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Volume 1 Number 2 March 1991

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

Jim Schwartz

M any readers have requested that we make our "TEXTechography" available on disk in ASCII format. Our "TEXTechnician," Editor Arthur A. Molitierno, and I have had numerous discussions regarding not only that but also about putting the entire TEXT Technology on disk.

Beginning this month, "TEXTechography" will be made available to subscribers for \$6.00 per issue. This price includes first-class postage and handling and your choice of an MS-DOS formatted disk in either 3.5" (720k) or 5.25" (360k) size. You *MUST BE A SUBSCRIBER* to receive "TEXTechography" on disk, and your payment must be either in cash or by check—no purchase orders, please, since they cost us almost as much to process as the amount you are paying for the on-disk "TEXTechography."

As far as our putting the complete *TEXT Technology* on disk, I have some reservations. First, one of the reasons for *TEXT Technology* is to show how a newsletter can be produced from one's desktop. Second, I'm too vain to give up complete contextual control. I enjoy laying text and graphics down in Aldus *PageMaker*. It's theraputic, a welcomed break from teaching.

This doesn't mean that someday *TEXT Technology* won't be available electronically. It just means that for now, enjoy the issues as they come, when they come. If you ever experience problems with receiving your issues (January, March, May, July, September, and November), give our editorial assistant, Stephanie, a call. She will correct the problem. Thanks.



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TEXTTechnology is composed on a Northgate Elegance 486-25 computer and printed using an IBM Personal Page Printer II Postscript printer. Images and text are scanned with a Hewlett-Packard ScanJet Plus scanner. Software used includes Microsoft Windows, Aldus PageMaker, Caere Omnipage 386, WordPerfect, H-P Scan Gallery, Micrografx Designer, CorelDRAWI, Lotus Ami Professional, and Symantec's O&A.



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COLUMN ONE

Eric Johnson

Icon for the Macintosh

I con is a relatively new computer programming language that is well suited for text processing. The name "Icon" is not an acronym; it's an appropriate name for a language that can represent and generate strings of characters that serve symbolic functions as text, music, or graphics. It is an accident that the word "icon" is also used for the little pictorial representations on the screens of the Macintosh and other computers.

The *Icon* programming language was developed by Ralph Griswold and others at the University of Arizona. It is obviously related to the *SNOBOL4* language which Griswold and others created at Bell Laboratories. *Icon* (like *SNOBOL4*) is designed expressly for non-numeric computing: searching and analyzing texts, formatting and converting files, and generating strings (of music or poetry).

Although it was first developed for UNIX systems, *Icon* is now available in implementations for virtually all mainframe operating systems and for all microcomputers with sufficient processing power and memory. There is a good MS-DOS version of *Icon*, and a special version was implemented for 386 and 486 machines; the best *Icon* for the Macintosh is called *ProIcon*.

Most of the implementations of *Icon* are public domain and are available for a modest distribution fee from the University of Arizona, although *ProIcon* was commercially developed and is sold for \$175. Far and away, the most interesting version of *Icon* is *ProIcon* for the Macintosh.

Users launch *ProIcon* by double clicking on its icon. A logo briefly appears, and then users are given either an open untitled file in which to

create an *Icon* program, or they are given a menu from which a program file can be selected. Programs in *Icon* need not be long. On the next page is the complete *Icon* code to count the number of words in a file (see *FIG*: 1).

The fact that *Icon* programs can be written in lower-case letters—reserved words like "while" and "do" must be lower case—identifies it as a language developed after the days when the only real computing was done on mainframes. While all mainframe computers have been able to store and print both upper- and lower-case letters for years and years, it is still often a terrific bother to program in lower case on a mainframe.

Perhaps because compilers for all three languages were developed at about the same time, *Icon*, *Pascal*, and *C* programs look somewhat alike. Like *Pascal* and *C*, *Icon* is a structured language that uses control structures such as "while...do..." to direct the execution of the program.

The sample program to count words works like this. An *Icon* program always starts with a main procedure; other procedures may be called from there, although there are no others in this program. The variable "letters" holds the characters that can be parts of words: the 26 lower-case letters (supplied by the keyword "&lcase") and the 26 upper-case letters (supplied by the keyword "&ucase") plus the numbers, apostrophe, and hyphen. A backslash must be used before the apostrophe to indicate that it is not an enclosing single quotation mark.

The program's fourth line is a "while...do..." loop that controls the rest of the program, except for the last two lines. It works in this way: while input can be read into the variable called "line," and

Fig. 1: ICON program code.

each time input is read, *do* the following. Each time variables "position" and "position2" indicate the starting and ending position of an uninterrupted span of letters (that is, when they indicate a word), one is added to "wcount." When there is no further input to read, the program drops out of the loop, writes the statement telling the number of words counted, and then stops.

Prolcon programs are very straight forward to run on the Macintosh. A menu can be pulled down to select a file for input. Other menus can be used to select various compiling options. Then another menu is used to run the program. A window opens to show the output. Using this article as input produces the following result: "There are 970 words in the ms." Using a Macintosh IIcx which has a 68030 processor, the program runs at a blinding speed, and the output appears almost at once.

If there were a blunder in the program, an error window would pop up with a message. When the user returns to edit the program, the cursor is put on or near the offending line. Help is available online, either from a menu or by highlighting a keyword in the program and asking for help on that specific topic.

It would be very easy to edit the sample program to make it print each word as it is found: only a single line of *Icon* coding would have to be added. However, a *ProIcon* program that writes a series of lines directly to the screen of a Macintosh will run rather slowly. It would also be easy to collect the words as they are found and sort them alphabetically before output.

In addition to its performance on a Macintosh, *ProIcon* is interesting because it has a series of extensions to the *Icon* language: 16 window functions and 12 other functions. From within an *Icon* program, the user can open, close, move, and arrange windows; the user can launch other applications, change the font in a window, create a dialog box, get keyboard input, or use trigonometric functions.

More information about implementations of *Icon* can be obtained from *Icon* Project, Department of Computer Science, Gould-Simpson Building, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721.

* * * * * * * * * *

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THE RESEARCH INTERN

Paul A. Fritz and Jeffrey D. Peters

The "Paperless" Desk

S tudents' study desks may resemble Alpine peaks ripe for an avalanche. Pity a student cramming for exams amid a desktop weighted down by syllabi, class notes, 3x5 index cards, ragged spiral notebooks, and form letters from Dean, Registrar, Bursar, and Parking Services (Hockey, 1983; 1985). The computer could help students control this "data storm." Using a computer as an "electronic desk," students could function in a class more efficiently, manage research more productively, and prepare systematically for their careers.

Class Notes

Students who manage lecture notes effectively generally earn good grades. Instead of copying down "everything the professor says," the real skill in note taking lies in revising them (Gerrard, 1987).

During lectures, students should jot down class notes on scratch paper. Immediately after a lecture students revise their notes at the campus computer lab or their residences. Students make a file for each course and revise the lecture into "cepts"—the smallest building block of a concept.

As an example, a professor's lecture may contain this "cept": "Proofs of proximity." These arguments are recognized by audience members as "in-statements"—known by a specific audience sub-group. The more proximity proofs a speaker uses, the higher the chances of audience compliance with the speaker's goals.

For instance, auto workers know the expression "the job you save may be your own" as an implied plea to purchase American-made cars. A union leader may use this phrase when speaking in Detroit but may omit it when speaking to a free

trade organization in Washington, D.C. This "cept" would be revised on computer to read:

Proximity: "in-language" —> compliance Detroit = "save job"

Each cept should contain the following: an identification or definition; an explanation showing how the term works; an illustration in the student's own words. Each cept is ranked and ordered into main and subheadings of larger categories (called "concepts," of course) mentioned in the lecture. Thus, a student's notes may look like this:

[CONCEPT] Appeals to involuntary attention:

[CEPT] Significance proofs: appeals to universal audience flags/freedom

[CEPT] Proximity: "in-language" —> compliance Detroit = "save job"

[CEPT] Concrete proofs: picture what CAN happen to audience—car accident drunk driving

Studying Class Notes

Daily review of notes helps students avoid last minute "cram" sessions. Our students blanch visibly when we ask them to read lecture notes over each day prior to class. However, if notes are correctly abstracted, the daily review can take just a few minutes and exponentially reduce exam preparation time.

Students could reduce exam study time by making a small "memory chart" file of each course's notes. Students duplicate the "cepts" notes above. They erase all definitions and illustrations and leave only the term names. Now they can scroll through the memory chart testing

their recall of definitions, explanations, and illustrations. When students draw a blank on a term, they "window" the master cept file below the memory file on the terminal screen and restudy the troublesome term.

Data Storage

Term papers generally come due during the last week of a quarter. This deadline couples with approaching exam dates and increases student stress. More to the point, student research frequently is viewed as a detached exercise to demonstrate documentation techniques. Once the papers are graded, students may toss the research paper away.

We suggest a different orientation for student research. Universities, at the start of students' careers, should ask them to identify six to eight broad, socially significant topics for research throughout their college careers. They read and abstract information about these topics and then write research papers drawn from this growing store of current information. Students should read a source, make an abstract of the information, and fold it into their growing databases. This exercise also trains students using online databases since many colleges now link student computers to their library card files and periodical collections (Purcell, 1988).

Each entry of the database could be stored with a ready-made citation heading on the top of the abstract file. This heading could be copied to the "References Cited" section of the student's term paper. The heading could be written in both American Psychological Association or Modern Language Association formats, ready for easy insertion to a waiting term paper, if the student could not afford more sophisticated bibliographic database programs.

If you are an academic advisor, you could help students make wiser vocational choices if you could view students' databases to learn of their reading interests. Instead of intuiting what courses a student may need for career preparation, the advisor could survey the quality and direction of the student's abstracts and make suggestions based on student interest. Instead of

charting students on "career paths," advisors could begin to chart them on "interest paths."

Networks

As campuses become larger, one way to build a sense of campus community may be through computer bulletin boards and e-mail. The bulletin board, of course, would give students a chance to communicate with each other and also allow students to communicate with their professors (Robbat, 1986). As a student studies lecture notes, he or she may ask, "I wonder what Doc Jones means by this idea? I don't get it!" At that point, instead of waiting until the morning to call Professor Jones, the student's question could be rewarded immediately. The student types out a memo to the professor and sends the question to the prof by e-mail. This written communique would be a good exercise in clarifying the question in the student's own mind.

Administrative Functions

The flood of catalogues, semester course offerings, and form letters could be stemmed if students could link directly to the college's central administration. If students had a course schedule file shipped to their terminals at registration time, they could select courses according to time preferences and register for courses of the next term. If a student's financial account at the university were current, the course fees could simply be charged to his or her account.

"Will this course fit my degree program?" is a common question juniors and seniors ask advisors. As students approach graduation, they must select courses that fit departmental and university requirements for the baccalaureate. The university audit of final courses would save both students and advisors the time and frustration of filling out final "check sheets" as students prepare for graduation. Several degree audit programs exist. An excellent one is the Miami (of Ohio) University Audit program which enables students to check course degree progress as they move from freshman to senior level. If this progress could be checked at the student's terminal, the student might be spared unpleasant surprises at graduation.

Career Focus

Students could make a file or subdirectory of vocational concerns. A small file could be made of sample term papers to illustrate their writing skills. Another file could contain letters of reference. Another could contain lists of standardized test scores (GMAT, LSAT, GRE, etc.), lists of courses taken arranged by general topic, and grades. Still another file could contain descriptions of extracurricular activities and intern projects. Of course the students would include their resumes in the career file. Students could also create a file of letter templates for Contact letters, potential contacts' addresses, "thank you" letters, and follow up letters. The flexibility of this file arrangement permits students to compile a vocational "portfolio" of credentials appropriate to different job recruiters.

How To Get This Idea Started

One way to generate interest in the "electric desk" is to involve the students themselves. Announce a campus-wide contest for proposals on "How to Eliminate Paper on Campus." Students would need to estimate the dollar savings achieved if their proposals were implemented (Groff, 1983; Skarulis & Thomas, 1980). Play off inter-university rivals. Two neighboring universities could compete and offer a substantial prize (say \$500 worth of tuition vouchers) to winning proposals. The contest could be a way for students to display their problem-solving skills to the community.

Professors may want to submit similar proposals for industrial funding. Tandy corporation encourages teaching experiments using computers. Of special interest in academic literature is analysis of qualitative data generated in class settings (Dow, 1982). For more information, contact Tandy Educational Grants Program, 1600 One Tandy Center, Fort Worth, Texas 76102 for the grant topic "Using Microcomputers for Classroom Management to Increase Teacher/Student Productivity. The Dean of the Faculty at University of Arizona (Kolodny, 1991) conducts an annual contest among her departments to propose innovative ways to move professors' classrooms into the 21st century.

A paperless desk would benefit professors, students, and administrators. After all—students are not the only academics who might encounter a desktop avalanche.

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THE CLIPBOARD

Ian Richmond

Parlez-vous . . .

P arlez-vous français? Sprechen Sie Deutsche? ¿Habla Usted español? Whichever language you speak, if it's not English, entering it from your MS-DOS computer's keyboard can be a royal pain in the derrière.

If you use only a wordprocessor, you may not have much of a problem. *Nota Bene* and *WordPerfect*, in particular, have superb foreigntext handling capabilities, including correct alphabetical sorting, spellchecking, and keyboard redefinition. Even the inexpensive *PC-Write* has a well-designed method for entering foreign characters from the keyboard. Most others let you figure out how to enter foreign text for yourself.

Even if your wordprocessor is a plurilinguist's dream, once you leave it to run another application—a database, outliner, or note-taking program—you'll find that computing is still very much an English-only world. Most often, such programs provide no facility for entering foreign text from the keyboard, short of pressing the Alt key while laboriously typing each character's ASCII code on the numeric keypad.

Some of these programs do claim to "facilitate" (read: "grudgingly allow") entry of foreign characters. For example, *GrandView* lets you call up an ASCII chart from a menu three levels deep and then select the character you want by highlighting it or typing its ASCII code. The recently released version 2 of this program greatly improves its predecessor by incorporating recognition of the MS-DOS foreign keyboards.

On the other hand, Pro/Tem's *Notebook II* wants no truck with any un-American keyboards. It makes you define Alt-function-key combinations or else use a special entry mode in which you can use the Alt-numberpad method or else enter the

character from one of the MS-DOS keyboards. Of course, until you exit from the special entry mode, the normal editing keys, including the cursor keys, Backspace, Delete, and Enter, do nothing but place their corresponding ASCII symbols into your text. So don't try to correct any typing errors.

For typing an occasional foreign character, this method may be barely acceptable, but if you take notes mainly from foreign-language sources, you will quickly tire of it. I used *Notebook II* for about two weeks before retiring it in disgust. Obviously unrepentant, Pro/Tem recently sent me an upgrade notice promising that the new version allows even more definable Alt key combinations. Let's see. Is "é" Alt-E, or is it Alt-A for "acute"? No, that's "à", unless it's Alt-F5... I'll pass, thanks.

It's a mystery to me why some programmers take such pains to prevent people from using the foreign-language keyboards included with most versions of MS-DOS. The beauty of these keyboards is that they enable those working in a European language other than English to use the same keyboard with all their applications. You no longer have to learn one keyboard layout for, say, WordPerfect, a set of arcane Alt key combinations for your note-taking program, and yet another set of Alt or Ctrl macros for your outliner.

As long as your applications support the DOS foreign keyboards, you need only load the one you want through your AUTOEXEC batch file. With so many programs available that do support these keyboards, it's absurd to waste time with one that makes you use a crib sheet or mess around with special entry modes just so you can use it to do what you bought it for.

One drawback to the MS-DOS keyboards is that you can't reconfigure them, unless you're familiar with assembly language and the wondrous ways of DOS's DEBUG program. A perhaps more serious problem for most people is that the lack of several common symbols on the foreign-language keyboards requires you to switch back and forth between the default US layout and the selected foreign one. If the latter is not in the familiar QWERTY format, a lot of typos can result from this switching.

Despite these problems, you may well find that a DOS keyboard is just what you need. If the only foreign language you use is French and you like the exoticism of the AZERTY keyboard layout, then DOS's French keyboard is just the ticket. Similarly, if you need only French but hate switching between AZERTY and QWERTY layouts, then try the Canadian-French version. Don't, however, expect to type any German or Spanish.

Neither of these keyboards will place an umlaut on anything but the three vowels "eiu." On the other hand, if you choose the German keyboard, you can't type some of the French characters. Selecting the Swiss keyboard forces you to choose between Swiss-French and Swiss-German and also gives you a layout that is neither quite AZERTY nor quite QWERTY.

The Spanish and Latin-American keyboards, on the other hand, by making liberal use of "dead" accent keys, are able to produce most, if not all, of the characters you need for the main European languages and keep the familiar QWERTY layout besides. If none of the DOS keyboards quite meet your needs or taste, another possibility is to use a keyboard configuration program. One of the best of these is produced by a Canadian company with the unlikely name of Mikholen Answerk (honest!). Called *Interpose*, the program can be obtained from the publisher as part of a \$35-dollar "Sample Pack." *Interpose* alone is worth more than the cost of the package.

With it, you can define "dead" accent keys as Ctrl or Alt combinations. This method gives you a keyboard able to produce any of the foreign characters in the Extended ASCII set without affecting the default US keyboard. This means you don't have to switch keyboards when you need a character—like a backslash, a square bracket, an angle bracket, or a curly brace—that is unavailable on most DOS foreign keyboards.

Working with foreign-language text on MS-DOS computers is not nearly as easy or convenient as it should be, although we've come a long way compared to five or six years ago. Whether we progress much further depends on how loudly we foreign-language users protest the obstacles programmers throw in our path.

For an alternate keyboard-configuration program, contact Mikholen Answerk Computer Systems Inc. at 63 Glynn Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1K 1S7 CANADA (ph. 613-749-7214).

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Articles & Reviews Welcome

TEXT Technology welcomes article submissions that pertain to wordprocessing, text-analysis, and research applications in professional writing situations, either corporate or academic. Also, hardware and software reviews are encouraged, but please contact Jim Schwartz before submitting them (call Jim at 419-586-2365 or send him a note at JSCHWARTZ@WSU.BITNET). Manuscripts should be submitted on MS-DOS 5¼" or 3½" floppy disks, through BITNET, or in hardcopy format.

PERFECT TECHNIQUES

Guy Pace

Converting Documents from TEX to WordPerfect

I learned that converting

text files is more difficult

than just stringing together

a bunch of

search-and-replace

commands.

y least favorite activity is to take some text file, strip out hard carriage returns, and reformat the file for my wordprocessor. When I first started using *WordStar*, in 19—*mumble mumble*—I would take plain text and convert it to a *WordStar* document, hard return by hard return.

The task was boring and repetitive, even when I used the then powerful capabilities of *WordStar* to strip files. Someone came along with a program

that stripped WordStar files of formatting code and rebuilt text files for WordStar. That worked well enough. When WordPerfect and Microsoft Word and XYWrite, Write, Volkswriter, etc. came along, we needed more sophisticated software for converting one wordprocessor format to

another and back. My personal favorite for document conversion is *Software Bridge*. It is relatively easy to use and performs beautifully.

However, conversion programs do not solve all the problems. In the university environment, or any other mainframe environment where *TEX* and its kin exist, we still deal with text files. Like *PerfectWriter* files, *TEX* files are straight ASCII files with formatting markup, similar to type-setting codes, mixed in with the text.

For instance, to center the word "the" on a line by itself in *TEX*, you would use the markup:

\centerline{the}

Of course, WordPerfect doesn't understand this at all. Software Bridge looks at TEX files as ASCII

files. If you belong to the *TEX* User Group (TUG), you know there are programs available to convert *WordPerfect* 5.0 and 5.1 files to plain *TEX*, *LaTEX*, and *TEXT1*. There is nothing available I know of to change *TEX* to or from *WordPerfect*.

Recently, a professor dropped in with about 20 disks full of text files created in *TEX* which were downloaded from a mainframe. Her concern was to be able to take these files, her doctoral disser-

tation and supporting research, and edit them into research papers for appropriate journals. She was also concerned because it cost more to print from the mainframe than to preview on the PC.

My solution to the problem was to create a macro in

WordPerfect 5.1 that converted most of the markup in the files to WordPerfect codes. I created a single macro to accomplish the job, but a series of macros might be easier to create and debug.

Here's how I approached the problem. I created a macro (Ctrl-F10) called CLEANUP. The initial macro moved to the top of the file, then executed a loop that searched for "\vs," which is markup for vertical skip, deleted to the end of the line, and lastly inserted two hard returns. For a starting point I saved the macro (Ctrl-F10) and then edited it (Ctrl-F10, CLEANUP, 2).

I learned that converting text files is more difficult than just stringing together a bunch of searchand-replace commands. I was more successful with a series of search commands, followed by formatting commands. The routines I created repeated themselves until the job was done. The structured looping of the macro reminded me of BASIC programs I wrote a long time ago.

My macro program looked like this:

{;}This cleans up most of the markups in TEX and TEX-style files. {PROMPT}We're on out way!~ {DISPLAY OFF}

{Home}{Home}{Up}
{ON NOT FOUND}{GO}Resume~~
{LABEL}Loop~
{Search}\vs{Search}{Home}{Left}{Del to}
EOL}{Enter}{Enter}
{Go}Loop~
{LABEL}Resume~

{Home}{Home}{Up}
{ON NOT FOUND}{GO}Again~~
{LABEL}Loop1~
 {Search}\centerline{{Search}}
 {Block}{LeftSearch}\{Search}{Left}{Del}y
 {Block}{Search}}{Search}{Center}y{Left}{Del}
{Go}Loop1~
{LABEL}Again~

{Home}{Home}{Up}
{ON NOT FOUND}{GO}DOIT~~
{LABEL}Loop2~
{Search}\it{Search}
{Block}{LeftSearch}\{Search}{Left}{Del}y
{Block}{Search}}{Search}{Font}24{Left}{Del}
{Go}Loop2~
{LABEL}DOIT~

{Home}{Home}{Up} {Replace}n\newpage{Search}{HPg}{Search} {Home}{Home}{Up}

Loop searches through the document for "\vs." When Loop find "\vs," it goes to the left column, deletes the line, and inserts hard returns. Loop1 searches for markups that center a line. Loop1 finds the markups, erases them, blocks the target text, enters in the WordPerfect command, and kills the closing brace.

Loop2 looks for italics markups. When Loop2 finds the italics markups, it erases the markups, blocks the target text, italicizes it, and then kills the closing brace.

The program's last routine goes to the top of the file and executes a simple global replace of "\newpage" with a hard page command.

The "{Go}Loop~" commands provide program looping capability. The "{ON NOT FOUND}{GO}DOIT~~" construction controls program flow on "not found" error conditions. Please note the use of the tilde in the command syntax. The commands are accessible from the macro editor in WordPerfect by menu with Ctrl-PageUp. Macro command reference in the WordPerfect manual begins on page 845, in Appendix K.

As I mentioned earlier, it would be easier to test and debug a series of macros. Test each routine for accuracy before adding it to the macro "chain." With that approach, each of the above routines could be in a separate macro, with a "{CHAIN MACRO}Whatever~" command at the end of each. The first macro runs and then calls subsequent macros until the entire process is complete.

I did add more than one "{BELL}" to my macro so I could track its progress. The "{PROMPT}" command flashed its message too quickly. The audible bells were a better sign of progress. For a specific set of documents as with my professor friend, a custom macro takes the tedium out of converting files.

Now, to get *WordPerfect* to make the perfect cup of coffee in the morning. . . .

* * * * * * * * * *

Guy L. Pace lives in Pullman, WA, with his wife and family. He is an Information Services Evaluator at Washington State University, Cooperative Extension. A large part of his job involves helping people learn to better use computer hardware and software. His degree is in public relations, and he was a journalist (off and on) for 15 years. His teenagers think he is weird, so he must be normal.

TEXTechography

Arthur A. Molitierno

[Ed Note: Unless otherwise stated, all articles are from the USA. All programs and software are italicized. For all journals, the "series," "issue" and "number" are labeled as "n.," with the number, series, or issue of the journal following the abbreviation. In all cases, the volume precedes "n." Each issue's bibliography is also available on 3.5" (720k) and 5.25" (360k) diskettes in MS-DOS format to TEXT Technology subscribers for \$6.00 US, cash or check—no purchase orders, please.]

Abbreviations:

Countries

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