

Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group

3 Thatcher Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 1S6

February, 1988

Free software programs

Two new enhancements for Lotus 123

Lotus is giving away two freebies to enhance your version 2.01 copy of 1-2-3 (only one for version 2.0):

LEARN - Records macro keystrokes

SPEEDUP - Increases re-calculation times.

To get your copy of the two free enhancements for Lotus 1-2-3 (one for 2.0) download

123ADN.ARC from The Bureau BBS or other fine BBS's in your neighbourhood.

LEARN-Record keystrokes in a macro (like in Symphony and other spreadsheet packages that are cons ahead of the likable but limited 123). To use it, you have to define one your ALT keys (I prefer ALT 5 since that's what Symphony uses) as the LEARN key. Start recording by pressing this key and press it again once you're done.

SPEEDUP-This speeds up your recalculation times (considerably I might add). There are two settings: STANDARD and OPTIMAL. Use the first. Also the cells that need to be re-calculated are highlighted (I have an EGA card and the highlighted cells shows up as a yukky purple. Use PC MAG's SPECTRUM to change this to any color of you like.) The highlighting can also be turned off.

XCOPY utility

Program has many features

by Andre Cyr

Whether you're an old hand at MS/PC DOS or a newcomer, it's likely that you only gave a cursory look at all the files included in the manual when you took possession of your new version of DOS (3.2 or later). The files may have then been tossed into oblivion in a DOS subdirectory or a backup diskette that you'll never refer to again,

If you've done that, then you may still be struggling with the COPY command, a relic of the mid to late seventies, and miss a little jewel called XCOPY.EXE. Without being the most revolutionary utility software,

XCOPY is a neat improvement on COPY and DISKCOPY.COM and ... you already own it.

XCOPY has most of the capabilities of the COPY command and DISKCOPY.COM, uses a similar syntax, and has a few improvement of its own.

What do you lose?

Everything has a price and XCOPY is no different. While the COPY is always available, being memory resident in COMMAND.COM, XCOPY.EXE is a command file which requires space on your diskette, RAMDISK or hard disk for access to its capabilities. The COPY command allows you to redirect ASCII files to your printer (COPY xxxxx.xxx PRN) or to input data in a text file (e. g. COPY CON textfile.txt).

XCOPY works only on files that are stored on disk. Also the COPY command can append files which XCOPY can't. On the DISKCOPY.COM side, also an external command, you don't lose or gain that much!

What you gain

Your gains are mainly at the COPY command level. The COPY command has two "annoying" features:

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Public domain software

EVALUATE is a handy 'FOG INDEX'

by Andre Cyr

Therein many "public domain", "shareware" or simply commercial package who will help you assess the readability of your writing as well as their human "punch". All these software are limited to the English language and French texts won't fare well.

EVALUATE is a small (24K) and slick public domain utility writ-

ten by a local author, P. Asselin. The utility has a built in table that give you the capability to assess the readability level and human "punch" of your English and French texts.

Assessing the readability of your writing is an intriguing concept with its schools of believers and non believers. Just for the fun of it you can try this program against texts in either official language and... you might of might not like the results...

(N.B. if you want to dump the results screen to your EPSON FX or compatible printer you need to use PRTSCFX to display properly the graphics characters used in the screen (PRTSCFX is also available on various local bulletin boards);

Avoid the rush

Memberships available now

Twenty five members mailed in their renewals prior to the January meeting and 44 others renewed at the desk. Thirteen new members also joined, which made for a pretty hectic evening at the registration desk. The names of the 25 and those who managed to register before the meeting participated in a draw for a Diskette-of-the-Month (DOM) subscription worth \$25. Dale Crook, a one-year member who had just renewed his membership, won the prize of an audit.

Because of the short time between the members receiving the newsletter and the January 27 meeting, we decided to include all renewees at the beginning of the meeting in the draw. The idea of the draw is to prevent those long line-ups which are annoying for everyone. We still would appreciate advance renewals both prior to the night of the meeting and immediately before the meeting. BUT, for the February and March draws, **ONLY THOSE RENEWALS RECEIVED AT THE OPUG'S ADDRESS NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 23 AND MARCH 29 RESPECTIVELY** will be eligible for the draws. .And since the names remain in the bag for all the draws, it's to your advantage to RENEW RIGHT NOW. There are still more than 360 members who have to renew their memberships.

Club badges

Your Membership Chairman seems to be loosing the "battle of the badges" and he's looking for HELP. At the January meeting, 252 name badges were spread on the table at the front of the hall. He even had provided lists to help everyone discover if their name badge was there instead of everyone rummaging through the whole lot. He brought 228 badges back home with him and he'll be adding more than 24 before the February meeting. If you haven't done it yet, please pick-up your badge, wear it at the meeting and **KEEP IT** with you? One way to remember it is to place it with your diskette carrier or your notepad you usually bring with you to the meetings. Please, retrieve your badge next time you come to the meeting.

Freebies ...

from page 1

INSTALLATION:

De-ARC 123ADN.ARCInouur Lot-is subdir.

Type: ADD-MGR 123 LEARN

and ADD-MGR 123 SPEEDUP

where 123 is actually 123.SET. Substitute this if yours is named something else.

Now go into 123, press ALT < 10>, select <A>ttach. The screens you'll get are self explanatory. Remember to <U>pdate these changes once you're done in the current menu.

You can also make either add-on enhancement autoloading.

Disk of the Month

Disk-48 will have (among other things) a great clipboard program for transferring data from one program to another with 4 separate clipboards, a utility to show disk accesses on screen (even RAM disks), a tennis game for two with an interesting twist, a utility to remove all *.BAK and zero-byte length files, a printer/ directory utility and a program to peek into your SideKick appointment calendar and set alarms to go off 10 minutes before your appointments.

Microcomputers in the federal government

by Jackson Hibler

Microcomputing in the Fed ... ? The Auditor General (OAG)? Oh Boy... maybe this would have been a good night to stay home. But from the looks of that four Megabyte RAM 386 powered "laptop" that feeds his Sayet overhead projector cornbo... could this be a man who loves his work!

Larry Duff arose before us in his auditor blue suit.

"Those of you who are in the Federal Government have had experience with us..." (ripple of nervous laughter) "...so naturally you are familiar with the world's third greatest lie: "We are here to help you!" (genuine laughter). He may not have helped us, but he certainly informed us ... maybe more than he intended!

... they put an entire year of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' financial data on a micro computer for audit purposes...

Perhaps the most telling statistic came at the beginning: There are about 600 employee at the OAG ... and 400 plus micros! These people are not "disinterested observers". They're already committed users.

The next subject - software- confirmed it. To start, they have an of-the-shelf software evaluation unit that has produced much sought-after reports that are not available for public distribution... this is the Auditor Federal, eh?

But when they can't find a FIDO BBS to transfer their inter-office mail, or a FULLTEXT to search large text files... well (they have the past decade of reports on micro computer in order to check for inconsistency), they write their own! (OACMAIL to transmit binary files through ENVOY 100 and retranslate them into a readable format - available free of charge to other federal departments) or CULPRIT (cute, eh?).

IDEA and AUDITPRO help them extract data from mainframes and a variety of microcomputer programs and import it into their

micros where they can work in a uniform environment (they put an entire year of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' financial data on a micro computer for audit purposes). I get the feeling these guys would not be rattled to discover my accounts are handled by a spreadsheet but, au contraire, would be pleased ... and prepared!

So here we have this committed bunch of people who consider micros essential to their work. But we also have bureaucrats who are beginning to see the micro computers in government as a very serious threat. What to do? Why not start with a couple of surveys?

The first one tells them what they think they already know: "bureaucratic" problems have so bogged down large-scale mainframe projects in the government that they are not getting fair return for the investment. The second survey confirms what they suspected: the microcomputer has become a significant, widely-accepted tool without waiting for cost benefit "proofs".

The trouble with surveys, of course, is that they are not audits. It has been very difficult to "quantify" the productivity improvements so clearly felt; not a pleasant feeling for an auditor, I'd guess. Still, the results are most interesting:

Micros in government

Micro computing in the government is growing rapidly: so rapidly that every departmental micro-support group was overwhelmed. There were 12,000 micros in government in 1986, Now there are twice that number. One out of four workstations have a microcomputer equipped.

The investment in micros is bigger than one might expect: the cost ratio of hardware to and other related expenses (software, training, organization, etc.) is one to six ... and that "one" is already \$60 million

Uncoordinated, decentralized planning (bottom-up) not only typifies micro usage, but it works. A well planned (top-down) mainframe-style installation is atypical.

Word processing is the number one micro computer usage, followed by spreadsheets, drafting and graphics, scientific and specially developed applications, in that order.

Problems such as the Department of Sup-

ply and Services' ignorance of compatibility requirements, and individual work-groups' ignorance of bulk software purchasing opportunities are not likely to be solved by central planning but through education and communication.

Experimentation is still the productive rule

Experimentation is still the productive rule with micros. Many programs developed in one department have spread through the government ...

with micros. Many programs developed in one department have spread through the government: StatsCan's scheduling system, for instance.

Clerical jobs are changing profoundly: "Our secretaries aren't typing as much because we're doing it!"

Sharing software

Software copying is a big unknown: they didn't "audit" every machine to look for pirated software... "Frankly, we were afraid of what we might find." But that audit will happen some day.

The biggest problem with microcomputers is not hardware or software but people's expectations: "It's not the technology but the limits of people to take up the technology that is our biggest problem area."

Standardization (software or hardware) will be almost impossible at this point, and that may be a good thing.

Diversity has been beneficial

At this point the overhead projector looked like it was about to burn a hole in the Sayet display, and I was quite convinced that government micro computing had already burned a number of holes in the bureaucracy. (It's too late to stop'em, folks, and it's too soon to control'em.)

XCOPY includes a 'compare' feature

It's more than a simple copy program

from page 1

- 1 - it reads each file, one at a time, and then copy them to their target;
- 2 - it can read big files in chunks of 64K only, thus needing multiple passes on big files.

These features mean a lot of disk activity in terms of reading and writing with its ensuing wear and tear on your hardware.

XCOPY is smarter. It will gobble up as many files as your computer memory can handle before starting to copy the files to their target destination. Thus, for wildcard copies and large files you obtain a faster copy rate with a reduced read and write access to your disks thus eliminating some wear and tear. This feature makes XCOPY worthwhile to investigate. But there's more...

XCOPY has eight internal switches which allows you to automate many cumbersome routine tasks. I will concentrate on what I feel are the most useful options.

"The MS DOS BACKUP.COM program permits you to create an archive copy of your hard disk at the end of a specified period (one day, one week, etc.). Backups created with BACKUP.COM are stored in a unique format which is unreadable from MS DOS and you must use RESTORE.COM to regain access to your files. XCOPY, as long as your files don't exceed the size of your floppy diskette, can store your "backup" in a MS DOS readable format.

XCOPY is one of the rare utilities around that use the archive bit that show that a file was altered since the last "backup". For example, if you use the following XCOPY flag:

```
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a: /a
```

This will tell XCOPY to save all the modified workfiles to your floppy diskette on drive A: But there is a more interesting flag available; if you use the following XCOPY flag:

```
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a: /M
```

this will tell XCOPY to save all the modified workfiles and to reset the archive bit to "unmodified" to your floppy diskette on drive A: The result of this XCOPY flag will be to "backup" only the files that have been

modified since you last run this option. Of course, the first time it's run, it will "backup" each one of your individual files; but once not it a form selective "backups" that you can automate through an appropriate batch file for each workfile subdirectory. Why waste time and cause unnecessary wear and tear on your hardware by "backing up" your program files?

For the more technically inclined individuals, there's another XCOPY flag that is worth considering in terms of selective backup of your workfiles. You can manually specify the date when you want XCOPY to make its backup if you use the following XCOPY flag:

```
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a:  
/D:MM-DD-YY
```

(Feb. 14, 1988=02-14-88)

this will tell XCOPY to save all files that are dated on or after the manually inserted date (N.B. if you have modified the date using the DATE command you must adhere to the date format selected) to your floppy diskette on drive A:

All of the above flags can be run with the verify flag active to guarantee that the copy is identical to the original by using the above command with these variations:

```
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a: /A/V  
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a: /M/V  
XCOPY C:\LOTUSWKS\*. * a:  
/D:MM-DD-YY/V
```

I personally like this additional reassurance that my copy process worked properly.

All these options are great! But their power can be increased by the /S flag. If you invoke this flag, it will cause XCOPY to "backup" your files in the directory that you specified according to the flag option selected; but your command is extended to the subdirectories if any, in the specified directory. If your diskette or your "D" hard disk doesn't have the necessary subdirectory, XCOPY will create them during this process. I found this option particularly useful in a partitioned hard disk. If the subdirectory is empty, XCOPY will ignore it, but if you use the XCOPY flag /E in conjunction with the /S flag, it will even create

the empty subdirectories found.

Other XCOPY flags

There are two other "less" useful XCOPY flag; the /W and /P flags. The /W flag will wait for any keystroke before stating to copy files. This will permit you to swap diskettes, if necessary. The /P flag requires that you issue a formal acknowledgement before any copy take place by typing Y at the prompt, N will ignore the proposed file and move you to the next file.

XCOPY can assist you in coping diskettes in a different format. Unlike DISKCOPY.COM that copies a diskette track by track resulting in an image copy of the original diskette, XCOPY ignores the source and target formats as long as the target diskette is formatted. If you issue the following command with you own selected flag:

```
XCOPY A: B: /x/x/x/S/E/V
```

XCOPY will permit you to copy the contents of a regular MS DOS 360K diskette to a MS DOS high density diskette; or a directory and its subdirectories to either a MS DOS 360K diskette or high density diskette with the proper flags invoked.

XCOPY.EXE has a "good" error trapping procedure. You can see various "menacing/warning messages" as you use XCOPY. If you are the impatient type or a master with XCOPY, you can eliminate all these messages by either copying or renaming XCOPY.EXE MCOPY.EXE.

MCOPY.EXE will work within the confine of the following assumptions:

-the source is a directory and the target is a directory (within an hard disk or a floppy diskette);

- if the source encompass multiple files the target must be a directory;

-if you append a "\ " (backslash) to the end of the target name, the target name is a directory (e.g. the following MCOPY command will create the directory LOTUSWKS if it doesn't already exist and then copy the specified files to it:

```
MCOPY LOTUSWKS a:\ LOTUSWKS\ .
```

What's new in the Specialty Library

Some of the additions to the Specialty Library for February will be as follows.

An adjustable RAM disk that allows you to change its size without rebooting and without losing its contents.

Version 2.0 of DanCAD 3-D. This is a major upgrade to this 3-D drawing and animation package. It supports CGA, EGA and Hercules display adapters and outputs to dot matrix printers, lasers, plotters, and even the Linotronic 300 typesetter. A fast computer (80286 or 80386) is recommended.

Version 2.3 of Galaxy. More speed and features from this fast and capable word processor.

Taxes 1987. Two Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheets and a stand-alone program (database application compiled with Clipper) to prepare your taxes.

March 2

Bulletin board seminar planned

A seminar session on Bulletin Boards for members with little or no experience in their use under the general theme of "Access to Bulletin Board- What to do ... and not to do..." will be held at Upland Airport, Wednesday March 2, 1988.

Bruce Miller, the club's Bulletin Board Operator (SYSOP) has agreed to be the speaker. Bulletin Board, their purpose, organization and use will be covered.

Due to limited facilities the maximum attendance will be limited to 10 persons.

To register or to express your interest in such seminar, you can contact:

Herb Kelland 733-4259

Based on the demand, the Ottawa IBM PC Users' Group will try to organize such "get accounted" seminars on this subject or other subject in the future.

WP 5.0 update ...

An upgrade to Wordperfect version 5.0 for existing owners is available for:
 - free (if version 4.2 was purchased after February 1, 1988);
 - \$50.00 (U.S.) for current users who order the update before March 1, 1988;
 - 60.00 (U.S.) if ordered after March 1, 1988.

Calendar ...

Meetings of the Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group are held on the last Wednesday of the month except in July and December. The Meeting are held at the National Research Council Auditorium, 100 Sussex Drive (Gothic Building facing King Edward Avenue). Memberships and club disks are available, at 7:30 p.m. with the regular meeting starting at 8 p.m. Free parking is available at the rear of the Gothic Building.

The next meeting will be on:

March 30.

Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group

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Packages	Eric Clyde	749 2387
Whole Bit TV Show	Sandy Shaw	733 5088

Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group

3 Thatcher Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 1 S6

Membership renewal

Name: _____
(Please print or type clearly)

Address: _____
(Please include complete mailing address, Apt. number, street, road, crescent, etc)

City: _____ Prov: _____ Code: _____

Home: () _____ Business () _____

Memberships in the Ottawa PC Users Group (OPCUG) are \$20.00 per person and are valid until March 31, 1989. Members may also subscribe to the OPCUG's Disk-of-the-Month (DOM's) service which entitles the subscriber to ten consecutive DOMs. Please make cheques payable to the OPCUG and mail to the address at the top of this form.

Check one:
New: <input type="checkbox"/>
Renewal: <input type="checkbox"/>

Membership fees:
Membership: \$20.00
Disk subscription: \$25.00