



Update: Shuffle Puzzle Variant by Alex Randolph

Article and photos by Fred Horn

One of the few games or puzzles with a double-sided solution was Alex Randolph's variant for FAX, a 4 by 4 shuffle puzzle. The problem is to solve the puzzle on both sides—one side displaying the letter H, the other side showing the letter U (or C?).

It is interesting the letters probably were H and C (instead of U) as the two last letters were used as a solution on the small added sheet of paper. So maybe we must call the puzzle after Randolph's suggestion: The CH (Swiss) puzzle!

And what about the publication? There was not more than the puzzle itself and the small sheet of paper. Thus, our research ended there, and the information is registered into this writing waiting for better times.

Update! In 2020 I found some more information about FAX after buying a set of miscellaneous games in which another FAX game with an information sheet was included. Again, no box came with the game and otherwise than in the CH puzzle, no reference to an author is made.



And this time no Item or Production number is on the sheet. Instead, imprinted on the outside of one of the sides of the puzzle the following text is visible:

N.V. Kantoormachinehandel
v/h P.J. BRUIJN

translation...
(Limited Company BE
Office machine business
formerly P.J.BRUIJN)

AMSTERDAM (tel. 88960)
DEN HAAG (tel. 331674)



This suggests the puzzle was used as a "give-away" for customers of the company. In that case the "FAX" name is the name of the producer/manufacture and not a name for the puzzle(s)!

It seems the best guess is that the game had been manufactured in England because on the sheet at left the first (of the six) languages used is in English. As well, the length of the phone numbers: 6 for Amsterdam and 5 for The Hague, along with the used plastic material, the game can be dated from somewhere in the early 1950s. AGPI