

Gateway Amiga

"Put Up or Shut Up" time is rapidly approaching. The 2001 edition of the Gateway Amiga Show in St. Louis is about a month and a half away. Amiga, Inc. made a bunch of predictions at the Amiga Show in Australia, last fall, and those predictions will be coming due in St. Louis. In addition, Bill McEwen, in his most recent Amiga Executive Update, without saying anything specific, as usual, strongly implies that, counter to a lot of expectations, Amiga will, indeed, be ready to deliver on those promises at St. Louis. Let's hope so. If Amiga can deliver what it has promised and does really have the support of all the major players in the computer business they have implied, then the product will certainly be worth in-depth evaluation by those of us who have been waiting and watching.

However, with my usual conservatism, I must say that it is still too early to start holding your breath. If they really do deliver on the promise of Amiga DE being able to run on almost any CPU and also over most Operating Systems it could, potentially, make Amiga DE a viable competitor in the market place. The obvious reason for this being that it would not have to directly compete against the established systems, but could be purchased for use on those same systems, when it beneficial to do so. Let's face it, there are many Windoze users who do so, not because they don't know any better, or because it's what everyone else has, but because of the availability of both software and hardware to do what they want, not to mention cost. Many of them complain constantly about having to work with Windoze. Many of them

would be only too willing to purchase Amiga DE to try it out... if the price is reasonable enough not to scare people off. The next step, of course, is that there must be enough applications available that do, indeed, perform better on Amiga DE or are not available at all for any other OS, to insure Amiga DE's market penetration. Given all those conditions, Amiga DE could be a real winner in the marketplace.

A second potential advantage is, given the capability to be the OS for the full spectrum of digital appliances, as intended, I have read that it will probably be more advanced than the next generation of OSs for hand held computing devices, also an area where Microsoft's entry has, to date, been a dismal failure. Again, one can only hope that all of this will lead to broad usage and the accompanying economies of scale that will encourage even more people to acquire it. Of course, if it turns out that most of us decide we don't like the new system, none of this will matter anyway.

...Ronald Schwartz
From the Dayton Area Amiga Gazette, Newsletter of the AmiTech Amiga User Group, February, 2001

OS 3.9

Over the Christmas holiday, I got the chance to install and play with the new Amiga OS 3.9 (a gift to my father) I enjoy that a new OS revision is out, and that it adds to 3.5, though my opinion of the update itself is more reserved. I've heard a lot of opinion all over the spectrum, and almost all of it is valid. I can't fault Haage & Partner (which appears to be the only real force behind "classic" Amiga updates) for doing business, but their practices can sometimes be compared to a much larger software company with antitrust problems. The commercial 3.9 appeared before the free "Boing Bag 2" update to 3.5, which is unnecessary if you've bought 3.9. It may not be intentional, but some viewed that sequence as a ploy to squeeze more users into buying the upgrade. With the exception of a few bug fixes, most of the real change from 3.5 lies in all the extra software, nearly all of which was previously available as freeware, shareware, or commercial packages, and much of it is crippled or otherwise limited compared to the original versions. While there's nothing really wrong with this, as it gives the opportunity to boost business for the makers of that software, there's little indication that there are better versions available, short of reading the documentation for that particular software, and many

users have little to no inclination to pursue other software options when they get something seemingly for free. This little nugget of human nature is what has made Internet Explorer the dominant web browser.

For what it's worth, there's a lot to like about 3.9. The most obvious one is the price. What 3.9 provides over 3.5 is a much better deal at about \$40 than the \$70 to \$100 of older OS updates, though many of them offered new ROMs or more revolutionary changes. I think the software add-ons are good choices, from the standpoints of making the OS look comparable to others, and general ease of use. Perhaps a lot of the enhancements aren't much more

than eye candy, or might be better handled a different way, such as an expanded version of Multiview instead of a suite of different image, video, and sound players. Still, I believe what is there is good, and a nice deal for what you get out of it.

Talk towards ya later.

...Eric W. Schwartz
From the Dayton Area Amiga Gazette,
Newsletter of the AmiTech Amiga User Group,
January, 2001

AmigaMCCC News

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April Calendar

- April 9 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Ctr.
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
- April 9 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 10:00 pm — TGI Friday's
Loop 820 & Bedford Euless Road
- April 19 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — SMU Building
Collins Blvd. & International Pkwy, Richardson
- April 28 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

Extravaganza 2001

I am pleased to announce the club's fifteenth annual computer show. The show will be held on Saturday, October 20th at the Brookside Convention Center. The details are being worked out by the Club's board of directors and will be released soon. Mark your calendars and watch for the details!

...Mark Stodola
Vice President, MCCC

