From the Desk of Jeff Scherb

I was looking through some recent issues of Amiga Magazines and was reminded how far the Amiga has come in both professional productivity software and professional multimedia.

Flipping quickly through these magazines, I noticed several things. The Amiga now has an industrial strength database, compatible with databases on the PC (Precision Inc.'s *Superbase Professional 4*). There are also several high quality structured drawing packages—the new kid on the block is *Designworks*, from New Horizons. There is an excellent presentation graphics package, *Scala*, from GVP and there are also three professional desktop publishing packages (*PageStream*, from Soft Logik, and *Saxon Publisher*, from Saxon, *Professional Page*, from Gold Disk).

OK, so we've got databases, structured drawing packages, business presentation software, and desktop publishing software. Each of the Amiga products mentioned above (and many that I did not mention) competes favorably with Mac and PC products. About all the Amiga needs now is a spreadsheet that can hold its own against the PC competition. I'm not talking about a spreadsheet that can win a head-to-head feature war with Excel or 123/G—no, I'd like to see a solid GUI spreadsheet that I could do the CATS budget with. Throw in PostScript and multiple font support, some simple drawing and annotation features, and perhaps an outlining feature, and I'll be happy.

One area where the Amiga really shines is in professional multimedia. The same magazines told me about the Video Toaster and a wide range of other gear for the professional video studio. Digital Processing Systems, Inc. now has a time base corrector that plugs into an AT-type slot; Digital Creations has a TBC called the *Kitchen Sync*; and RGB has a very impressive edit controller that interfaces through *ARexx* to the Toaster. The Amiga has a whole slew of new 24-bit cards and software should be available soon that can take advantage of all those bits. Personally, I can't wait to get my hands on one of those new 16-bit audio samplers from Sunrize.

All of the products mentioned above were found in two recent issues of Amiga magazines (disclaimer: if I left your product out, it's probably because I didn't notice it in those magazines). A year ago, we at Commodore were talking about the Amiga growing up. With all the professional applications and peripherals now in evidence, I think we can all be proud of ‘‘our child’’—she really has grown up. Now, with any luck, she'll be on a ‘‘fast track’’ in the corporate world.

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