

# GBBS Pro News

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## Couponet: BBS commercial potential

By Rainer Mueller

Sysop, Mainstreet Data, (619) 439-6624

I'm an entrepreneur, and if I can make money from something I really love doing, then I believe that I am living right.

After I started my bulletin board system, Mainstreet Data, I decided that there must be a way to make a well-run BBS earn a little money for a dedicated sysop.

One night, in my dreams, I came up with the idea of "downloadable coupons," which I decided to call COUPONET. This feature allows callers of my board the opportunity to enter a specific section of my BBS that supports advertising in the form of coupons from various merchants within my local trading area.

I must admit, though, I am not a "kid." I am 37 years old and have served on the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce here in Oceanside, Calif. I have been actively involved in civic affairs, and in doing so, I have become familiar with many, many of the businesses in my community. This gives me an edge when I go visit a merchant.

I take every opportunity to spread the message about my BBS, which I promote as an interactive on-line magazine. Non-computer types can relate to a magazine in concept, and when I solicit merchants who aren't computer literate, I take along my Tandy 102 with built-in modem and LCD screen, and give them an idea of what it's all about.

I first have to sell the idea that a BBS is a viable means of communication that targets a specific groups of people, and that these people are more than likely more educated than average and would appear to have more disposable income because of their commitment not only to a computer system, but a modem as

well.

When I tell them about the more than 15,000 callers my system has logged, they become quite attuned to the idea. I have structured my advertising prices quite inexpensively, when compared to other forms of more traditional advertising: I charge \$10 for one month's worth of advertising, \$25 for three, \$45 for six, and \$75 for a whole year. All advertising is paid in advance and is limited to 4K worth of ASCII text.

The advertisement can be in any form: a coupon, an article, or even ASCII art, but the size of the ad is limited by the GBBS 'Pro' editor. The client has the opportunity to upload the ad, or he/she can give me an ad which ran in a newspaper or magazine and I will convert it to acceptable ASCII form. I will also create ads from rough ideas.

The ad section itself is merely a converted general file section, where users may look at a menu, in this case a menu of advertisers and a few words regarding the ad/coupon, and select the corresponding number of their choice.

Some advertisers require that the ad be turned into hardcopy on a user's printer and then redeemed at the place of business. Others just use it as a matter of general solicitation or to highlight specials or close-outs.

The advertiser is allowed to change his/her ad as often as he/she deems necessary. Because everything is done electronically, it is easy to switch or replace an entire ad, or just a small portion of it.

If you would like to institute a similar feature on your BBS, you must have a system that will attract advertisers because of how well-run your system is. Your equipment, as well as your software, must be reliable. The information within your system must be up-to-date and informative. It must be worthwhile. Dedication to excellence is the key to success.

## Zippping along with a board in RAM

By Joe Abernathy

and Paul Hutmacher

Europa BBS, (713) 526-0714

Running a bulletin board in RAM is easily accomplished, and need not be a daily bother. The reward will be a much faster system, and who knows: Maybe a user or three will actually offer a compli-

ment.

The following simple system will make running up the board a snap, and safeguard against some common problems other system operators have encountered.

To run in RAM, you need to isolate your A: volume files to RAM, configure a copy of the bulletin board to read the RAMdrive, and

then use that when you run up the BBS. It is important that you break down your drive specifiers, because the standard GBBS drive specifiers, B:, F:, and G:, are usually written to when a user calls. The thing to avoid is putting anything that is written to in RAM, because it can be, and eventually will be, See Speed, page 2

# Speed demons can run GBBS in RAM

Continued from page 1

lost.

One other common complaint is the pain of formatting the RAMdrive at every bootup and then copying the A: files one-by-one into RAM. There is a much better way.

What it requires: In addition to the standard equipment and a copy of GBBS Pro, you need an expansion RAMcard and a copy of ProSel (Program Selector) utility package. The amount of RAM needed depends on how many "add-on" programs you're running.

To figure this out, add the length of all files ending in the suffix ".g", and the ACOS and ACOS.OBJ files. (Remember when adding file lengths together to pay attention to what type of figures you're counting. Some catalog programs report length in blocks, and some in kilobytes. RAMcards are measured in Kilobytes. Two ProDOS blocks roughly equal one kilobyte.)

A "stock" GBBS should fit on 512K or less. An expanded GBBS, that is, one with lots of large games or file transfer program segments, will require a megabyte or more. Europa runs with its program segments on a 1280K RAMdrive.

When making a choice on RAMcards, Applied Engineering has long been the standard. AE cards are still a good bet, but there are other alternatives, and Checkmate Technology in particular is giving AE a run for its money. The best bet is to decide on your needs, allowing room for growth, and then shop for price and support. Checkmate seems to be building support, so that might be a consideration.

ProSel is available directly from its publisher, Glen Bredon, at (609) 924-5976, 521 State Road, Princeton, NJ., 08540. List price is \$40. (The November

1987 issue of Nibble Magazine contains a glowing review of the program, which many GBBS sysops consider to be among their most important utilities. It is recommended whether you use a RAMdrive or not.)

ProSel's main purpose is to create a selector menu, and you may or may not decide to use it for that. The main thing we want from it are the "goodie" programs Backup and Restore.

If you decide to set up a ProSel boot menu (why not? It's a good utility), then put two selections on it for your BBS. Call one "My BBS" and the other "My BBS RAM." For the RAM menu selection, give a pathname of /RAM/ACOS.

Next, format your RAMdrive with the utility supplied by your RAMcard's manufacturer. Then copy all of the A: volume files to RAM. This should include the files ACOS and ACOS.OBJ, and everything with a ".g" suffix. (Don't include .s files! It works, but the point is added speed, and that slows things down.)

Now call up your GBBS Pro configuration program, and tell it at the startup menu that your boot volume is /RAM. Now configure storage for volume A: to be pathname /RAM. Exit config.

Use ProSel's Backup program to back up the loaded and configured RAMdrive to a disk file. Now you can either run up the board or turn the machine off.

The next time you want to run your RAM-based GBBS, the procedure is: Turn on the computer, format your RAMdrive, use Restore to restore the disk-based copy of your RAMdrive, and start the board.

Remember that when you make board modifications, you'll want to make them to your ".s" files on your old A: volume, compile them with the old BBS startup, then make a new backup of the RAMdrive, so it will include the changes.

## Speed versus volatility: putting it ALL in RAM

By Stephanie A. McGrath  
Pro News Editor

You only have to learn ONE lesson to run your entire bulletin board in RAM: Back up early and often.

Since the power supply of my 20-megabyte hard drive died in October, I've been running Chamelion BBS, (713) 875-9868, on a megabyte of internal RAM. And I think I'll leave much of the board in RAM even after the hard drive is repaired.

I had long used RAM as my A: drive for the speed of the program file access, but now that I've been using it for message bases for a

while, and particularly when using the trace/chaining mods, I can really tell the difference in speed.

I am running GBBS with all of the standard program segments, plus 12 sub-boards, some of which have 125 messages each.

(You're counting on your fingers. 125 messages times 4K equals 500K. That's half a meg. For one sub-board.)

Nyet, comrade. Look at your message bases realistically. How often do you have 125 4-kilobyte messages on any of your sub-boards? For that matter, how often do you have 125 one-kilobyte messages? Realistically, my 125-message subs have topped out at

about 50K each. My mail file, with 159 users, is about 40K now. They may grow a little yet, but after three months, I am secure that they'll be fine.

So how to do this. Take all of your program segments (".s" files, contrary to the above article. I'll explain in a moment), all of your message files, all of your menu and help files, up to the limits of your RAMdrive, and copy them to floppies. My board is currently about 1400 ProDOS blocks, and it all fits nicely, and organizedly, onto six floppydisk sides.

Use your favorite copy utility to copy the files onto your format-

See The secret, page 8

# First Word

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## First Word

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# Highlights:

L&L: (303) 420-3568

Lance has gone sub-board happy, adding two new sub-boards to the support board. He has added a Configurations board, for those who are having a hard time configuring off-brand hardware with GBBS 'Pro,' and a Dreamland U.S.A. board, on which he is soliciting ideas for the ultimate BBS of the future.

Interestingly, although Lance didn't specify it, most of the sysops who have responded so far on the latter, have suggested various modifications and enhancements to GBBS 'Pro,' ACOS and ACOS.OBJ, as opposed to starting over in a whole new language/type of BBS. Maybe it's because everyone hopes the ultimate BBS program will be compatible with what they've already bought?

Some of the suggestions: allowing the use of arrays; better mathematics; a spelling/grammar checker; acceptability of non-alphabetic characters in the smutcatcher (so we can catch all those k-køøl døødz....); and more sysop options within the program, so we don't have to leave ACOS to do various things.

Also, apparently the link between L&L and The Apple Pack is gone, so I'm going to have to dig up my old TAP password and see if there's been any activity out there on the East Coast.

**Supertac:** Andy Nicholas has posted a technical note about SuperTac on Volume 4 of the transfer section. It supposedly deals with transferring files over PC Pursuit.

Other SuperTac owners may be interested in a few mods that Bob Lindabury (#268) posted. They look like nice sysop utilities.

**Applecatt:** Tom Wallace (#102) says that to make the AppleCat 212 work with 'Pro,' you must have the following dip switches set: 1: ON; 2: OFF; 3: ON; 4: ON; 5: ON. "Use this switch setup no matter how you have the Cat installed," he says. "Forget what the manual says." For additional assistance, call him at his BBS, The Disk Fix,

(615) 983-8232.

**U.S. Robotics Courier HST:** "Mad Dave" Metzler (#81) has the following advice for HST owners. Set the HST's dip switches 1,2: UP; 3: DOWN; 4-7: UP; 8-10: DOWN. Set all Super Serial Card dip switches ON. Make sure you have GBBS cable #3. Configure for an External CTS FABRI-TEK 2424. He suggests that if you follow all of these instructions and still have a problem, but have some sort of a fancy "idle" screen, try getting rid of the idle screen; it worked for him, and he's running Dj, (303) 789-0500, at a maximum of 9600 bps.

For those trying to use it on an Apple IIgs with the modem port, Andy Nicholas says: "Set your NRAM settings so that the '&S' register is set to 1. That is NOT the default, so you will have to have dipswitch 10=UP so the modem will load your NRAM settings. And don't forget to do a 'AT&W' to save the NRAM. Also, do the commands: 'AT&S1' and 'AT&W'. This turns off the HST's default override of DSR."

**Apple IIgs:** Having other problems with the IIgs running from the modem port? Lindabury says he stopped his 'random errors' by not running GBBS from the Finder. He thinks the Finder and/or the desktop CDAs use the same parts of memory as ACOS. He now uses ProSel or Squirt to boot the system and then run GBBS.

**Multiporting:** Lance and George Willett are working on a multi-line system for GBBS and are "very close to having it completed," Willett says. When it's done, they promise to make it available for all. Willett says the system they've been using comprises two 64K Apple II+ computers; one 196K Apple IIe; three phone lines (one to call out; two to call in); three external modems with SSCs; three clocks; three AE Transwarp cards; one 5-1/2" floppy drive on each II+; two 5-1/2" floppy drives on the IIe; two 3-1/2" floppy drives on the IIe; one printer shared by one II+ and the IIe; and one CMS 20 megabyte hard drive with three SCSI cards. If you're interested in

the progress, let Lance know on L&L, or George on LES-COM-net, (303) 233-5824.

**Mods:** Tommy Johnson asks some questions: 1) Is there a way to force TRACE from within a segment, that is, simulate pressing CTRL-O twice? We had some pokes for some of the other CTRL commands; is there one for this? 2) He found an interesting "bug" in the editor. In system.seg, G)et a file that is more than 4K, and you get only the first 4K of it. Delete a bunch of lines from it, and then try to C)ontinue.

## Peripherals Plus:

(214) 424-2001

Jan has put the new "Land of SPUR -- Guild Wars" up for beta-testing. Check it out by hitting "!" from the main menu, and please report any bugs or questions.

In other gaming news, Tommy Johnson released Swords & Sorcery II, a "complete, winnable game in three segments. Complete with installation instructions and notes." It's available on P+, Volume #7, and probably every other GBBS file transfer section around the country by now.

**Multiporting:** Jan says he is considering setting up two systems. He has two Apple IIes sharing a Corvus, and he's designed a chat routine that works fairly well, and he's considering expanding into multi-user games. Is anyone interested? Give Jan a holler.

**EFTS:** Jan has incorporated a new section of code that allows the sysop to "move" file information from one section to another. That makes it easier for sysops whose users "forget" to change sections when uploading. It copies the file information to another section and removes it from the section where it was uploaded.

Rich Lowenburg (#170) wonders if there's a way to get GBBS to answer a null modem. He has an IBM, and he'd like to be able to upload IBM files directly into EFTS. He's been using ProTerm, but he'd like to

be able to use GBBS. Anybody know how?

**Mods:** Oscar Fisher (#141) says last month's instructions about playing with time\$ and date\$ were a little confusing. He says the best way to pull information out of those strings is in the form, "dz\$=mid\$(" "+date\$,2)" That will keep your date\$ from being corrupted, he says.

E.L. Word, sysop of the Electronic Odyssey, (313) 474-5795, was planning to upload a Mailcentre mod that would allow you to send a mailing to all users with a certain flag. It will allow either automatic or prompted mailings.

Elton asks only one thing in return for the public release of this product: that any pond scum who removes his credit line be afflicted with a curse. (Come on, guys. Give credit where credit is due. Don't be downloading mods, changing a few variables in 'em and then upload-

ing 'em with your name on 'em. You're NOT fooling anyone.)

**Hardware:** Oscar says he also ordered a ZipChip immediately after Applefest, and he's still waiting. He received a letter from the company that makes the chip, saying it would be about 6 weeks. "Vaporware???" Who knows," he said. I assume he'll let everyone know if/when he gets it.

**Appleworks:** Are there really still people out there who don't know that you CAN use Appleworks v2.0 to edit your GBBS files? You just have to set LM=0, RM=0 and PW=13, and go through and find any strange spaces that appear in the really long lines of code.

### **Cottontail Ranch:**

**(602) 433-0159**

EXfer v4.1 is available to regis-

tered EXfer owners on the file transfer system here.

The next news flash is one I couldn't confirm, since I could never get through onto the board before I HAD to get this thing to press, but a regular Chameleon caller tells me that Mike Golaszewski has announced that he will no longer be selling or supporting EXfer after Jan. 15, because he has decided to attend to his studies.

### **Chameleon:**

**(713) 875-9868**

Still no hard drive, but Rainer Mueller has finally convinced me to send the power supply for repair. We'll see what happens.

I mostly just wanted to wish everyone a happy holiday season and a bright, sparkly new year filled with lots of great new users and even more great mods.

## **I KNOW you have something to say!**

So say it here, where other GBBS 'Pro' sysops can read about it!

Articles, columns, ads & mods are hereby solicited from all GBBS sysops, regardless of age, rank and serial number.

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**Home of the Lizzard**

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# **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

from  
**The Kodiak Bear Board**  
**Kodiak, Alaska**  
**(907) 486-6906**  
**3/12/2400**

# Mods!

## Just Browsing

By Mike Delaney, L&L User #356

This browse feature allows a user to search by author, title or addressee. Mark.2 has one change in it; don't forget to add that one, too, or it won't show your last bulletin on a marked retrieval.

```
; browse bulletins
```

```
browse
```

```
m$="":a=Ø:print \"Browse Bulletins\"
print \"
1) By Author
2) By Title
3) By Addressee\"
input \"Your choice (1-3): \"i:if (i<1) or (i>3)
a=Ø:return
print \"Match string [<CR>=All, <Q>=Quit]\";
input @3 \" : \"m$:a=1:if m$=\"Q\" a=Ø:return
goto scan.2
```

```
; scan bulletins
```

```
scan
```

```
print \"Scan bulletins\"
if len(i$)>1 a=val(mid$(i$,2)):goto scan.1
input @3 \"Start at (#,<CR>) : \"a
scan.1
m$="":if a=Ø return
if (a<1) or (a>msg(Ø)) print \"That bulletin does
not exist!\":return
```

```
scan.2
```

```
input @2 \"Allow marking (Y/[N]) ? \"i$
ms=Ø:if left$(i$,1)=\"Y\" ms=a
d=Ø:x=15:print:z=flag:flag=ram2
```

```
scan.3
```

```
a$=" \"i:if msg(a)>nn then a$="*"
flag(a-ms)=Ø:input #msg(a),t$\\b,b$\\t7,t7$
if (i=1) and (m$) if not instr(m$,t7$) goto scan.4
if (i=2) and (m$) if not instr(m$,t$) goto scan.4
if (i=3) and (m$) if not instr(m$,b$) goto scan.4
if left$(t$,1)=\"*\" t$=mid$(t$,2)
x=x-1:d=d+1:print a$,right$(\" \" +str$(a),3);
print \"Subject: \"t$
print \"Addressed to: \"b$
print \"From: \"t7$
if i$<>\"Y\" print:goto scan.4
print \"Mark (Y/[N]/Q) ? \";get a$:print \\
if a$=\"Q\" goto scan.5
flag(a-ms)=(a$=\"Y\")
```

```
scan.4
```

```
if a=msg(Ø) goto scan.5
a=a+1:if x goto scan.3
input @2 \"More ([Y]/N/C) ? \"a$
if left$(a$,1)=\"C\" x=msg(Ø)-a-1:goto scan.3
```

```
if left$(a$,1)<>\"N\" print:x=15:goto scan.3
scan.5
```

```
me=a:flag=z:if not (d) print \"Sorry, no
match.\":ms=Ø:return
if left$(i$,1)<>\"Y\" return
```

```
; marked bulletins retrieval
```

```
mark
```

```
print \"Retrieve marked bulletins\":a=ms
if not ms print \"No marked bulletins\":return
mark.2
```

```
z=flag:flag=ram2:b=flag(a-ms):flag=z
x=Ø:if b gosub show
```

```
; add the line below
```

```
if x=Ø a=a+1:if a<=me goto mark.2
return
```

## Add Time

By Joe Kline, L&L user #79

This mod adds the selected number of minutes to the current call and does not affect user settings or subsequent call time limits. You can set the time limit in line 4 by changing "240" to the maximum number of minutes. (Change it in both places on that line.)

Joe suggested this as a modification to the main.seg; I think most of us are more likely to use it in system.seg, or to allow access only by super-elite users from the main.seg. Either way, don't forget to put a selection in whatever menu: if i\$=\"+\" goto add.time

```
add.time
```

```
input @1 \"How many extra minutes to you need [1-
60] ? \"t
if (t<1) or (t>60) t=Ø
clock(2)=clock(2)+(t*60)
if clock(2)/60>240 clock(2)=240
a=clock(1):b=clock(2)
print \"Time remaining online: \";
print (b-a)/60\" minutes, \"(b-a) mod 60\" seconds.\"
return
```

## Change new message #

I'm not going to try to guess who was the first to write this useful routine....

```
new.msg
```

```
input \"How many new messages do you want? \"i$
if i$="":return
x=val(i$):lr=mn-x:nb=lr
byte(5)-lr mod 256:byte(6)=lr/256
return
```

# Ervin Thompson

## System security: it's not paranoia!

Your recent article about system security started me reflecting on some of the security procedures I have installed. I thought you might be interested in some of them.

1) Upon logon, I have the system set a variable to 1 if the system is in local mode. From then on, it is easy to tell whether the user is on locally or from remote. I key such things as some system.seg functions and sending stuff to the printer, to this variable.

(I once got a call at 3 a.m. when my remote sysop hit the "P" key accidentally while reading a post. Since the printer was not turned on, it locked up the system.)

2) I have a security log separate from the normal log. I log a user to this log when he/she first calls. That way, if the system crashes, I can at least tell who was on. (The normal log is not updated until log-off, which never happens if the system crashes.)

I also log several other things to the security log, such as K)illing of posts. Anyone tripping certain "booby-traps" in the system.seg (see below) is also logged here.

3) System.seg: I have changed all of the system commands to two-or three-letter passwords (i.e., instead of "L" for log, it might be "Q?"). Of course, these are NOT reflected in the "Help" menu!

Any time an incorrect command is entered in system.seg, an audible alarm is sounded and the user is logged in the security log. The second such mistaken input logs the user off, with an appropriate message in the security log.

4) I have what I call the "system gestapo." Any user I have reason to be suspicious of gets put on the Gestapo list (setting a flag). The user is then restricted to the number of posts he can leave. He cannot K)ill or E)dit a post, and he is only allowed one call before I check the board and clear him for another call.

(If the first flag is set, the system sets a second flag when he logs off. If the second flag is already

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See Security, page 8

# Steve Schneider

## How message counts get "off"

Outside of normal error on your part in modifying parts of your segments, there are several normal ways for the number of new messages on a BBS not to jive with the actual number that exist. The three most common are that messages new to a given user have already scrolled off, are killed, or are lost from "system-caused" loss-of-carrier.

**Scenario:** You read "real" message #5000 the last time you were on the system (assume a one sub-board system for this discussion), which was the highest message on the system.

**USER NEXT #1:** Joe Blow logs on and posts 5 new messages, and goes through a normal logoff. This advances the 'mn' variable to 5005 and leaves a high 'real' message #5005 on the sub-board.

(If you logged back on now, the system would say you have 5 new messages to read. And there would, indeed, be 5. But you don't log on just yet.)

**USER NEXT #2:** Jon Dorb logs on and posts 3 new messages and goes through a normal logoff. This advances the 'mn' variable to 5008 and leaves a high 'real' message #5008 on the sub-board.

(If you logged on now, the system would say you have 8 new messages to read. And there would be 8. But you don't log on yet.)

**USER NEXT #3:** Jill Rye logs on and posts 7 new messages and decides to play Pigs & Swill, your new online adventure, which bombs with a syntax error and dumps her without even a "Thanks for calling."

Oh-Oh! She posted 7 messages, which leaves a high 'real' #5015 on the system, but since the system didn't update a DATA file, 'mn' is still at 5008!

(If you logged on now, the system would say you have 8 new messages to read. But you would really have 15.)

**USER NEXT #4:** Now you log on and post 2 new messages, and you kill one of Jon Dorb's messages, which leaves 'mn' set at 5010, and here comes the fun part: Since 'mn' was not previously updated on the last call, because of the syntax error, we now have

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# Security ≠ paranoia

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set when he calls back, it won't let him on. I must clear the second flag manually to clear him for another call.) Fortunately, I have only used this twice.

I liked the suggestion of renaming the system.seg. I haven't done it yet, but I may.

All this may sound like paranoia, but my motto is, "better safe than sorry."

...

*Ervin Thompson is a GBBS 'Pro' sysop in Steilacoom, Wash.*

# What new messages?

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two messages on this sub with the same numbers. (Messages #5009 and #5010 by Jill and #5009 and #5010 by you.) And, the killed message wasn't subtracted from the total number of messages on the system....

Imagine the confusion when this error spreads over 20 sub-boards and 200 or 1,000 new messages.

The moral of the story is: Don't bet the farm on the number of new messages shown by GBBS at logon.

...

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# The secret to running in RAM is, Back it up often!

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ted RAMdrive (I use Applied Engineering's Autocopy program, which formats the drive and then copies whole disk directories onto subdirectories of /RAM.)

Autocopy leaves me at a BASIC prompt, so I put in my GBBS.PRO system master and run config:

```
] -/GBBS.PRO/CONFIG
```

I hit return, and then no, I don't want to reconfigure. I say that my important files are on /RAM, and then I reconfigure the storage, setting specs A:, B:, and C: to "/RAM" and spec D: to "/CHAMELEON" (my floppy drive).

Now I jump out (assuming that the rest of my ACOS.OBJ was already configured for my modem, printer, clock, etc., which it was), and I IMMEDIATELY run to my favorite file copy routine.

I do not pass go, I do not collect \$200. I run as fast as I can to Copy II+, and I back up that brand new copy of ACOS.OBJ onto floppy disk #1, which contains most of the backup program files and text/help files of my board.

And then I do something else that I learned the hard way. I make an additional backup of all six sides of my backup floppies. I do this in case sometime while I am backing up to /CHAMELEON1, I somehow trash the floppy and

the /RAM at the same time. Stop laughing; it happened.

(I recommend backing up the second copy at least monthly....)

Now that the board is in /RAM and your backups are all made, you want to put the BBS online and compile all of those nasty ".s" files. But you don't want to make COPIES of them, which is what usually happens. So you boot up the BBS either from floppy (which I must do, having no hard drive power) or from whatever.

Put /CHAMELEON1 in the drive, and:

```
] -/CHAMELEON1/ACOS
```

Hit return, so it will prepare Logon.seg, and then, amazingly, you will get another annoying prompt, this one reminding you to make sure /RAM is online. Hit return again, and you're cooking with gas. ACOS will compile the segments, killing the ".s" files as it creates the new ".g" files, and giving you a clean compile. (Not that I don't trust "old" compiles, but I think they may get moldy after they sit on a floppy for too long.)

Listen closely now. Remember the first paragraph of this piece. Back up early and often.

I try to back up every three days, every week at the absolute longest. I back up almost every time I leave ACOS, particularly when I jump into AppleWorks, in

which I somehow always manage to find a bug -- but only when I have not backed up the /RAM.

Files you will need to back up: DATA, USERS, LOG (if you care), all of your board files (B1-Bx), MAIL. If you have voting on your RAMdrive, you'll also need to back up the result files (V1-Vx). If you edit your system news, don't forget to back up the new SYSTEM.NEWS.

I understand that ProSel (See Joe & Paul's article or the November Nibble Magazine for more on ProSel) has a copy program that will only copy those changed since a certain time/date. That would be a real help in backing up a board.

I'm also planning to write a backup modification that will use Scott Galbraith's x.copy file to copy the files I routinely back up, so I can copy them without leaving ACOS and without having to type the names every time.

I also hope to incorporate a "time" function so the Lizzard will remind me when I haven't backed it up within a certain amount of time. If/when I get the hard drive back, the backups will become more regular; I'll be able to back it up, say, at midnight every night.

But for now, I have to be there physically switching disks.

It's a pain, but boy, oh boy, is it FAST!