Trivia Now

Trivia Now is a quiz game you can play alone or with up to three of your friends.   Trivia Now allows you to quiz yourself and your friends on a multitude of topics with three different difficulty levels. This is an enjoyable way to learn interesting facts.

Playing a Game

Personalizing the Game

Menus

Topic Selection Dialog

After starting Trivia Now or selecting New from the <u>Game Menu</u>, a dialog appears allowing you to choose the topics each player is to be quizzed on, the length of the game and the number of people playing.

To change the length of the game, simply check one of the buttons in the top left corner of the dialog.   A short game consists of 10 rounds of questions (meaning each player will be asked 10 questions), a medium game has 20 rounds and a long game has 30 rounds.

To change the number of people playing the game, check one of the 4 buttons on the left hand side of the dialog.   The names of each of these players can be changed in the box to the right.   To the left of each of these names is a button.   Only one of these buttons will be active at any given time and will show which player is currently choosing the topics he or she wants to be quizzed on.   To select topics for another player, simply check one of these buttons, or the name associated with it.

Lists showing available topics and chosen topics appear to the right.   The letter that appears before each topic name determines its difficulty.   'e' stands for easy, 'm' for medium, and 'h' for hard. When a player selects topics to be quizzed on, they are moved from the available list to the chosen list. Likewise, if, during this selection process, a player changes his or her mind about playing with certain topics chosen, they are moved from the chosen topics list to the available topics list.   To quickly select or deselect all topics, click on the Add All>> or <<Remove All buttons that appear below these lists.   To move a group of topics from one list to another with a mouse, single click on each topic desired (don't forget the scroll bars!) and double click on the final one (or click Add> or <Remove).   With the keyboard, it's simply a matter of using the Tab and Shift-Tab combination (or ALT+hot keys) to jump to and from lists and buttons, the arrow keys to move within these lists and the Space Bar to select.

When everyone is through choosing topics, select OK.   For a long game, everyone must choose at least three topics; a medium game requires at least two topics, and (hopefully this one is fairly obvious to everyone) you must choose at least one topic to play a short game.   If these requirements are not met, Trivia Now will display a message box saying who has not met them and will return to the dialog.   Otherwise, everyone is ready to play the game.

Answering Topic Questions

After all players have chosen the topics they wish to be quizzed on from the Topic Selection Dialog, Trivia Now will ask each player (in turn) a randomly selected question from one of these chosen topics.

The question appears near the top of the window.   Above it appear the name of the topic from which the question came and the number of rounds left in the game.   Beneath it are the various answers to choose from.   Each of these answers will have a numbered button to its left.   A player can choose what he or she believes to be the right answer by clicking the appropriate numbered button with the mouse or pressing the corresponding number on the keyboard.   If Animation is turned on, the animation sequence will change according to whether the answer is correct or incorrect.   If Show Correct is checked, the correct answer will be displayed if the player guessed incorrectly.   Play then passes to the next player.

A box in the upper right hand corner contains a list of the players' names and their scores.   If you are playing a Timed Game, the time the current player has left to answer the question is displayed beneath this box.   The current player's name is left indented and highlighted.   At the end of the game, this list will be sorted according to score with the winner at the top.

If a question or answer is too long to fit in the window, vertical scroll bars will appear to its right. To operate the question's scroll bar from the keyboard, use the up and down arrow keys.   For an answer's scroll bar, Tab the focus (the outline around a button's digit) to the answer's button and use the left and right arrow keys to scroll the text.   If you have a mouse, you need not worry about this (unless you are really fond of the keyboard).

If the Trivia Now game window appears too small or too large, feel free to resize it.   To do this, simply drag one of the corner pieces of its border to the new size.   The game window will expand or contract its components to suit your tastes.

Ending a Game

You can stop the game at any time by choosing New or Exit from the Game Menu.   If, however, you let the game end naturally (by answering all the questions asked in a game), Trivia Now will show who won (or announce the fact that there was a tie) and allow you to play another game.   If you want to exit from Trivia Now entirely, you will have to choose Exit from the Game Menu.

The Secret Word

As you may know, Softdisk Publishing has a way you can show everyone how good your trivia skills are.   If you play a long game of Trivia Now and answer all 30 questions correctly, you will be shown a secret word.   On the issue's Report Card, there will be a place for you to fill in the secret word. Fill it in, send it to us, and (if it is correct) we will put your name in a future issue's Hall of Fame!   To get the most recent secret word (and therefore get your name in the Hall of Fame), you must be playing with a topic that came on the most recent issue.   If you have a current subscription, all of the recent topics will automatically be selected when you first start the game.

Creating New Topics

For all of you die hard trivia buffs, Trivia Now has a very convenient and easy to use feature that allows you to create your own topic files to be played with the game.   Because Trivia Now is becoming a regular feature on Softdisk for Windows, Softdisk Publishing is looking for topic file submissions.   Refer to the article Contest & Specials within the issue for more information on this offer.   Before seeing how to create your own topics, let's briefly look at how Trivia Now handles topic files.

Every entry you see in Trivia Now's opening topic selection dialog represents a topic file. Because you are able to select different difficulty levels here, each difficulty level is its own separate file. For example, a topic file that has easy, medium and hard difficulty levels would be spread out in three different files.   Because each file must have at least 40 questions, this topic would consist of at least 120 questions.   Currently, the maximum number of questions that can be found in any one file is 200.

Each topic file must have a minimum of 40 questions before it can be played with Trivia Now.   If this seems like a large number, just remember that four players may all want to play with just one of your topic files.   For questions to not be repeated during the game, there must be 40 questions in the file. Even though you cannot play with a topic file that has less than 40 questions, you can still save and open them with the editor.   This way, you don't necessarily have to come up with 40 questions in one sitting.   If a topic file is being saved that does not meet this minimum number of questions requirement, you will be reminded that it cannot be played with Trivia Now.

In a Trivia Now topic file, each question consists of the actual question, the correct answer and a number (anywhere from 1 to 29) of incorrect answers.   You can set how many answers will be displayed for the player to choose from for each file (anywhere from 2 to 8).   If the number of answers entered for a particular question is less than this number, then Trivia Now will do the best it can and display all of the answers for the question.   Of course, Trivia Now mixes up the correct answer and some or all of the incorrect answers before the question is displayed to the player - with one exception. This exception is for any "All of the above" or "None of the above" answers found.   They will be put at the end of the answers to choose from, provided they are spelled out exactly as they are seen here. Upper and lower case as well as any type of punctuation doesn't matter.

To create a Topic File, go to the Edit Topic File option in the Game menu.   A dialog appears asking for the Topic Name, Author, Difficulty Level and the Number of Answers to Display for each question.   Note that this dialog also has a typical file menu, so if you want to work on a previous topic file, simply go to Open.   Only topic files that you yourself have created can be edited.   The ones that come from Softdisk Publishing cannot.   Also, Softdisk Publishing files incorporate a secret word that gets shown to players that get every question correct in a long game.   You cannot create your own secret words to be incorporated into your own topic files.

After entering in this information, click on the Edit Questions button.   Up pops another dialog showing you the contents of a particular question.   Use the first, previous, next and last buttons to scroll through the different questions in the file.   To edit an already existing question, simply go to it and start typing.   Whenever you add another question (button located near the top), it is placed at the end of the list.   Entering in wrong answers works much like entering in questions.   To add an incorrect answer, press the Add button.   To delete an incorrect answer, select it and then press Delete.   To change one of these answers, you must press Edit and a box will appear that will allow you to change the answer.

The Search button can be used to locate the first occurrence of a word or phrase in any of the questions.   If the text is found in the question or the answer, the caret will be placed at the beginning of the field.   If it is found in an incorrect answer, the answer will be selected.

In order to have Trivia Now as a monthly feature on Softdisk for Windows, its editing abilities have been limited (most notably, no spell checking).   To get around this, Trivia Now has an export feature (found in the File menu) that allows you to save out an opened topic file in a format that is able to be read by most word processors.   The import feature works the same way, but backwards.   Import allows

you to convert a text file into a Trivia Now topic file.   Only questions and answers can be imported and exported.   The opening edit topic dialog information (Topic Name, Author, Difficulty and # of Answers to Display) is lost every time you import or export.   When importing, Trivia Now expects the question and answer text to follow a certain format.   **The text must be purely textual** or DOS based with each individual question and answer taking up only one line (no carriage returns in the middle of one).   The format for each question should be the actual question on the first line, the correct answer on the second and each incorrect answer following on separate lines.   Each question should be separated by at least one blank line.   Any indentation is ignored.   Any tabs or special characters will be interpreted as carriage returns.   Below is an example of an exported file or a file that could be imported:

Is this the first sample question listed?
Yes
No

How many questions have appeared so far?
2
1
3
4

What do most people think about playing Trivia Now?
All of the above
They love it
They want more
Greatest thing since sliced bread

Notepad is a very nice (textual based) word processor.   If Importing and Exporting appear to be giving you problems, open up the text file with notepad before you import and after you export and see if that helps.   While importing, Trivia Now will report any errors it found in the file's format and will tell you to go back to your word processor and alleviate the problem.

Remember that Trivia Now looks in its own directory for the topic files it will use, so make sure your newly created files are there!   Have fun coming up with questions, and remember, Softdisk Publishing is looking for a few good Trivia Now topic files!

Personalizing Topic and Animation Selection

If there are some topics that appear in the Topic Selection Dialog or there are some animation themes you do not like and know you will not use, feel free to move their files to a different directory.   If it is hard to figure out which topic goes with which file name, you can go to About Topic (in the Help menu) when a question is being asked from the topic to see its file name.   For the different animation themes, go to About Animation (also in the Help menu) while it is being displayed to see its filename. Topic files have an extension of (end with) ".TRV" while the animation files have an extension of ".TRA". If you are unsure on how to move files from directory to directory, refer to Windows on-line help. Remember, if a topic is broken down into easy, medium and hard difficulty levels, then there are actually three topic files associated with this one topic.   Trivia Now only looks in the directory where its EXEcutable file is located for the topics it will let you choose.

File Menu

New -- Starts a new game by bringing up the <u>Topic Selection Dialog</u>.   If a game is already in progress, you will be prompted before your game is aborted.

Edit Topic File -- Allows you to create your own Topics.   See <u>Creating New Topics</u>.

Exit -- Exits Trivia Now.   If a game is in progress, a message box will warn you about abandoning the game.   At this point you can choose to exit or return to the game in progress.

Options Menu

Timed Game -- This allows a maximum time to be set for each player to answer questions.   If this time is exceeded, the current player immediately forfeits his or her turn.

Show Correct -- This toggles a feature which shows which answer is correct whenever a question is answered incorrectly.   A check indicates that correct answers WILL be displayed.

Sound -- This allows you to set whether sound will always be playing, only play whenever you answer a question, or will never play.

Animation --   Allows you to vary the amount of time that elapses between each frame of the animation sequence or to turn off animation entirely.

Randomly Select Theme -   If this feature is enabled (checked), manual Theme selection (discussed below) is disabled and an animation theme is randomly chosen after a question is answered.   If this feature is disabled (not checked), the user can pick their own animation theme that will remain constant throughout the game.

Theme... --   Brings up a list of other animation sequences to choose from if Randomly Select Theme (discussed above) is disabled.

Help Menu

Contents... - Allows you to view this Help for Trivia Now.

Using Help... - Provides useful information on how to use this Help option.

About Trivia Now... -   Displays the About Box for Trivia Now.

About Animation... -   Displays information about where the animation currently being displayed came from.   See also <u>Personalizing Animation Selection</u>.

About Topic... -   Displays information about the topic file the current question being asked came from. See also <u>Personalizing Topic Selection</u>.