor.



Feature Newton Game Silicon Casino from Casady & Greene — Newton —

Recommendation: Better than average

Bound to happen! As is the case with almost every computer or communications device created, a developer, sooner or later, will release a “casino” title for that platform. In the case of *Silicon Casino*, they’ve done a good job of creating a title that’s fun to play.

These games of chance come on a floppy disk for either a Macintosh or Windows format. For Mac users, all you have to make certain is that your Newton is synchronized with your computer (via the Newton Connection program, either via serial or LocalTalk) and that you load the software as instructed in your Newton user guide.

It only takes a couple of minutes for the program to load into your Newton. The program is stored on your PCMCIA card, usually a 1MB or 2MB “Storage Card.” Once there, the program can be accessed via the “Extras” icon. When you select the subsequent Silicon Casino icon, a mini-casino is revealed in 1-bit graphics on your Newton screen. Now all you do is select your game of choice.

There are five games: Baccarat, Craps, Video Poker, Blackjack, and Slots. If you don’t exactly know how to play one of the games, you can instantly learn the rules by selecting the “?” icon at the bottom of the screen for the instructions to that game. Of all of the games, my preference was for the Blackjack play. With 1-bit graphics, you have to realize the depth of graphic revelation is somewhat limited. With some graphic and text elements in the background on the screen, some of the card displays (such as the Baccarat game) are difficult to follow when the background interferes with their placement on the “playing surface.” The

Blackjack screen, however, was clear in its presentation of the cards. The dealer deck—at first thought to be somewhat of a redundant inclusion and unnecessary—does reveal to whom a card is being dealt by the top or bottom orientation of the card back. (The same holds true for the other card games).

The Video Poker and Slots machines were far too unrealistic to bother much with—you drag your coin to the machine slot, then, grasping your Newton “pen,” you pull down on the handle of your machine. The three icon display within the machine then start to roll. The far left icon seems to halt first, with the middle and then rightmost icon turning and stopping. All icon action stops but the handle continues to move upwards, so synchronization between the rolling icons and the handle movement is far from perfect. If the icons stop and match, you win.

You’re constantly aware of your progress. The screen informs you of the amount of money you started with, your current holdings, and any loans you may have taken out to enable your play. The help screens are nicely completed with the Newton’s up or down arrows taking you through the various pages of this display.

All-in-all, *Silicon Casino* is a nice addition to your Newton. This title allows you to take a breather away from other work when you need a break from checking your address book or sending faxes. Although not perfect, especially in the slot machine play, the card games offer the most entertainment value. I certainly have no qualms in recommending this title to Newton owners as it certainly allows you to gamble away a fortune without any real loss—except to your business-related productivity!—*Mudgeon*

ICOM Simulations

Uninvited from ICOM Simulations — Macintosh —

Recommendation: Try it first!

It was a dark and stormy night! You and your brother are driving down an old back road. Suddenly, a shadowy figure appears and rushes toward you. You swerve the car and black out. When you wake up, you discover your brother is missing. Good riddance you say, now I don't have to pay him the money I owed him. No! You set out to find him in the old abandoned house nearby. As you enter the house, you quickly realize that you have become (organ music please), "The Uninvited!"

The Uninvited is another in a long line of adventure games that have discovered the effects that graphics and sound can have on the game. This is a black and white game that plays on almost any Macintosh, including the PowerBook. As the player you must defeat the evil in the house as well as find and save your brother. This is accomplished by using the objects you find in the house, creating, drinking and using magic potions, and defeating evil spirits. If you are successful, you will find and rescue your brother.

Cool Stuff

- Game is in black and white and will run on a PowerBook or Mac Plus.
- The game gives you a lot of options for exploring objects in the house.
- Hints are available at every level.
- The game provides you with basic instructions at each level
- Moves are reinforced by digital sounds.
- The play interface is easy to understand and use.
- You can fast forward to preview a play or rewind to see past plays.

Negative Bits

- No hints are ever given and there is no way to get any clues. This can be frustrating for some players.
- Not all objects can be grabbed. The game does not provide any visual clues as to what is grabbable and what is not. This means that you can spend a lot of time trying to get objects that you can not get.
- The text descriptions do not give enough information to make an educated decision. You have to guess a lot.
- There is no real intelligent branching. You either

figure out the correct path and thing to do, or you die.

- Even though the game can run on black and white machines, the graphics and sound are weak.

The Uninvited continues a long tradition of good adventure games from ICOM. This game suffers from a lack of sophistication. Being able to play the game on a PowerBook is a plus but there should be a version for color Macs. In addition, it is always nice to have some way to get even the smallest clue while still playing the game. The only way is to BUY the clue books from ICOM. A great way to make money, but a lousy game interface. *Mark and Eli Veljkov*

THE CLUE CORNER

&

H.E.L.P



Aces Over Europe

- 1) In Strike missions, remember that your primary objective is your bomb target. Avoid dancing with enemy fighters until you have taken out at least one or two ground targets. I prefer to use most of my weapons on ground targets, as many times the rest of your wing is shot down by the enemy. Then just fly low towards home.
- 2) Escort missions are tough in this one. Avoid them if you can. If not, I find that if you hang with the bombers while your wing engages, you can pick off any fighters that get by. I know it sounds cowardly, but it works.
- 3) My personal recommendation on planes is the P-38 Lightning. It seems to hold up better than the Mustang.

- 4) Always try to be higher than the enemy when you attack. It seems the computer is easier to take out with a diving run. You can dive, fire at the target, then bank around to mop up.
- 5) Watch your back! The computer is much better at getting behind you than in previous Dynamix Sims.—*Steve Wright*

Graphic Simulations

F/A-18 Hornet

- 1) Press the “option” key while selecting “Tour of Duty” from the “Mission” menu and you’ll be able to fly any aircraft in the 28 featured missions. Valid plane types that I know of are: A10A, AWAK, FA18, F111, F117, MG27, SU27, and the DC10.
- 2) Don’t think that just by using the ECM and flying low you’ll be able to dodge a missile—you’ve got to engage in some effective maneuvers to avoid them!
- 3) Throwing flares and chaffs when you see the “launch” indicator doesn’t do much—you *MUST* time the release perfectly.
- 4) You can boost your speed by using the afterburner and then turning it off when you reach a desirable cruising speed—your speed will remain the same, although the afterburners are off.
- 5) Reading the entire manual really provides you with information that can help you in the game. It’s really enjoyable reading, too!—*Tudor Popescu*

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