

Your Guide to the WORLD PERCUSSION NETWORK: Part Four

Tips For Saving Long Distance Charges by Barry Zimmerman and Norm Weinberg

Connecting with the World Percussion Network requires a long distance telephone call. But, with a little planning, you can keep your telephone bills to a minimum. Several PAS members call the WPN, conduct their business, and hang up within a minute or two. In fact, the average length of a call to the WPN is under six minutes! If you call when rates are the cheapest (after 11 p.m. and on the weekends), you can often keep the long distance charges under a dollar! Here are a few tips on how to save money while exchanging messages on the WPN.

■ Get your messages and read them off-line:

Most communications programs have a function that will save everything that's written on your screen to a file on your floppy or hard disk. This command is usually called "Log", "Save", "Capture", or something similar. Check your software's manual to find exactly how this feature works on your machine.

When you READ your mail and messages, use the "NO" option when the host computer asks if you want to pause between messages. Since you won't be pausing between each message, the WPN computer will feed messages to your disk as fast as your modem will go. After all the messages have been sent to your computer, you can then log-off and read your messages off-line.

■ Composing messages off-line and uploading them quickly:

You can compose mail and messages off-line with your word processor and upload them into the WPN by using an ASCII upload. Here's how to do this:

1. On your word processor, write anything you want to post as a message on a public subboard, or send to another user as mail. Then, save the text as an ASCII file. ASCII files are sometimes called "Non-Document Mode" files, or "Text Only" files. Again, check your word processor's manual for exact instructions concerning this feature.
2. Almost all communications programs have an ASCII file transfer protocol. This is what you will use to rapidly write your file to the WPN computer when on-line.
3. When you have chosen the WPN function you wish, just use your communication program's ASCII upload feature to upload the file. The text will be written into the WPN just as if you were typing it on your computer's keyboard (but typing at several hundred words per minute!). Macintosh users can simply open the text file while in your communication program, then "copy" and "paste" the text into the WPN.
4. You can then use the "READ" or "INQUIRE" commands on the WPN to review and edit your message.

■ Using the "NEW" command:

In order to get the most out of the NEW command, you'll have to do a little advance work. Once you're connected to the WPN, use the "J" command to jump to a subboard that you often visit. If you want to see a list of the available subboards, use the "?" command to get a listing of all the subboards currently on the WPN.

Once you've entered the subboard of your choice, press the

"1" key on your computer's keyboard to call up the "1 MEMBER JOIN" command. Then type "J" to join the subboard. The host computer will then ask you to enter a new message number. At this point, enter the number of the last message you've already read. If you want to start at the beginning, enter the lowest message number.

OK, now...the next time (and all future times) you're on the network, type "N" for NEW. Then type "J" to tell the computer that you want to read all the new messages in all the subboards that you've joined. At this point, you can easily follow the remaining instructions on the screen. The host computer and software for the WPN keeps track of which messages you've already read, so it will only show you the newest messages (note that the host computer keeps track of your messages only if you've joined the subboard).

The main advantage of the NEW command is that you can use the "1 MEMBER JOIN" command to join all the subboards! (Just be sure that you have jumped to the subboard you wish to join before you press the "1" key to actually join it.) Many WPNers have joined all of the subboards, and with the press of a single key, they can read all the new messages on all of the subboards! Way cool, no?

MIKE BALTER MALLETs and P.A.S.

Names built on...
Integrity, Sincerity, Respectability
Mike Balter Mallets...the name
you have come to know and trust!

See the complete line of Mike Balter Mallets
at your local dealer or contact:

MIKE BALTER MALLETs

15 E. Palatine Road, Suite 108 Prospect Heights, IL 60070
Phone (708) 541-5777 Fax (708) 541-5785