THE RESOURCE FILE

The Atari Developers Resource

ATARI.RSC

It's time to talk about what we are doing to make you more successful and what we expect of you in return. We (Atari and developers) need to recognize our mutual interests and realize that we're in this together. Individually we can only do so much; together we can do much more. We at Atari wish we could do more. We continue to be open to any good ideas.

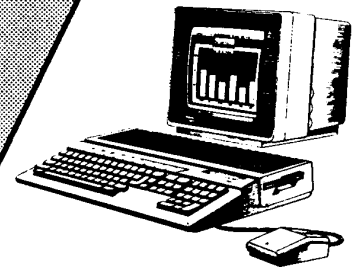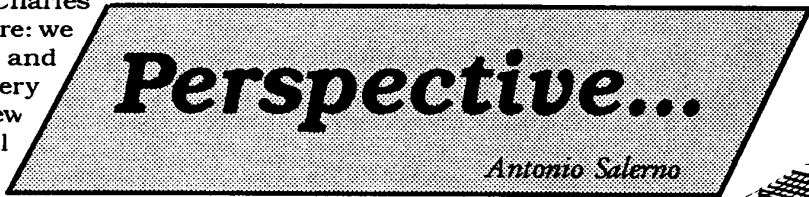In regards to Charles Cherry's departure: we will miss him and wish him the very best in his new endeavor. He will undoubtedly continue to be an active member of the Atari community and may even write an article or two sometime. (Are you listening Charles?)

The position will be filled shortly. We are interviewing candidates now and hope to have someone on board before the end of August. Naturally, when people are replaced there is an adjustment period; however, we will get things back on track very soon. Rest assured that the ideas we've come up with will be implemented, and that no idea has "gone away."

On Softsource™: Even though Softsource now has a good number of entries, the lack of participation by some developers is something that has to be changed. What is particularly disappointing is that we've come up with a good idea, we've

implemented it, yet some developers are still taking a wait and see attitude. As you've seen in previous newsletters, we have to make sure that developers who have done their work for Softsource™ get the benefit. But, we cannot do all the work for you. You have to make an effort. Making a complete Softsource™ entry may take a hour, but how much time do you spend trying to get your message across to all

Perspective...

Antonio Salerno

the dealers out there? And how much time do you spend trying to educate dealer salespeople to sell your product, only to have that person leave? **This is an investment in your future.** For this to really succeed, all developers must participate. You might note that a version of Softsource™ from another computer manufacturer would cost you about $10,000 a quarter ($40,000 per year.) **Use Softsource™. It will work.** (More on this in Dan's article.)

Regarding the question of when new models will be available, we have begun shipping ST^E's and will soon start to see TT's. Developers have had ST^E's and are beginning to get TT's. Our promise was to get them to you before the dealers and public. Even though we had unfortunate delays, you will have had them

for some time before they appear in your customers hands.

Next month, I hope we will have some articles from some of the US marketing staff in regards to what some of their plans are. Finally, it's important for you to know that this program has the full support of us at Atari. From Sam Tramiel on down, we want you to succeed and will continue to do the most we can. ♦

ATARI

Inside This Issue
August 1990

Atari SoftSource™

Dan Mc Namee

So far Atari Softsource™ has been open for you to make your entries for about four months. As I write this there are just over 100 entries, far less then there should be. I know of some major developers online, but they have not made any entries. The majority of the developers I have talked to agree that Atari Soft-source™ is a great marketing tool, yet many of them have not entered their products. Some developers have mentioned that the entry system is not very good. The entry program on GEnie does have some rough features, but you must remember that this program was put together to get the program started quickly. This is only the first version with others to follow. But no program will ever satisfy every person who may ever use it.

Rest assured we will make the program better over time and your feedback is very important to us. Atari Softsource™ is not a static thing; it will change and improve over time. You may have noticed that there have already been fields and new categories added. We will continue to invest in its development.

About 2 weeks ago it came to my attention that Atari is not the only company that thinks a database and demos of products on CD are good marketing tools. For one, Sun Microsystems is bringing out a product called Catalyst CDWare for its SPARC-stations. It will not have a database on it, no "exercise" files, only demo versions of software, and at this time only 20 titles. Users will only be able to run demos of these products if they know how. And if they decide to purchase one of them, they call the provided telephone number of the manufacturer, who then provides them with a password that makes the demo a fully functioning version of the software. **Another difference from Atari Softsource™ is that although developers are on the first disk at no charge, for them to be on subsequent releases of the CD they will have to pay SUN anywhere from $5,000 to $15,000 per release, depending on the size of their program.** Atari is charging you nothing to be on its CD, and has no plans of ever charging. Also, there is no search database and the demos on Catalyst CDWare are not self-running demos as are Demonstrator demos. This means that the user must know something about the software to get an effective demo of the product, or the dealer must have help on hand who knows how to use each product well enough to help demonstrate it. And I think you know what it means to give the customer a good demo.

For another, there is a company called SelectWare Technologies that produces a CD very similar to Atari Softsource™. It contains demos of programs for IBM PC and compatible computers, and a database containing information on these products. Select-Ware also charges to be on its CD. The amount developers are charged ranges from roughly $100 to over $2000 per release of the disk, which is updated quarterly. If you want your product to be listed under ☞

Softsource™...

more than one category (like Atari Softsource™ the products are divided into different categories) you are charged for each additional category. Inside the database, they have an overview text field which is 700 characters long. For each additional 100 characters, they charge an additional dollar. When no one is using the system, it will automatically run what is called a "Live Billboard", which is basically a slide system that displays a quick ad for products. You guessed right: it costs an extra $250. SelectWare has been around for a couple of years, and has released several disks. Of course, they have done some market studies to evaluate the effective of their system. According to their studies, sales increases due to being on their CD ranged from 0 to 20 additional sales, per retailer, per month. The largest increase belonged to the 1-5 additional sales category with a 59% boost. Not a bad sales increase.

As you can see from this, Atari Softsource™ is not only a better idea than they've got, it will really work. Also, Atari is providing this to you as a free service, where other companies are charging developers considerably. Even if Atari Softsource™ only generates one new sale for you that you might not have otherwise received, that sale has at least paid for your time and effort to make your entry. When compared to what it would cost you to advertise in a magazine, or to have a booth at a computer show, Atari Softsource™ is a true bargain. ♦
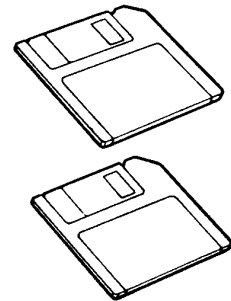
Developer Marketing Information

Software Sentinels are a family of execution control devices used by software developers to prevent the unauthorized distribution of their software. These unobtrusive devices are PC parallel port compatible and are completely transparent to printing functions. Atari DOS (by request), MS–DOS, OS/2, Unix/Xenix and Mac Operating Systems are available. For more information please contact:

Rainbow Technologies
9292 Jeronimo Road
Irvine, CA 92718
(800) 852-8569 (outside CA)
(714) 454-2100
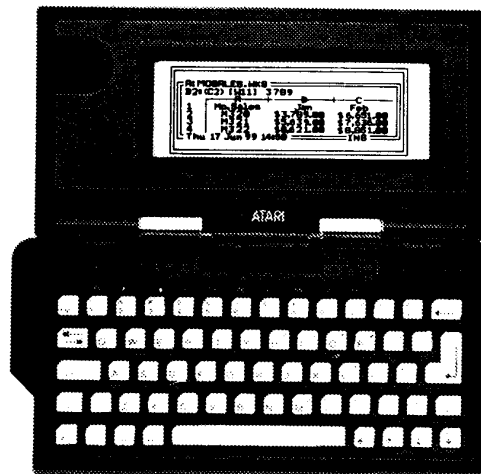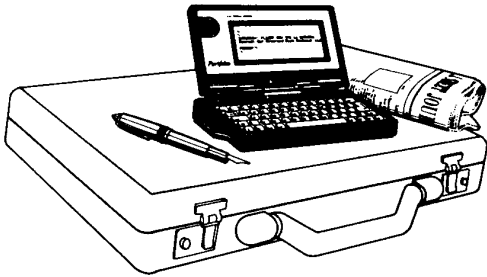
Expanding Coverage

Mike Pooler

The Portfolio is gaining popularity. If you're a *CompuServe* subscriber, you may have noticed a two–page article about the Portfolio in their August magazine. If you live in the Bay Area, you might have seen a full-page Portfolio ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle*-not from us, but from The Good Guys, a large electronics store chain. In the August *Byte*, Jerry Pournelle gives the Porfolio a wonderful endorsement. In January 1991, *StarT Magazine* will begin coverage of the Portfolio. And guess what — they want to review your products!

In fact, *StarT Magazine* asked me for our list of Portfolio developers, so that they could call each of you individually. I had to decline, since we consider the list confidential. However, we have provided a way for you to indicate your desire to be reviewed. This brings me to the next topic... the questionnaire.

If you're a Portfolio developer, you'll find a very concise questionnaire with this newsletter. The results of the questionnaire will help us to better support your development efforts.

The questionnaire will allow us to create a catalog of planned and existing Portfolio products. We'll use the catalog to inform dealers and customers about your product. Also, if we know what type of software you are creating, we will discourage new developers from starting work on identical software.

Perhaps you have no plans to create commercial software. In that case, you can use the questionnaire to indicate if you'd like to be contacted by companies who want to contract Portfolio developers. Many companies have specific internal uses for Portfolio's, but they need software authors. Finally, you can indicate if you'd like your name passed along to *StarT* and other magazines.

UPDATE

Meanwhile, we are continuing to improve the Portfolio through the Update procedure. On August 1st we released Update 1.07, by posting it as UPDATE.ARC on CompuServe ("aportfolio" forum, Library 3), GEnie ("ST" roundtable), and on the Atari BBS (instructions will follow).

Update 1.07 fixes the same bugs as 1.06, plus two more. First, the Portfolio crashes when you try to load a zero length file into the text editor. Second, multiple alarms can crash the Portfolio. With Update 1.07, both problems are fixed. I suggest that you install Update 1.07 in your Portfolio(s) as soon as you can. We are aggressive about getting Update 1.07 to all Portfolio users, so you can count on it being installed when your software is running.

To access the Atari BBS, set your modem to 1200 baud, with N-8-1 parameters (no parity, eight data bits, one stop bit). Connect to 408-745-5308. If you've never called before, you'll have to be "verified" first. Leave your name, address, and phone number, and call back in about two days. By then, you will have been given full access to the BBS. To make sure of this, press ☞

UPDATE...

question-mark ("?") for the list of commands. You should see "[S]ig change" in the list. If not, you haven't been validated yet.

If you have been validated, press "S" for "[S]ig Change", then type "12 <Enter>" for the Portfolio section. Press "F" for "File Transfer" then "D" for "Download", then "827 <Enter>" for the file UPDATE.ARC. You will be prompted for the transfer protocol, then the transfer will begin. The BBS also contains "ARCE.COM" (file 676), a program that will uncompress ARC files on your Portfolio (you might need this to uncompress UPDATE.ARC into UPDATE.COM). Of course, once on the BBS, you're free to browse around and download anything else you'd like. You can get help at anytime by pressing "?". ◆

YES, WE HAVE NO 64K BANANAS

There is a shortage of 512 kbit (64K) OTPROMS (also known by us, affectionally, as HPC-204). We are aware of your need for these programmable cards, and we're doing our best to get them (remember, we need them too!). Be assured that those who have ordered them will be notified by phone when they become available. We expect that this is a temporary problem, and will not be repeated.

There are two other options for those who want to produce program cards. You can use 128K OTPROMs (HPC-205), which are in stock. Or, you can order 64K Masked ROMs in quantities of 5000 or more. ◆

ROM BURNERS

Once you have the OTPROM cards, you will need a way to put your software on them. This is done by a machine called an EPROM Burner. The machine reads a RAM card, and "burns" its contents into the OTPROM card. Once an OTPROM card has been programmed in this way, the program will remain on the card indefinitly, requiring no battery backup. We have identified two burners which can do this reliably — they are discussed in the following article. ◆
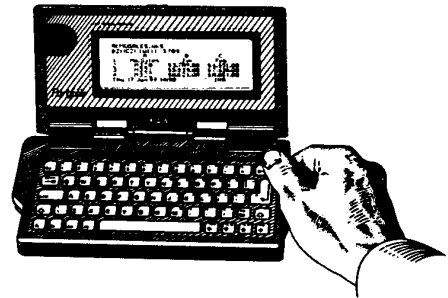
Burning OTPs

J. Patton

There have been a number of inquiries concerning EPROM burners to burn one time programmables (OTPs) for the Portfolio. First of all, any burner will work. In order to burn a ROM card, it is not necessary to use a RAM card in an EPROM burner. You can dump the image of the RAM card with a utility such as Norton utilities, and send the image into the serial port of the burner. If you are looking for an EPROM burner which will download from the RAM card, it must be the type which does not access encoding information used to set up burning conditions for the chip.

Once you have a burner of this type, you should follow these steps:

1. Format and copy the file onto a RAM card.
2. Test the software on the RAM card
3. Set the PROM type as shown in the technical reference guide.
4. Place the RAM card in the card adaptor and load the contents into the programmer.
5. Program the ROM card as you would a normal PROM.
6. This gives a ROM card with a bit image of the formatted RAM card.

There are various types of burners which have different levels of intelligence built into them relative to their cost. One burner which was tested was the model 200 from B&C Microsystems. This burner has a PROM which contains all its

commands accessible from your favorite communications program through your computer's serial port. This produces a low cost albeit slower alternative to self contained burners.

A stand alone burner is available from Stag Microsystems —model PP41 — and will burn up to eight OTPs from a RAM card with the press of a button.

Company Information

B&C Microsystems
750 North Pastoria Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
Tel: (408) 730–5511
Fax: (408) 730–5521

Stag Microsystems
1600 Wyatt Dr.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
Tel: (800) 227–8836
      (408) 988–1118   ◆

Calendar Of Events

AUGUST

August 15-17, Massachusetts
WINDOWS Conference & Exposition will be held at the World Trade Center in Boston. The Conference will draw corporate computer executives from Fortune 1000 Windows-specific computer sites across the country, seeking the latest applications and solutions in the Windows environment. For more information contact:

Kevin McGrath
(415) 601-5000.

August 24-26, West Germany
Annual Atari Messe (Fair) in Dusseldorf. Over 200 exhibitors and 45,000 visitors expected. For more information write: Atari Germany GmbH Postfach 1213,D-6096 Raunheim. West Germany,
Or contact:

Thomas Huber
Voice: 49-6142-2090,
FAX: 49-6142-209180.

SEPTEMBER

September 6-10, Nevada
Cinetex '90, International Film and Television Festival. The show will be held at Bally's Casino Resort, Las Vegas, Nevada. It will be the new showcase for the entertainment industry— displaying everything from computer/videodisc software to CD-ROM. from digital image manipulation systems to user friendly PCs. For more information contact:

The Interface Group
(617) 449-6600.

September 15-16, California
So. California Atari Computer Faire, Version 4.0b. The show will be held at the Glendale Civic Auditorium in Glendale, California. General admission is $5.00. If you are unable to attend, you are invited to give copies of your product as promotional items. Registration needs to be completed by August 15th. For exhibiting information or any questions, please contact:

John Tarpinian
(818) 246-7286.

OCTOBER

October 3-5, California
The Fifth annual Seybold Computer Publishing Conference and Exposition will held at the San Jose Convention Center in the heart of Silicon Valley. This show will once again provide the world stage for the display, discussion and debate of innovative information delivery technology. For more information please call:

(213) 457-5850.

October 6-7, Virginia
WAACE AtariFest'90. The Fest will be held at the Sheraton Reston featuring shopping bargains from dozens of vendors. Demonstration rooms (both days!). Seminars, door prizes and a banquet on Saturday evening at 8 pm. For more information contact:

Russell Brown
(703) 680-2698.

October 10-12, New York
INFO '90 Show will be held at the

Javits Convention Center in New York. INFO'90 is the only exhibition and conference to address the rapidly evolving integrated computer market. For more information contact:

Marilyn Harrington
(203) 352-8477.

October 25-27, Massachusetts
Northeast Computer Show to be held at the Bayside Expo Center in Boston. The focus of this year's Show is to address the specific needs of the buyer, finding customized solutions for their every computing requirement. For more information contact:

The Interface Group
(617) 449-6600.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you hear of any upcoming events, please submit them in writing to:

Atari Corporation
Post Office Box 3427
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3427
Attn: Applications Department
Marketing Assistant