SEPTEMBER 1994

BOARDWATCH MAGAZINE

Guide to Electronic Bulletin Boards and the Internet

THE TOP 100 BBSs IN THE U.S.

1994 Boardwatch 100 Readers' Choice BBS Contest Results

Plus

MAJOR BBS ON THE INTERNET

New Internet Connectivity Option Provides telnet/ftp to Major BBS

CIX-WE OWN THE INTERNET

Dramatic July Announcement
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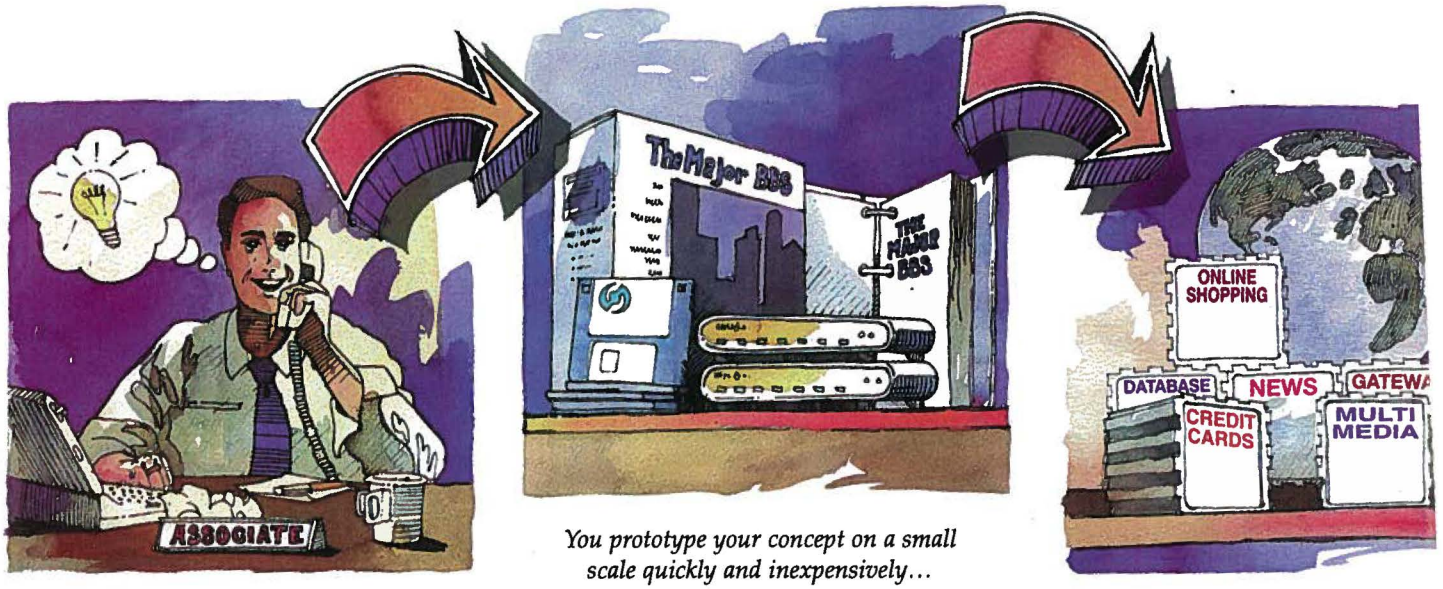

You start with a brilliant idea...

You prototype your concept on a small scale quickly and inexpensively...

You smoothly integrate multi-user applications as you need them...

You have a vision. Bring your company online. Tie the workgroups to the customers. Distribute all kinds of information and electronic media. Or maybe launch a new business in cyberspace.

You need more than just a BBS — you want an open platform for creating your own online service. A system that is tailored to your mission. And nobody can do it better than you.

Start Right the First Time

The Major BBS® Version 6.2 gives you everything you need to get started: e-mail, forums, polls, file libraries, QWK, teleconference, a user registry, and more. Right away, you can plug in one or two modems in a DOS-based 386 or better and go online.

Customize your look and feel with the built-in Menu Tree™ and text block editor. Use Locks and Keys™ security for intuitive access control. Create unlimited user classes for accounting and system management.

Enjoy auto-generated RIP graphics, MHS importing/exporting, full multilingual support, time analysis and user reports, CD-ROM utilities, remote Sysop management, "doors" to an auxiliary machine, an activity audit trail, autocleanup and timed events — hundreds of special features designed to make your life as Sysop a success.

But that's just the beginning...

Expand Your Horizons

Next, you can integrate a wide array of add-on options. Installation is as easy as "A:INSTALL". The Major BBS takes full advantage of DLL technology to dynamically link these features into your system.

For instance, *Fax/Online* lets you provide outgoing fax-mail and fax database services to your users. *Search and Retrieve* gives you a full document database, with support for graphics files and fax attachments. And Internet mail and newsgroups can pipe right in with the *Major Gateway/Internet* package.

Other DLL extensions available from Galacticomm include *Shopping Mall, The Major Database, Entertainment Collection, Dial-Out,* and a special version of the *RIPaint* GUI design tool.

Use the Menu Tree designer to place these new options in the most convenient location. Full security control lets you decide which users will have access. And because these DLLs are written in C and Assembly, they provide far greater performance and flexibility than script languages or xBASE derivatives.

You Need It? You Got It...

Over 150 independent software vendors offer a wealth of products you can cleanly add to your system as DLLs. Plug in software such as:

- multimedia document servers
- MLS photograph databases
- credit card verifiers
- FIDO, QWK, RIME mail support
- online bidding networks
- employment classifieds
- 1-900 payment and tracking
- interactive multiplayer games
- worldwide "chat" networks
- automatic call-back verifiers
- contact management databases
- alternate user languages
- photograph dating services
- online purchasing systems
- satellite news delivery
- remote management tools
- and much, much more...

Each of these products integrates directly into your system, taking full advantage of our open architecture and

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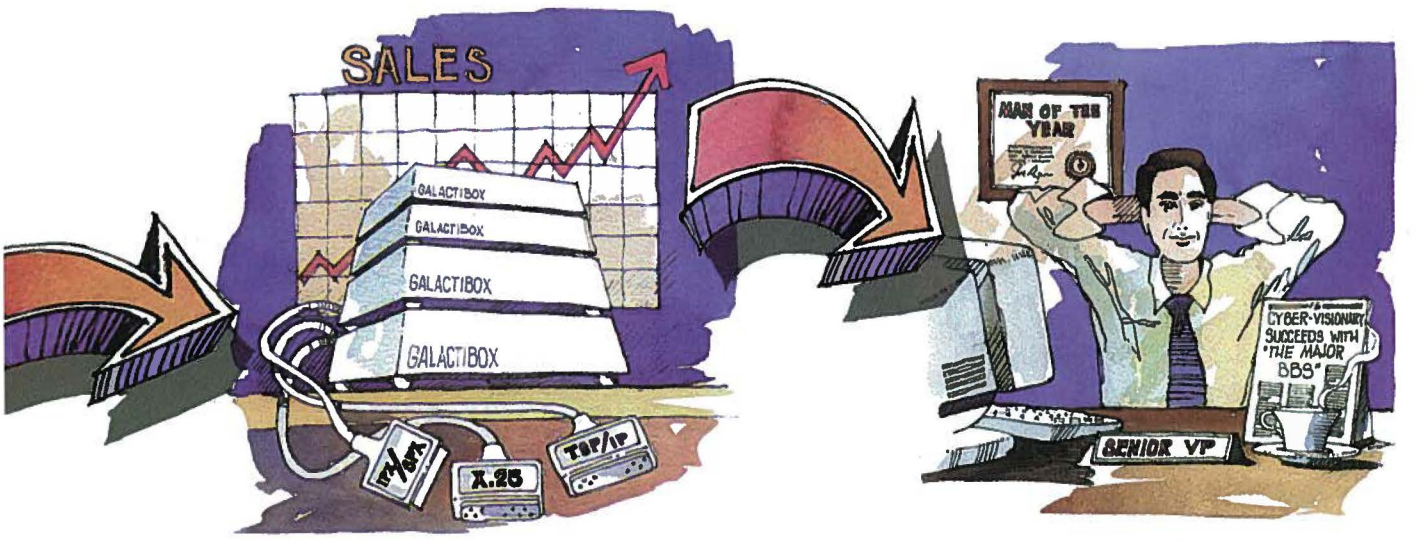
We just provide the tools.



As you grow, you add more lines, hook up your LAN, connect to the Internet...

And you experience the success of your own, unique online service.

ulti-user environment. No other BBS atform gives you this power.

"Doors" even let you interface to ient/server databases and other DOS plications, as well as the programs ritten for multinode BBSes.

ith the Freedom to Grow

As your system takes off, you can ld more lines without the headaches multitaskers or stacks of computers. mply add *User Six-Pack* licenses and ok up more modems.

ONLY THE MAJOR BBS GIVES YOU THE POWER TO SUPPORT OVER 100 SIMULTANEOUS HIGH-SPEED USERS ON ONE PENTIUM-CLASS MACHINE.

In performance tests reported by *ardwatch Magazine*, The Major BBS ndled 104 simultaneous file transfers 14.4 modem rates (1750 cps), and over at 28.8 modem speeds (3300 cps). In ost real world cases, even more simul- neous users are possible.

You can use multiport hardware ch as the GalactiBoard and GalactiBox easily manage huge numbers of inter- l and external modems. (Galacticomm the only BBS manufacturer with multi- user hardware design experience.) The Major BBS also works smoothly with non-intelligent hardware by vendors such as DigiBoard and Boca Research.

And Connectivity For All

Only The Major BBS gives you the ability to support modems, serial connections, IPX/SPX LAN channels, direct X.25 circuits, and TCP/IP sessions — all on one computer. Each channel group can have different menu branches and security controls, at your option.

The *Advanced LAN Option* lets you create a bank of channels that will dynamically accept calls from computers around your office — directly through your Novell LAN.

You can also provide national and international access at low cost via the *X.25 Software Option* and a PC XNet card — you avoid the inefficiencies and expense of a PAD.

And our new *Internet Connectivity Option* lets you integrate a TCP/IP stack directly into your BBS. You don't need a separate machine to provide telnet in, telnet out, FTP client, and FTP server features to your users. Anonymous FTP and Internet surcharges are also supported.

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There are few limits to what you can accomplish with The Major BBS. The full C source code to the BBS is available, to give you the ultimate flexibility. Write your own add-on options, or tweak a particular function to your exact needs.

And to address the needs of very high-end applications, Galacticomm has launched a UNIX technology division to provide The Major BBS platform for minicomputers to supercomputers.

Integrated solutions, consulting, and custom development are available from *Ambassador* dealers worldwide. World-class support is available to you via voice, fax, BBS, CompuServe, and the Internet. A quarterly magazine called *The Major News* provides you tips and tricks, as well as a resource for third-party products and services. And regular software improvements bring you the latest in online technology.

For more information, give us a call at 1-800-328-1128 (or 305-583-5990 outside the U.S. and Canada). And let's turn your visions into reality.

GALACTICOMM

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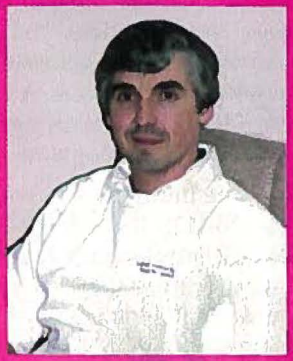

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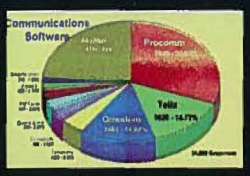

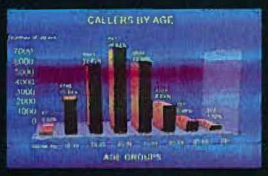

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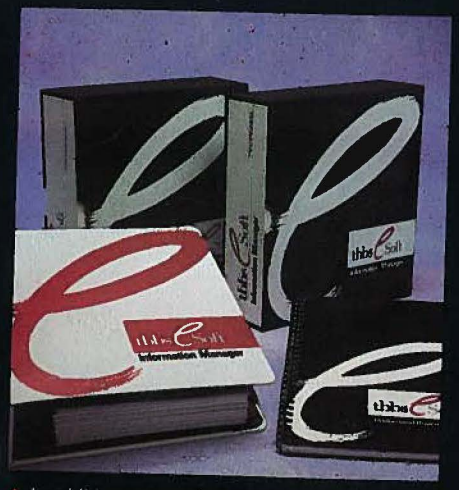
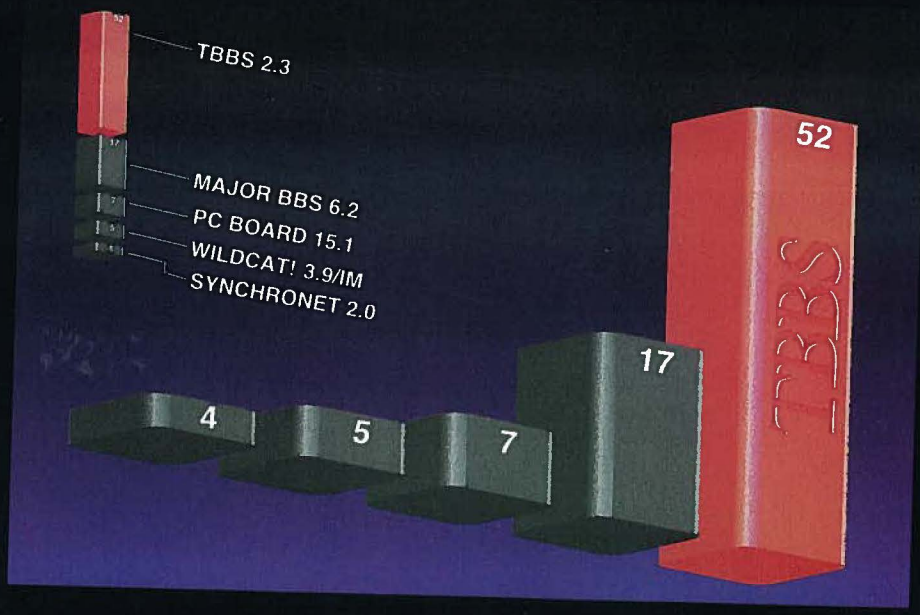
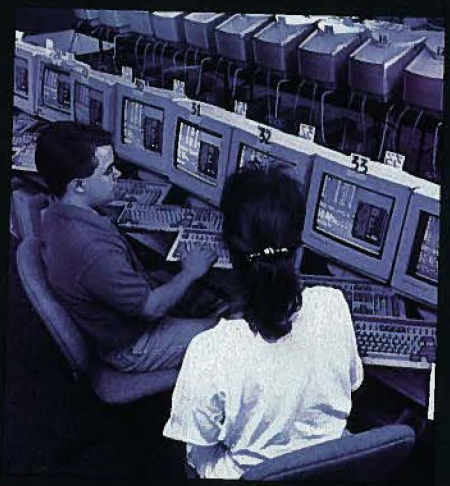


▲ In addition to complete documentation, TBBS comes with a 40 minute installation video tape.

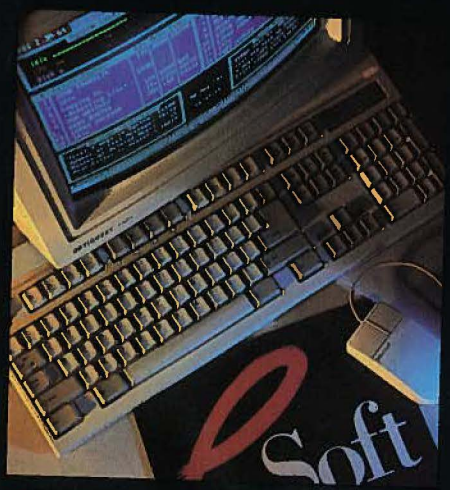
▶ Number of simultaneous, full-speed ZMODEM downloads at 38.4 Kbps on a single P5/60 CPU.





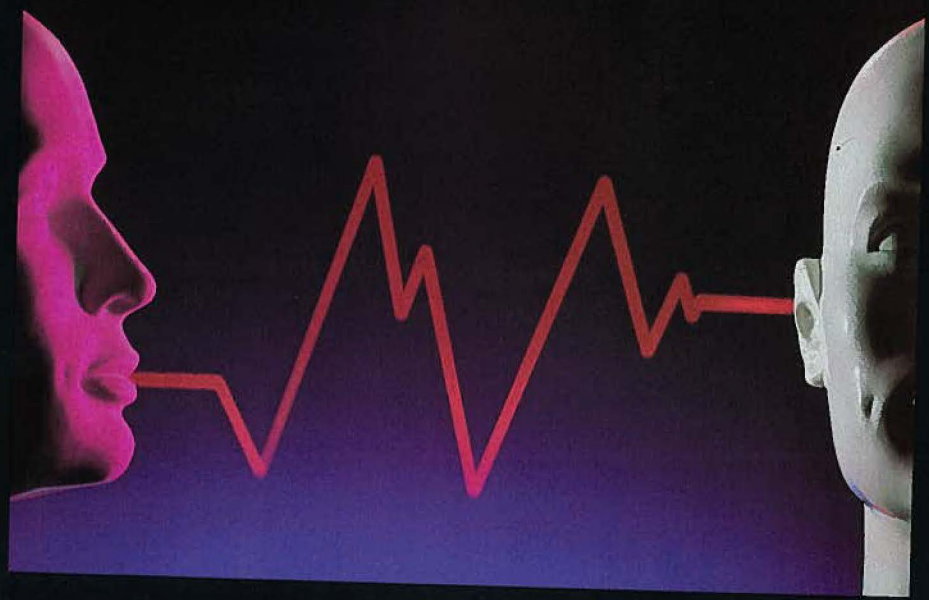
▲ The test was conducted in the eSoft Testing Lab. Each PC represents one BBS user.

◀ A 64-line TBBS and Internet Protocol Adapter (IPAD). Minimum hardware – maximum power.



▲ The high reliability of TBBS means its power won't turn on you. No babysitting required.

▶ TBBS' unprecedented flexibility lets your BBS talk to your callers in their language.



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Power.

When your BBS succeeds, you'll need the power to back it up – and you won't want to buy a room full of computers to get it. For years, TBBS has stood alone at the top of the power curve in BBS software. It still does. To prove it, we put all types of BBS software in a room and tested them. As the graph on the left shows, the closest competitor can't deliver half the speed and power of TBBS 2.3. To complement its speed and power, TBBS delivers unprecedented flexibility and smooth expandability – on the minimum hardware possible. So scaling up as your system grows won't stress either your budget or your sanity. And TBBS is backed by eSoft – the company with the most computer communications knowledge and expertise in the industry. You can buy 64 user TBBS 2.3 for $1,995 *(32 user for $1,495, 16 user for $895, and 4 user for $295)*. When you're ready for the only BBS product that can truly deliver reliable online xBASE databasing, TCP/IP Internet access, LAN access and high speed modem support in an integrated system, then you're ready to step up to TBBS. Call (303) 699-6565 for more information and access to a demonstration system.

Speed.

TBBS.

eSoft

eSoft, Incorporated

15200 E. Girard Ave.
Suite 3000
Aurora, CO 80014

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EDITOR'S NOTES

MUD WRESTLING ON THE INTERNET

Connectivity is one of the strangest commodities on the planet. It exhibits some astounding properties.

We think of intangible items that do have a significant value as generally unique. A one of a kind painting carries most of its value intangibly - the canvas, frame, and paint are not particularly valuable. But the painting is - often based on a combination of aesthetics, history, and authorship that make it unique. If you could make exact copies of it in ad infinitum numbers, it would not be nearly so valuable.

Connectivity is an intangible, has significant value, but is reproducible simply by the act of connecting. It is a verb in a commodity world of nouns. This gives it several astounding properties that otherwise bright people really find consternating.

First, the more of it you sell, the more of it you have in stock. If you connect 10 people, you then have 10 people for the eleventh to connect to. If you connect 100 people, you then have 100 people to connect the 101st to. Purchaser 101 actually got a better deal than purchaser 11. But purchaser 11 had the value of what they bought go up by the act of connecting 101 as well.

Which brings up the second astounding property. The more of it you have, the more valuable it becomes. Most commodities go DOWN in value based on supply and demand, scarcity and plentitude. Connectivity always works backwards. The more of it you HAVE in stock, the more valuable it becomes as a commodity.

The third astounding property is the Loaves and Fishes Property of Connectivity. If you sell ONE connection to anyone on the planet, they can likewise sell it to hundreds of others - at a lower price than you sold it to them. Which makes it a little hard to corner the market on, and despite some costs of doing business, you're basically selling air if ALL you sell is connectivity.

Simple connectivity can be made flat, by offering one model, at a reasonable price. If you want to connect to MCI Mail, they basically have one model, one fairly reasonable price, and the result is they sell it widely but not deeply. It's a flat fanout.

Internet connectivity is heirarchical by design. You can divide it down through a tree hierarchy until no one gets more than about 100 cps of connectivity, and it still more or less works. Packet on a tree.

Most of this seems a little obvious. But we've currently got a crowd forming, resembling nothing so much as all the hounds of hell in a pre-adolescent phase, determined not only to sell air, but to own the entire market for it. And the number of players is growing like a crowd around an armored truck accident. IBM has announced the IBM Global Network. Sprint now has not only Sprint Link, but Global Link, MCI has announced little, they're just basically hiring everyone that can spell TCP/IP and get it right before the third try - with some vague arm waving about Q1/95. A vice president of MCI is going to IBM's global network. Steve Wolffe, head of the National Science Foundation that funds the current backbone, is rumored to be going to work for MCI, which is further rumored to be buying SURAnet, which is not BARRnet because BARRnet was bought by BBN. Vint Cerf was the head of the Internet Society, but now he works for MCI. It's an Internet frenzy. Contracts aren't contracts, they're "cooperative agreements" so it's all cool. The New York NAP is actually near Philadelphia, so the National Security Agency won't have to walk so far to listen in. What a contree!

In the debate about commercial use of the Internet and the nearly mythical Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) a few years ago, a group called CIX was formed - the Commercial Internet Exchange. It was formed to demonstrate a commercial network, real enough to NOT be transparently mythical, so that companies could connect to CIX members and so to the Internet, with some assurance that they weren't infringing the AUP. That their packets didn't ever transit the NSF backbone anyway is absurd. But it was a salutory nod/effort toward the AUP acceptable to almost everyone.

The interesting thing CIX had going for it was it simplified interconnection issues because the heart of it was that all members would send/receive to all others without any settlement fees. Whichever way the traffic flowed and in whatever direction, nobody measured or charged each other for "carrying each other's traffic." This ended the otherwise endless and insolvable debate as to whether my connectivity was larger than yours so YOU should pay ME to connect to me, or whether my connected people were more desireable to reach and so it should really be reversed. Members paid $10,000 each and were peers.

Over the past two years, the number of people making the connection to the Internet has been phenomenal. And when you examine the startup costs to take your new found IP connectivity, sell it to 10 others, recoup your costs and the cost of your pipe to the net, it looks a lot like a license to print money and spend it before the ink's dry. So there's been an explosion of new "Internet Providers."

A couple of the early pioneers in selling Internet connectivity were Rick Adams, of UUNET, and Marty Schoffstall of PSI. They railed to high heaven at the National Science Foundation spewing accusations of conspiracy, malfeasance, and high crimes over every jot and tittle of any NSF cooperative agreement that our government was selling out to IBM and it would shut them, the little guy, out from being able to sell this connectivity. They won, and so were allowed to.

Once in the club, their first official act was to try to be the last in, and shut off anyone else. PSI simply won't allow anyone to resell connections by contract. UUNET tacks on an additional $8000 per year charge to make them go away. Now that they were in, screw the little guys - they can get their own.

And many regionals and service providers who did get into the game followed suit. Adding contractual clauses to all customer agreements limiting or forbidding in various clumsily worded ways of dubious legal heritage the ability of their customers to become their competition. The remarkable thing is that for some time this gravity defying strategy seemed to work and keep the whole thing in the air - however bizarre, inappropriate, unfair, and niggardly it all seemed. We usually refer to these as Dog in the Manger clauses. Generally these ISPs have done a poor job servicing demand

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for connectivity, but they won't let anyone else do it either.

Into this really genteel little boys club rides U.S. Sprint with Sprint Link. Sprint basically hooks up anybody, anywhere, anytime for a fee, and they don't care what you do with it. You can bury your end in the ground, or use it to light up the pope at night. You can sell it, resell it, repackage it, or just assume someone else in your office is using it and put a plant in front of it.

And the house of cards starts to tumble. The other Internet Services Providers didn't actually have a business, they had a wish for one. And if anyone said booger to the little contract clauses, it would be over. Sprint did. They would NOT be able to charge anyone $50,000 per year for $400 worth of connectivity, and their little spreadsheets went all atremble. Mom and Pop POPS starting to pop up like mushrooms. The two hurt most were of course UUNET and PSI - with ridiculous pricing structures based on wishful thinking.

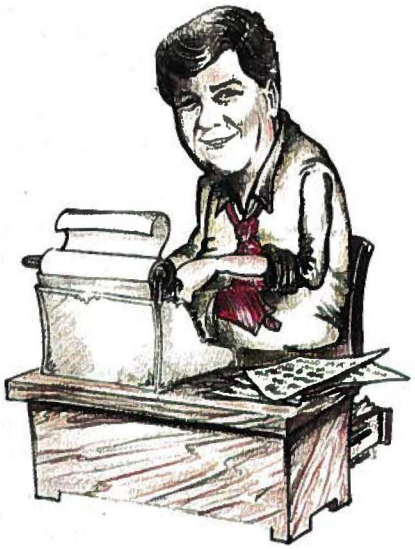
In a meeting July 7-8, the CIX board made a bold move. They announced that everyone selling IP connections anywhere, right down to Joe's Discount SLIPs, would pay them $10,000 per year or be route/path "filtered."

Basically, this is the knife at the throat of the Internet baby. "If you don't all pay up, we cut its throat." A disconnected Internet makes no sense of course.

The politics of this devolve to the comical. The CIX has about 59 members, but the board numbers five. Rick Adams of UUNET, Marty Schoffstall of PSI, John Rugo of NEARnet, Bob Collet of Sprint, and Susan Estrada, who used to be with General Atomic's CERFnet. She appears to be a board member sans network at the moment and we understand she wasn't actually at the meeting. Sprint voted against so it was 4-1 for. Basically, the CIX announcement was Rick Adams and Marty Schoffstall, in a move designed to crown themselves Internet Tsars. It was cunningly timed to correspond to the precise date when the NSFNet backbone is scheduled to be no more - November 1.

As to whether they get away with it, we can't find anyone who can actually say. If you ask how anyone was able to install two Cisco 7000 routers in a WilTel POP in Santa Clara and gain a choke hold on the Internet, everyone will readily and instantly deny that it did, does, can, or is possible. The Internet is everywhere, and can survive nuclear holocaust actually of course. Fire or earthquake in San Francisco No problem. We'd never notice. On the other hand, if the mom and pop ISP's don't pay the $10,000 ransom, will they still have full connectivity to the Internet? The answer seems to vacillate around the negative in varying degrees. The possibility exists that Rick Adams and Marty Schoffstall own connectivity - for the moment.

The problem is of course the low riders. If you are trying to provide Internet services in Durango, Colorado, the installed base of humanoids does not suggest the $10,000 will be good for your health as a business. And if you are a little guy getting started, as Denninger did in Chicago with MCS at an initial investment of around $5000,



you're basically shut out - IF the filtering is effective. And if no one calls the bluff.

On legal grounds the theory is bizarre but has a chance. It basically goes like this: If anyone has the money to call us on this one and sue us in court, or cause a ruckus on the restraint of trade issues, they probably have enough to not mind paying the $10,000 - which is cheaper, and then they're one of us anyway.

On political grounds, it's even dicier. The remaining CIX members are in a terribly confusing position. If they don't support the move, and anyone can be an Internet Services Provider and be interconnected without paying the $10,000, why was it again that THEY had to pay the fee?

If they do support the move, the requirements for forming an anti-CIX seem to be two Cisco 7000 routers and a good line of shit about how CIX tried to steal the Internet. In fact, there is some evidence that already from WITHIN the CIX membership there is talk of doing just that. Basically, the belief system in connectivity is strong enough, that if anyone throws down a brass ring in the Arizona dessert and talks four or five players into grabbing hold of it, the Internet just healed itself of Rick Adams and Marty Schoffstall, and it could take most of a week to accomplish it.

Worse, everyone might just ignore it and we would find the path routing toothless in the real world. No one seems quite sure just WHAT the route is for most traffic. Might work, might not. That would effectively end CIX.

So either of several ways, it was a risky move bordering on the foolhardy by Rick Adams and Marty Schoffstall. The one certain effect is that it will hopelessly alienate the "little guy." Their comments about hobbyists showed a profound ignorance of small ISPs, what CIX is, and what their position vis a vis the world really is. They are a hair's breadth from being stomped through the floor by IBM, Sprint, MCI, and most of the RBOCs, and their first official parry is to run off anyone smaller than UUNET and PSI and start fighting with them for quarters in the carpet.

Adams and Schoffstall are basically using the tactic that has always worked - point at Sprint, IBM, MCI, and anyone else "big" and wave their arms and whisper concernedly that there is collusion in government, conspiracies abound in the night, and that the giants will seize the Internet and - holy of holies - charge metered rates by the packet. We've listened carefully, and it is bullshit.

Yes, half of the Sprint corporate structure lays awake nights trying to figure out how to charge by the packet. Likewise IBM, GEIS, MCI, and anyone else in that industry with enough imagination to allow sugar plums to dance in

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their heads. But getting there appears nearly enough impossible. For Sprint to gain any customers at all right now, they have to play the existing game - a monthly fee for access. If MCI wants in, they have to compete with Sprint. If anyone "experiments" with measured service, they would instantly lose market share to another major player - or even a minor one. Hell, most Internet users don't even KNOW what their usage is.

And it is competitive. Last year, the three largest advertisers on national network television were AT&T, MCI, and Sprint. It is very likely that within the next year, all 7 RBOC will be allowed to sell long distance service - and Internet access as well. PACBELL and Ameritech are actually designated NAPS already by the National Science Foundation. You can do voice over the Internet. We think it is going to break into such a catfight, that not only will Internet access be modeled about like it is now (cheaper but same model), we'll go so far as to predict in print something we said first in 1988, National Local Calling area. Within five years, you will be able to have telephone service at some flat monthly fee, to dial anywhere in the U.S. as a local call. I understand the suits in these corporations don't want that, but it looks like another gravity defying feat to avoid it. I'll go further. I think they'll all make MORE money than they do now when it happens. I'll go further yet. I think it will be the biggest stimulus to the REST of our economy our nation has ever seen without a war. And all seven RBOC, and the top 10 long distance companies, will all have to work nights to keep up with it.

Yes, I know about the studies. Wipe with them. There are natural rythms to economics and human behavior and you can only hold things in the air in defiance of gravity so long - even by passing laws requiring the emperors clothes to be acknowledged as clothes. It costs no more to switch a call across Denver than it does to Washington D.C. Nada. We are accustomed to toll charges from a historical sense, and it has been preserved in a regulated legal environment. It will take an act of Congress to avoid prosperity in the future based on telecommunications alone.

As to little Ricky and little Marty - I don't know whether to admire the guts or pity the intellects at work here. Either way, there but for the grace of God...

The meeting of the full CIX membership at Interop September 14th should be a tremendous amount of good clean fun with free coke for the kids. I understand you can reach the membership at cix-members@cix.org (I just love this Internet stuff). They might note that the two Internet Service Providers with the greatest number of alternate non-CIX interconnections to other nets in the U.S. appears to be (drum roll - and the surprise) UUNET and PSI. They'll never let you do this to THEM.

Probable outcome? Divide the baby in half. Lower and more flexible rates for smaller ISPs - recast it as routing services fee, and take on more of a trade association/lobbying mission. Or they could throw UUNET and PSI into the street. Or start an antiCIX. Or bless it and hope they get away with it.

If the redundant duo pull this off, we look forward to a coronation ceremony. And the $10,000 will be just the first shot. If they sell this, they can dictate every e-mail message on the Internet from here on out with the same "filtering" threat. I don't want the government to have that power. I don't want Sprint to have it. And I certainly don't want Little Ricky and Little Marty to have it. But it could happen. None of these people even know what the Fight-O-Net wars were. It's all new to them.

This may all be terribly intriguing, but what is disappointing is the total lack of vision that once again rears its myopic, if largely ugly head. These people think they have built a network, and are fighting over who gets to pick up the quarters out of the carpet. For the past 18 months, virtually every print publication, all television networks, cable tv, and down to billboards and bus benches have been touting the Internet. There are over 20 million people with modems with but a handful having ever seen it. Bill Gates (not THE Bill Gates - but the Microsoft Guy) is about to hand at least 10 million more of them a Windows with TCP/IP and PPP. They all want it or think they do. Picture 30 million 18 months from now.

Most ISPs are struggling under the load NOW. For all of you who can count past the ten wigglies on the end of your arm, note that this is NOT going to work. The only way it even has a chance, is if they go out and RECRUIT bulletin boards and commercial online services to do the necessary fanout. Not shut them out - recruit them.

So one final thought - and a clue if you will. A very disparate and unconnected group of people have been looking for a product for over 30 years that would work with a concept called "multi-level marketing." They've tried soap, they've tried motor oil, they've tried vitamins, they've tried cosmetics, they've tried stain removers, they've tried rubber kitchen goods. But they keep coming up against some astounding properties all these commodities share:

1. The more of it you sell, the less of it you have.
2. The more of it that's available, the less valuable it is.
3. It's very difficult to get your customers to sell it too.

And finally, at any impressive rate of growth, these pyramid schemes would very rapidly involve the entire population after just a handful of levels. Everyone would have to want it.

It just won't ever work....at least with soap....

Jack Rickard
Editor Rotundus

*P.S. It can be a lot of work to decipher what's what in the Internet. It's all based on who can cook up the best verbal analogies for things that barely exist in real time. Gordon Cook is a kind of Rona Barrett gadfly of the Internet, trading in gossip, insider information, innuendo, off-the-records, and the occasional factoid dug from the bowels of the Washington Beltway. He's been doing it long enough now he's getting pretty good at it. But he does do a printed newsletter titled "The COOK Report on Internet -> NREN" on a monthly basis. Everyone at MCI, Sprint, BARRnet, BBN, IBM, ANS, PSI, UUNET, deride it mercilessly each month as so much National Enquirer yellow journalism, and then anxiously await next month's issue to club it to death again. If you need to be in the know on what's happening in the big boys club, you might want to cough for a subscription. Companies like these pay **$500** for the pain, individuals who talk nice to Gordon can get it for **$85** per year. We feature his latest missive offering a perhaps more balanced view of the CIX announcement. Reach him at* ***cook@path.net.***

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 10

Letters to the Editor

Boardwatch Magazine
8500 W Bowles Ave Suite 210
Littleton Co 80123

Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, Boardwatch Magazine, 8500 West Bowles Ave., Suite 210, Littleton, CO 80123; by fax to **(303)973-3731** or by e-mail to **letters@boardwatch.com.**

Jack,

I like Boardwatch. Quite a bit in fact. I have one itty bitty problem...This is a problem that seems to plague magazine publishers...Snail mail obliterated my magazine...Oh, to be sure, it was in a form that was readable when it got to me (barely) and it was only folded in 3 or 4 ways but I'm one of those people who collect the magazines they read. And this was definetly not in a collectable condition. I'd gladly pay an extra **$.20** per issue to get it sent in some type of paper or plastic cover (yeah, i can hear the environmentalists hollering FOUL - FOUL - FOUL already but hey, i want my magazines in good condition).

On another note, Boardwatch is a great magazine for those that are running a BBS and for those that are surfing the net. How about a few suggestions or pointers to some excellent communications software for dialing into the net or a BBS. I've just switched to a PC recently (due to the death of Commodore) and I haven't been able to find a good comm package yet. I'm looking for one with scripting, phonebook, fast scrolling, windows support, multiple terminal emulations as well as multiple protocol support, and anything else that power users like in a comm package. If you have reviewed these in a prior issue, how about a new review or a pointer to the mag that contained it?

Dunno if you have read a magazine called Wired but it puts the magazine online (via gopher and WWW) after the issue has been out for a couple of months. Any chance of Boardwatch doing the same? Need help doing it?

Thanks for listening,

Geoffrey@crl.com
Purple Duck Software

Geoffrey:

The reason it plagues all magazine publishers is that they all use the same U.S. Postal Service. Unfortunately, we have noted an alarming decrease in the quality of service specifically this year, with issues not received, received issues damaged, etc. far beyond the usual percentage of routine casualties we've been accustomed to over the past seven years. With this past issue we have added an outside protective paper cover to the magazine in an attempt to halt the assault at the post office. You ask little enough to receive your magazine in good condition. We are pleased to replace any issue that arrives at a subscribers locale in unacceptable condition, and do so at our own cost. But that isn't the point, you should receive it in good order the first time. We're also playing with some glues to see if that will keep the cover on a bit better. I'm hoping we don't have to go the titanium jacket route, but whatever it takes.

Actually Boardwatch was very early in the game of electronic distribution - available electronically in 1987. The first BBS that carried it was Adam Hudson's TURBO BBS, when he was developing a BBS package titled QuickBBS. We continue online with over 350 bulletin boards carrying our online edition. And it isn't a few months later - rather generally before the print magazine is widely available. We have back issues online going back to January 1988 on our own BBS at ***(303)973-4222*** *(**telnet boardwatch.com**).*

In those days, Louis Rosetto, Wired's publisher, was doing a journal out of Amsterdam I think titled the Electric Word, and we exchanged publications for a number of years. Wired is now a couple of years old, hardly a pioneer in this industry.

Both Telix and ProComm have product in the wings that should be available very shortly, and rumor has it both are pretty hot stuff. But QmodemPro for Windows probably has the hammer right now with regards to comm programs and is gaining favorable comment on a very wide front. It is inexpensive, and shipping, and we find it sufficiently powerful.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

While I agree that Tony Davis probably got a raw deal in Oklahoma City, his circumstances speak volumes as to the issue of illicit materials on bulletin boards nationwide. I am not personally offended by GIF files which anyone can access more easily in Penthouse than via downloading. But the community standards in some parts of "Heartland America" are much more straight-laced than here in New Jersey.

I would suggest a common sense standard for any BBS operator. If you can't buy the same material in a local retail store, don't post it on your BBS. If a BBS operator insists on selling CD-ROM's which are too close to the line of community standards, I suggest that they refrain from shipping the material within their own state. That should keep the local vigilantes off their case.

Thanks for a great magazine, I probably read more of it than any other of the computer mags.

Sincerely, Jim Bogart **(JimNJ@aol.com)**

Jim:

As long as you can assure me that the vigilantes remain committed to pornographic images, I'll buy it. Of course, if they want to outlaw cigarettes, or take control of health care, or confiscate firearms, or give us all federal id cards, or...well you get the idea. The issue is of the dismissal of personal liberties in favor of government control. There is a strong body politic that sincerely believes we can eradicate evil, danger, and illness if we can just gain control of all these people walking around loose doing whatever they please. They are very genuine in this belief, which makes them not just entertainingly idiotic, but quite dangerous as well.

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STOP losing time and money setting up and maintaining your online Information System. We have a team of professional system designers and programmers available to get your application online quickly and inexpensively. GW Associates has over eight years of experience helping customers with a wide range of online needs and the combined experience of over 30 professionals is available to help you bring your vision to reality.

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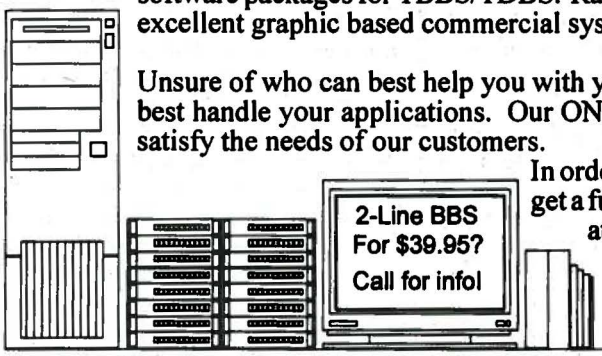

In order to best appreciate the capabilities of the software we work with you can get a full demonstration by calling our customer support system via your modem at (508) 429-8385 and registering as a GW Associates customer. This will give you full access to our system and to over 150 enhancement software packages, our catalogs and many demonstration software you may download and run on your TBBS/TDBS system.

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THE BUSINESS BBS

2531 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 109, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3163

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 12

You cannot eradicate evil, but you can concentrate it in the state. A poor trade.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

It was nice to hear someone agree with my thoughts about a ONE BBSCON on the West coast (Gabe Wizard's letter in June '94 Boardwatch). I, too, am in San Diego, and being a high school student, I can't afford to go all the way to the east coast for a show. You should seriously consider creating one over here...unfortunately, you failed to comment when Gabe made the suggestion.

On another note, you made an error in the same issue when referring to GIGO. First of all, the filename you listed was GIGO0114.ZIP, which was a beta for 1/14/94. Since then, there have been one or two more betas, and now there is GIGO0524.ZIP, which is the latest. But that's not as important as getting the author's BBS name wrong! :) It's not the Record Place, but WME Online, AFAIK. And it is a wonderful program, putting aside the fact that it is not as pretty as doing Internet conversion directly into your own BBS software. But remember that some of us have relatively new BBS software (eg. Synchronet) that don't have direct Internet support...YET!

Rob Perelman
Rob.Perelman@CNB.Com

Rob:

Thanks for the update on GIGO. Any tool in the box that gets the job done is precisely the one I was looking for. And GIGO does look like a nice piece of work.

As to ONE BBSCON, it would be nice if we could have it everywhere. And electronically, we more or less can. But it has formed as the one time of year when we can get a few thousand of us together in one place face-to-face, for a different kind of interaction. Those who have come, have found it worthwhile. That of necessity drives us to name a location. For some near, and for others more of a trip. At this point, we have regulars from Australia, Japan, India, South America, Greece, the Middle East, and all over Europe. They'll be a little less sympathetic to your plight. In any event, a West Coast ONE BBSCON probably will happen - we just don't know when at this point.

Jack Rickard

Dear Mr. Rickard:

Although I'm not a sysop, I purchased your magazine on a whim just to page through it. I will be sending you $36.00 to cover the costs of a years script. Why you ask?

Boardwatch June "94", I read with great interest in Editor's notes on the poor soul that was given 35 years in jail for not doing anything wrong. What caught my interest was your views on the subject and have to admit, I agree with you 100%. We are slowly loosing our rights to freedom of expression, not to mention all the other rights we as citizens were given back in 1776. It's a small wonder why more people can't see this coming. Take for an example the laws on gun control. Everyone should know that we have this right but yet, We The People don't see this coming. I have a hard time believing that the national news media will not support gun ownership. Maybe this will open a few eyes for them. After we loose gun ownership it will be the right to freedom of expression and the press. What happened to Mr. Davis is a good example.

I also believe in what you wrote, "It ultimately means civil war and the eventual violent overthrow of the United States Government". Please don't get me wrong. I'm not a raving lawless lunatic, I'm actually a middle aged person with a family and a respected job as a Paramedic. I fear for the younger generation as these people will be the ones who will have to fight for our freedoms in later years.

So you still ask why support your magazine? Mr. Rickard, you have to be the most outspoken, gutsy, and down to earth person I've ever seen. As I read someplace else in your magazine, "Give'em hell Jack"!

Yours truly,

Mark A. Jacobs
wi-mark_j.-pcm@society.com

Thanks Mark. Actually, I didn't say Tony Davis had done nothing wrong. And while I do think there are some issues of personal liberties that perhaps come into play, the editorial was primarily about a loss of perspective and priority when it comes to letting the punishment fit the crime. In this case, it had gone so overboard, it couldn't be about crime at all - rather it does become a political issue manipulated by the state. The police were involved in videotaping the "bust" to get it on evening television. It was a parody of our legal system and besmirches anyone who has ever been involved with the legal system as a profession. It is apparently OK for Ms. Bobbitt to axe the tally-whacker off her husband with a butcher knife and walk out of the courtroom a free person and a media celebrity, but it would draw 35 years for Tony Davis to sell a picture of the act, digitally encoded on a laser disk? We have a problem here that has nothing to do with knives, tally-whackers, or CD-ROMS.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I have been reading your magazine for some time now and have found no reference hardly at all to WWIV. In comparison with most software discussed in your magazine, WWIV equals or in fact surpasses about 85 to 90 percent of all of these other systems. If you have been keeping up with WWIV, you would realize that it is now capable of unlimited lines with its own multi-line chat system as well as just about everything else that those more expensive systems have.

In version 4.23, however, it does not have rip graphics as of yet, however, this is soon to change. WWIV is one of the most popular systems in the bbs community today and promises to grow even further! Its starting price is 80 dollars, which includes up to 2 lines as well as the source code for the software, which the sysop can do whatever he wishes with it. It is written in C, which is very simple to learn and can be used on anything else the owner wishes to use it on. The support is outstanding for it, as all any sysop needs to do is call any WWIV board on WWIVnet and simply mail 1@1 which is the author of WWIV, Wayne Bell. I would like to see WWIV represented more and I'm sure that most other WWIV sysops would as well.
Sincerely,

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 13

Brian Paisley
Sysop-The Lunatic Fringe BBS
Proudly running WWIV 4.23
1-9436@WWIVNET.TTPS.LAKES.TRENTON.SC.US

Brian:

As I say, any tool in the box that gets the job done. I'm not very familiar with WWIV and frankly, after a recent mail exchange with some of the WWIV sysops, that's a situation that it would appear I might be poorly served to remedy. But if it works for you, do it to it. We view software as tools, not a religion.

That said, I've always thought C was for girls.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

Well, I wanted to say that you have a pretty good looking magazine, and I always find informative information in each issue. Although I am disappointed in your Amiga coverage. At least one page would be nice!

As I read other mail sent to you, I wish I could say that it has all the positive effects on my BBS efforts. As it is, the information that I have been reading in you magazine may push me to taking the BBS down. Seems that the waters are a little shaky for BBS operators like me. With my BBS having well over 20,000 files, I find it hard to keep up with checking each one to see if this maybe a illegal scan/sample or copyrighted material. As it is, most of the files on my board are for other computer platforms than the one that I have.

Well, I will still buy my Boardwatch, I just may start looking at it from a user and not a provider view point.

Sincerely,

Jay Morgan
jam@m-net.arbornet.org

Jay:

The BBS community was pretty much an open range for a long time. I guess it is true that there are more legal issues regarding the operation of bulletin boards, and I fear there will be more in the future. It's rather the way things develop in new technologies. It happened with automobiles, airplanes, radio, television, and I can't imagine a scenario where it would be much different in computers. I would hope to see it minimized in this venue, but the very nature of the people that want to operate bulletin boards in the first place rather precludes their organizing into any sort of political force to prevent it. The real issues revolve around the economics and how the government can get a piece of the action. Pornography will probably be the excuse, but ultimately that's what it is all about.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

In Boardwatch there is an advertisement for the "Internet Society." It gives no address or number to call. I was wondering if you could shed some light on the subject.

Waiting to hear from you,
Cody B.
code_man@linear.mv.com (Internet)

Dear Codeman:

The organizational infrastructure of "the Internet" underwent some changes a couple of years ago. One of the Internet pioneers, Dr. Vinton Cerf, along with a number of like-minded Internauts, helped organize the Internet Society (ISOC) primarily as a support structure for the continued operation of the Internet Activities Board (IAB) and the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) to continue their good works in developing consensual standards on technical issues necessary for the continued interoperation of various operating systems and networks via TCP/IP, the domain name system, and various related communal internetworking technologies. (Biggest sentence in this issue - you can look it up.) I think it has rather taken on a promotion/cheerleading role for the Internet as well. We joined the ISOC during its first month of operation and continue to support it where and how we can. I've been most pleased at how apolitical it has remained, while at the same time providing information through congressional testimony, and of course continued to develop standards such as Multi-part Internet Mail Enhancements (MIME) and Privacy Enhanced Mail (PEM) and so forth.

*Membership includes an excellent quarterly publication and is $70. The Internet Society, 12020 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 270, Reston, VA 22091; **(703)648-9888** voice; **(703)648-9887** fax.*

Dear Jack:

I am very impressed with your magazine, particularly with the "Letters to the Editor" section. It's refreshing to see a commercial magazine 'really' open to a public forum which enhances interpersonal communications and our knowledge base. It follows the same principles that made Internet such a success story.

As we are heavy users of Internet, Unix, LAN, e-mail, news, etc., I thought you and your readers may be interested to know about our BBS operation and information services. At the risk of resembling a commercial advertisement, please read on.

We are a Dallas-based company with a unique offering and a special relationship with China. Our mission is to increase international trade activities with China and Asia through the use of Internet and networking technology. We have a direct link with a joint venture partner in Beijing who is the largest database company in China — one might say they are the census bureau of industrial information in China. They also feed us nightly proprietary news covering everything from soup to nuts in the commercial trade area. We also have a trade database of over 100,000 profiles of medium to large size companies in China, which represents over **90%** of Chinese industry. Other databases include cultural, travel, state laws & regulations and many other subjects.

Internet users can access our headline news service and parts of our BBS free of charge — this represents 3 to 8 articles of key daily news events. Users can also learn about available databases, pricing and how to sign-up for full-blown China Daily news, database access and other services. Our services are available in the U.S., but we are expanding to other countries as our network grows in the Western world and Asia.

Our host platform consists of SCO Unix running in a scalable, PC-based Client-Server environment. This initial design yields the best cost/performance ratio, while taking advantage of LAN & WAN networking and low-cost communications. The Unix system is bridged to a Novell LAN system for DOS-based office

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 14

Hayes Delivers The New Standard For High-Speed Global Communications.

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Searchlight BBS...

Our RIP file manager lets you scroll anywhere in a directory...you can tag items and run commands by clicking with the mouse

When the first Bulletin Board Systems went online in 1978, graphical user interfaces didn't exist. Callers had to stare at text menus and memorize commands; there was no alternative.

Today, everyone prefers the dazzling screens that Windows and OS/2 provide...but most BBS programs still display the same drab, confusing text menus that the first programs did.

The information superhighway is full of exciting stops; no one has to call your BBS anymore. If they see cryptic text menus, they won't call back. You have to give callers the dazzling graphics and intuitive menus they prefer. That's why you need *Searchlight 4.0*.

"Searchlight is doing a marvelous job incorporating RIP into their BBS"

Boardwatch Magazine
July, 1994

RIP: We Show—Not Tell

The Remote Imaging Protocol by TeleGrafix gives callers the graphics and mouse support they expect; that's why callers prefer RIP. That's why BBS developers are scrambling to add RIP—and telling everyone that their RIP is "as good as Searchlight."

Well, talk is cheap—and seeing is believing. It's easy to see who the leader in RIP support is...look at our competition and keep asking: ***"Where's the RIP?"***

Other companies love to tell you how good their RIP support is. But they hate to show it to you in their ads, brochures and test drives. They won't show you their RIP support because they know they can't match ours. Because nobody can.

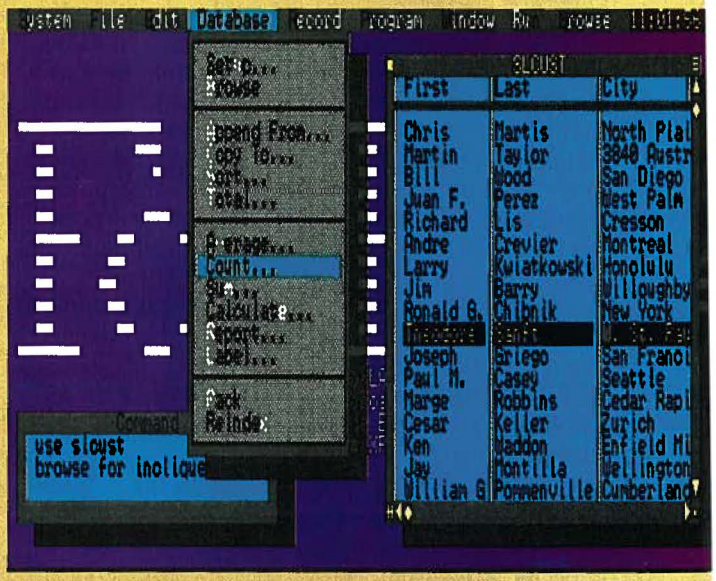
The working scroll bars *Searchlight 4.0* let you scr through a message, file or directo list with your mouse. You can sel messages, tag files, set options a run commands just by clicki with the mou

Searchlight 4.0 creates RIP men on the fly, so you can build custo menus in seconds. And *Searchlig 4.0* is the only BBS program th displays RIP locally—so you s the same screens your callers c

We do RIP better than anyo because we've been doing it long than everyone. *Searchlight 3.0* w the world's first RIP-compatib BBS. *Searchlight 3.5* was the first BBS th generated RIP graphics—the first to offer scr bars, pick lists and "on the fly"menu

Searchlight 4.0 is the ***only*** BBS th displays local RIP. It's the ***on*** way to give callers a true GU with no proprietary termin

And 90 days after TeleGraf releases the RIP 2.0 protoco we'll introduce *Searchlig 4.5*—the first BBS program th supports



Our direct video support lets you run any text-base DOS program as a doo

you won't believe your GUIs!

Improvise Without Scripts

If you want custom menus, some companies make you buy their script language and write routines in it. That's not customzing—it's programming.

We think our engineers—not our sysops—should write the code. Our menu editor lets you put any command (we have over 100) on any menu. You can nest menus 40 levels deep and add doors to any menu—even build executable menus that run lists of commands.

The automatic menu generation in Searchlight 4.0 lets you turn any RIP screen into a custom menu

Then use our RIP styles editor to add buttons and wallpaper—we'll generate your menus on the fly. Or use your favorite RIP painting program to draw RIP screens…and let us put your menus on it.

If you want a custom BBS, we help you build it quickly and easily. When you buy *Searchlight 4.0*, you can leave the compiling to us.

Open Any Door

A hobby BBS might want to add external programs ("doors") so users can play online games. A business might need to let their users drop to DOS and run a custom application.

Some major BBS programs can't drop to DOS at all. Others make you fiddle around with a DOS shell utility.

Searchlight 4.0's built-in DOS shell lets you run any text-based program (like FoxPro, dBase, Paradox or applications created with Clipper and Clarion)

"Searchlight remains one of the easiest BBS packages to set up and use; it is also one of the least expensive"
PC Magazine
June 14, 1994

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Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 17

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applications, using TCP/IP and for outbound transmissions through Internet. Inbound transmits from China consists of nightly updates on news, e-mail, databases, etc. We plan to implement this same network scenario within the borders of China, thereby linking the two largest economies in the world for business-to-business electronic communications. As you can imagine, we still have some technical work to do on the Asian side. Although, considering our level of expertise and our contacts with 100,000 companies in China, we can be on the map in a flash.

If you are wondering about the language barrier, our technical staff in the U.S. and China are bilingual. Chinese-to-English translations are performed on trade databases and can be programmatically done on mail messages from China. Our translation experience also reaches into multiple language, multi-media presentations (image & audio CD-ROMs). Important features include the automatic cross-referencing of China National Industry Codes to the U.S. Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes.

Aside from business reasons, we hope to play an important role in the increased development of trade, the reduction of our national deficit and the creation of jobs for Americans. Fortunately, U.S. trade interests are refocusing on China — with good reason. With a population of **1.2** billion people and a rising economic growth rate of **5%** in 1993, we simply can't afford to ignore the China prospect.

According to projections by the World Bank, Greater China's net imports in the year 2002 will be **$639** billion, compared to Japan's **$521** billion. Likewise, by using comparable international prices, Greater China in the year 2002 is projected to have a Gross Domestic Product of **$9.8** trillion, compared to **$9.7** trillion for the United States. According to these projections China could become the largest economic force in the world. Our communications infrastructure and computer technology are the best in the world. Why don't we utilize technology and management as our main arsenal in the global economic war?

So come on board fellow technocrats, we have a lot to sell in the international trade arena. Exporting to Asia is not as difficult as you may think.

Lou Gallio

AsiaInfo Services, Inc.
2474 Manana Dr. Suite 121
Dallas, TX 75220
(214) 351-3091
lou@asiainfo.com

Lou:

It does sound like a thoroughly fascinating project. But if you want me to publish your "commercial advertisement" in our letters section, I would ask that you provide a modem number. Due to a little technical hurdle we've never quite broached, we can't "watch" you unless we can dial or otherwise connect to you.
Jack Rickard

Jack —:

I find Boardwatch so helpful, so informative—and so very well written. Thank you very much.

I could cite many articles I found especially helpful, but I must give you a special HATS OFF AND HEARTFELT THANKS for the April article, "Miracles in Toronto," about the Ability Online Support Network. Even my wife, who is wonderful but cannot find any interest in the BBS world, was deeply moved by this article, and impressed with the power and usefulness of BBSs.

With appreciation,

Bob McMillan
bob@mcmillan.com
Boonton NJ

Bob:

Ultimately the BBS world is a world of people. They do tend to have computers, but that's not why they hooked them up to each other. Have the Mrs. McMillan take another look under the bits and bytes.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I read your Editor's Notes in the June issue of Boardwatch Magazine with some interest. Although I sympathize with your feelings about our government, I was disappointed by the tone of your message. I've come to expect intelligent discussions about online issues, and not to see you running in circles saying, "The sky is falling on our personal freedoms!"

In your article there is no discussion of the laws concerning obscenity in Oklahoma. Although you could say that his decision was based on customer satisfaction, Tony Davis was successful without the adult titles. When Mr. Davis became a member of the new P.O.P. (Profit Over Principle) culture, did he research the laws concerning the sale of obscene material?

Using the justification that the titles were available in national publications, which you failed to mention includes Boardwatch Magazine, does not discount that they may violate local statutes. Child pornography is legal in some foreign countries, but don't try to use that justification to advertise it in your magazine. Jeffrey Dalmer will never again walk the streets as a free man. To dramatize Mr. Davis' plight by saying that he fares worse than a serial killer takes the focus off the real issues. I do not think that insanity or prior abuse should be allowed as defense arguments. You have to be somewhat insane to take the life of another human being.

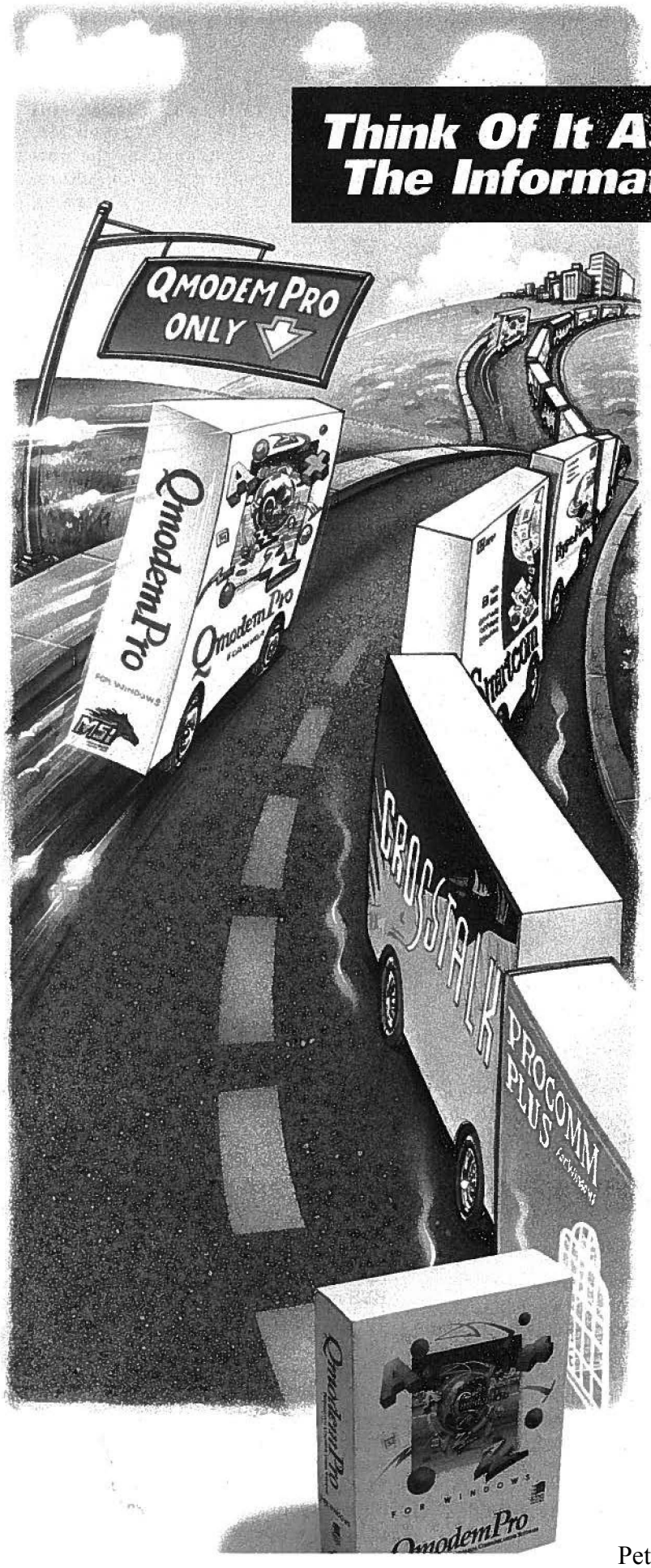
But the issues in the Davis case are education and documentation. If Mr. Davis had walked into that court with proof that he had made every effort to comply with local laws, the result may have been different. I agree that search and seizure process was grossly misused in this case, and I believe this is the direct result of technological ignorance of most police organizations. Your writers have constantly stressed the risks involved with obscene material, risks that have been present ever since man has tried to put the label of "art" on the naked human form. To incur that risk, you'd better be loaded for bear when the savage beast of justice comes snooping around.

As a respected source in the online community, it is important for you to stay focused on the solutions to these issues. The April/May issue had a wonderful article on how to become a one person political action committee. Apply the same ideas to empower local BBS operators to educate local officials about their hobby, or business, of being a sysop. Open a channel of communication between the BBS and City Hall BEFORE the feces hits the rotating blade.

Why should we have to educate City Hall? If we don't, then we leave it to the local minister who needs some publicity for his congregation, or a politician who will convince everyone

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 19

Think Of It As The Fast Lane On The Information Superhighway.



QmodemPro for Windows by Mustang Software zooms past the competition. With no roadblocks in sight. This feature-filled, power-packed communications software makes it easy for Windows users to dial into BBS systems. It's the first program to support both data and fax communications from a single phonebook. With a modem that supports adaptive answering, you can receive both fax and data calls while in Host Mode, a limited-feature BBS program that lets you set up your PC to receive incoming modem calls. You can also send a fax directly from any Windows application using the QmodemPro for Windows printer driver. It's easy. It's all in one integrated package. And it's available now.

QmodemPro for Windows is the first Windows product to support RIPscrip graphics, so you can plug into the thousands of BBSs offering graphics and full mouse support online. It also has more than 30 of the most popular terminal emulations, 10 built-in file transfer protocols including Zmodem, CIS B+ and Kermit, plus up to 40 programmable macro buttons. QmodemPro for Windows also lets you associate icons to each entry in your dialing directory, so you can create a true Windows phonebook. Each phonebook entry tracks up to 5 numbers, and groups of entries can be saved and dialed.

With QmodemPro for Windows, file transfers are made easy with features like drag-and-drop uploads from the Windows File Manager and live .GIF file viewing during downloads. The built-in .GIF viewer lets you zoom .GIF and .BMP files, or mark and copy portions of the picture to the Windows clipboard. You can put the Windows multitasking environment to work: use it to transfer files in the background while you work in your word processor or spreadsheet applications, or get in a few quick games of Solitaire. No other communications software does Windows like QmodemPro.

QmodemPro's new script language, SLIQ, gives you unparalleled power, speed and flexibility. With the AutoLearn feature, you can let QmodemPro record your scripts automatically without having to learn how to program. SLIQ scripts are compiled for fast, secure operation, plus we include a powerful script debugger and text editor.

QmodemPro for Windows also supports sound cards, so you can play your favorite .WAV file automatically when you connect to a BBS, and during other events like a successful fax transmission.

Whether you're a BBS beginner or a seasoned modem user, you'll find QmodemPro for Windows to be a flexible, easy-to-use communications tool, with twice as many features as competitive products. And at a better price: only $99 retail.
(DOS version also available)

If you want to get on the information superhighway, don't get stuck in the slow lane. Move ahead fast with QmodemPro for Windows by Mustang Software.

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that there is a gold mine out there waiting to be taxed. If we take an active role, we won't have to sit around and wait to get the label of victim, or prisoner, like Mr. Davis. Sooner or later some politician is going to figure out a way to tax the online community. I believe that the more we are involved with the education of City Hall, the more we will be able to influence the policies that are developed concerning the BBS community.

Democracy is not in its death throes. So get down off the soap box, roll up your sleeves, and start building a connector road between the Information Highway and City Hall.

Thank you for the most intelligent and thought provoking magazine that I have had the pleasure to read.

Sincerely,

Paul L. Scott
101 Morse Ave.
Groton, Ct. 06340
(203) 449-8879
scotty9999@aol.com

Paul:

We rather disagree. If justice has become a "savage beast" we have to be "loaded for bear" to deal with, you've made my point adequately in both clarity and cliche. I think I want no part of your City Hall.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

Just got my July issue of Boardwatch and just thought I'd drop you a note to thank you for doing a wonderful job with the magazine. Its really refreshing to read editorials that say things the way they really are and not sugar coat things.

I have been an avid fan of Boardwatch for some time. I used it as a tool to help find new and interesting things while being an on-line user. It was an indispensable tool in that endeavor.

I appreciated your candor and truthful facts about the state of on-line computing as well as the state of destruction that we fact at the hands of our government. It takes guts to tell it like it is and not back down.

Now that I am a Sysop of a multi-node BBS looking to expand into Internet connectivity and Satellite Backbone setups, your magazine has become even more important in our (The BBS) pursuit of accurate and untinted information. So much is this the case Jack, that all seven owners of the BBS have now subscribed!

What advice can you give to a person that seems to keep everything in line? Only one piece that I can think of - Keep up the GREAT work!!

Richard J. Sears
Sysop, American Dream Information Network (A.D.I.N.)
(619) 736-3702
rsears@crash.cts.com

Thank you for the kind words Richard. Very pleased we're with you on your journey.

Jack Rickard

The article "Jack In The Bean Tube" in the July issue of Boardwatch magazine reminded me of what one sees when perusing the smaller hobby and electronics magazines on the bottom shelf at the news stand - the quality of the photographs typically poor and the humor lame at best.

With all the steps forward that Boardwatch is taking each month, no need to take a step backwards.

Tree and tube humor aside, let me thank you for providing ongoing coverage of legal issues and case summaries of actions concerning and involving BBS operators.

Kevin Pfeiffer **<pfeiffer@pop.com>**

DigitalPopcorn Online * Los Angeles

Kevin:

Actually, we were talking about bailing on all of that stuff and doing the tree thing pretty much cover to cover. Those photographs were the best we could paste together on short notice, and the swing was a hit around here. This from the man from DigitalPopcorn?

Jack Rickard
Dear Jack:

Your Editor's Notes in the July issue asked why Laurence Canter was "pilloried in such a bitter and venomous fashion" after he advertised on Usenet. Hey, the guy spammed more than 5,000 newsgroups. Imagine if others could follow Canter's example with impunity and splatter ads helter-skelter from Bonn to Melborne. No one else has spammed the way he did or bragged about it to the New York Times. While Usenet carries ads, most by far are in the right areas.

Yes, Usenet may seem wild, but it houses many cohesive communities built around common interests. The denizens seethed when a virtual blockbuster invaded their neighborhoods with "Green Card Lottery" ads and promised more of the same.

This sense of community is evident in other ways on the Internet itself. PSI, now providing 'Net services to Canter, has taken note of Internauts' reactions and has worked hard to educate Laurence Canter about the economics of Usenet. He, in turn, has promised to call off the spam campaign he was planning. I find such give-and-take to be far, far better than a series of court battles. Certainly some editorials in Boardwatch, one of my favorite magazines, could help the efforts of companies such as PSI.

Meanwhile peace just might be at hand now that PSI has educated Canter. I myself, at least, believe that he has a right to be on the Internet as long as he doesn't abuse it. For a positive example of 'Net commerce in action, see the June 19 New York Times story about the florist who advertised in the right area, and who was flooded with orders from as far off as Japan.

In the future, many more BBS owners will be offering full 'Net access—and perhaps ad-related services such as the one that benefitted the florist. This model will serve us much better than ads distributed just by megaconglomerates. Nothing beats the potential of the Internet as a whole for BBS folks and other small business people seeking global markets. So, please, Jack, protect the 'Net and Usenet, which, of course, is also a staple in BBSland.

Such vigilance would be plain good business for you and your sysop readers, especially those charging by the minute. Most folks don't want to pay to read spammed ads.

David Rothman
rothman@clark.net
Former editor,
High-Tech Export & Import
703-370-6540

David:

So we could get more messages from David Rhoades on how to get rich by sending a dollar to the people on the list below? Where have you been David? There is all kinds of garbage spewed all over the net in horrendous quantities and some of it appears twice a week with the same tired message - not half as interesting as Canter's. What you had with him that you never had before was a real identity to go cream. This is the part I don't get. There are dozens of messages each week that go to 5000 newsgroups - and you don't say a word because they are anonymous and you can't do squat about it - and many are much more irritating than Canter's. Everyone acts like this was the first time it ever happened! Get real. Your quaint little communities are roach-infested, and actually the roaches were there first. To cop this holier than thou gig now is comical.

But I fear it is just the beginning. The decentralized consensual structure of the Internet lends itself to being held hostage by individuals.

The "pay to read ads" argument is as old as the hills and among a certain level of intellect, will always be popular. The point it misses is that one man's junk is another's treasure and always was. When you tap into a public network, you gain access to a certain amount of fascinating material, and a certain amount of detritus. You can avoid the latter by foregoing the former. If you want to regulate it, you have to first determine which is which, and then appoint someone who can reliably adjudicate which is which. And anything thrown out may well be another net users "information source."

Are you sure you're not miffed because you didn't win the Green Card Lottery?

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I just wanted to invade your E-Mailbox and maybe make a few comments and ask a few questions. I sent off for Boardwatch on or around 2 May 94. Although there was some delay in receiving some type of acknowledgement, it has been well worth the wait. The July 94 issue is fantastic. One comment though, could not BW at least send out some letter or postcard of reciption. There I was with a cleared check in one hand and no receipt (other than the check) and still even sadder...no magazine :

I am also more than a little interested in starting my own BBS. The Sysops I have talked to all seem to be less than friendly and very discouraging when it comes to advice on starting my own. I want to start a Windows BBS with some RIP and ANSI graphics (although I do not know exactly what either mean-RIP look great). Since I am only a computer novice it MUST be as simple as a childs toy. That includes installation and the works. I think that when I start college this August I can persuade the school to help out by adding some kind of school programs or something which will help them to get more students(i.e. right now i have'nt a clue). Naturally as your magazine insists, it must at least be able to support intermail and the like. What are YOUR personal preferences (if any)? I know you have lots of advertisers and I would not ask you to offend one of these. That is why I am asking for YOUR personal opnion. If you are able to do so (without getting sued) please give the BW opinion (if any) also.

I am sorry the letter is so long but after reading my first issue I can see I am not alone. Many thanks for your "down to earth-plain english" help.

Roger Wilson
Macon,Georgia
RDWFDR@AOL.COM

Roger:

Good news may be upon you. The air is extravagant with Clients and rumors of Clients, Servers and rumors of Servers, all revolving around the Windows theme.

We are currently looking at a thing titled Excalibur BBS. A very well done interface. We were a bit distracted by some extraordinary claims to multiline performance, but the visuals are just stunning, you can do a number of things simultaneously such as chat or write messages while downloading, and it is just beautiful. It's available in a beta version among about 1000 of the author's closest associates.

If Windows is really your game, Seth Hamilton of Hamilton Telegraphics has made some hay over the past year with a product titled RoboBoardFX. But he's moving the whole thing to Windows and changing the name to MediaBase.

Softarc has done well with a Macintosh product titled FirstClass. Deep rumors would seem to indicate they are about to release some sort of Windows server and they already have clients for both Mac and Windows.

A lot of this will come to light at ONE BBSCON in Atlanta. But I think the sleeper topic of the last half of 1994 will actually be BBS software for Windows. Windows clients, Windows BBS servers, and just a lot of Windows all around.

As to what we recommend, that's a little hard to do. I don't mind offending everyone if necessary, but if the only tool you have is a hammer, all the problems start to look like nails. If a visual interface, easy install, and Windows is what you are looking for, these packages hold some promise.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I was wondering what you think about the myriad of people who start their quest from America Online, Prodigy, GEnie, Compuserve and other small Online Services, seeking to find the pot of gold at the end of the Global Information Superhighway (Sounds like a term some bureaucrat came up with to confuse the masses.) only to find a mass of computer networks without the common interface that they were seeking. After they find this out, they become disenchanted with the Global Information Superhighway of their dreams and never find out about the wealth of resources out there to retrieved and downloaded.

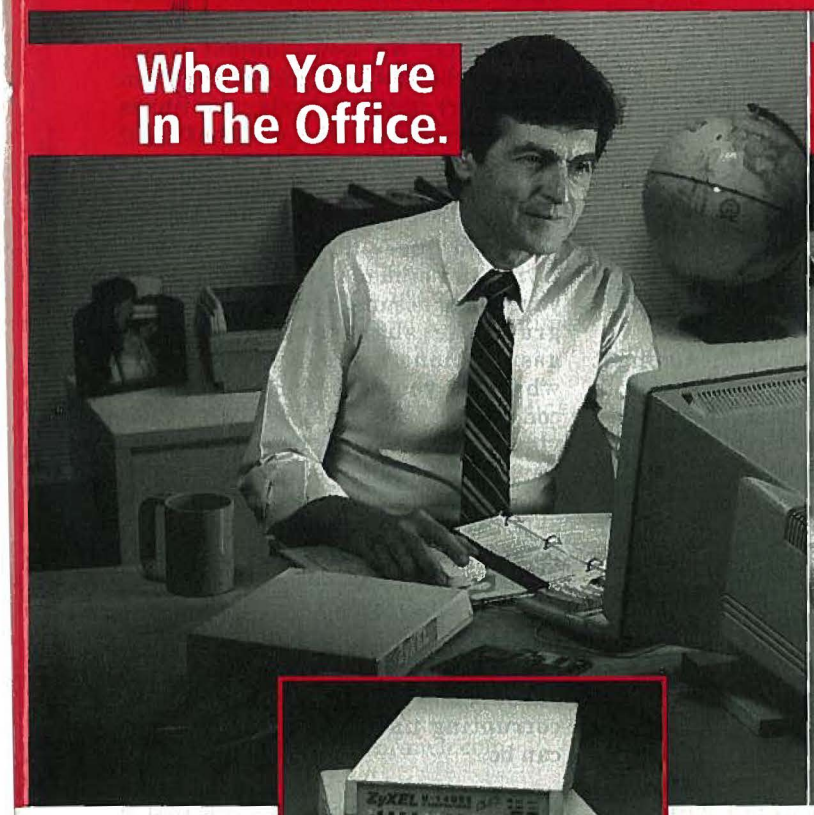
Well time for me to log off and to read my reserve of Usenet Newsgroups that make my days enjoyable and bearable. Bye.

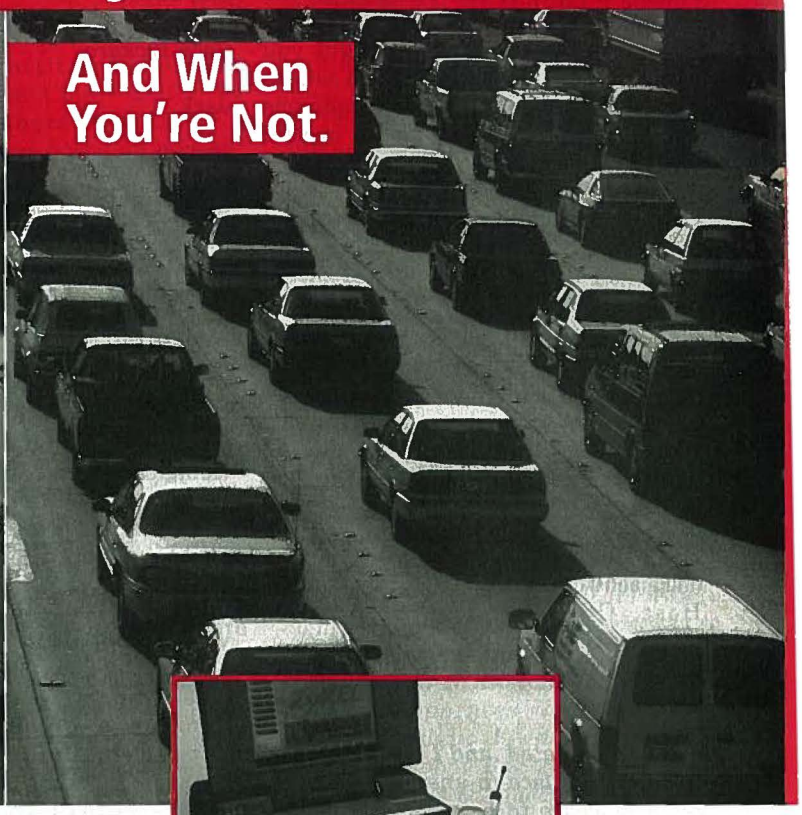
James Bryan
JamesBryan@Delphi.com
James:

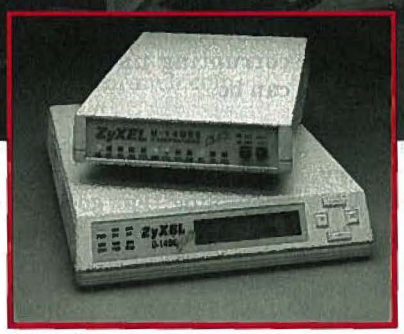
I think it's more of a journey, not a destination. We marvel at each pebble, in each brook, in each field, as we go. It's more about shady lanes, back alleys, and country roads, than about SuperHighways. We get disenchanted with the bills.

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 22

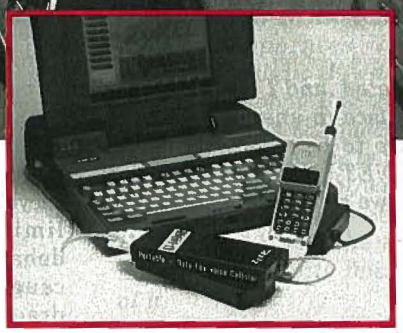
There Are Two Times When Modem Reliability Is Critical.







ZyXEL desktop modems offer high reliability without high cost.



The new ZyXEL portable— the first autoswitch modem for land and cellular lines.

Some modem users don't care if their data gets hung up, transmits inaccurately, or if they have to redial several times. Most modem users do. For them there's ZyXEL, the full-featured fax modem for serious users.

ZyXEL land and cellular modems get through where others fail. They're specially designed to overcome poor signal conditions on the physical layer with features like fast retrain and auto fall-forward/fall-back. This means ZyXEL modems connect the first time and continue to transmit data accurately at ultra-high speeds up to 19.2Kbps* over land lines (with DTE speeds up to 76.8Kbps) and 14.4Kbps over cellular networks. Fax speed is 14.4Kbps/V.17. It's the kind of performance you only expect from high-priced modems—but with ZyXEL it doesn't cost more.

ZyXEL data/fax/voice/cellular modems have more features than other modems of any price—like digitized voice capability, distinctive ring, multilevel security, industry standard data compression and error correction protocols, and much more.

When it comes to cellular, no other modem comes close to ZyXEL. With the ZyCellular option, your modem is not just fast and reliable. It will also communicate in asynchronous/synchronous mode at 14.4Kbps. The ZyCellular autoswitch capability automatically switches your modem from land to cellular when land connections are lost. ZyCellular is the ideal backup for leased lines as well as for mobile communications.

ZyXEL modems work in all environments—DOS™, Windows®, OS/2®, Macintosh®, NeXT®, UNIX® and Amiga™. So get serious about saving time, cost and effort with *true* modem reliability. Don't wait.

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ZyXEL U-1496
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210 TOP RATED
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BYTE
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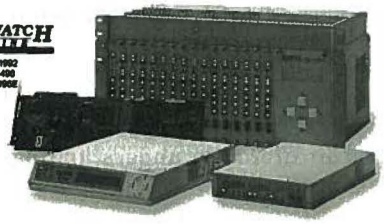
June 29, 1993
ZyXEL U-1496 Plus

PC MAGAZINE
February 1993
ZyXEL U-1496E Plus



yes it runs with NetWare

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Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

Just a note to say that you have become a topic of conversation on the usenet group. alt.online-service A few writers wrote that they thought you were opinionated and used the letters forum as a place to beat your opinions into the masses. I thought to myself; so what is new?

Owners of businesses and editors of magazines have the right to say/believe what they do and the system of checks and balances is those who buy their magazines or buy their ads/services. Personally I like a little spirit in my reading material and you do that.

Boy, were you right on with your analysis of NVN. Who is NVN now is shut down.....way to call them, Jack.

Dean Hughson
dhughson@delphi.com
Host, Custom forum 56 Divorce Support Board

Dean:

I am opinionated, and I use the letters forum as a place to answer letters. If we ever cease to be a topic of discussion in USENET, please let me know. That's when we're in trouble...

Jack Rickard

Hi Jack!

I've been considering starting a for-profit bbs rather than the traditional hobby board. I was wondering what is involved legally. Are there any regulations on bbs's? Any must-follow guidelines? What should I know about taxes,records,and billing stuff? What about privacy laws? Is there any reading material devoted to this topic I should be checking out?

I'd appreciate any help you and/or your readers could give me. Thanks alot and keep up the great work with Boardwatch!
Chris Williams
willl123@gold.tc.umn.edu
St. Paul, MN

Chris:

Our own Lance Rose is author of a book titled SysLaw, The Legal Guide for Online Service Providers. You can get if from the PC Information Group at 800-321-8285. *I think you might find it useful. I would also highly recommend Alan Bryant's new book, Creating Successful BBS Systems published by Addison Wesley at* 800-822-6339.

Jack Rickard

Jack:

I'd like to submit two or three columns (approximately twenty five hundred words each) on the sociology of cyberspace. Since our perceptions differ greatly, you are well within your rights to tell me to start my own magazine.

A few years ago I fell in amongst Libertarians on the WELL. I tried to persuade them to make their party electronic and put everything, conventions, candidates, position papers, the works, on line, letting the rank and file decide. I was surprised to learn they, to a man, opposed electronic democracy as you do. They feared a tyranny of the majority. I have no idea why you oppose it.

The Libertarians and I quarreled about the balance to be struck between individual and collective interests. They believe individual rights always outweigh collective concerns. They oppose mandatory recycling, zoning, every group effort to limit individual behavior. As we debated, Santa Barbara, California, caught in a severe drought, imposed draconian fines on individuals using more than their alloted water. One guy paid forty thousand dollars for a green lawn and the Libertarians thought that was great. Their philosophy is if you can pay for it, it should be yours. I said the town should have shut the sucker's water off.

Individualism, hierarchy, separateness, and competition are products of print. Reading and writing is a solitary matter, and we assume those who read more know more than those who read less. Literacy imposes the knowledge relationships that underlie hierarchy. All social positions, even economic class, reflect the collective conclusion that the higher ranked are smarter than those beneath them. We assume our bosses know what they are doing and follow them, often off the edge of a cliff.

Electronic media implies connectedness, equality and cooperation, but steeped in literary's understandings, we apply yesterday's solutions to reach weird results. Is the author of a computer program entitled to more protection than writers of songs and books? I don't think so, but we sell blank audio and video tapes whose prime purpose is copying copyrighted materials. We don't object when someone borrows a compact disc from the library, takes it home, and copies it to tape. We reach a different legal conclusion when same CD is downloaded from a bulletin board.

This odd query letter is my way of trying to persuade you to reevaluate your basic assumptions, an especially grandiose suggestion since your assumptions are mainstream, but whatever your decision, you should concede that the conflict between individual and collective brings us down. Say, for example, Boardwatch generates toxic waste. To dispose of it properly costs three hundred thousand dollars, but you can dump it in some Colorado wilderness free. What do you do? When you see the tobacco industry join the asbestos industry in lying to customers and concealing unfavorable research, you should realize how corrupting unbridled individualism can be.

No obligation of course. It's just a matter of persuading yourself that something that goes seriously against your grain can be worth consideration.

Best,

EDKUNIN@DELPHI.COM

Ed:

Well, I do have my back up on this topic a bit, but if you read through Boardwatch, you'll likely find several views not entirely of my own making. In some ways, this diminishes our focus. In others I think it reflects the online community a little more widely. Striking a balance feels like the right thing to do. Feel free to submit one. If it's well written and has some basis in thought, it will likely be viewed favorably. If it isn't, it will join most of what I write myself in a little pile on the floor.

It's a hard trip.

Jack Rickard

Petitioner Microsoft Corporation, Ex. 1018, p. 24

Hello there Jack!

I just read the letter from Greg Evans and had to laugh. Yes indeed, Zoom is a bit behind their public schedule. At last years ONE BBSCON I gave Zoom my Amex number for as many 24000 bps modems as they would have available, whenever they would become available. In April I got a call from them asking if they had my address correct so they could ship us the INTERNAL modems we asked for. (How many internal modems do they think a PC can hold?). I told them "No thank you". We had ordered two Hayes modems in January, and got them only ten days later. A 144 and a 288 Optima thank you very much.

Zoom definitely lost out on the game. As soon as Hayes began shipping, the BBS community, especially the Fidonet Hubs, went crazy getting all the V.FC modems Hayes could pump out. I have my 288 on line three, my listed Fidonet line, and the line I make my outgoing netmail and Planet Connect calls with.

So nerts to Zoom.

michael.muller@treebranch.com
Fidonet **1:278/521**
ADAnet **94:7180/3**
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718 739 5845

Michael:

It's a hard business and used office furniture goes cheap. We face another autumn of disquiet with the scramble to introduce V.34 modems. If you stop and contemplate how different the world would be had we stopped at 2400 bps, it's a bit awe inspiring. We tend to cheer the winners and hiss at the losers. Perhaps we should occasionally applaud all contestants.

Jack Rickard

Dear Jack:

I would like to comment on what has become a very well known contest - the annual Boarwatch TOP 100 Readers Choice contest.

We at Lifestyle Online operate 76 lines on a single 486 computer using ORACOMM under OS/2. We are also the large beta development site for the upcoming OS/2 product. There is also a very good possibility that we will be the marketing end for Oracomm OS/2 which has all the powerful chat and download features from the original DOS product while taking full advantage of the OS/2 operating system under a complete system re-write.

In 1990 we started Lifestyle BBS which grew from 9 lines to 76. Every year we have participated in the Boardwatch Readers Choice contest by asking our members to vote. We operate our business based on honesty and it is very upsetting when we find that operators of BBS's are buying the 1 to 10 top positions. Case in point is the Odyssey BBS. They have 277 prizes they claim to be giving away including a 486 computer system. Their "Winners will be selected on a random draw from ONLY those valid entries who voted for Odyssey...". With this tactic, who would vote for another system if these terms were brought to their attention? Clearly, the more you spend, the higher your rating in the Boardwatch Readers Choice Contest. This is totally unfair and as a contest rule, should not be allowed. Although we typically rate extremely high by being honest, the contest rules allow one to buy a top position. As Boardwatch Magazine continues to grow, we look to you for an honest contest where the Top 10 BBS's are placed in their respective positions by the voters, not someone buying the votes.

Marc Kraft
President OnLine Technologies
PO Box 577
East Setauket, NY 11733

Marc:

I've commented on this before, but let me once again to take this opportunity to point out how grossly flawed this entire line of thinking is. First, there is nothing dishonest about it. It is a promotion for bulletin boards and they are promoting themselves. The contest rules are widely distributed, everyone knows what they are, and the contest is no more nor less than it purports to be. There is nothing whatsoever dishonest in the contest, our actions, your actions, or Odyssey's actions. As I understand it, you're complaining that 277 of their callers, our readers, got a little benny?
Secondly, you ask who would vote for another BBS? I don't have the final results, but I would bet they're not at the top. I'm certain we have other ballots for other bulletin boards. Probably 3000 systems were voted for this year among some 26,000 ballots. I am perhaps not as cynical as you are about the fickleness of callers.

This is the whining, losing mentality that I find so abhorrent. If you want to play to win, do so within the existing rules. If you don't want to play at all, don't play. It's a simple popularity contest and I would be delighted if Odyssey taped ballots to the windshields of 10,000 Jaguar convertibles and gave them to their callers. It really reflects precisely how the world goes with or without a contest. If you get out and promote your system, you will prosper. If you sit around whining about how CompuServe has all the tv advertising money, you will be a loser. I'm very pleased that with a very bare minimum of rules, we have so accurately modeled the world, and allowed a spotlight on the winners.

It is a competitive business, as all good businesses are. At the top of the heap, the executives at Prodigy, CompuServe, and AOL all lie awake nights trying to figure out some way to offer callers something that will increase their market share. And this scenario operates more or less uniformly right down to competing single line hobby BBS systems in rural areas. This is the machine that gives us ever increasingly useful online services, at ever lower costs. The callers benefit, and ultimately so do the services. It's the American capitalist system at its finest. I'm in awe of it.

And you can usually pick out the losers pretty easily. They spend their time complaining about the system - rather than spending it figuring out how to deliver better services at lower cost.

Jack Rickard

CORRECTION

In the August issue of Boardwatch Magazine the BBS number of the Infinity BBS was incorrectly identified. The correct number is: **(619)728-8878**

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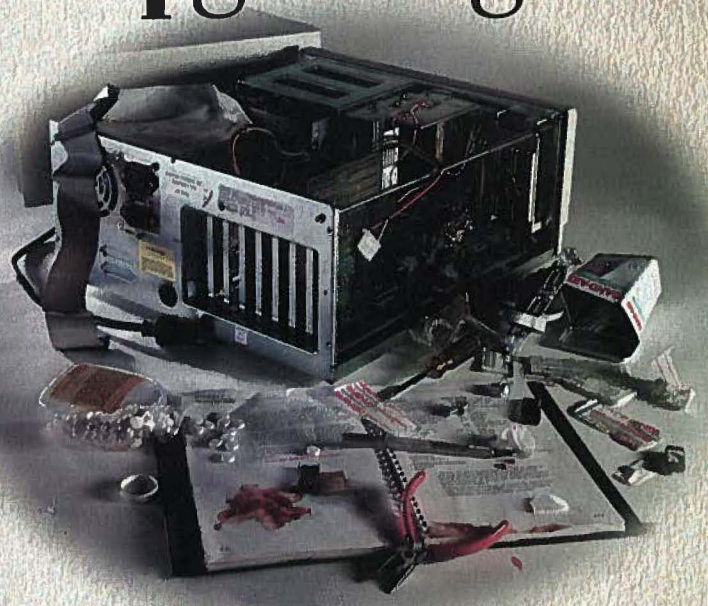

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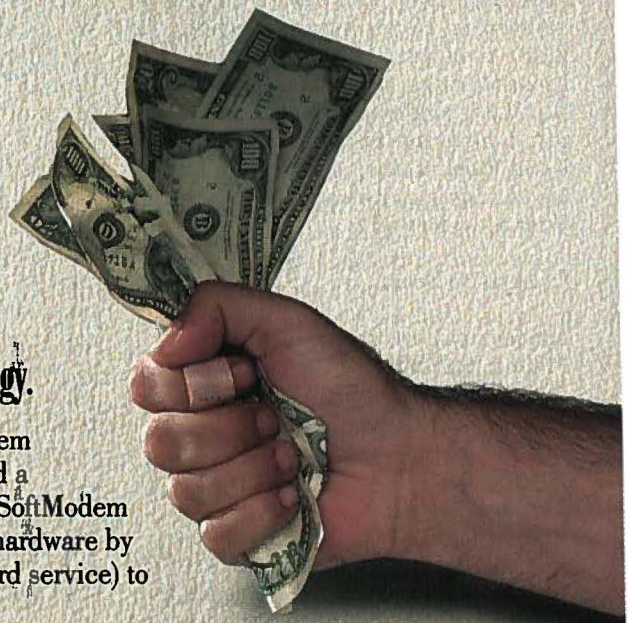

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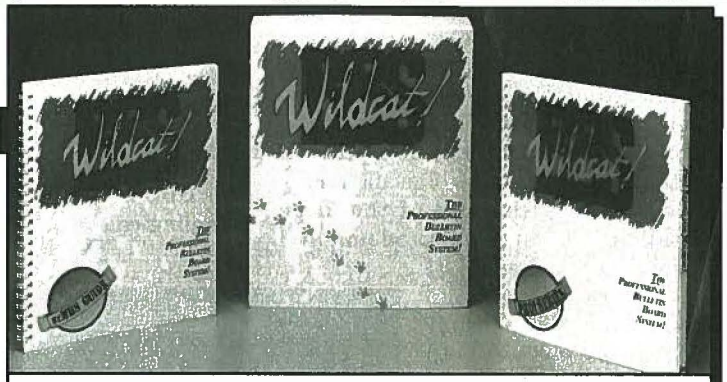

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