

PostMaster

(formerly "What Mailing List?")

Mailing List Management & Printing Software
for MS-DOS computers

Shareware Edition User's Guide

Written by Angel Babudro
P.O. Box 132
Paonia, CO 81428

NOTE: The file **PM.TXT** is ASCII TEXT for fixed-pitch printing, whereas **PM.WP** is a WordPerfect 5.1 document suitable for loading into a word processor for proportional-spaced printing.

Programme, Documentation, and all related files are
(c) Copyright 1990-1996 by Angel Babudro
All rights reserved

PostMaster

CONTENTS

- I. DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY 1
- II. COPYRIGHT 1
- III. LICENSE 1
- IV. TECHNICAL SUPPORT (HOW TO REACH ME) 2
 - Support & Updates from Bulletin Boards 3
- V. ORDERING METHODS AND REGISTRATION FEES 4
 - A. Benefits of Registration 4
 - B. How To Order 5
 - C. Pricing 5
 - INVOICE & REGISTRATION 7
- VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 8
- VII. WHAT DOES THIS SOFTWARE DO? 8
- VIII. HOW TO READ THIS MANUAL 9
- IX. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS 9
 - A. Practical File Size Limitations 10
 - B. Printers 11
 - C. Serial Printers 11
 - D. What happens after 1999? 12
 - E. Networks 12
 - F. Using With MS Windows 13
 - G. Using With 4DOS 14
- X. USING PostMaster FOR THE FIRST TIME 14
 - A. Quick Start 14
 - B. Quick Exit 16
 - C. Updating To a Newer Release 16
 - D. Choosing a Directory for PostMaster 16
 - E. Using an LCD or Monochrome Screen with a Colour Card 16
 - F. Specifying a Data Drive and/or Directory 17
 - G. Using the Menus 17

PostMaster

- H. Status Line 18

- XI. MANAGING & PRINTING YOUR FILES 18
 - A. Creating a New File 19
 - B. Opening an Existing File 20
 - C. Saving/Closing a File 20
 - D. Deleting a File 20
 - E. Changing a File's Name & Description 21
 - F. Copying Files 21
 - 1. Using DOS Commands (21)
 - 2. Using Back-up & Restore (22)
 - 3. Using the back-up option (22)
 - 4. Using the restore option (23)
 - G. Formatting Floppy Disks 23
 - H. Fixing Damaged Index Files (Re-Indexing) 24
 - I. Removing Records Which Are Marked for Deletion (Packing) 24
 - J. Importing Data from Other Software 24
 - 1. Importing ASCII files (25)
 - 2. Importing WML/PM files (27)
 - 3. Importing DBF (dBase) files (28)
 - 4. Importing Dr. Data Label files (29)
 - 5. Importing WordPerfect files (30)
 - 6. Grouping imported entries (31)
 - K. Exporting Data to Other Applications 32
 - 1. ASCII, comma-delimited (32)
 - 2. ASCII, fixed field length (32)
 - 3. Ventura Publisher (33)
 - 4. WordPerfect Merge (33)
 - 5. Microsoft Word Merge (34)
 - L. Querying & Selecting Entries to Print 34
 - 1. Selecting entries to be printed (34)
 - 2. Actions which affect all selected entries (35)
 - 3. Query examples (36)
 - M. Printing 37
 - 1. 11-digit Zip Codes (37)
 - 2. Other U.S. Postal Service considerations (38)
 - 3. Group List (39)
 - 4. Envelopes (39)
 - 5. Labels (40)
 - 6. Phone Book (41)
 - 7. Zip/Postal Code Distribution List (41)

PostMaster

- XII. DATA ENTRY 42
 - A. Names 42
 - 1. Special keys and key combinations (42)
 - 2. Using Function keys (F-keys) (43)
 - 3. Alt key combinations (43)
 - 4. Using filters (43)
 - 5. Getting help (<F1>/Help) (44)
 - 6. Locating an entry (F2/Find) (45)
 - 7. Grouping entries together (<F3>/Group) (45)
 - 8. Updating Response Dates (F4/Resp) (46)
 - 9. Switching between Last Mailed and Response Dates (<F5>/Date) (46)
 - 10. Adding new records (46)
 - 11. Changing existing records (47)
 - 12. Editing the Last Mail Date fields (47)
 - 13. Using the Delete/Omit/Bad Address/Select flags (47)
 - 14. Printing the Displayed Entry (48)
 - 15. Using Smart Zip (49)
 - 16. Macros & Key Words (49)
 - B. Groups 50
 - 1. What are groups? (50)
 - 2. Defining or changing groups (51)
 - C. Abbreviations (Macros) 51
- XIII. INDICES & FILTERS: CONTROLLING THE SORTING SEQUENCE AND VIEWING OF ENTRIES 53
 - A. Changing the Index 54
 - B. Filters 54
 - 1. Setting a filter (54)
 - 2. Clearing a filter (54)
- XIV. PREFERENCES 55
 - A. Setting Your Return Addresses 55
 - B. Data Entry Settings 55
 - 1. Setting the point of origin: the Country setting (55)
 - 2. Home country (56)
 - 3. City & State formatting (56)
 - 4. Default 3rd phone description (57)
 - 5. Bulk mailing features (57)
 - C. Envelopes 57
 - D. General Settings 58

PostMaster

1. Alert tone (58)
 2. Automatic 11-digit zip (58)
 3. Incomplete addresses (58)
 4. Import duplicate rule (59)
 5. Import technique (59)
 6. Adhere to USPS guidelines (60)
 7. Start on DE/Names screen (61)
 - E. Defining label dimensions 61
 - F. Defining Printers 61
 1. PCL (laser & deskjet) printer soft fonts (62)
 2. Scalable fonts (62)
 3. Post Office considerations (63)
 - G. Duplicate Checking 63
- XV. HELP 64
- XVI. PROBLEMS AND ERROR MESSAGES 65
 - A. EMS Memory Error 66
 - B. Text overlaps on reports 66
 - C. Information is Missing 66
- XVII. FILES WHICH MAKE UP THE PACKAGE 67

PostMaster

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY

THIS SOFTWARE ("PM") IS PROVIDED "AS IS" WITHOUT ANY WARRANTIES OR CONDITIONS, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THOSE CONCERNING MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NEITHER ANGEL BABUDRO NOR ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE CREATION, PRODUCTION, OR DELIVERY OF THIS SOFTWARE SHALL BE LIABLE FOR ANY INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF THE USE OR INABILITY TO USE THIS SOFTWARE EVEN IF ANGEL BABUDRO HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES OR CLAIMS. IN NO EVENT SHALL THE AUTHOR'S LIABILITY FOR ANY DAMAGES EVER EXCEED THE PRICE PAID FOR THE LICENSE TO USE PM, REGARDLESS OF THE FORM OF CLAIM. THE PERSON USING PM BEARS ALL RISK AS TO THE QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE SOFTWARE.

Some States do not allow the exclusion of the limit of liability for consequential or incidental damages, so the above limitation may not apply to you.

This agreement shall be governed by the State of Colorado and shall inure to the benefit of Angel Babudro and any successors, administrators, heirs and assigns. Any action or proceeding brought by either party against the other arising out of or related to this agreement shall be brought only in a State or Federal Court of competent jurisdiction located in Delta County, Colorado. The parties hereby consent to in personam jurisdiction of said courts.

COPYRIGHT

PM is copyright (c) 1990-1996 by Angel Babudro, all rights reserved. You may only use and/or distribute PM only under the License terms below.

LICENSE

The following terms and conditions apply to the use and/or distribution of *PostMaster*:

1. PM is being distributed as Shareware; it is **not** free. You are granted a limited license to use PM for an evaluation period of up to 60 days, to determine if it suits your needs. Any other use of PM or use past this period requires registration.

PostMaster

2. You may keep as many backup copies of PM as you wish. The Registered Edition is limited to simultaneous use on the number of computers indicated by the Use License. The Unregistered Edition may be used on any number of computers for the purpose of evaluation as specified in paragraph (1).

3. All files originally distributed as part of the package (including this notice) must be included without modification. The complete list of files can be found in the PACKING.LST file which is part of this package. The Registered Edition CONFIG.WDT files and files ending in SFP or SFL are NOT to be distributed.

4. Individual users may freely copy this disk and share it with friends, family, and acquaintances. Non-profit groups (including user groups and BBSs) may distribute copies of this disk. A fee of no more than \$5 may be charged to cover disk copying costs. If the files on this disk have dates more than a year old please contact the author for a free update to the current version.

5. Disk distributors and dealers must have written permission before selling copies of this software. When you contact me you will receive a free copy of the latest version and you will be placed on my mailing list to receive updates as they are released. Disk distributors may charge no more than \$10 per disk for copies of this software. If, as a distributor, you supply copies to other resellers, the end price to the user may not exceed \$10.

6. You must obtain written permission prior to distribution as part of any "bundled" packages (e.g., CD-ROM, placing on new computer systems, etc.). Such permission is often granted; the author is a nice guy - please write to him with your ideas.

7. If the software is packaged for retail sale the packaging must explain that the software is Shareware, that the purchaser is receiving a trial version, and that use beyond the trial period requires registration with the author.

8. You must immediately stop selling/distributing copies of this software upon notice from the author.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT (HOW TO REACH ME)

PostMaster

If you have questions or need help, just send a note to me through the mail or a BBS listed below. Registered users, those intending to register within 30 days, vendors, and BBS sysops may contact me via telephone as well. Sysops and shareware vendors please see VENDOR.DOC for concise distribution information.

| | |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Mail | Angel Babudro, "Computer Wizardry", Box 132, Paonia, |
| CO 81428 USA | |
| Phone | (970) 527-6756 Tue-Fri 10am-6pm Mountain Time |
| Internet | ababudro@omnionline.com |

I am normally available by phone during the hours stated above. If you get the answering machine please leave a message. Unregistered users must call back later - I am happy to answer your questions but I cannot afford to return these calls.

Support & Updates from Bulletin Boards

My software packages are "**free**" downloads on the BBSs listed below - unless otherwise noted, you need not subscribe to the BBS in order to download my shareware, although other files or functions may require subscription. Also see the topic "Updates via modem" in PM's Help Index (access from the HELP menu). You may send questions or comments to me via Internet e-mail at the following address: **ababudro@omnionline.com**

West Coast Both of my support boards on the west coast have closed down. I have my eye out for new ones...

Midwest Rusty 'n Edie's (OH) USR HST 16.8 (216) 726-1804
USR V.Everything 28.8 (216) 726-3628
Hayes 28.8 (216) 726-3619
ZyXel 19.2k v.32/v.32bis (216) 726-3620
2400/v.32/v.32bis (216) 726-2620
CompuCom SpeedModem (216) 726-3584

You will have to subscribe in order to download updates from this BBS, although I believe they give a trial subscription the first time you log on.

Syntaxis BBS V.34 28.8kbps (405) 721-8513
You can File Request (FREQ) my software from this board via FidoNet address 1:147/2021 using the magic name "PM"

PostMaster

to get the most recent version.

East Coast

WhiTech BBS (NC) ZyXEL 14.4kbps (910) 944-1165

You can File Request (FREQ) my software from this board via FidoNet address 1:3636/2.

Software Creations (Mass.) "Home of the Authors"

2400/9600/14.4 USR HST Dual Standard (508) 368-7036

2400/9600/14.4/28.8 USR V.Everything (508) 368-6604

This BBS offers 24-hours-per-day access and has 130 phone lines. They give a short first-time-user trial subscription; you must subscribe to continue downloading from this BBS.

The Sounding Board BBS (Sarasota, FL)

1200/2400/9600/14.4/28.8/33.6kbps (941) 955-5956

This BBS offers 24-hour-per-day access. You can File Request (FREQ) my software from this board via FidoNet address 1:137/121 using the magic name "PM" to get the most recent version.

Excalibur BBS (Central NY) USR Dual (315) 736-3792

This board is open for public access between the hours of 4am and midnight. You can FREQ (File REQuest) my software from this board via RBBS Net address A:954/401, FidoNet address 1:26501, or I.C. Net address 91:315/101.

ORDERING METHODS AND REGISTRATION FEES

Years of effort have gone into this software in the hopes that many people will be willing to pay for a small part of the development. Kindly remember that **if you use this software past the 60-day trial period** you are honour-bound to pay the registration fee. Besides this, there are several great benefits to registration!

Benefits of Registration

The Shareware (unregistered) version of PM is fully functional so that you may try all of its features. Past the 60-day evaluation period PM will display reminders to register your copy or discontinue use of the software, but it will always continue to be fully functional.

PostMaster

Registering PM gives you the following benefits:

- You get the latest version with automated installation, free PCL soft fonts, and bonus Shareware and Freeware.
- You get a data base of almost 71,000 zip codes (so PM will automatically fill-in the City & State name).
- You get a thorough manual which includes an introductory course in computer hardware, software, and DOS.
- Telephone help is available Tuesday through Friday, 10am-6pm Mountain Time
- PM is a "living" product that is continually developing. As a registered user you are entitled to download free updates from many BBSs around the world, from the SimTel site (and others) on the Internet, and many other sources (such as Shareware collections on CD-ROM). Updates are also available on disk for the cost of duplicating and mailing (see "How to Order" below).
- You can subscribe to receive new versions on disk in the mail about six times per year (see How to Order below).
- The Shareware License display and Unregistered Edition delay go away.
- It rewards the author for thousands of hours of software development from which you are deriving benefit. It's the right thing to do and will surely come back to you in blessings & good karma.

How To Order

You may pay by cash, cheque, money order, or credit card. Payment must accompany Purchase Orders. Since you are using the Unregistered Edition, please consider it the case that you are paying for delivered merchandise. When mailing payment please send:

1. U.S. currency, or
2. Checks or Money Orders in U.S. funds, or
3. Canadian cheque drawn on a Canadian bank in Canadian funds equivalent to the U.S. amount (if in doubt assume \$1 Canadian equals 70 cents U.S.).

If you prefer to use a credit card, you can order PM from Public (software) Library with your MC, Visa, AmEx, or Discover card by calling 800-242-4PsL (from overseas: 713-524-6394) or by FAX to 713-524-6398 or by CompuServe to 71355,470. THESE NUMBERS ARE FOR ORDERING ONLY. I CANNOT be reached at those numbers. To contact me for information about dealer pricing, volume discounts, site licensing, the status of shipment of the

PostMaster

product, the latest version number, or for technical information, call 970-527-6756 or write me at PO Box 132, Paonia, CO USA 81428. With Shareware you try the software before buying it; therefore, product returns are not allowed.

Tell PsL you want to register **product #10800**.

Pricing

Use License with Disk, US Zip Codes Data Base, and Manual — \$49.

This gives you a license to use one copy of PM, a disk with the latest Registered Edition, a data base of city names for over 70,000 US Zip Codes, the latest version of this documentation on disk, PCL soft fonts, notification of major updates, and a 3-ring-bound manual printed on either tree-free or recycled paper. The manual contains instructions for PM as well as a mini-course in computers.

Wholesale & OEM — If you want to bundle PM with your own special product or service (such as a special mailing list) and resell it, please write to me with your idea.

Site License — If your firm has multiple computers or network stations on which PM will be used you may purchase a Use License for the first copy (explained above) plus a Site License. A site license gives a discount based on the number of computers you are licensing, for which you received a disk for each computer and up to 10 printed manuals (additional printed manuals may be purchased as well). Discounts range from 30% to 80%. Use PM's Site License option on the Help menu to print the Site License order form.

Free Updates — When you register I will send you a "key" which will work with future releases. You can download updates from a bulletin board or otherwise obtain an update and it will recognize your registration "key".¹

Updates Though the Mail — Update disks are provided for the cost of duplicating and mailing. Updates are released every 1-8 weeks. For current pricing, choose the "Update/Sampler form" option under PM's Help menu to print an order form.

¹Be sure to **delete** CONFIG.WDT from copies you share with BBSs and others. Not only does it contain all the settings on your system and certain pieces of your data, it also contains your registration key and your name.

PostMaster

Update Subscription — You can subscribe to receive updates automatically through the mail. In return you agree to reimburse the cost of duplicating & mailing (currently \$4 plus shipping) within 30 days. There is no time commitment; either party may cancel at any time with written notice and you may return the last disk within 30 days in lieu of payment.

Prices & specifications are subject to change without notice. Vendors & sysops please see VENDOR.DOC & SYSOP.DOC.

PostMaster

INVOICE & REGISTRATION

Credit card orders see "How To Order" above

REMIT TO:

Angel Babudro
Computer Wizardry
PO Box 132
Paonia, CO 81428
USA

FROM:

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Use License Disk, manual, & computer course(\$49) _____
(see PM's HELP menu for multiple copy pricing)

Shipping & Handling U.S.A. - add \$5
Canada - add \$7
Outside U.S.A. & Canada - add \$23 _____

***** TOTAL = \$ _____**

Update Subscription

PostMaster

Do you want to receive updates in the mail every 1 to 4 months for the cost of duplicating & mailing? You'll have 30 days in which to pay or return the disk to cancel the subscription.

PostMaster

YES []

NO []

Disk size 3½" 5¼" Either
Drive density Low required High density (HD) ok
Do you use FDFORMAT? Yes: 820k, 1.48Mb, & 1.72Mb disks okay
Do you own a CD-ROM? Yes No

Printer make(s) & model(s) _____

Which version are you using now? (see Help/About screen) _____

I got my copy from _____

I saw a review in _____

Upon receipt of this paid invoice the latest Registered Edition disk and any options ordered above will be sent. Mail with U.S. cash, U.S. funds drawn on any bank, or U.S equivalent in Canadian funds. Put comments on back. Allow 1-4 weeks for the latest version to land on your doorstep. Thank you for registering!

PostMaster

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Everyone who has given me suggestions or sent me a "bug report" has contributed to this product. I'd like to acknowledge the extensive help that some folks have provided, namely Skip Taylor of The Researcher's BBS in California, Tom McElvy of Pleasure Communications in Virginia, Don Bearor of the Home Office On-line in California, Leticia Herr, Gigi Grizzard, James Ortt, and Bob Alger of The Sounding Board BBS in Florida.

Any trademarks I mention here are property of their respective owners.

WHAT DOES THIS SOFTWARE DO?

PostMaster (or "PM", formerly "What Mailing List" or "WML") is a powerful tool for managing and printing postal (mailing) lists which combines flexibility and ease of use. People who use *PostMaster* have rated it higher than competing software in practically any price range. Here is a brief summary of some of the outstanding features:

- * Easy & familiar pull-down menus
- * Context-sensitive help (just press the F1 key)
- * Up to 5.5 million entries per file
- * No limit to the number of files
- * Prints envelopes or labels of any type
- * Prints POSTNET 5-, 9-, or 11-digit (DPBC) bar codes for USA addresses
- * Phone Book print-out
- * Zip Code Distribution report for bulk mailing
- * Laser, ink jet, and dot matrix printers are fully supported, including fonts
- * 4-way indexing with instant switching between any of the four indices
- * Selectable 3-way duplicate checking
- * Filters for viewing only part of a file's contents
- * Query on any field's contents, any date range, by group, or choose entries at random
- * Unique Group feature lets you define up to 255 groups and then place each entry in up to 20 groups for easy selection

PostMaster is used by retailers, U.S. and Canadian government agencies, townships and city agencies, real estate agents, service companies, subscription companies (including BBS sysops and Internet providers), consultants, churches and other non-profit organizations,

PostMaster

individuals with lots of friends and family members, etc.

HOW TO READ THIS MANUAL

This shareware manual is intended for people with some knowledge of computers, DOS, and data bases. A detailed manual containing an introductory computer course and coverage of more advanced topics is provided with the Registered Edition.

Check the System Requirements section (below) before you begin. Next, read the Using PostMaster for the First Time section. If you are an advanced user this is probably all you will need to read before using PostMaster, however you probably want to review the Preferences screens to be sure PM will behave as you wish.

The rest of the manual is a reference guide, each menu item of PostMaster being described separately. Once you have PM "up and running" use this guide to refer to specific things you want more information about. For example, if you want to understand how Groups are used, look up "Groups" in the Table of Contents or Index.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

The bare minimum you will need is:

1. Any IBM-PC-compatible with a 720k (or larger) floppy disk drive or a hard disk drive
2. At least 400k of free RAM (use CHKDSK or MEM)
3. One of the operating systems listed below

I recommend you have:

1. An 80286 or faster computer
2. A hard disk with at least one megabyte of free space and an access time below 30ms
3. 512k or more available expanded or extended memory
4. A hard disk cache

PostMaster has been tested and found to work properly with the following Disk Operating Systems (DOS) and command interpreters:

PostMaster

- * PC-DOS 3.3² and 6.1
- * MS-DOS 5.0, 6.2, and 6.22
- * 4DOS 4.0, 5.0, and 5.5
- * DR-DOS 6 and Novell DOS 7
- * OS/2 2.1 and 3.0 (Warp)

You will need 800kb to 1.4Mb of disk space for the programme files, depending on which optional files you decide to keep on your disk, plus about 5Mb for the optional US Zip Codes data base, plus space for the files you will create. You may keep the data files and programme files in different directories or on different disks, so floppy disk use is possible although it will be very slow compared to a hard disk.

PostMaster will detect whether you have a monochrome or colour card installed, but it cannot detect what type of monitor you have. If you have a monochrome (black & white, green, etc.) monitor with a CGA, EGA, or VGA controller (this includes lap-top & notebook computers) the screen may be difficult to read. If so, try starting with the "/Monochrome" switch like so: "PM /M".

Practical File Size Limitations

Although PostMaster has a *theoretical* limit of 5.5 million names per mailing list file, you would need a super-computer and a lot of time to manage such a mammoth file. The number of names you can manage within a single disk file depends on the speed of the components in your computer (especially the hard disk and CPU). Here are my ideas of what you can reasonably expect from different computer systems:

Computer CPU Type Practical File Size Limit

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PC/XT (4.77MHz) | 300 entries per file |
| 286, 8MHz to 20MHz | 700 to 1,000 entries per file |
| 386dx, 16MHz to 40MHz | 1,000 to 4,000 entries per file |
| 486dx, 33MHz to 133MHz | 4,000 to 12,000 entries per file |
| 586 (Pentium) ³ | 5,000 to 15,000 entries per file |

²PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 3.1 or later should work fine. Except for file locking, previous versions should also work fine. However, WML has **only** been tested with the versions listed above, so I cannot guarantee the performance with other DOSs. If you are using an older DOS, I recommend upgrading to one of the versions listed above.

³586 estimates are theoretical; the others are based on my personal

PostMaster

If you are a patient person, you may feel comfortable with going well over these guidelines, and vice versa for impatient people.⁴ In making these estimates I am assuming that a disk cache (such as SmartDrive) is being used on all but a PC/XT and that people running a 486 expect faster response than people using XT's - a 486 can access a huge file faster than a PC/XT can access a tiny one.

You can store millions of entries by creating hundreds of files, although duplicate checking will only work within a single file. You can consolidate or separate files at any time, so you can enter your data now and experiment with different ways of organizing it as you please.

Printers

PostMaster supports two types of printers concurrently -- a laser printer and a dot matrix printer on LPT1, LPT2, or LPT3. The laser printer must be a PCL 1-5 printer (compatible with H-P LaserJet I, II, or III). PM has been tested on Panasonic 4450 (H-P LaserJet I-compatible) and H-P LaserJet III & IV laser printers. I'm sure there are some lasers which could be better supported, so let me know if you own one of them. PCL 5 laser owners will be happy to know that they can use the scalable fonts.

If your printer is not on the list check in your printer's manual for its compatibility. Most dot matrix printers are compatible with Epson or IBM, so try these if you can't find a proper match. If you have trouble, send me a note with your printer model & the problem.

Serial Printers

PostMaster directly accesses the parallel (printer) ports LPT1, 2, or 3, but does not have direct access to serial ports COM1, COM2, etc. If you have an older dot matrix or laser printer which has a serial interface and you have less than three parallel ports in your system, you can tell the computer to route one of the LPT ports to one of the COM ports. Setting things up in this way will allow all DOS software in your computer to access your serial printer using the more common parallel port names.

The command to use is "MODE". MODE is used to tell DOS the speed

experience.
⁴I know of one WML user who has over 25,000 entries in a single file on an 80486 computer.

PostMaster

of the serial port and to redirect one port to another. First you set the speed with the command "MODE COMx:speed,parity,databits,stopbits,p". To redirect a parallel port to a serial port the command is "MODE LPTx:=COMy:".

EXAMPLE: Let's say you have a parallel printer hooked up on the LPT1 port and you have no other parallel ports in your computer⁵, your mouse is hooked up to the COM1 serial port, and your serial printer is hooked up to COM2. You could tell DOS to redirect LPT2 to COM2 (in other words, if you print something to LPT2 DOS will redirect it to the COM2 port) by typing "MODE LPT2:=COM2:" at a DOS prompt. Most folks with a serial printer place MODE lines in the AUTOEXEC.BAT file so that the computer performs the function every time it is started, so you might want to check your AUTOEXEC.BAT file to see if these lines already exist.

What happens after 1999?

As we approach the year 2000 many people (banks especially) are concerned about their software's ability to handle dates after December 31, 1999. PM users have nothing to worry about because PostMaster's design currently handles dates to December 31, 2042.

Networks

PostMaster has file "locks" which allow it to be safely used on networks which use the DOS SHARE utility. LANtastic and WFW use SHARE, as do the majority of networks. OS/2 does not use SHARE but has a method which I am told is similar and works properly with PM. If you experience any problems using PM on a network please tell me about it so that it may be corrected.

PostMaster will allow one station to open a particular mailing list (.WML) file. The configuration, abbreviation, group, and zip codes files may be shared by more than one station. Thus, you may have several network stations running the same copy of PM but using different mailing list files. If you need to consolidate the data into a single file you may do so using the Import function (unfortunately this does not provide duplicate checking as names are entered, but you can check for duplicates as each file is

⁵If you have MS-DOS 6.0 or later you can type "MSD" at the DOS prompt (without the quotation marks). This diagnostic utility will tell you how many parallel & serial ports you have.

PostMaster

imported).

Using With MS Windows

PostMaster can be run as a DOS application under Windows 3.1 although it is not a Windows application (in other words, it runs the same in DOS or Windows). If you don't use Windows or use it only occasionally (as I do), then use PM from DOS since it will work better without Windows' quirks & overhead. If you normally have Windows loaded, however, then go ahead and set up an icon for PostMaster. To do this:

1. Highlight or create a group to hold the icon
2. Choose **File, New** to create a program item.
 - a. Place a description (such as "PostMaster") in the Description box.
 - b. Put C:\PM\PM.PIF in the Command Line box. If you have PM in a different location then change this line accordingly and use Windows' PIF Editor (in the Main Group) to edit PM.PIF to contain the proper drive and path.
 - c. Leave the Working Directory blank.
 - d. The Short-cut Keys are up to you.

You may also use Windows' File Manager's "Associate" feature to connect ".WML" files with the PM programme. If you do this you can double-click on a PostMaster data file from the File Manager and Windows will automatically launch PM using that data file. To do this open File Manager, highlight a .WML file (with one click), then choose **File, Associate**.

NOTE REGARDING PM.PIF FILE: PostMaster needs to have zero EMS or at least 160k of EMS (expanded memory) -- either way will work fine. However, if there is less than 160kb free EMS PostMaster will not run. If you have been unable to get PM run under Windows, this is probably the reason.

Windows dynamically allocates memory so you can tell it how much EMS to give a programme. If you don't tell Windows about the programme's needs I've noticed it gives sets aside 256kb of total EMS, about 16kb of which is available to PM (which doesn't work). The PM.PIF file included with PostMaster instructs Windows to provide the needed amount of EMS memory.

PostMaster

If you already have an icon for PostMaster (or WML) and wish to change it to use the PM.PIF file, click once on the icon, press Alt-Enter ("Properties") and this will open the same definition window that you see when creating a new icon. In the Command Line box, enter PM.PIF (instead of PM.EXE).

To associate .WML files with PostMaster, access File Manager, click once on a .WML file, then choose File, Associate, and when the Associate window pops open click on the Browse button. Navigate the directory to your PM directory -- for most folks that will mean: 1) double-click on "C:\\" at the top of the directory box; 2) scroll the directory display, if necessary, until you see "PM" or "WML" or whatever name you used; 3) double-click on the PostMaster directory; 4) Click on PM.PIF in the left-hand "file window" then click "Ok".

Using With 4DOS

PostMaster has been tested with 4DOS versions 4.0 through 5.5. PM uses the standard 4DOS "DESCRIPT.ION" file to store, update, and access long file descriptions. If you use 4DOS, when you issue the DIR command from DOS you will see the file descriptions that you entered for your PM files. Likewise, if you use the 4DOS DESCRIBE command to change the description of a ".WML" file, the new description will be used by PostMaster.

USING PostMaster FOR THE FIRST TIME

Quick Start

If you received PostMaster on disk you will have already used the INSTALL programme to install it on your hard disk or high-capacity floppy. Likewise, if you received PM from a BBS you have already expanded the archive in which PostMaster came. So you should already have done these steps:

1. Created a directory for PostMaster (or specified one in the INSTALL programme), such as C:\PM. I strongly recommend that you place PM (as with all software) in its own directory rather than mixing packages in the same directory.
2. If you got PM from a BBS you should have changed to that directory (e.g., CD \PM) and then expanded the archive, placing all the files in that directory.

PostMaster

Once PostMaster is installed on your hard disk here are the steps needed to begin using it right away:

1. Type "PM" at the DOS prompt.
2. Press "P" or click with a mouse to pull down the Preferences menu.
3. At the very least you will probably want to set up a printer. I suggest you go down the list of Preferences screens and fill in each preference window as necessary. Press <F1> while the cursor is on a field to get context-sensitive help.
4. Use **File, New** to create a new (blank) file. All mailing list entries must be placed within a file, so you must open or create a file before entering, importing, or exporting data. Once a file is open, you will see its name displayed at the top of the screen.

NOTE To view information about an item on the screen:

1. Position the cursor (use keyboard arrows or move the mouse cursor then click the left button once) on the item you want more information about.
2. Look at the lower left portion of the screen for the "<F1>/Help" message which tells you whether help is available. Press the <F1> key to open the Help window.

NOTE PostMaster may be started from any disk or directory. The configuration, group, abbreviation, and zip code files will be accessed from whatever directory contains PM.EXE (most likely C:\PM). The directory and file last in use when PostMaster was exited normally are automatically accessed.

TIP Aligning label sheets involves setting the top and left margins, and it sometimes takes a bit of experimenting to get it just right. Print a "test batch" on plain paper then hold the paper and the labels together up to a light source to see if everything lines up properly. The top and left margins are set on the Envelopes Preferences screen.

Quick Exit

PostMaster has a Quick Exit feature which ends the programme with a single key: Just press the **<F10>** key at any time.

Updating To a Newer Release

PostMaster

If you download PostMaster from a bulletin board (BBS) or get a copy from a friend or shareware vendor, just replace (overwrite) the old files with the new ones. As you extract an archive you will be prompted for each file to be over-written; using DOS COPY the files may be replaced without prompting. The new version will "see" your registration "key" and operate as a registered copy. If you can't find PM on a bulletin board in your area, you may want to ask a sysop if s/he can FREQ (File REQuest) the file from one of the BBS networks listed in the "Technical Support (How To Reach Me)" section or you can also send for a disk to be mailed to you (see "Updates" section above or the Help, Update Form menu item within PostMaster).

Choosing a Directory for PostMaster

It is a good idea to install PostMaster in its own directory under the root. Giving each software package its own directory keeps things organized and can improve file access speed. Besides this, the root directory has a limit to the number of files it may contain whereas a subdirectory may contain any number of files. The directory C:\PM (or another valid drive letter) is a good choice, or you might want to put all of business software under a directory called "\APPS" on drive D: and so would use "D:\APPS\PM".

You may organize things further by placing your data files and programme files in different drives and/or directories. This makes it possible to have PostMaster on your hard disk and use data files on floppy disks, for example.

Using an LCD or Monochrome Screen with a Colour Card

If you have a monochrome (Black & White) monitor connected to a colour adapter card or a lap-top or notebook computer with an LCD screen, you will see shades of grey instead of colours. This may not be very readable. You can force PostMaster to run in monochrome mode by using the "/M" switch like so:

```
PM /M
```

Specifying a Data Drive and/or Directory

When you start PostMaster it attempts to open the file which was open when it was last ended. This includes changing the drive and directory to that which contains this file. You may specify a disk drive, directory, and/or file name on PM's command line to override the automatic process.

PostMaster

The ability to navigate a hard disk is much more easily achieved through the use of PM's File Window, however, this ability is useful in batch files or for being able to double-click on a data file while using Windows' File Manager and have PostMaster open that file at start-up.

The command syntax is:

PM [d:[\pathname\[filename]]]

Here are some examples:

PM B: starts PostMaster using the default directory on drive B: for data files.

PM C:\DATA starts PostMaster in the C:\DATA\ directory.

PM C:\DATA starts PostMaster; if the file C:\DATA.WML exists it will be opened for use, otherwise the directory C:\DATA\ will be the initial data directory.

PM C:\DATA\MYFILE.WML starts PostMaster in the data directory C:\DATA\ and opens the file MYFILE.WML.

Using the Menus

PostMaster uses CUA-style pull-down menus, which is the standard used by QuickBASIC, Macintosh, and Windows. Basically, there is a horizontal menu of choices -- File, Data Entry, etc. Under each of the horizontal choices is a menu of functions pertaining to that item -- it is a two-dimensional menu, in other words. The last item of the left-most menu is always Exit, to end the programme or the sub-menu you are on.

There are two ways to select an item from the main menu:

1. Press the letter which is highlighted in the option's name
2. Use the Up/Down/Right/Left arrows to highlight the option you want then press **<Enter>** (a.k.a. RETURN or CR).

Certain pop-up menus do not have a highlighted letter associated with each option. On these menus you must use the arrow keys to highlight your choice then press **<Enter>**.

PostMaster

If you want to cancel an operation you selected, just press the Esc ("Escape") key.

Status Line

At the top of your screen is either PostMaster's title or the name or description of the file you have open. At the bottom of the screen is a status line which looks like this:

Total | Selected | Bad/Omit | Pack | Index | 01-01-1980

From left to right the items are:

1. Total records in the open file
2. Total records selected for printing
3. Total records bad or excluded from mailings
4. The word |Pack| if there are entries which are marked for deletion
5. Active indexing method: name, company, address, or zip
6. To-day's date (so far as the computer knows). If you have a filter chosen, this will be replaced with "**Filter**" followed by a word indicating the single filter in use or the first letter of each of multiple filters in use. If the filter message is **bright** the selection is unchanged, otherwise changes have occurred. For example, suppose you have set the filter to "Selected" then cleared the selection status of a record. The filter message would change to dim since the filter is no longer accurate.

MANAGING & PRINTING YOUR FILES

The "File" menu contains options to use and manage your files and to print entries from these files. Below is a summary of the choices under the File menu. The letter of each line which is shown in **bold** may be pressed to select the function or you can use the up & down arrow keys to highlight the choice then press the ENTER key.

- **O**pen - Open an existing mailing list file
- **N**ew - Create a new mailing list file
- **C**lose - Close the open file
- **D**elete - Erase a file from the disk
- **C**hange - Rename a file and/or change its description
- **C**opy - Make a back-up copy of data files or restore data files from a back-up copy
- **F**ormat Floppies - Format floppy disks (for back-up use)

PostMaster

- **Re-index** - Re-build the index files for the open mailing list file. This is normally handled automatically, but there may be times when PM cannot detect an error and you must perform this function yourself.
- **Pack** - Remove entries which are flagged to be deleted
- **Import** - Bring data into the open file from another file format
- **Export** - Send data to a different file format
- **Print/Select/Query** - Menu of ways to print your list, choose which entries are to be printed or otherwise operated upon, and search the file
- **Exit** - End PostMaster and return to DOS

Many of these options cannot be used at certain times. For example, if you have an no printer defined, the Print option is useless so PM won't let you use it. Valid options have a bright white letter; non-valid ones are gray with no highlighted letter.

Creating a New File

PostMaster can list up to 5.5 million files in a single directory. That should work for a while, eh?! You might also choose to organize your files by using more than one directory.

When you choose the **File/New** option you will see the File Window displayed on the screen and the cursor will be positioned in the file name box at the top left of the window. Enter a file name in this box that is up to eight characters long, consisting of letters and/or numbers. When you press ENTER the cursor will move to the Description line where you may type anything at all to describe the file (you will be able to read these descriptions for all PM functions that use the File Window). The description is optional and can be changed as desired. If you wish, you may change the drive and/or directory in which the file will be stored.

If you would like to create a new directory to hold certain mailing list files simply press the TAB key until the "Mk Dir" (Make Directory) button is highlighted then press ENTER. With a mouse just click on the button. A small window will appear in which you may enter up to 8 characters for the new directory name. Once you provide a name and press ENTER the directories will be re-read and you will see your new directory in the list. Just TAB over to the directory window and highlight your new directory (or click on it with a mouse).

PostMaster

Once you have entered a description and/or set the desired drive & directory just press ENTER or click on the "Ok" button. If you entered a valid name then your new file will be created and opened for use.

Opening an Existing File

Just like using a filing cabinet, you have to open a file before you can see what's in it. **File/Open** presents you with the File Window which lets you look inside the filing cabinet (a disk) and choose a file to open.

Note that entries will be displayed and printed in the order indicated on the bottom status line. To change the indexing sequence use the Index menu.

Saving/Closing a File

PostMaster saves your information every time you change something. If you enter information and press the Esc key or click on a "Cancel" button with your mouse a message will warn you about losing any changes you have made. The only danger comes with a power outage or anything else that causes PM to end improperly (such as pressing the reset button or Ctrl-Alt-Del). However, even in this case the only thing you would lose are any changes to the entry displayed on the screen. Just the same, it's safest to use **File/Close** when you will be away from your computer for a while. That way if anything happens while you are away your information is saved.

Deleting a File

You may delete files using the **Open & Manage** option on the top of the **File** menu. When you select this option you will see the File Window; one of the buttons on the right is "Delete".

1. From the list of files, highlight the one you wish to erase from disk.
2. Press the TAB key until the "Delete" button is highlighted then press ENTER, or click on "Delete" with a mouse.
3. PostMaster will tell you which files it is about to erase and ask permission to continue. You may click on "Ok", press the TAB key until "Ok" is highlighted then press ENTER, or press the letter "O" (which is the highlighted letter for "Ok"; if you can't tell which letter is the highlighted one try turning your monitor's contrast up & brightness down).

PostMaster

Changing a File's Name & Description

Changing anything about a file is easy to do using the **O**pen & **M**anage option at the top of the **F**ile menu. Once the File Window appears use the arrow keys to highlight the file you wish to change, then press the **T**AB key until the cursor is on the Description line. Change the description as desired. If you want to change a file's name press **T**AB until the "Rename" button is highlighted then press **E**NTER.

Alternately you may use a mouse to choose a file, click on the Description field, and/or click on the "Rename" button.

Copying Files

To copy a particular file between computers (say, a lap-top and desk-top) you will need to copy more than just the data file for proper operation. A complete set of data consists of:

1. The data file (ending in WML)
2. The index files (ending in IX*)
3. The group definitions (files matching GROUPS.*)

You can re-create the index files if you do not copy them, but it is usually faster to copy them. If the GROUPS files are missing you will not be able to select records by group nor will you be able to change or view the group settings.

The easiest way to be sure you have it all is to copy all of your data files using the **B**ack-up & **R**estore option under the **F**ile menu. Alternately, you can use the DOS copy command to copy the files outlined above.

Using DOS Commands

The **B**ack-up & **R**estore function is described in the next section. Here is an example using DOS: Let's say you have several mailing list files and you only want to put one of them on a 3.5" floppy to use on your lap-top. Let's call the list MYLIST and assume that your 3.5" disk drive is B:

1. Go to your PM directory on the hard disk (e.g., **CD \PM**)
2. **COPY MYLIST.* B:** to copy the data & index files
3. **COPY GROUPS.* B:** to copy the group definitions

PostMaster

Using Back-up & Restore

Your computer is a machine and one day it will break down as all machines do. **F**ile/**B**ack-up & Restore protects your information by allowing you to copy your data to and from other disks. To determine when it is time to make a back-up copy of your information consider a hard disk failure. Feeling suicidal? It's time to make a back-up copy.

When using floppy disks remember that a disk must be formatted before use. You can use the same back-up disk or directory over and over again - each new copy will over-write the old one - but it is a good idea to alternate at least three back-up copies just in case there is a problem (such as a power outage) while you are creating a copy. In this case if the computer "crashed" and the back-up was incomplete you would still have two other back-up copies on which to rely.

Using compression software packs more information in less space (so you can use fewer floppy disks) but requires more memory (RAM). The compression software PostMaster is programmed to use and their memory requirements are as follows:

ARJ 2.41 needs at least 300k free
LHARC 2.13 needs at least 189k free
PKZip 2.04g needs at least 157k free

PostMaster automatically checks the amount of free memory and allows you to choose only from those compression programmes which are found on your hard disk and will run with the memory you have available.

Using the back-up option

After you choose the back-up option a summary window pops open and a menu of methods will be presented, starting with "DOS Copy" and including each compression technique which is found on your computer (using your DOS PATH setting) and for which you have enough free memory. Once you choose a method you are asked to enter the back-up destination (which is typically a floppy disk drive, such as A:, but you may decide to back-up to another hard disk, a network drive, etc.). All PostMaster data files will then be backed-up

PostMaster

to the destination disk and directory using the method shown in the window.

Using the restore option

If you ever need to recover data files from a floppy disk you made using the Back-up operation, just place the floppy disk in its drive and select **File/Back-up & Restore** and then choose "Restore." The first thing you will be asked is to specify the disk drive from which to restore files. Once you highlight a drive and press ENTER the list of files on that disk will be shown - individual data files as well as any compressed archives.

Highlight each file you wish to restore and press the SpaceBar key; you will see an arrow appear next to each file as it is selected. If you change your mind, just press the SpaceBar again and the arrow will go away, indicating that the file will not be restored. Alternately, you may use the mouse and click the left button instead of using the arrow keys and SpaceBar.

Once you have selected all the files you wish to restore press the ENTER key or click on the "Ok" button with a mouse. Each file will be copied into the current data directory.⁶ Any compressed archives being restored will automatically be expanded.

Formatting Floppy Disks

This option is for those times when you have decided to make a back-up copy of your data but don't have a formatted disk handy or want to re-format a disk to check for any bad spots. **File/Format Floppies** lets you format a floppy disk to your computer's standard density without exiting PM. By "standard density" I mean that if you have a high density drive you can only format high density disks (in other words, PM doesn't pass any parameters to DOS FORMAT). There is an exception to this:

If you have *What Floppy Format?* (WFF.EXE) available somewhere in your DOS search path, PostMaster will automatically access it for formatting floppy disks so you can format any kind of disk using FDFORMAT. (You will

⁶The directory from which WML is started is considered the data directory - it is where the data files are stored. For example, if you are in the C:\WML\DATA directory and you run WML from there, then files will be created in, backed-up from, and restored to this directory.

PostMaster

receive a complimentary copy of the latest version of WFF with your PostMaster registration. FDFORMAT is a Freeware product by another author and can be found on my support BBSs.)

Fixing Damaged Index Files (Re-Indexing)

Sometimes a data base's index files can be damaged. This can typically happen with a power outage, resetting the computer (pressing Ctrl-Alt-Del or the Reset button) while running PM, etc. Most often PostMaster will detect a problem with the index files and correct it automatically, but there may be times when it cannot detect a problem. If it ever seems like entries are missing from your files or the record counts are off, use the **File/Re-Index** option to re-build the indices and count the Selected, Bad, Omit, and Deleted entries for the open mailing list file.

Removing Records Which Are Marked for Deletion (Packing)

File/Pack is used to remove deleted records from the mailing list data base which is currently in use. Entries which are marked for deletion remain in a mailing list file the file is Packed. This can be handy if you accidentally mark a record for deletion because you can "un-mark" it; or you could use this feature to mark all the records you want to delete then review the records on the screen before actually packing the file.

Importing Data from Other Software

File/Import allows you to read data from other files to become a part of the mailing list file you are using (the Open file, shown at the top of the screen). Once you select import, you will be shown a menu of file types, including:

- ASCII file
- PM/WML file
- DBF file
- WordPerfect file

There are two items on the General Preferences screen which affect the way files are imported: the Import Duplicate Rule and Import Technique. The former setting determines how duplicate entries will be handled, the latter determines how PM will handle missing data in the name and company name fields. Refer to the Preferences section for more details about these

PostMaster

two items.

While importing, PostMaster checks for a valid zip/postal codes. If an entry contains a potentially bad code the entry is flagged as "Selected to print" so that you may easily review these entries after importing is completed.

To begin importing a file, choose the **Import** option on the File menu, then highlight the type of file you would like to import and press **<Enter>**.

Note: In importing you will be defining the fields of the imported file. The definitions you give PM can be saved and loaded so that you need only define a type of file once. Before you begin importing, PostMaster will ask if you would like to save the definition (or you can press the <F7> key to save the definition). The next time you are importing a file with the same field layout, you can retrieve the saved definition by pressing the <F5> key. When you press <F5> PM will open it's File Window from which will display any saved definitions. You can navigate to other disks or directories, if necessary, in order to choose the definition you wish to use. Once you choose a definition, you will see the layout in PM's double import windows (as defined below), at which point you can change anything, as necessary.

Instructions for importing each file type are contained in the following sections.

Importing ASCII files

An ASCII file must be either comma delimited (i.e., commas separate each field) or have fixed field lengths (i.e., each field must always be exactly the same size, padded with trailing spaces where necessary). In addition, there must be one record per line (in more technical terms, that means a CR+LF marks the end of each record). Quotation marks may or may not be present, however, if fields contain commas (for example, "Frank Smith, Jr.") then fields must be surrounded by quotation marks in order for PM to properly figure out where each field ends.

PostMaster automatically detects CP/M NAD ASCII files and you can define the layout for **any** ASCII file. You can save and retrieve import definitions, so if you are always importing files which are

PostMaster

formatted in the same way you can define the layout once and then simply retrieve it each time you need it.

The first thing PM asks is for the name of the file to import. You can either enter the full file name (e.g., A:\DATA\YAK.TXT) or you can enter a file specification (e.g., *.TXT or *.LST or whatever). If you use an asterisk or question marks (known as DOS "wild cards") then PM will pop open the File Window so that you can search your disk drives for files matching the specification you entered.

If you are importing a fixed-field-length ASCII file, the next screen you will see is one which lets you define the beginning & ending column position of each field. On the screen you will see the first record of the import file displayed along with numbers above it indicating the column number. In a box near the lower left of the screen you will see the cursor waiting for you to enter the ending position of a field (PM assumes that valid data begins in column one; if you want to ignore the first field of an import file you can do so on the next screen, but you must define all of the fields on this screen).

So, for example, the first field might be a company name which is 30 characters long (going from column 1 to column 30), so you would enter "30" and press <Enter>. Next might be an address line which is 30 characters long (going from column 31 to column 60) so you would enter "60" and press <Enter>. When you have defined the entire record (that is, when you enter the right-most column number), PM advances to the next screen.

After specifying the comma-delimited ASCII file's name or defining the fixed-field-length ASCII file's record layout, PostMaster next shows a screen with two windows: 1) on the right, a window with the name of each PM field and it's length (in characters), and 2) on the left, a window showing the input file's fields which are assigned to the highlighted PM field (when nothing is defined, you will see "None" in the left-hand window).

Use the arrow keys to highlight a PostMaster field then press the <F3> key. A window showing the data from the first record of the file will open, with each field on a separate line. Just highlight the fields which belong to the PM field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the field "on" and "off" - an arrow will appear next to each field that is chosen. When you have chosen all the fields you wish to place in the

PostMaster

highlighted PM field, press <Enter>. You may choose as many fields as you like to be placed in a single PM field. Multiple import fields will be placed together with a space in-between. If you define too much data to be placed in a PM field then the imported data will be truncated (cut off) as necessary.

For example, you might highlight the PM field "Company", press <F3>, then use the down arrow to highlight a company name field, then press the <SpaceBar>, then press <Enter>. Perhaps the import file contains 10 short comment fields; you could place several of the import comment fields into each of PM's three comment fields.

To view the definition of each PostMaster field just press the up and down arrow keys and watch the contents of the window on the left - it will change to reflect the definition of each field.

To clear the definition for a field press <F3> to bring up the list of input fields (you will see arrows highlighting the chosen fields) and press the <Esc> key. Alternately you may highlight an input field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the arrow on & off.

Once you have finished defining how PM is to import the ASCII file you can save the definition for future use. Just press the <F7> key and enter a name for the definition. To begin importing, press the <F9> key.

Note: If you enter or change the field definition and press <F9> without pressing <F7> first, PM will ask if you want to save the definition, so you are never in danger of accidentally losing an import definition.

Importing WML/PM files

This option is handy for consolidating several PostMaster (or What Mailing List?) files into one. Just select **File, Import, WML/PM** and you will see the file list box. Choose a file, then choose whether to import all of the records or just those which are selected for printing, and away it goes. As usual, you will see a progress graph and the record number count on the bottom status line will be updated.

This is a handy way to separate a group of entries which have

PostMaster

grown too large. For example, let's say you had a list of clients grouped by occupation and one occupation became so large that you wanted to put them in a separate file. You could select all of the records with that particular group for printing. Then, create a new file and import the selected records. Back in your old file you can delete all of the selected records. Now you have a new file with just the records you want in it.

Importing DBF (dBase) files

PostMaster's DBF import can handle any file made by dBase III, FoxBase, dB XL, dB Fast, QuickSilver, Clipper, or any other dBase clone. Many information organizers (including other mailing list managers) use the DBF file format or can export to a dBase-III-compatible DBF file. As a general rule, if the file ends in DBF you can probably import it into PostMaster.

The first thing PM asks is for the name of the file to import. You can either enter the full file name (e.g., A:\DATA\YAK.DBF) or you can enter a file specification (e.g., *.DBF). If you use an asterisk or question marks (known as DOS "wild cards") then PM will pop open the File Window so that you can search your disk drives for files matching the specification you entered.

After specifying the file's name, PM next shows a screen with two windows: 1) on the right, a window with the name of each PM field and it's length (in characters), and 2) on the left, a window showing the input file's fields which are assigned to the highlighted PM field (when nothing is defined, you will see "None" in the left-hand window).

Use the arrow keys to highlight a PM field then press the <F3> key. A window showing the data from the first record of the file will open, with each field on a separate line. Just highlight the fields which belong to the PM field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the field "on" and "off" - an arrow will appear next to each field that is chosen. When you have chosen all the fields you wish to place in the highlighted PM field, press <Enter>. You may choose as many fields as you like to be placed in a single PM field. Multiple import fields will be placed together with a space in-between. If you define too much data to be placed in a PM field then the imported data will be truncated (cut off) as necessary.

PostMaster

For example, you might highlight the PM field "Company", press <F3>, then use the down arrow to highlight a company name field, then press the <SpaceBar>, then press <Enter>. Perhaps the import file contains 10 short comment fields; you could place several of the import comment fields into each of PostMaster's three comment fields.

To view the definition of each PostMaster field just press the up and down arrow keys and watch the contents of the window on the left - it will change to reflect the definition of each field.

To clear the definition for a field press <F3> to bring up the list of input fields (you will see arrows highlighting the chosen fields) and press the <Esc> key. Alternately you may highlight an input field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the arrow on & off.

Once you have finished defining how PM is to import the DBF file you can save the definition for future use. Just press the <F7> key and enter a name for the definition. To begin importing, press the <F9> key.

Note: If you enter or change the field definition and press <F9> without pressing <F7> first, PM will ask if you want to save the definition, so you are never in danger of accidentally losing an import definition.

Importing Dr. Data Label files

If you have been using the mailing list package, Dr. Data Label (DDLABEL), you can easily import your mailing lists into PostMaster. DDLABEL, as well as many other mailing list packages, uses a dBase-compatible file structure. To import these files just select the dBase DBF file import option and enter the path to your DDLABEL files (e.g., C:\DDLABEL*.DBF, or you may enter the entire file name such as C:\DDLABEL\MYFILE.DBF).

Once you have entered the file name correctly and you see the import definition screen (see the previous section for details), just press the <F5> (Load) key to pop open the File Window. Highlight the file **DDLABEL** which is found in the PM "home" directory. That's all there is to it. Just press the <F9> key to begin importing.

PostMaster

For a more detailed description of the options on the dBase/DBF import screen refer to the preceding section, "Importing dBase/DBF Files."

Importing WordPerfect files

You can import WordPerfect version 4 and 5 mail merge files into PostMaster using this function.

The first thing PM asks is for the name of the file to import. You can either enter the full file name (e.g., A:\DATA\YAK.WP) or you can enter a file specification (e.g., *.WP or *.LST or whatever). If you use an asterisk or question marks (known as DOS "wild cards") then PM will pop open the File Window so that you can search your disk drives for files matching the specification you entered.

After specifying the file's name, PostMaster next shows a screen with two windows: 1) on the right, a window with the name of each PM field and it's length (in characters), and 2) on the left, a window showing the input file's fields which are assigned to the highlighted PM field (when nothing is defined, you will see "None" in the left-hand window).

Use the arrow keys to highlight a PM field then press the <F3> key. A window showing the data from the first record of the file will open, with each field on a separate line. If you are importing a WordPerfect 5.1 file which contains field names, then these names will appear in the window. Highlight the field(s) which you want placed in the PM field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the field "on" and "off" - an arrow will appear next to each field that is chosen. When you have chosen all the fields you wish to place in the highlighted PM field, press <Enter>. You may choose as many fields as you like to be placed in a single PM field. Multiple import fields will be placed together with a space in-between. If you define too much data to be placed in a PM field then the imported data will be truncated (cut off) as necessary.

For example, you might highlight the PM field "Company", press <F3>, then use the down arrow to highlight a company name field, then press the <SpaceBar>, then press <Enter>. Perhaps the import file contains 10 short comment fields; you could place several of the

PostMaster

import comment fields into each of PostMaster's three comment fields.

To view the definition of each PM field just press the up and down arrow keys and watch the contents of the window on the left - it will change to reflect the definition of each field.

To clear the definition for a field press <F3> to bring up the list of input fields (you will see arrows highlighting the chosen fields) and press the <Esc> key. Alternately you may highlight an input field and press the <SpaceBar> to toggle the arrow on & off.

Once you have finished defining how PM is to import the WordPerfect file you can save the definition for future use. Just press the <F7> key and enter a name for the definition. To begin importing, press the <F9> key.

Note: If you enter or change the field definition and press <F9> without pressing <F7> first, PM will ask if you want to save the definition, so you are never in danger of accidentally losing an import definition.

Grouping imported entries

When importing a data base from another application you may have some type of grouping code which you would like PostMaster to use in grouping entries. This can be accomplished quite easily.

First, import the file into a PM file, assigning the code field from the imported file to a comment line. Then access the Print/Select/Query sub-menu. Choose "All" then "Clear", then choose Field_Contents. From the list of PM fields choose the comment line into which you placed the grouping code, then enter the code you wish to Select. Now use the Actions menu to assign all selected records to the group of your choice.

Example: Say you had a list of people who were either members, contributors, staff, or volunteers for an organization, and assume that each entry had a field (or line) which contained a code such as MEM for members, CON for contributors, etc. When this file is imported you might define the field containing the code to Comment 3.

PostMaster

After the file is imported into PostMaster you would access the Print/Select/Query menu, choose "All" then "Clear" to clear all Selected entries, then choose "Field_Contents." From the field list, you would choose "Comment 3", enter "MEM", then choose the "Select" button. At this point, all entries with "MEM" in Comment 3 are Selected For Printing. Next, go to the Actions menu and choose the "Reset Selected to Groups" option. PM will present the list of defined groups. Assuming there is a group called "Members" you would select that group (by highlighting it and then pressing the <SpaceBar>), then press the <F7> key. PM would then assign all of these entries to that group. Then you could use the All/Clear option to clear the selection and return to the Field_Contents menu to perform the same actions on the next group of entries.

Exporting Data to Other Applications

File/Export allows you to write data to a file in a different format. Once you select export, you will be shown a menu of file types:

- ASCII, comma-delimited
- ASCII, fixed field lengths
- ASCII, Ventura Publisher
- Mail Merge, Microsoft Word
- Mail Merge, WordPerfect

Highlight the type of file you would like to import and press **<Enter>**. Next you will be asked whether you would like to export all of the entries in the file, just the domestic entries (U.S. or Canada, depending on your country setting), or just the entries which are selected for printing. Highlight your choice and press **<Enter>** and the export file will be created.

ASCII, comma-delimited

This creates an ASCII (text) file which contains the fields you specify. Each field is enclosed in quotation marks and is separated from the next field by a comma. Carriage return & line feed codes (decimal codes 13 and 10) end each record (i.e., there is one complete entry (record) per line).

ASCII, fixed field length

--

PostMaster

This creates an ASCII file in which the fields are padded to their full length. For example, if the company name is "ABC, Inc." it will have 26 spaces following the name since the company name field has room for 35 characters. Carriage return & line feed codes (decimal codes 13 and 10) end each record. This is the file format required by the U.S. Post Office in order to check your files for correct address & 9-digit zip codes.

Note: If your country setting is "USA only" then the State field will be a length of two, otherwise it will be a length of 15.

Ventura Publisher

This is an ASCII text file with a "TXT" extension which can be loaded into a Ventura Publisher chapter file. Each line of the data begins with an "at" sign (@), the name of the field, a space, an equal sign (=), another space, and then the data. For example:

```
@NAME = John Q. Public  
@COMPANY = ABC Company  
@ADDRESS = 123 Main Street  
@ADDRESS = Suite 102  
@CSZ = Anytown, CO 81000  
@COUNTRY = USA
```

Lines are double-spaced in the file since this is how VP determines end-of-paragraph in an ASCII file. Each field type is a paragraph tag so you can define the font and formatting characteristics for each field. When you load the file (using Load Text/Graphic) into a VP chapter and select the paragraph tool, you will see the field names in the paragraph tags window.

WordPerfect Merge

First you will be asked for a file name for the exported data. Enter the full file name you wish to use, including drive and path if necessary. Once you finish with this function you will have an ASCII file which contains WordPerfect's merge codes. To prepare the file for use, start WordPerfect and import the ASCII file (Ctrl-<F5>, 1, 2). This is all you need do for WordPerfect 4.2 through 5.0.

PostMaster

If you are using version 5.1 you will have to create a "header" line at the top of the file which identifies each of the fields by a name. You do this by pressing Shift-<F9>, "M" (more), then select FIELD NAMES from the scrolling menu. You can use whatever field names you want but you must enter eight field names so that each PM field has a name associated with it.

Microsoft Word Merge

Just like with the WordPerfect Merge file, this option will make you an ASCII file which is in Word's merge format. I don't use Word, but in testing the mail merge operation I found that no special preparation was needed to use the file.

Querying & Selecting Entries to Print

Choosing this option under the File menu brings forth a whole new pull-down menu which lets you select or clear the records you wish to print and print labels/envelopes/etc.

Under the Print sub-menu are options to print and exit back to the top menu. Before printing you must first select the records to be printed, so I'll go through the select/query options first then the printing options later.

Selecting entries to be printed

Notice that the second item on the status line at the bottom of your screen shows the number of entries which are selected to print. This number will change as you use the options on this sub-menu.

"All" lets you mark or un-mark all records in the data base.

"Group" lets you select or clear records according to the groups to which they belong.

"Random" lets you select an arbitrary batch of entries. You tell PostMaster how many records to pick and whether you want all entries to be considered or just those entries which have no Last Mail Date.

"Field Contents" lets you select or clear entries according to the contents of whichever field you choose.

"Individual/All" will allow you to scan the entire data base, marking and un-marking records one at a time. If you try to Select an

PostMaster

entry which is flagged as Bad or Omit, PostMaster will offer to clear the flags for you. "Individual/Selected" will only show those entries which are currently selected, and "Individual/Deleted" will only show those entries which are flagged for deletion.

Actions which affect all selected entries

The "Action" sub-menu lets you perform actions on the entries which are selected for printing.

1. **Reset selected to group(s)** will change the group setting for all selected records to the group(s) you choose.
2. **Add group(s) to selected** will add the group(s) you choose to the selected records, without changing the groups to which the entries already belong.
3. **Mark selected for deletion** will set the Delete flag for the selected entries. Entries marked for deletion are **not** removed from the file until you use the **File/Pack** function.
4. **Clear Delete flag of selected** will turn off the Delete flag for the selected entries.
5. **Omit selected from mailings** will turn on the Omit flag for the selected entries. Since Omitted records can't be selected for printing, this also turns off the Select flag, resulting in zero entries being selected for printing.
6. **Clear all Omit flags** will clear the Omit flag for |all| entries in the file.
7. **Set selected to a date** let's you change the Times Mailed and Last Mail Date of the selected entries. This is handy for those times when you print a list but then don't actually mail to the people until a later date.
8. **Make selected 'Never mailed'** clears the Times Mailed and Last Mail Date fields. This is handy if you print a list and update these fields, then are unable to use the labels and need to print them again.
9. **Process using Import Technique** allows you to re-process entries which have already been imported. For example, if you imported a file without setting a Smart Import Technique or for whatever reason you end up with the personal name and company name fields containing each other's data or the first name and surname of each entry is in either the First Name or Surname field, this function will clean everything up for you using PostMaster's built-in artificial intelligence!
10. **Global Field Replace** allows you to replace the contents of a certain field for All or Selected entries in the open file. Once you choose this option PostMaster will ask you to choose a field and then to enter the new

PostMaster

contents. Finally, if there are entries Selected for printing, PM will ask if you want to change just the Selected entries or All entries. For example, you might have a file in which the Country field contained erroneous information and you wanted to erase it. Rather than correcting each entry manually you can use Global Field Replace.

Once you choose a function and enter any needed information, PostMaster will process each entry according to the Import Technique defined on the General Preferences screen. For all but Global Field Replace, only the entries which are Selected to Print will be affected.

Query examples

PostMaster's Query may seem limited at first glance, but it is actually quite comprehensive. Because PostMaster accumulates Selected entries you can perform any number of queries to obtain just the list you want. The only thing PM lacks at this time is a negation option (so you could, for example, Select all people who are not in California).

Let's say you have two groups defined in a mailing list: Team A and Team B. Of the entries on file, some are part of Team A, some Team B, and some are both.

Now, let's say you want to send a mailing to all Team A members. First you may want to choose All/Clear to clear any existing selection, then you would choose Groups/Select and flag the group Team A in the Groups Window.

For another mailing you want to include all members of Team B who are **not** members of Team A. First, clear any existing selection. Second, use Groups/Select to flag all members of Team B. Finally, use Groups/Clear to clear all members of Team A from the selection.

For another mailing you may want to include all members of Team A who have not yet received a mailing. Use Field Contents option to choose a date field; enter a blank date to choose all entries who have no date or enter a valid date range to choose all entries which have a date which falls between the range you specify.

Whatever you need to do, chances are PM will do it.

PostMaster

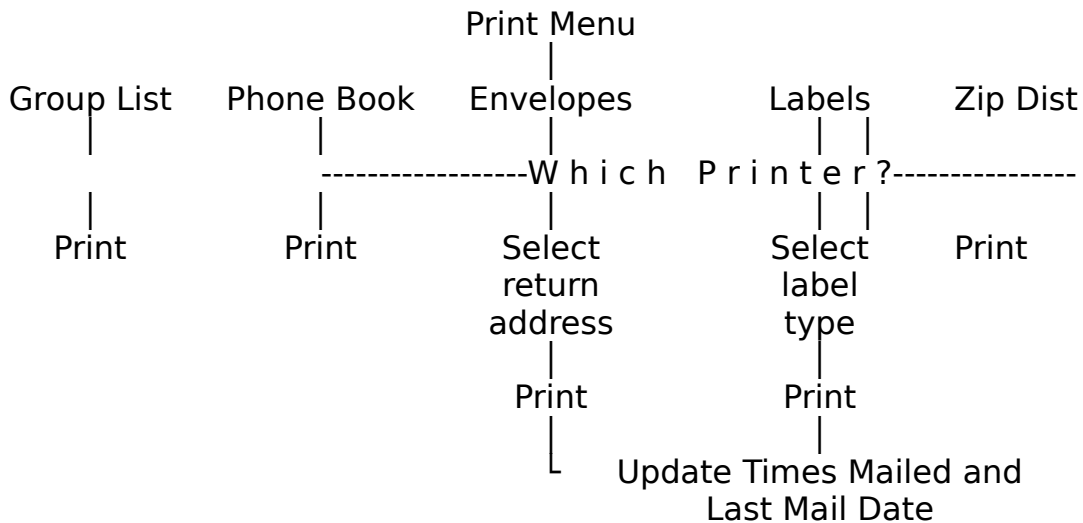
Printing

Note: You must define at least one printer and its fonts on the Preferences/Printer screen before you can select any printing options. The U.S. Post Offices prefer 10 to 14 point Helvetica type (a.k.a. Swiss or Univers) or another *sans serif* font (which means that it has no tops or bases. Times Roman & Dutch are serif fonts). The post office also has a hard time with italic type.

Some or all of the printing options on the "Print" sub-menu may be "grayed-out" and unavailable for use depending on certain conditions. For example, if you have not selected any entries for printing then all of the options except for "Group List" and "Exit" will be gray and you will not be able to select them.

Note: The number of records which are selected for printing appears on the status line at the bottom of the screen.

Here is an overview of the sequence of events for printing:



11-digit Zip Codes

The USPS's latest thing is an 11-digit zip code which pinpoints the delivery location for an item. The 11-digit zip is made up of a 9-digit zip plus two extra digits and a check-digit.⁷ These two extra

⁷The 12th digit of the extended zip code is calculated from the other 11 zip

PostMaster

digits are normally the last two digits of the street address or Box, but there may be exceptions, the reasons for which are known to the USPS. My guess is that there are very few, if any, exceptions at this point, but the Post Office doesn't want to make a guarantee in case things change.⁸

If the 9-digit zip is known but the extra two digits are not known, PM will use the last two digits of the address.⁹ On a bulk mailing, if this turns out to be incorrect you will never know because bulk mailings are not returned for bad addresses, but the post office tells me that it won't have any effect beyond being undeliverable (e.g., it won't affect your bulk permit or anything like that).

The way to get the exact 11-digit zip codes for your mailing list is to submit them to the post office or a third-party service on disk and get zip code and address corrections. You can use PostMaster's fixed-field-length file Import and Export features to accomplish this. Ask your Postmaster for the forms and information about submitting a file for zip code correction.

Other U.S. Postal Service considerations

One common thing you should know about addressing envelopes: the U.S. post office delivers to the address line which is just above the zip code. If you have two address lines (such as, "123 Anywhere Street" and "P.O. Box 17") the post office will send it to Box 17. Some areas (such as Paonia, Colorado) do not provide USPS to-your-door delivery, so you may need two addresses: one for the USPS and one for UPS or some other carrier.

Group List

The **Group List** option lets you print a list of the groups you have defined. If you have two printers defined you will be asked to choose the one to use.

Group List only appears if you have defined groups, and does **not** update the times mailed or last mail date.

code digits and is used by OCR equipment to verify the accuracy of what they read.

⁸See USPS Publication 25, "Designing Business Letter Mail."

⁹You can disable this feature on the Preferences/Other Settings screen.

PostMaster

Envelopes

If you defined two printers on the Preferences/Printers screen you will first be asked on which printer you want to print the envelopes.

Next, you will be given a menu of return addresses to print on the envelopes. Select "None" if you do not want any return address to be printed or use the arrow keys to highlight the one you want and press **<Enter>** to select it.

When printing on a PCL laser printer, any soft fonts you defined (on the Preferences/Printers screen) will be downloaded before printing.

Note: If you are using an impact printer and have set the "Pause" field to "yes" then you will be prompted to load each envelope and press **<Enter>** before the data is sent to the printer. All dot matrix printers, with a few rare exceptions, have a sensor switch which detects when the paper has run out. Some dot matrix printers, especially older models, stop printing when the paper moves past the sensor, rather than printing to the bottom of the form. With envelopes this is a problem since the form is very short (typically about 4.5-inches long) and you want to print the return address about 2-inches from the bottom.

If your printer has this problem with single-fed envelopes, one trick you can try is to put a business card or other piece of paper against the sensor so it will print to the bottom of the envelope. This defeats the paper-out sensor, though, so it's up to you to make sure everything is okay.

After all envelope data has been sent to your printer PostMaster will ask if you want to update the Times Mailed and Last Mail Date for the records printed. Answer by pressing the **<Enter>** key for "Yes" or the Esc key for "No." Answering "Yes" will change the Last Mail Date of the selected entries to today's date and the Number of Times Mailed field will be incremented by one.

A laser printer tip -- if the print density is uneven try changing the left or top offsets (on the Preferences/Define Envelopes screen) so all of the return address is on a constant thickness of paper. Laser

PostMaster

printers have trouble printing on uneven surfaces. You might also try using a different brand of envelope. As far as national brands go I have found that Meade recycled-fibre "security" envelopes work very well, but the Stuart Hall ones do not (too thick); Nobility recycled envelopes have a flat sealing edge which is perfect for lasers.

During envelope printing you can press Esc to cancel printing.

POSTNET (POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique) bar codes can automatically be printed on envelopes and labels for entries within the U.S. To print bar codes use the Preferences/Laser Labels and Preferences/Continuous Labels screens and select the Bar Codes line (you will see a check mark to the right of the line).

Labels

If you defined two printers on the Preferences/Printers screen you will first be asked on which printer you want to print the labels.

- For laser labels, you will be asked for the specifications of your label sheet -- the number of labels across and vertical distance between labels. You may also set the starting row & column, in case you have a partially-used sheet of labels. **BE AWARE** that some laser printers may not handle partially used label sheets well - check your printer's manual. It may be possible to ruin an expensive drum if some labels were to come loose.

- For impact printer labels, you will be given the menu of label types from which to choose the one you are using.

Note: During label printing you can press Esc to cancel printing.

You can change the left offset for impact printers on the Preferences/Label Types screen. Some impact printers, such as the NEC P5300, have the paper sensor a few inches from the left margin. If you use a narrow strip of labels, such as the common 3.5 x 15/16 labels, the printer will not "see" the labels and will, therefore, not print.

This is where the left offset comes in handy. You can set a left offset of, say, 1.5 inches, then load your labels 1.5-inches from the left margin.

PostMaster

PostMaster will print as much of a bar code as will fit on a label. Thus, you may see a 5-, 9-, or 11-digit bar code printed, depending on the entry's zip code and the size of the label.

To prevent wasting expensive laser label sheets, PostMaster stops at the end of the first sheet of labels and waits for input from you so that you may check the printed output for proper alignment.

Phone Book

You can print the phone book on your dot matrix or laser printer. A 12cpi to 17cpi mono-spaced (fixed) font will work best for the phone book, although the entries themselves work quite well with proportional fonts. If you use a proportional font for the titles you will find that the index at the top right of the page "floats." Short of figuring out how to do width tables, this was the best I could come up with. So just use Courier 12 or something like that. Experiment to find the best method to print the phone book on your equipment.

The phone book will only include records which have been selected for printing, and does **not** ask to update the Times Mailed and Last Mail Date. Entries without a phone number will just show the name & address (no trailing dots after the name).

Zip/Postal Code Distribution List

Here is a useful report for people who do bulk mailings. It shows each of the zip codes included in the open file's Selected records along with a count of the total number of entries in that zip/postal code. U.S. zip codes are classified by the 5-digit zip even if the entry has a 9-digit zip. When you print your bulk mailing, just bring this report with you to the Post Office. It is my understanding that they will use the report rather than count each envelope bundle by hand.

The Zip/Postal Code Distribution does not update the times mailed or last mail date since it does not print any entries.

DATA ENTRY

This menu lets you enter data into a mailing list or define groups and

PostMaster

abbreviations.

Names

This is the main data entry screen of PostMaster since it is where you enter and change your mailing list information. You can only use this function when you have a mailing list file opened for use. When you choose Names a window will open which has room for all of the information for a single entry. If the open file has any entries the window will be filled with the first entry on file. If the file is empty, a blank form will be displayed.

As you move through a mailing list file, a file position indicator on the right side of the screen will change to show you the displayed record's position in the file. When you are entering a new record the indicator turns yellow (or bright white on a monochrome monitor) and is positioned at the bottom.

Special keys and key combinations

While on the Names screen there are several special keys (such as **PgDn**) and key combinations (such as **^PgDn**) shown at the bottom of the screen.

PgDn Move forward (down) through the file. If you press **PgDn** on the last entry, PM will emit a tone.

PgUp Move backward (up) through the file. If you press **PgUp** on the first entry, PM will emit a tone.

^PgDn "Control-PageDown" — hold down the key marked **Ctrl** and press the **PgDn** key. This tells PostMaster to begin adding new records.

^Home "Control-Home" — moves to the first entry on file. Hold down the **Ctrl** key then press the **Home** key.

^End "Control-End" — moves to the last entry on file. Hold down the **Ctrl** key then press the **End** key.

Alt-P "Alternate-P" prints the entry which is displayed on the screen on an envelope or label.

Using Function keys (F-keys)

Near the bottom of the screen where the command keys are defined you will often see keys labelled "F1" through "F10" along the left side of your keyboard, or "F1" through "F12" along the top of your keyboard.

PostMaster

Some fields on the Names screen have different function key definitions than others. For example, pressing <F1> while on the City field brings up a list of city names for the entry's zip/postal code, while on the State/Prov field it brings up a list of US States and Canadian Provinces, and on all other fields it opens a help window, giving information about the current field.

Generally speaking, the <F1> key is for "Help", <F2> is "Find", <F3> is "List", <F5> is "Load", <F7> is "Save", and <F9> is "Begin".

Alt key combinations

The Names screen uses some Alt-key combinations as commands. Use the Alt (Alternate) key on your keyboard just like the Shift key: hold down Alt then press the other key indicated.

The Alt commands on the Names screen include Alt-P to print the displayed entry and the commands for the four toggles (on/off switches) shown on the right-hand side of the screen: Delete, Bad Address, Omit from Mailings, and Select to Print. The first letter of each toggle is highlighted to indicate the Alt-key combination to use. For example, to change Select to Print toggles hold down the "Alt" key then press the "S" key.

Using filters

A filter works just like its name implies: it allows some things to "get through" while others are "blocked." PM has these filters: Selected, Deleted, Valid, and Included. One or more filters may be set at once. If a filter is selected then only records which match the criteria at the time the filter is created will be displayed; all others will not appear on the screen.

When entries within a filtered set are changed, those records remain within the filtered set of records and PM displays the "Filter" message (at the bottom right of the screen) in low intensity to indicate a change has taken place. To illustrate, if you have the filter set to show you only those records which are "Selected" for printing, then you go to the Names screen and clear the Select flag for a record, that record no longer "belongs" in the filtered set. However, PM leaves this entry in the filtered set so you can review the changes

PostMaster

you have made to the records which were originally filtered. It would be more difficult to manipulate the entries in a filtered set if they disappeared once you made a change which affected their status. For example, if you are reviewing entries Selected for printing and every time you change the Select status of an entry it disappears from the list you wouldn't be able to see the ones you had decided not to print.

If you make changes to a filtered set of entries then want PM to show an accurate representation of the filter again, just turn the filter setting OFF then ON again.

As you use the PgUp and PgDn keys the display will jump to the next or previous entry within the filtered set of entries. The **F2** (Find) key will display only those selections included in the filter.

If you **want** to reset the filtered list after changing many records, just go to the Filter menu again and press ENTER.

Getting help (<F1>/Help)

When you see the "<F1>/Help" message at the bottom left of your screen it means there is context-sensitive help available for the field on which the cursor is sitting. Whether or not the message is displayed you can press the "<F1>" key for help. If there is no specific help for the item you are on you will get the Help Index.

In the State/Province field pressing <F1> brings up a list of U.S. State and Canadian Province names from which you may browse and select one. The abbreviation for the selected State or Province will be placed in the record.

Locating an entry (F2/Find)

Use this function key to navigate through your mailing list. F2/Find opens a window showing all of the entries on file, one line per entry. You can browse through the list to jump directly to the entry you want.

You will notice new function keys at the bottom of the screen while the Find function is active. You can press a letter or number to go directly to the index-key entry beginning with that letter or number (if you are using the Zip index press a "9" to jump to the first entry

PostMaster

with a "9" zip code; if you are using the Company Name index you could press "K" to jump to the first company beginning with "K")¹⁰. Use the arrow and PgUp/PgDn/Home/End keys to move around the list. Press **<Enter>** to use the entry which is highlighted.

Grouping entries together (<F3>/Group)

<F3> opens a window showing all of the groups defined with arrows next to ones to which this record belongs. You define groups by using the Data Entry/Groups screen (defined below). Basically, just highlight a group and press **<Enter>**; the arrow will appear and disappear (toggle) next to it — an arrow means that the entry belongs to this group.

When you press the **<F3>/Group** key a window appears showing the groups defined. Inside the window all of the group descriptions are displayed. You can move through the list using the up/down arrow keys, the PgUp/PgDn keys, or by pressing the first letter of the group description you wish to find. When a group is highlighted, press **<Enter>** to select it or clear the selection. Selected groups have an arrow to the left of them. When a group is Selected for an entry, it means that this person or business is a part of that group. For example, if you have a group called "Christmas List" you can Select this group for all people you want to be on your Christmas list.

Updating Response Dates (F4/Resp)

When Response Dates are displayed (as opposed to the Last Mail Dates) pressing the F4 key will increment the Times Responded counter by one, move the top Response Date to the bottom, and change the top Response Date to to-day's date.

Switching between Last Mailed and Response Dates (<F5>/Date)

The Names Data Entry screen has a block (near the bottom right of the screen) which contains dates. PM initially displays the number

¹⁰The index is determined by the setting of the Index menu. If the index is set to Address, then the entries will be sorted by whatever is in the first address line — starting with blanks, then numbers, then letters. The current index is displayed on the status line at the bottom of the screen.

PostMaster

of times the displayed entry has been printed plus the last three mailing dates. Pressing the <F5> key switches these fields to display the number of times a person has responded to mailings, the last two response dates, and the person's birth date.

The <F5> key is a toggle switch: pressing it repeatedly switches between the two sets of counter & date fields.

Adding new records

When you first use the Names screen on a new (empty) file, PostMaster will automatically place you in Add mode. Once the file has information, however, you are initially placed in Edit mode (i.e., existing information is displayed for you to view and/or change).

To add a new record to the file just press **^PgDn** (hold down the **Ctrl** key then press the **PgDn** key). This places you in Add mode. You will see a blank data entry form and the file position indicator will go to the bottom and turn yellow (or bright white on a monochrome monitor).

While adding new records *PostMaster* can check for duplicate entries. If you have one or more of the duplicate checking options enabled (on the Preferences menu) and you enter information which is duplicated in the file, PostMaster will pop open a window in which the duplicate entry's information is shown. Duplicate checking informs you of the presence of duplicate information but does not stop you from entering duplicate records. The action you take is up to you - PM can store up to 65,535 entries which contain duplicate name, company name, and/or address information.

When you are finished entering new addresses you can change modes in one of three ways:

1. Press ESC on a **blank form** to return to the menu (if you press ESC and have changed any information on the screen you will be given a message and an opportunity to save it -- don't worry)
2. Press PgUp to move "up" to the existing records in the file (i.e., switch to "change" mode)
3. Press F2 (Find) to locate an existing record

To abandon new information (i.e., if you have started entering

PostMaster

something on the screen and decide you don't want to save it), press the **Esc** key **before** you finish the screen.

Changing existing records

While an existing record is displayed you can change information, mark it for deletion, exclude it from being printed, or mark it as being a bad address.

You can use your mouse to go to the field you want to change or use the arrow keys to move around. After you have made changes just press <F7> (Save), or press Esc (Cancel) to abandon any changes you made.

Editing the Last Mail Date fields

PostMaster keeps track of the last three mailing dates for each entry. When you access a date field which has a date already defined, PM lets you change that date. When you access a date field which has no date defined, PM inserts the date stored in your computer's clock. When PM inserts today's date for you you may:

1. Press the up or down arrow keys to ignore the suggested date and leave the field blank, or
2. Press <F7> or Esc to save or abandon the entry, in which case the suggested date will be ignored, or
3. Press any other command key (such as ENTER) to accept the date.

Using the Delete/Omit/Bad Address/Select flags

On the right side of the Names data entry window you will notice four lines which have square brackets [] to the left of them. These are called **flags** (since they flag a condition) or **toggles** (since they act like toggle switches, being turned on and off). If there is a check-mark (√) inside the brackets then this item is active/on, otherwise it is not. For example, if a check-mark is next to the "Delete" flag then the record is marked for deletion and will be removed from the file the next time it is Packed.

You can set the toggles either with a mouse or the keyboard:

* Using a mouse, place the mouse cursor anywhere on the item you

PostMaster

want to change and press the left button. The check-mark will turn on and off each time you click the left button.

- * Using the keyboard (method #1), use the arrow keys to move through the fields until you reach the flags. To toggle the flag on/off just press the Space Bar.
- * Using the keyboard (method #2), hold down the Alt key and press the highlighted letter of the flag you wish to toggle (e.g., Press Alt-D to toggle the Delete flag).

The **Delete** toggle indicates whether a record is to be removed from the file the next time the File/Pack option is used. The **Bad Address** toggle indicates that the entry is a bad address and should not be printed. Likewise, **Omit from Mailings** indicates an entry which should not be included in print-outs (perhaps a customer who gives you bad checks, so you don't want to waste postage on him). Records marked Bad or Omit cannot be Selected for printing. The **Select** flag indicates whether the entry is selected for printing. Only those entries which are selected for printing will print.

Printing the Displayed Entry

When printing batches of labels or envelopes you use PostMaster's Print-Select-Query option under the File menu which provides many features to select and print groups of entries. When you want to print a single envelope or label there is a simpler method: locate the entry you want to print on the Names screen then press Alt-P. PM will ask which printer to use, whether to print an envelope or label, etc. and then print that one entry.

Using Smart Zip

Smart Zip is a feature which automatically enters the City and/or State/Province for a given zip code or postal code. The State or Province will always be filled in for you. If the exact zip/postal code is on file¹¹ the city will also be filled in. If the city is not on file you will be asked to enter it; the next time you type that zip/postal code the city and state/province will be filled in automatically.

Some areas of the U.S. have more than one city served by a post office. For example, my post office (81428) serves three towns

¹¹For U.S. addresses only the first 5 digits of the zip code are used to identify the City and State.

PostMaster

(Paonia, Bowie, and Somerset). If a zip code has more than one city a window will pop open after you enter the zip code in which all the available cities are listed. Use the up and down arrow keys to highlight the one you want and press ENTER to select it.

Macros & Key Words

If you are familiar with software which uses function key (F-key) or Alternate-key macros, or "key words" which are used to group entries together, you will find *PostMaster's* method to be much more flexible (and probably easier to use, as well).

Macros can be simulated using PostMaster's Abbreviations (described below). A simple 1-5 letter abbreviation can expand to whatever you need. For example, you can define an abbreviation "POB" which expands to the full text, "P.O. Box" or even "Post Office Box."

Abbreviations allow you to easily establish standards for your mailing lists, which is important for duplicate checking. See the section below entitled "Abbreviations (Macros)" for more on this topic.

Note: Abbreviations are used on the name, company name, address, and comments fields. Letter case does not matter - "pob", "Pob", and "POB" will all access the same abbreviation.

"Key words" are usually one or more short fields in which you can put short key words (like "PRO" for "Prospects", "XMAS" for "Christmas List", etc.). PostMaster gives you two flexible ways of accomplishing this same goal without cluttering the screen with extra fields:

1. Define group names into which your entries fit (such as "Service companies," "Christmas list," etc.). While entering a new name or viewing an existing entry just press the <F3> key to pop-up the Groups window. An entry can belong to none or as many as 20 groups. When you want to print your Christmas list just use Print/Select/Query (under the "File" menu, described above): Under the "Groups" menu choose the "Select" option. You will see the familiar pop-up window showing all group definitions. Select as many groups as you want then press <F7>. All entries in those group(s) are now selected to print.

PostMaster

2. Place key words or phrases in the comment lines. Let's say you had a customer list and in the comment lines you liked to keep track of which computer equipment your clients' own. You might put things like XT, AT, 386, Laser, Tape, VGA, DTP, etc. in your comments. When you want to mail a notice to all of your desktop publishing clients ("DTP" people), just use Print/Select/Query (under the "File" menu): Under the "Phrase" menu choose the "Select by phrase in comment" option; enter the key "DTP" and press **<Enter>**. All entries with "DTP" somewhere in the comments are now selected to print.

Groups

What are groups?

PostMaster's Group feature lets you organize your entries in ways which are sensible to you, rather than using short & cryptic codes. You may define and change up to 256 group descriptions. Grouping entries together makes it easy to select just the people you want for mailings.

For example, in your business you may want to distinguish people by whether they are current customers or prospects, or whether they purchased Product A, Product B, or Service C. For example, John Jones and Arthur Smith have service contracts with you; Acme Drywall and Frank Smith purchased Product A from you. If you want to send a mailing to all people who have service contracts, you might ask PM to Select for Printing those entries which belong to group "Service Contact".

Other examples of common group types are business types (automotive, general retail, attorney, etc.), and region definitions (northwest, west, southwest, etc.).

Note: Groups are an **optional** part of each record. An entry may belong to no groups at all, or it may belong to a maximum of 20 groups.

Defining or changing groups

Using the Data Entry/Groups screen is easy: Use the Up and Down Arrows to highlight an existing group definition then press the **<Enter>** key to change the text (e.g., you may have misspelled a word and want to correct it or you may find a better way to describe a certain group). Press the **Ins** (Insert) key to add a new group definition to the list. Press the **Del**

PostMaster

(Delete) key to delete (erase) a group definition.

Note: When you include an entry in a group PostMaster remembers the record number of the group (rather than the descriptive text).

- * If you change the description of a group, all entries in all of your mailing lists will still belong to that group.

- * If you delete a group, any entries which were part of that group will remember the record number and then, when you define a new group which uses that record number, entries will be included in that group. For example, if you have a "Christmas List" group and you delete it then add a new group called "Black List", all of your "Christmas List" entries will now belong to the "Black List" group. The reason for this is that it could be a very slow process to have PM search through every mailing list file to remove a group codes from all files -- if you had many large mailing lists it could take minutes or hours to delete a group code. A way around this problem is to open each file and use the **File/re-Index** option - this will remove any invalid group references.

Abbreviations (Macros)

This handy feature lets you define abbreviations to be used in entering your data. This is the same concept as a macro, although it is a rather short macro (30 characters or less). Abbreviations are checked and expanded on the company name, address, and comment lines; other fields do not perform abbreviation checking.¹²

PostMaster can store up to 5.5 million abbreviations, providing adequate disk space.¹³ An abbreviation entry consists of a key word (1-6 upper-case characters) and the text to which the key word will be expanded (up to 30 characters). When entering names PM checks for abbreviations using upper-case. Whether you enter "pob" or "PoB" PostMaster will access the same abbreviation.

This screen works the same way as the Groups and Messages screens: Use the Up and Down arrow keys to highlight an entry then press ENTER to change it or the DEL key to erase it. Press the Ins key to insert a

¹²This allows you to create an abbreviation "ST" which expands to "Street", for example, and still use the letters "ST" in "St Paul" without having it become "Street Paul".

¹³Each abbreviation consumes just 36 bytes - 1,820 abbreviations can be stored in just 64kb of disk space.

PostMaster

new abbreviation.

Some common and helpful abbreviations for North Americans are "POB" for "P.O. Box" (or "Post Office Box", as you prefer), "ST" for "Street", "BLVD" for "Boulevard". You may find repetitive text in your mailing list which lends itself to using an abbreviation. For example, you may have a list of attorneys, in which case the abbreviation "ATTY" as "Attorney at Law" would be helpful.

Abbreviations save typing and also allow you to easily establish standards for your mailing lists, which is important for duplicate checking. Once "POB" is set up every entry will say "P.O. Box", whereas if you had no such abbreviation you might have some entries saying "P.O. Box" while others might say "PO Box" or even simply "POB". This is a problem when it comes to duplicate checking because if you enter "POB 132" and "PO Box 132" PostMaster has no way of knowing that these are duplicate entries. The same holds for "Ave" versus "Avenue", "St" versus "Street", and so on.

Don't worry about making a bad choice for an abbreviation because you can always change it. You might set "St" to "Street" and then have need of the word "Saint" which is also abbreviated as "St". No problem - just enter "123 St. John St" - the period in "St." makes it different from "St" and, thus, PostMaster will convert the line to "123 St. John Street".

INDICES & FILTERS: CONTROLLING THE SORTING SEQUENCE AND VIEWING OF ENTRIES

This menu lets you change the order in which the entries in your mailing list are displayed and printed. There are four indexing options and a filter option from which to choose:

1. Name index - sorts entries by Surname plus First Name plus Company Name.
2. Company Name index - sorts entries by Company Name plus Surname plus First Name.
3. Address index - sorts entries by the first address line plus Zip/Postal code plus Surname plus First Name plus Company Name.
4. Zip/Postal code index - sorts entries by zip/postal code plus Surname plus First Name plus Company Name.

The last item on the menu, Set & clear filter, lets you decide which

PostMaster

entries you wish to have displayed based upon certain criteria. Once you choose this option you will be shown a menu of filter choices. If a filter choice is active it will have an arrow to the left of it.

1. Selected entries filter. When activated only entries which are Selected for printing will be displayed. To state the reverse, any records which are not Selected for printing will seem to be gone -- they will not show up on the screen nor on the F2 (Find) window.
2. Deleted entries filter. When activated only records which are marked for deletion will show up on the Names data entry screen, including the F2 (Find) window.
3. Valid Addresses filter. When activated only records which have a complete address will show up on the Names data entry screen, including the F2 (Find) window.
4. Included entries filter. When activated only records which can be included in mailings (i.e., neither the Bad Address nor Exclude From Mailings flags are set) will show up on the Names data entry screen, including the F2 (Find) window.

Changing the Index

The active index has a dot to the left of it. To select a different index press the first letter of the index you would like to use or highlight it using the arrow keys then press ENTER. Only one index can be active at a time.

When you select an index it immediately becomes active; there is no need to re-index your files or perform any other process. You can instantly switch between the indices because PostMaster maintains all four index files simultaneously.

Filters

A filter is a way of limiting what you see, just like a camera filter. This makes it easier to review certain entries, especially in very large mailing lists.

Setting a filter

Let's say you selected all records in Group A for printing and then wanted to browse that list, eliminating a few here and there to reach a target number of mailings. You go to the Index/Filter menu and

PostMaster

choose the Filter item at the bottom, then press the SpaceBar to mark the "Selected filter", then press **<Enter>**. You will see a bar graph as the file is filtered (on smaller files it may fly by so quickly you'll barely know it was there). Then when you go to the Data Entry/Names screen you will see the first record on file which is selected for printing.

Pressing the PgUp and PgDn keys will move you around in the filtered list. If you press the F2 (Find) key, the window will contain only the filtered list. It may seem as if the other records are gone, but a look at the status line at bottom of the screen will tell you that the number of records in your file has not changed.

Clearing a filter

To clear all filters, just access the filter menu and then press the **<Esc>** key. To clear certain filter(s) but retain others, access the filter selection menu again and re-define the filters you wish to have active.

PREFERENCES

The Preferences menu contains options which help you customize the operation of PM and set necessary parameters, such as the type(s) of printer(s) you have. Preferences are in two groupings on the menu, separated by a horizontal line. The upper options are screens; the bottom two options are toggles (i.e., they are either "on" or "off"). A dot next to any of the bottom three toggles indicates that it is "on."

Please check each Preferences screen before making full use of PostMaster, otherwise something might seem wrong with the software whereas it is due to the set of conditions under which PM is operating.

Setting Your Return Addresses

You can set up to two return addresses which you would like to print on laser envelopes. Each address may contain up to five lines and can include punctuation - even quotation marks and commas.

When you are finished with this screen you can click on "Ok" to save the information and exit, "Cancel" to ignore any changes and exit, or use the keyboard keys **<F7>** to save or **Esc** to cancel.

PostMaster

Data Entry Settings

Setting the point of origin: the Country setting

PostMaster has been designed to validate data differently for U.S., Canadian, and other (International) addresses. By using the proper country setting you will have the following abilities and features:

- ◆ The "U.S.A Only" setting will only allow numerical zip codes in the format #####-#####, telephone numbers in the format (###) ###-####, dates in the format MM/DD/YYYY, and state two-letter abbreviations. If you enter a full State name (properly spelled, of course) PM will find its abbreviation for you.
- ◆ The "Canada Only" setting allows postal codes only in the format A#A #A# (where A is a letter and # is a number), telephone numbers as (###) ###-####, dates in the format DD-MM-YYYY, and province abbreviations. If you enter a full province name PM will find its abbreviation for you.
- ◆ The "U.S.A and Canada" and "Canada and U.S.A." settings accept data in either of the formats mentioned above. Dates are presented in the format "## AAA ####". For example, "17 Sep 1992". When it is necessary to determine whether an entry is domestic or foreign, the "U.S.A. and Canada" setting assumes the point of origin to be the USA, and the "Canada and U.S.A." setting assumes the point of origin to be in Canada.
- ◆ The "International" setting does the least "work" for you: it does not format zip codes or telephone numbers and does not look up state/province abbreviations. Everything you enter is treated as literal information. Dates are displayed in yyyy-mm-dd format.

Home country

This field contains the name of the postal origin country (the country in which you live, most likely). This field is used to determine the country name, if any, to print on envelopes or labels. This field gives PostMaster the flexibility to have the same mailing list file used in more than one country.

PostMaster

As an example, let's say you have a data file which contains international addresses and the Home Country is set to Germany. Entries which have "Germany" in the Country field will **not** print the country name, entries which have an empty Country field and a U.S. or Canadian address will print the appropriate country name, and all others will print whatever is in the Country field. If the data base is mailed to Canada, changing the Home Country to "Canada" would cause Canadian addresses to skip printing the country name while German addresses would then include the country name.

City & State formatting

The setting of this field determines how city names will be entered from the keyboard on the Data Entry/Names screen. There are three settings: All upper case, Capitalize, and Leave as typed.

"All upper case" will accept only upper case letters for the city name. "Capitalize" will capitalize each word of the city name, regardless of how you enter it (e.g., "LOS ANGELES" will change to "Los Angeles" and "McLean city" will change to "Mclean City"). "Leave as typed" will leave the name as you enter it.

Default 3rd phone description

Every entry has room for three phone numbers: a main number (typically a business/work phone), a FAX number, and a third, "other" number. The description of the third phone number may be set differently for each entry. When you add a new entry to a mailing list the description of the third phone number is set to the default description found on this Preferences screen.

Bulk mailing features

This setting determines whether PostMaster will display the Carrier Route Sort field on the Names data entry screen and whether it will print this information (if present) on labels and envelopes.

Set this field to "enabled" to use and print the Carrier Route Sort field.

Envelopes

PostMaster

I expect that most folks, like me, tend to use the same kind of envelope time and again, and it's probably a #10 "business" envelope. So I decided to keep this screen simple and just have a single definition for an envelope which can be changed from time to time, if necessary (rather than having a menu of envelope types).

The fields, from top to bottom, are to contain the width of the envelope (in inches), the length (top to bottom, in inches), the top offset, and the left offset.¹⁴ Enter fractions of an inch as decimal figures (e.g., 1/2 is .5, 1/8 is .125, etc.). The left margin adjustment can be negative or positive. A negative number will move the return address to the left, a positive number will move it to the right.

General Settings

Alert tone

When some type of error or warning message is displayed on the screen, you reach the end of a field, press a wrong letter in a menu, etc., PM can alert you with one of three sounds or you may select "No sound" for silent operation.

Automatic 11-digit zip

If this feature is enabled then PostMaster will figure out the extended zip code for any address which has a 9-digit zip. According to the USPS this is normally accurate but there may be exceptions. When an envelope is pre-bar-coded it seems to me that it goes coast-to-coast a day faster. If you are doing ordinary first class mailings having a bad bar code would take away that one day advantage and maybe even add a day for them to correct it. If you are doing a bulk mailing, an improper bar code is grounds for trash-canning your mail - you'll never know about it (so you can't correct the mistake), but it isn't otherwise a problem.

Of course, it is best if your mailing list is entirely accurate. This

¹⁴An "offset" is similar to a "margin". A 1-inch margin means that the print begins one inch from the left edge of the paper. A 1-inch offset means that the print begins one inch from the printer's left-most printing edge - there is no guarantee that this is actually one inch from the left edge since the print position can vary depending on how you load the printer.

PostMaster

is almost entirely impossible with large lists, but you can get closer to that goal using the post office and third-party vendors who can correct your lists and provide the full 11-digit zip. Ask your postmaster for information about submitting a disk for free updating by the post office.

The Post Office will verify a given mailing list file only once - after that you will have to go to the C.A.S. who provide the service for a fee. If your mailing list consists of local addresses, the Post Office's one-time free service will probably be all you'll ever need. If you get your list verified then a year later you go after a new market and create a new list, this new list is eligible for the PO's free one-time service. I'm really impressed that such an excellent service is free of charge and that it is beneficial to all parties.

Incomplete addresses

The setting of this option determines whether incomplete addresses will be printed. An incomplete address is one which is missing the street, city, state/province, or zip/postal code.

If this field is set to "Print" then all Selected entries will print. If set to "Don't print" then Selected entries which have incomplete address information will not be printed.

Import duplicate rule

This field determines how duplicate entries will be handled when importing from another file. There are four settings for this field: Update, Add, Ignore, and Ask Each Time. Whether an entry is considered a duplicate depends on the duplicate checking options which are activated on the Index menu (i.e., if Duplicate Name Checking is active then PM will check for a duplicate personal name, etc.).

Setting this option to "Update Duplicates" will cause PostMaster to search for duplicate entries and, if found, the information will be replaced with data from the import file. If a duplicate entry is not found, the record will be added to the file.

"Add Duplicates" causes PM to add every record from the import file, not checking for duplicates. The "Ignore Duplicates" setting

PostMaster

causes PM to search for a duplicate entry and, if found, that record is not imported (i.e., the original is left as is).

If you set this option to "Ask Each Time" a window will pop open for every duplicate entry encountered, showing you the entry in the PostMaster file and asking whether you wish to update, add, or ignore the imported record, or cancel the importing process entirely.

Import technique

This setting determines how much PostMaster will try to assist you when importing a file which does not contain the same name fields as PM. For example, you may have a file which contains a name field in which the first name and surname are grouped together. For the purpose of indexing it is much more convenient for PM to have each component of a person's name in a separate field, otherwise the entries will be sorted by each person's first name. Likewise, you may have a file which contains a single Name field which may contain a company name or a personal name. It would save a tremendous amount of re-entering if PM could automatically adapt imported data, and that is precisely what this setting is for.

When set to "Standard", PM will import fields as you define them, without trying to figure anything out. When set to "Smart Name" PostMaster will split a personal name into the first name and surname components when necessary. Setting this option to "Smart Name > Company" will cause PM to split the personal name components and also to check for the possibility of a company name being in the personal name field. It does this by checking for certain key characters - such as "Inc.", "Corporation", or an ampersand (&) - which are unlikely to be part of anyone's personal name. Finally, the "Smart Name <> Company" setting will attempt to move data in either direction: if it seems that a personal name is in the company name field it will be moved, and vice versa.

The more assistance PostMaster attempts to provide, the greater the chance that it will guess incorrectly (for example, PM would assume the company name "Frank Smith Carpenter" is a personal name). Furthermore, if you are importing a file which only contains company names you would not want PM to attempt to interpret the data any differently.

PostMaster

Keep in mind that these settings only come into play if some fields are missing data. If you are importing a file which contains first name, surname, and company name fields then PM will simply copy the data as it is.

Adhere to USPS guidelines

This setting determines whether PostMaster will force compliance with U.S. Postal Service standards or will allow a more traditional printing of address information. The USPS uses computers with optical character recognition (OCR) to scan mail in an attempt to mechanically sort it (that is, without human intervention). For best accuracy they prefer that the address information be printed in all UPPER CASE letters without any punctuation.

If you set this field to "**Enabled**" all U.S. addresses will be printed in UPPER CASE with symbols and punctuation removed. This setting does not affect the printing of Canadian or International addresses.

Start on DE/Names screen

The setting of this field determines whether PostMaster will automatically go to the Data Entry/Names screen when it is first started.

- ◆ When |enabled| and a file was open when PostMaster was last ended, the file will be opened and PM will go to the Data Entry/Names screen.
- ◆ When |disabled| or no file was open when PostMaster was last ended, PM will wait at the top menu.

Defining label dimensions

PostMaster is pre-configured for a few common label types, such as an 8.5x11-inch sheet and the ever-popular 1-across 3½-inch by 15/16-inch labels which are commonly sold in boxes of 5,000 labels. You can change any of the 21 label types as needed.

First you will see the menu of label choices. Highlight the one you want to change and press **<Enter>**. A window will open showing the name of the label and all of the measurements. Type a short name (such as

PostMaster

"Mailing", "Shipping", "Disk", etc.) to indicate the type of label. Enter the width of the actual label (i.e., how much room there is upon which to print), the vertical distance from the top of one label to the top of the next, the horizontal distance from the left side of one label to the left side of the next, and the number of labels across.

You can use the Up and Down Arrow keys to move between lines, or point and click with a mouse. When you are finished click on "Ok" to save or "Cancel" to abandon any changes, or use the keyboard keys **<F7>** to Save or **Esc** to cancel.

Defining Printers

PostMaster can use two printers: a page printer (most lasers and some ink jets) and a line printer (which includes all dot matrix & daisy wheel printers and many ink jets). Until you define your printer(s) and font(s) there will be a flashing message at the bottom of the screen and you will not be able to use any of the printing functions.

The Printer definition window shows the current settings. Use the arrow keys to move between fields; press the **<F3>** key to pop up a list of choices for a field. For example, to set the line printer press the up or down arrow until that line is highlighted (shown in bright letters), then press **<F3>** and a menu of choices will appear. Highlight your printer (or one compatible with it) and press **<Enter>**, then choose the port (usually LPT1) and press **<Enter>**. Next, press the down arrow once (to move down to the first "font" field) and press **<F3>** again. Highlight your font selection and press **<Enter>**. When you are finished, either highlight the "Ok" button and press **<Enter>** or press the **<F7>** key.

PCL (laser & deskjet) printer soft fonts

You will need landscape (SFL) fonts for envelopes and portrait (SFP) fonts for everything else. You decide which fonts to use once — on the Preferences/Printers screen — and, from then on, PM automatically uses these choices.

Consider an example: When you set the font for the envelope return address you may choose any of your printer's built-in fonts or a soft font. If you select the first item in the font list, "Select a soft font," you will first be asked for the drive and/or path containing the files. The last directory you used will be the default.

PostMaster

After you enter a correct path you will be shown a list of the landscape soft font files (*.SFL) in that directory. Use the arrow keys and PgUp/PgDn keys to move around, highlight the one you want, and press **<Enter>**. The soft font file name will now be shown on the screen.

Scalable fonts

A scalable font is a single font (e.g., CG Times, Univers, etc.) which can be printed in practically any size. Modern laser printers like the H-P LaserJet III (and later models) have scalable fonts built in. This means you can pick a font, such as Univers, and print in practically any size you want.

When you select a scalable font PM will prompt you for the pitch (cpi) or the point size, depending on whether it is a fixed-pitch or proportionally-spaced font. In general numbers between 8 and 14 work best. My favourite font for both my laser and dot matrix is a Helvetica-type (sans serif) font at 12cpi or 12 points.

Post Office considerations

The USPS uses OCR (optical code recognition) equipment to mechanically "read" envelopes. A size of 8 to 18 points must be used (10 to 12 points is recommended); if your printer has fixed-pitch fonts use 10cpi or 12cpi. It is also recommended that you use Sans Serif fonts such as Helvetica, Swiss, or Univers (a sans-serif PCL soft font is provided with the Registered Edition of PostMaster).

Duplicate Checking

PostMaster can test for duplicate personal names, company names, and/or addresses as you add entries. You may enable any or all of these three tests as desired. As you choose these tests, a dot to the left of each item will appear & disappear; the dot means that the test is enabled. The way you set these tests will be saved between PM sessions.

- * Personal name checks first name & surname
- * Company name checks the company name field
- * Zip checks zip/postal code plus address line #1

PostMaster

With these duplicate checking options you can have PM warn you when you enter two names with the same address or the same name at two different addresses. How extensively PM tests for duplicates is entirely up to you. Duplicate checking also applies when you are importing a file into PM - whichever items are active will be tested while importing.

Because PostMaster keeps all index files active simultaneously, performing a duplicate check is very fast. On most computers you will not see any degradation in speed. If you are running PM on an older 8088 computer or from floppy disks (rather than a hard disk) duplicate checking may noticeably slow importing.

An entry is considered a duplicate if all of the data entered exactly matches data in the file. For example, "P.O. Box 12" and "PO Box 12" are unique and so would not be identified as duplicates. "Smith" and "Smith, Jr." are unique, however if someone named "Joe Smith, Jr." were on file and the name "Joe Smith" were entered, PM would tell you that "Joe Smith, Jr." is a possible duplicate since it contains the same sequence of characters. "Joe Smith Jr" and "Joe Smith, Sr." would not be considered duplicates since they do not match "Joe Smith, Jr."

To make duplicate checking work well for you I suggest you incorporate PostMaster's Abbreviation feature into your data entry. Abbreviations reduce typing (which speeds up data entry) and establishes standards. "Ave", "Ave." and "Avenue" are all different and will **not** be caught as duplicates, so if you set the abbreviation "ave" to mean "Avenue", "St" to mean "Street", etc. then PM will give you much more accurate duplicate checking.

NOTE Upper-case and lower-case letters do not matter for duplicate checking.

HELP

The Help menu contains information screens and print-outs. This menu is divided into four sections:

1. The on-line manual (Index)
2. Information about how PM is running on your computer
3. Registration, site license, and update order forms
4. Documentation which may be viewed and/or printed

PostMaster

Choosing the **Index** option will bring up the table of contents for PostMaster's help system. You may then use the arrow keys to highlight a choice and press ENTER to view the information on the screen. This is the same information which is displayed when you press the <F1> (Help) key on data entry screens, plus there are additional topics which is only available from this menu.

The **About** option gives you the current version number, copyright information, and my address & phone number.

The **Files & Memory** option tells you how about your computer's free memory (RAM and disk space) and shows statistics about the opened mail list file (if any), group file, abbreviation file, and zip/postal code file.

The **Settings** option shows a summary of all your preferences settings. This gives you a way to view these settings without having to access each Preferences screen.

The third group of options print various order forms. **Order Form** prints an order form for registering PostMaster. **Site License** prints a site license form which shows discounted pricing if you wish to use more than one copy of PostMaster at a single location. **Update/Sampler Form** prints a form to use when you want to order an update disk to the latest version of PostMaster - you need **not** be registered to order an update disk. If you have a version of PostMaster which is several months old please feel free to order the latest version for evaluation.

The fourth group of options are used to view and/or print PostMaster's documentation files. When you choose one of the files it will be displayed on the screen. You can move through the file using the cursor control keys and print the file, if you wish. While viewing one of these files notice the command keys at the bottom of the screen and remember to press <F1> if you want help.

PROBLEMS AND ERROR MESSAGES

PostMaster tries to handle most problems without any attention from you, however, there are times when an error happens which PostMaster is unable to handle. There are three types of errors:

PostMaster

1. Condition error - this is a problem due to an operating condition. Examples of this type of error are if a printer is off-line when you try to print, if duplicate checking is turned "on" and a duplicate entry is found, or if a file is locked by another user on a network. PM reports such conditions in a window and then, once you press ENTER or click on "Ok", continues operating.

2. File error - these problems cause an error screen to appear which suggests a possible solution to the problem. The most common solution to these problems is to re-index your files (**F**ile/**r**e-**I**ndex).

3. Programme error - this is a mistake of mine and will cause the programme to abruptly end with a one-line error message and a message like "Press any key to return to system." Report these errors to me right away, please. Just like other large software packages, PostMaster contains hundreds of thousands of instructions and the bigger it gets the more likely it is that a "bug" will creep in there somewhere. These errors get top priority and are usually fixed and a new version released within a day.

All large software packages have "bugs" which are errors in the programming logic. For example, many Windows users experience "General Protection Fault" messages which are caused by bugs in Windows and/or other software which was running. As PostMaster goes through its evolution, bugs are removed; as new features are added new bugs sometimes find their way into the software. It is very helpful when someone informs me of a problem they found.

The following sections describe some common errors and procedures to correct them.

EMS Memory Error

PostMaster requires that there be zero EMS memory or else at least 160kb of free EMS memory. If PostMaster reports that there is too little EMS memory to run, here are ways to get around this problem:

1. Check the EMM386 line in your CONFIG.SYS file for the word "RAM". Change "RAM" to "NOEMS". This will remove EMS memory support from your computer. If there is other software in your computer which requires EMS this will not be a practical solution for you.

2. Change the EMM386 line to have either more or less memory, re-

PostMaster

boot your computer, and try to run PostMaster again. For example, you might put the number "400" at the end of the line to see how 400kb of EMS memory works. Experiment to find the memory setting which works for PostMaster and also allows your other software to operate properly.

3. Change the memory settings for software which uses EMS, such as SMARTDRV, so that there is either more or less EMS memory available.

Text overlaps on reports

This problem is caused by choosing a font which is too large for the report layout - WVH has no way to detect this situation. To resolve the problem go to the Preferences/Printers screen and change the font to a smaller (lower) point size or a more dense (higher) character pitch.

Information is Missing

I place great emphasis on keeping data safe and know of no case where PostMaster has lost data, however, problems with DOS or computer equipment may cause data to be lost in rare circumstances.

If any of your data seems to be missing exit to DOS and type "CHKDSK C: /F" (without the quotation marks; replace "C:" with another drive, if appropriate).

MS-DOS 6.2 users: Use the command "SCANDISK C:" since it performs a more thorough test.

Either CHKDSK or SCANDISK will check that the recorded location of each file is valid. The SCANDISK utility can also perform a surface scan which tests the entire disk to be sure all areas of it are usable.

If CHKDSK or SCANDISK find any errors they will be reported to you and you will be asked for input on correcting the errors. CHKDSK only knows how to clear any errors and turn "orphan" data into new files. By "orphan" data I mean data which is on your hard disk but for which DOS has lost the information about the file to which it belongs. Normally this data is not usable or requires tremendous effort to make it usable again. I suggest you do **not** create files from this data unless you have lost a tremendous amount of data which would be very difficult to re-enter or the data is irreplaceable. Beyond this point you will require the help of someone who knows how to recover damaged files. Contact me if you cannot find a local consultant to

PostMaster

perform this service for you.

SCANDISK is able to identify bad sections of your disk and attempt to move data to safe areas. If the area is badly damaged the attempt to move data may not be entirely successful. If SCANDISK tells you it has found problems on your disk I suggest you let it fix them. If your data is irreplaceable or would take a tremendous amount of effort to re-enter, then I recommend that you get the help of a consultant. At the very least make a complete back-up copy of your data files (or the entire hard disk) so that you can attempt to restore information in case files are so badly damaged that information becomes lost.

In most cases you will find that no data is missing and all you need to do is re-index your files for the "missing" entries to re-appear. To re-build the index files just select the Re-index option on the File menu.

FILES WHICH MAKE UP THE PACKAGE

The unregistered Shareware Edition of *PostMaster* is made up of the following files:

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PM.EXE | The executable file |
| PM.HLP | Help messages file |
| PM.HX0/HX1 | Help messages indices |
| PM.TXT | * The ASCII text file of this document |
| PM.WP | * The WordPerfect file of this document (so you can format it for your printer) |
| PM.CO | Smart Import file containing key phrases which indicate an entry is a company name rather than a personal name |
| PM.MSG | Screen messages file |
| PM.MIX | Screen messages index |
| PM.PIF | * Windows Programme Information File (PIF), contains the settings for running PM under Windows. This file is only needed by Windows and is otherwise not needed by PM. |
| POSTAL.DAT | U.S. and Canadian zip/postal code ranges file |
| PRINTER.DAT | Printer definition file |
| DDLABEL.WID | * Import definition for Dr. Data Label files |
| PHONE.STY | * Ventura Publisher style sheet for a 2-column phone book for VP version 3.0 or higher. |
| READ.ME | * A text file describing the latest features, enhancements, and corrections, plus information on installing PM. |

PostMaster

ORDER.FRM Order form for all of my software
VENDOR.DOC * Information file for BBS Sysops & Shareware
distributors/disk vendors
SYSOP.DOC * Special deals for BBS sysops & co-sysops

Files marked with an asterisk (*) are not required to run PM so they may be erased if disk space is a premium (such as if you are using PM on a floppy disk system).

When you run PM for the first time it will create the following files in the same directory as the EXE programme file:

CONFIG.WDT Your preferences settings and other data
ABBREVS.WDT Abbreviations you define
ABBREVS.IX Index for abbreviations
GROUPS.WDT Groups you define
GROUPS.IX Index for groups
MESSAGES.WDT Envelope & label message file
MESSAGES.IX Messages index

The **Registered Edition** contains extra files which are for use by the registered owner only. So if you share PostMaster with friends and BBSs, please **ERASE** these Registered Edition files from the copies you share:

*.SFP Portrait PCL soft fonts
*.SFL Landscape PCL soft fonts
CONFIG.WDT Registration key & configuration info

PostMaster

INDEX

4DOS10, 14
Abbreviations51
 limits52
Adding new entries42
Alert tone58
ASCII Files
 Importing data from25
Bar codes
 Printing40
Bulk mailing57
Bulletin Boards
 Obtaining updates & upgrades from3
Carrier Route Sort57
Changing a File's Name & Description21
Changing existing records47
City
 Capitalization preferences56
Coding entries
 See Groups50
Country setting55
 home country56
 International56
 U.S.A. and Canada56
 U.S.A. only55
Creating a New File19
Credit card
 Registering using5
DBase/DBF files
 Importing28
Deleting a File20
Deleting records
 Removing records which are marked for deletion24
Description19
Directory
 Choosing a Directory for WML16
Directory.
 start WML from any15
Dr. Data Label Files
 Importing29

PostMaster

- DR-DOS10
- Duplicate checking49, 52, 63
 - Import59
- EMS Memory Error66
- Envelopes
 - Defining57
 - Printing39
- Erasing a file20
- Exporting15, 32
 - ASCII, comma-delimited32
 - ASCII, fixed field length32
 - MS Word34
 - Ventura Publisher33
 - WordPerfect33
- File name
 - Changing21
 - description19
 - rules19
- Filters43, 53, 54
 - Clearing54
 - Setting54
- Global Field Replace35
- Groups45, 50
 - Defining50
 - Printing a group list39
 - querying by group34
- Help
 - Accessing help for a function44
 - Index64
 - using the F1 key15
- Importing15
 - ASCII (text) files21, 22, 25
 - Data from other software24
 - dBase (DBF) files28
 - Defining field assignments26, 28, 30
 - Dr. Data Label files29
 - Duplicate checking59, 63
 - Grouping imported entries31
 - Loading (restoring) an import definition25
 - Preferences59
 - Saving an import definition27, 29, 31
 - Standard or Smart Technique59

PostMaster

- WML files27
- WordPerfect mail merge files30
- Index
 - Active indexing method18
 - Changing54
 - Options53
 - Re-index files19
- International mailings55
- Key words49
- Labels
 - Defining label dimensions61
- Last Mail Date
 - entering and changing47
 - updating after printing39
 - using with Query35
- Macros51
- Menus
 - Using17
- Monochrome (/M) switch10, 16
- MS-DOS10
- Names screen
 - Auto start on Names screen61
- Networks
 - Using WML with12
- Opening an Existing File20
- Order Form64
 - printing a Site License64
 - printing an Update order form64
 - printing from WML64
- OS/210
- Packing a file
 - Defined24
- PC-DOS10
- Phone book
 - font41
 - Printing41
- Postal codes
 - distribution list (report)41
 - testing during import24
- Preferences55
- Printers
 - Defining11, 61

PostMaster

- Laser printer soft fonts62
- Printing37, 39, 43, 48
 - a single entry48
 - Envelopes39
 - flow chart37
 - Incomplete addresses58
 - Phone Book41
 - Selecting entries to be printed34
 - U.S.P.S. considerations38
- Query34
 - Examples36
- Random
 - selecting entries randomly34
- Registration4, 64
 - benefits4
 - invoice & registration form7
 - key16
 - payment methods5
 - pricing5
- Replacing the contents of a field35
- Response Dates46
- Return addresses55
- Saving/Closing a File20
- Scalable fonts62
- Site License
 - printing64
- Smart Zip49
- Soft fonts62
- Sorting sequence53
- Update Subscription6, 7
- Update/Sampler Form
 - printing64
- Updating to a newer release16
- USPS guidelines60
- Windows
 - Using WML with13
- WordPerfect
 - Exporting to33
 - Importing from30
 - Importing, Mail merge field names30
- Zip codes
 - 11-digit zip codes (U.S.A.)37, 58

PostMaster

distribution list (report)41
testing during import24