

Software Reviews

• REVIEW SCORING

InfoWorld reviews only finished, production versions of products, never beta test versions.

Products receive ratings ranging from unacceptable to excellent in various categories. Scores are derived by multiplying the weighting (in parentheses) of each criterion by its rating, where:

Excellent = 1.0 — Outstanding in all areas.

Very Good = 0.75 — Meets all essential criteria and offers significant advantages.

Good = 0.625 — Meets essential criteria and includes some special features.

Satisfactory = 0.5 — Meets essential criteria.

Poor = 0.25 — Falls short in essential areas.

Unacceptable or N/A = 0.0 — Fails to meet minimum standards or lacks this feature.

Scores are summed, divided by 100, and rounded down to one decimal place to yield the total score out of a maximum possible score of 10 (plus bonus). Final scores should be judged as follows:

10 — 9-10 Excellent

7-8 Very Good

6-6.9 Good

5-5.9 Satisfactory

3-4.9 Poor

1-2.9 Unacceptable

• INDEXES

Indexes appear in the first issues of January, April, July, and October. For back issues, specify dates and send \$2.95 per issue to InfoWorld Customer Service, P.O. Box 5994, Pasadena, CA 91107. Please allow six weeks for delivery.

Target Editions are sent only to volume buyers of target products.

Also Included
In This Section

• Micro Resource
Manager 51

Sprint

Word Processor Is Slick, Quick, and Powerful

Borland's Chameleon-Like Product Mimics Old Favorites

By John Lombardi Review Board

Borland's Sprint dashes into the bitterly contested word processing market with a superior editor, a powerful text formatter, and an innovative programming language for text processing.

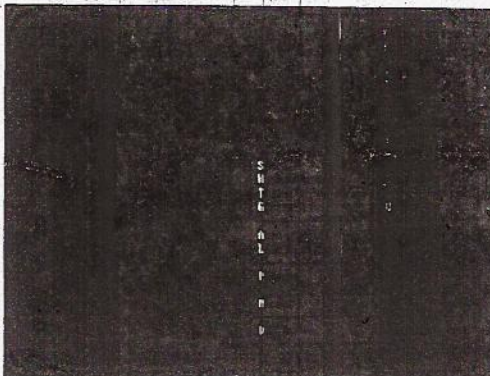
Slick and quick describe this innovative product, whose special features include a range of alternate user interfaces that make this the "Rich Little" of word processing. Sprint partially mimics the operation of popular word processors so that corporate staffs can standardize word processing with minimal retraining. Although it's not for everyone, Sprint has a variety of nice features that make it an attractive text processing system for a number of users.

FEATURES:

Within the context of high-powered office/professional word processing programs, Sprint falls somewhere in the upper half. While it is very flexible and possesses an impressively rich complement of editing commands for moving around the text, searching and replacing, moving/copying/pasting, and applying enhancements such as underlining or font changes, Sprint lacks a few fundamental features available in the likes of Wordstar 2000 or Word Perfect 5.0. Also, Sprint divides editing and formatting into two steps, much like word processors of the past, which is less convenient than the conventional office/professional word processors in use today.

Sprint has no math capability for columns or rows, its sorting routine is primitive, and its preview of the printed page is poor by comparison to the best in this class. Combined with the absence of useful graphic capabilities (with the exception of some rudimentary commands to include Postscript files), Sprint's professional word processing feature list falls below the best in the class.

However, the Sprint system includes niceties not available or less effectively implemented by the market leaders. In addition to its native Borland interface, the alternative user interfaces permit users trained on Microsoft Word or Multi-



The Quick Card utility is an on-line reference to a diverse list of shortcut commands possible in Borland's Sprint.

mate, for example, to begin using Sprint immediately: Sprint operates like (but doesn't look like) any of several popular systems — EMACS, Final Word II, MS Word, Multimate, Sidekick, Word Perfect, or Wordstar. These interfaces are included with the product now, but Borland plans to unbundle them later in the year.

A mouse can also be used reasonably effectively, for those addicted to the buttoned rodent. Moreover, Sprint can have 24 files and multiple windows open simultaneously, and a host of facilities exist for moving, copying, or cutting and pasting between windows and files.

Yet for all these features, the

one element that sets Sprint apart from its competitors is the word processing programming language. Sprint can be made into almost anything you want that handles text. Practically every operation contained in the system can be programmed to operate in any way and in any combination. This programmability, of course, gives Sprint the possibility of behaving like other systems, or like no other system at all. If the capability exists within the Sprint word processing engine, it can be programmed to operate in combination with any other function.

The possibilities for custom-designed text processing systems, or the creation of auto-

matic formatting procedures to be used by relatively unsophisticated users, is awesome. Because this capability goes beyond macro or keystroke records, it comes quite close to qualifying as a real programming language.

The formatting system of Sprint offers complete printer control with special emphasis on Postscript printers, although many others are supported. It will do proportionally spaced text using the commonly available fonts for the Hewlett-Packard and Postscript printers. The formatter will adjust kerning (space between letters) and the distance between lines. Headers, footers, page numbers, indexes, table of contents lists, and similar text elements can be placed as accurately as the printer permits. Sprint combines multiple documents, prints any particular pages, and will print to file for spooling. While the formatter is working, Sprint's editor is unusable. The formatter handles columns, parallel or newspaper style, with ease — although while editing you cannot see the columns or column breaks on screen.

As an editor/formatter program, many of Sprint's effects require special commands in the text, producing a cluttered screen. Similar to, but much more powerful than Wordstar "dot" commands, these formatting directives do not affect text appearance until the text is printed. Complex formatting requires imagination and experience to visualize how the commands will translate into printed text, and test printings are often required.

Sprint belongs to the editor/formatter class of word processors like PC-Write. That means that entering and editing text takes place separately from the process of arranging the text into final form and printing it. Most corporate word processing users prefer the WYSIWYG approach, in which the screen represents the printed page as closely as possible. For some applications, however, the Sprint system has distinct advantages, particularly when large documents with complex formatting must

WORD PERFECT 5.0 • INFOWORLD BENCHMARKS

	Word Perfect 4.2	Word Perfect 5.0	Microsoft Word 4.0	Sprint 1.0
File				
Load	1.5	1.9	1.4	3.5
Save & continue	5.6	3.7	4.1	2.9
Import ASCII 4.9	18.3	1	1.1	15.9
Export ASCII 2.8	22.5	8.4	55.3	20.4
Import DCA	20.9	19.9	58.7	61.3
Cursor movement				
Top to bottom	2.9	1.9	0.5	1.1
Manual scroll	97.7	44.9	94.1	79
Reformat	25.9*	19.6*	10.8	21.3
Search				
Last word	2.7	1.7	2.2	4.3
Replace	5.5	6	14.4	18.9
Append document	0.8	1.2	0.7	2.0

All times in seconds.

All tests conducted on 8-MHz IBM AT (640K of RAM, EGA).

*Import times varied from 8.2 to 15.3 seconds.

*Could not globally alter all rulers. Chart indicates total time to alter each ruler manually.

*Could not globally alter all rulers. This time included stripping out all margin sets, creating and applying a style sheet.

be edited extensively.

PERFORMANCE:

Editor, formatter, and programming language — each dimension defines a separate aspect of Sprint's performance. As an editor, Sprint is strong; its principal competitor for speed and effectiveness is Xywrite III. Here we evaluate Sprint according to our scoring and testing criteria established in the March 28 Office/Professional Word Processing product comparison.

Access to any part of a long file is option-rich. The complement of editing commands for selecting text by letter, word, sentence, line, paragraph, and the like exceeds any other sys-

tem we know. Should there be an editing combination command you want assigned to a single key, creating it is easy. The editor handles formats in almost any unit you can imagine, including fixed-space columns, inches, ems, points, and printer units.

With the possibility of 24 open files and as many open windows as will fit on a screen, the editor handles tasks requiring cut and paste across files

with no trouble at all. Page formatting works exceedingly well and permits margins to indent or outdent, at either the left or right margin, at any distance.

When you define a document format, it can have an almost infinite number of characteristics, and the program comes with a number of examples often needed in document preparation, including address, closing, and quotations. How-

ever, the system does not paginate while editing, requiring a separate process to determine page breaks. The preview system shows only a character-based version of the file on-screen, in which text overlaps to allow proportionally spaced lines to accurately show beginning and ending points.

Unfortunately, the editor's excellent hyphenation feature only works on non-proportional fonts because the editor has no

idea where the lines will break with proportionally spaced fonts — that's the formatter's responsibility. The cursor speed can't be changed, the file management system is limited (you can't create a subdirectory, for example), and the sort facility insists on sorting upper- and lowercase letters differently, seriously detracting from an already limited sort module.

With Sprint's diverse set of basic word processing features

INFO WORLD

REPORT CARD

WORD PROCESSING

SPRINT

VERSION 1.0

Criterion	(Weighting)	Score
Performance		
Correspondence	(40)	G
Spell/Thesaurus	(40)	G
Mail merge	(30)	VG
Outlining	(25)	P
Table of contents and indexing	(20)	G
Footnotes	(25)	G
Document tracking	(15)	P
Fonts/style sheets	(25)	S
Graphics integ.	(25)	P
Speed	(125)	G
Compatibility	(30)	E
Documentation	(100)	VG
Ease of learning	(125)	VG
Ease of use	(150)	G
Error handling	(75)	VG
Support		
Support policies	(25)	G
Technical support	(25)	VG
Value	(100)	E
Final score		6.9
E = Excellent; VG = Very Good; G = Good; S = Satisfactory; P = Poor; U = Unacceptable.		

PRODUCT SUMMARY

Company: Borland International, 1800 Green Hills Road, P.O. Box 660001, Scotts Valley, CA 95066; (408) 438-8400.

List Price: \$199.95.

Requires: IBM PC or compatible; MS/PC-DOS 2.0; 384K of RAM; two floppy drives.

Pros: Fairly full list of features; fine performance; highly customizable and programmable; strong on editing and formatting; great laser printer support.

Cons: Uses separate formatting program, so it lacks in WYSIWYG; poor on graphics support; no math features; less effective hyphenation; limited document tracking and outlining.

Summary: Sprint offers an interface that mimics other word processors, making it a good company-wide standard that allows for individual user preferences. Very programmable (for experts), Sprint has a superior editor, nice documentation, and a high level of formatting capability, although it falls short of the top ranks in overall features.

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Leader: Bill Zoellick, vice president, Avalanche Development Co.

W-2 Integrating CD-ROM into Multivendor/Multiuser Computing Environments

For information resource systems managers.

Among the topics you'll explore in detail are the roles Apple, DEC, IBM and others are playing as suppliers and vendors; MS-DOS and MVS-based operating systems and CD technology; networking issues; and hardware and software compatibility issues. You'll get answers to questions about appropriate CD-ROM applications, downloading, and conversion from magnetic media to digital or optical-based media, and more. You'll learn how to set up CD-ROM workstations in a corporate environment or large information-handling facility.

Leader: Julie Schwerin, president, Infotech

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considered, we rate its capabilities with memos and correspondence good.

The spelling checker does not include a global replace, and each capitalization of an unknown word must be learned/ignored individually. Words in the auxiliary dictionary are not offered as alternative spellings. However, Sprint checks for correct capitalization, and contains a nice thesaurus which permits you to "chain" search

through synonyms. The spelling checker can automatically check for misspellings as you type, beeping as soon as an error is typed (similar to Turbo Lighting). Borland says it has the most modern and accurate spelling checker word list available. We rate the spelling checker and thesaurus good.

The mail-merge capabilities are superior, with powerful conditionals, record criteria, and sorting commands. Some fea-

tures, such as criteria instructions and unusual field arrangements, could be clearer, but they are not a serious deficiency. You can use the programming language to automate data entry. Mail-merge capabilities are very good.

Sprint's outlining feature is just a list numbering system performed at print time. There is no useful on-screen indication of what level of the outline you're in, and you cannot indent

the various levels with tabs (indenting is done at print time). As a result, it's easy to inadvertently mismatch levels. Sprint can import Borland's Sidekick Plus Outlook (outliner) files. Because of its limited capabilities, we rate outlining poor.

The table of contents/indexing functions work well. An impressive number of tools are available, including cross-references and indexes (see, see also, index under, etc.). The

system allows a number of variables to be defined and includes such standards as date, time, day, month, year, and similar system choices. Cross-references of many kinds can be made easily within the text and in an index. All these features are accessed by inserting commands and codes in the text. We rate table of contents and indexing features good.

Footnotes are embedded in the document with no on-screen numbering. Footnotes, end notes, and unnumbered notes are available simultaneously and are easily differentiated. We rate footnoting good.

Document tracking support is minimal. There is no redlining; specific font styles, such as strikeout or underscore, could be substituted, however. Non-printing notes can be embedded. There is no document history screen. We rate document tracking poor.

Sprint includes a full complement of font controls including boldface, italics, underlining, strike through, and super- and subscripting. Font selections are printer-dependent. The print preview feature does not display fonts, but it does show some styles such as boldface. Sprint contains no MS-Word-like style sheet feature. You can, however, create and modify styles, but doing so is more difficult than in other office/professional word processors. Overall, fonts and style sheets meet our criteria for a satisfactory score.

Encapsulated Postscript is the only graphics format supported by Sprint. Lines can be drawn or space reserved for graphics, but neither Lotus Pict nor PCX files can be integrated. Graphics integration is poor.

Sprint performed faster than average for an office professional word processor in our suite of tests, although it didn't win any contests. We rate speed good.

Document conversion compatibility with other systems includes ASCII, DCA, RT, MS-Word, Multimate 3.3, Advantage, Borland Sidekick Plus Outlook, Word Perfect 4.2, and Wordstar. You can import or export a file in another word processing file format from within Sprint; you don't have to exit and use a separate utility. This meets our criteria for an excellent score in compatibility.

DOCUMENTATION:

The complexity and flexibility of this product demand extensive and comprehensive documentation, and Sprint includes three large, well-presented manuals plus a booklet on the alternative user interfaces. There is also a quick-reference guide. Each of these manuals guides users through increasingly difficult and sophisticated commands and operations.

The documentation includes a set of tutorial lessons. Everything about the program is fully documented and explained, for novices and advanced users alike. The programming lan-

Tutorial Program

Tuesday — September 27

Choose two comprehensive, half-day tutorials taught by the best in the industry. At the end of the day you'll have a working knowledge of the hardware, software and applications issues that will affect your organization, and you'll know what to look for when you visit the vendor exhibits. Each afternoon session is designed to complement a morning session (see chart below); however, there is no obligation to attend the tutorials in this sequence.

T1	T2	T3	9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
T4	T5	T6	1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

- T-1 Introduction to Compact Disc and Optical Publishing
- T-2 CD-ROM, CD-I, DVI: Multi-Media Formats
- T-3 Implementation of CD-ROM for Corporate Productivity

1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

- T-4 Introduction to CD-ROM Software Strategies
- T-5 Advanced Software Concepts: Hypertext, Hypermedia
- T-6 In-House Publishing: Developing CD-ROM Applications for Corporate Use

NOTE: Because of the schedule overlap on Monday and Tuesday participants may attend either the Workshop Series or Tutorial Program, but not both.

Conferences

Wednesday and Thursday — September 28-29

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- Managing CD-ROM Databases
- Introduction to CD-ROM Software
- Market Opportunities and Analyses
- Authorization of Data: Copyright and Trademarks
- CD-ROM vs. On-Line
- New Developments in CD Technology
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- Newspapers
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CD-ROM
EXPO

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11-WB/1

guage is also covered.

Sprint includes good on-line help which is context-sensitive and comprehensive. Error messages, by and large, prove helpful although the print-time formatter error messages can be somewhat cryptic to a new user. The formatter will not print the document until formatting errors are corrected, a nice "smart" feature. A disk file contains corrections to the user manual.

The well-produced, easy-to-read, fully indexed, and comprehensive manuals, combined with fine help screens, earn Sprint a very good in documentation.

EASE OF LEARNING:

Learning any new system requires attention and care, and Sprint is no exception. However, the good manuals and help screens greatly simplify the learning process, and for users

familiar with a word processor that Sprint mimics the learning process is quick indeed. We took less than half an hour to install the system, most of which involved copying the disks (totalling about 2.5 megabytes). A user new to word processing could become basically familiar with the concept and with Sprint in under two hours.

Given the good help system, clear menus, alternate user interfaces, and helpful documen-

tation, we rate ease of learning very good.

EASE OF USE:

A good working knowledge of Sprint, if not complete mastery of its features, requires a few days of concentrated effort. Many keyboard shortcuts are possible, and ease of use can be enhanced through customization.

For those interested in the programming language and the

system's extensive customization capabilities, learning time will depend entirely on programming experience. Novices should set aside several months and be sure to have a good teacher.

Some Sprint design characteristics inhibit ease of use. The lack of WYSIWYG capability in the editor makes the preparation of modestly complex documents more difficult than it need be. Compounded by the absence of a good graphic preview and the unavailability of a math module, Sprint's ease of use leaves something to be desired.

While ease of use is enhanced by the many alternative user interfaces that mimic other word processors, using them can be frustrating because they do not provide a 100 percent match. Consequently, you find yourself needing more and you ultimately resort to the Borland User Interface, which is the word processor's native and most complete interface.

However, in compensation, sophisticated users can make the editor do exactly what they want it to do, using exactly the right keys for the right functions. With enough investment of time and expertise, a power user can produce a text editor and word processing system that matches almost exactly any particular set of preferences. At that moment, Sprint becomes the easiest word processor to use.

For highly complex documents, long documents, projects requiring many indexes, lists, and multilevel formats, Sprint is easy to use. However, for producing correspondence, long documents with straightforward formatting requirements, or reports requiring graphic inclusion, more convenience is offered by major products such as Office Writer, Wordstar 2000, Samna, or Word Perfect.

With these many ease of use features taken into consideration, we rate ease of use good.

ERROR HANDLING:

Sprint protects the user against data loss in many ways. The system can be set to maintain a complete backup file of all changes made to the file during an editing session. Should there be a system crash or power failure, this backup file brings up the text with all information saved and ready. It will handle not just the file being edited at the time of the crash, but all open files, up to Sprint's limit of 24. The backup frequency has a default of three seconds, but you can set it to other time lengths.

The Undo command only has one level and undoes deleted text blocks only. It doesn't save deletes done with the Delete or Backspace keys.

Sprint always prompts you when an action could cause a file to be exited without closing, and the program provides a special command to close all open files at once. The formatter always makes a copy of the main file before proceeding to

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in your conventional spreadsheet

Live help

English language
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User-defined
validation criteria

Spreadsheets
validation

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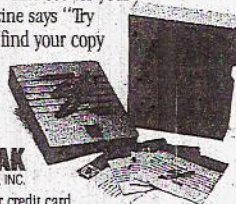
With all this — and more — going for Silk, Jim Gultinan of Cordata concludes "On a scale of 1 to 10 with Lotus being a 10, Silk is a 12." Soft Sector sums it up by saying "Silk is one of the most complete spreadsheet packages on the market today."

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Why not order right now? And see for yourself why Orange Bytes Magazine says "Try Silk, but be careful, you may find your copy of 1-2-3 collecting dust."



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System Requirements: IBM® PC or compatible with
PC-DOS® or MS-DOS® 2.0 or higher, with 512KB mem-
ory; hard disk recommended.

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print a file.

Sprint does a great deal to protect your data. We rate error handling very good.

SUPPORT:

Borland offers unlimited, but not toll-free, telephone support to registered users during regular business hours (PST). In addition, Borland has a money-back guarantee and maintains bulletin board support on popular bulletin boards. We rate Borland's support policies good.

We tested Borland's technical support through the company support phone and CompuServe. The phone support was quick and effective. The support personnel were helpful, courteous, and had a reasonable if not profound knowledge of the product. In a case where the technician didn't have the answer, she put us on hold for a few seconds and then returned with the correct answer.

On CompuServe, Borland offers comments from users and responses from Borland technicians. Responses are quick and informative, and the exchange between users often produces very helpful suggestions.

Given the good quality and quick response of the technical support, we rate Borland's technical support very good.

VALUE:

When all the performance features of Sprint have been reviewed and evaluated, we end up with a very good word processor that is in the same league as Xywrite III and only slightly behind Wordstar 2000, Release 3 or Word Perfect 5.0. What users will like about Sprint is not only its very good performance as a word processing system, but its exceptional flexibility and programmability.

Particularly intriguing is that Sprint, in some ways like Xywrite III, can serve as a text engine customizable for optimal adaptation to specialized text needs. The programming language, as one would expect from a vendor of programming languages, has a rich complement of commands and capabilities that can access all the resources of the computer system right down to the hardware level of ports and display devices.

Sprint may not be up to the level of Word Perfect, Word, Manuscript, or Wordstar 2000, but it is smack in the middle of high-powered, office/professional word processing, while at \$199.95 it is priced in the range of an executive word processor.

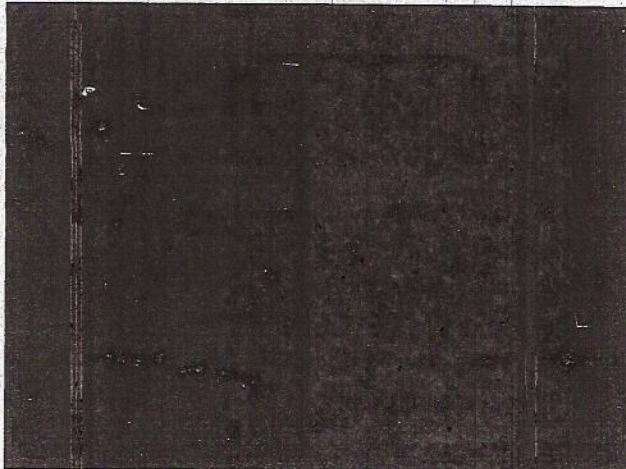
However, you may have to pay extra for alternative user interfaces in the future. Borland told us that perhaps later this year the full set of interfaces would no longer be provided free with the program, but would cost about \$99 for the set. This would dilute its value.

At the current price of \$199.95 with all alternative interfaces, Sprint is an excellent value.

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The Micro Resource Manager Professional has advanced management analysis reports that allow for great detail and flexibility.

Micro Resource Manager Professional Database for Micro Managers Is Expensive and Powerful

By Jeffrey G. DeBalko Manager of InfoWorld Microcomputer Services

As microcomputers continue to take over desk space in every corporation, and as microcomputer hardware and software become more complex (LANs, OS/2), it gets harder and harder to organize, track, and analyze effectively the resources dedicated to these machines. The micro support manager who can't use this information as a management tool may have a difficult time justifying his or her job. Micro Resource Manager Professional, from the Atrium Information Group, is a powerful data management tool aimed at these growing problems.

Whether you manage 50 PCs or 5,000, it's important to keep track of their locations, warranty histories, and upgrade needs. Remember the last time the spreadsheet you support went through a major upgrade? How long did it take to identify the several hundred users of the program, take down the serial numbers, and locate the system disks? This laborious and surprisingly common task is one of many that can be handled with ease by MRM Professional.

But MRM is also capable of handling far more complex problems. Say a PC user calls and asks you how to do graphics with his spreadsheet. You ask him if he has a graphics card. He doesn't know. So you walk to his office, screwdriver in hand, open the computer, and notice that he does indeed have a graphics card, but it's cracked. Now you walk back to your office and rifle your files looking for the warranty information on the hardware.

With MRM, once the call comes in, the procedure is more like this: You enter the user's name on your computer, and a list of his hardware is displayed. He does have a graphics card, you notice, and the correct software, so the problem is probably hardware-related. You hit another key, and the warranty information for that particular card—including the phone number of the vendor—pops up on your screen. The system will also tell you the maintenance history of any piece of hardware in your inventory. Also, when you start shuffling hardware

around (putting the defective card in the shop and taking a working one out of stock or another machine), MRM makes tracking these changes easy.

As the people at Atrium Software say, this program can change your job from micro janitor to micro manager.

FEATURES:

MRM can save time for you and for the users you support. It can decrease the frustration that comes from managing the large amount of information that micro managers have to deal with. More importantly, it can generate over 200 different reports ranging from a "what's where" list to mean-time-between-failures for particular manufacturers' hardware. There are 18 reports in the management analysis section alone, and you can also create custom reports and perform ad hoc queries.

MRM Professional (\$4,995), reviewed here, is Atrium's most powerful PC product. Other products in the line include a VAX version (due out in September) and a line of less capable, less expensive PC versions ranging in price down to \$695. A utility is also available that rolls the databases from multiple remote MRM programs into one MRM Professional file.

MRM Professional integrates nearly all the information the micro manager needs under the umbrella of systems management. The program organizes data into several major categories: Inventory, Warranty and Maintenance, Purchasing and Pricing, Support, and Management. To reap the full benefits of this product, you must commit to many hours of planning, data collection, and data entry.

Aside from the myriad bits of solid information this system tracks, you can also use it to record technical notes and hints that you or users in your organization develop. You can link these tech notes to particular categories of products or to particular product models. Then when you install a new configuration for a user, you can have the program print a tech support book that contains the

relevant cumulative knowledge you have previously gathered for the components in the system.

MRM includes an array of security features and a password-protection scheme that can restrict certain users to particular actions. It will also track use of the system and record who modified what information and when.

The MRM professional package can be run as a multiuser system under several LANs, including IBM Token Ring, 3 Com, and Novell. MRM is written in the Progress 4GL language and requires the Progress LAN run-time module (\$700) to operate in a multiuser environment.

Atrium's other packages include MRM 300 (\$1,995), which does not include the Management Analysis module or the training and support library, and MIM, the Micro Inventory Manager (\$995), which also leaves out the Purchasing and Receiving modules. In the fall, Atrium is scheduled to release Micro Tracer (\$695), a low-end PC management package for 100 or fewer systems.

PERFORMANCE:

We tested MRM on a 12-MHz PC Limited 80286-based computer with a 40-megabyte hard disk and 640K of RAM (InfoWorld Hardware Benchmarks: CPU 2.08, Hard Disk sequential 1.08, Hard Disk random 2.08). MRM is a disk-intensive product, and it seemed slow in responding to menu changes and screen loads. Virtually every request required a hard disk read. Moving between modules also seemed to take much longer than expected.

The vendor states that MRM can run on a PC XT-class machine. However, from our experience, an 8-MHz 80286 with a fast hard disk would be the absolute minimum. When designing a system around MRM, also keep in mind that the Progress and MRM program files alone take more than 12 megabytes of disk space even before entering your first byte of data.

MRM Professional takes up a lot of memory but left as enough room to run Borland's Sidekick. It does not support EMS memory.

Any database product is only as good as the information put into it. MRM allows for great detail and flexibility in describing all aspects of your microcomputer systems. When entering a piece of hardware into the system, for example, you can enter not only the name, model, and type of equipment (Lanier 145-MC monitor), but its class (PC) as well. Diligence in entering all this information can pay off when you combine it with information about vendors that sell this category or class of product and merge it into a form letter soliciting bids on your next major purchase.

The standout feature of MRM Professional is its very useful and advanced management analysis reports. The program allows you to analyze spending trends by department, product category, or almost any other variable. It also includes the capability to track equipment utilization and your support time by department and charge back your costs of support. It performs these functions very well, which is more than can be said for many managers, and this can be a significant aid to the micro manager trying to get a fair share of the dollars in the inevitable budget battles.

Printer support is flexible but limited. The program defaults to an Epson FX-800, and should you wish to use another printer, you must initially type in the escape sequences needed for condensed and normal modes. If you are using a

