

Letters

Write a star letter and you will win a Pace 56 Voice External modem. Another lucky reader will receive a copy of the informative *The What PC? Guide to your PC*

PowerDesk pursuit



I read about PowerDesk 1.1 in the Essential Utilities feature which appeared in your July issue and was most interested, since I had tried version 2.02 from a magazine disc last year. I found the program to be very good indeed but could not find anywhere to purchase a full copy of that version.

In December 1996 I wrote to Mijenix in America at the address given on the trial version, asking where I could purchase it in the UK and whether 2.02 was the very latest version. I was not favoured with a reply and wrote again in May this year. To date I have not had a reply to that letter either.

After reading your magazine I phoned RMG, quoted as the supplier of the product in your article, and was informed that they no longer carried that item.

They advised me to try CyberMedia and gave me their 0800 number. On ringing this I was kept waiting for almost 10 minutes

before being answered, only to be told that they too did not handle this product.

It all seems very strange to me and I must wonder at the advisability of pursuing the matter further.

I hesitate to pay good money for a product when I cannot find out about its availability, even from the producers.
DA Smith, Warrington, Cheshire

You can now get the latest version, 2.02, from Atlantic Coast. Their number is 01297 552222, or e-mail: sales@atlantic-coast.com and the



software costs £29.95 including VAT, plus a £4.70 delivery charge. If you happen to be on the Internet, you could try the Web site at www.atlantic-coast.com and you can download a full version for \$39.95, with no delivery charge (obviously!) and no VAT, and pay on line with your credit card. If you want to try out a shareware version, try the Mijenix site (www.mijenix.com).

You can write to us at *What PC?* Editorial, 32-34 Broadwick Street, London W1A 2HG, or e-mail us at: whatpc@vnu.co.uk

Please note that any letters sent to us by e-mail will be printed along with the sender's e-mail address, unless we are specifically instructed otherwise.

★ Star Letter

Where on earth?

After reading your five-star evaluation of AutoRoute Express, I bought a copy. Upon loading I asked the program to find Ross On Wye, and was amazed to find a village called Whichchurch marked on the A49 in the direction of Hereford where in fact Peterstow is situated.

Anyone can make a mistake but as I examined the map, I found several other anomalies within a few miles of my home. I phoned Microsoft and, after several attempts and a lot of canned music, managed to get through to tech support who grudgingly admitted that they had received similar reports from customers throughout the UK. I was told that a revised edition would be appearing shortly.

How does a program with glaring errors get awarded five stars in *What PC?*, and why has the product not been withdrawn from sale?

david@euroegg.demon.co.uk

It is indeed amazing that certain towns in AutoRoute Express are in the wrong location but these could hardly be called glaring errors. All products reviewed in *What PC?* are thoroughly tested but, sadly, this does not extend to verifying the location of every minor town in AutoRoute Express against an Ordnance Survey map.

We forwarded your letter to Microsoft and received the following reply from Nick Berry, Autoroute Express Program Manager at the company:

'Having investigated the inaccuracies raised by David, there do appear to be a few mistakes in Microsoft AutoRoute Express 5.0 - GB. We apologise for any upset or inconvenience this may have caused our customers - huge amounts of data are processed in order to put the product together and, unfortunately, a small issue with the processing has come to light after the release of the product. A new version of AutoRoute Express GB (version 6.0) will be launched later in 1997 and we can assure our customers that this problem has been resolved in this version of the product.'

PMC Consumer Electronics has donated a new Pace 56 Voice External modem to our Star Letter writer. Costing £199, the K56Flex-compatible modem supports downloads of up to 56Kbits/s with a suitable Internet Service Provider. For more information, call PMC on 0990 561001 or go to www.pacecomm.co.uk.



PC building

I would like to see an article on how to build your own PC as, having just built my own with little help or reference, a guide would be helpful. With prices dropping all the time it makes sense for a consumer, rather than the big companies, to reap the benefits.

I built a Pentium II/266 with 64Mb of RAM and top-of-the-range graphic and sound cards, etc, for £1,600 inc VAT and postage. The same-spec machine can cost around £2,000-£2,800. You could also include info on the new slot 1 motherboards, upgrade options and different types of cases (I ended up with the wrong type of case originally).

Mick Davies,
mdavies@bigfoot.com

Thanks for your suggestion. While articles on building your own PC are often interesting, it's practically impossible to write a

good one without going into depth about a number of specialist technical issues. *What PC?* is designed to be a mainstream buyer's guide, and so this type of feature doesn't really fit. However, we regularly carry features on upgrading and getting the best from your PC.

What is FlashPix?

The Picture Magic article on image-editing software in your August issue was very interesting and informative.

It would have been useful to have an introduction or explanation of the new FlashPix concept, as well as an indication as to which programs support this format and the FlashPix CD. I believe that Microsoft Picture It does?

Gilbert Rimes
(no address supplied)

FlashPix is an image file format developed by Kodak. If you request your pictures on a FlashPix CD when you get a film developed, they will be scanned and stored on a CD-ROM, much like a Kodak PhotoCD. As long as you have a FlashPix-enabled application, you can edit the pictures using your PC.

The clever part is the way the images are stored on the CD. High-resolution images can be several megabytes in size and need a powerful PC to edit them effectively. A FlashPix image can be of several resolutions, so you can open a low-resolution image for editing on a modestly specified PC but apply the changes to a high-resolution version for printing.

FlashPix-enabled applications include Microsoft Picture It and Live Picture's LivePix. More information and a free FlashPix viewer are available from:
● www.kodak.com/daiHome/flashPix/index.shtml

Rotec Distribution

The phone number that was given for Rotec Distribution in our review of the Alps MD-2300 Masterpiece printer in the August issue has since been superseded. The new number is 01932 571800.

June competition winners

Congratulations to Helen Byers of Reading who has won the top prize of an OKI OL610ex printer in our June competition. The second prize – an OKIPAGE 4w printer – goes to Mr J Iles of Bristol. Two runners-up, M Bowra of Goldsithney, Cornwall and M Alder of Hoylandswaine, S Yorks, will each receive a library of 10 Living Books CD-ROMs, including Dr Seuss's Green Eggs and Ham, Arthur's Birthday and Sheila Rae the Brave. Ten more runners-up will get a copy of Sheila Rae the Brave – they are: Linda Nakamura of Twickenham, JP Steward of Witley, in Surrey, Mark Caddy of Woking, J Temple of Colchester, Rhys Adams of Derby, Wilson Taylor of Morecambe, Gerrard T O'Neil, Kirkintilloch, Derek Cooper of Leicester, Mr M Williamson of Galashiels, Selkirkshire and Tom Pobog of London E8.