

# Review: Magic Window II

BY JOHN LOMBARDI

Contributor

**M**agic Window II is a much-improved version of a venerable Apple II word-processing program. The program is designed to simulate a typewriter, and it uses a "magic window" that moves across an imaginary page.

Magic Window is a "what you see is what you get" word-processing program. The screen image shows page breaks, headers or footers, page numbers and any other characters that will appear on the final printout.

In its earlier version, the program was less than satisfactory because it used a 40-column display — you couldn't see an entire line at one time, which made proofreading difficult. The new version, Magic Window II, resolves this problem.

The program can now take advantage of an 80-column board to provide a reasonable width for the magic window, or it can use the Apple's high-resolution Graphics mode to provide a 70-column display. The latter display is not as satisfactory, but most competing programs offer similar text displays. In either case, Magic Window II can handle text lines as wide as 160 characters, although you must shift the screen window once or more to view lines of this length.

Magic Window contains many of the editing features you would expect in an Apple word-processing program, although it is not a full-screen editor. You cannot move the cursor by word or back space to the previous line. Magic Window can scroll your text from the top or bottom of the file, either a line at a time or in half-screen blocks, and can go forward or backward any specified number of pages.

When you want to insert or delete text, there are some limitations. The editor is always in the Typeover mode and to insert you either open a new line, split an old line or first insert a blank character and then type the new character. You can delete an entire line, an individual character or part of a line from the position of the cursor to the end of the line. You cannot, however, delete by word. You can split and join lines anywhere in the text. If your inserted text exceeds the current line, the display wraps around to open a new line for more text.

An interesting feature of Magic Win-

ow permits you to make a copy of the character above the cursor, allowing you to create tables with repetitive labels or similar text. You can save and recover deleted lines from a push-down stack, which can hold up to 16 lines. You can also use this stack for cut-and-paste operations. If you push more than 16 lines onto the stack, the program deletes the first lines from the stack to make room for the last lines you enter.

The program can justify and reformat

text, but in a rather clumsy fashion. If you make changes in your text that leave gaps in lines, you must close them with the Glue command, which reconnects line fragments. You can glue one line or paragraph at a time. If you glue one paragraph at a time, you must separate the paragraphs by a single blank line for single-spaced text and four blank lines for double-spaced text. If you don't, all your carefully constructed paragraph indents are removed.

You can justify text one line or paragraph at a time to provide left, right or complete justification. This routine does not move words among lines to reformat a paragraph. Instead, it reformats text on a line-by-line basis, and so you do need to glue your lines first.

Magic Window can print all of your text or a range of pages — to indicate the range you specify the start page and the number of pages you want to print. You can print a duplicate of the formatted file to disk and list files that you want printed in sequence. The program also supports single-sheet or continuous-feed paper.

The program works with a substantial number of printers and printer-interface cards. Its printing subsystem supports micro space justification for printers such as the Diablo (an undocumented feature), and it does a fine job with superscripts, subscripts, underlining and boldface. You can enter any special printer-control characters into the file, and the line formatter handles these with ease, ignoring nonprinting characters.

Magic Window's filer subsystem handles the details of storing, retrieving and managing the word-processing files that the program uses. The program can read from and write to both formatted and unformatted files. Formatted files contain format information such as tabs, page size and other information that you have set from within the editor, as well as your text. It is best to use this file for edited documents. An unformatted file is a standard ASCII text file that contains only material that you type. You can use this file for source code and program files, as well as data that you want to insert into other documents.

The program is able to merge parts of documents reasonably well, although you might have trouble assembling complicated documents. We have no problems with Magic Window's Search and Replace and

InfoWorld	
Report Card	
Magic Window II	
	Poor Fair Good Excellent
Performance	
Documentation	
Ease of Use	
Error Handling	

**Summary:** In its new version, the Magic Window II word processor can use either a 70- or 80-column screen display. The program is easy to use and performs competently if you use it to produce short- or medium-size documents. For the production of long or complicated documents, it is slow and less effective.

**Product details:** List price, \$149.95. Available for Apple II and II Plus running DOS 3.3. Requires 48K random-access memory (64K recommended); one disk drive; printer, 80-column board, lowercase adapter, 80-column board, lowercase adapter are optional. Published by Artsci, 5547 Satsuma Avenue, North Hollywood, CA 91601; (818) 985-2922.

Find functions, which work as the functions do in other word processors. Since this is an in-memory word-processing program, it works reasonably fast, although production of long documents can be slow.

Your system's memory size (48K or 64K) determines the possible size of your document in memory. If you are using the 70-column mode instead of an 80-column board, your document size is reduced

because the screen routines take up memory space. Maximum document size approximates 26K (or 16 double-spaced pages), and the screen shows you the number of free sectors you have in memory, possibly to make comparison with disk space easier. The program issues repeated loud warnings when the memory is full, and, if you ignore them, you can overrun the memory and cause the program to fail.

Magic Window is a useful word-processing program. Many functions are menu-driven, documentation is good and the range of features is adequate. Although the editor is not as elegant as some others on the market, it is competent, easy to use and reasonably fast. You can use it effectively to produce short- to medium-size documents and letters that do not require extensive editing or complex formatting. ●

## Review: WordStar 3.3

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**W**ordStar, available since June of 1983 in revision 3.3, is probably the best-known word-processing package for microcomputers. Although it was introduced in 1978, an eon ago in the annals of personal computing, WordStar continues to be the best-selling word-processing program for personal computers and the standard by which other word-processing programs are measured. MicroPro has revised WordStar several times over the years, adding and improving features, but the program has remained fundamentally unchanged. That kind of staying power says a lot for the utility and power of this popular program.

Among other things it has improved,

simply by making selections from the appropriate menus. If you're using a color monitor, you can change the background, text and menu colors.

WordStar's Installation program also contains an undocumented feature that increases the program's customization abilities. By pressing the Plus key when you use the Installation menu, you gain access to WordStar's label patcher, which allows you to change program parameters that the Features menu does not list. To effectively use this, though, you need to know the labels or their hexadecimal addresses within the WordStar program.

commonly used functions, you can set the Help level at 0 for "no help, I know what I'm doing," and thus free up the entire screen for text.

WordStar's functions consist of one-, two- or three-key commands, that usually require you to first press the Control key. For example, pressing the Control key and the letter *D* tells WordStar to save your document to a disk file; holding down the Control key and pressing the letter *T* deletes the word to the right of the cursor; and pressing Control and *Y* deletes an entire line.

You need to learn a great number of these commands before you can use WordStar effectively, and so this program may take a little longer to learn than some other word processors. Help is available, though, at least as far as the IBM Personal

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### want to be visible on the screen.

MicroPro has given WordStar's documentation a brand-new look with Version 3.3. The older manuals were confusing at best and provided only very technical descriptions of WordStar's features.

WordStar is a screen-oriented word-processing program: The way it presents text on the screen is close to the way it will come out on your printer. It means that you create or edit your document and simultaneously format it for printing.

Before you can start using WordStar, you must install it. MicroPro provides a new and comprehensive installation routine with Version 3.3. (Previous WordStar installation routines were just short of nightmarish for many new users.)

For the IBM PC, installation usually means that you must specify which printer you will be using. Version 3.3's installation routine allows you to go a lot further towards creating a truly customized program than earlier versions of WordStar. You can alter program and features parameters and create several versions of WordStar to suit various applications.

WordStar prompts you through the installation process with questions and menus. You make changes to the program

Unfortunately, the new documentation does not provide this information; you have to get your hands on one of the older WordStar manuals for the details.

On the other hand, you can use the label patcher to help speed up and alter some of WordStar's functions. Even though it is undocumented, it's easy to use because of the menus and prompts that WordStar provides.

The first things you notice when you start using WordStar are its menus, which provide on-screen Help. The program lists every one of its functions on a menu or submenu. This information is available, on-screen, at any time, but it can be intimidating or confusing to new users. The on-screen information also takes up an enormous amount of screen space — space that you might want to use for text. This is a small problem, though, because WordStar offers four Help levels — you can tell WordStar just how much or how little help you want to be visible on the screen. Once you've mastered the most

Computer is concerned. WordStar uses the IBM PC keyboard to some advantage — the arrow keys move the cursor, and other keys on the numeric keypad perform other functions. For example, the Home key moves the cursor to the top of the screen, which saves you from having to press the Control key followed by the *Q* and *E* keys. WordStar also makes use of the IBM PC's ten special function keys, which are preset to perform certain functions. By using the installation routine, you can alter the functions of these keys and can create the right combination of Function-key and Control-key sequences to suit your needs.

WordStar offers most of the basic word-processing functions that you might need, including deleting a character, word or line; marking, moving, copying or deleting blocks of text; vertical and horizontal scrolling through the document; and a Column mode.

MicroPro likes to say that with its WordStar program, "What you see is what