

Adam

Classic Computer Column
by Faye Deere

COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE FOR ADAM

Winter is the perfect time to catch up on your reading. The weather tends to keep you indoors, and time can weigh heavily if you don't have enough to keep your mind occupied. Reading can take you to unexplored worlds and makes you forget that the weather won't let you venture off the front porch. In one of the many magazines that I get every month, I noticed an article about software licenses and restriction. It stayed with me, so I'm going to share my feelings with you.

If you have ever seen a new software program for an IBM (or compatible) computer, you probably noticed that most of the disks provided by software companies are sealed in a package with a lot of writing on it. You have never taken the time to read what is written on the package before you open it, maybe you should. The writing on that package informs you that the software you are

about to open is licensed to you ONLY, and that by opening the package, you agree to adhere to all of the listed conditions.

If you read all the fine print, you will discover that not only is the software contained therein licensed only to you, it also is licensed for use on only ONE computer. If it is used on more than one computer, even in the same house, it is considered illegal. It is doubly illegal if it is used by more than one computer in a company. You must license that software for every computer using it. Although software companies have special licensing agreements for company licenses, the premise is the same.

The authors of ADAM software do not go to such extremes to inform you of the license restrictions, but they DO apply, nonetheless. If you buy a program, it is for YOUR use only. If your son living a couple of blocks away would like to use the program, he must purchase it for himself. You cannot legally give him a copy of yours to use. The same rules apply to ADAM user groups when it comes to commercial soft-

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ware. A user group cannot purchase a commercial program and pass copies around for the club members to use. This is not only illegal, but it is not in your/our best interests.

These rules do NOT apply to public domain programs, such as those in our club library, however. In fact, the opposite applies; it is illegal to sell a public domain program. The AUGs (ADAM user groups) do sell copies of PD programs to their members, but you are not buying the program, you are paying for the data pack (or disk) plus a copy fee.

Even if you do get a "free" program on data pack or disk from a "friend," they ALL have a booklet or manual with them. This is the DOCs (documentation) that tell you what you need to know to use the program. Some DOCs may be only a few pages long, but the better programs have DOCs that consist of 25 or more pages. Chances are that your "friend" won't give you any DOCs with your "free" program; and you will find that you can't do too much with it. A few pages are easy to copy, but DOCs containing a large number of pages do not make copy-

ing them easy, and most people won't even try to make you a copy.

If you share that commercial program you just bought, the people you share it with will not purchase their own copy. Why should they? They already have access to it, and the author will sell that many fewer copies. If this happens often enough, the author will not have made enough profit to pay for his time and the work required to produce that commercial program. This means that the next time he has an idea for a program, he may think twice before he launches into the tedious effort needed to produce another program for the ADAM computer.

Is this what you want? I'm sure it's not. The commercial programs produced for the ADAM have been good programs, and each fill a need. These are programs for ADAM that have been created by people interested in ADAM's future, and who care about that future. They, along with the caring people who have created hardware for the ADAM, are what has kept the ADAM computer from

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joining other orphaned computers on the local junk pile. They are the people who make it possible for you to swell up in pride and yell "ADAM lives!"

An ADAM program doesn't cost nearly as much as a program for an IBM or compatible. At the prices charged, they should be within the range of all our pocketbooks. Don't copy that program for someone else to use, and don't ask someone else to give you a copy of theirs. You will only be helping Coleco to finish digging the grave they started when they abandoned the ADAM computer.

CHROMANTICS

EyeZod Graphics, c/o Pat Her-

ington (1003 Oak Lane, Apopka, FL 32703, 407-788-6396), has come up with another power packed volume of graphics for us. As you probably can tell from the name, the Chromantics graphics package contains letters and numbers that look like they were fashioned from pieces of chrome. They are elegantly formed, can be used by people who put out a newsletter, make their own cards for anniversaries, birthdays, etc., and have many other applications.

If you combine these letters with other commercial graphics, only your imagination will limit what you can create. The Chromantics package also contains clip files depicting two sizes of a license plate with "I LOVE YOU" in the center. Of course, the LOVE is depicted as a

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platform which should dominate the scene."

I'm not sure freezing the technology is a good idea. Then again, I'm not sure it isn't. Here are the main arguments for both sides of the issue...

REASONS TO FREEZE TECHNOLOGY

— Computers will not become obsolete so quickly. People who bought an Apple II GS a few years ago have found that the machine is

— You can never have too many standards or too many choices. The winners will find their way to the top naturally and the losers will die off. There's no need to impose artificial rules.

— Some people want to be on the cutting edge, and it wouldn't be fair to take away that opportunity just because the rest of us are having a tough time keeping up.

— Even if you wanted to, you can't freeze technology. We live in a free enterprise system, and it would not be fair or legal to prevent compa-

chrome heart. There is also a single heart clip and linked hearts.

You might be interested in learning that most of the graphics on this package were done by Tony Patterson. The only graphics not done by Tony are the chrome heart clips. On the bonus volume that is offered by EyeZod Graphics, Steve Majors did some of the artwork. EyeZod Graphics offers a bonus package to those who register their purchase. The difference is that this bonus package is FREE. This is madness since the selling price of Chromantics is only \$14 plus \$3 shipping and handling. Please register your Chromantics purchase. You will find that the bonus package is well worth sending in that registration form.

PowerPAINT FOR A HARD DRIVE

I am sure you are all aware that the Chromantics graphics package is designed to be used with Solomon Swift's PowerPAINT program. Ron Collins has informed me that hard drive owners were not able to use the PowerPAINT program until now. Not being a hard drive user, I was not aware of this. However, the problem has been solved.

If you are using a hard drive, and would like to use PowerPAINT with that drive, Richard Drushel will give you a converted copy for free. All you have to do is send your original Pow-

erPAINT program, along with a formatted double-sided disk (or two single-sided disks) and \$1.00 for return mailing, to Richard Drushel, 3353 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118; **216-397-0684**.

Be sure you tell Rich what hard drive you are going to use with PowerPAINT. Each type of hard drive requires different changes to make it run properly. Didn't I tell you ADAM users were friendly people?

ADAMCON 04

As I told you last month, ADAMCON 04 will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, July 23-26, 1992, with departure on Monday, July 27. All meals will be supplied, starting with breakfast on Friday, and including breakfast before heading home on Monday.

The cost of attending ADAMCON 04 has been kept the same as it was at ADAMCON 03 (\$220). A payment plan is being offered this year, and a bank account and accounting system have been set up to handle and keep track of payments made. All you have to do is send in partial payments from now until June. It is asked that you be paid up by June 1, 1992. An acknowledgment will be sent out for each payment received.

Please send all payments for ADAMCON 04 to Herman L. Mason,

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Jr. (8912 Blaine Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106, **216-231-8813**) or George M. Koczwara (4034 E. 52nd Street, Newburgh Heights, OH 44105, **216-883-6668**). It is asked that you do NOT send payments to anyone else! Start sending your convention payments in NOW. It'll be here before you know it.

The B.A.S.I.C. Users Group is offering an early bird special. If the convention fee is paid in full before April 15, 1992, you will receive an ADAMCON 04 T-shirt at the convention. If payment is made in full before June 1, 1992, you will receive 10 blank disks at the convention. The T-shirts are nice, so you might want to get your fee all paid up before April 15, 1992, just to get one. It makes quite a souvenir.

ORPHANWARE

As well as being very much involved in ADAMCON 04, "Big" John Lingrel has given Herman and George permission to produce and market some of his Orphanware serial ports. If you are in need of a serial port, get in touch with Herman Mason or George Koczwara at the above addresses for prices. Remember that you will need a serial port to hook up a "dumb" terminal to give you a full width 80-column display in T-DOS.

FIDONET

Barry Wilson of the St. Louis ADAM Users Group tells me that a FidoNet National ADAM Message Base is possible if everyone will participate. The basic idea is free access to the message base and free communications with other ADAMites.

In case you were wondering what a FidoNet is, it is a sophisticated BBS program that large BBS systems use to transfer messages from one local BBS to another across the country. Many local BBS boards carry FidoNet, and the local BBS is the start of the national message base. The National ADAM Echo is a very small part of the FidoNet exchange areas. It is a portion of FidoNet that is devoted to ADAM messages only.

If your local BBS carries FidoNet, log onto the board and leave a message on the ADAM message base. If the FidoNet BBS in your area does not carry the ADAM message base (ADAM Echo) on its FidoNet, ask if it will carry the National ADAM Echo Message Base found on the FidoNet backbone with a TAG of ADAM (these are the magic words).

If you would like to know if there is a FidoNet BBS in your area, send your area code to Barry Wilson of the St. Louis ADAM Users Group (12967 Weatherfield Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146), and he will send you a list of all the FidoNets in that area

code. He says this list could consist of as many as 150 BBSs with their phone numbers. You can then check to see which ones are not long distance or toll calls and log on to one of those. This means that you can get a message to another ADAMite anywhere there is a BBS using FidoNet handling the ADAM Echo.

It's nice to be able to communicate with other ADAM users without it costing you an arm and a leg. At various times, I have even been able to communicate with ADAMites in Canada. The quantity that makes this message link work is YOU. Log on and let us hear from you.

THE ADAM CONNECTION

I have mentioned David White's ADAM Connection on a number of occasions, but I'm going to bring it up one more time. If you have access to an IBM computer or compatible, David's program can be used to format 5-1/4 inch disks for use with the ADAM computer. This program is capable of formatting disks for either single-sided disk drives (160K), or double-sided disk drives (320K).

The reason I mention this is that I sometimes find I need a fresh, newly formatted disk when I run out of storage space on the disk I am using to store articles on, or the one I am using to work with while refining the current article. If I don't have one already formatted, it's a simple mat-

DIGITAL DATA PACKS AND DISKS

When you have been using an ADAM computer every day for several years, using disk drives, hard drives and various other peripherals, you tend to forget what it was like when you first got the ADAM, where all you had was the equipment that came with the computer. That included ONE digital data drive. Many ADAM users out there have recently acquired their ADAM, but only has one drive, that one being a digital data drive, and the new owners do not really know all the little ins and outs of using the digital data drive and the data packs (tapes). I ran across some information the other day that the new ADAM users might find very useful. Bear in mind that this information applies to disks as well as tapes.

The directory on an ADAM tape or disk normally has space for 36 entries. The first three spaces of the directory are used for the Boot, System and Directory programs. This leaves 36 spaces for you to store names of the files saved on tape/disk. When you delete a program from a tape/disk, it is NOT physically removed. The directory simply "hides" the name of the file so you can no longer read it, or retrieve it. The name is still in the directory, and the data is still on the tape/disk.

ter to run the ADAM Connection and format one on the MS-DOS machine. This way, I don't have to scramble for a disk that might have some extra storage space left on it, or (heaven forbid!) lose everything I haven't managed to save to boot a formatting program.

The ADAM Connection is very easy to use, formats the disks quickly, and saves wear and tear on your ADAM. Also, you can format needed disks while doing something constructive on the ADAM, instead of sitting around waiting for the format process to finish. This not only saves wear and tear on your ADAM, but your nervous system as well.

I save the article I'm working with at regular intervals on a work disk, finished or not, in order not to lose too much if the power goes off, or some other monumental disaster happens while I'm composing. I have done this religiously since I lost a very long article I had almost completed. I had not backed it up at any point during the writing or refining processes, and lost the complete article. I had to start from scratch, and this is not an easy task.

Contrary to what many people think, writers do NOT remember every word they write. I can recognize my own work, but remembering how I wrote it the first time is something else again. Maybe if I had a photographic memory, I could accomplish this, but I don't, SAVE frequently.

your ADAM will store information over the blocks that had been used by the deleted file. However, the name of that file is still on the directory, taking up one of the 36 spaces. If you delete six files, then save 30 files, when you try to save the 31st file, you will be told "NO MORE ROOM". When you check the status, you may find that you have, say 100 blocks free. This means that the directory is full, not the space on the tape/disk. The reason for this is the fact that file number 31 is now file number 37 when you count those that were deleted by you and by ADAM.

There are several ways to attack this problem. First, you use a file copier and transfer the files you want saved to an erasable tape/disk. Then you INITIALIZE (erase the old directory and write a new one) the directory so it can again be used. Second, you can use the public domain program called CATCLEAR to store the active file names in memory while it clears the directory and writes a new one, then writes the active file names back to the media.

Once this process is over, it must be said that you will really appreciate the value of the CD-ROM.

CD-ROM

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Headstart

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WEEZE to move all the active files forward by rewriting them to the tape/disk, filling in spaces previously taken up by deleted files. It then rewrites the directory, using only the names of the active files that were moved forward.

Here again, don't decide that you want to abandon ship halfway through the process. Once started, you must let the program finish its job, or your ADAM will "lose" your files. I find there is an even better way to attack this problem. When I INIT or format a new disk or tape, I direct the program to save me a three block directory. This gives me 78 additional spaces in which to store the names of files I have saved to the tape/disk. This way, I can usually fill the space on the media before I run out of room on the directory.

Please remember, however, that when you INITialize a disk or data pack, you only "erase" the directory. If you want to clear the disk or tape of everything on it, you can only do so by reformatting it. When you reformat, you wipe everything clear except the formatting itself. It is once again like a new, unused disk or tape. The only problem with this is that you can only format disks with your ADAM. The ability to format data packs is not built into your ADAM console. You have to have a Megacopy formatter to reformat a data pack.

More next month! If you have questions, or something you would like me to cover in this column, you can contact me at 411-B North Sea Lane, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548. If you would like a reply, please enclose a legal-sized SASE.

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