

ACoM Peanuts Manual

Business Connections for Mutual Success



connecting
ACoM
data systems

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Foreword

We would like to congratulate you that you acquired ACoM Peanuts. This program helps you to gain greater success with private or business networks.

The first part contains useful information and advices on how to build a successful network relationship. The second part introduces you to the various functions of ACoM Peanuts and shows how to gain the best support using them.

For the impatient reader we summarized all important information on the right side of the page. This way you can start to use ACoM Peanuts immediately. You will recognize very soon that most is explained by itself and that the program can be handled intuitively.

All other readers will find a detailed description including many screenshots. Thus you can understand all steps very easily.

Our little friend Eddi  will give you further hints and examples.

We wish you a lot of joy and success using your new program ACoM Peanuts.

Faithfully Yours 

ACoM Peanuts leads you to your grandest business success

Part 1:
Basic Knowledge
about networking
fundamentals

Part2:
Explanation about all
functions of the pro-
gram

All information is
summarized in the
right column.

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System requirements

To run effectively ACoM Peanuts needs the following system requirements:

- Microsoft Windows 2000 or higher
- Framework .Net 2.0
- Resolution 800 x 600

The .Net Framework is included on the CD and will be installed automatically, in case it has not been installed yet.

A short overview of the design

The screenshot shows the ACoM Peanuts application window. The interface includes a menu bar at the top, a search options panel on the left, a central results area, and a statistics section on the right. Red circles and arrows highlight specific features: the menu bar, search options, results area, and statistics.

Menu Bar with all important functions

Overview of done and received **favours**

Automatically generated, **statistics** of the competence, reliability and the quality of the contact

Search options

Results with miscellaneous sorting possibilities

Important **details of persons**

The most important fundamentals for network success

Networks are rightfully considered as „panaceas“ to success. But: In order to reach this success, networks must be developed and managed skilfully.

To do so ACoM Peanuts gives you important assistance as developing networks is much more than collecting business cards. You have to form strong relationships. Relationships differ from mere contacts by the following characteristics:

- They have a continuing basis.
- Details about the partners are known.
- They are to mutual benefit.

Remembering important information

You can recognize a good relationship by the quantity of information you have about each other. This information is the natural bond between people. If you want to create a new network, try to remember as much as possible about the people you meet. Every detail counts.

Thus you know not only with whom you deal. You also show interest and attention: the basic conditions for every relationship.

Tip

Think of yourself: How do you feel if somebody keeps in mind how you drink your coffee? How do you feel if somebody asks whether you are already better after you have been ill? How do you feel if someone gives you tickets for a special concert that had already been sold out?

This positive feeling is a great basis for every good network!



Try to remember as many details about your new network partner as possible. They are the basis for a good network.

Help others in advance

Unfortunately, most people always ask themselves: "What can the other do for me?" This question is the worst you can ask if you are seeking a prosperous network. How do you feel if somebody you meet is only interested in how he can benefit from you?

You turn away. And every other network possibility will resolve in nothing.

Hence, you should ask yourself the right question: "What can I do for the other?"

It is a matter of finding small wishes - wishes which are only "peanuts" for you but a great help for the other person. These small favours create a trustful relationship which is carried by joy and gratitude.

Try to help other people in advance. This creates a positive atmosphere of gratitude.

Keep in touch

Daily business life is extremely stressful. Customers, business partners, co-workers: they all are very demanding, so that there is hardly any time for new network relationships. This way a lot of contacts are lost and forgotten.

Don't let it get this far. Try to keep in touch at least every three months. This way you make sure that your business partner will remember you if he has a new potential customer.

Tip:

You will only generate a real network if all members are connected among each other. Therefore you should always think of all you network partners if someone seeks a special service. Is there anyone within your network who can do it? Could you create a beneficial relationship for both sides?

Set up the contact. You can be sure that both parties are thankful. They might not be able to pay back at once. But they will keep you in mind.



Always keep in touch with your business partners so that they will remember you.

ACoM Peanuts: The functions

The installation

Insert the CD into the disk drive. The installation begins automatically. Just follow the instructions on the screen. It couldn't be easier!

Create a new Person

If you get to know a new person start to create a new entry immediately. You have got to do so:

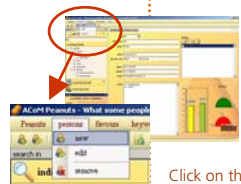
1st Possibility:

Go to the MENU BAR. Click on PERSONS and after that on NEW

2nd Possibility:

Click on the following icon  .

The window DETAILS OF THE PERSON opens



Click on the following icon.



Fill in personal data

You can fill in all personal data in the fields shown above.

Insert all data in the appropriate fields.

Fill in the reliability

It is always important how reliable a person is. Therefore you can use the slide bar to define the reliability. Simply move the slider to the appropriate position.

Pull the slider to the appropriate position.

If you don't know enough about the person yet, simply leave the slider in the middle.

Assign competence and keywords

In this area you can determine which special competences or business connections your new network partner has got.

Keywords are divided into two categories:
COMPETENT IN (skills the person has)
CONTACTS TO (important business connections the person has)

1st Area: Competent in

Here you can define as many keywords as you wish. Just tick the checkbox to assign this keyword to the relevant person. This way you always know which competences your new partner has.

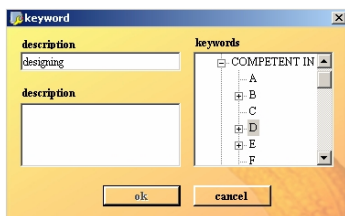
Advice:

Of course the ACoM GmbH does not know which competences your partners have. Hence, you have the chance to add as many keywords as you wish. To find those keywords more easily you can use the given structure of the alphabet.

Click on the initial letter of the keyword with the right mouse button. After that a menu will open. Select ADD KEYWORD. Another window will open. Insert the new keyword in the first field. If you want to you can also add a note for the keyword in the additional box.

In the right in the field you can check once again whether the keyword is assigned to the right letter. It is highlighted in grey.

If you want the letter to be changed simply click on the right letter. After that press OK. The window will be closed and the keyword appears in the keyword list.



To assign the competence to your new network partner, click in the small check box in front of the keyword. A menu will open. Here you have the chance to define how competent your network partner is in this special area.



To close the small box, click on the small cross.

2nd Area: Contacts to

Having good business connections is essential to every business success. Therefore you can determine which important contacts your new business partner has. Choosing a name or institution a menu will open. Use the slide bar to assign how good the contacts are. Are they very intense or just lose contacts?

To have a better overview this area is divided into more subcategories. So finding keywords, institutions and people is as easy as possible.

How to create new keywords:

- Go to the MENUBAR and select KEYWORDS
- Click on NEW
- Insert the name of the new keyword in the free field in the new window
- Add additional information if you wish to
- Click on the initial letter on the right side
- Click on OK

To assign a keyword to a person mark the checkbox with a cross by clicking in it once.

Use the slide bar to determine how skilled the network partner is in this area.

Advice:

Of course the ACoM GmbH cannot know which institutions or places your new network partners have connections to. Therefore you have the chance to create new keywords.

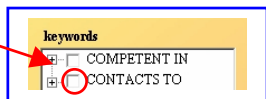
Click on one of the subcategories you want to assign a new institution to. Afterwards click once again on this area with the right mouse button. Then a menu opens. Select ADD KEYWORD. Another window opens.

Enter the name of the institution. If you want to you can add notes to the company or institution in the box below.

In the box on the right side you can check once again whether the new keyword will be inserted at the right position. It will always be a subcategory the word which is highlighted in grey. To change it, simply click on one of the other available words. After you clicked OK, the new institution will appear in the keyword list.



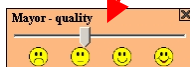
To assign a keyword to a person, you only have to click in the small check box in front of the keyword. Thereby, a small window opens where you can evaluate the quality of the contact between your network person and the institution.



Example:

If your network partner John Q. Public has good connections to the mayor of your home town, click on INSTITUTION with the right mouse button. Create a new keyword which might be "GOVERNMENT". After that you could create another keyword repeating the same steps which might be MAYORS. And finally you could add another keyword which might be the name of the present mayor itself.

After you have done all these steps the new keywords can be found in the keyword list. Click in the empty small boxes to assign the keywords to the according person. A new window with smiles in it opens. Because your partner has a very good connection to the mayor pull the slide bar to the laughing Smilie on the right Site.



Example:

- Create a new file for John Q. Public
- Create a new keyword for Companies
- Assign the keyword to John Q. Public
- Evaluate his contacts by using the slide bar

Attention:

Do not delete keywords. These keywords will be deleted completely (for all persons as a possible selection criteria). If a certain keyword does not apply to a person, you can deactivate the check mark in the check box by clicking on it once.



Specific information about people

In the field "NOTES" you can insert all other information you have collected about the person like their preferences or characteristics.


You can also fill in the company address of the person, so that you can reach him officially.

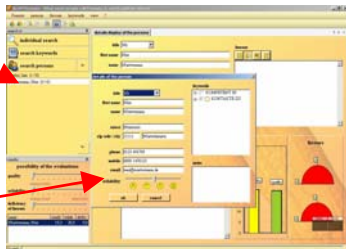
It also would be good, if you add important additional information. For example the commission arrangements which you drew up with this person or company.

As soon as you have filled in all important information and data of the person, click on OK. Now a new file for this person has been created.

Add additional information like characteristics and preferences of the person. (in the field NOTES)

Edit personal data

All files regarding people are listed alphabetically if you click on PERSONAL SEARCH. If you would like to alter some pieces of information about these people simply click on their names with the right mouse button. A menu will open. Chose EDIT PERSON. Alternatively you can click on the following icon .



To change some information in a person's file click on the name of the person and after that on the following icon



The window you are already familiar with will open again. Here you can fill in everything as usual like additional keywords, changes in the address data, further information about the person ...

Add a new favour

Networks are based on the fact that everyone helps each other. This mutual helping should always be balanced. Peanuts helps you to keep the best overview.

Furthermore you should never forget what psychologists have found out long time ago: "The law of the reciprocity". People feel more obliged to help you when in need once they have received a favour.

Thus peanuts lists all favours given and received so that you always know the best person to help you out.


Special Note:
If you do someone a favour he will feel more obliged to help once you are in need.

There are two possibilities to create a new favour. At first you must select the person the favour refers to. Then you have the following alternatives:

1st Possibility:

Go to the MENUBAR, select FAVOURS and click on CREATE

2nd Possibility:

Click on this icon to create a favour 

The window DETAILS OF FAVOURS opens

At first you should define whether you have done or received a favour. To do so select the suitable circle.

Assign a keyword to the favour (if you want to). Doing this the competence of the favour is automatically assigned to the person as well. This way you can find that person easier.

After that you can fill in a short title of the favour in the field FAVOUR which will be shown in the favour list later on. In the field "DETAILS" you have the possibility to describe the favour even more exactly.

Of course there is a difference,

- whether I do a very big favour or a small one or
- whether I complete the favour very well or rather bad or
- whether I am very reliable or too busy to pay enough attention to the favour.

Because of this Peanuts give you the possibility to evaluate these criteria. Just pull the slide bars to the appropriate positions.

Besides you have the possibility to be reminded of important favours. This way you will never forget to do other people a favour if you have promised to do so.

Of course you can also be reminded to ask for further information if someone still owes you a favour.

If you have set a resubmission, a window opens automatically when starting the program the next time after the given date. It shows what you had planned and/ or what you wanted to be reminded of.

To create a new file for a favour click on the name of the person who received/gave the favour and after that on the following icon:



After that follow these steps:

- Determine if the favour was given or received
- Insert a title for the favour
- Assign a keyword to the favour if you wish to
- Rate the favour by using the slide bars
- Create a new resubmission

Tip:

It is good to use resubmissions to stay constantly in touch with the persons of your network. You might for example create the favour, "remain in contact" or "meet for business lunch". Thus you make sure that none of your contacts get lost.

**Other features**

Probably you have already noticed that there are two additional fields.

Sometimes it can be very helpful if you remind people what you have already done for them once you need some help. But of course you can't tell them the same things over and over again. Otherwise this person would get the impression that he has to be thankful forever just because he once accepted your help.

As we want to avoid this effect the ACoM GmbH created another feature: WITH REFERENCE TO. Here you can put down which favours you have already mentioned in order to get some help of your network partner. Simply click on the title of the favour you used. – Of course this function is only available if there have been previous favours you could use.

Someone might feel more obliged to help if you remind him that you already did him a favour. In order not to mention the same favour over and over again mark this favour in the list WITH REFERENCE TO once you used it.

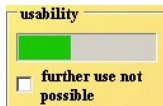
Example:

You helped someone to repair his car. Now you need his help, as your computer is broken. So you might call him: Hi Jeff, do you remember: a year ago I helped you to fix your car. Now I need your help."

After the phone call you will create a new file about this new favour "Fixing the computer". To remember that you used the favour "Repairing Jeff's car" to get the favour you would click on this favour which will be highlighted in blue.



Using this information and internal algorithms ACoM peanuts will calculate how much power this favour has left to be used for other requests. The result is shown in the green bar.



If you once notice that you cannot use this favour any more you can make a check in the box "FURTHER USE NOT POSSIBLE".

Example:

You call Jeff once again as you need to copy a special CD. As it is really urgent you remind him of the fact that you have helped him with his car a year ago. If Jeff answers: "Well, this was ages ago. And I already helped you with your computer and some other stuff" you know that you cannot use this favour any longer. Therefore you make a check in the box "FURTHER USE NOT POSSIBLE".

At the end of creating a new favour click on SAVE.

Add a new keyword

If you should miss a special keyword you can add a new one. You have two different possibilities to do so:

1st Possibility:

Go to the MENUBAR. Click on KEYWORDS and after that on NEW. A new window will open.

2nd Possibility:

Click on one of the existing keywords with the right mouse button and chose ADD KEYWORD.

Insert the name of the new keyword in the first textbox. If you want you can add further information in the field below.

After that you can determine where this keyword will be listed. It will always be a subcategory to the word you chose by clicking on it. While selecting the keyword the word will be highlighted in grey. If you want to change the keyword again simply click on another one. After the right keyword is highlighted in grey click on OK.

Advice:

To have a better overview you can hide all subcategories. If you want them to be shown simply click on the little cross in front of the keyword. If you want them to be hidden again simply click on the minus in front of the word.



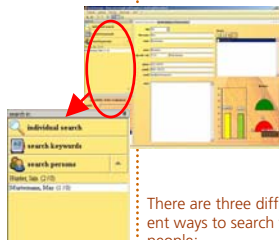
To create a new keyword click on the following icon:



Find the right person

Peanuts helps you to find the appropriate person to solve a problem. There are three different search modes:

- Individual search
- Keyword search
- Personal search

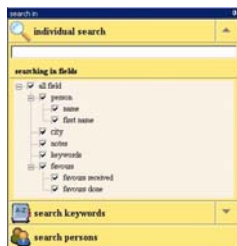


There are three different ways to search for people:

- Individual Search (here you can use as many words as you wish)
- Keyword Search (click on the keywords you are looking for)
- Personal Search (all persons are listed alphabetically)

All results are listed at the bottom of the page.

Individual search



If you click INDIVIDUAL SEARCH a search field will open below. Here you can enter all kind of different words.

Below this box you have the possibility to mark the categories in which the search will be conducted. Of course you can select as many categories as you want. But please keep in mind that this might slow down the search. So if you do not have much time, just select the categories relevant for this search.

Keyword search

If you click on KEYWORD SEARCH another field will open. Here you will be able to find all persons you attached special keywords to. Just click on the keyword itself and the program will list you all people connected to the keyword.



Tipp:

If someone did you a favour and you connected this favour with one of the keywords the person itself will also be found when clicking the keyword.



Personal Search

If you click on PERSONAL SEARCH another field will open. Here all entries are listed in an alphabetical order. Using the ▼ you can scroll up and down so that you can find any person you wish.

All search results are listed in the RESULT AREA at the bottom of the page. Here you can choose the right person by clicking on his or her name.

Chose the appropriate person

In many cases your search will lead to more than one result. To select the most appropriate person you can weight the results using three different slide bars.

The weighting

If you need some help you might have different priorities. Sometimes it is most important that the person is very reliable. On the other hand there might be times when the competence of the person is most important.

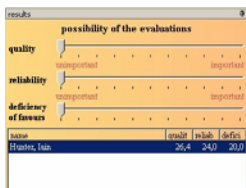
And finally it might be more important that a person still owes you a favour so that all your business contacts will keep its balance and you will not be known as a person who only seeks help but is never willing to give.

Therefore peanuts has a special function to help you to choose the right person. It has three slide bars. With each you can determine how important the criterion is. Just pull the slider to the appropriate position.

After that peanuts will sort the results using the information given. This way the best contact person will be listed on top of the list.

In order to notice the differences between the listed persons you will find a very brief statistic behind each name. QUALIT stands for quality and/ or competence. RELIAB stands for reliability. The higher the scores are the better it is.

After that you find DEFICI. Here the balance between given and received favours will be listed. If the figure is positive the other person still owes you a favour. If the figure is negative you have received more help than given.



You can sort the results using three different criteria:

- Quality / competence
- Reliability
- Balance of favours

The best matching result will be displayed on top of the list

Figures shown in the table are calculated values for the quality, the reliability and the balance of favours. The higher the value the better it is.

Tip:

If the statistics for DEFICI show a negative figure you should be very careful. Start to think about ways how you could delight the other person by a small favour. This way you will keep all your business relationships balanced.

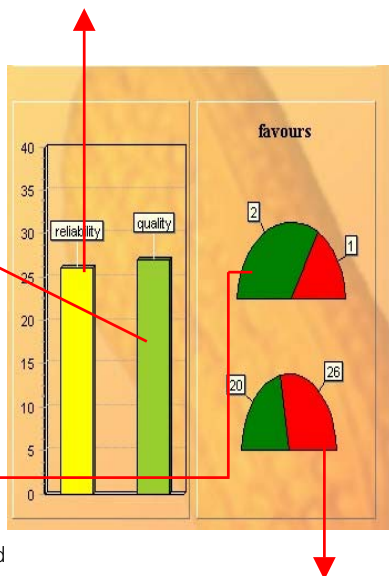
Statistics

Peanuts gives you a quick overview about each person listed in the program.

The yellow bar shows how reliable the person is. At first this bar will display the value you assigned to him while creating his file. Later on the value will be controlled automatically by checking whether all favours were really given with a high reliability.

The green bar shows the competence of the person. Its function is equal to the one of the reliability bar. At first it shows you the competence you have assigned to the person. After that the value will be calculated referring to the information given by the favours done.

The two semi-circles show the balance between favours given and favours received. The first one displays the mere number of favours. The second one is more detailed as it doesn't only show the number but the worth of the favours given and received. This is important, as some favours are more valuable and more important than others.



The yellow bar displays the reliability of the person.

The green bar displays the competence.

The first semi-circle shows the number of favours given (green) and received (red).

The second semi-circle shows the calculated values of the favours given (green) and received (red).

If the semi-circle shows more green than red everything is perfect. You are a very valuable business partner for the other person. If it shows more red than green you should be careful. You have been more demanding than helpful. Try to find little favours to delight the other person in order to gain a better balance.