

## AT POUGH'S HOUSTON STORE

# Computers Aid In Video Sales

By EARL PAIGE

SANTA ANA, Calif.—Imagine a video store with computer monitors dispersed in several locations, where customers can casually scan through a 2,000-title movie library via brief capsule descriptions of each entry, plus compelling graphics.

It's not five years hence, but today at John and Carol Pough's Video Cassettes Unlimited here. And since installing an IBM 5265 sales terminal, along with an IBM S120 small personal computer with printer, the Poughs have found numerous uses and payoffs for the equipment.

*Second of two parts*

Maintaining exact traffic on rental and sales activity is a key to the philosophy of Pough, head of a local VSDA chapter and of a pioneering dealer group here (Billboard, Dec. 18). The computer was a natural development.

One indication that Pough's inventory library is different is that it is tabulated by studio, whereas many video specialty retailers maintain al-

phabetical libraries by title. The computer, however, makes conversion back and forth instantly accessible.

Each title's computer number signifies the studio originator, the title, whether Beta or VHS, price and running time. All these elements are included in the computer-printed store catalog.

A computer, Pough points out, is not only handy for printing store catalogs; it also offers economies in terms of both money and labor. The store's catalog, in fact, has been modified radically.

Until recently, 20 sheets of 8½- by 11-inch paper were printed on both sides, then folded at the center and stapled to make up a 5½- by 8½-inch, 40-page catalog with an outside cover of slightly heavier stock. The format allowed for one column of listings per page with four vertical sections for stock number, movie title (alphabetically listed), price and running time. Around 2,200 titles were accommodated.

Price is fundamental, to Pough, because he believes in gradually

leading customers into purchases. "I think running time is interesting to consumers, too," he says, "but we had to trade off something."

Of all the computer's capabilities, Pough seems most proud of the jumbo Rolodex that's positioned right next to the cash sales terminal. At the spin of a wrist, every customer's vital statistics can be accessed. The cards in the file are printed by the computer, and there is a weekly update.

An extension of the computer that may sound at first whimsical is that a customer's entire rental activity for a year can be printed out. The Poughs have actually done this.

More pragmatically, explains Carol Pough, are the essential jobs done regularly. These comprise a constant track on customers, a weekly inventory and the mailing list. "The mailing list used to cost us \$150 a month," she says. That's \$1,800 a year saved or aggrandized by using the computer, and it sorts by zip code to boot.

"We can cross-reference customers, too. Maybe a husband started with us and then the wife and we have two cards in the system. This can be eliminated," she notes. However, she adds, couples who are not man and wife under one last name offer a more perplexing challenge.

The scrolling of the library on computer terminals situated around the store continues to fascinate the Poughs. They note that a constant index of all library titles by title or by number is also in the works—a rolling inventory.

As for the catalog on a screen, the use of computer graphics can add a striking dimension to the handy capsule description of a movie.

Would adult fare be similarly merchandised? Not likely. "Adult was once 90% of our business," says John Pough. "It's still an important part." He reaches under the counter to produce not the store's regular red carryout bag but a plain brown paper sack.

# Games Promotion Mapped By Phoenix Video Dealer

LOS ANGELES—The volatility of video games, recently demonstrated on Wall St., is not deterring Phoenix retailer Linda Rosser from planning an all-out February promotion to expose games product and to increase brand awareness among customers.

Rosser is a vocal advocate of retail promotion, evidenced by her re-

marks to registrants at this magazine's video conference in New York (Billboard, Dec. 18). Her Phoenix outlet is Entertainment Systems Of America.

The Feb. 5 contest will feature CBS-Fox, Imagic, ActiVision and Parker Bros., emphasizing brands other than Atari. However, practice sessions will be on Atari units.

Already allocated by the three-year-old store operated by Linda and Bob Rosser is \$2,000 in prizes. The Rossers expect the four video games manufacturers to kick in considerably more support. In fact, T-shirts, bumper stickers and patches from manufacturer sponsors are to be included in the store's "Numb Thumb" registration kit, which will sell for \$10.

The contest, open to all ages, will focus on rural regions and specialty markets. Registrants will fill out a questionnaire, affording the store data on attitudes toward games. "We want our store to become strongly identified as the place to buy games and players," Linda Rosser says.

Among the novel aspects of the promotion is the opportunity to record the top game score at home by taking a photograph of the screen. Just like scores posted at a golf tourney, four scoreboards in the Phoenix store will chronicle the leading scorers. "If contestants don't have a camera, we have a Polaroid here we'll lend them," Linda Rosser says.

As for the possibility of "doc-  
(Continued on page 36)

## Records Out At Service Merchandise

NASHVILLE—The Service Merchandise chain of catalog stores is closing out its record and tape departments—a move that will affect from 115 to 120 of the current 139 outlets.

According to Everett Purdy, senior vice president of merchandising for the Nashville-based chain, "We thought we could make better use of the space." Purdy adds that the newer Service Merchandise stores do not include a record section.

The chain has sold records and tapes for the past 10 years, Purdy says. There are now outlets in 27 states.

The stores involved are selling their remaining stock at half the usual list price, which was originally about \$7.97 for LPs, \$6.95 for cassettes and \$7.95 for 8-tracks.

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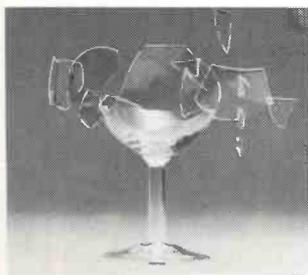
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## Have you ever heard a cassette sound like real music?



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### TO MAKE A CASSETTE SOUND LIKE MUSIC, YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT MUSIC SOUNDS LIKE.

Other than making tape, most cassette manufacturers have nothing to do with music. Denon, on the other hand, has been in the music business for well over seventy years. Denon professional equipment can be found in almost every single Japanese radio station and recording studio. Denon is the company credited with the development of the PCM recording process, a development which has already revolutionized the entire recording industry. And, when it comes to tape, Denon has been making it for over twenty-five years.

### CASSETTE TAPES CAN MEASURE ALIKE AND STILL SOUND DIFFERENT.

Serious audiophiles know that components with identical specifications can sound noticeably different. Conventional measurement techniques do not explain this phenomenon, so words such as "musical" are often used to describe sound that possesses the "life-like" characteristics of real music.

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Imagine what we'll do next.

## New Labels In Schulman Fold

NEW YORK—Two labels have been added to the Steve S. Schulman National Distribution Service. The Philadelphia-based operation will provide support services for December 20, headed by Carol Okai, who bows the label with her recording of "Don't Let Me Down Now" and "You Choose Me"; and Indigo, operated by Karl Guthrie and Ronald Davis, attorneys based in East Orange, N.J.

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Survey For Week Ending 12/25/82

# Top 15 Video Games

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These are the best selling home video games compiled from retail outlets by the Billboard research department.

This Week	Last Position	Weeks on Chart	TITLE	Copyright Owner/Manufacturer, Catalog Number	WEEKS AT #1
★ 1	14	14	PITFALL—Activision AX 108		6
2	2	16	DONKEY KONG—Coleco 2451		
3	9	4	ET THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL—Atari 2674		
4	3	16	FROGGER—Parker Bros. 5300		
5	5	10	MEGAMANIA—Activision AX 017		
6	6	16	PAC-MAN—Atari CX-2646		
7	12	4	RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK—Atari CX-2659		
8	4	16	BERZERK—Atari CX-2650		
9	15	5	REALSPORTS—Baseball Atari CX 2640		
10	8	16	DEMON ATTACK—Imagic 7200		
11	7	5	EARTHWORLD—(Swordquest) CX 2656 Atari		
12	13	4	ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS—Intellivision 3410		
13	14	16	EMPIRE STRIKES BACK—Parker Bros. 5050		
14	11	12	VENTURE—Coleco 2457		
15	15	2	LOCK N' CHASE—Intellivision 5663		