

Acorn Customer Services Newsletter

*Issue 18
July 1993*

Editorial

Welcome to CS News Issue 18, This month's disc contains a large amount of information in the form of application notes produced over many years and covering all Acorn products,

Please feel free to distribute the text and diagrams, We hope you will find them of use,



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Acorns

Acorn Information

Programmers Reference Manual Upgrades

Acorn Computers has released the latest version of its Programmers' Reference Manual containing all the information required to exploit the features of RISC OS 3, The manual has been totally restructured to take account of the differences between programming for RISC OS 2 and RISC OS 3 and is now in excess of 3,000 pages long - almost double the size of the original PRM,

Upgrades for existing owners of the RISC OS 2 PRM are available for £59, plus £4 postage and packing, from Vector Services Ltd., 13 Dennington Road, Wellingborough, Northants, NN8 2RL, Cheques should be made payable to "Acorn Direct" and the index front cover of the old manual only should be sent as proof of ownership of the RISC OS 2 version,

Onward product shipment

There have been a number of instances recently where our products have been damaged in the post, particularly the Programmers' Reference Manuals,

Dealers are reminded that our standard product packaging is not intended for direct mailing to Customers and we recommend that, if onward shipments are not palletised, the product is protected by extra packaging during transit,

A4 LCD connector cables

There has been a higher than average incidence of LCD screen to motherboard connector failure during the first year of manufacture, This is attributed to an abnormally low MTBF of the components used. The serial numbers affected are in the range:

From S/N	01-AKB62-1010001
to	01-AKB62-1010076
From S/N	01-AKB64-1010001
to	01-AKB64-1012275
From S/N	92-AKB64-1010001
to	92-AKB64-1010443

We are honouring Acorn's quality commitment: In the event that an A4 within the above serial number range develops a fault in the screen connector, Acorn will repair the computer free of charge whether in or out of warranty, Dealers should apply for a Warranty Return Authorisation in the normal way.

Acorn Glossary of Terms

We are aware that Dealers are confused by many abbreviations used within Acorn; below is a list of definitions which I hope you will find of use: DoA - *Dead on Arrival*

Description of a product supplied by Acorn which goes wrong within 28 days of sale to the end customer, Also see GRA,

FCO - *Field Change Order*

A document describing a change to a product which Acorn has released, Authorised service personnel can perform the agreed repair,

GRA - *Goods Returns Authorisation*

An authorisation by Acorn to return a DoA product for replacement, Applicable to direct dealers only,

WRA - *Warranty Returns Authorisation*

An authorisation by Acorn to return faulty product for repair within the warranty period but out of the 28 day DoA period, Applicable to all dealers, Please refer to CS News Issue 16 for full details.

RISC OS - *Reduced Instruction Set Computer Operating System,*

The operating system which Acorn currently supplies within its ARM chip based product range,

ARM - *Advanced RISC Machines* is the company who designs the ARM RISC Chip set.

Acorn Information

CS News Disc Issue 18

This month's Customer Service News Disc contains a large number of application notes and also the FCO's which have been issued since CS News Disc issue 14. The disc also includes an index for the FCO's issued on disc 14 and on disc 18 plus an index of the released application notes. Some numbers in the application note list may be missing from the disc either because they are no longer relevant or have been superceded by a newer application note. All the application notes on the CS News disc are compressed and the utility !SparkPlug is supplied on the disc to decompress them.

All the application notes are in Edit and Draw format. Some of the Draw files require RISC OS 3 to

be viewed and printed correctly.

New application notes will be placed on the Acorn Technical Support Bulletin Board (0223 254242) as they become available.

What do you want to see?

To enable Acorn to provide support for the areas that our Customers require most help, we would value any ideas you can put forward for application notes and also the information you would like to see printed in the Customer Services Newsletter.

The more ideas you give us the more information we will endeavour to provide!

Technical Information

MEMC1a or no MEMC1a.

The following short command can be used on a machine to find out if MEMC 1 a is fitted to the system,

```
PRINT ?274 AND 1
```

If the result is 1 then a MEMC1a is fitted,

1st Word Plus 'Window Definition' problem.

It would appear that the CMOS RAM within the Archimedes range can get into a state which will stop 1st Word Plus from starting correctly. The problem is shown by 1st Word Plus issuing the message "Window Definition will not fit". If this occurs a Power-On-Delete reset will cure the problem.

Maximum DOS partition sizes.

DOSFS, which is an integral part of RISC OS 3, does not support DOS hard disc partitions which are larger than 32 MB. If you create a DOS partition which exceeds this size, it will not be possible to access it from the RISC OS desktop environment.

DOS partitions greater than 32MB can only be accessed from within the PC Card / PC Soft

environment. Therefore if you wish to transfer files between a DOS partition greater than 32MB and a RISC OS based filing system, this should be done via floppy disc(s) or another DOS partition which is 32MB or less in size. If you are unsure on how to copy files please refer to the section "Files and directories" in the Welcome Guide supplied with your computer.

Windows 3 and MemoryMax.

As supplied, by default, DR DOS provides access to additional memory via the use of the MemoryMax (MEMMAX) software. During the boot sequence you will be prompted to load this software by the command:

Load MemoryMAX software (Y/N)

Replying "N" to this prompt will allow Windows to be started in enhanced mode by issuing the command:

```
win
```

If you wish to run Windows with the MemoryMax software enabled you should ensure that Windows is started in standard mode by issuing the command:

```
win /s
```

Technical Information

Windows driver with the Acorn 486 Card.

The Windows Driver disc supplied with the PC Card is in Acorn ADFS format, If you have created a DOS partition which is larger than 32MB it will not be possible to use the procedure outlined in the PC Card User Guide to copy the file on this disc to the DOS partition,

In order to overcome this you should use the following procedure:

From within the RISC OS desktop, format a blank floppy disc to 720k DOS format. If you are unsure on how to do this please refer to the section "Discs, Networks and filing systems" in the RISC OS 3 User Guide supplied with your computer,

When this has completed click select on the floppy disc drive icon, This will open a filer window showing the contents of the root directory of the DOS format floppy disc,

Remove the DOS format disc and insert the Windows Driver disc in the disc drive, Copy the file ARMVGA/DRV from the Windows Driver disc to the DOS format disc, If you are unsure on how to do this please refer to the section "Files and directories" in the Welcome Guide supplied with your computer, Clearly mark the disc "Windows Driver, DOS format",

Start the !PC Card application, When the PC card is running insert into the floppy disc drive the DOS format floppy disc which contains the Windows Driver, At the DOS prompt type:

```
copy a:*. * C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM
```

This will copy the correct Windows Driver for use with the PC card onto the DOS partition.

It is now necessary to edit the \WINDOWS\SYSTEM,INI file, To do this start the DR DOS text editor by typing at the DR DOS prompt:

```
C:\DRDOS\EDITOR C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM.INI
```

This will load the file C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM,INI into the editor, Use the cursor keys to move down to the line that reads:

```
display.drv=vga.drv
```

and change it to read `display.drv=armvga.`

```
drv
```

Save the modified file by holding down CTRL and pressing k and then q, Then press Escape to return to the DR DOS prompt,

The new driver will be loaded the next time you start Windows, and a different hourglass shape will indicate its presence,

Spares / Service Information

Acorn MEU dismantling.

Please remember that when removing the MEU drive tray the front moulding of the unit must be removed first, This will permit access to the 3mm screw that secures the drive tray to the lower metal case,

GRA and WRA Requests.

Please remember, when requesting either a WRA or GRA it is essential to include the Date of Purchase, the Complete Serial Number and a full description of the fault, If the correct information is not supplied then it will delay the supply of a returns number and therefore, most importantly, it will delay the repair

for the customer, Please try to help us all provide a quality service to our Customers,

ID Chip Usage and PCB Repairs

Software is now becoming available which uses the ID chip, for example Acorn's Advance. If the Customer's software uses the ID chip and you need to send their PCB away for repair, either on Fastrack or by WRA, then you must mark the service report form "ID Chip used" so that the Customer's own ID Chip is returned with the replacement PCB, If you don't do this then the ID Chip will not be retained and the Customer will need new software to install for the new ID Chip!