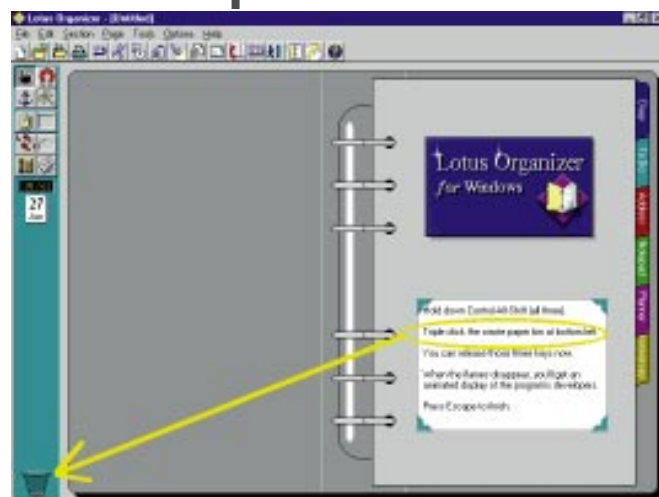# Tricks of the trade

Ever alert for work avoidance opportunities, **Terry Pinnell** has been having a bit of fun with those secret little programs you come across occasionally, the well-hidden routines inserted by programmers into odd corners of some major software products. You might feel it's often hard enough getting a program's normal facilities working, without ferreting into its undocumented private parts, and we wouldn't argue. Although there are a few tricks of practical value, the fun comes almost entirely from tracking the hidden routines down and trying them out. Here's a small sample he's pulled together to give you a flavour, or to add to your existing repertoire.
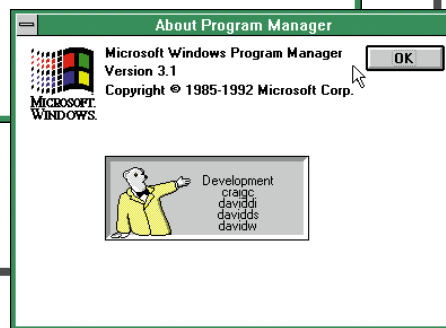
Lotus Organizer 1.0 and 1.12 credits

This may work with other versions too, but I tested it on 1.12. Hold down Ctrl-Alt-Shift. Triple-click on the waste paper bin in the lower left-hand corner. It should burst briefly into flames, and then you'll get an animated bouncing display of the developer credits. Just press Escape to finish.

Microsoft Windows 3.1 development team

Like many of these secrets, this is aimed at giving the programming team a bit of glory. Press Ctrl-Alt-Shift, and keep these three keys pressed throughout. In the Help menu of Program Manager, click About Program Manager. See that Microsoft Windows logo in the upper left-hand corner? Double-click on one of the four coloured windows in the logo, and click OK. Repeat those last two steps, but click on a different coloured window in the logo. The bottom of the window should become animated. Now repeat the same two key steps yet again, using a different colour in the logo. The lower part of the window will again change to present the team programmers, and so on. Try repeating the same steps several times more, using different colour sequences, and you'll find that the cartoon character presenting the names will change – including something vaguely reminiscent of Rupert Bear. Remember, a quick Alt-Tab will get this and any of the other secrets off your screen pretty fast if the boss should appear at your elbow.

Excel 95

Here's a fascinating Doom-like program. Open Excel 95 with a blank work sheet. Go down to the 95th row. Select the whole row. Tab over to column B. Click Help/About. Hold down Ctrl-Alt-Shift while clicking on the Tech Support button. The 'Hall of Tortured Souls' appears. Navigate through to the end using the up arrow key and you'll see the programmers' names. If you turn through 180 degrees and return to the far wall, and type **excelkfa**, then you go through the wall. If you're lucky – you can then find at least one small picture of some of the team. I'm sure there are more secrets down these corridors…

Windows 95 credits, with music

From the same source as the 'Windows 95 credits' below, this is more colourful, and accompanied by mood music, if you have the appropriate hardware and software installed. Right-click on the desktop and select New, then Folder. Name the folder 'and now, the moment you've all been waiting for'. Right-click the folder and rename it to 'we proudly present for your viewing pleasure'. Once again, right-click the folder and finally rename it to 'The Microsoft Windows 95 Product Team!' Now open the folder to get the credits (which include one Bill Gates) and close it when you've seen enough. Maybe it recycles, but I didn't wait. But on re-opening the folder later, it apparently cleverly resumed from where it left off.
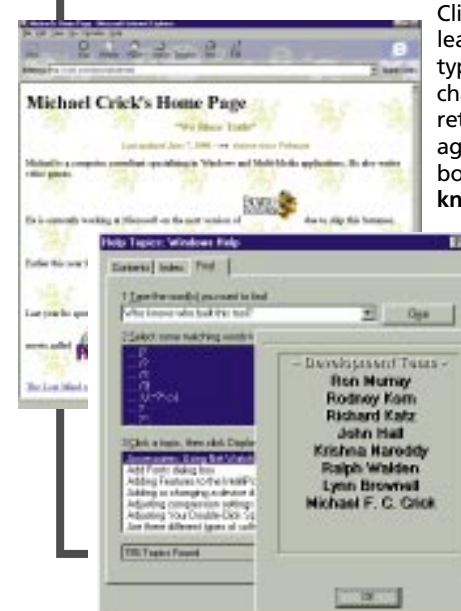
Netscape

These folk take a more direct approach to presenting their credits. While offline, at least in versions 1.1N and 2.02, you can simply type **about:authors** into the Location box. For a different message, try typing **about:mozilla** instead. Other entries just appear to produce 'Yeah, whatever...'. I read somewhere that **about:photo** would display a picture, but couldn't get this to work. Then there's some tricky combination of **ULBLELGI** that's said to display next week's lottery-winning numbers… More reliable is to press Ctrl-Alt-f while online, to go to the hardly secret Fish Cam page – which can also be reached in conventional fashion at http://home.netscape.com/fishcam/fishcam.html.

Windows 95 credits

I found this one on the Web pages of Michael Crick, a consultant specialising in Windows and games applications. Incidentally, his home page at http://crick.com/mica/michael.html plays music automatically while you read it, even when you revisit it offline later. Full details of his secret (or 'Easter Egg' as he and many others call these things) are on http://www.cyberspace.com/~mica/egg.html. It's buried pretty deep though. First, get into Windows 95 HELP, either from the Start button or by pressing F1 from the desktop. Click the Find tab, and, if you get a wizard the first time, just accept the defaults. In the Find dialog box click Options. Check 'All the words you typed in any order'. In the 'Show words that' drop-down list, choose 'begin with the characters you type' – in fact, both of these will probably be the defaults. Click OK to return to the main dialog. In the search field (the top box) enter exactly: **Who knows who built this tool?** Hold down Shift-Ctrl and click the Clear button. Click Options again. Check 'At least one of the words you typed'. Choose 'contain the characters you type'. Click OK to return to the main Dialog box again. At the cursor in the top box enter exactly: **The Shadow knows!** Hold down Shift-Ctrl and click the Clear button. That's it. You get a restrained presentation of the team members' names, split across various sections. It will cycle through until you stop it with the OK button. By the way, did you spot the 'Bureaucracy Control' section?

Windows Solitaire cheat

OK, so it's sad, cheating at cards when the only player is yourself, but there are worse sins. Anyway, as far as I've been able to discover, this particular cheat doesn't by any means guarantee a win – it merely gives you an edge when you've chosen the 'Draw 3' setting in Options. After starting solitaire in Windows 95 or Windows 3.1, before clicking on the deck, you press Ctrl-Alt-Shift; this will then ensure that the program deals you only one card instead of three. This gives you greater access to all the cards, increasing your chances of building rows and suits and hence winning. So much for the theory. I tried six games and still couldn't finish. Pity, as I've only once before seen the neat card-fanning animation that seems to be your reward for winning. If anyone knows how to invoke it without even playing, I'd appreciate a tip-off.