

BenSpeaks

Ben Vost

COLLABORATORS

	<i>TITLE :</i> BenSpeaks		
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WRITTEN BY	Ben Vost	December 31, 2022	

REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

BenSpeaks

1.1 Welcome to AFCD21

AFCD21

Christmas 97

So what do you think of the improvements over the last couple of months? Obviously they've proved pretty popular since, ever since we put AFCDFind on the CD you've been ticking that "Very easy" box in the AFCDSurvey on the question about how easy you find it to find stuff on our disc. The new AFCDPrefs should also help matters with people being able to use the file viewers they want to, instead of the defaults on the immutable CD.

The weird thing about the Amiga is that it's impossible to cater for everyone's tastes. I wish I had the far easier job of creating the Mac Format CD every month, for instance. You don't have to worry about font size or icon types there - because all Macs use the same font all the time and there are no troublesome icon patches to worry about. Not only that, but since about System 7, things have been pretty stable on the Mac with regard to system software - not like on our machine where owners of WB2 machines can't use Multiview, RequestChoice and so on. Ah well, I guess that must just be the price we have to pay for a far more flexible system...

On another topic, we've had hardware guru Simon Goodwin here at our offices this week. Simon knows all sorts of stuff too esoteric to mention and gets excited at the prospect of a new sort of EPROM. Not too interesting you may feel, but his grasp of the minutiae that make up an Amiga gives him an unparalleled advantage (in my experience) when it comes to sorting out hardware-based problems. In mere moments he fixed my problem with my DAT drive on my machine at home, discovered the problem with a Picasso II card and told us about how to fix the "vertical stripe problem" with the Amiga monitor converter. He's the kind of guy we like at Amiga Format. Although his writing is sometimes overlong, we can be sure he's giving you the best details in his reviews and that you can trust his words to base your decisions on.

And that's just one of the reasons why you buy Amiga Format every month.

Ben

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 Thought for the month

It's an article of faith

It's weird. I'll say it now - I am an atheist. But I do have faith. I have faith that the Amiga will rise again. I have no doubt in my mind that we will still be using Amigas in the near future and even further afield. I've spent most of my waking life working with Amigas, fixing them and writing about them and I believe I'll be able to carry on doing that for much more of my working life - if I so choose to do.

And it's odd in a way, especially since, apart from announcements from dubious companies, we haven't had much positive news about the Amiga since before 1994. We've hung on for the last three and a half years, just on the basis that we feel in our hearts that we're right about the Amiga's superiority to most other platforms currently available. It's not many computers that inspire this kind of loyalty. Sure, Mac owners are partisan about their machines, but I feel that Amiga owners are more like "rabid" than partisan. I once got email from a chap who signed off by saying that "they could take his Amiga when they prised it from his cold, dead fingers." If that's not dedication (and a slightly worrying obsession) I don't know what is!

Lastly, on a completely unrelated topic, you may like to know that the RC5-56 challenge is over. The Amiga team went from 149th place all the way up to 7th (and would have been sixth in about three days from when I wrote this), but the all-important key was found by a Belgian professor with a single PC (spit!). There was always a chance that the Amiga team wouldn't find the key - hell, it wasn't even likely that we would - but the sheer amount of effort put into the challenge by Amiga users all over the world was amazing! We were one of only seven teams in the world to crack the million block barrier, we were regularly in the top three of keys posted per day, we had over 1000 team members all giving their machine's time in order to help. By contrast, there wasn't a single PC team in the running. If you took part, give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back and wait for the new challenge to discover extra-terrestrial life. Now there's a thought - first aliens contacted by Amigas... :)

1.3 Submissions advice

1.4 Submissions advice

HOW TO SEND US YOUR SUBMISSIONS

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IMPORTANT! We can't accept your music modules as submissions for the Amiga Format CD owing to copyright problems with sound samples from copyrighted sources. 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:

"AFCDxx;-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 (we provide ABackup on the CD), Zip disk, Jaz cartridge, SyQuest 44MB, 88MB 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

1.5 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.
