

Pro Audio Spectrum & MPC Digest

Volume 1 - Number 11

January 1993

Published by Jim Rooney

Edited By Karen Goehner-Rooney

Dedicated to PAS and MPC Users

(C) Copyright 1993



Publishers Corner

Welcome to Pro AudioSpectrum & MPC Digest. I am writing this month's corner from Media Vision Inc. this month. I have been working with them on a secret project that will be sure to speed things up for those of you that need tech support. I hope I can tell you all about it next month.

This experience is bound to make both the main magazine and especially the technical notes section MUCH better. I hope you see a difference in that section this month.

As of the time of this writing, I do not know if we will get this out in time... Having to change equipment and all has slowed down the process a bit, so please forgive us if things are running a bit late... It will be worth it in the near future.

Media Vision has started a contest for developers. The top prize is a \$5000.00 shopping spree. You can download CONTEST.ZIP from either their bbs or ours. You should download CONTEST.ZIP from either the MV BBS or the PAS & MPC Digest bbs for further details.

***Now... On With The
Show!!***

Now, to get through all the legal gobbledegook...

This publication is protected by US and international copyright laws. You may copy it and distribute it freely but may not charge a fee for it or the process and materials used to copy it.

Pro AudioSpectrum, PAS, PAS16, PAS +, CDPC, ThunderBoard, Thunder & Lightning, AudioPort & Auto Blending are trademarks of Media Vision, Inc.

MS DOS, Microsoft, Microsoft Windows, Multimedia Windows and MSCDEX are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corp.

SP Spectrum is a trademark of Voyetra Technologies.

Sound Blaster, SoundBlaster Pro and Video Blaster are registered trademarks of Creative Labs, Inc.

All other products are protected by trademarks or copyrights of their respective companies.

Pro Audio Spectrum and MPC Digest assumes no responsibility or liability for any information contained within this publication. All editorials are strictly the opinion of the writer. PAS & MPC Digest does not necessarily agree or disagree with those opinions. Any software included with this publication is protected by US and international copyright laws unless it has been released to the public domain.

This publication is written and edited completely independent of Media Vision Inc. They also take absolutely no responsibility or liability for any information contained herein.

REVIEWS

The reviews this month are as follows...

Games... Space Quest IV on CD-ROM
Microsoft Golf

Windows... True Effects for Windows
Winjammer

Hardware... Fusion CD

There will be no DOS reviews.

Game Reviews

Space Quest IV - CD-ROM

Space Quest IV is now out on CD-ROM... course you can probably figure that out from the title... While this game is basically the same as the original, it has CD quality speech instead of text boxes. I'm not going to go into a BIG detailed description of this game as most of you have already seen the floppy version since it has been out for quite some time. The main concern here is the aforementioned speech instead of text boxes... which really makes a gigantic difference. I'm sure most of you have seen both versions of King's Quest V. The change is equally impressive with this game. So, if you have already seen or bought Space Quest IV on floppy, don't hesitate to get this too. If you haven't seen the original, get this one instead if you have a CD-ROM... you won't be disappointed.

For those of you that have never seen this game, the basic gist of this is that it is an adventure game (go here, go there, get this, use that) which takes place in space and on more than one planet. A little bit like a futuristic King's Quest game. Oh... the interface is just like all the Sierra interfaces... very intuitive and easy to use.

Available from most retailers or Sierra On-Line.

PAS16 Support - excellent
Graphics - OUTSTANDING
Interface - excellent
Originality - excellent
Value - excellent
Enjoyment - excellent
Playability - excellent
Digitizing - excellent
Overall - excellent

Microsoft Golf

I hope you all saw the review of Links 386 Pro a couple months back. I would also place a bet that you wish it would work in Windows. Well, it does... at least it's so similar you won't know the difference. Basically a combination of the regular Links and Links 386 Pro, Microsoft Golf is a great game. The game is made by Access and licensed to Microsoft for sale as a Windows game. Nope... this isn't a DOS window kind of thing... It is fully Windows 3.X compatible and even works better there. You can move the Windows around anyway you please... you can even reduce one to an icon if you need to for more room. I am not going to go into a full review of the game since we just did the basics for Links 386 Pro. The point I'm trying to make is that it is a very good game that runs in the Windows environment. So, run out and pick it up... and use your Links 386 Pro or just Links courses on it. Have fun.

Available from most retailers or Microsoft.

PAS16 Support - excellent
Graphics - excellent
Interface - excellent
Originality - very good
Value - excellent
Enjoyment - OUTSTANDING
Playability - excellent
Digitizing - excellent
Overall - excellent

Windows Reviews

TrueEffects for Windows

True Effects for Windows is a product that will completely amaze you. Much like MoreFonts, it will allow you to enhance your fonts with shadows, fills, background and more. The difference between TrueEffects and Morefonts is that TrueEffects will work with TrueType fonts instead of PostScripts type 1. There are many effects to choose from... Literally thousands of different effects can be made. And the process is so simple a 5 year old could do it. All you do is start TrueEffects, select a font, and use 4 drop down menus for the effects. You see your changes as you make them, so it's quick and easy. After you have the effect you want, just click on the INSTALL FONT box and you're ready to use it. The bottom line is this... if you want to increase your font bank with special effects fonts, this is the program to do it.

I wanted to show you a few examples of the fonts, but unless you actually have the program, you won't be able to use the fonts. This IS a major drawback and hopefully, MicroLogic will fix it in the future. It IS good for hard copy stuff, like newsletters and such where you will actually be printing the finished product on the computer you have the program installed on.

Available from most local software outlets or MicroLogic Software - 1-800-888-9078.

Winjammer

Winjammer is a shareware MIDI sequencer. Since the inception of this magazine, we have not yet reviewed any shareware programs.

Because of a reader request, we will probably review a shareware product every other month, if space permits.

There are LOTS of MIDI sequencers on the market today... and they all do basically the same thing. With a sequencer, you can edit a MIDI file in every aspect imaginable. Winjammer is no exception. The only problem is it is very hard to get started and use it. While the controls and such are very colorful, there just isn't enough intuitiveness to this program to make it viable for a beginner.

The program that comes with it, however, is another story. It's called Winjammer Player and is the easiest to use MIDI player I have ever seen. Not only can you play any MIDI file available to you, you can create albums of them. To make this clearer, let me give you an example... As you all know, I am a ragtime fanatic. So, I can open the player and select as many rag songs as I wish to play and then save them to an album named RAG. Then, the next time I want to play these songs, all I have to do is call up the album. The other big advantage of this program is that it is a Windows program as well as the main program so it will allow you to play these songs or albums in the background. As a matter of fact, I am auditioning songs for the multimedia version of this magazine as I write this. OK hang on... I have to switch songs... this one won't make it. OK that's better. Anyway, I would definitely think about trying this program out just for the player... as far as the actual sequencer goes, well, that's a decision you'll have to make.

The program is available on the PAS & MPC Digest support bbs, the Media Vision bbs or many other boards around the country. You can also write to the author at the following address...

Dan McKee
69 Rancliffe Road
Oakville, Ontario
Canada
L6H 1B1

Fusion CD

One of the newest products from Media Vision is the Fusion CD, which is a low priced multimedia upgrade kit that includes a stereo sound card, a SCSI interface, an external CD-ROM unit, two amplified speakers and more.

The kit is extremely easy to install and operate. All one needs to do is install the hardware per the installation manual, which is written very well and includes all the details, including drawings, that you need. Then just put the install disk in the floppy drive and type install. Not only does this program take care of all the necessary DOS configuration information, but it will set up all the Windows files too. Not only does this kit include the basic programs needed to use the hardware, such as Pocket Recorder and Mixer, Pro Mixer for Windows and PAS Mixer and Music Box (an audio CD player) for DOS, but also comes with Ultima Underworld, Wing Commander II, Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego and Compton's Family Encyclopedia. The last four on the list are all on CD-ROM. Quite a selection of software, eh?

While the audio sound of this kit is certainly not as good as a PAS16, it IS decent and since the kit is intended for home users who want a plug and play system, there isn't any question as to its value. Don't get me wrong here... it's difficult to tell the difference between the two... and it still rivals the SB Pro in my opinion... and probably most other people's too.

Since most of you already know what a multimedia upgrade kit is by now, I will go on to list the particulars...

Sound card is Spectrum Sound, soundblaster and ad-lib compatible and uses the OPL-3 FM chip.

Speakers are Labtec CS-550 amplified (using batteries) with bass and treble enhance capability.

CD-ROM reader is an NEC CDR-25BJ operating at an average seek time of 650ms and a data transfer rate of 150Kb/sec.

System requirements are an IBM or compatible 386SX or better processor,

expansion slots and a vga or better display card and compatible monitor.

Fusion CD is available from most hardware retailers or Media Vision Sales at 1-800-845-5870.

UPGRADES AND FUTURE PRODUCTS

Accolade...

January 7th, 1993... Accolade today announced the "Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition Hole Design Contest". The contest challenges computer golfers to create a perfect golf hole using Accolade's newest golf simulation, Jack Nicklaus Golf and Course Design: Signature Edition for IBM PC Compatible computers, the only computer golf simulation with a course architect feature. The Hole Design Contest will run from March 1 to May 31, 1993.

January 7, 1993... Earth, circa 2999. Peace has reigned for centuries, until the discovery that black holes... portals to distant galaxies... are harbingers of evil and unspeakable terrors. In a blinding flash, Earth finds itself struggling to defend itself against an onslaught of aliens.

This is the premise for WarpSpeed, Accolade's new Sega Genesis video game. Using a unique first person, full screen "cockpit" perspective, WarpSpeed offers total immersion in the game with a "you are there" feeling.

General Information & Tech Notes

We Have decided to date our tech notes because we realized there might be a little confusion over what is new and what is not... we usually keep them in for 2-3 issues so those who have not yet received back issues will have access to, what we believe, is the most important part of this magazine. We hope this helps.

January 1992... There IS a way to fix the problem of the percussion being on the wrong channel because of different types of MIDI files... Set up a MIDI Mapper with channels 1-10 and 13-16 set to OPL-3 FM Driver and then set the destination of channel 10 to channel 16. If you need more help on this, don't hesitate to call the PAS & MPC Support number.

January 1993... There have been several tech questions concerning IRQ conflicts with the Gateway Local Bus 66MHz machine... The best temporary fix at this time is as follows...

Change SB IRQ to 7 (jumper on the card) or 2. Then change the PAS IRQ to a high order one, such as 10,11 or 15 and change the DMA to 5. This will kill TBPro, but at the present time, there is no way around this. Media Vision is testing working on this problem and trying to find a fix, but the main problem lies in the way Gateway sets up these machines.

January 1993... If you get a STACK OVERFLOW with Ultima Underworld or Wing Commander II on the Fusion CD or 16, make sure the DOS command APPEND is not being run. Look in the AUTOEXEC.BAT file for it. Most of the time you don't even need it. Another problem that will give you this error message is a lack of enough stacks. In CONFIG.SYS, add or edit the Stacks= line to 9,256 or 64, 512. If the first doesn't work, try the second.

January 1993... With version 2.05 or 2.06 of RECFILE.EXE combined with version 2.03 or 2.04 of PLAYFILE.EXE you may get an error message upon playback by PLAYFILE... "Illegal .VOC data block encountered!". If so, you need to go back to version 2.02 of RECFILE and PLAYFILE.

January 1993... It is possible to have a hard drive crash if you have Stacker 3.0 and the Trantor hard drive SCSI driver use EMS memory at

the same time. They tend to step on each other and the hard drive file allocation table is the loser.

The Windows drivers ver 1.44 are done and on-line at the Media Vision bbs. They are also available on the PAS & MPC Digest support bbs. The file name is WIN144.ZIP. These will be available to P A S logons, too.

December 1992... A lot of folks are having problems understanding how to retain Windows mixer settings upon exit. A lot of you set the Pro Mixer or Pocket Mixer and then exit Windows and when you load Windows again, your settings are lost. Here's the solution... Double Click on Control Panel in the "Main" window. Double click on "Drivers". Single click on "Pro AudioSpectrum Mixer" and then on "Setup". Notice the box titled "Mixer Exit"? Be sure both boxes are checked... if not, just click on the box. You may also want to make sure the "Inherit DOS settings" box is unchecked. Now click OK and then Close and you should be set. Go ahead and exit Windows and then start up again... your settings should be the way you left them.

December 1992... Many of you have been complaining about a problem when trying to play MIDI files that they just don't sound right. Please keep in mind that the PAS products are *BASE LEVEL* MIDI devices and therefore use channel 16 for the percussion. If you try to use a general MIDI song, you will get notes instead of percussion as general MIDI or *EXTENDED LEVEL* MIDI uses channel 10 for percussion. The only clear way to fix the problem is to change the channel using SP Spectrum or any other sequencer.

December 1992... When installing Norton Desktop for Windows, it is changing a line in your SYSTEM.INI file which needs to be changed back for proper PAS operation... look for the Device=VDMADX.386 line, comment it out with a semi-colon and add the line Device=*VDMAD below it.

If you want to write to PAS & MPC Digest, here is the address:

PAS & MPC Digest
23217 NE 10th Pl.
Redmond, WA 98053-6520
Voice - 206-868-0950 - 9am to 9pm Pacific Time - NO CALLS AFTER 9!!
Fax - 206-868-2257 or if no answer - 206-556-1723

You may also upload your comments to:

The Neighborhood BBS

206-641-3908 - running PCBboard - 1200/2400
206-957-1112 - Node 2 - 12/24/96/19.2
206-747-6095 - Node 3 - 1200/2400

You can log on under the name P A S (be sure to use the spaces) and a password of MPC. This name and password will only allow you to upload files and download this monthly newsletter. If you become a subscriber to PAS & MPC Digest, you will also get full access to this bbs on all three nodes.

You can check for the digest using a Zippy directory scan for PAS. That will list all issues.

To contact Media Vision:

Media Vision Inc.
3185 Laurelview CT.
Fremont, CA 94538
Technical Support - 800-638-2807
BBS - 510-770-0968 or 510-770-1661
FAX - 510-770-9592
Main Number - 510-770-8600

BBS Listings

The Neighborhood BBS - 206-641-3908 - 1200/2400 - PAS & MPC
support bbs

The Neighborhood BBS - 206-957-1112 - 12/24/96 - Node 2

This is where you will find the latest edition of this magazine.

Media Vision BBS - 510-770-0968 - 12/24/96 - Manufacturer BBS
SysOp is Brett Stewart.

You can check here for upgrades that are not on Neighborhood bbs
or leave technical questions for tech support.

VGER Control BBS - 714-371-6482 - 12/24/96/14.4 - Alternate Media
Vision Support
SysOp - Bob Altenberger

The National PC & MIDI Databank - 708-593-8703 - 12/24/96 -
MIDI files - Sound Card files - Multimedia - SysOp is Duane Antor

Lighthouse BBS - 207-255-3700 - 12/24/96 - LOTS of .ROL and MIDI files

Ultimate BBS - 803-895-5836 - 12/24/96 - .ROL and MIDI files

National MIDI - 708-593-8724 - 12/24/96 - LOTS of MIDI files

If you want to add your bbs to this list, please write or call the bbs and
supply the information. We will be happy to add it.

Looks like that's it for Pro AudioSpectrum & MPC Digest for this month. Hope you enjoyed it. If there is anything you would like to see included in future issues don't hesitate to write. Until next time... Have a good month!

PS... If you didn't already notice, there are 3 formats of the publication. You will get MUCH better results if you use one of these files for printing as I use a lot of different fonts to make it look better. Here are the formats...

PASWR#X.DOC - Printed in Windows Write format.

PASASC#X.DOC - Printed in straight ASCII format.

PASMMXX.ZIP - The multimedia version available from the support bbs.

Subscription Form

NAME: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____

Diskette (circle one) 3.5" 5.25" or hard copy

Mail this form with \$22.00 for floppy or \$30.00 for hard copy
or \$40.00 for multimedia version per year to:

PAS & MPC Digest
23217 NE 10th Pl.
Redmond, WA 98053-6520

Thanks for your subscription and you can access the support
bbs's second node with contributor access at 206-957-1112.

