



FLIPPER 3

USER MANUAL

FOR THE AMSTRAD PCW

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HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

To many computer users, software manuals are like telephone directories: they're quite useful as reference works, but you wouldn't actually want to read one. Tempting though this approach may be, it really is a very poor way of getting to grips with Flipper 3. Quite simply, Flipper 3 isn't anything like other PCW programs so your computer "instincts" may well lead you astray. Even if you use and feel perfectly at home with earlier versions of Flipper, you may still find things very confusing without the manual to help.

If you're determined to work things out for yourself, you should at the very least make

sure that you read and understand Appendix A, "Warnings". However, you'll find the path much smoother if you simply work through the tutorial section of this manual. Taken together with the appendices and your disk's README files - README.LOC for Locoscript users, README.ASC for CP/M users - this should tell you all you need to know.

Once you've mastered the principles of Flipper 3, you can probably dispense with the manual for day-to-day use. If you are still unclear about any of Flipper 3's commands, the reference section should have all the information you need.

Flipper 3 software and manual
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Software Imperative's in-house development system.

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BEFORE YOU START

MAKE THAT BACKUP NOW!

Before you start working your way through this manual, it is absolutely vital that you make a backup copy of the relevant Flipper 3 master disk using either DISCKIT under CP/M, or Locoscript 3's "Disc copy" option.

You should already know how to do this from backing up the system disks supplied with your PCW.

It should be stressed that these are the only recommended ways of making a backup

copy of Flipper 3. Methods that work on a file-by-file basis (eg PIP) should not be used: as with CP/M and Locoscript 3 system disks, a Flipper 3 working disk contains special information that these methods won't copy.

Once you've finished backing up, put the original disk away in a safe place. From now on, the backup is referred to as your "working disk": this is the disk you should actually use from now on, going back to the original one only for a further copy if this one fails.

TUTORIAL

GETTING STARTED

Flipper 3 is an environment-switching tool. It splits an 8512, 9512 PCW10 or expanded 8256/9256 into two or more "environments" and lets you flip between them.

An environment is a complete machine-within-a-machine, consisting of a task - either the CP/M command line, a CP/M application, Locoscript 3, a Locoscript add-on program, or Software Imperative's FOREWORD - plus an M: drive and some crucial information about what state the task is in.

That last bit is the key to the whole exercise. When you flip from, say, Locoscript 3 to CP/M and back again, you'll find that Locoscript 3 is in exactly the same state as when you left it. If you flipped in the middle of editing a document - even if you were halfway through typing a word - that's where you'll be when you flip back. Locoscript 3 has been completely frozen in the meantime, whether you were away for a minute or an hour.

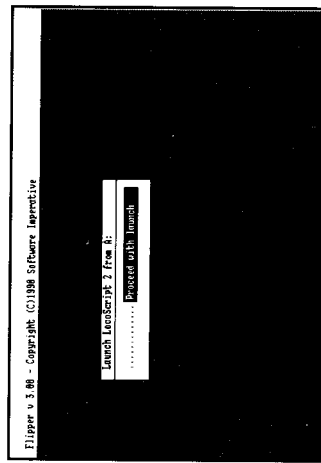
Let's get Flipper 3 booted up, so we can see this for ourselves. If you haven't already made yourself a Flipper 3 working disk following the instructions at the start of this manual, do so now.

LOCOSCRIPT & CP/M

The following example assumes that - like the vast majority of Flipper users - you are a Locoscript 2/3 user. If you don't have Locoscript 2/3, you may well find it instructive to follow the example on paper in any case. Don't try using Locoscript 1 instead: Flipper 3 only works with Locoscript v.2.16 or later.)

Switch your PCW on, and put your

Flipper 3 working disk into the A: drive. The screen will go black, and then grey/dark green, as different parts of Flipper 3 load from disk. Finally you'll get a screen display that looks like this:



Take the Flipper 3 working disk out of drive A:, and replace it with your normal Locoscript 3 start-of-day disk. When you've done this, hit the [ENTER] key. You'll see the screen go grey (or dark green) again, and you'll notice that the disk drive becomes active. This activity is simply Flipper 3 reading information from the Locoscript 3 disk.

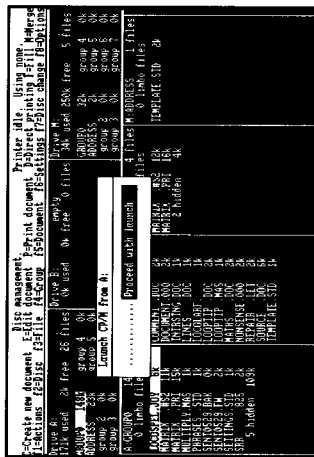
Once Flipper 3 has read all the information it needs, you'll notice the message "Launching..." appears in a bar across the top of the screen. There's a brief pause, and then the Locoscript 3 start-up screen appears. From here on, it's as if you'd switched the PCW on from cold and stuck your Locoscript 3 disk in straight away: the start-of-day sequence proceeds exactly as normal, ending up with the File Manager screen.

At this point you could be forgiven for thinking that Flipper 3 hadn't actually worked, and that you'd just booted Locoscript 3 as normal. There is almost no sign that anything unusual has happened: only the figures for used and free space on drive M: are out of the ordinary. (More about these a little later.)

In fact you haven't booted Locoscript 3: you've "launched" it as an environment. Flipper 3 is still hidden away in the machine and can be summoned up when needed, as we're about to see.

First, wait for the disk motor to stop running. Typically it'll keep going for 5 seconds or so after the File Manager screen comes up: you can hear it whirring away. Once it has stopped, take the Locoscript 3 start-of-day disk out of the A: drive, and hit [SHIFT]-[EXTRA]-[EXIT]. (That is, hold down the [SHIFT] and [EXTRA] keys and briefly hit [EXIT].)

This is the key sequence you'd normally use to reset your PCW. With Flipper 3 installed however, the result is quite different. You'll actually get a screen that looks like this:

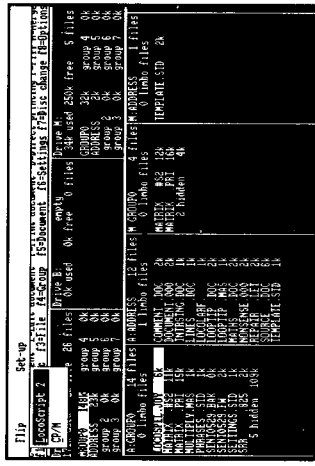


Now put a CP/M start-of-day disk in drive A: and hit [ENTER]. Once again you'll get a grey screen and some disk drive activity, followed by that "Launching..." message. This is then followed by the CP/M start-up screen. Depending on the start-of-day disk you chose, you may get an "A>" prompt with a cursor, or you may get various CP/M

screen with the message "Flipping..." in a band across the top. After a few seconds, the Locoscript 3 File Manager screen will reappear, exactly as it was when you first hit [SHIFT]-[EXTRA]-[EXIT]. Congratulations - you've just flipped!

Take a little time now to convince yourself that Locoscript 3 really is working properly: move the cursor around a bit, or hit [F7] to register a change of disks - you'll probably still have your CP/M start-of-day disk in the A: drive. (This isn't part of Flipper 3 use, but you'll probably find it reassuring.)

Once you're satisfied, check that the disk motor isn't running, and then hit [SHIFT]-[EXTRA]-[EXIT] to summon Flipper 3 up again. (You must always wait for the disk motor to stop before doing this: from now on it's assumed that you'll remember this.) Once again you'll see the bar and menu appear, like so:



Now we want to flip back to CP/M, completing our round trip. This time the highlight is in the wrong place. It's still positioned over "Locoscript 3", so hit down-cursor to move it onto the "CP/M" entry. Now hit [ENTER] and you'll get that "Flipping..." message again. After a few seconds you'll see the CP/M screen appear once more.

That's it for our first example: if you want to split your PCW half-and-half between Locoscript 3 and CP/M, you now know how to. A split like that won't suit a lot of people, however. The next chapter explains how to set Flipper 3 up differently.

BEFORE YOU GO ANY FURTHER

At this point, you may feel like leaving the manual for a while and actually using your newly-divided machine. This is fine, but there are a few restrictions you'll need to know about straight away:

- 1: Don't flip while the disk motor is running.
- 2: Don't flip while the printer is active.
- 3: If you're using a hard disk drive, make sure you don't create or alter files on the same logical drive from different environments.
- 4: If you use a printer in one environment, you must reset it before using it in another environment.

If any of these sound like they might cause you problems, consult Appendix A, "Warnings", for further details.

