Enclosed: !Printers version
1.22 Update - omitted from
Newsletter 32 - with apologies

Acorn

WITH COMPLIMENTS

THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR
TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT

!Printers version 1.22 Update

New RISC OS 3 printer manager

The enhanced printer manager is designed to run on RISC OS 3.10 or later and in at least 2MBytes of RAM.

This new version arises out of many discussions with Acorn Education Dealers and Acorn in Education Centres. We have taken note of many of the comments and hope that the facilities provided by this new version will answer most of the criticisms.

Disc Contents

!Printers Application
!System Application
!Scrap Application
Directory 'Printers' containing printer definition files.

Installation

To provide the bug fixes and extra functionality to !Printers it is necessary to provide some updated modules on the new disc. !System contains an updated version of the ColourTrans module. Use the !SysMerge application to update your current version of !System. A new version of PDumperSupport is loaded automatically by !Printers when needed.

What's New?

The following changes have been made to !Printers:

1. 'background' printing. This very useful feature has been added to the printer manager. In effect, this causes printing to be directed to a spool file for files in the queue, after which the spool file is then sent to the printer as a background activity. Since not all applications support queueing of printing, this feature will not work with all applications. Background printing is an option selectable in the 'Connection' dialogue box.

2. Improved colour printing support. Acorn has been working in conjunction with third parties to design and develop new ColourTrans and PDumperSupport modules. In addition to better colour rendition at the 256 colour level, the drivers now provide support for 24bpp colour rendition through the use of a three pass system. This is done transparently to the application and the user. Applications which can make use of this include Draw and Artworks. !Paint will not print in colour using 16 million colours option. Sprites can be printed from !Draw if you want to print using this option.

3. New and improved printer definition files. We have a number of new printer definition files for colour and black and white printers. Drivers for the Hewlett Packard Deskjet 500C, 550C and 1200C have been included; the 550C driver will also work correctly for the Deskjet 310 colour. The BJC600 has been included as an additional PDF. New black and white dot matrix PDF's have been included for various printers. The Epson Stylus 800 has been included with its own PDF which will also support the other printers in the Stylus range. The original PDF's supplied have been improved to provide higher resolution colour printing options. The lists of supported printers supplied within each manufacturer directory has been significantly updated with information supplied by the manufacturers to include nearly 300 printers in total.

4. Reduced disc swapping. Single floppy drive users have suffered from the overlaying system employed in previous versions of the printer manager. For users of dot matrix or laserjet class printers, the necessity to re-insert the printer driver disc has been removed. This should alleviate a lot of problems for the floppy disc system users within schools. When printing to PostScript printers it will however, still be necessary to insert the original printer driver disc.

5. Sensible default options. The PDF's will now load with more popular default options selected. Printers that print in colour only will select colour and sensible resolution options when they are loaded thus reducing the amount of configuration required when the printer manager is first set up.

6. PostScript printing. Various changes have been made to PostScript printing, including standardising the PostScript output.

7. Printing with Acorn Access. !Printers has been updated for use with the new Acorn Access package. A new option from the Printer Control menu allows the 'Shared' option to be selected if Acorn Access is installed. Please refer to the Acorn Access notes for further information.

8. New templates. Both 2D and 3D templates are provided. Selection is dependant on the setting of bit 1 of byte &8C in CMOS RAM. There is therefore no requirement for the application be updated with the sprites and template provided by !NewLook.

9. File Output. It is now possible to append to file thus a new printout to a previous 'output' file.

10. Printing 'Output' files. When printing 'Output' files created when printing for a dp class printer, the problem whereby an address exception could occur at the end of the print cycle has now been fixed.

11. Paper size editing. The 'Edit Paper Size' option now selects the paper type that is configured for that particular printer driver.

12. Cancelling a print job. When the Escape key is used to stop a print job the printer manager will now send a reset to the printer. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the printer is online when escape is pressed.

13. Loading PDF's. New PDF's loaded into the printer manager will now be automatically installed onto the icon bar so the user does not have to specifically make them active.

14. Look. Various changes have been made to the printer manager to make it more Style Guide compliant, eg the removal of dbox close buttons and the addition of 'Cancel' buttons.

Distribution

The enhanced RISC OS printer manager may be freely distributed in its complete form with its supporting applications, directories and documentation. Anyone wishing to make this disc available on any public access on-line system or via public domain, careware or shareware service should contact Acorn in writing at the address below for licensing details. The RISC OS printer manager '!Printers' and the associated files remain copyright of Acorn Computers Ltd.

Feedback

If you experience any problems contact us, preferably in writing, to the address below with the following details:

Printer being used.
Version of firmware fitted to the printer.
If the printer is Laserjet or PostScript how much memory is installed in the printer.
Which Acorn computer system is being used.
Full description of the problem including, preferably, a copy of the !Printer application, on disc, that is causing the problems.

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