

780ad7b8-0

COLLABORATORS

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REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

780ad7b8-0

1.1 Contents

GRAC Intro Creator V1.0

Copyright © 1998 DAS Software

Written by Antony Dzeryn

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Installation
Requirements
~Disclaimer~
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~~~~Past~~~~  
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1.2 What is it?

This utility allows the creation of introduction sequences for games written with the GRAC game-creation system. It was written in AMOS Pro, and an early version of the system was used to create the introduction for F1 Software's "The~Experiment".

Why not use GRAC, you ask? Why plug your own game, you cry? In answer to the first question, it makes GRAC programs less unwieldy, and can be edited separately without fear of destroying your game. It also is much easier to use, can be bypassed by the users if they've seen it more than they want to, and the separate files can be moved to different disks making compiling a finished version on floppies easier.

In answer to the second question... F1 Software don't seem to be doing much advertising at the moment. No, that's not quite right. They aren't doing ANY advertising at the moment, and never have since they evolved from F1 Licenceware. So, I need to do my own advertising.

1.3 Installation

Installation is simple. Just copy the drawer called "IntroCreate" to an appropriate place on your hard disk.

Then, copy the contents of the "libs" drawer to the "libs" drawer in your "SYS:" partition.

1.4 Requirements

This program requires:

- GRAC V2.0

1.5 Disclaimer

Though I've tested IntroCreate extensively, I cannot be held responsible for any damage it does to your Amiga or anything else, be it a hard drive, scanner, joystick, mouse or rabbit.

You use this program at your own risk.

1.6 Copyright

IntroCreate is Copyright ©~1998 DAS Software and was written by Antony Dzeryn. It is Public Domain, so you can mess with the source code, executables or data files as much as you want, but I'd like a mention if you use it with anything.

1.7 How to use

Instructions

How~does~it~work?
Writing~a~script~
~Adding~graphics~
~~Adding~music~~~
Running~a~script~
Adding~to~a~game~

~~~~Commands~~~~~

---

~~~~Examples~~~~

1.8 How does it work?

The actual executable file is simply a script interpreter. To create the introduction, a script is hand-written in a suitable text editor, for example "ed", supplied with Workbench. When executed, the IntroCreate program processes the script, and performs the actions it requires.

The program requires a special version of the GRAC Player program, modified by Edmund Clay (GRAC's author). This is included on the disk.

1.9 Writing a script

To write a script, load up your favorite text editor and type it in.

1.10 Commands

The commands are grouped according to their function:

```
~~~~Text~~~~  
~~~~Fonts~~~~  
~~~Pictures~~  
~~~~Music~~~~  
Miscellaneous  
  
~~~~Index~~~~
```

Note

All commands MUST be in lower case, but arguments such as filenames and text to be displayed may contain upper case letters.

1.11 Running a script

This is a little complicated. To run the script you need to:

1. Copy the script and the IntroCreate program into the same directory.
 2. Make an icon for the script using your favourite icon editor, ensuring you set the icon's type to "Project".
 3. Set the icon's Default Tool to "IntroCreate" (minus speechmarks).
 4. Now, simply double-click the script's icon.
-

1.12 Adding to a game

To add the script to a game, just copy the script and the IntroCreate program onto the disk with your game.

1.13 Text

```
- txt X Y TEXT T
```

This prints text on the screen. Only the bottom third of the screen can be used to display text using this command, as it is designed to add text beneath a main picture. To use the full screen, use the fxt command.

X is the x-coordinate, and Y is the y-coordinate of the text.

TEXT is the text to be printed (not in "" marks).

T is the time it will appear on screen (050=1 second). X, Y and T MUST have 3 digits. If less are needed, use a zero before the number,

eg. 001
010
100

TEXT can be any length, upper or lower case.

Example:

```
txt 015 030 The centre falls apart 110
```

```
- fxt X Y TEXT T
```

This works in exactly the same way as the txt command, but allows the text to spread over the whole screen.

1.14 Fonts

```
- fontdir PATH
```

Assigns the Fonts: directory directory to PATH (no "" marks).

Example:

```
fontdir SYS:Fonts
```

```
- fontname NAME SIZE
```

This sets a font to be used to print text. NAME is the name of the font, and SIZE is the size of the font. SIZE has to have 2 digits.

Example:

```
fontname Diamond.font 20
```

1.15 Pictures

- `picin PATH`

This loads a picture. If no picture is to be loaded, but you wish to remove the cursor and pointer (a blank screen so text alone can be visible), use the command:

```
picin nil
```

PATH is the complete name and path of the picture (no "" marks).

Example:

```
picin Work:Pics/IFF/Dexter.pic
```

- `picout`

This fades out a picture (text remains untouched). No arguments are needed.

- `fade STATE`

Turns fading in and out of pictures and text on or off. If turned off, `picin` and `picout` cause the picture to appear or disappear instantly.

Example:

```
fade on
```

1.16 Limitations

The limitations of this package are self-imposed. The executable is already big enough without adding hundreds of commands which no-one in their right mind could want. Some features which could, but won't, be included, are:

- Allowing GRAC characters to walk around in the intro.
- OctaMED modules.
- Different screen resolutions/sizes.
- Different colour text.
- Multi-line text.

There are plenty of others, too.

1.17 Future

Now, you may have read this guide, and looked at the features offered, and if you are a simpleton you may think that this whole shebang is a bit of a bargain, coming free and all. The truth is, the package is rather limited. However, its easy to use and offers a quick solution to adding an introduction of a technical standard which is in-keeping with the capabilities of GRAC.

Despite these limitations, I have no desire to update the package or release any other versions; this is your lot. Based on the number of games that I have seen reviewed in the various Amiga magazines, very few people have actually got to grips with GRAC, or bothered doing anything with it.

There is probably little demand for an all-singing, all-dancing GRAC utility.

1.18 Past

This isn't a history of revisions, describing how I removed a bug that stopped the "Q" key working, or something meaningless like that. Instead, this is a short history of why the program was made, and why it's taken at least two years to get released. That'll be equally as meaningless, then. Oh, well.

This program originally started life as the introduction to DAS Software's first GRAC game, "The Experiment". We were planning on a whole series, until the Amiga scene was put on life support and F1 Licenceware was taken over. Steve Bye (then manager of F1) asked us to write a second user disk for GRAC, because he alleged that the manual was too difficult to understand. I thought that I could help both DAS Software and many other GRAC users by adding a few more features to the intro, and turning it into a stand-alone script language, compatible with GRAC.

After much messing about with AMOS, I got the thing to do what I asked of it, not what it felt I should ask, and stuck it on a disk. And there it stayed.

In the meantime, we had put another user disk together, and sent it to F1, who denounced it as thoroughly useless. Morale destroyed, we decided not to bother again.

Much later, we received a letter from another GRAC user who wanted to write a sequel to The Experiment. Quite why he wanted to, I don't know, but I sent him some of the source files and various utilities, including this Intro creator. He wrote back full of praise (though he may just have been after more source files), and wondered why I hadn't released it. Basically, I couldn't be bothered.

Now, though, I'm giving it to every other Amiga user. All five of you.

1.19 Miscellaneous

- wait TIME

Waits for TIME. TIME is in 50ths of a second.

Example (wait for 3 seconds):
wait 150

- noquit

Stops the user quitting with Ctrl-C. This should be placed near the top of the script.

- closewb

Closes Workbench. This should be placed near the top of the script.

- gracplayer NAME

This decides the name of the gracplayer revision. This is optional, so the program can be used with all versions of the gracplayer. NAME is the complete name of the gracplayer. This has to be placed at the top of the script.

Example (for version 2 of GRAC):
gracplayer GRACPlayer2

- game NAME

This tells the program what your game is called. Replace NAME with the name of your GRAC program. This has to be placed after the gracplayer command.

Example:
game Experiment.grac2

- checkmouse STATE

If STATE is replaced with on, the program checks to see if the user is pressing a mouse button. This enables them to skip the introduction sequence.

- rem REMARK

This enables you to annotate your script with remarks. Any text which has semi-colon (;) or apostrophy (') in front of it is also ignored by the program.

Examples:
rem This text cannot be read by the program.
;Nor can this.

'Or indeed this.

- fin
This ends the program. It has to be used at the end of a script.

1.20 Music

- st PATH

Loads a Sound Tracker module. PATH is the complete name and path of the module (no "" marks).

Example:

```
st Work:Stracker/Mods/px.bladeswede_remix
```

- playst BLOCK

Plays a Sound Tracker module loaded previously. BLOCK is the block number to start from, where 00 is the first block. BLOCK MUST have 2 digits. Songs can have a maximum of 34 blocks.

To stop a module, use:

```
playst -1
```

Example:

```
playst 02
```

- filter STATE

Turns the Amiga's internal sound filter off or on. Replace STATE with either off or on, in lower case.

Example:

```
filter off
```

1.21 Index

| Command | Syntax | Description |
|---------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| txt | X Y TEXT T | Prints text on bottom 3rd of screen |
| fxt | X Y TEXT T | Text anywhere on pictureless screen |
| picin | PATH | Loads a specified picture |
| picin | nil | Blank screen |
| picout | | Fades a picture out |
| fade | STATE | Toggles text and picture fading |

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--|
| fontdir | PATH | Assigns the font directory to PATH | |
| fontname | NAME SIZE | Sets the font and size to be used | |
| st | PATH | Loads a specified Sound Tracker mod | |
| playst | BLOCK | Plays the module, starting at BLOCK | |
| filter | STATE | Toggles the internal sound filter | |
| wait | TIME | Waits for specified period | |
| noquit | | De-activates Ctrl-C quitting | |
| closewb | | Closes Workbench | |
| gracplayer | NAME | Selects the name of the GRAC player | |
| game | NAME | Name of the GRAC game to execute | |
| checkmouse | STATE | Toggles mouse-quitting option | |
| rem | REMARK | Allows notes to be added to script | |
| fin | | Ends the program | |

1.22 Adding graphics

Like GRAC, the only graphics format supported is the AMOS Pro compressed IFF format. To convert from standard IFF ILBM pictures to this format, a separate program called "Compress" is included.

When run, this program requests an input file which is loaded and displayed, then an output filename is requested. If you choose the same name, the original picture WILL BE OVERWRITTEN. There are NO WARNINGS. Except that one. The program then quits. Sorry, but you'll have to do one picture at a time, or buy AMOS and write your own compressor. Or, convert the pictures with GRAC. You should be able to figure out a way to do it.

Pictures should be:

- Lowres.
- 320*256 or less
- 32 colours or less.
- Use the OCS colour palette, not the AGA one; AMOS, GRAC and the IntroCreate program only use the A500 palette. AGA colours will be shown only as approximations taken from the A500 palette.

1.23 Adding music

The only music format supported is the Sound Tracker standard. AMOS' OctaMED support is extremely unstable and limited, and the only OctaMED format supported by AMOS, MMD0 (OctaMED Pro versions 1-4) is itself unstable. Some modules crash any program which attempts to play them other than OctaMED itself; even the official OctaMED Player suffers from this.

The only other format that could have been supported was the AMOS Pro-specific format. Never heard of it? Exactly.

Note

Due to a bug in AMOS, the original command to play Sound Tracker modules was bugged and would not allow the starting position to be specified. Both this

program and GRAC use a extension package which include an altenative Sound Tracker command set. Unfortunately, this too is bugged. Modules can only be 34 blocks long; any extra blocks are not played.

One advantage of using this program is that the intro music does not need to be part of the "Grac.song" file, therefore increasing the amount of music that can be played in the game.

1.24 Examples

There are a number of example scripts included in the "Examples" drawer (oddly enough). To use them, move the example you want to see into the directory containing the IntroCreate executable, then double-click the script's icon.

They illustrate how a script should be put together.

All of the examples will return an "Illegal function call" message, because I have not specified a GRACPlayer, nor a GRAC game.

1.25 The author

If, for any reason, you need to contact me for help with the IntroCreate program, my email address is:

spam_mail250@yahoo.com

For more downloads (including our two GRAC games), see:

<http://website.lineone.net/greenpizza>
