

History of Word Processors

A word processor (more formally a document preparation system) is a computer application used for the production (including composition, editing, formatting, and possibly printing) of any sort of printable material.

A word processor may also refer to a stand-alone computer unit similar to a typewriter, but often including technological advancements such as a screen, advanced formatting and printing options, and the ability to save documents onto memory cards or diskettes. Word processors almost invariably allowed the user to choose between standard typing and word processing modes by way of a switch. Such word processors should not be confused with an electric typewriter.

Word processors are descended from early text formatting tools (sometimes called text justification tools, from their only real capability). Word processing was one of the earliest applications for the personal computer in office productivity.

Although early word processors used tag-based markup for document formatting, most modern word processors take advantage of a graphical user interface. Most are powerful systems consisting of one or more programs that can produce any arbitrary combination of images, graphics and text, the latter handled with type-setting capability.

The days (2006) Microsoft Word is the most widely used computer word processing system; Microsoft estimates over five million people use the Office suite. There are also many other commercial word processing applications, such as WordPerfect. Open-source applications such as OpenOffice's Writer and KWord are rapidly gaining in popularity.

Characteristics

Word processing typically refers to text manipulation functions such as automatic generation of:

- batch mailings using a form letter template and an address database (also called mail merging);
- indices of keywords and their page numbers;
- tables of contents with section titles and their page numbers;
- tables of figures with caption titles and their page numbers;
- cross-referencing with section or page numbers;
- footnote numbering.

Other word processing functions include "spell checking" (actually checks against wordlists), "grammar checking" (checks for what seem to be simple grammar errors), and a "thesaurus" function (finds words with similar or opposite meanings). In most languages grammar is very complex, so grammar checkers tend to be unreliable and also require a large amount of RAM.

Word processors can be distinguished from several other, related forms of software:

Text editors (modern examples of which include Notepad, Emacs and vi), were the precursors of word processors. While offering facilities for composing and editing text, they do not format documents. This can be done by batch document processing systems, starting with TJ-2 and RUNOFF and still available in such systems as LaTeX (as well as programs that implement the paged-media extensions to HTML and CSS). Text editors are now used mainly by programmers, website designers, and computer system administrators. They are also useful when fast startup times, small file sizes and portability are preferred over formatting.

Later desktop publishing programs were specifically designed to allow elaborate layout for publication, but often offered only limited support for editing. Typically, desktop publishing programs allowed users to import text that they have written using a text editor or word processor. This was the case with Ventura Publisher.

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The term word processing was invented by IBM in the late 1960s. By 1971 it was recognized by the New York Times as a "buzz word". A 1971 Times article referred to "the brave new world of Word Processing or W/P. That's International Business Machines talk... I.B.M. introduced W/P about five years ago for its Magnetic Selectric typewriter and other electronic razzle-dazzle."

IBM defined the term in a broad and vague way as "the combination of people, procedures, and equipment which transforms ideas into printed communications," and originally used it to include dictating machines and ordinary, manually-operated Selectric typewriters. By the early seventies, however, the term was generally understood to mean semiautomated typewriters affording at least some form of electronic editing and correction, and the ability to produce perfect "originals". Thus, the Times headlined a 1974 Xerox product as a "speedier electronic typewriter", but went on to describe the product, which had no screen, as "a word processor rather than strictly a typewriter, in that it stores copy on magnetic tape or magnetic cards for retyping, corrections, and subsequent printout."

Electromechanical paper-tape-based equipment such as the Friden Flexowriter had long been available; the Flexowriter allowed for operations such as repetitive typing of form letters (with a pause for the operator to manually type in the variable information), and when equipped with an auxiliary reader, could perform an early version of "mail merge". Circa 1970 it began to be feasible to apply electronic computers to office automation tasks. IBM's Mag Tape Selectric Typewriter (MTST) and later Mag-Card Selectric (MCST) were early devices of this kind, which allowed editing, simple revision, and repetitive typing, with a one-line display for editing single lines.

The New York Times, reporting on a 1971 business equipment trade show, said

The "buzz word" for this year's show was "word processing", or the use of electronic equipment, such as typewriters; procedures and trained personnel to maximize office efficiency. At the IBM exhibition a girl typed on an electronic typewriter. The copy was received on a magnetic tape cassette which accepted corrections, deletions, and additions and then produced a perfect letter for the boss's signature....

In 1971, a third of all working women in the United States were secretaries, and they could see that word processing would have an impact on their careers. Some manufacturers, according to a Times article, urged that "the concept of 'word processing' could be the answer to Women's Lib advocates' prayers. Word processing will replace the 'traditional' secretary and give women new administrative roles in business and industry."

The 1970s word processing concept did not refer merely to equipment, but, explicitly, to the use of equipment for "breaking down secretarial labor into distinct components, with some staff members handling typing exclusively while others supply administrative support. A typical operation would leave most executives without private secretaries. Instead one secretary would perform various administrative tasks for three or more secretaries." A 1971 article said that "Some [secretaries] see W/P as a career ladder into management; others see it as a dead-end into the automated ghetto; others predict it will lead straight to the picket line." The National Secretaries Association, which defined secretaries as people who "can assume responsibility without direct supervision," feared that W/P would transform secretaries into "space-age typing pools." The article considered only the organizational changes resulting from secretaries operating word processors rather than typewriters; the possibility that word processors might result in managers creating documents without the intervention of secretaries was not considered - not surprising in an era when few but secretaries possessed keyboarding skills.

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A major breakthrough occurred in 1976 with the introduction of a CRT-based system by Wang Laboratories. It displayed text on a CRT screen, and incorporated virtually every fundamental characteristic of word processors as we know them today. It was a true office machine, affordable by organizations such as medium-sized law firms, and easily learned and operated by secretarial staff.

The Wang was not the first CRT-based machine nor were all of its innovations unique to Wang. In the early 1970s Linolex, Lexitron and Vydec introduced pioneering word-processing systems with CRT display editing. A Canadian electronics company, Applied Electronic Systems, introduced a product with similarities to Wang's product in 1974, but went into bankruptcy a year later. In 1976, refinanced by the Canada Development Corporation, it returned to operation as AES Data, and went on to successfully market its brand of word processors worldwide until its demise in the mid-1980s. Despite these predecessors, Wang's product was a standout, and by 1978 it had sold more of these systems than any other vendor.

The phrase "word processor" rapidly came to refer to CRT-based machines similar to Wang's. Numerous machines of this kind emerged, typically marketed by traditional office-equipment companies such as IBM, Lanier (marketing AES Data machines, re-badged), CPT, and NBI. All were specialized, dedicated, proprietary systems, with prices in the \$10,000 ballpark. Cheap general-purpose computers were still the domain of hobbyists.

Some of the earliest CRT-based machines used cassette tapes for removable-memory storage until floppy diskettes became available for this purpose - first the 8-inch floppy, then the 5-1/4-inch (drives by Shugart Associates and diskettes by Dyan). Printing of documents was initially accomplished using IBM Selectric typewriters modified for ASCII-character input. These were later replaced by application-specific daisy wheel printers (Diablo, which became a Xerox company, and Qume -- both now defunct.) For quick "draft" printing, dot-matrix line printers were optional alternatives with some word processors.

With the rise of personal computers, and in particular the IBM PC and PC compatibles, software-based word processors running on general-purpose commodity hardware gradually displaced dedicated word processors, and the term came to refer to software rather than hardware.

Early word-processing software required users to memorize semi-mnemonic key combinations rather than pressing keys labelled "copy" or "bold". (In fact, many early PCs lacked cursor keys; WordStar famously used the E-S-D-X-centered "diamond" for cursor navigation, and modern vi-like editors encourage use of hjkl for navigation.) However, the price differences between dedicated word processors and general-purpose PCs, and the value added to the latter by software such as VisiCalc, were so compelling that personal computers and word processing software soon became serious competition for the dedicated machines.

The late 1980s saw the advent of laser printers, a "typographic" approach to word processing (WYSIWYG - What You See Is What You Get), using bitmap displays with multiple fonts (pioneered by the Xerox Alto computer and Bravo word processing program), and graphical user interfaces (another Xerox PARC innovation, with the Gypsy word processor). These were popularized by MacWrite on the Apple Macintosh in 1983, and Microsoft Word on the IBM PC in 1984; these were probably the first true WYSIWYG word processors to become known to many people. Dedicated word processors became museum pieces.

Of particular interest to many is the standardization of TrueType fonts used in both Macintosh and Windows PCs. While the publishers of the operating systems provide TrueType typefaces, they are largely gathered from traditional typefaces converted by smaller font publishing houses to replicate "reversed" fonts. Advertising continues to create a demand for new and interesting fonts, which can be

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found free of copyright restrictions, or commissioned from font designers. "Software With Flair" was a software house, as an example, that employed artists in the 1980s and 1990s to create fonts.

WordStar

WordStar was a word processor application, published by MicroPro, originally written for the CP/M operating system but later ported to DOS, that enjoyed a dominant market share during the early-to-mid-1980s. Seymour I. Rubinstein was the principal owner of the company.

History

WordStar was originally developed for CP/M, one of the most popular microcomputer operating systems of the pre-MS-DOS era. It was the most feature-rich and easy-to-use word processor available for this OS, and became a de facto standard. Notably, WordStar was the last commercial word processor supporting the CP/M operating system. Release 4, the final CP/M compatible version was sold with 5-1/4" floppy disk as a default, and an 8" version as an option.

The DOS version was very similar to the original, and although the IBM PC featured arrow keys and separate function keys, the traditional "WordStar diamond" and other Ctrl-key functions were retained, leading to rapid adoption by former CP/M users. The first DOS version was a direct port of the CP/M version, and therefore only used 64K of RAM even though DOS supported up to 640K. Users quickly learned they could make this version of WordStar run dramatically faster by using the ability of DOS to create a "RAM disk" in memory, and copy the WordStar program files into it. WordStar would still access the "disk" repeatedly, but the far faster access of the RAM drive compared to a floppy disk yielded a substantial speed improvement. However, edited versions of a document were "Saved" only to this RAM disk, and had to be copied to physical magnetic media before rebooting.

By the mid-1980's WordStar was the most popular word processing software in the world. But IBM dominated the "dedicated word processor" market with its "DisplayWrite" application, which ran on machines dedicated to writing and editing documents. There were many dedicated word processing machines at the time, but IBM's main competition was Wang Laboratories. Such machines were largely expensive and were generally accessed through terminals connected to central mainframe or midrange computers.

When IBM announced it was bringing to market a PC version called "DisplayWriter", MicroPro focused on creating a clone of it which they marketed as "WordStar 2000". Neither program was as successful as its developers had hoped, and the lack of attention MicroPro had paid to the original WordStar in the meantime, coupled with WordStar 2000's poor support for WordStar formats and keystrokes, had allowed competing products an opportunity to take over market share. WordPerfect especially took much of the word processing application market. Its default setting used a smaller portion of the screen for menus than WordStar, and had a much cleaner, uncluttered look. WordPerfect also used the same key sequences as the popular Wang line of dedicated word processor computers, which made it popular with secretaries switching from those to PCs.

MicroPro International restructured as WordStar International, and rehired many of the WordStar programmers who had left the company during the WordStar 2000 diversion. WordStar then progressed through upgrades of 4.5 to 5.0 to 5.5 to 6.0, rebuilding some of its lost market share. An internal struggle between the "old timer" developers of version 6.5 (aimed at MS Word users), and the "young turks" working on version 7.0 (aimed at WordPerfect users), led to the former product being scrapped and the latter product released years ahead of its originally scheduled launch date.

Like many other producers of successful DOS applications, WordStar International delayed before deciding to make a version for the commercially successful Windows 3.0. The company purchased Legacy, an existing Windows-based word processor, which was altered and released as WordStar for Windows in 1991. It was a well-reviewed product, and included many features normally only found in

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more expensive desktop publishing packages. However, its delayed launch meant that Microsoft Word had already firmly established itself as the corporate standard during the two previous years.

WordStar is still actively used by several hundred people in the WordStar Users Group Community. They provide technical support, updated macros and scripts, printer and mouse drivers, and so forth for each other via the long-running WordStar mailing list which started in May 1996 and has continued without interruption (but with one move from Cuenet to WordStar2 in 2002). Several programs have been written to allow WordStar commands to be used in the Windows environment, and even as an integral part of Microsoft Word.

Interface

WordStar is still considered by many to be one of the best examples of a "writing program". Because it was designed for text-only display devices with only a single, functional typeface, the primary focus was on the text, without direct onscreen WYSIWYG formatting. Because typesetting and layout were secondary or tertiary functions left for after the document was written, edited, and proofread, the writer was not distracted by the many formatting possibilities presented by later word processors.

The original machines for which WordStar was developed did not have an array of separate function keys or cursor control keys (e.g. arrow keys, Page Up/Down), so WordStar used sequences of alphabetic keys combined with the "Control" key. For touch typists, in addition, reaching the function and cursor keys generally requires them to take their fingers off the "home keys" with consequent loss of typing rhythm.

For example, the "diamond" of Ctrl-S/E/D/X moved the cursors one character or line to the left, up, right, or down. Ctrl-A/F (to the outside of the "diamond") moved the cursor a full word left/right, and Ctrl-R/C (just "past" the Ctrl keys for up and down) scrolled a full page up/down. Prefacing these keystrokes with Ctrl-Q generally expanded their action, moving the cursor to the end/beginning of the line, end/beginning of the document, etc. Ctrl-H would backspace and delete. Commands to enable bold or italics, printing, blocking text to copy or delete, saving or retrieving files from disk, etc. were typically a short sequence of keystrokes, such as Ctrl-P-B for bold, or Ctrl-K-S to save a file. Formatting codes would appear on screen, such ^B for bold, ^Y for italics, and ^S for underscoring.

Although many of these keystroke sequences were far from self-evident, they tended to lend themselves to mnemonic devices (e.g. Ctrl-Print-Bold, Ctrl-block-Save), and regular users quickly learned them through physical memory, enabling them to rapidly navigate documents by touch, rather than memorizing "Ctrl-S = cursor left".

Some users believe that the relocation of the Ctrl key from the position just to the left of the A key on the PC XT-era keyboard (where Caps-Lock is found on modern keyboards), to the far lower left, interferes with this tactile approach, unless the keyboard is remapped in software to swap these keys. Other users prefer to have two control keys on either side of the space bar, which facilitates eight-finger touch typing. Indeed, WordStar can be regarded as a third keyboard interface: 1) the lower-case letters and numbers, 2. upper-case letters and symbols accessed by the Cap key, and 3) editing and formatting made possible by the Ctrl keys.

WordStar had relative weaknesses, such as an inability to reformat line justification as text was typed or deleted. Thus paragraphs had to be reformatted by command after edits and changes. But a command could be given to reformat the entire document after it had been edited or re-written.

The WordStar interface left a large legacy. This includes many text editors running under MS-DOS, Linux, and other UNIX variants, which can emulate the WordStar keyboard commands using Ctrl-key combinations. The popular Turbo Pascal compiler used WordStar keyboard commands in its IDE editor. WordStar Keyboard Command Emulators exist for current versions of Microsoft Word, and

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Word in turn can open WordStar documents when the appropriate filter is added, enabling users to move back and forth between the old standard and the new one.

Features

MailMerge was an add-on program which allowed a "merge printing" for mass mailings of letters. Pertinent data, like name, address, city, state, zipcode, and so on was stored in non-document datafiles. Documents like business letters could be printed in series by inserting data fields in "master documents". These master documents contained "boilerplate" text, like business letters, with data fields in place of addressee pertinent information. By printing "x" number of versions of the master document, for example, letters customized for various recipients could be printed in series by drawing information from the datafiles and inserted in place of the fields. Thus mass mailings could be prepared with each letter being individually addressed.

Other add-on programs included SpellStar, a spell checker program, later incorporated as a direct part of the WordStar program; and DataStar, a program whose purpose was specifically to expedite creating of the datafiles used for merge printing. These were revolutionary features for personal computer users during the early-to-mid-1980s.

WordStar identified files as either "document" or "nondocument", which led to some confusion among users. "Document" referred to WordStar text files containing embedded and hidden word processing and formatting commands. "Nondocument" files were pure ASCII text files containing no embedded formatting commands. Using WordStar in "Nondocument Mode" was essentially the same as using a traditional "text editor", but with more advanced text editing features than found in some mainframe-based editors.

Filename extensions

DOS WordStar files by default have no extension; some users adopted their own conventions, such as the letters WS followed by the version number (for example, WS3). Backup files were automatically saved as BAKs.

- WordStar for Windows files use the extension WSD
- WordStar for Windows templates use the extension WST
- WordStar for Windows macros use the extension WMC
- WordStar for Windows temporary files use the extension !WS
- WordStar 2000 for DOS and UNIX PC don't have a fixed extension but DOC was common

Note: There isn't a WordStar 2000 for Windows.

WordStar for Windows was also released under the name WordStar Personal Writer, and is a development of WordStar Legacy itself developed from a program called Legacy. Xoom also released a version of WordStar for Windows 2.0 called Xoom Word Pro.

(Information provided by the WordStar Resource Site)

WordPerfect

WordPerfect is a software program for word processing. At the height of its popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was the de facto standard word processor, but has since been eclipsed in sales by Microsoft Word. Although the DOS and Microsoft Windows versions are best known, it has been available for a wide variety of computers and operating systems, including Mac OS, Linux, the Apple IIe, a separate version for the Apple IIgs, most popular versions of Unix, VMS, Data General, System/370, AmigaOS, Atari ST, and OS/2.

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WordPerfect was originally produced by Bruce Bastian and Dr. Alan Ashton who founded Satellite Software International, Inc. of Orem, Utah, which later renamed itself WordPerfect Corporation. Originally written for Data General minicomputers, in 1982 the developers ported the program to the IBM PC as WordPerfect 2.20, continuing the version numbering of the Data General series. The program's popularity took off with the introduction of WordPerfect 4.2 in 1986, with automatic paragraph numbering (important to the legal market), and the splitting of a lengthy footnote and its partial overflow to the bottom of the next page, as if it had been professionally typeset (valuable to the academic market). WordPerfect 4.2 became the first program to overtake the original market leader (WordStar) in a major application category on the DOS platform. In 1989, WordPerfect Corporation released the program's most successful version ever, WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS, which included a pull-down menu that version 5.0 lacked.

WordPerfect used almost every possible combination of function keys with Ctrl, Alt, and Shift modifiers. This was in contrast to WordStar, which used only Ctrl, in conjunction with traditional typing keys. Many people still know the function key combinations from the DOS version, which were designed for the layout of the original 1981 IBM PC keyboard, with two columns of function keys at the left end of the keyboard. For example, the Tab key and the related F4 (Indent) functions were adjacent. This plethora of keystroke possibilities, combined with the developers' wish to keep the user interface free of "clutter" such as on-screen menus, made it necessary for most users to use a keyboard template showing each function. Infamously, WordPerfect used F3 instead of F1 for Help, F1 instead of Esc for Cancel, and Esc for Repeat (though a configuration option in later versions allowed these functions to be rotated to more standard locations).

WordPerfect Corporation produced a variety of ancillary and spin-off products. WordPerfect Library (introduced in 1986) was a package of utilities that included a customizable memory-resident menu driven DOS shell called Shell, task switching (which allowed several programs to remain open and selectable by a hot-key combination under DOS), an open application interface (API) that other software developers could access, an advanced (for its time) macro processor, a Clipboard, a Calculator, a Calendar with a running to-do list and alarms, a flat-file database called Notebook that could be used by itself or in WordPerfect merges, and other features. LetterPerfect was a scaled down version of WordPerfect with the more advanced features removed but with file and (for the most part) keystroke compatibility.

WordPerfect for DOS not only shipped with an impressive array of printer drivers, it also shipped with a printer driver editor called PTR, which features a flexible macro language and allows technically-inclined users to customize and create printer drivers.

Internally, WordPerfect used an extensive WordPerfect character set as its internal code. The precise meaning of the characters, although clearly defined and documented, can be overridden in its customizable printer drivers with PTR.

The relationship between different fonts, and between fonts and the various sections in the WordPerfect character set, were also described in the printer drivers and can be customized through PTR.

WordPerfect for Windows

WordPerfect was late in coming to market with a Windows version. WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows was released in late 1991, by which time Microsoft Word for Windows was already at version 2. WordPerfect's function-key-centered user interface did not adapt well to the new paradigm of mice and pull-down menus, especially with many of WordPerfect's standard key combinations pre-empted by incompatible keyboard shortcuts that Windows itself used (e.g. Alt-F4 became Exit Program instead of WordPerfect's Block Text). The DOS version's impressive arsenal of finely tuned printer drivers was also rendered obsolete by Windows' use of its own printer device drivers.

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Internally, WordPerfect for Windows still used the WordPerfect character set as its internal code. This caused WordPerfect for Windows to be unable to support some languages - for example Chinese - that can be natively supported by Windows.

WordPerfect became part of an office suite when the company entered into a co-licensing agreement with Borland Software Corporation in 1993. The offerings were marketed as Borland Office, containing Windows versions of WordPerfect, Quattro Pro, Borland Paradox, and a LAN-based groupware package called WordPerfect Office (not to be confused with the complete applications suite of the same name later marketed by Corel) based on the WordPerfect Library for DOS. The WordPerfect product line was sold twice, first to Novell in June 1994, who then sold it to Corel in January 1996.

Between the weaknesses of the Windows version, and Microsoft's simultaneous aggressive marketing of Word for Windows as part of the Microsoft Office applications suite, WordPerfect's sales suffered a decline from which it never recovered. Amongst its remaining avid users are many law firms and a few universities, to which Corel now caters as niche markets (with, for example, a major sale to the United States Department of Justice in 2005). In November 2004, Novell filed an antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft for alleged anticompetitive behaviour that Novell claims led to loss of WordPerfect market share.

In 1993, WordPerfect Corporation attempted a unique marketing experiment for WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows. A compact disc named Innovators was released containing a demonstration version of WP 6.0 along with eleven music tracks primarily written by Sam Cardon and Kurt Bestor. The two re-released the disc in 2000 without the demo, but with two additional audio tracks.

Comparison to other word processors

WordPerfect aficionados cite many reasons why they consider it superior to its competitors (especially Word), including:

- the Reveal Codes function, which allows the user to view and edit all formatting codes, and thus obtain complete control over the text;
- more stable handling of long, heavily formatted documents than Word (not true in WordPerfect 5.0 for DOS);
- easier and more reliable editing of tables, especially when they contain merged cells and the user wants to add or delete cells;
- powerful features for creating tables of authorities in legal documents, and including footnotes in word counts, which appeals to writers and legal professionals;
- multi-level paragraph numbering which works properly (compared to Word, which for a number of years suffered from a major bug in this area);
- a wide variety of import and export filters.

Those preferring the MS Word cite its better integration with other MS Office programs (such as e-mail programs), and WordPerfect's poor implementation of Windows conventions in its early Windows versions. Later versions have provided better compliance with interface conventions, file compatibility, and even Word interface emulation.

Corel added "Classic Mode" in WordPerfect 11. This was an attempt to win back users that had switched to MS Word because WordPerfect for Windows was so different from the DOS version they

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knew and loved, and to entice any hold-outs still using it to upgrade. See WordPerfect 12, which was released in 2004, for an extended description of the Classic Mode.

WordPerfect includes a one-click PDF creation feature, which lets users create PDF documents without buying Adobe Acrobat. It also features a built-in dictionary and a thesaurus which suggests new words from a drop-down box while users type. Unlike Word, all editions of WordPerfect since version 6 also use the same file format, making it easy for users to share documents regardless of which version individual users have installed.

WordPerfect for Macintosh

Development of WordPerfect for Macintosh did not run parallel to versions for other operating systems, and used version numbers unconnected to contemporary releases for DOS, Windows, etc. The first release reminded users and reviewers of the DOS version, and was not especially successful in the marketplace. Version 2 was a total re-write, adhering more closely to Apple's UI guidelines. Version 3 took this further, making extensive use of the technologies Apple introduced in Systems 7.0-7.5, while remaining fast and capable of running well on older machines. Corel released version 3.5 in 1996, followed by the improved version 3.5e. It was never updated beyond that, and the product was eventually discontinued. As of 2004, Corel has reiterated that the company has no plans to further develop WordPerfect for Macintosh (such as creating a native OS X version).

For several years, Corel allowed Mac users to download version 3.5e from their website free of charge, and some Mac users still use this version. Like other Mac OS applications of its age, it requires the Classic environment to be installed to run on OS X. An alternative for Mac users wishing to use a more up-to-date version of WordPerfect is to install the Windows version on top of Virtual PC for Mac. There does not appear to be any third-party development of a WordPerfect clone or work-alike for OS X.

WordPerfect for Linux

In 1995, WordPerfect 6.0 was made available for Linux as part of Caldera's internet office package. In late 1997, a newer version was made available for download, but had to be purchased to be activated. Hoping to establish themselves in the nascent commercial Linux market, Corel also developed their own distribution of Linux.

Although the Linux distribution was fairly well-received, the response to WordPerfect for Linux was varied. Some Linux promoters appreciated the availability of a well-known, mainstream application for the OS. Developers of other Linux-compatible word processors questioned the need for another application in the category. Advocates of open-source software scoffed at its proprietary, closed-source nature, and questioned the viability of a commercial application in a market dominated by free software. The performance and stability of WordPerfect 9.0 (not a native Linux application like WP 6-8, but derived from the Windows version using the experimental WINE compatibility library) was highly criticized.

WordPerfect failed to gain a large user base, and as part of Corel's change of strategic direction following a (non-voting) investment by Microsoft, WordPerfect for Linux was discontinued and their Linux distribution was sold to Xandros. In April 2004, Corel re-released WordPerfect 8.1 (the last Linux-native version) with some updates, as a "proof of concept" and to test the Linux market. As of 2005, WordPerfect for Linux is not available for purchase.

Versions

Versions for DOS include:

- 1982 WordPerfect 2.2 for DOS
- 1983 WordPerfect 3.0 for DOS

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- 1984 WordPerfect 4.0 for DOS
- 1986 WordPerfect 4.2 for DOS
- 1988 WordPerfect 5.0 for DOS
- 1989 WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS
- 1993 WordPerfect 6.0 for DOS
- 1995 WordPerfect 6.1 for DOS
- 1997 WordPerfect 6.2 for DOS

Versions for Apple II include:

- 1985 WordPerfect 1.0 for Apple II
- 1986 WordPerfect 2.0 for Apple II

Versions for the Apple Macintosh include:

- 1988 WordPerfect 1.0 for Macintosh
- 1990 WordPerfect 2.0 for Macintosh
- 1993 WordPerfect 3.0 for Macintosh
- 1995 WordPerfect 3.5 for Macintosh
- 1997 WordPerfect 3.5e for Macintosh

Versions for the NeXT Computer include:

- 1991 WordPerfect 1.0.1 for NeXT Computers

Versions for Microsoft Windows include:

1991 WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows
1992 WordPerfect 5.2 for Windows
1993 WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows
1996 WordPerfect 7.0 for Windows
1997 WordPerfect 8.0 for Windows
1999 WordPerfect 9.0 for Windows (WordPerfect Office 2000)
2001 WordPerfect 10.0 for Windows (WordPerfect Office 2002)
2003 WordPerfect 11.0 for Windows (WordPerfect Office 2003)
2004 WordPerfect 12.0 for Windows (WordPerfect Office 12)

Versions for Linux include:

- 1996 WordPerfect 6.0 for Linux
- 1999 WordPerfect 8.1 for Linux
- 2000 WordPerfect 9.0 for Linux

Versions for Java include:

- 1997 WordPerfect for Java

Future Versions

Many expect a future version of WordPerfect to support OpenDocument, though no formal announcement has been made. Corel is an original member of the OASIS Technical Committee on the Open Document Format, and Paul Langille, a senior Corel developer, is one of the original four authors of the OpenDocument specification. Also, Corel sent a letter to Massachusetts supporting their selection OpenDocument, saying, "Corel strongly supports the broad adoption of the open

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standards Massachusetts has outlined, including XML, the OASIS Open Document Format and PDF.... Corel remains committed to working alongside OASIS and other technology vendors to ensure the continued evolution of the ODF standard and the adoption of open standards industry-wide." Many find it improbable that Corel would invest so much effort, and say that they will work to ensure adoption, without implementing it themselves.

In a September 2005 interview with eWeek's Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols the communications manager for Corel WordPerfect, Greg Wood, was paraphrased as saying "While Corel won't commit to a date for adding OpenDocument to WordPerfect, the company made it clear that it is working towards that goal" although a direct quote said "it is not appropriate at this time for Corel to disclose its plans for OpenDocument in future versions of WordPerfect Office". However in an October 2005 interview with BetaNews's Ed Oswald the general manager of Office Productivity for Corel, Richard Carriere, said "...the reality is that there's no adoption of these standards and, as far as I know, there still needs to be some development to make it into a real product. Fine, Sun announces that StarOffice will support ODF, but the reality is people need to exchange files, and today nobody is exchanging files using ODF. On the other hand, if you talk about open formats, here we are with support for PDF in WordPerfect. You can save documents in PDF and exchange them very easily. That's an open format. We have also supported [a Corel schema for] XML for many versions". This was interpreted as, at best, sitting on the fence or, at worst, no support ever in the blog of OASIS legal counsel Andy Updegrave and by ZDNet reporter David Berlind.