Review:
EMS Shareware Delphi Library

reviewed by Bob Swart

The EMS Professional Shareware Libraries comprise large collections of public domain and shareware products on CD-ROMs, supporting software developers in many specialist areas, including Delphi, Pascal (mostly Turbo Pascal), C and C++, Assembler, Windows, Visual Basic, various databases and spreadsheets.

The Delphi library consists of 566 ZIP files totalling 47Mb. The CD-ROM which houses this collection also includes the Pascal, Windows NT and other libraries.

The February 1996 copy of the Delphi Utility Library which I reviewed has only Delphi 1 files, but I'd expect Delphi 2 stuff to be in the latest version of the library.

Examples of what you can find are the best of any utility or component written for Delphi that was uploaded to the Internet, the CompuServe DELPHI forum (especially Library 2 *From Borland* and Library 22 *Third-Party Tools*), etc, but now you don't have to download all those (sometimes huge) files!

It also includes the Delphi 1.01 patches, over 70 Technical Information notes from Borland on Delphi topics, the Delphi 1 VCL and Object Pascal Reference Manuals in Acrobat format, the first nine issues of the *Unofficial Delphi Newsletter* (highly recommended by the way) and also some trial versions of commercial libraries such as Apollo and Orpheus. Every file is selected by hand, so it's not just a dumb copy of the contents of all the BBS systems in sight, good or bad, but a big collection of really useful files.

Of course, the size of this library makes describing what you can find in this collection almost as difficult as actually finding something in it... if it weren't for the additional database which EMS supplies with each library. The database viewer lets you search for a file by type, name, vendor or author, or you can use free text search to look for words from the product descriptions. Whenever you have one or more hits, you get the product name, file name, release date, file size, producer, address (including e-mail), phone and fax numbers and description.

This is a great help in finding what you need – although some descriptions may need updating. My HeadConv Expert, for example, was listed as a "C source converter" while it only converts C DLL header files to Delphi import units, nothing more (or less).

Together with this database, the EMS Delphi Library (or any EMS library, for that matter) is priced at US$59.50, with updates on CD-ROM every three months for US$25. By the way: on the same CD-ROM are 1322 Pascal sources and utilities, totalling 75Mb (but without the database of product information). If you want extra libraries as well you want (for example C/C++ or VB *[Perish the thought! Editor]*) costs just US$25 extra (with updates for US$20). The complete set of 4 CD-ROMs is US$195 with updates for US$149.

EMS Professional Shareware is at 4505 Buckhurst Court, Olney, MD 20832-1830, USA. Telephone: +1 301 9243594, Fax: +1 301 963 2708, Email: ems@wdn.com, or visit http://www.wdn.com/ems