Proficient Autocad Enhancer Offers New Way to Input Autocad Data

I recently saw a demonstration of a product that seemed to flag a future in computing. The Proficient Autocad Enhancer from Computation Technologies Corporation, which provides a new method of input for Autocad through handwriting recognition and artificial intelligence technologies.

Proficient allows you to access over 185 features by simply writing a one-to-three-letter command with a stylus and digitizing pad (not manufactured by CIT). Proficient Enhancer comes with an expansion card for its handwriting recognition capability, software for the Autocad interface, and an adapter to place over the digitizing pad.

Profficient interfaces with the Autocad menu structure as a mouse would. But the more fascinating features come with the handwriting recognition system and macro capability.

The product's 185 "pre-built" menus are designed interactively. For example, to access the circle tool you type C. A button on the stylus lets you switch easily between macro and drawing modes. It's frequently used macros have two or three character combinations but are still more efficient.

The Profficient software lets you program your own macros, which can be up to 127 characters long. This allows complex but frequently used procedures to be set into macro form.

Using the stylus and pad for all entry into Autocad saves time and energy. No more reaching for the keyboard to mouse commands, and the user's eyes never need to leave the screen or drawings. On top of this, there is no need to slow down through menus to get to the more obscure commands that a particular user might access frequently.

Dac Easy Word 3.0

Dac Easy software, king of the low-cost accounting world, has issued a major revision of its massive executive word processing program, Dac Easy Word, rebadged Version 3.0.

In addition to some minor changes in internal operations, Dac Easy Word 3.0 includes a few new functions. A new command (Alt-A) moves the cursor to the top of the page, while another (Alt-0) underlines lines and words. Dac Easy changes the document on screen with customer or vendor lists from Dac Easy Accounts and Employee records. You can quickly file the structure of the business in its minimal list database, and a Pack command removes records temporarily deleted from the database. Headers and footers can include a code, GIF, that prints the current file name. You can also enter DOS, execute commands, and return to the Dac Easy Word. The manual has been slightly revised and reprinted.

Zipkey

ZIPKER SOFTWARE

Here's a little product so simple that it doesn't take one minute to demonstrate, and yet it will prove so indispensable that people will fall in love with it.

Zipkey is nothing more than a RAM-resident ZIP-code finder. It works exactly the way you would expect. You pop it up, type the name of the city, and it gives you the ZIP code. Oh, you can also enter the ZIP code and get the city and state. It just acts like a hard-copy ZIP-code directory, but you can type in to use one of these books! Oh! Trust me, this is no trick program. The makers of Zipkey have identified a real need that can be better done on a computer than on paper. Even if you just need to look up a ZIP code once in a while, it's easier to find out which subsidiary you stuck this thing in than to first over one of those cumbersome paperback books.

To make life easier, Zipkey actually shows you, as you type in the city name, all the cities that are matches so far. You enter Salt and it says too many cities, but when you get to San C (it's not case sensitive) it shows you 0 - San Carlos (48070), and 1 - San Clemente (92672).

You don't have to type out the entire city name, misspelling it in the process. For example, if I type in to Zipkey that city name, the program doesn't yet break them down by street (maybe later). Zipkey also supports 2,000 entries. (GIF, 755155, 326557).

Here's another time-saver. In memory-resident mode, Zipkey will take the ZIP code that finds the nearest cursor position and paste it into the underlying document, any combination of city (abbreviated or spelled out), ZIP code, and some other refinement I just don't go into.

When memory-resident, Zipkey takes

as little as 1KB of RAM if you leave the data file (300K of data compressed down to 12KB) anywhere in the directory on RAM, takes up another 12KB of conventional or, if you haveit, EMS memory. The memory-resident version looks entirely into memory and performs instantly even on our slowpoke XT.

Zipkey can be had by subscription for $120 per year, which entitles you to annual updates with higher subscription fees you get more frequent updates (appears new ZIP code appears frequently). Joe Bob see it out.

Eric Rasmussen Software, 416 E. University Ave., Bloomington, IN 47401; (812) 329-1181

Michael McCarthy

W.P. Kingsfield

INFORMATION RESEARCH

For Word Perfect users who don't like the standard help system's keyboard template display, the W.P. Kingsfield menu template (175K) offers an alternative.

This utility uses 35K of memory to provide both pop-up and template windows into the Word Perfect help system.

W.P. Kingsfield provides a pop-up template in the Word Perfect help system.

After loading the program into memory, whenever you type Alt-T, a three-line template appears at the bottom of the screen showing the meaning of each of the Word Perfect function keys. If you hold down the Alt key, you see all function key names, if you hold down the Shift key, you get the Shift function key names, and so on. If you type a question mark, then a function key you are putting into the Word Perfect help system for that key.

Everything works as described, and the utility is nifty. However, it adds little to the existing Word Perfect help system, which gives you a complete template of function keys by hitting F3 twice. This then takes you to the correct help page, whichever you type function-key combination. The advantage of the Word Perfect help system is that it doesn't take 35K and it comes for free. W.P. Kingsfield has to be loaded first in any set of TSRs or you may have a conflict, and in the current version there is no way to get it out of memory once loaded. The Word Perfect template remains active in whatever program you use, so you can get the Word Perfect commands in the middle of a Lotus 1-2-3-3 session if you so choose.

All in all, this is a handy but not very significant utility for the typical user of people who don't like the Word Perfect F3 keyboard template. The program works and is a little better, Information Research, 2421 Ivy Road, Charleston, Virginia, 22901; (804) 383-3542.

— John Lombardi