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Check out what I got today. You can tell it's something weird as fuck just from the box...

So this is a FISK ... thing.

It's a floppy disk fax machine! You can fax floppies to other people who have these things.

Apparently you can connect it to external drives, computers, or printers?

So I'm gonna do more research into this thing and how it works, but while I'm here, some of the other stuff I got today. Some 3.5" floppy disks. Single sided, double density ones! These were some of the very first 3.5" disks and basically nothing used them.

I also got this book: AutoSim, the Marketing Laboratory.

It's some software to help you sell cars, apparently! it was weird and cheap, so I got it. I'll of course image it.

And the elsewhere-mentioned Rescue The Scientists.

I also got a [@strudelsoft](#) release, Devotion by [@nanoshrine](#)
<https://t.co/ZXFoHdGULH>

Let's check out the manual for the FISK.

It comes with two disks, but they're not software for PCs, they're warranty registration cards?

It turns out they include a Visual Basic program to register it, then you just FISK it back to the company.

oh hey, that "Disk" connector is SCSI, so this can talk to hard drives and tape drives!

And yeah, they expect you to use that if you're getting a lot of files.

Manual version 1.2! And apparently FISK is both the company and the tool.

It's FISK, by Fisk Communications, Inc.

And now that I can research the company, it turns out they filed for a patent for this:

Filed July 16, 1990, dated June 30, 1992.

<https://t.co/HYmYOZF6tC>

FSK The Next Generation!

These are the voyages of the starship fax machine...

remember to Maintain An Orderly Procedure.

So yeah, they have some software for PCs called "EZ FSK", but you can only get it by registering the thing. That's a pain. They probably aren't around to let me do that anymore.

Interesting. They list two ports (Computer & Printer) which you are TO NEVER USE.

They're for future use, only.

I saw a reference to flash memory, so this thing was supposed to be upgraded in the field, apparently?

Found a mention of Fisk Communications in 1994: They were working on a binary file fax standard. Makes sense., From the Nov 14, 1994 issue of Network World.

And here's an announcement for it in the ABA Journal, July 1994

Interesting! it doesn't just send the whole disk, you select individual files.

So it must have enough brains to parse the filesystem, eh?

Apparently it has a minimum call time of 30 seconds, and then transfers at 2 kilobytes a second. Christ, they mention being able to send files off 88mb cartridges! that would Take A While.

It uses some form of T9 to enter floppy disk labels. Fun. I bet that's the only time those two technologies got used together, eh?

Ahh, it uses LZ77 compression.

I wonder if that caused problems when Unisys started enforcing the LZW patent?