



OTTAWA PC NEWS

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The newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group

June 1997

Product review

Office 97 from New Deal Inc.

by Harald Freise

For those of you who were not present at the last meeting, allow me to let you in on a little secret. YOU MISSED A GREAT DEAL. A New Deal in fact.

New Deal Inc. has put together a software package called Office 97. It runs on any DOS PC with 8MB or more of free disk space as if the computer was a high-end graphical-user interfaced (GUI) Windows computer. It combines an integrated word processor, spreadsheet, database, graphics and communications program in one package. Think about it - in a DOS PC?

Installation

I'm using a 286-72MHz laptop with 1MB of memory and a mouse plugged into the serial port. Setup wasn't the easiest for me because the software was told that my display was an EGA display when, in fact, it was really a dual twist gas plasma (ugly as sin) display. However it installed fine. (I didn't remember that 4 disks took so long to load.)

After a couple of questions at startup to further configure the system I was off and running. The program takes quite a while to load and there is considerable disk thrashing going on. The interface is graphical and is a reincarnation of the GEOS operating interface. If you are used to windows then it doesn't take long to get used to this. If you aren't used to running windows then this is a treat for you. Sure does beat DOS. Task switching is mighty good to have when you can cut, copy, and paste between applications. Printing is achieved in the background while you continue to work. You can even retrieve items from the wastebasket. Remember that this could be running on what is commonly referred to as an "obsolete" computer.

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What's good

I can't begin to list all the features included in this package. There is a lot of little thoughtful additions to the applets, like common, easy-to-use standard conversions in the calculator. There are shortcuts to aid you in finding out the gas mileage for your car, and simple mortgage and financial calculations. If you deal in currency there is a converter for Yen to dollars and back again. There are the requisite screen savers and Solitaire game, a planner, index card file, and a banner maker that does up some nifty designs. One feature that I have not seen before is the

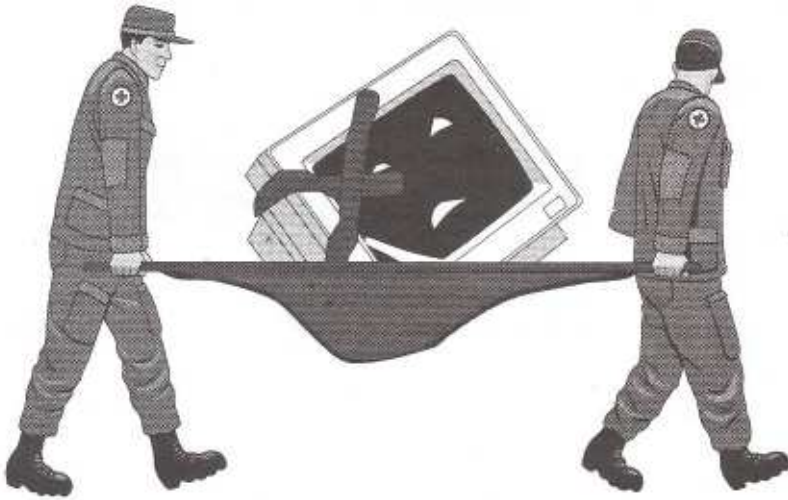
continued arc page 2

Next meeting: **WEDNESDAY, June 4, 1997** See page 2

DataWeb

by Harald Freise

DataWeb will be at our June 4 meeting, and their presentation will focus on the proper care and feeding of computer peripherals. Expect to hear a discussion of tips and tricks along with sound maintenance principles. There will be a question and answer opportunity as well.



John Mulroy of DataWeb, told us that not only does DataWeb service monitors but virtually all other computer peripherals as well. Printers, scanners, plotters, ups, in fact everything except the computer itself. They do service laptop computers though. DataWeb has been in business for about a year and a half, and they have four senior engineers on staff with about thirty-five years of combined experience. As well as a carry-in service for everyone, DataWeb offers a pick-up service for corporate and dealer accounts. The standard turnaround time for service work is 3 days (parts availability permitting) and they warranty repairs for 3 months. They also sell refurbished products, which carry a six-month warranty.

DataWeb is located at 2100 Thurston Road. Their phone number is 737-5854.

New Deal Inc. (continued from page 1)

ability to tear off any menu and place anywhere you desire on the screen. It makes repetitive menu driven tasks much easier.

What's not so good

On the down side are a couple of things. There are a lot of proprietary bits, like fonts and file formats. I haven't had time to sort out everything but with due consideration I can export most documents into file formats that are compatible with the majority of today's software. There is a considerable amount of disk access (thrashing) in my meager system and task switching is painfully slow. All of these problems go away when the application is loaded on a more capable system. The entire suite seems to be very well behaved when running within Windows or Windows '95, not to mention very fast.

Conclusion

It is a pleasant experience to see that older equipment can be upgraded with new software. The code is written a lot tighter than the bloated monsters that have become the

norm today: It's fast and easy to use. Just the thing to turn that old "obsolete" computer into a productive machine once more.

New Deal Inc. can be reached at www.newdealine.com or New Deal Inc., 137 Lindsay Avenue, Dorval, Quebec H9P 2S6, phone 514-633-6370, FAX. 514-633-6315. There is a demo version available on their web site. At CDN \$99.95 it should be quite a hit. Educational site licensing is extremely inexpensive. I still have some special offers left for club members at only \$39.95. Come see me at the meeting for your OPCUG order form.



Meetings	Date	Time and venue
OPCUG General Meeting	June 4: Data Web	7:30 Pro - Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd.
Desktop Publishing SIG	June 10: MS Publisher	7:30 pro - Lemmex Computer Training Centre, 275 Slater St. (at Kent)
Internet SIG	June 8: To be announced	7:30 Inn - Keefer Room, RMOC, 111 Lisgar St.
Ottawa Paradox Users Group	June 19: Paradox vs Access	6:15 pm - Inly Systems, 1221 a Cyrville Rd.
FOX SIG	June 20: To be announced	7:30 pro - Sir Jean Talon Building Conference room, Tunney's Pasture, Holland Ave. (north of Scott St.)

OPUG: Ottawa Paradox Users Group

Sneak Preview of Paradox Vers. 8

by John Ladds

The May meeting was "show & tell" night for the Paradox team from Corel. Frank Tomei and Sylvain Charron came out to hold Paradox 8 (Beta 1) up for our scrutiny. Frank, a product marketing specialist, conducted the demonstration and Sylvain the product manager for Paradox 8 fielded technical questions from the group. While some of the new features are not ready yet, the look and feel of the final version was very evident. The interface looks like the rest of the Corel office suite. All of the menus and buttons are the same across the full suite and the look of similar objects is the same (that is, Paradox Tables look like Quattro Pro spreadsheets). To aid suite integration the PerfectExpert has been added to Paradox. This tool allows a user to call up an expert from any of suite's programs to do a task. The PerfectExpert will pick the best program from the suite to do the task at hand.

We were pleased to hear that Corel was reviewing the programming language of Paradox (ObjectPAL) and making special efforts to tighten up the underlying code. We also liked the new Application Bar. Like the Windows 95 Task Bar, the Application Bar lists all of the open objects within an application. With 2 or 3 tables, a form and a report open, the Application Bar makes finding any one of them easy. A discussion was held on the Paradox Report facilities.

We would like to thank Frank and Sylvain for come out to the meeting. We appreciate the time they took to show us their work to date.



Access and Paradox

The topic of the next meeting on June 19 at 6:15 is Paradox vs. Access (a head to head competition). Our meetings are held at Inly Systems computer store, 1221A Cyrville Road (a couple of blocks to the East of St Laurent Shopping Centre). Please check out web site at <http://magi.corrx/-chopla/opug/opug.html> or contact any one of us.

- Larry Chop, 236-8761, chopla@magi.com
- John Ladds, 951-4581, laddsj@statcan.ca
- Nick Potter, 951-2384, pottern@statcan.ca



Review of the May 1997 Meeting of the I SIG

by Micheline Johnson



This presentation was the third on Web Authoring to the OPCUG Internet SIG by David Curling, Principal Consultant of Loday Systems Inc. The topic was "Update on Web Authoring and Management".

- Part 1 (1995) was a discussion of Web HTML Editors
- Part 2 (1996-02-13) was a description of the "Curling" process for developing and maintaining a Web site.
(www.pmicanada.org/isightm/isigrpt96.htm#CURLING) Note: Part 3 was to have been the online presentation, "Some thoughts on analysis and preparation of a Web Site", followed by the slide summary, "Notes on Page and Web Management". However, due to hardware/communications problems, only the latter was presented.

Some thoughts on analysis and preparation of a Web Site

Although not presented at the I-SIG meeting as planned, this may be downloaded from <ftp://ftp.pmicanada.org/outgoing/auth3.zip>, unzipped, and browsed starting with file [auth3.htm](#). Part of this presentation is a series of local web pages, with links to net sites. So be sure your browser is online (PPP connection to the net).

Notes on Page and Web Management

Learning Objectives

- to overview some of the issues of HTML Page development
- to review typical HTML Editors
- to consider leading Web Management Applications

Page preparation

- Basic HTML Tags
- Headings, paragraphs, lists, links, images, sound, video
- Advanced HTML
- Flames, forms, clickable maps
- Page Presentation
- Microsoft's FrontPage Editor
- Adobe's PageMill
- Corel's Web.DESIGNER
- Sausage Software's Hot Dog (code based)
- Nesbitt Software's Web Edit (split window)

- Allaire's Homesite FrontPage Editor, PageMill and Web.DESIGNER are WYSIWYG. Hot Dog, Web Edit and Homesite require a browser to view the end result. David uses Homesite because of its powerful training program and its link checker.

Case Study: WWW PM Forum

This site includes What's New (on the site), Monthly, a Mailing List (of 2 HTML files of What's New), and an HTML file.

HTML Validation

- CSE 3310 HTML Validator
(<http://htmlvalidator.com/>)
- Red Hog Software's SiteHog 1.07
www.compulink.co.uk/-allied--display/redhoglindex.html (UK shareware that validates the entire website)
- Editors

Web Analysis

These check for broken links, orphan files, and excessive loading times.

- In Context's Web Analyzer
(www.incontext.ca/products/analyze.htmD)
- Blue Sky Software's Web Doctor (www.blue-sky.com)
- Corel's Site.Manager (www.corel.com/corelweb/)

Web Management

- Microsoft's FrontPage
(www.microsoft.com/frontpage/documents/technical/default.htm)
- TCP/IP Test Utility
- FrontPage Editor
- FrontPage Explorer
- Microsoft's Image Composer
- Microsoft's Personal Server

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Trapping Workshop *Review by Bert Schopf*

What is Trap?

Lack of trap is seen in the thin, paper show-through lines around the edges of text/graphics. This happens when unfrapped artwork on printing plates goes out of register.

Trapping slightly overlaps adjacent coloured areas to compensate for misregistration, paper stretching, operator inattention, and other chemical/mechanical factors in the commercial printing process.

Trapping Methods:

duplicate objects, making the trap object slightly larger than the other one

overprint outlines - matching outline colour to fore/background colour OR black

use auto-trapping (built into most DTP software controls)

- overprint text rather than knocking out
- design with common colour components

Tip: if you copy from the clipboard, don't even *think* about trapping PICT or WMF files

June Meeting: MS Publisher

Join us on June 10 for a demonstration of Microsoft Publisher '97 by Mr. Scott Jackson of Microsoft Canada Inc. MS Publisher is a great entry-level page layout program that is easy to use and perfect for producing newsletters, web pages, and so forth.

Internet SIG (continued from page 4)

- Corel's Web Master Suite
(www.corel.com/corelweb/webmaster/)
Web.SiteManager-Web.PhotoShop-Web.Draw-
Web.Move-Web.World-Web.Data-Web.Gallery
- O'Reilly's Web Site (<http://lwebsite.ora.comn>)

General

David uses:

- Allaire's HomeSite ver 2.5 (www.allaire.com) for HTML coding,
- CSE 3310 HTML Validator (<http://htmlvalidator.com>), for code validation,
- Incontext's Web Analyzer (www.incontext.ca) for automated Web analysis,
- Microsoft's FrontPage (www.microsoft.com/frontpage/), and
- Corel's WebMaster Suite (www.corel.com) for Web Management.

For additional information, visit the WWW Project Management Forum Internet Update
www.synapse.net/~loday/PMForurn/intupdat.htm

A January, 1997 Web Audit was conducted on the W W W Project Management Forum Web by Wow DynamiX (www.wowdx.net). This evaluation is a free one--time service

and consists of several components including ratings and feedback regarding the "four corners" of a web site:

- speed
- functionality
- appearance
- Content.

The Web Audit Report provided by Wow DynamiX

(www.pmicanada.org/isightm/docs/webaudit.tx) provides talking points and a reference for the Presentation.

David Curling is an ardent "internaut" and Coordinator of the Ottawa PC Users Internet SIG (<http://www.synapse.net/~loday/isig.htm>). He can be reached at curlingd@lodaycom or by telephone at (613) 731--5381.



Product review

Frame-It by O. T Stop NOCCC*

Frame-It, an innovative program being shipped by DogByte Development, brings the computer and craft worlds together to design and print full-color picture frames, photo albums, scrapbook pages, photo cards, envelopes and double-sided matte inserts for photo album pocket pages. Of course, you can add text and a spell checker are built in.

It's full color designs give a number options from easel-back picture frames with coordinating cards and envelopes to personalized scrapbook

pages to custom matte inserts. The user may choose from over 2000 pre-designed templates. You can customize your work with stamp graphics and text options. The templates and designs themes include those for holidays, birthdays, graduation, anniversaries and more.

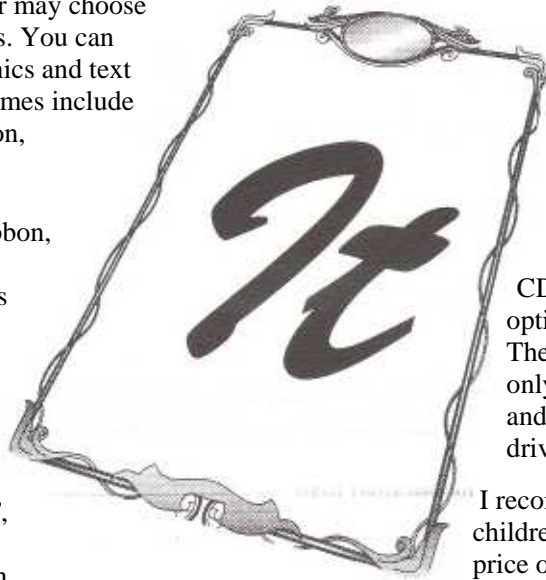
The kit comes with specialty paper, ribbon, cord and photo corners to produce two complete photo albums. Each picture is printed with fold, cutout lines, and instructions for standup frames and envelopes depending on the project.

Frame-It has options to use regular photos, scanned images or digitized photos in BMP WMF, EPS, JPEG, JIF, TGA, PCX, PCD, WPG and PCT file formats. The kit also includes a mail-in offer from Kodak. You can mail in film or photos to Kodak and in return, you will receive regular prints or photos in disc or CDROMs.

The user manual is quite complete with chapters, which include installation, getting acquainted and quick start. There are detailed instructions on creating an address book, (so you can create mailing lists), creating a card and matching envelope and assembling frames. These detailed instructions are important because you probably will not be using the program everyday. But if that is not enough, video demonstrations are provided of an actual frame assembly. For an art talent brain dead like me, the craft kit tip chapter was especially useful.

If you have an idea for improving the
OPCUG meetings,

DON'T FRAME IT ...



Another nice thing is that the technical support is a 213 number so the telephone charges will not break. If a technician is not available, you can leave a message and they will call you back.

The program comes on a CD and you can install in Windows 95 or 3.11. The system requirements 486/33Mz or faster computer, 8 MB of RAM is

recommended 256 colors, CD-ROM drive and mouse. You also need a color or laser printer. There are three installation options. Full installation installs the program and art files on your hard drive. Normal installation installs only the program on the hard drive and you have to the CD in the

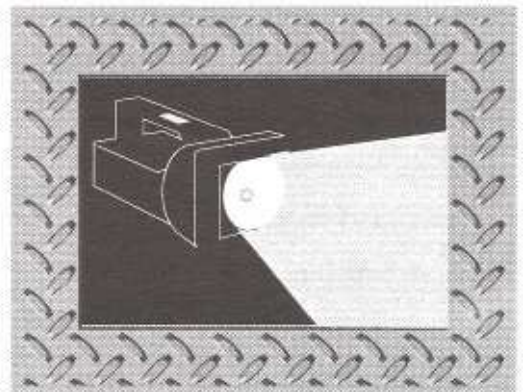
CDROM drive during use. The third option is to run everything from the CD. The third option may be the best if you are only going to use the program occasionally and you have limited space on your hard drive.

I recommend this program for your and your children's use. Frame-It has a suggested retail price of \$US69.99 and is expected to have a street price of \$US50.00. The program is available from DogByte

Development at 800-936-4298 or from major computer retail outlets.

* North Orange County Computer Club

** This article was originally written for a Californian audience.



Rama, A strategic adventure game

By Steve Berlin, NOCCC*

Greetings and welcome to Rama. Suddenly, you are called upon to become an astronaut and board a gigantic alien cylinder hurtling through space. The spacecraft is called Rama and your mission is to explore this wonderful and secret world and unlock the mysteries and solve the puzzles it has to offer.

Rama is an extremely enjoyable and difficult exploration thinking game. The world/spacecraft has a cast of human astronauts, alien biots, flying avians, octospiders and a complex layout all very similar to the Rama books by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee. Rama is filled with symbol plaques, artifacts, jewels, tools, and a myriad of interesting objects, all which are required to solve puzzles.

Rama uses sets of threes, base-8 and base-16 math, and symbol pattern matching to solve some difficult puzzles (holding true to the books). However, the rewards seem great after struggling through the math. It kind of takes you back to those high school days. During your entire visit on Rama, you are seated in an enclosed space vehicle which uses a slightly smaller display screen. After a while, it was not a problem. On screen, you can view, rotate, and manipulate objects, view video mail from other astronauts, use a radar locating system and view detailed map layout for the regions.

The game begins by meeting the human astronauts who tell you about themselves and their mission. After collecting some items (and your trusty sidekick, Puck), you will be shuttled to the base camp in the Central Plains area of Rama where your expedition begins. The game places artifacts and symbol plaques in random places, however the astronauts and game designers are kind and will most assuredly get you that object before you need it. Puck will also come in handy, pointing out objects and describing anything of importance.

The graphics in Rama start off fairly good. The biots (centipede, crab, spider, etc.) look somewhat menacing and will kill you if you get too close. The Bangkok and London regions have very good graphics and provide a surreal atmosphere. The Raman museum is very well designed and provides interesting room shifting techniques. After completing the Central Plains area, you will be transported across an ice field to the other side of Rama. This is where the game really delivers. The graphics are spectacular in the Avian and Octospider plazas and lairs. Beautifully colored walls, etchings, exhibits and animation sequences of the flying avians and octospiders are vivid and keep you thoroughly entrenched in the game. Some of the puzzles and clues get rather difficult, but your surroundings are so unique and spectacular that you stay motivated all the way through.

The goal in Rama is to eventually disarm a bomb which will destroy Rama, your fellow astronauts and the aliens. You will be under severe real-time pressure to do so. The game is a real challenge that offers spectacular graphical architecture and good animation. Don't miss this one!!!

Rama was created by Sierra and costs approximately \$US40 at your local computer store or can be purchased from Sierra at (800)757-7707 or at www.sierra.com.



* North Orange County Computer Club

WANTED



We need your opinions.

What do you think of the OPCUG?

Please respond by private message to Willem (Bill) Vandijk, either
• on the PUB, or

by E-mail to bvdijk@igs.net

OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users Group Of Ottawa, and is *published* monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in **this** newsletter may not necessarily **represent** the views of the club or its members. Deadline for submission is four Saturdays before the general meeting.

Group, meetings

OPCUG normally meet, on the first Wednesday in the month, except in July and August, at the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa. Meeting times are 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Fees

Membership: \$25 per year.

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Club news

May's winners *by Mark Layer*

The winners of a copy of the New Deal Office 97 Software Suite were John Bond and Ted Havrot. Imagine... Ted being asked to pick the winning ticket and then picking his own!! What were the odds?

Thanks to New Deal Inc. for donating the door prizes, and for the User Group Discount and the extra special discount on meeting night.



Reuse, recycle

Bring your old computer magazines, books, or any other computer paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the general meetings, and leave them in the area specified. If you don't bring something, you may want to TAKE AWAY something of interest, so look in on this area. Any item left over at the end of the meeting will be sent to the dumpster

