

Point of ORIGIN

Vol. I No. 7♦♦

Friday, December 6, 1991

♦♦ Austin, Texas

Post-Christmas Cash

Once again, Accounting was faced with the dilemma of how to get paychecks out during the holidays, since ORIGIN will be closed the entire week of Christmas. Here's the solution: Mark and Norma will be at ORIGIN West between 9:00 am and Noon on December 27th to hand them out. They will be in Mark's office on the second floor, Suite 214. If you're already on the automatic deposit system, you don't have to do anything; the checks will transfer normally.

Log On and Punch In

Time cards may soon be a thing of the past in Product Development. On December 7th, PD will begin phasing into the Paytrack System. It's been tested for the past three weeks by a control group of 25 employees with seemingly few problems. Basically, with the Paytrack System, you'll log on to the network and conduct a transaction which takes about 20 seconds.

Part of the transaction includes listing your project name. "What we're trying to do is set up an historical database that's going to allow us some kind of track record to be used for scheduling," Sherry says. Everybody in Publishing will keep on punching in and punching out the old-fashioned way.

Wing 2 the Toast of Paris

When Jennie Evans, our Brand Manager at Mindscape/Europe, jetted to Paris this week for the *Tilt Magazine* awards, she had no idea what was ahead. By the end of the evening, *Wing 2* was honored twice: as "Best Cinematic/Realistic/Creative Game" (an approximate literal translation) and, even more impressive, as "Game of the Year."

The winners were picked by *Tilt* readers and viewers of its television program, "Micro Kids." *Wing 2* picked up more than 50% of the votes cast. That's quite a feat, considering that much of the European market is still ST and Amiga. Jennie says, "Many people voted for *Wing 2* even though they didn't own PC's!"

"When I arrived at the ceremony, there was a large group of French seated near us. When (*Wing 2*) was announced as a nominee for Best Game, everybody in the group just nodded and said, 'There's the winner.'"

In the Best Game category, *Wing 2* edged out *Lemmings* (Amiga), *Vroom* (ST), *Crosiere pour un cadavre* (Amiga), *Sonic* and *Super Mario 3* (both Amiga translations). In the Cinematic/Realistic/Creative Game category, *Another World* and *Crosiere* (both Amiga) shared the runner-up spots.

The awards ceremony was carried live on French television and the timing couldn't have been better. *Wing 2* in French is almost ready for rollout and the first order is 3,000 pieces (and may be going up fast now).

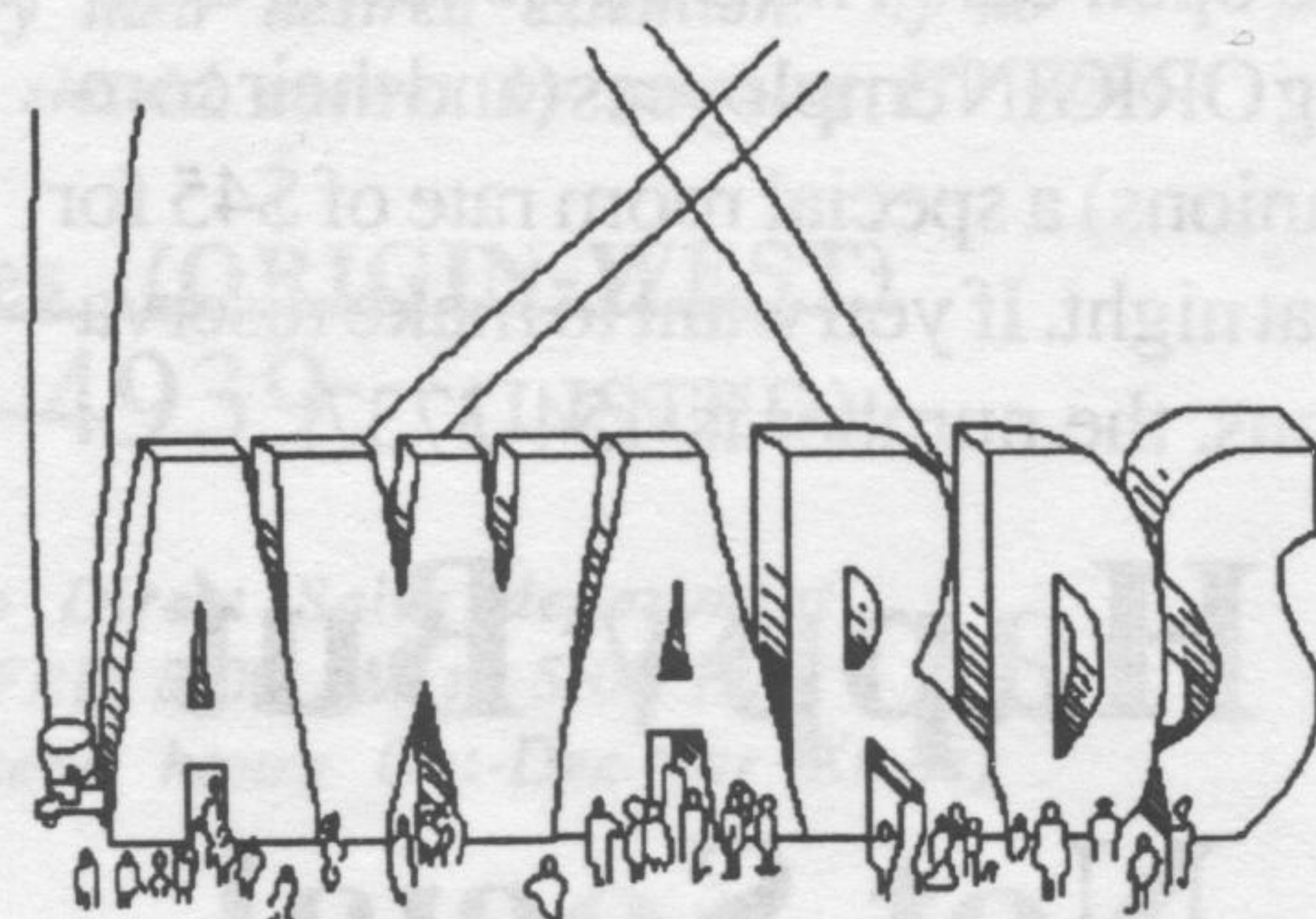
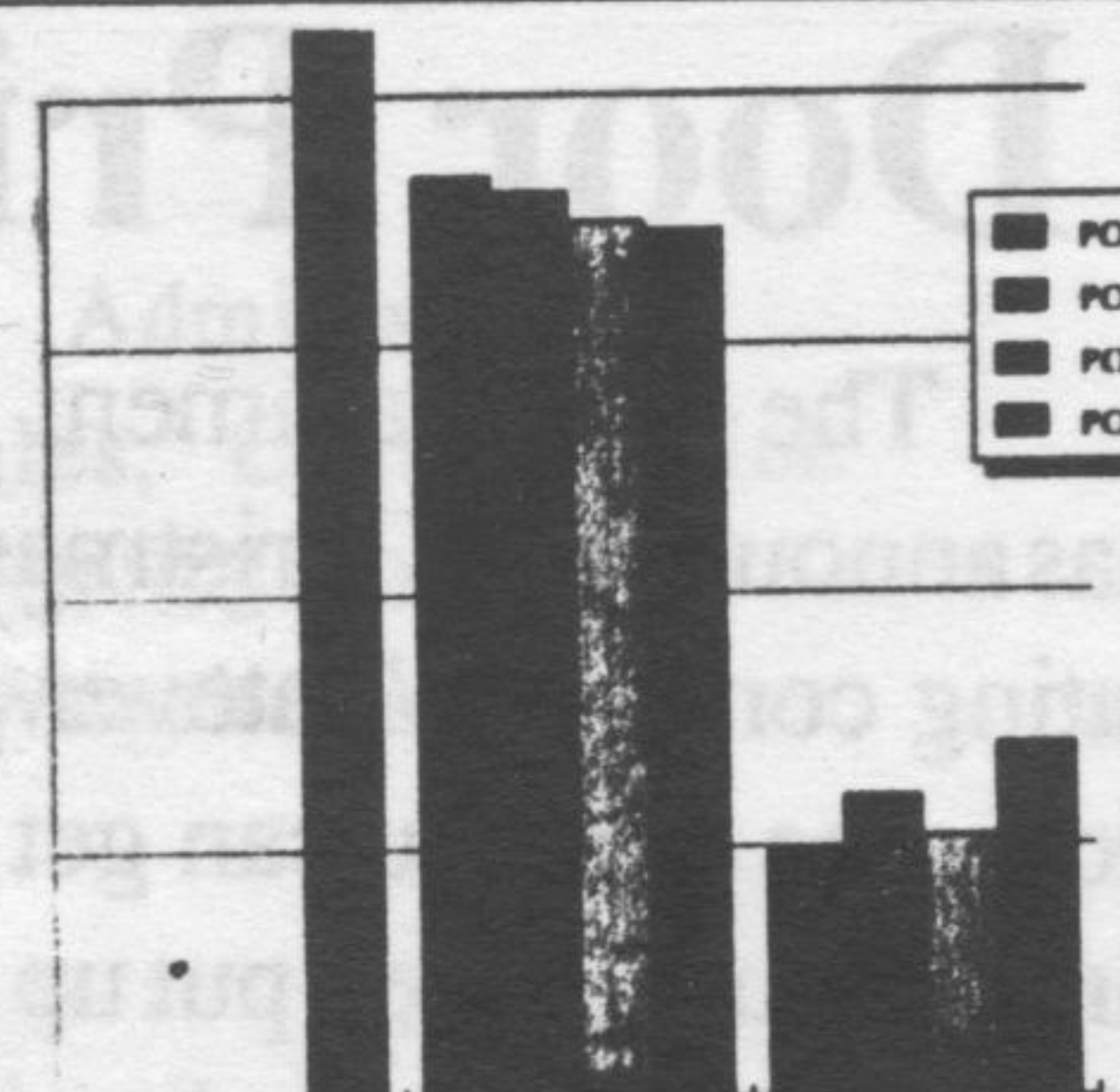


Chart-Buster

Computer Gaming World will have to revamp the graphics on its readers' poll. *Wing Commander II* flew off the chart! It's followed closely by *Wing 1*. Congrats to both teams. That's the best advertising of all.



CHRISTMAS PARTY!

You are cordially invited to the ORIGIN Christmas party, to be held December 14th from 6:00 pm until midnight at the Doubletree Hotel. Dinner begins at 7:00, with dancing afterward. The menu will consist of a buffet with chicken or fish. If you haven't already, R.S.V.P. with Michelle Caddel. Dress code is "suits and dresses" stuff.

We've already told you about the breathalyzer. Here's another way to stay off the roads if you want to enjoy the open bar. The Doubletree is offering ORIGIN employees (and their companions) a special room rate of \$45 for that night. If you want to make reservations, the number is 454-3737.

Happy But Not Social

As we head into those cold, cruel months of Winter, Social Hour has been suspended. But Happy Hour lives on, either in the atrium of ORIGIN West or perhaps off-site at a nearby restaurant/club. "That way, we could have food and soft drinks, and if anybody wanted it, a cash bar," Fred says. The next Happy Hour will be December 20th. Keep an eye peeled for QuickMail announcing its site.

Door Prizes

The Entertainment Committee has announced a Christmas door-decorating contest. Whatever you want to do is fine and you can get started anytime. You can even put up some sort of "bah, humbug" display if Christmas

isn't your bag. The only catch: all decorations must be removable, i.e., no arc welding or heavy explosives. Winners will be chosen December 17th and prizes have not yet been disclosed (I'm sure it's stock options or real estate, something like that).

For those who would rather pass judgment, 7 to 9 people are needed for the judging panel. The Entertainment Committee graciously gave up that honor since it will be an active competitor, too. Anyone who longs for door-to-door judging should contact Wayne Baker.

Wild Basin Wildness

If you just can't get enough Christmas partying, the building management of ORIGIN East has invited everybody in that building to a beef & chicken barbeque on Wednesday, December 18th at Noon.

Meanwhile, over at ORIGIN West, there will be a building-wide Christmas Party the next day on Thursday, December 19th, from 4:30 until 8:30 pm. The invitation says there will be "plenty of festive food and drink to

keep the holiday cheer flowing."

Stick with your building's party and no mooching. The company as a whole will be getting together one last time before the holiday break at our regular Happy Hour on Friday. Everybody should be OD'ed on egg nog by then.

Picking Up Paychecks

If you find you're recognizing even fewer faces, it's because we have five (somewhat) new employees.

Duane Voth is aboard after doing some research time at MCC. He and fellow programmer Rob Broussard, formerly of Phyto Resource Research, will be working on the FM-TOWNS version of *Wing Commander*.

Edwin Herrell gave up the Christmas party at Applied Research Labs to be here. He is shacking up (office-wise, that is) with Jean Marc as a programmer in support of translations.

Andrew Hofmann hits high-
(continued on next page)

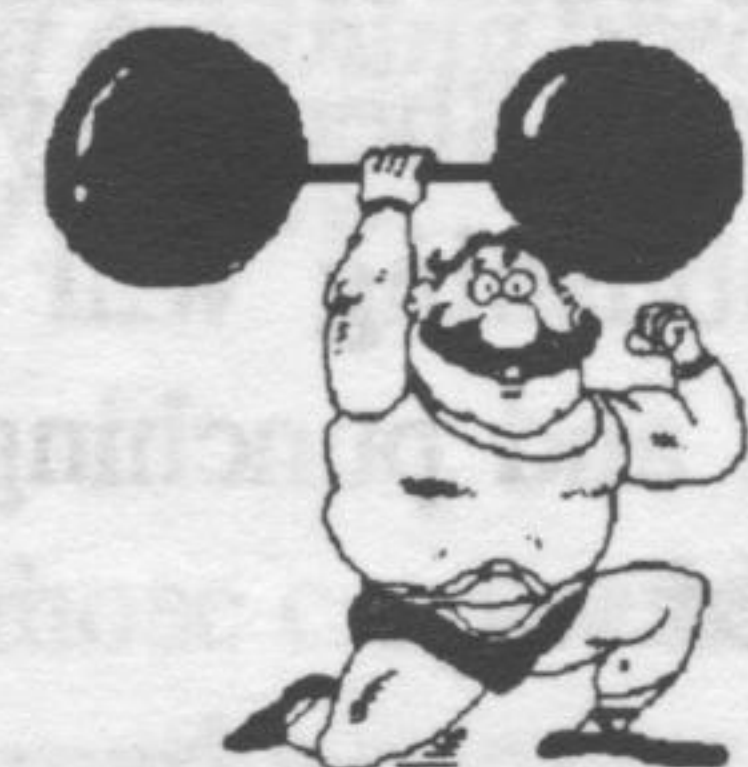
Free Weights

Are those endless hours in front of your terminal and Dorito diet catching up with you? Are you mole-like, squinting whenever you venture outside the building?

Not to worry. ORIGIN has "revived" its corporate membership plan with HQ Fitness. Next week, you and your spouse will be able to use *all* of the facilities at the Westlake location to check everything out. If it pumps you up, the representatives from HQ will be here December 18th and 19th

for membership money.

This plan reportedly costs much less than regular memberships and is even a little better than the deal ORIGIN had a couple of years ago. For more information on rates and to get your "Guest Pass" good for the entire week, check with these Entertainment Committee members: Kay Gilmore, Curtis Wood, Wayne Baker, Michelle Caddell and Beth Miller.



MAIN TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Publishing Group & SNES P.D. (ORIGIN-WEST)

(512) 328-5490 (UNlisted)

FAX: 328-3825

- Rings directly to the Receptionist at 206 Wild Basin #214
- Every employee in the ORIGIN-West building may also be reached directly by dialing their individual phone number, or speed-dial number if calling from ORIGIN-East. See detailed listings.
- If employee does not answer their phone after five rings, your call automatically forwards (or returns) to the Receptionist for a message.
- NO VoiceMail available at ORIGIN-West; paper or QuickMail messages via the Receptionist only.

Product Development Group (ORIGIN-EAST)

(512) 328-0633 (UNlisted)

FAX: 327-8011

- Ring directly to the 110 Wild Basin #230 location.
- All calls answered by the "Automated Attendant" system 24 hours a day.
- Callers may forward themselves directly to any extension if number is known. See detailed listings.
- Most P.D. management & heavy phone users have VoiceMail. Indicated by a "v" after extension.
- Calls not self-directed are answered by a P.D. admin. assist. between 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.
- Night calls to employees without VoiceMail: After 5:00 PM, callers can first try their desired extension. If no answer, they can call back and press Ext. 676 to activate the night bell; someone should answer by pressing [*] 7676.

Customer Service (ORIGIN-WEST)

(512) 328-0282 (LISTED)

- Rings directly into Cust. Serv. department.
- Hours: MON thru FRI 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Consumer Sales (ORIGIN-WEST)

(800) 999-4939 (LISTED)

- Rings directly into Direct Sales department.
- Hours: MON thru FRI 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
(longer evening/weekend hours Oct-Dec for Xmas)

ADDRESSES

Business Correspondence only

("ORIGIN-EAST")

ORIGIN Systems, Inc.
110 Wild Basin Road
Suite 230
Austin, TX 78746

- Also the primary physical location of Product Development and M.I.S.
- No other company departments at this location.

Customer Service Correspondence

ORIGIN Systems, Inc.
P.O. Box 161750
Austin, TX 78716

ATT: Customer Service (letters, orders, requests, etc.),
ATT: Customer Returns (defective products, disk exchanges, etc.)

Location of Other Company Departments (ORIGIN-WEST)

ORIGIN Systems, Inc.
206 Wild Basin Road
Austin, TX 78746

Suite 214: "Official" Reception, also: Administration,
Operations, Finance, Sales, Cust. Service
Suite 106: Marketing, Product Develop. (SNES Group)
Suite 107: Shipping, Receiving, Mini-Warehouse

- NOTE: This address is NOT for public consumption!!!
- No mail to this location, please
- All (or most) deliveries of supplies/materials come here to Suite 107

"EAST" BUILDING: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

	ADMINISTRATION	
Dallas Snell	VP Product Development	633v
Joel Manners	Project Coordinator	649
Michelle Caddel	Project Administrator	659v
Norma Vargas	Office Administrator	659v
Sherry Cain	Dev. Services Manager	669v
	ART DEPARTMENT	
Al Nelson	Manager	638v
Bob Cook	Artist	686
Bruce Lemons	Artist	692
Chris Douglas	Artist	692
Craig Halverson	Artist	687
Danny Garriott	Artist	687
Denis Loubet	Artist	686
Gary Washington	Artist	686
Glen Johnson	Artist	686
Jeff Dee	Artist	687
Karl Dolgener	Artist	687
Micael Priest	Artist	686
	AUDIO DEPARTMENT	
David Roach	Manager	641v
Martin Galway	Audio Programmer	639
Dana Glover	Sound Composer	643
Neno Vugrinec	Sound Effects Engineer	661
Marc Schaeffen	Sound Engineer	667
	DIRECTORS	
Ellen Guon	Director	683
Jeff George	Director	642
Paul Lidberg	Director	#130
Steve Beeman	Director	660
	TECH SUPPORT	
Steve Morris	Information System Mgr.	615v
Robert Herrick	Information System Sup.	619
Keith Robinett	Technician	619
	PRODUCERS	
Richard Garriott	VP, Producer/Director	666v
Scott Russo	Producer	663v
Virgil Buell	Producer	636v
Warren Spector	Producer	656v
Chris Roberts	Producer /Director	644v
Ana Moreno	Producer Assistant	668
Alan Gardner	Producer, Cart. Proj.	#129
	LIBRARIAN	
Jim Martin	Librarian	688

	PROGRAMMERS	
Art DiBianca	Programmer	695
Bill Baldwin	Programmer	684
Bill Ivey	Programmer	#131
Bob Quinlan	Programmer	626
Brent Thale	Programmer	696
Charles Cafrelli	Programmer	683
Chuck Bueche	Programmer	694
Duane Voth	Programmer	668
Edwin Herrell	Programmer	637
Frank Savage	Programmer	695
Gary Smith	Programmer	650
Heather Barclay	Programmer	#131
Jason Templeman	Programmer	681
Jean-Marc Chemla	Programmer	637
Jeff Wilson	Programmer	648
John Onorato	Programmer	645
John Taylor	Programmer	685
Ken Demarest	Programmer	654
Mike McShaffrey	Programmer	606
Paul Isaac	Programmer	646
Paul Meyer	Programmer	647
Philip Brogden	Programmer	634
Phil Sulak	Programmer	617
Rey Castro	Programmer	685
Richard Haley	Programmer	607
Rick Johnson	Programmer	609
Robert Broussard	Programmer	607
Steve Muchow	Programmer	#131
Thomas Blom	Programmer	681
Todd Hartman	Programmer	685
Tony Bratton	Programmer	657
Tony Zurovec	Programmer	625
Will McBurnett	Programmer	617
Zack Simpson	Programmer	651
	QUALITY ASSURANCE	
	DEPT	
Andrew Hofmann	Quality Assurance	677
Ben Potter	Quality Assurance	610
Jarrett Crippen	Quality Assurance	670
Jeff Shelton	Test Supervisor	697v
Karen Conroe	QA Supervisor	658v
Mark Vittek	Quality Assurance	673
Mike Sturm	Quality Assurance	671
Mike Chenalt	Quality Assurance	677
Perry Stokes	Quality Assurance	677
Robert Hill	Quality Assurance	670
Scott Shelton	Quality Assurance	697
Tim Hardy	Quality Assurance	610

"EAST" BUILDING: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

"WEST" BUILDING: ALL OTHER DEPARTMENTS

	TECHNICAL & CREATIVE DESIGN ASSISTANTS	
Edward Maurer	Tech Design Assistant	694
Jim Greer	Tech Design Assistant	635
Joye McBurnett	Tech Design Assistant	656
Kevin Potter	Tech Design Assistant	683
Kirk Winterrowd	Tech Design Assistant	649
Rudy Hovey	Tech Design Assistant	#131
Scott Hazle	Tech Design Assistant	699
Brian Adams	Tech Design Assistant	699
Bruce Adams	Tech Design Assistant	699
Eric Brown	Tech Design Assistant	634
Brian Martin	Creative Design Assistant	696
John Watson	Creative Design Assistant	699
Mary Margaret Ipser	Creative Design Assistant	699
	WRITERS	
Michael Sims	Manager	621v
Andrew Morris	Writer	635
Beth Miller	Writer	662
Bill Armintrout	Writer	621
Gilbert Pena	Writer	682
Jack Herman	Writer	682
Raymond Benson	Writer	682
Sherri Hobbs	Writer	622

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		Exchange: 314-
Suite 214	ADMIN / OPS / FINANCE	
Robert Garriott	President	#109/1424
Fred Schmidt	VP General Manager	#114/1408
Jeff Hillhouse	Director Of Operations	#113/1404
Mark Chandler	Finance Manager	#115/1411
Ron Kerwin	Accountant	#116/1421
Christi Wells	Receptionist (Cust. Serv.)	#199/328-5490
Suite 214	SALES: RETAIL & DIST.	
Marten Davies	VP Sales	#117/1402
Karl Kabler	National Accounts Mgr.	#118/1406
Anita Lockamy	Account Executive	#119/1407
Carol Cippola	Sales Administrator	#120/1403
	CUSTOMER SERVICE &	
Suite 214	CONSUMER SALES	
Kay Gilmore	Customer Service Manager	#121/1405
Michelle Lindner	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Marie Williams	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Mike Rundell	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Michael Madewell	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Chuck Zoch	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Allan Davis	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Rebecca Heidt	Cust. Serv. Representative	328-0282
Kathy Dorsett	Consumer Sales Supv.	#122/1451
Victoria Fields	Consumer Sales Rep.	#123/1450
Suite 106	MARKETING	
Mike Harrison	Acting Dir. Of Marketing	#124/1423
Craig Miller	Senior Graphic Designer	#125/1418
David Ladyman	Publications Manager	#126/1417
Galen Svanas	Media Relations Manager	#127/1410
Wayne Baker	Marketing Coordinator	#128/1422
Suite 106	SNES PRODUCT DEV.	
Alan Gardner	Producer, Cartridge Prod.	#129/1415
Ana Moreno	Assistant to the Producer	#129/1415
Paul Lidberg	Director	#130/1413
Steve Muchow	Programmer	#131/1412
Heather Barclay	Programmer	#131/1412
William Ivey	Programmer	#131/1412
Rudy Hovey	Tech Design Assistant	#130/1413
	WAREHSE / PRODUCTION	
Suite 107	SHIPPING & RECEIVING	
Curtis Wood	Production Coordinator	#110/1409
Pat Shelton	Shipping Coordinator	#111/1419
Donna Whitaker	Returns Coord. (Cust. Serv.)	#112/1414

EXTENSIONS "AT A GLANCE"

ALL EMPLOYEES / ALL LOCATIONS

ALPHA BY FIRST NAME

Al Nelson	638v	Galen Svanas	#127/1410	Mike Harrison	#124/1423
Alan Gardner	#129/1415	Gary Washington	686	Mike McShaffrey	606
Allan Davis	328-0282	Gilbert Pena	682	Mike Rundell	328-0282
Ana Moreno	668v	Glen Johnson	686	Mike Sturm	671
Andrew Hofmann	677	Heather Barclay	#131/1412	Neno Vugrinec	661
Andrew Morris	635	Jack Herman	682	Norma Vargas	659v
Anita Lockamy	#119/1407	James Nance	670	Pat Shelton	#111/1419
Art DiBianca	695	Jarrett Crippen	670	Paul Isaac	646
Ben Potter	610	Jason Templeman	681	Paul Lidberg	#130/1413
Beth Miller	662	Jean-Marc Chemula	637	Paul Meyer	647
Bill Armintrout	621	Jeff Dee	687	Perry Stokes	677
Bill Baldwin	684	Jeff George	642	Phil Sulak	617
Bill Ivey	#131/1412	Jeff Hillhouse	#113/1404	Philip Brogden	634
Bob Cook	686	Jeff Shelton	697v	Raymond Benson	682
Bob Quinlan	626	Jeff Wilson	648	Rebecca Heidt	328-0282
Brent Thale	696	Jim Greer	635	Rey Castro	685
Brian Adams	699	Jim Martin	688	Richard Garriott	666v
Brian Martin	696	Joel Manners	649	Richard Haley	607
Bruce Adams	699	John Onarato	645	Rick Johnson	609
Bruce Lemons	692	John Taylor	685	Robert Broussard	607
Carol Cipolla	#120/1403	John Watson	699	Robert Garriott	#109/1424
Charles Cafrelli	683	Joye McBurnett	656	Robert Herrick	619
Chris Douglas	692	Kathy Dorsett	#122/1451	Robert Hill	670
Chris Roberts	644v	Karen Conroe	658v	Ron Kerwin	#116/1421
Christy Wells	#199/5490	Karl Doulenger	687	Rudy Hovey	#130/1413
Chuck Bueche	694	Karl Kabler	#118/1406	Scott Hazel	699
Chuck Zock	328-0282	Kay Gilmore	#121/1405	Scott Russo	663v
Craig Halverson	687	Keith Robinett	619	Scott Shelton	697
Craig Miller	#125/1418	Ken Demarest	654	Sherri Hobbs	621
Curtis Wood	#110/1409	Kevin Potter	683	Sherry Cain	669v
Dallas Snell	633v	Kirk Winterrowd	649	Steve Beeman	660
Dana Glover	643	Marc Schaefgen	667	Steve Morris	615v
Danny Garriott	687	Mark Chandler	#115/1411	Steve Muchow	#131/1412
David Ladyman	#126/1417	Mark Vittek	673	Terry Manderfeld	686
David Roach	641v	Marten Davies	#117/1402	Thomas Blom	681
Donna Whitaker	#112/1414	Martin Galway	639	Tim Hardy	610
Denis Loubet	686	Marie Williams	328-0282	Todd Hartman	685
Duane Voth	668	Mary Margaret Ipser	699	Tony Bratton	657
Edward Maurer	694	Micael Priest	686	Tony Zurovec	625
Edwin Herrell	637	Michael Madewell	328-0282	Victoria Fields	#123/1450
Ellen Guon	683	Michael Sims	622v	Virgil Buell	636v
Eric Brown	634	Michelle Caddel	659v	Warren Spector	656v
Frank Savage	695	Michelle Lindner	328-0282	Wayne Baker	#128/1422
Fred Schmidt	#114/1408	Mike Chenalt	677	Will McBurnett	617
				Zack Simpson	651

NOTE: The small "v" after an East extension = VoiceMail.

NOTE: Two extensions #'s appear for employees located at Origin-West.

To dial EAST to WEST use 3-digit: #XXX

To dial within WEST use 4-digit: XXXX

Paycheck...

school books during the day and is a QA slave at night. He sets a record as our youngest part-timer. (Sorry about that, Andrew.)

And Terry Manderfield clocks in and heads for the Art Department. He's already done some map-making. Ask about his Richard-esque house back in Indiana.

Bright I.D!

Pretty soon, we'll all be card-carrying ORIGIN employees. Sherry's working on a new system to tighten security and access to the buildings. Plans call for an employee badge, complete with picture.

"We're thinking it will be a clip-on badge that has a slide-out security card to be used in card readers," she says.

The card readers would be on doors to ORIGIN itself: three in ORIGIN East, two in ORIGIN West. Sherry says she's trying to find a way to make the same cards work in the readers already in place at the East building entrance.

If things come together, the new system will be in place by December 16th. We'll keep you posted on day/time for your portrait sitting.

Extra Pay in 401(k)

In life—as in computers—"Save early and save often." Fred and Mark Chandler will hold a series of meetings next week on the 401(k) Savings Plan. If you've been with ORIGIN 60 days or more and did *not* attend a similar meeting, expect a buzz, since attendance isn't just a good idea, it's the law.

All full-time employees are eli-

gible after 90 days with the company. This fiscal year, ORIGIN plans to match salary deferrals by 25% to 50% up to a total of 6% of your salary. And it's all tax-deferred until you decide to withdraw it!

Neither Rain, Nor Sleet..

According to Steve, the company-wide QuickMail system's up and running. The only people *not* in the loop are PC users in ORIGIN West, but that should be solved this weekend.

For the first time, everybody's on the same system. "The biggest difference is for the PC users, because now they're on QuickMail and it has more features," Steve notes.

Steve also says he's braved the first wave of "help calls." He has a box of 100 manuals coming in soon, but in the meantime, he has enough reference cards for everybody. Steve's extended vacation starts next Tuesday. While he's gone, all of those "help calls" can go to Robert Heric or Keith Robinett.

Test Pattern

Could *Underworld* be the next hit? "This one's definitely a 'sleeper'," according to Karen, who says playtesters are having a ball with it. Right now, *Underworld*'s in the popular "beta-soon" stage. Blue Sky Productions hopes to go full beta on Friday the 13th.

Meanwhile, the low-density version of *Special Ops* is signed-off and out the door to Europe, as is the CD version of *Wing/Secret Missions* for Software Toolworks release worldwide.

That leaves a lot of attention for U7, listed as a strong alpha. QA has an install version and Karen says the game's faster than ever. Speed's being measured by the "Avatar Mile," or the time it takes the Avatar to cruise across the terrain. The Avatar Mile used to take 30 seconds, now it takes 15. Still to come: the end game. (Take it from me, it's great!)

Shirt Tales

Now for the really important news—the status of the *Strike Commander* shirts. Karen and Danny Garrett made the pilgrimage to Action Screen Graphics on Wednesday and placed the order.

Here's the way the shirts were described to me: they're sort of like light sweatshirts, with long sleeves and crew neck. Emblazoned down the length of each sleeve are the words "development team." The shirt itself has a semi-circular *Strike Commander* logo. In the middle is an F-16 with the pilot giving the ORIGIN version of a thumbs-up (need we explain more?) Karen's not sure when they'll be ready, but she hopes they're in by Christmas. Sorry, employees-at-large. This is part of the "limited edition shirt series" for development team staff and close associates only.

What Influences Us?

In our next issue, Raymond Benson unscrews the cap of the creative mind. You'll find out what movies, books and games rank as favorites with the movers, shakers and dreamers at ORIGIN. Some of them may surprise you!

High Profile

With the all-new press bulletin boards conveniently posted, you can catch up on the latest articles, such as:

Incredible coverage in France's *Joystick*: a preview of *U7*, a separate preview of *Underworld*, a profile of *ORIGIN* and even a review of *U6/Amiga*, which was rated very high at 95%. Nine pages in all. In case you don't remember, Editor Dany Boulack was one of the international press people here a few weeks back.

Rik Haynes took a look at *U6/Amiga* for *CU Amiga Magazine* (Europe). "After sampling *Ultima VI*," he writes, "everything else seems like a pale imitation."

The January issue of *Popular Electronics* includes *Wing Commander*

in its "Fun Software" column. Fred Blechman calls it the "Cadillac of space combat simulators."

Ian Murphy played through *Wing 2* for the current issue of *Imagination*. His thoughts? "It surpasses the original by a long, long way. ...If you have the machine and the money, I would seriously recommend this game as a must."

Gregg Keizer is everywhere! In the December issue of *Penthouse*, he says, "Smoother graphics and stronger story line make *WC2*'s revenge theme even more addictive!" And in *OMNI*, he calls *Wing 2* a "sophisticated space-flight simulator in a science-fiction jacket lined with romance, treason, and fighter-jock egos."

How about this for a holiday tie

in: David sears calls *U7* "the ultimate stocking stuffer." The article didn't say for *this* year, though. But seriously, folks (rimshot), Sears says it's the one game he'd bet on. "Garriott's never failed me."

Compute reviewed *Martian Dreams* in its December issue. "If you can meet the strict hardware requirements," writes Richard Rapp, "do yourself a favor and spend this year's vacation on Mars."

And finally, my personal favorite. At the last Happy Hour, I told you about the flight simulator article in *PC Games*. In it, Interplay Production's new *Star Trek: The 25th Anniversary* is touted as the first Trek to have a chance at being a genuine success. How does Interplay describe its own state-of-the-art project? "*Wing Commander* meets Sierra."

Dear Point Man

First of all, let me say "thanks" to those of you who've started using the Point drop boxes. Special and heartfelt appreciation goes to the conscientious employee who penned the first suggestion, printed below:

Dear Point Man,
Find a less offensive box.

They certainly are eye-catchers, aren't they? In their dormancy, the Point boxes had sort of become part of the scenery. Our new and questionably improved boxes are designed to attract attention. I'll make everybody a deal: as the volume of mail in the boxes increases, I will make them less obnoxious.

Dear Point Man,
Is it true that the Avatar is going to Hell in *Ultima VIII*? Is he going to heaven in *Ultima IX* and becoming God? I'm worried that this might offend people (even some here at *ORIGIN*).



The Avatar

For obvious reasons, Richard isn't giving away too much of the plot lines right now. He says the next two Ultimas deal even more with the utmost in good and evil, but God, the Devil, Heaven and Hell are not the parameters. He

says U8 is a "Dante's Inferno-ish type of story" and U9 is the final chapter of the Avatar theme. If I didn't answer the question, I hope at least I confused you sufficiently to keep you from asking again..

Dear Point Man,
After June CES, there was some talk of renting a bus so interested employees who weren't working the show could attend. Did anything ever come of this?

The way I hear it, that plan sort of dropped by the wayside as the release schedules slid past Christmas. But it could happen at another CES. According to Fred, Management is evaluating the matter and we'll let you know if anything breaks loose for the January show.

Keep those cards and snide remarks coming in!