ROMBACK2

ROMBACK2 is a utility program designed to allow 64K Color Computer and TDP 100 users to produce RUNNABLE copies of their ROMPACKS ("program cartridges") to tape. At the time such tapes are produced, the start, end and execute addresses of such tapes are provided to the user, to facilitate later transferral of the tape to a disk, using the SAVEM command. Once a "ROMBACKed" copy is made, ROMBACK2 itself is no longer needed to run that copy.

Although ROMBACK2 contains "hidden" code (and actually in some ways BECAUSE of that hidden code) ROMBACK2 itself is NOT copy protected. We urge you to make a backup copy of it for your files. Do NOT use any of the existing fancy file transfer utilities to make such a copy... merely CLOAD ROMBACK2 and then simply CSAVE it out again.

We firmly believe that cartridges are DANGEROUS to your computer. I burned out $50 worth of chips on my computer by inadvertently unplugging a ROMPACK while the power was on. It was this experience that motivated me to write ROMBACK2. Some authors of cartridge programs for the Color Computer have added special code to their ROMPACKs to prevent programs like ROMBACK2 from running. The excuse for this behavior that protectiinists give is that they are protecting themselves against piracy.

Fortunately few ROMPACKs are "protected" in such a fashion. For most of those few that are so "protected", I am here providing the modifications needed to allow production of ROMBACKable copies. I strongly urge you NOT to use this program to facilitate piracy of the software that is available on ROMPACKs. Some of those programs represent months of labor, and the authors are entitled to rewards for their efforts. They have to eat, pay rent, and support children, just like the rest of us. Use ROMBACK2 only to make copies of your ROMPACKs for yourself.

Similarly, if you have gotten this program by copying it from a legitimate purchaser, please send us, Cheshire Cat Computer Creations, P.O. Box 115, Lafayette, Ca. 94549 some money (preferably $10 or more) if you find it useful. We can't stop you from pirating this program, but we urge you not to do so. We're on your side, against protection of programs and for unprotected, inexpensive, quality software. If you knife us in the back by stealing my stuff, we're much less likely to produce more for you!

ROMBACK2 works by checking the size of the ROMPACK, block moving the ROMPACK data to low RAM, then tacking on a special loader program that is "hidden" within the ROMBACK2 program. This loader program is executed first whenever a "ROMBACKed" tape or disk file is executed. It boots the cartridge data and a specially modified copy of the ROM BASIC interpreter into high RAM, and then innitializes the computer to emulate its state at the time of a jump on power up to a real cartridge. The cartridge data is then executed.

"Protected" ROMPAKS

What follows are instructions for deprotecting "protected" ROMPACKs. To use these instructions, first make a ROMBACKed tape of the cartridge in question, then CLOADM that tape in to memory, but don't execute it. Now POKE the following POKEs for the ROMPACK in question, then CSAVEM the data back to tape using the addresses that ROMBACK2 gave to you. Some of the "POKE's" given here may be for early editions of some of the ROMPACKs in question, and may not work on yours.

MEGABUG   CANYON CLIMBER

    POKE &H567D,18   POKE &H4424,&H35
    POKE &H567E,18
    POKE &H567F,18
    POKE &H5680,18

                                     NEREIS

MICROBES   POKE &H5124,18
                                         POKE &H5125,18
    POKE &H45BB,18
    POKE &H45BC,18

SPECTACULATOR   STARBLAZE

    POKE &H51A0, &H9F   POKE &H427E,&H30
    POKE &H51A1, &HFF   POKE &H427F,1
    POKE &H51AF, &H12
    POKE &H51B0, &H12

(This change in Spectacalcualtor will also give you 8K more available space for storing your tables!)

MICROPAINTER   COLORTERM

    POKE &H4067, &H80   POKE &H404A,18
                                         POKE &H404B,18
                                         POKE &H404C,18
                                         POKE &H4139,17

There are several ROMPACKs in addition to these that are protected. If any of you out there are assembly language hackers, and you happen to "crack" Nelson's new VIP Writer (Super Color Writer) or Nelson's VIP Terminal, let me know what the POKEs are. There is apparently a new release of Spectacalculator that is differently protected. Jim Kearny's Starblaster (sold by Microworks) is heavily protected. There are more POKEs than I care to print here needed to crack it. If you want to ROMBACK2 it, send us your ROMPACK and we will provide on tape a cracked copy.

Hope you have a cracking good time with ROMBACK2!

INSTRUCTIONS for using ROMBACK2

1. Turn computer off.

2. Place a piece of "magic" tape over pin (trace) #8 on the Rom-pac to be backed up. Pin #8 is the fourth trace in from the left as seen when looking at the bottom of the rompack with the pins (traces) pointed up. (see illustration) On most Radio Shack packs the first 3 pins (traces) will be missing, so pin #8 will be the first pin on the left bottom of the pack as viewed with the pins up.

3. Insert ROM-pac into system (cartridge) port.

4. Turn on computer. Have ready a blank tape.

5. CLOAD "ROMBACK2" into the computer and RUN it.

6. ROMBACK2 will determine the size of the ROM-pac and then transfer it plus a special loader program into low RAM. It will then tell you the strt, end and transfer addresses of the ml tape it is about to make and ask you for a title that it will put on the headder for that tape.

7. Now place a blank tape into the cassette recorder, hit play and record, and hit "Y" in response to ROMBACK2's question about whether to output a tape. The computer will output a tape and then ask if you want to do it again.

NOTE 1: A 32K Color Computer is required to produce tapes with ROMBACK2 but a 64K computer is required to run the tapes made by ROMBACK2.

1) These three traces are usually ABSENT on Radio Shack Rompacks.

2) This is trace #8. Cover it ONLY. Be sure NOT to cover other traces. On most Radio Shack Rompacks, this will be the the first trace on the left side.

3) This is trace #10 Opposite it, on the top side, is trace #9, which will very likly either be filed down or cut.

BOTTOM VIEW ROMPACK