

BenSpeaks

Ben Vost

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Chapter 1

BenSpeaks

1.1 Welcome to AFCD16

AFCD16

August 97

Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us!

I know it's not an anniversary, but the fact that Amiga Format is one hundred issues old this month is certainly something to celebrate, as can be seen by just how full our CD is this month. One section I'm particularly proud of is the Top 100 Shareware titles in the `_In_the_Mag-/Top100_shareware` drawer. These titles have all been hand-picked by the Amiga Format team as the most useful, best programmed shareware programs of all time. There are a few that fell by the wayside, mainly because they are no longer being programmed (and we couldn't find them anywhere) such as Timm Martin's superb SID program. But the way we've laid them out on the CD is designed to make each program easy to find. It doesn't tell you what we think is the best piece of shareware ever to come out for the Amiga is, you'll just have to read the mag for that little detail!

See you next month,

Ben

Stefan Stuntz Interview

HEY!!!! READ THE SUBMISSION ADVICE! THEN YOUR STUFF MIGHT GET ON ←
THE CD!!!

PS. OK, you've stopped sending us your modules, but still more than half of your submissions are not getting onto the AFCD. If you don't know why yours hasn't appeared then maybe you should check out the

submissions advice page

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1.2 Submissions advice

1.3 Submissions advice

HOW TO SEND US YOUR SUBMISSIONS

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IMPORTANT! We can no longer accept your music modules as submissions for the Amiga Format CD owing to copyright problems with sound samples from copyrighted sources. Thanks for all your music submissions up till now, but please don't send any more...

We want you to send us your programs, animations, pictures, game tips and cheats, hacks, hardware projects, basically anything you can think of that you have done with your Amiga. It must be your own work - no passing off Chris Achilleos' greatest masterpieces as your own, and we need a variety of things from you in addition to your submission and we need them on your disk.

1. We need your name and address so that we know where to send your prize. You should also put your name and address on labels on your media.

2. We need two

read me

files accompanying your work; one for us and one to go on the CD itself (title them AF_ReadMe and ReadMe). These can be as in-depth as you want them to be, but should contain instructions for us on getting your work running if it is a complicated procedure, including things like necessary libraries and so on. The readme that will go on the CD will be the introduction of your work to the whole Amiga Format reading world so check your spelling and grammar and show people just what is so good about your work.

3. If your work requires files such as libraries which you cannot send us owing to copyright reasons make sure we know about them so that we can either arrange to put them on the CD, or warn our readers about them (you will probably do this in your CD read me).

4. Be aware that we won't be as interested in programs that need to boot or that require to be in a certain place on the CD, unless, of course, that place happens to be in your directory on the CD. Your directory will almost certainly have the path:
"AFCDx:-ReaderStuff-/your_name/" but then no-one will be able to run your program except from the CD, limiting its usefulness or appeal.

If we do put something on the CD that needs to autoboot, it will almost certainly only be as a DMS that readers will have to extract to disk before they can use it.

5. Lastly, your submission must include the following text within your AF_ReadMe file, otherwise your submission will not go on the CD:

In respect of all material which forms my reader contribution to Future Publishing's Amiga Format I hereby warrant that:-

- (1) the material is original and does not infringe any other material or rights;
- (2) the material does not contain any material which is defamatory, obscene or indecent and is exempt from classification under the Video Recordings Act 1984;
- (3) that there are no legal claims against the material provided;
- (4) that I have full power and authority to provide this material to Future Publishing.

(There is a version of this text as a file in the -Look_here_1st!- drawer on the CD.)

You can send us your work on pretty much any sort of media whether it be floppy disks (high or double density, but don't send us work on high density disks unless you yourself have a high density drive. High density disks used in a double density drive aren't as reliable as using double density disks), a floppy disk back up using AmiBack, Quarterback or any of the shareware backup tools, Zip disk, Jaz cartridge, SyQuest 44MB, 88MB or 105MB or EZ Drive, DAT tape backup from any of the above-mentioned programs (the only thing we're not very keen on is the Video Backup System that Power Computing sell in the UK, we've had nothing but trouble with it), FTP upload to ftp2.futurenet.co.uk, (you'll only be able to put your file in the incoming directory, you won't be able to see it once you have finished uploading, but don't worry, it'll be there. Make sure that you name your file with AF at the start so that we know it's for us) basically anything apart from a listing on paper. We don't want to have to type in your program too!

We will return any media more expensive than high density floppies via registered post, so you won't have to worry about losing seventy quid's worth of Jaz cartridge.

Send your submissions to:

CD submissions
Amiga Format
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BA1 2BW

1.4 How to make a Read me file

If you are unsure about how to make a readme file it really is very simple. If you have a word processor of some description (Wordworth, Final Writer or the like) you can create one in that - you must just make sure that you save the text as ASCII text; there will be an option in the Save As... requester or program preferences.

If you don't have a word processor, but you have a text editor for a programming language or for some other reason - we put Gold Ed on our CD every time the authors release a new version, you can use that, in fact, it would be ideal for the purpose.

If you don't have a third party text editor, you have two provided by Commodore with your Amiga. In the tools drawer you should find MEMacs, but just opening a shell window will get you to ed. To edit a new file in ed, type the following line at the shell prompt:

```
ed ram:AF_Readme
```

This will create a new text file in RAM: called, yes, you guessed it, AF_Readme. It won't have an icon, but don't worry about that, we can always add one for you, just make sure you put it in with your submission.

1.5 Thought for the month

It's competition ti-me!

This month's been very busy for me working on the magazine. Not only do I have my usual quota of pages to write, the CD to oversee and product procurement for next month's - making sure that not only is Amiga Format the world's biggest-selling magazine, but also the best, but this month I have been in heavy protracted negotiations with all sorts of people to get you prizes you can win by simply sending a postcard. No inane questions, no complicated ones, just an out and out freebie fest.

Best of luck!

Ben

1.6 Interview with Stefan Stuntz - author of MUI

Interview with Stefan Stuntz

Unfortunately, due to lack of space in the magazine itself, we have been forced to put the interview we did with Stefan on the CD.

AF: What inspiration did you have for MUI?

The first idea for MUI was born back in 1992 while I was working on my previous product MFR (Magic File Requester), a replacement for the system's file & font requesters. As opposed to most other available Amiga programs at that time, MFR was already capable of using proportional fonts and offered resizable windows and a somewhat configurable design.

Since there were no alternatives available, MFR was written using the old programming techniques and methods that were supported by the Amiga operating system. Although the window layout of a file requester is rather simple, adding new gadgets & features soon started to become a nightmare. I had to spent more than half of my time for MFR just to keep the user interface up to

date and working.

Somewhere at that point, I decided to stop to continue with the old fashioned way of handling user interfaces. The first ideas about an object oriented and flexible layout system which would free the programmer from almost any user interface related tasks started to come up. After a few more weeks of thinking, the basic concepts of this system were finished and I was about to start implementation.

At first, I did not even think about releasing my work on user interface programming to the public. The intention while doing all this was just to make my own programming life easier and help me to enhance old and to develop new applications much quicker than before. However, after completing the first few implementation steps and after discussing my ideas with some friends, I started to realize that if I would keep my system flexible enough and give it a well documented interface, other programmers might also find it quite useful.

This was when I first discovered the true potential of object oriented layout techniques and that my system could have a real influence on Amiga software in general. I skipped my previous intentions of inventing something just to support my own programming work. Instead, I tried to build a tool which was as easy to use as possible for programmers and as flexible to configure as possible for users. The result of these efforts was Magic User Interface which was first released in August 93.

AF: How many registered users for MUI are there?

Over the past years, MUI has been a big success on the Amiga. I'm very pleased and also a little proud that my GUI system found its way to so many Amiga computers worldwide. MUI was accepted and welcomed by many software authors as a way to provide their applications with a modern and powerful interface. There are currently about 500 public domain, shareware or commercial MUI applications available and the number is increasing every week.

Considering the amount of mail and suggestions I receive daily, MUI is not only welcomed by software authors but also by the users of their MUI-based products. They like the idea of not having to live with a predefined design, but instead having the possibility to customize the outfit of their preferred applications to match their personal taste.

AF: Have you been speaking to Gateway with regard to making MUI part of the next version of the operating system?

Thanks to Aminet and other public domain CDs or disks and thanks to the Internet, MUI is available to all Amiga users worldwide without problems. I am quite happy with these distribution mechanisms, so there are currently no detailed plans for including MUI with the next Amiga operating system. However, I am always open to suggestions from Amiga International and would definitely like the idea of having MUI as default GUI used by the OS.

AF: What next for MUI?

MUI is a work in progress. Due to the large amount of feedback I receive, the list of things that could be implemented or enhanced is really long, probably long enough for many new versions and upgrades. Some topics that are probably addressed in the next release include an easier and more flexible way of

dealing with screens, enhanced support of graphics board-equipped systems featuring truly transparent windows, something the Amiga has not yet seen. Also planned are many new configuration options to customize GUIs even more and a major speed increase of MUI's so-called "virtual groups" which will boost the performance of all MUI based web browsers.

How to register MUI:

Either online with a credit card at <http://www.sasg.com/> or by sending £15 cash or cheque to the UK SASG representative:

Paul Jewell
7 Fairfield Ave
Cardiff CF5 1BR