

# STATION 345

## ACORN USER'S MANUAL PRESTEL TEXT PROCESSOR

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a preliminary release of the software intended for use in the preparation of pages of text to the Viewdata format. The final package will allow interface to Prestel, online or for bulk update. This release demonstrates the structure of the page processor package but does not include some device drivers. The interfaces to a Prestel editing keyboard and to the modems are not included. The program is written mainly in BASIC with a small editor section written in machine code. Software is included to ensure that the options such as double height, background colour and graphics are all to full Prestel specification. The package operates on a menu basis with the user options at each level clearly indicated. This is a preliminary release and sections or formats may be changed in later versions.

### SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The software is provided on a disk with auto boot facilities and will automatically be loaded into memory on reset. The software requires 24k of RAM in blocks 2,3,4,5,6 and 7, and either Basic in ROM in block C or RAM at this location in which case Basic will be loaded into this RAM. The display is via the Acorn Frestel VDU card mapped into its normal position at 400. The input device for this release is the usual Acorn keyboard with a parallel interface connected to the CPU card input port. Also present in the system must be a versatile interface card; the 6522 on this card is used to provide clock interrupts for the software; only the 6522 is used on this board at present; future software will use other parts of this board for interface to modems etc.



## MENU SELECTIONS

When the program is executed the first thing to be displayed is a header page introducing the system. The header page may be changed using the editor section of the software. Pressing any key at this stage leads to the first menu which displays the following options:-

```
Dial prestel
Page edit
Format options
Edit off line
eXit
```

In all but the exit option the first letter of the option required should be typed to select the next menu. To exit back a level in the options at any stage the X key should be used; pressing the X key at this stage will cease execution of the Prestel program. The other options perform the following functions.

### Dial prestel

This option is used to cause the system to connect to Prestel. Another menu is presented and the user selects the required dialing option. The connection to Prestel is then made automatically with a minimum of user intervention to supervise the connection. This option will not operate if the Prestel modem is not fitted or connected to the telephone line.

### Page edit

This option is used for the creation of pages to the viewdata format; these pages can then be saved on the disk. This option is described further in the section on page preparation in this manual.

### Format options

This option is used to format new disks to take a copy of the program disk or to store more pages. Other options in this section deal with facilities used in connection with connection to Prestel and are not detailed here. The Formatting of new disks is detailed in another section of this manual.

### Edit off line

This option is used when entering frame detail information for records used when bulk updating to Prestel. This record editor section is a close model of the similar section of the Prestel online editing system. This section of the software may be tried out but has several loose ends at the moment and does not save complete records on the disk. The Prestel publication on online editing may be consulted as to the suitable options at each stage. The record editor differs from the Prestel editor when the stage of inputting the frame contents is reached; at this stage the page editor is called. The page editor may then be used to create a new page or load an existing page from the disk and edit it before submitting it back to the record editor for encoding into a bulk update record. Some record types do not require frame contents to be entered in which case the record editor function is finished when the record is complete.



## Page edit

On entering the page edit option the following menu is displayed:-

```
Enter page
Load page
Catalogue
eXit
```

The exit option as always is selected by the X key. The other options are selected by their initial letters and select the following functions.

### Enter page

This option is used to enter the page editor with a blank page and is used for the creation of new pages.

### Load page

This option is used when an existing page is to be loaded into the page editor for inspection or editing. The system will prompt for the page name when this option is selected and then load the specified page before entering the page editor. If the named page does not exist a blank page will be displayed on entering the page editor.

### Catalogue

This option is used to obtain a list of the current pages stored on the page file on a disk. The current pages are displayed after which one of the options Load, Save, Catalogue or eXit may again be selected by the appropriate key.

### .w.b.c EDITING PAGES

On entering the page editor either from the page edit option or from the edit off line section the screen will show the requested page or a blank page. The screen will also show the status of the Prestel telephone line and the current cursor position. Characters may now be typed and will be put on the screen at the current cursor position. In order to enter control codes for special display features and to control cursor positioning and marking special key sequences of two or more keys are used. The viewdata display control codes are entered by using an escape sequence: the escape key is pressed and released followed by an upper case alphabetic character. This system is used for compatibility with Prestel transmission codes and future input devices. Another point to note is that the viewdata standard character set requires a special code for the character hash this is represented by the ASCII code for underline and is entered from the Acorn keyboard as Shift+ Back space. The backspace key is adjacent to the break key on the Acorn keyboard. The following keys are recognised following an escape and perform the following functions:-

|   |                      |   |                              |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| A | Alphanumeric Red     | Q | Graphics Red                 |
| B | Alphanumeric Green   | R | Graphics Green               |
| C | Alphanumeric Yellow  | S | Graphics Yellow              |
| D | Alphanumeric Blue    | T | Graphics Blue                |
| E | Alphanumeric Magenta | U | Graphics Magenta             |
| F | Alphanumeric Cyan    | V | Graphics Cyan                |
| G | Alphanumeric White   | W | Graphics White               |
| H | Flash                | X | <del>Graphics</del> Conceal. |
| I | Steady               | Y | Contiguous graphics          |
|   |                      | Z | Separated graphics           |

L Normal height  
M Double height

X Black background  
J New background  
H Hold graphics  
R Release graphics

The other key that is recognised after escape is return, which is used to exit from the editing option. Following escape, return the user may select from the following options:-

Save the current page with the name entered in response to the 'Name ?' prompt. Valid names are up to 13 characters long; entry is terminated by pressing return.

Load a new page with name specified in response to the 'Name ?' prompt.

Delete a page with name specified in response to the 'Name ?' prompt.

Catalogue the pages existing on the disk.

eXit from the page editor mode

There is an option which is not prompted which may be used for initialising the header page on a new disk. This option is selected by using the H key.

The cursor position and some editing functions are controlled by holding the control CTRL key down and pressing another key at the same time. The following functions are available:-

A Move cursor left  
S Move cursor right  
W Move cursor up  
Z Move cursor down

X Clear line to right of cursor  
E Remove line and move lower section of screen up.  
D Insert blank line and move lower section of screen down.  
The inserted line is a copy of the current line with the area of the line to the right of the cursor blank. This option may therefore be used to insert a blank line if the cursor is on the far left of the screen, or to create a copy of the current line if the cursor is on the far right.

F Mark current cursor position  
the cursor is split by this command and occurs as two alternately flashing blocks. One cursor may be moved around using the cursor control keys. U Unmark cursor; the cursor is restored to a steady block.

Once a window has been marked using the CTRL,F command some operations may be performed on this window in isolation from the rest of the screen:-

ESC CTRL,X This sequence will clear the area within the marked window.

RETURN Will return the current cursor to the same horizontal position as the marked cursor.

CTRL,C Will scroll the windowed area downwards

CTRL,V Will scroll the windowed area upwards



Once editing has been completed the ESC RETURN sequence is used to exit from the editor and the next operation is selected from the menu.

## FORMATTING DISKS

A disk for use on the editing system must have two files on it, a file called CATALOG and a file called PAGES. The CATALOG file is a list of all the pages currently stored in the PAGES file, the page names are stored as strings starting at every 26th byte in the file followed by pointer and other linking information used by the program. The PAGES file holds the pages as images of the screen each of these are 1k bytes long, as this file is accessed sequentially it has control characters in its name to prevent inadvertant loading of the file corrupting large areas of memmory. The position of the page images matches the location of the names in the CATALOG file hence a page may be found by other user programs by finding the name in the CATALOG file and loading the coresponding section of the PAGES file sequentially. As the PAGES file is extended as more pages are saved this file should be the last one saved on the disk. These considerations are catered for by the formatting options in the package. It is possible to create a disk with the BASIC and machine code sections of the package for use on another system or simply a disk to hold pages of data. In either case a blank catalogue is save and a blank header page, the header page may be chanded using the page editor. To create a disk for use in the system a disk that has been formatted using the operating system format utility should be inserted in the drive the format option should then be selected. The type of format option, program or data disk, should then be selected. After disk creation no other files should be saved on the disk, files may be saved on the disk before this creation operation. Running a format option on a used disk will have the effect of clearing all pages from the catalogue and clearing the header page.