Subject: Official FAQ comp.binaries.cbm (semimonthly posting)
Posted by Cameron Kaiser on Wed, 20 Nov 2019 15:39:02 GMT
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COMP.BINARIES.CBM Official Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
4.10
written by Cameron Kaiser <ckaiser@floodgap.com>
based on documents by William Ward and Michael Miller

** START OF INTENSELY HUMOUROUS FAQ **

0. Introduction

This is the droll, charming and occasionally even informative Frequently Asked Questions guide for the newsgroup comp.binaries.cbm (hereafter c.b.c). People are urged to consult this immensely entertaining and mildly useful guide before asking questions of the moderator(s) or posting them to the appropriate discussion group, as doing so may answer your query much more quickly and in such a manner that you do not collect mail along the lines of 'read the faq, you blithering idiot' or significantly more unmentionable versions thereof.

This FAQ was written by Cameron Kaiser, who based it on an original draft by William Ward, who based *that* on a draft by Michael Miller, and no one knows where his came from. (Well, never mind. Michael says that he just made it up. Thanks for clearing that up, Mike! ^^)

In version 4.0, I completely rewrote Bill Ward's FAQ, which was version 1.3, and gave it the wrong version number, which has now stuck.

In version 4.1, I added Jim Brain's notification that this FAQ will be/is now available on his FTP site, John Iannetta's lament about CompuServe's mailing subsystem, and made wording changes to the document for clarification, all on 13 October 1997.

In version 4.2, I made some notes about proper documentation of postings, did some cleanup of inexplicable garbage, and some helpful tips for posting by mail, all on 1 December 1997. Also included is an entire section on troubleshooting various complaints. I also have started doing a change-log system, allowing you to see new changes. Here's how:

| NEW CHANGES IN THE FAQ ARE DOCUMENTED with a | symbol in the first column.
| WATCH FOR THEM.

In version 4.3, I announced where the FAQ can be found online, and made some brief changes to netiquette notices, as well as adding the actual charter in. Some notes from the big bad binaries thread on c.s.cbm have been added, all on 27 March 1998.

In version 4.4, I added some information about the official c.b.c web page, the Videocam archive, more troubleshooting, regular features on c.b.c, and rewrote some commonly asked problems about c.b.c propagation, on 15 September 1998.

In version 4.5, I added notes about the mini-FAQ and the Things never to do on c.b.c, on 17 January 1999.

In version 4.6, I introduced a new submission address, removed some old information that was no longer applicable, brought various other notes up to date, and issued a warning about autoposting, on 21 September 2001.

In version 4.7, after a long hiatus, I fixed all the old URLs and E-mail addresses, and updated some preference notes on archiving, all on November 26, 2004.

In version 4.8, I noted the existence of the OFTV bot, corrected the history of Mike Miller's FAQ background, and a few other custodial changes, on April 2, 2005.

In version 4.9, I introduced the new anti-spam standards for c.b.c and various current updates on August 1, 2005.

| In version 4.10, I added the new mailing list archive on September 22, 2006
| that Spiro Trikaliotis maintains.

The humor in this FAQ is totally intentional. Posting to the group about what a yutz the author is will be ignored, mostly by the author.

0.1 Where to get the FAQ from

This FAQ is posted semimonthly to comp.sys.cbm. You can also ask the author for a copy. See 'Contacts' for addresses. You can also find it posted around the same time to alt.c64.

A mini-FAQ appears weekly issuing and detailing the most common errors and announcements. Important extracts from these mini-FAQs will eventually appear here and vice versa. The mini-FAQ appears only in comp.binaries.cbm.

You can find the FAQ online at

http://www.floodgap.com/comp.binaries.cbm/

It is currently plaintext. I'm working on an HTML version. It also will be posted at intervals to comp.answers in the future pending approval.

1. General Notes about c.b.c

1.1 What c.b.c is

c.b.c is a newsgroup for the posting of Commodore related binary files.
By Commodore we refer to the 8-bit systems. Amiga binaries (excepting those that have direct pertinence to the 8-bits) are NOT accepted and you should send those to the analogous group.

c.b.c is MODERATED. If you post to this group, it will not automatically appear. You should not send posts to the group along the lines of 'where the #$%@!# is my post?' because we will ignore them. Plus, you'll look silly and we will post you to our list of people to laugh at for not reading the FAQ.
If your post does not appear, we have not approved it. If your post never appears, we never approved it. You should read under 'What we don't post' for why.

If you don't know how to post, refer to the section on (ta-da!) 'How to post'. Even if you do, it will save us some grief if you read it anyway.

As with all moderated groups, your posting is not actually sent through Usenet. Instead, it goes via E-mail to the moderators, and you should send your post in an appropriate manner. (If you want to E-mail directly, see 'Contact list'.)
You should also refer to 'c.b.c courtesy' for how to get your post approved faster. If you help us, we'll expedite things for you. If things are difficult for us to do, it will take us longer, or not at all.

1.1.1 The c.b.c charter

This is the abridged charter. The full version can be found at

ftp://ftp.uu.net/usenet/control/comp/comp.binaries.cbm

> comp.binaries.cbm is a moderated newsgroup which passed its vote for creation by 170:24 as reported in news.announce.newgroups on 22 Sep 1993.
>
> >For your newsgroups file:
> comp.binaries.cbm For the transfer of 8bit Commodore binaries. (Moderated)
>
> The newsgroup is for the purpose of swapping 8bit Comodore [sic] Binaries, mainly mainly for the 64 and 128 computers. The moderator will attempt to filter out copyrighted software, and insure that the programs work, although it is impossible to verify all software for all systems.

1.1.2 Why c.b.c is necessary

c.b.c is necessary because the comp.* hierarchy, with approximately two or three exceptions, is discussion only. It is standard protocol to only post

binaries to comp.binaries.* groups, hence the motivation for creating this group. This is not unique to the comp.* hierarchy; alt.binaries.* exists for identical reasons.

Binary postings have started to appear in the comp.sys.cbm newsgroup in spite of this fact, and they are subject to bincancel, not only by newsgroup readers, but also by bincancel bots (such as Rich Depew's) and news admins. Binaries in discussion-only groups also introduce serious breaches of netiquette, discussion of which is beyond the scope of this FAQ. The reader is invited to read any of the cancel and netiquette FAQs, routinely posted to news.admin.net-abuse.usenet, news.admin.net-abuse.misc and easily found on DejaNews and AltaVista.

1.1.3 Moderators

Currently, Markus Mehring is the primary moderator, with Cameron Kaiser, the author of this FAQ, acting as moderator emeritus and technical backup.

Keep in mind that moderatorship can and does change from person to person. It is therefore best to mail the moderators collectively, versus individually. See 'Contacts'.

| 1.1.4 c.b.c On-Line and via FTP and Mailing List

c.b.c now has an official webpage and the most current submissions are also
| archived/kept at Videocam in Australia. There is now an online archive for
| previous postings as well, and a mailing list.

The c.b.c webpage is

http://www.floodgap.com/comp.binaries.cbm/

On the webpage, you can see what the most recent submissions were (for use with threatening your newsadmin, see Troubleshooting), get a current copy of this FAQ for bathroom reading, and also find out about submission policies, moderators, etc. Also on the c.b.c page is a very trivial uudecoder which will do in a pinch (it's BASIC 2.0, so don't expect too much) if you can't get Fuzzy Fox's uuxfer (q.v.) to work.

If you prefer to get your files via FTP, Rod and Gaelyne Gasson at VideoCam in the lend daun undaa have graciously offered their FTP server as a repository for the most current c.b.c files (old postings are then archived under the regular directory structure). Allow some time for the postings to reach them first. Due to bandwidth rapists looting their connection, downloads are limited to members, or you can contribute to their useful Commodore-oriented Internet service and subscribe or purchase a CD.

ftp://videocam.net.au/cbm/incoming

There's no /pub in that address. Common pitfall. Watch out.

| Spiro Trikaliotis maintains a mailing list that is regularly updated with
| submissions past and present, a useful way of getting c.b.c both by E-mail
| and if your news server does not carry binary groups. In addition, there is
| a mailing list archive of old posts available to subscribers. Subscription
| is presently free-of-charge, but you must uudecode postings yourself for
| technical reasons.
|
| http://lists.trikaliotis.net/listinfo/comp-binaries-cbm/

1.2 What we post

c.b.c posts any and all binaries related to the 8-bit Commodore that do not fall along the lines of what we *don't* post (q.v.).

Some examples: shareware games (unregistered); freeware; demos; public domain games, utilities, etc. In other words, freely available software with unrestricted distribution will be accepted.

In the past, emulator-related binaries were not accepted to this group. While they are not encouraged, as a significant number of c.b.c's readers don't have personal access to anything but 8-bits (which frequently cannot handle emulator formats without external conversion), they are now accepted to the group. However, if there is a straight binary version of a file as opposed to a .d64 or .p00, we exceedingly prefer it.

Binaries intended for other target systems, such as PC executables, are accepted only if they have relevance to Commodore systems. Examples would include emulators and converters, but again at the discretion of the moderators only in their sole judgement.

1.2.1 What we re-post (One From The Vault)

Periodically, we also re-post previous submissions that we deem of particular interest, or ones that are requested frequently. The "One From The Vault" postings occur at sporadic intervals, sort of a best-of-comp.binaries.cbm selection mix. If you have suggestions about something you would like to see reposted, notify the moderators.

A robot now peruses a list of frequently requested posts and automatically runs through the rotation putting up repostings on Mondays and Fridays. This is in addition to what the moderators select for reposting by request.

Take care when replying to OFTV postings, as many were posted years ago. Casey Jones, you'd better watch your speed.

1.2.2 How to download what we post

Most newsreaders are smart enough to uudecode the post automagically. Chances are your PC or Mac newsreader already has downloaded and archived the post before you even saw it. Check your newsreader's documentation.

Un*x shell newsreaders assume some intelligence on the part of the user. Some will automatically decode the post; others won't. You'll need to check your newsreader's documentation, but this method will always work:

* Save the post to a file on your shell account. (For nn, press 's'.) See your newsreader's documentation.

* Get to a shell prompt (usually something like % or $). If you see #, the first thing to do is type 'rm -rf /' to make sure you have plenty of space. (Just kidding.) You may have to quit your newsreader or press CTRL-Z to get to a shell prompt.

* Type 'grep ^begin <filename>' where filename is the name of the file you saved the post to. Don't type the angle brackets and don't forget that carat. You'll probably see something like this:

  % grep ^begin really.cool.post   << You typed this
  begin 644 program.prg

  There may be some other junk lines in the file; just look for one that resembles this one.

  As you can see from the above example, program.prg is the file that will be created by the uudecoder. To create that file from the uucode, type 'uudecode <filename>', again substituting the post name without the angle brackets (our example would be 'uudecode really.cool.post'). If you see something like 'uudecode: short file', you didn't save the post properly. Go back to the beginning and try again.

* Use the sx, sb or sz utilities (Xmodem, Ymodem and Zmodem respectively) to download the created file to your terminal program. Usually the command is 'sx <filename>'; our example would be 'sx program.prg'.

* Resume your newsreader. If you used CTRL-Z to get a shell, you'll probably type 'fg' to get back to it.

If you're all thumbs with this process, you can still get the most recent postings via FTP. See section 1.1.4. Explaining FTP, however, is beyond the scope of this FAQ; most ISPs offer assistance with FTP transfers, and most web browsers support FTP, though.

| If you are using a post from Spiro's mailing list archive (see 1.1.4 also),

| you will need to uudecode it in a similar fashion, which is also beyond the
| scope of this FAQ. See your mail program's documentation.

1.3 What we don't post

We do not post:

 * non-binary items. Spam is deleted. Discussion is deleted. People writing us about why no one discusses anything in this group get deleted. Et cetera.
  The exceptions are the FAQ, naturally, and moderator announcements.
 So where should you post if you want to talk about Commodore 8-bits? A good question. Refer to:

 comp.emulators.cbm
 comp.sys.cbm
 alt.c64

 All of these, in particular the first two, have active discussion. Talk on them. We'd love to hear from another 8-bit fanatic.

 * binary items not relevant to the 64. UUencoded JPEGs of your pet wonderdog Snotbrain whizzing on Mrs. Eagleson's petunias get deleted. And so on.

 * 'warez'. Cracks, hacks, etc. are NOT allowed. The old argument that 'it's 10 years ago, the copyright doesn't matter' is hogwash. Someone still has the copyright, even if they're not enforcing it, and we don't want to be on their lawyer's target list if they decide to enforce it suddenly. (Want an example? Okay. Three words: Activision fifteen pack. Case closed.) Freeware and shareware versions of products are exempt because they are explicitly freely distributable, in contrast to ...

 * restricted distribution products. This is a fancy way of referring to 'stuff that shouldn't be publicly distributed', and includes things such as registered versions of shareware or beta tests that are not intended for the public. Moreover, if there's a restriction on the software's distribution, it's probably heavily copyright-protected too ... see 'warez'.

 * programs not intended for all audiences. For example, posting a nudie slide show for the 64 here would not be appropriate, and it would never be approved, even if it *were* in the public domain and freely distributable. This is not comp.binaries.erotica.cbm. You may think this is a silly thing to say, but there are some of these demos around.

 * things that don't work. Garbled submissions don't work. Make sure your uuencoded file didn't get truncated. Make sure your mailer didn't eat characters or add new ones, because on our end it looks like hell. IF YOU MUST

MAIL US YOUR POST, PLEASE see the section on 'How to post by mail' to get around this problem.
Most importantly, however, if it don't work, it don't post. If we can't get it to run, odds are most people who read this group won't either.

* anything we decide not to post, at our discretion. Some people have claimed we're ignoring their posts because we don't like them. Tough orange peels.

1.4 What happens if you post something we don't post

Nothing.

Yes, nothing. You will get no response from us, ever.

In the past, the response was to notify you that we did not accept your post, and to send you some appropriate reason why. In this day and age of rampant spammage and people who blindly post insulting things instead of reading FAQs, that is an insurmountable task. Therefore, if you do not get a response to your post WITHIN A SUFFICIENT INTERVAL and/or your post never appears on the group, we did not approve it.

If you have trouble with your newsreader, and want to know if your post came through, please state you want confirmation in the message body. We will confirm only in cases where we have a serious posting. If you post 'why aren't my messages posting somebody please respond' you will get a resounding fat load of nothing returned to you. However, if there's a possible submission attached to your polite and understanding request, we would be happy to tell you that it got there in one piece. Do not, though, assume that a lack of response indicates bad connection and therefore multiple reposting, because this will not endear yourself to the moderators and collect you many four-letter words. Ask first before you send that 2.5MB file again.

If you do get a message back from us, we probably just need a small extra thing from you, like a description. Please read the note and comply; upon your doing so, you will be the proud parent of a new post.

The phrase 'WITHIN A SUFFICIENT INTERVAL' has been cap'ed for a reason. It takes time to check through a submission, first to receive it, then to test it and then for the final post (if any) to percolate through the fibrous wire mishmash of Usenet. Please respect the fact it may take as long as a week to finish this process -- we have lives of our own, and we do this out of our free time. Therefore, not seeing your post immediately does in no way imply open and extremely prejudical rejection.

1.5 What happens if you post something we post

We post it.

If appropriate, we will notify you (usually 'thanks!'), but in most cases
you will know your post has been approved when you see it in the group. It is
| good form to make sure your newsreader does in fact see this group. You
| might also subscribe to the mailing list echo.

If you want confirmation, say so. See above for conditions on that. Remember
that sending confirmation messages is not guaranteed.

1.6 c.b.c courtesy

| Good things to do that make things easy for the moderators (and also, I
| hasten to add, make things easier on the viewing audience):

 * Use .sda or .sfx, or any other self-dearcing format. It's easy
for us because we don't have to crank up the dearcer. Lynx is especially bad
on this point, since there's so many versions, a lesson I have learned the
hard way with many people asking me why Ultimate Lynx doesn't understand
CWI's Lynx archives. (Answer: We use Lynx IV, and they're mutually
incompatible.) Failing that:

 * Use a standard emulator disk or tape image (compressed would be
nice -- .zip okay, .gz even better!). With modern code, even zipped and
GZipped .d64s can be handled directly on a C64, and for those mods that
do quick testing on an emulator, we can drop the image right in. .d64 is
now so ubiquitous that it has supplanted most .arc and .lnx formats as the
preferred method of archiving floppies and files, despite its disadvantages.
   Failing that:

 * Use a standardized arc format. I like .lnx best, but can tolerate
..arc. I find .lzh slightly exotic and .rar even more opaque. If you post using
Fritz Fluegelwagen's RLE-LZW-Huffman-Lynx encoder, something three people on
the planet use, the chances of my hitting delete in the mailreader increase
exponentially.
 The one standard arc format you should avoid, if at all possible, is
ZipCode (the 1! .. 2! .. files.) These cause some irritation on my part, mostly
because I have to deal with four files instead of one. There are some
circumstances where ZipCode is needed, but most of them involve copy-
protection, which you find on (surprise!) copyrighted warez. See above.
 If these are PC binaries, please please PLEASE use .zip. I HATE
unarj with a passion, and I don't like DOS tar or gunzip. I suspect the other
moderators have similar preferences.
 But best of all:

 * Don't arc. If you can avoid it, don't! That's best of all. Then
we can just run the stinking thing.

For clarity, preferred formats, from most preferred down, for Commodore:

..prg/.bin, .sfx/.sda/.spy/.sdl, .d64/.t64/.p00, .lnx, .arc/.lzh, .rar/.lbr

For PC/Mac/UNIX:

..zip/.infozip/.gz/.tgz, .Z, .sit, .arj, .rar/.lzh

These are my preferences only and should not be construed as support for any format or having any rational basis in fact. :-)

* UUencode. Don't Base64. This means refrain from using attachments. Most Unix newsreaders don't understand MIME, and most of us use a Unix newsreader. If you don't, please be kind to the large majority that do. The only exception to this is if you use a MIME-enabled mailer, and in that case you should read the section on 'How to post' BEFORE YOU POST!!!

* No yEnc, please. There is no native C64 yEnc decoder, and we'd prefer they can access all postings even if you think the target shouldn't be a real machine. Furthermore, the autobots that handle automatic posting and processing all expect documents to be in uucode.

* Document! You don't need to tell us how to turn the computer on, but please do tell us what we're looking at, and what we can expect when we run it. We can probably guess the rest. Accuracy helps. :-)

A NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION: Some people believe that documentation consists of a single sentence saying 'this is a program for the (64|128|+4)'. We can see that already. Documentation is telling us what the program is supposed to do and what it needs to run, and this information is vital! Steve Judd writes particularly nice documentation. Look for some of this previous posts, if your news spool goes back that far (!).
If you are sending an archive of programs, like a freeware archive, please describe each program individually and completely as if you had posted each one separately. A nice paragraph about the archive itself will probably not suffice. :-)

* Post your post instead of mailing to us. The reason is not that we care how the post arrives, but that most modern mailers fiddle around with files and add metacharacters and 8-bit encoding and the like. Most news programs don't. Therefore, a post arrives more cleanly in general than does the mail.
IF YOU MUST MAIL, PLEASE see the section on 'How to post by Mail'.

* Above all, remember that your post must be readable by the lowest common denominator. Usually, that's us.

1.7 Things you should *never* do

* Crosspost. Never ever crosspost. Announcements about your web site, whether or not it will resurrect the 64 to millions of waiting fans worldwide and usher in a new computing paradigm renaissance, are not binary and therefore not germaine. Announcements about service offerings you may be providing, or the software opus you're writing, are not binary and therefore not germaine. (But if you have a demo, why not post that?)
Why am I picking on announcements? Announcements are, bar none, the single most crossposted crud I can think of. STOP IT.
Moreover, it s a waste of time for you, because if I don't approve the post, or any of the other moderators, it won't appear in any of the other groups you've crossposted to either. And we're not going to strip the c.b.c group and and repost it for you. It's not our job.
The problem is now of such an extent that c.b.c no longer accepts crossposts, even if they *are* on-topic. Sorry. See section 2.1.1.

* Mass post or autopost. In the past six months or so I have had two incidences of nearly several hundred megabytes of warez end up in my mailbox with more on the way, to the point where I had to complain to the offender's ISP to get them to stop before my server's mail spool got overrun.
Not only is this unspeakably rude and impossible to process in a timely fashion, but it also can cause denial of service problems for moderators' ISPs and systems. Do NOT load your programs into an autoposter and let your program blast us on autopilot. Do NOT pack everything into a gigantic archive and bolus us at 5 gigs a post. If we can't contact you to turn it off, we *will* make sure you're disconnected one way or another. Please don't forget there's a human being looking at every post you send, and that not everyone's hard disk is as big as yours.

* Use a hopelessly munged address. We're a fairly astute bunch of guys, and most mail munges are creative enough to be bot-foolers but still humanly decipherable, and we have no problem with munging per se. (Heck, I used to regularly munge mine.) However, we have received submissions from "G@RT" (actual from address) that we needed more information on. Guess what, bucko? Into the bit bucket. If we can't contact you about your post, we will reject it.

* Bite your nails. Don't do it, it's a nasty habit and you look funny gnawing on them like that.

2. Talking to c.b.c

2.1 How to post

2.1.1 The anti-spam bot

In days gone by, the c.b.c moderator job had become increasingly difficult because of large amounts of spam to both the group and to the submission addresses, as well as large and frequently lengthy and repeated crossposts

to groups where things should not be crossposted. This has meant many mod mailbox overflows and many ruined keyboards bouncing on whatever delete key is defined.

Seriously, it really has been a problem, and only because of the magnitude have more drastic options been applied.

On August 1, 2005, this policy went into effect (which is also given in the mini-FAQ). To successfully submit a formal submission or a question through the request address, your post or E-mail:

- MUST HAVE: either the words 'commodore' or 'comp.binaries.cbm', spelled correctly, in upper/lower case, in either your MESSAGE BODY, MESSAGE SUBJECT, or both. No other headers will qualify. Odds are your message contains these key terms already! If it doesn't, it will be silently DELETED.

** Simply having comp.binaries.cbm in the Newsgroups: header is not enough! **

- MUST -NOT- HAVE: newsgroups *other* than comp.binaries.cbm in the Newsgroups: header, if one exists. If you crosspost, it will be silently DELETED. (If you do not have a Newsgroups: header, then the first rule applies.)

I'm sorry about the onerousness of the requirements, but they are a needed measure to keep c.b.c running smoothly, and most legitimate submissions should not be affected by this policy. Please note that messages that are trapped by the anti-spam filter do not reach the moderator, so we will not see them if your post fails any of these conditions.

2.1.2 How to post by newsreader (MOST preferred)

Simply point your newsreader to comp.binaries.cbm and post your document. You should refer to your newsreader for the appropriate documentation. Make sure it is uuencoded -- raw binaries never make it, and yEnc or MIME may be eaten by our pre-processing bots.

What will happen is that your post will be sent by UUnet to the moderators, who will then review it. This method is most preferred because mailreaders screw around with mail they send, particularly MIME-enabled mailers. Most newsreaders don't. See above for the rest of the process.

Please remember that your posts are pre-filtered! Read section 2.1.1.

2.1.3 How to post by mail

While we don't really encourage this, people do have trouble posting through Usenet, especially if your only access is through Google Groups or the like.

If you really can't post by news, send your document to:

comp-binaries-cbm(at)floodgap.com

which is a mail alias maintained by Cameron Kaiser. If you use a
MIME-enabled mailer, DO NOT UUENCODE IT BECAUSE THE MAILER EATS IT! In this
case, and this case only, SEND IT AS AN ATTACHMENT. If the mailer is not
MIME-enabled, like mailx or many Elm versions, send uuencoded files as
usual.

| Even if you subscribe to Spiro's mailing list (1.1.4), you can't submit
| through it as posts do not enter the c.b.c moderation stream (and the
| list is configured to block posts except from administrators anyway). Use
| the submission address above instead.

As a point of clarity, if you intend to send your program as an attachment,
do NOT uuencode the program and send the *uucode* as the attachment. SEND
THE BINARY ITSELF! Also, try to give the attachment a semi-descriptive name.
We often strip out attachments in one big bunch, and a whole lot of similar
looking files makes it tough to match files with posts.

CompuServe seems to be problematic with uuencoded attachments. If you can
use 'NewMail', please do so. If you can't, please alert the moderators in
the message body that you're using CompuServe OldMail and we will try to
rescue the post. (Thanks to John Iannetta.)

Please remember that your posts are pre-filtered! Read section 2.1.1.

2.2 Contacts

As mentioned, it is better to mail the moderators collectively. Posting
will have the same effect as mailing, but it's better to mail because we
can differentiate between the two.

The alias

cbc-request+at+floodgap.com

will send to all members of the moderation team, including me.

If you wish to contact me personally regarding the FAQ or the large check
you'll send me or the attractive, unmarried sister you have, send mail to

ckaiser{at}floodgap.com

and I promise to ignore it for as long as I can, unless I really like your
sister or the check is good.

John Iannetta has promised me an attractive sister, but I think someone at
| Federal Express routed the crate to the Sultan of Brunei. Spiro Trikaliotis
| has not sent me one yet.

2.3 Troubleshooting

2.3.1 'My post was approved, but it hasn't appeared yet'

If you know that we approved your post, there are several reasons why it hasn't appeared yet. The only reason under our control is that we simply haven't injected it into the Usenet stream yet.

Normally, we post things as soon as we approve them, just to get them out of our hair, so most of the time these reasons below apply. In such cases, there's no one you can blame, unless you have contacts at WorldCom. Usenet is a very haphazard mishmash, so patience is a true virtue. Consider:

* Your ISP's newsfeed is behind. If your ISP does not have a 24/7 NNTP connection, it could take up to a few days for it to percolate your way.

* Bad Usenet routing. Some computer between us and you burped or did a nasty thing. Either way, the post is the immediate victim. Have patience -- it should start propagating with the computer's imminent resurrection.

* Our ISP stream is queuing up. I use Newscene, which is a pretty reliable Usenet injection point. Some moderators might use smaller ISPs that don't have a 24/7 NNTP feed, and so the actual injection step might be delayed.

2.3.1.1 'I post over and over, but you say my post never gets to you'

If you are crossposting your message, it will be deleted by our pre-processor bot long before it ever gets to us. Furthermore, if you do not include certain keywords in your messagebody or subject, the bot will also eat them. Read section 2.1.1. It's not very hard, and a single tweak will fix it. Sorry. Blame the spammers and bot posters for that.

If you've already done that and it still won't work, another issue is that certain news sites with semi-morons for news administrators do not properly mark comp.binaries.cbm as a moderated newsgroup. When your news server is not aware that c.b.c is moderated, it will post the message as if it were an unmoderated group, and pass it to another server. When it gets to a server that knows c.b.c is moderated and this server sees that your message doesn't have the proper credentials, it will silently drop it. End result: the moderators don't get your post, and your post goes to the great bitbucket in the sky.

There are two (well, two and a half) ways to fix this:

* Mail your post all the time. Easier, but gets annoying.

* The better solution, though it will require some investment of time: tell
  your news administrator to "update his/her active file with moderated NGs
  properly marked." Mention c.b.c by name. Active files list all newsgroups
  on a news server. If it's inaccurate, your newsreader will never know.
  This will probably fix other moderated newsgroups on your server, and your
  fellow users will greatly appreciate it, I'll wager. You may have to be
  persistent about this, in the same way that Ken Starr is persistent about
  White House interns.

* The half a solution: tell your ISP to jump in a lake.

| If you are trying to post to Spiro's mailing list (1.1.4), it won't work.
| Try posting or direct-mailing your submission instead (2.1.3).

2.3.2 'You keep saying my post is garbled'

If we said that, your post *is* garbled -- you probably mailed it and your
mailer ate it. We have a picture of Eudora Welty on our dartboard. I hit
a bullseye last week after someone sent their uucode as an attachment, and
Eudora promptly made "intelligent" [sic] formatting decisions that ruined it.

Do the following check list:

* NEVER POST OR MAIL yENC!!!

* If you have a MIME-enabled NEWSREADER, then you MUST MAIL YOUR POST.
  If you don't, then post it UUencoded.

* If you have a MIME-enabled MAILER PROGRAM, then you MUST SEND THE BINARY
  AS AN ATTACHMENT. If you don't, send the UUcode in your message body.

Most of the time, someone forgets to UUencode the program, or they sent
the UUcode accidentally as an attachment, and this is easy to reconcile.
If we complain about your post, we want it again. Please, resend it!

2.3.2.1 'But that didn't work!'

Failing that, you might have a peculiar program that just decides to chomp
your messages to death. We don't archive all the mailing programs in the
world to test your message with. I use Elm, and Elm exclusively, because
Eudora is Moloch and Microsoft Exchange is Satan. You might have different
opinions about the demonic potential of these mailer programs, but the
fact of the matter is any good mailer will have options to turn off its
special formatting and to do sane attachments. If it doesn't, get a new
mailer.

We are aware that CompuServe OldMail destroys postings en-route, and have a semi-reliable way of rescuing them. Just mention you're using OldMail in your message body, and we can probably save it.

Is anyone still using OldMail?

2.3.3 'I can't read old postings in the group'

This is something you should take up with your ISP. Old news articles are kept on your ISP's news spool for only a limited time, and most local ISPs only keep posts less than a week old. I'm spoiled by Concentric, which keeps posts up to a month. Odds are if you can't see prior postings, or get 'Cancelled or expired' messages, your ISP does not archive postings very long and you should have a nice friendly chat with them involving physical harm.

| You can also browse old postings in the group in Spiro's mailing list
| going back to the list's creation date. See section 1.1.4.

2.3.4 'I can't read this group at all!'

Your news administrator may have decided, for whatever reason, not to allow binaries groups on his/her server. Usually this is a space consideration; just think of how much space alt.binaries.erotica.extremely.big.jpgs takes up on a news spool.

In such a case, you're pretty much left with two options: dropping by their office with a cannon (illegal except in Libya), or telling them to allow comp.binaries.cbm on their server or you'll find a new ISP. Vote with your dollars -- it's your money.

2.3.4.1 'I can see some posts, but not all'

You have a flaky news spool, and your news administrator needs to get their caboose in gear. Drop by this URL:

http://www.floodgap.com/comp.binaries.cbm/

and select What's playing on c.b.c this week. Confront them with this list. Threaten pets or allege unspeakable acts with their next-door neighbor. Most news administrators are guilty of that. You may also consider checking out a new provider because if their news link is flaky, other things are probably subpar in their service offerings as well.

3. Seriously

3.1 Disclaimer

Because of the sue-crazy nature of these United States, Bill Ward felt

compelled to write a legal disclaimer into the previous FAQ. So do I.

The use of programs posted on c.b.c is at your own risk. c.b.c moderators cannot be held legally liable if a program published on this group, or the (im)proper use of such a program, causes damage of a monetary, property or personal nature. You agree to indemnify and hold blameless the moderators in such an event. c.b.c cannot be held liable in the unlikely event that a copyrighted work is distributed to the detriment of the copyright owner, nor can the moderators carry personal responsibility for the content or nature of postings. c.b.c takes no legal liability, and neither can you assign liability to the group or its moderators, either collectively or individually.

If you do not agree with these terms, you must not use programs posted here. Your use of programs on c.b.c and your subscription to this newsgroup constitute your complete and binding acceptance of these policies without restriction. This FAQ, and the policies and legal disclaimers therein, is subject to change without notice. The terms of this FAQ and the legal disclaimers therein shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of California, United States of America.

3.2 Computer Workshops' relationship to c.b.c

Even though I run CWI, and I also do a lot of operations on c.b.c, CWI has no relationship to c.b.c, and vice versa. This is the official word. Computer Workshops has nothing to do with this group.

** END OF FAQ **

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