



# DIRECTIONS

*Technology in Special Education*

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## The MMany MMs of Multimedia -- Part III

We've talked about the hardware components used in a multimedia system, and defined the acronyms frequently used in the industry in our past two issues. This month, we'll begin by taking a look at some of the benefits that can be achieved through the use of this new and exciting technology. Rockly L. Miller, of Future Systems, Inc., in Falls Church, VA, has reported that the following benefits are achieved through the use of interactive multimedia learning systems. These benefits were reported by leading corporate, institutional, and government users.

### Reduced Learning Time

More than 30 studies compiled to date have found that interactive multimedia technologies reduce learning time by an average of 50 percent.

### Increased Retention

The process of interaction with material being studied provides a strong learning reinforcement that significantly increases content retention over time.

### Increased Motivation

Interactive multimedia systems provide a level of responsive feedback and individual involvement that has proven to be highly motivating in both individual and classroom learning environments. Further, interactive multimedia systems focus attention, reducing the potential for distraction. This is especially critical for special needs students.

### Instructional Consistency

Technology based instructional systems do not have bad days or tire at the end of a long day. Instruction is delivered in a consistently reliable fashion that does not vary in quality.

*(Please see MM on Page 7)*

## On-Line Services

What Are They – And What Do They Offer?

CompuServe, America Online, eWorld... have you heard these names before, but aren't quite sure how to access them, or where to access them, or... well.....um..... what in the world they are? If so, you aren't alone. But listen up, you may be surprised! If you have a modem on your computer, and a little bit of time to explore, the interfaces are getting easier to use, and there's a whole world of information on disabilities out there waiting for you!

It is estimated that by the end of this year, five million Americans will be subscribing to an on-line service like CompuServe or America Online. These mammoth data store houses offer varying features, but all have one goal in mind ... to literally put this information at your fingertips!

Next month we will be taking an in-depth look at services that offer sections on disabilities and the education of the disabled. But for now, here's a brief look at some of the major services and what they offer.....

**CompuServe**  
1-800-848-8990

*(Please see On-Line on Page 4)*

## Inside This Issue

### Window Tips

Learn what NOT to do when running Windows  
See Page 2

### Used Computer Prices

AmCoEx prices for this month  
Details on Page 5

# Technology Tip of the Month

This month's technology tip is actually a number of useful hints for making Microsoft™ Windows a little bit easier to use and run. Take heed too because Chicago, (yep, just like the city) aka Windows 95 will be out soon. This next version of desktop Windows will not allow access to DOS!! So, you'll HAVE TO work within the Windows environment! Those of us that are old DOSers are going to need a lot of time to get use to this!!

Anyhow, hope these few tips will help you along on your trip through Windowland .....

=:> Before installing new applications, its a good idea to make copies of AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG.SYS, WIN.INI, SYSTEM.INI, and any .GRP files. These system and windows configuration files are normally modified when new Windows applications are installed. If your installation goes badly, you can restore the original configuration. See your system guide for directions on how to use the "copy" command either from DOS or from the File Manager in Windows.

=:> Buy an "UNINSTALL" program. If you want to remove an application, this very useful tool will remove the files that applications scatter all over your disk when they install.

=:> In Program Manager, if an icon's title is already highlighted, you can launch the application by pressing the Enter key. You don't have to double - click.

=:> **Always** exit Windows before turning off your PC. There are a number of housekeeping chores that Windows needs to do when it exits normally .

=:> Never run DOS based utilities that fix disk problems while Windows is running. **Always** exit Windows first.

=:> FI nearly always displays an application's Help.

=:> Did you know that Windows "HELP" files allow you to add your own two cents? Select Edit and then Annotate from the top menu in Help. Type in any notes that you would like included on the HELP page. Select SAVE. A small paperclip will then be showing on the screen. Clicking on this paperclip will display your comments.

Look for more Windows tips in this section next month...

# DIRECTIONS

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**Editor / Publisher**

Janet P. Hosmer

**Technical Editor**

Chester D. Hosmer, Jr.

**Copy Editor**

Kira L. Boyd

**Business Development**

Gerry Kawamura

**Educational Consultant**

Donna M. Eno

**Contributors**

Tom Nurse ◦ Mamie Evans ◦ Tina Brandel  
Chuck Palmer

DREAMMS FOR KIDS, INC.

2763 Tasha Drive

Clearwater, FL 34621-1223

VOICE/FAX: 813.781.7711

DREAMMS@aol.com

DREAMMS@ix.netcom.com

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Vendors - We welcome product news. Please include pricing and contact name with press releases.

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## Florida Technology News

The Fourth Annual Florida Assistive Technology Impact Conference in conjunction with the Division of Technology and Media of the Council for Exceptional Children will be held at the Orange County convention Center on March 2-4, 1995. FATIC/TAM '95 will target researchers, parents, administrators, teachers, rehabilitation agencies, and other decision making groups, and will focus on research, implications and uses of assistive technology to facilitate the inclusion of at risk children, vocational rehabilitation, sensory, physical, mental, speech and language, and emotional impairments.

The Florida Families of Individuals with Disabilities Stipend Project is providing stipends to technology using consumers and their immediate family members or caregivers to attend this conference. These stipends are designed to provide opportunities to attend FATIC's events and activities that promote independence, productivity, integration and inclusion.

Allowable expenses and costs may include:

- \*registration fees
- \* workshop fees
- \*transportation costs
- \*hotel/motel costs
- \*costs associated with special assistance (interpreters, respite/child care, personal driver, personal care, rental of assistive equipment.)

Applicants may apply for up to \$750 per year. Application packets may be requested through the Coordinator of Technical Services within the Florida Instructional materials Center or the Family Network on Disabilities. Contact L. Jeffrey Fitterman at FIMC at 1-800-282-9193 or (813) 872- 5281; or Janet Jacoby at FND at 1- 800-825-5736 or (813) 289-1122. Completed applications must be received by November 15, 1994.

## This Month's Software Pick

**Marvin the Moose** from Milliken

The Marvin the Moose series helps develop reading comprehension while teaching your child valuable social skills. Each colorfully illustrated story has a moral and reinforces the message later in the program in an interactive story writing segment.

In Volume I of this series, Marvin and his friends learn about peer pressure and the importance of teamwork. The clear colorful screens and the human voice in this story telling package make it a sure winner for the early learning set! Children are asked simple, clear questions based on the passage that was just read to them. They select the best answer with the mouse or the keyboard, and then move on to the next page.

This is another great package for children who enjoy stories. As an extra added bonus, you can print out the stories in outline form and create a coloring book!

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*Online Continued from Page 1*

**Disabilities Forum** – Sections and libraries are devoted to specific types of disabilities, including developmental, learning, deaf and hearing impaired, vision, mobility and multiple sclerosis.

**IBM Special Needs Forum** – Focuses on adaptive computer technology equipment. Includes hardware and multimedia equipment prices, downloadable software.

**Handicapped Users Database** – Articles on adaptive and assistive devices, augmentative communication devices and software.

### America Online

1-800-827-6364

**disABILITIES Forum** – Libraries of articles on disabilities and related areas, online conferences, many topic specific databases

### World (MAC only)

1-800-776-2333

ABLEDATA, RehabData libraries, Assistive Technology Center, Disability Forum, Exceptional Parent Magazine is also on-line.

### BIX

1-800-695-4775

Provides information on adaptive technologies for persons with physical disabilities.

### Delphi

1-800-695-4005

Provides access to WIDNet – Disability network (World Institute on Disability) which offers message boards, conferencing, file libraries & chat areas. Has a database of disability related materials and links with government / community disability groups.

### Genie

1-800-638-9636

disABILITIES RoundTable / Equal Access Cafe, ENABLE RoundTable

Each of the services we have listed above provides a section or several sections that are specifically for the disabled or their care-givers and educators. When deciding on a service, be sure to compare things like their services and features (conferences and forums), cost (monthly and options), and interface (text or graphics, technical or intuitive). Most have local access numbers now too! This means that there will be no added cost for long distance charges during connect time! And, you can

access the Internet from most services now too! (More on this in a future issue!!) CompuServe still seems to be the biggest with the most to offer, but others are catching up fast!

Oh, btw (by the way), there are some new things to learn about <heavy sigh> when you DO get on-line. As you become familiar with travels around the service, you'll probably find yourself wanting to "chat" with the folks on the various boards (areas where you can talk to others with similar interests as yours). These folks are limited in how they can express themselves with only the keyboard, so they have devised various ways of expressing their feelings, facial expressions and emotions when they type their messages <g>, and use lots of shortcuts for words. You'll understand when you get there, but as a short primer, here's some definitions and examples:

**SYSOP** Short for System Operator. This person is the manager of the board, forum or conference, and is responsible for over-seeing operations.

**Thread** A series of messages with a related theme. In other words, if I write to you, and you reply, and then I reply, and then you reply, etc... You can keep these threads and refer to them like notes.

**Emoticon** An abbreviation or word used inside brackets < > to usually denote a facial expression or a thought that you are having. For example:

<vbg> = very big grin

<ROFL> = rolling on the floor laughing

<sigh> = exasperation

**Download** To copy a file from the service "DOWN" to your own computer.

**Upload** To copy a file from your own computer "UP" to the service.

(Not sure where the UP and DOWN come from...it seems all in a straight line to me!!)

**Smilies** These are just great <vvvbg> ! Tilt your head a little to the left and enjoy!

Standard Smilie :-)

Smilie with sunglasses 8-)

Smilie with mustache :-{)

Anyhow, the services and bulleting boards listed here are only a few of the many that are around. They can be a lot of fun, as well as very informational! Try one out, most have complementary initial connect time offers... and if you join... have fun in cyberspace!

## ***HOTLINE Update***

Q. Ed M. asked about IBM's Linkway Live! multimedia authoring package...

A. Linkway Live! is one of IBM's UltiMedia packages that links pictures, text, sound and motion video into a multimedia presentation and instructional package. Linkway Live! is very popular since it runs on lower end (286) PC and compatible computers, and doesn't require Windows. This package may take some learning since it is much more versatile than a standard off-the-shelf software package, but the rewards in the versatility are very high! It also is relatively inexpensive. For more information on this and other IBM software packages, call their toll free info line at: 1-800-887-7771.

Q. Tina S. was having a really hard time getting her single switch interface connected to her PC...

A. Installation of external devices usually involves the actual physical connection of the device (to either the serial port or the parallel port on the back of your machine) and the loading of the software (or driver) that comes with the device. Tina also added a third variable. She was using an A/B switch so that she could use her printer and her single switch access. Turns out that she was doing everything correctly. The problem was a bad A/B switch!

When you are installing something for the very first time, try to eliminate as many variables as possible. Our suggestion to Tina was to eliminate the A/B switch from her system, plug the single switch directly into the parallel port and try it out! It worked just fine! The diagnosis... a bad A/B switch or cable!

### ***Zoom Caps***

We ran across these wonderful little aids in Exceptional Parent Magazine....and they seem perfect for our special users! They're keycap sticky labels that are in large print in either black on ivory or white on black. Great for low vision students or those just learning the alphabet! And, best of all, they're only \$9.95! Call Meeting the Challenge, Inc. at 1-800-864-4264 for a free catalog, or to place an order!

## **Buying a Computer?**

### **Don't Send Your Money Flying Away!**

The American Computer Exchange (AmCoEx) serves as a broker of used computers and computer equipment. Buyers contact AmCoEx with their purchase requirements, and pay the seller's asking price for the system to AmCoEx. (AmCoEx charges a \$25 fee for listing the computer). The seller ships the computer to AmCoEx where it is inspected and sent to the buyer. The buyer has a 2 day warranty period to check it out! If all is OK, the buyer's check is forwarded to the seller minus a 10 - 15% commission! WHEW!! Through all of this, 98% of those who have used the service are completely satisfied!

Here are some recent prices for some of today's most popular computers and peripherals. If you see anything that may be of interest to you, or if you have any questions on how the service works, call AmCoEx at: 1-800-786-0717.

Computer/Hard Drive	Price
IBM PS/2 Model 70 60 MB	\$525
Compaq Deskpro 486/33 120MB	\$1,250
Dell 386/33 100 MB	\$900
Gateway 486/33 120 MB	\$925
Mac Classic II 80 MB	\$500
Mac IICI 80 MB	\$725
Mac Quadra 800 500 MB	\$2,600
PowerBook 140 40 MB	\$950
HP LaserJet IIIP	\$525

***Don't Forget Our Hotline!***  
***813-781-7711***

## CAN YOU USE EXCEPTIONAL PARENT?

The magazine that helps you parent  
your child with a disability.

*Exceptional Parent* was created in 1971 by three clinical psychologists, specialists in the care and education of children with disabilities and their families. Their goal was, and still is, to provide information, practical guidance, and emotional support for parents of children and young adults with disabilities and special health care needs.

### Parents like you.

For two decades, this award-winning magazine has been a source of hope, help and guidance for millions of parents, family members and professionals concerned with the care of children with physical and development disabilities, including psychological, learning, emotional, hearing and vision problems, as well as chronic illness.

If your child has special needs, you have special needs, too, needs that range from expert advice to old-fashioned common sense. *You need information that matters, from people who care. You need Exceptional Parent.*

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# Thanks to Our Sponsors

A special thank you to each one of you who have given so generously to the DREAMMS organization during the last month! Your contributions help to provide this newsletter and the services that we provide our special students and their parents. We couldn't do it without you!

*Pat & Louie Baskinger  
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Special Thanks to Bruce & Karen Wilber for the Macintosh computer they donated! This will enable us to evaluate even more educational software packages!!



*Did you know that DREAMMS is a non profit public charity that is supported by your gifts and donations? We use your dollars to help pay for the printing of this newsletter, for postage for mailings to our parents, and to pay for our Hotline.*

*Won't you please send us your tax deductible gift today?*

## Mastery of Learning

Interactive multimedia systems will not move on to new material until current material is mastered. This insures that students have strong foundations for continued learning.

## Learners Enjoy Interactive Learning

Interactive multimedia systems allow learners to take greater control of – and hence, responsibility for – their own learning process.

## CD-ROM Multimedia Titles

This list of CD-ROM multimedia titles are some of the newest on the market. We will end our series on multimedia with a comprehensive list of titles (and their publishers) that we feel are appropriate for the special needs student. Contact your local software retailer or catalog dealer, or call our HOTLINE for information on where you can obtain any of these! Expect to pay somewhere between \$40.00 and \$70.00 for each CD. Remember that software need not be distributed on a CD in order for it to be considered 'multimedia'. Sound and video files take up a lot of disk space, and one CD is just much less expensive to distribute than 3 or more diskettes!

CD Title	Publisher
Story Book Weaver Deluxe	MECC
Reader Rabbit Series	The Learning Company
Allies Playhouse	Opcode Interactive
Animal Alphabet	REMedia
Learning English – Primary Rhymes	Jostens Learning
Story Book Maker	Jostens Learning
Any Gus Series Title	Modern Media Ventures
Sound It Out Land 1-3	Conexus
Kid Works 2	Davidson
Kid Phonics	Davidson
Work Attack 2	Davidson
Math Blaster	Davidson
Spell It 3	Davidson
My Favorite Monster	Simon & Schuster
BubbleLand Directory	Ednovation
BubbleLand Workshop	Ednovation
Preschool Parade	Nordic
Big Bug Alphabet Book	Milliken
Animal Tales	Milliken
3 Balloons: Alphabet, Numbers & Shapes	SWeDE
Arthur's Teacher Trouble	Broderbund
Harry & the Haunted House	Broderbund
Tortoise & the Hare	Broderbund
Little Monster at School	Broderbund
Arthur's Birthday	Broderbund
Countdown	Voyager

# NOTICE

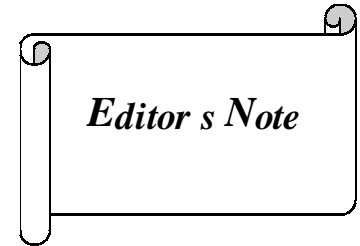
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**Happy  
Thanksgiving**

An update from last month ... Kira's Word Explorer can be found in the following places:

CompuServe -- Education/Sp Ed/Gifted/LD/ADD Forum  
America Online -- disABILITIES Forum  
Logic Gate (Tampa Bay area) -- 813-831-8125



Dear Friends,

## *Editor's Note*

DREAMMS for Kids, Inc. is proud to announce our new fundraising affiliation with Exceptional Parents Magazine! I remember first seeing this wonderful magazine nine years ago when our son was born, and I have been a subscriber ever since! Each month I look for that special parent who has had an experience just like mine. I never do meet them, but I consider them to be a friend, and share a very important part of their life. Welcome EP, your publication is an excellent source of information, and in the words of syndicated columnist Ann Landers, "...is must reading for all those with a handicapped child..."

Our newsletter readership is growing quickly, and our distribution is widening every day! Welcome to each and every one of you all over the country.... I truly enjoy chatting with you on the phone, and I am so very pleased to hear how our services are helping you to move into the exciting and beneficial world of computers and technology! Looking forward to sharing with you all again next month...

*Janet*



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