



Now, join our intrepid explorers in the treacherous world of handheld peril. In this suspense-filled issue...

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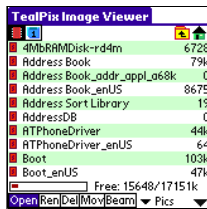
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Inside TealPoint
What we've been up to



Ahh, for the old days of PalmOS development. Back in the early days, say, 1997 or so, developing apps for what was then the PalmPilot family of organizers was a joy of simplicity.

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Palms, ARMs, and Handhelds

Should you upgrade?

This fall, the air is heavy with anticipation as the industry awaits the unveiling of the next generation of handheld organizers from Palm Solutions Group. While it's not unusual to see new products released in time for unbridled seasonal overspending, the new units represent a significant milestone and challenge for the Milpitas-based company.

While some of the new models will use the same Motorola Dragonball processors found in other PalmOS handhelds, a number of the new units will be built around faster ARM technology, and will run PalmOS 5. Seen as a necessary move to combat the perception of Pocket PC's as higher-end devices, ARM chips also bring more flexibility to handheld manufacturers, offering them higher potential speeds, lower cost, lower power consumption, and multiple chip vendors. Other handheld makers have followed suit, with Handspring and Sony announcing their intention to release ARM-based models as well.

New Speeds

Most Motorola Dragonball processors run at either 16 or 33 Mhz. The fastest Dragonball, the "SuperVZ" found in the Sony NR70, tops out at just 66 Mhz. ARM processors, however, can be much faster, commonly running 200 Mhz or faster. While higher speeds can have some drawbacks, such as decreased battery life, most ARM-based devices will likely run significantly faster than their Dragonball brethren.

A faster processor, however, will not always mean a faster handheld. As covered in a previous issue, PalmOS 5 is a major restructuring of the handheld operating system, rewritten to run natively on the faster ARM processors. Existing application code, however, will run the new OS under emulation, which can actually be slower in some instances. Many time-critical apps like movie players and games will likely be rewritten to take full advantage of the increased speed, but many productivity titles will likely stay unchanged in order to run simultaneously on both old and new devices.

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There were only a few models to worry about, or rather one model in a few slightly-different flavors to worry about. All PalmPilots had the same sized monochrome screen, had the same buttons, and ran the same processors at the same speed. When you wrote a program and got it working, you'd know it would work for the indefinite future, and you could spend time thinking about new programs to write, or at least only come back if you had more features you wanted to add to your old programs.

Now fast forward five years, a near lifetime in the high tech industry. There are over a half dozen companies creating PalmOS organizers, each with a half dozen models trying to carve their own niches in the developing market. Some manufacturers, like Sony, have been releasing new models at a feverish rate, seemingly unveiling a new model every two or three months, each with its own unique design, styling, and capabilities.



While some platforms have been losing models and manufacturers, PalmOS really has grown into a phenomenon of its own. And yet, all this wonderful expansion has not come without a cost. All the new devices have brought a cornucopia of different screen resolutions and depths, audio capabilities, button configurations, and expansion devices. What was once a platform consisting of a single unit and a few near clones has become a wide array of differing devices running the same operating system.

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Palms, ARMs, and Handhelds

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New Features

So, if speed is not a sure thing, why upgrade to ARM? Indeed, this is a good question, particularly if you're already happy with the handheld you have. One reason might be the additional features which are likely to come with the new models. For instance, while the high-end Sony CLIE's already offer high resolution and multimedia capabilities, PalmOS 5 makes these features, and the way software uses them, part of the standard interface, insuring much more consistent software support and compatibility. Up to this point, cutting-edge device manufacturers like Sony and Handera have written their own incompatible--and often clumsy--interfaces to access their capabilities, and this has led to somewhat spotty support from third party software. For instance, on Sony CLIE NR70 handhelds, even the majority of the software which ships on the device itself does not support the unit's innovative full-screen mode. While PalmOS 5 does not yet (unfortunately) address this specific feature, it does finally make high resolution a standard feature, which goes a long way to guaranteeing widespread support from software developers.

Compatibility

Speaking of compatibility, what about software compatibility with PalmOS 5? Ah, perhaps that is the \$10,000 question. While other OS releases have created minor headaches for customers and developers having to navigate their way around in a sea of compatibility issues, the latest release brings with it a tidal wave of potential problems. It is estimated that as much as 30% of existing PalmOS applications may have problems running under PalmOS 5 and the new ARM handhelds. While many of these will no doubt be quickly updated to fix any initial compatibility issues, some programs simply cannot be made to run under the new architecture. Others, like some classes of hacks, can be made to function with help from third party programs like TealMaster, using TealMaster 2.0's new PalmOS 5 hack emulation feature. (Visit <http://www.tealpoint.com/softmstr.htm>)

Conclusion

It's difficult to say whether the upgrade to an ARM device is immediately worthwhile. As with most things, the choice will be an individual one based on many personal factors. There's no doubt that ARM chips represent the future of PalmOS, but there's still life in the older Dragonball technology, and the number of compatibility issues which remain have yet to be seen. Yet, for those considering their first handheld device, or those still toting technology a few years behind the curve, it's probably well worth taking the time to look at this Fall's newest gizmos on the block.

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Hardware manufacturers, eager to differentiate their products from the competition, have been pushing the limits of the operating system to support higher resolutions, better connectivity, and higher multimedia capabilities than PalmOS had previously supported. While this has greatly benefited the platform as a whole, the application and OS software has had a tough time keeping up, requiring hardware manufactures like Sony and HandEra to hack their own incompatible changes into the operating system to support the features they need, sometimes affecting compatibility and support. This lag can be plainly seen in the latest NR70 device from Sony, whose own shipped applications show glaring omissions in support for their own new features. Its wonderful full screen mode, for instance, is not supported by the basic PIM applications, but only by a slideshow image viewer which ships with the device.



We at TealPoint have not been immune to these changes. Five years ago, less than 20% of our development time was spent on maintenance and compatibility of existing programs, with 80% devoted to new features and new programs. This was possible largely due to the stability of the platform. Then came Visor flash memory. After that, came color. Then HandEra's high-resolution modes. Then Sony's completely different high resolution system. Then expansion cards. And jog dials. And now, PalmOS 5.0. Today, a full 80% of our development time is spent simply playing catch-up with changes to the operating system and in new devices, slowing the release of requested features and new programs. For us, there is another issue. Creating new features and programs is fun and rewarding. Maintaining existing programs for compatibility, however, is not.

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TEALAGENT 1.10 - updated July 8, 2002

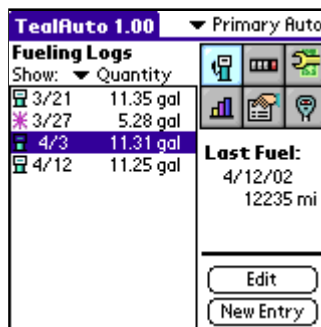
(www.tealpoint.com/softagnt.htm)


A PC-based Palm data converter, installer, and web clipper which formats local, network, and web-resident data into standard Palm formats.

TEALAUTO 1.30 - updated Sept 13, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softauto.htm)

The complete automobile mileage, service, and expense tracking program, TealAuto supports unmatched features and customization options.



TealAuto 1.00		▼ Primary Auto
Fueling Logs		
Show: ▼ Quantity		
3/21	11.35 gal	
3/27	5.28 gal	
4/3	11.31 gal	
4/12	11.25 gal	Last Fuel: 4/12/02 12235 mi
		<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
		<input type="button" value="New Entry"/>

TEALDOC 5.01 - updated September 19, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softdoc.htm)

Powerful reader for Palm documents, e-books, and newspapers, supporting advanced features such as pictures, links, and flash cards.

TEALECHO 2.41 - updated October 4, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softecho.htm)

Digital "ink" lets you see what you write, vastly increasing graffiti writing speed and accuracy. No more writing blind!

TEALGLANCE 3.35B - updated April 13, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softglnc.htm)

Pop-up utility shows time, date, appointments and to-dos, and other useful information at power-up. See your day at a glance.

TEALINFO 4.20 - updated August 29, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softinfo.htm)

A system for creating and displaying interactive databases, reference works, and mini-application folios; a handheld reference library.

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Enter TICL

TICL, an acronym for the TealPoint Independent Code Library, represents a new initiative at TealPoint. Designed in response to the widening of the PalmOS platform, it is designed to insure that TealPoint products going forward enjoy excellent portability, stability, and compatibility with existing and future devices and platforms.

Benefits

TICL is a large effort to isolate all display, hardware, and operating system-dependent code from TealPoint programs into a single, modular library shared between all programs. Essentially, its goal is to unify all TealPoint programs so that they are no longer affected by changes in either the operating system or new devices. Instead, all programs are written with code which does not have to change when PalmSource releases a new version of their operating system or when a new device is released which supports a new input device or display mode. All the code which handles this stuff is kept within the shared library, so any changes that need to be made can be done once in the library and all applications (currently 20) can be updated at once with a minimum of effort.

With most of the useful common code between programs centralized and isolated, development is faster and more time is free for feature additions and new products. This is very ambitious, of course, and there will no doubt be limits to which applications and features can benefit from the new library. If even partially-successful, however, the benefits will be great. Imagine all TealPoint applications supporting full screen mode in a single update. Or supporting a new jog dial or additional buttons of a brand new device. Or transparently supporting expansion media as easily as RAM. Or taking advantage of a new rotating/resizing/super-resolution display. All of this is not only possible, but is the stated goal of TICL.

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Products

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TEALLAUNCH 2.80 - updated July 31, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softlnch.htm)

A pop-up application launcher and mapping utility for launching apps and special functions from pen taps, graffiti strokes, or button presses.

TEALLOCK 4.60 - updated September 29, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softlock.htm)

Secure automatic locking program with optional data encryption and numerous activation and customization options.

TEALMAGNIFY 2.10 - updated Sept 13, 2000

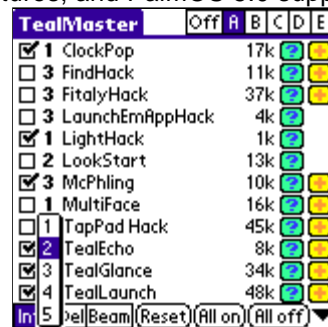
(www.tealpoint.com/softlens.htm)

An ever-ready magnifying glass that works with most any program, TealMagnify saves your eyes when looking at tiny text.

TEALMASTER 2.00 - updated September 25, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softmstr.htm)

A supercharged Hackmaster replacement with 100%-compatibility and enhanced stability, configuration, diagnostic and activation features, and PalmOS 5.0 support.



TEALMEAL 3.44B - updated Jan 10, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softmeal.htm)

A personal restaurant database and selection wizard. Keep a database of your favorites and easily find them by type or category.

TEALMEMBRAIN 1.01 - updated October 23, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softmemb.htm)

Memory monitor and stack manager which helps identify conflicts and greatly improves stability running multiple hacks and drivers.

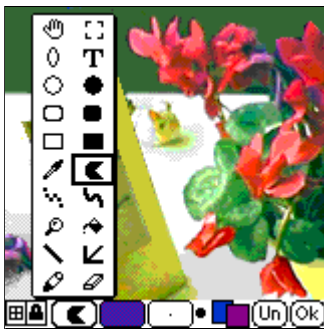
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So when can I see this?

TICL is currently in development, is making very good progress, and is expected to be complete by the end of the year. Its creation is slowing other development and activities (like newsletters) a bit, but the rewards when it's done should be well worthwhile. Simple internal test applications, while not too exciting to look at externally, are already running, and the newest versions of TealMovie and TealLock are already taking advantage of some modules from the TICL library. As development continues, expect to see more standard features to appear in existing programs, and even a few programs rewritten from scratch to take full advantage of the new framework.



While a few minor TICL applications may be released first, TealPaint will probably be the first major application to be fully rewritten. The original code base was the second TealPoint program to be written (TealMeal was first), and is written completely in assembly language. The new version will be rewritten in 'C', and will fully support nifty features such as 16-bit color, expansion cards, high-resolution, and special effects such as layers, transparency, and plug-in drawing and effects modules. A very ambitious update, the new version will probably be complete sometime this winter.

Products

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TEALMOVER 1.31 - updated August 29, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softmovr.htm)

File management utility for beaming, deleting, renaming, and copying files both in memory and on VFS-compatible storage cards.

TEALMOVIE 2.55 - updated September 25, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softmovi.htm)

High-quality multimedia system with video and synchronized sound. Includes audio/video player and Windows AVI/Quicktime converter program.

TEALNOTES 1.20 - updated July 19, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softnote.htm)

Insert freehand graphic "Sticky Notes" into memos, to-do lists, address book entries--almost anywhere you currently have editable text.

TEALPAINT 4.95 - updated September 13, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softpnt.htm)

The most powerful paint and sketch app on Palm OS handhelds, featuring 16 tools, 16 patterns, 12 brushes, color, and desktop image conversion.

TEALPHONE 3.61 - updated September 19, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softphon.htm)

A powerful Address Book replacement with superior interface, display, search, and indexing options.

TEALPRINT 1.62B - updated September 11, 2001

(www.tealpoint.com/softprnt.htm)

The all-in-one text and graphic printing solution for Palm OS, supporting infrared, serial, and HotSync printing to any Windows printer.

TEALSCRIPT 2.50 - updated July 22, 2002

(www.tealpoint.com/softscrp.htm)

An improved, tunable, Graffiti text recognition system that lets you modify the handwriting recognition to suit your handwriting.

TEALTOOLS 1.10 - updated March 13, 2001

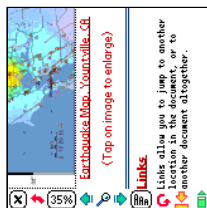
(www.tealpoint.com/softtool.htm)

Six pop-up desk accessories, including a calculator, clock/stopwatch, preferences panel, editing panel, memopad, and a file/backup manager.

@Teal Mobile

View in TealDoc or HTML

Don't be chained to your desktop. Read this e-magazine on your Palm with TealDoc.



Zipped TealDoc File:

<http://www.robofish.com/download/news/news07tc.zip>

Raw TealDoc File:

<http://www.robofish.com/download/news/news07tc.pdb>

Adobe Acrobat PDF File:

<http://www.robofish.com/download/news/news07tc.pdf>

View it online in HTML:

<http://www.tealpoint.com/news/news0701tc.htm>

Best Programs for PDA's

TealPoint Sweeps SIA Awards

Two of TealPoint Software's products won top honors at the 2002 Shareware Industry Awards held July 20 in St. Louis, Missouri. **TealGlance** won the "**Best Program for PDA's**" category based on votes from industry members, while **TealPhone** won the **People's Choice "Best PDA"** category based on votes from the general public.

TealGlance is a pop-up task and appointment reminder that displays a "quick view" window on power-up showing commonly-needed information such as date, time, day of the week, upcoming appointments, unchecked tasks (to-do list items), and the current battery level. A wide variety of activation and customization options are available, including analog or digital clocks, alternate task categories, and scheduled activation.



TealGlance (\$11.95) <http://www.tealpoint.com/softglnc.htm>

TealPhone replaces the standard address book, offering a superior interface and many convenient and useful improvements, making it the ultimate contact manager. Enhancements include a one-screen integrated display, eye-saving large number view, quick seek index bar, recently-used city and country memory, powerful search features, TealPrint summary, entry and label printing, and switchable sorting by first name, last name, and company. Also supported is phone number dialing through integrated phones, modems, phone add-on peripherals, and cabled and infrared GSM cell phones.

TealPhone (\$17.95) <http://www.tealpoint.com/softphon.htm>

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Slap your Hands Save from Hands High

Announcing Slap from Hands High Software

Do you find your handheld organizer still too cumbersome? Entering appointments, address book entries, tasks and other information while simultaneously talking to people in a meeting or on the phone is difficult.

Slap solves your problem by giving you one place to enter notes. Later, when you are ready to organize them, Slap helps you turn your notes into addresses, appointments, tasks, memos, emails and more.

Many people are already saving hours of time by using Slap. Download now and try it! To download, go to <http://www.handshigh.com/>.

SPECIAL OFFER: Slap is regularly \$12.95, but TealPoint customers can buy Slap today for only \$9.95! Enter coupon code "teal25sl" at the Hands High Store.

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Special Prices at Handango.com

TealPoint Software has partnered with Handango to provide these PALM OS SOFTWARE SPECIALS for October. Below you'll find eight applications discounted up to 25% off! Do more with your Palm OS handheld for less money! (Discount codes expire October 31.)

***** Teacher's P.E.T. v3 by Coffee Pot Software

The most complete gradebook, attendance and contact info package for the Palm OS enabled teacher.

Special Price: \$17.99* (save 10%) *Use discount code: 399A8

Read more, download a trial, or purchase here:
<http://www.handango.com/Redirector.jsp?productId=38633>

***** InfoSafe Plus by WakefieldSoft, LLC

Securely manage usernames, passwords, logins, account numbers, credit cards, personal info and more!

Special Price: \$16.99* (save 15%) *Use discount code: 2155X

Read more, download a trial, or purchase here:
<http://www.handango.com/Redirector.jsp?productId=43448> *****
ExpenseLog PRO by TrajectoryLabs.com

A full-featured professional expense tracking and reporting program with three programs in one -- an expense tracker, a mileage tracker and a currency converter.

Special Price: \$11.96* (save 20%) *Use discount code: 7X6D7

Read more, download a trial, or purchase here:
<http://www.handango.com/Redirector.jsp?productId=41996>

***** TAKEphONE by ShSh

A stylish wrapper for the Palm OS Address Book designed to enhance and simplify common tasks with easy "one-hand" operation.

Special Price: \$8.96* (save 10%) *Use discount code: 3E716

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Two great tools for one low price. NextUp! is a great organizational tool and Pocket Codes is an area code, country code and international Internet domain extension program.

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3. Enter that product's discount code in Handango's shopping cart, then click "Recalculate". The price of the software will be reduced and the savings passed on to you!
4. Click "Checkout" and follow the instructions to complete your purchase.
5. Download and enjoy your software!

P.S. Don't forget -- these special prices are only good for a limited time, and you must enter the discount code provided for each product.

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<http://www.handango.com/newsletters>

