DESKTOP PUBLISHING ON THE ARCHIMEDES – DTP for all

Bruce Goatly

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Preface

This book is for all those with an interest in desktop publishing (DTP to the fashionable) and who either have access to, or are thinking of acquiring, an Acorn Archimedes. In the home, at school or in the business environment, if you are curious about what DTP is all about and what it can do for you, or if you have started using DTP and need help, then this book is for you. The subtitle, *DTP for all*, reflects my belief that the Archimedes and the software for it have brought genuine DTP within everyone's reach.

Although the speed and processing power of the Archimedes make it ideal for DTP, the machine has an undeservedly low profile by comparison with Macintoshes and PCs. The main criticism of the Archimedes, that it lacked software that did it justice, was valid for DTP only because of the long development time for such complex programs. At the time of writing there are three fully-fledged contenders: in order of appearance they are *Desktop Publisher* from Acorn, *Impression* from Computer Concepts and *Ovation* from Beebug. *Impression* also comes in a simplified version called *Impression Junior*.

This book is not intended as a comparative review of DTP software for the Archimedes: instead it seeks to explain what DTP is, how it can be used and how to get the best out of it, with examples. Each of the three programs has its particular strengths and it is not necessarily significant if only one of them is used to illustrate any given point.

One area where DTP has great potential is in schools, and one chapter is devoted to DTP work with two packages (*PenDown* from Longman Logotron and *Desktop Folio* from ESM) designed specially for use in the educational sphere.

You may not want everything that DTP has to offer: newer word processing programs have many features that make them DTP-like, and one of them may be all that you need. With this in mind there is a chapter which describes three word processors of increasing sophistication (*1st Word Plus, PipeDream* and *EasiWriter*), so that you can see whether you really need to travel the whole DTP road.

An even more cost-conscious route, though a less flexible one, is to use the free software supplied by Acorn with the Archimedes: there is a special chapter on how to get a first taste of DTP with the applications *Edit* and *Draw*.

In the end, of course, only you can say what your requirements are and therefore which software will suit you best. To make that decision you should also read reviews and seek other advice; remember, too, that your needs and ambitions may grow.

As the ultimate worked example for a book on DTP, in an appendix I explain how this book was written wholly with a DTP program on my own Archimedes.

Throughout the book I use the term 'Archimedes' for the sake of brevity to refer to all machines in the Acorn range running RISC OS: this commonly means the Archimedes series and the BBC model A3000. Although I shall assume readers have a passing acquaintance with RISC OS terms and procedures as explained in the User Guide, for the sake of neatness there is a short section on the particular conventions used in the book. One convention that I have adopted and tried to be consistent about is to use italics for the name of a piece of software (such as *Draw*, *Paint*, *1st Word Plus*) but roman type for the name of the application's directory with its ! character (such as !Draw, !Paint, !1stWord+). This is offered in a spirit of helpfulness rather than as an attempt to confuse.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people for help, advice, guidance and just plain generosity during the preparation of this book. Special thanks are due to Charles Moir at Computer Concepts for software and hardware support beyond the call of business, and also to John Wallace at Beebug, Robert Macmillan at Colton Software, Ian Copestake, Claire Graves at ESM, Mike Glover at Icon Technology, and Longman Logotron, all of whom kindly supplied various versions of their software as well as the fruits of their expertise. Some of the hints on the use of *Impression* are my own discoveries, but some appeared first in *Archive* magazine and are included here with the kind permission of Paul Beverley. Steve Turnbull, Kendall Down, Edward Detyna and Gordon Young read, and made constructive comments on, early drafts; Mike Cook and Wild Vision provided the digitised images in Figure 8.8. The support of Graham Beech at Sigma Press over the course of my labours has been much appreciated. I should also like to thank my wife, Alice (the book widow), for her patience and understanding. Although I have received much help from other people, I should make it clear that any errors in the book are my fault, not theirs.

I have enjoyed finding out more about DTP on the Archimedes in writing this book – I hope you enjoy doing the same in reading it.

Bruce Goatly

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