PsL PD/Shareware Database & Installation Program

This database is intended for the non-commercial reference use of the individual purchaser of this database (or CD-ROM) only. To purchase the rights to a mailing list from this database or for other commercial use, contact Nelson Ford, PsL, 713-524-6394.

NOTE: Do NOT send money or credit card information to the authors listed in this database without confirming the entry first. Despite our best efforts, it is possible for the wrong author to be shown for a program or for an author to no longer be at the address listed. Check the program's documentation to make sure that the author listed in this database is the same one listed in the docs and that the address in this database is where money and/or credit card information should be sent.

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Quick Start

For those who can't wait to get started, simply start the program and when the main screen appears, click on the Find Program button on the left of the screen.

The program will start with the first Section, Category, and Subcategory in DOS. Click the Next and Prior buttons to view all the write-ups in order. When the end of the selected subcategory is reached, the program will continue on to the next subcategory, so you can continue on through the entire set of new programs for the month.

Introduction

The PsL Database contains write-ups of

1. The New and Updated Programs:

Each month we receive over 1200 new and updated programs. Regardless of the section of the month being featured on the CD, the new/updated programs can include every type of program we carry (games, business, utilities, etc.) for DOS, Windows and OS/2. We test, review and organize these programs and put them on the monthly CD-ROM. The rapid, low-cost distribution of the latest pd/shareware to users was the founding basis of the PsL Monthly CD-ROM.

2. The Section of the Month:

Each month we put a section of our complete library on the Monthly CD-ROM, in addition to the new/updated programs. Over a six-month period, our entire library appears on CD, then the cycle repeats. When a category repeats, it is updated for the thousands of new/updated programs received during the previous six months since the category last appeared.

3. The Complete PsL Collection:

Although it takes six CDs to hold the entire PsL, the Shareware Database on each month's CD contains the write-ups of the entire library. When you search for a program, if it is not on the current CD, the program will tell you which CD it is on.

Selecting a Library to Scan

By clicking on the File menu item in the program, you can elect to view the write-ups for the New Programs, the Updated Programs, or the Section-of-the-Month.

Normally, subscribers will first want to view just the New Programs. You can start with the first category under DOS and browse through the whole database for the month, or click on the category boxes to jump to a specific category.

The New Programs and Updated Programs selections take affect only when you are browsing the catalog by CD Date + Category (the first option under the Find Program button).

FIND PROGRAM BY TYPE:

If you want to find all the Games in the library or all the Accounting programs, etc., regardless of CD-Date, click on the Type option under the Find Program button.

FIND PROGRAM BY NAME:

If you want to search or browse the database by program name or file name, select one of those options, then press Ctrl-K. This will clear the screen and put the cursor in the appropriate box for entering a name for which to search.

After entering a name, click on the Find Program button, then use the Prior and Next buttons to scroll through the database.

FIND PROGRAM BY AUTHOR/COMPANY:

To find all the programs in the database for a particular author, first clear the author fields by clicking on the Edit menu and the Clear Author option, then enter the author's name or company name in the appropriate field, click the Author/Company option under the Find Program button, the click the Find Program button.

Click the Prior and Next buttons to page through the programs for the selected author. Click the Prior Auth. and Next Auth. buttons to browse the authors' names.

Selecting Sections and Categories

In the upper, left corner of the window are four drop-down list boxes with which you can select the Operating System, Section, Category, and Subcategory to use when you begin viewing the database.

For example, if you are looking for a Hearts game for Windows, you can select "Windows" in the Operating System list box, "Games" in the Section list, "Card Games" in the Category list, and "Hearts" in the Subcategory list.

The program will display the first entry found in that subcategory. From there, you can use the Next and Prior buttons to page through the database. When the end of the selected subcategory is reached, the program will continue on to the next subcategory so that you may easily browse the database.

At any time, you may select and jump to a new Operating System, Section, Category, or Subcategory. Because the Sections are not identical for each Operating System and the Categories are not identical for each Section, etc., if you change a higher box, you must also re-select the boxes below it.

For example, if you are looking at WINDOWS, GAMES, CARDS, HEARTS and want to look at Hearts games for DOS, you must first select DOS, then select GAMES in the next box, then CARDS in the next, then HEARTS in the next.

IMPORTANT: After changing categories, click on the "Find Program By" button before using the Prior and Next buttons.

IMPORTANT2: If you have the CD Date + Type option selected, you will only see programs for the selected CD date. If you have the Type option selected, you will see all matching files in the database.

Searching For Programs

To find a particular program, enter the program's name in the Program Name box, then under the Find Program button, click on the Program Name line, then click on the Find Program button. Use the Prior and Next buttons to page by program name.

To find a program by filename, first enter the filename in the Filename box, then under the Find Program button, click on the By Filename line, then click on the Find Program button. Use the Prior and Next buttons to page by file name.

See Searching For Authors for information about browsing the program write-ups by author's name or company name.

Searching For Authors

When you start paging through the programs, the information for the author of each program will be displayed.

To search for a particular author, type the author's last name in the Last Name field and first name in the First Name field and click on the Find Author button. Use the Prior Auth and Next Auth buttons to browse the author database.

To search for an author by company name, make sure the Last Name field is blank and enter the company name in the Company Name box and click on the Find Author button. Use the Prior Auth and Next Auth buttons to browse the author database.

After locating an author, you can browse through all the programs by that author. Under the Find Program button, click on the By Author line, then click on the Find Program button. Use the Prior and Next buttons (NOT the Next Auth and Prior Auth buttons) to browse all the programs by this author.

VIEWING THE AUTHOR LIST:

You may find it easier to scan a list of authors than to page through them an author at a time. If so, click on the Edit menu, click on Author, click on Show Author List, and then click on the way you want the list sorted.

To remove the list, use the same procedure you went through to bring up the list.

The list will display the names starting with one letter of the alphabet at a time. If you have an author's name displayed before bringing up the list, the first letter of that name will be the list displayed.

Once the list is displayed, you can page through the author database by letter by clicking on the Prior Auth. and Next Auth. buttons.

To select a name from the list, double-click on it. Once a name is selected, you can use the Edit - Author menu to update or delete it (only if you have copied the database from the CD-ROM). See <u>Entering/Changing Data</u>.

Viewing Screen Shots

A number of the new/updated programs for the month have screen shots of the program on the CD. If the Show Screen button is grayed-out, there is no screen shot for the program. If it is NOT grayed-out, there is a screen shot on the CD and you may view it by clicking on the button.

Viewing screen shots is a nice plus unique to PsL's shareware CDs. They allow you to see what a program looks like without having to first installing it. Many times a single screen shot can tell you more about a program than the the the write-up does.

Because of the amount of disk space used by screen shots, we limit them to only the new/updated programs and only the ones of those for which we think the screen shot adds significantly to the write-up.

Installing Programs

After finding and displaying a program you wish to install, click on the Install button. Use the drive and directory boxes to select where you want the program installed. (The file box is shown just so that you can see the files already in the directories.) You can create a new directory if you wish.

After you have selected a drive and directory, click Install. The program will be dearchived from the CD-ROM to the selected path.

Files for each program on the PsL CD are combined into an archive file to keep them from getting mixed up with the files from other programs. The PsL program dearchives these files to your selected directory. However, it is not uncommon that in these sets of files for a program is an installation program which must also be run.

We are frequently asked why the user must go through two installations in cases like this. The answer is that many authors require the distribution of their programs in this manner and we must comply.

Entering/Changing Data

You can use the PsL PD/Shareware Database program for keeping track of other programs. However, since you cannot write to a CD-ROM, to store new or edited entries, you must copy the database and the software to your hard disk.

There is no complicated set-up necessary. Simply copy the AUTHORS.DAT, PGM_CATS.DAT, SHRWARE.DAT. For Windows, copy the PSL_SHRW.EXE file and run it from Program Manager. For DOS, copy the BTRIEVE.EXE, DONT_RUN.EXE, and PSL_SHRD.BAT files and run PSL_SRHD.BAT. (In DOS, the PSL_SHRD.BAT must be run to load BTRIEVE as a TSR before running the access program, which is in the file DONT_RUN.EXE file.)

When deleting an author or a category, you will be asked for the category code or author number to assign to programs which reference the entry being deleted. So before deleting a category or author, write down the code or number of the category or author which will take its place.

Since this program is being distributed as a look-up tool and we do not know if anyone has any interest in creating their own database with it, we are not going to take up a lot of time and space explaining the editing functions, which should be pretty self-explanatory anyway. If you need more help, call PsL Tech Support at 713-524-6394, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central time, Monday-Friday.

Viewing the Category List

In the Edit menu, you can select Category Maintenance which will let you see a list of the Sections, Categories, and Subcategories for DOS, Windows and OS/2.

This listing may make it easier for you to get an overview of all the categories available in the database; however, you cannot add, edit or delete entries while the files are on the CD. For information about updating the list, see Entering/Changing Data.