

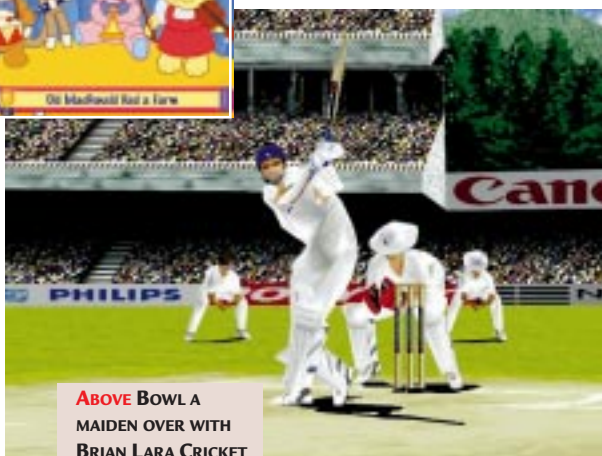
# leisure lines

Screenplay this month lets you get into the swing of Microsoft's new **GOLF 99**, you can get to grips with googlies in **BRIAN LARA CRICKET**, tackle those wacky, wiggly worms in *Worms - Armageddon*, set your mind to a puzzling game called **JEWELS OF THE ORACLE**, steal a march on your opponents in **THIEF**, and revel in a blast from the past — **ASTEROIDS** is back, this time in 3D. In our CD-ROMs you'll see stars



▲ THERE'S SNOW BUSINESS LIKE WORM BUSINESS: THIS TIME, IT'S ARMAGEDDON

with **PATRICK MOORE'S GUIDE TO THE UNIVERSE**, learn about black history with Microsoft's big hit, **ENCARTA AFRICANA**,



ABOVE BOWL A MAIDEN OVER WITH BRIAN LARA CRICKET  
INSET JUMP AHEAD BABY IS DESIGNED FOR THE VERY YOUNG

and chill out to musically animated murals with **DANCER DNA**. The Kids section paints a picture of the new IBM Crayola package, **MAKE A MASTERPIECE**, and Cendant Software takes computing to a disturbingly young age with **JUMP AHEAD BABY**. In our Competitions you have the chance to win an **IRISPEN**, a new approach to data entry, or a copy of Dragon Systems'

**NATURALLY SPEAKING** software. A Chambers dictionary is up for grabs if you complete our crossword [see *ChipChat*], and how many

pots of paint would it take to paint the Titanic? It's just one of the puzzles in our **BRAINTEASERS** section. And there's brainpower on display in *Retro*, as Simon Collin salutes one of the great industry eccentrics, the flawed but well-packed **GRUNDY NEWBRAIN**.

ETELKA CLARK, LEISURE LINES EDITOR

[etelka\\_clark@vnu.co.uk](mailto:etelka_clark@vnu.co.uk)



▲ THE SUBLIME BILLIE HOLLIDAY IS FEATURED IN ENCARTA AFRICANA

# Worms - Armageddon

More **weird and wiggly fun** with those wily worms and their wicked weapons.

**S**tressed out? There's nothing better after a hard day at the office than sitting down and blasting away at a few nasty little loudmouth worms. Previous versions of Worms were excellent fun, but if you're ready for something a little stronger, then you'll love Worms - Armageddon. You get several new devious

weapons this time round, including Lingering Fire, a petrol bomb that burns for several rounds, and the Viking Axe, which chops an unlucky worm's life in two. You can also place your worms manually into the terrain for even greater strategic effect. Worms - Armageddon also helps you hone your fighting skills with training missions. Once you've



fulfilled the training requirements, then you're ready for the regular missions. And you can still play a quick game against the computer, a friend, or a networked foe.

**One of the best features** is the new sound banks, which let you customise your teams with different songs, accents and catchphrases. Three of my favourites

include Scouser, Wideboy and Cad (cue Leslie Phillips-style 'Oh, hel-*looooo...*'). It was hysterical to hear the worms scream 'Oi! Nutter!' or 'Eee! By 'eck, that's champion!' in response to a particularly skilful shot. You can add your own voice to annoy your competitors even further.

Worms - Armageddon is one of the best PC games around. But be warned: it's highly addictive, and Team 17 takes no responsibility for adverse effects on your work and social life.

SUSAN PEDERSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £39.99

**Contact** Team 17; 01924 271637

[www.team17.com](http://www.team17.com)

**System Specification** Pentium 100MHz or faster (150MHz recommended), Windows 95/98, 32Mb RAM (64Mb recommended), 30Mb free hard-disk space, 2X CD-ROM (4X recommended).



# Microsoft Golf 99

Even the bunkers are inviting in this **gorgeous game**.

**G**olf 99 is a stunningly beautiful game. Expertly rendered courses, complete with an opening flypast of each hole, immerse you in an environment a thousand miles from the home or office PC on which you are playing. Even the sounds — singing birds, the whoosh and thwack of the club, and the gently reassuring commentary — envelop the user in a relaxing netherworld where the sun always shines and, without a drop of rain, the course is always lush and green. If you're a poor golfer, or have never played before, don't be put off. Taking a shot in Golf 99 is easy and the on-screen guides, if followed precisely (which is far from difficult) will nearly always get you to the place you would expect — namely, the fairway or the green. On the first game, by the sixth hole this reviewer was five shots below par. Not bad for a beginner!

**Golf 99 has three** brand new courses and incorporates the seven courses found in the 98 edition, giving you no

less than 117 holes to conquer. When you've played them all one way, you can do them



again, but differently. With four swing types, ten game types and myriad customisation options, you'll never play the same game twice. Having no friends is no excuse for playing on your own, either: compete over modem or LAN, or hook up with players worldwide at the MSN Gaming Zone.

NIK RAWLINSON



## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £24.99 (£10 cashback for customers upgrading)

**Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000

[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

**System Specification** Pentium 90MHz processor, Windows 95/98 /NT4 Sp3+, 16-40Mb RAM, 65Mb free hard-disk space, 4X CD-ROM, 16-bit SVGA display at 800x600, mouse.





# Jewels of the Oracle

Thought provoking and **atmospheric**, this is a challenge for the mind.

**T**housands of years before the Egyptians, there existed an enlightened civilisation upon which all others were based. It was known as the City of Nisus. Its people were cautious in admitting those whose untamed emotions and untrained minds threatened to destroy their state of Paradise, so the petitioners were required to travel through the Girsu Gates and unlock the mysteries of this realm. The Jewels of the Oracle game attempts to recreate the devices that challenged

those attempting to pass through the Girsu Gates, consisting of 24 puzzles in logic, mathematics and geometry. The Oracle himself guides you through the mysteries of his dark, tomb-like world constructed around a room with a well at



its centre. The well is divided into six groupings, or 'Houses', with four puzzles in each House. You have no opponents and no time limit. Your only ally is your mind. When you solve a puzzle, the Oracle releases a jewel to

be returned to the Altar Room. Return all 24 jewels and you can leave the domain.

**It's a very basic concept** but beautifully crafted to create an intense atmosphere for all ages to enjoy. The puzzles become increasingly challenging, but with the option to pass on a puzzle and return later, you can drift away with your imagination as if enjoying a *Sunday Times* crossword. It's a refreshing change to find such inventiveness in a game that runs on such a low spec.

IAN ROBSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★

**Price** £29.95

**Contact** Iona UK 0181 296 9454

[www.ionasoft.com](http://www.ionasoft.com)

**System Specification** Windows 98/95/3.1, 25MHz 486SX processor (66MHz 486DX/2 recommended), 8Mb RAM (16Mb RAM recommended), 2X CD-ROM drive, SoundBlaster-compatible sound card, 256 SVGA video card.

# Brian Lara Cricket

A sedate way to pass the time as you **sort your leg breaks** from your googlies.

**D**epending on your point of view, cricket is either an epic battle of mind and body or a waste of a perfectly good lawn. And previous attempts at capturing the game on the PC have lent credence towards the latter view, being slow, dull and uninvolving. Brian Lara Cricket changes all that. It's quick to set up, fast-moving and, most importantly, great fun to play. Even better is the fact that while cricketing aficionados will love the attention to detail and realistic action, those who don't know a googly from a leg break should also enjoy it. From the recreation of the grounds to the fluid movement of batsmen and bowlers alike, the level of detail is remarkable. As with the real thing, you'll need a fair degree of patience to get to



grips with the subtleties of the game: my first effort left me knowing how the England team feels most of the time as I slumped to a pitiful 39 all out. Learning the key combinations required for the various shots also takes a while but, once done, you can start to concentrate on the tactics required to build big scores.

**The multitude** of playing options, from a full test to a fantastic feature that

allows you to replay classic matches, also greatly enhance the longevity of the game. So if you're sick of the bloodletting

and frantic action of most PC games and fancy something a little more sedate, you'll be bowled over by the quality of this release.

OWEN GIBSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £35

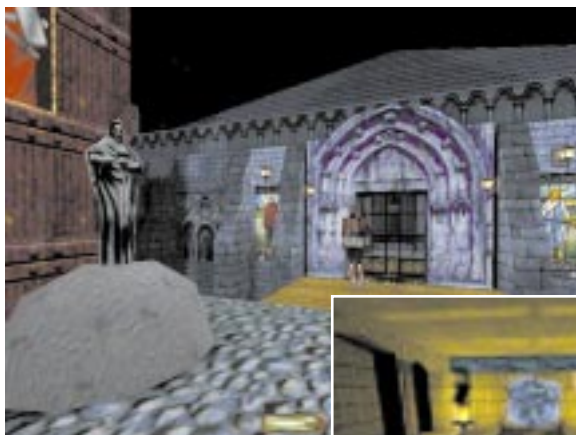
**Contact** Codemasters 01926 814132

[www.brianlara.co.uk](http://www.brianlara.co.uk)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, Pentium 166MHz processor, 16Mb of memory, SoundBlaster-compatible sound card, 3Dfx 3D accelerator card, 70Mb free hard-disk space.

# Thief - The Dark Project

Do you have a **cunning plan**? Good: you'll need it in this game.



**T**his game is unlike any first-person game on the market. While others compete on the level of carnage you can see on-screen, Thief - The Dark Project is just the opposite. In this game, stealth, secrecy and cunning are your best friends. Exposure means almost certain death. You play the role of a thief whose mission is to prevent a city

from being overpowered by an evil being. To achieve this, you have to complete certain perilous missions. During these missions, shadows and darkness remain your constant companions, and as befits a thief, you

spend a lot of time waiting patiently within them. There is however a 'visibility jewel' to let you know how visible

you may be to your enemies. Fighting your enemies in a Quake-style shoot-out is not a great way to finish the game. Even Thief's weapons are best suited for stealth rather than frontal attack: they include a blackjack, a sword and a bow

with a variety of arrows. The arrows have to be used sparingly as they are always in short supply. This again forces you to avoid confrontation whenever possible.

**Another unique feature** is Thief's use of sound. Sound cues are absolutely critical to finishing the game. If you make too much of a racket, your enemies will be quick to pounce on you.

**In a market** devoid of imaginative games, Thief stands out due to its brilliant design and gameplay.

AJITH RAM

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £44.99

**Contact** Eidos Interactive 0121 332 4647

[www.eidosinteractive.com](http://www.eidosinteractive.com)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, Pentium 166 with 3D card, DirectX 6, 32Mb RAM, 8X CD-ROM.



# Asteroids

One of the **best blasters** just got better — and in 3D.

**I**n 1979, possibly the most addictive arcade game known to man started chomping up 10p pieces by the bucket-load. In 1999 the legendary Asteroids has hit again, this time in 3D. Staying faithful to some of the constraints of the original format will please most nostalgia fans. You still have a static screen where you swoop across from the top of the screen only to reappear at the bottom. Highly unrealistic, but

tactically a firm requirement. And thankfully 3D has been restricted to the modelling of the asteroids, as negotiating your sprightly ship as it zips through the



flying behemoths is troublesome enough. This updated version provides stunningly inventive graphics that provide a real dynamic feel to your frenzied efforts. However, you may not have time to admire the blue-flamed side-burners

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £29.99

**Contact** Activision 01895 456700

[www.activision.com](http://www.activision.com)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, Pentium 90 or equivalent (Pentium 133 recommended), 16Mb RAM (32Mb recommended), 2Mb SVGA video card, 70Mb free hard-disk space, 4X CD-ROM, support for 3D accelerator card with 100% Microsoft Direct3D compatible drivers.

as you rotate to avoid fragments of rock consumed in flames shooting by. There's also the opportunity to equip one of three asteroid-clearing ships with an additional unique weapon hidden in each Zone. Search for laser nets, repulser shields, shock waves, gun satellites that orbit and add to your ship's firepower, and more.

**A particular favourite** is the asteroid tug that has the annoying habit of capturing asteroids only to protect them from your attacks. Shoot that sucker with venom.

This marvellous game is everything the original was, with bells and whistles added. Classy stuff.

IAN ROBSON



# Dancer DNA

Gives a whole new meaning to **swinging blue genes**.

**T**he demon spawn of Professor Richard Dawkins and Notting Hill Electronic Publishing, this is a graphical representation of breeding and mutating genes dancing to your chosen music. The ideal venue for this presentation would be via an LCD projector onto the walls of a club, but it will look just as good on your home monitor. Although the box states that you are supplied with 15 animations, this package is very much more than just an animator. You actually have full control over how the effects generate themselves by associating movements with particular instruments on a track, such as a menacing heavy beat or a vocal. The controls even extend to some finer tweaking of the sensitivity settings and



the speed of each directional morph. The interface could do

with a little loosening as it seems to target the professional, when at this price it should be taking advantage of the larger audience that can afford it.

Still, if it does all get a bit confusing, there's a selection of pre-sets that cater for a standardised selection of musical tastes.

The recommended system requirements detail quite a high specification, but if you want to take advantage of the best this program can offer, you may be looking for even more power. Running on a Pentium III with all the best options checked, reduced initial rendering to around three minutes maximum, and the results were quite impressive if only a tad out of time with the actual music.

IAN ROBSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £19.99 (£17.01 ex VAT)

**Contact** Notting Hill Publishing  
0171 937 6003

[www.dancerdna.co.uk](http://www.dancerdna.co.uk)

**System Specification** Pentium 133MHz or equivalent (200MHz recommended), 16Mb RAM (64Mb recommended), 10Mb free hard-disk space, CD-ROM drive, 16-bit colour support (Direct3D graphics card recommended), 8-bit compatible sound card.

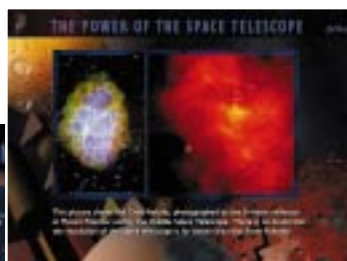
# Patrick Moore's Guide to the Universe

The **night sky** in all its glory, presented by the man who knows.

**S**ince the advent of the multimedia CD-ROM, there has been a trend towards enlisting famous people in their marketing. This astronomy CD is endorsed by Patrick Moore, an expert on the solar system and xylophone player *extraordinaire*. The multimedia extravaganza begins with a resounding

rendition of the first movement of Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*. You start your study of astronomy with a brief history of the subject itself, then choose whether to listen to the commentary

by Patrick Moore or just read the explanations on-screen. Most of the tour is made up of individual slides rather



than flashy animations — a good thing, as the viewer is not distracted from the core subject matter. Almost all the important facets of astronomy, ranging from galaxies, constellations and our solar system, to the

telescopes used to view them, are covered in some detail. For instance, if you want to learn about constellations, there is an informative section on the night sky. Using slides, the Great Bear and Orion, to name but two, are explained in detail.

No multimedia CD would be complete without its share of video clips, and Patrick Moore's Guide has its share, including great historical moments like the lunar landings and the launch of the space shuttle. These video clips are not as informative as the slide shows, however.

**Patrick Moore's Guide to the Universe** emphasises substance over style and is well worth a look.

AJITH RAM

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £29.99

**Contact** FastTrack Software Publishing  
01923 495496

[www.fasttrack.com](http://www.fasttrack.com)

**System Specification** 486 or higher with 8Mb of RAM. Pentium with 16Mb of RAM recommended.

# Microsoft Encarta Africana

A brilliantly presented, **fascinating account** of Africa's contribution to human history.

**I**t's taken a long time to get here, but better late than never. With an authoritative editorial team led by Harvard University professor Kwame Anthony Appiah and including Henry Louis Gates, Jr, director of Harvard's W.E.B Du Bois Institute, Microsoft has released an interactive, electronic encyclopaedia documenting the human history of the (Pan) African Diaspora. Tracing its movement to the Americas, Encarta Africana looks at the cultural, economic and political impact this



movement has had on American history to date. Going right back to four million B.C.E (Before Common Era), the origin of all mankind, Africana traces the great accomplishments of Man, from the ancient dynasties of Egypt and the art of Mali, to Toni Morrison's novels or LL Cool J's method of storytelling.

**Every article is accompanied** by either a picture, a virtual tour, a celebrity contributor's comments, or a sample of music. For example, listen to Lady Day (Billie Holiday) at Harlem's Apollo Theatre, or watch a video of Whoopi Goldberg illuminating the concept of 'race' as an idea rather than a reality.

The topics are accompanied by links and sidebars to related aspects and subjects, providing further information at the click of a mouse. Navigation is

easy, with the program split into sections, so you can go straight to the encyclopaedia articles, the 2,500-strong archive of video presentations, audio clips and photos, or the interactive maps which allow you to visit habitats and places of interest. Go on a virtual tour to Paris, Harlem, Havana, Egypt or Brazil, and conduct your own word or phrase search with the Pin Pointer to find specific topic areas.

**As a research tool**, Encarta Africana proves invaluable. The Research Organiser means you can collect and order your chosen topics, while the

web links encourage you to dig deeper on the issues and topics raised — perfect for essays and dissertations.

Microsoft has succeeded in bringing to our attention the massive influence Africa and its people have had on our world, specifically America. The only downfall of the program is that as it's not on DVD, you have to keep alternating the CDs to access particular media. But this is a fascinating, captivating program, with excellent graphics and beautiful presentation. It brings the truth of African and African American history alive, telling the flip-side version of history that is so often ignored. It's one of a kind, a truly essential work. Buy it.

HELEN FORTGANG

**PCW DETAILS**



★★★★★

**Price** £49.99 with £20 mail-in cashback until 31st December 1999. After this date, Encarta Africana will cost £69.99. (Prices include VAT)

**Contact** Microsoft Connection 0345 002000

[www.encyclopedia.msn.com/products/africana](http://www.encyclopedia.msn.com/products/africana)

**System Specification** 486DX/66MHz, Windows 95/98 or NT 4.0; 16Mb RAM, Windows 95; 24Mb, Windows 98; 30Mb free hard-disk space. 2X CD-ROM, 256 colours, local bus video with 1Mb of VRAM, mouse, sound card with speakers or headphones.



# Crayola - Make a masterpiece

**Exploding popcorn** is just one feature that should be in every art package.

**A**pproaching an art tool while not actually being in the intended age group of 5-12 years could have proved a difficult task. But I have to take my hat off to a most inspired creation. This is not just your run-of-the-mill kids' graphics package; it's a complete foundation course for your budding little Da Vinci's. You start with a blank canvas or one of over 200 idea starters. Whatever you choose, you won't be able to resist frantically dabbling with every available tool to arrive at something wonderful each time. At any point you may be surprised by what you learn as you ask your own personal tutor, Scribble, to advise you on what you're about to try out. The traditional tools are all here, from pens, chalks and paintbrushes with a special



paint-mixing feature, to lines, squares and circles. But the Wacky Tools is

where the fun starts. You'll find that you won't be able to pick out a favourite and you'll end up making mad collages. Worth mentioning is the multi-coloured

popcorn that is placed as a seed of corn and seconds later explodes into colour. And how could I forget the food palette with its selection of goodies that you throw at your own creation.

**It's an absolute wonder** why these amazing tools are not available to every graphics package, professional or otherwise, as it may just lead us to having a little more fun.

IAN ROBSON

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £19.95

**Contact** IONA Software 0181 296 9454  
[www.ionasoft.com](http://www.ionasoft.com)

**System Specification** Pentium or better, 16Mb RAM, 16-bit colour support, 10Mb free hard-disk space, Windows-compatible sound card, mouse, 4X CD-ROM drive, printer.

# Jump Ahead Baby

Visual learning for the **very young**, with your host, Teddy.

**T**here is a growing market for so-called 'lapware', a group to which Jump Ahead Baby, designed for kids aged 9-24 months, belongs. Very simple, both in its graphical presentation and its content, this is the first program in the Jump Ahead series. Essentially, it serves as an introduction to interactivity with the screen and the keyboard, as well as being a visual learning tool. Suitably colourful and easy to follow, kids — sorry, babies — can familiarise themselves with shapes, colours, animals, clothing, music and various objects found within. With animated host Teddy, the user is guided through the program where they are treated to dozens of games, each with a happy introductory song or melody. There are eight different activities, such as



dressing Teddy to go the beach, where basic differentiation skills are taught.

As Jump Ahead Baby is meant to be used with the parent, there are two

control options. The child can be encouraged to work directly with the keyboard by pressing any key when asked to do so, or the parent can guide the experience with the mouse, in the normal point-and-click way.

**As a parent** you would need the patience of a saint to go through this program however many times your child may wish to. It's a cheerful production, though personally, I'd rather teach a child with 3D toys which can be picked up and thrown about.

HELEN FORTGANG

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £12.99 (plus £5 P&P)

**Contact** Knowledge Adventure/Cendant Software 0118 920 9100 (No URL)

**System Specification** Windows 95/3.1, 486DX2/66MHz, 2X CD-ROM, 16Mb RAM, 15Mb free hard-disk space, SVGA 256 colours, MPC-compatible sound card, mouse.

# Space oddity

Grundy's unusual NewBrain packed a lot of computer into a very small space.

At the start of the personal computer revolution, almost any manufacturer could — and did — turn its hand to a respectable computer. To prove the point, do you remember the Grundy NewBrain? Grundy was, and still is, a manufacturing company.

Launched in 1983, the NewBrain was a great little computer, if somewhat unusual. It was packed into a small cream-coloured box around the size of a decent hardback novel. A particularly unpleasant keyboard was on the top side of the case, with hard 'clicky' keys spaced calculator-style and hopeless for touch-typing.

Just above the keyboard, in the top right-hand corner, was a small smoked-plastic panel. This attracted the most attention at the time; in the high-spec versions, the NewBrain had a fluorescent 16-character display tucked behind the plastic. With just a few lines of assembler, you could flash or scroll messages on this little marvel. Much like the keyboard-based LCD of the early Apricot PCs, this was a great gizmo that had little practical value but always featured in the reviews.

What should have taken most of the review space was the internal design of the NewBrain. Open up the plastic casing and you would be faced with just about the most crowded space in PCs at the time. Although the case was less than an inch thick, there were three separate circuit boards sandwiched inside. Each connected with a wide ribbon cable that



▲ THE NEWBRAIN WAS A MASTERFUL EXERCISE IN HOW TO CRAM SOME COMPLEX ELECTRONICS INTO A VERY SMALL CASE

this could be doubled with a soldering iron and some basic rewiring of the motherboard. The base model was supplied with 16Kb of RAM but the computer could support a staggering 2Mb of RAM. If you were rich enough to be able to afford this (close to a thousand pounds) you gained extra room for clever graphics and complex programs. Like all the computers of the time, the NewBrain included a good version of Basic and could run the then standard CP/M operating system; but to do this your NewBrain would need 64Kb of RAM and this in turn was expensive.

The graphic display was one of the good points of the NewBrain. It provided a basic 80x30 text display together with images at a resolution of up to 640x250. Only black and white text and graphics were supported though, and oddly, only part of the screen area could be used for the high-resolution display.

To reach the outside world, the NewBrain was fitted with the simplest of ports: just a TV connection for the display, two serial ports, cassette-tape ports and an expansion connector. In fact, this is rather similar to the latest logic from Apple in which all ancillary devices are excluded from the basic computer and connected via a FireWire cable (for this 1983 computer, read 9600bps serial cable). An expansion

box was available as an extra and

included expansion ports, I/O ports and a disk drive controller.

Grundy produced three different models: the model A didn't have the little fluorescent screen on the front and was considered dull. The AD had the screen and was the most reviewed machine, while the M included a special battery pack that turned the NewBrain into a mobile computer. You would need to rely on the 16-character fluorescent readout or plug in to a TV set to read any text, but it was a nice idea.

One of the oddities of the NewBrain was that it had no on/off switch (again, rather like the Apple Macs). The power supply cord was temperamental and often reset the computer, normally when you were just about to save several hundred lines of Basic code.

I rather liked the NewBrain and still have a model AD tucked in a corner of the shed. At the time, it was promoted either as a programmer's computer with speed, graphics and memory, or as a business unit. As the former, it was fun and interesting. As the latter, it never took off. It really only won as a piece of electronic packaging: the designers did a great job squeezing so much into such a tiny space.

SIMON COLLIN

*The NewBrain's designers did a great job squeezing so much into such a tiny space*

allowed them to be folded on top of each other. To stop the boards touching and electrocuting innocent users, a sheet of plastic (or sometimes paper) was carefully inserted between the boards.

The circuit boards were fantastically complex because the NewBrain was rather advanced for its age. It sported a Z80 processor running at 4MHz, although like most Z80s of the time,



### Rules of entry

These competitions are open to readers of *Personal Computer World*, except for employees (and their families) of VNU Business Publications, Image Recognition Integrated Systems (IRIS) and Dragon Systems. The Editor of *Personal Computer World* is the sole judge of the competition and his decision is final. No cash alternative is available in lieu of prizes.

### How to enter the competitions

1. Via our web site at [www.pcw.co.uk](http://www.pcw.co.uk), or
  2. Write your name, address and daytime telephone number on a postcard or on the back of a sealed envelope. Mark your card(s) 'PCW/IRISPen Competition' or 'PCW/Dragon Systems Competition' and send to:  
P.O. Box 191  
Woking  
Surrey GU21 1FT,  
to arrive by Friday 23rd April 1999.
- Please state clearly on your competition entry if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies.

## Win a wonderful IRISPen!

Just as the mouse reinvented the way we interface with computers, so a new innovation is set to change the way we handle data entry both in and out of the office. Developed by a company called **Image Recognition Integrated Systems (IRIS)**, the **IRISPen** is a small, lightweight, handheld scanner that is used in a similar way to a highlighter pen.

In place of the tedious and time-consuming practice of retyping extracts of existing printed matter from books, magazines and reports to create a new document, the IRISPen will do the work for you.

The IRISPen is available in three versions. In addition to scanning, the top-end Translator can provide translation to and from English into any one of four other languages (German, French, Italian, Spanish) and provides one-way translation from English to Japanese. The user simply 'drags' the pen over the text they want to scan and the information is automatically entered into their computer application, such as a word processor, spreadsheet and/or database.

The IRISPen will scan text from 8pt up to 22pt — even characters on coloured backgrounds or inverted text. The OCR software is based on IRIS's own proprietary PCR (Pen Character



Recognition) technology and is bundled with the hardware.

♦ **We have four** of the top-end Translator IRISPens worth £234 (inc VAT) to give to away to *PCW* readers. To enter the IRISPen competition, just answer

the following question:

➤ **How many languages will the IRISPen translate?**

A) Two B) Three C) Four

➤ See the panel at the left of this page for details of how to enter this competition.

## Win a copy of Dragon Systems' Naturally Speaking!

**D**ragon Systems has recently launched the latest version of its award-winning continuous speech recognition software, **Dragon Naturally Speaking**. Its recognition accuracy factor, quoted at 97 percent, remains unrivalled, but version 3.5 also boasts improved number-handling characteristics and an enhanced voice-only Windows navigation capability to deliver more efficiency at the desk. The package includes a quality, lightweight, head-mounted microphone and the software comes fully integrated into both of the two leading word processors, Microsoft Word 97 and Corel WordPerfect 8. Special features include Natural Language Commands which have been developed as part of Dragon's continuing crusade to make

speech recognition a totally user-friendly experience. Natural Language Commands mean that instead of having to memorise specific pre-set phrases to edit or enhance text, users can achieve the desired result simply by saying what comes naturally.

♦ **We have six copies** of the latest version of Dragon Systems' Naturally Speaking software to give away. Each package is worth £175 (inc VAT). To enter the Naturally Speaking competition, just answer the following question:

➤ **Apart from the software, what else does the Naturally Speaking package include?**

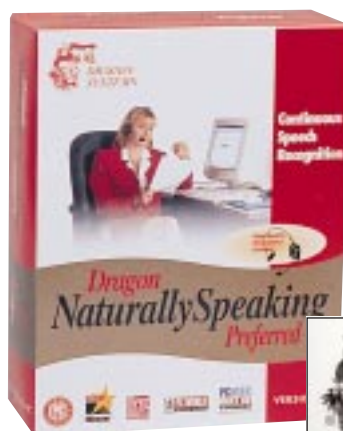
— A quality, lightweight, head-mounted...

A) Microwave

B) Toupee

C) Microphone

➤ See the panel at the left of this page for details of how to enter this competition.



# books

## Silicon Gold Rush

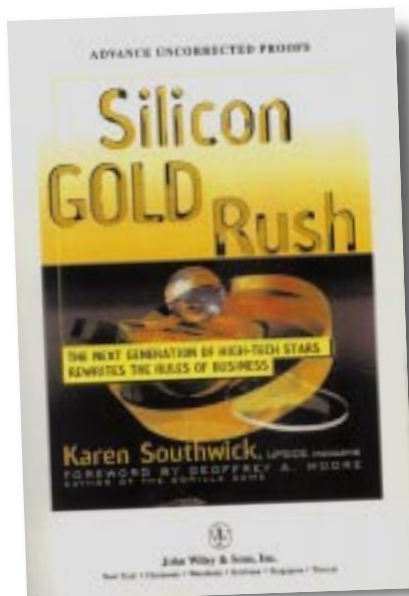
**T**his book reflects on the similarities between the American Gold Rush in the early part of this century, to the current wealth being generated by the IT industry in California.

**There is no doubt** that this fast-moving area requires a different kind of business approach: failure to implement the changes can lead to a quick demise. But there are also great rewards to be reaped, as exemplified by Hewlett-Packard and Compaq. Author Karen Southwick takes a good look at this ever-changing industry, while analysing in-depth the example of a fledgling

software company. The book is split into chapters that describe the life cycles companies in this arena can expect

to encounter. It begins with how low-key launches have become the expensive events that now last for days. As the book progresses, it covers such topics as how to grow, how to expand into new markets while retaining the current one, and — a favourite of IT companies — buying up other companies.

**The final chapter**, entitled 'The Party's Over', makes for particularly interesting reading. It examines the mistakes that have been made, by Novell in particular. In this



case, the author shows lucidly how a large company in this business can make a small mistake that can hurt it deeply.

**The entire book is based** on in-depth interviews with people at twenty three technology companies, which gives the author a real — and revealing — insight into the whole Silicon Valley society. For those eager to venture into the IT industry, this book makes interesting reading.

Not exactly an essential guide to starting up a new technology company, but interesting nonetheless.

DAVID LUDLOW

### PCW DETAILS



#### SILICON GOLD RUSH

**Author** Karen Southwick

**Publisher** John Wiley & Sons

**ISBN** 0-471-24646-8

**Price** £24.95

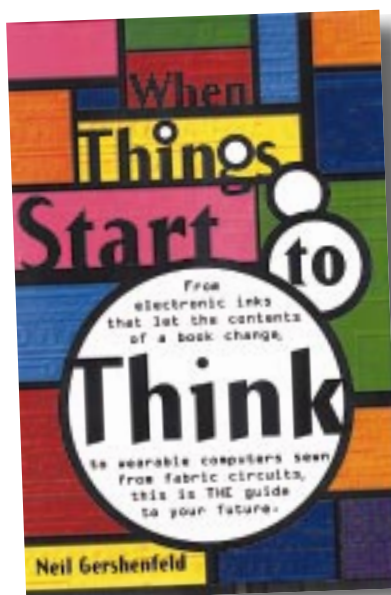
## When Things Start to Think

**I**f there's one subject the geek community loves, it's futurology. *When Things Start to Think* is written by the director of MIT's Media Lab and plays on the marketability of this kind of literature, with the cover proclaiming that '... this is THE guide to your future'.

**This is frankly misleading.** Although the book is concerned to an extent with technology development from one of the people responsible for it, it's not a catalogue of the electronic widgets we'll all be using in a few years' time. True, the first couple of chapters deal with

electronic inks and computers woven into fabric, but if you're a regular reader of *Wired* magazine it will all sound very familiar;

the author's MIT colleague, Nicholas Negroponte, has covered it all before. Where it does score, however, is in Gershenfeld's lack of technology eulogisation. He discusses the implications of IT rather than atom-orientated information delivery and gives refreshing perspectives on their relative worth. He comes not only to the obvious conclusion that books are currently superior to computers as text delivery devices, but that, in some cases, they always will be. However, you may get a little perplexed and fairly bored in the latter half as the



discussions veer completely away from technology and turn into a propaganda pamphlet justifying the existence of the Media Lab. Gershenfeld spends pages and pages on its methodologies and links to industry that are completely off-topic and seem to be lifted out of an MIT corporate pamphlet. He finally gets back to the point in the last chapter, but does little more than

repeat what he said in the first. *When Things Start to Think* is interesting in parts, but too disjointed and self-absorbed to make a coherent and satisfying read.

DAVID FEARON

### PCW DETAILS



#### WHEN THINGS START TO THINK

**Author** Neil Gershenfeld

**Publisher** Hodder & Stoughton

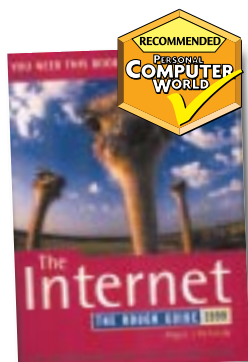
**ISBN** 0-340-72870-1

**Price** £17.99



# Rough Guide to the Internet 1999

The *Rough Guide to the Internet 1999* comes in an unimposing pocket-sized format, but this doesn't mean that important information has been sacrificed. The first few chapters serve as a basic introduction to the internet. To this end, it covers what the internet is, what it can offer you, how to go about choosing an Internet Service Provider (ISP), how web pages are created, and even online gaming. This section by no means constitutes an ultimate guide to these topics, but the detail level is good enough to get you started, which after all is really the aim of the book. The middle section is an internet directory, covering web pages, newsgroups, and a round-up of useful



**PCW DETAILS**  
 ★★★★★  
**ROUGH GUIDE TO THE INTERNET 1999**  
 Author *Angus J Kennedy*  
 Publisher *Rough Guide*  
 ISBN 1-85828-343-4  
 Price £5.00

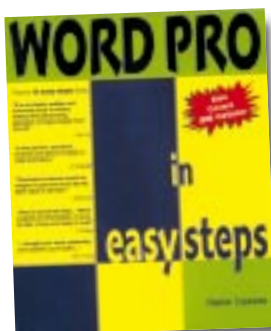
software. This directory covers a lot of sites which are split up into categories for easy reference. The final section gives you a brief history of the internet, a guide to net language, and a glossary, and finishes with a listing of ISPs throughout the world. The author, Angus J Kennedy, manages to cover all of these subjects surprisingly well. He presents much needed information in a non-technical way that people new to this side of life will find refreshing.

**But it's not just the novices** who will value this book: the directory sections are bound to contain information that everybody is interested in. At only a fiver, you really can't go wrong.

DAVID LUDLOW

# Word Pro in Easy Steps

It seems that for every piece of software released on the PC, there is a third-party book teaching you how to use it. Word Pro from Lotus is no exception, as *Word Pro in Easy Steps* is written specifically for it. The book begins with an introductory section that covers the basics of the program from starting it up to explaining the on-screen display — toolbars, menus and the title bar. It moves on to its real purpose of explaining how to use Word Pro. The following chapters begin with simple starter features that allow you to create, save documents, and use the basic tools to do so. As the book progresses you are introduced to more complex features, such as in-depth text formatting and creating your own



**PCW DETAILS**  
 ★★★★★  
**WORD PRO IN EASY STEPS**  
 Author *Stephen Copestake*  
 Publisher *Computer Step*  
 ISBN 1-84078-041-X  
 Price £8.99

text styles. Throughout the book, screenshots illustrate what the book is saying, helping you to understand the text better. There's also some appealing clipart that prompts you on things you should remember or be warned of.

**As a quick and easy guide** to using Word Pro,

this book does the job well. It is not, however, the ultimate guide by any means. It proudly announces on the front that it covers IBM ViaVoice, too.

This it does — in just nine pages of mostly screenshots. If you desperately need a guide to using Word Pro, then *Easy Steps* is easy enough to read and not bad value at £8.99. If you want more in-depth material, look elsewhere.

DAVID LUDLOW

TOP

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books

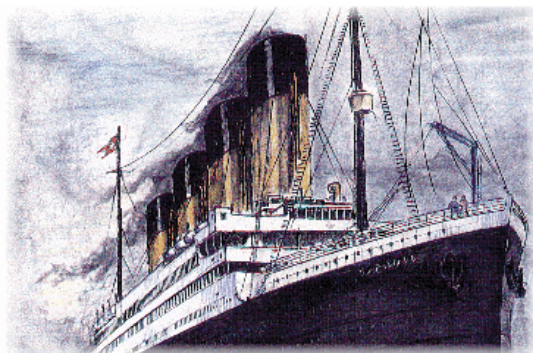
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## brainteasers

## Quickie

I made a model of the Titanic and used a whole pot of paint to paint it. My brother made the same model, only his was twice as big. How many pots of paint will he need to paint his?



## This Month's (May) Prize Puzzle

A logical problem this month which can be solved by computer or just plain brainpower.

At our school recently, one of the parents donated a sum of money to provide new books for the children in the junior class. Since Maths books, English books and Science books were all

would be a good way of using all the money.

Only two of the above suggestions were actually correct.

Mrs Topper realised that buying books all of the same type would also exactly use up the money available —

this was only possible with one of the book types — so she went ahead and spent the money in this way, buying 15 of them.

All the Maths books were the same price, likewise all the English books and all the Science books.

Which type of book did Mrs Topper buy?

Answers on a postcard

or the back of a sealed envelope, to:

PCW Prize Puzzle - May 1999

P.O. Box 99

Harrogate

N. Yorks HG2 0XJ

to arrive not later than Friday 21st May 1999.

We will also accept solutions by email. Send the solution only (no explanatory notes or program listings etc) and your address, to

[jj.clessa@btinternet.com](mailto:jj.clessa@btinternet.com)



needed, Mrs Topper, the headmistress, asked three other staff members which books the school should buy.

Mr Adams said that the money would buy exactly 2 Maths books, 3 English books and 3 Science books.

Miss Brown thought that 4 Maths books, 3 English books and 2 Science books would exactly use up all the money.

Miss Crane suggested 4 Maths books, 4 English books and 3 Science books

## Winners

Because of the cock-up I made of the November problem last year, we have two winners this month.

Incidentally, there has been an excellent response via email, but please don't ask me to reply individually, especially to letters saying 'Did you get my entire email?' Also, please include your name and address — I can't send prizes to an email address!

## Winner of February 1999 Prize Puzzle

164 entries for this one, 120 of these by email. The winning card was the 104th, one of the email entries, and came from Mr Andrew Rossett of Stoke-on-Trent. Congratulations, Mr Rossett, your prize follows shortly.

The winning solution was that there were 5,764,795 coins, and the general solution to this type of problem, where there are N pirates, is that the least number of coins is:

$$1 - N + N^{(N+1)}$$

## Winner of re-issued November 1998 Prize Puzzle

There were almost 100 entrants despite the confusion surrounding this problem — and 56 of these were emailed. The correct solution was that the happy couples are:

**Dave and Mary**

**Colin and Kath**

**Alf and Nell**

**Bob and Liz**

The winning card, chosen at random from the heap, came from Mr Chris Bolton of Plymouth. Congratulations, Mr Bolton, your prize will be on its way shortly.

Meanwhile, to all the also-rans, keep trying, it could be your turn next.

JJ CLESSA

PCW Prize Crossword: This month's crossword is on the ChipChat page at the back of the magazine.

## Clessa Quickie Puzzles

Have you ever failed dismally on one of JJ Clessa's Quickies? For those of you who enjoy our Quickie problems and perhaps would like to get the solutions too, JJ Clessa will shortly be publishing two books of Quickie Puzzles — 125 puzzles in each book — which will comprise almost all the puzzles that have appeared in *Personal Computer World's* Leisure Lines section since its inception nearly twenty years ago. The books will be titled *The Little Red Book of Quickie Puzzles* and *The Little Blue Book of Quickie Puzzles*.

Each book will eventually be available in book shops for about £2.75, but there will be an early opportunity for PCW readers to obtain the books at a specially reduced price. Watch this space for further details.