



Everything you ever wanted to know about Emulators but were afraid to ask!

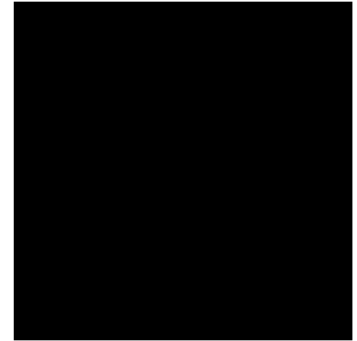
:: By **Henry Kong** :: May 13, 2001 :: Page **1**, [2](#) ::

Games emulators are great fun. It's not only the tons of money that they will save you from purchasing games, but that they bring back retro, classic gameplay to today's Pocket PC's. On top of these obvious advantages, there are no repair bills, no need to hunt for hard-to-get spare parts or take additional shelf space.

Emulators contributed much pleasure to my life. They motivated me to surf the web (for retro gaming), go into PDA's (the first [Palm Pilot](#) comes with 4 nice retro games, remember?) and upgrade to the [iPAQ](#) (the only PDA that does justice to emulators). In this write-up, I will focus on many of the emulators that are now up and running on PPC's. Most of them are up to speed with sound and all the other good stuff. I have used the [iPAQ](#) as the benchmark for these programs since it is the fastest and most compatible PPC currently available. All comments are purely my personal preferences.

As you can see from the below screenshots, these emulators and their many ROMs are squeezing the juice out of my new 512 MB CF, leaving barely 50 MB free. On the second screenshot are 15 of my favorite emulators. On the top row are the three early consoles, [Atari VCS](#), [Colem \(Colour Emulator, a.k.a. PocketColeco\)](#) and [NEC's PCEngine](#).

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On the second row are computer emulators, the [Commodore C64](#), [Apple II](#), [Apple //e](#) and [MS DOS](#). On the rest of the screen are the Nintendo offerings: [Nintendo Entertainment System](#), [Super NES](#), [Pocket](#)

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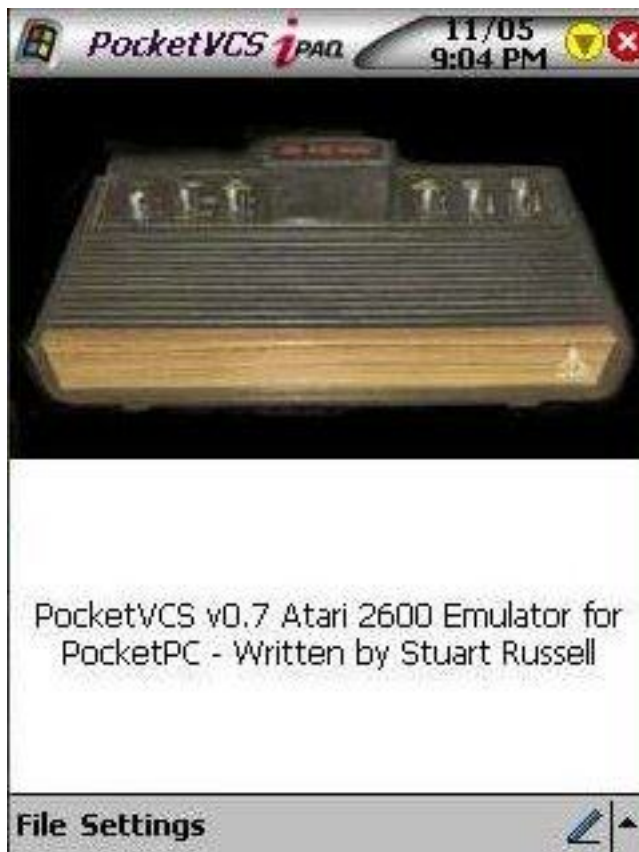
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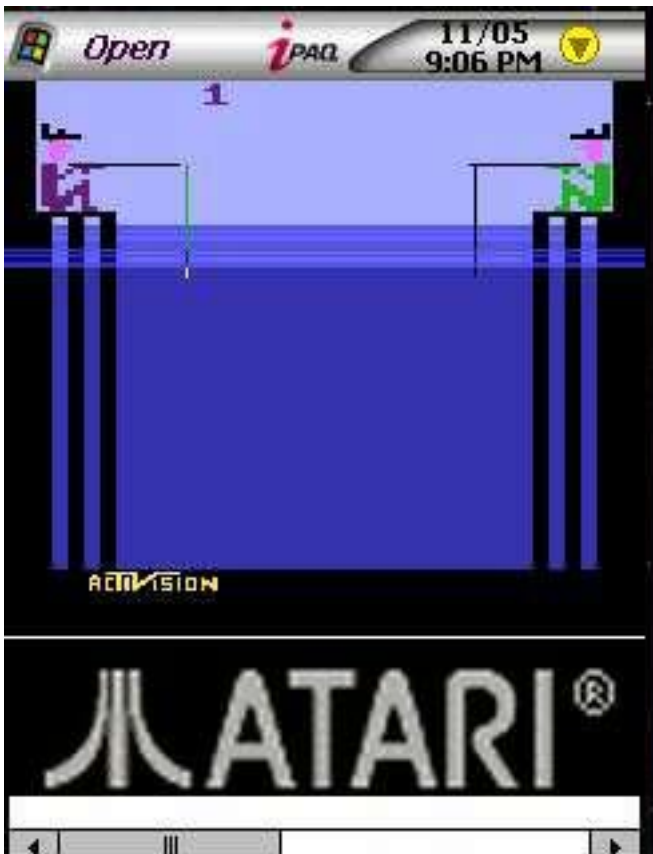
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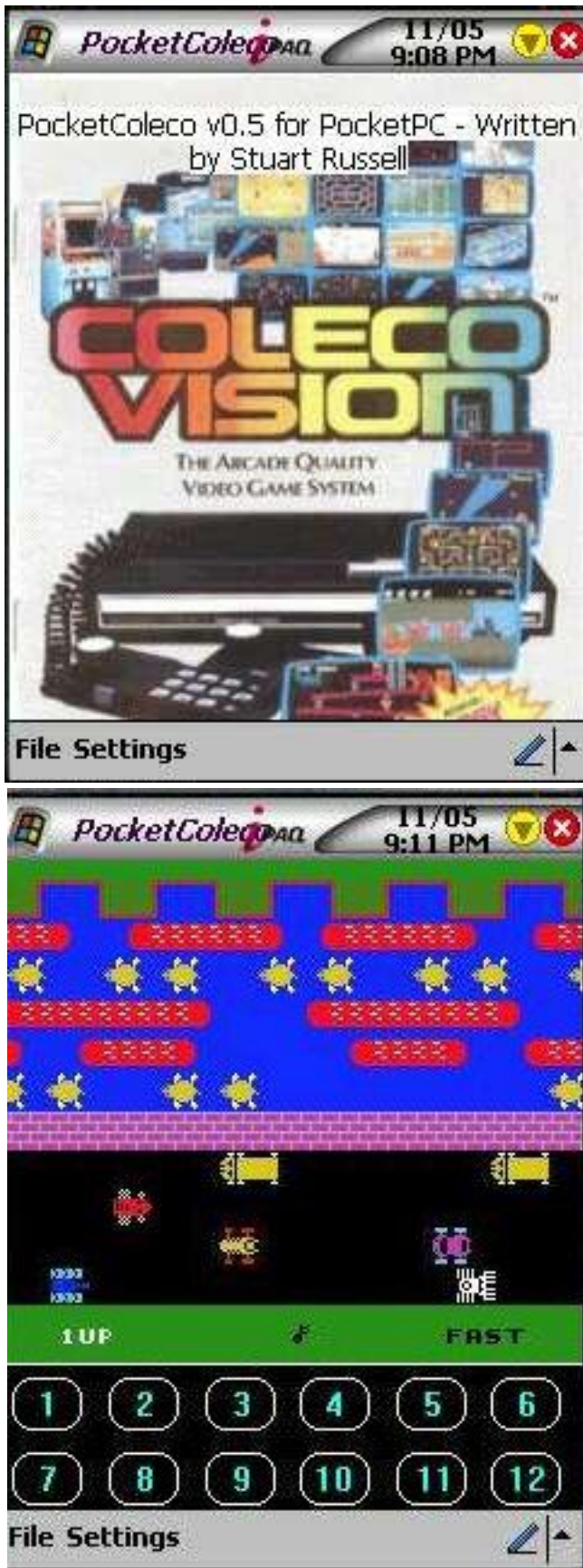
[Game Boy](#) and [Palm Game Boy](#). Also displayed are [Game Gear/Sega Master System](#), [Pocket NeoGeo](#) and [MAME \(Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator\)](#) in both the Large Built and Normal Build. All these emulators are available from Mike's great gaming site, [PocketGamer.org](#) (see the [Emulation section](#)).

The [Atari VCS](#) emulator is now at version 7 and works great - sound and all. On the [iPAQ](#), it is a tad too fast, even with frameskip set to 1. The Atari's graphics are blocky but colourful, excellent gameplay with lots of skill levels and options. Some of my favorite games are Circus, Breakout and Fishing (above) although the computer fisherman is too good for me.





The [Colour Emulator or Colem \(a.k.a. PocketColeco\)](#) is Atari's competitor. It offers better graphics, nicer games but could not catch up with the abundance of software that Atari VCS commands, especially popular games like Pac-Man. This is one of the newer emulators for PPC's, but already running to speed with sound. In my emails with the programmer, **Stuart Russell**, at my suggestion he is working on an [Aero](#) version. I love games like Carnival, Frogger and the excellent Galaxian.



NEC's PCEngine is a great console that was miles ahead of anything in its day. Later, a hand-held version was

released by NEC. Many games were specially commissioned and rewritten for this machine including Lode Runner. The [PCE emulator](#) is complete and plays very well on the [iPAQ](#). It boasts of some of the nicest pinball games like Alien Crush, great ports of arcade games like Columns and Invaders.



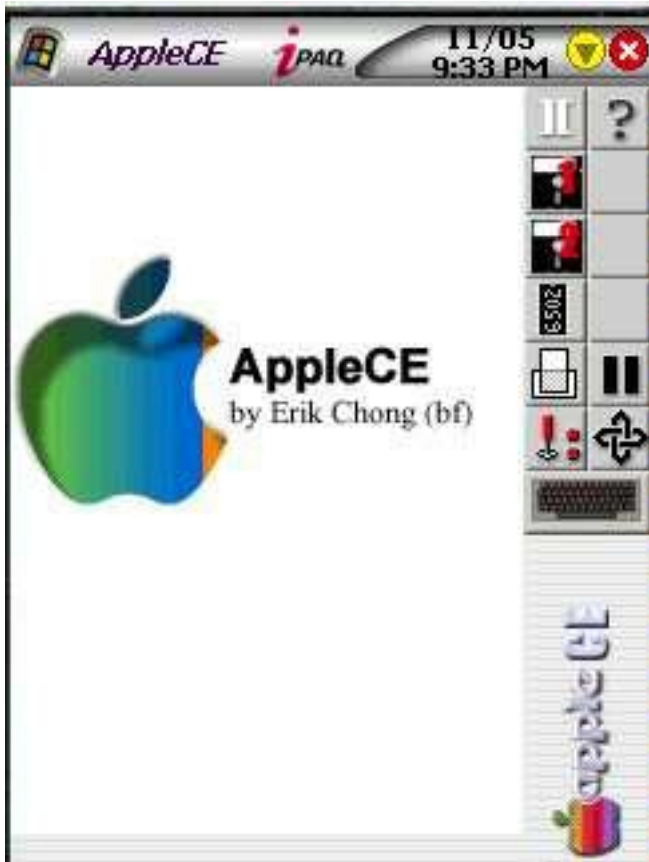


Now on to computer emulators, [Come Back 64](#), the Commodore C64 emulator is a tad too nippy for the [iPAQ](#). Since most of the ROMs on the web are pirated copies, there is often a tedious 'greetings' display before the games are displayed. This can be switched off by hitting the virtual space bar. Not every game works well, but these are amongst the many that run good: AutoBahn, Bandits, Pacman, Moon Cresta.



Many of us can remember the [Apple II](#) computer, floppy disks and all. This emulator, like all the above is running

to speed with sound and all. I was happy to see my all-time favorite game, *Dung Beetles* running perfectly on this emulator. What a gem!



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The [Apple //e](#) is a nicer upgrade of the famous Apple][. This is another new emulator which works great right from the start. Games like Midnight Mission, Serpentine and Lode Runner plays great. The ROMs are rather small, and easy to download at FTP sites. Certainly one of my most played emulators.



Pocket //e 1.00
Copyright (C) 2000-01
James Lee

originally AppleWin 1.3
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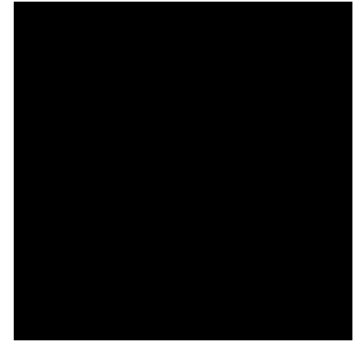


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When I first migrated from [Palm OS](#) to the Pocket PC world, I imagined how nice it would be if I could run a DOS emulator on the PPC and use it to run all my other DOS emulators. Little did I know after registering for [PocketDOS](#) that there is a limit in the size of the program. Also this emulator runs only in CGA (Colour Graphics Adapter) mode, without sound. Not to worry, I was able to get Nimbus (a great slot machine collection), Volley Ball and a number of programs to work.

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When Atari went bust with poor management in spite of a popular product, Nintendo quickly muscled in with their

Entertainment System, providing better graphics and games. A 'Nintendo Seal of Approval' weeded out many a useless game, one of the reasons for Atari's downfall. I consider the [PocketNES](#) emulator as the best PPC emulator as all ROMs work flawlessly, with good speed, sound and gameplay. 5 Stars, no less.





Not content with the NES' success, Nintendo later released the Super NES console. This is a great machine with very nice games like Bust-A-Move, Shanghai, Sister Pinball etc. with very large ROMs. There are a few [SNES emulators for the PPC](#), the one that I liked best, is [PocketSNES](#) which comes with a nice virtual keypad.



[PalmGB](#) was the first emulator I purchased (along with [PocketDOS](#)) on the same night that I got hold of my first [Cassiopeia](#), a Palm-sized Windows CE PDA. After

struggling for months to get [Liberty](#) to run to speed on my [Sony Clie](#), what a joy it was to see it running normally and with colour for colour cartridges. I am glad that it has now been updated for the Pocket PC.





I could not decide whether I liked [PalmGB](#) or [PocketGB](#) better, so I purchased both of 'em. That was a wise move because those cartridges that I could not get to work on one seems to work on the other! [PocketGB](#) has a nice virtual keypad, something that is always welcomed with [iPAQ's](#) much-to-be-desired buttons.



This past week I have just downloaded the [Game](#)

[Gear/Sega Master System emulator](#). I have not taken it through its paces, but as a first version, it is running OK. There are lots of medium-sized ROMs for this emulator and I do enjoy games like Halley War, Monaco Grand Prix, etc. There is also a nice keypad on this first release.





Neo Geo is a great console that is still fun after all these years. I love the Bowling game as well as the car Rally. Now, there's a hand-held, Pocket Neo Geo. Its emulator, [Pocket NeoGeo](#), runs rather slowly, does not have sound but do have great possibilities. The homepage tells us that an update is coming soon. ROMs are very big, though. However in computer gaming, the unwritten rule is, "the bigger the ROM, the better the game."



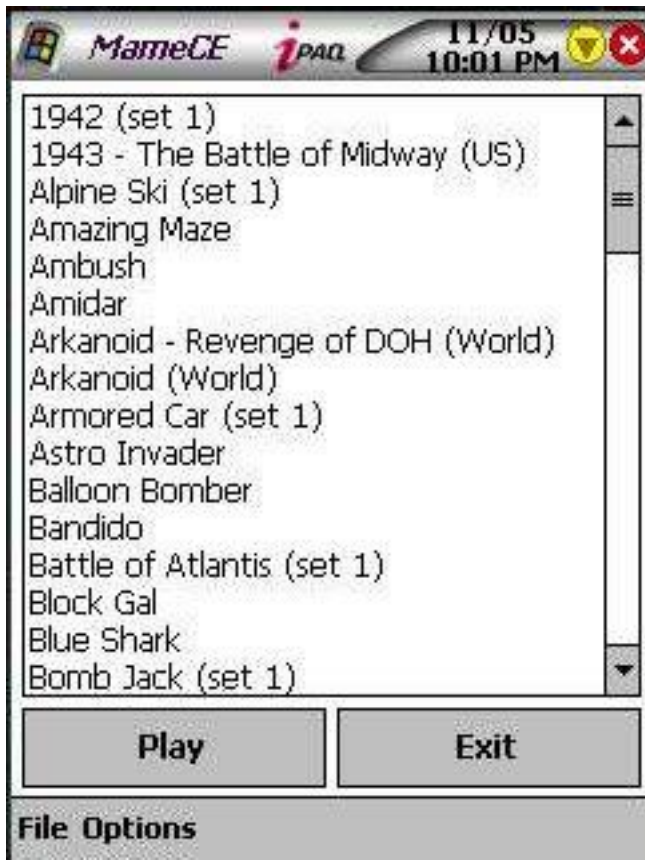
MAME (Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator), is indeed the mother of all emulators. If you need a quick blast, from

Space Invaders to virtually most games on the Arcade, you'll find it amongst the thousands of ROMs that it runs. There are several good [MAME emulators](#), but my vote goes to [MAMECE](#). Pity that the [iPAQ's](#) clumsy keys spoils much of the fun.



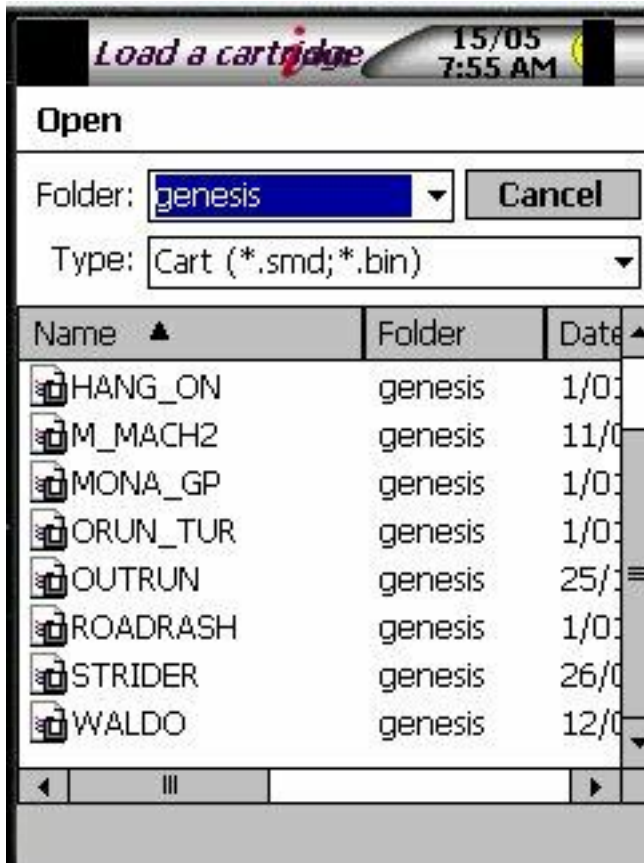


The last of the emulators on my favorite screen is another [MAMECE](#), this time the large built. It is similar to the above MAME emulator, although even on the superfast [iPAQ](#), takes a few seconds to load. If you have an extra large CF, this is THE emulator to keep in it. For some games, you will need a sample folder for its unique sounds. I wonder if the PPC version will someday include the ability to run real NeoGeo console ROMs like the [Windows PC version of MAME](#)?



A beta version of the long looked forward to, [Sega Genesis emulator](#) by **Domenico Dato** has just been

released. In the gaming arena, the Genesis stands head to head with the SNES (Super Nintendo Entertainment System), with as many games. Like the SNES emulators, the PPC [Genesis emulator](#) is still (at the time of writing) without the all-important sound. Only about half of the available games actually work (it is very difficult to emulate scrolling games like automobile and cycle racers), but those which do work run adequately fast, and are perfectly playable on the [iPAQ](#) by using the invisible virtual pad. Hmm... great possibilities for this one, especially with [Jimmy Software's](#) support.



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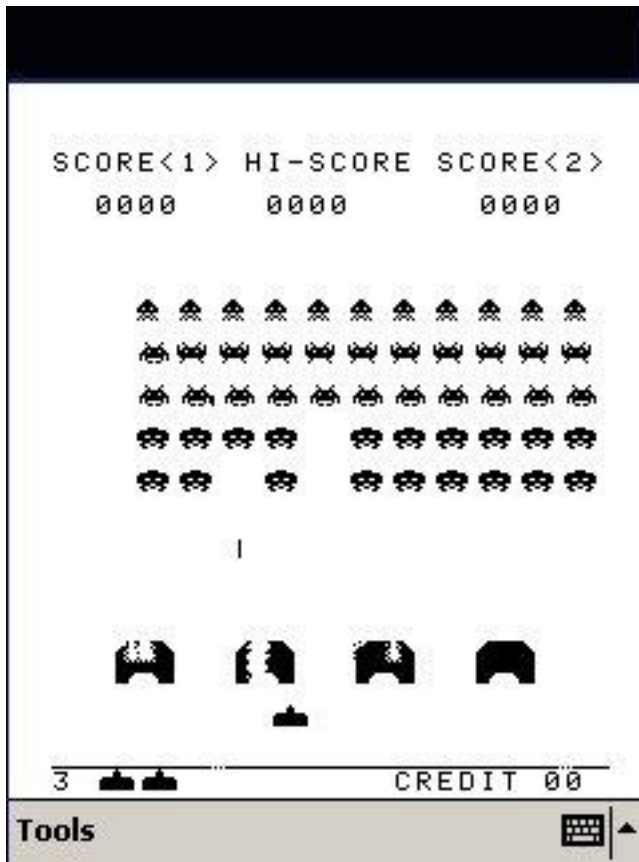
The [Sinclair Spectrum Emulator](#) plays more than 3,000 games. It is the only Pocket PC emulator that I can get working on the [Aero](#). Like [Come Back 64](#), it is rather tedious getting the games to work and configuring each game to work just right. On the [Aero](#), the speed is good (as is the sound), but colours seem to get in the way of clarity. However, games like Impact and H.A.T.E. work well.



This write-up would not be complete without mentioning emulators running on the [Aero PPC](#). You will be forgiven if

you are wondering just what could a puny 70 MHz B&W PPC could hope to emulate. There are in fact a few emulators that will run on the [Aero](#), but the only one worth mentioning is the [Aemu for Aero Emulator](#). In my humble opinion it runs Space Invaders at its perfect speed. There is no sound, but as you can see from the snapshot, it runs a good number of arcade ROM's.





If I have whetted your appetite with this sampling of emulators, please check out my write-ups on emulators at these top web sites:

- [Overview of Emulators for the PPC at the Gadgeteer](#)
- [Start with the Apple \]\[Emulator at PocketGamer.org](#)
- [MAME: Mother of All Emulators at Brighthand](#)
- [Pinball Games on PPC Emulators at Brighthand](#)
- [An old article on Emulators at my website](#)

Many thanks to [Henry Kong](#) for this article. Be sure to check out his [excellent website](#) on the 3 C's: Computer, Church & Cuisine. Don't miss his [Windows CE section](#) for plenty more Pocket PC related stuff!

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