

Your Psion & Outdoor Adventure...

In the first of a regular series Keith Giles discusses Psion and Cycling in

Psion Psycling



Psions are used for a variety of reasons. Mine came about from cycling.

For well over 20 years I had been doing an annual, mostly solo, bike trip somewhere in Western Europe, ranging from the End-to-End (Lands End in SW Cornwall to John O'Groats in NE Scotland) in the UK to a ride along the Danube from its source in Germany's Black Forest to Budapest.

I always used a pen and notebook to keep a daily log of such things as where I overnighted; what sort of accommodation (YHA, B&B, etc.); the information from my bike's cyclometer (daily mileage, average speed, max speed, etc.); my expenses; information about the photos I took - I take 300-500 slides (to be highly edited for slide shows I give of my trips) and would never remember where or what if I didn't write it down.

Series 3, then 5

In 1998, at age 74, when I returned home I found my handwriting had deteriorated so much I had a hard time deciphering what I had written. Something needed to be done.

I remembered seeing a Brit friend using something called a Psion - I think it was a Series 3. Maybe I should get something like that. On the internet I found a US company that was selling something called a Series 5. I ordered it, sight unseen in 1999, a month or so before my next bike trip. It was an eye-opener for me when I saw what it could do.

Man, I was going wild.

After getting acquainted with it, I began to discover all the internet sites having something to do with Psion, like the now-defunct UPS5D (Unofficial Psion Series 5 Digest). That led me to



Screen Shot 1.

other sites, freeware, shareware, and commercial products. As a result I bought a docking station to connect to my PC; Route Planner (Europe); Street Planner (Europe); Collins English/French and English/German dictionaries; a Vega holster for my belt; and a 98MB CF card. Man, I was going wild.

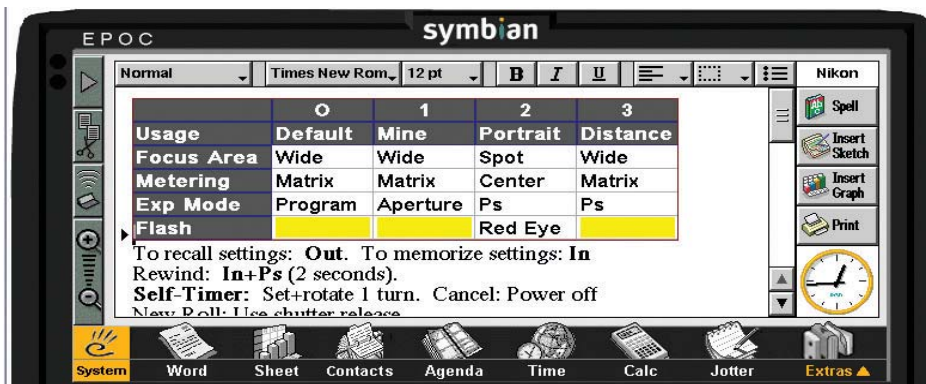
In 2000, while under warranty, I had the screen cable problem. Later that year I upgraded to the 5mx which is my preferred machine for traveling. I use

PsiWin to backup the C drive, but because PsiWin takes so long, I now have a USB 2.0 multi-media card reader and use it to backup my D drive to the PC.

Back to cycling and my Psion. What follows is the result of a lot of trial-and-error development with a lot of help from the Psion user community. Screen shots are taken from the Emulator on my PC.

Word

I do a daily log. I have a macro



Screen Shot 2.

which lets me enter all the info from my cyclometer then puts it in the proper format at the start of that day's entry. (screen shot 1).

I have a file for info about my Nikon camera in case I forget how things work. I've embedded a Sheet file in it. (screen shot 2). Then there's a Psion Notes file where I keep quick-and-dirty info about how to use various apps. The current cyclometer I have is a bit complicated to use,

Since I keep a bicycle in Germany, I have a list of German TV channels. Then I've developed an English/French/German dictionary of bike parts and tools. I have a file which calculates a few statistics from a bike trip. (screen shot 3).

Data

I use Data quite a bit for cycle touring. All my photo information is kept in Data. Each shot has a roll number, a shot num-

	D2	12		
	A	B	C	D
1		DISTANCE - Miles	CLIMB - Feet	Trip DAYS
2	START	15,415	610,600	12
3	Trip Start	15,576	615,660	Trip MPD
4	Trip End	15,954	631,600	32
5	Trip Total	378	15,940	Total DAYS
6	END	15,971	632,000	25
7	TOTAL	556	21,400	Total MPD
8				22

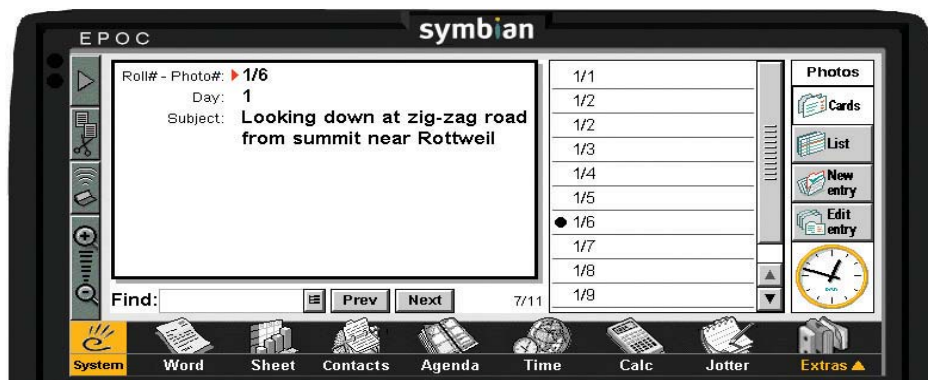
Screen Shot 3.

so I've made some notes from the user manual and put them into a Word file.

Sheet

I have a list of Julian dates. I'm a retired AF colonel and can fly free on a space-available basis. When you sign up for a destination, the expiry date is given as a Julian date and I need to know just what "real" date that is.

ber, and something about the photo to remind me what it was. (screen shot 4) All my addresses and phone numbers are in Data. I have files of European radio frequencies for English broadcasts set up by bands - AM, FM, etc. Notes from my travel radio's user manual. Files, by country, for toll-free phone numbers to contact credit card companies and banks in case I lose any cards.



3rd-Party Apps

Having moved up to a 526MB CF card, I've loaded every Western European country in Route Planner. I have about a dozen selected cities loaded from Street Planner - that changes from trip to trip.

I've found in practice that I still use paper maps while actually cycling - no way to mount a 5mx on a handlebar plus I wouldn't want it exposed to the elements. It's fun to do some route planning in the evening for the next day, and Street Planner is a big help in a city when I'm looking for a particular location.

Of course I have to mention the classic - Macro5. And I've already mentioned the Collins English/French and English/German dictionaries.

Backup

Then there's Backup.

I backup my C drive each night onto the D drive in case I ever have to do a hard reset - it happened once. I have a few eBooks and the freeware PSolly (solitaire) loaded. I have them for whiling away the time at military airbases waiting around for a free seat. In practice I find I spend so much time talking to others who are waiting that I have no time to use them.

For keeping track of my expenses I use Malcolm Bryant's excellent app, abp. When I return home I export the information as a Quicken file, import it into Quicken on my PC, and everything goes into the right categories.

For cyclists, I can't sing the praises enough for Jaap Lameris' Biklog5. It makes my "statistics" file look like it was produced by a kindergartener. You can produce lots of graphs

and statistical tables. I use it year-round. At the end of each year I print out the tables and graphs.

Of course I have lots of other apps, like JB5StopGo, Converter, PdfPrinter, etc., but they are not used while cycle touring.

I have no trouble, now, reading what I have written during a bike tour.

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Read on for a guide to software mentioned here in 'Software Spotlight'.