



## Media Vision PCMCIA Sound Card

What's PCMCIA? People Can't Memorize Computer Industry Acronyms ..A play on words taken from the manual of the product in question which clearly exemplifies how the average user is not interested minimally to know the meaning of many acronyms. PCMCIA is actually stands for Personal Computer Memory Card International Association, an association that brings together builders of portable computing devices really able to ensure the real portability of the computer and that allow at the same time as being able to be used only when needed offering in this way «plug & play» characteristic mode. Too bad that actually the standard PCMCIA is a fairly vague term and present determining characteristics configuration problems on own computer whenever it uses a different card or device. The reason is quite simple: currently there are three different types of slots and PCMCIA cards, classified as type I, type II and type III; also, each device PCMCIA uses its own IRQ and

own memory addresses, reason for which if multiple devices employ it it is inevitable to run into the same addresses in resulting configuration problems from such conflicts. The device produced by MediaVision reviewed in these notes resolves portability issues e.g. of real «plug & play» use with your own notebook offering, at the same time, all the characteristics of a traditional sound card.

### Description

The Media Vision PCMCIA SoundCard It looks like a tiny card of PCMCIA type II standard (version 2 compatible) interfaced with a device, with a characteristic design, which in its small size it offers: an audio output to connect to supplied headphones (or speakers optional amplifiers); an audio input at a high level for connecting devices audio not amplified in the same way of Audio CD players, cassette players; an audio input for connecting

Producer:  
Media Vision, Inc. - 47900 Bayside Parkway  
-  
Fremont, CA 94538 (USA)  
Distributors:  
Modo srl - Via Masaccio, 11 - 42100 Reggio Emilia - Tel.: 0522/512828  
Ingram Micro Italia - Via Roma, 74 - 20060 Cassina  
de' Pecchi (MI) - Tel.: 02/95343604  
Price including VAT):  
PCMCIA Sound Card + software Lit.  
496,000a

the supplied microphone; a wheel for adjusting the sound level; a connector for connecting joysticks or, via an optional device MIDI adapter. Everything is completed by a rich equipment of software that allows you to enhance all the performances offered by the device. The main feature of PCMCIA Sound Card is to be able to be inserted and removed with the computer turned on without suffering damage thanks to the adhesion to PCMCIA standards and, above all, of be able to be used after insertion in the slot occurred when the computer was turned on, thanks to a special manager software, moreover already generally present in computers with slots PCMCIA (Card & Socket Services 2.0), without necessarily having to re-execute the boot procedure, but limited, from DOS, to launch the SETSOUND program. The audio section ensures digitization and sample playback sound with sample resolution similar to that of Audio CDs (44.1 kHz 16-bit); has a compression circuit/ decompression for samples 8-bit mono and stereo with ratios of 2:1, 3:1 and 4:1 compression; of a circuit of compression for samples a 16 bit compliant with À-Law techniques, A-Lawe IMA ADPCM (which requires software produced by third parties); adopt digital filters for suppression of noise and for the microphone input features of an automatic control of gain (AGC) that allows the microphone used (dynamic or capacitor) to always operate in the conditions Better. A 20-voice FM synthesizer ensures a realistic reproduction of musical instruments, while the presence of the MPU-401 UART ensures compatibility MIDI. Finally, an 80 mW amplifier makes it possible to use immediately with the supplied headphones and, what

much more important, a special software named VGame makes it possible compatibility with Sound cards Blasters.

#### Installation

The minimum configuration required for installing PCMCIA Sound Card consists of an IBM compatible system equipped with a processor at least 386 (better if higher) provided PCMCIA type II slot, 4 Mbyte RAM memory (preferably 8). at least 6 Free Mbytes on hard disk for installation of the software (plus further at least 4 MB for sound storage championships), VGA card. mouse, DOS 5.0 or higher and Windows 3.1. The non-use of I/O and address addresses memory 200-20F and 380-38F. If the hardware installation is limited to done when inserting the PCMCIA card in the slot on the computer, the discussion is a little different the software.

The supplied disks collect numerous applications ranging from usual set of programs for control of the audio and any sessions of audio or MIDI recording, to a system voice control of the functions of the computer in a Windows Environment, to what is the minus part flashy software, but what of done allows you to use PCMCIA Sound Card, i.e. software drivers. The installation procedure, as it is now customary, it is automatic, in short, it takes care of installing the necessary elements and to configure them

The device to connect to the betting slip PCMCIA offers all the standard connections audio, adjustment of the volume and a connector for the connection of a joystick and, via an adapter, of musical instruments electronic MIDI.

Resource management audio occurs through the usual software which takes on the appearance of a hi-fi rack at which one is connected sampling software and digital edit capable of producing files in WAV format.

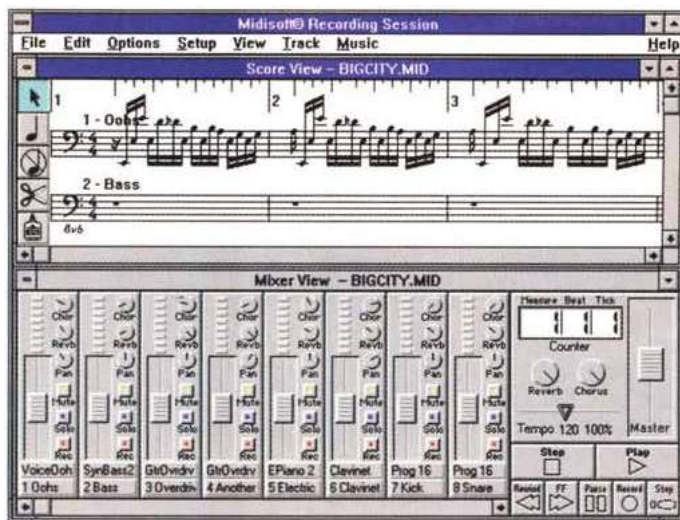




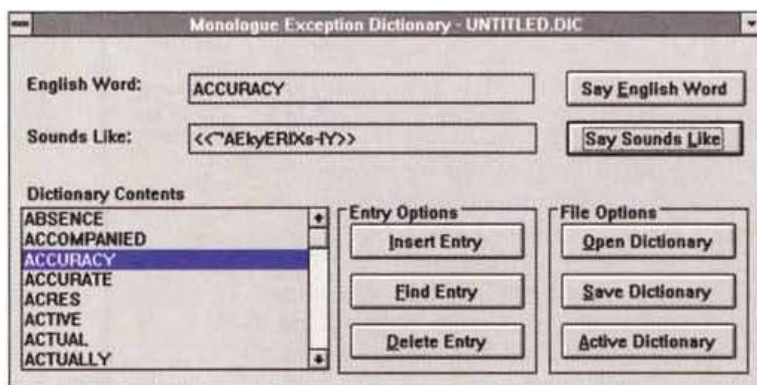
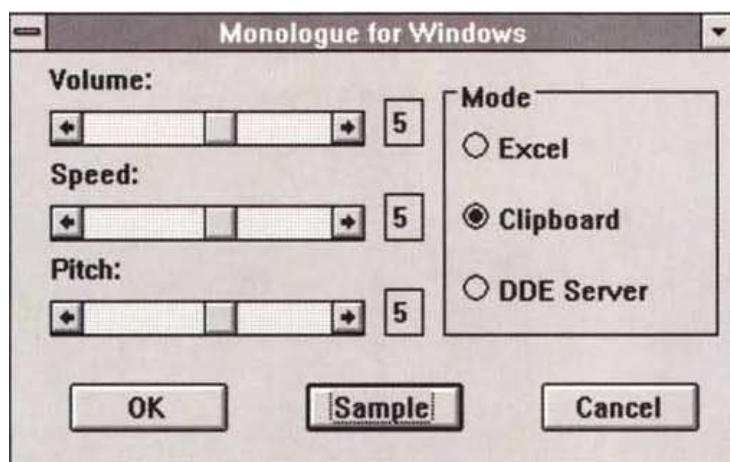
accordingly, but before getting ready  
The operation is worth a look  
to the manual where they are widely available  
described a series of possibilities  
regarding memory management  
using software such as EMM386,  
QEMM, 386MAX.

In this regard, another element from  
to consider is the exclusion of the area of  
memory addresses between D800  
and D8FF from the use of procedures  
«BIOS Shadowing».

PCMCIA Sound Card can operate  
together with other PCMCIA devices,  
but in this case it is good practice to install  
also the Card & Socket Services software  
which deals with «talking» with  
PCMCIA slot management hardware  
generally consisting of one



The equipment of the  
audio software is completed  
from a program  
of composition ed  
musical arrangement  
able to reproduce  
the musical pieces through  
the synthesizer  
internal or through  
MIDI musical instruments.



The Monologue for Windows software is also included in the scope of delivery  
pronounce a rich dictionary of English terms on the computer.

## The levels of functioning PCMCIA

Although every device manufacturer  
PCMCIA interprets the specifications differently  
of the standard, its functioning yes  
is based on multiple levels, each of which provides  
different functionalities; in a description  
summary the different levels can be  
summarily divided into three main levels.  
The lowest level is that relating to  
"ferragiaia" and mainly concerns the controller,  
or the chip, which oversees management  
of PCMCIA devices. Currently, the  
The most commonly used chip is Intel  
82365 or others, known under the denomination  
„365 compatible", which they do to it  
reference.

The next level is that of services  
"Socket" (literally cavity). in which  
specific small software drivers,  
referring to the hardware used, they deal with  
to offer functionality to PCMCIA cards used.

Generally such «device  
drivers" are easily identifiable inside  
of the CONFIG.SYS because in the name of the  
file contains the wording SS (for example:  
SS365SL.EXE or PCMSS.EXE). THE  
Socket Services directly concern  
PCMCIA management hardware and with only  
Using them you can enable the devices  
PCMCIA exclusively by inserting them  
into the slot before turning on the  
computer; thus one of the characteristics is lost  
main ones of the system, i.e. the  
«plug & play» features, and furthermore,  
it is more difficult to configure correctly  
multiple PCMCIA devices present in the  
case of IRQ conflicts.  
The last level is the one named  
"Card SeNices» which provides specific  
resources  
for the simultaneous management of multiple  
devices  
PCMCIA used simultaneously.

This is the most complex level, most  
burdensome, but also higher, in operation  
of the system because through it  
functionality can be ensured  
"plug & play". In fact, it allows you to insert  
or extract PCMCIA cards as desired  
while the computer is turned on and  
providing  
then automatically configure the resources  
solving the request in many cases  
of the same IRQ by different devices  
PCMCIA.  
Drivers "Card SeNices» are easily  
identifiable within the CONFIG.SYS  
because generally in the file name it is  
containing the wording CD (for example:  
CS.EXE, PCMC.S.EXE).  
Just the implementation of all three  
different  
standard operating levels  
PCMCIA ensures complete availability  
of the "plug & play" features that the  
standard  
PCMCIA is able to ensure.



specific controller based on a chipset dedicated (Intel 82365 Socket Services, Cirrus Socket Services, etc.). There PCMCIA Sound Card can at this point be used in all its functions although some must be observed rules.

### Use

If you have installed the Card & Socket Services software, the computer is not automatically on able to configure the Sound Card if it was extracted and reinserted into the computer turned on, but just throw from DOS the SETSOUND application (or in alternative, more drastically, execute system reset with Ctrl-Alt-Del) for have it recognized by the computer; If it is in Windows, to perform the procedure you need to close your Windows session avoiding launching SETSOUND from within a DOS Shell.

Regarding the management software audio these are the usual applications Sound Impression and WaveForm Editors to whom Media Vision has us accustomed: the first takes the form of a complete hi-fi system complete with a special circuit for the return of three-dimensional character of the sound played, called Sound Retrieval System (SRS). The second is a suit sampling and testing system audio with which you can intervene digitally on the sound adding also echo effects. To complete this set of applications there is also a music editing software, Recording Session, with which you can compose music directly on the lines of the pentagram, using the instruments music offered by the synthesizer inside the PCMCIA Sound Card, or by sending the score, via same, to electronic musical instruments M/DI. Talk>to Plus is finally the flagship of the software equipment, since, through it, after an appropriate period of training, it is possible to impart orders at your computer simply with a voice command. Although it is an application simple enough, the results are flattering and perhaps unthinkable for a Product of this class.

In the end, after the initial doubts regarding



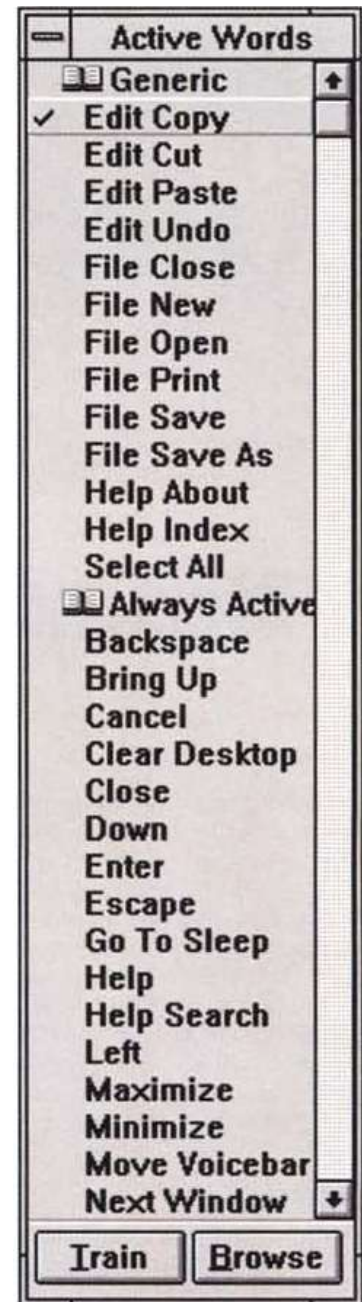
Talk>To Plus with which, after a training period, using a "Voicebar" it is possible to execute to the computer a series of instructions the command verbally.

giving the correct configuration of the whole, the Media Vision PCMCIA Sound Card meets expectations by offering in very small dimensions and above all in an easily transportable package, all services insured by a traditional audio adapter. It deserves a separate mention Sound Blaster emulation, which can be set directly when booting the system with a specific instruction inserted in the AUTOEXEC. BAT, or by recall of the VGAME application that provides it to provide the correct emulation of the card for all gaming applications that require compatibility DOS by Sound Blaster.

### Conclusions

The validity of such a solution (audio adapter to standard PCMCIA) finds its maximum expression when using mobile applications » in which the notebook computer is used for the deployment of applications different in which, not necessarily the presence of the adapter is required audio.

The possibility of being able to employ «al flight" the audio section, simply inserting the card into the PCMCIA slot and starting an initialization software it is a characteristic that can result very welcome on several occasions and which also means possibility to be able to use a lighter notebook, as it does not have a docking station or contained elements such as audio section, speakers, as well as lower price.



And it's not always about price you have to forget about the whole kit Media Vision PCMCIA Sound Card that it maintains itself, with its four hundred and ninety-six thousand lire, sufficiently contained in relation to the services offered, like, indeed, all production of the Californian company that now has us accustomed to products that are real demonstrations of its advance technology.