

SO. CAL.
SORCERER
USER'S
GROUP



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Dear Sorcerer User,

Before you do anything else, go fish the envelope this came in out of the trash and check the front lower left corner to see if I printed in RED ---LAST ENVELOPE on it. If it is, then send me 6 or 12 self addressed stamped envelopes NOW or you won't get anymore news letters by mail. 'Nuff said?

The next meeting of the S.C.S.U.G. on Thursday, January 12, 1984 will be held, as is our custom, in the Community room of Allstate Savings and Loan, located at 8809 So. Sepulveda Blvd. in Westchester. The nearest cross street is La Tijera, from which you enter the building. The door will be open about 7:00 p.m. for conversation and equipment set-up. The more-or-less formal meeting begins at 8:00 p.m. The S.C.S.U.G. meets on the second Thursday of each month.

Walt Hendrickson is going to begin his series of demos and talks about the various methods of converting the Sorcerer to 80 column screen format. Many in the S.C.S.U.G. have shown an interest in this conversion so we would expect a fair turn-out at the next three or four meetings. Y'all come now. Y' hear?

I purchased a DDS box from Exidy just before they closed the doors. The unit came with everything except the drive mechanisms and cables. I have decided to purchase a pair of new Tandon double sided 100 TPI from Walt and install them. This will now be my primary system using, at least for now, Exidy's CP/M 2.2f for double sided drives. Exidy's CP/M and controller will read both single sided and double sided disks in this configuration. Exidy did ship a few of the double sided systems (total quantity unknown) and apparently they exist with both Micropolis and Tandon drives. This configuration is going to place me in a pretty rarified class even for Sorcerer users, but I think the increased disk capacity is worth while and is certainly cheaper than the least expensive hard disk setup. My initial problem will be to get all of my 16 hard sector software over to the new format, but I am hoping that I can get help with this from the one or two in the group that have the ability to run Exidy 77 track soft and Micropolis 77 track 16 hard concurrently. I will relate my experiences with this new setup when I have some experience with it. By the way, I erred last month in stating the price for the Tandon drives. The correct price from Walt, per drive, is \$250, not \$240 as stated. My apologies, Walt.

Other drive news. The Micropolis 10XX series of drives (1015, 1023, 1043, 1053II, etc.) are now out of production and are no longer available at Micropolis or Priority One. The 16 hard sector controller is also no longer available from them. The drives themselves have been replaced by improved models in the 11XX series. The new drives are a little longer than the old and therefore will not fit in the old 1053II case or in the Exidy FDS. They will fit in the DDS, but new mounting holes will need to be drilled before they can be bolted in. At this time Micropolis does not plan on building a replacement for 1053II, IV system. As far as spares and repairs for the 10XX series I know of two. One here in Hollywood and another is Damon in Huntsville, AL (see last month's news letter). The Hollywood store has been an authorized Micropolis service center for a few years now. I don't have their name and address, but if anyone is interested, I can get it. Write or call me. By the way, note the new phone area code. About half the Los Angeles 213 area (generally San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys) has been changed to 818.

I only know of one other hobby group that is cheaper than Sorcerer users, and that is the live steam scale railroaders (this happens to be another hobby of mine) so here is a tip that should be dear to your hearts. If you need a printer stand something like the fancy and not so fancy ones that sell for \$20 + then the next time you get into town, drop into your local K Mart or equivalent, direct yourself to the housewares department and take a look at the racks intended to keep the dishes or other stuff organized in the kitchen cupboards. K Mart has some that are in various sizes. The one I saw was welded heavy gauge wire (strong enough to support Epson, Oki, NEC and other relatively lite dot matrix printers), was dipped or sprayed with white vinyl paint and had rubber feet. There were sizes to fit either 9" or 15" capacity printers. The bottom line is I don't think that \$2 or \$3 is too much, enen for a Sorcerer User.

I had a long chat with Don Gottwald last weekend. He is now moved into his new house and he likes it. He will complete volume 5 and will then transfer the Sorcerer's Apprentice to a group in Arkansas. Volume 5, No. 2 was mailed and I got mine in Friday's mail (1-6-84). The format has been changed to reduce costs to a minimum. In 1982 he had more than the 300 subscriptions needed to break even, but in 1983 he only had 127 which, without advertising, isn't enough to cover printing and postage costs. Don has carried the whole job by himself so given his personal circumstances the long delays have been unavoidable. The Sorcerer's Apprentice has been and I hope will continue to be an international source for information by and for Sorcerer users. Don gets my personal thanks and deepest respect for his efforts over the past several years. I have been a subscriber to the four oldest computer magazines for a long time and articles relating to the Sorcerer have been all but non-existent since 1982 and I know that many were printed up to two years after they were submitted. Even though Exidy advertised in all of the magazines as late as the fall of 1982, they ignored the existence of the Sorcerer computer from mid-1980 onward. For those of you, and I know there are a good many in our group, who feel the Sorcerer is still worth supporting, write to Tommy Stokes, Rt. 1, Box 121, Everton, AR 72633 and let him know that you want to see the Sorcerer's Apprentice continue with Volume 6 and 7 and and that you will support it.

In this issue you will find the first part of a review of CCP's Exidy edit. This is a really good assembly language editor with text handling capabilities to boot. At the price, its a bargain.

In the near future, I hope to include a review of CCP's monitor ROM's with Televideo attributes built in.

A late development. I have had several conversations with Walt Hendrickson, Eric Matlen and Ed King in Arkansas about the possibility of bringing the Sorcerer's Apprentice to Los Angeles. The issue is apparently still unsettled, therefore we would like to open discussions on this matter at this next meeting with a final decision to be made at the February meeting. For this reason, I would like as many of you to attend the January and February meetings as possible. Please pass the word.

Enough for this month. I have writer's cramps everywhere but remember.....

We run no program before its time.

Sincerely,
Cary E. Stewart

PRODUCT REVIEW

ExidyEdit - A FULL SCREEN EDITOR FOR THE SORCERER

\$39.95 +tax from:

CREATIVE COMPUTER PRODUCTS - Walt Hendrickson
2313 W. 181st Street, Torrance, Ca. 90504

Hats off to Walt Hendrickson and his company, CREATIVE COMPUTER PRODUCTS for turning out a great Exidy Utility program at what I think is a bargain price! (Almost a steal at \$39.95 + tax).

For your money what you physically get is a 5 1/4 diskette, in either Exidy soft-sectored format or Micropolis 16-sector hard format. I'm fairly sure Walt could make it available on 8" disk by request. You also get a 30 page documentation manual with an extensive index and a one-page "Quick Reference Guide" to the 40 or so functions ExidyEdit supports. You may not even need this guide since it is a printed replica of the ExidyEdit "MENU", which is never more than an <ESC> key away if you forget all the possible commands while learning ExidyEdit. Easy to do in the beginning and later on, when you know your way around in ExidyEdit you can disable the menu option with a */M" when you invoke ExidyEdit.

Functionally what you get is a great editor. In a CP/M(tm) environment you can edit, create, manipulate and save files as large as your disk capacity will allow! And you won't automatically expand the file length such as word processors like SpellBinder(tm) and WordStar(tm) do.

ExidyEdit will run under LifeBoat and Exidy CP/M (tm) 1.4 and 2.2. (The Ratoff/Mentzer 2.2 CP/M (tm) is a LifeBoat version.) on any Sorcerer with 1.1 Monitor ROMS. I understand it runs even cleaner if you have Creative Computer Products Televideo emulation ROMS (also \$39.39 + tax) because of improved screen and cursor routines, but these ROMS are by no means necessary.

ExidyEdit has two basic modes: Screen Mode (in which you will do most of your writing and editing work), and Command Mode from which you execute disk I/O, Global Search, Search and Replace, set margins, tab stops, line width (up to 127 characters!), quit (if you goof up this command returns you to CP/M (tm) and aborts any editing done up to that point, thus preserving your original file for another go at it), erase files, delete part of a file you are editing, and also toggles on and off the "Text" mode of ExidyEdit. (More about the "Text" mode later on.)

From the Screen Mode you can move the cursor right, left, up and down either a line or a page at a time as well as to the end or beginning of a file you are working on, all with two key instructions, one of the keys being the <CTRL> key. For instance, cursor up one line is <CTRL>UP-ARROW; down one line is <CTRL>DOWN-ARROW (using the numeric pad). If you're good with your left hand <CTRL>W will do the same thing as <CTRL> UP-ARROW, <CTRL>Z the same thing as <CTRL>DOWN-ARROW. And similarly, <CTRL>A or <CTRL>S moves the cursor one space left or right respectively.

<CTRL>B inserts a line (if your at the beginning of a line; if you are in the middle it 'splits the line' at the cursor location. Walt has even provided an "AUTO INSERT" command <CTRL>G if you have a lot to insert. Concatenate two lines? Simple...<CTRL>O. Insert a character? <CTRL>F moves everything from the cursor position one space to the right each time you type it.

You can also move the cursor an entire word at a time. "Next Word" is <CTRL>N; "Last Word" (I prefer 'previous word') is <CTRL>]. To delete an entire word place the cursor at the beginning of the word and <CTRL>V does it. If you are in the middle of a word <CTRL>V will erase from the cursor position to the end of the word and the trailing space (truncate the word). To Move the cursor (back) to the beginning of the line type <CTRL>U. <CTRL>L will delete an entire line...and move the lines below up one automatically! <CTRL>Y will delete from the cursor position to the End of Line.

Remember I mentioned back at the beginning of this review that ExidyEdit ran 'cleaner' on the Televideo Emulation ROMS? That's bcause Exidy's 1.1 Monitor ROM screen routines don't allow you to erase the 64th character from the screen...even though ExidyEdit erases it from memory. So if you do a lot of deletions you wind up with a vertical line of garbage down the right hand side of your screen (the lingering 64th character of each deleted line). Easy enough to fix. Just type <ESC> twice; (e.g. go to "menu" and return...and viola'...the right margin "garbage" is gone!)

One of the features I love, and you will too, if you enter much assembly code, is the "Entry Mode" which is toggled on and off (while in Screen Mode) with a <CTRL>G. This enables several extended features of ExidyEdit (including an "E" in the upper right-hand corner of your screen to show you you're in "Entry Mode").

ExidyEdit in "Entry Mode" automatically sets up four fields; the Label field, the OpCode field, the Operand field and the comment field, thusly:

```
0          8          16          40
!          !          !          ; comment field
!          !          !          ; cols 40 to 127
!          !          !
!          !          operand field: cols 16-39
!          opcode field: cols 8-15
label field: columns 0-7
```

When you toggle "Entry Mode" on with the <CTRL>G these fields and the ;_ (semi-colon & 1 space) are set up and each press of the <SPACE>BAR advances you from one field to the next. And when you hit the <SPACE>BAR for the fourth time the cursor jumps over to the 40th column, ExidyEdit automatically prints the semi-colon (;) and one blank space, then sits there awaiting your (hopefully lucid) comment. No Comment? Just hit <RETURN> and you advance to the label field at the beginning of the next line. Tah-Dah! What could be easier than that?

There is so much to ExidyEdit that we'll continue the discussion in the next newsletter. Hopefully by then you'll have your own copy up and running and having as much fun as I've been having editing and configuring (well...trying to configure, anyway) all the files I've downloaded from RCPM systems in the past.

A couple of caveats and suggestions. My particular Bios traps an Exidy UnShifted <RUB> (5FH) and converts it to a <CTRL>H (08). CCP saw this coming, and provides two pages of "keyboard definition" and where they are. Using SID (tm) I simply changed the byte at 0521 from a 5FH to a 08 to make ExidyEdit's "Delete" compatible with my UnShifted <RUB>. Unfortunately I haven't trapped Exidy's <TAB> key and so to

"TAB" I have to use either <CTRL>I, or <SHIFT><TAB>. This isn't clearly spelled out in what is otherwise a pretty extensive and understandable documentation effort by CCP.

A couple of other documentation 'glitches' are:

Page 12: 2.2.3 Home Cursor: use <CTRL><CARAT) (lower-case tilde). The manual shows an up-arrow; NOT to be confused with the UP-ARROW(S) on the numeric pad!

Page 22: 3.2.2 BLOCK OPERATIONS: To delimit some piece of a file you delimit the beginning with a [* (left bracket asterisk) and to delimit the end of that particular block of file the delimiter is the reverse; *] (asterisk, right bracket). However, in the practice example which follows there is a typographic error:

*Example:

```
text in a file
[*this is some text
]*      <=====THIS IS WRONG! Should be "]*"!
hi there
```

Page 23: 3.2.5 PARAMETER SETTING COMMANDS:

&
3.2.5.1: TEXT (BOOLEAN)

On the Menu it looks like all you have to do to enable the "TEXT MODE" is type "TEXT". Not True! What CCP is trying to say above is that to enable "TEXT MODE" you MUST type in either:

```
TEXT TRUE
or
TEXT 1 (or any integer greater than 0)
```

Next month more on "TEXT MODE" which offers some extended features like "WIDTH" (up to 127 characters), "CENTERING", and "PARAGRAPH FORMATTING" ; and more about Disk I/O; "Load And Go"; and other features offered by ExidyEdit.

And it's only thoitynine ninnyfive (plus tax and licensing, of course!) Thanks, CCP!

Eric Matlen

PS: Letter Quality comes to Dot-Matrix. This was set on a new BMC BX-80 Printer (uses a carbon ribbon) on sale at SUNTRONICS in Torrance for \$259.95 + tax. Has friction feed and fully adjustable tractor sprockets, and emulates quite a few of the new Epson FX-80 functions. I just got it 12/27/83 and haven't had a chance to fully wring it out, but at 80 cps the print quality is great. In "Emphasized" mode it is fantastic! More about the printer soon.

My new home telephone # is 389-3419 for anyone wanting more info about either ExidyEdit or the BMC printer.