

**Second Edition**

# **COMPUTER ACQUIRE**

COMPUTER ACQUIRE IS AVALON HILL'S TRADEMARK NAME  
FOR ITS HOTEL EMPIRE BUILDING GAME.

## **COMPUTER STRATEGY GAME**

**Investing  
and Expanding  
Hotel Chains**

**INSTRUCTION FOLDER**



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# Computer Acquire

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**FOR:**  
**TRS-80®**, Models I & III, Level II  
**Apple II®**  
**PET®**, 2001 & CBM (40 Column) Series  
**Atari 400/800**

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## OBJECT OF THE GAME

The main object of **Acquire** is to become the wealthiest player by the end of the game. This is done by shrewdly buying the right stock at the right time, merging chains to obtain capital and adding hotels to the chains in which you have controlling interest to increase their value.

## THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO RUN THE ACQUIRE PROGRAM ON YOUR COMPUTER:

1. Play against the program. (At 1 of 5 levels)
2. Watch your computer play against itself. (A good way to learn strategies!)
3. Play with your friends. (Up to 6 can play)

## CASSETTE LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

If you have difficulty loading, see the WHAT TO DO section at the very end of this instruction folder.

**Acquire** is written in machine language and will run on the following computer systems having 16K or more of memory. Diskettes require memory as listed on the game box.

Apple II or Apple II Plus (Integer or Applesoft)  
TRS-80 Models I & III, Level II  
Commodore PET 2001 or CBM (40 Columns)  
Atari 400/800

## LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

### ATARI 400/800 Cassette

The Atari program is located on SIDE ONE of your cassette.

Rewind the cassette and advance the clear portion of tape (leader) until the brown magnetic portion is just visible to the left of the cassette head. Remove all cartridges from the computer (*for example: the BASIC cartridge*) and prepare the tape for loading by pressing 'PLAY' on your cassette recorder.

Turn on your computer while holding down the yellow 'START' button. The Atari will 'beep' once to indicate it is ready to load the program. Press the 'SPACE BAR' to start the tape loading. The program is not short and will take approximately five minutes to load. If you are given a screen message of 'ATARI MEMO PAD' you have had a bad load. Rewind the cassette and try again.

If your Atari has only 16K memory the screen will change and many different images will appear during the last twenty seconds of the loading process. Do not be alarmed! The screen will be adjusted when the loading procedure is completed with no harm done to your Atari.

When loaded the Atari screen should give you a hex number, press the 'Y' key and the hex number will change. Press the 'N' key until PLAY GAME? appears. You are now ready to play COMPUTER ACQUIRE, press the 'Y' key to begin.

### APPLE II or APPLE II PLUS

The APPLE program is located on SIDE ONE after the Atari program. By listening to the tape, you can tell the difference between the two programs. The APPLE program is easily recognized by the relatively high pitch and 'pure' quality of the calibration tone at the beginning of the program. This tone is free of the characteristic "on & off" Atari buzz. Find the beginning of the APPLE program and position the tape to just after the start of the calibration tone. Set up the recorder for input.

Now enter the monitor by pressing 'RESET' on earlier Apples or by typing:

CALL -151

and then pressing the 'RETURN' key. A '\*' should appear on your screen.

Now type in the following:

800.3FA4R (Don't hit 'RETURN' yet.)

Press 'PLAY' on the recorder and immediately press 'RETURN' on the keyboard. The computer will start loading the program. The bell may ring before the program has finished loading. Wait for the cursor to reappear before stopping the recorder. The program takes a couple minutes to load.

After the program is loaded, you can start the game by typing:

800G

and then pressing the 'RETURN' key.

#### COMMODORE PET OR 40 COLUMN CBM:

Turn the cassette over to side two. Insert the tape into your recorder and rewind to the beginning of the tape. When ready, type:

LOAD "LOAD"

and press 'RETURN' on the keyboard and 'PLAY' on the recorder. The tape will start to advance and, in a minute or so, the screen should inform you that the program is loading. The program then takes about five minutes to load.

When loading is finished, the system will respond with 'READY'. To start the game, type:

RUN

and then press the 'RETURN' key.

#### TRS-80 MODELS I & III, LEVEL II:

The TRS-80 program is located on SIDE TWO of the cassette after the PET program. You must skip the PET program before the TRS-80 program can be loaded. By pulling out the EAR and MIC jacks on your recorder and listening to the tape you can differentiate the PET program from the TRS-80. The PET sounds louder, yet has a lower pitch. The PET program last approximately 4-5 minutes and is followed by a por-

tion of blank tape which is your cue to prepare to load your TRS-80 program. Check that the volume and tone controls are at proper levels (a volume between 5 and 6 is normal).

For Model III only: When the prompt: CASS? appears type: 'L [ENTER]'

While in 'BASIC', type the following on the keyboard:

SYSTEM

and press the 'ENTER' key. The TRS-80 should respond with '\*?'.

Press 'PLAY' on the recorder and type:

LOAD

press the 'ENTER' key and the tape should begin to move. In a minute or so, a flashing asterisk will appear in the upper right corner of the screen. This indicates that loading has begun. Loading takes about four minutes. When the tape is loaded, the TRS-80 will again respond with '\*?'.

To start the game, type:

/ (Slash)

and then press the 'ENTER' key.

If you have a disk on your system and you are having loading problems, power down your system and then power back on while holding down the 'BREAK' key. Then try loading again, using the instructions above.

#### TERMS

ACTIVE CHAIN—chain on board

BOARD—playing board (drawn on your monitor)

CHAIN—two or more adjoining hotels on the board (not diagonally)

CHAINMAKER—player creating chain

CHAIN MARKERS—letters used to designate hotels of a particular chain

DEFUNCT CHAIN—an open chain which has been taken over as a result of a merger

FOUNDER'S BONUS—one free share of stock in new chain awarded to the chainmaker

HOTEL—a number that the player places on the board during his turn

ISOLATED HOTEL—a hotel on the board that does not belong to a chain (these are marked with an "x")

MAJORITY HOLDER'S BONUS—lump sum paid to largest shareholders in a chain which is taken over in a merger or in an active chain at the end of the game

MERGER—two or more chains connected in one play

MERGERMAKER—player causing a merger

**OPEN CHAIN**—a chain of 10 or less hotels

**PERMANENTLY UNPLAYABLE HOTEL**—a hotel that would merge two safe chains

**SAFE CHAIN**—a chain of 11 or more hotels

**SHAREHOLDER**—player owning at least 1 share of stock

**TAKE-OVER CHAIN**—the name of the resultant chain after a merger

**TEMPORARILY UNPLAYABLE HOTEL**—hotel which would create an eighth chain

## INITIAL CONDITIONS

Each player begins with \$6000 and 6 randomly selected hotels. One isolated hotel is randomly selected and placed on the board for each player in the game. The program then decides and announces who goes first.

## PLAY

### EACH PLAYER'S TURN CONSISTS OF:

1. Entering a hotel to be placed on the board. If this hotel creates a chain or causes a merger, all transactions connected with creating chains or merging chains are completed before player's turn continues.
2. Buying stock—only if stock is available (see buying stock).

The program automatically replaces any expended or permanently unplayable hotels before the player's next turn. If a player has no hotels to place, he may still purchase stock during his turn.

## CREATING CHAINS

When a player places a hotel next to an isolated hotel (rank or file—not diagonally), he creates a chain. For example, assume hotels 11 and 22 are on the board. These two do not form a chain as they adjoin diagonally rather than rank or file. These are isolated hotels and are marked with an "x". If a player places hotel 23, a two-hotel chain is created. If later he places hotel 12, the chain is expanded to a total of 4 hotels. (12 is added because it is on the same rank as 22, 11 is added because it's on the same file as 12).

Chainmaker chooses the name of the resulting chain by entering the appropriate first initial ("T" for tower, etc.) The chain names, in order of increasing prestige, are:

TOWER—least prestigious  
LUXOR  
AMERICAN

WORLDWIDE  
FESTIVAL  
IMPERIAL  
CONTINENTAL—most prestigious

Chainmaker then receives founder's bonus of one free share of stock in that chain (if a share is available).

A maximum of seven chains may be on the board at one time. Any hotel which would create an eighth chain may not be placed.

## MERGING CHAINS

When a player places a hotel next to two or more chains, he creates a merger. The chain with the greatest number of hotels takes over the resulting chain. If the largest merging chains are equal in size, the most prestigious chain takes over. Defunct chains are handled in the order of their size or, in the case of ties, prestige. The largest or most prestigious defunct chain is liquidated first, followed by the other defunct chains. If any, as follows:

**MAJORITY HOLDER'S BONUS**—Compensatory bonuses are paid to the two largest shareholders of the defunct chain. The first bonus, paid to the largest shareholder, is equal to 10 times the value of 1 share of the defunct stock. The second bonus, paid to the second largest shareholder, is equal to 5 times 1 share's value. In case of tie for largest shareholder, the first and second bonuses are combined and divided equally between the largest shareholders. In case of tie for second largest shareholder, the second bonus is divided equally between tying players. If only one player holds shares in defunct chain, he receives both bonuses.

**DISPOSAL OF STOCK AT TIME OF MERGER**—After majority bonuses have been paid, each player, starting with the mergemaker and continuing in numerical order, handles his stock in one or more of the following ways:

1. **KEEP**—stock may be held with the expectation of starting another chain with that name.
2. **SELL**—stock may be sold at a price determined by the size of the chain before the merger.
3. **TRADE**—stock may be traded on the basis of two shares of defunct stock for each share of take-over chain's stock. (Players may not trade if no take-over chain stock is available.)

Bonuses and stock prices are determined by the number of hotels in defunct chain before the merger.

A chain containing 11 or more hotels is safe and may not be taken over by another chain. Hotels that would merge two safe chains are automatically removed from the game by the program.

## BUYING STOCK

Any player may buy stock in an active chain—up to 3 shares—during his turn. His purchase may be in one, two, or three different chains. The price per share varies with the chain and with the number of hotels it has. A player with no money cannot buy stock. He can not raise money by selling stock, except during the liquidation period of a merger. When all the available shares in a chain have been sold, players wishing to buy stock must do so in other active chains.

## ENDING THE GAME

Normally the game ends when one player, during his turn, announces that either all chains on the board are safe or that one chain has at least 41 hotels. (A player does not have to announce that the game is over if it's to his advantage to continue.)

## SPECIAL RULES FOR TWO PLAYERS

When two play, the game follows the above rules until a merger is made. At merger time, the stock market is also considered to own stock and competes for majority holder's bonuses. The program randomly selects how many shares the market owns—from 0 up to 12 shares. Consider, for example, that the first player owns 7 shares and the second player owns 4 shares. If the market "owns" 5 shares, then the first player receives the first bonus and the market receives the second bonus.

At the end of the game the market competes again for bonuses for each active chain.

## RUNNING THE ACQUIRE PROGRAM

Acquire is a lot of fun—whether you play against the program, with your friends, or watch your computer play itself. Your computer keeps track of all pertinent game variables and displays information you need at the touch of a few keys.

Perhaps the best way to learn the features of Acquire is to run the program . . . .

Load and start the program (see loading instructions). After the credit and situation screens disappear, you are asked,

"DO YOU WANT TO PLAY ME?"

Unless you enter "NO" or "N", the program will assume you want to play against it.

For now, challenge the program by pressing the "RETURN" (on some computers, the "ENTER") key. The program will then ask,

"AT WHAT LEVEL (1-5)?"

You should enter a number from 1 to 5. Most people will find it more difficult to beat the program at the higher levels (4 or 5). Depending on your particular strategy however, you could find one of the lower levels more challenging. For now, enter any number from 1 to 5.

Finally the program will ask for your name. Enter it.

After a few moments the board is drawn on the monitor and two isolated hotels are placed. All accounts and variables have been automatically initialized and the game is ready to play.

If the computer goes first it will inform you of its move and change the board correspondingly. If it's your turn, your hotels are listed and you are asked to enter your choice. Do so and the board will change accordingly. Pretty neat, huh? If you start a chain, you'll be asked to

enter a name for the chain (see creating chains). When this happens, enter the initial of the chain of your choice. If there are any active chains on the board, whether you started them or not, you'll be allowed to buy stock. Continue to play the game until this situation arises.

At this time, the board should be drawn on the top portion of the screen and an information display should appear on the bottom portion. You are also asked to make a stock purchase decision. Before you decide, examine the information display. The first line should look like this:

CHAIN T L A W F I C

The single letters are the chain markers used to identify the various chains. Notice that the chains are listed in order of their increasing prestige ("T", which represents "TOWER" being the least prestigious and "C", which represents "CONTINENTAL" being the most prestigious). Columns form under the chain markers—displaying information about the chains. The second line of the display for example, shows the cost of one share of stock for the various chains. (Notice that stock for chains that are not active are worthless.) The third line displays your holdings (number of shares) in the various stocks. The fourth line shows how much money you have. (If you haven't bought stock yet, you should have \$6000.)

Then there's the stock question. The information display is intended to help you make your decisions. There are times however, when you would like more information—like how many hotels are in a particular chain, or how many shares of a particular stock are on sale (available)? You can get this information by entering a "D" (for DISPLAY INFORMATION). Go ahead and try it! Another display screen should now be on your monitor. Take time to study this display—notice the size and stock availability information has been added. Also, your hotels may be listed, depending on the type of computer you are running on.

When some computers write this information display, all or a portion of the board gets pushed off the screen. If such is the case, enter "B" (for BOARD). Go ahead and try it—even if your board display is intact.

It's expedient here to point out that the "D" (DISPLAY INFORMATION) and "B" (BOARD) commands can be entered almost any time you are in control of the keyboard. This comes in very, very handy. Another command is available—the "E" (END) command. Go ahead and enter an "E". The program wants to know if you want to end. If you enter "YES" or "Y" the game is summarized and ended. Any other entry continues the game (in case you changed your mind or entered "E" by mistake). For now, enter anything but "YES" or "Y". Continue playing for a while—create chains (if you can), buy stocks, watch the board and information displays change—have fun. Play until there is a merger.

You've probably noticed that the board position changes between players' turns. Besides adding a little razzle-dazzle to the game, this

feature serves two purposes: First, it helps prevent burn-in on your monitor and second, it helps eliminate confusion—all messages to and from your program opponent are displayed near the top portion of your screen. All your messages and responses are printed in the bottom portion.

Assuming you are now in the merging process, make entries appropriate to the computer cues. When asked, for example, if you want to sell, trade or keep your stock, enter the appropriate letter ("S", "T", or "K"). Use the "D" or "B" command if you wish to review your assets or the board before making your decision. (See how handy these two commands are?) You can sell some, trade some, and keep some if you like (and have enough shares.) Make sure, however, that you trade or sell all you wish before entering "K" as the computer will assume you want to keep all your remaining shares.

Continue to play as long as you wish. Don't worry if you make illegal entries—the computer will handle them appropriately. (If you haven't already discovered this, try it.) Your program opponent will end the game only when all active chains are safe or when one of the chains has at least 41 hotels. You can play till the end (see "ENDING THE GAME"), or quit early using the "E" command.

#### **WATCHING YOUR COMPUTER PLAY ITSELF**

Load or reload and start the game.

When the program asks,

"DO YOU WANT TO PLAY ME?"

Enter "NO" or "N". It will then ask,

"... WANT TO WATCH ME PLAY?"

Enter anything except "NO" or "N".

Then the computer will ask . . .

"AT WHAT LEVEL (1-5)?"

Enter your choice.

Finally your computer will ask . . .

"DO YOU WANT TO STUDY THE PROGRAM STRATEGIES?"

If you type anything but "NO" or "N", the computer will stop during each routine's move—giving you time to examine the merits of each play. You can study later. For now, enter "NO" or "N". This will cause the two routines to play non-stop until the game is over. (Great for demos!) Note the communications—information pertaining to Routine 1's moves are displayed in the bottom portion of the monitor. Routine 2's moves are displayed near the top of the monitor.

Enjoy the show!

#### **PLAYING ACQUIRE WITH YOUR FRIENDS**

Load or reload and start the program.

Enter "NO" or "N" to all questions until it asks,

"HOW MANY PLAYERS?"

Enter a number from 2-6. The program will then ask for each player's name. After the names are entered, the program will announce who is first and initialize the game. Notice an isolated hotel is placed for each player in the game. The program will cue the first player.

When playing with your friends, remember that there are times when your hotels are displayed on the screen. If you want to keep them a secret (a good idea!) Make sure your opponents are not noting them.

When the final score appears you may restart the game by pressing the 'RETURN' [ENTER for TRS-80] key about five seconds *after* the final results are displayed.

#### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANNOT GET THIS PROGRAM TO LOAD!**

1. Check your equipment carefully to be sure that all cables and connections are correct.
2. If you can adjust the volume on your recorder, try different settings, both higher and lower.
3. If possible, load another program from a tape you know works on your computer. This will prove that your equipment works. Try once more to load your game.
4. The normal reason tapes will not load is tape recorder head misalignment. Your computer may be able to save and load programs on its own recorder, but be unable to read tapes made on a different recorder for this reason. Be sure that your tape recorder heads are correctly aligned. Your local computer store or dealer can help with this.
5. If the program still cannot be loaded, send the cassette, with a complete description of the problem (what type of computer you have, what the computer says, if anything, when you try to load the cassette or play the game, and what you did to try to get it to load.) to:

**Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games**

4517 Harford Road

Baltimore, Maryland 21214

Defective cassettes will be replaced.

## **YOU NAME IT, WE'VE GOT A GAME ON IT . . .**

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## **QUESTIONS ON PLAY**

The clarity of these rules has been verified by *Software Testers of Universal Microcomputer Programmers (STUMP)* and deemed "*complete*" in all facets of instruction. Please re-read them in areas that seem unclear at first reading. Questions on play can be answered by the factory *only* upon receipt of a self-addressed envelope bearing first-class postage.

## **CREDITS**

Based on the original board game by

The Avalon Hill Game Company.

Computer adaptation and programming by Steve Goss  
and 4-D Interactive Systems.