Window Manager / Brian Livingston

Users reply with some useful tips and tricks on Windows 3.1

Now that Windows 3.1 has been available for a few weeks, I've been getting good pieces of information on it. In this column, I report the feedback on several important points.

CHEATING AT SOLITAIRE. I described on April 6 how you can use an undocumented feature of Windows Solitaire to win almost every time — hold down Ctrl+Shift+Alt while turning the deck in a Draw Three game, and the cards actually turn over one at a time without counting against you.

Since that time, I've learned that a "back door" is also programmed into Minesweeper, the other game that comes with Windows 3.1.

First, use the Control Panel to change your Desktop color to black, in order to see this trick. Minimize all your applications, so the upper-left corner of your screen is visible. Then start a new Minesweeper game. Move your mouse pointer into the playing area, then (on your keyboard) type "xyzzy" and press Enter. Press the Shift key and move your mouse slightly. A single white pixel will light up in the upper-left corner of your screen if your mouse pointer is on a "safe" square. If it's over a mine, the pixel goes out. This little "spy" will guide you safely through every game.

Both of these cheating tricks are explained in *Winning!*, a book of tips on the games in the three Microsoft Entertainment Packs. The $14.95 book is by John Hedtke and published by Peachpit Press, which can be reached at (510) 548-4393.

Another book I've been having fun with lately is *Stupid Windows Tricks*, by Bob LeVitus and Ed Tittle. Somehow an actually useful program crept into the book/disk set: Wallpaper Randomizer, which switches your wallpaper every time you start your PC, so you don't get bored with the same old desktop.

The other programs in this book might earn the title of Windows Nonproductivity Pack: a video poker game, an app that plays sounds through your speaker, even "roaches" that hide beneath your windows and scurry for cover when you move them. The $19.95 book is published by Addison-Wesley, which can be reached at (617) 944-3700.

Brian Livingston is the author of Windows 3.1 Secrets *(IDG Books). Send comments by MCI Mail to 420-0583, by CompuServe to 70053,2035, or by fax to (206) 282-1248.*

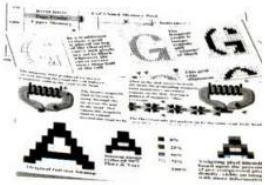
uniquely readable tutorials, clear explanations of complex technology, important benchmarks, insightful commentary, and critical analysis of this vital industry.

Spanning the period from 1986 through 1990, Steve's first five years of Infoworld TechTalk columns have been assembled into a comprehensively cross-indexed, limited-edition five volume set, to create this historic collector's edition anthology.

The five-year cumulative topical index makes finding columns on any subject quick and simple. All past columns describing "protected mode", "microprogramming", "multithreading", "optimization", ISA, EISA, EMS, XMS, or virtually any other PC industry subject can be located in just seconds. Steve created more than 80 new diagrams especially for this anthology to further clarify the more complex technical topics.

free pH-balanced archival-grade paper to last forever. For just $24.95 (plus $5 shipping and handling) this acclaimed guide to the PC industry can be yours to keep and reference for years to come.

Order one set for yourself and additional sets for anyone who's struggling to grasp the incredibly fast-paced PC industry. Call toll free, or return payment with the coupon below to receive your own **A Passion for Technology**



Each set is just $24.95 + $5 shipping/handling. CA residents please include 7.25% state sales tax. Enclosed is: $_____ for ___ set(s) at $29.95 (CA: $31.76 please) each. ☐ Bill my card ☐ Check enclosed.

Name: _____

U.P.S. Shipping Address: _____

_____

City:_____ St:_____ Zip: _____

VISA or MasterCard#: _____ Exp:_____

Signature: _____ Day Phone: (___) _____

OR CALL TOLL FREE: (800) 736-0637

Gibson Research, 22991 La Cadena, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 (714) 830-2200

A Passion for Technology and *TechTalk* are trademarks of Gibson Research Corp.