

ADash

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Contents

1	ADash	1
1.1	Main	1
1.2	Features	1
1.3	License and Disclaimer	2
1.4	Credits	3
1.5	Origins	4
1.6	Requirements	4
1.7	Installation	4
1.8	Starting ADash & the Commodities Exchange	5
1.9	Getting Started...Touring the Main Window	6
1.10	Configuring ADash...ADashPrefs	7
1.11	ADash Preferences Window	8
1.12	Setting Up Screen Blanking...	8
1.13	Setting Up SpeedIcons...	10
1.14	More Options...	12
1.15	ADashPrefs Gadget by Gadget	13
1.16	ADash Preferences Gadget by Gadget	13
1.17	Select Blanker Module	14
1.18	Add	14
1.19	Delete	14
1.20	PreLoad	14
1.21	Disabled	15
1.22	Demo...	15
1.23	Load When Blank/Pick When Blank	15
1.24	Blank/After	15
1.25	Mouse/After	16
1.26	SmartBlank/%	16
1.27	Use ME!	16
1.28	Cat	16
1.29	Select SpeedIcon	16

1.30 Add	16
1.31 Del	17
1.32 Up/Dwn	17
1.33 Accelerate Mouse	17
1.34 When over	17
1.35 Speed up by	17
1.36 Start Iconified	17
1.37 Dbl Click SI	17
1.38 Hide Timer/Alm Boxes	18
1.39 Iconify as Workbench Icon	18
1.40 Audio Click	18
1.41 Options...	18
1.42 Save	18
1.43 Use	18
1.44 Cancel	18
1.45 Blanker Maintenance Gadget by Gadget	19
1.46 Title	19
1.47 Path	19
1.48 WB StartUp/CLI Startup	19
1.49 CLI Args	19
1.50 ADash Protocol/CTRL-C Break	20
1.51 Disabled	20
1.52 Sound	20
1.53 Can PreLoad	20
1.54 Stack	20
1.55 Only Blank with this Module	20
1.56 Demo Module...	21
1.57 Select Display Mode	21
1.58 Module Dependant Options	21
1.59 Okay	21
1.60 Delete	21
1.61 Cancel	22
1.62 SpeedIcon Maintenance Gadget by Gadget	22
1.63 Path	22
1.64 Image	22
1.65 Rescale Image	22
1.66 WB StartUp/CLI StartUp	23
1.67 Stack	23
1.68 CLI Args	23

1.69	Okay	23
1.70	Cancel	23
1.71	Options Gadget by Gadget	23
1.72	No Never...	24
1.73	No Immediate...	24
1.74	PubScreen Name	24
1.75	Numeric Font	24
1.76	ADash Main Window is Normal	25
1.77	Sound Path	25
1.78	Play Direct From Disk	25
1.79	Test Sound	25
1.80	PassLock	25
1.81	Password	25
1.82	* DOS WildCard	26
1.83	Click<->Move	26
1.84	Show All Tasks	26
1.85	No Activation	26
1.86	Okay	26
1.87	AppWindow Drag and Drop Features	26
1.88	Writing Screen Blanker/Saver Modules	27
1.89	Reporting Bugs, Making Suggestions, Contacting the Author	27
1.90	ADash History	27

Chapter 1

ADash

1.1 Main

ADash V2.0

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Features
License and Disclaimer
Credits
Origins
Requirements
Installation
Starting ADash
Getting Started...
Configuring ADash...
ADashPrefs Gadget by Gadget
AppWindow Drag and Drop Features
Writing Screen Blanker/Saver Modules
Reporting Bugs...Contacting the Author
History

1.2 Features

ADash V2.0

A Utility for the Amiga, and Only the Amiga!

Features: --Modular screen blanking system including over 30 separate graphic modules, full configuration using a graphic interface, interactive blanker demo mode.

--Built-in zero activity blanker that can be used when CPU intensive programs are running.

- ADash is a commodity and can be controlled through the Commodities Exchange program.
- PassLock feature protects your computer from unauthorized access during your absence.
- Mouse blanker and mouse accelerator.
- Automatic window activation as you begin typing or auto activation of windows as the pointer moves over them.
- Double click to bring partially obscured windows to the front of the screen.
- Main window displaying the time and date, an alarm clock, stopwatch, timer, free memory, number of tasks running and current CPU usage.
- Main window may be a 'backdrop' window or an 'always in front' window that will never be covered by other windows.
- Main window can be reduced to an icon on the WorkBench screen, an entry under the 'Tool' menu on the WorkBench, or a title bar. Or main window can be reduced to a 'dock'.
- Separate window displays individual tasks, their current status and how much CPU time they are using.
- Configure 'SpeedIcons' that allow you to launch an unlimited number of applications with only one or two clicks of the mouse. Arrange them in up to five categories.
- Launch a shell by clicking a single icon.
- Setup all options using a separate preferences program, 'ADashPrefs'. Add blanker modules or application SpeedIcons using the AppWindow feature of the main window or preferences window, by dragging and dropping icons into them.
- Amigaguide documentation and context sensitive on-line help system.

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1.3 License and Disclaimer

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1.4 Credits

I would like to thank all those who helped beta test and evaluate the
original version of ADash:

Michael Cianflone, US	Michael Neylon, US
Bill Hogsett, US	Jacob Rose, US
Brian D. King, US	Shachar Shemesh, Israel
Steve Lee, US	Chris Miles, Australia

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Jacob Rose for creating the ADash Icon. Shachar Shemesh for advice and opinions relating to the design of the blanker protocol.

1.5 Origins

The idea for ADash arose out of many disparate notions. It came in part from ideas I had upon seeing an ad for a commercial package for the IBM that combined system information with icons for launching applications. It came from using AmiDock, an excellent utility by Gary Knight, and a scholastic desire to learn more about how to fool applications into thinking they had been launched from the WorkBench when in fact they hadn't. It came from the lack of any substantial screen blanker/saver standard for the Amiga and from envy in face of a certain commercial product with hundreds of thousands of copies running on IBM's and Mac's across the world. Finally ADash was the result of a desire to complete a major project and release it out into the world for better or for worse.

1.6 Requirements

ADash V2.0 will run on any Amiga computer with WorkBench Release 2.04 or higher and has been extensively tested under both version 2.0 and 3.0 of the operating system. The basic program requires under 100K of memory. However, if you are planning to use screen blanking, 1 Meg or more of RAM and a hard drive are suggested. In addition, some blanker modules are designed to make use of additional colors if you have the AGA chip set. Two versions of the program are provided: one for users with a 68000 or 68010 processor and one for users with a 68020 or higher. The selection and installation of the proper version will be handled automatically for you by the installation utility.

1.7 Installation

To install ADash, insert the disk marked 'ADash Install 1' into one of your floppy drives and double click on the drive icon. Double click again on the 'Install ADash' icon that appears to start the installation utility. The installer will first ask you to decide what your level of expertise in using the Amiga is and thus how much control you will have in directing the installation process. I suggest leaving the installer on the default setting of 'Intermediate'. If, however, you wish to leave all decisions to the installer, you may wish to select 'Novice' or if you only wish to install certain portions of the ADash package, you should select 'Expert'. Once you

have made your selection, hit 'Proceed With Install' to continue and then 'Proceed' on the following window.

The installer will now ask you whether you would like ADash installed in your 'SYS:WBStartup' directory. If ADash is installed here, it will load automatically every time you boot your computer. Next you will be asked where the main ADash directory should be located. You can install ADash anyplace you wish by selecting a volume and/or directory. The installer will create an ADash directory in the location you choose. Once you have made your selection and hit 'Proceed', the installer will ask you to mark the various portions of ADash you wish to have installed. You will also have the option of installing another copy of ADash in the main directory. Once you have marked or unmarked the choices, select 'Proceed'. The installer will now install the various parts of the package that you have selected. You will be asked to insert the second disk labeled 'ADash Install 2' into your drive about midway through the install. Towards the end the installer will ask you if you would like it to add an assign to your 'S:User-Startup' script. Allow it to do so unless you have a specific reason for not letting the installer add the assign. ADash 2.0 is now installed on your system.

1.8 Starting ADash & the Commodities Exchange

Starting ADash is very easy. If you asked the installer to place ADash in your WBStartup directory, it will be run automatically when you turn your computer on and will open its main window. Otherwise, simply locate the directory in which you asked the installer to place ADash and double click on the program icon to start the program. You can also run ADash from a CLI or Shell if you wish. Use 'Run ADash' to detach ADash from the shell so that you can use 'EndCLI' to close it if you wish.

ADash does not require any arguments but instead obtains all of its options from a file called 'ADash.prefs' which is located in the 'ENV:' directory. To change ADash's settings, you use the 'ADashPrefs' program located in your 'Prefs:' directory. You can start ADashPrefs by clicking on the small icon depicting a wrench located in the upper right corner of the main ADash window or by selecting the 'ADashPrefs' item in the WorkBench tool menu.

The ADash main window should now appear. However, if it does not, it is possible that ADash is starting up either iconized or as an item in the WorkBench tools menu. Look for an icon labeled 'ADash' on your WorkBench and double click it to bring up the ADash window, or check the tools menu and select 'adash'.

The ADash main window will always open up in the same position as the last time you used it. Every time you exit ADash, the current position of the window is saved for the next time you run the program.

Once ADash has been started, it can be controlled using the commodities exchange program found in your system tools directory. You can exit ADash, or bring up and iconize the main window using the appropriate buttons in the Commodities Exchange window. ADash also pays attention to the 'CX_POPUP' and 'CX_HOTKEY' tooltypes. Using 'CX_POPUP=NO' as a tooltype for Adash will make ADash launch iconized or menufied. Set the 'CX_HOTKEY' tooltype to designate a command sequence to toggle the main ADash window between the iconized/menufied state and being open. The hotkey defaults to 'left-amiga-A'. For more detailed instructions, consult your system manuals.

1.9 Getting Started...Touring the Main Window

The ADash main window is the most visible part of the ADash software package. Once started, ADash reads in all settings from the 'ADash.prefs' file located in your 'ENV:' directory and opens its main window on the WorkBench screen in the same position as when you last used the program. Alternatively, you may set ADash to startup as an icon or as a item in your WorkBench tools menu. You can also have ADash open its main window on a public screen other than the WorkBench screen. Consult the section on 'ADashPrefs' for more information on configuring ADash. For the moment, however, we will concentrate on understanding how to use the ADash main window.

Notice that the window title bar contains the current time, day of week and date. Alternatively, the display may alternate between the time and date if the 'No Timer/Alarm' flag is set in ADashPrefs. This flag makes the ADash window smaller by removing a couple of displays from the right side.

On the left part of the window are the five vertical category gadgets. The currently selected category is recessed and the 'SpeedIcons' associated with it are displayed horizontally to the right. 'SpeedIcons' are buttons you can set up to represent various applications available on your system. You can then click these buttons to launch the applications without having to navigate through the normal WorkBench windowing system. The images can either be scaled copies of the program icons or special IFF images. If there are more than five SpeedIcons for a particular category, you may scroll through the available buttons by using either the arrow gadgets or scroll bar located beneath the SpeedIcon display. Click on a new category gadget to see the 'SpeedIcons' associated with it or use the arrow keys on your keyboard to cycle through the five categories.

Beneath the SpeedIcon display are the free memory and CPU activity displays. How much chip ('C') and fast ('F') memory are currently available are shown both numerically and by a scale. Chip memory refers to memory that can be accessed both by your Amiga's CPU and its custom chips (usually for graphics displays). Fast memory is memory that can not be used for graphics or sound and is reserved for applications.

The CPU activity display tells you how much of your CPU's available time is currently being utilized. The RPM indicator and the number just above it on its left side represent the percentage of CPU time which is being occupied. The number above on its right side shows how many tasks and processes are currently active on your Amiga. If you click on the number on the left side representing CPU use, ADash will display another window called 'Process Info'. This window lists all current tasks and processes and several bits of information about them, including how much CPU time each is using.

Just to the right of the SpeedIcons is the alarm clock display. Select 'Alm' to activate the alarm clock. A window will appear and you will need to enter the desired time for the alarm to sound, in military time. When using military time, remember that 1300 is the same as 1PM, 1400 as 2PM, etc. Select 'Ok' to accept setting. Once the alarm has been activated, the display will reflect the time the alarm will sound and the small square next to the 'Alm' button will be filled in to indicate it is active. To turn off the alarm before it sounds, select 'Alm' a second time and the square next to it will be erased.

When the alarm sounds, you will hear either a preset tone or a user selected audio 8SVX sound. This is controlled through the ADashPrefs program in the 'Options' window. To stop the alarm, select the 'Stop' button in the requester that has opened.

Beneath the alarm clock are the timer and stopwatch which share the same

display. To start the stopwatch, hit the 'ST' button. You will see the time above start to count up, one second at a time. Select 'ST' a second time to stop it. Likewise, select 'TI' to use the timer. A window will open where you can select the desired interval. Select 'OK' to accept the interval and the timer will start counting down. When the count reaches zero, the alarm will sound exactly as for the alarm clock and you must hit 'Stop' to silence it. Note that depending on system loading, the stopwatch and timer may appear to count by more than one second at a time. Both are extremely accurate however and will catch up to display the correct interval when you stop them or when the timer reaches zero.

Along the right edge of the main window are a series of four vertical buttons. The topmost one, depicting a wrench, when selected, starts ADashPrefs. You use ADashPrefs to control all of the various options and settings available to you in ADash. The button beneath it, the question mark button, brings up a window displaying information about the ADash software. Next is the shell button, which you can use to launch a CLI or DOS shell. Last is the blanker button which immediately blanks the screen according to how you have setup the various ADash blanker options. Note though that to bring back your original display you must click either mouse button once. Normally when the screen is blanked, any keyboard or mouse movement will bring back the display. In addition, if you have selected the Passlock feature of ADash, you will also be prompted to enter your password before the display will reappear.

There are also several ways that you can reduce the size of the ADash main window in order to free up more space on your WorkBench. One way is to set the 'Hide Timer/Alm Boxes' flag in ADashPrefs. This will remove the alarm and timer/stopwatch boxes from the main window, shrinking its width. You can also use the 'i' button in the window titlebar. The main window will then disappear and be replaced by either an entry in the WorkBench tools menu or by an icon on the WorkBench screen depending on the setting of the 'Menufy' button in ADashPrefs. To get the window back, either select the menu item or double click the icon on your screen. Lastly, you can use the system zoom gadget in the title bar to reduce the ADash window to a tool dock which only displays the SpeedIcons. Use the arrow keys to change categories. Hit the zoom gadget again to return to the full display.

It is important to note that the various ADash displays may not change immediately when system information changes. ADash updates all displays periodically, usually once per second. However, system loading may cause displays to update more slowly depending on your CPU type.

1.10 Configuring ADash...ADashPrefs

ADashPrefs is a separate program that is used for configuring the various options and settings available to you in ADash. It follows the same general model as the other preferences editors that came with the operating system. To run ADashPrefs, you may either locate its icon in your 'Prefs' directory and double click on it, or if ADash is running, you may either select the 'ADashPrefs' item in your WorkBench tools menu, or use the wrench icon in the upper right-hand portion of the ADash main window.

ADash's settings are controlled by a file called 'ADash.prefs', normally found in your system 'ENV:' path. ADashPrefs will load in this file and allow you to edit it. However, you can also load in any other valid ADash preference file using the 'Open' menu item or save out settings to any file or path you wish using the 'Save As' function. Both of these will bring up a

file requester to allow you to select the file to operate on.

1.11 ADash Preferences Window

The first thing you will see when you run ADashPrefs is the 'ADash Preferences' window. This window contains controls for screen blanking, SpeedIcons, Mouse Acceleration and several other misc. functions.

The bottom of the window contains three buttons: 'Save', 'Use' and 'Cancel'. When you have made your selections, use the 'Save' button to save your settings permanently, or 'Use' to use them temporarily until the next time you use ADashPrefs to change them or reboot your Amiga. The 'Cancel' button allows you to exit ADashPrefs without altering your settings at all. When you use either 'Save' or 'Use' and ADash is already running, ADash will reset itself to implement any changes you may have made in ADashPrefs.

Notice that most, if not all, of the buttons in ADashPrefs have keyboard equivalents. These are denoted in the windows by an underlined character in the button's description. For instance, typing either an upper or lower case 'u' in the ADashPrefs main window is the same as pressing the 'Use' gadget.

1.12 Setting Up Screen Blanking...

ADash uses a modular system to implement screen blanking. You configure individual graphic modules which are separate from the main ADash program. This has the advantage that less memory is used and more graphic effects can be implemented than if these were part of the ADash itself.

When ADash is run, it can either choose one blanker module in advance to use until you reboot your computer, or it can be told to randomly select a module each time it needs to blank the screen. In addition, you may ask ADash to load the module(s) in advance. This feature is useful if you do not have a hard drive but have plenty of RAM.

Use the first cycle gadget to control when blanker modules are loaded. Select "Load When Blank" if you want ADash to only run modules when it needs to blank the screen or "Load At Startup" if you would like all of the modules loaded in advance. This can be useful if you are running from a floppy disk and want to minimize disk access.

Use the second cycle gadget next to it to control whether one module is selected and used for blanking or whether a different module is used every time the screen is blanked. Select "Pick When Blank" to have a different module every time or "Pick At Startup" to use one module for the entire time.

To configure a blanker, you must first add it to the list of modules that ADash has access to. ADash comes with over fifty modules, all of which should already be displayed in the listview in the upper left of the ADash Preferences window. To edit a module, double click on its name in the listview. To add a new module, select 'Add' and then locate the module in the file requester. Either action will bring you to the Blanker Maintenance window.

The first two items in the Blanker Maintenance window are the name and copyright information, and the path of the module. Beneath these is a cycle gadget that allows you to choose whether the module you are working with is started up as a WorkBench or CLI process. Normally, you will always choose 'WB Startup'. The only exception is if you want some other program, other than an ADash blanker module, to be run when screen blanking occurs. In that

case, you might wish to use 'CLI Startup' and enter a command line in the 'CLI Args' field to be passed to the program. You might also wish to change the 'Stack' field from its default of 4096, which is adequate for ADash modules, to a higher value.

The next button, 'ADash Protocol' is disabled when you are configuring an ADash module. Again, the only time you would change it is if you wish to use some other program for screen blanking. In that case, you would have already used the 'Add' gadget in the ADash Preferences window to select the path and name of that program and the 'ADash Protocol' gadget would have instead automatically become 'CTRL-C'. This means that ADash will send a 'CTRL-C' sequence to the program to stop it when it is no longer time to blank the screen. To test if this will actually stop the program, you can run it from a shell or CLI and hit CTRL-C with the shell or cli window active and see if the program is halted. Normally, however, you will be using ADash modules and for these you will always use 'WB Startup' and 'ADash Protocol'.

Next are three important buttons, 'Disabled', 'Sound' and 'Can PreLoad'. If you select 'Disabled', the module will never be used for screen blanking, and it will have a 'D' to the right of its name in the listview in the ADash Preferences window. 'Sound' turns off any sound effects for the module. If the module does not use any sound effects it will be ghosted and unavailable. Lastly, 'Can PreLoad' is related to the 'Load When Blank' cycle gadget in the ADash Preferences window. When not checked, the module will never be loaded in advance of blanking, even if 'Load At Startup' is selected in the previous window. This allows you to load most modules in advance, but exclude one or more that are very large. Simply, select 'Load At Startup' in the ADash Preferences window but leave 'Can PreLoad' unchecked in those modules you do not want to always have in memory due to their large size. If 'Can PreLoad' is marked (i.e. the module can be loaded at startup - the default), you will see an 'L' to the right of its name in the listview in the ADash Preferences window.

Beneath these three gadgets, is the 'Only Blank with this Module' button. If you hit this button, this module will always be used for blanking, excluding all others. The blanker module will have an asterisk in front of its name in the listview in the ADash Preferences window. To unselect a module and return to normal blanking, hit the 'Use ME!' button in the Main Preferences window.

The 'Screen Mode' button can be used to select the screen mode used for the module. This will default to different modes depending on the particular module. For some modules, you will be unable to change the mode and in that case this gadget will be ghosted and unavailable. When you select 'Screen Mode', you will be given a list of possible video modes from which to make a selection.

The bottommost section of the Blanker Maintenance window allows you to edit those options specific to the current module. They will vary according to the module and in some cases, there may not be any at all. To receive help on what any of them do, place the mouse pointer above a button and hit the 'Help' button on your keyboard. A message will be displayed describing the options use. Descriptions of the various options for each module distributed with ADash will be found later on in this document.

ADashPrefs offers a special interactive demonstration mode. If you hit 'Demo Module...', the module will be started so that you can see what it looks like. ADashPrefs will open a small window over the module's graphics display containing just the module's options and a 'Stop' button. You can alter the options in this window and the module will instantly change to reflect what you have done. Hit 'Stop' when you have finished changing the options.

Unfortunately, certain modules completely distort the display such that you can not easily see the small window ADashPrefs opens. In this event, you can use the 'ESC' key to exit the module.

When you have configured the module to your liking, hit either 'Okay' to accept the changes, or 'Cancel' to close the window without changing anything. If you wish to delete the module from the list of available modules, hit 'Delete'. Either of these three buttons will return you to the main ADash Preferences window.

Directly to the right of the Blanker Module listview are a series of buttons. 'Add', as we've already seen, allows you to add a new blanker module to your list. The next three buttons all operate on the currently selected module which is shown in the box just below the listview. To select a module, click once on its name. 'Delete' allows you to remove a blanker module from your list. Be careful...once you delete an entry, you must recreate it from scratch if you change your mind. 'PreLoad' allows you to toggle whether or not a module may be loaded at startup. It only has an effect if the 'Load At Startup' setting has been selected below the listview. If a module can be preloaded, you will see an 'L' to the right of the module's name in the listview. Similarly, 'Disable' allows you to temporarily disable a module, so that it won't be used for screen blanking, without deleting it from your list. You will see a 'D' to the right of the module's name in the listview if it is disabled. Lastly, 'Demo...' allows you to jump to the interactive demo mode discussed previously. It is the same as first double clicking to edit a module and then hitting demo in the module's Blanker Maintenance window.

The 'Blank' and 'Mouse' buttons both enable and disable screen and mouse blanking respectively. The sliders next to them select after how many minutes and seconds respectively blanking should take place. Screen blanking can be set to occur after 1 to 60 minutes of no mouse or keyboard activity. Mouse blanking can be set to occur after anywhere from 1 to 60 seconds of no activity.

The SmartBlank feature allows you to prevent blanker modules from using up valuable CPU resources when you are in the middle of complex calculations or other operations. Mark the 'SmartBlank' checkbox and select at what level of CPU activity the built-in blanker should be used. The built-in screen blanker uses no CPU resources and simply turns off display DMA. If for instance, you select 80%, ADash will use the built-in blanker any time that CPU usage is 80% or higher. The built-in blanker is also used if no blanker modules are configured in the selection listview, but blanking is enabled.

To the right is the 'Use ME!' button. Click on this button to unmark a module which has an asterick to the left of its name in the listview above. This turns off blanking with only one specific module.

1.13 Setting Up SpeedIcons...

SpeedIcons are an easy way to launch applications that are located anywhere on your hard drive or floppy disk without having to navigate through the usual series of WorkBench windows. SpeedIcons are arranged in categories, of which you may have up to five. You can select and change the name of your categories using the controls to the right of the blanker module selection listview in the ADash Preferences window.

The 'Cat' cycle gadget allows you to select the current category to work with. Its name will also appear in the string gadget below where you may change it. The listview beneath will list those applications associated with the current category. Initially, the names of the categories will be blank and you will not see any applications in the listview beneath. To add a new SpeedIcon, you click on the 'Add' button. You will then be asked to select an application in a file requester. To edit a SpeedIcon entry, you double click on its name in the listview. Either action will then take you to the

'SpeedIcon Maintenance' window.

The first two fields in the SpeedIcon Maintenance window are string gadgets for the application path and the image path. The application path will be filled in by either the path of the application you chose in the file requester if you are adding, or by the full path of the application whose SpeedIcon you had selected in the listview. You may edit the application path if you wish or use the file gadget (the button with a floppy disk on it) to the right of the string gadget bring up a file requester where you may chose a new application.

The image for the SpeedIcon for the application you choose can come from either of two sources. You can have ADash use the icon image (in the xxx.info file) associated with the application, the icon you would see on the WorkBench screen, or you may choose any IFF format graphics file. To use the application's icon image, leave the 'Image' gadget blank and check the 'Icon Image' checkbox below. You must also decide if you wish to have the image rescaled to fit in the space available for it in the main ADash window. If you do, you should check the 'Rescale Image' checkbox to the right. If you wish to select an IFF format graphics file for the SpeedIcon image, you should either type the path and name of the file into the 'Image' string gadget, or press the file button to the right of the string gadget and use the file requester to locate and select the image file. If you use the file requester, it will default to displaying a large selection of images which come along with the ADash program. When using an IFF file, you may disregard the 'Icon Image' and 'Rescale Image' checkboxes as they have no effect.

Beneath these last two gadgets is a cycle gadget that determines whether you application is started as a WorkBench or CLI type process. Normally, you should use the 'WB Startup' option. The only reason for using 'CLI Startup' is either if the application explicitly expects to be launched from a CLI or if you need to be able to send it some specific options. If you do use 'CLI Startup', you may specify any number of arguments to be sent to it in the 'CLI Args' field. You may also wish to change the 'Stack' field from its default of 4096 bytes to a larger value. If you are using 'WB Startup', ADash will use the stack size stored in the application's '.info' file if it is larger than the number entered here. When you have configured the SpeedIcon, press 'Okay' to accept the changes or new SpeedIcon and return to the ADash Preferences window. If you don't want to make the changes or add the SpeedIcon, you can hit 'Cancel'.

Beneath the 'Select SpeedIcon' listview are four buttons. As we've seen, 'Add' allows you to add a new SpeedIcon to the current category. 'Del' allows you to delete a SpeedIcon. Click once on the SpeedIcon you wish to delete and press this button. 'Up' and 'Dwn' allow you to change the order of the SpeedIcons in the listview. SpeedIcons are displayed in the ADash main window in the same order. To move a SpeedIcon, first click once on it to select it and then hit either 'Up' or 'Dwn' to move it up or down in the list.

Beneath the SpeedIcon portion are settings which control mouse acceleration. Check 'Accelerate Mouse' to enable acceleration. 'When Over' determines how fast the mouse must be moving for acceleration to take place. 'Speed up by' controls how much the mouse is accelerated. A value of zero or one disables acceleration whereas a value of two means that the mouse will be accelerated by a factor of two, three means by a factor of three and so on.

The horizontal strip near the bottom of the ADash Preferences window contains several buttons controlling various functions. 'Start Iconified' select whether ADash opens its main window when first started or whether it starts up as an Icon or Tools menu item. Use the cycle gadget below to choose which of these two last options are used when the window is iconified. The 'Dbl Click SI' checkbox determines whether you must double click a

SpeedIcon in the main ADash window or simply single click it to launch the application. 'Hide Timer/Alm Boxes' allows you to shrink the size of the main ADash window by removing the Timer and Alarm boxes. This can be useful if you have limited space available on your WorkBench screen and wish to minimize the amount of space ADash occupies.

The 'Audio Click' checkbox controls whether a 'click' sound is heard when you launch an application in the main ADash window using a SpeedIcon. Check this box to enable the sound or leave it blank to disable.

Finally, the 'Options...' button will bring you to the Options window which allows you access to several other important ADash functions.

1.14 More Options...

The top portion of the Options window controls two special features: the sleep and 'immediate' corners. You can select a specific corner of the screen such that if you place the mouse pointer there, the screen will never ever be blanked and a second where the screen will immediately be blanked. The rectangular box in the upper left corner of this window is a representation of your monitor screen. A '+' marks the the location of the immediate corner and a '-' marks where the sleep corner is currently located. You use the cycle gadgets to the right to set these corners. You can also disable either feature by selecting either 'No Never' or 'No Immediate' as appropriate.

Directly beneath the sleep and immediate corner cycle gadgets is the 'PubScreen Name' field. Normally, ADash opens its main window on the WorkBench screen. However, if you are running another application which makes its screen 'public', you can set ADash to open its main window on that application's screen instead by entering its public screen name in this field. To determine whether a screen an application opens is public or not, you will need to carefully read its documentation. The documentation should also give you the name of the screen it opens.

ADash uses a special font for the numeric displays such as the time, stopwatch, percentages and free memory. This font can be set in the Options window by placing the name of the desired font (with the extension '.font') in the 'Numeric Font' field. In general this font must be slightly smaller than your system default font in order for the numeric displays to fit in their spaces. You can also use the font button to the right of the string field to open a font requester that you can use to select a font instead of typing the name into the string gadget directly.

Beneath cycle gadget which controls the behavior of the ADash main window. You can set the window to always stay in front of all other windows ('ADash Main Window Stays in Front'), to always stay behind all other windows ('ADash Main Window Stays in Back') or to act as a normal Intuition window and allow the user to manually control depth arrangement ('ADash Main Window is Normal').

Beneath this gadget is the 'Alm Sound Path' field. ADash has the capability to play an 8SVX IFF sound file or raw sound file when the alarm sounds or when the timer reaches zero. You can specify which file to use by typing its path here or by using the file button to the right to select a sound. ADash comes with several alarm sounds. You can hear the sound by selecting the 'Test Sound' button to the lower right. If you do not specify a sound, ADash will play a default tone when the alarm sounds or the timer reaches zero. When using a sound file you also need to decide if you would like ADash to load it into memory in advance or if ADash should play it from the disk when it needs to use it. If the sample is large or you seldom will use the alarm or timer, you will probably want ADash to play it directly from the disk so as to minimize how much memory the program uses. In this case,

place a check in the 'Play Direct From Disk' checkbox.

ADash also supports a password system to prevent unauthorized access to your computer when you step away. By marking the 'PassLock' checkbox, you tell ADash to require a password to unblank the screen. You specify your password in the 'Password' field to the right. When you return to your Amiga and the screen has blanked, you will be asked to enter this password before you are returned to your previous screen. Until you enter the password you can not return to work.

Next are three miscellaneous checkboxes and a gadget which controls mouse activation. The '* DOS WildCard' checkbox enables the asterick wildcard in AmigaDOS, replacing the AmigaDOS '#?' pattern string. This makes AmigaDOS use the same pattern matching for filenames as is used by MSDOS. The 'Show All Tasks' checkbox determines how many tasks are shown in the Process Info window. The Process Info window, which you open by clicking on the CPU use percentage figure in the ADash main window, displays currently running tasks and how much CPU time they are using. Normally this window only lists tasks which are currently using the CPU. You can mark 'Show All Tasks' to have all tasks listed even if they are not currently using CPU resources.

The checkbox to the right allows you to double click on the visible part of a window to move it in front. Or you can double click with the right mouse button held down to move a window behind all others.

Finally, the cycle gadget at the bottom determines a couple of automatic activation features that ADash supports. You can select 'Key Activation' to have ADash activate the window under the mouse pointer when you begin typing. This eliminates having to first click on a window before typing into it. You can also choose 'Auto Activation' which causes ADash to activate windows as the mouse pointer moves over them. Lastly, you can choose 'No Activation' which disables both of these options and leaves you with the normal Intuition window behavior.

When you have made your selection, select 'Okay' to return to the ADashPrefs window. Once there, you can press 'Okay' to save your settings permanently, 'Use' to make use of them only until to you reboot your Amiga, or 'Cancel' to exit without saving your settings.

1.15 ADashPrefs Gadget by Gadget

ADashPrefs allows you to configure all of the various settings associated with ADash. You can start ADashPrefs either by selecting the item with the same name in the WorkBench tools menu, by using the 'Wrench' gadget in the ADash main window or by locating its icon in your system 'Preferences' directory.

ADash Preferences Gadget by Gadget
Blanker Maintenance Gadget by Gadget
SpeedIcon Maintenance Gadget by Gadget
Options Gadget by Gadget

1.16 ADash Preferences Gadget by Gadget

The ADash Preferences window provides you with access to almost all of the major ADash configuration settings as well as to all other maintenance windows. Many of the gadgets can be activated or toggled by using a key on

your keyboard. This shortcut key is indicated by an underlined letter in the gadget's name.

Select Blanker Module	Del
Add (Blanker)	Up/Dwn
Delete	Accelerate Mouse
PreLoad	When over
Disable	Speed up by
Demo...	Start Iconified
Load When Blank/Pick When Blank	Dbl Click SI
Blank/After	Hide Timer/Alm Boxes
Mouse/After	Iconify as Workbench Icon
SmartBlank/%	Audio Click
Use ME!	Options...
Cat	Save
Select SpeedIcon	Use
Add (SpeedIcon)	Cancel

1.17 Select Blanker Module

This listview shows all of the blanker modules which are currently configured. An asterick in front of a module name indicates that a blanker is the 'Use ME!' blanker and will be used exclusively for screen blanking. In addition, two flags may appear to the right of a module name. An 'L' indicates that the module may be preloaded when ADash is first started. A 'D' indicates that a module is disabled and will not be used for blanking. These flags may be changed using the buttons to the right. To select a module and then use one of these buttons, click once so its name appears right beneath the listview. To edit a module, double click on its name and the Blanker Maintenance window will appear.

1.18 Add

Use this file button to add a new module to your list of configured blankers. You will be asked to indicate the path of the new module. Select 'Okay' to accept the path and move to the Blanker Maintenance window, or 'Cancel' if you change your mind.

1.19 Delete

This button deletes the currently selected blanker module. You select a module by single clicking on its name in the listview.

1.20 PreLoad

This button toggles the 'PreLoad' flag for the currently selected blanker module. If this flag is not marked, the indicated module will not be loaded when ADash starts up. It only has meaning, however, if 'Load At Startup' has been selected in the cycle gadget below the listview. Otherwise it has no effect. The letter 'L' will show to the right of the module's name in the listview if this flag is set. To select a module and use this button, first single click on its name in the listview.

1.21 Disabled

This button toggles the 'Disabled' flag for the currently selected blanker module. If this flag is marked, the indicated module will be disabled and not be used for screen blanking. The letter 'D' will show to the right of the module's name in the listview to the left if this flag is set. To select a module and use this button, first single click on its name in the listview.

1.22 Demo...

Select this button to move to the Blanker Maintenance window for the currently selected module and start the interactive demo mode. This button only works if the module in question is an 'ADash Protocol' module. Demo mode is unavailable for other applications you may set up to be run during blanking. To select a module and use this button, first single click on its name in the listview.

1.23 Load When Blank/Pick When Blank

These cycle gadgets control how ADash handles blanker modules when it is first started. Select 'Load At Startup' if you would like ADash to load all modules into memory when first started and keep them there until ADash is exited. This feature can be useful if you are either running from a floppy disk or if you have plenty of memory and only a few modules which you would like to have blank as quickly as possible. Note that any modules which do not have their 'Can PreLoad' flag set (do not have an 'L' to the right of their name in the selection listview) will not be preloaded even if this flag is set.

'Pick At Startup' makes ADash select one module from the list of available blankers when it is first run and use that one for blanking permanently. Set 'Pick When Blank' to have ADash blank with a new module every time there is no activity.

1.24 Blank/After

This checkbox turns screen blanking on and off. The slider to the right sets how many minutes of no keyboard or mouse activity must elapse before the screen is blanked. You may set it to anywhere from 1 minute to 60 minutes.

1.25 Mouse/After

This checkbox turns mouse blanking on and off. The slider to the right sets how many seconds of no keyboard or mouse activity must elapse before the mouse cursor is blanked. You may set it to anywhere from 1 second to 60 seconds

1.26 SmartBlank/%

SmartBlank allows you to prevent screen blanking from using up valuable CPU cycles when you are performing other tasks. Mark this checkbox to enable this feature and use the slider to the right to select how busy the CPU must be before the SmartBlank built-in blanker is used. If, for instance, you select 80%, if the CPU is 80% busy or more, the built-in blanker will be used instead one of your configured ones. The built-in blanker simply stops video DMA. This requires zero CPU use and under some circumstances may actually speed up your Amiga.

1.27 Use ME!

This button is used to clear this feature. If you hit the 'Only Blank with this Module' button in the Blanker Maintenance window, one blanker will be selected to be used permanently for blanking. It will have an asterick to the left of its name in the listview. To turn off this feature, simply press this button.

1.28 Cat

This cycle gadget selects the current SpeedIcon category that you will be working with. You may change the name of the category using the text gadget beneath. The SpeedIcon applications associated with the category will be shown in the listview below.

1.29 Select SpeedIcon

This listview displays the SpeedIcon applications associated with the current category. To edit a SpeedIcon, double click on its name in this list and you will be taken to the SpeedIcon Maintenance window. To select a SpeedIcon in order to use the buttons beneath the listview, click once on its name.

1.30 Add

Press this button to add a new SpeedIcon to the currently selected category. You will be taken to the SpeedIcon Maintenance window. To select a category, use the cycle gadget above the listview.

1.31 Del

Use this button to delete the currently selected SpeedIcon application. To select a SpeedIcon, click once on its name in the listview above.

1.32 Up/Dwn

These two gadgets may be used to change the order of the SpeedIcons within the current category. ADash will always display the SpeedIcons in its main window in the same order that they appear in the listview above. To change the order, first select the SpeedIcon you wish to move and click once on its name to select it. Then use either the 'Up' button or the 'Dwn' button to move it in the list.

1.33 Accelerate Mouse

The 'Accelerate Mouse' checkbox turns mouse acceleration on and off.

1.34 When over

This sets the minimum amount by which the pointer must have moved since the last mouse movement for acceleration to take place. A value of zero means the mouse will always be accelerated. If you increase this value you will have to move the mouse faster before it will begin to be accelerated.

1.35 Speed up by

This value determines the factor by which the mouse pointer is accelerated when the acceleration is enabled. A factor of 0 or 1 deactivates mouse acceleration. Two would mean twice as fast as normal, three would be three times, etc.

1.36 Start Iconified

Setting 'Start Iconified' prevents the main ADash window from opening when you launch ADash. ADash will start up either iconized or menufied depending on the setting of the 'Iconify as...' cycle gadget below.

1.37 Dbl Click SI

This button controls whether or not it is necessary to double click or single click a SpeedIcon to launch its associated application. Check this box to require double clicking

1.38 Hide Timer/Alm Boxes

Set this checkbox to reduce the width of the ADash main window. When checked, the timer/stopwatch and alarm boxes will be removed from the main window and the width decreased by that amount. This can allow you to conserve space on your WorkBench screen.

1.39 Iconify as Workbench Icon

This cycle gadget controls ADash's response when it is iconized. ADash starts up iconized when 'Startup Iconified' is checked or can be iconized while running using the 'i' gadget in the main window's title bar. When ADash iconizes, it becomes either an entry in the tool menu of the WorkBench screen, or an appicon on the WorkBench screen. You either select the menu item or double click the appicon to bring back the main window.@endnode

1.40 Audio Click

This button turns on and off the clicking sound you will hear when you launch an application. Check the box to enable the sound effect.

1.41 Options...

Click this button to move to the Options window.

1.42 Save

When you have finished adjusting your settings, select 'Save' to exit ADashPrefs and save your work. ADashPrefs will save your configuration to both the 'ENVARC:' and 'ENV:' directories. In addition, if ADash is running, ADash will reset itself to use your new settings.

1.43 Use

Click on the 'Use' button to exit ADashPrefs and use your settings without permanently saving your work. ADashPrefs will save your configuration only to the 'ENV:' directory and if ADash is running, it will be reset to use your new settings.

1.44 Cancel

Select 'Cancel' to exit ADashPrefs without saving your settings.

1.45 Blanker Maintenance Gadget by Gadget

The Blanker Maintenance window allows you to add and change blanker module settings. Many of the gadgets can be activated or toggled by using a key on your keyboard. This shortcut key is indicated by an underlined letter in the gadget's name.

Title	Stack
Path	Use Me! Blanker
WB Startup/CLI Startup	Demo Module...
CLI Args	Select Display Mode
ADash Protocol/CTRL-C Break	Module Dependant Options
Disabled	Okay
Sound	Delete
Can Preload	Cancel

1.46 Title

This field is displayed at the extreme top of the Blanker Maintenance window and displays general information about the current module: name, version, author and copyright info, and release date. If you are configuring a non ADash Protocol blanker this field will be blank.

1.47 Path

This field displays the DOS path of the module you are configuring. This is the same path you selected when you added the module. You can not modify this field. If it is incorrect, you will need to delete the module and use the 'Add' button again.

1.48 WB StartUp/CLI Startup

This cycle gadget determines whether the module is launched as a WorkBench process or a CLI process. The only time you will normally select 'CLI Startup' is if you are configuring an application to be used for blanking other than an ADash module and wish to use the 'Args' field to the right to send it startup parameters.

1.49 CLI Args

This string gadget is used to specify CLI arguments when you are launching a module or application as a 'CLI Startup' process. It will be disabled when 'WB Startup' is selected to the left.

1.50 ADash Protocol/CTRL-C Break

This cycle gadget determines how ADash tells a program is launches during screen blanking to stop and exit. If you are configuring an ADash module, you should always leave this set on 'ADash Protocol'. If you are setting ADash to launch another application during screen blanking, you will want to make sure this is set to 'CTRL-C Break'.

1.51 Disabled

Check this box to disable a blanker so that it will not be used for screen blanking.

1.52 Sound

Check this checkbox to enable any sound effects or music the current module may support. This checkbox will be ghosted if the module does not support music or sound effects.

1.53 Can PreLoad

This button determines whether a module may be loaded into memory when ADash is first started so that it will not have to be reloaded each time it is needed. This field only has meaning if 'Load at Startup' is selected in the ADash Preferences window. It can be used to prevent large modules from loading while smaller ones are.

1.54 Stack

This sets the stack size for the blanker module when it is run. Leave it at the default of 4096 bytes when using an ADash module. If you are configuring another application, you may need to increase this value. Consult the instructions for the program to make sure. Note also that if the program is launched as a WorkBench process, the stack size in its '.info' file will be used if present.

1.55 Only Blank with this Module

This button is used to select the blanker module you are viewing as the module to be used exclusively for screen blanking. When this feature is enabled, no other blanker modules will be used for blanking or be loaded. To disable this feature, either select another blanker module for this option, or hit the 'Use ME!' button in the ADash Preferences window.

1.56 Demo Module...

The demo button allows you to see what the current module looks like and change its options. When you hit 'Demo Module...', the screen will be blanked and the module will run using the current options. ADashPrefs will open a small window on screen with the module's option gadgets and allow you to change them. If the module has no options, you will see only a 'Stop' button. In most cases, you will see the effect of changes you make to the module's options immediately. To stop the demo mode, hit the window's close button in the titlebar or use the 'Stop' button. Note that some module's may scramble the screen image in such a way that it is difficult or impossible to see the window ADashPrefs opens. In this event, to stop the module, use the 'ESC' key on your keyboard. Other blankers, specifically those that normally perform a graphics display and then blank the screen (such as Smelter and Zoom, for example) will not blank the screen in demo mode so that you will still be able to see the 'Stop' button.

1.57 Select Display Mode

This screen button allows you to change the screen mode the current module uses for blanking. Some modules may not allow you to change the mode and will have this button ghosted.

1.58 Module Dependant Options

Any options specific to the module you are configuring will appear in the area at the bottom of the Blanker Maintenance window between the 'Demo Module' button and the 'Okay', 'Delete' and 'Cancel' buttons. If the module does not have any options you will not see any additional gadgets in this window. If you are unsure of what an option does, you may hit the 'Help' button on your keyboard to view a brief description.

1.59 Okay

Select this button to close the Blanker Maintenance window and either add the module to your list of blankers or accept changes you made to an existing entry.

1.60 Delete

This button will delete the current blanker module from your list of available modules. You can restore a deleted module by using the 'Cancel' button on the ADash Preferences window. You will however also lose all changes you made with ADashPrefs.

1.61 Cancel

Select 'Cancel' to return to the ADashPrefs window without saving the current module's information.

1.62 SpeedIcon Maintenance Gadget by Gadget

The SpeedIcon Maintenance window allows you to add and change SpeedIcon settings. Many of the gadgets can be activated or toggled by using a key on your keyboard. This shortcut key is indicated by an underlined letter in the gadget's name.

Path	Stack
Image	CLI Args
Rescale Image	Okay
WB Startup/CLI Startup	Cancel

1.63 Path

This string field displays the path of the SpeedIcon application you are either adding or editing. You may change it directly by retyping it here or you may use the file button to its right to select the path in a file requester.

1.64 Image

This string field displays the path of an IFF file to be used as the SpeedIcon image in the ADash main window. If you would like to use the application's icon image instead you may leave this blank. Otherwise, this points to a standard iff image that should be used as the image on the ADash main window. The selected image (for when you press the SpeedIcon button) must have the same name but end with '.alt'. If ADash can not find any file with '.alt' added, the same image will be used for both the normal and selected states of the SpeedIcon button. Note that the maximum displayable size of image will vary according to your WorkBench screen resolution and font selections. The specified image will be centered in the SpeedIcon gadget if it is smaller than the gadget or clipped if it exceeds the size of the SpeedIcon gadget.

If you leave this gadget blank, ADash will look for a Workbench icon for the file specified in the 'Path' field and use it as the SpeedIcon image instead.

1.65 Rescale Image

Check 'Rescale Image' if you would like ADash to adjust the size of an icon image before using it for your SpeedIcon image.

1.66 WB StartUp/CLI StartUp

This cycle gadget controls whether the application is executed as a WorkBench or CLI process. Many applications can be launched either way. Consult the documentation for the application in question if you are not sure which modes it supports. If you specify 'CLI Startup', you can also use the 'Args' field beneath to specify arguments to be given to the application. WorkBench processes retrieve their settings from their icon tooltypes. (To change the tooltypes, select the icon on the WorkBench by single clicking on it and select Icon/Information from the WorkBench menu. You can then edit the tooltypes.)

1.67 Stack

This value sets the size of the SpeedIcon application's stack. The default value of 4096 is usually sufficient, however, you may wish to increase this value. Consult the documentation accompanying the program to determine if it requires a larger stack size. Alternatively, if you are launching the program as a WorkBench process, ADash will use the stack size recorded in the application's icon file instead. In that case, this value will be ignored.

1.68 CLI Args

If you are launching the SpeedIcon application as a 'CLI Startup' process, you can use this field to specify arguments to be sent to it when it is launched. If the SpeedIcon will be launched as a 'WB Startup' process, this field will be ghosted.

1.69 Okay

When you have finished configuring the SpeedIcon, select 'Okay' to exit and save the entry.

1.70 Cancel

To exit without saving your changes, select 'Cancel'. You will lose all of your changes.

1.71 Options Gadget by Gadget

The Options window allows you to edit various miscellaneous ADash features. Many of the gadgets can be activated or toggled by using a key on your keyboard. This shortcut key is indicated by an underlined letter in the gadget's name.

No Never...	PassLock
No Immediate...	Password
PubScreen Name	* DOS WildCard
Numeric Font	Click<->Move
ADash Main Window is Normal	Show All Tasks
Sound Path	No Activation
Play Direct from Disk	Okay
Test Sound	

1.72 No Never...

This cycle gadget selects a corner of the screen for the 'Never' feature. The corner you have selected will be marked with a '-' in the representation of a screen to the left. When the mouse is in this corner of the screen, it will change to an 'X' symbol and the screen will never be blanked no matter how long there is no keyboard or mouse activity. You can also select 'No Never' to turn off this feature.

1.73 No Immediate...

This cycle gadget selects a corner of the screen for the 'Immediate' feature. The corner you have selected will be marked with a '+' in the representation of a screen to the left and must be different from the 'Never' corner. When the mouse is in this corner of the screen, ADash will immediately blank the screen if screen blanking is enabled ('Blank' is checked in the ADash Preferences window). You can also select 'No Immediate' to turn off this feature.

1.74 PubScreen Name

This field specifies a public screen which ADash should use for its main window instead of the WorkBench screen. If the screen name located here can not be found, ADash will use the WorkBench screen as usual.

1.75 Numeric Font

This field allows you to specify the font used by ADash for the numeric displays in the main window. You may type the name of a font into this field or use the font button to the right to open a font requester where you can choose a font. The 'Display Font' defaults to a special font included with ADash that is normally installed by the ADash installer utility.

1.76 ADash Main Window is Normal

This cycle gadget determines whether the ADash main window operates as a normal window, always stays in front of all windows or stays behind any other open windows. Select 'ADash Main Window Stays in Front' for a main window that will stay in front of all others, 'ADash Main Window Stays in Back' for a window that stays in the back, or 'ADash Main Window is Normal' for a normal Intuition window that you move yourself as needed.

1.77 Sound Path

This field sets the sound that will be played when the alarm sounds or the timer reaches zero. You may type the path of the sound directly into the string gadget or use the file button to the right to bring up a file requester where you can select it. The file you chose must be either a monaural 8SVX IFF sound file or a raw sample. If no file is specified here, a default tone will be played.

1.78 Play Direct From Disk

This checkbox controls whether or not the sound file specified above it is preloaded and stored in your Amiga's memory when ADash is first started, or if it is reloaded each time ADash needs to play it. You can mark this field to reduce the amount of memory used by ADash, especially if the sound file you have chosen is a large one.

1.79 Test Sound

Select this button to test the sound file you chose in the 'Sound Path' field above. ADashPrefs will play the sound for you.

1.80 PassLock

This checkbox turns the Passlock password protection feature on and off. When this is marked, you will be asked to enter the password entered in the 'Password' field to the right each time the screen blanks before you can continue work. This feature is useful for preventing unauthorized persons from accessing your computer during your absence.

1.81 Password

Enter a password here for the PassLock feature. The password may be no more than 16 characters, digits, spaces or symbols. This is only used if the 'PassLock' checkbox to the left is marked. In that event, this is the password you will be asked to enter each time you return to your computer and the screen has blanked.

1.82 * DOS WildCard

This checkbox enables the asterick wildcard in AmigaDOS commands. When enabled, you may use an asterick in any path or filename to match any characters, instead of the standard '#?' AmigaDOS wildcards.

1.83 Click<->Move

This checkbox allows you to click the mouse in a window to move it to the front or back of other windows. When checked, just double click on any portion of a visible window to move it in front of all other windows or double click the left mouse button with the right button held down to move the window behind all other windows.

1.84 Show All Tasks

This checkbox determines whether tasks with zero CPU usage will be displayed in the Process Info window. Check it to display all tasks or leave it cleared and only those tasks with more than zero CPU usage will be listed.

1.85 No Activation

You may use this cycle gadget to select from various types of window activation. 'Key Activation' causes the window underneath the mouse to be activated when you start typing. This prevents you from having to first press the mouse button before you start typing in a window. 'Auto Activation' is a sunmouse like feature that automatically activates windows as you move the mouse pointer over them. You can also disable these features by using the 'No Activation' setting.

1.86 Okay

When you have finished editing your settings, select this button to return to the ADash Preferences window.

1.87 AppWindow Drag and Drop Features

Both ADashPrefs and ADash support the WB2.0 and higher AppWindow feature that allows you to drop program icons from the WorkBench on these windows to add blankers or SpeedIcon applications. Simple drop an icon on the ADash Preferences window and ADash will bring up either the SpeedIcon maintenance or Blanker maintenance windows as appropriate. Alternatively, you may drop an icon on the main ADash window. Drop the icon over the SpeedIcon display to launch ADashPrefs and bring up the SpeedIcon maintenance window. Drop it on any other part of the main window to add it as a blanker module.

1.88 Writing Screen Blanker/Saver Modules

A Call To Arms

I would like to invite all graphics programmers to write blanker modules for ADash. In writing this program one of my goals was to create a standard which would allow modules to be written and others and encourage the formation of a large assortment of modules like those existing for other platforms. Information on creating your own blanker modules as well as examples and startup modules can be found in the Developer directory in the same directory where you installed ADash.

1.89 Reporting Bugs, Making Suggestions, Contacting the Author

I welcome all bug reports, suggestions and requests for information and/or aid writing blanker modules. I can be contacted by the following methods:

Internet EMail: vreeland@earthlink.net

Or visit the ADash support page on World Wide Web:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~vreeland/ADash.html>

Or by snailmail:

Robert Vreeland Jr.
45 Maywood Dr.
San Francisco, CA 94127

1.90 ADash History

V1.0	First ADash Release	26/12/93
V2.0	Second Enhanced ADash Release	15/5/96