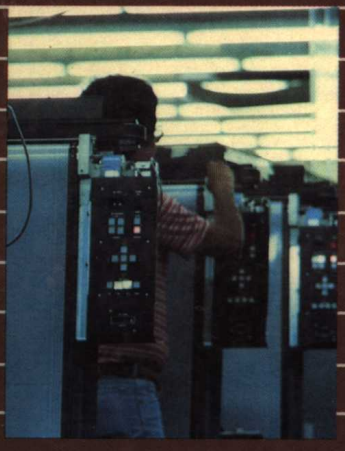
PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION PROCESSING



THOMAS OWENS PERRY EDWARDS

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PREFACE

That the 1980s have been a half-decade of radical change in all aspects of our business and personal lives, including the onset and growth of the personal computer industry, is evidenced by the changes we have experienced as teachers of the "intro" course in information and business data processing. At the beginning of a term, we are accustomed to jotting down a list of ten to fifteen concepts we want our students to have learned by the end of the course. Over the last ten years, our lists of objectives have had a common core of hoping that our students would come to see how computers help people and businesses better manage their affairs. We emphasize that computers are bought for a purpose—to ensure that businesses and organizations run more productively, efficiently, and in the case of business, profitably. In the realm of personal use, we stress how computers can expand lives by offering more efficient means of communication and information handling, along with new forms of learning and entertainment. While our approach may be seen as one "trend" in this course, there is another trend demanded by instructors—flexibility.

Principles of Information Processing With Applications was written to provide for the increasing variety of the "intro" course and the flexibility in materials expected by instructors. While there is general agreement on the conceptual core students should take with them from the course, there is little agreement on the balance of concepts, programming, and applications software to which students should be exposed. This textbook provides a current and comprehensive approach to information processing concepts in an "essentials" form, and allows instructors to supplement the text with programming language and productivity software experiences and texts for their students. (This text is available in a version that includes a two-chapter BASIC programming section. Instructors should ask for *Principles of Information Processing with Applications and BASIC.*)

Our approach is, however, livelier and more contemporary than the typical "essentials" text. Rather than talk about computers in general terms, we use a timely and motivational case study to get down to specifics early. This case study focuses on a real business, View Video, an actual home entertainment videocassette rental firm and an example of one of the fastest growing small businesses in this country. View Video rents tapes and like most videotape rental stores

keeps its records on paper. The text traces this business as it falters from too much paper and not enough information about the store's operation. Throughout the conceptual core of the text, Chapters 1 through 11, students follow the owners as they review their need for computers and the hardware and software required to get the job done. In the applications module, Chapters 12 through 16, students see how the owners take control of their information with word processors, spreadsheets and graphics, database managers, and integrated software. We hope that students will see that disks, printers, memory, data security, and automation are very real problems to businesses today, and not solely academic topics. And we hope students will have the foundation for learning programming languages more easily by seeing their use in the development of a relevant business system.

As a realistic case, View Video works. It provides students with the practical knowledge necessary to understand the complex role of computers in our world. In the classroom, we've found it helpful as a launching point for discussing automation, careers, personal business computer selection, and a number of the important social issues of the 1980s—computer crime, privacy, and the changing nature of work in Chapters 17 through 20. The text stresses the productivity gains that computers can provide as well as the value of information in today's complex world. As students are increasingly exposed to productivity software tools, the text helps them grasp concepts with a real-world examples.

Productivity Software Applications

Today's students expect an opportunity to use the variety of software discussed in their text. As instructors, we've experienced the nightmares created by copyright restrictions and site licensing problems of commercial and "educational" software. In an effort to eliminate these problems for instructors and to provide the widest freedom of choice, the productivity software module, "Applications", Chapters 12 through 16, deals generically with word processing, spreadsheets and graphics, database managers, data communications, and integrated software. This enables instructors to use the text with a variety of software and be certain that students understand the fundamentals of popular software types.

Computer Applications: Using Intro-Software

Special applications software accompanies the text. Intro-Software offers free, unrestricted, copyable software to teachers. Intro-Software offers students a hands-on experience with the concepts and operation of the central productivity tools of a spreadsheet (Intro-Calc), a database management system (Intro-File), and word processing (Intro-Word). They learn basic operations and applications

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through self-paced and carefully guided workbook assignments that reinforce concepts. Available for the IBM PC and compatibles as well as the Apple II series, each application contains an easy-to-use menu and operating instructions and can be used either in a networked or standalone computing environment.

Intro-Software was created by Fred Beisse of the University of Oregon. He wrote the programs and the workbook which can be conveniently used with the text. In designing Intro-Software, Fred took into consideration the pressures on instructors to balance the presentation of concepts, programming, and applications in one term. To maximize value to the student and instructor, Intro-Software uses a few simple commands that demonstrate typical capabilities and features contained in major commercial programs, and assumes that this is the emphasis given to applications software by instructors at the introductory level. In our course we ask our students to whet their appetities on the software, work out any phobias about using productivity tools, and master one or more specific products on their own.

Chapter Learning Aids

Principles of Information Processing not only covers the most current topics, but includes proven pedagogical devices that make the text easy to teach and learn from. Inclusion of these pedagogical aids in a principles text is unusual.

Chapter Outline A concise outline guides the reader to the most important elements of each chapter.

Previews Specially constructed previews and goals clarify expectations.

Key Terms Important terms are listed at the beginning of each module to emphasize terminology to be mastered.

Italics Italicized key terms are defined in context and listed when introduced in the margin of each page.

Diagrams and Photographs Diagrams have been constructed and photographs selected to both instruct and stimulate further thought. The use of color has been carefully planned to reinforce the text material and concepts, and is more extensive than in any similar text.

Chapter Summaries Student-oriented summaries have been constructed to review key terms and important concepts learned.

Review Questions End-of-chapter review questions have been ranked by three levels of difficulty from information queries about the text to thought-provoking inquiries about concepts.

References Selected references have been listed for further reading to invite students to explore areas of special interest.

Glossary Items Cross-referenced indicating where terms are first introduced in the text.

Comprehensive Index The text has a single index including concepts and terminology.

Teaching and Learning Supplements

Principles of Information Processing is surrounded by a complete teacher-student support package. These materials include an Instructor's Manual, Transparency Masters, printed Test Bank, computerized Test Bank, and software encompassing the View Video data bank and Intro-Software.

Instructor's Manual

In many cases, writing the Instructor's Manual to accompany a text is either left until last or placed in the hands of others. Knowing the importance of this support element for *Principles of Information Processing*, we wrote the Instructor's Manual in parallel with the text. Our teaching experience and the teaching experience of others, both on our own campus and across the country, was utilized in its preparation. Realizing that there is often a direct relationship between the success of a teaching situation and the resources available to the teacher, the Instructor's Manual includes many helpful features.

instructor-oriented summary of central concepts

teaching suggestions and lecture tips

answers to review questions

additional exercise suggestions to give variety to the classroom experience

a listing of suggested project assignments

an expanded annotated bibliography

commentary on using the View Video case and database

references to the package of Transparency Masters

Transparency Master and Acetates

A full set of Transparency Masters from the text, sized for effective and convenient use, is available along with additional material and instructional commentary on the use of the package. The Transparency Master package is also available in acetate form.

Printed and Computerized Test Bank

The Test Bank is available in two versions with over 2500 multiple choice, true/false, fill-in, and matching questions of graded diffi-

culty to help verify student mastery of terms and concepts and to ease the chores of test preparation and grading. Version One is in printed form and Version Two is part of the Burgess computerized testing system, TEST ONE, for the IBM PC/compatibles and the Apple IIe.

Acknowledgements

Writing this text and preparing the student and instructor support package took a tremendous effort on the part of many people. In manuscript form, our book was reviewed by instructors from a variety of colleges and universities. We wish to offer a special "thank you" to these selected reviewers:

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Thomas Owens
Perry Edwards
Rocklin, California
September 1986

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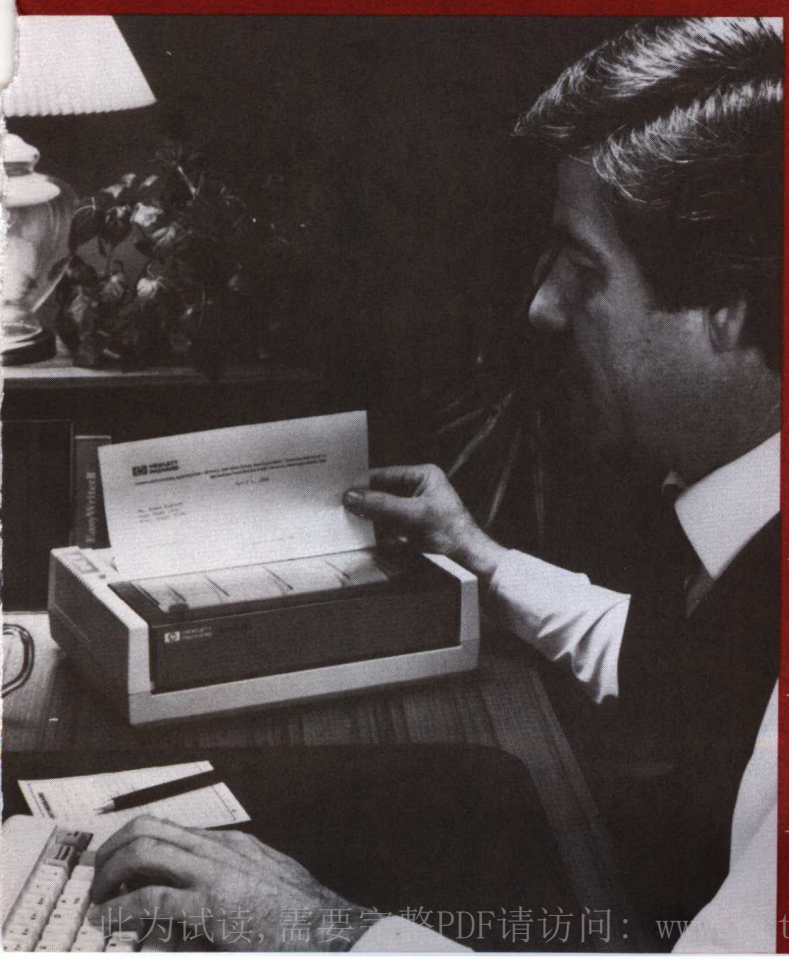
MODULE 1

Introduction



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