October 2018 Edition

The President's Corner
By Michael Current

Recently, as a result of suddenly and unexpectedly incurrig a bandwidth overcharge for my website, I found myself taking a close look at the web server log files to see what was going on.

I have dealt with web server log files before, so I was not unfamiliar with what to look for. The main problem appeared to be a glitch in how the server was set up, allowing infintely inaccurate file requests to return actual files.

Not a security breach, but it meant that bots were soaking up a lot of bandwidth on the same files, over and over again. I was able to solve that problem by adjusting server settings.

The other remarkable thing was the sheer volume of hits that were obviously simple hack attempts.

The world appears to be full of automated bots that look around for common login pages on common web server providers, to then turn around to hack into. Again, no security breaches, but it's amazing to see what any simple web server faces in terms of perpetual hacking attempts.

Now, almost half of my storage space is used up by the log files which are primarily recording these automated hacking attempts. The hidden cost of simply being on the Web with your own site!

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, on Friday, October 12, 2018.

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Treasurer's Report
By Gregory Leiner

NOTE: Due to the absence of the Treasurer in September, there will be no Treasurer's Report.
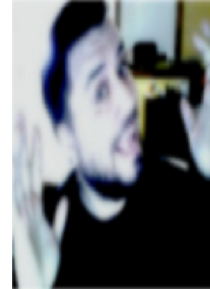
We apologize for the inconvenience.

The Treasurer's Report will be back in the next Newsletter from SPACE.

Message from Captain Irata:

When I was your age, Pluto was still a planet and Atari was a household name! At least you were nearer to an Atari game system! Travel to that instead."

HOO-RAH!

Secretary's Report
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Hello, again! It is time for another Secretary's Report. Here is what we had to say last time.

The meeting commenced at 7:30 PM, on Friday, September 7, 2018. Again, it was just Glen and myself. So, it was small, but we did have a time to talk about the DOM.

I will go into more about the DOM in the A8 DOM Review. But, it is a good one.

Also, the Membership Count stands at nine paid-up members, and I myself will pay my dues in October anyway, since they are due then. Also, the SPACE Election is coming up next month. So, be prepared. You may be one of the next Officers in 2019!

The existing meeting adjourned at 7:31 PM, lasting only one minute. But, we stayed until 8:30 PM, to converse casually about things going on. Other than that, nothing else special happened.

So, this is the end of the Secretary's Report. I will say *"sayonara,"* and also, in the words of the great Stan Lee…

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

Although the MOS 6502 microprocessor chip (the CPU used in the Atari 8-bit microcomputers) is an 8-bit chip, with six registers, the program counter register itself on the 6502 is 16-bit, or two bytes in size.

BE THERE!

AtGames® Announces Blast! Family of Products

Company to Deliver Value-Priced Combination High-Definition HDMI Dongle and Wireless Controller Hardware Packed With Classic Video Games

LOS ANGELES, September 25, 2018(Newswire.com) - AtGames® Digital Media Inc., a leader in interactive entertainment products, today announced their latest classic video gaming releases: the Blast! family of products.

The Blast! series of HDMI dongle and wireless controller bundles features eight to 20 classic titles per model. These new hardware products will be available at major U.S. and Canada retailers on Oct. 1, 2018.

"This upcoming range of products represents an unprecedented value for families and gamers of all types," says Dr. Ping-Kang Hsiung, CEO of AtGames. "With a wide selection of innovative, expandable HDMI dongle and wireless controller products with fun-to-play games of every type, there's truly something here for everyone."

The Blast! family includes the Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 1, Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 2, Activision Flashback Blast!, Legends Flashback Blast! and Bandai Namco Flashback Blast!, all of which come with a USB-powered HDMI dongle that plugs directly into the TV and an ergonomic six-button wireless gamepad. The Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 3 swaps the wireless gamepad for a pair of wireless game paddles, which are specially optimized for its selection of classic paddle and ball games.

Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 1 features 20 Atari 2600 classics like Centipede, Millipede and Yars' Revenge. Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 2 features 20 Atari 2600 classics like Adventure, Asteroids and Missile Command.

Atari Flashback Blast! Vol. 3. features 20 Atari 2600 paddle-based classics like Breakout, Pong and Warlords. The Activision Flashback Blast! features 20 of the most iconic Activision home classics, including Pitfall!, H.E.R.O. and River Raid.

The Legends Flashback Blast! features Space Invaders and an additional 11 favorites like Burnin' Rubber and Jungle Hunt. The Bandai Namco Flashback Blast! features eight arcade mainstays, including Pac-Man, Galaga and Dig Dug.

Every Blast! includes high-definition video output, an intuitive menu system, save and resume game functionality and the ability to rewind a game in progress to recover from a play misstep. An optional second wireless gamepad can be purchased for games that support two players.

Blast! family products retail for $19.99-$39.99.

About AtGames

AtGames Digital Media Inc. (http://www.atgames.net) is a leader in innovative consumer-oriented interactive entertainment products. The company leverages the latest technology to develop and publish its best-selling classic video game products for worldwide distribution. AtGames is based in Los Angeles, with international offices in Taipei and Shenzhen.

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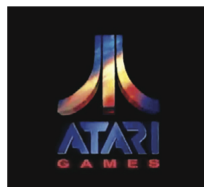
Atari 8-bit DOM Review
By Steven Peck

Well, almost three months until the end of 2018. Nothing surprises me about that anymore. But, here we are with yet another A8 DOM Review.

With that, I will just get into the Review.

October 2018 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM, "Freestyle," is an intro by Emkay that shows a picture of a beautifully-rendered woman with wings, great music, and an animated ticker. This must have been done with RastaConverter, due to the colorful graphics.

It's brilliant. Nothing short of angelic-looking. Very impressive work! Kudos to Emkay for a job well done. I will score accordingly.

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
Sound:	10
SCORE:	30/30 (perfect score)

DotPlot is a demo that shows animated dots moving in geometric patterns. It looks really cool, too. I would love to see something like this with music set to it. But, that's cool. It still really looks nice.

So, this is really spectacular, too. Again, many kudos to the artist/programmer who created it.

Graphics:	8
Animation:	9
SCORE:	17/20

"Atari Goes On!" It does go on and on, too. This is the next file on the disk. It is music by Zdenek Eisenhammer. It is very creative, I must say. It plays at double-speed, in stereo, and sounds great!

I assume that this is a POKEY tune, but I am not so sure. I also love the fade-out. Very nice.

TOTAL:	10/10 (perfect score)

"Aquanka," the next file, is a picture. It reminds me of Atlantis, sunk under the ocean. It also shows a deep-sea diver in the background, a temple, statues, and they are brandishing what look like weapons.

It is quite interesting. I think that, graphically, it could look better. It does have a striking look, though. It is cool. Here is my score:

TOTAL:	7/10

There is another file after this, called "Don't Panic!" It reminds me of the early scenes from the classic movie "Heavy Metal," where the astronaut with the Loc-Nar enters Earth's atmosphere with a car from the space shuttle. Here's what I think.

It is beautifully rendered, great range of color, funny premise, and it's magnificent. I love this rendering. The "DON"T PANIC!"sign is a hoot. So, again, I extend my kudos to whomever rendered this. It is really cool.

TOTAL:	9/10

"Deszczownik" is a game, coded by Kris3D. It shows a cat and it looks like you need to catch letters falling from the sky. I really don't know what it means, since it is in Polish. But, it sounds and looks interesting.

Graphics:	8
Sound:	10

Animation:	8
Gameplay:	7
SCORE:	33/40

The final file on Side A of this DOM is called "K Jak," by XXL. You play a kayaker, and you must get through a slalom course in the water with your kayak. I like this game. It's cool, sort of difficult, and has great promise.

It is simple in design, yet harder to play than that. Again, I express my utmost kudos to XXL and his great game. Here is where I score.

Graphics:	8
Animation:	8
Gameplay:	9
Sound:	9
TOTAL:	34/40

Side B:

The last file on this disk, "Minotaur," encompasses the entire B side of the DOM. It is a maze game, and you have to find your way through the maze. Except for one thing. Most of the maze is dark.

You have to go through the maze and illuminate it. Once you go through a darker part of the maze, it stays illuminated, and if you have blocked your self off, you can retrace your steps by pressing the fire button and staring over again.

There is a time limit. The less time you take, the better. It is an interesting game, and I found the way out, but I do not know how to advance to the next level. I do not know if the mazes are random or not, but it looks cool with a cool soundtrack.

It is challenging enough. would love to know how to get to the next maze, if there is a next one after the one that I did. Here's my score.

Graphics:	7
Gameplay:	10
Sound:	9
Animation:	9
SCORE:	35/40

So, that's all she wrote, folks! We are done with the DOM Review for the A8. Until next month, carpe diem, fellow Atarians! Bye, now!

GET INVOLVED!

WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES!

The next SPACE meeting will commence on Friday, October 12, 2018, at 7:30 PM.

We hope to see you there. Thanks!

The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.
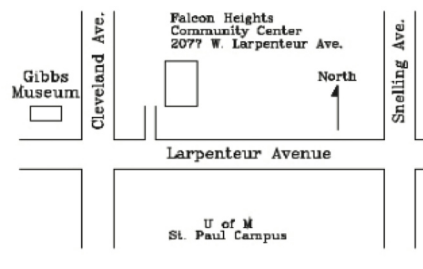
S.P.A.C.E.

c/o Gregory Leitner
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Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076-3037

DISCLAIMER:

SPACE BBS NOTICE:

The SPACE bulletin board service (BBS) is currently offline. We apologize for the inconvenience and hope to have it back online in the future.

NOTICE FOR AUTHORS OF SPACE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:

Articles meant for newsletter publication must be receive by the SPACE Newsletter Editor by two weeks prior to the start of the next scheduled SPACE Meeting. Thank you for your understanding on this.