

tangent

NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 1987

TANDY COMPUTER - BUSINESS USERS GROUP

Sharing Business Computer Solutions

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In the first newsletter of this administration, I reported that the Directors had formed four committees -- Newsletter, Membership, Compuserve, and Annual Conference. In this our second newsletter, I'm pleased to report that the committees are functioning and progress is being made in all areas.

Each committee chairman has a report in this newsletter, but I would like to highlight several items even at the risk of being redundant. ---Compuserve is our primary means of communicating with the membership. The Tangent Forum has been an active forum since the last Annual Conference. The Directors have used their special section to conduct the business of the users group. In July, the Directors participated in two on-line conferences and

selected a new name for the users group in accordance with the instructions of the TC-BUG Annual Business Meeting. The Compuserve Forum is an integral part of the users group! Even this article was submitted to the Newsletter Chairman via the Forum. If you are not using the Tangent Forum, you should be -- it is a major service of the users group.

----Plans for the 1987 Annual Conference are looking good. The meeting will be held Sunday, April 26th through Wednesday, April 29th, at the Worthington Hotel, Fort Worth. Mark your calendars!

----The membership committee has sent out membership renewals--have you paid this years dues? This committee is also

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TANDY CORNER

TANDY OVERTAKES IBM

A report was issued July 28, 1986 by the Gartner Group, Inc., a Stamford, Connecticut research firm. It dealt with the PC and PC-compatible marketplace. Gartner believes that in the Fortune 500 companies (companies with approx. \$500 million or more in revenue) IBM will continue to dominate the market with an 82% share in 1986. This represents a 1% decrease from 1985.

BUT, in the market for firms grossing less than \$500 million, their report shows Tandy taking over the lead from IBM! According to Gartner, IBM had 45% of this market in 1985 -- Tandy was second with 22%. They claim that in 1986, Tandy will advance to a 30% share of the market, while IBM

drops to 24%.

Where are all the transient no-name clones? According to Gartner, all of the Asian imports combined will represent 30% of the market in 1986.

TANDY TELEPHONE SUPPORT

We've been receiving a lot of calls and letters responding to a recent mailing we did talking about telephone support. Some clarification is in order.

First, an explanation. Look at the economic realities of the support issue. Computer manufacturers can't package "lifetime support" with each CPU. The growing base of Tandy Computer

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FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1987 TANGENT CONFERENCE

Start making plans now for the 1987 Tangent Conference. It will be held on April 26-29 in Ft. Worth, again at the Worthington Hotel. The conference will begin early Monday morning, so you will probably want to arrive on Sunday evening. We will have a number of tables reserved at Billy Bob's that night, especially for Tangent members. A bus will be running from the Worthington to Billy Bob's from 7:00 pm

until midnight. This will give you a chance to get together at that time with other attendees.

A popular part of previous conferences has been the extensive display of the latest in Tandy hardware and software. In 1987, this display area will be expanded to allow other vendors to exhibit their products. We expect to be able to show you numerous third-party products that will help tailor your

Tandy hardware to further fit your needs.

The 1987 conference will be structured similar to previous conferences. On Monday, Tandy representatives will fill us in on the latest developments from the Twin Towers. The day will be highlighted by a talk by John Roach, Chairman of Tandy Corporation.

Tuesday morning, we will have several

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The President's Corner (Continued from Page 1)

working to update and upgrade our membership database. In the future, with your cooperation, the users group may be able to do more in creating a forum between members with similar applications.

---The June 21st and October 4 Directors' meetings were well attended and productive. More Directors attended the June meeting than any previous mid-year meeting. This level of commitment is largely responsible for the progress of the users group.

----If you have concerns that should come before the Board, please contact me -leave a message on the SIG or if you must, write me a letter. Your suggestions for the Annual Conference, or the Newsletter are especially welcome.

Fred Hill - President

Tandy Corner (Continued from Page 1)

customers requires ever-expanding support, and costs have to be covered somehow. Almost all personal computer manufacturers are charging for on-going support. They have to.

Industry watchers are identifying a strong trend toward third-party support ... manufacturers leaving long-term support to firms who do nothing else, and who obviously charge for this service. Tandy is bucking that trend and it's an advantage to our users. CPU from 'Company X,' software from 'Company Y,' peripherals from 'Company Z,' and now support from 'Company W.' If this third-party trend continues, Tandy may be the only place you can go to a single supplier. It's much easier to go to one place and say "make it work."

Now the good news. Radio Shack hasn't taken away free support. The Fort Worth customer service telephones are still free. (And for testimonials on quality of service, talk to somebody who had a one-on-one at the last Annual Conference. It's those same folks answering the Fort Worth phones) Yes, they are crowded. No, you probably won't get in on the first try. And, Yes, it can be frustrating. That's why there

are over 60 Training and Support Centers (TSCs) nationwide, supporting only business products. That's the service that's free for 30 days, after which it costs \$20/month (available in 3, 6, or 12-month increments only.) Our business customers asked for a business-oriented service which would have some cost, to discourage unnecessary calls and therefore be more accessible.

While the minimum charges help, they don't begin to offset the expense of offering the service. Your \$20/month brings you unlimited calling privileges. Our charges are among the lowest in the industry. IBM charges \$40 or \$50 per call, meaning that you get 2 or 3 months of unlimited calling with Radio Shack for the cost of one call to Big Blue.

At any rate, we do want you to realize that we didn't remove something free, we just added a second service that costs. For your information, the support system today fields over 100,000 calls per month! 90,000 of those are through the Training and Support Centers.

**ATTENTION
MODEL I AND MODEL III OWNERS**

If you are a Model I or III owner, there is a new program in Express Order Software called "Conv3toPC," Cat. No. 90-0345. It allows you to easily convert your Model I/III files, via diskette, to Tandy 1000/1200/2000/3000 user.

The program automatically converts 95% or more of each BASIC program, inserting the required spaces between keywords, replacing PRINT@'s with LOCATEs, etc. It even takes care of Model I/III PEEK and POKE locations. So, those who have been asking for an easy way to convert files, it's here.

**TANDY 2000 GETS DISK
CARTRIDGE SYSTEM INTERFACE**

The Tandy 2000 DCS Interface board is available now -- Cat. No. 26-5147, for the 10-Meg Disk Cartridge System. The DCS System works as either a primary storage device, or can be used for backup.

**COMPUSERVE'S TANDY FORUMS
CHANGE HANDS**

Back in June, the Tandy 100 and PRO forums changed sponsorship. Tandy will

maintain a presence on the forum, and hopes to expand our participation to a wider variety of information services. We're convinced that our partnership rather than our sponsorship will result in a more productive and enjoyable forum.

Fifth Annual Conference (Continued from Page 1)

industry leaders addressing us on matters of interest. The keynote speaker will be Bill Gates, Chairman of Microsoft Corporation. William Krause, President of 3COM will address us concerning networking. The state of the industry will be covered by Seymore Merrin of the Gartner Group.

On Tuesday afternoon, we will break into several small special interest groups, where we will have a chance to kibitz with users who share our particular interests. These groups will cover such topics as MS-DOS, Xenix, Scriptsit, Profile/filePro, Accounting, Desktop Publishing, Maximizing the 6000, and Communications.

On Wednesday morning, we will have a Compuserve demonstration, this time with a working projector. Then we will hear an address from David L. Flack, the Executive Editor of UNIX/World magazine. Following one other major speaker, the conference will end at noon.

Over the next several months, there will be numerous exciting developments of interest to business computer users. The 80386 machines that are starting to appear on the market promise greatly increased speed and performance. Microsoft has stated that Xenix/386 should be in released to hardware manufacturers by March, and it should give us additional utilities and increased capabilities (such as running DOS as a task under Xenix.) DOS/286, also due to be pre-released by March, offers the prospect of breaking the 640k barrier, and greatly enhancing the power of the Tandy 3000.

Additional developments in networking will enhance machine-to-machine communication. The 1987 Tangent Conference will concentrate on these topics (among others,) and will provide you with the information you need to stay on top of the ever-changing field of business computing.

See you in Ft. Worth!

The *tangent Newsletter* is published by and for the *tangent* general membership. Articles for future publications or questions concerning this or any past publication should be sent to:

tangent

Attn: Newsletter Editor
P. O. Box 17580
Fort Worth, TX 76102

TC-BUG becomes TANGENT

The Tandy Computer Business Users's Group, usually referred to as TC-BUG, is changing its name to TANGENT. The purpose, goals, and activities of the group are the same, only the name has changed.

A tangent is making contact at a single point or along a line; touching but not intersecting. This definition describes the role of the User Group as a point of contact between computer users, Tandy Corporation, and computer industry

leaders. The name change process began at the 1986 General Business Meeting held at last year's Annual Conference. Two primary reasons for the name change were expressed. First and most important, the User Group's name needed to reflect a more professional, businesslike image for the organization. Second, an IRS ruling on the organization's tax exempt status was complicated by the Tandy name appearing in the User Group's name.

The name change began in April 1986 and is still evolving. Along with the name change comes a change in logo. This newsletter is the first with the new TANGENT logo. Hopefully, the transition to TANGENT will be completed by the 1987 Annual Conference. The Users Group is becoming more professional, and the name change is one of the visible signs of this change.

UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLIES

by Lee Penn

Due to major power problems with our electric utility in Cincinnati, Ohio, I've long been using an uninterruptible power supply to insure that my equipment keeps running when there is a power failure. Additionally, the protection provided keeps power outages from DAMAGING my equipment as our location is often subject to very short outages of just a few seconds. A Tandy 6000 computer is particularly prone to hardware damage by this sort of outage. One of the interesting aspects of the unit I use is that it has a computer interface which allows me to determine the power usage of attached equipment. I recently measured each piece of equipment that I have to determine power usage. I then compared the total usage to my total monthly power usage to see the economic impact of the equipment. Some of the equipment people may not be familiar with. The DT100 is a WYSE 75 terminal and should have about the same power consumption as the WYSE 50 and WYSE 60 terminals given in the table. The LEGEND 808 is a very inexpensive narrow carriage printer. The PRIMAGE printer is a daisy wheel printer like the DAISY WHEEL II that most folks are familiar with. Do note that I've shown the power usage of the printers two ways; while inactive (not printing) and while active (printing). As expected, the power consumption increases substantially.

Computer Equipment Power Utilization

Description	AMPS	VOLTS	WATTS
MT224EH Modem	0.160	125.000	20.0
COMODEM 1200 Modem	0.030	125.000	4.0
WYSE 60 Terminal	0.260	126.000	33.0
DMP2100 Printer (inactive)	0.520	126.000	65.0
256K Print Buffer	na	na	na
MODEL 100 Portable Computer	na	na	na
WYSE 50 Terminal	0.260	126.000	37.0
PRIMAGE 90 Printer (inactive)	1.780	123.000	221.0
PRIMAGE 90 Printer (active)	2.810	121.000	344.0
DIABLO Printer (inactive)	0.680	125.000	85.0
DIABLO Printer (active)	1.780	125.000	223.0
WYSE 50 Terminal	0.390	125.000	49.0
TANDY 3000 (No Hard Disk)	1.520	125.000	190.0
LEGEND 808 Printer (inactive)	0.030	125.000	4.0
LEGEND 808 Printer (active)	0.230	125.000	29.0
30 and 33 MEG Hard Drives	0.910	126.000	114.0
TANDY 6000	1.680	125.000	210.0
TANDY 6000 with Hard Drives	2.460	124.000	305.0
US ROBOTICS 2400 Baud Modem	0.030	126.000	4.0
TANDY 3000 with 70 Meg HD	2.330	124.000	288.9

Total Power Usage (Printers inactive)	1305.9
Usage in Kilowatt Hrs/Day	31.3

BILLING HISTORY

	DAYS	KWATT HRS	Per Day	Computers % per day
DEC 85	30	2578	85.933	36.472%
JAN 86	33	3662	110.970	28.244%
FEB 86	29	2871	99.000	31.659%
MAR 86	32	2853	89.156	35.154%
APR 86	30	2408	80.267	39.047%
MAY 86	29	2303	79.414	39.467%
JUN 86	32	2919	91.219	34.359%
JUL 86	30	2957	98.567	31.798%

Where "na" is shown, the power usage was so low, I was not able to measure it.

XENIX TRIX #2

This month's column is addressed to Tangent members using MBasic. The first trick is for programmers, while the second is for anyone wanting to print a group of Basic programs.

#1: "PRINT" SPEEDUP

One of the problem with MBasic is the slow speed with which PRINT statements send data to a screen. If you are displaying a full screen of information, it can take up to seven seconds to fill the screen. Here is a method to reduce that time drastically. On my system, seven second displays have been reduced to two seconds with this method.

At the start of your program, include the following lines.

```
80 OPEN "pipe: who am i" FOR INPUT AS #1
81 INPUT #1,TERM$
82 TERM$="/dev/"+MID$(TERM$,10,7)
83 N=INSTR (TERM$," "):IF N = 0 THEN TERM$=LEFT$(TERM$,N-1)
84 CLOSE #1
```

After execution of these lines, the variable TERM\$ will be something like "/dev/tty01" or "/dev/console". Now let's look at the portion of your program that displays a large amount of data on the screen. It probably consist of numerous lines of PRINT's and PRINT USING's, such as:

```
1010 PRINT A$
1020 PRINT USING XX$, A,B,C,D
1030 PRINT
1040 PRINT USING YY$, E,F,G,H
1090 PRINT B$
```

Instead of using PRINT's, and letting MBasic send the data to the screen, we want to send the data directly to the device. Therefore, we modify the code like this:

```
1000 OPEN "O",1,TERM$
1010 PRINT #1, A$
1020 PRINT #1, USING XX$, A,B,C,D
1030 PRINT #1, CHR$(10);
1090 PRINT #1, B$
1100 CLOSE #1
```

Line 1000 opens the terminal as a file. Now anything sent to file 1 will go directly to the screen. Line 1010 through 1090 have been modified to direct the printing to the file (which is actually the screen.) Notice that line 1030 has been changed from PRINT (which prints a blank line) to PRINT #1, CHR\$(10);, which places a blank line in the "file". Line 1100 closes the file, causing any data that is in the buffer to be flushed out to the screen, and takes us back to being able to use regular PRINT statements.

There are a two warnings to keep in mind when using this technique. First, do not use CLS or PRINT while the TERM\$ file is open. Second, this technique will not handle PRINT @ statements. However, the dramatic increase in speed make these inconveniences worthwhile.

#2: MULTI-LLIST

Here's the situation--you have a large number of Basic programs that you want to list on your printer. So you enter Basic, and type:

```
LOAD "a.bas"
LLIST
LOAD "b.bas"
LLIST
LOAD "c.bas"
LLIST
```

and so on. What a drag!

Of course, you could load each program, save it in ASCII format, and then use "lpr *.bas" from XENIX. But who wants to load and save that many programs? Why not let XENIX do all of that for you? Use the following script:

```
# Name          llist
# Syntax        llist file (or wildcard)
#
for i in $*
do
    echo load \z"$i\"
    echo list \,"PIPE: lpr\"
done | b63k
echo "Listing complete"
```

Now to list out all of the programs, you just type (from the XENIX prompt):

```
llist *.bas
```

This routine was developed with the help of several Tangent members on the Compuserve Tangent Forum.

PROBLEM SOLVING

When you are having difficulties with your Tandy computer, how do you get the problem solved? There are a couple of helpful steps you can do to help you determine what to do:

1. Determine if the difficulty is hardware or software related,
2. Look in your manuals for assistance.

How do you tell if it's hardware or software? This is not always an easy decision. If the equipment is not

functioning properly, i.e., the monitor is rolling, your floppy drive is destroying your disks, the system won't boot, etc., you are probably experiencing a hardware problem. On the other hand, if you are using a specific application, and for example, SCRIPSIT keeps giving you an error message, chances are you have a software problem.

First and foremost, check your user's guide, and software manuals for assistance. They frequently have error

messages listed in them which can aid you in clearing up the problem. Also, be honest. Is the problem actually the computer, or is it the user? If you determine the user is the difficulty, a training course or some on-site support may be the answer.

Here is a flowchart with directions on who to contact in different situations. Keep in mind that some of the options are subject to agreements, e.g., extended service agreements, EOS software support agreements, etc.

Tangent - PROBLEM SOLVING

HARDWARE

Check Things Out:

Is the equipment:
Connected Properly?
Plugged In? Turned On? etc.

If you have On-Site Service:

Call the National Service Desk in Ft. Worth, toll-free
1-800-433-5529 or 1-800-772-5942 (Texas) or
1-817-390-3888 (Texas Local Only)

On-Site Service is also available on a "Per Call" Basis,
contact the above numbers

If you have Carry-In Service:

Take the equipment to the Radio Shack Computer Center
nearest you.

If the Problem is still not resolved:

Recontact the National Service Desk in Ft. Worth. They will
contact the Service Center to solve the problem.

If you are still not satisfied:

Recontact the National Service Desk and request to speak
with the Divisional Director

If you are still not satisfied:

Contact the Vice President, Support Services.

EXPRESS ORDER SOFTWARE

Who Supports your software?

If it is Express Order Software, (90-series) the Express Order
Vendor supports it.

Call the Vendor Support telephone number listed in your
manual.

NOTE: Vendors often require the software to be registered in
order to support it.

Please be aware that there may be a charge for
these support services.

If the problem is still not resolved:

Recontact the vendor, ask for Manager, Director, V.P., etc.

If the Problem is still not resolved:

Report the problem in writing to Computer Merchandising
in Fort Worth

SOFTWARE

Who Supports your software?

If it is Radio Shack Software, (25- or 26- series) Radio Shack
supports it.

FOR ALL RADIO SHACK SUPPORTED SOFTWARE:

If you have paid for telephone support:

Contact your Training and Support Center.

If you have not paid for Telephone Support:

Contact Ft. Worth Customer Service
Accounting: (817) 338-2391
WP, Spreadsheet and Database: (817) 338-2390
Communications: (817) 338-2394
Business Language: (817) 338-2392
Home Language: (817) 338-2395

If the problem is not resolved:

Recontact either the TSC or Customer Service.

If the Problem is still not resolved:

Contact the TSC Manager or Customer Service Manager

If the Problem is still not resolved:

Contact the Regional Training and Support Manager or
Manager of Field Operation

If the Problem is still not resolved:

Contact the Director of Computer Merchandising Services

USER

Check it out.

Read the Manual, ask for internal assistance

If there is still a problem:

Contact the Training and Support Center for:
On-Site Support
On-Site Training
Classroom Training.

WINDOWS?

By Jerry Dockery

I was working on a posting program that we have been using for some time now and I wanted to add some of the new features of filePro Plus. I had previously added edit messages to several fields. Now I wanted some on-line-help as well.

The first thing I tried was the built-in help screen function. My problem with this function was that I could not find a way to access the same information from multiple fields. I could replicate the information in the help screen for each field but that was not very practical.

As it happened, I was on my way to the TC-BUG conference so I took my problem to John Esak of the Small Computer Company. He suggested, "Do a lookup to the file with the data you need. This way, if you make any changes or additions to that file, you won't have to edit the help screens as well."

Wow! What a great idea. Why didn't I think of that? I thanked John and left with this nugget of wisdom.

To my chagrin, however, when I started planning the program, I realized that I had no idea how to display a lookup from another file while in the active update mode of another file. I would have to corner John again.

This time he was more specific and even made a drawing for me. He mentioned creating a blank screen to display the data and the processing needed to perform this feat. Unfortunately, when I returned home, I could not find this piece of paper in my "goodie bag" of things garnered at the TC-BUG conference. Therefore, what I am about to share with you is not exactly what John suggested but a variation that works for me. The example listed and notated below is just that portion of the code necessary to perform the function. In my actual program, this code is a subroutine of the when processing function found in filePro Plus.

```

1  -----
    If:
    Then: dim txp(100) (15,*); an (1,allup)
**Line 1 sets up an array to hold the names from the lookup. The variable is to hold the answer to the question at the end of the display screen.
2  -----
@wfl  If: 1 co "?"
    Then: goto spec
3  -----
    If:
    Then: end
4  -----
@wlf2 If: 2 co "?"
    Then: goto spec
5  -----
    If:
    Then: end
**Lines 2 and 4 check to see if the operator has entered a question mark in these fields. Since the process is identical for either, they both goto the same subroutine if the statement is true.
6  -----
spec  If:
    Then: kf = "          "; i = "1"
**Line 6 defines the key for the lookup as a blank field and sets the variable i equal to 1.
7  -----
    If:
    Then: lookup per = personnel      k = kf      i = b      -ng
**Line 7 does the lookup to the personnel file using the automatic index b. The lookup must be greater or equal to the variable kf and not report any error conditions.
8  -----
loop  If: not per
    Then: goto start
**Line 8 tests for the end-of-file and branches to the label start when this condition is true.
9  -----
    If: per(10) ne ""
    Then: txp(i) = per(10); i = i + "1"
**Line 9 checks first to see if the lookup field is empty. I leave this field blank for personnel that I do not wish included in this list. If the field is not empty, the name is loaded into the array and the counter is incremented by one.
10 -----
    If:
    Then: getnext per; goto loop
**Line 10 gets the next record using index b and continues the loop.

```

Windows (Continued from Page 6)

```

11  -----
    rt      If:
        Then: i = "1"

**Line 11 resets the counter to one for the next portion of the process.

```

```

12  -----
showit If:
        Then: xa=txp(i);i=i+"1";xb=txp(i);i=i+"1";xc(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
13  -----
        If:
        Then: xd=txp(i);i=i+"1";xe=txp(i);i=i+"1";xf(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
14  -----
        If:
        Then: xg=txp(i);i=i+"1";xh=txp(i);i=i+"1";xi(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
15  -----
        If:
        Then: xj=txp(i);i=i+"1";xk=txp(i);i=i+"1";xl(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
16  -----
        If:
        Then: xm=txp(i);i=i+"1";xn=txp(i);i=i+"1";xo(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
17  -----
        If:
        Then: xp=txp(i);i=i+"1";xq=txp(i);i=i+"1";xr(i)=txp(i);i=i+"1"
18  -----
        If:
        Then: xs=txp(i);i=i+"1";xt=txp(i);i=i+"1"

```

****Lines 12 - 18 sets the variables xa - xt equal to the names in the array. Since I did not understand how John said to display the names on a blank screen, I just setup a screen with dummy variables xa - xt to show the names.**

```

-----
    If:
        Then: display "2"

**Line 19 simply switches to screen number 2 and displays 20 names from the lookup.

```

```

20  -----
    If:
        Then: input an "Enter a 'Q' to quit or 'ENTER' to continue."

**Line 20 stops the listing after 20 names and waits for a response from the operator.

```

```

21  -----
    If:
        Then: xa="";xb="";xc="";xd="";xe="";xf="";xg="";xh="";xi="";xj="";
22  -----
        If:
        Then: xk="";xl="";xm="";xn="";xo="";xp="";xq="";xr="";xs="";xt="";

```

****Lines 21 and 22 clear the variables xa - xt.**

```

23  -----
    If: an = "Q"
        Then: screen "1";end

```

****Line 23 lets the operator quit and return to the original screen. filePro Plus has the ability to change screens and return to a certain field but, in this example, there are two fields where this action can originate. I tried using a variable to designate which field but filePro did not recognize the variable as a field number.**

```

24  -----
    If: i ge "101"
        Then: i = "1"

```

****Line 24 checks to see when the counter exceeds 100. When the counter exceeds 100 the counter is returned to 1 and the list of names starts over.**

```

-----
    If:
        Then: goto showit

```

****Line 25 sends the program back to display another screen of names.**

Well there you have it. Not exactly a threat to Microsoft's Windows, but certainly a useful feature for many programs. I have added this code to two programs so far and I plan to add it to others. In accounting programs, looking up general ledger codes would be another application that comes to mind at this time. I'm sure that everyone has a program where this would improve it's ease of use.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Accounting Info Systems Enterprises

Frank Berndt
1799 S. Lee St #D
Lakewood, CO 80226.....(303) 989-6068

Affordable Inns, Inc.

David Perschbacher
P.O. Box 1268
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864.....(618) 242-7240

Anderson, Emmett & Franck, P.C.

S. Franck
1200 Old Colony Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23185.....(804) 229-7322

Ash Business Services

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Associated Placement & Guidance Ser

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Baltimore, MD 21215.....(301) 466-9200

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Roanoke, AL 36274

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120 W. 2nd St.
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Cape County Private Ambulance Svs.

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