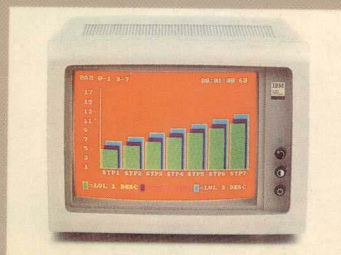
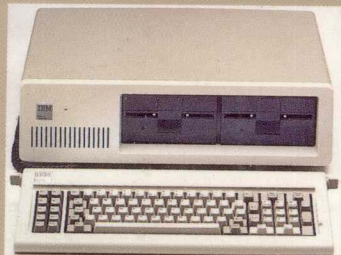


Terris B. Wolff

Revised Printing



Microcomputer Applications: Using Small Systems Software

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Terris B. Wolff

University of Southern California



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Preface to the Instructor

This book introduces students to microcomputers and applications software. Emphasis is placed on gaining practical experience with the use of software, as opposed to discussing theoretical applications. The topical coverage includes the rudiments of information systems, word processing, electronic spreadsheets, database management systems, business graphics, integrated packages, systems selection, and an introduction to BASIC programming. It can be used with students majoring in business, social science or physical science. No previous experience with computers or programming is necessary.

Several major software packages are presented in each applications category. The packages covered are:

Word Processing	Spreadsheets	Database	Integrated
Wordstar	Lotus 1-2-3	dBASE II	Symphony
Easywriter II	VisiCalc	RBase 4000	Framework
PFS:Write	SuperCalc	PFS:File/ Report	PFS:Graph

During the past 3 years of teaching this course, I found it necessary to require that students purchase several books. Not only was it costly, most students used just a small portion of each book. Hence, I decided to write a single book which would overcome these problems, allow coverage of different combinations of packages, and treat each package with sufficient depth.

Even though multiple packages are covered for each application area, the design of the book is such that the student can concentrate on a particular software package without interference from another. This is accomplished by dividing facing pages into four large columns. The column on the extreme left is reserved for generic comments. Each column on the right contains instructions for the use of a specific package.

The presentation of concepts unfolds at a measured pace mixing conceptual material with reinforcement through hands-on sessions at the computer. Lasting learning correlates directly with the amount of time spent in the microcomputer lab. Consequently, each chapter is built around a project which serves as the vehicle for mastery. My experience has been that most students will find these projects quite time consuming. For students who move through this material quickly you may wish to assign exercises in addition to those contained in the chapter. The accompanying Instructor's materials augment these exercises.

I have written the book to allow maximum flexibility in terms of the order of presentation. You may wish to present application areas in a different sequence. For example, it may be more desirable to introduce database management systems before electronic spreadsheets. This can be done without loss of continuity. It will be

necessary to cover the chapters on integrated software after those on word processing, electronic spreadsheets, and database management systems.

Obtaining the desired software in sufficient quantities is one of the major hurdles to overcome in preparing this course. Fortunately, software vendors are beginning to realize that there are tangible benefits in cooperating with educators involved in this area. Some vendors are providing attractive special discounts to schools. Others are permitting replication of their software through on-site licensing agreements. The best way to find out a company's policies in this regard is by directly contacting them. Telephone numbers and addresses for the vendors represented in this book are listed in the accompanying Instructor's materials.

Writing this textbook has been a rewarding and challenging experience. It's not often that the opportunity comes along to be among the first authors to attempt to solve some of the problems associated with a new course. I drew upon my personal resources and those of my colleagues in the search for the best approach. While I am satisfied with the result of this effort, there is always room for improvement. As you use this book you undoubtedly will become aware of its strengths and weaknesses, please do not keep these observations to yourself. It would be greatly appreciated if you would write me with your experiences and send them to the address below:

Boyd and Fraser Publishing Company
286 Congress Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02210

Thank you for your help and I am looking forward to reading your comments.

Terris B. Wolff
Los Angeles
1985

Preface to the Student

The intent behind this book is to assist you in acquiring the knowledge and ability to put microcomputers to work. These skills will have immediate application in your school work and should be beneficial in the pursuit of your future goals.

If you are not familiar with computers and software, you should begin your study by reading chapters 1 and 2 which cover the rudiments of information systems in a non-technical fashion. Chapter 3 introduces the basics of how to operate a computer through hands-on sessions for the most popular systems. Those who have experience in using computers may opt to skip over these chapters without any loss of continuity in the subsequent material.

Several different software packages are presented for each application area. Most likely your instructor has selected a single package from each group. The design of this book allows you to concentrate on the desired software without being hampered by others. A benefit to this multiple package coverage is the added reference value. In the future you may use other computers with different software. Since the most widely used software appears for each application, it is likely the software will be one of the options in this book.

The hands-on sections contain many example display screens. These displays are intended to give you a general reference point. However, do not become dis-

tressed if your computer display is not identical in comparison to the example. Small errors often creep into the best efforts while working at the computer. Use these examples as a self check.

The best advice for success I can offer is to spend as much time getting to know the computer and its software as you can. Feel free to experiment. "Creative" play is the best way to become thoroughly familiar with potential of small computer systems.

As you work through the book, you will find things you like and don't like about the presentation. I invite you to write me with your experience. You may reach me in care of the publisher, at this address:

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286 Congress Street
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Good luck with your studies!

Terris B. Wolff
Los Angeles
1985

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The following people comprise the team that put the idea into print. Jim Leisy served as acquisition and developmental editor; he succeeded in cajoling, guiding and inspiring me whenever I needed it. Production of the book was very ably overseen by Joan Parsons. Kathy Talley-Jones did a most merciful job of editing my prose. Joe Pastor enhanced the book's appearance with his illustrations. Thank you all for your very fine effort.

Joan Wolff, my very patient wife, deserves special thanks for her help throughout the project and for preparing the book's index. I could not have done it without her.

To all of these people I am forever indebted for their efforts on my behalf. However, I take full responsibility for contents and accuracy of the book.

To my wife, Joan, and my children, Rebecca and Michael.

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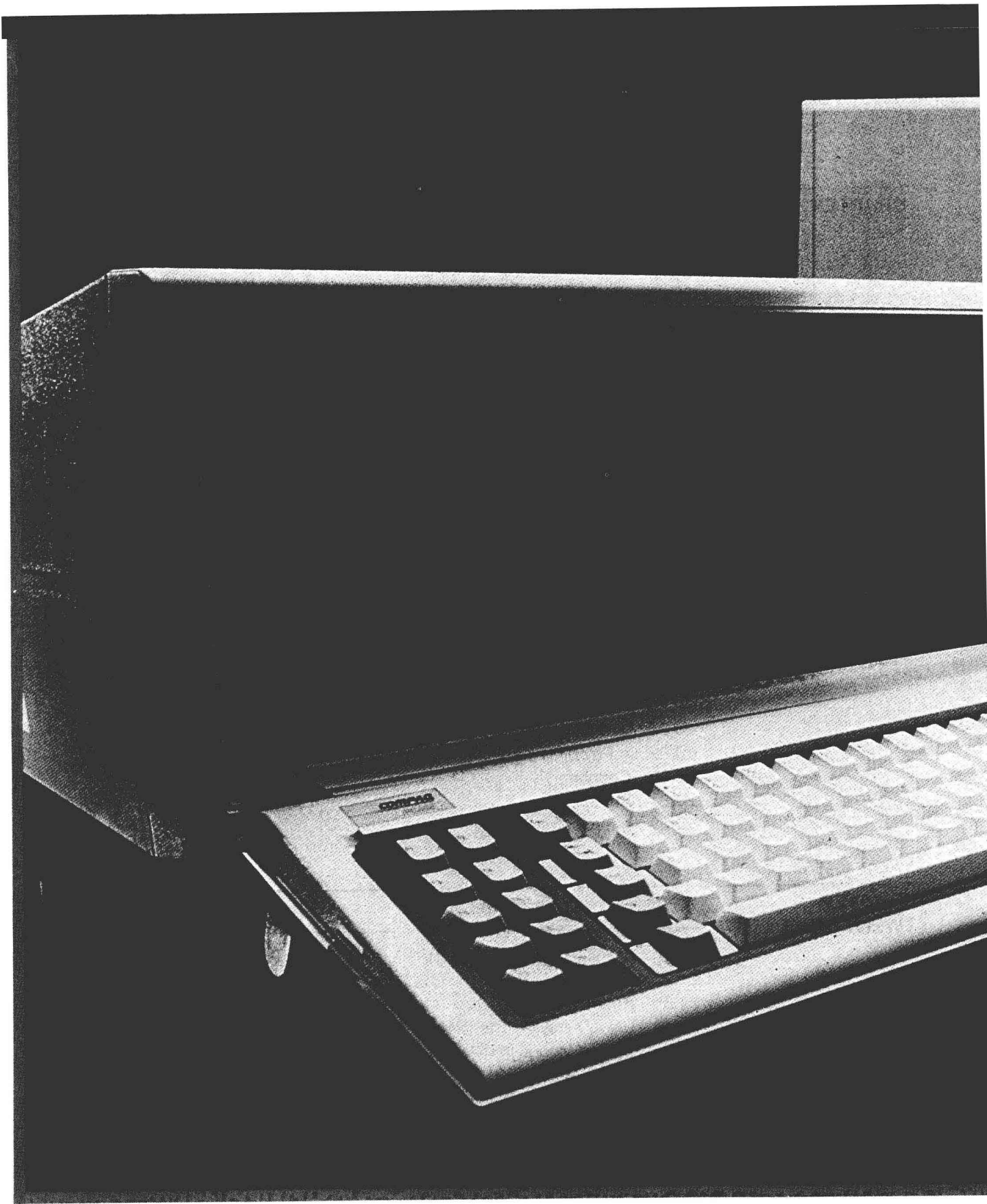


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