

AmTALK

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Chapter 1

AmTALK

1.1 AmTALK.guide

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AmTALK
*****

Welcome to AmTALK, the AmigaOS Talk client.

Version 1.3 (14.02.97)

- Introduction -

Copyright
    Copyright, author information and more.

Description
    What is AmTALK?

Installation
    Cool. Now how do I make it work?

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    That might help.

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    A little guide to the interface

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```

1.2 AmTALK.guide/Copyright

Copyright

AmTALK has been designed, developed and written by

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Brought together in a heavy overnight operation

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Support

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There is a support mailing list to discuss AmTALK related issues; write to <AmTALK-request@vapor.com> and put "ADD" in the mail body. Please join the list if you want to report bugs or have suggestions.

About Author

=====

Olli Wagner is a sausage munching German who writes really good Amiga software like amIRC and Voyager (along with several others.) This is shareware so if you like it, send Olli a large slice of bratwurst to the address in the registration info in the about window. Also send him email asking what happened to Knabber and if VNG will ever ship.

1.3 AmTALK.guide/Description

Description

AmTALK is an enhanced version of the UNIX talk program. This program was the precursor of IRC in that it permitted remote users to chat with one another in real time. While IRC extends the basic functionality such that many people can talk to each other simultaneously, the basic need for a direct one on one method of communication is still there. However, using talk is rather like using the phone in that people aren't always available so wouldn't it be nice to have an answering machine.

Vaporware introduces... AmTALK.

AmTALK has the following features:

- * fully multithreaded for several talk sessions at once.
 - * Auto answer facility to accept talk requests and store incoming messages. Can be triggered manually or by a user-definable timeout. Optional auto answer information icon on workbench displaying number of new and unread messages.
 - * "Locate" function to locate a user on a dynamic IP address even if you don't know which IP he is using right now.
 - * History of last used talk addresses for easy access.
 - * user configurable sounds for notifying of incoming talk requests
-

and successfully established talk links.

- * Userlist to store frequently used talk partners, with aliasing for easy talk start and specificable access privileges (override auto answer, refuse/ignore always, locate always etc.)
- * Can be started from inetd, or reside resident in the background, activated by hotkey.
- * Supports clipboard Cut & Paste from talk windows.
- * Keeps a full log of incoming talk requests.
- * nice and friendly GUI to start talks, control operation and configuration.
- * handles incoming talk requests with "wrong" usernames gracefully.
- * works with Miami, AmiTCP and as225r2-derived TCP/IP stacks.

1.4 AmTALK.guide/Installation

Installation

The easiest way of installation is of course using the provided Installer script. Note that the provided Installer script doesn't work with the old OS 1.3 1.24/1.25 versions of Installer. Please get Installer-43_3.lha from AmiNet (/util/misc) or from ftp.vapor.com, /pub/misc/Installer-43_3.lha.

You may also want to add this to your startnet or startup.miami script:

```
IF SHOW('P','AmTALK') THEN DO /* Already there */
  DELAY(5)
END
ELSE DO
  ADDRESS COMMAND 'run >nil: AmTALK '
END
```

This means that the program will be run automatically when you start up your TCP/IP stack so the ability to handle incoming chat requests will be there automatically.

AmTALK can also be started from inetd "on demand". Add the following line to your inetd.conf file:

```
ntalk          dgram  udp wait  root    <path>AmTALK <path>AmTALK
identd=1
```

Note that you have to specify the full path to the AmTALK executable, and it's right that you have to specify it twice.

Your identd will then start AmTALK when a talk requests comes in.

1.5 AmTALK.guide/Running the program

Running the program

In order to talk with someone, you can either use the provided talk rexx starter program. Simply type

```
talk user@host
```

from a shell window.

Also, when started manually, you will be presented with the Talk window, which is thoroughly explained in the next section. When AmTALK is lurking in the background, you can open it everytime with the specified hotkey. This defaults to ramiga t.

1.6 AmTALK.guide/The GUI

The GUI

The default window opened up gives you access to the address of the user you'd like to speak to, a drop down window (an arrow pointing to a line) which is a history of people you've talked to in the past so you don't have to type their addresses in again.

Underneath that are three buttons.

Talk This opens up a direct chat to the person specified in the address field above.

Locate and Talk This allows you to 'find' a person on a dynamic link such as those provided by most ISPs. It also needs a full address but will search through all the addresses in that level of addressing until it finds the person you'd like to talk to. It can take a little bit more time though.

Userlist This brings up another menu that allows you to enter aliases for addresses - similar in style to the way Mail programs do it. This means that you can type in "Olli" rather than "olli@hurz.wupper.de" at the address line.

Once you've chosen to talk another window comes up which is the chat window itself. This is dominated by two sections - the top one which contains what your chatee has to say to you and the lower one which is what you're saying to them. Scroll bars on both allow you to look at what's moved off the top of the screen. In the dragbar at the top is the address of the person you're talking to.

The Talk Received Window:
=====

This pops up when someone else tries to start a Talk session with you.

Ignore Press this if you don't want to talk to the person. He will get a message stating that you're not available.

Ignore Always Press this if you never want to talk to the person ever again. He will get a message stating that you're never available.

Refuse Press this if you don't want to talk to the person. He will get a message stating you're ignoring incoming requests.

Refuse Always Press this if you never want to talk to the person ever again. He will get a message stating you're ignoring incoming requests.

Answering Machine Route the call to the answering machine.

AA Always Always route this person's calls to the answering machine.

Accept Start the talk session.

The Menu Bar
=====

Start Talk This brings up the window mentioned earlier on and allows you to have multiple talk sessions going on with other people at the same time.

Review AA Messages This is a list of all messages that have been sent to you while you've been away from your computer. It tells you the address of the talkee, when the chat attempt happened, how long the message was and whether you've read it or not. The window to the bottom contains the text of the message. The three buttons at the bottom allow you to start a talk session with the person who left the message. If you double click on the name that two will start a chat session with the person who left the message.

Review Log This is a list of all the chat sessions that have been started recently and list the time, date, addressee and what happened to the session. The three buttons at the bottom allow you to delete the list that's stored, or talk to the originator again.

Copy to Clipboard Copy selected contents of the current window to the clipboard.

Paste From Clipboard Copy the contents of the clipboard to the talk session. The contents must be ascii format.

[1] xxxxxx This is a list of all the current talk sessions in progress. To just to the appropriate one, just choose the option.

Configuration
=====

Hotkey

Set the keyboard option that you want to call up AmTALK. This defaults to ramiga t

Colors

here you can set the colour of your text and background. Click on the line to bring up the options for changing them.

Sounds

AmTALK can play samples for when a connection is attempted and for when it succeeds. Type the location of the sound files or use the document button to bring up a file requester. The number refers to the replay speed and typically changes to an appropriate value automatically. Test allows you to try out the sample.

AutoAnswer

In the text window to the top, you can type in the message that people will get when they try to reach you if you're not paying attention, don't want to talk to them and so on. The two sliders set how long their message can be and how long it'll take the answering machine to kick in.

UserList:

See the section about this earlier on.

MUI:

Set your preferences for all MUI related gageetry in this program. Read the MUIPrefs documentation for further details.

Show AA Infowindow:

This is a tiny little window that displays messages left for you to read in the format "read messages/unread messages" - double clicking on it brings up the AutoAnswer message window documented earlier.

Snapshow AutoAnswer Window:

This ensures the program remembers where you left the window.

Auto Answer All:

This means that the Answering Machine handles all incoming calls rather than bringing up the Talk requester so you aren't bothered by them. The default is off so you get the option of answering people's chat requests.

1.7 AmTALK.guide/AREXX

AREXX

In addition to the standard MUI Arexx commands, AmTALK provides the following two commands:

talk

Template: RemoteUser/A,RemoteHost/A,RemoteTTY,Locate/S

findalias

Template: AliasName/A

1.8 AmTALK.guide/Locate

Locate

Many people seem to have problems understanding how the "Locate and Talk" facility in AmTALK works, so I try to give a more thorough explanation.

One of the reasons that the talk protocol went out of fashion recently is tied to the more and more advancing usage of dynamic IP addresses.

Since you must know the exact host name of a party you want to "talk" to, it's nearly impossible to talk to someone which normally uses a dynamic IP address without a means of finding out the address he currently uses.

You can, for example, find this out if you meet in IRC, but it's pretty pointless to use talk if you could use the more efficient DCC CHAT anyway.

AmTALK tried to provide a solution to this problem, the so-called "Locate facility". How does it work?

Let's assume you want to talk to MrFitz, which ISP's has the domain "ifx.net". ifx.net provides dynamic IP addresses to it's users, so everytime MrFitz logs on, he gets a different host name - "ip69.ifx.net", "ip42.ifx.net" etc.

So, when you want to talk to MrFitz, you don't know which address he's currently using. Locate, however, does the trick of asking all of the potential IPs he may be on for a user with the name of "MrFitz", and if you're lucky, the correct AmTALK at the remote end will respond with "Here I am!" and voilà, you know where to talk to.

Actually, in order for "Locate" to work, you must know at least one of the IP addresses that MrFitz normally has - you might have gotten it from the last time you saw him on IRC, or when he "talk"ed to you etc. You can't use "*.ifx.net" or just "ifx.net" as an anchor address to Locate, btw - it must be a valid hostname which results in a IP address record.

Also, you must know the exact username that he uses at his end, because this is the anchor at which the identification takes place. If you try to locate "mike@ip42.ifx.net", you will fail, because his AmTALK will only responds to queries for the username "Mike". The local username is normally equivalent to the email name of the person, or the username in his IRC userhost address. If you are unsure, just ask.

Technically, "Locate" works by assuming that the ISP gives out all his Dynamic IP addresses from within a single Class-C network. It takes the host name you feed to it, masks out the network part and then queries all 254 IP addresses of this net with a short UDP packet bearing the username. If the correct site is hit, it will respond with a acknowledge packet. This is a very brute force approach to the problem, but has the advantage of not relying to any global or ISP-local "talk hostname servers". The bandwidth waste caused by the packet flood is comparable to WWW or usenet comp.sys.*.advocacy hierarchies, and therefore "Locate" should not be used lightly.

1.9 AmTALK.guide/Index

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Description

The Locate function

Locate