



OPERATOR INTERFACE PRODUCTS APPLICATION NOTE

Subject: SoftScreen PC/ AT and 3rd Party Software

AN# 1033A

Date: October 20, 1994

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Description: Automatic Program Changes Between SoftScreen PC/ AT and Third Party Software

Using SoftScreen PC/ AT Development and Runtime Version 4.5 or higher and DOS batch files, it is possible to switch between Runtime and third party software packages automatically. **Please note that SoftScreen does not run concurrently with other software packages.** Some possible usages for this is accessing PLC programming software, diagnostic software, word processing software, communications software, etc., after exiting SoftScreen Runtime. this has been tested using SoftScreen running with Procommand with AB 6200 programming software.

SoftScreen 4.5 has a new feature in the function key, touch button, selector button, and pseudo key function configurations called "Exit SoftScreen". When this function is used, the Runtime engine goes into "idle mode" and exits to DOS. At this point, another program may be run. It is possible to automatically run this program by using batch files.

For example, by using two batch files, automatic program changes may be accomplished. The first batch file used will execute SoftScreen, any required third party software and contain the looping information. Using the DOS editor, create a batch file (for example Test.bat) and enter the following into that file:

```
:jump
cd softscrn
pcengine SS_APP
cd/ ipds
abmenu
pause
rem pause is an optional line explained later
goto jump
```



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In this example, “:jump” is the beginning of the loop; “cd softscrn” and pcengine SS_APP” runs the SoftScreen application; “cd/ipds” and abmenu” runs AB 6200 programming software (or any other third party software); and “gotojump” closes the loop. Make sure that the DOS directory that contains Test.bat is included in the path command line of the Autoexec.bat. The second batch used is the Autoexec.bat. Simply use the DOS editor to add the line “Test.bat” to the bottom of the Autoexec.bat file.

Using this technique, after bootup, the SoftScreen application SS_APP will execute. Upon using the Exit SoftScreen feature during Runtime, the engine returns to the DOS prompt. Test.bat then continues to run and the AB 6200 then executes. Upon exiting the AB 6200, Test.bat continues to run and re-executes SS_APP.

This loop will continue until CNTRL-C is used to terminate the batch job. Note that high speed processors may make the CNTRL-C batch termination difficult. If this is the case, reboot your system using a bootable floppy disk or with DOS versions 5.0 or higher, press the F5 key during bootup to skip autoexec.bat and config.sys execution. Another alternative is to add a pause statement to Test.bat. Every time the Test.bat reaches this pause, the batch file will halt until a key is pressed. At this point, use CNTRL-C to terminate the batch job.