

# **AIO**

Chris Seward

**COLLABORATORS**

	<i>TITLE :</i> AIO		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY	Chris Seward	October 9, 2022	

**REVISION HISTORY**

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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# Chapter 1

## AIO

### 1.1 Amiga Information Online

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Issue 10 - February 1998

- Welcome** - Editorial
- Index** - Contents this issue
- Gamers Corner** - Games section
- Utils Corner** - Utils section
- NEWS** - Latest News
- Articles** - Various articles
- Adverts** - Adverts place
- Letters** - HOT TOPIC for next month
- The Team** - Editorial Team!
- Distribution** - Distribution details
- Contact** - Contact us

DON'T forget to fill in 'Form.txt' that came with this archive

Aio Web Page : [Http://www.dcandy.demon.co.uk/aio/](http://www.dcandy.demon.co.uk/aio/)

### 1.2 Welcome to Amiga Information Online

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Editorial By Chris Seward

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Welcome, welcome, welcome, another month passes and we are back again!

This month we've got a full review of the excellent game, Myst, we've also got a review of The Strangers from Vulcan and all the other PD and shareware games floating around the aminet and bulletin boards. We have now got a new Co-Editor, so expect to see a lot more articles from him in the coming months. As well as the new Co-Editor we have a new Games editor so check out the bursting games section. Also check out the amazing review of AmIRC2.0 by Lewis Mackenzie.

A sad loss this month is that we lose Daniel Kitingan as our Australian reporter as he is busy studying Law, don't worry though, he assures me he'll be writing the occasional article :) and if he doesn't I'll pester him till he does ;)

Check out the articles section and see the statement by Vulcan Software and what their plans are for the coming months, some are very interesting. Quake is coming to the Amiga and everyone is happy, Descent was uploaded to the Amiga the other week which is some more good news, is this where the Amiga turns?! Sales of Myst seem high because when I bought my copy they were sold out at first!

I see some people did not like the chosen font so AIO will now be using whatever your default font is, if you want to read AIO in the font I picked, load up 'aiov10.guide' and at the top edit '@font Polarrsmall.font 7' to say '@font Polarrsmall.font 7' then it will work fine!

Join us next month for more pearls or wisdom!

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## 1.3 Contents of this issue

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Myst - FULL REVIEW

Homergotchi

The Strangers from Vulcan Software

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TCCII

Stonetowers

Battle XI

Amipet V1.14

Forgotten

WBasteroids

X-wins

SWOS highlights league

Top 40 EVER AIO games since May 1997

Cheats for Amiga dooms

How the games scores work

Utils Corner :

Gui4Doom

Amiclock

AmIRC 2.0

Latest Amiga news :

Vulcan go multi platform

Vulcan get more games in more languages

News in brief

Articles :

Winners of the AGA Experience competition

AIO web page re-done

New irc channel on IRCnet

Vulcan make long statement

Differences between Amiga users and PC users (joke!)

Adverts : All the adverts for the latest Amiga things

Letters : All the letter related things

The Team : Who does what?

Distribution : How and where to get AIO from

Contact : How to get in contact with AIO

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[Strangers](#) - The Strangers from Vulcan

[TCCII](#) - Top down shooter

[StoneTowe](#) - Castle battle game

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[Amipet](#) - Cyber pet (V1.14)

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[WBsteroid](#) - WB asteroids game

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[Cheats](#) - Cheats for Amiga Dooms

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Utils reviews menu

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[Gui4Doom](#) - Gui for Doom V0.4

[AmiClock](#) - Another WB clock (V1.1)

[AmIRC2.0](#) - Latest Amiga IRC software

[Henry](#) - A channel bot for IRC

[Scoring](#) - Utils scoring system

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News menu

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[Vulcan1](#) - More translations for Vulcan

[Brief](#) - News in brief

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[AIO WWW](#) - AIO web page re-done

[IRCnet](#) - NEW amiga channel on IRCnet

[VulcanSTATE](#) - VULCAN MAKE HARD STATEMENT

[Difference](#) - Differences, PC, Amiga users

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## 1.8 Adverts

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Adverts menu

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[DCandy](#) - Digital Candy BBS (UK)

[Vulcan](#) - Vulcan Group need help

[TKG](#) - The Killing Ground BBS (UK)

[PDPlus](#) - For \*ALL\* your PD needs!

[Advertise](#) - You want to advertise

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## 1.9 Who does what and how to contact them

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The Production Team

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Below are the people that make AIO work, drop any of them an email of thanks, it makes our job so much nicer :)

Editor : Chris Seward

Cool@DCandy.demon.co.uk

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Deputy Editor : Paul Steadman

Mightyhalf@reaperman.demon.co.uk

Games Editor : Lee Hesselden

95LHSC@Saltash.Cornwall.Sch.Uk

Utils Editor : Adrian Hendy

Ade@DCandy.demon.co.uk

Thanks to the following people who also did something or provided something which brought you this issue :-

Christian A. Weber - For the brilliant ShowIFF program

Steve Hines - For Quickgrab V1.1

Exo Designs - For the EXCELLENT AIO render

Thomas Krehbiel - For the Viewtek program

And thanks to everyone who has registered as an AIO reader!!!

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## 1.10 Where to get AIO from

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Distribution

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To get the latest issue of Amiga Information Online please try one of the following official distributors/places below.

England:

Digital Candy BBS : (+44) 01785 607207 OFFICIAL WORLD Hq

The Funky Frog BBS : (+44) 01543 258263 OFFICIAL UK Hq

On the Oche BBS : (+44) 01705 648791

Amiga Nutter BBS : (+44) 01707 395414 OFFICIAL UK Hq

Scotland:

Backwoods BBS : (+44) 01463 870022 OFFICIAL Scot Hq

( 6pm til Midnight Weekdays and 2pm til Midnight Weekends )

Wales:

The Killing Ground : (+44) 01978 751393 OFFICIAL Wel Hq

( Opening times : 22:00 - 08:00 )

Sweden:

Jipebo BBS : (0)8 58355020 OFFICIAL SWEHq

Australia:

Lend\_A\_Hand BBS : +61 3 62 739645 OFFICIAL AusHq

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Aminet:

Aminet : Docs/Mags/AIOV?.lha - ? = Issue number

Email Orders:

Send an email to the following for the latest issue

BGonzalo@cvtci.com.ar

Or

Cool@Dcandy.demon.co.uk

Web page:

Http://www.dcandy.demon.co.uk/aio/

or

Http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/backwoods/aio.html

Written Orders:

To receive orders by post please enclose a stamped address envelope  
with a blank disk and send it to :

Lee Hesselden (AIO),

8 Plough Green,

Saltash,

Cornwall,

PL12 4JZ.

ENGLAND.

DISTRIBUTION NOTES : AMIGA INFORMATION ONLINE CAN BE COPIED AROUND  
PD LIBRARYS, UPLOADED TO BBSES OR GIVEN TO ANYONE. IF AMIGA INFORMATION  
ONLINE IS TO BE INCLUDED ON A COMPILATION CD OR ON A MAGAZINE  
COVERDISK/CD I MUST RECEIVE A COPY OF WHATEVER IT APPEARS ON TO REVIEW.  
THE ONLY EXCEPTION IS THE GREAT AMINET CD'S. IF YOU DO WANT TO PUT  
'AIO' ON A COMPILATION CD OR MAGAZINE THEN PLEASE EMAIL ME IN ADVANCE.

If you run a BBS or can distribute AIO by post in your country please  
get in touch with Cool@Dcandy.demon.co.uk and let me know!

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## 1.11 Why not contact us

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Contact AIO

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If you would like to get in touch with AIO for any reason at all  
please email the address at the bottom. Any emails are welcome,  
unless stated, letters will be publicly shown in the latest issue  
from the date of when the letter was received.

Cool@DCandy.demon.co.uk

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## 1.12 Vulcan NEWS

Vulcans 1998 Plans

After many meetings and internal development discussions Vulcan Software has released its future plans for 1998.

The year ahead is mainly based on development expansion and will see Vulcan developing for Macintosh, PC and Playstation formats aswell as high-end specification Amiga CDRom and Amiga PPC formats.

A full Past, Present and Future analysis including (Teams & Talents) information can be found at <http://www.vulcan.co.uk/vulcan/who.html>

Live Long & Prosper!

Kind Regards

Paul Carrington BA (Director) Vulcan Software Limited <http://www.vulcan.co.uk>

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## 1.13 More Vulcan News

Vulcan Software partners with the ATO (Amiga Translators Organisation)

Adding to our continued localisation support this partnership will insure that all Vulcans future Amiga CDRom titles will be available in as many languages as possible.

see <http://www.vulcan.co.uk/vulcan/t-trans.html> for more information

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## 1.14 Brief

News in Brief

NetScape comming to the Amiga?:

Netscape Inc has annouced that it will soon be releasing the Full source code to it's web browser with easy licence terms. At the time of this news an amiga programmer is interested in doing the port, Netscape spokesman Martin Cagan said that many of Netscape's engineers are Amiga aficionados.

AWeb brings JavaScripts home:

AWeb 3.1 by Yvon Rozijn has got it self many new features, one of the more interesting features in the inclusion of Javascript. This will allow amiga users to access more complex web sites more easily.

It is not the full Java but it is a step in the right direction!

OXYPatcher now in UK:

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Anyone interested in getting the FULL version of OXYPatcher can now get it from Weird Science (0116 246 3800) for £14.99 - Many people did not register in the first place with the idea of sending money to Germany.

India get A1200s:

The well known Indian distributor Shaf Information and Technologies PVT have signed an order of 2000 Amiga 1200s for the beginning of February 1998 with more to come if sales go well.

CoGo software:

The author of the CoGo software mentioned last month has now changed his email address and cannot get access to any mail sent about CoGo, if you have sent him an email or would like more information please email him at his new address :- [dlbenson@psnw.com](mailto:dlbenson@psnw.com)

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## 1.15 Coming up Next Month...

Next Months Issue

I hope you enjoyed this months issue, sorry for the utils reviews being a bit low but that will change for next issue :) The games section will be bursting again with are new games ed and we will bring you the latest news and articles. Don't forget to write in about the **HOT TOPIC !!!**

Chris Seward - Editor

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## 1.16 Game Ed Welcome

Games editors welcome

A big HELLO to all of you A.I.O readers out there, my name is Lee Hesselden and i`m the new Games Editor in A.I.O. This is my first issue as a member of the A.I.O team, I hope to give you the best games out there on the Aminet and a few commercial titles too.

I am trying to put as many screenshots as possible in this section, the software I use to grab the screens only works on Intuition Screens, and does not work with screens which programming languages like AMOS use, if you are uploading a game to the Aminet it would help if you put a screen shot with the archive, and mention that there is one included in the .Readme file somewhere, this will improve your chances of getting your work noticed in this brilliant disk magazine!

Lets hope in the next issue I can get even more screenshots and make A.I.O that much better!!! (As if it isn't all ready!)

If you have any suggestions, comments, want me to review your software, or have you wrote a review? Get in touch with me today:-

Snail Mail: Lee Hesselden

8 Plough Green

Saltash E-Mail: 95LHSC@Saltash.Cornwall.Sch.Uk

Cornwall

PL12 4JZ

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## 1.17 Myst

Myst

Myst, one of the biggest games of all time and the best selling game on PC and MAC cd-rom comes to the Amiga at last! The interest all started way back in time around 95-96 when a mock Myst was seen running on the PAWS (Portable Amiga Work Station) at an American show! This caused thousands of enquires into whether Myst would actually come to the Amiga. Some time went by, various things happend and ClickBOOM landed themselves with the rights to convert and publish Myst on the Amiga.

Before being able to play the game you will have to install some of it, the minimum is 5Mb but it is best to install as much as you can onto HD as everything will access quicker. I choose to install 250Mbs of it which filled up my DH1: partition!!! It doesn't matter how much you install but you have to install some no matter what.

Upon loading the game you are shown exactly what happended... well actually you see a view of someone flying to an island and that is it! Then a screen will appear and the game has started. The idea really is to confuse you, you start off not knowing why your there, not knowing what you are meant to do or even what the hell is going on. The second the first screen comes up you will be outstanded by the graphics, click around a bit more and you will see that every screen is absolutly amazing. The game is made up of linked pictures but the graphics are not the only reason to buy the game, apart from the excellent graphics the gameplay matches, as you don't know what you are doing or anything about what is going on you have only one choice... and that is to explore. After a whiles exploring

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you will find clues and other bits that tell you important things. You do not actually collect objects, once you have picked up an object you use it pretty soon and don't have to carry it around with you all the time, once it is used that part is over. Throughout the whole game you don't really know what is going on but you will get a better idea as the game progresses. In parts you will get video clips of someone telling you important things that you need to remember to complete the game. The game is made up of mostly puzzles so if you don't like puzzles don't buy this game, a lot of the puzzles are quite difficult as well so if you're only a novice adventure player think twice before buying it.

Myst is one of those games that you think you've been playing for half an hour and you look at the clock and two hours has slipped past, the music is very atmospheric and the whole game will completely suck you into that world.

Overall Myst is an excellent game and is one of the best games I have ever played in my entire life. I recommend that everyone should get this game as it is something that shouldn't be missed (no pun intended!) Also on the CD is a 14 minute video of how the game was made, although it is a little slow and jerky it's good to watch for the first time. If you like a few puzzles then you'll LOVE this!

Specs : AGA Amiga or Amiga with Graphics board, 8 Meg of FAST ram and minimum 5 MB of Harddrive space.

Available from: ClickBOOM or ALL good amiga retailers!

Archived name : Myst (£29.99)

Graphics : 98%

Sound : 96%

Playability : 94%

Lastability : 97%

Overall : 96%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.18 HomerGotchi

HomerGotchi

Homegotchi as you may guess straight away is a Tamagotchi on the Amiga but with Homer from the Simpsons. The only thing you can do is feed him, that's not because this is a beta version or anything, according

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to the author who would want to clean up after Homer and he's probably right :)

You leave Homergotchi running on your WB screen and open up the Fridge directory, every now and again he'll mention a certain food from the fridge and you have to drop the food icon on homers head so he eats it. If you drop the wrong food or drop food when he doesn't want it his energy will drop down 10 and he'll get angry at you and shout.

Homergotchi is very funny for the first couple of times and is worth downloading just for a laugh. After running it a couple of times you'll get bored and never run it again but it is useful for the samples which you could use in your sound prefs or something.

Overall download it for a laugh by all means and use the samples but don't be expecting to keep you amused for long.

Available from: Aminet game/???

Archived name : homergotchi.lha

Graphics : 73%

Sound : 81%

Playability : 40%

Lastability : 5%

Overall : 63%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.19 The Strangers

The Strangers

The Strangers was the first in the series of Vulcans now CD only games.

It is a beat-em-up game in the style of 'Streets of Rage' and other type games where you have an area where you can scroll back and forth having to beat up anyone that comes in your way. It revolves around the same style of gameplay as Renegade from the C64 and other early computers.

The graphics are quite good but they could do with improving as they have a shareware game look about them. The music is really thumping to get you going and into the spirit of things. In one player mode the gameplay isn't all that exciting and you will probably get bored after a while, give it a two player game and you and your friend will never want to put it down. I have spent countless number of hours playing this game with friends and kept on going trying to beat the hiscore. The game isn't that hard really

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give a level a couple of tries and you'll get past it with no trouble. That is until you reach level 8 (the last level) This is the hardest level in the game as you would expect, and is nearly impossible to complete in your first 50 tries of the level, the amount of swearing and sweat pouring from me when I played this level was outstanding :) After a long while in two player mode you should be able to beat everyone up and then you have to kill the boss. The boss must take around 100 hits as his face doesn't even get a scratch on it when you have been hitting it for along time. The only way I found to kill him was one of the players grabs him from behind while the other one keeps punching at his face and you will have no trouble in beating him.

The game is said to be very violent, it is more comical than violent, if you are offended VERY easily or have very small children then I suggest not buying this game, otherwise you'll just laugh at the chessey comments made by the bosses before they chop you into pieces or rip out your tounge and eat it?!? If you have more older children but you don't want them to be seeing the fatalitys then there is a parental lock to stop children accessing the fatality modes.

Overall a very nice game, lacking in some parts which gives it a shareware type of look and feel to it. If you're going to play this game one player there isn't much fun involved but get two - six players and you'll be having loads of fun. Also check out the deathmatchs where you can have six human players beating each other up in a big rumble!

Available from: Weird Science (Tel: 0116 246 3800)

Archived name : The Strangers (£19.99)

Graphics : 83%

Sound : 86%

Playability : 93%

Lastability : 95%

Overall : 88%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.20 Total Chaos City II

Total Chaos City II

Total Chaos City II or TCCII as it is known is an overhead 2 player shoot each other game, you know the type, not amazing graphics but has great gameplay and will suck you in until you realise you've

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been playing for hours :) It has the same feel as the legendary Extreme Violence and if you liked that you'll love this! TCCII has no scrolling screen but the levels are different everytime you play them and have various obstacles and extra weapons and powerups to collect. If you have Extreme Violence it's worth checking this out but you may not like the non-scroll screen limit to it as you always know where the other player is and you can get into situations where neither of you will go round the corner otherwise you face the risk of being shot.

The original game was coded in Amos but the author decided to re-code it in Blitz basic to learn the language and he had lost the source code to the Amos version!

Overall a nice game that will give some enjoyment to you and a friend, if you have no friends avoid. Can be two player joystick and keys, both keys or both joystick.

Available from: Aminet game/2play

Archived name : ???..lha

Graphics : 76%

Sound : 73%

Playability : 85%

Lastability : 83%

Overall : 79%

Previewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.21 Stonetowers

Stonetowers

Stonetowers is based slightly around Settlers and Foundation but more basic in a way. The idea is to pick your land to set up your castle and the second player does the same, you then have to put other castles around the screen and gather more land, you can also upgrade you exisiting castle. Every move you make gains you more points but the positioning of your castles can earn you more land which results in more points.

When I first loaded Stonetowers I though it was going to be rubbish but on my first go it was excellent! The fun and excitment that you get out of this game makes it well worth downloading, the only draw back is it seems to be two player only.

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There are three different game versions, short, medium and long, each have a set amount of moves you can each make before the game is over and the winner is declared. Overall its a nice game but could do with some more features and maybe some soothing music insted of the occational Dong!

Available from: Aminet game/board

Archived name : ???..lha

Graphics : 85%

Sound : 73%

Playability : 84%

Lastability : 81%

Overall : 82%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.22 Battle XI

Battle XI

I am very angry with this game, first off you need a screen size 800x600 with at least 8 colours, then you have to read all of the German documentation and then, and only then you can load the thing, then it tells you you need a screen 800x600 pixels, or something like that (It`s in German), oh heck, go back into the ScreenMode prefs, change that again because you forgot to click on "Use", and now Workbench won`t close down because Battle XI is still loaded in the background. So reset the computer start again and at last it loads!!!

Well, once you have the installation complete as detailed above you are presented with a message in German, don`t ask, I don`t know what the silly thing says! After a few seconds you get the title screen and some music which is quite good, now you move your mouse down to the bottom of the screen and heck, the auto scroll is off and that hours work getting the thing to load is wasted; reset the computer, change it, load the program up again and now you can read the instructions of what to do next. (At last, something that looks like English).

Press SPACE it says to play, do that and you get the game screen, black with white dots all over the place. Now, how to move the silly things, joystick, no; mouse, no; keyboard, oh heck, quit it again! In fact I can`t get the dots, which I assume are your pieces, to move; back to the menu, ah, demo, click on it the computer plays for you, still does not tell me

how to play it! Lightning, somethings happening, white lines all over the screen, interesting!

Maybe it would be best to credit this game with some English documentation, although the archive is almost full with docs, there all in German! Send me some English docs and I might review it again, until then...

Available from: Aminet/BBSes

Archived name : BattleXI.lha ??

Graphics : 30% A few dots; title screens good though!

Sound : 76% Title musics great, thunder good too!

Playability : --% It would help if I knew how to play it!

Lastability : --% Need to play it first!!

Overall : 35% I m felling generous!

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.23 AmiPet V1.14

AmiPet V1.14

AmiPet is another one of those Cyper Pets for your computer, we last reviewed this is issue 7 (V1.10b). It got a 89% rating, nice with some let downs, well this version is attempting to remove those let downs, and the author has managed it well.

When you first use AmiPet you have to set some of the tooltypes to tell the program where the graphics and sound files are, this is the only let down in the program, it would be nice if there was a configuration program which saved a file on your HD or something telling the program where to look, as the installation may be a bit complicated for children, who I assum this is aimed at, or the beginner Amiga user!! You can also set the size of your pet, either BIG, horrible graphics, or small, as in the screenshot.

In all you get 6 different graphics files, two of them are blobs, one is a computer, another is a fish, you can even have a sheep or a spider! The idea behind the different graphics is a good one, and you can even make your own up, as the archive comes with a program to convert normal IFF pictures into AmiPet graphics! Amazing!!

I have left my AmiPet in the corner of the screen, he seems very happy, he hasn` t been to the toilet yet, and I wish he would because I wan` t to know if I hear one of the brilliant sounds, the best of course being the fart

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when it needs a clean, this you can test using one of the menu items in the GFX test menu.

In the time it has taken me to get this far my AmiPet is dead! It lived for 2 minutes 48 seconds, is this a record?? Maybe not! It lasted longer than that when I was making the screenshot. Maybe I shouldn't have given the little thing a meal to eat? I don't know, let me create another using the New Pet button also accessible from the pull-down menus.

Anyway, back to the review. All of the AmiPet's functions, feeding, playing, cleaning, going to the vet and punishing are all accessed by using the pull-down menus, this lets the window be very small so it can sit in the background and not get in the way of that very important A.I.O review! Be very carefull though, as when you quit AmiPet the time and date is saved, if you leave your pet unattended for too long it WILL die!!

Maybe i'm about 7 at heart, but this is a brilliant piece of software for any child or indeed adult, its great fun to play with and the sounds make it brillaint. Well done!

Screenshot - Screenshot of the game [Click once]

Available from: Aminet/BBSes

Archived name : AmiPet\_114.lha ??

Graphics : 79% - Some are good, but others let the game down

Sound : 92% - Some wonderful sound in this little number

Playability : 90% - Gets a little tedious when it pops-

Lastability : 87% - to the front every now and again!

Overall : 91% - Great Game!!

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.24 Forgotten Empires

Forgotten Empires

When I downloaded this from the Aminet I thought it was the full game, but it isn't, this is V0.33 and it is a preview of whats to come. It is the authors first Blitz Basic Game, and by the looks of things he is a Star Trek fan as the races you have to choose from I seem to remember of the Star Trek Series on T.V.

At the moment the game isn't up to much, you start off and you pick your race, enter your name, and the computer picks out some skill points etc, then it askes you if you want to roll again, meaning are the scores i've given you a load of rubbish? After all that your character is created, you

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then move on into the game it self, as it is text based there are no fancy picture here yet, but you are presented with a map with loads of stars on it. You are placed upon one of the stars and all you can do at the moment is move to and each one. When you do move however you get a bar scroll along the screen to tell you how far you have travelled.

Another feature of the game is the trader, this is where you can buy and sell things, every time you go into the trader the items available to buy are different, you can even sell some of your items too.

The game, at its present state isn't up to much, there is no documentation which is a must when making a game, but the foundations for a great playable game are there, I just hope the author continues progress with this game, and hopefully we will see the full version on the Aminet in the near future.

Available from: Aminet

Archived name : ForEmp\_Pre.lha (64k)

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.25 WBsteriods V1.5

WBsteriods V1.5

There have been lots of Asteriod clones doing there rounds on the Amiga, but WBsteriods is one of those really good ones, its loads up on the Workbench screen, says Asteriods in a freeky voice and lets you play as many times as you like!

The game has the original graphics like the original game which makes the graphics not too brilliant, but the author was going for the original look for his game.

The game is from the people who made Battle XI, although the documentation is only in German, you do not need it, the game is simple enough anyway!

A nice addition to the game is the resizeable window which lets you increase the size of the playing area, you don't really need to use this though as the size of the playing area you start with is big enough!

The only problem I had with this game is when I got on to the later levels the whole game slowed down, it might be my system, 2mb Chip Rammed A1200, [-Ed Upgrade you computer then :)] but it is a real let-down to this brilliant game.

Not gripping sound, simple graphics, but great playability, except when it gets sloooooooooowwwweerrr and slower in the later levels. Great game,

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but too many let-downs for an A.I.O Gold.

Screenshot - Screenshot of the game [Click once]

Available from: Aminet/BBSes

Archived name : WBsteriods.lha ??

Graphics : 85% - Asteriods Graphics, definately

Sound : 67% - Not much of it!

Playability : 72% - What a shame it slows down.

Lastability : 95% - It lasted me for ages, whynot you?

Overall : 88% - I would like to give it more - but too many let-downs

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.26 X-Wins

X-Wins

You have all played Connect 4 sometime in your life, well, I bet you got fed up setting it all up, finding the pieces stuck under the sofa, well, your problems will be all solved if you buy X-Wins, this is, yes, you've guessed it, a Connect 4 game!!

This is the third game this month which has no English documentation, its all in German! Is it me, or are there more programming Amiga Users in Germany than anywhere else in the world? Yes! Then why can't they write in English, the most widely used language in the world?? Anyway, the docs are not needed, the archive comes with a Catalog to convert the German text into English in the game itself. Isn't it amazing what all these Aminet Programmers can do now??

When you start the game you select the size of the board, the row length and the difficulty level, the difficulty level and the size needs no explaining, the smaller the harder it is to get at least one person to win. The row length lets you select how many discs you have to get in a row, it defaults at four, but you could have up to six in a row and make it very difficult!

I won't mumble on telling you how to play the game, i'll just say all you have to do is click on one of the letters at the top of each column, or press the key on the keyboard, and a little round disc falls from the top of that column and either sits on top of another disc or plonks itself on the bottom.

There are two problems with this game, every now and again a disc will fall down, but there will still be a disc stuck on the top of the column,

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any other discs go through it and it disappears, but it is very annoying.

The other problem is when you resize the window, it makes the display much more clearer, but sometimes the program crashes!!

However, this is a great game and is a must for all Connect 4 fans out there who have had their own games damaged by little sisters!! (No; i`m not being sexist or ageist!)

Screenshot - Screenshot of the game [Click once]

Available from: Aminet/BBSes

Archived name : XWins.lha

Graphics : 70% - Not spectacular, WB 4 colour stuff

Sound : 00% - There is none, an improvement?

Lastability : 87% - Very simple and fun.

Playability : 85% - It will last a long time, if it doesn`t crash!

Overall : 78% - Some sound and 3D graphics? - 90% ???

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.27 SWOS Highlights

SWOS Highlights Competiton

Sensible World Of Soccer is probably the best football game of all time, although the graphics are no where near the standard of any multi million pound N64 or Playstation game it has the best gameplay on any format.

I am starting up a league of SWOS highlights for the '96/'97 version of the game. Each month the league will be published in AIO and you`ll be able to see if your goal on SWOS is the best of all amiga SWOS users.

Send your highlights (uuencoded or mime) to :

Email : Cool@DCandy.demon.co.uk

Or email for a postal address to send them to!

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## 1.28 Cheats and tips

Cheats to Amiga Dooms

These codes are for the PC version but do work on the amiga version

idkfa - You get maximum ammo, maximum armour and maximum weapons. This cheat is more effective if you`ve found a backpack (ammo capacity is doubled with a backpack).



idfa - Same as idkfa, but you don't get the colour keys. NOTE: this ONLY works with Doom I v1.666 (or higher) or any version of Doom II.

idspispopd - Walk through walls ('zero clipping', they call it). This cheat is toggle-type. You can't activate teleporters pick up things, etc., when this mode is on. Plus, it can be difficult to fight the bad guys because their gun blasts, etc. can knock you through a wall!). See below for equivalent Doom II code.

idbehold - (followed by pressing one of S, V, I, R, A or L) Toggles the selected 'Power-Up'. The Power-Ups are:

Power-Up Type Duration for which the effect lasts

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S-Berserk Strength The rest of the current level (\*\*\*)

V-Invulnerability 30 seconds

I-Invisibility 60 seconds

R-Radiation Suit 60 seconds

A-Allmap (computer map) The rest of the current level

L-Light Amplifiers 120 seconds

idclew - followed by episode number and level number, (or map number in DOOM II), will warp you to that episode and level (or map). Note that using this cheat will cancel any use of the-nomonsters' command line option. In Doom II, the number given must always be two digits; thus, for levels 1 to 9, use 01, 02, 03, etc.

idmypos - displays your current co-ordinates and angle of view in hex notation.

idchoppers - this code gives you the chainsaw. Press '1' to use it.

Whilst in MAP mode (ie. after having pressed the TAB key):

idddt - type once: show entire map,

type twice: show all monsters as well,

type a third time: back to normal.

Found by Axxis^ACH

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## 1.29 Top 40 AIO games

The Top 40

I was going to have the top 50 games reviews in A.I.O, for my first issue as the Games Editor, but I couldn't write enough reviews in my first issue! Add that to all the disk problems I had, and all the stuff which wouldn't load and I couldn't be bothered with, anyway, here for the

first time, the Top 40 Games in A.I.O, if we have reviewed later versions of the games listed, the score for the newer game is shown:-

#### TOP 40 A.I.O GAMES

1. MYST 96% Issue 10
  2. T.F.X 94% Issue 6
  3. Uropa 2 93% Issue 7
  - Evils Doom 93% Issue 2
  5. The Final Odyssey 92% Issue 9
  6. Worldcup V1.02 Guide 91% Issue 8
  - Alien Formula One 91% Issue 1
  - AmiPet V1.14 91% Issue 10
  9. Amitamagotchi V0.53 90% Issue 7
  - Aerial Racers 90% Issue 4
  - Rez & Sparky 90% Issue 4
  12. Dog Fight 89% Issue 5
  - Genetic Species Demo 89% Issue 2
  14. Unofficial SWOS Update 88% Issue 8
  - WBsteroids V1.5 88% Issue 10
  - The Strangers 88% Issue 10
  - Bloodbath 88% Issue 2
  18. Super Ballz 87% Issue 8
  19. Aggression 85% Issue 2
  20. Sheep Shoot 83% Issue 2
  - Super Tron `97 83% Issue 9
  22. Speed Racer FX 82% Issue 3
  - Stonetowers 82% Issue 10
  24. War V1.1 80% Issue 4
  - Ants Games Compilation 80% Issue 6
  26. Escape From Hammy Town 79% Issue 7
  - Shoot 79% Issue 5
  - Apex Golf 79% Issue 1
  - Total Chaos City II 79% Issue 10
  30. X-Wins 78% Issue 10
  31. Slipstream 77% Issue 2
  32. Toads Demo 76% Issue 7
  33. Sore Fist 75% Issue 1
  34. High Noon 73% Issue 3
  35. 6k Pacman 71% Issue 5
  36. Spod Race 69% Issue 3
-

37. Jupiter Runner 67% Issue 5

38. Wackban 66% Issue 4

39. Boche 64% Issue 4

40. HomerGotchi 63% Issue 10

And just for the sake of it, here are the games that were NEVER anywhere near the Top Ten, so what chance have they got in the Top 40??

41. Archery 62% Issue 4

42. Scissors, Paper, Stone 53% Issue 5

43. Euro League Manager 51% Issue 1

44. Monte Carlo 46% Issue 2

45. Megalgen 37% Issue 3

46. Battle XI 35% Issue 10

47. Think Cool 20% Issue 9

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## 1.30 Game Scores

Games reviews and what there score means

Games are reviewed mostly on playability and how long they will last you, although some big games with fancy graphics might be expected to get good reviews it is not always the case. A small 10k game might get a better overall score than a 1Mb game. It is not that the 1Mb game isn't any good it's just that the playability might be non existant and there is no point in downloading a huge file if it will last a couple of minutes and you will only run it to show off to friends.

90%+ - AIO GOLD (amazing)

70-89% - Nice but some let downs

50-69% - Not to good but it'll do

30-49% - Hasn't really been thought out to well

0-29% - POOR! AVOID!

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## 1.31 Gui4Doom

Gui4Doom V0.4

By now most of you will have played one of the versions of Amiga doom and will know that it is anoying having about 4-5 different versions all by different authors. One Doom will offer some options but

the other may be faster with your blizzard or apollo board. It is a pain to have to find all your different dooms and load them via your WB, also if you have the various .Wad files it can also get annoying. This is where Gui4Doom steps in, it is one program that you enter the paths of each doom and each wad file and then just load up that everytime and pick which doom you want to play and with which wad file. There are other options like to play from Rad:, autoforce demo, have SFX and Music on/off, Rotate map, Use Ext .Wad and autoquit. Gui4Doom is a very useful tool for everyone that has many different versions of doom and it's wad file!

Available from: Aminet game/misc

Archived name : gui4doom.lha

Overall 86% out of 100%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.32 AmiClock

AmiClock V1.1

Umm, AmiClock is a clock programmed in Blitz Basic 2, it reminds me of the Blitz-Clock programming example which comes with Blitz 2. What makes this one special is the interesting colours the author has chosen, and the wonderful messages which it says when you start it and close it, in that horrible American voice which the Amiga is blessed with you hear "Welcome to AmiClock, by...", umm, forgotten the rest, its ssssoooooo dull!!

When you quit, which you should immediately after you see the thing load you hear "I hope you enjoyed using AmiClock", and the answer to that is NO!! The only use of AmiClock is in case there is a powercut and you need to know the time, leave the clock-stuff to the machines made to tell the time, also known as Clocks!

Don't rush out and download this, first it would be nice if the author could make it a little smaller, it really clogs up my Workbench screen, also change the colours, but DON'T remove that feature where the program loads on the screen in front of the rest!

Screenshot - Screenshot of the util [Click once]

Available from: Aminet/BBSes

Archived name : AmiClock.lha ??

Overall 52% out of 100%

Reviewed by : Lee Hesselden

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## 1.33 AmIRC 2.0

AmIRC 2.0

Requirements : MUI v3.6 +

Kickstart & Workbench 2.x +, with setpatch 40.16

TCP/IP stack

AMIRC v2.00 was released a while ago, and this review was meant to be in last months issue.. sorry :)

Is it any good ? Well, I think the answer to that has to be a big yes.

The main thing I'm going to cover is new features, mainly because its got so much stuff it would take ages to write a review on the existing features..

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MIMEPrefs now comes with AmIRC, it is a prefs programme in which you can select what you want to happen to different types of file which are recieved by DCC. It laid out in the same format as that in a web browser.

So you can set it up to auto play music, or view pictures automatically, or even dearchive files into a directory. Pretty neat :)

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The serverlist, which is in the first window that opens, can now be devided up into Server Groups, which makes it much easier to organize. You can have all your DalNet servers in one group, and all your EfNet servers in the one group.

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The "Lag-O-Meter" monitors and shows the current lag as a three-colour bar underneath the user list. Going from Green to Red. When the lag is at its worst, the bar flashes red on and off. Another pretty neat addition IMHO :)

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Another addition is the favourite channels window, which contains a list of all your favourite channels (obviously).

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Now, when you iconify a window, only the current channel is iconified, not all the open channels as before.

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The DCC Reveive window has a replace button to overwrite existing files, and also a MIMEPrefs button to call up the Prefs programme.

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There is a menu item Auto accept DCC send which lets you automatically

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start to receive offered files.

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The dialog and channel windows all have a button to log the contents to a file.

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Invites are now shown in a requester in which you can select to ignore them, or join the relevant channel.

Bugs !

Err.. actually, I couldn't find any :) I also asked everyone on #am!ga if they'd found any, but none, so that's another plus :)

Registration

Well, if you aren't already a registered user of AmIRC, and you use IRC frequently, I definitely recommend that you register soon. I will be, as soon as I can get the 20 quid together... My pocket money doesn't go very far :(

Donations are welcome btw ;)

Available from: Aminet and all good BBS's (including mine ;)

Archived name : amirc\_20.lha

Overall 90% out of 100% \*\*\* AIO Gold \*\*\*

Reviewed by : Lewis Mackenzie (luigi@backwoods.prestel.co.uk)

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## 1.34 Henry

Henry Public Beta #3

Henry is an MUI channel bot, it has all the features you would expect a bot to have like log the channel, faq, say and everything else, as this is still in its beta stages some of the functions don't work or have not yet been written, the file server for example.

There isn't a lot to say about it, it connects quick and does everything you want it to do, very useful if you're looking for a channel bot, it's one of the most polished and best bot I've seen.

I've tried this on many channels and it is very stable, definitely worth a download if you are looking for a channel bot!

Available from: Aminet Comm/tcp

Archived name : Henry.lha

Overall 83% out of 100%

Reviewed by : Chris Seward

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## 1.35 Utils Scores

Utils reviews and what there score means

Utils are not marked on how good they are compared to other utils, they are marked by usefulness and what purpose they serve. As there are so many different utils that do so many different things it is hard to review something like MUI and then when reviewing a program like a WB clock say it wasn't up to the standard of MUI. This is why it is not possible to have a Top Ten list for utils.

90%+ - AIO GOLD (amazing)

70-89% - Great but lacking some features

50-69% - Not to good but it'll do

30-49% - Hasn't really been thought out to well

0-29% - POOR! AVOID!

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## 1.36 AIO Web page

AIO Web page re-done

For the readers that have visited our web page since it was put up you wil know that it isn't exactly interesting and very much under construction. Well now both web pages have been totally re-done, they are both looking excellent and will give you all the information you need, you can also download every issue of AIO right up to the latest issue.

Visit :

[Http://www.dcandy.demon.co.uk/aio/](http://www.dcandy.demon.co.uk/aio/)

and

[Http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/backwoods/aio.html](http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/backwoods/aio.html)

If anyone can offer us any free web space please get in touch, it would be most appreciated.

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## 1.37 New irc channel

New amiga IRC channel on IRCnet

Many of you may have visited #amiga on IRC, this is an alright channel but anyone to do with the Amiga Scene or has any disagreements with the 'Big boys' gets chucked off and is never allowed to return, that is

why the new channel has been setup. If your on IRCnet why not pop along to :

#am!ga

At anytime and give your comments about anything, as long as you don't go to far and completly slag off the ops then you'll be able to have free speech and do whatever you want there practically. Most people on the channel can help you with most Amiga subjects ranging from Amos, ASMone, Maxs BBS to games like Myst and hardware like CD-roms and HD's. So why not pop along to #am!ga and meet all your amiga friends there, use any servers encluding :

irc.stealth.net - irc.demon.co.uk - chat.bt.net

Channel owners/ops : Cool96, Stonecold and Cryton

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## 1.38 Vulcan Statement

STATEMENT TO THE AMIGA COMMUNITY From VULCAN SOFTWARE LIMITED

Wow! where to begin? We have been inundated with emails regarding our future plans for 1998, some best wishes, some disgust, some confusion and some worries.

As Vulcan is the oldest, most active, longest surviving Development and Publishing company the Amiga has left I feel a certain responsibility towards the Amiga community and would like to make an official statement to endorse some facts about the Amigas commercial market and Vulcans plans for the future.

This statement is very long indeed and comes from the heart, hopefully it will answer all the questions `I receive daily` about the decisions and changing direction of Vulcan aswell as giving a true account of our experiences over the last 4 years in the Amiga market. I dont know what reaction this statement will receive but, as it is based on our commitments, efforts and dreams for the Amiga platform then I am hoping it will be understood.

TRUTH

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Not many companies have really spoken out about the past, current and future Amiga market, instead wild rumours seem to circulate based on past events and lies, I feel it is about time to lay down some facts about the Amiga market, some are not what people want to hear, some are already well known, some simply are so unbelievable they make you weep.

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Nevertheless with our 4 years experience in this ever changing market I feel we are in a very good position to be able to comment truthfully and openly about the Amiga market which is based on our experience and ventures.

#### Background & Overview

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Since 1994 Vulcan has been developing and Publishing Amiga games for the Amiga market. To date we have released 10 x floppy titles, 3 x CDROM titles and have several Amiga CDROM titles still in production which includes some PPC specific projects.

#### PAST

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In 1994 we developed our first title, as you all know, this cult classic (Valhalla) was either hated or loved, either way this title was developed, manufactured and Published, but most importantly it was distributed in retail outlets around the UK using a software distribution company.

The point here is that this fully boxed floppy based title was available in the shops!

At that time in the UK there were 8 Amiga magazines, all of which reviewed the title, carried demos of the title and advertised the title not to mention newspaper coverage, radio coverage, television coverage with personal appearances and interviews.

The upshot was, that if an Amiga user heard about Valhalla and liked the product then the next time they went into their computer shop they could pluck it from the shelf and buy it.

#### PERFECT MODEL

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Sounds perfect doesnt it? And it was, as it meant a developer could develop a product, a publisher could publish a product, a distributor could distribute a product, a magazine could advertise and review the product, a retailer could sell the product and a user could buy the product.

When the Amiga market in the UK worked like this it was fair all round, and everybody made money from their efforts as tens of thousand of units could be sold in the first week of launch.

#### WHAT DID IT RELY ON

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The above model relied completely on one thing to make it all work, and

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that was, that there had to be a good healthy `available pool` of Amiga buying users and accessibility.

Sure the Model would fail if inferior products were developed but overall the only reason a publisher published, a distributor distributed and a retailer sold was due to the users purchase.

Adding to this model the Amiga user could only purchase the product if they new about it from magazines and other media and also had access to the product via shops, so its easy to see that the whole intricate commercial Amiga software market was finely balanced and self perpetuating.

Of course the Amiga users had to have an Amiga! :)

#### WHAT WENT WRONG

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The 69 thousand dollar question, many things went wrong with this model, becoming apparent in the middle of 1994.

Dont forget, that at this time in the UK you could go into any high street electrical store and buy an Amiga computer and many pieces of software from publishers as it was a rife and healthy commercial market.

What went wrong can be blamed on many things but to start with, this was the year that Commodore went into liquidation, reasons why have always been given and attributed but for now I am only interested in what happened with the Amiga commercial market.

#### HARDWARE TO BLAME?

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In 1994 the most popular Amiga computer in the UK was the A500, Some lucky users had souped up A500`s in the `desktop form` of the A1500 and there were also some A2000`s.

Commodore tried to push the Amiga hardware forward, the market saw the A500+ were a percentage of loyal users upgraded instantly, we saw upgraded Operating Software, we saw the dying CDTV, we saw the A600 which sounded great with its 1Mb chip but was smaller and cheaper looking, we saw the dying CD32 (way ahead of its time) and we eventually saw the A1200 with 2Mb chip, AGA chipset and 68020 CPU.

Throughout this gradual advancement we saw many third party devices such as external/internal Hard Drives, ram expansions, extra floppy drives, flicker fixers, monitors, accelerators, OS chip upgrades and many more interesting devices for connection.

Sure these hardware improvements were absolutely vital to the Amiga`s future (as if a technology stays still it dies) but with so many

failings of hardware launches the UK Amiga community was definitely becoming split and diversity was rife.

For example you had Amiga users screaming for AGA specific or CD32 specific or Hard Drive Installable specific aswell as floppy A500 users still wanting 1Mb floppy based titles.

This was not too much of a big problem but developers and publishers had to strike a balance whether to support the low spec machines for bigger sales or higher spec machines to advance the market or in some cases both but there was something vitally important missing and that was an owner of the Amiga who could officially advance its technology.

#### OTHER COMPETITION

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Just around the corner in 1994 something was happening, it was called the PC, now the PC was used all around the world but mainly in educational and business situations. The big change was when PC hardware prices tumbled and PC technical specifications rose, both at incredible rates and I also believe a game `I had never heard of` called DOOM had something to do with it!

Suddenly average home computer users could find themselves in a position were they could afford a PC, after all thats what they used at work or at school and its technology was being pushed and advanced at incredible rates and DOOM offered something unique and wonderful to games enthusiasts.

#### PUBLISHERS

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The big publishers at this time (many who had begun on the Amiga platform) saw an opportunity to develop for this growing market, and why not? After all they were mainly business motivated and with the Amigas technology in a temporary halted state it seemed a good gamble.

I remember at that time (in June 94) when Vulcan was working on our next Amiga title `Valhalla II` that all the companies we spoke to on a regular basis kept saying that they were going to PC formats. It was a strange time as I began to notice distributors and retailers and users alike all asking if we were developing for PC, `no` we said, `whats wrong with the Amiga market?` we said, `its a big market and we have only just begun`...

#### AS TIME WENT ON

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From June 94 to June 95 it became apparent that this delicate commercial

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Amiga market model had been altered, with no new Amiga hardware to compete, with Amiga users moving to PC, magazines moving to PC, Developers and Publishers moving to PC, distributors moving to PC and retailers moving to PC the whole thing was hit hard.

By the time Vulcans third Amiga floppy title `TimeKeepers` was released in June 95 there was no longer a distribution network in the UK, our Amiga products (and others) found it harder to be available to Amiga users via the shop shelf.

This was mainly due to the distributors who would only distribute a title if it was on the PC format as this was the format that the retailers could sell and the users were buying in vast quantities.

Now sure there were still Amiga users around the country who wanted Amiga titles but due to the way business decisions dictate market changes the majority market soon became the minority market and things got harder.

I remember many heated conversations with distributors trying to get them to stock our Amiga titles and often blamed them for killing the Amiga market but at the end of the day the Amiga platform had no active owner, no new hardware development, fewer users, fewer developers, fewer publishers and alot of PC competition.

AND ON...

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Vulcan had a decision to make, we either went with the flow and switched to PC or.....and heres the or.....adapt to the changing market and base our companies future on a dream. We chose the latter, we believed that it would only be a matter of time before a new owner was found for the Amiga and when it was supported again we believed we would be right at the top of the proverbial ladder as a mainstream development and publishing company on the Amiga platform.

HOW TO SURVIVE WITH NO COMMERCIAL RETAIL MARKET

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Many people over the years have enquired as to how Vulcan managed to survive in the Amiga market were others could not and this has been the key to our existence. In June 95 to account for the lack of retail support in the UK we set-up Vulcan Mail Order to provide our products direct to the Amiga user.

VULCAN MAIL ORDER

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This turned out to be an excellent move for Vulcan at the time as it

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meant that Vulcan as a developer and Publisher could now distribute and sell our own products direct to the user which meant allot more revenue was generated for per title (as we cut out the middle men) and allowed us to sell our titles cheaper (around 12.99 as opposed to 24.99) which resulted in more Amiga users buying our software due to the price drop and the direct personal attention they received through our company. Because of this unique set-up (being 3 companies in 1) we were able to continue as normal and did not notice the pinch in the Amiga market as other companies had, towards the end of 95 we released Hillsea Lido and had just started signing external development teams to our label, the year ahead 1996 was looking great!

### PIONEERING

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In 1996 Vulcan took on a pioneering role and we dedicated alot of our time to getting our products back in the UK shops, alas without much success. We did however start to supply many independent retail outlets in the UK with our software range but could not convince any UK mainstream distributor to stock our products in favour of PC titles.

Beginning our expansion and aswell as selling our products to Mail Order users and UK retail outlets we started to convert and develop our titles for the German market.

Running up to the middle of 1996 we saw Valhalla III and the TimeKeepers Expansion being released with now 6 external development teams signed to the Vulcan label.

To keep pushing forward we founded Vulcans own International Distribution Company whos main purpose was to distribute our products by bulk retail and wholesale outlets around the world. Vulcan Distribution supplied our products to retailers spanning 14 countries, Vulcan Mail Order supplied our products to many thousands of registered users, Vulcan Development signed up many teams and individuals. Briefly (now and then) we glimpsed at the Amiga markets commercial situation, but only briefly.

### RECAP AND WARNINGS

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To recap, by the middle of 96, there was still no Amiga owner (or perhaps there was a brief handling by an Eskimo? or something), very slowly we began to notice some new changes. Amiga magazines were starting to close and many Vulcan registered users were asking to be removed from the Vulcan database as they had moved to the PC platform.

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Now this change should have been more noticeable to us and a bigger warning sign but as we had now entered the world distribution market, were now supporting other languages, were receiving allot of publicity and talking to allot more developers, we got carried away with our own companies expansion.

The run up to the end of 96 saw us release Bograts AGA and Jetpilot.....Happy X-mas! :)

#### THE SMACK IN THE MOUTH

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January 1997 was the hardest month of Vulcans entire existence, I still joke about the fact that Santa Claus delivered a Playstation or Multimedia PC to every household for Xmas of 96.

Literally overnight Vulcans Amiga Mail order sales plummeted, now we are not just talking about latest release performance, if we were then I could understand the change but we are talking about all Vulcan titles that sold regular and maintained a constant level for years suddenly decreasing to an all time low. We lost over 4,000 registered Amiga users in a 4 week period, Vulcan Distribution saw previous bulk purchasing retailers around the world go bankrupt, we saw wholesalers ceasing to order, we saw more Amiga magazines fold, we saw development companies go into liquidation, we saw developers leave the Amiga platform, we saw hell itself and all at Vulcan had to come to terms with this new reality.

#### PLODDING ON

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End of January 97 we plodded on, releasing Burnout AGA and Tiny Troops, we feared the worst and were proven right, the sales were not there in any quantity to justify the investment. Sure we could say its the type of title but sales right across the spectrum of the entire range were getting smaller and smaller, registered users, retailers and web ordering was diminishing fast.

By March 1997 we had 2 Amiga magazines left in the UK and in vain we saw many small Amiga companies start up and try to do something like, Mediasoft who tried to publish a new Amiga fanzine, Direct software who promised new hardware bundles, both of which folded, we saw long established mail order companies like Premier Mail Order collapse along with others. The commercial Amiga software market was at rock bottom with only the strongest companies surviving.

#### COMPETITION

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Thinking back to March 97 we saw PC computers in shops, not just in shops but in a world of their own, namely PC World were they had slowly been selling to millions of users all around the world. Walk in and be bombarded with hundreds of PC system choices that had plenty hardware and software support.

Now Im not talking an 020 CPU, 2Mb Memory, extended keyboard with a floppy drive attached for 350.00 via mail order, No no, Im talking all singing all dancing complete systems at 133Mhz, 16Mb memory, Graphics Cards, Hard Drives, modems, Monitors, keyboards, floppy drives, sound cards, software bundles and a bill gates special promotion devil hat for 500.00 in every shop in the high street that has been advertised to the hilt in every paper, magazine, television program you can imagine.

Now anyone in the Amiga community knows that the Amiga has a far better approach to things but lets face it if your a family purchaser who uses a PC at work and your kids use a PC at school or your a student who uses a PC at college or your a games freak who simply must have Doom, Quake, Tomb Raider, Star Trek, Theme Hospital and zillions of other software tiles and applications `right now` then it doesnt take Einstein to figure out what the average computer purchaser will buy.

I mean, just look at the Investment, the hardware, the software, the promotions and the technology that the PC has had over the previous years compared to the orphaned Amiga with no owner.

MIRACLE

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Would you believe it! We couldnt! Just as everything was about to hit the fan, in March 97 the Amiga found an owner, not just any owner but an owner with money, namely Gateway 2000.

Immediately Vulcan planned for the future! Our dreams that held us tight were going to happen, our hopes raised at the prospect of new Amigas being made, perhaps a complete unit ready to buy that will be marketed, distributed all over the world and available to users in the high street shops at a price that would compete with current PC`s and with technology to match.

Vulcans plans for the rest of 1997 was to make Amiga titles for higher specifications, we chose to go CDRom only with all future titles knowing that we could catch up with PC competition, we started catering from other language support to ensure world wide penetration, we invested heavily in our company and started to live again, we signed up more

development teams, we started on higher specification development strategies catering for graphics cards and sound cards.

Throughout the rest of 97 we published Strangers, Uropa2 and Finally Odyssey which were all re-vamped and turned into Multi language Amiga CDRom titles.

Hellpigs the Multi-CDRom adventure was going to be awesome, Wasted Dreams was looking incredible, Hard Target the virtua cop clone is looking fantastic, Genetic Species is absolutely outstanding, Breed2000 was being revamped, Valhalla IIII was re-written to cater for full actor speech, 3D Games creator was re-designed to cater for Graphics cards, JetPilot expansion was initiated, Desolate was signed, overall 1997 was looking great with renewed hope, Phase 5 with PPC boards, Vulcan signing the World Foundry with PPC projects like Explorer and Maim & Mangle, investing in development hardware, PPC boards, Graphics Cards, faster processors, going to Cologne and meeting the new owners of the Amiga, new contacts, new possibilities, everyone I spoke to was excited, magazines were happy, developers were happy, publishers were happy, I was ecstatic at Sadeness starting in the games market, finally some good competition, I helped AliveMedia start up their games publishing company and finally felt like the market was coming together, I was encouraged by Aurora works entering the publishing market from across the water, Amiga shows began popping up, Ohio, Italy, Germany Belgium, what a brilliant beginning to the rest of 1997 indeed!

...but all the while....software sales were falling, companies were closing, projects were being cancelled.....

Forget it! because Amiga speeches were being made, hope was back with vengeance, everyone I spoke to was on a high, other developers stated CDRom only titles, more projects were being developed for graphics cards, high CPUs and now PPC specific.....we saw the potential in the platform, we opened up Vulcan America to supply our titles to America and Canada, our expanding development and publishing responsibilities became more demanding so we transferred our Mail order operations to Weird Science Limited and we transferred our Distribution company to GTI in Germany so we could spend more energy in our development dream, we established a development network of support and help for all our new Amiga development teams, we concentrated on bigger and better Amiga CDRom productions, we were on the road to glory! Nothing could alter our destiny, nothing can stop the Amiga being reborn!

.....this is where we were wrong.....

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2 things, just 2 little things kicked us where it hurts.....

.....one thing is something we RELIED on, and the other is something we ASSUMED.

SOMETHING WE RELIED ON

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The Amiga has something unique, a community, many individuals and companies who believe in the Amiga and its future with many users around the world. All sounds great but lets analyse it in detail to get a complete picture of what the Amiga community is made up from and what makes it work commercially.

You've got Amiga magazines all around the world who love doing what they do, putting so much of their lives into their jobs and all need advertising revenue and Amiga users buying their magazines to continue.

You've got Amiga web promoters who, review Amiga software and hardware and offer excellent Amiga support to users around the world with information and news, they do this because they love doing it and many are non-profit orientated.

You've got hardware development companies like Index and Phase5 who are trying to push the Amigas hardware forward, realising there is a commercial gap to be filled and doing what they do out of inspiration, they depend totally on the Amiga users buying their hardware.

You've got shops and mail order companies around the world who sell hardware and peripherals who advertise in magazines who all rely on Amiga user upgrading their hardware.

You've got shops and mail order companies selling software around the world who advertise in magazines who all rely on Publishers publishing and Amiga users purchasing new software.

You've got dedicated Amiga distribution companies who exist in the minority market who all rely on the Amiga retailers purchasing the Software.

You've got thousands of talented artists, musicians, coders, developers and teams who invest their time, money and lives to create software on their prized platform because its in their blood who all rely on the Amiga Publishers Publishing their creations.

You've got Amiga publishers who publish Amiga products, invest their time, money and lives into producing and marketing Amiga titles and making them available in the market place to retailers and distributors who rely on the Amiga developers developing and the Amiga users

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purchasing the software.

The list goes on and on but the moral of the story and the `simplistic flow chart` dictates that every single related Amiga company and active individual in the Amiga commercial market all rely on each other, and all rely ultimately on one thing to make it all possible!

One thing that makes everything else work.

One thing to give it a purpose and a way of making a living.

One thing to ensure magazines keep printing new issues.

One thing to ensure hardware developers continue to progress.

One thing to keep all the retail outlets in business.

One thing to ensure the publishers remain.

One thing to ensure the developers remain.

One thing to keep the Amiga Alive!

And that one thing is the Amiga user Buying the merchandise, whether its magazines, hardware or software.

I cant speak for magazines sales but there are fewer magazines around with extremely low ABCs compared to 94.

I cant speak for Hardware sales but I do know we get so many complaints about supporting CDRoms, Graphic Cards, fast CPUs, Hard Drives and even AGA...and why Genetic Species wont be on floppy for the A500 :)

However I can speak for software sales and sadly this element has decreased ridiculously over the last 4 years from mail order, retail and wholesale all around the world.

They say that hundreds of thousands of Amiga users still use their Amigas, I honestly dont know the number but I do know that Amiga software piracy is rife and with the total Amiga buying user base at its lowest current level, that there is simply no longer enough users left who BUY software to justify the developers and publishers investment.

#### PIRACY

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A quick note about piracy. It does sadden me to see our latest Amiga releases and other recent Amiga titles available on pirated CD`s. It tears me up to think that people are making money from the illegal duplication instead of my developers, my company, my distributors and all the other hard working people in the Amiga industry who deserve that revenue, however I do not blame the pirates or the piracy for the current Amiga situation.

Piracy is rife in any industry whether its, designer jeans, music, video

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or other computer platforms but because the buying share of these markets is large enough, it can sustain the illegality and still continue.

The Amiga market however cannot sustain the piracy due to its size, an Amiga users who uses pirated software cannot really care about the Amigas future so do not enter into the equation but the Amiga users who truly cares about the Amiga`s future make up the users who BUY.

#### USERS WHO BUY

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The Amiga user who BUYs is the thing we relied on (and many other companies too).

Yes there are allot of you out there who have upgraded your machines, bought your towers, bought your CD drives, bought your Memory and CPU upgrades and bought all the latest software and my hat comes off to you, I understand that you also share the same frustrations as we do and that you have done everything in your power to help keep the Amiga market alive, but unfortunately your numbers are at an all time low right across the scale all around the world. This results in developers, publishers, distributors, retailers and mail order companies all feeling the squeeze and licking their wounds.

#### SOMETHING WE ASSUMED

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From March to December 1997 (10 months) Vulcan prepared for the Amigas future, I know things dont happen overnight but with the Amiga market being at its most critical and at its lowest point ever I knew that if Vulcans dreams and hopes for the Amiga as a commercially successful platform did not materialise in that specific period of time then the Amiga market would never recover.

Perhaps its time to share Vulcans vision, I know from my experience and my logic that the only way the Amiga computer can ever make a commercial comeback (and I enforce the word commercial) and for the Amiga to once again have stupendous and vast software development, once again have millions of buying software users, once again have huge publicity with a plethora of magazines, once again have hundreds of publishers, retail outlets, distributors, once again have continued and advanced 3rd party hardware development, once again be the leading computer in technological advancements and as a result once again be the best home computer used throughout the world, it all comes down to one essential ingredient called.....Money.

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Certainly by licensing the Amiga technology and allowing many companies to build components, motherboards, and complete systems allows the Amigas technology to progress but we must ask ourselves a simple question, who is going to buy this upgraded technology?

Certainly not the new computer purchaser in the high street, as for one they cant see it in their shops, would be hard pushed to hear about its availability, cannot see the vast software support to the scale of other platforms and certainly would not be turned on by the end price of the components or systems being sold.

So that simply leaves the existing Amiga users and loyal enthusiastic upgraders.

The problem is that this number alone is way too small. This means that re-sellers of systems and components need to rely on mail order and specialised outlets and due to small potential sales it requires higher purchase prices which causes the vicious circle creating fewer upgraders. Not even thinking about the small amount of developers and publishers who would support this new technology due to the small amount of potential software sales.

You see the idea of technological advancement with PPC, Graphics Cards, 3D Chips, better motherboards faster CPUs, towers etc. is all very well and all something I believe the Amiga needs but the current Amiga community or market is already way too small to make any of this worth while.

To me it seems that, the companies and users who really care about the Amigas future and have stuck it out through the worst of times and invested a good number of years of their life into the Amiga and want to build the Amigas future suddenly have the whole responsibility, with all the risk, expense and investment to bring the Amiga back to glory, this is something that will not happen at the current level, no matter how hard Phase5, Index and other hardware companies try, no matter how hard developers push the limits, no matter how hard Publisher promote, no matter how hard the re-sellers sell and no matter how hard the existing users buy, this approach is never going to work due to the size of the existing user base and it will never encourage new users to the platform as there is no cohesion, no distribution, no marketing, no price benefits, no software support and no overall direction for it to become apparent and compete in the world computer industry.

MONEY

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The only way the Amiga has a chance of revival in Vulcans opinion is Money!

Money poured into the cream plastic until it spews out the sides, money at the level of Sonys investment into its Playstation.

We are talking a complete base Tower computer system, with High resolution Monitor, keyboard, floppy drive, a 24xSpeed CDRom, 1Gig to 10Gig hard drive, a modem, A graphics card with 4Mb on board, 3D Chipset, 32Mb memory, combined 060 CPU with 200Mhz PPC board, Mpeg decoders, sound card, external speakers, (backward compatible only) AGA chipset, new operating system, pre-installed web browsers, Email applications, word processors, spreadsheet and accountancy software, and bundled games software which has all been invested into and acquired for the purpose and finally the word AMIGA on the outside.

This is not good enough on its own, no far from it, this needs to manufactured in masses by one company or at least co-ordinated by one company, this needs to be sold to distributors and re-sellers all around the world, this item needs to be available to buy in every shop on the planet, this system need to be backed up by world-wide advertising and marketing promotional campaigns in consumer press, magazines, radio and television adverts, it needs to be launched as an awesome computer with an incredible future that is an alternative the current PC platform and finally this system has to be around the user buying price of 400 to enable it to work.

Anything less, anything removed, anything left out and the Amiga has not got a hope in hell of catching up in the ever moving commercial computer market...even the above specs will only work with dedicated software, massive marketing and extremely low price point.

No money will be made by the company who initiates these actions, on the contrary money will be lost as the hardware and software would cost far more than the distribution price, but the money spent now will be creating a future goldmine with greater potential than any one can imagine.

If this `base level` launch was combined with investment in future hardware advancements, investment in software support to allow developers to excel it would give reasons for publishers, magazines and shops to once again think `Amiga` and this dream will become a reality.

Currently the Amiga community has all the people and companies available to make the above system a reality...the thing lacking is the direction and the money.

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## REFLECT

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So to reflect, Vulcans Amiga vision and Vulcans existence in the commercial Amiga market relies on 2 things which are not making themselves apparent. Throughout the last 10 months our Amiga development and Publishing continues whilst the commercial Amiga market gets worse.

If Vulcan continues its recent strategy on the same level of waiting for the Amiga market to recover whilst still investing in a decreasing and more diversified market then it would only be a matter of time before Vulcan Software would cease to exist and only the 2 mentioned things can alter that fate for us and others.

As we have invested so much of our lives into the Amiga market, we do not wish or intend to leave it, but rather see it through to its ultimate destiny, as with any good book or film the Amiga market is the similar where you never know whats going to happen next.

The only way Vulcan can remain active in the Amiga market and to support its future to the full is if we can stay financially sound, strong in resource and talents and function as a successful business.

This is why in 1998 Vulcan plan to develop entertainment titles for the PC and Playstation platforms where there is a combined and large active user base. Certainly we are aware that these markets are saturated but these market do have active distribution network with millions of potential customers.

## AMIGA TITLE CANCELLATIONS

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To enable a smooth transition to other platforms we have invested a great deal in our teams and development operations and as a consequence many Amiga development projects have been cancelled namely, Breed2000 CDRom, 3D Games Creator CDRom, JetPilot expansion CDRom and Valhalla III CDRom so the teams and individuals can concentrate on other formats and other projects. This is a decision that didnt come easy for us but one that is vital to our future plans that enable us to support the Amiga.

## AMIGA TITLE CONSEQUENTIAL EFFECTS

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As a consequence of the last 10 months the development team responsible for Hellpigs the Multi-CD adventure title has halted development of that title and also decided to move onto other business ventures.

## AMIGA TITLE PENDING

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Currently the Wasted Dreams development team is waiting another few months to see if anything happens in the Amiga market that would indicate a reason to continue with their development plans.

#### AMIGA TITLE FUTURE RELEASES

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Genetic Species CDRom is all ready for a February 98 launch and close behind it we will see Desolate CDRom and Hard Target CDRom closely followed by the Genetic Species World Creator CDRom.

#### AMIGA DIRECTION

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Our future Amiga development is based on extremely high specifications and will take advantage of Graphics Cards, fast CPUs and 060/PPC boards. We are actively supplying a selection of our developers with PPC boards and along with Explorer 2260 and Maim&Mangle we will see other exciting high specification Amiga titles being developed and published by Vulcan through 1998.

#### PUBLISHING

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We will still operate our Amiga Publishing operations and actively sign new Amiga development teams and individuals. As long as there are developers developing for the Amiga we will always be available as a mainstream commercial publisher.

#### OVERVIEW

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I hope all the above will clarify Vulcans future plans and that it shows that our plans are not carried out in spite or malice but are simply choices that our company is forced to make if we are to continue. Vulcan as with many other Amiga companies have worked extremely hard and you will find no one more loyal to the Amigas future than we `are` and `have been`, but we simply cannot change the Amigas future with all our efforts alone.

2 things are needed if the Amiga is going to survive, 1 thing is in your grasp and the other is the responsibility of the owner of the Amiga.

Live Long & Prosper!

Paul Carrington BA Director Vulcan Software Limited

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Kind Regards

Paul Carrington BA (Director) Vulcan Software Limited <http://www.vulcan.co.uk>

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## 1.43 PD Plus

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SOUTH YORKSHIRE,

DN2 5EJ

I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR REPLY

NICK ABBOTT

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## 1.44 Your own advert

How to advertise in AIO

Are you trying to find something, a game that you lost years ago and now want it back, are you trying to sell some of your games or do you run a user group/BBS and want new members? If you are trying to sell anything or want to buy something or anything at all wants advertising then email us below.

So all you have to do is send your advert to the email address below and we'll sort out the rest :-

Cool@Dcandy.demon.co.uk

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## 1.45 Letters

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AIO Letters

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NEXT MONTHS HOT TOPIC...

For next months issue get scribbling about your ideas on Vulcans statement, do you think it was the right choice to make? and will continue to support them after hitting the amiga hard?

Email : Cool@DCandy.demon.co.uk

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## 1.46 Competition

Winners of AGA Experience 3 CD

Well Done to the lucky winners of the AGA Experience competition, thank you to everyone who entered, but don't worry if you didn't win because you can always buy AGA Experience from Sadeness Software, email :

Rich@Sadeness.demon.co.uk

Below are the lucky winners, if you havn't already sent me your smail address please do so.

Angel Alvarez <angel@labein.es>

Chris Hearn <stone@amigaworld.u-net.com>

Lewis Mackenzie

Ian Hewitt <ianh@enterprise.net>

Lee Hesselden

Lee Atkins <l.a.atkins@uclan.ac.uk>

Kenneth Kilfedder <kkilfedder@iee.org>

Paul Delaney <paul@delaney.demon.co.uk>

Chris Brown <chris@amiga1.demon.co.uk>

tomasz bartnik <saddam@zet.com.pl>

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