

A Direct Line to Atari

On March 23, 1985, a small room in Atari corporate headquarters started to buzz with activity from all over the country. Taking as many as four calls at a time, four 800XLs and eight disk drives hummed away.

The Atari BBS was on line.

Early response to the BBS was very good. The first callers were modemaniacs who heard of the BBS through the Atari SIG (special interest group) on CompuServe. They were pleased with the concept of an Atari bulletin board.

Some interesting ideas have been put forward by BBS users already. Brian Young, a BBS enthusiast who calls himself "Brainwave," suggested an electronic conference on hardware and software tips.

David Duberman, the user group coordinator and the systems operator for the BBS, feels user group activities will be enhanced by the Atari BBS. Six new user's groups from various parts of the country were added to the database in its first two weeks of operations. In fact, users are a major reason for the establishment of the BBS. "It's a direct line to the users. They can call in at night and leave messages when the rates are cheaper and it doesn't interfere with their daytime activities," said David Duberman, the Atari user group coordinator.

Duberman is also the System Operator for the BBS. He is excited about distributing programming to users through the BBS. "The idea is to get out files that Atari owners need," he said. By the time you read this, the Atari BBS should have DOS 2.5, the users group listings, and the RAM disk program for the 130 XEs available for downloading.

A permanent software and peripheral system has not been settled on yet. The public domain AMIS system was the first software used to put up the BBS, but other programs are now under consideration. "We're constantly updating the system, looking for the best software and hardware to run on," Duberman said. **A**

The Atari BBS is waiting for your phone calls. The number is (408) 745-5308. If it keeps ringing, the line is busy.