Support, both technical and for the outside world, is a mixed bag with *Teknon Accounting*, unless you are a fan of the a la carte system of ordering. Technical assistance is toll-free, but you only get thirty days before it'll cost you: $115/year. To use the payroll module's features, you must subscribe to Teknon's payroll table update service (a very reasonable $49/year for federal and one state, $12.50 for each additional state), and if you are interested in data exchange between *Teknon Accounting* and such popular general-purpose products as *1-2-3*, *Excel*, *dBase*, *Q&A*, and *Paradox*, you'll have to pony up $29 for a utility program. *Teknon Accounting* controls your keyboard under DOS, rendering such sequences as <CTRL-ESC> under DOS 5.0's DOSSHELL useless, but responds to *Windows* in 386Enhanced mode. While you'll likely find many vendors willing to sell you forms for use with *Teknon Accounting*, the endorsed provider is Deluxe.

We mentioned earlier that *Teknon Accounting*'s documentation was a problem. The difficulties are widespread. Context-sensitive help sometimes fails, and the printed text, although written in clear English and obviously intended to be helpful, falls short. There's no mention of the hidden feature that allows you to rebuild corrupt index files, and after you work through the startup guide's initial chapters, *Teknon Accounting* does nothing in the way of hand holding for accounting novices. The former point is worth expanding upon. Most system crashes occurring while *Teknon Accounting* is active will corrupt your indices, and if you encounter this for the first time after your free 30-day support period expires, you might be concerned about it costing you to get your data back (you needn't be—officials at Teknon were quite clear on their position regarding customers with data trouble).

Teknon Accounting needs 2.4 megabytes of disk space for its program files, and data files use another several hundred kilobytes, while still empty. The program needs almost 500K of available RAM to run, and although it's advertised as "using extended memory", this is really a minor issue; on systems equipped as we recommended earlier, only program overlays are stored above the 640K barrier.

QuickBooks
Intuit

In *QuickBooks*, Intuit has released a pro-duct that the legions of *Quicken* users have long clamored for. Intuit's flagship has long held the preeminent position among personal financial management software, but it's always lacked the tools to act as a serious business accounting package for anything other than the one-man operation. *QuickBooks* fill the gap. As shipped, it sure doesn't feel like any other accounting package you'll ever see—just try to find the words "debit" and "credit" anywhere, we dare you—but that's its beauty. *QuickBooks* is truly accounting . . . er . . . bookkeeping for the non-accoun-tant, but can be configured to act a bit more traditionally, and will satisfy the requirements of both your accountant and the Internal Revenue Service very nicely, thank you.

QuickBooks doesn't get caught up in defining its modules, either for definition's sake or to govern how you use the program, and that's its beauty. Loosely speaking, there's General Ledger, Accounts Payable and Receivable, and Payroll. But, you may never encounter the ledger in the usual sense of the word. Payroll functions are a matter of using the subaccounts set up for the purpose, either as manually-accessed accounts or through the separate *QuickPay* module, which automates the process (except vacation and sick time) without significantly altering the way you use *QuickBooks*.

Instead, *QuickBooks* looks at

bookkeeping as three simple operations: check writing, billing, and logging receivables. Simplistic? Sure, but, that's the point. Like big brother *Quicken*, *QuickBooks*' check writing screen looks like a check, and that's as difficult as it gets, and it works.

QuickBooks is accompanied by a six-hundred-page user's manual, but it's a testimonial to thorough documentation, rather than program complexity. In fact, *Quicken* converts will probably make due with just the quick reference card that's also slipped into the box, and everybody else will get through maybe seventy-five pages before they realize that they understand as much about *QuickBooks* as they need. Context-sensitive help is much better designed than in *Quicken*, rendering it a useful tool instead of the frustrating creature it can be in *Quicken*, and there's an automatic help system that confused beginners will relish.

QuickBooks comes with default charts of accounts for over twenty different kinds of business, and differentiates the