Foundation Publishing
Introduces Comic Strip Factory

Foundation Publishing of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is pleased to announce **Comic Strip Factory** for the Macintosh. **Comic Strip Factory** is fast and easy, and you don't have to be able to draw to use it. It applies the best elements of the Macintosh's graphical user interface to the problem of laying out comic strips, cartoons, story boards, and related documents. As such, the program can be used by itself or with other graphics and desktop publishing products. It is useful in publishing, advertising, education, creativity, and other applications.

Our Distinguished Panels. Developed by David Durkee of The Pacific BitWorks in Sherman Oaks, California, **Comic Strip Factory** provides all the tools necessary for creating comic strips. New comic pages are created with a user-specified layout of rectangular panels. Any panel can be reshaped by adding an overlapping shape—a rectangle, oval, or triangle— which is automatically subtracted from other panels it overlaps. New panels are created in the same way. Virtually any panel shape is possible, and the program always makes sure that there is a uniform amount of space between panels.

Character Building. Characters in the comic strips are created by putting together character parts from the supplied parts libraries. Six characters come with **Comic Strip Factory** and more disks are on the way. Drawn by Trici Venola (author of the bestselling clip art package Mac the Ripper) of Flying Pixels in Santa Monica, California, the characters have facial expressions and body positions for every occasion.

The characters making their debut with **Comic Strip Factory** are Fred Nerd (a computer nerd with a lot of character), the Root Wizard (a fantasy wizard who is also known to dabble in computers), Broadway Bug and Sweet Patootie (two performing insects in the finest Vaudville tradition), Slytho (the flaming lizard), and Tawny Dancer (gorgeous, feline, anatomically correct terpsichorean). They're a motley crew, but they work well together. Future data disks will contain theme character groups.

Character parts are moved into comic strips by selecting them in their window (just like selecting icons in the Finder) and issuing a single command, Copy to Panel. **Comic Strip Factory** uses Cut, Copy, and Paste in all the normal ways, but adds Copy to Panel to speed up the more common copying operations. Parts can be rearranged by moving them with the mouse, either singly or in groups. They can also be flipped horizontally or vertically, rotated, and inverted. The front to back ordering is also easy to change. Furthermore, although characters and other objects are normally confined to the bounds of a panel, they can be released from the panel as well. So they can walk from one panel into another or even step right off the page.

Changing a facial expression or the position of a finger is easy with **Comic Strip Factory**'s special EditBits screen. This variation on MacPaint's FatBits allows you to edit both the drawing and the background mask, making possible things that are impossible in other programs, like creating an opaque donut with a transparent hole.

Behind Every Great Comic Character… is a background. Kurt Wahlner of Wahlner, Pender, McKeon in Hollywood, California drew the four panoramic backgrounds that come with **Comic Strip Factory**. These are Main Street, a 360° view of a city intersection inspired by John Steinbeck's classic Cannery Row; Apartment, the deluxe spacious home of Fred Nerd, festooned with computers, manuals, a high-tech home entertainment center, and stacks of dirty dishes; Wizardland, the lair of the Root Wizard, plus surrounding village, countryside, and an adjoining dungeon with a castle view; and Orpheum Theatre, the elegant proscenium and squalid backstage rooms of the workplace of Sweet Patootie and Broadway Bug.

Background pictures are taken from MacPaint files. **Comic Strip Factory** can interpret the Paint file as a Portrait (normal 8" x 10" MacPaint document dimensions), a Wide Screen (16" x 5"), or a Panorama (24" x 3 1/3"). In the two latter configurations, **Comic Strip Factory** cuts the picture up into two or three horizontal strips and pastes them back together as one long strip.

Any portion of the background picture can be copied to any panel just by dragging an outline of the panel shape in the Background window and clicking Copy to Panel. And don't worry about reshaping a panel after putting in a background: **Comic Strip Factory** remembers where you got the background and automatically corrects for the new panel shape. A pattern dialog allows you to darken or lighten a panel's background or to use just a pattern for background. Although only one background picture can be associated with a comic page, the fact that backgrounds are stored in MacPaint files gives you complete freedom to mix and match.

Meaningful Dialog. Dialog balloons are easy to make too. There is a text window where you can type the entire script of the strip in advance (or load in a text-only file from your favorite word processor). From there you can copy parts of the text as they're needed into the balloon editor. (If you want, you can type directly into the balloon editor). In the balloon editor, you can format the text, select fonts, styles, and sizes, and choose a balloon type. **Comic Strip Factory** will make the balloon for you, fitting it perfectly to the text. Once it's made, you can move the balloon around like any other object, duplicate it, invert it, or edit its shape. Plus, you can add a pointer to it merely by issuing a command and clicking the mouse.

Comic Strip Factory will use clip art from other packages. It can also save files in MacPaint format as well as comic format, making the comic readable by anybody and modifiable by a growing number of compatible paint programs.

Comic Strip Factory requires 512K or more memory. Suggested retail price is $89.95. It's available now. Orders and dealer and press inquiries are welcome at 800-328-0184 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Central time.

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