

Back in the 1980s we were limited to a simple 512x256 screen. Then along came Atari emulators, Thors, Aurora and we got used to a few more pixels on screen. Nowadays it's getting ridiculous! The monitor I use at the moment is a 1920x1080 pixel monster. I hadn't realised QPC2 could fill this display - as you will see from the screen dump below. I don't know what is the maximum resolution QPC2 can display - maybe we can persuade Marcel to tell us! Or, more likely, QPC2's maximum probably depends more on what the PC's graphics card can do.



Figure 1 – Who can count how many programs I had running at once here?

To access all these fantastic screen sizes in QPC2, all you have to do is either:

1. Use a `DISP_SIZE x,y` command (e.g. `DISP_SIZE 1920,1080`).
2. Set the size in the QPC2 configuration dialogue at startup. If this doesn't appear when you start QPC2, just hold down the `SHIFT` key as it starts to force it to be displayed.

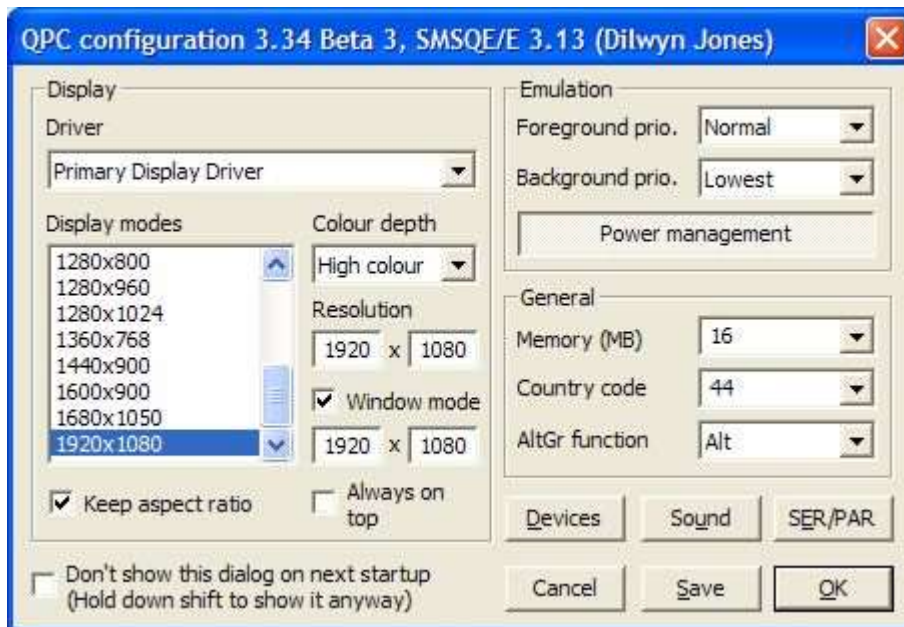


Figure 2 – QPC2 startup dialogue box

You can see from figure 2 that it shows a few pre-defined range of screen sizes in the "Display modes" window (just click on one of these to select them), and you can manually type new horizontal and vertical sizes into the "Resolution" boxes. QPC2 can either appear in a window on the PC display (i.e. part of the PC screen, with the usual title bar, X icon and so on) or can occupy the full screen like the original QL display. If you make it fill the whole display and not in a window, it gives the QL pretty exclusive use of the display, at the cost of interfering with some of the Windows pop-ups from the Windows Notification Area, which some call the System Tray, for example. It's up to you whether you use Window mode or full-screen mode, although I almost always use Window mode so I can flit back and forth between QL and Windows all the time.

The advantage of using a large QL display is that you can have a lot of programs on screen at one time, although this can quickly become cluttered as you'll see from my screen dump of figure 1 (OK, this is a bit of an extreme example!), but it does give you that extra bit of space when playing with graphics or simply doing tasks that need more than one program open at a time.

QPC2 is able to work in 3 different colour depth modes in these high resolutions. It can emulate the original QL mode 4, but in higher resolutions. It can use what's called 8-bit colour mode (which is like the 256 colour display of the Aurora, but with a greater choice of screen sizes) and of course it can work in 16-bit high colour. For me, that's the everyday mode, unless I'm working with a program which will only run in mode 4 of course. And using the BGIMAGE command, I can give the QL some fantastic background picture displays using photos I've converted from the PC either using my BMP program, or Dave Westbury's Photon JPG viewer, or even Roberto Porro's Photo-QL package, all available from the graphics page on my website.

* In the next issue I'll delve further into the QL's graphics capabilities and discuss some useful extra facilities Marcel has built into QPC2 to maintain compatibility with older QL programs.