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Technical Support

Technical support may be obtained from the following sources:

International users: CompuServe 100026,506

Australian users: PBACHMAN @ OzEmail

Desperate users: Phone/Fax: 61-3-804-5411

Introduction

The computer industry changes more quickly than just about any other, and the work required in keeping up with the latest changes is daunting.

Traditional solutions include the weekly digestion of information provided in computer magazines, or the reliance of expert knowledge by software vendors.

You may have found that the right issue of the magazines is not be there when you need it, or that the expert information provided by vendors is sometimes not so expert (and is perhaps biased towards their own products).

Compare! solves these problems by providing the following features:

- It presents information about software products in a style that is easy to digest.

- It puts software products of the same category side-by-side on the same screen, so that you may compare them.

- The Compare! database is cumulative, so that past editions are not lost when new editions are downloaded (unless the vendor has decided to provide updated information on the same product).

- The updates are provided through electronic bulletin board services like CompuServe, so the Compare! information is always up-to-date.

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Installation

Installation overview.

System Requirements

Installation Procedure

System Requirements

List hardware/software requirements for setup. eg:

- | Industry-standard personal computer.
- | Windows 3.1 or higher
- | VGA or Super VGA (800 * 600 pixels) displays only. 800 * 600 display recommended.
- | Mouse or Windows-compatible pointing device.

Installation Procedure

Having extracted all the files from the downloaded archive:

- | Move all DLL & VBX files into your Windows System directory.
- | Add Compare.Exe to a Program Manager group.

Main Screen

The main screen allows you access to all the other screens.

It is normally used to select the category in which you wish to compare products.

Categories

Allows you select the category in which you wish to make comparisons.

Select the category buy clicking it with the mouse or moving to it with the cursor keys.

To expand categories, double-click on the item, or press the Enter key. Not all entries are expandable.

Show Products

Selects the products which fit into the selected category and jumps to the [Compare Screen](#).

Copyright

Copyright banner.

Help

This screen.

Product Entry

This option is for software developers or vendors only. If you have products you wish to market via Compare!, the [Product Entry Screen](#) will allow you to assemble the information in way that is appropriate for submission.

Exit

Leave the system.

Compare Screen

The Compare screen allows you to view products side-by-side.

There are four sections on this screen:

Application Icons

View Window

View Options

Caption Speed

Application Icons

All the products in a given product category appear as buttons containing icons at the top of the Compare Screen.

If any of these buttons is pressed, information regarding this product appears in the View Window.

View Window

This is the large green-blue rectangle that appears in the center of the screen, and which displays information about the currently selected product.

To change the information appearing in this window, select one of the [View Options](#).

View Options

Display

Displays a picture of the application.

If the Caption Speed has been set to Fast or Slow, captions will appear showing information about particular areas being displayed.

Summary

Shows a summary of what the application is about.

Features

Displays a list of features, in point form.

Further Info

Provides information on how further information about the product may be obtained.

Ordering

Ordering information

Price

The price (or approx) in US dollars.

Caption Speed

The caption speed appears on the right side of the Compare Screen and is selectable between the following values:

- | Fast
- | Slow
- | Stop

Selecting an item in the View Window with the mouse will automatically change the setting to 'Stop'.

New Updates

Compare! is a cumulative repository of product information, so you'll probably want to update it with the latest information as it becomes available. To do this, follow the steps below:

- | Download the next update in the sequence from your on-line service. The next update can be determined by using File Manager to inspect the compare directory. There is a file which looks something like MAINn.CMP in this directory. The next update will be named CMPn.UPT where n is the next number in the sequence. In the case of MAIN5.CMP, the file you need to download is CMP6.UPT.
- | Move the update file into the Compare! directory.
- | Run Compare! You will be prompted to update.

See [Update new entry](#).

Update new entry

When Compare! detects that an appropriate update file appears in the Compare! directory, it prompts you proceed with the update.

Press Update to proceed, or Ignore to go straight to the Compare! Main Screen.

You will be prompted to delete the update file when the update is compare.

Wrong update edition

A new edition (*.UPT) has been detected in your Compare! directory, but it is not the edition that was expected.

Choose OK to move to the main screen.

See [New Updates](#) for general instructions on updating Compare!

New version of Compare.Exe required

You have downloaded a new edition, but it requires a new version of Compare.Exe to load it.

If the new version is not available from your normal source, it may be obtained from CompuServe, MSBasic 3rd Party Library.

Becoming a supplier

The entry process of product information is outlined below. If you are already registered with [WCS](#) as a supplier, some of the items won't need to be done. Click on any of the items for further information:



Creating a supplier file

Creating a supplier file enables you to create your own products for submission.

The creation of the file happens automatically when you select Product Entry for the first time.

Product Entry Screen

This screen allows you to enter and modify pictures and textual information in a way that is suitable for submission to WCS.

Depending on the resolution of your video card, there will be one or two rectangles appearing on the screen:

- | The inner box, marked VGA, indicates the maximum size of a picture that can appear on a VGA screen without the image being distorted by shrinkage.
- | The outer box, marked Super VGA, indicates the maximum size of a picture that can appear on an 800 * 600 Super VGA screen without the image being distorted by shrinkage.

Deciding the size of a product's picture is a trade-off between having as much information as possible presented and picture quality.

See also:

[Supplier Menu](#)

[Product Menu](#)

[Picture Menu](#)

[Creating captions](#)

[Caption Editor](#)

Supplier Menu

Details

Presents Supplier Details Screen.

Exit

Return to the Compare! Main Screen.

Product Menu

New

Create a new product. You will need to select Details from the Product Menu to enter the product description etc.

Details

Shows the [Product Details Screen](#).

Delete

Deletes the currently selected product.

List...

A list of your products appears in a list at the bottom of the Product Menu.

The current product is marked with a check (tick) symbol.

Click on any other product to change products.

The first product is always selected when the Product Entry screen appears.

Picture Menu

New

Create a new picture from one of the BMP files in the Compare! directory.

Paste

This menu will appear enabled if there is a bitmap in the Windows Clipboard.

Select this menu item to use that bitmap as the picture for this product.

Creating captions

To create a Caption, follow the steps below:

- | Assign a picture to your product from the Picture Menu.
- | To create a Point caption, click the mouse on the point that you want to assign the text to.
- | To create a Surface caption, drag the mouse from the top-left corner to the bottom-right corner of the area you want to assign the text to.

Once a caption has been created, it may be moved or deleted, but not resized.

To move a caption, select and drag it with the left mouse button.

To delete a caption, select it with the right mouse button and press the delete button on the Caption Editor.

Caption Editor

The Caption Editor allows you to enter the text that will be associated with the nominated point/area of the picture.

Press OK when complete, or the Delete button to delete this caption.

Supplier Details Screen

All but the first two fields below are optional:

Supplier ID

This field uniquely identifies the supplier. You should leave this field as "Unregistered" until you have been given a unique supplier number by WCS. You may freely complete product information without entering a supplier number.

Name

The name by which you wish to be known.

CompuServe ID

Email address for CompuServe.

Internet address

Email address for Internet.

Phone

Phone no.

Fax

Fax no.

Postal Address

Mailing address, including zip/postal code.

Other Addresses

Other email addresses, satellite dish numbers etc.

Product Details Screen

Name

The product name. Should be no longer than about 50 characters.

Categories

Select one or more entries from the current selection of categories. If the none of the categories are suitable, include a message with your upload indicating the name of any category you wish to have added.

Summary

Summarise the product in a few sentences.

Means of further appraisal

Indicate how the prospective customer may further evaluate your product. The list box and copy button prompt you with options and reduce the required typing.

Price

The price (or approx) of the product in U.S. dollars.

Icon

The icon symbolises your application and is presented to the potential customer as one of the Application Icons on the Compare Screen.

Click on empty square to be prompted for a list of ICO files in the current directory.

Features

Provide the user with a list of features, up to about 10. Each paragraph will be marked with a star symbol when it appears in the View Window.

Ordering Information

Explain how the customer may order your product.

Appendix A - Messages

Used to list the most disastrous errors your application is likely to produce, and what the user should do in those circumstances.

You should use the Context ID field to link these to a Help button on the dialog boxes warning the user about these errors.

No categories selected

Before submission, you would normally select one or more categories for the product to belong to. If none of the categories are appropriate, please send a list of categories you think would be appropriate for your product along with your submission.

Invalid Icon

The selected file was not recognised as a valid icon.

An icon must be a picture with exactly 32 pixels across and 32 pixels down.

Delete Product?

Deleting a product will permanently remove all information pertaining to the product, including pictures.

This operation is not reversible.

Create new supplier file?

Select OK only if you wish to create your own displays for submission.

Invalid supplier ID

The supplier ID is not normally changed. It represents an unique number that distinguishes you from other suppliers.

Valid entries are:

- | The word 'Unregistered'.
- | A number provided by WCS in the range of 1-9999 representing your user ID.

See [Becoming a supplier](#)

Delete update file?

Yes

Removes the new edition from the hard disk. Select this option if the update proceeded OK.

No

Leaves the new edition on the hard disk.

Glossary

The following terms are defined in this glossary:

Caption

Point caption

Surface caption

WCS

Caption

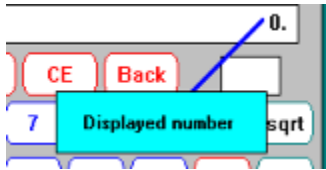
A Caption on a picture associated with a piece of text.

There are two types:

- | Point caption
- | Surface caption

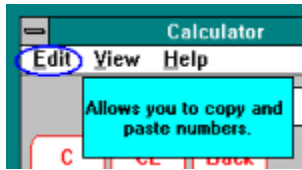
Point caption

Text that is associated with a point on the picture.



Surface caption

Text that is associated with an elliptical area on the picture.



WCS

Wonderful Computer Services
Melbourne, Australia

Developers of the Compare product.

Send your submissions to one of the following:

CompuServe: 100026,506

OzEmail: PBACHMAN

