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Word Processing with Amstrad The PCW8256/8512

Ron Hughes

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MACMILLAN

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Preface

Whether you are using an Amstrad PCW8256 or PCW8512 now, or plan to sometime in the future, you will find something of interest in this book. As the PCW is a microcomputer that is intended to be used mainly as a word processor, this book is primarily a guide to using the word processing software called **LocoScript**, which is supplied with it. While this book mainly concentrates on LocoScript, it also contains essential information on the use of the disk drive(s) and the printer.

A word processor (or WP) is a system which enables you to prepare professional-looking documents via a keyboard and visual display unit (or VDU). You create your document and make any corrections or alterations on the screen and only print it when it is ready. The main advantage is that a copy of your document can be saved on disk and recovered later. Once a document has been saved on disk it can be used over and over again in its present form or be modified to suit the occasion. For example, if you regularly need to send letters to chase customers for payment, you could create a standard letter and then need only add the customer's name and address (not forgetting the date), before printing it.

WPs have been used in industry for some years now, but they have always been very expensive (often costing thousands of pounds). Now, with powerful low cost machines like the PCWs, people from all walks of life can reap the benefits of using a WP, including people who run small businesses, lecturers, authors, etc. This book was written entirely using a PCW8256 with a single disk drive and LocoScript; indeed it is hard to imagine writing a book these days without using a WP!

In an age when it is easy to be dazzled by the vast range of computers competing in the market place, it is comforting to know that these are popular machines, destined to become a major landmark in computing history together with the Sinclair Spectrum and the IBM Personal Computer. Any machine which sells in very large numbers is bound to be well supported with software. Here for the first time is a WP that includes a monitor, disk drive and printer at a cost which is less than some WP packages alone! But the PCW is in fact much more than a dedicated WP, it includes the CP/M Plus operating system which enables it to perform many different tasks by running other applications programs such as spreadsheets, database systems, etc.

This book assumes no prior level of knowledge or computer literacy. If you are still at the stage where you think that bytes are what you get from fleas and that RAM is a male sheep, then you will be relieved to learn that all jargon and technical terms like this will be fully explained!

However, it is assumed, if you are using a PCW, that you have Locomotive Software's LocoScript v 1.2, CP/M Plus v 1.4 and the first edition (1985) of the Amstrad Book 1 *'User Guide - CP/M Logo & Word Processor Manual'*. If you have an earlier version of LocoScript or CP/M Plus then you should return the master disk to Amstrad who should replace it with the current version, free of charge.

While you might want to read this book from cover to cover you may find it useful to browse through it before doing so, to get used to its layout and to be able to find your way around in it. In a book of this type you will need to be able to find pieces of information after you have read it, so it has been organised with this thought in mind; you should find the cross references it contains useful.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this book, as it is fully appreciated that errors can very easily destroy a beginner's fragile confidence. However, if you have a later version of this software or a later edition of Amstrad's Book 1, then you might find some inconsistencies with this book. Nevertheless, the greater part of this book should remain relevant to future versions.

The following conventions are used in this book:

angled brackets signify a single key to be pressed,
e.g. <RETURN> or <Y>

<[=]> represents the key located between <-> and <->

<[+]> and <[-]> are used to represent the Set and Clear keys at either end of the space bar

⊗ represents the tick that is sometimes displayed against an option in some of the pull-down menus and used to indicate your choice

text enclosed between ⇒ and ⇐ represents the option in a pull-down menu which will be selected if you press <ENTER>

Acknowledgements

I owe thanks to the late Edwin Clarke who first kindled my interest in the PCW8256, Vic Pearson who persuaded me to take the plunge and spend my hard-earned cash on one, and Bob Hill, Martin Roberts and Bob Hersee for their encouragement. My thanks also go to my wife Liz, without whose support, proofreading and endless cups of coffee this book would never have reached fruition, and also to our children Laura and Melvyn for endeavouring to keep the ambient noise level below 120dB! Also, thanks to Malcolm Stewart and Jon Finegold of Macmillan Education Ltd for their help and ideas during the publishing of this book. Finally, the greatest credit must go to Amstrad for producing such excellent machines.

Ron Hughes
Findon
Summer, 1986