



WINDOWS ON THE WORLD ?

This month's issue of *IYM Software Review* is a bit different.

It's different because instead of covering a segment of the software market, we're looking instead at a way of working. The so called "experts" have been lauding the arrival of *Windows 3.0*, and those of us at the receiving end of the technology chain can hardly move without someone trying to ram it down our throats. Is this good?

It can be. While many of us are perfectly contents operating under character-based DOS, and not likely to see any fast gains in our personal productivity levels by embracing *Windows*, we'd have a hard time arguing with the fact that for a large majority of (hesitant) users, using a graphically-based environment makes that pile of transistors on the corner of the desk more accessible. Let's face it, **C:\>** is not a terribly comforting thing for most people to be faced with.

The question then, ultimately, is not **will** a graphical user interface become the standard for PC computing, but **when**, and **which one**? For now, there's only one answer, and it's *Windows*. OS/2 PM still isn't ready, nor are the variations on UNIX, and in any rate, most folks simply don't have the hardware necessary to make either of those choices feasible. GEO DOS promises to be a suitable alternative, but we've heard that story before, haven't we? So far, *Windows* is all we have.

Now for the bad news. Although it will run on an 8088/86 based PC, there are an increasing number of applications for *Windows* that won't. Maybe that's not such bad news after all. Microsoft recommends at least a fast 80286, but that's optimism at its best. **If you don't have at least an 80386SX based machine, with 4 MB of RAM, *Windows* is likely to disappoint you.** It will run with a much lower level of resources to draw upon, but it's VERY slow. You can get by with 2 MB, but if you try to run multiple applications concurrently, you're going to spend more time wondering why you bothered. DOS will start to look pretty good to you.

Some of the things we usually report on in *IYMSR* become irrelevant under *Windows*, so this issue discusses, for example, RAM usage of individual programs little to not at all. You will see occasional references to "system resources used" here, and the concept is similar, but it's so involved, making comparisons based on this criteria is not always fair. Instead, we've tried to give you a general feel for comfort levels, ease of learning, and the like.

Some products are reviewed alone, some with others from their segment. As you can tell from the length of this issue (remember when *IYMSR* ran sixteen pages?), this group reviewed here is by no means complete. We simply ran out of space, and time.

As always, we have a short opinion to be conveyed, at the end.

Enjoy -

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a thin blue rectangular border. The signature is cursive and appears to read "E. Jeffrey Yablon".

E. Jeffrey Yablon, Publisher

Bookkeeping By Design
Accounting By Design

If you've been looking to "go *Windows*", but have been held back by a lack of certain types of software for the environment, you can't use lack of accounting software as an excuse. While most offerings in the area until now have consisted of kludgy macros for Microsoft's *Excel* spreadsheet that inspired nothing in the way of confidence, and releases of "real" software promised by several vendors are so far only vaporware, we know of one product that fits the bill right now, and deserves your attention. *Bookkeeping By Design* is that product.

Making full use of the *Windows* environment, including strong Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE) capabilities, the latest release of *Bookkeeping By Design* makes use of a proprietary database system (it previously relied on Novell's *Btrieve*). As a concession to users of earlier versions of the product who are updating, the developer has chosen to leave the appending of entries to WIN.INI that drive that database in the installation