WordPerfect enhances both the old and the new

Versions 5.1, 6.0 get minor upgrades

BY JOHN LOMBARDI REVIEW BOARD

If you use WordPerfect 5.1 or 6.0, you'll be interested in two relatively minor but useful upgrades just out from WordPerfect Corp.

WordPerfect 5.1 - should put some zip into word processing chores for users who have stuck with Version 5.1 and may still be running it on XT-class computers. The highlight of this specially designed upgrade, priced at $49.95, is a set of new conversion utilities that let 5.1 users share documents with WordPerfect 6.0 (or 6.0a) users on either DOS or Windows platforms.

To test this enhancement, I created a moderately complex document in WordPerfect for Windows 6.0a that included columns with one column of graphics, a table element, and page numbers. I then opened and saved the document in WordPerfect 5.1, and opened the document (now in Version 5.1) back in Version 6.0a for Windows. Although it wasn't seamless, the conversion appeared to work quite well.

The WordPerfect 6.0a fonts that Version 5.1 doesn't support didn't come across (5.1 translates unrecognized fonts into Courier), and layout features unavailable in 5.1 didn't appear. (For example, text wrapping around all sides of a graphic element.) But no data disappeared and the font not recognized in 5.1 survived the round trip and reappeared when transferred back into 6.0a as WordPerfect 5.1+ adds a few other frills as well. It works with fax/modems and electronic mail through hooks to WordPerfect Office. Its file manager has also been enhanced, giving better file sort order, date, time, and size, as well as file name.

I also liked the two new TSI's that came with WordPerfect 5.1: ScreenExtender and Bitstream FaceLift. ScreenExtender is a wonderfully convenient feature that solves the old '51's problem of not being able to see all of your lines on-screen when you display proportional fonts on a monospaced screen.

ScreenExtender installs a TSR that drives a database of common graphics characters, including EGA and Hercules standards as well as VGA and Super VGA, so that WordPerfect can have more characters on a line. ScreenExtender lets you choose smaller character sets that the display will fit in a full-line on-screen. ScreenExtender worked fine on my VGA screen, making the editing of multiple columns in WordPerfect much easier.

Being There offers simple, inexpensive Mac videoconferencing

BY CAREY NEWS
PREVIEW BOARD

Being There, from Intelligence at Large Inc., is a new Macintosh-only videoconferencing package that offers top-notch desktop videoconferencing at a fraction of the cost of "executive" videoconferencing systems. If you have a camcorder (CCD) video camera, an Apple microphone, and a sufficient bandwidth, you can share audio, video, files, email, and videoconferencing with other users on your Ethernet or Token Ring network with a remote dial-up connection.

Being There comes in two versions: standard ($599), which can connect only two users at a time and requires 3.5MB of RAM, and professional (Being There Pro, $999), which connects multiple users and needs 3MB of RAM. We looked at the professional version.

Both versions require System 7.0 or later and a Mac with full-duplex audio and video input capability. Most high-end Macs include full-duplex audio, which allows simultaneous sound input and output, and AV Macs of third-party video capture boards allow video input. Being There does not run in Power Macintosh native mode, but it uses many native-mode system resources, so you can expect a performance boost.

We set up Being There on a 600AV and an 840AV on the same local LAN and plugged our cameras into the AV's Video in ports.

Being There requires you to set the video input signal type - NTSC, SECAM, PAL - but doesn't explain to the novice user what these are. The configuration dialog is complex, but not impossible to use.

The user's manual offers many configuration tips based on the kind of machine you are using.

Once the software is running, it operates adequately. I tested Being There by meeting with a colleague across the LAN. We found the sound lag of one second a bit annoying, but so much of an

To test WordPerfect 6.0a, I loaded the same graphically complex document that caused Version 6.0 to hang, fixing it.

New conversion utilities let WordPerfect 5.1+ accept WordPerfect 6.0a documents like this one.

machine during testing of word processors. (See product comparison February 7, p. 26) WordPerfect 6.0a has fixed this bug. I had no problem with the document this time.

Graphical operations and scrolling in complex documents are also faster in this new version. I found scrolling by cursor in WordPerfect 6.0a to be about twice as fast as in Word, and about the same when I used WordPerfect plus Adobe Facelift. WordPerfect now has an automatic correction feature that catches and corrects common spelling errors on the fly. It has also added some tracking, and automated help systems for new users, and it now comes with an uninstall tool.

For OS/2, WordPerfect provides a separate toolkit disk for $49 that promises to help integrate WordPerfect files into Windows and the Windows Shell.

WordPerfect, which is headquartered in Orem, Utah, can be reached at (801) 485-5151.