



Bill Bowman, Chairman of Spinnaker Software.

Once banks, insurance companies, phone companies, etc. observe that 20% or 25% of the population have home computers, they will begin to subsidize the electronic delivery of their services, and penalty-price the physical delivery. Once your bank statements cost \$10 and your local phone company is charging \$25 for a telephone directory, even the anti-technologist will see it's in his or her interest to purchase a home computer. Spending \$199 for a home computer will make sense when one can forego \$200 per year in charges for bank statements, phone books, and American Express bills.

We are passing from one age to another. The "early adopters" have bought eight-bit machines and have had fun playing with them. Now we have to convince the other 90% that we have something that will save them time or money. Computers like the Atari ST permit software developers to build products that will answer those needs. ▲

The future of computing is almost like the weather. Everyone talks about it, but fortunately, some people do some things about it. Certain people like Bill Bowman. He is the president of Spinnaker Software, and a visionary. One of the things he is good at is imagining where the home computer will help people in their daily lives, and fitting it into their routines. —P.R. Adler

Home Banking for Atari Users

by P.R. Adler

Bill's wife (see "What's up Ahead?," facing page) may want to wait for her ST, but thousands of people are using Atari computers to do their banking and pay their bills right now. Rudimentary home banking began in 1978 with Prestel, a videotex system operated by the British Post Office for use with dedicated terminals. In the U.S., the first home computer ever to be part of a home banking service was the Atari 400, installed in consumer's homes by Chemical Bank in 1982 for their Pronto system.

There are approximately 44,000 U.S. home banking customers, most of whom use Pronto or Bank of America's HomeBanking program. According to TeleServices Report, a newsletter that covers home banking, more than 65 banks using 25 systems have installed personal access accounts. Some banks operate units that communicate directly with their customers, others work through networks like CompuServe or The Source. Essentially all home banking services are alike in that a user can dial his or her bank using a modem and a computer, and check balances, transfer funds, and schedule payments of bills anywhere in a 30 or 90 day period, depending on the bank. Most banks charge use fees for their services, which differ from bank to bank. According to Richard Forbes, marketing V.P. of Pronto U.S.A. Corp., the banks may one day begin charging for physical delivery of bills, but does not expect it to be soon. "Banking habits take a long time to change," he said.

The problem with the adoption of home banking, according to Forbes, is the fact that it is so new. There is a nat-

ural resistance to change which the industry must overcome. "When you talk to people about doing banking over computer, you're talking about a long evolution," he said. Other authorities point to problems of introduction, feeling that for home banking services, technology should not be pushed, rather the services should be introduced at a "very basic level." As Bill Bowman says, the consumer has to be shown how a home banking system will save him time or money.

If computers get easier to use, home banking will grow. An AMERICAN BANKER poll found that two-thirds of all computer users would consider using the machines to bank at home. Teletel, a videotex service in France, expects the number of its home banking subscribers to grow dramatically as the number of homes with Teletel terminals reaches a projected three million by the end of 1986.

Most computers available today do not have the ease of use of the Atari ST. But, as millions of people know, they are still extremely useful. And home banking is available all over the country. ▲

Here are the names and main locations of some major banks who offer home banking services:

Bank of America—San Francisco
Citibank—New York
Manufacturers Hanover—New York
Chemical Bank—New York
Manufacturers National Bank—
Detroit
Florida National Bank—Jacksonville
Banker Trust of South Carolina—
Columbia, SC
Worthen Bank—Little Rock, AK

—P. R. Adler