



Easy driver

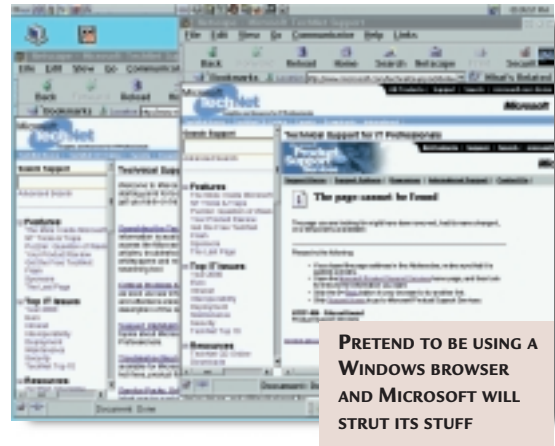
Terence Green goes in search of decent drivers and FTP clients but **ends up just browsing.**

Isn't it amazing the way computers turn simple tasks into time-consuming adventures? A 1980s study, possibly apocryphal, claimed that 10 years of personal computing had zero effect on white-collar productivity because work expands to fill the time allotted.

I was going to explain how to get RealPlayer working with Netscape 4.6.1 for OS/2. However, I ran into problems, principally the difficulty of finding a decent OS/2 driver for an audio card with an ESS Maestro-2 chip. Don't ask me why I decided to remove a working Pine card to fit the Maestro immediately prior to trying to get RealPlayer sound working. No doubt the answer is in the aforementioned productivity study. Noting the absence of Maestro drivers

for OS/2 on the ESS Technology website I should have replaced the Pine card since drivers for its ESS-1869 and the entire 18XX range can be found at www.esstech.com. This is a useful site if your notebook has an ESS chip. You can go there directly or via the IBM Device Driver Pak Online at service.software.ibm.com/os2ddpak/html/multimed/esstechn/index.htm.

For my part I continued to bang my head against a brick wall. Apparently there are Maestro-2 drivers somewhere but they're useless. Finally I gave up and moved on to the next reader question, but if you want to go ahead,



have a look at the Unofficial Home Page for the OS/2 Netscape Navigator at people.netscape.com/law/os2nav/index.html. It's a little old, but a good starting point.

FTP for OS/2

There are lots of shareware FTP clients on sites such as 'OS/2 Must-Have Utilities' at www.musthave.com, Hobbes at hobbes.nmsu.edu and the OS/2 SuperSite at www.os2ss.com. Free FTP clients which have been praised in the newsgroups include NcFTP, a command-line FTP client, and AWGet, a PM front end for WGet FTP which requires the EMX runtime.

EMX runtime is required for OS/2 applications developed with EMX, an OS/2 port of the free GNU C compiler. It can be downloaded from various sources including Hobbes, but the latest version should be available at ftp.leo.org/pub/comp/os/os2/leo/gnu/emx+gcc/.

To install EMX one

only has to extract the files from the compressed archive by running the executable, add the relevant EMX directories to LIBPATH and PATH in CONFIG.SYS, and reboot. The EMXRT.DOC release note has slightly longer instructions for 'impatient users'!

Once I had installed EMX, NcFTP ran like a dream. I couldn't quite get to grips with AWGet, even though it seems very clever, but I will continue trying.

Coincidentally EMX reared its head again when I was reading about Star Office from Sun. As you may know

Sun acquired Star Division and has been giving it away as a free download from Sun (www.sun.com) or on a CD containing all versions including OS/2 for around \$10 (£6.25).

According to OS/2 Netlabs (www.netlabs.org) a bug in the EMX compiler is holding up testing for further OS/2 versions of Star Office.

Incidentally, if you avail yourself of the Sun Star Office offer, please check the FTP support site as there are some fixes. The ones I've heard of are at ftp.stardivision.de/pub/support/so51a/sync/os2icci3/syncptc h.exe and [ftp://ftp.stardivision.de/pub/support/so51a/db/os2icci3/s db517co.dll](http://ftp.stardivision.de/pub/support/so51a/db/os2icci3/s db517co.dll).

The next question looked easy. It was about OS/2 FTP clients, but I was soon mired in the Internet. Clive Shearsby wondered whether there was a standalone FTP client for OS/2. Indeed there is. Warp includes both command line (FTP.EXE) and PM (FTPPM.EXE) clients. But they're old (c.1994) and not particularly exciting. They're also not Year 2000-compliant. More on this shortly.

Personally, I don't often use FTP and anyway, OS/2 Netscape versions after 4.04 have basic FTP services. But this is not enough to glorify them with the FTP client tag, even though they reportedly support the REGET command which allows an interrupted download to be restarted. The catch is that your Netscape Disk Cache has to have sufficient free space to hold the entire file, otherwise you won't be able to restart.

I also noticed several complaints about Netscape for OS/2 aborting downloads or locking up after moving the mouse cursor over the Saving Location window. It didn't sound good, so I went looking for FTP clients.

That was when I found, buried deep within IBM's online documentation for Warp, hints that there were some Year 2000 problems with FTP and a few of the

other TCP/IP services in Warp. Nothing serious apparently, but it led me to look into TCP/IP updates. Shortly afterwards my head started hurting. A lot.

I didn't know this, but Fix Packs don't update any TCP/IP functionality. And there are two entirely separate update streams for Warp TCP/IP. One set of updates fixes the TCP/IP protocol STACK, while the other addresses the TCP/IP SERVICES aka applications, FTP for example.

The distinction is important. It didn't take long to discover that TCP/IP updates are a can of worms. All Warp clients have 16bit TCP/IP stacks. Warp 3 has TCP/IP version 2, Warp Connect has version 3, and Warp 4 version 4. Type INETVER at a command prompt to see the version you have.

You can hang in there with the 16bit update path, which looks like it has reached the end of its life, or head out on the 32bit path towards TCP/IP 4.2. The easy way to 4.2 is through a Software Choice subscription. This takes you to the 4.1 stack and includes all the TCP/IP application updates. Then you can add the 4.2 update. But it looks as if Software Choice won't be available after 1 January 2000 to poor end users seeking a single subscription.

You can get to the 4.2 stack through an update but this won't include the applications. If you take this path, you can update the applications separately as they don't mind whether they're on the old 16bit stack or the new 32bit stack.

To get the new 4.2 stack, you need MPTS service pack WR08620. This can be installed on any version of the OS/2 Warp client. However, before you can install WR08620 you must first install WR08610. Once you have the stack

New tricks for old browsers

Here's an interesting one. Open one of the support pages on the Microsoft website in the Netscape for OS/2 4.61 browser. I went to the Support home page at www.microsoft.com/support, selected TechNet from the drop-down window on the left, and got the standard 'page cannot be found' HTTP 404 error.

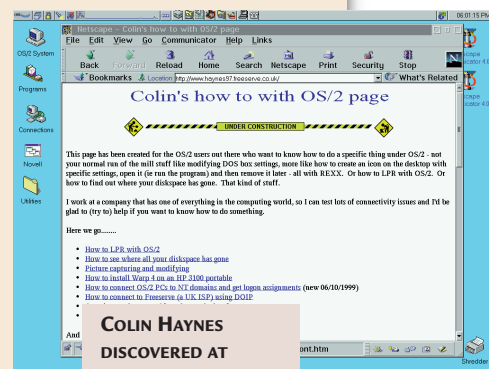
Now have a look in the Release Notes section of the Netscape 4.61 Help menu. It contains instructions for editing some of the User Preferences in the PREFS.JS file. Add the following line to the file.

```
user_pref("os2.
emulate.windows"
, true);
(Key: code string
continues)
```

I pasted it in at the top under the warning against editing the file. Now go back to the Microsoft page that caused the HTTP 404 'page cannot be found' error. Surprise! Funny old world, isn't it. Footnote: Colin Haynes has put up his own OS/2 page at www.haynes97.freemove.co.uk.

The page has useful information on networking, printing and

OS/2 to NT connectivity. Colin has contributed to the column in the past but was too mod-



est to seek a plug here. I found the page during an Internet search. You can run, Colin, but you can't hide...

sorted you can then move over and start applying TCP/IP service updates.

I know this isn't terribly clear, but this is because the whole process did my head in. The nearest I've found to a helpful site so far is www.warpupdates.de/english/warpupdates.html and even then it makes my head hurt. Hopefully you'll be able to make sense of it all.

FANCY A HEADACHE, DEAR? JUST TRY AND WORK OUT WHICH TCP/IP UPDATES YOU NEED

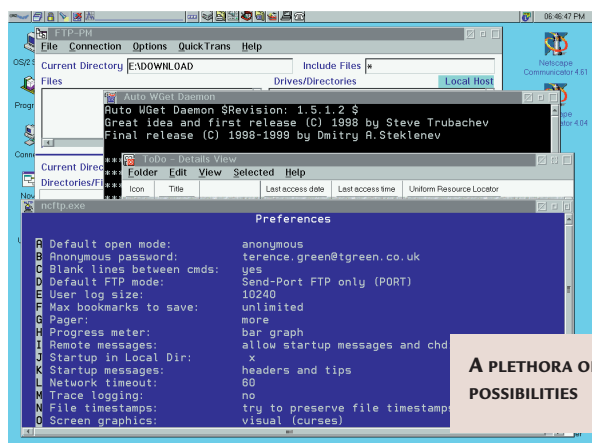
■ **Adieu**
Unfortunately, the time has come to say goodbye to this column. There's a large and vocal OS/2 community on the

Internet and in the newsgroups, but everything changes with time and PCW

has to move on to cover new areas. I'm indebted to those who wrote in and gave life to the column - my thanks to you all, and to the many readers from around the world who kept my mailbox busy.

PCW CONTACTS

Although this is the last OS/2 column, you can contact Terence Green for the remainder of the month at the PCW editorial office or email: os2@pcw.co.uk



A PLETHORA OF FTP POSSIBILITIES