Word, Excel usability gains entice users

**Word for Windows 95** by John Lombardo

For many users, the most popular application in Microsoft Corp.'s Office 95 is Word for Windows 95. It has few major additions to its feature complement, but it has greatly improved and enhanced its user interactions — with many wizards, tips, intelligent interactivity, and other devices designed to make work easier. All these have added Word to the word processing market.

I tested a solid beta of the product and found that it is as easy and intuitive for the user interface as previous versions of Word for Windows, with the same menus and icons. Under the new suite integration system, however, Microsoft works hard to make the menu bars and pull-down options identical from product to product in the Office suite.

Most of the new elements in this area reflect changes in the underlying operating system. For example, Word takes advantage of the Windows 95 line-drawing system, which will index each file that matches a user-specified criterion (generally defined by file type).

This version of Word has many automatic enhancements. It reviews your spelling as you type and underlines the red words that don't have a match in the dictionary. You can either fix the word on the spot by typing the right spelling or by clicking the right mouse button for some suggestions from the spell checker.

Word has a new feature that copies a paragraph or sentence of text to the clipboard. To do this, you first select the text you want to copy, then click the right mouse button, and choose Copy. This feature is useful for importing text from one document to another.

Excel for Windows 95

By Kelly Conway

For a minute there, things smelled a little fishy. At first glance, the Microsoft Corp. Excel for Windows 95 beta I tested looked suspiciously like its 16-bit predecessor, Excel 5. The same menus, same file name format. "People are on their minds upgrading to Excel 95, and Excel 95 includes some improvements to existing features. The INFOMAN numeric formatting dialog box has finally been tamed. First table cache has been enhanced to support up to 95 percent less RAM. And VB. A, the programming language that has stopped many macro viruses in their tracks, has party no longer a thing. But Excel 95's new features and appeal improvements provide plenty of reasons to upgrade.

Opinions

Microsoft Word for Windows

Microsoft Corp., Redmond, Wash. (800) 426-9300 or (206) 882-8000 (1200) 222-2330

Price: $139 estimated retail $199 to upgrade from any previous version or competitor (until Dec. 31, 1995 thereafter).

Platform: Windows 95, Windows NT

Pros: Easily enhanced usability, automatic spell checking.

Cons: Lees complex command line.

"From the

The Help window that displays additional information.

Word 95 has a variety of workbook features. There's a special mail mode that makes sending and receiving mail easy. The spelling checker and dictionary are on a par with previous versions of Word, and the typewriter font is much more professional than before. Word 95 also supports "buy" to "purchase" and "telling" to "telling."