Australian Amiga Gazette

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December 91
Issue 13

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"Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us...for we are one year old" and they said we would never last this long. In the midst of harddrive crashes, surface-mounted chip failures and uncooperative printers, at times I have had my doubts also. But, in the true spirit of the Amigan, we persevered. Thank you to all our readers for also persevering with us. We didn't achieve all our goals for our first year, but we are pretty close to the mark.

In the August issue I remarked that the light at the end of the tunnel for Amiga was a bloody small light. In the October issue, I upgraded that rating to a 200 w light globe. With the rumours (very strong rumours) that a new version of Lightwave will be developed for the Amiga, and the probability of Phase 5 producing a multiprocessor PPC board for the Amiga, I am upgrading my current rating to a 200w quartz halogen globe.

MG has been fortunate to obtain the services of Paul Morabito as our News Writer. If you are a web surfer you will recognise his name in relationship to the Amiga News Central; one of the most prominent Amiga news services on the net. We look forward to Paul keeping us up to date on all the coming Amiga events.

Last month, I spat the dummy at what I believe was a large degree of complacency of Amiga groups around Australia. Thank you to all the user group presidents who contacted me to inform me otherwise. We look forward to being involved in creating a more dynamic image for the user groups around Australia. Dear Reader, please allocate the energy to get involved with your local user group - you won't regret it.

I won't keep you in suspense any longer; you will find the name of the winner to the SMD-100 Mpeg Decoder, donated by Rob at Amitech, on page 16. We will be forwarding your prize, wrapped in pretty Christmas paper to pop under your Christmas tree.

Over the past 12 months, quite a number of people have contributed to AAG. A special thank you goes to each and every one of them (a list on page nine).

Finally, thank you dear readers for without your faith in Amiga and trust in AAG to keep you informed, this publication would not have been possible - like I said earlier, they said we would never last, and it is great to prove them wrong!
Computer97 News

Computer97, the largest annual Amiga exhibition held in Germany last month promised a lot but provided little in the way of hard facts for Amiga users. It was largely believed “Amiga international” would finally reveal detailed plans for the future of the Amiga but instead users were once again left in the dark. Petro T., president of Amiga International in his speech highlighted the importance of leveraging the Amiga technology and promised more would be revealed when possible. You can read Petro’s speech is on page 20.

While on another note it was reported in some quarters Petro T. was supporting the idea of further advancing the 68k processors instead of moving to a new architecture like the PPC. While it has received some support, notably from Carl Sassenrath, it has largely been dismissed as heresy and it is highly unlikely Motorola could be convinced to restart development on the 68k line.

Newtek Continue Support

Amidst a lot of rumours and speculation “Newtek” have reaffirmed their commitment to the Amiga. It was believed that due to the stoppage of development on the Amiga version of Lightwave and the suspension of Flyer development that Newtek were preparing to leave the Amiga scene. But according to Tim Jenison, co-founder of “Newtek”, they have merely suspended development pending clarification of Gateway’s plans for the Amiga. Currently they are in discussions with Amiga Inc. And despite reports to the contrary Newtek are very excited about “PlayableTV” and especially happy at “QuikPak” being granted a license to produce Amiga’s.

It has been rumoured “Phase5” have done their bit to entice Newtek back into the fray by offering to make a special multiprocessor PPC board especially for use with Lightwave. The board would essentially be identical to current PPC boards except it will feature 4 or possibly more PPC processors to give optimum speed when rendering. It has even been reported that a very small amount of these boards have been produced with some being sent to Newtek. “Infoseek” have also recently covered “Newtek” and their future plans in which the Amiga is prominently positioned.

New WWW Browser?

BrowserWatch in its “access stats” webpage shows the existence of a mysterious new web browser titled “ARExx Browser”, presumably written in ARExx for the Amiga. At the time of writing the browser has a mere 76 hits which would indicate it is used by very few people possibly being beta or alpha tested. Searches of the WWW and newsgroups show no reference to an “ARExx Browser” on any platform and there has been no reference to an “ARExx Browser” in any Amiga news item in the past 12 months. Research indicates a web browser written totally in ARExx is possible if used with certain extensions (such as MUIRexx) but unless compiled it would be very slow. More information when I receive it.

Aminet Watch

All Monopoly fans should check out “International Monopoly” which has just been uploaded to Aminet. The game is by far the best freely available Monopoly game. Available from the Aminet sites (207k).

PowerUP News

The “PowerUP Homepage” reports that despite reports to the contrary, pOS from “ProDAD” will be ported to PowerUP and should be available in Spring ’98. Previously it was rumoured “Phase5” were very keen on using pOS in the A/Box but there appears to have been a fallout between the two companies maybe caused by ProDAD wishing to make pOS multiplatform. This put the planned port in jeopardy. So far pOS is being ported to Amiga m68k, Intel, PowerUP and A/Box.
The long awaited Myst has finally been completed by "ClickBOOM".

In other PowerUP news.
The next PPC CD-ROM update will have AGA drivers for CyberGraphics. The drivers will provide owners of AGA Amiga's with access to all 8bit CyberGFX modes and thus allow them to use "LWShow", "Isis" and any other CyberGFX program.

At "Computer97" Haage & Partner held a seminar about their PPC programming tools including StormC and StormASM. To highlight the speed of the compiler and the PPC cards they showed a Quake engine running on a PPC equipped Amiga which reportedly produced quite remarkable results.

User Group Network Formed
In keeping with the philosophy of supporting current Amiga users Amiga International in association with Amiga.Org have formed the "Official Amiga User Group Network". A global registry of Amiga user groups will be kept so as news can be easily broadcast to all members. The cornerstone of this will be a regular e-magazine distributed to all members. Currently the UGN is in discussion with the ICOA as to the best way in which it can serve the Amiga community.

New Clone Manufacturers
It was announced at "Computer97" that "DCE Computer", a long time supporter of the Amiga had been granted approval to produce Amiga based clones. Their first model, the "A5000" aims to be the new standard in high end Amiga's and is based around the A4000 motherboard. It will initially be based around a 68030@50mhz. The machine will ship with a large IDE hard drive, CD-ROM and MPEG-1 support as standard, all in a mini tower case. And due out in Spring '98 is the "PowerA 6000" which will include many new features including an 060 processor. "Power Computing" has been appointed world wide distributor. More information can be found at "Power Computing", http://www.powerc.com

Not to be outdone. "Index Information" has announced the immediate availability of their first Amiga clone, the "Access". The machine is built specifically for corporate applications and represents two years of research and development. The Access is a completely new design and is 2.3 times faster than a standard A1200.

In other licensing news.
"Quikpak" has been granted a license to produce Amiga computers. "Newtek" are reportedly very pleased at this. It is unknown if Quikpak will produce their previously designed portable Amiga specialist A4000 machine with built in bridgeboard or the mysterious A1630 which they touted earlier in the year while bidding for Amiga Technologies. To keep track of all the latest Amiga licensees "Amiga International" has created a page dedicated to listing current and prospective licensees, it can be found at "http://www.amiga.de/diary/licensees.html"

Myst finished!
The long awaited Myst has finally been completed by "ClickBOOM" and should be available now. The game achieved record breaking sales on both the PC and Mac and ClickBOOM hope to do the same with the Amiga port. Interestingly Myst has just become available on the Amiga while the sequel to Myst, Riven has just appeared on the PC and Mac. This is the first Amiga port by ClickBOOM with many more planned. For information on the game and purchasing contact your local Amiga Dealer.

Amiga Quake?
ClickBOOM have confirmed one of the Amiga's worst kept secrets, that they are negotiating with ID Software with the hope of officially releasing an Amiga version of Quake. Earlier in the year an illegitimate version appeared from Digital Corruption compiled from stolen source code. While the game required mammoth resources it confirmed the Amiga can handle such games. It is thought
# Used But Not Abused, Secondhand, End Of Year, Amiga Hardware & Software Sale!

## Hardware
- Amiga A2000 base units with WB2.0: $195
- Commodore 2091 SCSI Controllers: $99
- A2000/A500 Internal floppy drive: $60
- External floppy drives (assorted brands): $65
- Amiga Rom burner with manual: $130
- Videomaster Genlock (orig price $2000): $550
- Star cursor Joysticks (Australian made): $30
- Assorted joysticks from Commodore 1084 monitors: $70
- Commodore 2091 monitors: $30
- External floppy drives (assorted brands): $65
- Commodore 1084 monitors: $70

## Software
- Maxon Magic: $35
- ArtDeptPro Upgrade Kit Ver 2: $45
- FinalCopy Slutface fonts Vol 3: $25
- Super Base Pro4: $135
- Bars & Pipes Add-on series: $25
- (All Still in shrink wrap)
- performance tool kit: $25
- Multi-media Kit: $25
- MusicboxA: $25
- MusicboxB: $25
- Creativity kit: $25
- Pro Studio Kit: $25
- Power tools Kit: $25
- Cando Ver 2.0: $30
- Amos Compiler: $25
- Deluxe Paint 5: $35
- Deluxe Video 3: $10
- Digi View Gold: $10
- Deluxe production: $10
- Maxiplan Plus: $15
- Maxiplan4: $15
- Ami-Back: $15
- AmiBack tools: $15
- Sas C compiler Ver 6.5: $200

## CDroms
- Meeting pearls Vol.2: $10
- Meeting Pearls Vol.3: $10
- EuroScene Vol.1: $10
- EuroScene Vol.2: $10
- LSD Vol.3: $10
- Aminet CD's Vol 6 to Vol 20: $15 each
- Developer Cd Vol.1: $10
- AmigaCD Vol1: $10
- Aminet Set 1 (4cd): $15
- 17Bit Continuation: $10
- Micro R&D Vol3: $10
- Assorted CoverCD’s: $3 each

## Books
- Making Music (Shrink wrapped): $10
- Amiga Rom Kernel Reference: $15
- Amiga Hardware Reference: $15
- Amiga Intuition Reference: $15
- Amiga Tricks & Tips: $10
- Amiga Basic Inside & out: $10
- More tricks & Tips: $10

---

**MOTHERBOARD COMPUTERS**

42 Manning Street, Kingswood NSW 2747
Ph(02) 4736-8055  Mother@pnc.com.au
a proper fully Amiga-ized port could see the game running many times faster. ClickBOOM hope to announce the outcome of discussions very soon (positive or negative).

Championship Manager 3
A rather poor port of Championship Manager 2 has just been released for the Amiga but development has already begun on Championship Manager 3, for the PC. The development team responsible for both games are keen on an Amiga port but do not have the resources to port the games themselves. It is thought that the game could be licensed to an Amiga developer to port properly.

Foundation Demo out!
Another long awaited Amiga game is nearing release. This time "Foundation" from Paul Burkey and "Sadeness Software" is on the verge of being released. The game which is best described as a mixture between the Settlers, Megalomania, Warcraft II and Populous is set to ignite the Amiga games scene. A demo highlighting the high quality of the game is available from both "Aminet" and Foundation's "web site". Pre orders are currently being taken.

Amiga in Wired
The Amiga is continuing to make headlines in the mainstream media. This time, "Wired" magazine has covered the Amiga's resurgence in an article titled "Commodore Amiga computer set for comeback". The article appeared in Wired 5.12, December 1997 on page 56. And to further highlight the Amiga's movement back into mainstream publications, "WorldVillage" have also recently written an article about the Amiga. The article centers on the Amiga games scane and in particular "Myst" stating, "All in all, the Amiga seems to be the promising platform for any new game".

In other Amiga media news, "OS News", a website dedicated to news on alternative operating systems including Linux and BeOS will now cover the Amiga.

New at Ossaowski's Schatztruhe
Schatztruhe" continue to enthusiastically support the Amiga by announcing version 5 of Turbocalc, the Amiga's premier spreadsheet. There are numerous new features and bug fixes including HTML export and improved Excel import loaders. Schatztruhe have also announced the long awaited availability of "Cygnus ED 4", the Amiga's favorite and most powerful text editor. Finally, Schatztruhe have announced the release of Amiga Forever 1.0 from "Cioanto" and the availability of Myst, Shadow Of The Third Moon and Uropa2

Other News
"Asimware" have release a demo of "MasterISO 2.0", a CD-R/RW program for the Amiga. The demo is available from both Aminet and Asimware while the full program should be available now.

"NovaDesign"
Have teamed up with "Safe Harbour Computers" and "Software Hut" to bring massive savings on Aladdin 4D 5.0. If you purchase any produce from either of the two dealers you will be eligible for a discount of $130 on Aladdin.

Legacy Makers Inc
Hava released a tutorial video for "NovaDesign's" ImageFX titled "Catalyzar". VP Of Nova Design Kermit Woodall is rappedort to have said "It taught me things I didn't know about our own software!". The video is available for $US39.95.

"Amiga Nutta"
Reports that the authors of "Fortress Of Fear" which is set to be "THE" Diablo game are in desperate need of assistance. The authors are interested in hearing from any talented graphicians and musicians. Those that contribute will receive a free copy of the game.

Oxyron
Hava announced the sequel to the 3D smash hit, Trapped 2. The game will be called "FratzenGeballer" and will ship with an improved version of the
Over the past year many people have provided articles for AAG, a special thank you goes to the following.

Daniel Hajduk
Darren Robertson
Davo
Dear Dianna
Geoff Milnes
Grant Ragan
Guy Nathan
Igor Mercier
James Wilson
Jason Compton
Joachim Blekey
Max Frost
Michael Gruber
Norman Cantrell
Paul Graham
Paul Morabito
Peter Hutchison
Petro Tyschanko
Phil Scanrold
Sidewinder
Stewart Munday
Vincent Morton

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Westcomp Computers

Intangible Assets Manu.
Is slashing 50% off the price for both Disksav 4 and the "Connect your Amiga" book. The new prices are $US20 and $US12 respectively. A further discount is available for user groups wishing to bulk purchase. For more information "IAM". http://www.iam.com

"Amiga RC5 Effort"
Has once again broken the one million block barrier. This time it was achieved in a record 35 days, almost twice as fast as the previous RC5-56 effort. Unfortunately due to the higher profile of the competition and thus more competitors the Amiga is losing ground. If you are not already involved in the effort and would like to participate, instructions and an client are are available at the "Amiga RC5 Effort" website http://homepage.cistron.nl/~ttavoly/rc5/

VerkoSoft
Have two new games, "Wheels Of Fire" and "BeamBender". Wheels Of Fire is a 3D voxel driving sim while Beambender is a puzzler.

Gamasoft
Are offering Amiga users a special money saving offer. From now until December 31 both NewYork and Voodoo can be pur-
Do It Yourself

Amiga Hardware Projects for the holidays

4000/040 running
at 35 MHz!
by Luigi Pasciuto

IMPORTANT: this is a modification
on the A3640. Hardware
manipulation skill is required so
TAKE CARE of electric static dis-
charge, you have to be grounded
before proceed!

I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR
DAMAGE TO YOUR
COMPUTER, THIS IS A HW
MANIPULATION, TAKE CARE!

This is a tip for everyone want to
accelerate his A4000/040 spend-
ing not much money.

Cause of my raytracing jobs, I
need more MIPS by CPU. The
less expensive accelerator for
A4000 cost $1000 at least (with
ncpu on board). For example:
Warp Engine 26 MHz costs
$1000 with no CPU, using this tip
you will spend $ 60 and will obtain
same performances like Warp
Engine, the difference 1000 - 60 =
$940 are in your pocket!

So I've tried to modify my A3640
CPU board to improve perform-
ces. The way is to replace the ex-
sting original oscillator on CPU
board (50 MHz) with another at
higher value. The value of the
right frequency for your system
depends on various factors: CPU
frequency tolerance, CPU board
quality. My experiences reports

good results using 60 MHz, 65
MHz, 66.67 MHz, 70 MHz. Some
people (thank you Joe I) have
tried 66 MHz too with good
results but I think this is an
isolated one, more users reported
me 66 MHz didn't work fine. What
can I say? The only way to know
if it's possible to speed up your
A4000/040 is to try, try and oscil-
lators try with different oscillators
(let you start with 60 MHz).

I CAN'T ASSURE YOU THAT THIS
TIP WORKS FINE ON EVERY A3840
BOARD! I THINK THAT 68040
CLOCK TOLERANCE IS THE
MAJOR CAUSE OF SUCCESS OR
FAIL OF THIS HACK, BUT THIS IS
ONLY AN OPINION.

The substitution of the oscillator
on the CPU board don't cause
any damage if you respect my
advice.

First of all, turn off your A4000,
open the case and remove the
CPU board A3640. Using a well
grounded solder, remove the or-
iginal oscillator and keep it. Take
note of oscillator orientation on
CPU board before remove it. Now,
solder a 14 DIL socket on oscil-
lator place on the board, then in-
sert the new oscillator in the
socket respecting the right orien-
tation (have you noted 6 before?).
Stick a CPU cooling fan on the
68040 heat sink so that it push
the air jet on the CPU. Connect

COOLING FAN

A4000 Motherboard Overview

Australian Amiga Gazette Dec 97
From the dawn of the Amiga, man has desired to add, modify, expand and fiddle with the delicate internals. The great thing is with a bit of common sense and some good instruction every man and his dog can do so.

In following this great tradition we present the “Amiga Hardware Projects for the holidays” Each of the projects have been tried and tested at the AAG lab. A word of warning please don’t exceed your own abilities. A bit of common sense will go a long way, if a project seems to hard then it mostly is. Don’t rush to get it finished and double check then check again everything you do. Finally AAG can not take responsibility if your Amiga explodes in a ball of flame.

the cooling fan to 12 V power supply available on spare hard disk connector. Now “cross the finger” and power on the A4000, is it booting up ? Yes ? WHOWWWWWW !!!!!!!!
That's all !!! Now you have a real 27 MIPS A4000 !!!!

I'm using this tip since 1994 and it works fine without any trouble. Everyday I use my A4000 for 5/6 hours continuously with no trouble.

The use of higher clock cause an increase of power consumption of CPU so it must dissipate more heat. Using the CPU cooling fan, as described before, you prevent CPU damage. However it’s possible, specially in hot region and hot season, that CPU cooling is not enough. In this case you’ll note a decrease in speed of system performance, the Amiga will slow down to stop. Don’t worry, this is a protection system developed by Motorola to prevent CPU damage. In this case power off the A4000 and wait for CPU cooling, the system will restart again.

I didn’t test this tip on other configurations, but I think that it must work fine the same.

The AIBB 6.5 program report an average increase of performances of 35 % with a maximum of 41 %. Unfortunately this tip cause a raise of CPU/memory latency index: from 8.1 to 9.1, but you can patch this using copymemquick program, available on Aminet.

68040 at 35 MHz permits an improvement in hard disk transfer rate too, in this case you must verify, using DiskSpeed 4.2. If there are errors with the higher speed, in this case you must modify the MAXTRANSFER parameter in HDToolBox program to 0000ffff. My hard disk (Western Digital 340 Mb, slave) transfer rate is raised from 1.3 Mb/s to 1.6 Mb/s using the MAXTRANSFER value mentioned above.

In the pictures you can find an aid to modify your A38640 board.

If you have any trouble, contact me at the following addresses:
Please send me your Internet address, I’ll include it in my mailing list so you’ll receive update and news direct from me.

Internet: pascluto@settimo.italia.it

Good MIPS to all !
This sampler was developed around the ADC 0808.

The ADC 0808 (or 0809) is a monolithic CMOS device with an 8 bit A/D converter with typical conversion time of 100 µs, like the 0802. The main differences are the 8 channels multiplexing analog switches and no internal clock generator. The picture named "Sampler.dat" contains the connection diagram for the ADC 0808 and the LM324 chips.

To build the sampler, you will need:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ADC 0808 - A/D converter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LM 324 - Quad op Amp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CD 4093 &quot;inverter&quot; gates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1N914 (or similar) diodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1K 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>100K 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>470K 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>47K 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3K3 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>68K 1/8W resistor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>220K trim pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>100K potentiometers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>220nF ceramic capacitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>100µF eletrolitic capacitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 mm leds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>knobs for the pots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>125 pin D type socket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>RCA jacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>printed circuit board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and electronic stuff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circuit description

Following the diagram "Sampler.pic" is easy to understand how to connect the ADC chip to the parallel port of the Amiga. Address lines A and B are used to switch left/right inputs, and Address line C is held low to keep Address range between 0 and 3. The part of the circuit marked with a gray background must be repeated for the right channel and connected to input 2 of the ADC chip. The three gates of CD 4093 are used as a clock generator. The fourth gate is used as an inverter for the STROBE line from the computer. It is good to remember that almost any "inverter" gate can be used for the clock generator and strobe line. I used the 4093 only because I already had one at home.

The 220 K trim-pot is used to calibrate the overload level for both channels. To set the right point of the trim-pot, connect an analog source at the inputs and turn the trim-pot until the LEDs start flashing very dim.

It's a good idea to connect an audio source like a CD player to adjust the trim pot. If you don't want the overload sensor, just don't wire it and it won't be there. It's there just to use the other 2 built-in op.amp on LM324 that would be left useless otherwise.

Assembling the circuit

The sampler circuit should be mounted over a PCB designed only for it. If you try to use wire-wrap or other kind of work, like proto-boards or similar, you'll be very impressed with the noise. Make all connections very short and use shielded cable for the RCA inputs and rec level potentiometers. If you use a metal case, ground it to the audio inputs.

---

Australian Amiga Gazette Dec 97
After putting all the stuff together, double check all wiring and connect the sampler to the Amiga parallel port. REMEMBER TO TURN THE COMPUTER OFF BEFORE DOING IT!!

Now, pick up your favourite sampler/editor software like AudioMaster III, or any similar commercial or PD software. If there's any, choose Perfect Sound 1 or 2 from the setup menu. You're now ready to make your first sample! Some mono programs use the left channel input, and others use the right, so don't be upset if things go wrong at the first time. I tested my prototype on AudioMaster III, NoiseTracker, OctaMed 2.0, Future Sound 1.0 and they all worked well.

Luiz Cressoni Filho

**stereo sampler for Amiga**
Actually, one problem I had with the Computer97 was that there was just too much to remember a significant fraction of it (okay, I was also numb from exhaustion). I did make some notes, like most others, but gave up halfway through the presentation—or about one page of notes. Here’s some of what my sheet says. It’s semantically decompressed, so don’t expect it to be literal or 100% reliable.

AI is negotiating with REC (the Wonder TV A6000, or whatever it’s called). Looks like there’s no real problem between the two companies, just the need for Gateway 2000 to assert their Amiga IP (excuse me, that’s Intellectual Property, not Internet Protocol) lest parts of it ‘expire’. Use ‘em or lose ‘em. More about this later.

Jeff Schindler has talked to RJ Mical, he has seen a video (presumably the Deathbed Vigil video) about the Amiga, and was much impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication he saw there. No feel-good jive or hippie talk though; he apparently read it as an indicator of how the engineers appraised the Amiga design.

About the many emails and phone calls he got: “Keep ‘em coming”.

On a planet where it’s always somebody’s lunch hour, I’m sure he’ll regret those words.

Ted Waitt was “really behind” AI’s independent position within Gateway. So far I’d been cautious not to take all this “Gateway believes in Amiga” stuff too seriously, but this time I really got the impression it was true. Jeff Schindler, not exactly a newbie at this kind of process insofar that there’s anything remotely comparable, seemed tingling and even a little nervous about making his presentation.

Amiga, Inc. will be “in the technology business, not in the products business”. They want to produce worldwide standard technology for convergence products. They presented a very, very wide range of potential applications for the Amiga IP portfolio. Some of the subranges may require different reference platforms with different GUI setups etc. This could be much like what Microsoft is trying to do with the Windows (“Bermuda”) Triangle of 95 for home systems, NT for serious use, and CE for embedded applications. Except that Amiga OS doesn’t require 4 Mb or ROM to power a palmtop computer, of course.

Content is key. They need software to run on the Amiga, services to provide through the Amiga, data to process with the Amiga. IIRC there was some mention of using Gateway’s leverage with major software suppliers. So far I think Petro has shown himself a good behind-the-scenes player in this regard, but obviously it’s difficult to convince big players like Epson when you’re such a small company.

AI have looked into, and will continue to investigate, the strengths and weaknesses of the Amiga. More about these later. They also put emphasis on the need for feedback, keeping in touch with trends in the computer market, supporting industry standards, and keeping abreast with technical (that’s a good word I just rediscovered, you don’t have to say ‘technological’ all the time) developments. Their aim is to get the Amiga “at or above the state of the art”, and Gateway’s experience with the current state of the art (press F1 and reinstall Windows) seems to have convinced them that this is both feasible and desirable.

Identified strengths of the Amiga: Compact, efficient & reliable environment. Preemptive multitasking, no buts. AutoConfig as opposed to Plug-and-Play, without
A view from under the table

compromise for older products (Jeff mentioned the phrase Plug-and-Pray here). Video and graphics rich system. Good cost/function ratio, considering of course that current systems are artificially expensive due to non-mainstream hardware market. Ability to use both TV and monitor.

Weaknesses of the Amiga:
"Mostly four-year-old technology" which needs overhaul. GUI improvements needed. "Leading application support" is needed. Driver support is needed for add-on hardware. Motorola has not aggressively supported the 68k line. Must have state-of-the-art hardware. Last but not least: Lack of industry attention. Like I said, no feel-good jive there, but obviously these items form the top of their todo list.

Amiga, Inc. interfaces directly to the large developers. ICOA handles the run-of-the-mill support and organizes devcons. Actually that's just my synopsis of a diagram that was shown; suggestions about this structure were solicited.

Developer support will have to include hardware reference designs, comprehensive software development kits with decent debugging tools, and software compliance testing. Third-party software quality apparently has a high priority.

OS 3.5 is to be released "sometime in 1998", after that frequent (eg yearly) updates are to follow. The 3.5 release may or may not include new ROMs. Some third-party software may be bundied to bring the OS up to par with other systems, feature-wise. This has happened with the Amiga before, but since this time we're talking about commercial software or software that competes with commercial software, care will have to be taken to do this fairly. It was said that "a lot more OS tools" were needed, but I'm not sure what details or examples were given, if any.

In order to preserve the value of the Amiga IP portfolio, AI said it is vital that these patents and trademarks be asserted in the marketplace. That means that all unauthorized use of the Amiga trademarks (just imagine how many computer companies would like to get their hands on names like Workbench(tm) and Intuition(tm)!) and patents must be tracked down, and proper licenses for them negotiated. To do this, all attendees at the conference were asked to look for possible infringements on these rights and report them to AI. The deadline for this is december 31st, 1997.

Gateway is willing to put gobs of cash into getting the Amiga going. This includes a multi-million dollar advertising budget. As Petro called it, "Gateway is our bank".

A three-year development roadmap is being drawn up or has been drawn up. No vapour. The AI guys seemed to be biting their lips most of the time; on the one hand they seemed very enthusiastic about platform development plans, but on the other they took secrecy very seriously.

Some minor beans were spilled in private conversations over alcoholic beverages, so there was some "I'm under non-disclosure" and "oops, you didn't hear this from me okay". Unfortunately (at least in this case), the Germans have this great light type of beer called 'Koelsch' that I never knew about, which doesn't cloud your judgment even after several liters. And some of the more criminal elements in the Amiga community (notably GPSoft's Greg Perry and Amiga Format's Ben Vost who actually kept records of their Koelsch consumption) really worked hard to find out how much it took to get plastered.

There was more reason for this secrecy than just to avoid the Osborn Syndrome (announced vapour competing with your existing product); one of the AI people put it privately as "Microsoft is the problem. We don't want Microsoft to know". Most people were convinced that some of the mishaps that have befallen the Amiga so far were coordinated acts of sabotage; there were a lot of stories of people who fought the Amiga tooth and nail, not just within Commodore. In fact I was surprised by how easily these cases would pop up in conversations. You'd mention a name and somebody would say, "hey, here's what that guy pulled on me". Some of the stories had never been put together yet, but confirmed each other in great detail.
The Amiga Apache http server project is happy to announce the new 1.3b3 release of the professional Apache webserver. It is available for download at: http://www.xs4all.nl/~albert/apache/index.html

The Amiga Apache webserver is a port of the professional Apache webserver, used by more than 40% of all servers on the Internet. Amiga Apache is compatible with the original Unix Apache and uses the same configuration files and uses the same options. The Amiga Apache webserver is enhanced with the ability to execute AREXX scripts (although it has no Arexx port of its own). This means that Amiga programs can interface with the server for input and output. For example, it is possible and easy to connect to a database program with Arexx support to Apache with the help of AREXX scripts. The Amiga Apache http server project is run by Jeff Shepherd who has made the port, Bert Vortman, maintainer of the Amiga Apache binary & source distribution, the homepage and the documentation and Brett Burridge who maintains the FAQ, Thorsten Hiddessen, Robert Ramiega and Eirik Synnes who are running a mirror site and many beta-testers. Ben Vortman, maintainer of the Apache Homepage. Here is a selection of a list of new features that Amiga Apache supports:

Selection of new features.

Optional Spelling Correction module
This optional module corrects frequently occurring spelling errors in document names requested from the server. This includes the correction of misspelled requests (as was available in a separately available mod_speling module as of Apache 1.1 already) but extends spelling correction to single inserted, omitted, transposed or mistyped characters. This catches the majority of mistyped requests. To make use of this module, it must be enabled in the server’s Configuration file, and the CheckSpelling directive must be set to on.

Enhanced Conditional Setting of Environment Variables
The BrowserMatch directives of Apache 1.2 have been joined by some more powerful brethren: SetEnvif and SetEnvifNoCase. These allow you to set environment variables for server and CGI use based upon all sorts of attributes of the request.

Better Logging for Proxy Connect Errors
In Apache 1.2 and earlier, when the proxy had difficulty connecting to a system it would log the error but no details. It now includes the IP address and port to which it couldn’t connect.

Enhanced SSI String Comparisons
The string-based server-side include (SSI) flow-control directives provided by mod_include now include comparison for less-than (<), less-than-or-equal (<=), and greater-than-or-equal (>=). Previously comparisons could only be made for equality or inequality.

Sortable Directory Listings
If a directory listing is displayed using FancyIndexing, clicking on a column title will now sort the listing in order by the values in that column. Selecting the column repeatedly will toggle between ascending and descending order. This feature can be disabled with the SuppressColumnSorting IndexOptions keyword.

New “Magic” MIME-typing module
A new module, the optional mod_mime_magic, has been added. It uses “magic numbers” and other hints from a file’s contents to figure out what the contents are. It then uses this information to set the file’s media type, if it cannot be determined by the file’s extension.

Support for Directory Icon Sizing
The mod_autoindex module provides listings of directory contents when appropriate. If the FancyIndexing option is enabled, each line in the list is preceded by an icon representing the content type. In earlier versions of Apache, the HTML IMG tags for these icons weren’t sized, so the browser had to wait until the images were loaded before it could lay out the page. With 1.3, the indexOptions directive has two new keywords which allow you to control whether pre-sized IMG tags are used. This can substantially speed up the display of large directory listings.
The SMD-100 is a VideoCD and MPEG-1 decoder from HiSoft Systems. Once connected to a SCSI CD-ROM, the SMD-100 will produce high quality, full-motion video when plugged into any suitable monitor.

Our congratulations go to Wolfgang Ammashell of Fairfield in NSW. You are the lucky winner of the SMD-100. We will be wrapping it up in some nice Christmas paper and sending it by courier so you can put it under your Christmas tree.

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For latest prices or to place an order please call.

Dealer Enquiries Welcome
The DraCo Vision is a turnkey nonlinear editing system manufactured by MacroSystem GmbH in Germany, and distributed in Australia by DraCo Systems Australia.

From a hardware perspective, DraCo Vision is a purpose-built computer based on the Motorola 68060 chip and the Amiga operating system with a high bandwidth, video bus known as the DraCo Direct bus. This bus, based on the Motorola 32-bit local bus, has an astonishing real-world bandwidth of more than 30MB/sec. (Most PCI bus systems max out at around 6 or 7MB/sec. in the real world.) This means that the Vision could actually process uncompressed video from a fast enough RAID, but the video quality is already so good at 4:1 compression that this seems like a waste of disk space. The video board delivers CCIR 601, 720x576 at rates above 4MB/sec., the output is virtually indistinguishable from the original video, and the system provides on-board, CD quality audio which is locked to the video. The DraCo Vision doesn't allow dropped video frames. MacroSystem managed to completely sidestep the audio sync and dropped frame problems which persist in some other systems in this price range. The Vision's proprietary editing software, MovieShop 4, allows very fast editing and virtually unlimited stacks of video, audio, and effects operators. You could conceivably composite 20 streams of moving video, each with individual effects and motion control and 30 channels of audio. Extremely complex After Effects-style compositions can be created in the timeline, with rendering times comparable to and sometimes faster than After Effects on a Power Mac. All transition effects and titles must be rendered and cuts are played back in real-time. Many transitions render amazingly fast, since the JPEG-to-RGB conversion of each frame is handled by hardware: a one-second dissolve, for example, takes about 30 seconds to render. 32-bit titling with numerous options is provided by a third-party program, Monument Designer, which ships with the Vision. Many Amiga programs, including LightWave, ImageFX and many others will run just fine on the DraCo Vision. Other Amiga programs (such as Scala) which directly access the Amiga's AGA custom chips will not. 99% of today's modern Amiga applications are CyberGFX and 68060 aware, making them compatible with the DraCo Vision.

MovieShop 4.6 is the same software that runs on the Amiga with a Vlab Motion as the Full DraCo. On the DraCo, MovieShop allows access to very large RAIDs, permitting the production of long broadcast quality programs up to 2000Gb or 2Tb in size. On PC-based non-linear systems the AVI limit is still only 2Gb! A machine control and timecode option is available to control most RS-232 and RS-422 VTR's. This Timecode/Machine control card will work in the Amiga with Vlab Motion. This will allow you to build a project on a Vlab Motion in off-line or low quality, and then take the tapes and your MovieShop project to a DraCo studio for them to do...
an on-line or High quality version. This will breathe a bit more life into your Viab Motion. A FireWire interface based on Sony's DVBM-1 hardware codec board can be integrated into the DraCo Vision which will allow DV (Digital Video) I/O, converting DV directly to the DraCo M-JPEG format, and allowing finished programs to be output directly back to DV. This is the FIRST FireWire interface for the AmigaOS.

Wheelin' Around

The DraCo Wheel is a jog/shuttle wheel which controls most digitizing and trimming operations in MovieShop. The wheel will work in both the Amiga with Viab Motion and the DraCo. My initial reaction to the Wheel was that it was a bit of a toy, despite its solid feel. I rapidly changed my mind, though, and found myself automatically using it most of the time. The heavy jog-shuttle wheel responds beautifully, allowing you to whiz quickly through long scenes or move carefully frame-by-frame. The buttons are large and heavy duty. Less durable were the Vision's audio and video connectors, which seemed quite flimsy. Video I/O is currently composite and Y/C. However, DraCo Systems promises a breakout box providing balanced XLR audio connectors, BNC composite video connectors, and component video I/O. If the breakout box is built as well as the DraCo Wheel, it will round out a solid, professional system.

For more info on upgrades and new effects for Viab and MovieShop as well as DraCo info

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Madame, Dear Sir, Dear Amiga friends

The past has shown that there exists a market for Amiga which we can also see at the fair here in Cologne. In 1993 there were 45,000 visitors at the Fair in Cologne, 1995 already 65,000 visitors and this year we expect more than 70,000 visitors. Those figures are quite respectable and it shows the big faith and the enormous community spirit towards Amiga. Of course these figures are containing interested people from the PC market. Today I will tie up to my speech of last year, in which I said: "Due to the current situation, we do not have a fair booth this year. But I'm very optimistic to attend the exhibition in Cologne with an own fair booth in 1997"

"Amiga is indestructible - Amiga is alive!"
This, my dear friends, was the end of my speech last year.

And at that time I was already convinced to have a comeback and that's why I'm here today, I'm the living evidence. In my speech already quoted above, I said those days: "We are looking for further potential investors." We don't give up. We will see what's going to happen." Glance backward in the past of Amiga and compare Amiga with other companies. Than you will ask yourself:

How many companies exist which survived two bankruptcies?
How many brands survive two bankruptcies?
And all this in times in which no new products exist or are developed.
And in times in which nobody believes in the future of our brand.

But Amiga is still there. Amiga is alive.

The development must go on faster and more specifically with Amiga too. Many professional developers, but even private tinkerers have meanwhile developed a few good ideas for Amiga. We all, from Amiga, are open for all new ideas. We have already made a new start. A new start with the support of a company which believes in the future of Amiga - Gateway 2000.

But who is "Gateway 2000"? Gateway 2000 is a large and solid American enterprise with more than 10,000 employees world wide. 1998 Gateway sold more than 1.9 million PCs. The turnover amounted to 5 billion US dollars. The net profit was 250 million US dollars after tax. In the United States Gateway 2000 belongs to 500 biggest companies. Gateway 2000 has already awarded many prizes for their product range and their services. This shows what a great potential is behind AMIGA International, Inc. The policy of Gateway 2000 for Amiga is: "Amiga International" is supposed to operate independent on the market. As independent as possible For that purpose AMIGA International will be supported by Gateway 2000 wherever it is useful and synergies can be made.

Our strategy, the strategy of AMIGA International has three cornerstones!

Supporting the existing Amiga community
Leveraging the existing Amiga technology through licensing
Assisting in developing new products based on open standards to the home computer and video/graphics market.

Let me explain the above mentioned goals. The support of our Amiga users was already in past one of our cornerstone. Even in times when Amiga worked under sequestration, Amiga succeeded almost always our customers advice and help. In future we will not change this policy, much more, we will
enforce the support. Our second cornerstone are the license agreements. Wherever it is sensible and possible, we will reach license agreements. Sensible and possible means: We reach only license agreements with companies if it is of advantage to Amiga users and to the market, the Amiga technology remains compatible and the licensee grants to pull in one direction with Amiga. Presently we reached 17 license contracts about soft and hardware.

The third cornerstone is the development of new Amiga models and to upgrade the existing Amiga products. As you may know, Amiga has nothing developed for years. But new products are essential to exist in a dynamic market. For the development of new products, we need time. Time and money. Money which was not always available in the past few years, but with Gateway 2000 we are have found a solid basis. We have founded a company which is responsible for Research and Development. The name is Amiga Inc., a wholly owned company of Gateway 2000. Amiga Inc. is situated in Sioux City close to Gateway 2000. The tasks of AMIGA International, Inc and Amiga Inc. are clear defined. Amiga Inc. develops products and AMIGA International, Inc. is responsible for sales and marketing world wide and for the settlement of license contracts.

We already started with some new developments. We hope to be able to present a new product for Christmas 1998. This will be a Computer between PC and Game machine. Which means a Computer, Game Machine, TV, Settop-Box, TVD and internet access device all in one device. If you think about that an Amiga OS which doesn't need more than a one Megabyte Ram, than you see that our preconditions are nearly perfect. Our Amiga has a extraordinary good relation towards price and efficiency. The advantages of Amiga are the Operating System. This has been proven in the past, and the future will show the same. Prices for new developments will approximately range from 250 to 800 US dollar.

What concerns the software, we are planning to put the new Operating System 3.5 onto the market, hopefully in Spring 1998. In Winter 1998 we estimate to present further upgrades. The image and the product position of Amiga is still very good. And on this we built. So, why resign of something which has shown its efficiency in the past time of crisis and without Amiga wouldn't have survived on the market. We don't want to invent the wheel again, but we will do our best to develop Amiga on a high standard. Therefore we will find and look for co-operations. We will serve our customers honest and open minded. We will outsource services and we will look for new distributors And we will try to operate with only a few employees.

Ladies and Gentlemen, last year Amiga did not participate with a booth, but this year you will find us in building 11.1 booth number D42. Our booth has approx. 200 square yards, and everybody is kindly invited to visit us. Before my closing words, I would like to thank a certain group very very much. It is the group of Amiga Magazines I'm talking about. Thank you for the support in the past years and especially within the difficult years of bankruptcy. Thank you again for that.

Please allow me some final words. I think I can tell you with clear conscience that my last confidential words of the year before, came already true. Today I had the great pleasure again to stand here and to talk to you about our future plans coming up in the next few years and I'm convinced that we will meet each other several times within the next years and we will be still saying:

Amiga is indestructible - Amiga is alive
My personal opinion is: Amiga has a bright future ahead!

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Josh Daniel

Hi I have a A1200, 8meg, WB3.0, Blizzard 1220 accelerator.
Problem: I am trying to fit an additional 420MB (2.5") hard drive into my A1200 (I already have a 40MB but need more space!) I have a dual hard drive cable. Could you please give me any information about fitting a 2nd hard drive into an A1200.

Hi Daniel

The A1200 is not designed to have two harddrives mounted in the case, but it can be done. Please note this will void any warranty. By removing the RF shielding, this will provide sufficient space to mount a second 2.5” drive on top of your current 40mg drive. The most important point is to ensure that no electronic component is accidentally grounded. Use a thin piece of hardened plastic - the type you find on the top of shirt boxes is best - to provide insulation between the two drives. To secure the drives, double-sided mounting tape will suffice. A small piece of foam secured to the top drive will provide a snug fit when the lid is replaced. Make sure that one drive is set as a master and the second as a slave by the small jumpers on the side of the drive. The only other area of concern you may have is compatibility - not all 2.5" drives work well with the A1200. Best bet is to contact your local Amiga dealer to confirm this. Best of luck.

I also have an A500 which has a loose fitting with the power cord connection. Could you please give me a solution to this. (My temporary solutions such as sitting a brick on top of the cord didn’t help the problem). Thankyou.

Unless you are proficient with a soldering iron, it would be best to take it to your nearest service centre to have the power connector in your A500 replaced. After time, they have the tendency to become loose.

These two upgrades will give you the desired affect, but please note, much of the software which is coming out now, really requires 2 meg of chip ram and around 4 meg of fast ram. You might consider it time to move to a A1200.

Hi Andrew

To run any of the new software, you will need to upgrade your system by firstly replacing your ROMS. Head down to your nearest Amiga dealer and pick up a 3.1 ROM Kit. Currently they are selling for around $195.00.

All the instructions are included in the box to achieve the task. Just be careful to make sure you fit the ROM chip the right way around.

Stage two of your upgrade will require more memory. The A590 harddrive has space to add an additional 2 meg of Fast Ram to its controller board. Again, your Amiga dealer will be able to supply the chips for you. Installation is pretty much straight forward.

Dear AAG Please Help

I have an A2000 with 1084S monitor that I purchased 2nd hand. A number of the programs when started make the display on the screen go crazy. I can pick up some of the colours so I know the program is working, but not much else. The computer originally had a multisync monitor, but the previous owner kept it.

Peter Wilson

Dear Peter

The best solution to your problem would be to reinstall the offending programs. It is most likely that the programs have been set to run in double PAL or one of the high res modes available to owners of multisync monitors, and will cause the symptoms you have mentioned when run on the standard Commodore monitor. The only other way around this problem would be to locate the specific preference file used by the pro-
"Please Help"!

Dear AAG

I have an A1200 and find some of the games I love will not run on it, but work on my friend's identical A1200. I have tried everything I can to get them to work on my machine, but without success.

T. Andrews

Dear T

It is likely you have one of the A1200s with the modified PC floppy drives. These drives work happily with productivity software, but have problems with a number of NDOS games. The reason being that many of these games look for a certain signal from the floppy drive which is absent from the above said drives.

If you have access to the net, a number of DIY files are around to instruct you regarding a modification to your drive. Please note, this does require the ability to use a soldering iron. Good luck.

Dear AAG

I have a A1200 which I want to connect to the internet. I live in a country area and our local service provider seems to know nothing other than PC and MAC and tells me that my computer is not compatible with their system. I know a lot of Amiga people are on the net, so what he says can't be true. Can you help.

Gail Thompson

Hi Gail.

You are right and your service provider is wrong. The internet if anything is more UNIX, but is considered by those in the know as being generic (non platform specific). The Amiga has a number of TCP stacks available to allow you to connect to the net. I would recommend MIAMI because it is the easiest to configure. The three pieces of information you need to get from your service provider are: (1) the phone number to connect to their server; (2) your user name and password; (3) the type of protocol used, the most common now is PPP (Point to Point Protocol).

Your next step is to turn on the computer and your modem and follow the installation instructions with MIAMI. It will negotiate a connection with your service provider and obtain all the information required from the other computer. Please note, the above solution works with 99.9% of service providers - it is not a perfect world. Failing that, there are a number of good instructional videos that come complete with internet software (demo versions) that will take you step-by-step through the process. Best of luck

Gail and send us an email when you arrive in cyberspace.

Did you know that you can write to "Please Help" on the net?


Australian Amiga Gazette Dec 97
We at AAG understand the important role Amiga User Groups play in keeping the Amiga alive. Below is a list of user groups we have contacted. If there are any groups we have missed (believe us, there are a few) please contact AAG so we can include them in this list.

**New South Wales**

**Amiga Creative Enthusiasts**
Location: Illawarrah Yacht Club
Frequency: 4th Wednesday of the month
Contact: Brian Gale (Secretary)
Phone: 042 752 493
Mail: 16 Cowper St, Port Kembla 2505

**Amiga Graphic Artists Special Interest Group**
Unit 13, 63 Flora St, Kirrawee 7237
Frequency: 4111 Sunday of the month
Time: 01:00pm
Membership: Free
Contact Michael Williamson (President)
Phone: 02 9545 4572
Email: wlllie@accom.au
Mail: Unit 19, 63 Flora St, Kirrawee 2232

**Commodore Hornsby User Group Inc.**
Location: St Leo’s College, Woolcott Ave, Wahroonga
Frequency: 4th Wednesday of the month
Time: 07:30pm
Membership: $6 (Joining), $24 (Annual)
Contact: Ian Sim (Secretary)
Phone: (02) 9456 3995
Email: i.sim@compasenet.com.au
PO Box 1578, Hornsby North 2077

**Muswellbrook Combined Computer Group**
Location: Red Cross Hall
Frequency: 2nd Saturday of the month
Time: 07:30pm
Membership: $5 (Joining), $10 (Annual)
Contact: Wanye Miller (President)
Phone: 065 41 1024
Mail: PO Box 848, Muswellbrook, 2333

**Mutual Amiga Computer Enthusiasts**
Location: Beresfield Bowling Club
Frequency: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month
Time: 07:30pm
Membership: $10 (Annual)
Contact: Kent Woodward (President)
Phone: 049 523 770 (ah), 049 675 266 (bh)
Mail: 59 Carnley Ave, New Lambton, 2305

**Southern Sydney Commodore User Group**
Location: Scout Hall, Como St., Penshurst (Behind the Penshurst RSL)
Frequency: Every 2nd Monday
Time: 08:00pm
Membership: $20 (Annual)
Contact: Steve Perry (President)
Phone: 02 9526 6117
Mail: PO Box 217, Beverly Hills, 2209

**Western District Amiga User Group**
Location: Uniting Church of Australia, 15 Evan St, Penrith (Top Floor)
Frequency: 2nd and 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 07:00pm till late
Membership: $20 (Annual) or $3 (Attendance)
Contact: Michael Gruber (Vice President)
Phone: 019 651 284
Email: mgruber@i.net.au
Mail: PO Box 6260, Baulkham Hills 2153

**Tuggerah Lakes Computer User Group Inc.**
Location: Berkeley Vale Public School
Frequency: 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 07:00pm
Membership: $7 (Joining), $18 (Annual)
Contact: Darrell Kelman (President)
Phone: 043 32 1087
Fax: 043 32 1087
Mail: PO Box 659, Tuggerah 2263

**Australian Capital Territory**

**Canberra Amiga User’s Society (CAUSe)**
Location: Woden Town Centre Library
Frequency: 2nd Thursday of the month
Time: 07:30pm
Contact: Alex Cameron (Secretary)
Phone: 06 296 2986
PO Box 599, Canberra City, ACT, 2601

**Victoria**

**Amiga Users Group of Victoria**
Location: Moorabbin Arts Centre Complex, 979 Nepean Highway, Moorabbin (cnr of South Rd, near the station)
Frequency: 3rd Sunday of the month
Time: 02:00pm (doors open at 01:30pm)
Membership: $30 (Annual)
Contact: James Gardner
Phone: 03 9553 3926
Email: aug@cp.com.au
Mail: PO Box 196, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189

**Central Victoria Three Amigas**
Location: Seymour
Frequency: Once a month on Fridays
Time: 09:30am
Membership: Free
Contact: Randall Lasinl
Phone: 03 5792 2835
Email: sulicyde@eck.net.au
Home Page: http://www.eck.net.au/~sulicyde
Mail: C/O Seymour Post Office

**North West Amiga User Group**
Location: Moonee Ponds Community Center
Frequency: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month
Time: 08:00pm
Membership: $25 (Annual)
Contact: Gregory Thomas
Phone: 03 9337 8798
Email: gtt@minyos.ils.rmit.edu.au
Home Page: N/A
Mail: 19 Mary St, Essendon, Victoria 3040
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Email: zhulien@alphalink.com.au
MOVIES

One of the biggest hassles with going to the movies is deciding which movie to see and finding out where it is showing and when. Now with the net, all you have to do is type Hoyts on any of the search engines and lo and behold you are presented with details of what is showing where and when, plus the added benefit of reviews, trailers, sound files and history about the making of each of your favourite movies.

MUNCHIES

If you are feeling a bit peckish, you can always drop into the Pizza Hut web site. Just type Pizza into one of the search engines and you will be presented with a menu of all the Pizza Hut favourites or choose from a variety of ingredients to make your own personalised mouth-watering pizza. Click on the button and you'll have your pizza delivered to your door in about 30 minutes. Unfortunately, this service is localised and still not available in Australia. I ordered a pizza from the States some three months ago and it still hasn't arrived, and I bet it will be cold when it gets here.

www.pizzahut.com

THE DOLLAR

With the constant plummeting rate of the Australian dollar, it is handy to know the immediate exchange rate between the Aussie dollar and foreign currencies; especially if you are about to place an order to the U.K. for that Power PC card. There is a great variety of web sites that can provide you with these details. My favourite is at "www.dna.ith.se/cig-bin/kurt/rates" where you are presented with two lists of countries and it is as simple as clicking on Australia then clicking on the country you want the exchange rate for - far simpler than trying to work it out with a calculator.

THE TIME

Need to know the time anywhere in the world? Try the "World Time Clock" which displays the current time to the minute of more than 200 countries. The
TELEROBOT

If surfing from web site to web site is becoming a bit boring, you might like to try WebCams.

A webcam is basically a video camera connected via digitiser to a computer with permanent net access. A picture is taken at regular intervals converts to a gif or jpeg then shoot on to the net.

One of my most favourite of the lot is TeleRobots. These are single-armed robots controlled remotely. The best of the lot we found at "telerobot.mech.uwa.edu.au" at the University of Western Australia. Because only one person can control the robot at a time, sometimes you have to wait in the queue to have a go, but it is well worth the wait. While you are waiting you can always log in as an observer and see how badly others are doing. The TeleRobot at the university has four cameras positioned to give you an excellent operational view. The goal is to have the robot build a small structure from children's play blocks. By entering the co-ordinates of the x, y and z axis and manipulating the gripper, with a lot of patience, you can have the robot build most any structure. if you register as an operator, you can take control of the robot from any visitor on the site. A nifty feature of this robot is the ability to customise the user interface to your own likes. This site is a definite must for the Christmas holidays.

FISHCAM

The fishcam is the second oldest live camera site on the web at www.netscape.com/fishcam. The fishcam may also be the most visited live camera site on the web with an average daily number of hits at 90,000. There are two physical cameras taking the pictures of the fishtank, one is a standard sony video camera and the other is an SGI Indy-Cam. Both are connected to an SGI Indy workstation. Four times a minute a picture is taken in SGI RGB image format and transformed into a JPEG image. The JPEG is then stored on our main web server for fast access by you.

![Fishcam Image]

Control robot

Enter a set of moves (example "open z10 close z100 y70 open");

or specify only the next position and orientation of the gripper:

Gripper open: X: Y: Z: Spin: Tilt:

Relinquish control?
Welcome to the world of the Internet Relay Chat or IRC for short. It is a world where almost anything is possible, and something which words alone cannot give justice to, better experienced.

So just what is IRC?
The IRC is made up of many locations, some of which are linked together and each location is called a 'server'. People connect to these servers via their computers in order to chat to others in virtual 'rooms' (known as channels) or send private messages to one another. People connected to these servers can come from anywhere from the same house to the other side of the world, and in general it costs nothing more to chat to others there than it does already cost you for the same time you're connected to your Internet Service Provider. IRC is multi-platform, but its recognised by many a PC and Macintosh owner that the Amiga has the best of all available IRC clients (the program used to interface with the server) out there, namely AmIRC (Available from www.vapor.com/amirc/).

Who uses IRC?
If you believed alot of the media hype, you would say either that a: the people you talk to aren't real. b: everyone there is a geek (computer nerd) or c: are cult-starting, bomb-making, murderers.

Cast all these misconceptions aside the type of people you find on IRC includes students, models scientists, girl friends, boy friends and the occasional cult starting, bomb making, murderer. In summary anyone you've spoken to off IRC has a person just like them who you can meet through IRC! And just like the real world you have to watch out for the nutcases out there.

So where does a person chat?
Although there are many Amiga related channels out there, the best channel for Australian Amiga users would have to be the #AmigaZone channel found on Oz.org (www.oz.org) servers. This channel over its history has often surpassed all the other Amiga channels in the number of people using it at once, most of the people being Australian Amiga owners at that, along with an international flavour of users to compliment. At times the channel has had from 60-100 regulars a day login. It also probably has had the most female users of any Amiga IRC channel.

The topics discussed in this channel really vary, and for those of you who believe there's more to life than Amigas, well so do the users of this channel, infact almost every subject imaginable has been covered at some point or another, except for conversations about IBM clones, which is left for people to chat about in other clone related channels. You don't necessarily have to own an Amiga to join though, and as long as you don't put down or abuse the Amiga, you will be welcome there.

Here's a description of the channel as found on the channel's web site: "From the ashes of #Amiga oz.org, comes a new, improved, politics free, AMIGA channel run by Amiga fanatics. The main objective is fun, and there are virtually no rules either! We welcome any new visitors as long as you're polite and respect the Amiga, or if you're female, well accept you also ;). So come visit us some time, any day, we're not always around, but when we're around there's many of us regulars to be found hanging around!"

In the channel you can also get assistance to do with any Amiga related topic, catch up on the latest Amiga gossip, find out the latest Amiga news, but anything to do with Amiga piracy is strictly forbidden.

Some of the folks you may meet on #AmigaZone are: Amiganut, Amoeba, BeanBladez, Catch, CyberWlf (that's me), Drizzt, Fastlan, Fastlane, Himtay, KingGuppy, Kristal, Obi, Provider, Orko, Oysta, Matte, Pen, Prowler, Rebel, Senc, Souris, Tasmaniac, Welp, ZarSon, Zife.

As wierd and wonderful as the names may sound Channel AmigaZone is made up of people from diverse backgrounds. A wide variety of Amiga users who come from all over, of different ages and of different professions, but when it comes down to it #AmigaZone is just a place for all of us to hang out and enjoy ourselves and chat about whatever just happens to come up.

Please drop in for a chat!
NoProxy and ProxyDomain directives
Added to proxy, useful for intranets.

AddModuleInfo directive added to mod_info
Allows additional information to be listed along with a specified module.

Include directive
The Include directive includes other config files immediately at that point in parsing.

Improved HTTP/1.1-style Virtual Hosts
The new NameVirtualHost directive is used to list IP address:port pairs on which HTTP/1.1-style virtual hosting occurs. This is vhosting based on the Host: header from the client. Previously this address was implicitly the same as the "main address" of the machine, and this caused no end of problems for users, and was not powerful enough. Please see the Apache Virtual Host documentation for further details on configuration.

Year-2000 Improvements
The default timefmt string used by mod_include has been modified to display the year using four digits rather than the two-digit format used previously. The mod_autoindex module has also been modified to display years using four digits in Fancyindexed directory listings.
TurboCalo 4, DrawStudio, PCTask and more.
ImageStudio 2.3, WebPlug 1.22, ProgEd 2.4, FontMachine 1.05 and software for the Amiga. Includes registered version of AmigaE 3.21, BeckMan 1.4. Also includes demo versions of Personal Paint 7.1, A comprehensive collection of quality shareware and registered programs, utilities, images, sound, music and more from the Aminet Internet site. A must have set for any Amiga CD collection. Includes The fifth volume of the ultimate Amiga resource. Four CD's full of new material since Aminet 19. Features a special registered version of Wildfire animation editor.

Aminet 3, $35.00
This edition of Aminet includes over 1 gigabyte of uncompressed software in thousands of archives. Features XTreme Racing.

Aminet 20
The latest edition of Aminet includes over 1 gigabyte of uncompressed software in thousands of archives. There is over 500 MB of new material since Aminet 18. Features full versions of CanDo 2.5 and AmiAtlas 1.3.

Aminet Set 3, 4 CD Set
The third volume of the ultimate Amiga resource. Four CD's full of programs, utilities, images, sound, music and more from the Aminet Internet site. A must have set for any Amiga CD collection. Includes full versions of Imagine 4.0, XPaint 3.2 and OctaMED 5.

Aminet Set 4, 4 CD Set
The fourth volume of the ultimate Amiga resource. Four CD's full of programs, utilities, images, sound, music and more from the Aminet Internet site. A must have set for any Amiga CD collection. Includes full version of Directory Opus 5.11.

Aminet Set 5, 4 CD Set
The fifth volume of the ultimate Amiga resource. Four CD's full of programs, utilities, images, sound, music and more from the Aminet Internet site. A must have set for any Amiga CD collection. Includes the full version of OctaMED SoundStudio and over 1 GB of material that will not appear on the regular Aminet disks.

Amy Resource Vol. 1
A comprehensive collection of quality shareware and registered software for the Amiga, includes registered version of AmigaE 3.2i, ImageStudio 2.3, WebPling 1.22, ProgEd 2.4, FontMachine 1.05 and BackMan 1.4. Also includes demo versions of Personal Paint 7.1, TurboCalc 4, DrawStudio, PC Task and more.

Assassins CD 2 Set
Another collection of great games on one CD. This follow up is even better than the original with no duplication from the first CD. It has been tested on the CD32, CDTV, A1200 with Zappo and Power Drive and the A4000. A menu provides access to all games and instructions and it can also be run from a Workbench AmigaGuide document. Includes Assassins Floppy disks 1-250 in DMS format.

CDBoot 1.0
A1200&A4000 owners with CD-ROM drives can now play those great CD32 games with this amazing CD32 emulator. Simple installation and better than 90% compatibility make this a must have program.

CD-Sensations: Golden Games
A great collection of almost 1000 Amiga games. Most are ready to run directly off the CD. Includes arcade games, commercial demos, strategy and puzzles and more.

CD-Write
CD-Write allows you to 'write' to a CD-ROM by extending the Amiga OS in a fully compliant and transparent way by redirecting modifications to a CD to a special area of a hard drive or other writable media.

Connect Amiga to the Internet, Video & disks $20.00
This video and the accompanying three disks guide you through the complex task of configuring the Amiga using AmiTCP to connect to the Internet. NB: Does NOT include AmiTCP. A demo version is available on the Aminet CD.

Desktop Video CD2
A collection of textures and backgrounds in JPEG, IFF and Video Creator formats, over 200 colour anti-aliased fonts up to 200 points, over 150 3D objects in popular formats and a host of DTV utilities.

Epic Collection 3
The latest collection of Amiga Public Domain and Shareware programs all ready to run from the CD.

Epic Interactive Encyclopedia '97
Finally, a decent interactive encyclopedia for the Amiga. Includes both ECS and AGA versions. A multimedia experience of knowledge. New 1997 version.

Fusion Mac Emulator
A Mac emulator for all Amiga's with a 68020 or better processor. Supports Emplant hardware, Mac OS 7.1.0 to 7.6, Picasso96 and CyberGraphX, stereo audio and more. Minimum requirements 68020, 4MB Ram, 20MB Hard disk, System 7.1.1, HD floppy and 256K Mac ROMs.

Geek Gadgets - Developers v2
This CD contains virtually all the tools you need to start programming on the Amiga, including C, C++, FORTRAN, ADA, EMACS, debuggers, linkers, compilers and much more. Includes beta port of X Windows X11R6.1, tools will run directly from the CD.
More CD’s than you can poke a stick at!

Guru-ROM V6 for GVP SCSI cards $110.00
A SCSI driver update for all GVP Series-11 host adapters and all Combo and G-Force accelerator cards. This ROM module has been considerably extended and updated and replaces all previous driver ROMs.

Hottest 4 $10.00
A comprehensive collection of the very best and most up-to-date Shareware and Personal Domain Software. Files are in DMS format and require a floppy disk. Full BBS support.

Learning Curve $40.00
A fantastic collection of educational and informational material for the Amiga. There are over 32,000 files that will entertain and interest young and old. Categories include Art, Electronics, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Astronomy and much more.

Magic Publisher .4 CD Set $100.00
A definite must have for the DTP enthusiast. Get Final Writer 4 SE and Wordworth 4 TD, over 10,000 fonts, 500 clipart images, 150 printer drivers, Web page tools and much more. Includes a 100+ page booklet with printouts of all fonts and clipart. A special BBS section is also provided.

Meeting Pearls Vol. 4 $30.00
Germany’s most popular Amiga CD-ROM collection with many programs and utilities not found on any other CD. Several different search tools have been included to make finding and executing programs from the CD even easier.

Multimedia Toolkit 2 , 2 CD Set $40.00
A double CD set aimed at the Music and Video professional. Over 1.2 gigabytes of graphics and sound. Includes the full version of Lightwave 3D.04 along with 250 MB of support material, over 500 24-bit images, more than 2000 Imagine objects, fonts, clipart.

NetNews Offline Vol. 1 & 2 $35.00
The first CD with all Amiga related newsgroups from Usenet. There are over 437,000 postings from 19 newsgroups. You will find valuable advice on nearly every facet of Amiga computing without wasting costly online time.

Network CD $15.00
A CD dedicated to the connection of Amiga computers including CDTV and CD32 machines. Includes ParNET, SetNET, Fish 600-975, Amos PD 478-803, TBag 1-74, 500 images and more. The automatic reset function of CDTV and CD32 machines have also been disabled.

Octamed 6 CD $45.00
The latest version of the best music making program for the Amiga. Produce eight channel modules and control MIDI instruments and sample sounds. There are over 600MB of modules, MIDI files and samples including the entire Walkabout Music sample collection.

Octamed Sound Studio $75.00
The best music creation program for the Amiga just got better. Full mixing facilities, direct to disk recording, 64 channel support, new MIDI commands, sample length limited only to memory and much more!

p.OS Pre-release $50.00
A pre-release of a new operating system for the Amiga. Includes the complete p.OS Workbench, Shell, Filer DOS and a number of demos. Requires 68020+ & 4MB RAM.

UPD Gold , 4 CD Set $35.00
The entire United Public Domain library on four CD’s. There are over 4,800 disks archived in the DMS format arranged by category and accessed from an AmigaGuide document. Includes disk collection from Amigos, Amos, Assassins, Fred Fish, Jam, Gold Fish, Scope, Snag and TBag. Great value!

XIPaint v4.0 $70.00
A leading edge 24-bit paint program with many features for both the novice and experienced Amiga artist. Includes new animation and ray-tracing features. Wacom support, unlimited undo, support for graphic cards and more.

Network PC $55.00
Access any PC drive including CD-ROM, Jazz, fixed hard drives and networked drives through the parallel port. The PC acts as a slave machine and cannot access the Amiga, however, the Amiga can read and write to the PC. Load image files on a PC directly into a paint program. Includes the parallel cable to connect the machines together. Works with WB 2.04+ and Windows 95.

1078 Weird Textures $40.00
A massive collection of 1078 seamless texture tiles. 256 x 256 pixels. Includes a 28 page colour index booklet displaying every texture. File formats include PICT, Targa, IFF, GIF and JPG.

3,000 JPEG Textures $30.00
Over 3,000 royalty free textures in JPEG format. There are thumbnails of every texture for easy selection. Categories include Brick, Bumpmaps, Carpet, Cloth, Fabric, Marble, Organic, Rock, Tiles, Wood and many more. Great for 3D rendering and Web design.

Imagine PD 3D $30.00
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MOTHERBOARD COMPUTERS
42 Manning Street, Kingswood NSW 2747
Phone (02) 4736-8055 Email: mother@pnc.com.au
Happy Birthday to us, Happy Birthday to us, Happy Birthday to Australian Amiga Gazette, Happy Birthday to us. I'd love to be only one year old and know what I know now. We all know that won't happen, but with the use of our Amigas and special effects in our videos anything is possible. Hi and welcome to part three of "SFX for Amiga and Video".

We have already seen what a genlock is used for with our Amiga's in earlier issues of the magazine so now we'll look at the genlock as a special effects weapon.

Genlock is a special effect to begin with, so you don't have to go too far to create something special or unusual. Genlocking is also the main way to get the computer effects to be more than just images on a monitor and turn them into part of your video production.

Overlaying anything from the computer onto video tape is a special effect in its self, according to professional video people. Most of the time you will be trying to do it straight, in other words with as little distortion as possible. You can also combine a straight overlay with your own pictures you've created in a paint, titling or animation program. Since most of the time your audience can instantly see the difference between a computer generated image and real life you don't want to try and hide that fact. But in some situations you can trick the viewers into believing that a computer generated picture is real.

The first way to do this is by simulating the Amiga's graphics. Yes I know this sounds pretty silly but if you know anything about computers then you'll know that 99% of people have no idea what computer graphics look like. The Amiga can successfully simulate the kinds of images people expect. There have been a quite a number of films and TV shows made over the years that have tried to simulate computer vision by putting graduated cross-hairs over a scene. Remember the TV show, The Six Million Dollar Man, well the director made good use of this technique even though there was no computer. By overlaying numbers, lines or grids, you can simulate computerised targeting, submarine periscopes and even the vision of a robot.

The other way to trick your audience into believing that what they are seeing on the screen is real is not to have it on the screen for too long. If you were shooting a scene outdoors for another production and a UFO flew by, you would quickly turn your camera around, run after the object in the sky, try to focus and then it would be gone. What would it look like when you played it back? Unless the UFO stayed nice and still while you were filming it and running after it, you would more than likely get an out of focus, blurred jumpy disc shape on the tape. Those few frames of the UFO will look more realistic than if you overlaid a nice sharp well drawn UFO bang in the centre of the screen.
You can also create ghosting effects by only partially overlaying the graphics (not using the computer colours at full strength). By using a background colour that is a tight weave of colour 0 (black) and another colour you can have a live video ghost mixed with a computer background. One of the problems with genlocking devices is that you can overlay computer graphics on top of video but you can't overlay video on top of graphics. To do this you need another device called a Chromakey, but this is another story.

If you don't have fade controls on your camcorder you can use the genlocking unit to do this just by fading to a blank screen (not colour 0). You can also fade into a scene by using this technique. The advantage of doing fades with the genlock is that you can fade to any colour (or pattern) and you can usually control the speed of the fade more easily.

Using a technique that we will now give you an outline, you should be able to do dissolve, where one scene blends in with another to reveal a different scene. You can of course dissolve from a computer generated image to a video image and vice versa with a genlocking device. This method is for dissolving between scenes that are not following each other on the video tape. To make this work well you must make sure that each of the scenes are static images. This is where there is no movement by your actors at the end of the scene. In your edit room, copy scene one to a master tape. Go back and grab a frame from the end of the scene where there is no movement. You will have to experiment to get the image as close as possible to the original. Once you have the scene digitised in the highest resolution possible set up scene two in the slave video unit which will be genlocked to the Amiga. Set the genlock so that it is only showing Amiga graphics (the digitised frame from the end of scene one). Now record a new scene (scene two) starting with the genlocked Amiga image dissolving into the original (scene two) picture from the slave VCR. Finally, go back and edit the new scene onto the ending point of scene one. The final result, if you timed everything correctly, should be scene one coming to an end on a static image which then dissolves smoothly into the beginning of scene two.

Since the digitised images are essentially Amiga graphics you should be able to do any special effects with them that your genlock or paint software is capable of, including fades, wipes, dissolves, rolls and even digital effects. You still won't be able to go from one moving scene into another but a bit of your own creativity should compensate in just about all circumstances. Remember, if you're grabbing pictures off the TV or from a magazine or book 99% of these are copyrighted and you might land yourself in court with a legal suit against you, so check these things out first.

Digitisers have been used to generate special effects in video for the past ten years, although costing many thousands of dollars for a top of the range one back then, they are quite affordable for the average person these days. On the computer side, digitisers were the only way to get detailed visual information into the computer without drawing them by hand. In a strange sort of way, video professionals appreciate the fact that digitised pictures look like computer images, while computer people have been trying to get digitisers to the point where the images look like video pictures. Computer artists have made use of the fact that a digitised picture is very close to looking like a photograph but just coarse or blocky enough so that the image was created by hand.

**Australian Amiga Gazette** Dec 97
There will be times when it is easier to use a digitiser to get an image from print to video. With the digitiser you can take printed graphics, put them into your favourite paint program and clean them up or modify them to your hearts content until you are completely satisfied with the end result then transfer the images to video tape. This is particularly useful for industrial videos where you might want to include images from reports, charts, graphs, publicity photos and the like.

A scanner is a modern day digitiser and with the price of these falling every month this method is more feasible and cost effective. The scanners on the market to-day are capable of very high resolution, anything from 50dpi upwards. A digitiser or scanner is particularly good for creating custom title screens. The easiest way to get a company logo, sketch, drawing, painting or any image into the Amiga so that it can be manipulated for a title screen is with the scanner or digitiser. Many scanners have a black and white line art mode or two colour scan that improves the sharpness of the scanned image. This image is taken to your paint program and colour is added in there. Many industrial video producers, including myself use this method for creating company logos. It's a lot easier than trying to recreate an image by hand in paint or rendering programs. If there is a particular font that you need that just isn't available for the Amiga, you simply scan the letters, put them in your paint program, and by making each letter a brush you can create your custom title.

Well thats your double dose this month, have a merry Christmas and an even merrier new year when I'll be back to give you more info on Amiga and Video in the new year.
Getting to Know you!

Which Amiga do you own?
- □ A500
- □ A500+
- □ A600
- □ A1000
- □ A1200
- □ A2000
- □ A2500
- □ A3000
- □ CD32
- □ CDTV
- □ Draco
- □ 612k
- □ 2Meg
- □ 8Meg
- □ >16Meg
- □ 1.3
- □ 2.0
- □ 3.0
- □ 3.1
- □ CDrom
- □ Scanner
- □ Modem
- □ Genlock
- □ Under 15
- □ 16->30
- □ 31->45
- □ Over 46

How long have you been using your Amiga? ...........................................

Serious Stuff:

Rating of 1 represents your most popular, 2 your second most popular.... etc.

- □ 3D Rendering
- □ Multimedia
- □ Animation
- □ Studies
- □ Networking
- □ Word Processing
- □ Video editing
- □ Accounting
- □ Communications
- □ Hardware Dev
- □ Publishing
- □ Music Creation
- □ Small Business
- □ Internet Related
- □ Programming

Name your most often used software title ..................................................

Fun Stuff:

Rating of 1 represents your most popular, 2 your second most popular.... etc.

- □ Platform Games
- □ Adventures
- □ Sports Simulators
- □ Beat'em Up's
- □ War Strategies
- □ Motor Racing
- □ Sports
- □ Pinball Simulators
- □ R.P.G.
- □ Board Games
- □ Shoot'em Up's
- □ Arcade
- □ Puzzle Games
- □ Flight Sim
- □ Env Simulator

Name the last game you played .................................................................

Name your favourite Game of all time .......................................................

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1 - Very Good, 2 - Good, 3 - Border line, 4 - bad, 5 - Pathetic

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- □ Tutorials
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If you would like, please give your opinion regarding the Amiga situation.
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Australian Amiga Gazette
1997 Survey


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Reader Survey
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AmiFig
Since the Amiga's first introduction over a decade ago, the Amiga has been praised for its graphics capability. Many will agree that the graphic software available for the Amiga is among the best that their is. Unfortunately this praise does not extend to drawing packages, and the overall opinion is that drawing packages for the Amiga over the past have not been as good as they could be. This is where AmiFig comes into the equation, and the best thing about AmiFig is that it is offered as a public domain package, so you won't have to spend big to get good results.

AmiFig is a structured drawing tool that enables you to create objects and place them onto a drawing sheet with other objects to create a professional drawing. AmiFig comes with an impressive arsenal of drawing tools and features. Among this impressive line up, is the usual line up such as line, square, circle, oval and a freehand tool. You have the ability to rotate the objects to any angle and resize them at any stage. There is an colour and fill pattern window which will allow you to include colours or a number of fill patterns to your drawing. The font tool will allow you to place text onto your drawing using any fonts that you have from your Workbench fonts directory, and of course their is the usual cut, copy, paste and move functions. The screen sizes range from A0 to B5, and you can have a drawing grid for easier drawing. The grid spacing can be adjusted to suit your needs. All dimensions can be set to either metric or imperial. The drawing tool box is floating which means that you can move it around on your screen and you can freely size the drawing palette to whatever size you like. There are rulers down both sides of the drawing palette, which is useful if your drawing need to be to scale. My only harsh criticism of the interface is that their is no tool tip help, which means that until you learn what each drawing tool does it may be difficult to figure out what each drawing symbol means.

You drawings can be printed out and the save option allows you to export your drawing as Postscript files for use with a desktop publisher. Along with creating your own shapes you can also import clipart pictures. The only drawback to this is feature is that you are restricted to only IFF pictures.

One of the most noted features of AmiFig is the magnifying tool which works very well because it magnifies an area around the current mouse position automatically, and the best thing about this feature is that it is in
real time. This means that the magnified area changes continuously as the mouse pointer moves over your drawing. Further to this option is a zoom tool which will let you increase or decrease the magnification of the drawing palette.

Despite the program's healthy features, future versions of the program could do with some more such as support for datatypes and the ability to include Arexx.

At last it is good to see the Amiga with a commendable structured drawing package, which although may not be as good as some of the larger commercial packages available from other platforms, AmiFig does demonstrate the ability to create structured drawings with the power and ease of use, not normally available from art packages. The only drawback to this nature of programs is that the quality of your drawings can only ever be as good as the users ability to draw.

Requirements: 68020 (FPU recommended)
Available From: Aminet Sites
Programmer: Andreas Schmidt

AWS

Seeing the average Amiga boot up is not very exciting. No catchy theme sounds or trademark graphics to catch your attention and let you know that your Workbench is about to be loaded. This has inspired quite a few people to take up the challenge and make the Amiga's bootup more exciting, with the common solution being to create some kind of sequence or intro. There are lots to choose from and most of these work fine, but the one common trait that was noticed among these type of utilities is that they don't serve any useful purpose.

AWS was one of only a few that does provide a solution to the dull and boring startup sequence of the Amiga whilst adding some purpose. AWS displays a nice trademark graphic of the Amiga Technologies logo and some system information about your Amiga. The system information displayed includes CPU, FPU, GFX chipset, video system, kickstart version, memory, and the current date and time.

There are two versions of the program, each accommodating users of either PAL or NTSC monitors. You will have to install the program manually to your C directory, and add two lines to your startup-sequence.

AWS is small sweet and simple to use, and at least serves a small purpose of more than just fancy graphics during bootup. The only drawback to AWS is that it does come at the disadvantage of slowing the boot time of your machine slightly, though this time lost is really insignificant and should not frustrate most users.

Requirements: OS3.0+
Available From: Aminet Sites
Programmer: Powel Hemik

CyberAVI

CyberAVI is an animation player specifically for use with AVI file formats. CyberAVI's main focus is to play the AVI file with reasonable speed, as this has been a problem with AVI players in the past. In order to do this the developer has designed the program to take advantage of users with graphic cards or at least an AGA chipset and a 020 processor.

Use of the program is very similar to using MultiView. Select the AVI file from the requester and click OK. CyberAVI will automatically attempt to play the AVI animation at the correct speed, although this does depend mostly on the processing power of your machine. The animation will by default be set to play in a continuous loop, although this can be changed to suit your desires. Once the animation is playing you can stop it simply by clicking on either mouse button.

There are some options to viewing the AVI. If you are fortunate enough to own a graphic board it is possible to request a public screen for the animation, and you can also choose the screenmode for the playback. You can change the animation speed, and if you are finding that the animation is playing slow even with the maximum speed setting you can select a grey scale palette which will speed things up a little because less data is required to be processed.

CyberAVI offers reasonable performance and ease of use for playing AVI files. The best thing about CyberAVI is that it has been optimized to use the potential of graphic cards. With more and more graphic cards being purchased for Amiga's it is good to see software that has been written to use their full potential, whilst at the same time not forgetting the less fortunate Amiga owners.

Requirements: OS3.0+
Available From: Aminet Sites
Programmed By: Powel Hemik
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There was also a lot of other news on the show, some of which really deserved more attention IMHO: One machine had a PCI graphics board in it. I don't think it had a fully-functional RTG driver yet (it used CyberGraphX IIRC), but this is certainly a promising development. Phase 5 said they had temporarily taken some resources off the AMBox project to give the PowerUp boards a performance boost (the 64-bit memory interface makes the board faster than previous accelerators even on the 68060 side), and will soon make some important decisions about hardware and software development to ensure "conceptual continuity from PowerUp towards the ABox."

There was also a certain degree of detente towards Haage & Partner w.r.t. the conflict over the alternative software solutions for these boards; Wolf Dietrich and Juergen Haage had a friendly and seemingly quite relaxed chat about this on Saturday.

There was also a lot of fairly new, but not quite hot-off-the-presses stuff: During an AI dinner on Saturday night, one of the Cloanto people demonstrated Amiga Forever by running Personal Paint on an IBM Thinkpad using their improved version of the UAE emulator. They added in a lot of tricks to speed up often needed tasks, eg. a filesystem that ran natively on the PC side and an intel version of PPaint's blit library. The claim that "no really, it's a real Amiga" caused some heated debate, which was silenced by a quick demonstration of Amiga screen dragging. You could change the colours of the mouse pointer on one screen, then drag it halfway down and position the pointer over the transition between the two screens. Just like with the real Amiga chipsets, the two halves of the pointer appeared in the two screens' different palettes with a couple of pixels left blank between them.

Haage & Partner showed a PowerPC version of Quake that ran very smoothly. Unfortunately there is no license yet for any Amiga port of Quake as far as I know, so this was no more than proof that it could be done. The author of Class-X gave me an impressive demonstration of his animation compression format, which could play complex animations smoothly even from disk. Apparently it made very effective use of the Amiga chipset for both its video-compatible output and its very effective motion compression.

The central AI booth sported products from lots of different Amiga companies, as well as a transparent vertical tube with a small Boing ball floating up and down in it. The A5000 was on display there (made by recently licensed Amiga cloner DCE and distributed by Power Computing Ltd.), which apparently includes MPEG 1 support but is otherwise a fairly low-end model by today's standards. High-end users may provide the more powerful A6000. The booth had HIQ's Siamese system displaying its Amiga screen on an adjacent PC. According to a sign put up between the machines, the Amiga side was not using a graphics card. Right next to this, at least on Friday and Sunday, was the new Boxer motherboard (from index Information Systems IIRC), a PPC module for which apparently been announced. Bloody shame I lost my leaflet about it.

There were Amiga mugs on sale on the booth right next to it, and lots of other paraphernalia to be had. There were free Amiga mouse mats after the show, which was very fortunate: My old mat had a Wintel PC shop logo on it, so I had to use it upside down.

Many celebrities were to be found at the Amiga booth at one time or another: Dr. Peter Kittel, Angela Schmidt, NASA's Chris Greene, Heinz Wrobel, Holger Kruse, the AI people, and naturally Petro Tyschtschenko himself. One visitor, who was also there last year IIRC, had gotten Petro (and perhaps some others as well) to autograph the back of his Boing shirt.

All in all, I thought the show was pretty good. Lots of shop talk over lots of beer (oh Heavens, the beer!). As for me personally, I bought the *entire* Aminet on 21 CD's, which means I'm ready to get into the second-hand floppy business. When I went to Cologne my trusty polyester weekend bag felt like half empty; when I returned it felt like half a ton. In fact I swear it was so full that the fabric started ripping loose of the zipper during the ride home. And it didn't end there: Even back in Amsterdam I met up with some developers returning from the show (image: Droves of Amigans spreading across Europe, leaving trails of Boing stickers and black white red logos) and got a free copy of their product.
"Oh I do like to be beside the seaside, oh I do like to be beside the sea ...."

This month's column comes to you from the seaside, where I am attempting to recuperate from severe allergy reactions which have been exacerbated by bush fire smoke and high pollen counts.

The sea breeze contains no magic qualities - it just blows away the muck. However, it seems, the sea breeze also blows in quite a bit of muck as well - namely those wonderful, youthful backpackers whose noise reminds me of my high school days (I was very noisy).

Also blown in by the sea breeze are those groovy, fashionable yuppies whose desire for seaside real estate has driven unit prices sky high and caused a proliferation of kerbside cafes with trendy names.

Yes, you guessed it, I am jealous. With two little kids in tow, the golden arches is our place of dining and no fancy hotels or motels for us - it's stay with relatives or rent a ramshackle A-Frame - both of which we have done this holiday season and both times terror toddler seemed to find fatal house design flaws to which he could push to the limit - i.e. break things or nearly kill himself.

We were not without I.T. whilst on holidays. The computer served as a useful source of relaxation rather than work. We had packed three games to take away, each of which related to a particular household member (except me!). The first game unpacked was "Flash Back" and it proved to be a challenge to hubby. "Can you help me find the teleporter?", he asked one afternoon. Of course I proceeded to quiz him as to what the teleporter looked like, only to discover that the Star Trek teleporter is not the definitive model - in fact this game had small hand held ones ...well really.

The next game was the much loved "Lotus Ill" racing car game. Little boy adores this one and has just learnt to use the joystick in order to steer the car - the red one, of course.

The last game to be unpacked was the "Christmas Lemmings" game which was more attuned to our elder daughter's taste. I must say I liked the way the Lemming's hair swished when the little beast turned its head.

As for me, sitting in a chair staring at nothing was just fine, not that I did much of that. Even when staying with a relative, I still had to cook, clean and amuse the kids and, would you believe it, it rained for several days and there was no TV or video (aahh!).

At present my mother and daughter are sitting on the floor sewing and terror toddler is fast asleep. Quietness does not seem out of place and in any case the sound of traffic filters in from the patio - that's the price you pay for living near the city, yet by the sea. Of course the furniture is brand new and the computer is a "PC". The kids seemed more comfortable in the old A-Frame house down the coast rather than the luxury apartment in a trendy suburb. Perhaps the kids know something which we adults have forgotten in our rush to embrace "everything new"; that is, sometimes the older, well-worn things of life are just more comfortable and fun to be with.

The final competition winner for 1997 is Alex Coleman of NSW - here is Alex's letter and for the effort of writing in, Alex wins a box of disks, which will be posted shortly.

Dear Dianna

I enjoy your column in AAG and was particularly impressed by your October 97 offering. I wholeheartedly agree - about the clothes, the TV shows and the software. Have you seen any decent software for preschoolers at all? I mean genuinely interesting, and with some educational value? If you have, please let me know.

Dear Alex

I don't recommend buying much at all in the way of edutainment for little ones. I have mentioned a few times that our household uses the "Noddy" educational game and I do highly recommend it if you can get hold of it.

It is a tiered game and covers the British curriculum (which is fairly similar to our own). A map accompanies the game, which helps guide the children in driving Noddy around on screen (using the arrow keys). I recommend...
that you laminate the map, as the
game should last a child several
years (3+ to 7 yrs).

What I do recommend is that you
get hold of public domain tit bits
and demos as these will amuse
most small children. I only recom-
mand the investment in the cur-
rent offering of basic educational
games as REMEDIAL work for
children who are struggling with
numbers and the alphabet. Most
children who are old enough to
use a mouse can already count
and say the alphabet, so these
games (in my opinion) are a total
waste of money. Books are a
much better investment.

I have mentioned in previous
columns that, in our household,
we do not encourage use of the
computer for the children as their
age group requires more tactile
stimulation. Don't let the software
dresses fool you, children need
dress ups, sand pit play, water
play, building blocks, books and
playdough - a computer game
should only be a novelty or time
filler (much like a video or TV
show).

Some children, of course, find
computer games relaxing and at
present there is conflicting re-
search as to the benefits and
negative side affects of too much
computer activity. Any violent
games should be discouraged for
little ones as they have difficulty in
distinguishing reality and fantasy
that means absolutely no "kill" ac-
tivity.

Well, that's it for me for 1997.
Whether I return in 1998 is up to
the editorial team. Hopefully AAG
will be in the newsagents in
Australia soon and a less relaxed
column will be called for.

Cheers,
Dianna.
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### Helping Hands

If you live in the local area and would like to be involved in helping preparing AAG please contact Michael on (02) 4736-8055. No experience is required, just some spare time and a sense of humour.

### Our Thanks To

- Peter Hutch
- Daniel Hajduk
- Paul Graham
- Paul Morabito
- Dear Dianna
- Phil Scarrold
- Luiz Filho
- Morman Cantrell
- Petro Tyschtschenko
- Guy Nathan
- Luigi Pasciuto

### Important Notice

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