

Pace Micro Technology

COMMSTAR II

INFORMATION

Advanced communications software for BBC series micro-computers

For two years now the Pace Commstar ROM has dominated the market for BBC micro-communications software. In a single 8K EPROM Commstar offered a powerful combination of ASCII terminal and Viewdata software which made communication with remote information services simple and effective.

DATA PARAMETERS

<A>	Auto LF
<C>	CTRL Codes
<L>	Local Echo
<R>	Remote Echo
<F>	Filter
<M>	Mode
<P>	Printer
<X>	Xon/Xoff

BUFFER OPERATIONS

<C>	Copy
<F>	File
<L>	Load
<S>	Save
<T>	Transmit
<V>	View
<W>	Wipe

SYSTEM OPTIONS

<G>	Get Params
<P>	Put Params
<I>	Initialise
<M>	Modem Control
<R>	Receive XMDM
<S>	Send XMDM
<L>	Lock status
<F>	Foreground Col
	Background Col
<*>	MOS command

Now with two more years valuable experience behind us, Pace introduce Commstar II, more powerful, more flexible and even easier to use. Commstar II contains all major features of the original Commstar but now includes a host of new functions.

Terminal mode

In terminal mode extensive use is made of 'pull-down' windows and menus for the selection of options. These menus operate in screen modes 0,3,4,6 and 7 thus providing the capability for both 40 and 80 column display of incoming data.

Whilst on-line an optional status panel provides useful information about how Commstar II is configured. For convenience, a particular set of configuration options which have been set up for use with a host system can now be stored on disc via the 'Put params' command and then re-loaded using 'Get params' next time you use Commstar. This minimises set up time and reduces the risk of using incorrectly configured parameters.

User configurable parameters include Auto-Line feed, Local & Remote echo, XON/XOFF flow control, foreground and background colours, screen mode, baud rate, data format etc.

Incoming data can be buffered in memory or stored directly to disc and data stored in the buffer can be manipulated by a number of dedicated buffer commands. In addition there is a new command to allow the monitoring and/or trapping of CTRL codes received from a host system. This means that incoming CTRL codes can now be filtered out and ignored, acted upon normally or displayed in HEX.

For file transfer Commstar II includes the XMODEM standard which ensures error-free transfer of program and data files.

Some of the main Commstar II commands are now accessible from BASIC in the form of '*' commands. For instance XMODEM file transfer can be initiated from within a Basic program by inclusion of the Commstar *XTRAN and *XREC commands for transmitting and receiving respectively. Similarly the Mode 7 frame print can be accessed from basic.

Viewdata Mode

Viewdata mode now includes a simple mailbox editor for editing and sending multiple mailbox frames and a jotter facility which allows the storage of frames in memory or on disc for use in 'carousel' displays. Frames can be printed to Epson compatible printers with graphics or a text only dump can be used with other dot matrix and daisywheel devices.

The telesoftware downloader has been enhanced to allow optional automatic execution of multi-file programs thus alleviating the necessity for the complicated save procedures required by many other systems.

Summary of features

Terminal mode : Local & Remote echo on/off
 Auto Line-feeds on/off
 Screen modes 0,3,4,6 & 7
 CTRL codes DEF, FLT or HEX
 Foreground & Background colours
 Transmit/Receive baud rates from 75-9600
 7 or 8 Data bits
 Odd, Even or No parity
 1 or 2 Stop bits
 XMODEM file transfer
 Full data buffering to memory or disc

Viewdata mode : Frame load & save
 Frame print (graphics or text only)
 Offline mailbox editing
 Frame tagging & retrieval
 Full 16 colours, double height & graphics
 Advance telesoftware downloader
 Frame carousel facility

Compatible with BBC Model B, B+, B128 and Master Series.
Specification subject to alteration without notice

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