

company that designed many of ZSoft's outlines. Getting to this point is easier than it might sound; the typeface set is comprised of variations on thirty styles, many of which are similar. However, unless you are looking for a specific, unusual appearance, the combination of serifs, sans-serifs, scripts, and ornates should suffice.

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A few notes: The installation process is a bit confusing, owing to references to several concepts that are covered a bit further along in the manual, but by accepting the default values provided by *SoftType*, you'll position yourself to be able to take advantage of whatever screen and printer values you've customized your copy of *Windows* to recognize. Also, be aware that while the space calculations provided by *SoftType* to fit your creation requests are very accurate, the time estimates are not. The estimates are right on the head for printer fonts, but don't seem to take screen fonts into accord. Further, the process of building the fonts is very disk and processor intensive, so if you switch away to use other applications while *SoftType* does its work, the times you are shown become completely meaningless.

Perhaps the kicker is this: Due to the nature of *Windows*' graphics scaling operations, creating a single font will usually yield usable sets in several sizes. For example, we made eight point sets in several typefaces, and were rewarded with screen fonts in eight, nine, ten, twelve, fourteen, eighteen, and twenty-four point increments, and although only the specified eight point printer font is listed on menus, perfectly acceptable display (but not printed) results can be gotten printing in the other sizes. So, if you remove *SoftType* from your hard disk after using it to build a library of fonts (leaving the actual font files, whose names show up in WIN.INI file), you'll add tremendous functionality to all your *Windows* applications, while sacrificing next to nothing in terms of system resources. For example, three of the examples of multi-useful eight point fonts take up under 250K of space. *SoftType* is fast, useful, and inexpensive. If you create any printed output or use *Windows* for computer-based presentations, you want it.

Our Call

We've reviewed twenty-six *Windows* programs here - applications, add-ons, tools, development environments, and hypertext. Five of them were good enough to earn check ratings. While "the *IYMSR* seal of approval" on products in our monthly focus article is usually based on a comparison of the products in the review, this month, the designation means something different. These five - *JetForm*, *PowerPoint*, *Q&E*, *FormBase* and *SuperPrint* - are simply what we consider to be examples of excellent work. Two are full fledged applications programs, one is a combination tool/application that helps make working with non-*Windows* resources easier by taking advantage of the environment, another an application that runs under *Windows* almost by accident, and the last is a tool designed specifically to overcome shortcomings in *Windows*.

While the list is by no means complete (we've skipped word processors, desktop publishing, and communications programs, for example), it seems pretty much representative of what's out there. There are applications that were designed specifically for use under *Windows*, but there are also plenty of ports of products originally designed for other environments, and tools, tools, tools.

We don't like to editorialize too much - you're smart enough to draw your own conclusions - so here it is: *Windows* is pretty, it shortens the learning curve and makes computing feel more natural for many people, and wherever we ultimately end up, you can bet that *Windows* will influence things tremendously. Still, that fact that there are so many tools for improving its shortcomings can't be ignored; *Windows* is great, but unless you do a lot of DTP or graphics work, adopting it now may be a little premature. Remember also that unless you've got a serious hardware setup, it's slow on a good day, and seems almost to be hibernating on a bad one. **However**, as the price of hardware plummets and more people upgrade their systems, this problem will go away. If we repeat this type of issue in two or three years, the speed issue will have gone away.

Do you want *Windows*? Yes, you do. It'll give you a head start on the future, allow you access to that occasional breakthrough product (*PowerPoint* is great right now, and *FormBase* is the precursor of the paperless office), and heck, it may give you a chance to look smart from time to time. Is it time to abandon the C:\> prompt? Not yet, but stay

tuned; GUIs are here to stay, and you'll be seeing more and more reasons to adopt one full-time in the months ahead.

SOME NEW STUFF ...

V.I.R.U.S. Protection - Vital Information Resources Under Siege

Author: Pamela Kane Published by: Bantam Books \$39.95

It isn't very often that *IYMSR* departs from the path of "reviewing software, and nothing but software". There are two ways of looking at our deviation from that policy for *V.I.R.U.S.*; either this book is must reading for everyone who uses software, or including the *DR. PANDA UTILITIES*