PRISMA for underscoring this point for us. OK, Guy, this one's for you; we hope you like it.
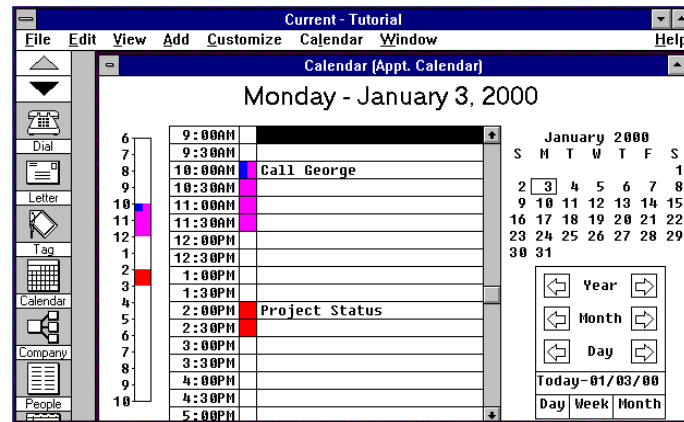
The most important point about PIMs is that they need to handle those miscellaneous bits of data that are constantly flying by you in a way that makes it easy to retrieve and use them when the time comes, **if** the time comes. While there are many products that purport to accomplish this task in the character based world of DOS, there are only a few that work under *Windows*. *Current* and *Your Way* were the only ones that were provided to us in time for this review. The significance of this fact is that overall, the demands of graphical user interfaces (GUIs) coupled with the need for constant redraws of your monitor's screen made necessary by the nature of work you do with PIMs makes this a nascent category. Technologically speaking, round one goes to *Your Way*, overwhelmingly. It redraws screens as quickly as any application for a GUI we've seen. *Current* is not exactly a slouch in this area, either, but doesn't compete. Where *Current* does compete, and compete strongly, is in the area of flexibility. Want to include graphic images with your information? *Current* handles the request with aplomb. Looking for Gantt charts? IBM's offering can format and print them, while PRISMA's is limited to tabular hard copy in its reporting function.
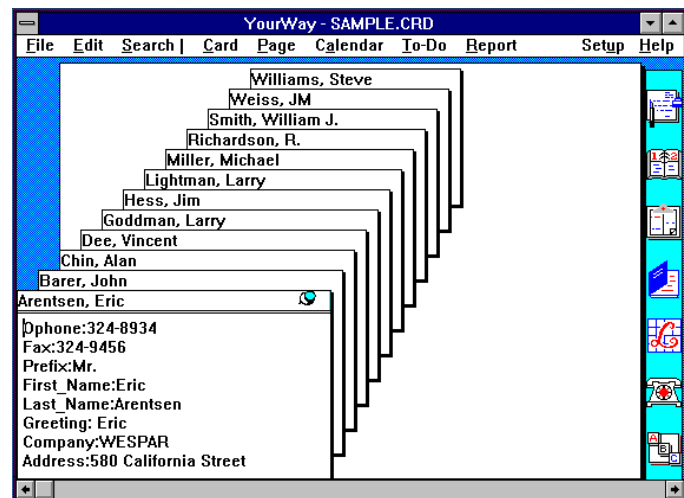
The difference between the programs, all apparent comparisons aside, is one of attitude. *Your Way* reminds us very much (and was produced partially in response to complaints about the restrictiveness of) a character based contact management program called *Act!*, whose purpose is stated clearly by its description. If you want fast, near effortless access to your notes on John Smith of ABC Corp., *Your Way* will give it to you with no more effort then a couple of mouse clicks. Information is tracked via a mixture of contact cards, calendar entries, phone calls, letters, and to-do lists, all data is **automatically** shuffled to appear in all possible contexts, and *Your Way* even offers the ability to launch applications and associated data files directly from the index cards that make up the data nerve center of the product. If you know that Mr. Bigg is keenly interested in the information contained in a particular spreadsheet file, you just set up a properly formatted notation on his index card, and the moment he asks about it, BANG!, you fire it up.

Both *Current* and *Your Way* rely on attractive screen presentations to do their tricks (see figures), but in spite of their similar appearances (particularly with respect to the icons used to navigate them), they are very different. This is because the symbols are only representations of concepts in *Your Way*'s free form database, while they serve as gateways to individualized modules in *Current*. There are advantages to both approaches. *Your Way* wins out in terms of speed and integration, but the nod goes to *Current* for data integrity and size. While both programs occupy about 1.4 megabytes of disk

space, *Your Way*'s data (but not externally linked objects such as form letters) is contained in a single file occupying over 500 kilobytes of space and sized statically. *Current*, on the other hand, stores data in a series of small files that are resized as necessary, starting out at just over 60K aggregately. (This is a significant improvement in version 1.1 of *Current*; release 1.0's data set exceeded 250K in size, empty.)

Current takes a broader and more complicated view of personal information management, a la the progenitor of all products in this

category, Lotus Development Corp.'s *Agenda*. Much more difficult to learn then *Your Way*, *Current* attempts