

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to ProChat! For those of you that do not already know what ProChat is, you have been missing out! Simply put, ProChat is a replacement door for PCBoard 14.5's CHAT or NODE function commands. It allows quite a bit more flexibility with the CB system, and is currently enjoyed by hundreds of PCBoard systems internationally!

If you do not run a multi-node PCBoard system, this door is of no use to you. If you are running a non-PCBoard system, the door will not work even with the most sophisticated of door conversion utilities because ProChat takes full advantage of many of PCBoard's internal data structures (namely the node status data file that is maintained constantly by PCBoard while other callers are online)

GETTING STARTED

Getting ProChat up and running is not a difficult task and should not take any more than about 10 or 15 minutes of your time. Even if it does take more, it will be well worth it. Should you decide to customize ProChat to make it seem a part of PCBoard, it will take you a bit longer. However, care has been taken to mimic PCBoard as much as possible.

First off, make ProChat it's own directory. Place the contents of the ProChat .ZIP file into this directory. There is no need to make multiple configuration files for each node on your system. There is no node-specific information stored in the main configuration file.

To create a configuration file (or at least modify the one that is included with the distribution files), run the setup program. Type `SETUP <config filename>`, where `<config filename>` is the name of the configuration file you wish to create/modify. A default one has been supplied for you (PROCHAT.CNF) Even if you decide to use the default configuration file, you must run setup to modify the paths and filenames to point to the appropriate locations on your hard drive. The setup program is outlined in detail in the next section of the documentation.

Next, create a batch file to run ProChat. Since ProChat is based on ProKit, you may be familiar with the format for the batch files to load a ProKit door. An example batch file for ProChat is below:

```
@echo off
c:
cd\prochat
prochat prochat.cnf c:\pcb1
cd\pcb1
if exist event.bat event
node1                                <-- command to reload your system
```

Last, but not least, modify your doors.lst file in PCBoard to reflect the addition of your new door. A common name to give the batch file is just CB, that way users can just type CB at the main PCBoard menu and drop right into ProChat. Don't forget to modify your doors menu file so that your users know that it is there!

To go a step further, you may wish to modify your PCBTEXT file(s). ProChat allows users to page others in PCBoard. In order to do this, some changes are needed for your PCBTEXT file to let users know that they are being paged to go into ProChat and not the built in CHAT facility inside PCBoard. Below is a list of record numbers you may wish to modify and what you may to change them to. If you are running ProChat in /X mode (using USERNET.XXX instead of USERNET.DAT), you may decide not to modify your PCBTEXT file because ProChat takes advantage of the new BR command to notify users of a ProChat chat request.

```
225: " wants you in ProChat, @FIRST@."
226: "To respond, at the main Command line enter CB."
227: "Node CHAT: (U)navailable, (Enter)=no change?"
228: "Node CHAT: (A)vailable, (Enter)=no change?"
311: "CHATTING in ProChat"
```

Please also note that you should not raise the security on the CHAT command in PCBSetup. Doing so will prevent users from paging others inside of PCBoard from ProChat.

THE SETUP PROGRAM

The setup program was included with ProChat for a couple of reasons. Most importantly being the fact that ProChat stores configuration information in binary format. It was also included to make your life a little bit easier in setting up the system.

When you run setup, you can place the name of the

configuration file on the command line. If you do not place the filename on the command line, you will be prompted for a filename for the configuration file when setup loads.

The setup program is fairly easy to use and is pretty much self-explanatory. This section will outline the use of the program. There are basically four different types of fields that can be modified. They are strings, numbers, toggles, and lists. If you press the F2 key at any input field, you will be toggled between the general setup screen and the security level setup screen.

When editing strings, the field is automatically formatted to uppercase, lowercase, mixed, or none for you. Use the right and left arrow keys to move the cursor around the field, backspace and delete to remove text, home to go to the beginning of the field, end to go to the end of the field, and insert to insert text. Pressing ctrl-end will delete from the cursor to the end of the field. If you press ctrl-left or ctrl-right, the cursor will move one word to the left or to the right.

When editing numbers, use the right and left arrow keys to move around the field, backspace and delete to delete, home to go to the beginning of the field, and end to go to the end of the field. Pressing ctrl-end will delete from the cursor to the end of the field. If you enter a value that is out of range, you will not be able to move to another field until a valid value is entered.

When editing toggles, pressing the space bar will toggle from yes to no and vice-versa. If you press 'y', it will switch to yes, and if you press 'n', it will switch to no.

When editing lists, there are a couple of stages. The first stage is when you first move onto the field, and the field is high-lighted. Pressing the space bar or enter will cause a window with a list in it to pop up. This is stage two. Use the up and down arrow keys to move through the list and press enter to choose the item you want to set the field to. If you press ESC while in stage two, any changes to the field will be aborted. If you pressed enter to pop up the window, when a selection is made, you will be moved down to the next field, otherwise you will be back at stage one on the same field.

When you are editing any one of the four types of fields, you always have the option of exiting the program (and saving any changes made) by pressing the ESC key. If you press tab, enter, or the down arrow, you will be moved on to the next field. If you press shift-tab or the up arrow, you will be moved back to the previous field.

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PCBoard node information file This is the full path and name of your usernet.dat file (or usernet.xxx file). This file is maintained by PCBoard to determine who is online and to send chat requests to other nodes. This must be the same for all nodes.

ProChat node information file This is the full path and name of the file used by ProChat to determine who is online, what channel the caller is on, etc. This file is created and maintained by ProChat itself. No intervention on your part is required. This must be the same for all nodes.

ProChat chat data file This is the full path and name of the file used by ProChat to relay messages between the callers in ProChat. This file is created and maintained by ProChat itself. You should delete it every so often because it can grow quite large in size. I recommend that you delete this file while no one is in ProChat, however you may delete it while callers are in ProChat without a problem. This must be the same for all nodes.

ProChat channel data file This is the full path and name of the file used by ProChat to maintain a list of currently active channels and squelch values. This file is created and maintained by ProChat itself. No intervention on your part is required. This must be the same for all nodes.

Bad Handle Trashcan file This is the full path and name of the file that restrict names that may be used for handles. This file is a straight ascii file that contains a list of names that you may not want users to use for a handle (ie Sysop, etc) If you place an asterisk (*) in the first column on a line followed by some text, the text will not be allowed in a handle (ie *Sysop would not allow a caller to use _Sysop_ or anything with the text 'Sysop' in it)

Caller Help Display file This is the full path and name of the file that is displayed to a caller when the /HE command is executed in ProChat. Both ascii and ansi versions may be used (ie HELP and HELPG)

ProChat Entrance display file This is the full path and name of the file that is displayed to a caller when he/she enters ProChat. This is an optional file. Both ascii and ansi versions may be used.

Registered To This field should not be filled in if you have not registered ProChat. If you have registered ProChat, simply place the name of your BBS as you have it registered with me in this field. It is case sensitive. Make sure that there are no leading or trailing spaces in this field, otherwise ProChat will run as unregistered.

Registration # This field should not be filled in if you have not registered

ProChat. If you have registered ProChat, simply place the registration number that I have given you in this field.

Driver Type This list-type field allows you to choose between BIOS and INTERRUPT for communications. This is the same as the first line in any ProKit configuration file. Choose interrupt for starters. If you have problems, try using bios.

PCBoard Version This field is extremely important. In this field, place either "/Exx", "/U", or "/Xxx" where xx is the number of nodes. By placing "/U", the system will default to 99 nodes. If you are running PCBoard with the new usernet.xxx format, you must place "/Xxx" in this field with xx being the number of nodes you have online. Should you add an additional node to your system, you must remember to update this field, otherwise ProChat will not recognize the new node(s).

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Number of channels This is the number of channels available. ProChat is limited to 65535 channels. However, no more than about 100 should ever be necessary, and in most instances, no more than about 10 are needed. You must have at least 1 channel set up in this field.

Default Channel This is the channel that ProChat should place a caller into when the caller first enters CB. Normally this would be channel 1. You may configure the system to enter users into another channel depending upon the conference the user entered from, etc.

Default Squelch This is the squelch that ProChat should place a caller into when the caller first enters CB. Normally this would be blank for public chat. Any string up to 12 characters in length may be placed in this field. It is not case sensitive.

Time Warning Frequency Due to a bug in ProKit, I implemented this to notify users every so often of how much time is remaining. You may disable this completely by entering 0. Any other value will cause a message to be displayed to the user every xx minutes telling the caller how much time he or she has remaining for the call. xx is the number you place in this field.

Allow use of handles If you do not wish to allow handles to be used in chat, the caller's first name will be used instead. If this field is set to no, the /HA command will not be allowed regardless of the security level you have placed on it. If this flag is set to yes, upon entering ProChat, the caller will be asked for a handle to use with their first name being the default. Handles are limited to 12 characters in length.

Allow duplicate handles If this field is set to yes, ProChat will allow users to use the same handle as someone on another node. For instance, if the caller on node 1 was using the handle "The Doctor", a caller on node 2 could also use the handle "The Doctor". If this field is set to no, ProChat will not allow users to use the same handle as someone else.

Use fast message check method ProChat checks it's data files for incoming messages once every 5 seconds. If this field is set to yes, ProChat will still check every 5 seconds, only if the user has nothing typed on his/her input line. If this field is set to no, ProChat will check every 5 seconds, whether or not the user has anything typed on his/her input line. Setting this field to yes will speed the system up, however slow typists may fall behind in receiving incoming messages.

Allow paging in PCBoard If this field is set to no, ProChat will not allow users to page another user that is in PCBoard. If this field is set to yes,

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ProChat will send a chat request to a user in PCBoard if the caller requests it to be sent.

Allow paging in ProChat If this field is set to no, ProChat will not allow users to page other users that are also in ProChat. This was added as a prevention for "death paging" where one user could send countless page requests to another user in ProChat. If this field is set to yes, ProChat will allow users to page others in ProChat.

Show private messages to sysop If this field is set to yes, the Sysop (if in ProChat) will receive the private messages from all users. If this field is set to no, only the addressee will receive the private message sent from someone.

Display city in node scan This is the same option as found in PCBSetup. The reason it is here too is because ProKit does not provide a link to this option in PCBoard (and I was just plain too lazy to reread the pboard.dat file)

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The second page in setup is nothing more than a list of all of the commands available to users in ProChat and a security level attached to each. To switch back to page 1, press the F2 key.

PROCHAT COMMANDS

/AC - Perform action command This command allows users to show emotion to other users. The messages come across to other nodes without the tradition incoming message header ("(channel, handle) message"). Instead the come across in the format of "handle message". Incoming action messages are also displayed in a different color (in ansi mode) from normal incoming messages.

/AD - Adjust time left This command should be available to Sysops only. With this command, you may adjust the time left of a caller on another node in ProChat. By selecting a negative adjust value, time will be reduced, and a positive adjust value will increase time remaining. The caller to be adjusted must be in ProChat. You cannot adjust your own time limit.

/AN - Ansi mode toggle This command is exactly like the PCBoard main board command M (display mode change). It toggles between ansi and non-ansi modes.

/AV - Page availability toggle This command allows users to toggle

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whether or not they want to receive ProChat page requests. ProChat never displays a page request from PCBoard (since PCBoard will not send a page request to a caller with a Group chat status). If the user selects unavailable, other callers will be notified when they attempt to page the user. The default availability setting is to available.

/CH - Change active channel Allows users to switch among channels within the limit you have set up in ProChat. When changing the channel, other users will be notified that the user has switched out, and the users chatting on the new channel will be notified that the user has switched in.

/FR - Frequency node scan Displays to the user a list of other users that are chatting on the same channel with the same squelch value of the user.

/GO - Goodbye Logs the user off of the system. Other users will be notified that the user has been disconnected.

/HA - Change handle Allows the user to change his or her handle as shown to other users with incoming messages. If you have chosen to not allow handles in setup, this command will not execute.

/IG - Set Ignore handle Allows users to create and maintain a list of handles that they do not want to receive incoming messages from. If a message comes through from a handle the user has chosen to ignore, it is ignored and no action is taken. If the user chooses a handle that is already being ignored, ignore status will be removed from that handle. If the handle being ignored changes, incoming messages will once again come through since ProChat only looks at the handle text that it is coming from. Users may create a list of up to 20 handles to ignore. Once the user exits ProChat, the list is destroyed.

/MO - Set channel monitors Allows users to monitor incoming messages from channels other than the one he/she is chatting on. Users may also choose squelch values for the channels chatting on. A list of up to 10 different monitors (channel and squelch combinations) may be maintained.

/NO - ProChat node scan Displays to the user a list of users that are in ProChat. It tells the user what channel the user is chatting on, what their handle and real name is, and what speed the user is connected at (ie 2400bps)

/PA - Page user for chat Allows the user to send a chat request to another user. There are three different methods that ProChat may use to page the caller. If the caller is in ProChat, ProChat will send a page request notifying the caller of the channel and squelch value that the paging user is

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chatting with. If the caller is in PCBoard and the new usernet.xxx format is being used, the caller in PCBoard will receive a broadcast message telling the user that he or she is wanted in ProChat. If the caller is in PCBoard, but the old usernet.dat format is being used, the caller in PCBoard will be paged in the traditional PCBoard style. In which case, the PCBTEXT lines mentioned earlier in the document would have to be modified for the caller to know to go into ProChat.

/PC - PCBoard node scan Displays to the caller a list of all callers on the system and their current activity status. It is equivalent to the PCBoard WH and 11 commands.

/RE - Log user off system This command should be available to Sysop level users only. This operates in a similar fashion to the PCBoard 12 command. The only difference being the user must be in ProChat for it to work.

/SE - Send private message Allows the user to send a message to another user in ProChat no matter what channel or squelch value either is using. Only the addressee will receive the message. If the Sysop is in ProChat and has chosen to receive private messages, the Sysop will also see the message being sent. When received, the addressee will receive a beep and be notified that it is a private message.

/SQ - Change squelch value Allows the user to change his or her squelch value. A squelch value is used to establish private communication with one or more users on other nodes. If the user has his/her squelch set to blank, he or she is considered to be in public chat mode.

/TI - Time statistics Displays to the caller the number of minutes used and number of minutes remaining for him/her for this call.

/WH - Who else is chatting Displays a list of callers that are chatting with the same channel and squelch settings as the user. This command is different from the /FR command because it displays in sentence format the handles that the user is chatting with (ie "You are chatting with no one." or "You are chatting with Sysop, Mary, John.")

TROUBLE SHOOTING

Problem: Users are not receiving any form of messages from other users.

Solution: Make sure that all of the data files labels in the setup section as "Must be the same for all nodes" are the same for all nodes.

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Problem: Users are receiving "Nobody is listening on this channel" messages when there are other users with the same chat settings (channel, squelch).

Solution: Delete your channels.dat file and start ProChat up again.

REGISTRATION

ProChat is not crippled in any way. The only difference between the registered and unregistered versions of ProChat is that the unregistered version displays unregistered messages to the caller. When registered, ProChat will proudly display the name of your bulletin board as it is registered to.

Registration for ProChat is cheap and simple. When I receive your registration request in the mail, I will call your system and leave a message with your registration information in it. The registration fee for prochat is a base of \$25. If you run a system larger than 5 nodes, please add (to the \$25) \$5 for each additional node (ie 8 nodes would be \$25 + (\$5 * 3) = \$40) Please send check or money order only. If you are registering from outside the US (ie Canada, or some other foreign country), please add an additional \$5 for processing. Thank you!

SUPPORT

At present, I am away at college and am not running a bulletin board. The best way to reach me would be on Springboard BBS (401-232-0088) or Eagles Nest Communications (401-732-5292). On Springboard, please address messages to "Fistandantilus". Thank you!

I can be reached at the following address:

Bryant College
Student PO Box 2144
Smithfield, RI
02917

-- OR --

ProChat registration
c/o Matt Messier
3 Loring Drive
Lincoln, RI
02865

REGISTRATION FORM

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Your name _____

BBS name (as to appear for "Registered To" field - max 40)

BBS location _____

BBS Phone # _____

Account name to log on as (for me to give you your registration information)

Account password _____

Your home phone # _____

Street address _____

Number of nodes online _____

Quantity

Amount

_____ \$25 base fee _____

_____ (#) additional nodes (over 5) _____

_____ Foreign processing fee _____

Total enclosed _____

Signature _____

Date _____