

## In Memory of Washy

I first met David Washford in 1982. I'd had my Tandy Model I for about a year. Whilst visiting a local trade show in Bournemouth, I met one of Os Houses' cohorts who introduced me to NATGUG. I decided it would be a good idea to set up a local group if one hadn't already existed. So I advertised, possibly in the NATGUG mag. although I don't really remember after the passing of so much time. Anyway, I got a phone call from Dave who at that time was living close by in Southbourne. If memory serves me right, the upshot was that Dave invited me round to his home where he put me in the picture regarding TOPIC, the club he was running at Englishes.

After that historic meeting I became a regular and enthusiastic member of TOPIC as well as NATGUG. I remember one of the subsequent Wiltshire NATGUG meetings in particular. After the evening meal, Washy was rushing around seeking volunteers and I was co-opted. What was about to happen provided me with fond and lasting memories of Washy. Of course I am talking of the infamous graphic simulation of the Z80 processor.

There were two things that were central to this simulation. One of course was Washy's enthusiasm, the other a barrel of beer. Yes, a barrel of beer! The volunteers were arranged in a semi-circle with the barrel of beer on a table opposite and Washy at its side. Washy being the railway buff that he was came equipped with a selection of railway workers hats. These were placed on the heads of the various volunteers. Each volunteer elected to play the part of a component in the processor, eg memory, register, etc. Washy was of course the controller and wore the controller's hat. Anyway, he had the script. The object of the exercise was for the human Z80 processor to perform a simple calculation on two numbers.

But what was the purpose of the barrel of beer? Well, memory has to be refreshed every cycle or so and what better way to refresh it than with a nice glass of beer. Washy's processor was rather unique since all the other components decided that they too needed refreshing regularly. When controller Washy flagged a register, that particular register would raise a hand and do the necessary with the numbers. The memory would be refreshed with his glass of beer (and so was everyone else). Several hours later with all the players a little worse for drink, out popped the answer to the original calculation and believe it or not, it was correct!

Computers have become considerably faster since then but I somehow feel that many of us would still prefer to be using Washy's 'beer powered' Z80 simulator today.

Thanks for the memories Washy. Proud to have known you.

Mark A.

Software Review: WINZIP 8.0

by Pete Theisen - SPCUG

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If you are like I am, you have more files than you know what to do with. The "My Files" subdirectory on my ancient 486/50 notebook is 4.63 megabytes as of this writing. It will be 4.64 megabytes when I save this file. Of course, the upgraded hard disk is 6 gigabytes so I will be able to save it. But what happens when I want to back up the files or move them to another computer? I know ... copy them subdirectory by subdirectory to floppy disks! I have done it that way, you may have done that too. What if there were a way to put them all on one disk? There is - WINZIP 8.0!

WINZIP 8.0 rewrites your files in a compressed version called an archive which takes up less space to fit conveniently on a floppy disk. If the compressed archive is still too big for a floppy disk, not to worry. WINZIP 8.0 will write such an archive to span successive disks -- as many as

it takes. All you need is WINZIP 8.0 and enough disks.

If you don't have a CD burner, and even if you do, this is a great way to move files. I think that floppy disks are still more portable than CDs. A 3.5" floppy disk will fit into your shirt pocket, try that with a standard CD! Of course, the compressed archive file can go on any media or over the wire. When the file is compressed, it takes less space or less bandwidth.

Developed in 1986 by the recently deceased Phil Katz, the PKZip format of file compression finds its latest incarnation in WINZIP 8.0. This latest version is a Windows only program, and does not include the PKZip and PKUNZip programs in their DOS versions. The same functions are available however, in the "Make .Exe File" option in the "Actions" menu. Using this function makes an archive file that can be used on a computer that doesn't have WINZIP 8.0. It had better have Windows 95 or later though!

When I reviewed the 6.3 version of WINZIP in the March 1998 issue, I quibbled about my not being able to span directories when creating an archive. It turned out to be possible in the old version, but it took some figuring out. There is no such problem with this version. In fact, you don't even have to have WINZIP running to do this, you can go right from Windows Explorer or My Computer. Just select your directory and select "Add to Zip" from the "File" menu. That's what I did. I selected "MyFiles" in Windows Explorer's right panel and then selected "Add to Zip" which appears on the "File" menu when WINZIP 8.0 is installed. WINZIP 8.0 started itself and popped up a dialogue box asking me to name my archive. I changed the "C" to "A" in the default name and clicked on the "Add" button.

That old 486 cranked away for about a minute and a half and I had my archive on the floppy disk, named MyFiles. Every file in every directory and subdirectory was included in the archive. It did not, however, preserve the directory structure. Then I noticed that there is an option to do that in the dialogue box and I hadn't checked it. I tried it again with the box checked. This produced perfect results. When the archive was unzipped or "extracted" the directory structure was identical to what it had been.

The new version also zips e-mail attachments without leaving Explorer, works with MIME files and includes an automatic theme and screen saver installer. WINZIP's parent company also has a new name - WINZIP Computing, Inc. I don't know if this change is the result of Mr. Katz's demise or the result of some other reason. It used to be called Nico Mak Computing, Inc. The address is the same: P.O. Box 540, Mansfield, CT 06268, [www.winzip.com](http://www.winzip.com).

The price is unchanged, still \$29 for the registered version. If you buy 200 copies it is \$6 each, and there are price breaks for various other quantities as well. The shareware version is free. I tried the 7.0 shareware version last year. It seems to me that you have to reinstall the shareware version every time you use it, a nuisance. Send in the \$29 and get the registered version.

Software Review:

Clickbook 2000

by Sharon Rump - SPCUG

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I am always on the lookout for interesting software that I can add to my collection. Clickbook2000 does qualify under the category of "interesting" but is not just ordinary software, but a print utility that allows you to do all sorts of things with your printed matter. I have many times wanted to print up a project into a nice booklet style. I know that there are several programs that include this feature and some printer drivers can be adjusted for this type of printing. But with this program, you don't have to do a lot of adjusting and figuring. It is automatically set up with lots of options.

The software installed easily, then I was prompted to set up my printers. It found the printer drivers on my system and automatically set up my HP printer. The Xerox laser printer that I use was not on the list, but when I went on-line and did the automatic update of the program, that printer was located and setup for me. If your printer is not on the list, there is a Custom Printer Setup Wizard that will walk you through printing two sheets that will allow the program to know how to work with your individual printer. Clickbook2000 adds a line to your list of printers with CB in front of the printer name. It becomes a separate printer driver.

When you have a document that you want to print, you simply choose the Clickbook2000 printer from your list of printers and Clickbook2000 opens and allows you to choose the layout that you would like. It automatically will rotate, reduce and realign the project for printing. There are a large number of options which include an address book, Avery organiser pages, brochures, business cards, CD jewel boxes, Day Runners, Day-Timers, Franklin Day Planner Layouts, wallet books, fax sheets, tiled printouts and my favourite, a side-by-side booklet printed on a full sheet of paper and rendering a booklet 8.5 x 5.5. There is also an option called Surf 'n' Print that allows you to print information from Web pages where you cannot control the margins. This option insures that you will not lose any lines that might fall outside of a margin. You can also log onto their Internet site and download layouts from other users. You can opt to add a border around the margin of the page and also to include page numbers.

There is a layout wizard that will walk you through the program and help you to get things set up with very little effort. The project can be customised with options to print cut marks, print second side instructions, print assembly instructions, print an info sheet and print a Table of Contents page. When your document is printed there are very easy to follow instructions for completing the project including how to place the pages back into the printer correctly. The interface is very simple to understand and shows exactly how the printed version will look. As you select options, they appear on the desktop so you can check and make sure it is exactly like you want it to look. The one project that I was working on was originally 26 pages and when printed in a booklet it was reduced to 7 sheets, which saves a lot of paper.

When the printer drivers are installed you have the option to have a shortcut put on your desktop, which allows you to drop any file on the icon, and it will automatically open the Clickbook2000 program and allow you to set up how you want it to be printed. There is also an icon added to some of your software such as Word, which allows you to simply click on it, and the program will automatically open.

This newest version is now compatible with Adobe Acrobat 4.0. Clickbook2000 allows you to save a file and open it for future reprinting using the same settings that you originally set up. This program is not only very functional and easy to use, but it is a lot of fun to organise and set up projects. It will surely be one of the most used pieces of software on a lot of systems.

System requirements: Pentium 100 or faster processor, Windows 95/98/NT/ME, 16 MB of RAM, 5.5 MB of free disk space and a laser or DeskJet printer. Check out their Website at [www.BlueSquirrel.com](http://www.BlueSquirrel.com) for information about this very useful piece of software. The suggested retail price is \$49.94 with an upgrade price of \$29.95.

Book Review:

Microsoft Publisher 2000 Bible

by Anita Plutchik - SPCUG

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I know that people say "more is less" and yes, quality is more important than quantity, but when it comes to information, the more the better. As with other books in this series, this is an

extremely comprehensive manual. To be exact, it has 877 pages dedicated to one program. This provides ample space to cover, in great detail, every everything you can think of about Microsoft Publisher.

I am relatively new to Microsoft Publisher, and to all publishing programs, so I was looking for an easy to use manual. The general tone of the book is very user friendly, even a little humour in some of the headings, and you are guided along very thoroughly to complete extremely difficult tasks. The book is printed on good quality paper with simple clear print. It is filled with lots of diagrams and they are clear and easy to read. Obviously this is extremely important with Microsoft Publisher which is geared to design work for desktop publishing as well as for the Web. The book shows you how to use Publisher to its fullest capabilities. The program comes complete with a wide variety of Wizards and by studying up on them with this book, you can save a great deal of time.

Just as with other books in the Bible series, one its unique characteristics is Table of Contents. There are two pages called Contents at a Glance which summarise the various parts of the book. However, this is followed by 16 pages called Contents, which is very much a listing of things you might want to do by tasks. The way the contents are provided is task oriented and I found this helpful. Not only do I get impatient when I can't find a subject, but I like looking for new projects that are suggested often by the Table of Contents.

The back cover mentions that the book is for beginners to advanced user and this seems reasonable. It is organised with the introductory procedures at the beginning of the book with the more advanced features at the back. The material is presented in sequential order from considering the design to the final printing with all stages in between.

Something I particularly liked about the book are the tips listed every few pages. Highlighted with small icons, they stand out and are very helpful, going beyond the simple explanations of the features to give the user some advanced techniques. They are very simple and easy to understand. Also, extremely appealing is the very large number of visuals. There's not a page without a picture of an interesting design, a dialogue box or some clever graphics and text ideas.

This greatly simplifies following the instructions. It can even lead you through adding audio material and motion clips to your work; this would be especially useful for Web designing.

I have no question that using this manual and following its suggestions, you could get really great looking flyers, newsletters, posters, and the like for use on the Web or anywhere else. It is so simple to manipulate graphics, clipart, etc. All in all, I would strongly recommend his book as a thorough reference tool. I did not find any topic that was omitted or even abbreviated. I even found that I am now using Microsoft Publisher for doing tasks that I previous did with a word processor such as labels, book plates, and flyers. It's easy to be original and get a professional look.

Author: Sue Plumley; Date: July, 1999. Publisher: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc., 919 E Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404; [www.idgbooks.com](http://www.idgbooks.com); ISBN: 0-7645-3343-6; Price: \$34.99

Software Review:

LiveMotion 1.0

by Gary Schweinshaupt - SPCUG

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If you don't already know how to use Macromedia's Flash, Adobe LiveMotion according to most of the media reports I've seen, is easier to learn. Like all the Adobe product reviews I have done recently, LiveMotion at least uses a consistent user interface with other Adobe products, like Photoshop and Illustrator. Some commentators say LiveMotion is actually going to give Flash a run

for its money.

What's Macromedia Flash, you may ask ? It has become the de facto standard for streaming Web animation and interaction and, until now, has had the market to itself. To view Flash animation, you must have a Macromedia Flash Player installed/integrated in your browser (over 248 million Web users can now use it). Actually the two companies share or compete for user's desktop space in several professional graphics applications, there is even a law suit under way where Adobe is claiming Macromedia has allegedly infringed on some of their patents. As LiveMotion uses Macromedia's .swf Flash Web animation standard format (LiveMotion can export files to both versions 3 and 4 of Flash), this could get interesting! Neither Flash (\$341.95 discount), nor LiveMotion (\$289.44 discount) are pocket change purchases.

Not sure if you have seen a Flash animation ? Here's some Web addresses for some examples:

Adobe LiveMotion Flipbook

[http://www.adobe.com/products/  
livemotion/main.html#](http://www.adobe.com/products/livemotion/main.html#)

Macromedia Flash Showcase

[http://dynamic.macromedia.com/bin/  
MM/showcase/scripts/  
showcase\\_cs\\_listing\\_by\\_query.jsp?  
product=Flash](http://dynamic.macromedia.com/bin/MM/showcase/scripts/showcase_cs_listing_by_query.jsp?product=Flash)

You may have to install Flash in your browser, but you should have it installed anyway. Usually when you go to a page that has a Flash animation, and your browser can't display it, there are instructions on how to install it.

When I picked up the manual, I thought it was another of those thin, bare minimum manuals; however, I soon learned that it was jam-packed with small print, icon sized-screen prints and small illustrations.

The install from CD-ROM went smoothly, using just 27MB of my harddisk, somewhat short of the 100MB suggested by specs ? Having reviewed and used Adobe ImageStyler, I would have thought I had that product open, the palettes and work areas look identical. Also, anyone that uses Adobe Photoshop should feel right at home. The TimeLine Editor uses exactly the same Adobe AfterEffects styled timeline.

Help is browser based, and accesses everything you would find in the printed manual. The help system has a logical layout and navigational system that shows you where you are at all times, with electronic index and search. Personally I prefer a browser to a paper manual anyway, you can't electronically search paper manuals.

As well as the standard drawing tools, there are also separate palettes for 3D effects, gradients, transparency, sounds and other special effects to be added to objects. In addition, LiveMotion includes tools for easily creating common vector objects, such as rectangles, ellipses, polygons, and drawing paths.

As LiveMotion is a part of the Adobe software paradigm it natively supports layered Photoshop and Illustrator (\*.EPS & \*.AI) files that you can import easily and directly into any project along with other file formats including: BMP, JPEG, EMF, WMF, PSD, ES, AI, TIFF, IFF, PXR, TGA, VDA, DIB, ICB and VST. You can even modify the Photoshop or Illustrator (6 to 8) documents in their original creation software using the edit original command. Once you have changed the pictures in Illustrator or Photoshop the LiveMotion document will be automatically updated! Creating animations is simple. Just select an object (or group of objects), set the timeline marker in the desired place in the length of the animation and change a property.

For example, if an object is designed to fade in from 100 per cent (invisible) to 0 per cent (visible) over 10 seconds, at the start of the animation the object's transparency value is set to 100 per cent and set to 0 per cent at the end. Just about any property of an object can be animated in this way, including text values changing over time.

Objects can also contain different "states", from which actions can be triggered. A simple use of states is when an object is designated as a button. When the button is in the "up" state, a text box containing a description of the button may be hidden. When the button is in a "hover" state--that is, the mouse pointer is within the boundaries of the object on a Web page--the text box could be made visible. When the state is "clicked", the browser may be told to load another URL, play a different animation or perform some other action. If operations that are more complex are required, LiveMotion supports the industry standard JavaScript language.

Sound support includes WAV, SND, AIFF, AU, and MP3 formats. Standard sound controls such as panning, fade in/fade out, and volume, as well as the ability to link sounds to specific objects and events, round out the audio options.

Another plus, is you can import pictures from a TWAIN 32 source in LiveMotion using your scanner or digital cameras.

I found LiveMotion very easy to pick up and intuitive in its operation, however, I've been an Adobe fan for a long time. The tutorials are excellent, even a beginner should be able to come up to speed quickly. Bear in mind, this is a very feature rich environment, and you will have to invest a lot of hours to get the most out of this product. I suspect only experienced builders will be able to push the product to perform the advanced functions of Macromedia's Flash. It should work well for anyone who wants to jump straight into Flash animation without becoming an expert in or needing the benefits of advanced scripting or complex interactivity.

Overall, LiveMotion seems to represent a solid choice for Webmaster or Web designers, graphic designers and animators ready to jump into Flash animation. It utilises existing familiarity with Adobe products to output media in a range of formats. As this is the first version of LiveMotion, media experts suggest that power users concerned about file optimisation or leveraging the full power of Flash Player, may want to continue using the more mature products like Macromedia Flash, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop.

Choice of which animation application to use, I think is getting very confusing, certainly for the novice. I reviewed Adobe's GoLive in November 1999, it has an animator using an integrated QuickTime editor. I wonder if there is any relationship between the Time Editors? Adobe ImageReady can create animated GIF files, but when Adobe created Photoshop 5.5, they incorporated ImageReady into the Photoshop product.

So, if you're looking to create Web animations, your work is cut out for you in trying to figure out which product accomplishes your goals. You had better plan on spending considerable time comparing specs, if you're considering one of these high-end products.

Requirements: Pentium II CPU and higher, Windows 98, 2000, NT 4.0 SP4, Me, 64MB RAM recommended (48 MB minimum), 100 MB Disk space and CD-ROM drive. Suggested list price is \$299.

The Adobe LiveMotion 1.0.2 update is now available on the Adobe Website. It features faster performance, improved sound support, better import and export capabilities, more efficient SWF compression, tighter integration between Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop and updates to the object-based Timeline. You can also download the full operational program for a 30-day free trial.

Adobe Systems Inc., San Jose, CA; 800-492-3623, 408-536-6000; Web: [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

Software Review:

Dragon Naturally Speaking

by Anita Plutchik \* SPCUG

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For the uninitiated, Dragon Naturally Speaking is the king of voice recognition software. Speak into its supplied microphone-headset and your text magically appears on your screen. Having used this fine software from its inception, this is the fourth review that I've written about it for SPCUG. I began several years ago by reviewing Version 1 and am now doing Preferred Version 5. As each upgrade has come out, there have been improvements in the recognition accuracy as well as general spelling, grammar and various other aspects of speech recognition. Version 5, however, contains major changes and I'm not referring to the fact that the familiar desktop icon has changed from the tiny blue and white scene to a cute red dragon!

Until now, you had to open the Naturally Speaking program separately for each word processor in order to use it. With version 5, you can open it and simply leave it open. That is, it will be available to you in your various programs; you will not have to recall it. If you choose to leave it open, you have a choice of having the new DragonBar on your screen at all times or simply sending it to the task bar.

This took a little getting used to, but now I love this feature. Anyone who uses voice recognition, knows that it does not open in a flash; rather it has to load your specific voice training each time you want to use it. Therefore, this saves you a good deal of time.

Version 5 has further increased accuracy and yet retains the ability for more than one person to use the same program. Each user can train it for his or her particular voice. When opened, the dialogue box asks the identity of the user. This is clearly a very large advantage when the program is going to be used by more than one person, whether in an office or within a family. Furthermore, you can now dictate in a second language by installing multiple languages.

The new Quick Correct Box enables easier proofreading and correction of text. Also new is the Add Words from Document feature. It scans your documents for particular words you use and adds them to the NaturallySpeaking vocabulary. The Text-To-Speech and Dictation Playback greatly assists with editing. You can listen to your own documents or other files such as e-mail being read aloud to you and then make changes. Finally, the Add Words from Document feature improves accuracy by quickly adding new words to the vocabulary from existing documents.

Although previous versions have supported WordPerfect and Microsoft Word, this latest version can be used with any popular word processor. More important, it adds an extensive set of new voice commands to browse the Web and manage e-mail navigation by voice. Most popular e-mail programs can be controlled with your voice. New commands such as Check for New Mail, Send E-mail, and Reply to Message have been added.

Another improvement is having voice commands readily available with helpful on-screen reminders, extensive on-line help references, a detachable command reference card, and a top 10 commands sticker for your keyboard or monitor. The package contains several cards with reminders of the instructions that you need to use for these special commands. Lastly there is a new feature which simplifies things by allowing you to create dictation shortcuts to insert multiple lines of text, such as a letter closing, with only a few words.

Since I had the previous version on my computer, it copied all of my speech patterns immediately upon installation. If you are new to the program, it will require about 30 minutes of training for it to take normal speech dictation with about 90 percent accuracy. Although the program will correctly read a single word, it typically waits for a whole sentence or clause before typing on the screen. This is in order to use the correct word since, for the most part, it differentiates beautifully between homonyms. That is, it decides from the context of the sentence if the word is whether or weather; there or their, etc. There are many first names, and some common last names, already in the memory.

There is true continuous speech recognition allowing you to speak to your computer naturally and at a normal pace, up to 160 words per minute, without pausing between words. There are commands for all aspects of punctuation as well as verbal commands that enable you to move words, lines, and paragraphs around within your document. You can also copy, cut and paste verbally. A special dialogue box enables you train new words to the extensive existing vocabulary. The package contains several cards with reminders of the instructions that you need to use for these special

commands.

As with all of the earlier versions, most of the difficulty lies with small words and pronouns, such as: and, the, of, etc. It is sometimes necessary to retrain the program with the dialogue box to catch the nuances of exactly how you say these words. With regard to this particular problem, I found that by speaking a little more quickly, I actually had less problems with the small words. As in the past, the accuracy improves with time and use.

The Preferred Version 5 also features expanded support for a program called NaturallyMobile. This feature provides support for approved hand-held recording devices to let you create text even when you are away from your PC. We bought one of these about a year ago. Although it required some extra training, we are able to use the hand-held recorder to dictate anywhere in the house, car, etc. A cable is provided which is always plugged into our computer at one end, and we simply plug in the recorder to the other. Simply turn on the power button and the dictated material appears on the screen.

Overall, Naturally Speaking is a wonderfully efficient way to dictate material. Anyone who decides to use this program must realise that it takes some training before you can depend on it. Although it comes with more than a 30,000 word-active vocabulary which can be expanded up to 250,000, there will always be many words, especially names and places, that are not on the list. Some of the many features allow you to verbally edit, format or correct words and phrases; to insert frequently used phrases and sentences by saying a single word or phrase; to find words in text files and enter the words, their pronunciations, and the word usage information into your personal vocabulary; to detect accents and dialects; and to add your own unique words, terms and names automatically. For regular usage, the spelling is excellent.

Minimum System Requirements: Windows 98, 2000, Millennium, or NT 4.0 (with SP-6 or greater) operating systems; a 266 MHz processor or equivalent; at least 64 MB RAM; a minimum of 150 MB free disk; a Dragon Systems certified sound card, CD-ROM and speakers.

The price is \$199.00. This includes software on a CD-ROM, documentation, and a noise-cancelling microphone (USB version is \$249 including a USB microphone for optimal use with laptop computers). For information: Dragon Systems; Lernout & Hauspie Speech and Language Products; 803 East Street; Frederick, MD 21701; 800-437-2466; [www.dragonsys.com](http://www.dragonsys.com) or [www.LHSL.com](http://www.LHSL.com).

\* Drs Anita and Robert Plutchik are well-known authors of psychology textbooks specialising in the field of emotions. They use Dragon Naturally Speaking exclusively in the preparation of their manuscripts.

Software Review:

The New Windows TweakUI

by Vinny La Bash - SPCUG

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Soon after the introduction of Windows 95, Microsoft got tired of responding to all of their customers' gripes, so a team of programmers came up with a utility known as TweakUI. This tool sports an amazing collection of dialogue boxes that allows you to fix a few Windows' irritations without messing around in the Registry. TweakUI may seem like a very strange name for such an outstanding tool, but it stands for Adjust (Tweak) the User Interface (UI). Simple enough, right?

Inexplicably, Microsoft dumped the utility with the release of Windows 98 Second Edition. Enough consumers must have complained, since Microsoft has now made an upgraded edition available for downloading from its Web site. To get the new TweakUI Version 1.33, point your browser to:

<http://www.microsoft.com/networkstation/downloads/PowerToys/Networking/NTTweakUI.asp>. This version works on Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, and Windows Me.

The Web site provides detailed instructions for downloading and installing the utility. You can make a note of them, or print them out for reference. Whatever you do, be aware that there is a bug in the installation program which may prompt you for a non-existent installation disk. If you get the prompt, just point to the folder where you downloaded the file and click Ok. All will be well!

TweakUI is a software power tool that fixes a lot of the dumb defaults that Windows saddles you with. However, if you don't understand what TweakUI actually does, or if you get reckless and change a couple of dozen settings at once just to see what happens, you're likely to end up in big time trouble. One of the 'oddities' you need to be aware of is, if you clear any of the checkboxes on TweakUI's My Computer tab to hide a drive, you will no longer be able to right-click the Start button and select the Explore option. There is a way to work around this, but it's more trouble than it's worth.

If you remove the Network Neighborhood icon from your Desktop, you lose the ability to browse other computers on your local network. Unless you like to spend a lot of time troubleshooting, leave the icon on the desktop if you network your computers at home.

There are a few situations where TweakUI seems to cause unrelated behaviour problems. If you disable Active Desktop using TweakUI, you lose the "stretch" option on your Wallpaper. When you open the Display Properties dialogue box, the Web tab may be missing. Also, if you right-click the desktop, the Active Desktop command may be gone. Even with these aberrations, if you take the time to explore TweakUI properly, you can benefit tremendously. Let's take a look at some of the reasons you'll be glad you installed TweakUI.

You want your kids to use the computer, but you don't want them messing with your financial data. The My Computer tab will let you hide a second hard drive or partition icon from the My Computer Window. This won't prevent a knowledgeable person with malicious intentions from accessing your data, but an unsophisticated innocent will be a lot less likely to blunder into sensitive information. The My Documents folder resides on the Desktop by default. With TweakUI, you can move it to another location on your system while preserving its special properties.

Open the Mouse tab to control the speed at which cascading menus automatically open when you move the mouse over them. The fastest setting causes them to open immediately. The slowest setting can put you to sleep while you're waiting. A little time spent in adjusting this option will make your computing experience much more pleasant. Fine tune your mouse wheel by checking the "Use mouse wheel for scrolling" box to permit the mouse wheel to scroll data. You can specify whether rotating the wheel should scroll data one line at a time, one page at a time, or anything in-between.

Move to the Explorer tab and check the "Save Explorer window settings" box. This preserves the settings of a folder when you close it. When you return to the folder, the previous settings will be restored. When you shut down, Windows will remember which folders were open and re-open them the next time you start up.

If you would like to control the number of Control Panel icons that display in the Control Panel window, TweakUI will let you do this in the Control Panel tab. Simply check the icons you want displayed and uncheck those that you don't. Keep in mind that hiding a Control Panel icon doesn't remove it from your system. The graphic is merely 'tucked away', out of sight until you decide you want it back again.

Windows provides animation effects with menus, list boxes, opening and closing windows, mouse trails, and scrolling. They can be cute. They can also be a drag on your system, consuming resources without providing any real function. Turn them off with TweakUI for better performance. For the truly paranoid among us, TweakUI has a carefully designed section.

If you are obsessed with covering your tracks, open the Paranoia tab for a genuinely mouth watering set of options especially crafted for those who sincerely believe that "they" are out to get you. You can remove almost all traces of any computer activity you engage in. If you think

this is unimportant, please examine the following attitudinal matrix:

#### Attitude-Reality Matrix

Feels Paranoid Does Not Feel Paranoid

Is In Reality Not Persecuted

(1) Paranoid

(2) Normal

Is In Reality Persecuted

(3) Normal

(4) ?

#### Interpretation:

1. We call this individual paranoid, because his/her attitude does not reflect reality.
2. An individual who does not feel persecuted, and in reality is indeed not persecuted can only be described as normal.
3. If an individual feels persecuted and actually is persecuted, his/her attitude does reflect reality and we must declare them normal.
4. There is no classification for this category of individuals for they have extremely short life expectancies.

TweakUI is useful and entertaining. Download and enjoy!

#### Book Review:

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Windows Me

by Andy Egeressy \* SPCUG

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"This book shuns everything about Windows Millennium that is hopelessly technical. If it has a "For Geeks Only" label on it, I walk on right by it. Instead, this book concentrates on those Windows tasks that you're likely to use most often. I present Windows concepts in clear, jargon-free language and I teach you how to use Window's features in a simple, step-by-step fashion", quoted from the book by the author.

Paul McFedries is also the author of more than 30 computer books that have sold nearly two million copies worldwide. Some of his titles include The Complete Idiot's Guide to Windows 98, The Complete Idiot's Guide to MORE Windows 98, and The Complete Idiot's Guide to Windows 2000 Professional and now this book. So new that as of this review the book isn't yet on the publisher's (QUE) Websites.

There are those who feel that Windows Me is but a small change to Windows 98 Second Edition, and in many ways, this seems to be true. They add that Windows Me may be skipped. I'm not so sure. I view Windows Me somewhat differently. Windows Me makes computers easier to use in numerous small ways (read the book to find out how) including more readable messages and more complete tutorials. Making computers easier to use is a laudable goal and not to be skipped lightly. Unless, of course, you feel that computers are easy to use now, and I don't. I'm reminded of the nay sayers a few years ago who felt we had no room for Windows at all and the associated overhead of Windows style graphic computing. They were the one's that felt we should all stay with DOS and its style of character-based computing. I wonder if they are among the same people arguing against Windows Me today ?

I find the book to be a handy reference to Windows Me, in spite its title, (you can always hide the title with a plain brown wrapper or with duct tape). Adding to the book's usefulness as both

a reference tool and a tutorial aid is the associated two part Tables of Contents called the "Contents at a Glance" and the "Contents," the convenient Index, appropriately referred to by the author, as the "Index" and the handy eight page Glossary, referred to as "The Jargon Jar: The Complete Archive."

The book has an unusual method of identifying selected text throughout with logos and highlighted emphasis, called sidebars, including Windows Wisdom (tips), Jargon Jar (definitions), Look Out (pitfalls), Cross Reference (related material) and New Knickknacks (what's new in Me). To some, they improve the readability and reference, a stylized but useful aid to many readers.

The author describes the book more fully on <http://www.mcfedries.com/books/cigwinme/> including (paraphrasing the author): Vital Stats, book information such as the price (\$19.99 list), the number of pages and chapters; The Introduction, full text of the book's Introduction, which includes general remarks about Windows Me, the overall structure of the book, and a list of the book's features and Acknowledgments, Kudos and Credits section where the author thanks those who helped put the book together. The Web page also includes: The Front Cover, a full-size image of the book's front cover (48KB); Buy It Online, buy the book online from Amazon.com (\$17.99), 10% off the list price!); Table of Contents, a detailed listing of the book's chapters and the headings within those chapters;

A Sample Chapter, the full text of Chapter 1, The New ME: What's New in Windows Millennium Edition, gives you the information on all the new Windows Me knickknacks; Windows Me on the Web, a few of the author's favourite Windows Me WWW resources are included and The Back Cover, a full-size image of the book's back cover (61KB).

I recommend the book for reading or reference to many of the Windows Me users, and hasten to add that DOS users may choose to skip it. Although the book seems to be too new to have a street price, Sam's Club can be expected to discount it to as little as \$10.98, as they have with other COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDES ....

\* The author of this review, Andy Egeressy, is retired from IBM and a computer hobbyist, like many other members of SPCUG. He is a former teacher of GED for the Sarasota School Board, where he taught in a fully networked computer classroom. Andy has been a member of SPCUG for some 10 years and currently teaches in the Getting Started SIG in a Sarasota school board networked computer classroom at SCTI.

Software Review:

Quick View Plus 6.0

by Herb Goldstein - SPCUG

[Reprinted from the 2001 November issue of "SYDTRUG News", newsletter of SYDTRUG Inc., PO Box 75, PANANIA NSW 2213, AUSTRALIA, where it was reprinted via the "APCUGNET" BBS of APCUG from the 2000 December issue of "Sarasota PC Monitor", newsletter of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group Inc. PO Box 15889 Sarasota FL 34277-1889, U S of A]

Graduation from novice status occurs at about the time a computer user begins to realise that what's on a computer exists in the form of folders containing files. And when a user reaches that point of computer maturity, that's about the time that the necessity for Quick View Plus becomes obvious. Working with files commonly requires a good file viewer in order to see what those files contain. When it comes to good file viewers, there simply is no competition for Quick View Plus, nor has there been for the many years of its existence.

Whether you are in your favourite word processor, Windows Explorer, Power Desk Utilities, or anywhere else where you have access to a list of files, all you need do is double-click on the file of your choice and Quick View Plus will bring it up for you just as though you were in the program to which that file belongs. Not only will you be able to view it, you will also have the option of performing a number of file functions such as print, archive, etc. on that file.

Quick View Plus will also come up on the right-click menu of any file in Windows Explorer. Yes, Quick View Plus is a veritable toolbox sitting inside this superb utility, one that you will never want to be without. I consider it one of the most vital and frequently used programs on my computer.

Quick View Plus will allow you to view over 225 different file formats including e-mail attachments. Almost any type of file format from almost any program is viewable, with the exception of multimedia movie types. It is not necessary that the file or attachment you are viewing come from a program that is installed on your computer. As an added plus, this utility will permit you to zip and unzip any file. In fact, if you are attaching a large file to an e-mail, Quick View Plus will automatically zip it to both conserve space for speed and to allow you to transmit files whose size would prevent you from so doing.

A number of nuances accompany version 6. You will immediately notice a browser-like interface that lists all the files in the directory you are viewing so that you may readily move from one to another. As you move, the view of each file will appear as you move up or down the list. The display now offers 3-part windows, the largest of which shows the content of the file you have selected. The smaller two display the list of directories on the drive you are browsing, and a list of the files in the selected directory.

Among the formats now supported include Microsoft Project and Office 2000, Visio, Paintshop Pro, Progressive JPEG, AutoCAD DFX, Corel Perfect Office 2000, Kodak Flash Pix, Adobe PhotoShop4, PowerPoint 2000, and Micrografx Designer. Of course, all the various word processing, spreadsheet, database and graphic formats are completely viewable. Enhanced support is provided for Internet Explorer 5 and Netscape Communicator, versions 4.5, .6, and .7.

Quick View Plus integrates with the various versions of Windows including NT, 95 and 98. I did not specifically try it with ME, but I see no reason why it would not work there as well. It occupies some 17MB of disk space and requires a processor of 486 or better.

You can order Quick View Plus directly from the publisher, JASC software, at [jasc.com](http://jasc.com). The boxed version goes for \$59, or you can download it from JASC for \$49. It is also available in all the usual retail and Web software outlets where you may find it for even less. Wherever you get it, you will never regret it. It is one of computerdom's real winners.

## Software Review

My first look at Windows XP: It's great. Here's why

by David Coursey - Executive Editor, ZdNet AnchorDesk

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Microsoft's new Windows XP -- at least the beta builds I've been playing with -- combines the best of Windows 2000 with what I like about Windows Me, and then goes a step further. And this is good.

Even the beta is a big improvement over any Windows I have ever used. It doesn't crash and has some pleasant improvements to the user interface and visual design. So far I have run two builds

of Windows XP and will receive the third, the formal Beta 2 release, later this week.

I have written columns using Windows XP, and the machine (a Compaq notebook lent by Microsoft as a review platform) is on my home network. I've used it as I use everything else, though I haven't been brave enough to take it on a trip -- even for a visit to Microsoft. But I probably will soon.

This is the first day I can write about the beta under terms of the non-disclosure agreement I had with Microsoft. With Beta 2 now on its way to testers, Microsoft figures the world is going to find out all the details anyway, so the NDA has been lifted.

During the month I have been running Windows XP, the OS has never crashed. It's slowed down a few times, but always recovered. Applications crash only very occasionally -- and they never take the operating system down with them. I am even running a beta of Office XP atop the Windows XP beta -- something I was specifically warned not to do -- without any real problems.

Why I am lauding an operating system simply for working like an operating system should be expected to work is something I really don't understand. It's like saying, "Look at this great new car I've got! It actually drives down the highway without exploding!"

But if you're used to rebooting Windows on a fairly regular basis, as I am, this is a big deal: Windows XP just works. And, actually, I think the people responsible for the product consider this their biggest achievement: Windows XP will put a "real" operating system on both home and business desktops.

Merely describing Windows XP as "pulls less of a vacuum than previous releases" would, however, be selling the operating system short. And since you can get the same level of reliability from Windows 2000 (though few people have), XP has to do more.

So here's why I find XP pleasant to use:

The user interface has been simplified, but made more helpful at the same time. There is a task orientation in this OS that helps users do things they want to do, rather than merely find features they are looking for.

The visual design -- which is different from, though intertwined with the user interface -- is quite nice. The colours, menus, graphics, task bar, and other items work well together. Some problems, such as overcrowded task bars, start menus, and system trays, have been addressed.

Support for digital media and entertainment, lacking in Windows 2000 and sometimes clunky in Windows Me, is much improved. This system anticipates users having digital cameras and MP3 devices and works well with them.

XP's network management, which Windows 2000 does better than Me, gets a friendly user interface, including some important but geeky technical features.

I'd like to tell you that you can get your own copy of the beta. But you can't. Microsoft isn't ready to deal with all the combinations of hardware and applications and users that exist in the real world. And they still have some bugs to fix and changes to make. Every new build includes a bunch of little things and, over time, these add up.

As we get closer to the release date, however, Microsoft will have a public Windows XP beta program. And there is already a preview program for Office XP that gets you a set of disks for \$19.95.

There's more, but I am running out of space for today -- and I am sensitive to my habit of writing columns that run long. So this is a topic I'll be returning to often.

<http://www.zdnet.com/anchordesk/stories/story/0,10738,2700591,00.html>

Software Review:

Windows Scripting Software

by Dale Oliver - NWA-PCUG

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This article is not written using brilliant journalism techniques that keep you in suspense right up to the very end. If you are looking for a quick, user-friendly way to schedule system maintenance such as backing up your hard drive, running Disk Cleanup, ScanDisk and Disk Defragmenter, use Windows Task Scheduler. If you are a relatively basic user and you don't want to fool around with installing new scheduling or scripting software and then learning the nuances of how to use it, you can stop reading after the second paragraph of this article.

In case you are unfamiliar with Windows Task Scheduler, you can learn about what it is and how to use it by clicking the Windows Start button, then Help. Type in the keyword "Task Scheduler" to find the help topics available for this software.

If you are a more curious or experienced computer user and you want to learn about some neat ways to write Windows script files that actually go beyond the capabilities of DOS batch files in many ways to help you automate potentially complex tasks in Windows, then keep reading.

CNET.com has a number of Windows scripting and automation type programs available. I considered cost, user feedback, the number of downloads and my personal experience while evaluating the programs to hone in on the four separate offerings that are included in this review. This will hopefully help steer you in the general direction you want to go so that you don't have to evaluate a half-dozen different programs to find the one that works for you.

WinBatch v2000C

Wilson WindowWare (<http://www.windowware.com/>)

Runs on: Windows 95, 98, NT

Winner PC Magazine Editor's Choice award

21-day trial, \$99.95 to purchase.

High user rating.

WinBatch lets you take nearly anything your computer can do and assign it to a menu selection, command or hotkey. This is not a watered down GUI point-and-click program for the computer neophyte, nor is it something you can learn in an evening.

It harnesses the power of a complete programming language in its 500 functions, but is easy enough to use to give experienced computer users the ability to quickly create scripts that automate tasks without the overkill of writing a program in C, VB, etc. Wilson WindowWare even offers an optional compiler to let you create .EXE applications that can be distributed royalty-free. This product seems to be targeted primarily to power users, network system administrators, and the like. Technical support via the Web appears to be excellent. Here's a good sign: The software installation program itself is written using WinBatch.

Event Manager v2.5

SRO Systems (<http://www.srosystems.com/>)

Windows 95, 98, NT

Winner ZDNet Editor's Pick 5-Star Award

Nagware, \$25 to register.

Positive reviews.

Event Manager is a Windows task/alarm scheduler that will perform operations while you're away from the computer. Features allow you to schedule the PC by day or by date to launch any Windows or DOS program, exit, restart, and reboot Windows. It offers complete event logging, encrypted password protection, and a keystroke macro automation function. It is relatively a simple, yet powerful Windows task scheduler and automation program that allows you to run any number of programs in any order at any time. You can schedule, time and terminate programs, create macro events to run multiple programs with conditional execution, send keystroke macros, open control panel applets (switch printers/video modes etc.), logoff or reboot your system and much more. The GUI interface is fairly friendly and intuitive, and makes creating moderately complex batches of processes and scheduling tasks relatively easy. Scheduling unattended tasks with this program is certainly possible, but requires some trial-and-error and attention to detail.

GroundControl v2.10  
Acrasoft (<http://www.acrasoft.com/>)  
Windows 95, 98, NT  
Winner Ziff-Davis' highest ranking  
30-day trial, then pop-up screen at startup.  
\$39.95 to register.  
Very positive reviews.

GroundControl is an automation scripting utility that can be used to automate almost any task with over 120 functions. It has an easy to use GUI interface to help you put together your automation scripts. You can use GroundControl stand-alone or with one of Acrasoft's other products for additional functionality. This program is very similar to EventManager, with the major difference being the process for sending command keys to running applications.

Event Manager uses a single text field for indicating strings of desired command keys, where Ground Control uses a sequential graphical listing of the different steps. They both appear to be very capable products, but in my (admittedly) short software review, I felt that Event Manager's "WINDOWWAIT" function allowed some additional flexibility when scheduling events that you have no idea how long they will take to run, such as tape backups.

ClockMan95 v1.0  
Graphical Dynamics (<http://www.graphicaldynamics.com/>)  
Windows 95, 98, NT, 2000  
30-day trial, \$79.95 to purchase.  
Mixed reviews, but more positive than negative.

ClockMan95 is a Windows automation utility that you can use to gain control of your time. Like the other products, it automates disk backup, optimisation, virus scanning, etc. It also allows you to display reminder messages to help you stay prepared and on time; and lets you control complex events via the Windows Interface Language of more than 450 functions. Features include Automation Assistant wizards that help automate processes such as PointCast, Diskeeper, Oil Change, and MetaStock. This program's approach is somewhat different than EventManager and GroundControl, and it adds a clock bar to the currently running window's title bar.

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