PFS Professional Write
Second-Generation Program Is Quick, Simple Update Adds Address Book Manager, Synonym Finder
By John Lombardi, Review Editor

With PFS Write, Software Publishing Publishing has refined the product to incorporate several improvements. The program is now more efficient and user-friendly, offering a simpler interface than its predecessor.

FEATURES:
PFS Professional Write has a good set of features, including:

- A fast, efficient word processor
- A spell checker
- A built-in thesaurus
- A user-friendly interface
- A customizable layout

The program is designed to be easy to use, with a minimal learning curve. It is suitable for both novice and experienced users.

PERFORMANCE:
PFS Professional Write is a fast and efficient program. It is easy to use and provides all the features needed for a basic word processing task.

- It has a user-friendly interface
- It is easy to use
- It is efficient
- It is customizable

The program is ideal for anyone who needs a basic word processing program. It is fast, efficient, and easy to use.

Also Included
In This Section

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- Drafix
- Filenaker Plus

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With PFS Professional Write, you can set margins, tab stops, headers, footers, and underlines and bold, italic, and underline options. A synonym finder lists words that have the same meaning as any word type.
Given its excellent documentation, strong menu system, and clean design, PFS Professional Write earns an excellent rating for its ease of learning.

**EASE OF USE:**
Most of the features that make this program easy to use also make it easy to learn. Because the menus aren't too small to read, and because the program may be used conveniently when you've mastered the program, PFS Professional Write provides a keyboard-compatibility that is much more consistent with most commonly used commands. You can enter or save files, do most editing functions, including cut, paste, move, and spell using different control-key combinations.

On the other hand, everything except justification on-screen, including headers and footers, page layout is extremely functional if you've used the program before.

Of course, one thing that makes this product so easy to use compared to something like Word Perfect 4.1 is that PFS Professional Write has many fewer features. Neverthelass, the program is well-designed to make this product easy to learn as it is to use. We give this program an excellent ease of use rating.

**ERROR HANDLING:**
This program is virtually impossible to crash. It handles almost all problems gracefully except for those that are the result of similar difficulties, with apologetic and comprehensible error messages. Errors in PFS Professional Write operates correctly in memory, so a power failure will cause the loss of any editing changes made since the last save. Fortunately, saving is quick and easy.

There are no undo commands, although the block actually copies it to the clipboard where it can be retrieved by the Paste operation, a useful safety feature. Unfortunately, the program does not end up in the clipboard, however, because large block deletes that exceed the size of the clipboard buffer. The program also has a limit on the amount of text it will cut and paste.

One oddball feature in error handling occurs if you reset the margins so the body of text is too narrow. The program will warn you to check your margins at 10 and 12 margins at 13. If you reset the format with a block of five characters, any word longer than that is broken after the fifth character. When you try to recover by reloading the margin back to something reasonable, the program puts a blank character in the middle of every word broken. There is no easy recovery other than to discard the whole copy and start over with the original data. We found this an easy mistake to make because when we reset the margins accidentally, then tried to select another block of text, the program simply used the Return key, which executes reformatting. The program should have done this more elegantly.

We tested the program with several memory-resident programs, including WordStar and Symphony, and had no problems. Overall, error handling is conventional and satisfactory.

**SUPPORT:**
PFS Professional Write has a strong support group. The program is not expensive. Many disks will be replaced for 90 days (a standard warranty), and the company provides a terminal installation of the United States and a test number for international messages. The manual provides a newsletter and notification of product upgrades for users who send in their registration card.

We called with technical questions about a program we were having with the DCA feature. We found the technical support staff easy to contact and friendly in their interaction with users.

Because of its letter address, newsletter, and all the available information, PFS Professional Write has a very good rating in support.

**VALUE:**
Within the realm of easy-to-use and easy-to-learn word processing programs, PFS Professional Write is one of the best. It is quick, effective, predictable, and reasonably complete. While lacking a number of features that characterize more powerful programs, it has the basics and a number of features of its own, like the address book. Its spelling is excellent, as is the documentation. The program is limited to files of no longer than about 30 pages, and for somewhat larger files, it can print documents without complex formatting requirements such as multiple line settings, automatic line breaking.

PFS Professional Write, at $199, is about equal in value to MicroPro's Easy Writer, which costs $199, and a better value than Webster's New World Writer, priced at $39. We rate PFS Professional Write a very good value for basic word processing.

John Lombardi is a professor of history and author of five books. He has been working with computers since 1987.