Windows Online™
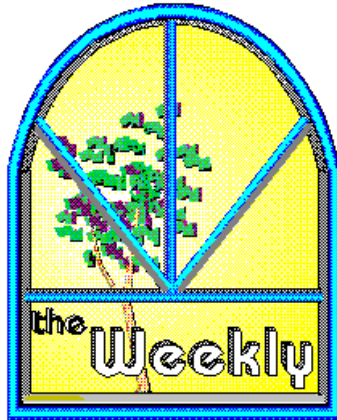
Windows Online™ "the Weekly"™ (WOLW) is published electronically every Saturday and distributed through many well known on-line services. WOLW contains articles and weekly columns by WOL's staff and freelance writers. Subject matter includes all aspects of MS Windows and its associated applications and utilities. Also covered are Computer News, Communications and other GUI subjects. Reviews, Test Drives, First Looks, etc., are limited in scope to allow "the Weekly" to be both diverse and maintain a manageable file size. If you are interested in writing for "the Weekly" contact us through the numbers listed at the end of this publication.

In this issue:

Quick Look at Shareware

WinTach 1.0 For Windows

The Ultimate Windows Benchmark for Microsoft Windows 3.1
by Randy Wong

Have you ever wondered how your computer is performing when running your favorite Windows' application? We all know that using a faster processor chip will run your computer and Windows faster. I had the pleasure of testing a mixture of several 80386 and 80486 computers. To my surprise, the high end 80386 computers ran Windows just as quickly as many of the 80486 computers. The WinTach benchmark program is a tool for estimating how Windows 3.1 applications will run on your system, without the actual application.

WinTach

Reports   Start Benchmark   Resolution   Tests   Help

Paint

Frame Buffer
256

Test Resolution

WinTech runs a series of proformance tests. The test areas are word processing, CAD, spreadsheet, and painting. There is even a mouse cursor stability test. Each of the benchmark areas, can be run separately, or one after the other. You can also select the resolution at which the application benchmark's tests are run. The four possible resolutions are 640x480, 800x600, 1024x768, or 1280x1024. The available resolutions are those which your Windows video driver supports. After running through the various performance tests, you can print the report, or copy to the clipboard.

Word Processing

The Word processing benchmark is performed on formatted text documents using an extensive variety of fonts, styles, and formatting options. The important test would be page scrolling of text.

Cad / Draw

The Computer Aid Design benchmark is based on the creation of technical drawings, using the computer's processing power to store and manipulate a large number of drawing objects. The key test would be the speed of drawing, re-sizing and graphical screen scrolling.

Spreadsheet

The Spreadsheet benchmark uses the management of table data. This includes storage, manipulation, text reporting, and graphical reporting. The highlight of this test would be the scrolling of the spreadsheet on the screen.

Paint

The Paint benchmark is based on creating and manipulating bitmapped images. These images are created using a variety of drawing tools. Common drawing operations include lines, rectangles, floodfills, pixels, and freehand drawing with rectangular and elliptical brushes. The important test is measuring the speed of drawing various bitmap graphic operations.

Overall WinTach RPM

After starting WinTech, I fell in love with it. The graphics are well done. The Windows application tests were all that I could ever want. With this utility, I can check Windows performance on any computer that it is installed on. Performance tests concentrated on video and processor speeds. One area, WinTech does not check, was that of disk performance. Your hard drive does play an important part in loading and swapping Windows applications.

WinTech could make a big difference, on how you purchase your next Windows-based computer.

Requirements

* Microsoft Windows 3.1.
* Any MS Window based computer, 286 processor or greater.
* 250K disk space required to install.
* Any amount of memory required by Windows.
* Any Window compatible display.

Where To Find This Benchmark

Any local Bulletin Board System
< or >
Windows Online BBS
(510) 736-8343

A product of Texas Instruments,Inc.
The file to look for is **WINTACH.ZIP**
The Price is **FREE**

Randy Wong

Computer News & Product Reviews
Windows Online

Visual Basics
by **Barry Seymour**

Visual Basic Product Review - Part II

Last week we were in the middle of a new database application created from the tutorial in the Q+E Database/VB manual. We'd created the forms, added custom controls, specified the databases and were off an running, loading data, pictures, combo boxes and grids and controlling the application with buttons that were amazingly easy to create.

Now, on with the show...

Searching the Database: Query-By-Example (QBE)

QEVB provides a number of functions which can be accessed either through declare statements in the global module or by the custom control command buttons which come with QEDBF.VBX. These buttons can be assigned to a function by setting the pFunction property to one of the following sixteen choices:

0	(Default)	- No function is called.
1	DoQuery	- performs the query in the query control DEL
2	EndQuery	- ends/closes the query in the query control
3	Next	- obtains the next record in the found set
4	Previous	- obtains the previous record in the found set
5	Random (pRecNumber)*	- enables random access by record number
6	New (pRowIndex, pBefore)*	- insert a new record before the current one
7	EnterQBE	- Enter Query By Example mode
8	ClearQBE	- Clear fields for another query while in QBE Mode DEL
9	Insert (pRowIndex)*	- Inserts a record after fields have been filled in
10	Update (pRowIndex)*	- Updates a changed record to the database
11	Delete (pRowIndex)*	- Delete current record from the database
12	Lock (pRowIndex)*	- Lock current record for exclusive use
13	TranBegin	- Begin locked transaction recording
14	TranCommit	- Commit transactions to database
15	TranRollback	- Discard recorded transactions without committing
16	ExecSQL (pSQL)*	- Execute an SQL statement on the database

* *indicates a parameter which must either be specified in a property of the command button or passed to the equivalent function or procedure*

This list represents a lot of powerful functionality you can build right into your QEVB applications, either by calling these functions directly or assigning them to command buttons.

Functions seven and eight allow the easy installation of the Query-By-Example (QBE) capabilities to your application. Click on a button with it's pFunciton property set to 7 and you enter Query By Example Mode (QBE Mode).   In the aforementioned DayCare application, clicking QBE clears all fields. You then enter "Woltman" in the last name field and click the "Do Query" button. This causes the application to display only the records which have "Woltman" in the last name. This is a powerful piece of functionality obtained with a surprisingly small amount of work during development time.
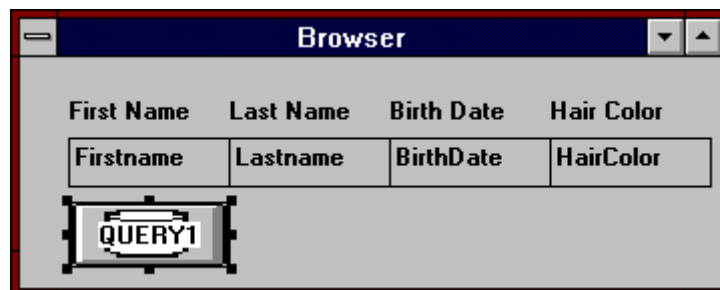
Records can also be filtered and/or sorted by changing a query control's pWhere property.   Setting Query1's **pWhere** property to BIRTH_DATE > {01/31/1988} ORDER BY LAST_NAME will return the appropriate results at run time. QEVB also provides a nifty dialog box called the pWhere Builder which helps you specify which fields to include in the **pWhere** property and how to filter them.

Control Arrays and Browsing
As mentioned before, the Grid control is great for browsing, but is read-only and a slow at larger sizes.   A way around the read-only problem is to create a control array of textboxes which emulate a grid. This way you can browse **and** edit records in a row format. This ended up being simpler than I expected it to be. The concept is to create one instance of each field control, highlight the lot of them and copy them several times en masse, making a control array of the whole bunch.

VB Hot Tip: Clicking on a control, then hold down the Ctrl key and click on other controls; you can select more than one control at a time with this feature. Now cutting, copying pasting and moving groups of controls is **much** easier!

You start by creating the textboxes, each accessing a separate field...

...then copy them as a group several times. The first time you copy the controls VB asks if you want to create a control array; click Yes. When you're done, add a scroll bar and command buttons. Set the

pFunction of the command buttons accordingly.

Setting the scroll bar to the same query automatically links the scrolling. Each instance of each control in the control arrays views a field from a record based on it's index, so if txtFirst(0) is looking at FIRST_NAME in record 5, then txtFirst(1) is looking at FIRST_NAME in record 6, and so on. The command buttons shown above are empty of code, but they automatically provide the functions indicated by their captions since their **pFunction** property was set accordingly.

Transaction Processing
QEVB also supports Transaction Processing. Under normal operation, updating a record or series of records in a database is done instantly when the user clicks an update button or leaves a record. With transaction processing, QEVB remembers each transaction but doesn't actually commit changes to the database until told to do so. This sort of functionality can be helpful in multiuser environments, or in situations where the application or user must check the validity of entered data before committing changes to the database file. The application or user can choose to commit or rollback transactions entered while transaction processing is active.

Joined Tables and Multiple Queries
A lot of press has been generated about dBase's shallow adherence to the true model of a relational database. QEVB is equally faithful (or unfaithful, depending on how picky you are) to that model. You can build table relationships into your VB application by joining tables, but there are limits.

A **table join** is when you specify multiple tables in a single Query control. Table joins are simpler to implement at development time, but have a big drawback; you can't insert or delete records from

either table while a join is in effect.

The other option is to have multiple Query controls on your form, one for each table you're referencing. The various other controls are then liked to the Query control for the desired table. For example, Query1 would access EMPLOYEES.DBF, and QeText1, QeText2 and QeText3 could display fields in that table, while Query2 would access SALARIES.DBF and would display fields in QeText4, QeText5 and QeText6. This approach does allow insertions and deletions in each table, but can be slower and requires more code to manage things.
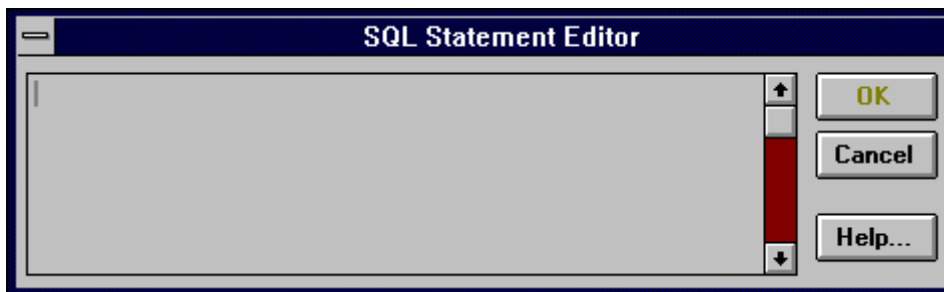

Table Management and SQL Statements
QEVB comes with a tool for creating new databases, a separate EXE file called the Database Manager. This is a nice tool which performs the same kind of functions as dBase's CREATE and MODIFY STRUCTURE commands, helps you define and rebuild indexes and helps you pack databases. You can also browse and edit database tables and set default operating parameters for QEVB. This is a nice utility, but loads somewhat slowly -- I suspect it too was written in Visual Basic.

QEVB also supports SQL commands via the **fExecSQL** function. Using this function the programmer can build code into the application to perform many of the functions in the Database Manager. Any database application worth it's salt will need to be able to create, modify and delete tables, create and maintain indexes, pack the database and select groups of records that meet various search criteria. SQL Statements allow you to write code to perform these functions and more.

While the Database Manager is an acceptable tool the real power for the programmer lies in QEVB's SQL capability. Once a command button is created with it's property set to **ExecSQL** the programmer can write the SQL Statement to be attached using the SQL Statement Editor dialog box...

_____

Impressions...

      I liked how QEVB automates the linking of application to database. Dialog boxes help the programmer choose which database file to use, what fields to include in queries, what functions to assign to buttons and what conditions should be met in embedded query controls. These kind of details can be the most onerous ones in developing a database application, but with QEVB a minimum of code writing is required to achieve functionality.

      On the minus side, some aspects of QEVB are slow. The grid can be a snail if it gets too big, but row-by-row scrolling of grid-like structures is slow just about everywhere else in Windows, including cells in Excel and tables in Word for Windows. The program is also slow on handling larger databases and can't intelligently add records to joined tables. Pioneer Software has their technicians at work on the speed problem and a maintenance release is already addressing some performance issues.

To sum up...

Pluses	*Minuses*
Transaction Processing	Grid slows down at larger sizes
MultiUser Support	Speed an issue on larger databases
BitMap Support	Grid is read-only
Ease of Development	Insertions & Deletions not supported on
Good Documentation	Table Joins
Transaction Processing Support	
Seamless Integration into	
VB environment	
Built-in Error Messages	
Royalty-Free Runtime VBX	

      Q+E Database/VB is an excellent tool for Visual Basic programmers to develop database applications under Windows. The speed and simplicity of development is unsurpassed, and additional goodies like graphics support, transaction processing, multiuser support and built-in error message handling make it a powerful tool. Speed shortcomings are real, but only come into play with large databases.

System Requirements
Windows 3.0/3.1
Microsoft Visual Basic 1.0
286 or better PC with minimum 4mb RAM

DOS 3.1 or higher

For more information, contact

Pioneer Software
5540 Centerview Dr.
Suite 324
Raleigh, NC 27606
(800) 876-3101
(919) 859-9334 (FAX)

_____

Barry Seymour
Marquette Computer Consultants
San Rafael, CA 415/459-0835
for *Windows Online Weekly*

Windows Tips

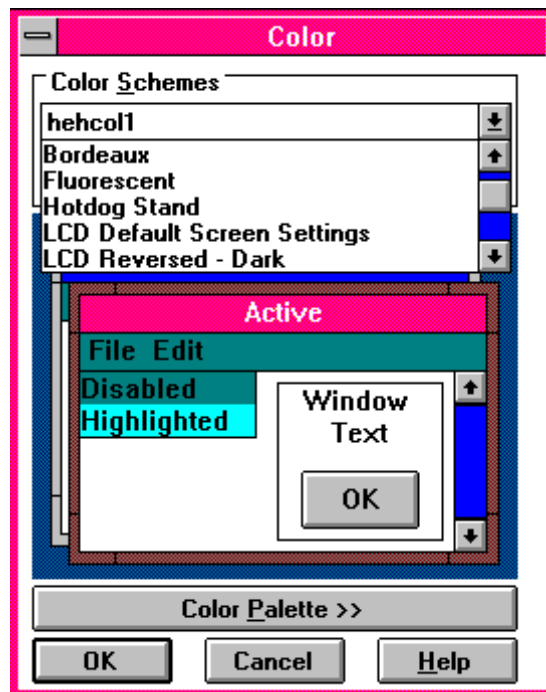### *All the Colors of the Rainbow*

Fonts, Fonts and more Fonts

All the Colors of the Rainbow

In previous Wintips we have explored the task of customizing your

desktop by choosing your own colors for various screen elemtents. Briefly, the Control Panel applet COLORS provides all the capabilities you need to color your world.

Windows 3.1 introduces many preconfigured color schemes which are available by clicking on the drop down list box icon next to the name of the currently active color combination. I must admit that I find most of the canned combinations either nauseous or bland but I am sure that each one will develop its own following.

Three combinations are of particular interest to LCD portable or notebook users. The three schemes are:

LCD Default Screen Settings
LCD Reversed - Dark
LCD Reversed - Light

Each one is designed to make the Windows colors legible in the most useful way. The problem is that certain colors which are rendered as different on a regular CRT screen are translated into the same color on an LCD screen. Thus, you could have a background color translated to White and the text which is to appear on top of the background also being interpreted as white. White on White is kind of difficult to read. LCD users will find these three new color schemes very helpful.

Fonts, Fonts and more Fonts

The TrueType, TT, font technology which comes with Windows opens up a universe of choice in the way your documents look and many bulletin boards have started to offer TT fonts in large numbers. This all sounds as if it would be a boon for Windows users. Not so, for a number of reasons.

The issues raised by this plethora of fonts are as follows:

Disk space requirements
Font management
Appropriate font selection

Disk space requirements

I have a total of 5.7 MB of disk space containing TT fonts. In addition, I have another 2.7 MB of TT fonts in ZIP format. Goodness knows how much they would expand to! If you have a 200MB disk drive, perhaps 7 to 10 MB of fonts is not a big deal. For most users, that amount of storage is a big deal. It follows that storing only the fonts that are useful to you is the sensible approach. If one face looks much like another, keep one but not both and if you find yourself not using a face at all, get rid of it. You can always store them in ZIP file format on diskette.

Font Management

With all the TT fonts on BBSs, trying them out is a tedious and time consuming process. They must first be unZIPPed, then installed in Windows. The next step is to create a sample text document which shows all or most of the characters in the font.

I have used two different approaches to sampling fonts. In one, I created a document in Ami Professional and made a line which had the following format:

FONT name AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz

I copied the above line for each of the fonts I wanted to test and then formatted line to display the appropriate font. The resulting document allowed me to compare the various fonts relatively easily.

The second approach is to use Font Manager software. This software is somewhat variable in its functions but generally allows the user to view their various fonts on the screen and/or on a page. This is all automated and the user

is not responsible for setting up pages or selecting fonts as I had to in the Ami Pro example. The downside of the font manager approach is that you may not get all the characters of the alphabet on the screen or page. In addition, the package may not compensate for the fact that a 12 point character in one font may not be the same size on a page as another font at the same size. This makes comparisons more difficult. However, Font Manager software supplies enough information to determine if you wish to investigate a particular font further.

The bottom line is that with an increasing number of fonts, users need extra help to keep them under control.

Appropriate font selection

While it might seem that more fonts is better than less fonts, that is not necessarily true. The more fonts, the more choices and the greater opportunity for selecting a font that is wrong for a given piece of written communication.

Fonts set a mood and create an impression of you and/or your organization. For most people, the fonts that come with Windows 3.1 and the fonts in the font pack which was promoted with the release of 3.1 will probably be all they need. Chasing after "free" fonts is a waste of time unless you have diverse needs in printing. Many of the fonts look basically the same while others are marred by poor kerning. By all means, download public domain fonts and try them out. But remember that all the choices bring with them the responsibility for selecting the appropriate font for a given circumstance.

For business users, engaging a qualified typographer or graphic designer to assist you with the selection of fonts appropriate for your business is money well spent.

More on fonts and their appropriate use in a later column.

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Shareware Reviews
by Chris Roberts

Welcome to **ShareWare Reviews**. This is where you will find reviews of the latest and greatest Windows software available from BBS's around the world, including Windows Online, (510) 736-8343.

This week I'll be looking at two utilities, WinDock and WinEZ, that have the ability to increase the useability of the Windows environment. One of the areas of Windows, both version 3.0 and 3.1, that could use improvement is the Program Manager. There are some commercial products that do a great job at this improvement, but there are also several shareware products that do just as great of a job.

WinDock Version 1.51

WinDock is much like a toolbar for launching applications. It allows you to place Icon buttons on a "docking bay", which is configurable to appear either on the left or right of the screen. This allows you to place the most frequently used programs in a place that is accessible at all times, yet does not clutter the screen as the Program Manager would.

To add an application to the docking bay you simply drag it from the File Manager and drop it on the docking bay. Now you may execute this application anytime by double clicking the button. You may also drag a file from the File Manager on top of a button to launch the application with the dragged file as the file you wish to use with the application. The nice thing about this feature is that the application does not have to support drag and drop since it is WinDock that is supporting the drag and drop and passing the file name to the application when it is launched. To remove an application you simply drag it off the docking bay.

Clicking on a button with the right mouse button brings up the *Application Options* dialog. This allows you to configure the launching of an application. All of the options available in the Program Manager's File/Properties... selection are here plus a few more. This includes Startup Window type Normal/Minimized/Maximized, File for application, Parameters, Default directory, Icon file, and Icon selection.

At the very top of the docking bay is the WinDock control icon. Double left clicking on this button brings up the *WinDock Run* dialog. From here you may

launch any application just as you would from the File Manager's File/Run... selection, except you are presented with a Browse type list of files/directories/drives to aid in the selection of the application to run.

Right clicking on the WinDock control icon opens the *About WinDock* dialog, from which you to may configure some options concerning the behavior of the docking bay itself. These options include Left/Right side of screen position, *Always on top*, and *MaxView*. *MaxView* causes applications to only "maximize" up to the edge of the docking bay, allowing you to see the docking bay at all times. I found this to be more useful and less obtrusive than the *Always on top* option.

WinDock has proven to be not only powerful but easy to use. This program is definitely a thumbs up and deserves at test drive by all.

WinEZ Version 3.0

Another program that enhances the launching and switching of applications is WinEZ. WinEZ attaches to buttons on the menu bar of the currently active program. These two buttons allow access to all program groups and programs contained in the Program Manager (the *Fast Path Icon*) and access to all currently running applications (the *Task Switch Icon*).

When the *Fast Path Icon* button is selected a pulldown menu of all program groups appears. Selecting one of the program groups activates a popup menu listing all programs in that group and then selecting a program launches it. The *Fast Path* menus may be rebuilt automatically every time WinEZ is run or forced to be rebuilt via the *Rebuild Power Menu* option in the pulldown.

Selecting the *Task Switch Icon* button activates a pulldown containing a list of all currently running tasks, *End Task*, *Run...*, *Options*, *About*, and *Exit*. Clicking on a particular task switches to that task immediately. The *End Task* option displays a popup menu containing all currently running applications and selecting one of these terminates that task. The options available under the *Options* selection are *Switching Options*, *Fast Path Invokes*, *Icon Position.*

This program, once again, alleviates the necessity to keep the *Program Manager* and have it cluttering the desktop, while allowing quick and easy access to all applications. It also increases the functionallity and availabilty of the *Task Manager*.
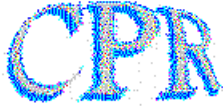
When WinEZ is combined with WinDock one only need start up the *File Manager* to create a new program group or add a new application, and this might get easier in future version of both of these applications.

Software Reviewed

WinDock - Version 1.51
by Chris E. Capson
internet: becap@cs.mcgill.ca
Compuserve: 73467, 1453
900 Serbrooke St. West # 92
Montreal, Quebec H3A 1G3
(514) 848-9659
<u>Registration: $15.00</u>

WinEZ - Version 3.0
New Generation Software
P.O. Box 890482
Houston, TX. 77289
(800) 964-7638

<u>Registration: $29.95</u>

CPR

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22092 San Fernando Court
Cupertino, CA 95014

NEW
PRODUCT
NEWS

ACT! for Windows

Contact Software International Inc. developer of the DOS based ACT!, the popular contact management package, has announced a Windows based ACT! for Windows. ACT! combines the planning and scheduling features of a daytime organizer with the activity follow-up and support of a personal executive assistant.

ACT! for Windows incorporates industry standard dBase file structures for contact data, activities, notes and history with Windows features including pre-defined DDE macros to link with Microsoft Word for Windows, WordPerfect for Windows, Lotus' AmiPro, CC:Mail and other Windows software. New features to the Windows version of ACT! include prioritization of calls, meetings, and to-dos and the ability to schedule recurring activities. Calendar management in ACT! for

Windows is fully prompted and allows users to choose from WYSIWYG day, week, and month views.

The product also offers enhanced customization through user-definable field types (date, phone number, currency, numeric, character), a customizable pull-down menu system and user-selectable screen layouts. ACT! for Windows contact and calendar management functions are tightly coupled with full-featured communications tools. These tools include a telephone auto-dialer, and a word processor with a built-in Houghton-Mifflin spell checker that produces letters, memos, and other documents with a few clicks of the mouse. ACT! for Windows also includes many standard reports, and a WYSIWYG report generator. You can also automatically merge data with the DOS based ACT! as well as the version for HP 95LX users.

ACT! for Windows Features

Contact Management
   * Unlimited number of contacts and databases
   * User-selectable screen layouts
   * 70 User-definable fields
   * User-definable field attributes and default values
   * Hide/Protect field attributes
   * User-Definable pop-up window selections
   * Unlimited notes per contact
   * Automatically updated contact history
   * Instant `Look ups' that can be added to the menu
   * User-definable `Look ups' on critical contact data
   * Global keyword search
   * Sophisticated query capability
   * Group editing

Calendar Management
   * Unlimited calls, meetings and to-do's
   * Prioritized calls, meetings and to-do's
   * Timeless and recurring activities
   * `Typeless' activity scheduling from day, week and month views
   * `Drag and drop' rescheduling from dynamic day, week and month
    views
   * Automatic conflict checking
   * User-definable lead times and durations
   * Instant `Tasklist' by date range and priority
   * Critical activity alarm with `snooze' feature pops up in any
    Windows application
   * Pop-up activity timer

Word Processing
   * Full WYSIWYG word processor
   * Quick memo, letter, form-letter, envelope and fax cover

generation
* Automatically generated dates, addresses, salutations and
  closings
* User-definable mail merge templates that can be added to the
  menu
* Houghton-Mifflin spell checker
* Support for Windows fonts and printer drivers
* User-selectable typestyles, fonts, point sizes and page
  layouts
* Superscript and subscript
* Headers, footers, page numbering and justification
* Search and replace
* Open and save RTF (Rich Text Formula) documents
* Supports graphics in documents
* Output to screen, file or printer

Report Generation
* Address and phone lists
* Completed and future activity reports
* `Tasklist for user-selected date ranges
* Contact report
* History report
* Address book and calendar printing
* Promted reprt writer
* User-definable reports that can be added to the menu
* Output to the printer or editable WYSIWYG document

Additional Features
* dBase file formats
* On-line context-sensitive help
* Links to popular Windows applications
* Icon assignable macros
* Custom icon bar
* Automatic phone dialing (modem required)
* Database password security
* Full data compatibility with ACT! family products

ACT! for Windows lists for $495 and should be available in June. For more information, write: Contact Software International, 1840 Hutton Dr #200, Carrollton TX 75006.

Software Overview

Amish Utilities for Windows v1.0

Amish Software has grouped a useful set of desktop utilities for Windows users. Many software developers have recognized the limitations of Windows and it's included Program manager, File Manager etc.. Several vendors (Norton Desktop, PCTools for example) have put together very complete sets of add-in utilities and replacement shells for Program Manager. Amish Utilities is another effort in that direction. The included programs are:

Amish Launch

Launch can function both as a program manager and task manager. You can customize menus in a text view which will give a bit more information, allows sub menus, uses hot-keys for commonly used programs and is accessible with a click on the desktop (Ala. task manager).
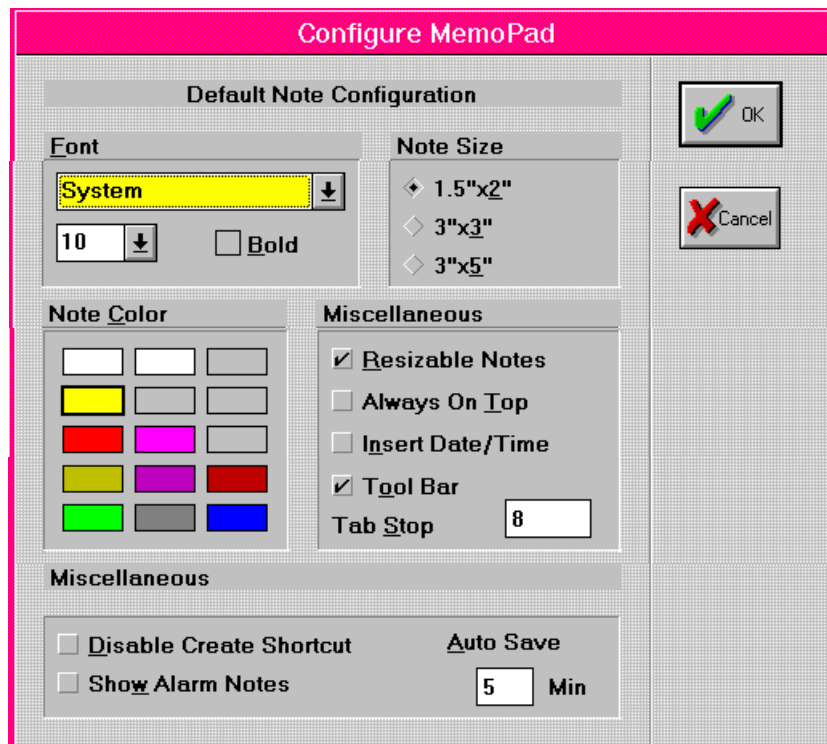
Amish Desk

Desk is the original virtual desktop for Windows. It allows you to keep your Windows applications maximized at full screen and toggling to different desktops through the use of a "map" window. You can manipulate your display to show any portion of your enlarged desktop on your monitor.

Amish MemoPad

MemoPad provides reminder notes for Windows. Up to 100 notes can be used at any given time. MemoPad will save the state of all notes upon program termination. Next time you startup, your notes will be just as you left them. You can change their color, size and font.   MemoPad includes complete editing, cut, copy and paste. The print facility will allow you to print one note or all notes. One nice feature is that you can set up a note to be displayed at a certain time of the day along with an optional alarm tune -- rather handy for your lunch time alarm. A search feature will allow you to find that missing text among those 100 notes you have scattered about. You can also choose to group notes by categories. Quite a nice set of features don't you think?

Amish File

A replacement File Manager that will copy, move, delete file's one at a

time or by group. It can create or delete sub directories and view ASCII or Binary files (no graphic viewing) and run programs. One interesting feature is that it can "ADD" to the Windows clipboard. Normally, a cut or copy command erases the previous contents of the clipboard. FILE maintains a history of the clipboard, letting you recover the previous contents.

Amish Clock

Clock is an alarm clock that allows you to set 10 alarms, and optionally will run a program rather than sound an alarm. Think of the uses that can be put to.

Amish Mem

Mem is a utility that shows you how much disk space, memory and Windows system resources are available in real time. It can be configured to sound an alarm if your memory, disk space or resources get too low. Clicking on the desktop will bring up the display shown below.

Windows 3.10
386 Enhanced Mode

Free memory: 12410K
Free resources: 69%

OK

Summery and Opinion:

There are some interesting features in some of these utilities with my favorite being MEMOPAD (a bit like Post-it Notes). It has many options to help you customize it to fit your needs. The alarm CLOCK program could also be useful to automatically run programs through out your day.

The "look and feel" of the programs seems a bit dated though. The package is a bit expensive considering what else, in this category, you can get for $99.00. Though, I'm sure the street price is a bit lower. The least useful utility was the Amish MEM. Windows already provides that information in the needed form.

Overall this set of utilities is not going to replace my Norton Desktop and will not even stay on my hard drive. However, you may find some of the included programs useful, so check them out at your local computer store.

Amish Software
541 Cowper St. Suite A
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(415) 323-4627   Questions and Technical Support
(415) 323-0138   Fax
(800) 26-AMISH Order Line
Suggested Retail Price $99.00

Written by Frank Mahaney for Windows Online "the Weekly"

by Rob Weinstein

Presentation vs. Content

Several days ago I got into a ridiculous argument with a corporate consultant who said that you simply could not use roman, bold, and italic type on the same page. It was too confusing, too taxing on the reader, and too difficult on the eye. It distracts the reader from the material, the argument goes, making him or her lose their concentration.

This is NONSENSE! (Oh, Oh--bold and italic together in capitals--I hope I didn't lose too many readers). If the use of bold or italics or both is going to distract your reader, your material is weak, and no typesetting tricks are going to save it.

So let's go back to the basics--rule number 1, the primary, most single important thing about any publishing--desktop or otherwise, say something worth saying, and say it in a way worth reading!!! There are two very separate and distinct issues here that are so closely intertwined that they often become confused. One is what you say, and the other is how you present it. They are different, and the difference is vital to understanding successful desktop publishing.

Presentation has two primary goals--to attract the readers' attention so that they will start reading the story, and to get the hell out of the way so they will finish reading the story. You'll notice, however, that the central goal of both jobs is the same, to get the reader into and through the material--to convey the message contained in the written words.

This is true whether you are publishing a newspaper, magazine, annual report, newsletter, flyers, brochures, advertisements or even business cards. A nice design might get someone to look at a business card, but it is their interest in the service offered that will make them put it in their wallet or rolodex.

Newspapers and magazines are a perfect example of these principles. Every newspaper and magazine is looking for a photograph or headline to catch the readers' attention. William Randolph Hearst described it as "Oh Wow" journalism. What he wanted was a front page that would make a man on the way to his mother's funeral stop at a newspaper rack and say "Oh Wow!" That may be extreme, but it's what we're all looking for--how to get someone to stop and notice our product.

But both newspapers and magazines are also excellent at getting out of the way so readers can get their information. Features are always located in the same place, columns have consistent formats and heads (so they are easily identified both as columns and as specific writers), text is produced in narrow columns (usually 9 to 24 picas--1 1/2 to 4 inches) because readers can take it in quicker, every caption is in the same format, every continuation line (Please turn to page ...) is identical, and so on. Page through your daily paper for a week, or study the format of your favorite magazine. You will quickly see how they attract readers, and then get out of the way.

In magazines, this means most articles begin with splashy presentation pages. These include color, graphics, and larger type, to attract readers' attention. But subsequent pages are usually more mundane, with easy to follow jump heads, simple flowing columns of type, and specific informational graphics. In the case of newspapers it means the lead paragraph is always the most catchy and often includes a drop cap (an initial larger letter) or is printed in slightly larger type (I do both in my newspaper, using a 72 point drop cap and 11 point type for my beginning paragraph, and then dropping to 10 point for my body type)..

In many respects this is like computer programs--a nice box or an attractive opening screen can attract users, but the real question is whether a program get's the job--accounting, word processing, communications or whatever--done.

Anyway, now that I've gotten on my soapbox, I'm going to try and pass on some tidbits about both attracting attention and getting out of the way.

Make your most important information the center of your design--always build around your most powerful image or most important information. If you are doing a newspaper or newsletter, this means designing your page around your central story and graphic. Generally this flows from left to right and from top to bottom. Put you most important story at the top of the page, and have the largest headline at the top of the page. Make you headline size and story length smaller as you descend on the page.

Be aware of the emotional impact of your type styles or graphics. Different type conveys different emotions. For example, Optima, a tall, san serif type face conveys stately elegance, perfect for the headlines in an annual report, while Souvenir is a face with rounded serif which conveys a more casual, relaxed atmosphere. Don't be afraid to

Be consistent! You can follow a pre-defined style. Go to a book store and buy Strunk & White' Elements of Style, or the Associated Press Style Book. These will give you ideas for language and design that are in keeping with the most generally accepted styles. But you do not have to follow any specific style. By doing the same thing consistently you create your own style. If at the beginning of every column you have a black box with the columnist's name reversed out in white, readers will eventually associate that format with columns, and a style will be established. The New York Times created their own style by using the titles Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms., before every last name. Although this is different from the vast majority of newspapers, it is now expected in the Times. (Some typesetters always put the names of other newspapers and magazines, such as New York Times, for example, in italics). Remember, your audience will develop a familiarity with your style and come to accept it. This not only allows you to get out of the way, it makes formatting quicker. Not only that, it provides the ability to create real emphasis and shock value by breaking style. And success breeds familiarity. Rolling Stone magazine was new and different when it started in the 1960's, but by doing the same things consistently, it created a style that is now standard for music publications throughout the industry.

A couple of facts just for interest sake.

Studies have shown that the optimum width for a column of type is between 9 and 24 picas. For justified type the figures are between 9 and 18

picas. At this width the eye can take in most or all of a single line of type, so that eye movement from the left to right is minimized. The less eye the eye moves from left to right, the quicker it can read. If you are using justified type, it is easier for the eye to follow without inter-column rules. If your type is unjustified (ragged right), inter-column rules help the eye move from line to line. Readers are also more likely to read indented paragraphs.

Finally, one of the more obscure facts--a recent editor's trade publication reported that 22 percent more readers are likely to follow a story if the continuation line reads "Please turn to page XX" than if it reads "Continued on Page XX," or "See Page XX".

Apparently even readers like being asked nicely.

Desktop Publishing
by Rob Weinstein
A Windows Online "the Weekly" column

Computer News
By
Randy Wong

Microsoft wants Windows on PS/2s

Last month, IBM had announced that OS/2 2.0 will be preinstalled on all PS/2 personal computers. This month, Microsoft Corp. has announced a special MS-DOS/Windows 3.1 package for the IBM PS/2 computers. The Microsoft combination package will be sold to IBM PS/2 resellers. The resellers will then have the option to delete OS/2, or leave it on the system, for users to 'dual boot' to either operating system. Microsoft expressed that they are not out to do battle with IBM. Microsoft decided to sell the combination package after talking to many resellers and users, who did not want to be forced into using OS/2.   OS/2 2.0

can run DOS and Windows 3.0 applications, it can not run applications made for Windows 3.1. The IBM PS/2 DOS/Windows package will be available by June. The retail price for this package will be $199.95, with a promotional price of $149.95. There will also be a version for the IBM compatible computers, which will be available later.

With Microsoft cutting them off at the pass, IBM is still hoping to sell at least 1 million copies of OS/2 this year. To date, IBM claims to have shipped about 200,000 copies of OS/2 2.0, plus another 200,000 by electronic downloading.

Lotus Dreaming Multimedia Notes

Lotus Development Corp. is looking at releasing imaging software for it's Notes workgroup platform. The product, currently called Lotus Notes: Document Imaging, is the combination of Notes and Eastman Kodak's Desktop Document Imaging. Lotus Notes: Document Imaging will handle three phases of the image process, the scanning, viewing, and storage. Other functions will be offered as add-on companions to Notes. One add-on would be an optical character-recognition feature, which will transfer a document to a standard Note file format. With a separate fax gateway add-on, faxes are sent directly to Notes, and viewed as a document.

Help Me, CD-ROM

With millions of Windows users, getting technical help from Microsoft can be time consuming and costly. M'aidez, Inc. has decided to cut out Microsoft technical support by putting technical support information on compact disc read only memory (CD-ROM). Helpdisq for Windows is an indexed CD-ROM that is updated monthly on the latest technical support information on various Windows products. Currently, there are about 200 vendors supplying the information to M'aidez. Helpdisq will be available for a subscription price of $1,495. For this price, you get 12 issues for use on one workstation, or three local area network users. A site license is also available, for a starting price of $3,900. Helpdisq requires Windows 3.1 and a CD-ROM reader.

Intel Goes Direct To Users

Intel Corp. announced that their Overdrive Processor family will be sold directly to users through retail stores. The OverDrive Processor family is the Intel's line of double clocking I486 processor chip products.   Intel has release two OverDrive processor chips. One version, priced at $549, will fit into the 16 MHz or 20 MHz 486SX computer systems. The

second, priced at $699, will match up with the 25 MHz 486SX systems. The chip is plugged into the Performance Enhancement socket on most 486SX motherboard. Intel will offer a DX and DX2 version of the OverDrive chips later this year. Intel will support these chips through a toll free number.

Improving Lotus 1-2-3 For DOS

Lotus development Corp. has announced 1-2-3 for DOS Release 2.4. This upgrade will bring some Windows graphics into this latest release. Release 2.4 will include Lotus SmartIcons. The SmartIcons allow users to point and click on a graphical icon to perform a task. The improved help system is easier to understand and is more like an on-line manual. Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.4 is expected to be available in June. Lotus is also scheduling Lotus 1-2-3 for DOS 3.4 later this year. The bigger brother will have all the new enhancement that Release 2.4 has.

Peachtree Capitalize On SmarText

Peachtree Software currently uses Lotus SmarText 2.0 for Windows as an on-line tutorial for its release of Peachtree Accounting for Windows. Lotus SmarText 2.0 for Windows is a hypertext tool for building and reading on-line documents. The reference tools are The Accounting Primer, Glossary and Tutorial.

Randy Wong

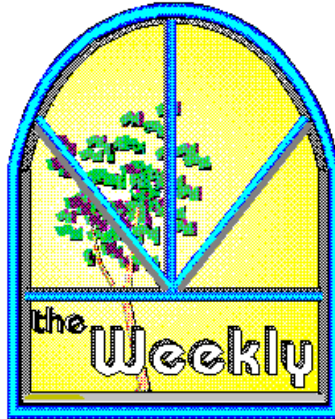Computer News & Product Reviews
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