



WRITE — BACK

IMAGERY: PALETTE STUDIO RESPONDS

Thanks for your very thorough review of Imagery (see RISC User 6:3). I'd like to make a few points about the use of the program which I think were missed, but first one about the comparison with Archrome, which appeared on an Archimedes World cover disc. Imagery does incorporate some of the same features of Archrome which was by the same author, but is some two years of development further on. Also, Archrome is not now available for sale. If users want these features they are only available in Imagery.

I think your reviewer understated the facilities for working with scanned and digitised pictures. There was no mention of Colour Replace, Contrast control or De-tint. Colour Replace is very relevant to cleaning up digitised pictures. Colours to replace can be picked from the screen with the mouse pointer, and colours not to be replaced can be masked out. The suggestion that ChangeFSI can do any of these things is misleading.

I am grateful for the praise which is given to the painting facilities, but the connection is not made

between these and digitised pictures and scans. What people use Imagery for is to add captions (outline fonts), textured borders and tinted boxes to their pictures. In the case of grey scale images, these colour painting facilities are especially appropriate because they can be used to add false colour by colour replacing grey shades, and by overlaying washes, or by colour scaling.

Perhaps your reviewer didn't have time to find some of these solutions to the questions he rightfully posed. Imagery users are sending us their work which proves they are finding the answers. We've put together a newsletter with some of their graphical ideas, called Creative View, which is sent to all registered users, but is available on request to any reader of RISC User who would like a copy. Just send a stamped addressed envelope to: Creative View, Palette Studio, 108 Smug Oak Business Centre, Lye Lane, Bricket Wood, Herts AL2 3UG.

Mark Webb for Palette Studio

We always welcome comment and feedback on the content of RISC User, and we are pleased to reproduce Mark Webb's letter

here. We do not lightly publish adverse criticism of any product unless fully substantiated. That was done in this instance, but even so these criticisms were discussed further with the reviewer, Richard Hallas, before publication took place.

According to Richard, a major criticism is that Imagery works only in mode 15. He believes that this is an underlying weakness in a package which is intended for

BOUQUETS AND BRICKBATS

processing digitised and scanned images. While it is impossible in a review of this length to mention every single feature, he believes his other criticisms are valid when set against the mode 15 limitation. Richard also added that while Imagery was a much tidier and robust program than its predecessor, Archrome, extensions in terms of new features were comparatively limited.

I think it is time I put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) and make a few comments about some of the products I have purchased from your company.

Wimp Programming for All Since purchasing an Archimedes back in 1987 I have made several abortive attempts to understand the Wimp. I am pleased to report

that with the help of the above book I have at long last been able to write several Wimp applications, thanks to the knowledge obtained from your excellent publication. I really do feel sure that another title (perhaps More Wimp Programming for All) would be most welcome by us 'new' band of Wimp programmers.

Masterfile III

Having received this package only a few days ago, I was amazed at how quickly I was able to set up a database and make use of the data therein. I previously had a mass of data spread over about 15 Pipedream documents. After just a few hours work these were transferred to one Masterfile file of about 500 records.

The manual is first class in its presentation of how to use the package, although it almost seems superfluous as each function of the package works precisely as expected. What would be an ideal follow-on from your current MF III would be a fully programmable DBMS.

Wimp Programmer's Toolkit
One of the reasons for purchasing this package was to obtain the latest version of Acorn's FormEd. I was disappointed to learn that the one supplied is version 1.02. Perhaps you could check this out.

In general, thank you for

producing many useful products, including RISC User itself, which acts almost as my Archimedes manual with its precise and helpful advice.

J.W.Wright

The Wimp programming book has proved very popular, and

FLOPTICALS FOR

we shall be reprinting this very shortly to keep up with demand. The idea of a follow-up book, to cover some topics in more detail and deal with other matters not dealt with in the first book is an idea we may consider. What do other readers think? There are no immediate plans to produce a programmable version of Masterfile III, but further developments are in hand or under review.

As for the Wimp Programmer's Toolkit, we have only recently obtained a licence from Acorn for version 1.26 of FormEd, and this is now included as standard. Existing users may obtain this later version by returning their original Wimp Programmer's Toolkit disc together with payment of £2. Please mark your package Wimpkit Upgrade.

Further to the review of floptical

RISC OS 3: THE GOOD AND THE BAD

disc drives in RISC User 6:2, can you tell me if your Hard Disc

Companion supports the use of flopticals for backup purposes?

E.F.Lloyd

We have discussed this with RISC Developments Software Manager. The immediate answer is probably No, as it seems flopticals have certain characteristics which are different to other types of drive and which might not therefore be supported by Hard Disc Companion (HDC) at present. While HDC could be modified to overcome, its organisation and efficiency is directed at the storage capacity of conventional floppy discs (800K or 1.6Mb). Thus HDC would probably be less than satisfactory for backup to flopticals (some 20Mb of storage) without a considerable rewrite to incorporate more relevant algorithms for this storage medium. This is being considered.

Some four or five months ago I converted my A410/1 to RISC OS 3. After a fair amount of experience with it, I feel very disappointed and wonder whether my fellow readers share this view.

My use of the computer is mainly word processing and desktop publishing, but I also use a spreadsheet fairly frequently, drawing software and a number of Basic programs for general purposes. All this was achieved under RISC OS 2 with great ease and speed.

In the past, when I switched on, the computer seemed to be ready for action almost immediately; now I seem to look at an acorn for ages while it initialises. Does this matter? It can be most irritating when someone has telephoned wanting information which is on the computer, but even in more usual circumstances, I find it frustrating when I think back to the previous response.

Then we come to applications. I have always used 1st Word Plus, which I still regard as superb for my purposes. I had not bothered

to upgrade to release 2 and found to my horror that release 1 would not run because of palette problems under RISC OS 3. Acorn kindly sorted this out by providing a copy of release 2. This works well enough, but the method of saving and accessing files strikes me as more cumbersome now. Already I am asking why I have changed to RISC OS 3.

For DTP work I use Ovation and have noticed little difference until it is time to print. Then it seems to take an age for the new printer driver to install itself. The quality of print is very good with

the Canon BJ-300 printer, but to my eye no better than under RISC OS 2.

The old Draw was not a program which I found particularly endearing, and I was delighted to discover Draw+ which is absolutely superb. I still use it; in my opinion the new RISC OS 3 version of Draw is not a patch on it.

On the positive side, the new system seems to make little difference to my spreadsheet - the now antediluvian but still powerful Logistix - and there is no doubt that Paint and Edit, two

PIN BOARD

PSION MC - WORD
FOR THE ARC USER?

I have now read several reviews of the Acorn Pocket Book. After seeing the review of the A-Link in RISC User 6:3, I have become very interested in using the machine as a portable for doing

word processing away from my main machine. However, I do feel that the screen and keyboard are too small for this purpose.

I have recently seen an advertisement for the Psion MC-Word. This is apparently 'compatible' with the Psion Series 3, but has a larger keyboard and

screen. Does anyone know if the A-Link will function correctly with the MC-Word. Has anyone had experience with this device - is it a

machine useful to the Archimedes user? Might we see a review in RISC User? If the machine is indeed a "grown up" version of the Series 3/Pocket Book, I think it should be examined more closely.

Andy Austin



We will investigate the

Points Arising ...

RISC OS 3 SCREEN MODES
(Volume 6 Issue 4)

The table referred to as Table 1 was accidentally omitted. It is reproduced here. Note that SVGA modes (29-31) are unlikely to work satisfactorily except on the A540 and later machines (like the A3010)

Modes	Text	Pixels	OS units
29 - 31	100x75	800x600	1600x1200
33 - 36	96x36	768x288	1536x1152
37 - 40	112x44	896x352	1792x1408
37 - 40	112x44	896x352	1792x1408
41 - 43	80x44	640x352	1280x1408