Jim Beatty , Chemistry Department, Ripon College.

Uninterruptible Power Systems for Your PC

Byte, April 1989, 14(4) 162-176. If you live in fear that the power to your PC will go out and you will lose your report or important data see this article. Twelve power systems are reviewed. Costs of a system range from $600 to about $2000. I have found my battery powered laptop a life saver during thunderstorms.

Monitor Life

The New York Times, Sunday, April 2, 1989, page F-19. Peter Lewis reviews screen dimmers for IBM compatible and Apple Macintosh computers. The screen dimmers are resident software programs which dim or blank tahe screen after a selected period of non-use. The screens are reactivated by hitting any key. I have one copy on order to prevent burn-in on a VGA monitor on an IBM compatible which is left on. An evaluation is forthcoming.

Linking Between the Mac and IBM Worlds

The New York Times, Sunday, June 19, 1989, page F-12. John Markoff offers an interesting and short review of the options in moving data from the two microcomputer worlds. The options are a mixture of software and hardware. We have used the Apple Talk option he discusses. It is low in cost and easy to use. Also see Byte, January 1989, 14(1) 317-325. These two articles complement each other and are worth filing.

Digitizing Tablets

Byte, January 1989, 14(1) 162-174. Twenty one IBM-PC digitizing tablets are reviewed. These tablets are for those who need high quality input of graphic data.

Full Spectrum Scanners

Byte, April 1989, 14(4) 189-194. Two full color scanners for the Mac and IBM worlds are evaluated. Cost is the order of $8000. This article offers a good introduction to available options in scanning.

Hand-Held Scanners

Byte, June 1989, 14(6) 187-191. Six scanners costing about $300 are evaluated. The cost is low enough that we are considering one for use in entering graphs, sketches, etc. into WordPerfect documents.

COVER STORY

Please see the cover for the figures from this article.If you need more information ,query professor Currie directly.

ChemIntosh

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ChemIntosh is a structure drawing aid for Macintosh computers. For chemists, this tool is so incredibly useful that it could be worth buying a Macintosh just to use it. While having some functional similarity to ChemDraw, the fact that ChemIntosh is a desk accessory, greatly adds to its versatility. With it, you can generate typeset quality structures of all sorts for inclusion in written articles, databases and presentation materials.

As with nearly all Macintosh programs, ChemIntosh is easy to use. A very complete palette of tools is used to create the structural parts. All the common rings, bond types, and stereochemical notations are included. Tools for rotation, inversion, resizing, alignment, and grouping are also present. Quite frankly in the one and one-half years of use, I have not encountered a structure or equation that could not be adequately

and easily drawn with it. Most of the tool characteristics such as default bond lengths, double bond spacing, wedge lengths or widths are easily customizable. And of course all installed fonts are available. The resulting graphic is easily copied to the clipboard and pasted into the currently active application. All the common applications, such as word processors or databases accept these structures and allow manipulation as needed. The structures are object graphics and take full advantage of the resolution of a postscript laser printer.

ChemIntosh is large for a desk accessory (36K) and uses a very large resource file, 360K. The DA itself must be either installed in the system file or accessed through a utility such as Suitcase II. The resource file may be anywhere but must be on-line during use. I use ChemIntosh conveniently on an Appletalk network with both components stored on the network server. Suitcase II is used to access the DA and a shareware utility, SetPaths, is used to transparently tell the system where to look for the resource file.

A second version of this program is known as ChemConnection. This desk accessory contains a full implementation of ChemIntosh but adds a structure translation tool for converting drawings to a text equivalent for on-line searches in Chemical Abstracts. Although I have not yet tried this feature on-line it's implementation is very convenient. One merely selects the drawing and clicks on the phone icon; the text equivalent is pasted on the clipboard ready to be sent by a communications program. The feature may be customized to give the desired translation into normalized or exact bond types.

ChemIntosh retails for $295 and ChemConnection for $395. Academic discounts are available. This is one of those "can't live without" programs that while not cheap is worth every penny of it.