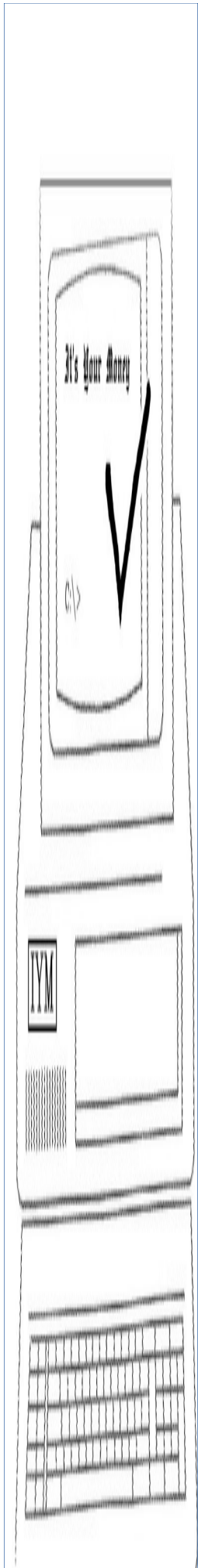


386/enhanced mode with nine megabytes of extended memory, 3.625 MB configured as a disk cache. Get the picture? Under (admittedly demanding) circumstances, *Q+E* is a slug, and not a well behaved one.

The above aside (which is where it belongs; performing a join on unindexed databases is an invitation to idle time), we say unabashedly: we love *Q+E*. Installed, it occupies 425 kilobytes of disk space, plus about 100K additional for each data filter you choose to install. Since *Q+E* works with *dBASE* (II, III, or IV), *SQL Server*, and ASCII text data, you'll probably use roughly 650K, total. Installation is via a DOS-driven program that asks where to install, which interfaces, whether you want *Q+E* to be a read only or read/write product, and whether to modify the PATH statement in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file (not necessary). You also have the option of copying sample data in *dBASE* format for use with the tutorial, which is short but adequately explains most aspects of the program. Documentation is one moderately sized book (its 200 pages split evenly between tutorial and technical information), plus an on-line help system that employs an interesting twist: It's an alphabetically indexed file that is context sensitive only in that the choices you can view are limited to the currently available menu options.



Basically, there are two ways to use *Q+E*; it's a SQL (Structured Query Language) data search/sort tool, and an effective link between your databases and *Windows* applications, with emphasis on Microsoft's *Excel* spreadsheet. In the first instance, using a well defined series of pull down menus and simple point-and-click actions, you define data queries that execute immediately on screen. You can sort data (to memory; *dBASERS*, relearn the meaning of the word), select subsets, construct added conditions as the mood strikes you, and save (and recall) your information any time as SQL queries, *dBASE* files, delimited ASCII text, or to a special user defined mailing label format. With respect to multiple selection criteria, the documentation makes clear that the order in which you present them may affect your output. In any case, *Q+E* automatically writes SQL code to represent all your actions, so it can even serve as an effective practical tutorial in that language. Regardless of what you ultimately do with your queries in terms of saving, printing, etc., you can always ask *Q+E* to show you the SQL phrasing of the current query in effect via the "INFO" command (see figure).

Once you retrieve the data you're looking for, you can format it by changing column widths, performing several statistically oriented math functions, zooming in on individual fields (great for viewing long memo fields), and shuffling column positions and presentation. Fonts are available both for viewing and printing data according to what you've installed in *Windows*. You can print the results of a query whenever you like, optionally including column names, record and page numbers, date and time.

# Q+E - Info: Query1

File Info Window

Help

Source: dBASEFile

Joins:

Conditions: EXEMPT = F AND

DEPT = 'D202'

Sorting:

SQL: SELECT FIRST\_NAME, LAST\_NAME, EMP\_ID, HIRE\_DATE,

SALARY, DEPT, EXEMPT, INTERESTS

FROM D:\Q+E\EMP.DBF

WHERE EXEMPT = F AND

DEPT = 'D202'

The second method of using *Q+E* is as a data manipulation tool. Via *Windows*'s Clipboard, or directly using the DDE (dynamic data exchange) hooks provided to *Excel*, you can move information between applications' data files (which relationships can be made permanent and not require manually opening both applications). Temporary links to unsaved data queries also can be created. This use of *Q+E* is not for neophytes, though, so *Q+E* includes an *Excel* macro that automates most of these actions by integrating them as easily understood menu choices in *Excel*. The macro is over 70K in length; we sure would like to see what's in it (alas, it's protected against snooping).

OK, so what's the big deal about *Q+E*? Why are we so excited? Here it is: *Q+E* can create *dBASE* files all by itself, so if your database needs are light (or at least usually confined to flat file, rather than relational work), *Q+E* may be all the database you ever need to buy! You can't write or run custom *dBASE* applications, but you can exchange data with the huge installed base of *dBASE* and compatible users whenever you need to. As to the above-cited example of joining non-indexed databases, officials at Pioneer tell us they plan to implement a warning box that will alert users to the impending wait before carrying out such commands. Also, except for Fox Software's *FoxPro*, *Q+E* is the only *dBASE* compatible product we know of that can display multiple databases simultaneously in interactive mode. Now, here's the kicker: *Q+E* is cheap, right? Well, check this out: because of a co-marketing agreement between Pioneer and Microsoft, if you buy (or recently bought) *Excel*, you can get *Q+E* for \$9.95.

If you saw something that struck a chord in all that (or multiple somethings), buy *Q+E*. It earns it's check rating, in spades.

**Grammatik IV**  
**Grammatik Windows**  
Reference Software

There are an increasing number of products available for the PC that call themselves spelling checkers, style replicators, or something else bringing up visions of your ninth grade English teachers. (We used this metaphor when we reviewed a similar program, *RightWriter*, in November of 1989, but we just can't think of a better one.) The *Grammatik* family of products, with a DOS based version now called *Grammatik IV* and a *Windows* variant with the name *Grammatik Windows*,