Postcode The Great Detective

It's not often that a software program can bring a malicious fraud to light but that's exactly what happened when Gilmex decided to look for some postcoding software.

Gilmex produce and sell a full range of binding and presentation supplies. If you want to keep papers together either temporarily or permanently, they have a solution. Steve Rouse at Gilmex explained, 'we were finding that many couriers labelling and routing systems were dependent on having the correct postcode for the recipient. In many cases our database did not have the correct postcode so we decided to invest in some postcoding software. We saw an AFD advert in Go Direct and decided to call and set them a little test. If they passed we would buy the software. If not. . . .'

Steve selected three company names and addresses totally at random, 1 from his local Yellow Pages in South London and 2 from a Midlands edition of Business Pages. The first two addresses came back fairly quickly through Postcode Plus, but the third was posing a few problems. After a long search, Postcode came back and announced it couldn't find the address.

'Strange' muttered Iain, here at AFD.

Iain spoke to Steve and said 'We can't find this address, can you fax through a copy of the advert and the people to contact about advertising in Yellow Pages'.

Steve did so, and from there Iain went to work. 28a Hemmings Road, Washford and a Redditch phone number sounded like a proper address. But was it?

After much interrogation of Postcode Plus, Iain found that there is no Hemmings Road in the UK and even the powerful phonetic search failed to deliver. 'OK' he thought 'its a mistake. I'll ring the number and find out where they really are located.' He rang and was asked 'Which emergency service do you require?' Iain asked for the department which related to the advert only to be told that 'this was an emergency line and would he hang up now, please as genuine emergencies couldn't get through as he was on the line'.

Calling the operator to report that the number seemed to be bogus was the first step. From there Iain called Yellow Pages to say that

Welcome Back!

Welcome back to our third edition of Postcode News. It seems almost yesterday that the first editon was being written. Since then we've been frantically busy with the superbly successful launch of Postcode Plus. Our first purchaser was David Pearse of the Multiple Sclerosis Society who is a keen user of Postcode.

In this issue our user stories feature the well known lenders, Guiness Mahon, and, using Postcode in a slightly unusual way, Gilmex. Our staff profile this issue is John Dolman, our Marketing Manager. He reveals almost all on page 4. We hope you enjoy reading PN3. So that we can make Postcode News even better, we need your help. If you have any comments, stories, technical tips, etc that you want to pass on, then let us know. We can be contacted by e.mail, Royal Mail, phone or fax. Send your news to Jo Lloyd, Editor, Postcode News.

'the whole advert was a fraud and would they like to do something about it, especially as the phone number given was that of the emergency services?' After pulling the advert Yellow Pages launched an investigation as to who had placed the advert.

Steve was so impressed at the way in which Postcode Plus had been used to bring this fraud to light that he bought the software. Gilmex are now sending out properly addressed parcels, using a labelling routine that Steve has developed with Postcode Plus. Steve said 'I still can't believe that someone would pay to place an advert which gives a vital emergency number as a phone number. I'm glad that our enquiry about Postcode Plus brought this to light.'

Banking on Postcode

Guiness Mahon is a leading name in the field of leasing and when they wanted to update their computer software they talked to Oyster Bay Systems (01792 473313). Oyster Bay specialise in providing software solutions to the consumer credit and leasing market. A market where correct address information can make the difference to the granting of credit or not.

Oyster Bay built a networked addressing facilty for Horsham based Guinness Mahon using Postcode in three different guises – within the UBDOS based 'Fiscal' lease administration package; within 'Prostar, a prospecting system especially developed for and used throughout Guiness Mahon and as a server to the Microsoft Word 6 word processing package. Postcode is used to ensure that address information is standardised across the bank's computer based functions. Michael Breach, who designed the system, said 'we used Postcode as it met the client's needs. We were also impressed with the ability to swiftly modify software to meet the internal requirements of our existing systems.'

AFD's Diary Dates

You may have heard David speaking the at Address '95 exhibition. He presented his lively and topical seminars on address management under the title 'Can your software do this?'.

If you missed hearing David at Address 95, then come along and speak to him, John Dolman and other AFD Staff at some of the other exhibitions we're going to. The dates and venues of the exhibitions are given below and you'll be able to get further details and tickets nearer the time from **margaret @afd.co.uk**.

14th November 1995
Royal Mail Open Day,
The Royal Mail Headquarters,
Mount Pleasant, London, EC1
29-30th November 1995
European Catalogue and Mail Order Days Exhibition,
Hammersmith Novotel,
London.
30th November 1995
Royal Mail Open Day,
The Automated Processing Centre, Edinburgh
31st January – 1st February
1996 Software Developers Forum, Olympia 2, London.
27th February – 1st March
Windows 1996,
Grand Hall, Olympia, London.

And as a special bonus, all purchasers of Postcode and Postcode Plus at any of the above exhibitions and open days will receive a wonderful die-cast collectors model of a 1950 Morris 'Z' Post Office Van. Crafted in Britain, models such as this have become much sought after by discerning collectors. Now you have a chance to obtain a small historical reminder of less pressured days when you purchase a program from us.

The Morris Z Van was immortalised as the bright, shiny red, helpful 'Mickey the Mail Van' from the classic Ladybird book 'Tootles the Taxi'. We've chosen Mickey as his little rhyme perfectly sums up our drive to get the UK properly addressed:
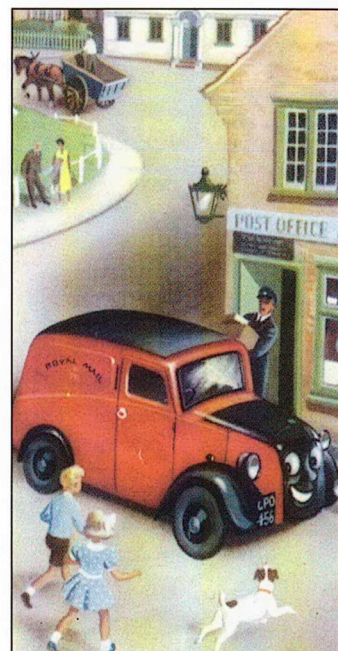
I'm Mickey the mail van,
and I never fail
To find all the people
For whom I have mail.

For those of you who can't get to the seminars, just order a copy of either Postcode or Postcode Plus before 31st December 1995 and we'll send Mickey to you. Postcode is £154 +VAT and Postcode Plus is £475 +VAT.

© Ladybird Books

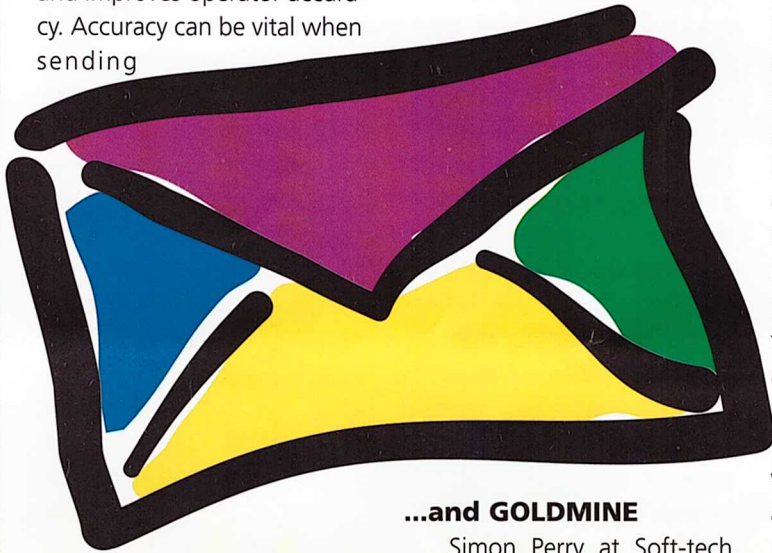# Incorporating Postcode into...

Sage Software Packages

A nifty piece of development work by Mike Solomon of MSC Systems, has enabled ~rs of the Sage range of business software products to have all the benefits of Postcode incorporated into their software.

Sage produce a broad range of accounting and contact databases for all sizes of business user. For the large business there is Sage Sovereign, mid range businesses use Sterling (in both DOS and Windows versions) and smaller users have Bookkeeper. Newly developed is the Telemagic range, a range of contact database products which allows users to easily ~nage and track business contacts.

Mike, as a Sage dealer, said, 'we were always being asked to come up with a low cost solution to the problem of inadequate address entry to Sage packages. By developing a user interface between Sage and Postcode we are able to offer enhanced value with the Sage packages to all our customers.'

'Using Postcode speeds up the entry of names and addresses into the programs and improves operator accuracy. Accuracy can be vital when sending invoices and statements to customers and suppliers' added Mike.

Mike can be contacted on 01934 417904

...and UNIX

Adrian Mardlin, of the major Shareware specialists Nildram, has written an interface to allow multi-user Unix systems to have all the benefits of Postcode. Installed using a C library interface, Postcode provides developers with an additional tool that can be used to improve the functionality of programs for end users.

Adrian can be contacted on 01442 891331 for full details of the installation.

...and GOLDMINE

Simon Perry at Soft-tech (01606 862449) has been digging away without even a hi-ho or a dwarf in sight to incorporate Postcode into the contact manager program Goldmine.

Goldmine is one of the growing number of Personal Information Management Systems (PIMS) on the market today. Written to allow Sales and Marketing departments to manage and control their lead generation programmes by using a full contact manager facility, Goldmine interfaces with other programs to provide an easy to use tool.

Goldmine has a number of applications in business – sending out catalogues, logging phone calls, diarising follow-up calls, all of which depend on accurate address information to monitor and use. And that's where Postcode comes in. Simon has developed a routine by which Postcode can be incorporated into Goldmine to help put the postally correct address into the address area. This then allows users to generate automatic follow-ups and access a range of analysis reports which are dependent on address information.

Simon commented 'putting Postcode into Goldmine as a Check Address function has made a difference for users. It helps to differentiate our product from the opposition and users like the convenience of using such a simple addressing program.'

With Christmas approaching at a very rapid rate, we thought we'd set you a little Competition. Answers on a postcard or e.mail (competition @afd.co.uk) please. First correct entry out of the sack wins a a copy of our Mailsort program, Mailcode, worth £116. Second prize is a £25 discount voucher for AFD programs and 10 runners up receive their own precision die-cast model of Mickey the Mail Van.

All you have to do is match the famous person to the most appropriate postcode from the lists opposite. *Postcode Plus users have a distinct advantage here!*

Closing date is 15th December 1995 and the winner will be drawn from all correct entries received before that date. The judges decision is final and no correspondence

Postcode	Person
FK8 1EJ	John Major
SW1A 2AA	Mary, Queen of Scots
SW1A 1AA	William Wallace
EH49 7AL	Queen Elizabeth II
PO1 1PZ	Duke of Cumberland
OX20 1PX	Lord Montague
SO42 7ZN	Marlborough
IV1 2EH	Nelson

Are they talking about us?

Since the last issue of Postcode News, we have launched Postcode Plus. The comments we've had so far have been perfectly summed up by Paul Alford of QA Dataquest -

'Just one word . . . . Excellent!!!!'

It makes a refreshing change to see a software company doing it right, unlike some I could mention'.

But we mustn't forget Postcode, our original address management program. Kay Ewbank, writing in Computer Shopper in October 1995, about the Shareware version from Nildram said *'Finding a full address is a doddle using Postcode – and it can be used alongside a wide variety of databases.'*

'The Shareware version supplies only the town, county and STD code, but is sufficient for you to try out the package to see if it fits in your application. Postcode can be used under DOS or Windows and a UNIX version is now under development'

In the Hotseat

John Dolman, Marketing Manager.

Age – 'older than David'. Even bribery of a plate of μουσσακα∗, with ρεβνθια∗ and χορτα σαλατα∗ on the side has not helped to get him to reveal all.

Original Career Choice – retail management. John was a guitarist and songwriter who managed a music shop whilst waiting to be discovered. Unfortunately the music industry took the wrong turning, so John decided to devote his considerable writing talents with software instead.

Sports and Hobbies – John is a cricket fanatic supporting his home team of Lancashire. He also plays garden cricket with his sons.

Joined AFD in – John swears that the date he joined the company is just a co-incidence – 1st April 1991.

Favourite food and drink – A good Greek meal, preferably in that little taverna in Skiathos, just where the yachts come in and out of the harbour, with the sun dappling on the water. Failing that a good Greek meal anywhere. To drink – a good claret, except in Greece.

Family – four boys, (not to be confused with the Midlands newsagents chain)

∗Moussaka, chickpeas and green salad.

Contacting AFD

We can be contacted in many ways. Phone on 01294 823221 or fax on 01294 822905

The AFD Bulletin Board is a two way service – it gives you all the applications that Postcode works with and is a forum for Postcode users to exchange views and information about the Postcode. The Bulletin Board can be accessed by dialling 01294 829327.

Our e.mail address is `(which staff member you want to speak to)@afd.co.uk` If you want to reach David then type `david@afd.co.uk`

And finally the Royal Mail approved postal address is – 51 Meadowfoot Road, West Kilbride, KA23 9BU.

'Mickey the Mail Van' and 'Tootles the Taxi' are copyright of Ladybird Books.

Data Set News

The 3/95 data set will shortly be available. We have been told that there are no major recodings, but a substantial number of minor tidy-ups are contained within the set.

Existing Postcode users can get their copy of this data update at the nominal cost of £30.00 + VAT (Total £35.25). The Postcode Plus data update is £75.00 + VAT.

To order your update, simply call Margaret on 01294 823221 or fax her on 01294 822905 with your Postcode serial number and your credit card details. Alternatively you can order by post to th address below or email `postcode@afd. co.uk`

Please note that the update packs run from Windows and installs for DOS and Windows versions. They will only operate with a properly installed version of Postcode or Postcode Plus! If you cannot install a Postcode update from Windows, please order the DOS only update pack for Postcode. This costs £50.00 + VAT (£58.75).