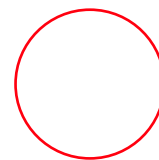


Letters



Write to *What PC?* Editorial, 32-34 Broadwick Street, London W1A 2HG. We offer a £20 book token for the best letter each month

Bad for business

I needed a notebook – I selected four models and faxed their makers, asking for details and answers to specific questions.

One large manufacturer did fax back a spec sheet after I faxed them twice but they did not answer any questions. Another did not reply after two faxes and did not even respond to a visit to their showrooms. A smaller retailer phoned me within an hour but was unable to supply within four weeks.

Opti phoned me within half an hour and not only answered all my questions but suggested another machine which was more suitable to my requirements and saved me money. This Opti machine was also delivered within 24 hours of placing the order and is everything Opti said it would be.

So why do some of these firms selling well-known brands spend thousands on advertising when they cannot get staff to do their job properly? Ninety percent of my own company's work is repeat business; if we behaved like these firms, we would not have a business.

Russell Carter, Carter Agricultural, Harleston, Norfolk

The price of Works

The short segment on Microsoft Works included in the article on office suites in your March issue led me to believe that this integrated package would be ideal for my needs.

A big attraction was the price quoted of £79.99 (inc VAT). I was therefore somewhat surprised to find that PC World was charging £99 (inc VAT), while at Byte it rose to £109 (inc VAT). After taking into account VAT and delivery charges, I could not find any company that could match the price quoted in your magazine.



Not so bright?

In After Hours in the March issue Terry Pinnell reviewed the NASA Observatory Web site which includes satellite photos of cities at night. With reference to the UK map, Terry commented that 'It's no surprise of course, but good to see that we're especially bright!'

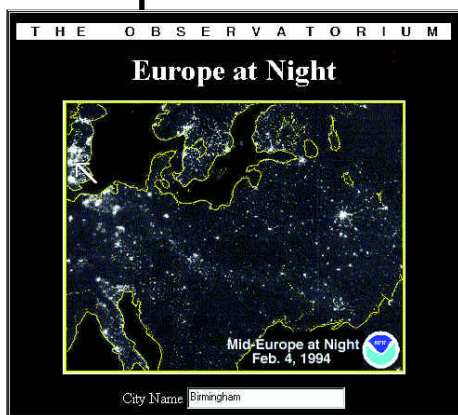
This was surprising to say the least. The reason so many cities are visible from space is also the reason we are gradually losing the ability to see the stars at night.

When street or domestic security lighting is badly designed or installed, it can throw huge amounts of light up into the sky, shrouding even rural towns with a fog of light called sky glow. At its worst it blocks out the light from all but the brightest stars and planets.

Given that Terry was reviewing Web pages related to astronomy it's very disappointing to read such badly informed words.

Lastly, the URL given for the site itself, ie, www.telescope.org/observe.ivv.nasa.gov/observe/ seems to be wrong as I was unable to access it.

Tim Ward, 100532,750



You've got me puzzled. Which bit of the sentence is 'misinformed'? That 'It's no surprise,' or that it's 'good' to see that we're especially bright!? And are you ignoring my play on the dual meaning of 'bright'?

If you're an astronomer, professional or amateur, then I sympathise with your concern about the atmospheric pollution that obstructs outward visibility – in Europe as well as the

UK. But that was not the subject of my very brief mention of this site.

I'd be happy to go into all sorts of background in my column on the environment and the damage we do to it, etc! But unless you can persuade the editor to give me more space, I'm limited to the briefest of coverage – and that is generally focused on the 'fun' or lighter aspects.

We're sorry you couldn't get into the NASA site – unfortunately, the URL you were trying was actually a combination of two addresses (www.telescope.org/ and observe.ivv.nasa.gov/observe/). We have refined the way we print Web addresses (see this month's On line pages) and hope this will avoid confusion in the future.

Terry Pinnell

I would therefore be grateful if you would let me know the name of the suppliers who are selling this software at the price mentioned in your review.
Mr D Sale, London SE21

We're sorry to say that we were given an incorrect price

by Microsoft's press office and the company's suggested sell-

You can also write to us via e-mail at:

whatpc@vnu.co.uk

Please note that any letters sent to us by e-mail will be printed along with the sender's e-mail address, unless we are specifically instructed otherwise.

February competition winners

Our three first-prize winners each receive software gift packs from GSP containing 11 titles: they are JP Brearley of Sheffield, A Cowell of Blackburn and R Hetherington from the Isle of Wight. Second prizes of GSP double packs go to B Andrews of Hereford, C Ellis of Eaglescliffe, JJ McWhinnie of Essex, EJ Pettit of Weymouth, J Ragle of Camberley and C Redington of Ilford, while our runners-up are M Amu of Burton-on Trent, C Coombs of Bristol, F Honour of Boston, DW Hughes of Macclesfield, A Lawrence of Somerset, I Potter of Grimsby, H Powell of Kent, M Smith of Derby, M Speed of Rugby and G Wood of Guildford. They each receive a copy of *A World of Wisdom* from Attica.

ing price (SSP) for Works 4 for Windows 95 is in fact £109.99 (inc VAT). However, you might try calling Watford Electronics (01582 745555) as it is offering the product for £94 including carriage and VAT.

Without prejudice

In your March issue the article about the three office suites grabbed my attention. I use Microsoft Office, but have previously used Novell Office.

I feel that no comparative test of software is honest if done by one person, as they find it easier to work with the package they use daily. I feel the test should be done by three people – one devoted customer for each suite. You cannot judge without prejudice a package you have been using for years against one you have only used for a short time.
Lea Van Gijzeghem, Belgium