

Mailbag

by our readers; edited and responded to by Matthew A. Hudson

We want your feedback! Send your letters to: **Softdisk, 606 Common St., Shreveport LA 71101-3432**, FAX to **(318) 221-8870**, or E-mail to **sdwletters@softdisk.com**.

Dear Softdisk,

I have tried 3 times to download the win32s driver. I have used over 3 hours of my internet time. Tried both on Compuserve and ATT Worldnet. Both use Netscape 2.02. After about 1/2 hr. the download window disappears. I wait for another half hour or more as that was the time displayed. However I never get the entire file I guess. This last time I received 761676 bytes. When I tried to unzip it with WinZip it says it is not a valid zip file. I assume maybe it's not all there. I pay by the hour for my internet service so this does not make me very happy. I do not have a CD-ROM and do not intend to get one. If you start sending out 32 bit programs I will have no choice but to cancel my subscription. I have really enjoyed Softdisk and would hate to do that. Is there any other way I can get the driver?

Audrey Bucher
Via the internet.

Matthew responds:

The file is 2.39MB. I have tried downloading the file myself using several different methods and it seems to download fine. It could be a problem with your ISP or the connection between the server here at Softdisk and your ISP. Unfortunately the size of the Win32s makes it impossible for us to send it with the floppy based issues containing the 32-bit programs. At one point in the past you could get the Win32 extension from Microsoft via mail or you may wish to try the Microsoft website: <http://www.microsoft.com>. CD-ROM technology has become more and more affordable and with it comes progress. As we look into the future here at Softdisk we see in that future a time when we may have to switch over completely to CD-ROM, although this is in the distant future. The reason is simple. With more space we can provide a greatly improved product in the form of better graphics, sounds, and larger, more robust software. The switch to 256 colors has made the job of fitting the issue on a floppy increasingly more difficult. We urge everyone to switch to the CD-ROM based issue so we can continue to make improvements.

Dear Softdisk,

I have been a subscriber to Softdisk since it was Big Blue Disk, and have recently switched to the CD-ROM version, which is really great. However, I have a complaint about the screensavers on Issues 30 and 31. All previous Softdisk screensavers ran without a logo on the screen, notwithstanding an opening acknowledgement sometimes. I find these "advertisements" annoying and refuse to use these screensavers.

I pay for a subscription so that I can use the enhancements. I think that if this is the type of screensavers you intend to produce, then you should say that you are offering "SD Advertisements" instead of "Screensavers" and acknowledge that you are not putting these "enhancements" on your disk anymore!

Anthony J. Battista
via the internet

Matthew responds:

In the future screen savers will have a small S³ logo on them instead of the large logo you have been seeing. By including the Screen Saver Studio Demo on the disk (CD-ROM only) and adding a new Enhancements feature for Screen Saver Studio Projects. CD-ROM owners will not only have a nice

clean screen saver but they will also be able to see hints and tips and the actual project file that was used to create the screen saver. With the Screen Saver Studio demo you won't be able to build the actual screen saver, but you can get a good idea of how screen savers are created with Screen Saver Studio. Owners of Screen Saver Studio will be able to modify and rebuild the screen savers into whatever they like.

Dear Softdisk,

I have come across one Criss Cross II puzzle so far that does not seem to have a solution!

It was "Artists" in which my disc only supplied me with four eight letter words. When five are required to solve the puzzle. The four eight letter artists I had were Rossetti, Rousseau, Whistler, and Whitaker. In order for my solution to be correct, the one that is missing must be _ _ _ _ A _ T. Would you please supply the missing artist's name?

Matthew Responds:

As is the case sometimes things get missed. This is a bug in the Criss Cross II program. The missing artist is Van Gogh (the space in the name confused the Criss Cross program).

Ron Schwinn continues...

Guess I will just sit back and enjoy this issue now. Great sounds - where can I find the *.wav file that plays the introduction "Stars & Stripes Forever"?

Matthew Responds:

In the \SHELDATA\SOUNDS\ directory there are several files named with numbers. You must COPY these files and rename them to filename.WAV (or simply rename them with the .WAV extension). The sound you are looking for is 0.032.

Ron Schwinn continues...

Keep up the great job. By the way, I enjoy going back and enjoying some old windows issues, since I have them all.

**Ron Schwinn
via the Internet**

Matthew Responds:

Glad you're enjoying the content! I hope you like the progress that has been made since the early issues.

Dear Softdisk,

This was a really great issue(#31). I know you will probably catch lots of flack from people who are not crazy about games, but I was thrilled. I didn't load all of them (like dice and math), but I can tell the card game is going to be very addictive. I loaded the envelope program, but I have not yet tried it out. I'm sure it will come in very handy.

The icons were better (at least for me) this issue also. Not as cute and much more functional.

Matthew responds:

Thanks. And you're right. We will get accolades from those who like the game filled issues, but will receive an equal number of negative responses on the subject. Functional icons are more of what I'll shoot for as manager, but what is functional for one may not be for another.

Buddy Bourne continues...

AND NOW IT'S TIME TO GET TECHNICAL:

1) UNINSTALL PROGRAMS

I am hoping you can explain the pros and cons of different uninstall programs. I guess what I'm asking is: When uninstalling a program is it better to use the uninstall program supplied by the program or is it better to use a commercial program like Quarterdeck's "CleanSweep"? I have CleanSweep installed already and it seems to work great so far. But most of what I have done is clean up the messes I had already made deleting programs from inside Explorer. I know CleanSweep will delete the program, all its associated files, shortcuts and Registry entries.

It also checks for shared files and will warn me if I try to delete anything that affect another program's running. Do the uninstall programs supplied by the main program also do this? Or do they simply remove all files associated with that program when it was installed? Thus resulting in possible orphan files, Registry entries that are no longer valid and deleting overwritten DLL files that are still used by other programs. Since you supply uninstall programs with all your installations, I'm hoping you can give me an answer.

Matthew responds:

It the majority of cases if the program comes with an uninstall utility it is best to use that. All uninstallers should remove every trace of the installed program. Some programs uninstallers are very bad at detecting shared files so caution should be taken when uninstalling anything. Softdisk's uninstaller will remove the program and its shortcuts, but since many of our programs use the same shared files we generally leave them alone.

Buddy Bourne continues...

2) PATCH FOR BACKGAMMON

I wrote you last issue or two and complained that this patch was not on my CD. Well it was on Issue #31. So I tried it and was told I did not have the correct version to be patched. The copy I have is version 1.01. I obtained it from your site through AOL. In fact it has the AOL logo on the game board. Does this version need to be patched or is it fine as is? I don't think I have ever had any problems with it.

Matthew responds:

This version does not need to be patched. The patch is for the version that appeared on an earlier issue.

Buddy Bourne continues...

3) ORDERING BACK ISSUES

In crusing through the Back Issue program, I noticed some issues I might like to add to my collection. I know a print-out of the total order can be sent to you or phoned in. I would rather do this on-line, but would not want to send a copy of this document over the Net unless through a secure site. Is it posible to order back issues at your Web site? I'm fairly sure that it is posible and of course I could simply check your site to find out for myself, but then you guys would not get the opportunity to hear me ramble on about things you have probably talked about before. Issue #19 looks very tempting and the Backgammon board looks very nice. And I guess this is also the file that needs to be patched. Well at least if I order the issue, I have the patch for it already.

Once again thanks for a really super issue.

Buddy Bourne
via the Internet

Matthew responds:

At this time ordering back issues through the Web isn't possible. You can, however, send the order form through e-mail.