

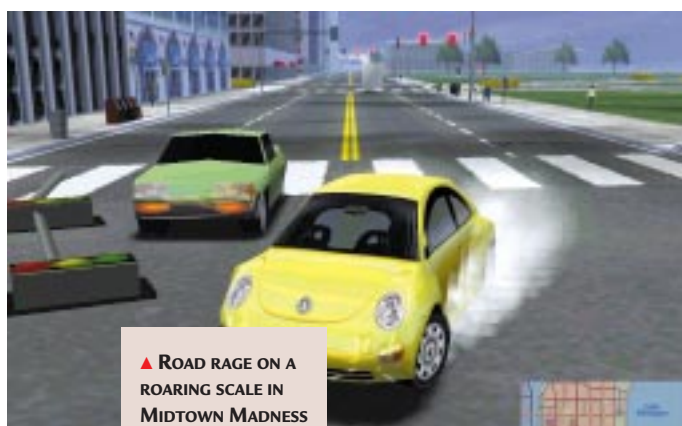
# leisure lines

In *Screenplay* this month we have reviews of the Tetris-style *Swing*; the sequel to the gruesome 3D dinosaur blaster, *Turok*; the new Star Wars game, **X-WING ALLIANCE**; Jimmy White's new snooker game; and two superb racing games, **MIDTOWN MADNESS** and *TOCA 2*. If your decor's getting you down, then step boldly onto the home front with **HOUSE BEAUTIFUL**, reviewed in the *CD-ROMs*

section. Other CDs include a design package called *Photo Montage*, *National Geographic Maps*, and an impressive reference tool called **EYE2EYE BRITAIN**. Children will enjoy spending time with **PINGU** and his friends in our *Kids*



▲ HATS (OR POTS!) OFF TO PINGU, AS HE MAKES LEARNING FUN [SEE KIDS]



▲ ROAD RAGE ON A ROARING SCALE IN **MIDTOWN MADNESS** [SEE SCREENPLAY]

section, and they can help Willy find his ghostly powers in another great hit from Tivola, **MAX AND THE HAUNTED CASTLE**. There's much to learn from our *Books* section this month, as we settle down with *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Visual Basic 6*, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, and **MICROSOFT SQL SERVER 7 FOR DUMMIES**. You could be on a

winning streak if you try your hand at this month's *Competitions*: there are **ATI GRAPHICS CARDS** and copies of **McAfee OFFICE** to give away. If you complete the *PCW Prize Crossword*, a copy of the new Chambers dictionary could be yours. And if you give some thought to **BRAINTEASERS**, you could earn a prize in the process. Lastly, in *Retro*, Simon Collin takes **COMPAQ'S FIRST PORTABLE** for a spin.

ETELKA CLARK, LEISURE LINES EDITOR  
[ETELKA\\_CLARK@VNU.CO.UK](mailto:ETELKA_CLARK@VNU.CO.UK)



▼ DAMAGE LIMITATION NEEDS ATTENTION IN **X-WING ALLIANCE**

# Turok 2 - Seeds of Evil

Blood and gore galore as you **fight to save** the enemy's energy.

**A**s Joshua Fireseed, the new Turok, you are set the task of protecting a series of energy totems erected to imprison the ancient Primagen. The Primagen's hapless minions, genetically bred dinosaur humanoids, are hell-bent on destroying the totems and seem to have a personal grudge against humans, too.



**The smooth first-person gameplay** of Turok 2 is easily equal to Quake, taking the atmosphere to a new level with lavish scenery that only Tomb Raider 3 could hope to approach. Blood and gore seem to be the designers' focus here, with the reactionary physics of a foe entirely dependent on your point of impact with a weapon. It's frighteningly realistic, with the scaly critters flinching

as your bullets hit them, or squirming helplessly on the floor with blood pouring over a neck bone where there was once a head.

With at least 20 weapons to choose from, you'll be spoilt for choice. Some are specific to underwater battle, with options on types of ammo and even methods of using a weapon including sniper modes.

New levels of tactics and skill will

have to be achieved before you can confidently take on the multi-player levels. The single-player quests are certainly imaginative, but where attention has been paid to the graphics and physics, the artificial intelligence is a tad lacking. At times it's a bit repetitive, but more annoying is that when you're forced to cover old ground, you tend to meet up with the same enemies again.

IAN ROBSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £39.99 inc VAT

**Contact** Acclaim

0171 344 5000 [www.acclaim.net](http://www.acclaim.net)

**System Specification** 3D graphics adapter (recommended 3Dfx Voodoo or equivalent), Pentium 200MHz or equivalent (P266 recommended), 32Mb RAM, Windows 9x, 200Mb hard-disk space, DirectX-compatible sound card, 4X CD-ROM drive.



# Midtown Madness

**Car trouble** in Chicago — and not an AA man in sight.

**I**magine you're in Chicago. You're in the driving seat of a Panoz Roadster and the loud pedal is beckoning for your right foot to stamp it right through the floor. You've got over 65km of roads to blast around at 170mph, and the only thing that can (try to) stop you is the police. This is an outrageous game combining the skill of



within a realistically modelled city environment.

**There are several ways** to play the game. You can either go for a roam, hunting out all the shortcuts, or beat opponents in checkpoint or

circuit races. You can also beat the clock as you blitz down boulevards and back alleys. You can drive one of ten licensed

vehicles, ranging from exotic race cars to city buses to semi trucks. Also, this is the first game to feature the sexy new VW Beetle. As soon as I fired up this beauty, I noticed the incredible attention to detail in every way. The sound effects are brilliant; the graphics are impressive too, but it's the little touches like working indicators that make the difference. All the vehicles handle in different ways, making particular cars more suitable for certain races.

'Addictive' is the word that comes to mind. One for all the rev-heads!

JAMES MARTIN

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £34.99

**Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000

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

**System Specification** Windows 9x/2000, Pentium 200MMX (or 166 with a 3D accelerator), 16Mb RAM (32Mb recommended), 2X CD-ROM (4X recommended), SVGA monitor at 16-bit colour, sound card (MS DirectSound 6.0 compatible recommended), 28.8Kbps or faster modem for multiplayer over internet, steering wheel recommended.



competitive racing, the strategy of urban navigation, the freedom of unrestrained exploration and the thrill of the chase



# X-Wing Alliance

Battle your rivals and **the Empire** in some seriously heavy hardware.

**A**t first, this game feels like you're playing a graphically souped-up version of the original X-Wing. Soon, though, you realise that there's much more to it. Lucas Arts has listened to the criticisms levelled at the previous incarnations and has improved the game tenfold. Back is the plot-driven story line, with you as a member of a trading family caught between the Empire and your rivals. The first few missions serve to get you to become a member of the Rebellion, and it's at this point that the main improvements in the game show through. Missions now allow literally hundreds of ships to fill the screen, giving you the feeling that the Empire really does have a



lot of weight to throw at you. Not only this, but ships such as Star Destroyers are rendered to the correct scale, making them seem as big as they ever did in the films. Control of the ship is the same as it's ever been, mixing keyboard strokes with joystick movements. You soon pick up the main controls, and Lucas Arts provides a quick keyboard guide.

**It's not all good**, though, with some missions being hugely difficult and others containing bugs. One particular mission said that I had failed before anything had happened.

But despite this drawback, X-Wing Alliance is still a game worth playing, and with the final mission letting you fly the Millennium Falcon through the Death Star, it's certainly one for the Star Wars fans.

DAVID LUDLOW

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £34.99

**Contact** Activision 01895 456700  
[www.lucasarts.com](http://www.lucasarts.com)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, DirectX-compatible PC. 200MHz or faster CPU, 32Mb RAM, 2Mb PCI or AGP graphics card, 16-bit sound card or better, 4X CD-ROM.

# TOCA 2 Touring Car

Enough to **drive** you round the bend — and through it.

**T**his game is so real, you feel you need a crash helmet to play it. You'll also need a fast PC, and a 3D graphics accelerator is a must. On an AMD K-6 200MHz with a 12Mb 3Dfx Voodoo II card, I still had to turn down some detail settings to avoid an incredibly jerky start to each race; although admittedly, even on this low setting, the graphics were superb and the action fast. You'll also need a proper steering wheel setup with a foot pedal, as trying to drive a car with a joystick is a frustrating experience, and



the keyboard lacks the varying degrees of control one gets with a steering device. That said, the keyboard is still preferable to a joystick.

**The game itself** recreates every detail of the Touring Car Championship, right down to the names of the drivers and the

choice of cars. You can opt for the full championship season or a single race, choose which car and livery you want, and even tweak the car's mechanical settings, such as gear ratios and brake balance. There are even hidden cars you can drive once you reach a certain score, just to keep you on your toes. This is all set off by excellent sound effects and realistic driving physics.

BARRY DE LA ROSA

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £34.99

**Contact** Codemasters 01926 816044  
[www.toca2.com](http://www.toca2.com)

**System Specification** (minimum) Windows 95/98, Pentium-compatible 200MHz processor, 32Mb RAM, 55Mb hard-disk space, DirectX 6-supported 3D accelerator with 4Mb RAM, 4X CD-ROM, DirectX 6-supported sound card.

# Jimmy White's 2: Cueball

Go out in a **baize of glory** against 'Whirlwind' and his house of games.

## Everyone's favourite loser

is back in this follow-up to Jimmy White's Snooker. JW2 is a much better package, mainly thanks to the inclusion of a few inconsequential but entertaining pieces of visual fluff.

**The main game** sees you arrive at Jimmy's home as a guest, free to explore, enjoy his Cistine-esque ceiling and choose to play either snooker or pool. Both the snooker and pool games are well implemented and feel rather like the real thing. The balls roll like real balls, the players' play like real players, and you even need to chalk your cue between shots. However, a major problem with baize-based simulations is their *raison*



*d'être*. You have to ask why anyone would spend £30 on a PC game that can only be inferior to the real thing. Why not just pop out to the local and roll a few balls for 50p? That caveat aside, JW2 is fun for an hour or two, especially when you get into its little extra bits and pieces. Each room has various simple games to distract you from the table, including

darts and a fruit machine. My personal favourite was a sit-down version of the arcade classic Dropzone, which instantly transported me to those early eighties halcyon days of candyfloss and Pacman. Apiculturists should keep an eye open for the bizarre Bee-cam.

Overall, Jimmy's latest comeback is the gaming equivalent of fast food — great for a quick fix, but likely to give you indigestion (or something like that).

J MARK LYTLE

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £29.99

**Contact** Virgin Interactive  
0171 368 2255 [www.vie.co.uk](http://www.vie.co.uk)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, Pentium 166 (200 recommended), 32Mb RAM, Windows-compatible sound and video cards, 115Mb hard-disk space (170Mb recommended), 4X CD-ROM drive, DirectX 6 or higher.

# Swing

**Ball control** that's fiendishly addictive.

## From the creators of Tetris

comes a new brainteaser that draws upon our addictive natures until we succumb to its charm, never to return. Swing has a simple premise: you have to constantly try to beat your previous high score by matching up horizontal lines of three or more of the same-coloured balls. The weight and balance of the balls has to



be considered, as do more than 20 special balls that can play havoc with any strategy you may feel you've mastered. Simply controlled by three keys, you position your industrial ball dropper over



one of four two-handed scales and let loose the weighted ball. If the increased ball weight

outweighs the other hand of the scale, then the top ball will shoot off a number of places equal to the excess. If this isn't enough, balls that shoot out of the playing field return at the opposite side

initially as weightless dummies and then as bombs. The special balls range from wildcards for completing a two-row, explosives for clearing sections, transformers for selectively changing the colours of surrounding balls, through to even more exotic effects.

**Graphically the game is** beautifully fluid, with an inspired interface that attempts to realise an illusion of industrial mayhem. Equally, the sound is tailored for the mechanical imagery and adds the requisite dramatic effects to your crestfallen feeling as you fail to achieve just that little bit more.

IAN ROBSON

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £29.99 inc VAT

**Contact** PBH Systems 0121 236 2554  
[www.total/videogames.com/pbh/](http://www.total/videogames.com/pbh/)

**System Specification** 486 DX2 66MHz processor (P90 recommended), 8Mb RAM (16Mb recommended), 2X CD-ROM drive (4X recommended), MS-DOS 6.2 or higher, SVGA graphics card, SoundBlaster or 100% compatible sound card, IPX network for multiplayer mode.



# Eye2Eye Britain

A hugely impressive **reference work** that focuses on places of note in the British Isles.

**D**ozens of British cities, towns and villages have been photographed and compiled onto this single CD-ROM. Compressing them sufficiently to fit them in means there's slight pixelation at higher resolutions, but Eye2Eye Britain nonetheless remains a unique reference resource. To put it in perspective, looking at each of the 10,012 images for six seconds before moving onto the next, would take a full 12 hours.

**Eye2Eye** covers over 3,000 places. Even if your own hometown isn't included, there's a fair chance somewhere just down the road will be. It's the ideal tool for the idle motorist: plan your leisure trip before you set off and you'll already have a good idea of what you're going to see. The overall interface is an antique map of the UK mainland, proving this package to

be not only practical but also beautiful. There did, however, seem to be some strange omissions. Although the new town of Basildon is included, historic Chelmsford, county town of Essex, is not. There are no views of locations away from the mainland, so the Channel Islands and Shetland Islands are sadly missing. It does, however, have a good search facility to act as an index. Search by location, or scan the descriptive text that accompanies each photo. Check out 'Henry VIII', for example, to see all the places associated with the man himself, or take one of the set tours, selecting from such varied subjects as 'Royal Connections', 'Film, TV and Press' and 'The Coast'.

NIK RAWLINSON



## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £39.99

**Contact** Eye2Eye Software  
01223 293886 [www.eye2eyesoft.co.uk](http://www.eye2eyesoft.co.uk)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, 75MHz Pentium processor (166MHz recommended), 16Mb RAM (32Mb recommended), 20Mb hard-disk space, 4X CD-ROM drive, SVGA display @ 800 x 600 resolution in High (16-bit) or True (24- or 32-bit) colour, mouse.

# National Geographic Maps

All the maps you missed from previous NG CDs.

**T**here's only one thing missing from the Complete National Geographic on CD-ROM [PCW, August '98]: the foldout maps for which that publication is famous. Something has now been done about that, and the famous yellow magazine has released this eight CD-ROM set, complete with smart black zip-up carrying case, of every foldout map the magazine has produced since it was first published 111 years ago.

The package opens each time with an ad for Hewlett-Packard printers, claiming that it has been optimised for printing its images on HP inkjets. This can be skipped, moving on directly to the main interface, a desk containing a keyboard (linked to the National Geographic web site) and other objects representing the CD contents.

**The CDs can be explored** in a number of ways; searching is the most obvious. Other options include taking a tour, from which we learnt that 12 of the nations of present-day Europe were created between 1990 and 91, and the history of map



to accommodate the rather conservative resources of a lower-specced PC, but fortunately the maps themselves can be enlarged to fill an entire monitor, regardless of size. We found the constant need to swap disks every few minutes irksome, but this in no way detracted from the value of this first-class product.

NIK RAWLINSON

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £59.99

**Contact** The Learning Company 01293 651300 [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98, 486/66 or better processor, 16Mb RAM, 40Mb hard-disk space, SVGA card @ 256 colours, 16-bit sound card, 2X CD ROM.

making. Each presents its subject in an interesting and engaging way.

It's annoying that much of the action takes place in a small window designed

# House Beautiful

**3D interior designer** helps you on the home front.

**I**f you're thinking of redecorating your home, or you've decided that your mint green walls really don't match that candy-floss pink carpet, don't panic. This CD saves you the hassle of the inevitable tramp around furniture stores and trawl through tons of paint colour cards for that elusive glimpse of inspiration.

The program guides you practically through establishing your floor-plan shape, decorating your room, picking furnishings, arranging them and then viewing it all at your leisure. A nice feature is that any of these tasks can be done at any stage of your decoration, and you can save at any point. There's also a comprehensive database for each section. Once you've chosen your floor plan, either from the selection given or you've created your 'real' room shape with the aid of the grid,



you can scroll through the database for a choice of windows, doors and stairs.

**The fun begins** when you start decorating. The program unleashes a database of carpet textures, wallpapers, fabrics, paint colours and accessories that include anything from mirrors to houseplants. The only disappointment

is the paint palette, which is rather limited. There's a range of greens and blues, and I painted my room lilac initially. But when I fancied entering a deep-purple zone, I ended up with deep grey instead. But it's not a major flaw.

Arranging your furniture takes a bit of practice, too. But once done, you can view your creation in glorious 3D and even take a stroll around your computer-home garden.

ALANA JUMAN-BLINCOE

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £35.99

**Contact** IBD (distributor)  
01442 881891 [www.housebeautiful.com](http://www.housebeautiful.com)

**System Specification** Windows 95/98/  
NT 4.0, Pentium, 16Mb RAM, 85Mb  
hard-disk space, 8X CD-ROM, sound card.

# Arc PhotoMontage 1

Your chance to indulge in a little light **photo play**.

**Y**ou must have seen those posters made up from thousands of smaller pictures. With the impending release of the Star Wars prequel, hundreds of the things have infested card shops the length and breadth of the country. Well, now you have the chance to inflict them upon your friends and family, too, using your own photos as both the master collage image and the smaller composite images that link together to make it.

Straight out of the box, PhotoMontage comes with 20,000 high-quality micro images. To use, simply select a photo on your hard drive and hit the Build Montage button. It's as simple



optional extra. Plug in your camcorder or video and this clever little gizmo will capture hundreds of images, saving you the hassle of downloading each from the net or a digital camera.

## PCW DETAILS



**Price** £49.99

**Contact** ArcSoft 00 353 61-702087  
(Republic of Ireland) [www.arcsoft.com](http://www.arcsoft.com)

**System Specification** 486 processor  
(Pentium rec.), Windows 95/98/NT, 24Mb  
RAM, 20Mb hard-disk space, mouse, CD-  
ROM drive, 16- or 24-bit display card rec.

as that. Now, watch and wait as, before your eyes, your rather uninspiring holiday snap is transformed into an impressive collage. But the snap's not quite up to your usual high standards? Not to worry: PhotoMontage includes a range of rudimentary editing tools, such as cropping and colour adjustment.

Adventurous users with a video camera can invest in the Zip Shot as an

**The mischievous user** will enjoy dropping a 'hidden treasure' into their creations — a photo hidden within the general melée that your viewers have to find. You can even scan in your personalised scrawl and have PhotoMontage use it as your signature in the bottom right-hand corner.

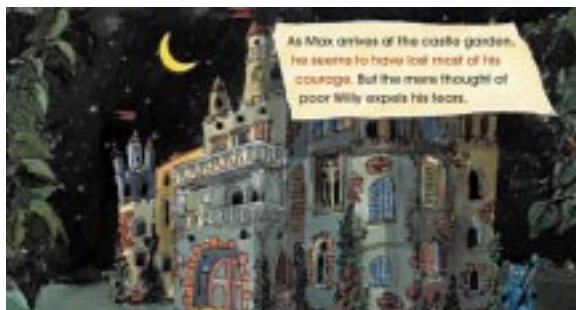
NIK RAWLINSON



# Max and the Haunted Castle

Ghostly goings-on make **learning fun** for Willy and Max.

**W**illy, a little ghost, has lost his ability to fly through walls and doors. He can only retain his ghostly powers by eating twelve small socks — the catch being that they have to be yellow with lots of holes. Our old friend Max is asked to save the day, and agrees to venture up to the haunted castle to bravely search for the much-needed articles.



deodorant in the bathroom, talking statues, a ghostly fashion show, and lots of naughty antics in the schoolroom. There are secret corridors to seek out, and you can even take a ride on a ghost train.

Like many other Tivola products we have seen, Max and the Haunted Castle

has been well thought out and beautifully designed, and is generally faultless. It caters for English, French and German speakers, and you can switch between languages at any time. Intended for three- to seven-year-olds, the CD's narration and highlighted subtitles help to encourage early reading. This, together with a delightful selection of music and delicious graphics, makes Max a must for any young child.

ETELKA CLARK

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £19.99

**Contact** Tivola +49 30 53 31 21 00

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

### System Specification

**PC:** Windows 3.1x and 95, 486 PC with VGA graphics card, sound card, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8Mb RAM.

**Mac:** System 7.1, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8Mb RAM.

# Pingu and Friends

Inside the igloo with Pingu and Crew. It's very cute, too.

**I**f you're a Pingu fan, you'll understand what 'Mwaa Mwaa' means. If you're not, believe me, you're missing out. But don't worry: the BBC has come up with another nice offering for Pingu fans everywhere. Aimed at children aged three to six, this is an interactive version of the TV programme using the same scenes and animation sequences.

From the introductory scene outside Pingu's igloo, you'll find lots of objects to click on to take you to one of ten activities. Each activity represents key educational skills including literacy and language, science, problem solving and recognition of left and right.

Narrated by actress Felicity Kendal, the child is given guidance throughout the program, with simple instructions that are available whenever required. With three



skill levels, the range of abilities among young children is amply catered for.

Within the fun and games, the child has to help Pingu find missing letters, pictures and objects, putting the unscrambled stories back together. The Art Igloo is great, as the child gets to create their own pictures using a variety of templates, or they can print out the join-the-dots puzzles. Accompanied by



Pingalese sounds, each activity is well animated and fun to watch.

**As an educational tool,** Pingu and Friends takes a subtle approach, focusing on enjoyment to mask the chore of learning. The child will feel as if they really are part of Pingu's crew.

HELEN FORTGANG

## PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

**Price** £24.99

**Contact** BBC Multimedia

01483 204450 [www.bbcworldwide.com](http://www.bbcworldwide.com)

**System Specification** Pentium 90, Windows 95/98, 16Mb RAM, 4X CD-ROM, 16-bit colour display, 640 x 480 resolution, compatible sound card.

# Carry on computing

Compaq portables had an inauspicious start — balanced **on the edge** of a toilet seat!

Over the past few months I've been looking at a range of different laptops and portable computers in the hope of finding a new ideal laptop for myself. My search is finally over, and I now have a bright, shiny new Compaq. It's so nice, that it's got me interested in the history of the Compaq portable range.

**Compaq, as everyone knows,** was the first company to produce an IBM compatible that worked in the same way as a real IBM PC. What is not so well known is that the first Compaq computer, and so the first clone, was a portable. Actually, forget portable: it was a luggable that, thanks to its case design, was soon known as the 'sewing machine'. I won't trouble you with the full history of the route from tiny startup with a clone luggable through to vast international company, but the development of the first Compaq portable

makes a good story. When IBM developed

its first personal computer, intended really for small-business users rather than personal home users, the designers were on a tight deadline. Project Acorn (as the PC was originally codenamed) was put together very quickly. The way the designers managed this turn of speed was because they used standard stock components rather than fancy custom-built chips. In fact, the first PC was built with a bunch of components that anyone could order from a local electronics supplier.

The core of the PC — and the Compaq — was the Intel 8088 processor. This 8-bit chip was clocked at 4.77MHz and, thanks to a neat Intel design, needed few extra parts to create a full-blown computer. To make a clone, you only had to figure out the standard wiring between the components, buy a bag of these off-the-shelf chips, and you had a motherboard.

IBM realised from the start that its design would be easy to copy, but it had



▲ **COMPAQ'S FIRST PORTABLE RESEMBLED A SEWING MACHINE BUT WAS A GOOD COMPUTER NONETHELESS**

an ace to catch out any potential clone-makers. If you wired together all the components, you might have produced a hardware-compatible clone, but it wasn't software-compatible. The secret

lay in the BIOS chip that was programmed with the basic instructions and routines that managed

the various parts of the computer. IBM published the entire instruction set and so copyright law immediately protected it.

**Luckily for Compaq,** a company called Phoenix couldn't resist this challenge. It recruited two groups of programmers: the first group knew all about the way the IBM BIOS worked; the second group had never seen the BIOS code. The first group analysed the code

and documented what each routine did (not how it did it) and passed this to the second group. They then wrote code from scratch that carried out the same commands. This sailed through the courts and found Compaq as its first customer.

The first Compaq portable, rather like the Osborne luggable, had a large

case (about the size of a desktop case) that contained the 5.25in floppy

drive, the motherboard and a small mono monitor. The keyboard was hinged on one edge and flipped over to protect the monitor and drive. Compaq added a padded handle and a mains lead to create its first computer. None of the luggables at the time could be run from batteries, which led to a good story from Bob Cringely's great book, *Accidental Empires*, that recounts how this first clone was first shown working in the toilet of a hotel, balanced on the loo. It was the only room that had a mains power point!

In fact, it was rather a good luggable. Not as heavy as other, similar designs,

it had reasonable processing power and, as the key feature, it was IBM

software compatible. Since mimicking the PC so accurately for its first computer, Compaq was then notorious for using incompatible hardware devices in its later machines. At least my current descendant of this first portable is, again, both hardware and software compatible.

SIMON COLLIN

*The first PC was built with a bunch of components from a local electronics supplier*

*Compaq was notorious for using incompatible hardware devices in its later machines*



# Win a copy of McAfee Office!

**M**cAfee is giving PCW readers the chance to win 15 copies of **McAfee Office** worth £69.95 each. McAfee Office combines the award-winning technology of some of the best utilities in the industry,

including VirusScan, Nuts & Bolts 98, Oil Change and 2000 Toolbox. This product demonstrates a revolutionary approach to maintaining and optimising PCs for the desktop in both the corporate and consumer markets.

Previously, users had to purchase and install many different utilities in order to ensure a PC was fully protected, repaired and optimised. By integrating the broadest desktop product line into one solution, McAfee Office provides incredible value while solving all of the most common PC problems.

Features include:

- protection against viruses, hostile ActiveX and Java applets, system and application crashes, and unauthorised access to personal data from the internet;
- diagnostic and repair capabilities for hardware and software;

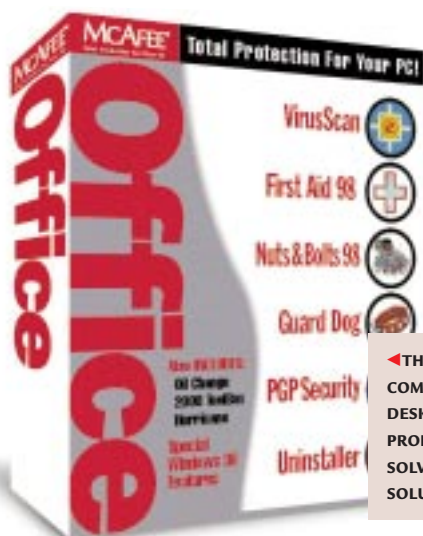
- enhanced system performance through sophisticated memory management techniques, boot and application launch acceleration, disk defragmenting and optimisation;
- removal of unwanted applications and data files for Year 2000 compatibility;
- advanced encryption technology to ensure privacy and security of your critical data;
- emergency boot disk creation for recovery from system failures; and
- Windows registry backup and recovery, and dynamic data file backup and recovery.

➔ **To enter this competition, just answer the following question:**

*Does McAfee Office check for Year 2000 compatibility?*

- A) Yes
- B) No

*See panel below for details of how to enter the competition.*



◀ **THE COMPLETE DESKTOP PROBLEM-SOLVING SOLUTION**

# Win an ATi Rage Fury graphics card!

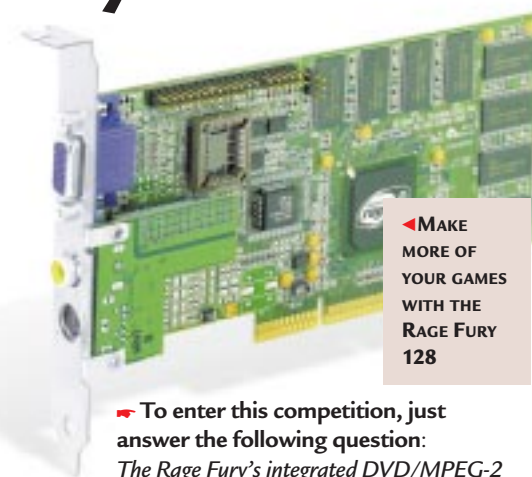
**W**e have seven **ATi Rage Fury graphics cards** up for grabs this month. Worth £149 each, and optimised to improve the performance and visual images of the latest games, the Rage Fury 32Mb TV-out provides one of the largest frame buffers in the industry for the ultimate gaming performance, even at high resolutions.

Equipped with most advanced 3D features used by games developers, the Rage Fury 32Mb TV-out's extensive 3D feature set and powerful 3D engine produce an unparalleled level of detail without sacrificing fast frame-rate performance.

Bringing fully integrated 2D, 3D and DVD acceleration to the

gaming add-in board market, the Rage Fury 32Mb TV-out is the ultimate graphics solution, eliminating the need for dedicated 3D hardware. It also offers full AGP 2X support with software support for Direct3D and OpenGL gaming standards.

The Rage Fury 32Mb TV-out's integrated DVD/MPEG-2 decoder produces full frame-rate DVD/MPEG-2 playback even on lower-end systems such as those powered by the Celeron processor. By integrating a DVD decoder into the chip, users no longer require costly DVD-decoder hardware for DVD/MPEG2 playback.



◀ **MAKE MORE OF YOUR GAMES WITH THE RAGE FURY 128**

➔ **To enter this competition, just answer the following question:**

*The Rage Fury's integrated DVD/MPEG-2 decoder produces full...*

- A) English breakfast
- B) Frame-rate DVD/MPEG-2 playback
- C) Monty

## Rules of entry

These competitions are open to readers of *Personal Computer World*, except for employees (and their families) of VNU Business Publications, McAfee and ATi. 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

Write your name, address and daytime telephone number on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope. Mark your card(s) 'PCW/McAfee Office Comp' or 'PCW/ATi Comp' and send to the following address by Friday 25th June:

Personal Computer World  
Building 960  
Sittingbourne Research Centre  
Sittingbourne  
Kent ME9 8AG

• Please state clearly on your entry if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies.

## books

## The Complete Idiot's Guide to Visual Basic 6

**D**o you shudder with a crushing sense of fear whenever the word 'programming' is mentioned? If you do, but are thinking of dabbling in the murky waters anyway, the Visual Basic language is a good start. Being visual, it's much easier to create the user interface than in any other programming language.

Although harshly titled, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Visual Basic 6* is probably going to give you a head start at creating some fabulous Windows applications.

The author, Clayton Walnum, starts off with an introduction to the art of programming and moves on to describe the

Visual Basic environment, including a detailed explanation of how to install it on your system. Obviously at some point the hardcore

program code has to be explained, and gentle introductions are made to all of the fundamental programming concepts such as loops, data types and variables. Nothing is omitted or skimmed over, so even the most technical aspects of program code are covered very well. By the end of the book you should be able to code some impressive applications to wow your friends.

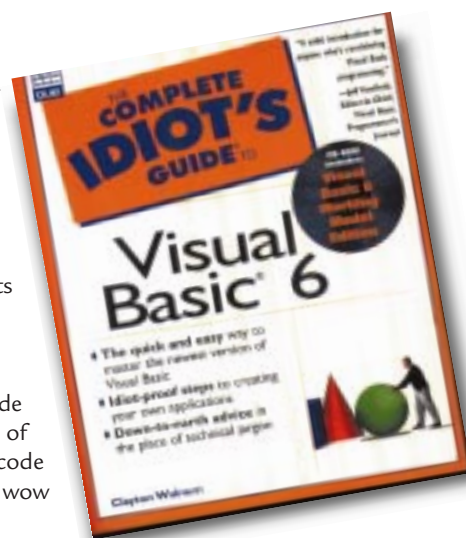
**The text is written** in a lighthearted conversational tone with detailed instructions outlining important tasks. Essentially, you are shown the basics of Visual Basic through friendly, task-orientated examples and a hands-on approach. Interspersed with the text are a multitude of screenshots and programming examples which can be typed-in to let budding new coders flex their programming muscles.

Of course, no *Idiot's Guide* would be complete without the Speak Like A Geek

section, a handy glossary of all the technical terms used throughout the book. The CD-ROM includes a free version of Visual Basic 6, which is a cut-down version of the professional edition that will do everything that you need to complete the programming lessons in the book.

It would be rather a smart move to buy this book. It will give you the knowledge to use Visual Basic to create, test and run programs and distribute your applications.

JAMES MARTIN



### PCW DETAILS



#### THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO VISUAL BASIC 6

**Author** Clayton Walnum

**Publisher** Macmillan Computer Publishing

**ISBN** 0-7897-1812-X

**Price** £15.99

## The Age of Spiritual Machines

**T**he fusion of humans and computers is inevitable, says Ray Kurzweil in his latest collection of technological prophecies. A renowned expert in the field of artificial intelligence, in his first book, *The Age of Intelligent Machines*, he made a number of uncannily accurate predictions, such as the beating of the world chess champion by a computer. In his latest book, he sets out his vision of computer evolution over the next hundred years.

Kurzweil pushes technology to its limits, and provides a timeline of the computer's development from the end of the era of Moore's Law, to what

Kurzweil calls the Law of Accelerated Returns. Here, he postulates that technological development will accelerate throughout

the next century, surpassing that of human intelligence in a little over twenty years' time. These are not the musings of a raving scientist on the trail of the next popular bestseller. Kurzweil has been likened to a modern-day Edison and holds the patents to prove it. His predictions in this volume are credible, being as they are extrapolations of existing scientific facts with a healthy dose of futurism thrown in for good measure.

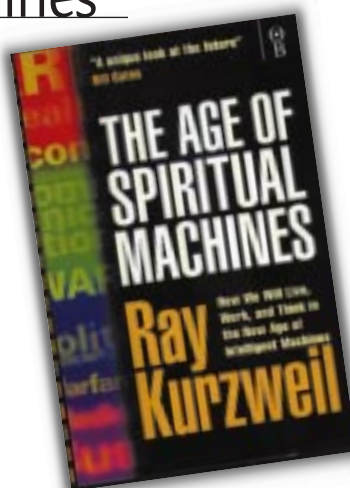
With a lengthy preamble that sets the stage for the later sections of the book, this is an engaging read. Kurzweil neatly segments it into easily digestible portions,

the paradigm shifts that he believes will occur in the next century. He follows the development of the digital computer through its inevitable human-machine symbiosis and into the realms of quantum computing and machine consciousness.

**Not just for the technophile**, this latest volume stands at the crossroads of cutting-edge science. Quantum

computing, picoengineering (engineering at the trillionth of a metre scale), and the final post-human state when consciousness finally transfers to a form that transcends the organic or the digital, are all described in an easily accessible style. This is a fascinating vision, backed up with hard science to provide a unique and credible vision of the future.

DAVID HOWELL



### PCW DETAILS



#### THE AGE OF SPIRITUAL MACHINES

**Author** Ray Kurzweil

**Publisher** Orion Business Books

**ISBN** 0-75282-078-8

**Price** £18.99





# Microsoft SQL Server 7 for Dummies

If there was to be one piece of software that I wasn't expecting the *Dummies* books to cover, then it would be Microsoft's SQL Server. This is a rather more complex application than the standard software covered by these guides; but here we have SQL Server 7 for Dummies. It's fair to say that this book isn't a complete guide to the product, but more of an easy way to get yourself acquainted with what you can achieve.

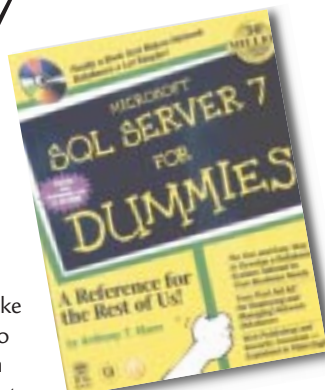
One of the biggest potential nightmare areas of software such as this is the installation itself. The book steps in and helps out here, starting out with a guide to SQL 7 tools and then covering the actual installation procedure itself. This provides you with a way to get a basic working system up and running with as little hassle as possible. Then, you can move on to the bulk of the book which covers the main event — using SQL Server 7. Things start out pretty relaxed, with important terms that you need to understand, such as 'relational databases', explained clearly.

**Everything is illustrated** through examples and screenshots of what you should be seeing on-screen. This allows you to

learn as you work, while the screen-shots simply make it harder to get lost on the way. Later chapters cover the more advanced features of the software, but everything you have already learned doesn't make this a culture shock and you'll soon find yourself performing the tasks described.

**This is a well written** and well thought-out book: a section at the back even contains flowcharts describing the wizards in the application. While it may not provide a total solution, it will get you to the level where those more complex manuals are actually understandable.

DAVID  
LUDLOW



## PCW DETAILS



**MICROSOFT SQL SERVER 7 FOR DUMMIES**

**Author** Anthony T. Mann

**Publisher** Dummies Press

**ISBN** 0-7645-0416-9

**Price** £28.99

# Networking for Windows 98

This book covers networking between Windows 98 based machines. The first few chapters deal with the basics of networking, explaining various topologies, protocols, and hardware such as hubs and switches. You're then introduced to the more physical aspects of networking, namely cable and network card installation. And therein lies the problem: after you've read all of this, the section that covers the actual

configuring of Windows 98 for networking is a paltry 25 pages including a lavish scattering of screenshots.

This problem exists mainly because the basic networking of Windows 98 machines is in itself a fairly simple task. To try and expand this section, they even include, under the 'Managing the Network' section, the WinPopup utility, which simply allows text messages to be sent to another computer and has been around since Windows 3.11. For people who just want to know about connecting Windows 98 machines, though, this book covers the subject in enough detail.

DAVID LUDLOW



## PCW DETAILS



**NETWORKING WITH WINDOWS 98**

**Author** Peter Ingram

**Publisher** Computer Step

**ISBN** 1-84078-038-X

**Price** £8.99

TOP

10

books

- 1 **Business @ the Speed of Thought**  
Penguin  
£18.99
- 2 **The Internet: The Rough Guide 1999**  
Rough Guides  
£5.99
- 3 **Open Sources: Voices from the Open Source Revolution**  
O'Reilly  
£16.50
- 4 **VB & VBA in a Nutshell**  
O'Reilly  
£15.95
- 5 **Web Design in a Nutshell**  
O'Reilly  
£15.95
- 6 **Perl in a Nutshell**  
O'Reilly  
£15.95
- 7 **Javascript: The Definitive Reference, 3rd Edition**  
O'Reilly  
£26.50
- 8 **Flash 3 Creative Web Animation**  
Macromedia Press  
£22.99
- 9 **Java in a Nutshell, 2nd Edition**  
O'Reilly  
£15.95
- 10 **Unified Modelling Language User Guide**  
Addison-Wesley  
£35.99

Prices include VAT on disks and CD-ROMs. List supplied by The PC Bookshop, 21 Sicilian Avenue, London WC1A 2QH. Telephone: 0171 831 0022 Fax: 0171 831 0443

# brainteasers

## ■ Quickie

Fred is carrying a bag full of potatoes. Paul, who is bigger, has to carry three bags. That's all that the two boys are carrying, yet Fred's load is 25 times heavier than Paul's. All the bags are the same size, so how can this be?

## ■ This Month's Prize Puzzle

Not too difficult this time. On a recent shopping trip, Anne bought several identical reels of cotton and Betty similarly bought several identical balls of wool. Neither lady bought anything else, and each bought as many items as the price of a single item in pence.

The product of the total number of items bought between them, and the total amount of money they spent in

pence, exceeded by 1,768 the product of the difference between the numbers of items they bought, and the difference in money they spent in pence.

Since no item bought cost more than £100, how many items did each lady buy?

Answers on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope, to:

PCW Prize Puzzle - July 1999

P.O. Box 99

Harrogate

N. Yorks

HG2 0XJ

to arrive not later than 20th July 1999.

We also accept solutions by email.

Send the solution and your name and address only (no explanatory notes or program listings, etc) to

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

## ■ Winner of April 1999 Prize Puzzle

This was quite a difficult problem — not requiring any significant mathematics, but requiring a good control of file handling and data manipulation.

Of the 63 entrants, only 24 had the correct answer of 696,457. And of these 24, the winning entry, selected at random, came from an email submission (there were 44 email entries in all) sent by Mr Stephen Glover of Colchester. Congratulations, Stephen, your prize is on its way. To all the others, keep trying — you could be next month's winner.

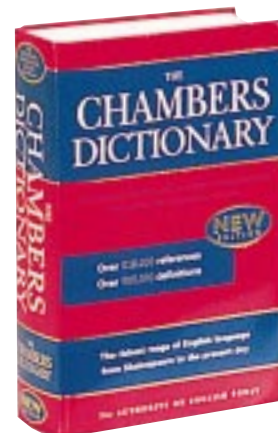
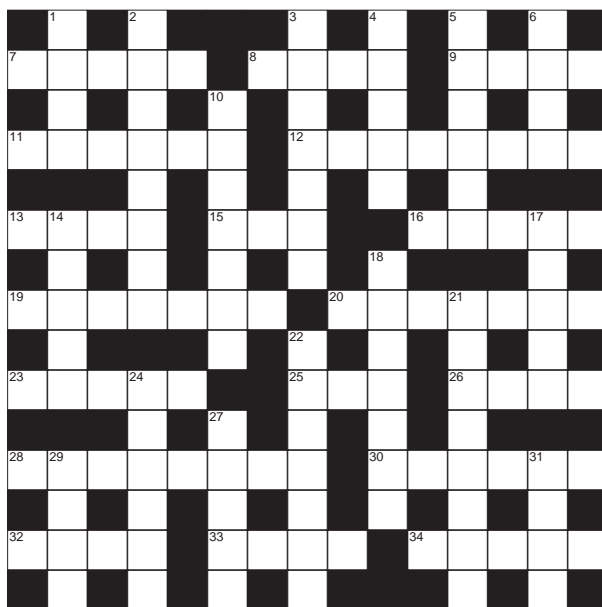
JJ CLESSA

Two books of Clessa's Quizzes, the Red Book and the Blue Book, are now available at a specially reduced price of £2.25 each. Contact JJ at the usual Prize Puzzle address for payment and delivery details. DO NOT SEND CASH.

# prize crossword

Each month, one lucky PCW Crossword entrant wins a copy of the new *Chambers Dictionary*. This time, it could be you. Send your completed crossword to 'PCW July Prize Crossword', VNU House, 32-34 Broadwick Street, London W1A 2HG, to arrive not later than 25th June, 1999.

• Please state clearly on your entry if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies.



## Solutions to June's crossword

### ACROSS

7 Exported 9 Output 10 Tape 11 Encrypted  
12 ASCII 14 Pirates 18 Cookies 19 Fortran  
22 Traffic 24 Modem 26 Sound card  
28 Drag 29 Access 30 Machines

### DOWN

1 Expansion 2 Home 3 Otter 4 Gory 5 Statue  
6 Sued 8 Deceit 13 Ink 15 Atom 16 Leaf  
17 Pacemaker 20 Too 21 Disarm 23 Routes  
25 Edict 26 Sick 27 Desk 28 Drip

### ACROSS

7 Uses a flatbed, perhaps (5)  
8 Unit of integrated circuits, commonly (4)  
9 (Of a file) currently being modified (4)  
11 General term for a printer, modem and so on (6)  
12 Not capable of being written over (4-4)  
13 Site's first page usually (4)  
15 Protocol for email message storage (3)

### DOWN

16 Instruction replaced by a sequence of other instructions (5)  
19 Frequency of screen regeneration (7)  
20 Like data that's damaged or unusable (7)  
23 Fundamental language? (5)  
25 Old colour screen standard (3)  
26 Set of particular letters, numbers and symbols (4)  
28 Your machine! (4)

### DOWN

30 Blinking indicator (6)  
32 \_\_\_\_width determines the volume and speed of digital traffic (4)  
33 Put an application or file onto a system (4)  
34 Billionaire Bill (5)

### DOWN

6 Narrate (4)  
10 Storm (7)  
14 Musical drama (5)  
17 Become mature (5)  
18 Love story (7)  
21 Act of passing on to another (8)  
22 Give too much cash to (7)  
24 Obstruct (6)  
27 Stem (5)  
29 Egg shape (4)  
31 Finished (4)