

THE

MICRO



ISSUE 2

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Creative Technology (MicroDesign) Ltd.

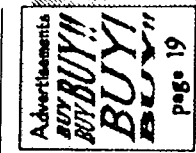
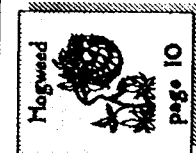
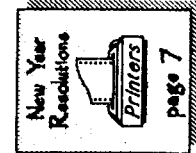
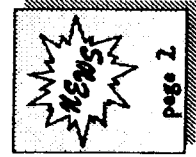
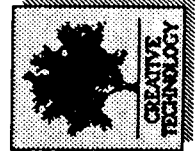
Hello Again ...

WHAT BETTER WAY to start the Nineties than with this bumper 24-page second issue of *The MicroDesigner*? Fifty percent fatter than its predecessor, and moulded by your comments & suggestions on it, this issue contains many of the specific features you have requested.

We could not possibly, however, have included them all: the response to the first issue has been tremendous - thank you for all your letters, and our special thanks also to those of you who have sent us examples of your *MicroDesigning* - there is no better feedback than seeing what you do with our program, so that we can go on extending and refining it to your requirements. Some of the *MicroDesigned* pages we've seen are also the best compliments we could receive!

While working through the correspondence from the first issue, we have tried to reply individually where appropriate, but we have also incorporated here as many repeatedly requested features as we can, including advice on Printer selection, loading *Locoscript2* files, using accents, and much more. What we could not fit into this issue will appear in future ones ... the subscription system to the next issue (No3) will be as before - see the *Order Form* on page 23 for details.

The MicroDesigner is composed entirely using MicroDesign2 PCW. The pages (except 19 & 21) were printed at A4 scale with an HP Deskjet+ printer, and were photo-reduced to A5 for duplication.



The Magazine for Users of *MicroDesign2 PCW*

SCANNING

Here at CT we get quite a few enquiries from users who want to use some kind of scanning system to reproduce graphic images from paper. The only PCW scanner currently available is the MasterScan print-head device, which as well as being slow and of limited resolution, will not work on the 9512. So, what to do? Well, one option is to find a company who already have a PC-based scanner system which produces excellent quality with a minimum of fuss, and convince them to do your scanning work for you (for a fee, of course).

Luckily, we know of just such an operation. Groundwork are a training company based in Lancashire who are in the process of setting up a PC-to-PCW scanning system specifically for MD2 users. Details of charges etc have yet to be finalised, but if you need your company logo or personal letterhead scanned as an MD2 image, why not call Groundwork's John Hunt on 0539 533600.

MD2 OPERATES

Version v1.15 of MD2 is now complete. This has a new improved MDMAKE program, which allows hard drive users to install MD2 on any Drive, including the Cirtech Diamond, but v1.15 is in all other respects identical to version v1.12.

Whilst we still provide free upgrades to this latest version for users with versions BEFORE v1.12, there is absolutely NO point in upgrading from v1.12 unless you have a Hard Drive - you will only be wasting your time and ours! To obtain an upgrade, send your Master Program/Fonts disc back to us with a covering letter and a list class stamp to cover the postage.

TRAINING

We are currently trying to compile a list of any companies offering training in MicroDesign2, so that we can pass on this useful information to our users. Please write in and tell us if you know of any MD2 training courses, whether such courses are well-planned and effective, or even if you fancy teaching MD2 yourself.

HARDWARE

RAMPACKS

Loco2 users have been taking advantage of the extra M: drive facilities offered by the two PCW RAM packs, available from SCA Systems and Ienstein. We have had many enquiries asking whether MD2 is compatible with this extra memory: the answer is that it will work on a PCW which has a RAM pack fitted, but it does not at present use this memory. The latest version of Flipper, Flipper2+, allows users of 8512s with RAM packs to keep both MD2 and Locoscript in memory at the same time (although files can only be transferred between them via disc).

We do intend that future versions of MicroDesign will use the RAM extensions as an M: drive, and other extra features may be added. If the SCA Systems RAM pack can be upgraded to 2Mb, as suggested by their advertising, this will offer even more power: contact them for more details.

LIBRARY NEWS

XFD2

**This is Bolden 33pt
... and Bolden 22pt
... and Bolden 17pt**

THIS IS DROP SHADOW

**RONDO comes at 26pt
and also at 20pt
and 13pt too**

... and many other styles too ...

NEW CLIP-ART

This month has seen the release from A.G.Booth Illustrations of a new clip-art disc to supplement the clip-art library already available from HD Design, and the Cleartext Fonts disc from Exemplar (see the advertisements towards the end of this newsletter). The new disc has some scanned pictures of animals amongst its selection of 75 pictures, and is very reasonably priced at £9.95. Tony Booth told us that more clip-art discs are on the way: watch this space!

ADVERTS ...

As usual we are carrying advertisements from all our library suppliers. Please note that although we have never heard any complaints against any companies advertising here, we cannot be held responsible for any problems you may have when dealing with them. We are interested to hear what you think of their service: why not write in and tell us?

Coming Soon...

By the way, we are currently assembling our own graphics library here at CT. In the next few months, we will be releasing a set of discs covering a number of particular topics: more news in the next issue!

By the time you read this, EXTRA FONTS DISC Number 2 will be ready for release. This latest collection of typefaces provides further sizes of some of the styles from Extra Fonts Disc 1 (where do we get these scintillating titles from?), and new styles in both headline and body text sizes.

The new Rondo is a wonderful alternative to Times when a serif design is required, and the three Bolden fonts gives stunning results when you need a weighty typeface to grab the eye. Other new decorative designs are included too (Scribble is particularly striking), but the emphasis is on rather more 'normal' styles this time. See the advertisement on page 22

Dear Hamish

He's back! The King of the Problem Page answers your queries, explodes your myths, and gives lifestyle advice to the puzzled and the spiritually bankrupt....



Dear Hamish:

Quite often when I print a page on my DMP3160, the very top lines have white stripes running through them. Why is this, and how can I cure the problem?

P Diana (Mrs)

Hamish Says...

This happens because there is a little 'slack' in the mechanical drives of most printers, some worse than others. To get around this, either use the printer front panel (or press PTR with PCW printer) to issue a line feed before printing, or use the print queue •CODES command to drive the paper forwards a short distance, taking up the mechanical slack before starting to print your actual page: The following queue produces an extra gap of about 1/20th of an inch above the printout...

•codes 27 J 10

•current

(and don't forget to set the PRINT option to QUEUE).



Severe Flooding in South America

Dear Hamish:

My PCW printer sometimes stops near the bottom of the page and refuses to print any more until I give it some more paper. Would hitting it with a sledgehammer help?

Frustrated, Millwall

Hamish Says

It may make *you* feel better, but the PCW printer is notorious for being stubbornly unfathomable and impervious to physical assault. Try setting the Paper Out Defeat by using the CP/M PAPER command as described at the bottom of Page A1-1 in your MD2 manual.

Dear Hamish:

I occasionally manage to Flood a large area by mistake: there is no problem UNDOing this, but the accidental Flood can take so long to finish that I have time for an illicit weekend in Brighton before I can do any more page design. Is there any way of stopping in mid-Flood: my husband is getting suspicious.

Mrs X. Inverness

Hamish Says...

Pressing the STOP key will halt the Flood operation, and you can then UNDO it. Brighton is, I'm afraid, an insoluble problem.

Dear Hamish...

I produce an A5 format parish newsletter by designing two A5 pages on a Sideways A4 page. Typesetting in two columns is no problem, but I always find that I have big gaps wasting space at the ends of the paper, but no gap in the middle where I want to fold it. Any suggestions? Rev. A. McVicar

Hamish Says...

You can print "longer" pages, which in this case are "wider" pages, using the Print Queue (again!). First, design each A5 page as usual: half a Sideways A4 page *without* leaving a gap in the middle. Now save each one as a separate Area file, say as RITEPAGE.MDA and LEFTPAGE.MDA.

With the two pages are saved separately, use the following Queue to print one, leave a gap by sending line feed codes to the printer, then print the other. Because Sideways printing starts at the right edge of the page, the right hand page should be first in the queue:

•RITEPAGE.MDA

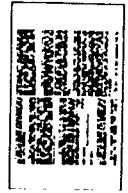
•codes 27 J x

•LEFTPAGE.MDA

where x is the desired gap length, measured in inches, maximum 255

216

Remember to set the LENGTH option to CONTENT when Queue printing several MD2 pages onto one sheet of paper.



Before... After

Dear Hamish:

I use the Print Queue system extensively for print runs of several pages, and I sometimes have trouble with completely inexplicable Print Queue Errors. The last one occurred when trying to print the file "NEWPAGE.MDA": should I sue? W.Caxton

Hamish Says...

At the beginning of each line of the Print Queue, the system checks to see if the line contains one of the Print Queue Commands. If you try to use a filename which begins with the same letters as a Command, you are in trouble. The Commands in version 1.12-1.15 are •CODES, •NEW, •CURRENT and •FORMFEED: more Commands may be added in later versions.

Dear Hamish:

I have a disc with two text files on it called "FIRST.GRP" and "SECOND.GRP". Whenever I try to Load Text (••) from this disc, my PCW passes out and can only be revived by a Boot up the A: drive. Please help! A.Bootlegger

Hamish Says...

Files called ".GRP" are special Loco2 Group files, and MD2 cannot cope with listing more than one such file on screen. This is because if it finds a ".GRP" file, it always displays it as the first entry in the filing window, before the alphabetical list of files, so that you can see which Loco2 Group you are using. Avoid using ".GRP" in your filenames.

Dear Hamish:

Look, I may be pretty stupid, but could you explain the text marking system to me one more time. I type some text into the Editor section of MD2, then mark it using ALT/+ and ALT/- so that it appears white-on-black. Then when I move into Layout and try to Typeset, I get a message telling me there is no text marked. So I count to ten very slowly, then look in the Typeset Menu: *yea! there is an entry which says "MarkText.fl"*. So I press *f1*, then PASTE to typeset again: *lo and behold, there is still no text marked. I have now eaten my PCW in frustration, but if you can tell me how to mark the text properly, I may put a brick through Dixons window and steal another one.*

Hamish Says....

S. Chiblain, Antarctica
You must realise that marking text in the Editor section is DIFFERENT from marking text for Typesetting. The Editor has its own Cut, Copy and Paste facilities, and it is the markers for these operations, NOT the typesetting markers, which are positioned when you press ALT/+ and ALT/- in the Editor section.

To mark the text for Typesetting, you need to be in the Typeset operation. As you say, you should press *f1*: however, this does not mark the text. It displays the text in the bottom window, allowing you to place the markers wherever you want them using ALT/+ and ALT/-. So an example sequence to mark all the text in the Editor is...

Type in the text

Move to Layout (EXIT, L)

Press T to start Typeset, then *f1* to display the text

Press ALT/SHIFT/DOC to move the cursor to the beginning of the text file
Press ALT/+

Press SHIFT/DOC to move the cursor to the end of the text file
Press ALT/-

I hope that makes everything a bit clearer. If you really do want to place the Typeset markers while in the Editor section, you can do it using EXTRA/+ and EXTRA/- (although these marker positions are not visible until you move to Typeset), but this feature was not included in the MD2 manual because the boffins here at Belated Technology thought it might confuse people!

Dear Hamish:

Why is it that my 9-year-old son knows more about MD2 than I do?

Roger Beeson
Hamish Says.... This phenomenon is well known to all computer users, as well as those with video recorders. Either you can let it depress you, or you can take all the credit for having such a bright child and be grateful that you don't have to pay him very much to do all your work for you: it's all a question of attitude.

* Dear Hamish * Dear Hamish * Dear Hamish * Dear Hamish * Dear Hamish *

New Year's Resolutions...

... or Everything You Always Wanted to Know About

* Printers *

One of the most frequent enquiries we receive from users goes something like this: "I've decided to buy an external printer for my PCW, and I was wondering if you recommend any particular type or make of printer, and whether I need any other bits of hardware to make it work?" So, with apologies to the hundred or so people who have already heard this explanation over the telephone, here it is again.

WHY BUY ANOTHER PRINTER?

There are two basic reasons for buying a new printer. Firstly, 9512 users *must* buy one if they want to use MD2, since the printer supplied with the 9512 is a Daisy-Wheel, and this type of printer cannot print MD2 pages at all.

Secondly, 8256/8512 users will find that the quality of MD2 printed output obtained using the PCW's own dot-matrix is not as good as that obtained using external printers. This is because MD2 normally prints in "Quadruple Density" graphics mode, but when we asked Amstrad for the technical information needed to print in this mode on the PCW printer, they originally refused to give us any data or help. Consequently, MD2 currently drives the PCW printer in "Double Density" mode only, but uses "Quad Density" on other printers: external printers therefore print MD2 pages at higher quality than the PCW printer. (However, Amstrad have now told us what we need to know ...)

WHAT KIND OF PRINTER?

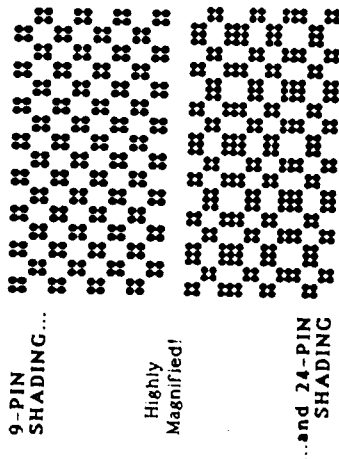
So, having decided to buy a new printer, what are the alternatives?

Dot Matrix printers, which work by pushing pins through a ribbon onto the paper, are the cheapest and the most common: the 8256/8512 printer is a dot-matrix. Originally, most dot-matrix printers used a vertical row of 9 pins to produce dot patterns for text and graphics. In the last couple of years, printers with 24 pins have appeared: these pins are closer together, and smaller, so they can produce more detailed characters for word-processor printouts. In the graphics mode used for printing MD2 pages, 24-pin printers are theoretically capable of producing improved resolution, but this question is made more complicated by the fact that MD2 was originally designed to use 9-pin printers.

Each dot on the MD2 page is represented by one dot on a 9-pin

* New Years Resolutions *

printout (but NOT using the 8256/8512 printer), and the printout is therefore very even. With a 24-pin printer, each dot on the page has to be represented by several dots on the printout: this means that while most 24-pin printouts give slightly more detail because of the smaller dot size, the dot spacing can vary by a few thousandths of an inch. This is not visible under normal circumstances, but if repeated dot patterns are used to fill an area with a "grey-scale" effect, this can appear slightly "stripey" on a 24-pin printout. The 9-pin version will be more even, but the bigger dots produce a more coarse shading effect:



The net result of all this blinding science is that the improvements gained by using a 24-pin printer are really only useful in MD2 if you are using the 256K High-res strip (page format 6) to get the greatest possible detail, and it is unlikely that this extreme case will be worth the extra £100 or so which the 24-pin printer will cost. On almost all page formats, you can achieve the same quality by choosing the right 9-pin printer. But which one?

WHICH 9-PIN PRINTER?

Firstly, make sure you only consider 9-pin printers which have Quad Density graphics† - many older ones in particular don't eg Amstrad DMP2000, Epson MX80.

Secondly, pin size can make a difference: for most MD2 applications the pins should be as small as possible, so have a look at a sample printout. The best 9-pin output we've ever seen was achieved using a Star LC-10, although if anyone thinks they have a 9-pin which produces better output, please let us know.

THE EFFECT OF

AA AA

LARGE PINS AND SMALL PINS

WHICH 24-PIN PRINTER?

If you do decide to buy a 24-pin printer, make sure that the one you choose has "Hex-Density" graphics: a few 24-pin printers, including some of Amstrad's own, have only "Triple-Density", which does not give such good results. We generally recommend the Star LC-24-10 as a low-budget printer, although the choice of facilities and range of prices is much broader in the 24-pin market, and you may find another printer more suited to your particular purposes.

† Ask your suppliers for this information - if they can't or won't tell you, they shouldn't be selling printers at all, so DON'T buy from them!

BUT WHAT ABOUT MY WORD-PROCESSOR?

It is important to understand that all these advantages and disadvantages only apply when using the printers to print out from MD2. 24-pin printers offer some real improvements over 9-pin speed and quality for word-processor work, and Locomotive don't recommend the Star LC10 for use with Locoscript2 because of problems with proportional spacing and justification. This complicates the issue still further(!), but we can only advise reliably on printing MD2 pages. If you want to know about word-processor printing, please consult the authors of your word-processor.

MORE EXPENSIVE OPTIONS...

Thermal, Inkjet, LCD Crystal and Laser printers can all be driven by the MD2 Laser option, provided the printer itself supports the HP LaserJet Plus graphics standard. (Laser printers must have about 1½ Megabytes of internal RAM, enough to store a full page of graphics.) As well as producing good results, all of these printers are virtually silent. Laser printers are extremely convenient for printing multiple copies of a single page: it may take the usual 10-20 minutes to send the page, but a Laser can then produce up to 100 copies at 4-10 pages per minute. Here at CT, we use the HP Deskjet printer for master artwork (to get the highest quality), and a cheap Laser printer for producing multiple copies.

SPEED

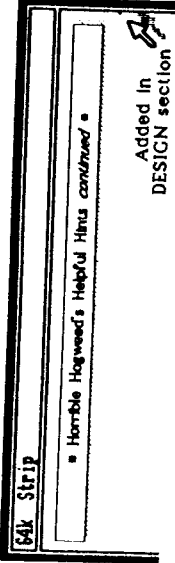
One final note. Although printing speed does vary a little between different printers, we know of no printer which is very much faster than any other when printing MD2 pages (except when printing multiple copies using a Laser): if you know better, please drop us a line. To give a rough guide to time comparisons, here is table of times for printing the same page on 4 different printers:

PRINTER	256k A4 Upright	256k A4 Sideways
PCW	20 mins	25 mins
STAR LC10 9-pin	16½ mins	25½ mins
P'sonic KX-PII24 24-pin	25½ mins	12 mins
PP8 Laser	16½ mins	26½ mins

WILL I NEED ANY EXTRA HARDWARE?

External printers are usually connected to computers by a Centronics parallel interface. The 9512 has a Centronics interface built in, so you don't need any extra hardware. For the 8512 and 8256, you will need to buy a Centronics interface: this is often combined in the same box with a Serial or RS232 interface, and costs about £40-50. And do make sure that you order the right printer connection cable for your system: the 9512 and the 8256/8512 Centronics interface use slightly different types of cable.

Now that the header is basically finished, one last little touch before storing it on disc: a single pixel is added at the very right hand edge of the page about 24 lines below the shadow to define the gap between the header and the start of the main page body. (This will become clearer later when we look at the Print Queue). Then the full width of the page, the height of the header including this dot, is saved on disc as HOGHEAD2.MDA (the first Hogweed header was HOGHEAD1.MDA).



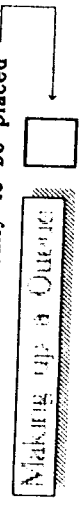
Part 2 - The Main Page Body

The main body of the page was designed on a 256k Upright A4 format, and demonstrates particularly the use of the SetWindow & Typeset operations to lay text out on the page. The text included markers for tabs, indents and other effects to achieve most of the completed page design, with a few minor graphic touches added in the Design section. Taking the various aspects of the page in the order in which they were tackled ...

The Text was created in the Text Editor section bit by bit as the page design took shape.

The Top Paragraph was assembled in two stages:

Firstly the 'Making up a Queue' panel was created at the top left of the page using Write in the Design section (with the Times22 font) and Rectangle operations as previously described. An extra box was also added where the big capital N was eventually to be placed



... to control the Auto-Flow typesetting of this paragraph. The Auto-Flow function will ensure that the typeset text avoids this obstruction, which can later be replaced with the big capital N. There is, of course, no N in the typeset text! (The reason for using a square for now is that I wanted the N to be exactly the height of two lines of text, but didn't yet know how tall that would be!)

Secondly, the rest of the paragraph is typeset. The Window for this paragraph, and almost the whole of the text, was set to a few pixels less than the page width, and about 8 lines (on the Layout display) less high than the 256k Upright A4 page.

The Typesetting was executed, then, in Times14.MDF with Auto-Flow set to AUTO-SKIP (in the Format.f3 menu) and the start cursor positioned just to the right of the dummy box. Only the text of this first paragraph as far as *winding back up, etc.* was typeset this time, and it had its own markers for Double-Strike On/Off at the beginning and end of the paragraph text.

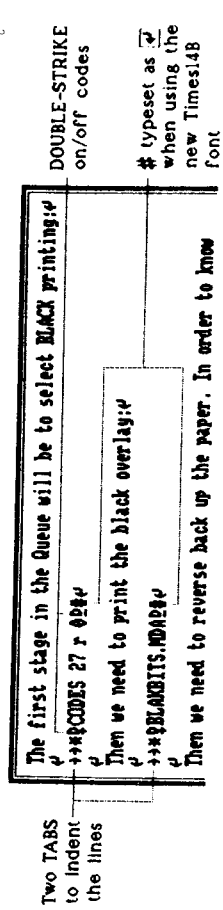
Once the four lines of this paragraph had been typeset into place, the dummy box was removed and replaced by a capital N which was made exactly the right size by rescaling from Times25.MDF.



Customising the Times14 Font: Before examining how the rest of the typesetting was executed, a quick look at the two 'special' characters implemented here as part of the font: the ☐ and the /216', each of which replaced an unused character in the original Times14 typeface. The ☐ was created directly in the Font Designer section, and was Kept in the # slot. The /216' was assembled in the Design section by Writing with the Times12 font, and the result was then Grabbed from the Font Designer, being Kept in the 1/2 slot. The altered font was then re-saved as Times14B.MDF. This font must be loaded whenever these character substitutions are required.



The Main Text is typeset onto the page in the newly-edited Times14B font. The text used included TAB codes to allow the lines of the Print Queue to be indented as well as in Double-Strike, so a short sample looks like ...



The whole of the first half of the page (down to the table) was typeset in one operation, in a Window very slightly less wide than the one used for the top paragraph.

Once this typeset was satisfactorily executed, a couple of Layout section Block Copies were used to reduce slightly the height of the blank lines between paragraphs. This was in order more clearly to 'attach' each queue line visually to the paragraph above it. The same effect could also be achieved by Marking and Typesetting each paragraph separately, and moving the start cursor up a pixel or so before Typesetting the next (though Ruled Lines must be OFF for this to work).

The **Table** is the next part to look at. This involves the establishment of a new setting for the 'Window', with four columns covering about 3/8 of the page width.

The reason for setting up this particular Window is to execute the table in COLUMNS rather than in ROWS. If a 'Start-Next-Column' marker (Alt-RETURN) is inserted just before the first entry for each column in the text, the Typeset operation will lay out the table contents for us automatically:

Note the use in the text of:

- ① Start-Next-Column markers
- ② Right-Aligned and Centred codes (list column is right-aligned, all others are centred).

Note also the 1/2 characters which are typeset as /216' when Times14B.MDF is used.

The table is completed by adding the lines in the Design section using **Rectangle** and right-angled **Line** operations, and the 'Page Format' title using **Write**. Then another Window setting (one column only now) was used to typeset the paragraph next to the table in Times12.MDF.

The **Remaining Page Body** was created just like the first half, in one big Typeset operation following by some 'gap-shuffling' as described earlier. In the end, the total length of this main page body was 1001 lines on the MicroDesign page, measurement of which is made easier using the Extra-O key-function to zero the cursor readout on the topmost line of the page contents (v1.12 upwards).

The only other point arising here is the use of further TAB codes to push the italicised comments across the page next to the last set of Queue lines ...

eg `→→→CODES 27 r 40#→→to select yellow`
`↵`

↳ These 2 extra tabs push 'to select yellow' across

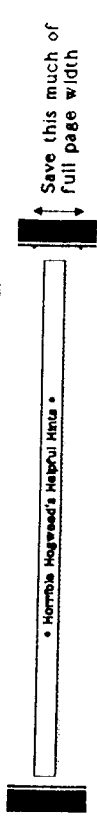
The **Finishing Touches**. We now have only the shaded lines & rectangles which link the queue text together to add, as well as the line down the right hand side and the 'Bye-bye' panel at the bottom right of the page...

The completed page body should now be saved. I called this particular page HOGPAGE6.MDA as it is the sixth page of my article. This leaves only the footer and page number ...

Part ③ - The Footer

The footer design is basically just an exact repeat of the header, except that the box is slightly less tall, and that Times16 was used for the words (rather than Times22). Remember that you would only need to design this footer ONCE, and can then use it for all relevant pages by including it in the Print Queue (more later).

The other point to note is that when the footer was saved (as HOGFOOT.MDA), TWO dots were added to the design: one BELOW (as described for the header), and one ABOVE to mark the gap between the bottom of the page body and the top of the footer box. The full height including these dots was saved:

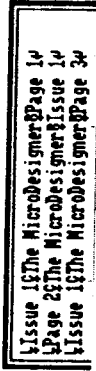


Part ④ - The Page Number

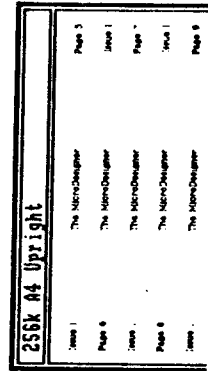
There are two alternatives for doing this part:

You could use the #CODES function in the Print Queue (v1.10 upwards) to tell your printer to output the desired text directly, but due to the way #CODES currently interprets spaces you will have to list every space as a decimal code 32! eg #CODES Page 32 49 32 32 32 32 32 The 32 MicroDesigner 32 32 32 32 issue 32 49

Alternatively, as I did here, create each page number 'strip' as a separate .MDA file, and include the filename in the Queue. These strips (16 in all, though Page 1 wasn't used) were all typeset together on one page in Times12. The text looks like:



Left Centre Right



This is typeset with a large enough multiple-of-8 Line Pitch (eg 48) to give a clear & regular gap between the strips so that they can be saved on disc separately. When the typesetting is done, you should see something like the Layout view shown ...

No spacing dots are needed here because the gap above the page number has been defined in the Footer .MDA, and there is nothing below them: we therefore only need save exactly the height of the lettering of each line.

In my case, I called the Area files PAGENO1.MDA, PAGENO2.MDA, etc. up to PAGENO16.MDA. These names will be inserted in the relevant places in the Print Queue.

The Print Queue

Now that the various components of the page have been designed, they may be combined in a Print Queue to generate the final result. The queue for this page is as follows:

- #HOGHEAD2.MDA the Header
- #HOGPAGE6.MDA the Main Page Body
- #HOGFOOT.MDA the Footer
- #PAGENO10.MDA the Page Number
- #FORMFEED

Remember that this queue must be at the very start of the Editor text space, with no spaces after the asterisks and no blank lines. (We are working on extensions and improvements for the Queue system!)

After preparing the Queue in the Editor, move to the Layout section, press **P** for Print, and select Print Menu settings as follows:

Print :	PAGE	QUEUE	TEXT	Copies :	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 X	YOUR CHOICE
Scale :	FULL	HALF	QUARTER	Paper :	CONT	SINGLE ←
Style :	DRAFT	QUALITY		Feed :	OFF	ON
Margin :			Length :	CONTENT PAGE	

- * The FORMFEED setting is OFF to avoid spitting the paper out BETWEEN the page elements.
- * The Length-CONTENT setting ensures that MicroDesign will only print the actual height of each part of the page, rather than a whole A4 height with the header lost in the middle! This is where the spacing dots added to the Header and Footer come in ...
- * If you want multiple copies of the page on a Dot-Matrix printer, Copy the queue in the Editor so that it is repeated the number of times needed (remember - no blank lines!). Use the Print Menu Copies setting on a Laser printer.

That's about it really, but a few odd points arising before we go on ...

- The spacing dots used in the Header & Footer should be easy to remove with Tippex. However, if you want you can use #CODES lines in the queues instead of the spacing dots to generate the gaps between header/body, body/footer etc. eg #CODES 27 J 108 which provides a half-inch gap on a 9-pin dot-matrix.
- #CODES is only available in versions of the program v1.10 or above: users with versions before v1.12 please see page 2 for information about upgrades.
- Although it may seem as though this page was terribly well planned, this is in fact not true at all! Continual trial-and-error was involved, so don't despair if your efforts don't come out right first time. That's what the Undo/Redo is for!

Now let's look at some other points raised by users of MicroDesign2 ...

Loading Locoscript2 Files into MicroDesign2

This seems to be causing some difficulty, and to clarify the issue, the following points should be noted ...

- 1) MicroDesign2 Text files can have any name. The default .TXT filename suffix is only a recommendation (like the DOCUMENT.000 which is offered in Locoscript.)
- 2) Your Loco2 file can be in any group on your Loco disc, and can have any name (except anything.GRP, for reasons which will become clear later)
- 3) Your Loco2 file should ideally be no longer than about 11k. If it is too long, it will be chopped short to fit the Editor space in MD2, and you will not be able to use the end part of the file.
- 4) Accents are stripped from their letters when Loco2 files are imported into MD2 eg Å → A. We will see how to get round this later.
- 5) MicroDesign2 recognises most of the relevant Loco2 Codes eg Right-Aligned etc, but it does not display them quite as obviously in the MD2 Editor as in Loco2. MD2 only shows the codes as single character markers, and does not actually align text against the right margin etc in the Editor - all this formatting is left until Typesetting.
- 6) You cannot resave a Loco2 file from MD2. You can only save the text as a MicroDesign text file, which cannot be loaded back into Loco2.
- 7) Locoscript 1 files cannot be imported directly into MicroDesign2. They will have to be converted to ASCII in Locoscript1, or to Locoscript2 format in Loco2.

To shed further light on points 1 & 2, let us look at an example. Suppose you have Created and Saved a Locoscript2 file called BANKMAN.LET in Group 3, which is called LETTERS, on a disc in Drive B: (It doesn't matter if the Group doesn't have a name). Let us see how to load this file into the MicroDesign2 Editor ...

- ◆ First run MicroDesign2 and go to the Editor section (EXIT then E)
- ◆ Insert your Loco2 disc in drive B:
- ◆ Press **F5** for LoadTEXT - the Filing Window will appear with A:*.TXT in the name slot if this is the first LoadTEXT operation since running the program
- ◆ Press **Alt-B** (The drive letter for the Loco2 disc - only necessary if not already set to drive B)
- ◆ Press **Alt-3** to select User (Group) 3
- ◆ Change the *.TXT to *. (to list all files) or to eg *.LET
- ◆ Press **ENTER** to list the files in User 3
- ◆ If the Group has a name (LETTERS in this case), it will be displayed with a suffix .GRP as the first file in the list. You cannot load this 'file', and should not have any real files in this Group which have the suffix .GRP
- ◆ Use the cursor keys to select the required file BANKMAN.LET and press **ENTER** - the file will be loaded, and MD2 will recognise it automatically as a Loco2 file.
- ◆ If the file is not listed, you may have the wrong user group ...
- ◆ Remember to switch back to User 0 (Alt-0) on your next disc operation or you will keep getting No file(s) found messages.

I hope this helps those of you who have had trouble with this ...

Accented & 'Foreign' Characters in MicroDesign2

This has also been causing some consternation! Although MicroDesign2 does not (yet) have full accent handling, until it does it is still possible to use accented characters, and to import them from Locoscript2, as follows ...

You will first have to decide how many different 'unusual' characters you want to use, and what you are going to lose from an existing font to accommodate them. For example, I had to typeset a Loco2 file in Welsh including the letters â, ŷ, and ı decided that these would replace the normal # [and] respectively.

The design of the accented characters themselves is very simple, especially if you create the â in the Font Designer (Edit an â, add the accent, Keep in the # slot), then use Block Copy in Design to add a ŷ from an â over a w and a ı, so you can Grab & Keep these new characters. In this way I created HELV25-W.MDF to use for Welsh applications (hmm ... sounds nearly as good as French polishing!)

When creating and editing your text, type # where you want an â, ı wherever you want a ŷ, etc. Although the text appears strange in the editor, it produces the desired result when Typeset with the amended font. If you are importing the text from Locoscript2, use Loco2's FIND & REPLACE facility to change all âs to #s, all ŷs to ıs, etc - this can now be imported into MicroDesign2 and typeset.

To reduce the chances of using the wrong letter somewhere, it's not a bad idea to make yourself a table like this one, which shows a possible set of character substitutions for various languages:

NORMAL SET:	£	\$	%	&	[]	{	}	"	'	,	@	#	1/2
FRENCH:	è	œ	ó	é	ù	ò	ı	à	â	è	ç	ı	ç	ç
GERMAN:					ü	ü	ı	ä	ö	ü	ö			
ITALIAN:	ò				ù	ı	ı	à	è	é	ı	ò	ı	
SPANISH:	ó	é	ú	ı	ı	ı	ı	á	ñ	ı	ı	ı	ı	ñ

These are in fact the substitutions used by Exemplar Design, whose MD CLEARTEXT includes some fonts already converted to carry these new characters, and a wide range of .CUT files etc containing the language variants for their other typefaces. (Their SANSSFR/GM/IT/SP fonts were used in this table).

Obviously this is not an ideal solution, but you'll just have to hang on, and use the above technique for now ...

NEXT ISSUE

Constructing Headlines ... Uneven Column Widths ... and more Bye 'til then!

* Hogweed's Helpful Hints *

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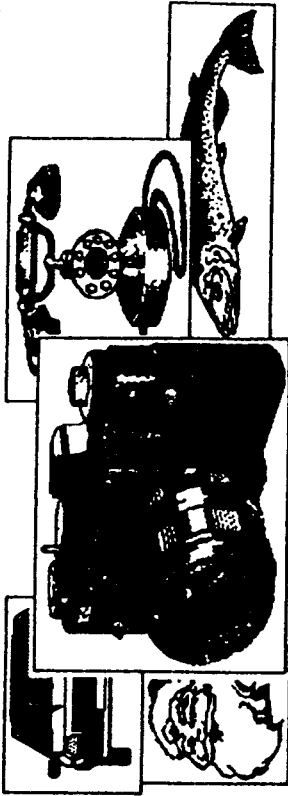
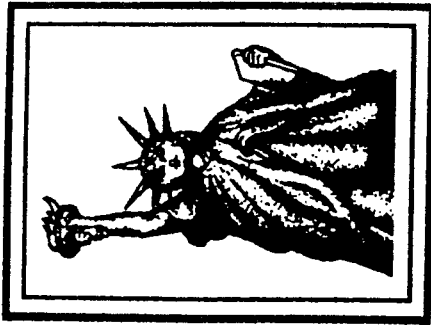
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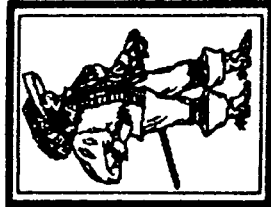
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