EXP FOR WINDOWS, VERSION 5.0

A SOFTWARE REVIEW

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For those EXP users using Windows '95, Brooks/Cole has introduced its newest version of EXP for Windows, Version 5.0. This version is to be used **only** by those using Windows '95. The new version saves files in 4.0 format so that users who collaborate with others using version 4.0 can do so with ease.

It should be noted that the earlier review of version 4.0 mentioned a few glitches in the program, which were explained in the README.TXT file of the software. The reviewer did not get a chance to read the README file and therefore, was not aware that many of these "bugs" were easily avoided. Both versions contain README files as well as a CHANGES document that should be read before using the software. These files are very helpful in offering advice concerning issues and problems that may arise. There is also an EXP users discussion group (called bc_exp) on the internet. This group is an excellent resource. In order to join, send a message to majordomo@list.brookscole.com containing the text "subscribe bc_exp yourEmailAddress". You will automatically be added to the listserver which will allow you to receive and send messages or questions to others concerning EXP. Brooks Cole also offers an FTP site at ftp.brookscole.com as well as a web site at <http://www.brookscole.com/brookscole.html>.

To get a different perspective on the new version, I asked a few other people who had never typed scientific manuscripts before to try it. Overall, these novices were very pleased with EXP for Windows (both version 4.0 for Windows 3.1 and version 5.0 for Windows '95). The ease of learning the software in a matter of a couple of hours was impressive. One person typed at least 20 pages of a Ph.D. dissertation within two days, which is amazing given that she had never typed any mathematical text before.

I particularly like the precision one can get in formatting documents. As a typesetter for three international journals and a technical typist for many others, it can sometimes be very difficult to follow precisely the instructions provided. For example, I just recently had to produce a monograph prepared in "Camera-Ready Copy (CRC)" for a publisher, and EXP 5.0 definitely made a difference. The ease with which I could change the settings was particularly useful.

The features of EXP for Windows can prove to be very advantageous for desktop publishing. A few such features are the Header/Footer menu, which enables you to

put different headers/footers on the first page as well as on odd/even pages and to specify exactly how far from the margin those headers/footers should be; the ability to set margins for binding, which requires unequal inside and outside margins, and the availability of numerous font families and sizes.

Another helpful tool contained in EXP for Windows is the ability to scale fonts up to 72 points. This enables users to cut and paste selected parts of a document and to use a larger font to prepare professional presentations and lectures.

There are still some compatibility problems with the HP printer drivers. It appears that these drivers cause a problem in the Windows environment. A patch has been set up in the README file, and if you have one of these printers it is **highly** recommended that you read this file. The table feature is another handy improvement. It is very easy to use, much like the table feature in WordPerfect.

Version 5.0 now supports macros. This is an excellent feature in order to speed up the processing of mathematical equations, which often require several keystrokes. The investment of ten to fifteen minutes of practice is likely to save valuable time in the long run.

Some of the enhancements from version 4.0 to version 5.0 are that EXP now supports long filenames, has thirty-nine new symbols (including diagonal arrows and a checkmark), and has a graphics import filter for the Corel Draw CDR graphics format.

At the time of this review, the converter to T_eX had not been thoroughly tested. This will be reviewed at a later date.

EXP is still cumbersome to use as it requires many keystrokes to create various equations, such as hitting F4 to get the menu for symbols, F5 to get the box menu, and F6 to pull down another menu, but macros can alleviate this problem. Another minor annoyance is that one still needs to type in the symbol name even though the menus highlight the symbol and its name. One should just be able to highlight the symbol press the enter key to make it appear.

Overall, this version of EXP is wonderful. It easy to use and the output is of extremely high quality. It is highly recommend to all. Personally, the reviewer would rather use any version of EXP than LaT_eX , T_eX or $AMST_eX$, as the output is much better and the user has much more control over the format of the document.

EXP for Windows, Version 5.0

The Scientific Word Processor

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