

STOP THE PRESSES:

Antic write-in campaign pays off

NEWSROOM ARRIVES FOR 8-BIT ATARI!

Reviewed by Jim Pierson-Perry



Newsroom (\$49.95) is an easy-to-use page design application that puts the basic power of the press into your hands. You can quickly and easily create personalized newsletters, flyers and other short publications. This software is all you need for writing articles, adding pictures and designing the overall page layout.

As long-time 48K Atari 800 owner, I started reviewing the 64K Newsroom on a borrowed XE model. My family and I liked Newsroom so much that we bought an Atari 65XE computer just to continue using this program.

In May 1987, **Antic** kicked off a write-in campaign to convince Springboard Software to make an 8-bit Atari conversion of its popular Newsroom home publishing program. Two months and hundreds of letters later, Springboard president John Paulson gave the go-ahead. The Atari Newsroom was released in March, 1988.

SETTING UP

Newsroom requires an Atari XL/XE with at least 64K memory, an Atari 1050 disk drive (or a compatible drive

*Jim Pierson-Perry recently co-wrote an article in Clinical Chemistry titled "Automated Assay of Effective Heparin Activity in Plasma." He also programmed Designer Labels (**Antic**, April 1987) and last month's Super CZ MIDI application.*

that reads enhanced density disks) and a graphics-capable dot-matrix printer. Most likely you'll also need a printer interface such as ICD's P:R Connection or the Atari 850, because the only direct-connect printer supported by the software is the Atari XMM801. However, the 64 printer drivers included in Newsroom should cover just about any standard printer.

Newsroom also requires Atari BASIC, so keep your finger off the [OPTION] button when loading the program. The Newsroom disks are copy-protected and formatted in enhanced density (DOS 2.5). Your data file disks must be formatted by the Newsroom program.

The Newsroom manual is clear and well-written, with numerous illustrations and screen shots. The provided tutorial gives step-by-step instruction in preparing a sample one-page newsletter.

Newsroom comes with more than 600 pieces of clip art. Three more \$29.95 clip art disks are available, providing an additional 2,000 general, business and sports/recreation images. Springboard discounts the entire product line if you order directly from them — \$39.95 for Newsroom and an extra \$9.95 for each clip art collection.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Newsroom publications are designed and printed one page at a time. A page is made up of individual panels (see *Figure 1*) that can each contain pictures and/or text. Standard 8 1/2×11 inch paper can hold eight panels, or six panels with a double-panel banner across the top of the page. Longer (14-inch) legal paper adds an extra two panels to the bottom of the page.

Each panel and banner is stored on disk as a separate data file. An additional page layout file controls panel posi-

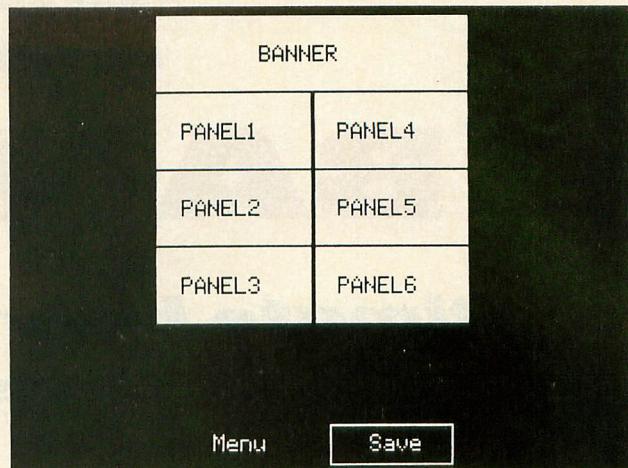


Figure 1

tioning. All files for a given page should be kept on the same data disk.

The Newsroom main menu leads to five simulated departments—Photo Lab, Copy Desk, Banners, Layout and Press. The natural flow is to create pictures in the Photo Lab, then add text to form individual panels in Copy Desk. A banner, if needed for the page, is composed in Banners. You set the overall page format in Layout by deciding what panels to use and in what order. Then you print the page in Press.

Throughout the program, commands are selected by using either a joystick or the keyboard control arrows to pick from a menu of icons. This system is easy and intuitive. An undo command, appropriately called Oops, can be called from the Photo Lab, Banners or Copy Desk to cancel the most recent action.

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DAISY-DOT II
Roy Goldman
2440 South Jasmine
Denver, CO 80222
(303) 756-6678
\$10, 48K disk

Reviewed by Charles Cherry

Most Atari owners are aware of Daisy-Dot, a program that prints text in a variety of excellent near letter-quality fonts on Epson and Star printers. Daisy-Dot took the Atari world by storm last year because it works so well and is public domain.

Now welcome Daisy-Dot II. It's more than just an upgrade, it's a whole new package. It makes desktop publishing a reality for the Atari. While News Station and Newsroom work as page layout programs, Daisy-Dot II makes it easy to "typeset" an entire manuscript. To prove this, the excellent, 25 page, manual is included on the disk as a Daisy-Dot II file. Just print it out.

The manual demonstrates multiple fonts (even on the same line), microspaced justification, block left, block right, centering, proportional tabs (for microspaced tables), bold

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BORDERS.NLQ
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

BROADWAY.NLQ By B. Sheppard
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

CATSBE.NLQ By C. Gross
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

OHIO.NLQ
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

CINCINNATI.NLQ By C. Gross
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

NEW YORK.NLQ By C. Gross
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

OLDWEST.NLQ
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ROMAN.NLQ
!#%&0*+,-./0123456789;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ^_abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
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print, double width characters, underlining, and included pictures. And that's just the first page. Daisy-Dot II also does superscript and subscript, prints chained files, prints a range of pages and prints multiple copies.

The disk has 15 fonts, including the high-resolution new Senator style. There's an elegant font editor to design your

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TOP BANNER!

**Ultimate banner maker
even uses Print Shop fonts**

**By Jacob Donham
and
Lee Brilliant, M.D.**

Top Banner is a banner printing program that's loaded with features but easy to handle. It can even use fonts from Broderbund's Print Shop software as well as standard Atari 8 x 8 fonts. This BASIC program works on 8-bit Atari computers with 48K memory and disk drive.

Top Banner easily produces a tremendous variety of horizontal banners or vertical streamers on just about any Epson-compatible dot-matrix or letter quality printer. You can control the height (up to eight inches) and width of each individual letter, as well as choosing the character that each letter is to be printed with. You can even use fonts from Broderbund's Print Shop software as well as standard 8×8 Atari fonts.

GETTING STARTED

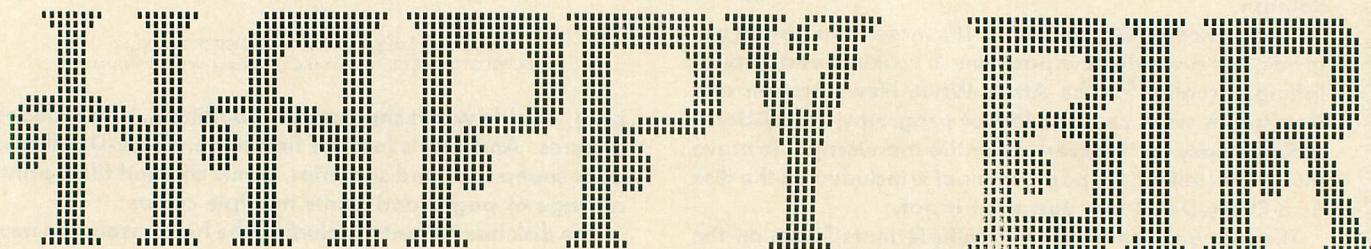
Type in Listing 1, TBANNER.BAS, check it with TYPO II and SAVE a copy to disk before you RUN it.

Control the pointer on any menu with the up and down [ARROW] keys. You don't need to hold down the [CONTROL] key. Press [RETURN] to select an item or [ESC] to go to the previous menu.

The main menu choices are as follows:

EDIT MESSAGE takes you to an editing window so you can type the text of the banner. You can re-edit a message without retyping the whole thing. To erase the whole message, go to Edit and press [RETURN] without moving the cursor. NOTE: Trying to shift from a standard 8×8 font to a special Print Shop font will erase your message.

CHANGE PARAMETERS brings up another menu where you can change INDIVIDUAL or OVERALL parameters, or use EFFECTS. Selecting INDIVIDUAL takes you to a window where you move the cursor with the left and right [ARROW] keys. Press [RETURN] to enter your changes in foreground, background, height and width of each character. The foreground and background values are the ASCII codes that will be sent to your printer. The numbers that



(Talk about an embarrassment of riches! Antic hasn't printed a banner-making program since the highly popular Bannertizer (December 1984) because we didn't get another submission that did the job better. But now we suddenly had two!)

From Jacob Donham, author of the ambitious MegAnimator in the February 1988 Antic, we accepted a powerful banner program controlled via easy-to-use pull-down menu windows. Then a few weeks later, well-known 8-bit programmer Lee Brilliant sent in his own banner program that did just about everything Donham's program did—plus accepting Print Shop fonts. When we asked Dr. Brilliant if we could add his Print Shop module to Donham's program, he generously offered to combine the best of both programs.—ANTIC ED)

determine the height and width of each "printed pixel" must be between 1 and 10. OVERALL lets you change the parameters of all the characters at once.

There are also four special effects:

RESPECTIVE FOREGROUND/BACKGROUND automatically sets each character to be printed equal to the ATASCII value of the overall letter. For example, if you had a banner that said "Hi", the "H" would be made up of little *H* characters, the "i" of *i* characters.

SHRINKING/GROWING makes the sizes of letters increase or decrease from left to right.

LOAD CHARACTER SET is where you enter the filename of the font you want. When you decide to print your banner, you'll be notified if you haven't yet typed a message or if your printer is disconnected. If an error message pops up, press any key to return to the main menu.

Each character has a different density when printed on paper. You can use this to your advantage. For instance, a letter made of periods will be much lighter than one made of asterisks. Interesting fade-ins and fade-outs can be produced by clever use of the foreground. You can also create small capitals by changing the heights and widths of some of the characters. Many of Top Banner's features work well together, while other combinations produce less-satisfactory results. By all means, experiment.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Top Banner uses quasi-pull-down menus. I did this the hard way, by PRINTing each menu separately. However, I'm working on a system that will create menus from DATA statements, requiring much less code.

Line 1010 lets you set up the program for your own printer. RESET\$ contains the printer reset command which re-initializes all printer settings to the power-up defaults. It also contains the commands setting the printer's line

feed length to 1/72 inches. MARGIN\$ contains the command to set the printer's left margin (see example in line 3050). SMALL\$ contains the command which sets the print pitch to 17 characters per inch.

PRINT SHOP FONTS

Top Banner is unusual because it uses not only standard 8×8 Atari fonts, but fonts that are compatible with Broderbund's Print Shop software as well. On Print Shop's menu screens, those nine fonts have names like Alexia or RSVP, but on the disk their filenames are simply F0 to F8.

Unlike DOS files, Print Shop fonts are only stored in contiguous sector blocks. So they can't be scattered all over the sector map like DOS files. If you want to modify a font using Print Shop Companion's font editor, you can only shrink it—you can't expand it. The Companion's fonts use the filename FO. plus the title and they also have different filename structures and file sizes.

The font directory starts on sector 362 and each directory entry occupies 32 bytes. (DOS directories start at sector 361, and filenames occupy only 16 bytes.) Bytes 17 and 18 of a Print Shop font filename contain the starting sector, while bytes 25 and 26 hold the file size.

Each file starts with four tables of 59 bytes, each byte corresponding to an ASCII character from 32 to 91—from space to Z. The @ is not used and has no values in the tables. The first table contains the width of each character in columns because Print Shop fonts are proportional, unlike fixed 8×8 fonts. The second table contains the height in rows, and the last two tables contain the address in RAM where each character's shape starts as it is loaded.

The characters in the Print Shop memory map start in RAM at \$60EC (24812 decimal). The rest of the file contains the font data itself. Companion files have an ad-

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