

# Newstalk

*(Los Angeles Times / Version 1.2 / 1994)*

(This draft version printed March 7, 1994)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### I. Quick Start

Introduction to Newstalk .....	Page 1
Overview .....	Page 2
<i>Illustration: "The Working Screen"</i>	
Writing: Word Processing and DOS .....	Page 3
<i>Illustration: "The DOS Tree Structure"</i>	
Going On-Line .....	Page 5
<i>Illustration: "The Dialing Directory"</i>	
Sending Stories .....	Page 6
Reading, Printing and "Capturing" Stories .....	Page 7
Messages .....	Page 8
Signing Off .....	Page 8
Command Summary .....	Page 9
<i>Illustration: "The Help Screen"</i>	

### II. Technical Reference

Installing and Starting Newstalk .....	Page 15
Overview of Telecommunications .....	Page 16
Configuring the Dialing Directory .....	Page 18
<i>Illustration: "Line Settings (Alt-P)"</i>	
The Status Line .....	Page 22
<i>Illustration: "The Status Line"</i>	
The Review Screen .....	Page 23
Setup Screens (Alt-F2) and Options	
Opening Screen .....	Page 23
General Setup .....	Page 25
Terminal Setup .....	Page 26
Modem Setup .....	Page 27
Input Control .....	Page 28
Output Control .....	Page 29
User Profile .....	Page 30
Keyboard Macros (Alt-Y) .....	Page 31
<i>Illustration: "Index of DO Commands"</i>	
Special Configurations .....	Page 31
Hayes Modem Commands .....	Page 33
Error Messages and What They Mean .....	Page 34
Troubleshooting .....	Page 38
Index .....	Page 39

I started Newstalk during the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, Korea. I was there to support Times sports writers, some of whom were having trouble adapting to PC communications and sending their stories back to Los Angeles. They were accustomed to editing and saving their stories on a Coyote with simple keystrokes and prompts, and I thought if we could combine Coyote-like prompts and keys into a communications program for the PC, it would solve some of their difficulties. It would also make it easier in the future to train Coyote users to be PC users.

Five years and many revisions later, I'm finally comfortable enough with Newstalk to make it available to everyone. There has been a small following of Newstalk users from the beginning, and I wish to thank them for the many suggestions they've given me and for their help in identifying those elusive bugs. Everyone in Editorial Systems has been helpful in testing and evaluating various versions of the program. I wish to give special thanks Victor Pulver of Office Information Systems for help on parts of the program, and the modifications he made to the News Editing System to add more Coyote-like features to Newstalk.

This program was actually finished a year ago but there was no documentation available to the users of Newstalk or those who will be responsible for supporting it. A special thanks goes to Lisa Loomis and Doug Cox. I know they spent many hours putting this manual together and finally making Newstalk complete.

*Russ Francis, Los Angeles Times*

Welcome to Newstalk, a PC word-processing and communications program that has been highly customized for use with the Los Angeles Times News Editing System, the Coyote. Whether you're a veteran Times editorial telecommuter or just starting out with a PC and a modem, your life (at least this part of it) just got a whole lot easier.

You really don't need be an expert with DOS or computers to use Newstalk; in fact, if you are currently using LA-Talk, the current standard-issue Times telecommunications program, you're already pretty proficient with Newstalk. Newstalk *is* LA-Talk in large measure, both in appearance and operation, save for one thing: Newstalk does much more of the work for you by providing Coyote-like prompts.

If you are installing Newstalk yourself, see "Installing Newstalk," Page 15.

If the Newstalk software was installed and set up for you, then you probably won't often need the technical appendices that make up last three-quarters of this manual. Pressing Alt-F10 summons an exhaustive list of Newstalk commands for writers, while the more technical options are kept neatly out of sight behind Alt-F2. (If you're setting up the program yourself, you will probably need to tackle some of those technical options. Also see *Setup Screens*, starting on Page 23.)

Feel free to make as many copies of Newstalk as you like for yourself and other users. Newstalk is a FREEWARE program. There is no charge for it and it should be freely distributed.

## Overview

Newstalk is designed like a small "communications factory", with a word processor (PC Write) on one side and the shipping and receiving dock (telecommunications) on the other side. When you first start up Newstalk, you arrive in the corridor between the two "rooms:" the Working Screen, the main screen from which you will be working. The Working Screen displays material sent from your computer and received from the Coyote. It is also the screen you should be in to execute most of the commands and call up the Coyote-like prompts.

In most cases, you will write your stories on the word-processing side and then switch over to the telecommunications side, where you will link up with the Coyote. Then, using Coyote-like prompts, you'll copy your work ("upload") directly into the Coyote.

While you're signed on you will also be able to send and view messages, call up directories, read individual stories and even copy stories ("download") into your PC, where you can edit them.

Whenever you start Newstalk, it displays a title screen and proceeds to check your computer for serial ports and a modem. It first tells you how many serial ports you have, and then attempts to reset the modem. If Newstalk is able to get a valid response from your modem, it will initialize and prepare it for dialing a number at your request.

If all is successful, you will get a message that says "*Configuration and reset were successful.*" If it fails for any reason, you will eventually get a message telling you the reset was unsuccessful along with some error messages. This could be due to many things: your modem may not be connected, plugged into the wrong serial port or simply turned off. Call the Editorial support hotline or see *Troubleshooting*, Page 38.

Where to find the Help Screen:	Modem settings:		Modem port:	Disk logging on or off:	Printer logging:	Communications mode:	ASCII or XMODEM:
HELP-ALT F10	FDX	1200E71	COM1	LOG-OFF	PTR-OFF	MODE-CONV	ASCII

### The Working Screen

Shortly after you get the message indicating a successful modem reset, Newstalk will switch to the Working Screen (above). From this screen you can also go to the dialing directory, call the setup menu, file

a story, review captured text, etc.

When you first get into the working screen it will be blank except for the bottom line, a status line that gives you important information on your modem and printer settings. If the numbers and words on this line don't make sense to you right now, don't worry. Each item is explained under *The Status Line*, Page 22.

So there you have it: a two-step process, writing and telecommunicating. Let's look at them one at a time.

## Writing: The Word Processor (Alt-W)

While virtually any good word processor can be used to generate text that Newstalk can send to the Coyote, Newstalk's own simple word processor is particularly well-suited to the job. A specially modified version of Quicksort's venerable PC-Write, Newstalk's word processor is designed to work seamlessly with the Times program subdirectories created on your computer's hard disk when Newstalk was installed.

The word processor is summoned to the screen by pressing Alt-W and following the prompts from there. We won't go into the finer details of the program here, but there are three key items to keep in mind:

—You can summon the word processor while you're on-line, connected to the Coyote system, but only for short periods. The telephone connection will be automatically broken after 10 minutes pass without a signal from you. It's best to complete your word processing before you sign on to the Coyote.

—PC Write can be set up to automatically add the all-important < character at the end of each paragraph, which the Coyote will translate properly as the paragraph-ending ¶ character on its end. This saves you from having to place the < at the end of every paragraph in your story (or, worse, requiring someone on the other end to do the work). For other word processors, you can choose an option, appropriately called COYOTE, in the "Output Control" section of the Setup Screens (Alt-F2). See *Setup Screens*, beginning on Page 23, for instructions on how to select this option.

—In order for the Coyote formatting option to work properly, be sure to add either the .nes or .nts extension when you save each story (e.g., file1.nes) if you are using PC-Write.

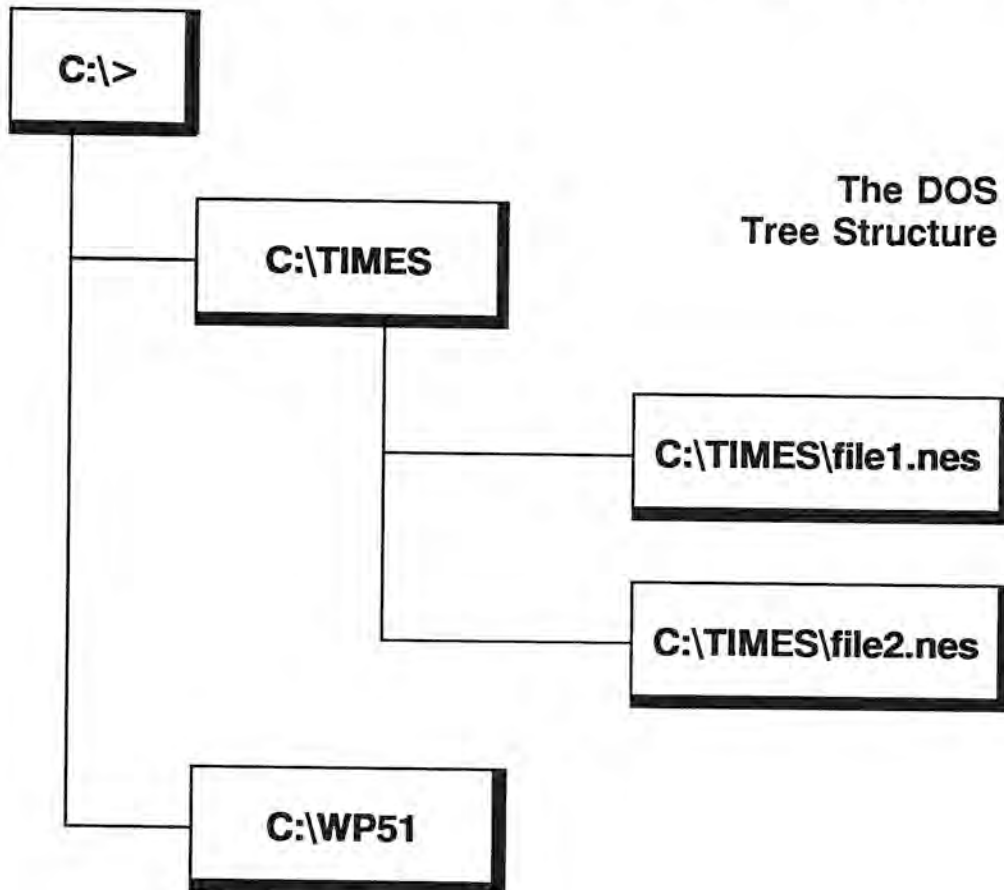
A word about DOS here: computer programs like Newstalk are designed to follow the DOS method of naming stories. When these programs prompt you with something like "Enter filename," it really helps to speak the lingo. If you're already familiar with DOS, feel free to skip this next part. If not, bear with us.

## Writing: DOS, directories and files

DOS uses a "tree" structure to keep stories ("files") neatly stored in directories and subdirectories. The Coyote's desk/basket/story arrangement is also a type of tree structure. It helps to think of a particular file as a single acorn on a large oak: to tell a digital squirrel (like Newstalk) to go get that acorn, you must lay out the DOS path to it—first the tree trunk, then the branch, then the twig off that branch and, finally, the acorn hanging off that twig.

DOS views a computer's drives (such as A:\>, B:\> and C:\>) as individual tree trunks. Typically branching out from the "trunk" are "branches" (program directories) like Newstalk and PC-Write. Branching off of those are additional "branches" (file subdirectories) for all sorts of files. And on those twigs are the individual acorns: your stories.

DOS is an able squirrel, but not terribly bright. When you ask it to fetch a particular acorn to send to the Coyote, you must lay out the entire "path" to the file you want. If you are using the Newstalk word processor, this is pretty simple: just type in the name of the story you entered when you saved it. This works because Newstalk and your word processor are both in the same subdirectory (C:\>TIMES).



It gets trickier if you are using another word processor, such as WordPerfect or Microsoft Word, which aren't in the C:\>TIMES subdirectory. In this case, you'll need to spell out the path Newstalk must take to find your particular epic. For example, if you wanted Newstalk to get a story you wrote called *file1.nes* that is kept in a WordPerfect 5.1 subdirectory called *doc*, you'd answer the Newstalk prompt "Enter PC filename" this way: *c:\wp51\doc\file1.nes*. When you press the Enter key, you're telling Newstalk "The file I want is called *file1.nes*. It's in the *doc* subdirectory of the *wp51* directory on the *c:* drive."

Every file must have a name, but there are some rules for DOS filenames. Each filename must:

- 1.) Have no more than eight characters.
- 2.) Contain only the letters A through Z, the numbers 0 through 9, and only these punctuation symbols: `_`, `^`, `$`, `~`, `!`, `#`, `%`, `&`, `-`, `{`, `}`, `(`, `)`, `@`, `'` and `'`. No other characters are allowed.
- 3.) Not contain spaces, commas, backslashes or periods (save for the period that separates the name from the optional filename extension, as in *file1.nes*.)

Thus equipped with your digital road map, Newstalk scurries over to your story and retrieves it for you.

### Telecommunicating: Going On-Line

The moment of truth is at hand: Stories written, coffee mug filled, you're ready to leap into cyberspace where, one hopes, the Coyote will take you in hand with all the calm ease of a trapeze artist. Here's how to make that leap.

Name	Number	Baud	P	D	S	E	Com	Save	Pcg	Script
1 LA FAST TALK	7-4430	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	
2 LA FAST DUMP	7-4423	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N	
3 OR FAST TALK	6-7435	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	
4 OR FAST DUMP	6-7427	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N	
5 LA CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y
6 OR CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y
7 DC CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y
8 DC CASE TALK (Dial)	7-6000	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	Y
9 DC CASE DUMP (Dial)	7-6000	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N	Y
10 LA TALK (CompuServe)	9,629-4095	2400-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	Y

=====

Dial line #:    or . . .

T = 1-800-283-6397	R Revise Entry	M Manual Dialing
+ = 1-213-23	L Print entries	F Page forward
- = 23	P Dialing Prefixes	B Page backward
@ = *70,	ESC Exit	
# = .....		

Modem Dial Cmd: ATDT    Com Port Active: COM1

### The Dialing Directory

### Telecommunicating: The Dialing Directory

Pressing Alt-F1 (or starting Newstalk at the C:\TIMES prompt by typing *nt d* and pressing Enter) will summon the dialing directory, from which you will direct Newstalk to dial the appropriate telephone number that will connect you with the Coyote. If you are at the C:\ prompt, you must type *cd\times* (note backslash) and press Enter first.

The dialing directory stores information that is needed to dial and connect to the Coyote. Each line contains a different phone number for the host Coyote modem, as well as the parameters that are needed to communicate with it, the serial port your modem uses, what mode (Converse or Dump) you wish to be in, etc. The Dialing Directory section of the appendix will explain each part of this daunting screen in detail, including how to customize it for your particular needs.

We'll use a typical example here to illustrate how you'll use the Dialing Directory. Let's say you have a Coyote profile and remote-access authority (if you're not sure you have remote-access authority, contact Editorial Systems) and decide to make a full interactive connection (Conv) with the Coyote through the first option on the directory, LA FAST TALK. The screen indicates only a five-digit extension number for LA

FAST TALK, which obviously won't work if you're trying to make a connection from outside the Times building.

In the bottom portion of the screen is a list of dialing prefixes, one of which (T) is a full 800 telephone number. By typing T1 and pressing Enter, you direct Newstalk to dial the T prefix (the 800 number), which dials the Times operator, and then the five-digit extension for the Coyote. If, on the other hand, you decide to dump your story into the system, you'd select one of the DUMP lines.

In either case, if all goes well you'll hear the familiar shrilling and beeps of a fax machine—except this time, this is the sound of your computer and the Coyote making their connections. The Coyote will send you several messages like "OK" and "Connect 1200," but the one for which you're waiting is "What do you want?" Press F1 (Alt-S) to summon the sign-on prompt, fill out your name and Coyote password, and press Enter.

The Coyote will respond with "Well, if it isn't SMITH J." At this point, you're ready to interact with the Coyote: messages, directories, the works.

## Telecommunicating: Sending Stories (F8 or Alt-T)

There's not much you can't do through Newstalk that you can do with an actual Coyote. Complete explanations of each Newstalk command are listed in *Command Summary* on Page 9. Here, we'll work with sending ("uploading") files from your PC to the Coyote and receiving ("downloading") files from the Coyote into your PC.

<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;"><b>FILING A STORY</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">PC file name: file1.nes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">NES Keyword: .....</td> <td style="text-align: center;">NES Basket: .....</td> </tr> </table>								<b>FILING A STORY</b>		PC file name: file1.nes		NES Keyword: .....	NES Basket: .....
<b>FILING A STORY</b>													
PC file name: file1.nes													
NES Keyword: .....	NES Basket: .....												
HELP-ALT F10	FDX	1200E71	COM1	LOG-OFF	PTR-OFF	MODE-CONV	ASCII						

Want to send ("upload") a file you've written? Press F8 (Alt-T), which gives you a prompt for entering the filename of a story you wish to transmit to the Coyote. If you wish to send the story from a directory other than PC Write or a floppy disk, you will have to specify the full, exact pathname in the prompt. If the file cannot be found on the disk you will be prompted for another filename, or you can get a directory of files that are in the default pathname by hitting the Enter key.

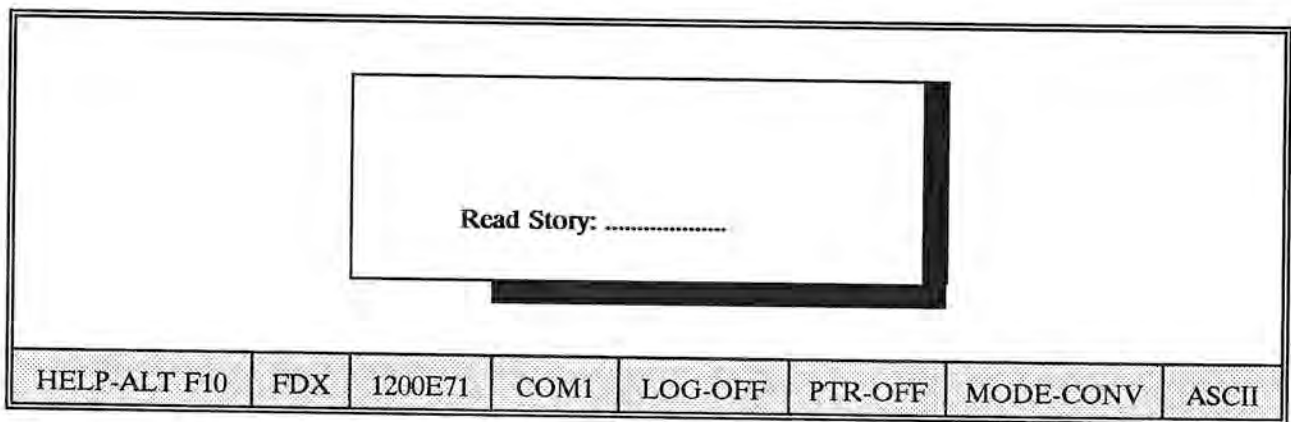
After you have entered a filename that exists, another Enter will start sending the story to the Coyote. If you are interactively sending a story to the Coyote (Mode=Conv), you will be asked to enter a keyword and a basket name. If no basket name is entered, your User Default basket (see *User Profile*, Page 31) will be used. If you are simply dumping a story (Mode=Dump) into the system, the prompt will first ask you for a *routing code* and a *keyword*, then the filename. If you don't know which routing code to use, you can see a list of them by pressing the Enter key. The story will be sent after the filename and routing code are entered.



In either case, Newstalk will beep three times when your story has been transmitted and then send you a message that your story has been saved and its unique number in the Coyote.

If you press the ESC key at any time during the transmission of your story, the uploading process will be aborted and the message "Transmission aborted by sender" will be displayed on the screen as well as at the end of the text that has already been sent.

**Telecommunicating:  
Reading Stories (F7 or Alt-G), Printing Stories (Alt-F7),  
Capturing Stories to Disk (Alt-F7 and Alt-F8)**



Want to read ("download") a story, basket directory or other Coyote list? If you don't know the slug or the number of the story you want, summon the directory prompt by pressing F5 (Alt-D). Type in a valid path, key and list name, then press the Enter key. The system will begin displaying the stories in the basket you've specified; to stop the list from scrolling up and off the screen, either press the gray Pause key at the top right of the keyboard or activate the Review Screen by pressing any of the gray cursor arrow keys. See *Review Screen, Page 23*.

Only 10 items will be displayed at a time. Alt-N will display the next 10 items. If you hold down the Alt-Shift-D keys, the prompt will be repeated with the previous information already filled in. This is similar to Command Period D on a Coyote.

Pressing F7 (Alt-G) gives you a story prompt. Enter either the story's Coyote slug or the # character and the story number (#123456), and then press the Enter key to receive the story on the screen. It will probably scroll off the screen, but you can read the complete story by using the Review Screen (press any of the gray arrow cursor keys), printing the story with Printer Logging (Alt-F7) or capturing the story on your hard disk (disk logging, Alt-F8 or ALT-R).

Pressing Alt-F7 ("printer logging") toggles the link between Newstalk and your printer on and off. The PTR-OFF at the bottom of the Working Screen will change to PTR-ON when the link is active. Anything called to the screen from this point on, including any commands you type, will be printed out. The sequence for printing something out is: 1.) Switch on printer logging (Alt-F7). 2.) Call whatever you like to the screen (F7 or Alt-G). When you're through printing switch off printer logging (Alt-F7).

Let's say you not only want to read a particular story, but you also want to copy ("download") it from

the Coyote into your word processor for some changes. Alt-R is used to download a story to a disk file on your computer. The prompt will ask you for a valid DOS filename, after which Newstalk will create the file in the directory specified in the "default directory" section on the General Setup (Alt-F2, 1) screen. If you wish to create the file in a different directory or a floppy disk, you will have to specify the full DOS filename and pathname.

After you enter the filename and press the Enter key, the status line of the working screen will show the path and filename that was created. From this point on, all data that appears on the screen will be written to the file. This continues until you press Alt-R again.

For example, if you wish to download a story from the Coyote and use the word processor to edit it, you will need to do an Alt-R, then an F7 (Alt-G) to get the story, then another Alt-R to close the disk file. Then you can do an Alt-W, summoning PC-Write, to edit it. Be sure to sign off first (F10), since the system will disconnect you after 10 minutes without a signal.

## **Telecommunicating:**

### **Reading Messages (F2 or Alt-V)**

### **Sending Messages (F4 or Alt-M)**

Want to check your messages? Press F2 (Alt-V). Everything will scroll furiously by, but you can pause this by pressing the gray Pause key or summoning the Review Screen (press any of the gray arrow cursor keys). Once you've seen everything you want, you can stop Newstalk from scrolling on and on by pressing Alt-B (be sure you've left the Review Screen first), which will get you a B-R-E-A-K message after a few more lines.

Messages sent to you while you're on-line with Newstalk will appear on the screen. Alt-O will toggle the beep announcing your message on and off (similar to SDK B and SDK b on the Coyote).

Want to send a message? Press F4 (Alt-M). Fill in the prompt with the recipient's name and, if the recipient is in a different system, the name of that system (use the tab key to move the cursor). Tab to the message area, type your message and press the Enter key. The Coyote will tell you "Message Sent," even if the recipient isn't currently signed on. The message will be waiting for the recipient when he or she signs on next.

## **Telecommunicating: Signing Off (F10 or Alt-Z)**

Want to sign off of the Coyote? Press F10 (Alt-Z). Newstalk will ask you if you really want to do this and, if you type y for yes and press Enter, you'll be returned to the Working Screen. From here you can re-summon the word processor or, if you're completely through with Newstalk, Alt-Q will take you back to the DOS prompt.

## **What's Next?**

We've only scratched the surface of Newstalk's many capabilities, some of which you'll rarely need. Others, once you discover them, will have you wondering how you ever got along with them! So, refill that coffee mug and browse through the rest of this manual. Then go back into the program and play—it's almost impossible to hurt anything on- or off-line, and there's always Editorial Systems to call when things appear out of hand.

Happy telecommunicating!

## Command Summary

Sign-on	ALT-S or F1	Dialing Directory	ALT-F1
View messages	ALT-V or F2	Setup screens	ALT-F2
Acknowledge message	ALT-A or F3	Transfer story	ALT-F3
Send message	ALT-M or F4	Redial	ALT-F4
Directory prompt	ALT-D or F5	User directory	ALT-F5
Long directory	ALT-L or F6	User dir long	ALT-F6
Get story	ALT-G or F7	Printer logging	ALT-F7
Upload (to host)	ALT-T or F8	Disk logging	ALT-F8
File story	ALT-F or F9	Next part (story)	ALT-F9
Sign-off	ALT-Z or F10	Help screen	ALT-F10
Break	ALT-B	Kill story	ALT-K
Clear screen	ALT-C	Line settings	ALT-P
Continue list, dir.	ALT-N	List prompt	ALT-X
Echo on/off	ALT-E	Download (from host)	ALT-R
Exit Newstalk	ALT-Q	Tandem Utilities	ALT-U
Hang Up	ALT-H	Toggle messages	ALT-O
Ignore previous	ALT-I	Word processor	ALT-W
Keyboard macros	ALT-Y		

Enter command or 'ESC' to exit help screen

### The Help Screen

Following is a complete list of Newstalk commands and their explanations. Remember that while you can summon the various prompts whether or not you're actually signed on to the Coyote, you must be signed on for them to have any effect. And even when you are on-line, it obviously makes quite a difference whether you're in the conversational mode (Mode=Conv) or dumping mode (Mode=Dump).

**F1 (ALT-S)** will give you a sign-on prompt. Enter your name, then press the Tab or Enter key to move to the password field and type your password. Your password will not be displayed as you type it. Press the Enter key again and Newstalk will send the sign-on command to the Coyote.

**F2 (ALT-V)** will display all your messages in the Coyote. Everything will scroll up and off the screen. Either summon the Review Screen (gray cursor arrows) or type Alt-B to halt everything.

**F3 (ALT-A)** will acknowledge or delete your messages. You must type Alt-V before you try to acknowledge a message. A prompt will appear and ask how many messages you wish to delete. You can delete up to 99 messages. **Warning: Messages are deleted from the most recent message down!** You cannot specify individual messages to delete—that can only be done on a Coyote terminal.

**F4 (ALT-M)** brings a message prompt to the screen. Fill in the name of the user to whom you wish to send the message. If you already have a system name (LAXE, LAWE, LAOCE, LALE, etc.) entered in the User Profile setup (Alt-F2), Newstalk will add the system name for you when you send the message.

Just Tab down into the message field and type your message.

If the recipient is in a different system, you'll also need to press the Tab or Enter key to move to the System field and enter the system name (LAXE, LAWE, LAOCE, LALE, etc).

You can edit the message as you can any other text, using such keys as the backspace, insert, etc. When you press the Enter key again, Newstalk will send the message. If you wish to repeat the message for a different user, just hold down the Alt-Shift-M keys and Newstalk will give you another prompt pre-filled with the same message. Just change the user name and press the Enter key until the message disappears.

**F5 (ALT-D)** summons the directory prompt. Enter a valid Path, Key and List name. If you have a List name entered in the User Profile setup (Alt-F2), pressing the Enter key at this point will fill the list name in for you and send the command to the Coyote. The default list is PC80, the best choice for an 80-column computer screen.

Only 10 items will be displayed at a time. Pressing Alt-N will display the next 10 items. If you hold down the Alt-Shift-D keys, Newstalk will repeat the prompt with the previous information already filled in. This is similar to Command Period D on a Coyote terminal.

**F6 (ALT-L)** summons the same prompt as Alt-D. When the command is sent to the Coyote, a long directory, consisting of the first five lines of the text, is displayed.

**F7 (ALT-G)** summons the "Read story:....." prompt. Enter the story name or number (remember the # character) and press the Enter key to receive the story on the screen. It will probably scroll off the screen but you can read the complete story using the Review Screen, printing the story with Printer Logging (Alt-F7, Printer Logging) or capturing the story on disk (Alt-F8, Disk Logging; or the Alt-R/Alt-G/Alt-R sequence described on Page 8).

**F8 (ALT-T)** summons the "Filing a story:....." prompt for entering the filename of a story you wish to send ("upload") to the Coyote. The filename is appended to the default path listed on the General Setup screen (Alt-F2). If you wish to send the story from another directory or a floppy disk, you will have to specify the full path and filename at the prompt (as in *file1.nes*).

If the file cannot be found on the disk you will be prompted for another filename, or you can get a directory of files that are stored in the default path by pressing the Enter key. After you have entered a filename that exists, pressing the Enter key again will start sending the story to the Coyote.

If you are simply "dumping" the story into the system, the prompt will ask you for a Routing Code and a Keyword, then the filename. If you don't know the routing code to use, you can retrieve a list of them by pressing the Enter key at this point. Again, the story will be transmitted after the filename is entered.

Note: Alt-T works the same as Alt-F when in Mode=Conv.

**F9 (ALT-F)** is similar to F8 (Alt-T), except it is designed to be used in conversational mode (that is, when you're signed on to the Coyote). The prompt will ask you for a Basket and a Keyword. Only after these are correctly entered will you get a "Filename:....." prompt. Entering the filename will then send the story to the indicated basket.

If you press the ESC key at any time during the transmission of your story, the transmission will be

aborted (the copy of the story in your PC won't be affected at all) and the message "Transmission aborted by sender" will be displayed on the screen as well as at the end of the text that was sent.

Note: Alt-T works the same as Alt-F when in Mode=Conv.

**F10 (ALT-Z)** summons a prompt asking if you really do wish to sign off of the Coyote. It will not exit Newstalk (see Alt-Q).

**ALT-B**, when the user is signed on to the Coyote (Mode=Conv), will stop the scrolling display of a long list, such as when you are viewing your messages or displaying a story with Alt-G. In any other mode (Mode=Dump) Alt-B just sends a B-R-E-A-K signal to the Coyote. Different computers react differently to a "break" signal.

**ALT-C** clears the screen.

**ALT-N** continues the display of the last List or Directory.

**ALT-E** toggles the echo on and off in any mode.

**ALT-Q**, when the user is signed on to the Coyote, logs off the user, hangs up the modem and then exits Newstalk. When connected to other host computers, Alt-Q hangs up the modem and exits Newstalk.

**ALT-H** attempts to hang up the modem.

**ALT-I** sends a command to the Coyote telling it to ignore the last command. This is sometimes necessary to get back in sync with the Coyote.

**ALT-Y** summons the Keyboard Macros screen. See *Keyboard Macros*, Page 31.

**ALT-K** summons a prompt that asks you for a story number or the slug of a story you want killed out of your basket. You can only kill stories you created in your basket, and you will be asked to verify that you really do want to kill this story. As with the Alt-G prompt, you will have to put the "#" character before the story number.

**ALT-P** summons the Line Settings screen. See *Line Settings*, Page 20.

**ALT-X** summons the list prompt. It can provide you with lists of Users, Baskets, Directories, Groups, Headers, etc., and is analogous to the Coyote's Command X function. You must enter the List Name and then an optional Path (BA, SN, DE, etc.). Entering a Key is optional, as it is on the Coyote.

For example, if you specify a Baskets list with no Path and a Key of F\* (an F and an asterisk), it will list the Baskets starting with F. If you type Alt-Shift-X, the prompt will reappear with pre-filled fields. Pressing Alt-N will continue the list.

**ALT-R** is used to capture a story ("download") to a disk file on your PC. The prompt asks you for a filename and then copies the file in the directory specified in the default directory of the General Setup screen (Alt-F2). If you wish to create the file in a different directory or a floppy disk, you will have to specify the full filename. After you enter the filename and press the Enter key, the status line of the working screen will show the full path and filename that was created.

From this point on, all data that appears on the screen will be copied to the file on your PC. This

continues until you type Alt-R again. For example, if you wish to capture a story from the Coyote and use your word processor to edit it, you will need to type an Alt-R to begin the reception of the story, then an Alt-G to get the story and finally another Alt-R to close the disk file. Then you can summon the word processor (Alt-W) to edit the story.

This Alt-R/Alt-G/Alt-R method is similar to Disk Logging, but here you can specify a unique filename (such as a floppy disk). Disk Logging, on the other hand, restricts you to the default filename specified on the Setup Screen (Alt-F2) and also records any commands you send to the Coyote in addition to the text of the story.

**ALT-U** summons a prompt for using Tandem utilities. This can only be used by the Systems Support staff with the proper authority.

**ALT-O** toggles the display of messages on your screen. If you don't want your messages to be displayed type Alt-O. If you wish to turn them back on, type Alt-O again.

**ALT-W** summons the word processor without exiting Newstalk. It actually suspends Newstalk in a "shell", and starts your word processing program. When you exit the word processor, this "shell" is removed and you will be returned to where you left off. The location and name of your word processor is listed on the General Setup (Alt-F2) screen under 6), User Profile.

**ALT-F1** summons the Dialing Directory screen. See *Dialing Directory*, Pages 5 and 18.

**ALT-F2** summons the Setup Screens menu. See *Setup Screens*, Pages 23 through 31.

**ALT-F3** summons a "Transfer story:....." prompt. You can only transfer stories from basket to basket in the same system (LAXE to LAXE). Alt-F3 does not make a copy of the story; instead, it removes the story from your basket and puts it in the destination basket.

**ALT-F4** automatically redials the last number you dialed if you get disconnected or hang up. If the number had a script associated with it, Alt-F4 will run the script as well.

**ALT-F5** displays the User Directory based on the "User Basket" specified on the User Profile setup screen under the Setup Screens menu (Alt-F2). This saves you from having to fill out the Alt-D prompt if you want to look at your own basket. Any basket can be specified and displayed if you have the proper remote authority.

**ALT-F6** is the same as Alt-F5 above, but will give you a long directory.

**ALT-F7** toggles Printer Logging on and off. Everything that is transmitted to the Coyote or received on the screen will also go to the printer port specified in the General Setup screen (Alt-F2). Typing Alt-F7 again toggles printer logging off. The Status Line at the bottom of the Working Screen will indicate whether Printer Logging is on or off.

**ALT-F8** toggles Disk Logging on and off. Everything that is transmitted to the Coyote or received on the screen will also go to the disk file specified in the General Setup screen (Alt-F2). Typing Alt-F8 again toggles disk logging off. The Status Line at the bottom of the Working Screen will indicate whether Disk Logging is on or off. (Also see Alt-R).

**ALT-F9** continues the display of a story summoned to the screen with Alt-G. A story display will stop scrolling after about 32,000 characters. Typing Alt-F9 continues the display of the story where it left off.

*ALT-F10* displays the Help Screen with all the commands and prompts we have been describing.

***EDITING PROMPTS***

If you are entering data in a prompt with more than one field, you must press the Tab or Enter key to move to the next field. Back-tab (Shift-Tab) is used to move back to a previous field. If you press the ESC key at any point, the prompt will be cancelled and disappear. Only when you have reached the last field and press the Enter key again will the information in the prompt be sent as a command.

**Newstalk  
Technical Documentation**



## Installing Newstalk

To run Newstalk, your computer must have at least the following:

- 1.) An IBM PC, XT, AT, PS/2 or compatible computer
- 2.) DOS 3.3 or later
- 3.) 640K of conventional memory
- 4.) Floppy drive or hard disk
- 5.) Monochrome, CGA, EGA or VGA graphics screen
- 6.) At least one serial port and an internal or external modem

Newstalk consists of three files:

NT.EXE, the program file.

NT.SCR, the script file which will allow you to automatically connect to the host.

NT.DIR, the directory file, prefilled with the Public Data Network (PDN) and Times phone numbers.

Another file, NT.DEF, is created when you start the program for the first time. It is the file that keeps track of your communications parameters, your modem information, your user name, special keys, colors for your screen, etc.

To install Newstalk, you just have to copy the three files from the floppy installation disk (either a 3.5" or 5.25" floppy) to your the C:\TIMES directory on your hard disk. Here's how:

- 1.) Put the 3.5" installation disk into your A:\ drive (a 5.25" disk would be put into your B:\ drive instead; if this is the case, just substitute B:\ for A:\ in the following directions).
- 2.) At the DOS prompt (C:\>) type the following line and then press Enter:

```
copy A:\nt * C:\times
```

DOS will then automatically copy all of the Newstalk files from the installation disk. If you're not sure how to copy the files from the floppy to a hard disk, please call the Editorial support hotline for assistance.

Newstalk can also be run from your floppy disk. Just type *nt* at the A:\> prompt to start it.

**Using Newstalk with Microsoft Windows** Newstalk can be initiated under Microsoft Windows. Because it is a DOS program and not a Windows program it will not run under Windows directly, but runs under what is known as a DOS shell. You can create a Newstalk icon and start the program by putting its name into the Properties setting in the File Manager. See the Windows documentation for more information on installing a DOS (non-Windows) program under Windows.

## Starting Newstalk

There are three ways to start Newstalk from the C:\> prompt:

- 1.) Just typing *nt* will start the program and leave you at the Working Screen after the program checks and resets the modem.
- 2.) Typing *nt d* will leave you at the Dialing Directory after the program checks and resets the modem.

3.) Typing *nt ##* (where *##* is a valid number in the dialing directory) will automatically start dialing the number in the directory after the program checks and resets the modem. If you always dial the same number, this saves a few steps. If you have scripting turned on for that number you can automatically get to the sign-on prompt in one easy step. See *Dialing Directory*, Pages 5 and 18.

## Overview of PC Communications

If you are new to PC communications, this overview will help in understanding the process of communications between any two computers. There are two main methods of communicating between computers: "direct" and "dial-up."

A *direct* connection is used when you have a permanent link the other computer. This can be done with a cable (as is the case with most of the Coyotes in Times Mirror Square) or through the phone company. The phone company simulates a direct connection through its telephone switch.

*Dial-up* connections (by far the most common arrangement) use a device called a *modem*. The computer uses the modem to dial telephone numbers, pick up and answer incoming calls from other modems, and to exchange information between the two computers. The modem operates like the telephone on your desk, only it converses using data rather than a human voice. It even uses the same telephone lines as voice calls.

If you do not have a direct connection, then you must use a modem. Your PC does not understand voices; telephone lines do not understand data from a PC. The modem is the translator. It changes voice signals to data for the computer, and data signals to voice for the telephone lines. It's that simple.

It is crucial, too, that the two computers speak the same language. Wouldn't you have trouble communicating with a person on the other end of the line if you spoke different languages? The speed, size and protocol (computer language--Newstalk offers ASCII (the default) and XMODEM protocols) of the data must be the same on both computers trying to communicate with one another. A communications program, like Newstalk, allows you to change these communications "parameters" to match those of the computer with which you're communicating. Once that is accomplished, the communications program is used interpret your keyboard commands to either computer.

The Los Angeles Times uses both the direct connect and dial-up methods depending on the location of the "remote" PC. Your computer is usually considered the remote PC. The News Editing System computer, or any other mainframe computer your trying to communicate with, is considered the "host" computer. Some of the local LA Times bureaus and some of the PCs located at the Times main facilities use direct connect. The Coyote terminals also use direct connect to the host. The rest of the PCs and any home telecommuter will have to use a dial-up connection to connect with the host.

Dial-up connections, as far as the remote computer is concerned, all take place in the same fashion. Your communications program (Newstalk) tells the modem to dial the phone number of another modem (host modem) which is connected to the host computer. The host modem answers the remote modem, exchanging a digital "handshake," and a connection is established. As long as the computers are speaking the same language you can now communicate between the two computers. That could get expensive if the phone call is long distance. There is a special way to dial up the host computer by making only a local call.

Public Data Networks (PDNs), allow you to call a local phone number and connect to the host in the

same way you would if you dialed up a host modem directly. PDNs do this by giving the host computer a special address and asking you for that address when you dial the local PDN number. The PDN knows, by the address you give, that you are supposed to be connected to The Times' host computer.

Many remote computers and many host computers are connected to the PDN, and we all share the same phone lines: That is why the address is required. PDNs make money by charging a fee for each dial-up connection and, usually, a flat monthly rate as well. The Times pays these fees to the PDN, so there is no cost to you if you use this service.

The Times currently subscribes to CompuServe, Infonet and Western Union PDNs. There is probably a local number you can dial anywhere in the world to access one of these services. These services have other advantages: they are usually "cleaner" than regular long-distance phone lines (less noise on the line means a cleaner transmission), they can operate at higher speeds and have an unlimited number of dial-up connections available. Dialing up directly to a Times host modem (via the FAST TALK and FAST DUMP lines) is limited in speed (1200 and 2400 baud) and the number of connections available.

It is worth your while to become familiar with at least one of these PDNs. You don't have to be a long-distance caller to use them, either. The Times "Green Book" lists the local phone numbers in locations throughout the United States and around the globe (yes, you can use Newstalk to dial in from Riyadh via CompuServe and Western Union) and explains how to connect to these services.

Name	Number	Baud	P	D	S	E	Com	Save	Pcg	Script	
1 LA FAST TALK	7-4430	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N		
2 LA FAST DUMP	7-4423	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N		
3 OR FAST TALK	6-7435	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N		
4 OR FAST DUMP	6-7427	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N		
5 LA CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y	
6 OR CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y	
7 DC CASE TALK (Dir)	.....	2400-E-7-1				Y	1	CONV	N	Y	
8 DC CASE TALK (Dial)	7-6000	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	Y	
9 DC CASE DUMP (Dial)	7-6000	1200-E-7-1				Y	2	DUMP	N	Y	
10 LA TALK (CompuServe)	9,629-4095	2400-E-7-1				Y	2	CONV	N	Y	
=====											
Dial line #:	or . . .										
T = 1-800-283-6397	R	Revise Entry	M	Manual Dialing							
+ = 1-213-23	L	Print entries	F	Page forward							
- = 23	P	Dialing Prefixes	B	Page backward							
@ = *70,	ESC	Exit									
# = .....											
Modem Dial Cmd: ATDT						Com Port Active: COM1					

The Dialing Directory

## Configuring the Dialing Directory

The Dialing Directory is summoned by pressing Alt-F1 from the working screen or by starting Newstalk from the C:\> prompt by typing *nt d* and pressing Enter.

The directory stores information that is needed to dial and connect to the Coyote. Users can modify the directory to suit individual needs. The dialing directory that comes with the master Newstalk disk already has a number of dial-up telephone numbers (including some for such PDNs as CompuServe and Western Union). Every parameter of each telephone number can be edited by pressing R (for Revise Entry); to edit the Dialing Prefixes (T, +, -, @ and #), press P (for Dialing Prefixes). Pressing M (for Manual Dialing) summons a prompt allowing you to enter a telephone number of your choosing—but the number will not be retained in the Dialing Directory.

Many problems in establishing a dial-up connection with the Times host computer can be resolved by editing the respective parameters of a given telephone number on the directory. Some parameters, remember, are established by the host computer—such as baud, parity, data bits and stop bits—and are probably best left as they are, at least at first. Editing the other parameters, however, can often make a significant difference. Let's look at the options individually:

**Line #** Each line entry is assigned a specific line number. The line number points the software to the information to the right of the number when the host is being dialed. This is also the number used if the program is started by typing *nt ##* at the C:\> prompt. The numbers 1 through 30 are available.

**Name** This is an arbitrary name given to the host computer being dialed. The name, which can be up to 20 characters long, is significant only if Newstalk's scripting feature is being used.

**Number** This is the actual telephone number of the host system (such as the Coyote) being dialed. It can be up to 14 numbers and special characters long; anything longer than that will have to be dialed by using a dialing prefix or the manual dialing feature.

Typing a dialing prefix (T, +, -, @, #) and the line number directs Newstalk to dial the prefix and the number together. Take a look at the Dialing Directory illustration: dialing T1 will direct Newstalk to dial 1-800-283-6397 (T) and 7-4430 (Line 1) automatically. The five-digit line numbers have pauses programmed into them in order to give the Times telephone system enough time to answer Newstalk's call before sending the five-digit extension number.

Using the dialing prefixes will allow Newstalk to dial telephone numbers up to 28 units consecutively. If manual dialing is used, the maximum allowed is 58 units consecutively.

**Baud** This is the speed of the modem being used, and must be set to match the speed of the host system's modem. The baud rate specified in this field will override the speed indicated in the Working Screen status line, and can be set from 150 baud to 38400 baud.

**P** This stands for "parity" and must match that of the host system. Options are N (for "no parity"), O (for "odd parity") and E (for "even parity").

**D** This stands for the number of "data bits" and must match that of the host system. Options are 6, 7 or 8 data bits.

**S** This stands for the number of "stop bits" and must match that of the host system. Options are 1 or 2 stop bits. A good rule of thumb is if 7 or 8 data bits are being used, 1 stop bit should be used. The 2 stop bit option is rarely used, except with really old host computers.

- E** This indicates whether the echo is turned on (Y) or off (N). If the echo feature is turned on, the host computer "echoes" back the characters it receives from the remote computer. The default setting is Y. If you are getting double characters (eg., yYeEsS for yes), selecting N will correct the problem.
- Com** This indicates the serial port to which your modem is connected. This setting will override the COM port specified on the Working Screen. If you have an external modem, this should usually be set to COM1. If you have an internal modem, this should be set to COM2. Other options are COM3 and COM4.
- Save** This indicates which mode in which you're working, and overrides the setting specified on the Working Screen. The default is 1 (Conv). Options are 0 (None) and 2 (Dump).
- Pcg** This indicates whether or not you have specified a time delay after each line of text is sent to the host computer. The default is N (no). If you need to slow down the character transmission because the host computer can't keep up with your computer, you can use pacing, which inserts a programmable delay after each line is sent. Pacing delay time is set in the *Output Control* setup screen and is turned on by putting a Y (for yes) in the Pcg field of the dialing directory. It usually isn't needed unless you are sending data through a large network or to a very old host computer. A recommended pacing delay would be 2 (2 x 50ms or .1 second). See *Setup Screens*.
- Script** This indicates whether or not you have a "script" for Newstalk to follow after it dials up and connects with the host system. If a script is indicated (if this field has a Y in it, Newstalk will look for a script in the NT.SCR file), Newstalk will automatically look for a specific sequence of characters coming from the host system and respond by sending a specific sequence of characters—the script—just as if you were responding to the host system with the keyboard.

Most of the items on each line of the dialing directory will adjust the communications settings as indicated. This allows the user to dial up the Coyote for an interactive session (Mode=Conv), hang up and then dial another number to dump a story (Mode=Dump) without having to change parameter settings each time.

At the *Dial line #:* prompt, the user enters the line number and then presses Enter to start the dialing sequence(s). The program will automatically switch back to the Working Screen, display the number being dialed and wait for a connection. The result of the effort to establish the connection will also be indicated.

The Dialing Directory also offers a variety of options:

- R Revise Entry** This allows the user to change any parameter on any Line #. Newstalk begins by asking for the line number being changed; each time the Enter key is pressed, the program displays the options available for that particular parameter. Changes are automatically saved when the reconfiguration is completed.
- L Print Entries** This prints the entire dialing directory on your line printer (see *Setup Screens*). It is a good idea to print out the directory if any changes have been made to the default names, numbers and setting. This way, if anything goes haywire, there will be far less work involved in recovering from the crisis. The printout displays all 30 lines in the directory.
- P Dialing Prefixes** This allows the user to edit any of the prefixes (T, +, -, @, #) in a separate editing window. This option also allows the user to put a specified time delay of 0 to 20 seconds between the prefix and the phone number in the line dialed. This would be necessary when connecting with an automated telephone system on which the host system's modem is an extension—exactly the situation with The Times' 800 number.

When the number is displayed on the Working Screen, it will show commas for each incremental delay. Most modems use one comma for each two seconds of delay; consequently, entering T1 would display:

Dialing #: 1-800-283-6397,,,,,,7-4430  
 Press ESC to cancel...

The prefixes are automatically saved and displayed in the lower left side of the screen.

**ESC** Exits the Dialing Directory and returns to the Working Screen.

**M** Allows the user to manually dial a number that isn't in the working directory or is too long to fit in the directory. Selecting this option switches the user back to the Working Screen and summons a prompt asking for the number to be dialed. Any character that is valid in the Dialing Directory is also valid here.

After the number is typed and Enter is pressed, the dialing begins. **Caution:** Manual dialing does not override any of the default communications parameters (see *Line Settings*), as does parameters specified on individual lines in the Dialing Directory, and so you must be careful to ensure your parameters match those of the host system being dialed. The scripting feature doesn't work with manual dialing, either.

If you need to dial a really long telephone number, as you would when using a telephone credit card, then manual dialing would be the way to go.

**F Page Forward / B Page Backward** This moves the directory display forward or backward one 10-line page at a time, so you can go forward or backward a maximum of three screens. A specific telephone number need not be displayed in the directory to be dialed; just enter it and press Enter to start the dialing sequence.

**LINE SETTINGS**

Current settings: 1200,E,7,1,COM1

1) 300,E,7,1	8) 300,N,8,1
2) 1200,E,7,1	9) 1200,N,8,1
3) 2400,E,7,1	10) 2400,N,8,1
4) 4800,E,7,1	11) 4800,N,8,1
5) 9600,E,7,1	12) 9600,N,8,1
6) 19200,E,7,1	13) 19200,N,8,1
7) 38400,E,7,1	14) 38400,N,8,1

15) COM1 16) COM2 17) COM3 18)COM4

Save mode: 19) NONE 20) CONV 21)DUMP

22) Save changes 'ESC' to Quit

Your choice: \_\_\_\_

**Line Settings (Alt-P)**

The last two items, *Modem Dial Cmd* and *Com Port Active*, indicate what command Newstalk is sending to the modem to begin the dialing sequence and which serial port is currently active. The serial port displayed is the same as the one on the Working Screen status line; the modem dialing command is covered in the *Setup Screens* portion of this manual.

**Pulse dialing** Older phone systems still may use only pulse-type dialing. If you hear pulses when you dial a number rather than tones you have this type of system. You can use Newstalk on this type of system but you must change the Dialing Command in the *Modem Setup* screen to ATDP. This tells the modem to dial using pulses rather than tones.

**Host mode (answering calls)** If you wish to have another modem connect to your computer, it can be done by putting your modem into Auto Answer state. The easiest way to do this is to type ATA in the working screen of Newstalk. When you see the word RING appear on your screen, press the Enter (Return) key and a connection will be made. Remember the parameters of both communications programs must be the same (speed, length, parity, stop bits, etc.).

**Long phone numbers** If it is necessary to dial a long number sequence, say for a credit card call, you will have to use Manual dialing from the directory. The directory only allows phone numbers with 14 digits. The Dialing Prefix will allow another 14 digits for a total of 28 digits that can be stored in the directory as a line item. If you need to dial more than 28 digits press M in the dialing directory. Newstalk will prompt you for a number, which can be up to 58 total digits in length.

**Credit card dialing** You can automatically dial using your credit card number by using Manual dial as explained above. You must place commas in the number sequence to allow time for the ATT or MCI recorded operator to answer.

Example: 10-288-0-213-237-4430,,123-022-4310-2056

(10-ATT-0-<phone number><8-second delay><card number>)

The dashes are ignored by the computer and are shown for clarity. The commas are necessary to allow the recorded voice to answer and accept your credit card number. Each comma allows two seconds of delay. The delay may vary, depending on where you are calling from.

**Using Hayes compatible modem commands** Any Hayes modem command may be sent to the modem while you are in the Working Screen. You can put most Hayes commands in the Initialization field in the *Modem Setup* screen. These will be sent to the modem when it is first initialized and be in effect throughout the session. See the *Hayes Modem Commands* for a list of the most commonly used Hayes modem commands.

**Internal or External modems** Internal modems are built into the PC and only require that you hook up a phone line to the modem. When the modem is installed it is set to use a designated port address on your PC (usually COM1 or COM2). This serial port designation cannot be used for any other devices. If your computer already has a COM1 and a COM2, you must disable one of them either through your computer software or by removing the serial board in your computer. You can often change a switch on the back of the modem to change it to either the COM1 or COM2 port. External modems come with a cable that you connect to a serial port already built into your PC. The modem doesn't care which port you use, but Newstalk must know which port you are using so it can communicate with the modem.

**Non-Hayes-compatible modems** Non-Hayes-compatible modems present a special problem, but they can be used by Newstalk to a limited extent. Commands must be sent from the Working Screen that the modem can recognize, and you will have to live with some errors that are likely to occur when connecting to other modems.

**No modems installed (dumb terminal mode)** You can use Newstalk for direct connect to a host computer, but to avoid errors and delays when you start the program you will have to go into the *Modem Setup* screen and select Modem port "0." This disables modem checking and initialization. You will still have to designate the serial port you are using in the *Line Settings* screen.

**Using COM3 or COM4** Many computers today have the ability to use COM3 or COM4, and Newstalk supports this. Unfortunately, there is a serious limitation in using these serial ports: You can only use COM1 or COM3, but not both. You can only use COM2 or COM4, but not both. So you are still limited to two COM ports. It gets very confusing because you may be told that you have more than two serial ports, or you may get your modem installed as COM3 when you purchase a new system.

Many newer systems attach the mouse to COM1, so if your modem is set up for COM3 it won't work. The safest solution is to always have your modem installed as COM2, which is the default in Newstalk.

**Transparent (8-bit) mode** It may be necessary to send graphics characters from your PC to the host. The character codes used by the PC allow you to send and receive special characters if you use an 8-bit character length. To take advantage of this you need to take the following change in your *Input Control* and *Output Control* setup screens:

Toggle the *Strip bit 7* field to off. If you wish to also send and receive "control characters" you may toggle the *Strip control characters* field off. This allows the full character set to be sent and received. Beware: Some "control characters" will cause your screen to do funny things!

HELP-ALT F10	FDX	1200E71	COM1	LOG-OFF	PTR-OFF	MODE-CONV	ASCII
--------------	-----	---------	------	---------	---------	-----------	-------

The Status Line

## The Status Line

The Working Screen is blank, save for the bottom line: the Status Line. This displays current information on your communications parameters, your serial port, whether disk or printer logging is on or off, etc. The meaning of each field in the Status Line is indicated below.

**Help-ALT F10** This is just a reminder that pressing Alt-F10 will summon the Help Screen.

**FDX or HDX** This indicates whether you have the echo turned on (HDX) or turned off (FDX). If your characters are doubling up on the screen, such as YyEeSs for Yes, you'll want to set the echo off.

**Parameters** This field displays your *current* communications parameter settings. The field consists of the *speed* (1200 is the default), the *parity* (e for even in the above example) the number of *bits per character* (7 in the above example) and the number of *stop bits* (1 in the above example).

**COM** This shows which serial (communications) port is being used. The default is COM1, but this can be temporarily or permanently changed on the *Line Settings* screen if a different serial port is indicated in the dialing directory line you select.

**LOG-OFF / LOG-ON** This indicates whether you have *Disk Logging* turned on or off. Disk logging allows you to "capture" data sent to and from your PC to the Coyote on your PC's hard disk (or a floppy disk). If Disk Logging is set to OFF, nothing will be captured.

**PTR-OFF / PTR-ON** This indicates whether or not you have *Printer Logging* turned on or off. This works exactly like Disk Logging, except that data is sent to your printer rather than to a disk file.

**MODE-CONV / MODE-DUMP / MODE-NONE** The MODE field indicates what type of connection you've established with the Coyote. MODE-CONV (for conversation) is the default mode, and indicates that you are actually "signed on" to the Coyote. You must have a Coyote profile, as well as remote-access authority, to use this mode.

MODE-DUMP is for "dumping" stories into the Coyote. It is intended for use primarily by freelancers and others who do not have full access to the Coyote for one reason or another.

MODE-NONE is used for connecting your PC to other types of host computers. NONE allows Newstalk to operate like other commercial communications programs, but should not be used when attempting to connect with the Coyote (you won't be successful—trust us).

**ASCII / XMODEM** This indicates which "filing protocol" or computer telecommunications language you've



selected to send stories to the Coyote or other host system. ASCII is the default, since it is the only protocol currently accepted by the Coyote. XMODEM is also offered and can be used by other host systems.

## The Review Screen

When you are in the working screen, data sent from the host system will often scroll off the screen before you can read it. Newstalk provides a Review Screen feature that allows you to scroll back to any part of the current session with the host system.

Pressing any of the cursor control keys—the arrow cursor, PgUp, PgDn, Home or End keys—will summon the Review Screen at the present position of the cursor. The status line at the bottom of the screen will indicate that you are no longer in the Working Screen (if you have a color monitor, you may see a change in the colors used). Use the cursor keys to move around in the Review Screen: the arrow keys will move you left, right, up or down one character; the Home key will take you back to the beginning of the session; the End key will take you back to where you were when you summoned the Review Screen, and PgUp and PgDn will move you back and forth one page at a time.

You can scroll horizontally, and if you have Wrap off you can see text that is wider than 80 columns. When you are finished, ESC will take you back to where you left off in the Working Screen. When you exit Newstalk with Alt-Q, the data on the review screen will be lost. If you don't need the Review Screen, or if your computer doesn't have enough memory to summon it, this feature can be disabled by setting the scroll buffer to Off on the Terminal Setup screen under the Setup Screen menu (Alt-F2).

## Setup Screens (Alt-F2)

<p><b>SETUP SCREENS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) GENERAL SETUP</li><li>2) TERMINAL SETUP</li><li>3) MODEM SETUP</li><li>4) INPUT CONTROL</li><li>5) OUTPUT CONTROL</li><li>6) USER PROFILE</li><li>7) SAVE CHANGES</li></ol> <p>Your choice: — 'ESC' TO QUIT</p>
--

The Setup Screens are summoned by entering Alt-F2 from the Working Screen. These screens allow the user to customize Newstalk's features, many of which are only used for special situations.

The screens consist of several levels of menus. As you select items, you may be given a new menu from which to select or a group of items at the bottom of the menu. The ESC key will take you back to the previous menu level until you reach the Working Screen.

The main setup menu consists of seven items; when you select any of the first six items, you will be presented with another menu. The last item, No. 7, will save any settings you have changed on the first six menu items. If you do choose to save these changes, they will be in effect the next time you start Newstalk; if not, the changes will remain in effect only until you leave the current Newstalk session.

You should generally use the defaults in the Setup Screens unless you are sure you need to change something. It is quite possible that you might want to change some things in the User Profile Screen, or perhaps the Modem Port in the Modem Setup Screen. If you're satisfied with your choices, be sure to save them (item No. 7) before leaving the General Setup Screen. Most of the changes will take effect immediately, while some will take effect the next time you start Newstalk.

All of this information is kept in the NT.DEF file, which is created the first time you start Newstalk. If you make changes on the Setup Screens that create seemingly intractable problems, you can always go back to the original default settings by deleting the NT.DEF file and restarting Newstalk, which will create a new NT.DEF file.

## General Setup Screen

Screen text:	GENERAL SETUP	Options:
1) Printer port .....		LPT1 (default), LPT2
2) Log filename .....		LOG.TXT (default), user-modified.
3) Default pathname .....		\TIMES (default), user-modified.
4) Filing alert .....		ON (default), OFF
5) File xfer protocol .....		ASCII (default), XMODEM
6) Word Processor .....		ED.EXE (default), user-modified.

- 1.) **Printer Port** This sets the printer port to be used for printer logging. Since LPT1 is the most common, it is the default.
- 2.) **Log Filename** This is the name of the file created when disk logging is used. It can be any legal DOS filename.
- 3.) **Default Pathname** This is the DOS path that will be used when the user transmits or receives a story from the Coyote. When transmitting, Newstalk searches for the indicated filename in this directory. When receiving, Newstalk puts the indicated file in this directory. **Note:** This is where the stories are usually kept when using the default Times word processor.
- 4.) **Filing Alert** When switched on, this directs Newstalk to give three beeps when it reaches the end of the story being filed.
- 5.) **File Xfer Protocol** If you are connecting to the Coyote, you are required to use the ASCII setting (hence, ASCII is the default setting). Some host computers can use XMODEM, which sends data in "packets" and checks for transmission errors. If a packet isn't successfully transmitted the first time, XMODEM will transmit it again.
- 6.) **Word Processor** This is where you can enter the full DOS path and filename of the word processor you use to create your stories. Entering Alt-W from the Working Screen will use this filename to start the word processor without completely exiting Newstalk. When you exit your word processor, you will automatically go back to where you left off in Newstalk without disconnecting from the host system. This is handy if you just want to make a few minor changes in your text before you transmit it to the Coyote.

Your computer must have enough memory to hold both the Newstalk and word processor programs. If you have at least 640K, you probably have enough memory for most word processors.

## Terminal Setup Screen

Screen text:	TERMINAL SETUP	Options:
1) Echo .....		OFF (default), ON
2) Flow control .....		XON/XOFF (default), NONE, CTS
3) Line wrap .....		ON (default), OFF
4) Scroll buffer .....		ON (default), OFF
5) Set colors .....		Default, user-modified.
6) Abort key .....		27 (default), decimal key value (1-256).

- 1.) **Echo** This is where the ECHO can be set on or off at program startup. This setting can be overridden in the Dialing Directory for each line, and can also be temporarily changed on the Working Screen with Alt-E.
- 2.) **Flow Control** This allows the computers on each end of the connection to send a "stop" message to the other computer if data is being transmitted too fast. The default, XON/XOFF, is also known as "software handshaking" and works for most computers. CTS is used if "hardware handshaking" is desired, but NONE is not usually a good choice because it may cause data to be lost if the other computer cannot process it quickly enough.
- 3.) **Line Wrap** When this is set to On, the working screen will automatically wrap the data on the screen when it gets to the last column. The Working Screen has 80 columns. If you do not wish to wrap the data, turning line wrap to Off will cause the characters not to wrap, and you will not be able to see the characters that are off the right side of the screen—but they can still be seen in the Review Screen, which allows horizontal scrolling.

For example, wrapping would devastate the display of a 96-column table. Turn wrap off instead and look at the table in the Review Screen.

- 4.) **Scroll Buffer** This is the buffer, or memory, for the Review Screen. It takes up some of your computer's memory, so turn the scroll buffer off if you get an "out of memory" error message. The Review Screen will not function if the scroll buffer is turned off.
- 5.) **Set Colors** This allows you to set the colors for Newstalk's various screens to suit individual preferences. Feel free to experiment with them, since changes won't be permanent until you save the settings. The colors will not take effect until the specified screen that has been changed is redisplayed.

This said, **be careful**: Changing colors recklessly can ruin your screens. Unless you understand how PC color codes work, you're probably better off not saving experimental changes. And, of course, this option is not needed on monochrome screens.

- 6.) **Abort Key** This is used to cancel a story being transmitted. The number entered here is the ASCII code (in decimal) for the key desired. The default, 27, is the ASCII code for the ESC key. There is really no need to change this under normal circumstances.

## Modem Setup Screen

Screen text:	MODEM SETUP	Options:
1) Modem Port .....		COM2 (default), COM1, COM3, COM4, NONE
2) Dial Command .....		ATDT (default), user-modified.
3) Initialization string .....		User-defined.
4) Modem speed .....		User-defined. Most common: 1200 and 2400.
5) Modem model .....		User-defined. Most common: Hayes.

- 1.) **Modem Port** This is the port to which your modem is connected. When you start Newstalk the program looks at this setting and uses it to reset and initialize the modem. If your modem is not connected to COM2, the default, you will get an error message. Change the COM port here and save the setting before restarting Newstalk.
- 2.) **Dial Command** The modem uses this command to dial the telephone number of the host system. The command always starts with the letters AT, which are followed by several modem options. Among these are pulse dialing (ATDP), touch-tone dialing (ATDT), silencing the modem speaker (ATL1DT), etc. This is the **Modem Dial Cmd** displayed in the Dialing Directory.
- 3.) **Initialization String** Modem commands can be specified here to set the modem up for special configurations when the modem is initialized at program startup. Unless you are familiar with the Hayes set of modem commands, don't put anything in this field—it may cause your modem to stop working.
- 4.) **Modem Speed / Modem Model** These settings help Newstalk initialize the modem more quickly by defaulting to whatever settings are indicated here. The settings are not critical, though, since Newstalk attempts to reset and initialize at several baud rates by searching for the correct baud by sending commands and looking for the valid corresponding responses.

Note: Any changes made to these settings will bring up this prompt:

If the modem configuration has been changed, it may be necessary to restart the program.

...Press any key to continue.

## Input Control Screen

Screen text:	INPUT CONTROL	Options:
1) CR translate .....		0) NOXLATE (default), 1) LF-CR, 2) CR-LF, 3) EOL-SP, 4) STRIPEOC 5) LF-CRLF, 6) CR-CRLF 7) CRLF-LF 8) CRLF-CR
2) Upper/Lower case .....		NORMAL (default), UPPER, LOWER
3) Strip bit 7 .....		OFF (default), ON
4) Strip control chars .....		ON (default), OFF
5) Echo to sender .....		OFF (default), ON
6) Translate map .....		NONE (default), user-modified

- 1.) **CR Translate** When you are receiving data, you can change how the program treats the "end of line" characters. Since you generally do not want to change what is being received, the default is no translation at all: NOXLATE. But special situations may require that you remove the end of line character or change to a line feed. The options will be displayed at the prompt.
- 2.) **Upper/Lower Case** This will translate all received characters to all upper case, all lower case or leave them alone.
- 3.) **Strip Bit 7** This strips all non-text or special characters received.
- 4.) **Strip Control Chars** This strips all control characters being received. If this is set to Off and you receive some control characters, the screen may do some funny things.
- 5.) **Echo to Sender** This will echo the characters received back to the host. Since this is generally controlled by the host system, the default is Off.
- 6.) **Translate Map** This function uses special translation maps supplied by the Coyote. Call the Editorial Systems hotline (x77999) if you have a need for special character translation.

## Output Control Screen

Screen text:	OUTPUT CONTROL	Options:
1) CR translate .....		0) NOXLATE (default), 1) LF-CR, 2) CR-LF, 3) EOL-SP, 4) COYOTE 5) LF-CRLF, 6) CR-CRLF 7) CRLF-LF 8) CRLF-CR
2) Upper/Lower case .....		NORMAL (default), UPPER, LOWER
3) Strip bit 7 .....		OFF (default), ON
4) Strip control chars .....		ON (default), OFF
5) Pacing (x50ms) .....		0 (default), user-modified.
6) Translate map .....		NONE (default), user-modified

- 1.) **CR Translate** When you are transmitting data, you can change how the program treats the "end of line" characters. Since you generally do not want to change what is being transmitted, the default is no translation at all: NOXLATE. But special situations may require that you remove the end of line character or change to a line feed. The options will be displayed at the prompt.

One special option, COYOTE, will automatically put the "<" character at the end of every paragraph while the text is being transmitted. The Coyote translates this "<" character into a paragraph symbol automatically, saving you from the tedious task of placing this character at the end of every paragraph in your story.

- 2.) **Upper/Lower Case** Translates all transmitted characters to all upper case, all lower case or leave them alone.
- 3.) **Strip Bit 7** This strips all non-text or special characters transmitted.
- 4.) **Strip Control Chars** This strips all control characters being transmitted. If this is set to Off and you transmit some certain control characters to the host system, it may disconnect you.
- 5.) **Pacing** This will slow down the transmission of data to the host system. At the end of every line, the transmission will pause for the specified delay. Some slower computers will need to have pacing on, especially if they don't use any form of "handshaking" (see the "Flow Control" section on the *Terminal Setup* screen).

If the Dialing Directory has a Y in the Pcg column, it will use the value specified here for the pacing. The default is Off, but it can be set from 1-99 (this is 50 to 4,950 milliseconds in increments of 50 milliseconds). You may want to try this if the host system is losing characters you send to it. A good number to start with is 2 (100 milliseconds or 0.1 second).

- 6.) **Translate Map** This function is not yet implemented, but when it is it will use special translation maps supplied by the Coyote.

## User Profile Screen

Screen text:	USER PROFILE	Options:
1) User name .....		Coyote sign-on. User-defined.
2) Default basket .....		Coyote default basket. User-modified.
3) Default directory list .....		pc80 (default), user-modified.
4) Default system .....		LAXE (default), LAOCE, LALE, etc.
5) Long lines length .....		5 (default)

- 1.) **User Name** This is the default name used by Newstalk for certain prompts and commands. Placing your Coyote sign-on name here will automatically insert that name in the appropriate prompts and commands.
- 2.) **Default Basket** This is the basket you will be using to file stories in the Coyote, unless you specify a different basket in the filing prompt. Your personal basket should be entered here.
- 3.) **Default Directory List** There are special lists designed for remote connections to the Coyote. They are all the same as the standard Coyote directory lists, except that they are limited to 80 columns, the maximum number of columns a PC can display unless wrap is turned off. You can use any Coyote directory list; the default is PC80.
- 4.) **Default System** This is the name of the host system with which you have a user profile: LAXE, LAOCE, LALE, LAWE, etc. It is inserted automatically in certain prompts.
- 5.) **Long Lines Length** This indicates the number of lines displayed when a long directory (Alt-L) is used. The default is five lines, and is not currently modifiable.



## Keyboard Macros (Alt-Y)

The F(x) (for Function) keys (F1-F10) and the ALT-F(x) keys (ALT F1-F10) are predefined in Newstalk (see *Command Summary*). The CTRL-F(x) keys (CTRL F1-F10), on the other hand, can be defined by the user.

Typing Alt-Y when in the Working Screen brings up the Keyboard Macro screen (pictured at right).

While in the Keyboard Macro screen, holding down the CTRL and an F key (F1-F10) summons a prompt asking the user to enter a new command. After entering the new command, the user presses Enter to update the NT.DEF file and display the new command on the screen.

When entering a new command, remember that the "DO" commands must be followed by a CTRL-C, which displays a "heart" on the screen. This sends the command. Any command can be entered, such as "DO" or modem commands, but an "Enter" command cannot be sent, so the user must manually press the Enter key, if necessary, after the CTRL-F(x) combination.

While in the working screen, pressing a CTRL-F(x) key combination will execute the "DO" command stored for that key. All alphanumeric characters and most control characters can be entered in command lines.

### Control-Function Key Directory

CTRL-F1 = do s name;password♥  
 CTRL-F2 = do d ba3 wire♥  
 CTRL-F3 = do d♥  
 CTRL-F4 = do f5♥  
 CTRL-F5 = do d♥  
 CTRL-F6 = do f7♥  
 CTRL-F7 = do f8♥  
 CTRL-F8 = do f9♥  
 CTRL-F9 = do so♥

Press the CTRL and F(1-10) key you wish to change ... or ESC to quit:

### Index of DO Commands

DO A	Acknowledge a message.	DO K	Kill a story.
DO D	Directory of . . . or next page of current directory.	DO M	Send a message.
DO F	File a story.	DO N	Get next part.
DO G	Get a story.	DO S	Sign on.
DO H	Help.	DO SO	Sign off.
DO I	Ignore previous command.	DO T	Transfer story to new basket.
		DO V	View message(s).

## Special Configurations

The following information is a collection of notes and suggestions for special situations. It seems that no matter how well you know computers and remote communications, there is always a situation where your not sure what to do.

**If you can't unplug the phone line from the back of the phone:** There are three methods of connecting a phone to a modem if you can't disconnect the standard modular plug from the wall or the phone. This situation may occur on various office phone systems, single line phones in hotels or at home, and phone booths.

The first method is to use a special adapter called a Konexx modem adapter. The second method is to use acoustic couplers. The third method is to directly connect to the phone wires using alligator clips (supplied with the Konexx adapter).

**KONEXX adapter** This can be used where you have a removable handset cable (most home and office phones). Here are the steps for using this adapter:

1. Unplug coiled telephone handset cord from the base of the telephone (not from the handset end).
2. Plug silver cable from Konexx into telephone base where you disconnected the handset.
3. Plug the coiled cord from the handset into the Konexx slot marked "Hand Set."
4. Plug a modular phone line cord (supplied with the modem or PC) into the Konexx slot marked "Data Port."  
The other end of this cord goes to the PC modem connector.
5. Place the center switch on the Konexx to DATA.
6. Lift the handset from the cradle and make sure that you have a dial tone.
7. Dial the number on the telephone keypad or have the computer dial using the dial directory.
8. Leave the phone off-hook (be sure the handle has been removed from cradle).
9. When finished transmitting, hang up the phone and move the center Konexx switch to VOICE. You can leave the Konexx connected and use your phone in the normal manner as long as the switch remains in the VOICE position.

Other switches on the Konexx adapter...

"Phone type:" Refers to the type of "element" in the microphone.

E -- Most office phone systems.

D -- Newer digital phone systems.

C -- Most hotel or home single line phones.

"Polarity:" When using the C Phone type, you must set the polarity. When the adapter is connected, flip the middle switch to DATA and listen for a dial tone. Then switch the setting back and forth. You should notice one setting that gives a louder tone. Leave it on that setting.

**Acoustic couplers** These can be used by attaching to the mouthpiece of most phone systems. The acoustic cups take the place of the phone cable that normally connects your modem and the phone line. Often this phone cable cannot be removed at either end, such is the case in some hotels and phone booths. Generally you would place the "cups" over the microphone and receiver of the handset, and plug the cord from the cups into the modem.

The modem must be designed for accommodating acoustic cups. Some modems designed for this purpose are the "Touch Base World Port", the "Com1 Voyager" and the "CP+ Telecoupler". These are available on loan from Editorial Systems or can be purchased at most computer stores. The first two come with acoustic cups and a small external modem that connects to your PC serial port. The CP+ is the only one that has a modular phone adapter and can connect up to any modem including an internal PC modem. The easiest way to use acoustic cups with Newstalk is as follows:

1. Type "ATX1D" on the Newstalk working screen.
2. Lift the handset and dial the number on the telephone.
3. When you here the carrier tone (the loud squeal when the modem at the remote end answers), attached the acoustic cups to the handset.
4. Press the Enter (Return) key on the PC.
5. You should hear a tone and then get a "connect" message.
6. Proceed as you normally would to sign-on or dump.

Some of the older acoustic cups will only operate at slow speeds such as 300 baud. Check the manufacturers documentation for speed or any other limitations of the acoustic cups being used.

**Alligator clips** You can use these when you have a phone that doesn't unplug in the back, but has a mouthpiece that unscrews. The Konexx supplies alligator clips for this purpose. To use them, follow these steps:

1. Plug the silver cable from the Konexx into the jack on alligator clips.
2. Unscrew the mouthpiece and remove the microphone element.
3. Connect the alligator clips onto the metal prongs (it doesn't matter which clip goes on which prong).
4. Establish a dial tone.
5. Dial with telephone keypad or dialing directory.

6. You should get a connecting tone from the remote modem.
7. Leave the handset off-hook.
8. Switches on the Konexx can be left in any position.

If you can't unplug the phone from the back and can't unscrew the mouthpiece, you can still use the alligator clips directly into the phone lines if you can remove the wall outlet cover and get to the RED and GREEN wires. The phone handset must be off-hook when you are ready to dial the number. You can dial with the phone or the dialing directory. Because the phone handset is off-hook it is susceptible to picking up noise and you must have quiet surroundings until you disconnect. If you can't get a connect, or don't hear the phone dialing, you may need to reverse the wires on the alligator clips. Touch-tone phone systems are polarity sensitive.

## Hayes Modem Commands

Listed here are the most common Hayes modem commands and their functions.

**ATA** Puts modem in auto answer mode.  
**ATB0** Puts modem in CCITT mode (some European lines need this).  
**ATB1** Puts modem in BELL standard (default).  
**ATDP** Dials number that follows using PULSE mode.  
**ATDT** Dials number that follows using TONE mode.  
**ATH0** Hangs up the modem.  
**ATL1** Lowest speaker volume.  
**ATL2** Medium speaker volume.  
**ATL3** High speaker volume.  
**ATM0** Speaker off.  
**ATM1** Speaker on until carrier detected (Default).  
**ATM2** Speaker always on.  
**ATX1** Ignores "No dial tone" and "Busy" status from modem.  
**ATX4** Accepts all status messages from modem.  
**ATZ** Resets modem.

**S-registers** These are special registers that are programmable in most Hayes-compatible modems. A few useful ones are listed here.

<u>Register</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Default</u>	<u>Description</u>
S7	0-255	30	Wait time (in seconds) for carrier/dial tone.
S8	0-255	2	Set duration of delay for comma.
S11	50-255	95	Define duration/spacing (in msec.) of dialing tones.

Example: to speed up dialing, enter "S11=50" in the working screen or put it in the Initialization field of the Modem setup screen.

**Dial Modifiers** These are the characters that the modem will accept when dialing:

0-9 # * A B C D	Digits/characters for dialing.
P	Pulse dial
T	Tone dial
,	Delay processing of next character.
!	Hookflash
@	Wait for quiet (no dial tone).
W	Wait for dial tone.

## Error Messages and What They Mean

Listed below are some of the common error messages you may see while using Newstalk. Along with the error is an explanation of what it means and what you might do to correct the problem.

Errors you may see in Newstalk can be generated by the Newstalk program (N), your modem (M), the host computer (H), or your computer (C). The letters indicate the source of the error.

- 1.) **"You are missing the NT.SCR file..." (N)**  
This file must be installed along with the NT.EXE and NT.DIR for the program to work properly.
- 2.) **"COM1: not installed" (N)**  
A serial port or modem was not found at COM1 but it was the default setting in the NT.DEF file.
- 3.) **"Configured COM1 not available" (N)**  
Same as above.
- 4.) **"Cannot initialize COM1..." (N)**  
Could not open the port COM1.
- 5.) **"Cannot initialize modem default COM1..." (N)**  
Could not find modem to initialize at the port specified in the Modem settings screen. In this case COM1.
- 6.) **"Error initializing modem structure = ..." (N)**  
If you get this error, you have a bad copy of Newstalk or a problem with your computer.
- 7.) **"Error initializing modem, error = ..." (N)**  
There is a problem communicating with the modem or a modem is not connected.
- 8.) **"Error resetting modem" (N)**  
The modem would not accept a "reset" command (ATZ). The modem may be bad or configured incorrectly.
- 9.) **"Configuration & reset were not successful" (N)**  
You will get this error message if the modem did not respond to the initialization commands or reset commands correctly. The modem may not be connected to the correct port, the modem may be bad or configured incorrectly, or there is no modem connected.
- 10.) **"Insufficient memory available for review screen" (N)**  
If you have a very old PC with 640K of memory or less, you may get this error. You can turn off the scroll buffer in the Terminal Setup screen.
- 11.) **"Write error = XX" (N)**  
This indicates that the serial port or modem cannot output data for some reason. The XX number will help determine the source of the problem.

- 12.) **"Cannot open COM1 or port does not exist, error..."**  
**"Check dialing directory and make sure serial boards are installed correctly" (N)**  
This error will happen if you try to dial a number from the dialing directory and the directory entry specified an invalid modem port. Usually this can be fixed by correcting the entry in the dialing directory.
  - 13.) **"Error receiving data error = XX" (N)**  
This indicates that the serial port cannot receive data correctly for some reason. The XX number will help determine the source of the problem.
  - 14.) **"Cannot open file <filename>, hit any key to continue" (N)**  
This indicates that you are not able to create a file by this name. Either the name does not meet the correct filespec or the drive is not available.
- 

Any of the following errors may be returned when trying to dial a number:

- 1.) **"No connection established" (N)**  
No modem answered at the other end.
- 2.) **"No Dialtone" (N)**  
The phone line connected to the modem has no dialtone.
- 3.) **"Dialed number is busy" (N)**  
Self explanatory.
- 4.) **"No answer" (N)**  
The phone number dialed does not answer.
- 5.) **"No ring detected" (N)**  
The phone number dialed does not ring.
- 6.) **"Unknown response" (N)**  
The modem returned a response code that could not be interpreted.
- 7.) **"Call already in progress" (N)**  
The modem is already in use.
- 8.) **"Not a valid phone number" (N)**  
Self explanatory.
- 9.) **"Function aborted by user" (N)**  
The ESC key was hit during the dial procedure.
- 10.) **"Modem port is not available, check dialing directory for correct setting" (N)**  
The dialing directory entry is specifying a port that is not available.

- 11.) **"Modem did not receive dial command" (N)**  
You will get this error if the modem is not ready to dial a number. Usually resetting the modem will fix this.
- 12.) **"Cannot open nt.def, hit any key to cont." (N)**  
This indicates that the NT.DEF file has a problem. You should delete the NT.DEF file and restart Newstalk.
- 13.) **"No script found" (N)**  
The dialing directory indicated that there was a script for the line dialed, but a script could not be found.
- 14.) **"No match on script" (N)**  
A script was found and executed but the expected response was incorrect. Either the script is wrong or the expected responses from the remote system have changed.
- 15.) **"No END\_SCRIPT" (N)**  
This indicates that a script was found but did not end with the correct "END-SCRIPT" line.
- 16.) **\*\*\* <response> \*\*\* (N)**  
This is the response that was returned to the script program if it did not match the script.
- 17.) **"Printer offline" (N)**  
**"Printer out of paper" (N)**  
**"Printer turned off" (N)**  
**"Printer buffer overrun" (N)**  
**"Printer error = 0x??" (N)**

These errors may appear when you turn on printer logging. The errors are self explanatory except the Printer error = 0x?? where ?? will help determine what is causing the printer error.

---

Newstalk Internal Error Codes:

- 1.) **"Cannot initialize COMx error = xx"**  
**"Cannot initialize modem default COMx error = xx"**

Cause: Error in SETOP-A2, set normalized transmission functions option.

- xx = 2: Invalid port specified. Must be between 1 and 4.
- xx = 3: Port is not currently open.
- xx = 54: Invalid baud rate specified.
- xx = 56: Invalid number of data bits specified.
- xx = 57: Invalid number of stop bits specified.
- xx = 58: Invalid remote flow control option.
- xx = 59: Invalid local flow control option.
- xx = 60: Invalid bit 7 trimming option.
- xx = 61: Invalid bit 7 forcing option.
- xx = 62: Invalid CTS option.
- xx = 63: Invalid break time option.

2.) **"Error initializing modem structure = xx"**

Cause: Error in STRUCT-HM, construct a modem control descriptor function.

xx = 50: Unable to allocate memory.  
xx = 100: Structure not initialized.

3.) **"Error initializing modem = xx"**

Cause: Error in INIT-HM, initialize a modem function.

xx = 2: Invalid port specified. Must be between 1 and 4.  
xx = 3: Port is not currently open.  
xx = 7: Output queue is full. Check flow control settings.  
xx = 100: Modem control structure has not been initialized (see STRUCT-HM).  
xx = 102: Modem did not respond.

4.) **"Error resetting modem = xx"**

Cause: Error in RESET-HM, reset the modem to power-on defaults function.

xx = 2: Invalid port specified. Must be between 1 and 4.  
xx = 3: Port is not currently open.  
xx = 100: Modem control structure has not been initialized (see STRUCT-HM).  
xx = 103: Modem could not be reset.

5.) **"Write error = xx"**

Cause: Error in WRTCH-A1, write a character to COM port function).

xx = 2: Invalid port specified. Must be between 1 and 4.  
xx = 3: Port is not currently open.  
xx = 7: Output queue is full. Check flow control settings.

6.) **"Error receiving data = xx"**

**"Cannot open COMx or port does not exist, error = xx. Check dialing directory and make sure serial boards are installed correctly."**

Cause: Error in RDCH-A1, read a character to COM port function.

xx = 2: Invalid port specified. Must be between 1 and 4.  
xx = 3: Port is not currently open.  
xx = 7: Output queue is full. Check flow control settings.  
xx = 10: Input queue is empty.

7.) **"Printer error = 0x??"**

?? = Status bits from printer status lines.

It is very rare that you would get this very complicated error. It merely indicates that you have a bad printer, cable or parallel port on the computer, and the most common errors are already clearly spelled out; e.g., "Printer offline."

## TROUBLESHOOTING

1.) **"Nothing happens when I press Alt-W."**

**"When I try to summon the word processor, all I get is a blank screen with the cursor 'frozen' in the middle of the screen."**

Your computer might not have enough memory or, more likely, the wrong path for the word processor has been indicated in the "Default Pathname" field of the *General Setup* screen.

2.) **"When I sign on, I get a human Times operator."**

This can probably be diagnosed from the Dialing Directory screen. The incorrect number for the Coyote has been dialed or, when using an (800) number, an insufficient delay (indicated by one comma per two-second delay) has been used.

3.) **"When I sign on and connect, the system keeps scrolling messages like 'Invalid command from terminal,' 'Timeout--please reenter.'"**

The most common cause is an error on the Coyote's part. Try again.

4.) **"Stories I upload to the Coyote don't have the ¶ at the end of the paragraphs, and do not indent three spaces when they are retrieved on the Coyote end."**

If you're using PC-Write, you must add either an .nes or .nts extension to the DOS filename (as in *file1.nes*). If you're using another word processor, you must specify "Coyote" in the "Output lines" field of the *Output Control* screen.

NOTE: The Troubleshooting section will be expanded considerably if all current Newstalk user veterans are polled for the problems they have encountered.



## **Index**

NOTE: These pages will be generated once the final configuration of the manual has been determined.

This draft printout dated/timed: March 7, 1994, 3:57 pm

Doug Cox

March 7, 1994

Russ:

I gave Jackson Sellers and Bart Everett copies of this on Thurs., March 3 in Los Angeles.

It's been a real pleasure—not to mention an honor—to work with you on this manual. Newstalk is a terrific program, and if this manual (or whatever portion of it actually sees print) can get more Times folks actually using it on a regular and productive basis, I'll be delighted.

When I can determine just where Lisa Loomis is hanging her hat these days, I'll make sure she receives a copy as well.

Hope to see you soon.

Aling Cox