

speaks to overall readability on the Flesch-Kincaid and Grunning's Fog indices (measures based on school grade reading levels) and the Flesch Reading Ease Index, a 1-100 scale, with documents that score higher easier to understand. Herein lies the rub. For all the useful information provided by a run through by *Corporate Voice*, there is no paragraph or document oriented testing performed. *Corporate Voice* will give you high scores if you can write a decent sentence from a good mix of words, but if you can't make cohesive points by stringing them together, you're out of luck. Other weaknesses of the program include an inability to modify models after they're created by adding more samples to the mix (you'll need to reassemble the documents and run them all from scratch), lots of room for misinterpretation of the statistics produced, and what we consider to be a flaw in design: even such universally known words as "Wednesday" and "pencil" fall outside the core group of 2450 words used for determining so much of *Corporate Voice's* output.

It's useful as a preliminary tools for creating guideline-compliant writing, but it's no cure-all (nor is it marketed as one). As before, there's still no replacement for a good human editor.

Qumatic Instant Business Software For Instant Forms
Qumatic Instant Business Software For Instant Presentations
Qume Corporation

If you subscribe to the theory that most business software is more difficult to learn than necessary and contain many features that most users wouldn't need even if they knew that the features existed, You'll love Qume's family of *Instant Business Software* packages. Throw in a price tag that won't make you give up your weekly golf game, and you'll really be sold. Is there a catch? You bet there is. Now decide what you think:

In addition to the two packages reviewed here, a third product, *For Mail Labels*, rounds out the line. Each program is designed to do a very precisely defined job quickly, economically, and with a minimum of training, and that they do. If your needs can be filled with fifteen forms, or seven types of charts (plus variations that bring the totals to twenty-two and thirty, respectively), *For Instant Forms* and *For Instant Presentations* will do nicely. One is documented in about fifteen pages (plus pictures of available program output), and the other in less than one page, plus pictures.

While the temptation to dismiss such practices as either inadequate or indicative of uselessness is strong, it's best resisted here. True to the advance press from Qume, both of these products can be learned in under ten minutes. On line and minimally context sensitive help is available if you really get stuck, but the fact is, the two *Instant Business Software* packages we reviewed are so easy to learn and intuitively operated that you'll probably never have occasion to lean on the F1 key. We approve of the way the *Instant Business Software* products are packaged. Both 3½" and 5¼" disks are provided, and a coupon for a three dollar rebate on your next purchase is included in each box. Promotional materials for the entire product line, including labels and film overlays were included in the *For Instant Presentations* package, but not with *For Instant Forms*.

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The fifteen forms in *For Instant Forms* include credit and debit memos, FAX cover sheet, invoice, job estimate, job invoice, letterhead, packing list, proposal, purchase order, quotation, request for quote, sales order, statement, and a "generic" form. Each has a space for your company's name/address/phone information, which only needs to be provided to the program once for all future uses (it can be changed if you like). The forms are very professional looking, with crisp output from the printer drivers and fonts provided. The fonts are licensed from a company called The Font Factory, which distributes similar character sets, among others, under the name *FontMaker*.

For Instant Presentations consists of portrait and landscape versions of variations on seven layouts named, with titles that are not always clear or use-encompassing, Title Page, Bullet Chart, Comparison, Finance Chart, List Chart, Table Chart, and Text. The salient point here is that if you are making a presentation that can be handled with text only (*For Instant Presentations* has no graphics support whatsoever), the templates provided here are probably all you'll ever need.

The fact that the forms in *For Instant Forms* all look so alike and that *For Instant Presentations* is designed with simplicity in mind at the expense of variety jibes with the way the programs are installed and run. The provided installation programs (just type "install" from the **A:>** prompt) allow you to specify the drive on which the software should be installed, but not the directory. They set up a directory hierarchy including one named "\Qumatic", which hold no files, but is home to two subdirectories for each piece of *Instant Business Software* you own; one is for program files, the other for fonts. They also place batch files to change directories and run the programs in the root directory of your specified drive. These can be moved, but their placement points out the lengths to which the folks at Qume have gone to build user-error defenses into their products. The very process employs techniques that are likely to foster bad habits. **Batch files do not belong in root directories.** Worse is the hierarchical directory structure. Want to move the font files into the same directory as the program file? Too bad, because the executable code contains specific references to the directory in which the fonts are placed. Short of performing some very delicate surgery with a sector editor, you're stuck with what they give you. On the other hand, no amount of tampering will cause you to delete or disable the provided templates; they're each named with a leading ASCII 16 "right arrow" symbol, and Qume's software won't allow you to name the files you customize with ASCII "control" characters below 32.