

MEMORANDUM

To: Andrew Milford
From: Chris Oswald

Date: 4th August, 1982

cc: John Horton
Andrew Gordon

Re: BBC Microcomputer Teletext System User Guide 1.5

I think that it is delightful to see Acorn at last have its documentation ready early. On my second read of the guide I have picked out a few more small points - again the guide as a whole is everything I had hoped for.

Wiring-up of the adaptor (mains plug): last paragraph first?

2.3 The implication given is that the page is in the process of being transmitted over a period of several seconds. In fact the delay is ofcourse due to other pages being transmitted first. Even on Oracle, where the lines from different magazines are interleaved in transmission, the time between the first and last lines of a page being sent is less then a second.

4.1.1 The start-up procedure is liable to be different for computers that have other filing systems fitted (such as the DFS).

6.2 last paragraph: shoul - should

7.3.1.1
On exit A=&FB

A file is implicitly closed when another file is opened (only one may be open at once). No provision has been made for closing a file by an OSFIND call as this is not needed.

7.3.1.2
On exit A=&FB

7.3.3 Only one OSWORD call (&7A)

7.3.4.1

7.3.4.1
XY+0=&00 file title and version
=&01 comment
=&02 code to get next block
=&03 code to get same block again

On return, XY+0 and XY+1 point to the requested data (the first byte of which is the length of the data) or XY+0 = XY+1 = 0 if the data is not available.

7.3.4.2
XY+0=0 should read XY+0=&80
=1 =&81
=2 =&82
.....etc

8 The Prestel side of the Prestel and teletext filing system is left very vague by the guide with only occasional references which are then not pursued. Surely it should be fully documented (although it will not be implemented this year) or not mentioned at all?

9.1 Magazine numbers 0-7 ?

Page sub code structure is due to the original intention of allowing a user to request the retrieval of a certain page at a certain time. The sub code was of the form HHMM, giving a twenty-four hour clock time. This needs 2+4+3+4 bits. Its uselessness has made it fall into disuse, and the bits are now just used as a page number extension.

9.6.3.1

Example is not suitable for teletext. Better:

(DSB) '1' '3' 'X10'

(this is the 16th block of the file)

(sorry, no angle brackets on this type-writer).

9.6.3.2

...from CEEFAX will start with the name for this block.

should read:

...from CEEFAX will start with the name of this command.

9.6.3.2

Insert between 6th & 7th paragraphs word to the effect of:

The command subroutine (DSB) is given the escaped name &42.

9.6.4.2

and between 2nd & 3rd paragraphs word to the effect of:

The date of issue should be given as the modified julian date (in decimal).

Files, whose blocks may only be received in order are arranged on CEEFAX in a chain. The first block is marked as the chain header and should contain a (DTL) command giving details of the file; other blocks need not.

Files, whose blocks may be received out of order, are also arranged on CEEFAX as a chain, however each is marked as a chain header and should contain a (DTL) command giving details of the file.

9.6.4.2

Example is not suitable for teletext. Better:

(DTL) '2' '7' 'P' 'r' 'o' 'g' 'r' 'a' 'm' '1' '5'

(file title is 'Program'; version number 5)

9.6.4.3

Similarly:

(DCO) '1' '9' 'A' ' ' 'p'....etc.

9.6.4.5

Similarly:

(DML) '4' '2' '0' '0' '0'

9.6.4.6

Similarly:

(DLR) '1' '3' '1' '0' '0'

9.6.4.7

Similarly:

(DXA) '4' '2' '0' 'F' '0'

9.6.4.8

Similarly: (DXR) '2' 'F' '0'

9.6.5.1

Similarly: (DES) 00 '4' 'w' 'o' 'r' 'd'
(the escaped name 00 will decode to 'word')

9.6.5.3

Similarly: (DLS) 00 '4' 'W' 'O' 'R' 'D'

9.7.2 below:: - below:

9.7.3 3 pages of heap/queue space

10

Provisionally,
the following error message may be issued by the redefinable
telesoftware format (RTF) decoder:

RTF decoder error

This will be a result of one of the following occurrences:

Error
Number

200	Out of Soft Stack workspace
201	Unexpected end of file encountered
202	Unexpected entry in name tables
203	Command Subroutine not available
204	Illegal representation of numerical information
205	Out of heap/queue workspace
206	No more data available from source of telesoftware
207	Cannot locate start of block
208	No file open

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5.8.82