



## Electronic News - Rn

### What is Rn?

Rn is a Unix application which allows you to read and post messages to Usenet Newsgroups. There are several varieties which behave similarly, including `strn`, and `xrn`. The majority of this document applies to both `xrn` and `strn`.

### Launching Rn

To launch the Rn program:

- Log into your Unix account.
- Type `rn`.

### Reading and Subscribing to Newsgroups

When you invoke Rn, it will automatically check for new newsgroups. If there are new groups, it will prompt the user to subscribe to these new groups. The message is as follows:

```
Finding new newsgroups:
```

```
Newsgroup alt.cuckoo.talk not in
.newsrc -- subscribe? [ynYN]
```

- Answering `n` will not subscribe you to the current newsgroup, answering `N` will not subscribe you to any new newsgroups.
- Answering `Y` will subscribe you to all new newsgroups, and `y` will subscribe you to this newsgroup and the user will be prompted for a location to place the newsgroup:

```
Put newsgroup where? [$^.Lq]
```

- Typing `h` will provide help at this point. The meaning for each of the symbols is as follows:
- Type `^` to put the newsgroup first (position 0).
- Type `$` put the newsgroup last (position 87).
- Type `.` to put it before the current newsgroup (position 0).
- Type `-newsgroup <newsgroup>` to put it before that newsgroup.
- Type `+newsgroup <newsgroup>` to put it after that newsgroup.
- Type a number between 0 and 87 to put it at that position.

- Type `L` for a listing of newsgroups and their positions.
- Type `q` to abort the current action.

When all new newsgroups are dealt with, the user will see the number of messages that are in each of the newsgroups as follows:

```
***** 19 unread articles in
usc.general -- read now? [ynq]
```

- Answering `y` will read the particular group, `n` will skip this group, `q` will quit from `rn`.
- If `y` is answered, the first message will be shown and at this point the following commands can be used:
- `n,SP` Will find next unread article (follows discussion- tree in threaded groups).
- `N` Will skip to the next article.
- `p,P` Will open the previous article.

To scan for an article containing a specific pattern, type:

```
/<pattern>/<modifiers>
```

**Pattern** refers to the sequence of characters that you are interested in. The following are acceptable

**modifiers:**

- `?pat?` : Scans backwards
- `append f` : Scans from lines
- `h` : Scans whole headers
- `a` : Scans entire articles
- `r` : Scans read articles
- `c` : Makes the search case-sensitive

### Replying and Posting News

To reply to a post you can type the following commands at the article reading level.

- `r` replies to the user's email without the original message
- `R` : Replies to the user via email with the original message
- `f` : Replies to the message without the original post

- **F** : Replies to the message with the original post

To post a message in a newsgroup, you need to use the Pnews program. This can be invoked at the Unix command line by typing:

```
Pnews <newsgroup>
```

*Note:* You must capitalize Pnews.

For example, the following Unix command will post an article to usc.general:

```
Pnews usc.general
```

The following will be displayed on the screen:

```
Your local distribution prefixes are:
Local organization: usc
Organization:      usc
City:              la
State:             ca
Country:           usa
Continent:         na
Everywhere:        world
```

You will be prompted to fill the following fields in:

```
Distribution (usc):
```

```
Title/Subject:
```

The following lines will print on screen:

```
This program posts news to machines
throughout the organization. Are you
absolutely sure that you want to do
this? [ny]
```

At this point answer **y** to post. The following message will appear:

```
Prepared file to include [none]:
```

If you want to attach a file, type its name. Then Rn will invoke the default editor. Type your message and exit the editor. After exiting the editor, the following prompt will appear:

```
Send, abort, edit, or list?
```

Type **send** or **s** to send the article.

## Getting Help

For further help with rn and Pnews, check the man pages which are available:

- Type **man rn** or **man Pnews** at the Unix prompt.

If you have questions regarding newsgroups, Rn, or Pnews, please call the Customer Support Center at (213) 740-5555 or e-mail [consult@usc.edu](mailto:consult@usc.edu).