



Editor's note: The following article is Part 1 of a two-part series on major magazines on CD-ROM.

We never get enough time or money. Magazine publishers, sensing this and also sensing monetary advantages in getting involved in disc-based technology, now offer us all we want of *TIME* and *Money*—on CD-ROM.

TIME, *Money*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *PC Magazine*, all of which have very high circulations, are published on CD-ROM. *Business Week* tried its hand, but found the results of its first release disappointing and stopped the presses on CD-ROM publication. *Newsweek* had three well-edited, genuinely multimedia volumes that could have done even better had they not been crippled by an utterly hostile installation and archaic (expanded instead of extended) memory requirements.

Each quarterly volume had: three months of the previous issues of the magazine, about 200 articles from the *Washington Post*, four hours of audio from the *Newsweek-on-the-Air* program, plus a special topic (such as environment protection, movie special effects) that was richly illustrated with multimedia elements (audio, video, and animation) in addition to the static media of text, charts, and pictures.

The entire text of the *Newsweek* articles can be searched through a decent search engine. The status of this product is questionable, though, as no new volume has been published for several months. Other magazines will certainly get their feet wet soon, then decide if they want to swim with the new technology.

In all these current CD-ROM magazines, it is the back issues that are published, not the current year issues. All go beyond the content offered by the print editions, though *Money* magazine only to a minimum extent with a frugal video introduction. However, all offer much more flexible searching of the entire text of the back issues than any print index or abstracting and indexing database could. In this issue, we shall look at the news and business magazines. In the next issue, we shall discuss the upcoming CD-ROM edition of *Sports Illustrated* and *PC Magazine*.

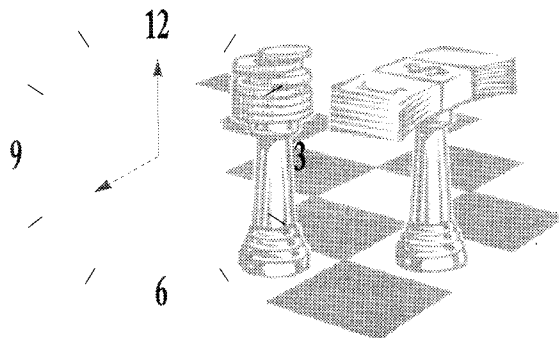
TIME Almanac

TIME has tried many formats, including an online fling on America Online and a number of CD-ROMs on different platforms. The first ones included *Man of the Year*, which is now incorporated into other products, and the 1991 *TIME Magazine Almanac* for DOS, which was replaced by a genuinely multimedia version for the IBM DOS, Windows (MPC), and the Macintosh platforms in 1993. This version was known as the *TIME Almanac 1993* but was renamed *TIME Almanac Reference Edition* when the *TIME Almanac 1994 Update* was published recently. This update is not available for the DOS platform.

The CD-ROM covers all issues from

Need More *TIME* and *Money*? Now There's a Way.

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By Péter Jacsó

1989 and selected issues from 1923. It also has 11 audio-visual portraits of personalities who had a significant influence on history in the 20th century. Federal and state directories and statistics of the U.S. Statistical Abstracts are a bonus, obviously not available in the print edition of *TIME*. Neither are the *CIA Factbook* and the directory of UN and other international organizations, which enhance the CD-ROM edition.

A quiz provides a good combination of education, information, and recreation and is likely to send you back to search the Almanac if you fail to answer some questions correctly.

The textual information is of high quality. After all, they are the printed words of *TIME*. The *CIA Factbook* is a tad pale, but its presence is convenient and saves you money since you don't need to buy one of the many standalone versions.

There are about 400 charts and tables, 350 pictures, and over 30 video clips of about one hour duration. The well-chosen videos are larger than usual (4 by 3.5 inch) and their quality is good. Most of the videos are from the archives of CNN.

The statistical tables are useful and look great on the screen, but it is a serious oversight that they are printed with scalable fonts that horribly mess up the tables when printed. Fortunately, you may download the tables and specify appropriate fixed-width fonts that will print the tables correctly. Casual users are, however, unlikely to be aware of this alternative. The charts are not of as high quality as the print edition, and the colors are much washed out. The same can be said of the statistical maps, which are nevertheless useful.

The U.S. state maps are acceptable on screen (though you would expect more from *TIME*), but when printed in gray scale

they are blurred because of the unnecessary light green and blue background. The non-U.S. maps are disappointing as there are no country maps but only regional ones, lacking the details and sometimes using outdated names and omitting important ones. On the map of Southeast Asia, Burma is used instead of Myanmar; Timor is identified, but Bali is not.

The software has some nice and some disappointing features. This is one of the few softwares that does not need installation and can run off the CD-ROM entirely. You may install it, however, if you wish, though I did not experience much of a speed difference when doing so.

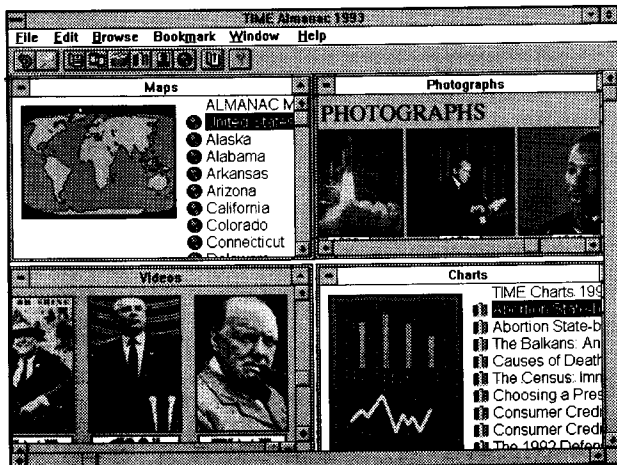
The icons, the table of contents, and the navigation tools are very good in this database. It is easy to browse the list of articles, portraits, maps, cover photos, and charts. If a list is too long, it is displayed in a collapsed mode but can be expanded by a click to display the details. In the browse list, the maps, charts, and multimedia elements are listed last, after the articles. This should be the other way around, as a number of these elements are limited.

There is only a single word index created from the entire text. There are no subject headings (descriptors) and posting information. You may not qualify a term to retrieve records where it occurs in the title, for example. Neither can you limit your search by the length or type of the article or by the availability of a chart, table, picture, or video. In such an information-rich database, I would like to be able to limit my search, for example, to cover stories about abortion that also have statistical information or feature stories about a person with his or her photograph.

The term that got the record retrieved is highlighted, but if you have used more than one term, only the last one is highlighted. There is no tool to jump to the next occurrence of the term, and in the case of longer articles it may take a long time to find the relevant passage. There is no hyperlink searching from within the text, but a LINK option button is displayed if there are related articles. This is a good but rarely used idea, and the option that is on the menu ribbon is too easy to miss. It is a weird restriction that numbers cannot be searched. The lack of positional and proximity operators is a serious omission with a full-text database. Despite these deficiencies, the database is a valuable tool.

Money in the 90s

The 1990-1993 issues of *Money* magazine make up this CD-ROM, called *Money in the 90s*, which is advertised for \$29.99. It is money well spent even at the list price of \$49.99, but at a 40 percent discount it is a steal. Even better, some mail order companies offer it for a mere \$12. It cannot really be considered a multimedia database since there are only two video clips, both merely talking head shots. One is an introduction to the database, where narrated screen shots would have been better for illustration. The other is about the



(continued on page 24)



More Time and Money
(continued from page 22)

evaluation criteria used for the annual review of the best (and worst) places to live in America, where video clips of the top 10 cities would have been much more interesting.

Beyond the frugal multimedia, there is the informative, well-edited text from 50 issues of the magazine. The charts and tables are there, too, but to my disappointment, they cannot be printed let alone downloaded, for further manipulation (I captured the partial list from the screen just for illustration).

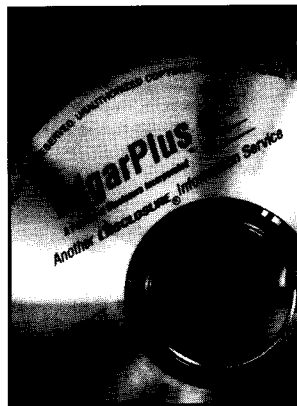
This is a real hindrance as everyone would prefer curling up with the list of the best cities or top 20 credit card deals to scrolling up and down the screen and jotting down the data. I would even go one step further and urge the publisher to attach these charts and tables also in a worksheet format and let the user download and import them into a spreadsheet program for

entire four-year timespan. The titles are grouped under major descriptors in alphabetical order. Surprisingly, there is no way to jump to a cross-referenced descriptor. This is not only a strange limitation in the mid-'90s, but a real inconvenience when you need to get from the descriptor BROKERAGES to STOCK MARKET and the only way is to keep scrolling down. Such jump facilities are readily available in the underlying search engine, that is, no extra programming would have been needed by the developers of this application.

The search engine is very good. It is based on the Microsoft Viewer software and allows sophisticated searches that are really needed in full-text databases, such as proximity operation or limiting the search to the title field. You can call up your history log and easily return to a previous result list without repeating the search.

These CD-ROM versions can provide incomparably better access to the content

Disclosure releases EdgarPlus on CD-ROM and on LEXIS/NEXIS



Disclosure's new EdgarPlus on CD operates under the same "Easy Menu Search" platform shared by the company's other CD-ROM corporate databases.

Disclosure, a provider of global company information, announces the release of EdgarPlus on CD, a CD-ROM version of its EdgarPlus database of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings.

The EdgarPlus database has been released on the LEXIS/NEXIS online service.

"Disclosure is working to make EdgarPlus widely available to an expanding market, by offering it in ways that underscore flexibility and convenience to the user," said William C. O'Connor, executive vice president.

EdgarPlus, the only commercially available information product of its type, is a value-added, full-text database of public company reports filed electronically using EDGAR, the SEC's Electronic Data Gath-

ering, Analysis, and Retrieval system. A steadily increasing percentage of companies now submit their SEC filings via EDGAR rather than paper.

Disclosure's new EdgarPlus on CD product will operate under the same "Easy Menu Search" platform shared by a number of its widely used CD-ROM corporate databases. These include Compact D/SEC, an abstracted/extracted CD-ROM database of U.S. public companies.

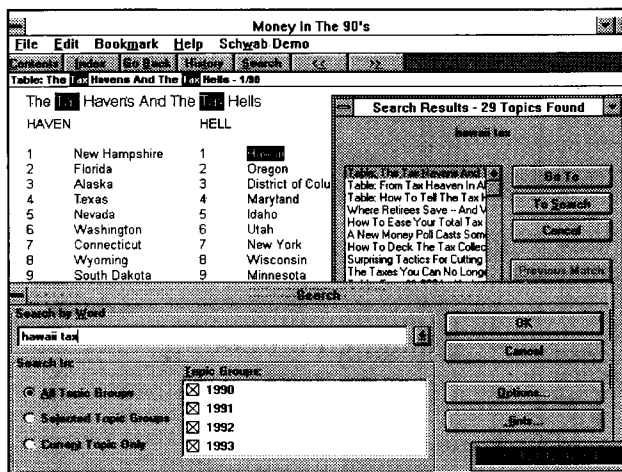
In its initial release, EdgarPlus on CD will provide CD-ROM access to current EDGAR filings, with keyword searching of all filings across companies and "instant" access to all fielded items (e.g., Net Sales).

EdgarPlus on CD subscribers will receive monthly discs containing the latest EDGAR filings, enhanced by Disclosure's value-added formatting and field tagging to provide optimal readability and searchability.

The first phase of EdgarPlus on LEXIS/NEXIS went live this past fall. LEXIS/NEXIS customized the data by building on Disclosure's navigational and search/display tags. For example, Mead has added a table of contents for each document, which enables users of its customized Windows software to click on a table of contents item and go directly to the associated text. LEXIS/NEXIS has also used Access Disclosure document information to create a company profile which is included for each document requested.

SEC filings provide a wealth of vital information about the performance and operations of public companies to investors and investment banks, financial analysts, attorneys, business students, accountants, and other company researchers.

For more information, contact Disclosure, 5161 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20816; phone: (301) 951-1300; fax: (301) 657-1962.



further manipulation. As the list is in rank order, it takes too long to find specific cities that the user may be interested in.

The output options are limited in other regards as well. The text part can be copied, though not as conveniently as possible. While you may mark in a pop-up window the portion of the text to be copied, it is copied into the clipboard. You have to switch to the clipboard to save the file before copying another part of the article or a different article that would overwrite whatever is in the clipboard.

This is a Windows limitation, but the developers should have implemented a Save As option to facilitate copying without the use of the brain-damaged clipboard function. There should be a marking option also for printing, as you may not wish to print out the entire topic (article) that may span over several pages. You cannot change the font size either for display or printing.

Browsing in the title list can be limited to individual years or expanded to the

issues of the past few years, and in the case of shorter articles, you may not even need to get the original issue. Even if you need to consult the original for a photo or a chart, you have the power to find anything in an instant, a task far less efficient in the printed indexes and even in the CD-ROM abstracting/indexing databases that provide topical access only through words in the title and abstracts and the descriptors but not through every single word that was printed in those magazines.

The next logical step will be to include the facsimile of the original pages (as Money does with most of the tables) and allow their printing directly off the CD-ROM. With the impressive new genre of software that can reproduce the fonts, the graphics, the color, and the layout of the original even on computers that do not have the same fonts, and with the decreasing cost of producing a CD-ROM, such yearly issues of key magazines will be a reality in 1995.

CD-ROMs rated and reviewed in new book/CD-ROM package

With the dazzling array of CD-ROMs flooding the market today, consumers are often left confused about which ones to purchase. CD-ROMs don't come cheap, may titles sound similar, and quality can vary greatly. The perfect solution is provided in *CD-ROMs Rated*, a unique guide that allows consumers to road-test CD-ROMs before they buy. The book/CD-ROM package is published by McGraw-Hill and edited by Les Krantz.

CD-ROMs Rated contains hundreds of concise but substantive reviews by a panel of multimedia experts. They road-test, rate, and review CD-ROMs covering a wide variety of subjects.

At the beginning of each chapter, rankings of titles to follow are provided, making it easy to assess discs at a glance. The experts rank titles on the following criteria:

installation, navigation, screen design, content depth and breadth, graphics, and multimedia features.

Each review features screen captures so readers can actually preview how the product looks.

CD-ROM categories covered include business, history, music, movies, travel, reference, health, children, literature, religion, almanacs, dictionaries, erotica, games, humor, learn-a-language, performing arts, and more.

Another valuable feature of this impressive book/CD-ROM package is a complete appendix of the overall best and worst discs.

The book package is available in bookstores or from the publisher by calling (800) 822-8158.