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MaxWorld
The Maximus & SquishMail Newsletter

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OPINIONS

Editor's Notes

I have been co-moderator of MUFFIN for about a month now, and I must say it is a lot of work. One thing I can't get over is the persistence of some people to get a release date for Maximus 3.0.

Now I am not on any of Scott's beta teams, so I know just as much as the next guy about the next versions of Max and Squish, however one thing I am familiar with is the programmers' life. Certainly not an easy one at that.

The constant pestering about a release date is both counter productive and futile. I will do everything I can to ensure that Scott doesn't go insane due to this constant dribble by the unappreciative masses who believe they are somehow owed something from Scott. Scott owes you people nothing. Get it through your thick skulls.

Max 3.0 will be out when it's ready, and not a moment sooner. If you want to keep up with the Jones', then feel free to get RA, GrapeVine, or even PCBoard, but at the very least, get out of MUFFIN.

REVIEWS

CheckDate, Version 1.01
Delete old files in your file areas
Antonio Ortiz

This is a very good idea if you run a busy system and don't want to keep very old files around. However, this is not the best implementation possible. The text config file is too strict in it's formatting. CheckDate reads FILEAREA.CTL and needs certain things like no trailing back-slashes on your paths. It also doesn't recognize wild-cards in FILES.BBS, although the docs state that you don't need a FILES.BBS, so why it reads it is beyond me. I think after some more development, this could be an indispensable tool for the Max sysop.

At press time, CheckDate 1.03 had been released which addressed some of these concerns however there was insufficient time to include it's review in this issue.

-- Robert Presland

SqError, Version 1.0
Spawn SqFix from SqPack log
Craig Palazzo, Glen Davis

This is a neat idea for a utility, and it seems to work as one would expect, with one small mite. I grunged a message base and then ran SqPack on it as suggested in the docs. SqPack reported that the one base was corrupted and that I should run SqInfo. I ran SqError, and it

spawned SqFix to fix the base and copied over the lastread file, thereby

preserving my last read pointer. However, SqError seems to have done all this twice, when it was only reported once in the log. Never the less, for the amount of time that this would happen, it doesn't seem like such a big problem. This utility can save some people a lot of work.

At press time, SqError 1.01 was the latest version which reports to fix this small mite.

-- Robert Presland

NEW RELEASES

QQLink v1.24

Features/Bugfixes include:

- o Subject lines will now be massaged before linking, to avoid problems with OLRs that uppercase or truncate subject lines.
- o Passthru areas are recognised, and not linked (by default)
- o Potential bugs related to *.MSG echo areas fixed.
- o "Slow mode" allows QQLink to link areas without creating a .QQL file - handy for areas with very little traffic.

Available for request from 3:771/330 with magic name QQLINK.

timEd gamma 1 (DOS)

Fast Message editor for JAM, *.MSG and Hudson bases (DOS systems)

Available as TIMG1.ZIP (167108b) from 1:138/211

timEd gamma 1 (OS/2)

Fast Message editor for JAM, *.MSG and Hudson bases (OS/2 systems)

Available as TIMG1P.ZIP (157229b) from 1:138/211

timEd Colour Config

timEd colour configuration program (made by Dick Pluim)

Available as TIMC_101.ZIP (23177b) from 1:138/211

HINTS & TRICKS

Detecting ANSI and RIP

-- Robert Presland, original code provided by Mark Histed

With the increasing things you can do with ANSI and RIP and the ease at which you can add these to Max, auto-detecting the ability of the caller to handle these `standards' is a great asset. The following Mecca code can detect ANSI and RIP and set the A or R key respectively. Note that the indented lines of code are a continuation of the previous line.

```
[keyoff]AR
[27][[0m
[sys_name]...Detecting RIP...
[menu_cmd chg_hotkeys]
[27][[0;30m!|1F000000RIP?
[pause pause no_keypress goto dtctansi]
[ansopt menu][[;<>.,}{:"'|;+_=|\?/) (*&^%$#@!~`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvxyz
    0123456789
[choice]0 [goto ripdtctd]
[choice]1 [goto ripdtctd]
[goto dtctansi]

[/dtctansi]
[27][[0mDetecting ANSI...[27][[0;30m
[27][[6n [pause no_keypress goto noansi]
[ansopt menu][[;<>.,}{:"'|;+_=|\?/) (*&^%$#@!~`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvxyz
    0123456789
[choice][[ [goto ansidtctd]

[/noansi]
[moreoff][log]#Using TTY
[link]misc\logo.asc
[moreon quit]

[/ansidtctd][27][[A[no_keypress goto ansidtctd2]
[ansopt menu][[;<>.,}{:"'|;+_=|\?/) (*&^%$#@!~`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvxyz
    0123456789
[goto ansidtctd]

[/ansidtctd2]
[moreoff]
[log]#Using ANSI
[keyon]A
[link]misc\logo.ans
[moreon quit]

[/ripdtctd]
[27][[0mRIP graphics detected.
[moreoff]
[log]#Using RIP
[keyon]R
[link]rip\logo.rip
[menu] |
[link]rip\ripoff.rip
[moreon quit]
```


Use this code as your LOGO.MEC file. Then create three other Mecca files: LOGO.RIP, the RIP version of your logo screen; LOGO.ANS, the ANSI version of your logo screen; and LOGO.ASC, the ASCII version of your logo screen.

The new LOGO.MEC will detect ANSI or RIP, and if not detected, default to ASCII. A log line will be added to the log file (for later parsing) and then the A and R keys will be set according to the callers ability to receive ANSI or RIP respectively.

Limiting Number of Calls

-- Robert Presland, idea and original code provided by Frederick Tan

For those of you that want to be real mean to your users, or perhaps you want to allow a maximum number of callers to your system without the situation where one caller hogs the system with 100 calls each day, you can limit the number of times a user calls your system with a simply Mecca file.

For our example, we want to limit each user to three calls per day. We would include the following Mecca code in our WELCOME.MEC file.

```
[notontoday keyoff]123 [keyon]1 [goto ok]
[ifkey]1 [keyon]2 [goto ok]
[ifkey]2 [keyon]3 [goto ok]
[ifkey]3 [goto nogo]
[goto ok]
[/nogo]
Sorry, you have reached your maximum of 3 calls today.
Please call back tomorrow.
[hangup quit]
[/ok]
```

The way this works is as follows. On the users first call on any given day, all the working keys (1 through 3 in this example) are cleared and the 1 key is set. On the second call, the 2 key is set, and on the third call, the 3 key is set. On any succeeding call, the 3 key is detected and the user is dumped with the hangup message.

You can easily modify this to include up to 32 calls per day, but that would use up all the keys not allowing you to use keys anywhere else. The number keys (1 through 8) work well here as the letter keys are better used for area locking.

Improving SquishMail Tossing Speed

-- Robert Pearson

1. Run "packet sorter" over the *.pkt files before squish does the tossing. This not only speeds things up, but it ALSO will split "long" messages apart so that squish can toss them!

2. Don't let squish do any linking. Use QQLink instead. Not only is this a LOT faster than the "squish link" option, but it ALSO does more intelligent linking.
3. If you don't already use a disk cache, install one.
4. If you have multiple (physical) hard disks, make sure that your "inbound" and "current" directories are on a DIFFERENT hard disk than your database. This will allow you to more evenly spread the load between your disk drives.
5. If you are using OS/2, format the disks for HPFS (instead of FAT).
6. Optimize your HD from time to time. This is ESPECIALLY important if you have a number of squish areas in the same DOS directory, as the "directory file" itself can get fragmented....

BYEBYE.MEC

Best Quote

Yah, a 486dx2/66, a 1ms HD, and a bunch of little men inside the box pushing packets around..<G>..

