

leisure lines

Soul long, suckers

Crystal Dynamics released its flagship title **Legacy of Cain: Soul Reaver** in late August, a gothic 3D action affair. You play Raziel, a creature who roams the world absorbing the souls of the victims that he kills. Beginning without any weapons and few skills, you roam the open environment, using objects that you find and learning skills from the people you meet to complete the game. Crystal Dynamics is especially proud of its 'Predator AI', which allows enemies to learn your moves and hunt you down.

If you have ever fancied being a true swashbuckler, check out **Cutthroats**, a pirate strategy from Hothouse Creations. As the commander of a pirate ship, you must work your way up from a small trading vessel to a galleon, by stealing cargo from innocent ships and raiding Spanish towns. Check out www.eidosinteractive.com for more on both titles.

Sold Out tries to increase its budget market presence with the introduction of



▲ THE WEST GETS WILD IN THE TIE-IN GAME TO THE WILL SMITH MOVIE

its Extreme range, re-releasing older games for only £9.99. Launched on the ninth day of the ninth month of 1999 (when else?), the initial titles are **Dark Colony**, **Special Ops**, **Three Lions** and **Archipelagos**.

SouthPeak Interactive is hoping that all the hype surrounding the Will Smith film **Wild, Wild West** (above) will rub off on its tie-in game. The developer and publisher is claiming that the game will combine the 'irreverent humour of the movie with adventure puzzle-solving and twitch action'. Check out:

www.southpeak.com for more details.

A game of conquerers

After what seems like an eternity of waiting, the Command & Conquer saga is set to continue. Command & Conquer was, and still is



to many die-hard advocates, the definitive real-time strategy game. Tiberian Sun sees

the continuing struggle between the GDI or Global Defence Initiative (the good guys) and the Brotherhood of Nod (the bad guys).

Due for release on the 26th of August, Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun will undoubtedly be one of the biggest games of 1999. If the initial sales of Red Alert (the last C&C title) are anything to go by, you should probably reserve your copy early.

With almost all the big PC releases looking like first person shooter clones, it's good to see something different on the horizon. Don't forget, the Global Defence Initiative needs your help to defeat the evil Kane.

www.tiberiansun.com

◀ STRAP ON YOUR GOGGLES AND SEEK OUT YOUR ENEMY

Top 10 products Last month

Windows software

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------------|----|
| 1 | Office 2000 Premium ug | Microsoft | - |
| 2 | Norton Anti-Virus v5 std | Symantec | 5 |
| 3 | MSWorks v4.5 | Microsoft | 8 |
| 4 | Office Pro 2000 CD/ug | Microsoft | - |
| 5 | MSOffice Pro 97+books ug | Microsoft | 4 |
| 6 | WINDOWS 98 CD/ug | Microsoft | 6 |
| 7 | MSOffice 97 std v/comp | Microsoft | 7 |
| 8 | Windows 98 v2.0 ug | Microsoft | - |
| 9 | Uscan v4 classic | Net_associ | 10 |
| 10 | McAfee Office | Net_associ | - |

DOS software

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | Turbo Pascal v7/DOS edu. | Borland | 1 |
| 2 | MS DOS v6.22 ug | Microsoft | - |
| 3 | PC DOS 2000 v1CD | IBM | 2 |
| 4 | Novell 3.12-4.2 5-user ug | Novell | - |
| 5 | Laplink v5 Ttraveling | 3 | - |
| 6 | Netware 3.2 5-user ug | Novell | - |
| 7 | Netware 3.2 5-user | Novell | - |
| 8 | Novell Sup Conn Monthly CD | Novell | - |
| 9 | MS Mail PC Remote 3.2 | Microsoft | - |
| 10 | Groupwise ug 5.5 5-user | Novell | - |

Peripherals

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---------|----|
| 1 | 32Mb 8x32 60ns EDO 72pin | GSI | 4 |
| 2 | 16Mb 4x32 60ns EDO 72pin | GSI | 2 |
| 3 | Delta 44X Int EIDE CDROM | ? | - |
| 4 | 64Mb 100MHz SDRAM | GSI | 7 |
| 5 | Stylus Photo Color 750 | Epson | 6 |
| 6 | Stylus Color 640 1440dpi | Epson | 9 |
| 7 | Stylus Color 740 | Epson | - |
| 8 | 32Mb 168pin SDRAM mod ug | GSI | - |
| 9 | HP De skjet 420 colour | Hewlett | - |
| 10 | 128Mb 100MHz SDRAM | GSI | 10 |

CD-ROMS

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | Star Wars: Ep 1 Insiders Guide | LucasArt | 1 |
| 2 | Dance EJ2 | Fast Trak | - |
| 3 | Music Makers Three | Magics | - |
| 4 | Music Studio | Magics | - |
| 5 | Simpsons Virtual Springfield | Fox Interact | - |
| 6 | South Park Screen Saver | Telstar | 4 |
| 7 | Simpsons Cartoon Studio | Fox Interact | - |
| 8 | Austin Powers | Cendent | - |
| 9 | X-Files Interactive Guide | Fox Interact | - |
| 10 | Dance EJ2 Sample Kit | Fast Trak | - |

Games

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------|----|
| 1 | Kingpin | Activision | 2 |
| 2 | Hidden and Dangerous | Take 2 | 4 |
| 3 | Alien vs Predator | Elect.Arts | 1 |
| 4 | Half Life: Game of the Year | Take 2 | - |
| 5 | Championship Manager Three | Eidos | 6 |
| 6 | Rainbow Six: Gold Edition | Take 2 | 10 |
| 7 | Dungeon Keeper Two | Elect.Arts | 3 |
| 8 | Flyl | Elect.Arts | - |
| 9 | Phantom Menace: Ep 1 | LucasArt | - |
| 10 | Star Wars: Ep 1 Insiders Guide | LucasArt | - |

Games and CD-ROM figures supplied by HMV. Others from Software Warehouse.

Kingpin: Life of Crime

Turning to crime can help you get your revenge in this **X-rated** and darkly atmospheric thriller.

Kingpin carries a BBFC age certificate claiming to be suitable for over 18s only. The reason for this is threefold: the subject matter, the on-screen violence and the explicit language.

It's easy to think of Kingpin as just another first-person shooter, but it has something that's woefully absent from so many games in this genre – a plot. Anyone who watched and enjoyed the Mel Gibson movie *Payback* will love this game. Like Gibson, you find yourself lying on the floor in a very bad way, with only one thing on your mind – revenge.

You begin the game in a seedy back-



alley with only a handy lead pipe for a weapon. Your first major problem is finding yourself a gun, but this isn't as simple as it sounds. The local pawnshop is more than willing to supply you with a pistol, but you'll have to rob a warehouse in order to pay for it.

The visuals can't be described as ground-breaking, but the rundown and decayed city streets set the scene

perfectly. You'll encounter a multitude of shady characters, each one looking like an extra from *The Crow*. Sound is also first rate, with very effective directional effects making it easy to tell if someone is around the next corner.

3D support is OpenGL only, so make sure your card supports it before you buy. Of course there's a multi-player death-match option, but Kingpin comes into its own as a single player game.

RIYAD EMERAN

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £39.99

Contact Interplay 0171 551 0000 (Virgin)

www.urbangangsta.com

System Specification Pentium 233, Windows 95/98/NT, 64MB RAM, 570MB Hard Disk, 4x CD-ROM, DirectX-compatible soundcard, OpenGL-compliant 3D accelerator

Outcast

Life's tough enough as a **Navy SEAL**, without finding yourself stuck in a parallel world.



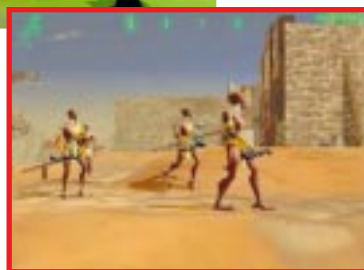
Waking up in the parallel world of Adelpha with a splitting headache is nobody's idea of a good start to the day, unless of course you are a US Navy SEAL by the name of Cutter Slade.

Outcast is spread out over six different geographical regions, all of which are immense, interspersed with villages, towns, lakes and the like.

Essentially an action/adventure, Outcast lets you choose between a first and third-person perspective. You have the dual mission of helping out a local tribe and finding the probe that sent you there in the first place.

The programmers have unusually chosen to forgo the 3D graphics cards so loved by most PC games today.

Instead, they've plumped for a relatively unused procedural technology known as voxels. So you don't need a



powerful 3D card, but you do need a powerful processor – a Pentium III ideally – and lots of memory.

As well as traipsing around the lush scenery, the game involves lots of talking to the locals. It's a little tricky to remember their names as they use a daft, incomprehensible language, but it proves to be time-consuming and enthralling in equal measures. Outcast is unlikely to fade quickly, with its large variety of weapons and gadgets, and the chance to ride the kangaroo-like wildlife through six different worlds.

JIM HARYOTT

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £40

Contact Infogrames 0161 827 8000

www.outcast-game.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, Pentium 200MHz processor (PII 300MHz recommended), 32MB of memory, (64MB recommended), 500MB of free hard disk space, quad-speed CD-ROM drive, (8-speed recommended), 1MB graphics card, (2MB card recommended), soundcard

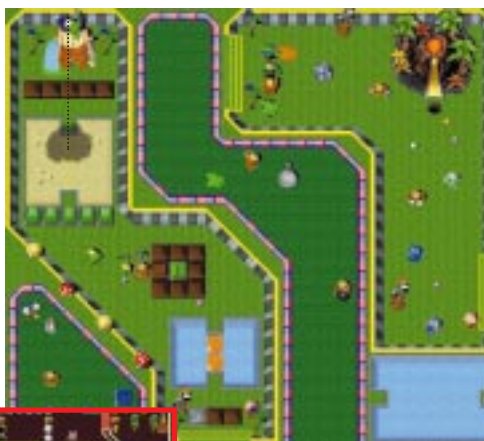
Gruntz

Well I never... Lemmings with a sense of survival! A deceptively simple and seductive game.

The intro movie for Gruntz started recollections of the gross character *Fungus the Bogeyman*, who terrorised the kids years ago, but once the game gets going those fears are quickly dispelled. The child-like creatures of the title are in fact incredibly cute, with any offensive noises passed off as endearing mischief.

The excitement begins after curiosity gets the better of the Gruntz and they are whisked away through a twisting worm-hole into an unknown land. Thus begins their long, perilous journey home, with your help as their leader, tackling devilishly tricky puzzles and mischievous enemies on the way.

Played from God's perspective, the eight themed worlds scroll across the screen as you begin locating and



assembling eight magical Warp Stones. At your disposal are over 60 unique tools, toys, power-ups, secret items and spells to help you navigate through the puzzles and

defeat unwary enemies. In a sticky situation, you could either grab a big club and act offensive or try and

distract the enemy with a shiny yo-yo.

As well as the single-player quest mode there's the opportunity to battle your tribe of Gruntz against up to four players over the Internet or LAN in the multi-player battle mode. Family appeal is heightened through a simple learning curve to the game's schematics with an option to advance the basics for adults.

Although not the most stunning game graphically, it has long term appeal through sheer game play alone.

IAN ROBSON

PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £19.99 inc VAT

Contact Codemasters 01926 814132

www.gruntz.com

System Specification Pentium 133 or equivalent, 32MB RAM, 2MB SVGA video card 100MB free hard-disk space, 4x CD-ROM, Windows 95/98

Lego Racers

Fancy a day at the races? How about kit car racing fun with knobs on – Lego style!

To put it bluntly, Lego Media International's latest game is the Lego version of MarioKarts. You select from a group of cute characters (our favourite being Joan OfKart) and choose from a number of themed wacky courses.

The game is based on Lego's popular themes of Pirates, Castles, Space and Adventurers. There are a number of racing options, the main competition being the circuit races where the Rocket Racer challenges players to defeat all the greatest Lego Racing champions of the Lego Systems.

Lego Racer's most attractive feature, which we know kids and adults alike will



love, is that players can build their own cars and customise drivers by selecting pieces in the Lego garage. Car handling is user friendly and

game movement is impressively smooth, with multiple-view perspectives and

accelerated 3D graphics.

Experienced racing game drivers won't find it hard to conquer this game within their first few attempts, although to be fair, the target Lego Racers

audience is aged six and above, and a large proportion of all current Lego fans are under 10. But you don't need to be a Lego enthusiast to enjoy this game.

Lego Racers does succeed along with most other racing games in that it can become extremely addictive and a lot of fun. For a great laugh we'd recommend the two-player mode to pit your driving wits against your friends.

MATTHEW HOWARD

PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £34.99 inc VAT

Contact Lego Media International 0181 600 7200

www.lego.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, 210MB(Hard Disc), 4MB Direct 3D video card (8MB recommended), High Colour resolution 16-bit (640x180 minimum), Direct sound card, P166 MMX (P200 MMX recommended)

Alien versus Predator

Blood and butchery are the bangs for your bucks – **if it moves shoot it**, chop it or tear it apart.

It's a good job we've had a few years to get used to violence and blood in PC games, judging by this gory offering from Fox Interactive.

Alien versus Predator is a fast-paced

gruesome shoot-em-up in which you play an Alien, a Predator or a Colonial Marine in three entirely different landscapes. There are 17 missions in total, six

for the Marine and Predator, and five for the Alien. But in order to tap into the bonus levels and weapons you must complete each one on all three difficulty levels – no mean feat.



Each character has its own strengths and weaknesses. The Predator can make himself

almost entirely invisible, and has a fearsome array of weaponry. As a Marine you are the weakest but you have the biggest arsenal to choose from, and you also have a tracking device, telling you if

any unsavoury beast is in your vicinity.

The Alien has only his jaw, tail, and what pass for hands – but it can clamber over any surface and cling to the ceiling.

With sensational graphics, plus blood, limbs and gunge aplenty, Alien versus Predator is not for the squeamish. But in the form of first-person shooters, it's top of the class.

JIM HARYOTT

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £40

Contact Fox Interactive (through Electronic Arts) 01753 549442
www.foxinteractive.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, Pentium 200MHz processor (Pentium II 400MHz recommended), 32MB of memory (128MB recommended), 200MB of free hard disk space (400MB recommended), quad-speed CD-ROM drive (24-speed recommended), DirectX compatible sound and 3D graphics cards

Amerzone: Explorer's Legacy

Jungle fever on a giant scale with this **fun-packed frolic** from France.

The Amerzone was originally a cartoon series designed by French writer and graphic artist Benoît Sokal. Now it has been re-shaped into an interactive PC adventure game boasting some outstanding graphics and a surreal plot.

Amerzone is a 3D-adventure game, much like the classic Myst and Riven titles. However, this whopper has four CDs' worth of hazardous peril – enough to make even Indiana Jones jealous. Written by French developers Microids, it upholds that country's tradition of producing incomprehensible games.

Your quest takes place in an imaginary country lost in the depths of South America and ruled by a power-crazy dictator. The storyline revolves



around the legend that God created the 'White Birds' in order to give the Indian race eternal life. Since a sorcerer stole the eggs, though, a malediction has hit the Amerzone. You play a journalist who is the only one able to save the country from chaos. Armed with just your rucksack and journalistic endeavour, you have been sent to investigate the political

and ecological goings on in the Amerzonian jungle.

The interface is very simple, to appeal to the less hardened adventure gamers, but the game is peppered full of taxing puzzles. If you don't like having to switch CDs, then take comfort from the knowledge that a DVD version is promised for October.

LUKE PETERS

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £34.99

Contact Codemasters 01926 814132
www.amerzone.com

System Specification Windows 95/98, Pentium 166MHz processor (Pentium 200MHz recommended), 32MB of memory (64 MB recommended), 100MB of free hard-disk space, 8-speed CD-ROM drive, 2MB graphics card (4MB recommended), Soundblaster compatible soundcard

Baldur's Gate

So, you've got a **weekend to kill** and no friends. How about a relaxing trip to the Sword Coast.

Baldur's Gate is a sprawling game of heroes and magic, based on the original Advanced Dungeons and Dragons rules and boasting five CDs full of beautifully rendered graphics. The Tales of the Sword Coast is only one CD, but it has subtle enhancements that Interplay added at the request of fans, as well as new areas to explore.

You start by choosing what type of character you want to play: fighter, wizard or thief, or a number of combinations. You take the role of a young adventurer, cast out from your home and forced to wander the Sword Coast. Your mission is to find out what makes you special and why people seem to be trying to kill you. As well as these assassins, there are plenty of monsters



and rogues that are out to get you.

But the game is not just about hacking and slashing: there are allies along the road who may join you (and you'll need their help!) As you wander you will hear gossip and rumours, and these are recorded in your personal journal, which serves as a handy reference. Complete a mission and there

could be rewards of gold or magic items.

Those familiar with the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons rules will have a head start, but it is not essential. These rules have been modified to allow the players to concentrate on the role-playing aspect of the game. With Baldur's Gate, the computer does all the dice-rolling, while you just enjoy making the right decisions.

BARRY DE LA ROSA

PCW DETAILS



Price £39.99 (*Baldur's Gate*), £19.99 (*Tales of the Sword Coast*)

Manufacturer Interplay 0171 551 4266
www.interplay.com

System Requirements Pentium 166MHz or equivalent, Windows 95 and DirectX 5 or better, 16MB RAM, 300Mb Hard Disk space, 4X CD-ROM, 2MB video card

Byzantine – The Betrayal

Investigating this box of **Turkish delights** may leave you drooling over your next holiday.

A summons from a friend finds you in a modern day Istanbul, as an investigative journalist. After being questioned by the police, you're left in your absent friend's apartment. You have in your inventory just a few items, to which you must search out and add other objects along your quest. Following the trail of your friend's prophetic words, your mission is to uncover the truth behind the legacy of a lost civilisation. To fail is to perish.

Each scene you find yourself in, you must explore – looking for clues and objects left for you. The things you



acquire may get you out of difficult situations. By examining your objects, you'll find you can progress through the game, while a map guides you each time you leave a scene. New places to visit appear as you advance on your quest.

As part of the interactive adventure, you can converse with some of the characters you encounter, or eavesdrop on their conversations, while real-video sequences treat you to a tourist's eye-view of the city. However, although you get 360-degree vision, your directional movement is limited.

The game is not hugely challenging,



but it is enjoyable, and gives a great taste of Turkey if you're interested in going. The country's history and culture appear to have been well researched for this action-adventure, where you must trust no one and suspect everyone.

HELEN FORTGANG

PCW DETAILS



Price £29.99

Contact Marshall Media 0171 291 8222
www.marshallmedia.com

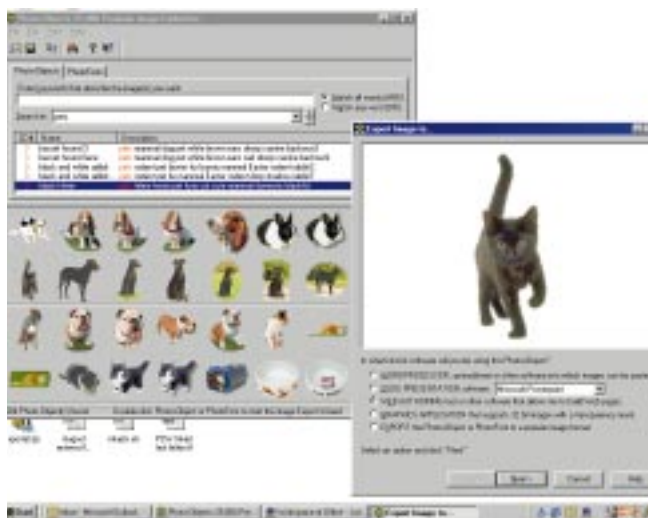
System Requirements Windows 95/98; Pentium Processor 90+; 16MB of RAM; Windows compatible sound card; video/audio card; 2MB of video RAM

Hemera Photo Objects

Worried about your image? This library of 25,000 alternatives lets you illustrate your best points.

If you need to make a snazzy website, document or PowerPoint presentation you could find yourself running around town with a digital camera, madly trying to source original material to illustrate it.

Or you could let someone else do the hard work for you and use a few of the images from this mammoth collection of 25,000 professionally taken and archived photos. Subjects range from chocolate biscuits (a personal favourite) to cats, and from love to traffic signs. Once you've selected your



photo, the program will lead you step-by-step through a simple optimisation process, asking you what sort of application you'll be using, and letting you set attributes such as image size and whether or not it has a transparent

background. The image will then be grabbed from one of the CD ROMs and dropped onto the drive of your choice.

Photo Objects' second function is to make your text more visually pleasing by applying images to otherwise bland standard characters. The images replace the uniform colour, making them suitable for use as a banner across the top of a web page. Changing the image is a simple matter of clicking on a new icon, and your own images can easily be imported and incorporated.

NIK RAWLINSON

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

Price £49.99

Contact Hemera 0171 372 9733

www.hemera.com

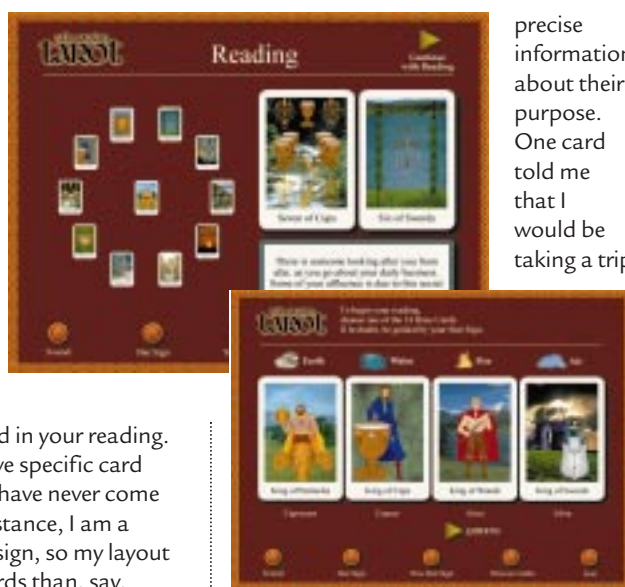
System requirements IBM-compatible 486 PC, 8MB RAM, Windows 95 / 98 or NT4, 15MB hard drive space, 256-colour VGA display

Fifth Realm Tarot

Your future could be on the cards if you try out this tarot-reading software.

Like other tarot software, Fifth Realm provides you with interactive card readings. You are asked to choose the card that corresponds with your star sign and are given a card layout. You then use the cursor to pick the cards you want to have included in your reading. Certain star signs have specific card layouts, something I have never come across before. For instance, I am a Capricorn, an Earth sign, so my layout included far more cards than, say, Aquarius, an Air sign. No explanation was provided for this.

One by one the cards are turned over, but unlike a traditional tarot reading, the meanings of the particular icons are not read to you. Instead you are given very



precise information about their purpose. One card told me that I would be taking a trip

information for each of the 12 signs on personality, love and partners, career and characteristics. Another section called True Star Signs, raises the question as to whether your present sign is actually your real one. By filling in details such as your birth date and time, the computer works out your true sign and also tells you the day of the week you were born.

Unfortunately, as good as this software is, I couldn't help feeling I'd rather have visited a genuine tarot reader.

ETELKA CLARK

to Florida. One wonders how a card could possibly interpret such a thing, and via a computer!

Other sections in this software include horoscopes. There is

PCW DETAILS

★★

Price £19.99

Contact Attica Interactive 01865 791346

www.attica.com

System Requirements Win 95/98, P90, 16 MB RAM, 4MB hard disk space, 16-bit soundcard

All about me

If you want your kids making **Identikit images** of Mum and Dad, this is the perfect package.

All About Me is the perfect interactive scrap book for children to keep information concerning everything personal to them.

Aimed at ages five to eight, the software includes a secret diary and sections to fill in about the family, school and hobbies, friends and pets. In each section the child can create pictures that resemble friends or family members and can keep a record of stories or personal feelings concerning these people.

There are added sections within the main headings. Here children can input details about when they were born, what their first words were, how old they were when they learnt to ride a bike or tie their shoe-laces and what they would like to do when they grow up. Although bright



and colourful, the categories of careers to choose from were limited. They included being a musician, a fire fighter and a ballet dancer. Yet there are many kids who want to be a footballer, bus driver or scientist, but there was no option for them to input this if they wanted to.

It is evident that a lot of thought and

effort has been put into this software to ensure the maximum educational benefit for the child.

This package is very clear and simple for children to use unaided. It would certainly help to develop writing skills, self-expression and encourage creativity while providing the child with a 'secret' record they can call their own.

A brilliant idea that is bound to be a big hit with the children.

ETELKA CLARK

PCW DETAILS



Price: £19.99

Contact: Dorling Kindersley
0870 010 0350 www.dk.com

System Requirements: Win 95/98,
486/33MHz, 10MB hard disk space,
8-bit soundcard

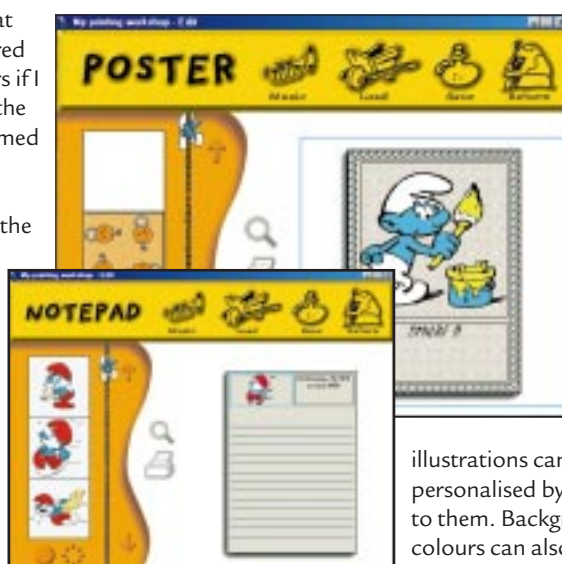


The Smurfs Printing Workshop

Smurf's up! And they're running amok over your stationary and inside your PC.

I would need at least a hundred toes and fingers if I were to count the amount of themed printing workshops we have seen over the last year or so. I'm afraid to say that The Smurfs isn't much different from the others.

The templates that children can work from are basic, consisting of sections for greeting cards, invitations, posters, certificates, postcards and notepaper. Each of these activities can be printed either horizontally or vertically.



Once a template is selected, children can choose from a range of Smurf pictures to decorate their stationery with. The bold and colourful

illustrations can be personalised by adding text to them. Background colours can also be altered, although when I attempted

this the colours I chose didn't seem to correspond with the colours appearing on my activity. I clicked on pink and the background turned grey. Green turned to blue and orange turned yellow.

This package also includes a 'CustomSmurfer' feature, which allows children to customise the Windows 95 environment. They can change screen savers, the cursor shape, icons, fonts and add background wallpaper. This however, may require adult supervision!

Including the Smurfs as part of this package will certainly appeal to a young audience. But without the little blue fellas there would be little to tell it apart from other printing software. Still, for a tenner you can't go wrong.

ETELKA CLARK

PCW DETAILS



Price £9.99

Contact Eurompress - 01625 855000
www.eurompress.co.uk

System Requirements Win 3.1 or
95, 486SX25 or higher, 8MB RAM,
25MB hard disk space.