

QUANTUMLINK Q&A

What is QuantumLink?

QuantumLink is a new subscription service which provides home computer owners with easy, friendly access to dozens of services at an affordable price.

How does QuantumLink compare with other services, such as CompuServe?

The key differences are specificity, ease of use, and price.

Specificity -- CompuServe and the other national networks are designed to be "all things to all people." Their objective seems to be to offer a little bit of everything, so the service will appeal to every type of customer. We believe there is an opportunity to provide targeted markets -- such as owners of Commodore 64 computers -- with a specific, focused set of relevant services.

Ease of Use -- Because CompuServe is accessed by all kinds of computers, it has to assume the lowest common denominator interface, which is a black & white ASCII dumb terminal. Since QuantumLink is designed for specific computers, it takes advantage of each computer's graphics power, so the screens are friendlier and the menus are easier to use.

Price -- We're pricing QuantumLink for the consumer market, which means we're pricing QuantumLink in a manner consumers are familiar and comfortable with, which is a monthly fee, like cable television. QuantumLink is priced very affordably -- for \$9.95 a month, consumers get to use most of our services as much as they want. By contrast, CompuServe charges \$12.50 per hour for nighttime 1200 baud access to its consumer information service, and, in addition, there are extra charges to use some CompuServe services -- for example, there is a \$50 annual fee to use the encyclopedia. QuantumLink's pricing is simpler and more affordable.

When will QuantumLink be available?

QuantumLink will be available to a few Commodore user groups later this summer, and will be introduced nationally on October 1.

What computers will QuantumLink be compatible with?

Initially, QuantumLink will be compatible with Commodore 64 and 128 computers, and also the new Amiga which will be introduced soon. In 1986, the service will also be compatible with other popular computers, including Apple and IBM.

How much does QuantumLink cost?

QuantumLink will cost \$9.95 a month, including connect fees and communication charges for most of the services. Because of this flat-rate pricing strategy, subscribers will be able to access services like the encyclopedia and news as much as they'd like for the same low monthly fee. In addition, there will be a few services, such as online telegaming, for which there is a nominal additional surcharge for communications.

How much is the communications surcharge?

That information is proprietary, but I can say that the QuantumLink surcharge will be less than the online fees which most of the national information networks currently charge.

Which services will be surcharged?

That information is proprietary.

Is there an initial subscription or sign-up fee?

The sign-up fee will be \$25.00, but this will be waived for purchasers of Commodore 300 and 1200 baud modems.

What do consumers receive when they subscribe?

They'll be sent software which contains everything they need to use QuantumLink. The QuantumLink software even includes basic communications software which can be used to access other services, such as local bulletin boards or other national networks like CompuServe.

What equipment is required to use QuantumLink?

A computer (Commodore 64, 128, or Amiga), a disc drive, and a modem.

Does QuantumLink work with any modem?

QuantumLink will work with any Commodore 64 compatible modem -- either 300 or 1200 baud -- but to get the optimal service, we suggest that a consumer use Commodore's new 1200 baud auto-dial modem. The service is easier to use and much faster when that modem (the Commodore 1670) is used.

Which software companies are providing software for QuantumLink?

Over 35 software companies participated in the test marketing of our software preview service, including leading companies like Epyx, Scarborough, Electronic Arts and CBS. We haven't had a chance to talk to them all about QuantumLink, but the ones we have spoken with are very enthusiastic. Our expectation is that virtually all of the major software companies will be participating when we launch QuantumLink this fall.

Can you download and keep software?

It depends. Public domain programs can be saved permanently, and most previews of brand-name software are limited versions that can also be saved. However, there will be some full-length programs which will be downloaded to RAM, so they can be used but not saved.

How will you get the software documentation to consumers so they'll know how to use the programs that are previewed on QuantumLink?

We'll be sending subscribers a monthly publication which will feature new software and services.

Which companies are providing each of the QuantumLink services?

News -- USA Today

Shopping -- Several providers, including Comp-U-Card

Commodore Information Center -- Commodore

Software Showcase -- dozens of leading publishers

Chat/Telegaming -- PlayNET

Encyclopedia -- provider will be announced in September

Electronic Classroom -- provider will be announced in September

When do you plan to add financial services?

We are currently in discussions with a number of banks and brokerage companies, but we haven't established a specific timetable. In all likelihood, some financial services will be available by the end of the year.

What is/was Explore?

Explore was the working name for QuantumLink.

What is Commodore's role in QuantumLink?

Commodore will be handling the marketing of the service. Commodore has entered into an agreement with Quantum Computer Services, which will be providing all the services and support.

Who/what is Quantum Computer Services?

Quantum is a new company which was formed by several leading venture capital organizations, including Citicorp, Sears/Allstate, Hambrecht & Quist, and Patricoff & Associates to work with Commodore.

How many subscribers are you expecting to get?

Specific objectives are proprietary, but we do feel that with Commodore's prowess, a meaningful percentage of the 3 million Commodore 64 owners out there will be interested in subscribing to QuantumLink.

How will QuantumLink be marketed?

Starting this fall, everyone who buys a Commodore modem or computer will learn about QuantumLink, and will be encouraged to subscribe. In addition, Commodore will promote the service in its magazines, and with its user groups. Later, as we offer QuantumLink to non-Commodore computer owners, additional marketing channels will be utilized.

What happened to Control Video Corporation and its MasterLine service?

Control Video is still in operation, and has licensed certain rights to its technology and services to Quantum Computer Services.

NOTE: If people have additional questions or desire more specific information, you should give them Steve Case's business card and suggest that they speak with Steve directly. Also, you should take their business card, and on the back write down their specific areas of interest/questions.

DEMONSTRATION: KEY POINTS

1. Preview -- This is a preview of a new service called QuantumLink, which will be available this fall for personal computers. The system released to consumers will be somewhat different, but what you see today will give you a general sense of what we'll be offering.
2. "Next Generation" System -- QuantumLink represents a quantum leap in personal computer networks, principally because of three things:
 - 1) specificity, which results in services which are more useful, entertaining, and relevant to consumers
 - 2) ease of use;
 - 3) simple, affordable pricing
3. Specificity -- Most of the national networks try to be all things to all people. By contrast, we're trying to offer a more focused, relevant set of services for specific target computers. We will, for example, provide a specialized software showcase and computer information center for each computer we target. We'll also provide the services which have proven to be most popular, such as an encyclopedia and online chat -- we'll just provide them in an easier to use, more affordable manner.
4. Ease of Use -- QuantumLink is easy to use because it takes advantage of the graphics capabilities of each computer. The user interface and menus are easy to understand, and friendly.
5. Simple, Affordable Pricing -- QuantumLink will cost \$9.95 a month, including connect fees and communication charges for most of the services. In addition, there will be a few services, such as online telegaming, for which there is a nominal additional surcharge for communications. The bottom line: QuantumLink's pricing is affordable, and because of the flat-rate pricing strategy, subscribers will be able to access services like the encyclopedia and news as much as they'd like for the same low monthly fee.
6. Quantum/Commodore -- QuantumLink has been developed by a new venture capital-backed company called Quantum Computer Services, and the service will be marketed by Commodore. Commodore's marketing efforts will include bundling QuantumLink access software with all Commodore modems, and packing a brochure which promotes modems and QuantumLink in all Commodore computer boxes.
7. Target Computers -- When QuantumLink is launched this fall, it will be available for the Commodore 64 family, which includes the compatible Commodore 128. QuantumLink will also be available this fall for the new Amiga computer. Next year, we plan to make QuantumLink available for other popular computers, including Apple and IBM.