

# What's New

by "Cajun" David Richard

## Happy New Year

Ambrosia's offices have been a little quiet over the last few weeks. Everyone took some well deserved time off, leaving Cajun and Hector alone together in the office. Find out what happened later on in this issue.

Because of the holiday season and the quietness of the office, many of our projects were slowed down so that we all could enjoy our time off. But, that doesn't mean that we don't have things cookin' in the kitchen. We managed to release a new version of a utility, as well as start the ball rolling on a few more projects.

## Snapz Pro Released!

If you haven't heard by now, we have released a new version of our screen capture program. It's called Snapz Pro and offers the user many more features when capturing screens. Snapz Pro gives the user the power to easily grab the entire screen, a window, a menu or a selection of the screen in seconds. In addition to this, Snapz Pro scales the image to a pre-chosen size, makes on-the-fly conversions to a color palette, and also allows the user to organize the screens to different folders on the hard drive.

But, you're not going to find out all about it here. The best thing to do is to download Snapz Pro and check it out for yourself. You can also check out the Snapz Pro Press Release and an extensive How To article on the subject later on in this issue.

The product comes complete with a manual to help you with any initial questions as well as complete registration information. Snapz Pro carries an affordable \$20.00 registration fee -

previously registered users can upgrade to Snapz Pro for only \$10.00.

## New ColorSwitch

Bit-master, Matt Slot, is working on the new version of ColorSwitch. Aside from a new interface and the ability to set the color depth and the system volume, the main feature being added is support for multiple resolution monitors. (Yes, for all of you who have asked, it is soon to be a reality).

As you can see from the menus on the right, this new ColorSwitch will list all of the resolutions that your monitor and video card support. Each resolution will have a separate pop-up menu that lists the color depths available. The monitor on which this was installed does not support the "Thousands" color depth at the displayed resolution. However, it does support "Thousands" at a lower resolution, which is why it is greyed out in the pop-up menu. At a lower resolution (in this case, it's 800 x 600, 60Hz) the "Thousands" menu item is available.

As you will also notice, the lower box is titled "Main Display." This is because the machine on which this was loaded only had one monitor. In the case of a machine with more than one monitor, the ColorSwitch menu will have a separate list that has all of the resolutions and color depths of the additional monitor.

Oh! But that's not all! This new version of ColorSwitch will also feature the ability to preset a resolution and a color depth, and to switch to that setting by choosing a menu item that appears under the "ColorSwitch Sets" heading.

y choosing the "Edit Sets..." menu item, you are prompted by the above dialog box. Here you can add and delete sets, choose a specific name for a set, and even assign a keyboard shortcut for the set. This allows for simple and convenient setting of your monitor, and will come in handy when a particular game needs a specific resolution or color depth (like our forth coming game, Manse), or when you wish to work in a program that uses a higher color depth than you normally use (such as Photoshop).

This new version of ColorSwitch is well on its way and will be entering beta testing in early February. We should see it available on the market soon afterwards.

## Product Updates

Along with the new version ColorSwitch, a few of our games will also be upgraded. The makers of Barrack, Escape Velocity, and Bubble Trouble have all mentioned future updates. What can we expect from them?

A recent conversation with Greg Lovette revealed a little information about his future plans for Barrack. Since the game is already very stable, we may see the update sport several new features, one being a save game feature for you Barrack experts.

Along with fixing couple stragglng bugs in Escape Velocity, Matt Burch with working with his artist (his little brother ;) to create a new set of graphics for the next version of the game. You can see a preview in version 1.0.4. Check out these Mantas:

n the Plug-in world (where I have heard there are now over one hundred plug-ins), two

enterprising EV players, by the names of Mark Melaccio and Ian Beach, have created a set of plug-ins that replace the entire universe. It's called Star Wars: A New Alliance and is a must-see for anyone who has conquered the aliens. You can get it from the EV Add Ons page, or the Official Escape Velocity Web site at [www.escape-velocity.com](http://www.escape-velocity.com).

We also have plans to release a Delta\_V FAQ (everything you wanted to know about making plug-ins for Escape Velocity). So if you are interested in making plug-ins and don't really know where to start, this Delta\_V FAQ will be your recipe book for making any type of plug-in imaginable. Look for the Delta\_V FAQ to be released with the next version of Escape Velocity.

## Bubble Trouble High Score Contest

Oh, yes. You knew it was coming, and soon it will be here. When the next version of Bubble Trouble is released, the Bubble Trouble High Score Contest will officially be underway. Although we can't say when this version will be released (you know that), we can say that it is not too far off. So start practicing your fish-squishing skills and get ready to see who is the biggest fish in the sea.

## Manse and Delver

Wow, with all this happening, we almost forgot about the two new games. I decided that this time we should hear what's happening with these products from the makers themselves...

Brian Barnes tells us:

[Manse] is coming along fine, most all of the coding is done (except for bug fixes). What I've been working on, and will be for a while, is making maps, objects, monsters, and the logic that ties them all together. I'd like to include a screen shot of the interface, is that OK?

When it ships, even if I have to test this software at .01 fps, it will be RAVE compliant, that means out of the box (eh, out of the net) 3D card ready.

Glenn Andreas writes:

Delver is coming along slowly, getting closer to testing. The engine is all but done (pending minor enhancements and bug-fixes), and the design work on the scenario is mostly done as well. My current emphasis is making a world that is interesting and "deep" - above and beyond the main plot (which gets layered onto of that). This includes making sure that different objects work together correctly (for example, if you want to bake bread, you can add water to flour - and that water can come from a pitcher or a bucket, which could be filled from a pool, fountain, well, or storage vat, which could also contain wine or oil (which you can use to refill an oil lamp)). I don't expect people to fill a bucket with wine (maybe a pitcher though), but I'm trying to at least anticipate that sort of thing.

Ah, put wine in a bucket. I like...

Keep in mind, folks, that both of these projects are quite huge, and there will more than likely be a considerable amount of time before we see them on the market. Please be patient with us, we want to make your experience with these games the best that we can, and it may take some time before every detail is in place.

Changes to our Toll Free Order Service

Some of you may have noticed that your calls to our toll free order service are handled a little differently these days. We are now sending our 800 order line to an answering service that provides 24-hour access, 7-days a week (that's 24-7 to you and me). Now you can register your Ambrosia products over the phone anytime, day or night.

However, this does remove the ability to provide your code to you over the phone (as many of our older products do state). The reason for this is because the orders must get to our office and be processed before we can send out the codes. So we recommend that when you are ordering on the 800 line, please provide your eMail address so we can get the code to you as soon as we are done processing each day.