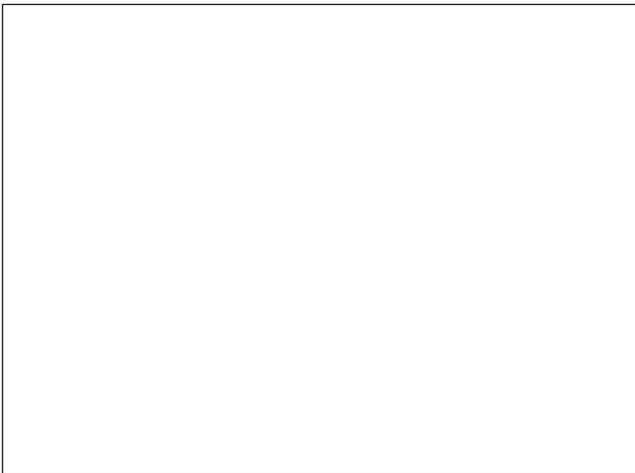# Palmtop Scheduler

David Cooper finds out if Acorn Schedule and Event from ExpLAN, can help you organise you life a little better with the

E ver since I got my Pocket Book, I could not help feeling that Acorn got it wrong when deciding what to take out of the Psion Series 3 to make their palmtop. Considering that this machine was aimed at the schools market, the Agenda time management and organiser application found in the Series 3 would have been very useful for keeping track of a school timetable and homework. Instead, Acorn seem to have waited while they wrote their own version - Acorn Schedule. ExpLAN have also released a complementary product for your Arc called Event,

The Acorn Pocket Book

so you should be able to

SCHEDULE

Schedule, like Agenda on the Psion, is designed to prevent you forgetting meetings or appointments, or perhaps more importantly your wedding anniversary (missing either could be more than your life s worth). It also allows you to make notes and keep track of your outstanding tasks. It does this by providing a monthly calendar, a weekly timetable of appointments, a list of daily appointments, a page of notes for each day and a to do list: in fact everything you can do with a Filofax, which is pretty much it s purpose.

Possibly the most used feature of Schedule will be the week at a glance display, which contains the currently selected day, and uses vertical arrows to show how the time in each day is used up with appointments. You can get a more detailed display of the week by pressing a button on the hinge that you assign to Schedule. The weekly timetable is displayed in the form of a horizontal bar graph, with a box representing each appointment. Inside each box are the details of that appointment taken from the daily list of appointments. The longer the appointment, the bigger the box and the more details that can be displayed. Unfortunately, short appointments of say an hour, only get a few letters (the number of letters depends on the proportion of the day you want displayed on your timetable). This should not be too much of a problem as abbreviations can always be used to fit inside the box.

If further details of an appointment are needed, then pressing the Schedule button again brings you to the daily list of appointments. Any appointment from the daily list can be repeated daily, weekly, monthly, on a particular day of the month, yearly, even work days only (and by using the Time application, you can tell it which days of the week you work). It is also possible to set an interval for any of these periods. So if needed, it is easy to set an appointment for the first Tuesday after the 8th on every alternate month. This should be flexible enough for all but those with the strangest of routines.

The Day Notes provides an ideal place to keep track of things like birthdays or anniversaries. As with the daily appointments, any note can be repeated with the same flexibility. A nice little feature is the ability to take a line from the the Day Notes and use it as a title for the appointments for that day. That way, any important fact about a particular day will not get overlooked.

When entering an item on to the To Do list, you are asked to provide a subject matter, a priority of either Low, Medium, High or Urgent and a due date. With this information the list of things to do is displayed in order of priority and due date. As these lists get much too long for such a small screen, it is possible to display a list relating to a particular subject matter.

Any appointment, note entry, or item on the To Do list can have an alarm set to go off up to 23 hours in advance. When this happens a message giving the details of what the alarm was for is displayed. When Schedule is turned off, the details of the next alarm are passed to the Time application (which cannot be turned off). The Time application will display details of how long before the next alarm. This is very useful, as Schedule seems to be quite memory hungry, particularly in its use of system memory, so it is not always going to be possible to leave it active at all times.

Unfortunately, the review copy of Schedule was not accompanied by a manual, so I cannot comment about this. However, the fact that it was not missed is a testament to how easy it was to use Schedule. Ample explanation of any of the advanced features was provided by pressing the Help key on the Pocket Book.

I found that Schedule was just what I had been waiting for. Its omission had, at one stage, caused me to regret not buying the Psion Series 3. It would be nice, therefore, if Schedule could be included with the Pocket Book in future, say squeezed onto the SSD with the Spell application. It compares favourably to the Agenda on the Series 3 providing all but the most obscure facilities that Agenda provides

My recommendation is that if you have a Pocket Book then buy it - already I am finding that I cannot live without it.

EVENT FROM ExpLAN SOFTWARE
To coincide with the release of Acorn Schedule, ExpLAN Software, a new contender in the Acorn software market, has released a diary program called Event for the Archimedes that talks to either Acorn Schedule or Agenda on the Psion Series 3.

It is described as the little brother of a larger package called Occasion, which is being developed to include a telephone and address book, a note book and more. Occasion will also talk to the Pocket Book, and is due for release later this year.

The fact that files can be transferred between Schedule and Event means that they both have quite a similar feel. Apart from the fact that the displays are larger, there are few other differences.

Event running on an Archimedes

The day notes on Schedule have now been split into three categories: Birthdays, Anniversaries and Reminders. When transferring to and from Schedule, a prefix of Birth or Anniv is used to ensure compatibility. There is an example data file containing a number of historical birthdays and other important dates. The weekly timetable display is vertical and therefore does not contain text in each item. Clicking on the box brings up the appointment details.

There is also a pattern system for irregular schedules those operated by shift

Product	Acorn Schedule
Supplier	Acorn Computers Ltd.
	Acorn House,
	Vision Park,
	Histon,
	Cambridge CB4 4AE
	Tel. 0223 254254
Price	£49.95 inc. VAT
Product	Event
Supplier	ExpLAN Software UK Ltd.
	St Catherine s House,
	20 Plymouth Road,
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