

FRONT

PAGE



DESK-TOP PUBLISHING
FOR THE SINCLAIR QL
=====

USER'S MANUAL

C O N T E N T S

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dark programming nightmares!
*
* Peter Chambers *

FRONT PAGE version 1.01 - December 1986

ERRATA

1. For some reason, the alternative character set is not mentioned in the manual! Press F5 at the main menu to access it.
2. Also, if you are using the Brother M1009 printer, use the 'fully Epson compatible' option in the setup routine.

IMPROVEMENTS

1. The program is now supplied on just one cartridge, with an improved backup procedure. This is as a result of comments from early customers, some of whom found the old procedure unnecessarily complex. Thinking about it, they are right!

For microdrive-based systems, have two cartridges ready. They should be either blank, or contain nothing of any importance.

2. Instructions for using Front Page with Shinwa and Mannesman Tally printers are now included in the backup routine. Do not take the ESC option for Epson printers. NOTE THAT YOU CAN ONLY PRINT 80 OF THE 100 COLUMNS IN FRONT PAGE.
3. You can now load your own character sets. Note, however, that they must be in exactly the same format as the standard QL set. They can come from any source. We understand that those in Nucleon by Pyramide are ok, and the ones from QL World (June 1986, James Lucy) are certainly all right, as the bold set in Front Page was produced with it! They should contain only the normal 96 ASCII characters. Using longer sets will certainly cause problems, perhaps even a crash. Press F3 F2 F2 F3 {filename} to do it.
4. There is a new text entry routine. As text editors go, it is not incredible, i.e. the only editing you can do is by overwriting. This will be improved upon at a later stage.

However, it does have a few plus-points...

- a) It works with all ROMs. (The early one was very restricted on AH and JM ROMs)
- b) You can no longer accidentally scroll out of the window, possibly losing text.
- c) You can open a window over text or graphics, allowing overwriting/editing and precise positioning of text over graphics.
- d) The up and down cursor keys are now usable, allowing full window movement.
- e) You can toggle between the character sets within the window.

Press shifted F2 to enter text mode. F5 toggles the character sets.

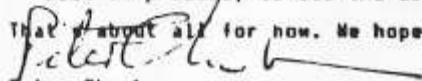
5. You can now get out of the program without having to reset! The routine also updates TEMP FILE, just in case...

Press ALT and left cursor key. They are well separated, so it should be difficult to do it accidentally. There is also a restart option after doing this.

6. Front Page now supports PAR for printing, as well as ser1 and ser2. Let us know if there is anything else you can stick a printer in!
7. There is a memory check routine. Hopefully you will never see it working. If memory available falls below about 2.5K, you will see a warning printed. You can ignore it if you wish, but don't blame us...

If it does come up, either SAVE, or do something to update TEMP FILE. The best is probably to use the abort option (see 5 above) and start afresh.

That's about all for now. We hope you find the changes useful.


Peter Chambers

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to FRONT PAGE, the desktop publishing system for the QL!

You have here a system which will run on a standard QL, without additional facilities, but which can be used with ramdisks and floppies if you have them. We do not pretend that it is the most sophisticated system available, but we do not charge sophisticated prices either!

With Front Page, you can type and draw until you are happy with the result. Then you can Save it or Print it, as you wish. You can load monochrome screens from other sources to include in your newsletter, leaflet etc. So if you have a digitiser...

A printer routine is built in for Epson and Epson compatibles, and it can be configured for your printer if necessary. We are working on routines to handle other printers.

We would recommend that you set the program up, then "mess around" for a while. That way, you will get an idea where everything is and what it looks like. Anyway, it's more fun (and probably more useful) than reading some stuffy manual! (Even this one!)

A word for the microdrivers amongst you - some operations can take ages! Front Page is perfectly happy on a standard QL, but you need a little patience here and there. Try to avoid unnecessary microdrive operations. Your "TEMP-FILE" cartridge is updated quite frequently during use of the program, so you do not need, for instance, to SAVE your work unless you want to start something else. Similarly with printing. Before your file is printed, whatever is in RAM at the time is saved to cartridge. This is to ensure you have a permanent copy of what you print. Again, this may take time, so don't print after every line of text! Unfortunately, most microdrive operations are measured in minutes rather than seconds. For instance, copying TEMP_FILE takes 5-10 minutes. Loading a file takes up to about 5 minutes, and so on. Be patient!

FRONT PAGE was written with five main objectives in mind. It should...

1. ...run on an unexpanded, unmodified QL.
2. ...be easy to use for the non-expert.
3. ...do as much as possible of what you might expect.
4. ...be difficult to lose several hours work.
5. ...be cheap!

We would like to explain some of these objectives. However, they are not essential reading, so skip the next page or two if you are bored!

1. STANDARD QL.

Most desktop publishing systems run on high-level computers. Even on "home" computers, they tend to need something more than the basic computer. Disks, expansion RAM, mice, laserprinters.... Fine if you've got them!

So objective 1 was to make the idea of desktop publishing available to as many people as possible, without saying you need to spend another £500 on necessary extras! Would you buy a car where the engine, seats and wheels were extras?!

2. EASE-OF-USE.

It is a point, often missed by programmers, that not all computer users are programmers. This is not a point confined to home computer market! It is also a fact that computer literacy is not an all-pervading aspect of society. Notice that a food mixer is not "user-friendly". It is simple to use. A doddle. Easy to operate.

Front Page uses a "menu-driven" system, where all options available at any time are shown on the screen. Quite a lot more about this later. Suffice to say that you do not need to remember commands, or interpret symbols on the screen.

3. DO AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

It doesn't do everything, but most of what you need to produce a published page is available i.e. text entry, graphics, cut and paste, change type size, etc. And of course, print out the result! More will be made available as we develop it. We have some interesting ideas!

4. DIFFICULT TO LOSE YOUR WORK.

Those of you who sometimes do long jobs on computers will know the reason why this is here! Front Page updates "TEMP-FILE" quite frequently e.g. during load/save/print operations, and at certain points while moving through the file. Also, a copy of the screen is held in memory and updated as you scroll around, so you are never far from having at least one copy of your work! This approach also means that you do not have to keep stopping work to save it just in case of disasters.

5. CHEAP.

We think that a lot of software is overpriced, so we have tried to put a sensible price on it. You must be the judge of our actions on this!

Anyway, that's enough of that! We hope we have met our objectives and that you will find Front Page an interesting, useful, easy-to-use, and even profitable piece of software. Now let's move on to actually using the beastie. (Affectionate name! You'd call it names if you'd written it!)

1. INSTALLATION

This is quite easy. You first of all have to customise the printer routine for your system. Don't worry, it's no problem! Then everything is copied automatically to whatever you want to use Front Page on. You should keep the cartridges supplied as backups.

The information you need is

1. What is the printer connected to - SER1, SER2 or PAR?
2. Does your printer use one or two codes for linefeed? You will probably have set this with a dip switch in your printer. I believe that Epsoms are normally supplied set to one code. If you are not sure, reset your QL and type in the following short program:

```
100 OPEN E3, SER1; REM or whatever you normally use
110 PRINT F3; "THIS IS LINE 1";: REM note the semi-colon
120 PRINT E3; CHR(13);:REM note the semicolon
130 PRINT F3; "THIS IS LINE 2"
140 CLOSE E3
```

How I wish all programs were as easy!

Run it, and see what is printed. If you get two consecutive lines, you are a two code person. If you get it all on one line, you are a one code person. Well, it's easier than taking the top off an RX80!

3. Which codes does your printer use for setting margin, line spacing, and setting density? Make a note of them.

a) MARGIN - Epsoms use 27 108 X, where X is the number of character positions required as a margin.

b) LINESPACING (Epson 27 65 B) This sets linespacing to 1/9 inch. The Brother HR5 uses 27 65 4 to do the same thing.

c) PRINT DENSITY (Epson 27 76 N1 N2 for double, 27 75 N1 N2 for single). This both sets the printer for graphics and says how many bytes to print.

When you have the information to hand, reset the QL, put the "FRONT PAGE" cartridge in drive 1, and press F1. After a few whirrs, you will be asked the questions outlined above. Answer them truthfully and honestly, and all will be well! Note that if you have an Epson or a printer that uses the same codes as mentioned above, you are given the opportunity to skip all that coding by pressing ESC when asked.

Afterwards (this takes about 1 minute), you will be asked what you want to back the program up to (Floppy or cartridge). After your answer, it will be saved. This will take 1-2 minutes. You will also be asked to make a copy of TEMP_FILE. This is done by the backup routine. Note that it is unimportant exactly what is on TEMP_FILE at this stage.

Just follow the prompts, and ring GAP if you have any problems.

IN THE BEGINNING. . .

Reset the QL again, and load your working copy. It was saved as BOOT, so you can just use F1 after a reset to get it all happening. If you are using a TV you may lose a couple of columns from the display.

If you use a ramdisk, amend and resave the BOOT program, deleting the old BOOT. It should be formatted to a minimum of 170 sectors. Call it ram1_ or ram2_. (More on ramdisks later) If you use a 'dynamic' ramdisk like Qflash, no formatting is needed.

In this manual, keypresses are shown as (e.g.) F3-shifted F2. This means press Function key 3, then SHIFT and Function key 2 together. All such sequences are from the main menu.

Please note here - you can only load from devices mdv or flp. The program must come from drive 1. TEMP_FILE can come from anywhere. You could, if you wish, have both on drive 1, but you will need a formatted capacity of 250+ sectors minimum. If you want to use TEMP_FILE on a ramdisk, use COPY TEMP FILE at F3-shifted F2.

In a short time, the program will be loaded and you will see the main menu. There is a page already on TEMP-FILE. Look at the screen. There are four main sections. The biggest is the working area. What you see is 60 graphics columns wide, or 480 pixels. If you use a printer in single density mode, this is the width you can print. It is 25 graphics columns high (200 pixels).

To the right is a block showing the name of the program, stylishly written vertically. This is so you never forget it's name!

Below the main screen is the status and options block. The status items are updated as necessary. The bottom two lines are your current options. Virtually all the key pressing you do will be on the function keys or shifted function keys. Finally, there is a single line right at the bottom of the screen. This is for input. It is used when you need to type in filenames for instance.

Now let's make it do something. With any luck, the cursor is in the top left corner. Press the right arrow key. The cursor moves off. Keep it pressed down, and watch the screen. The column indicator is counting up. When you reach the right hand side, the screen moves, revealing more of the page in memory. Keep it pressed and it will eventually stop at column 100. So far so good!

Now press the down arrow. Similar things happen, but when you get to row 50 (watch the indicator!), everything stops and the cartridge or floppy starts. This is getting the next bit of the page. When it is loaded, the cursor is off again. The same thing happens at row 75, and the cursor eventually stops at row 100. That is the full size of the page. Now go left, back to column 1, and up, back to row 1. Note that it stops at intervals again to update and load the next bit in, as before.

If you want to create a blank TEMP_FILE, go all the way through as above, using the 'CLEAR SCREEN' option (F3-F5-F1) until the whole file is blank. Then save it or copy it to another cartridge or disk. You can save via F3-F2, or COPY TEMP FILE is at F3 shifted F2.

DEVICES AND FILES

1. RAMDISK

Front Page allows for the use of 2 ramdisks, `ram1_` and `ram2_`. (That's original!) Although in theory you could set up both, in practice it is probably only worth having one to hold `TEMP_FILE`. This is because, on this first version, the main program disk or cartridge is not used after the initial load. If you use `mdv` or `flp` for `TEMP_FILE` you do not normally even have to worry about saving half-finished work. On `ramdisk`, you should copy `TEMP_FILE` to a more permanent medium at the end of the session using the built-in routine. (`COPY TEMP FILE F1-shifted F2`). Remember when transferring the file around to set devices 1 and 2 to what they should be. Toggle devices with `F3-F2`, then shifted `F1` or shifted `F2`.

TEMP_FILE

This holds a complete copy of your page at any time after an update. At any one time, there is half a page in memory. As you move around, files are moved onto and off `TEMP_FILE`. Updates happen on the following occasions -

1. When you scroll across a half-page boundary.
2. When you `SAVE` a complete file
3. When you `GO TO` a row/column in the other half of the page from your current position.
4. When you `PRINT` a file.
5. When you copy `TEMP_FILE` to somewhere else.
6. When you exit from the program using `ALT-<left cursor key>`

What it boils down to is that you normally have a more-or-less up-to-date copy of your work on device 2. If you want to force an update, either move right through the file, or `GO TO` the other end of it.

To create a `TEMP_FILE`, for instance if your cartridge gets corrupted, type in the following short program after resetting the computer.

```
100 a=respr(20000)
110 sbytes mdvl_file1,a,20000:sbytes mdvl_file2,a,20000
120 sbytes mdvl_file3,a,20000:sbytes mdvl_file4,a,20000
```

This will save a file full of random rubbish. Just use it as a new `TEMP_FILE`. Change the device (`mdvl_`) to whatever you need. This will almost fill a cartridge.

SER1, SER2 and PAR

Any of these can be configured for use with your printer. The device name used is `SER1HR`, `SER2HR` or `PAR`.

HARD DISKS

There is no reason why you should not use them, providing they can be accessed via one of the device names available in Front Page.

Now to really start using the software...

MANIPULATION

You are probably anxious to see something happen, so let's have a look at 'cut and paste'. This not only serves to get a bit of activity going, but shows how to open a window (!). This routine is also used when putting text in.

Right. Select F3 from Main Menu. This gives the Functions Menu. Notice that F4 is cut and paste. Press F4. The options part of the screen is now replaced by an instruction. This happens whenever more than simply pressing a key is required. It tells you to mark the TOP LEFT corner of the required area to be cut and pasted by moving the cursor and pressing SPACE. Pick an area to be moved and do it.

You are then asked to mark the BOTTOM RIGHT corner in the same way. You can move the cursor anywhere, but make sure it ends up below and to the right of the other one! Note that you can only set a window within the screen area as seen. Also note cursor movement updates row and column. (Opening a window for text input is done in exactly the same way.)

When you have pressed SPACE, you are now told to enter the row and column for where you want to move the marked area. This refers to the top left corner of the destination. The instruction includes a note of the maximum row and column numbers you can enter. You will note, that you can only cut and paste within the current 1/2 page. If you need to move further, save it as a screen/part-screen, then reload it where you need it. (Unfortunately, cut and paste would take too much memory if you could move it that far.)

Enter an appropriate pair of numbers. You can overlap them if that is what you want. In fact you can move the block as little as 8 pixels if you wish!

If you moved it somewhere off the currently visible screen area, scroll/pan or GOTO (F3, Shift and F1) until you find it.

GOTO (F3 - Shift F1)

This has been mentioned a few times already. It is basically a way of moving large distances round the page. You may be used to the spreadsheet type of idea, where the cursor always ends up in the top left corner. This is different. Basically, it moves to the screen, left or right based, in which you want the cursor. The cursor is placed at the position required. If the column number required is up to 60, a screen will be displayed covering columns 1-60. If it is over 60, you will get 41-100. The top row will be 1,26,51, or 76. It sounds complex. It isn't. Try it and see! e.g. if you want row 59, column 73, the screen displayed will be row 51 to 75, column 41 to 100, and the cursor will be at row 59, col 73.

SUMMARY

That is most of the ways of directly manipulating the page. Now you can move the screen around, move bits of the screen around, and move to other parts of the page. You are advised to practise and mess around with these facilities. You learn it much quicker than by reading a manual. Don't be afraid to experiment!

CREATIVITY

You now know how to move around and manipulate the page. It's probably an idea to show you how to get something on the page! There are three ways of achieving this.

1. TEXT

This is probably the one you will use most frequently. On the main menu you will see that text is accessed by shifted F2. If you do it, you will find the same window-opening procedure that you used in the cut and paste routine. Do it, opening a window the size you want. After setting the bottom-right corner, you are asked for the width and height of the text you want. These numbers are the same as the QL's CSIZE. i.e. width 0-3, height 0-1.

After setting these, you are asked whether you want to clear the window (losing any existing text etc), or overwrite. Type your answer.

the window is then coloured and you start entering text. You can use the four cursor keys and all the text keys. Please note that, in this version (1.01), there is no editing as such. Changes must be done by overwriting. (We ran out of memory!) As a part compensation for this, you can toggle character sets while writing. Just press ENTER when you have finished, and the colour is cleared. That's it!

2. GRAPHICS

a) UDG's (user defined graphics), which you can see displayed. To access these, press F2. This will change MODE from MOVE to DRAW.

To change udg, press F4 then 1-8 for whichever one you want. You can inverse it by pressing SHIFT F3. In effect, this either doubles the available udg's or halves the memory to store them!

You change udg subset with SHIFT F4. This gives you another 8 udgs. SHIFT F5 gives other sets. There is space for 3 sets of 32 udgs within the program although only one set is available at present.

"Draw" mode allows you to draw using the current cursor, shown at the top left of the status area. Press F2 to change between DRAW and MOVE modes. Shifted F3 inverts the cursor i.e. black and white are exchanged. Shifted F1 deletes at the current cursor position. It does not move the cursor. In MOVE mode, nothing is drawn so you can move around freely. DRAW mode will put the current cursor shape on screen, replacing anything already there.

b) Freehand. This is pretty basic. All it really does is lines. It was originally put in for 'touching up' the larger letters so that they had fewer 'steps' in them, but it is also useful for putting lines close to other shapes where this would not be possible any other way. If you want to do any large drawings, make up a basic shape with the udg's, then edit it.

To get into this mode, (put the main cursor out of the way), do F3-F3. You are now in the freehand mode. It has it's own options. there is a GOTO to set your position (F3). You can only move on the current screen area. The full size so far as the pixel you draw with is concerned is 480 pixels along by 270 up.

The drawing cursor is initially in the bottom left corner. You control it with the cursor keys, one pixel at a time. You can do diagonals using the /, \, ? and ! keys. This may seem an odd combination, but in fact it is the two keys on the QL keyboard that show diagonals, shifted and unshifted. Also, the shifted one gives the opposite movement to it's unshifted equivalent. Perhaps not as silly as it sounded at first? Hope not, anyway!

You switch between Draw and Move in the same way as with the other cursor - with F2. Be warned that MOVE mode also erases! Thought we'd better mention that!

To leave this mode, just press ESC to go back to the Main Menu. The reason for keeping the main cursor out of the way is that it is inverted. Any changes to it will look odd when you move it again. It will only affect that position though.

We do not claim that the graphics facilities are incredible. They are there to help, not as an end in themselves. We are sure you will agree!

PERIPHERALS, INPUT/OUTPUT etc.

You have now been through most of the facilities for making pages. Now let's take a look at loading, saving, and printing.

WARNING TO MICRODRIVERS: This can take up a lot of time. About the smallest file that is moved is 20K. Saving or loading a whole page takes 80K. Note that figure. You can only get one page per cartridge. If you are a bit limited for cartridges, print a copy of each page and keep that as the master. See also Hints and Tips.

There is nothing complicated about any of this, because Front Page deals with it all. In general, each operation updates TEMP FILE, then does whatever the operation is.

LOADING

You are asked whether it is a file or a screen.

FILE. This will replace whatever is currently on TEMP FILE. If you do not want to lose this, use the COPY TEMP FILE option on the Functions menu first. You can also save it.

You will be asked for a filename. Make sure that it is on DEVICE 1, whatever this is set to. You should not specify the device name. i.e. if you would normally type 'flp1_artwork' all you type is 'artwork'. There will then be a frenzy of LOAD and COPY activity, and the file will be loaded. TEMP_FILE will hold a copy, and the top left of the file will be displayed on the screen.

SCREEN. This merely loads to the screen. Until you scroll, save or print it will not be a part of the memory or TEMP_FILE.

Note that it will load to whichever row and column number is at the top left of the screen. If you happen to have row 76, column 41 there, that is where it will go. You may be seeing some possibilities for this ... (See Hints and Tips).

Note also that you can load any screen for the QL, including any from other software packages. You will lose anything that extends outside the normal drawing are, however, so it should be no more than 480 pixels by 200 pixels (80 text columns by 20 text lines) in size. If you have digitised pictures that fit the bill, by all means include video shots and photos in your artwork! Do not use colour screens. Front Page works only in monochrome. You may get odd effects if you load colour screens. If you want to load a screen of the right size, save it outside Front Page with the following line:

```
sbytes <device>_<filename>,131072,25600
```

where <device> is mdv1, flp2, etc. If you then use the load screen routine in Front Page, it will be the right size.

SAVING

This is almost identical to loading. You save to DEVICE 1, specifying a filename. Again, do not include the device name (mdv1_ or whatever).

FILE. First of all, TEMP FILE is updated, then it is transferred to whatever you have set Device 1 to be. It is actually saved as four files, but you do not need to worry about this. Front Page looks after it all for you. So you will get the usual frenzy, and it is done.

SCREEN. The same, except you can specify how many rows you want to save. So if you want the top ten lines, tell it. That is all that will be saved. Seeing possibilities again?...

Screens or part screens can be loaded into other software, but remember that the right hand bit where it says "Front Page" vertically will be included. Just erase it with the other software if you don't want it.

Note that the save will be from the top of the screen, so make sure it is correctly positioned.

PRINTING

This is the easiest of all. Just do F3 (Functions) F2 (Microdrives/Print) F5 (Print) F1 (Confirmed). Yet again, the frenzy of activity as TEMP FILE is updated, then printing starts. Half way through the page, it loads in the second half of the page and carries on. At the end, it loads the top half back in and you are left with the screen showing the top left hand corner of your page. You can stop the printing at any time by pressing ESC. The printer may do another line, but it does only need ONE press of ESC. Honest!

MISCELLANEOUS

There are one of two things not mentioned in detail yet. They are not generally vital to the software, but they are useful.

a) DIRECTORY

From the Microdrive menu. (F3-F2-F4) This does a DIR on device 1. Don't worry, you get your screen back. It does not do device 2 because that will always contain the stunningly original title "TEMP FILE" and will consist of the equally original file1, file2, file3, file4! If you need to do a Directory of something else, just set Device 1 accordingly. If you are checking a filename, remember to ignore the number at the end of it. (1,2,3 or 4)

b) CLEAR SCREEN

From Functions menu (F3 - F5) This clears the screen. Can't think of much else to say really.

c) COPY TEMP FILE

From Functions menu (F3-SHIFT F2) This allows for 3 main operations. One is to copy from disk or cartridge to a RAM disk (Minimum 170 sectors, remember for TEMP_FILE).

The second is to backup part-finished work when you do not want to save it. Note that it copies under filenames file1 - file4. You cannot set your own filenames.

The third use is to copy from RAM disk to a more permanent medium when you have finished a session. Otherwise you lose the lot when you turn the QL off!

It copies from device 2 to device 1. You can set these within the routine.

d) SET DEVICE

From Functions (F3 - Shift F1 or F3 - Shift F2)

With this you can set devices 1 and 2 to whatever you need. They can be set to mdv1 and 2, flp 1 and 2, and ram1 and 2.

Remember that device 2 must ALWAYS be the one you keep TEMP_FILE on.

HINTS AND TIPS

These are some bits and pieces that you may find useful.

a) To clear a bit of screen quickly, go into text mode and open a text window over the area you want to clear. Enter any old height and width figure (0,0 is easy), select the clear option, then press ENTER. The whole window clears. It's a lot quicker than deleting each bit!

b) If you are doing, say, a newsletter where something (like the title) is repeated every time, save a screen with just that bit. Then load it in whenever you start a new issue.

c) You can only cut and paste within the current half page (50 lines by 100 columns). So if you want to move outside this, save a screen or section of it, then load it back in after scrolling to where you want it.

d) To do artwork for, say, business cards or invitations do one first, then cut and paste once or twice across the top of the page. Then cut and paste 2 or more at a time to below the first lot. Continue until you have a whole page of 10 or 15 or whatever. Then print it. Then take it to a printer and get it put on card.

e) Vertical printing. Open a vertical window of the correct width then enter text as normal. The width you need is

For letter width 0 and 1	1 cursor width
2	2 cursor width
3	3 cursor widths

f) Pseudo macros. Because of the keyboard buffering on the QL, it is possible to type some way ahead. For instance, when scrolling, and the drives are going loading in the next part of the file, press the arrow keys (say 20 individual times) while you are waiting, and as soon as it is free, it will carry on. i.e. you don't have to sit there waiting for it to finish.

Having said that, be careful that the QL registers the keypresses. On one occasion, I did F3-F2-F5-F1 to print, and the F2 did not register. F3-F5-F1 from the main menu clears the screen... Ah well!

g) When overwriting text, remember that every 5 'cursor rows' is the same as 4 'height 0 text rows'.

h) Some Centronics printers need control codes 27-49 to "lock" the linespacing. If you get particularly small blank lines between printlines, this may be the answer. Phone Peter at GAP and ask.

NOTES ON THE SOFTWARE

This section is for those of you who want to have more understanding of how it all works. It is not "essential reading".

Front Page is menu-driven, and control starts at the main menu. Most of the commonly used facilities are found here. The other facilities are found via the Functions menu (F3 from Main menu). There is necessarily some compromise here but we have tried to group like facilities together.

Most facilities are accessed purely by the use of the Functions Keys F1-F5, with or without Shift. In some places, the numbers are used. e.g. for choosing a cursor (1-8). The only other times function keys are not used in an operation are when you need to enter filenames, and obviously for cursor movement.

For those of you interested in a little psychology, there is less chance of mistyping when there is only a choice of 5 (function keys) or 10 (numbers) compared with 26 (letters) or a million or more (words). Suppose you want to load something. Which is less error-prone - "F2" or LOAD? Have you ever typed LOOD, LOD, LOAAD etc? So much for psychology!

Your screen is held in RAM as part of the 1/2 page being in memory at any one time. At various intervals, what is in RAM is backed up to device 2.

Device 2 holds four files, schematically shown as:-

```
XXXXXXXXXXXX \           X is the part of the page
XXXXXXXXXXXX file1       that you can see on screen
XXXXXXXXXXXX /
UUUUUUUUUUUU \
UUUUUUUUUUUU file2
UUUUUUUUUUUU /
UUUUUUUUUUUU \
UUUUUUUUUUUU file3
UUUUUUUUUUUU /
UUUUUUUUUUUU \
UUUUUUUUUUUU file4
UUUUUUUUUUUU /
```

When first loaded, Front Page holds files 1 and 2 in RAM (lines 1-50). The screen shown is cols 1-60, rows 1-25 of the page. When you move the cursor down, rows are copied from the screen to RAM at the top, and from RAM to screen at bottom. When you want to go to line 51, FILE 1 is stored on device 2, File 2 is moved up in ram, and File 3 is loaded in to take it's place. You now have Files 2 and 3 in Ram, and File 1 has been put on device 2. Similar things happen moving up and down at other file boundaries. The full 100 column width is in RAM all the time.

When you save or print the 2 files held in RAM are copied to device 2 to ensure that any recent work is stored, then the saving or printing is done. All this file movement is handled by the program. The user never needs to know what is on device 2, or in RAM.

When a file is SAVED (not updated as above) i.e. to a cartridge/disk as a finished job, the user is asked for a filename. The program adds the device name (device 1) as already shown on screen, and saves it as four files, with 1-4 appended. Thus, when a file called PICTURE is saved, what goes on device 1 is (eg) flpl_PICTURE1, flpl_PICTURE2 etc. Loading is treated similarly i.e. device name etc. is added to the filename requested.

Printing uses a special routine. It basically does a screendump on an area of RAM. A sort of RAMdump! In order to do 100 columns of 8 bytes each, the printer must use double density to get 800 bits across i.e. 100 graphics columns on screen. The default state of the printer routine gives a left margin of 8 character spaces, and is set up for RX80/FX80 printers. Of course, any printer using the same codes will work unmodified. The printer set-up routine on the master cartridge allows you to change any codes required.

At present, only Epsoms and compatibles are supported. We are looking at the possibility of an alternative routine to support Seikosha printers. We will advise if/when we manage this!

ERROR HANDLING

Due to memory restrictions, this is rather basic. In later versions, we will try to shoehorn some better error trapping in. For the time being, however, please do not enter anything silly. Most common errors are trapped, but there is always the possibility...

If you get mysterious messages coming up like "JOB 1 COPY FP Not found Retry y/n", the general interpretation is that an operation has been unsuccessful. In the case of COPY or LBYTES, it is probably 'Bad or changed medium' or you have typed a filename wrongly. It may also be that you have the wrong cartridge running. Use Directory before loading just to check. I have found this to be the commonest cause of error.

If you get some other error, it will probably be easiest to start again after a reset. If it is persistent, check that you are not doing anything wrong. If all seems ok, contact GAP. Which brings us neatly on to...

HELP

Since starting out on the path to financial ruin, GAP have taken the view that users deserve proper after sales back-up. We therefore are available by letter, phone and Prestel mailbox. Phone any time, but we would appreciate it not being after 9pm!

We will try to sort out any query you have. We do not charge, and have no plans for doing so.

Let us know your comments and criticisms. Try to keep it constructive! The point is that improvements should be a help to our customers, and only our customers can tell us what those are! We would also like to hear of, for instance, minor changes you think would help. Our program Designer on the Spectrum has a toggle for device as a result of a suggestion from a reviewer. We incorporated this in front page as well. We obviously cannot promise that all suggestions can be implemented, but we will certainly consider them.

FINALLY

We hope you will find FRONT PAGE a useful piece of software. Let us know if you don't! Contact us:-

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17 ST JOHN STERRACE
LONDON
E7 8BX

PHONE 01-552 5452

MBX 919996049

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REGISTRATION

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We will be producing upgrades for FRONT PAGE over the next few months. These will be made available at various prices, depending on the facility being offered.

Please make a note of the date purchased and invoice number in the space below.

If you wish to be notified of these as they become available, please complete the details and return the portion below to:

GAP SOFTWARE
17 ST. JOHN'S TERRACE
LONDON
E7 8BX

DATE PURCHASED:

INVOICE NUMBER:

-----CUT HERE-----

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DATE PURCHASED:

INVOICE NUMBER:

SUPPLIER :

MY SYSTEM CONSISTS OF:

(Please give details of any expansion RAM, discs, modem, etc)

ROM version: