

Chapter 1 : Professional developer : ProgrammerHumor

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New generations of notebooks with ever-better features appear every few months, and prices continue to fall. All now sport chips and supply pointing devices. Windows comes preinstalled though many now supply Windows for Workgroups 3. Buying Considerations When purchasing a notebook or subnotebook, serious analysis and testing are in order. Consider each of the following factors. Determine how big a load you can stand to carry. AC transformer and cords, the carrying case itself, external floppy drive for subnotebooks, and extra batteries, for example. Unknown manufacturers may expose you to service problems. Also, be aware that the battery is going to fail in a year or two. Batteries are almost always built especially for each machine; will your computer vendor be there to sell you a new battery when the time comes? Test the battery life, if possible, or read an unbiased test report. Determine how important battery life is for your usage patterns before spending a lot for longer battery life. Longerlife NiMH batteries are often available at extra cost. If you can afford it, color makes a laptop seem percent more useful and usable. Nevertheless, color screens are magnificent. Active matrix color is the real thing, with vivid, bright colors. Passive matrix color uses less power, costs much less, and produces paler colors. The new dualscan passive matrix screens are a good compromise. Look for accessible brightness and contrast controls. The key advice here is to actually work with the screen in realistic lighting before buying. Screens blur, fade, wash out, and render color programs with odd shadings. If not the most important factor, the keyboard is at least the second most important factor. First, look for standard key arrangements, particularly with regard to the cursor arrows, PgDn, and so on. Many manufacturers are still piggybacking the PgDn, PgUp, Home, and End keys on the arrow keys, requiring you to press a special Fn key to use them. I will never buy a machine with such a keyboard, though it may not pose as big a problem for you. WordPerfect users may also want true F11 and F12 keys other programs use them as well. Keyboard touch is extremely important. Size is critical in considering a subnotebook. Almost every system comes with a trackball. After using a dozen different arrangements this month, however, I can tell you that built-ins are generally more satisfactory than units that hang off the sides. Determine if the unit runs at 3. Look for power management features built into the chip. Not all were able to provide computers for review, but this listing is a representative sample of the outstanding notebook and subnotebook computers available today. In a gleaming white casing with a breathtaking active matrix color screen, it stops all passersby for an admiring once-over. Not just a pretty face, it has a MB drive, 4MB of RAM, a sturdy Notepoint trackball that snaps securely on the front of the unit, and preloaded network software. A special ZDS-designed high-speed communications port hooks directly to Ethernet networks. It has the full complement of cursor keys and comes with a NiMH battery. This notebook runs Windows faster than my comparably equipped desktop. Its trackball slides forward from the front of the machine and, although small, gives immediate and positive cursor control. Two models with faster chips and MB drives are available. It piggybacks the cursor keys and provides an innovative but less-than-totally-successful mouse substitute: You have to grasp the unit to hold it still in order to click the switch. It also has a unique small ten-key numeric pad above the keyboard. The keyboard includes all cursor keys, as well as the F11 and F12 keys. The new keyboard design gives a better-than-average touch. The T is available in monochrome or color, with drives of up to MB top-of-the-line price: Like the Philos, it has sound-recording capabilities, but it has a better trackball. The trackball at the upper right of the keyboard is only adequate. Removable hard disks make using a loaner easy. Its screen is larger than that of most of the others while the unit itself is smaller; an enviable achievement. The two buttons that go with it are on the front of the unit, where one-handed operation is surprisingly facile. The pointer itself, however, takes some getting used to. The HandBook is priced right. Its primary drawback is its large, ungainly AC adapter unit--nearly half the size of the computer. Its LitePoint trackball attaches in a full-width bar across the front of the unit and provides excellent cursor control. The

external floppy drive snaps onto the AC adapter, which in turn snaps onto the side of the unit, making the whole thing easier to use and control than the normal setup with cables and boxes everywhere. The keyboard gives a slightly cramped feeling, but the key travel and touch is good. The screen is nearly as large as that of a normal notebook. The Z-Lite is, however, quite thin--much thinner than any of the others I tested. Hard disks were small and disk compression was uncommon, but Windows with its bloated programs was already on the scene. Today the matter is much easier, but unless you have a newer notebook with a healthy-sized hard disk, you still need to be sensitive to the need to conserve disk space. Then consider disk-wise software. If you must remain compatible with a desktop unit or your office software, you may not have too much choice-- but you may have more choice than you realize. To remain compatible with even major Windows applications, you can run several smaller programs which produce files that can be read into the larger program back at home base. Each produces files in formats that mainline applications can easily read. Yet these programs can save 30 or 40 megabytes over installing mainline applications to accomplish the same things. Why waste megabytes on a Windows communications program, for example, when K of Procomm Plus works fine? By reclaiming that half- to full-inch border that most portables leave unused at the top and bottom of the screen. It makes text and images noticeably larger and easier to read. It also supplies a wealth of attractive screen fonts and a wonderful blinking-box cursor for DOS programs. I like the running-sand-in-the-hourglass animated cursor of Cursorific Professional, though there are a dozen equally fine competitors. The Diminishing Difference With each generation of notebook computers, the differences between portable computers and desktops diminish, as does the need for special software.

Chapter 2 : VC&G | Â» [Retro Scan of the Week] Procomm Plus for Windows

Publishing History This is a chart to show the publishing history of editions of works about this subject. Along the X axis is time, and on the y axis is the count of editions published.

Procomm Plus for Windows, v2. Box , Lemone Blvd. Columbia MO Software Type: Serial Communication for Windows List Price: A mature and reliable product based on long experience with producing communications products. Many aspects of the program are configurable. Many convenience features allow adaptation to almost every PC communications situation. Special purpose and proprietary communications programs may appeal to many as easier to use and more efficient. Support for Internet access is limited. No support for off-line e-mail or World Wide Web browser applications. Review Procomm Plus for Windows v2. Many new features have been added as well as taking advantage of the capabilities of Windows. Procomm Plus for Windows includes 34 popular terminal emulations and 11 error-correcting file transfer protocols, including Zmodem. Differences between Procomm Plus for Windows 2. System Requirements Any or Windows 3. VGA or better display. Minimum 5 megabytes of hard disk available. Modem, virtually any modem Hayes compatible or not, internal or external. Installation Installation is in line with most new Windows programs and is fairly easy using the Install program. The hardest part has always been configuring the modem. The list of available types is very large, and updates to this list are available from the manufacturer. As with most large programs now, the disks are in compressed format, which take a while to uncompress. Installation and initial checkout takes about half an hour. The program was mostly run at a screen resolution of x, but was checked at normal VGA resolution also. A Hayes compatible modem running at 14K baud with compression was used for testing. Configuration One of the bugbears of communications was, and to some extent still is, the large number of configuration parameters which are part of any modem-based communication system. In Procomm for Windows 2. For the expert user, all the configuration parameters are still there, available through drop down menus. The other aspect of configuration involves the program window itself. All the colors used are configurable, for those with an artistic bent, as are many other user aspects. Support for import and export of dialing directory information is very good. The drudgery of keeping track of phone numbers is made somewhat easier when using this program. The only changes I would recommend concerns the button bar. Since only a few of the buttons are visible at any time the user can re-arrange the buttons in line with his or her normal use. This re-configuration is easy to do now with the latest software revision. Operation To give a look and feel of the operation let us walk through a typical on-line session to a remote server. Initial Window From the main window clicking on the icon opens the initial screen shown in Figure 1. There is a terminal window in the center, which is default blue, surrounded by a white border. There is a button bar above called the Action Bar by Procomm , and at the top of the screen the usual Windows pull down menus. Many of the buttons on the button bar are not visible even at high resolution. These are accessible through the arrow keys at the end of the bar. Dialing Out With a Script By clicking on the "Rapid dial" button we open the dialing directory and select the entry that we want. We have a logon script for this, so we can just sit back and watch the show. When the service is selected, a dial-up window opens, and the little telephone icon moves to the off-hook position. The modem makes its usual dialing noises. When connection is made, the dialing window closes. The icon button changes to a little guy in running gear who starts to move! This shows that the script linked to this number has been activated. If all goes well, after a few seconds, the terminal window clears, and the remote service takes control. The terminal window shows a logon sequence in progress. When logon is complete, we get a beep from the script and the runner stops moving. At this point we decide to keep a capture file of the session so that any information passing through the terminal window will be saved in a file to look at later off-line. So a click on the "fishing net" icon and we are ready to start, knowing that we do not have to read everything we see on-line, but can come back to review it later when the session is over. The example shown in Figure 1 is a local weather report--always of interest here in New England. A glance at the lower line shows the time elapsed so far for this session. Session time and date are logged and kept available in a local text file. Host Mode Procomm Plus supports remote host

capability. If the program is activated in host mode, it can act as a sort of mini BBS. Another computer can log in over the telephone and access files on the host. Also a direct wire null modem cable can be used to transfer information directly between the host and another computer. I have not had occasion to use this facility with this version, but previous versions worked fine. Scripting The scripting language, called Aspect, has undergone further revision in this version. A major change is the welcome addition of an improved script editor, which can also be used as a stand-alone text editor. Window management is extensive and DDE links to other Windows programs are supported. For the ordinary user, using the Record option provides a simple way to build a customized logon script. Start the recorder, then go through all the motions of calling the service. The program will build a script by watching the activity in progress. After logging off, the user can then review the script, and edit it for style and additional features from inside the program. The header and comments were added later. There is also an extensive collection of existing scripts that come with the program. Fax Support Many modems now include a fax capability by supporting the Hayes command set extended to handle the fax machine protocols. The normal way to send a fax is to use the print facility of your favorite Windows word processor, which contains a separate driver, installed by Procomm to enable fax transmission. A short test shows that fax support from Procomm Plus is in line with that of other Windows programs for fax creation and transmission. Incoming fax translation is not supported. Disk Space Requirements One of the hidden costs of upgrading to a new Windows application can be the large amount of disk space required for program installation. My estimate for Procomm for Windows 2. If you are a Windows user and disk space is very tight, try the Terminal program that comes as part of the Windows package. Special vs General Communication Program A significant decision for those involved in communications is to decide between using a general purpose program such as Procomm or one of the more specialized programs that are now available in increasing numbers. There are specialized programs for particular on-line services, for instance, CompuServe and Prodigy both put out their own service-specific communications programs, and America Online can only be accessed in this way. Of particular interest over the last year has been an explosion in the so-called "client-server" applications, starting with the most popular, the World Wide Web browsers. These are discussed in the next section. My feeling is that a general purpose package is a good place to start. For the user that finds he or she spends a lot of time with one type of use, then consider adding one or more special purpose communications programs. A local graphic interface on the PC can be controlled remotely by the host which may even be on another continent. This has enabled Windows applications to "look like" they are directly connected to the host computer. Spearheaded by the enormous success of the World Wide Web browsers, most services normally performed through serial line communication such as e-mail and Telnet are now moving to client-server applications utilizing the low cost dial-up SLIP and PPP services. In this environment the plain dial-up connection may go the way of the buggy whip. Also many client server connections require large amounts of computing power and memory, beyond that available on many current PCs now in service. Procomm for Windows 2. Figure 3 shows a typical application of the Procomm FTP client showing a file transfer about to take place between the remote host and the local PC computer. The directory structure on the remote computer and the local PC are shown in a convenient side by side fashion. Documentation and Technical Support The documentation includes two softbound manuals, one a user manual, the other devoted to the Aspect script language. Both are clear and are well laid out. Indexes are about average for this type of manual. The average user can manage mostly with the on-line help and the tutorials. You can speed ahead, browse or exit at any time. The script file for the tutorial is itself available in source code for the interested programmer. Technical support is available through e-mail via CompuServe Forum: Summary I would recommend Procomm Plus for Windows as a program for Windows users, from novice to expert, as a general purpose serial communications package.

Chapter 4 : What Are Some Alternatives to ProComm? | It Still Works

"Procomm Plus provides users with flexible and reliable connectivity across the entire computing spectrum—from mainframes to laptops," said Elizabeth Magliana, vice president of product management, Enterprise Solutions Division, Symantec Corporation.

Chapter 5 : procomm plus | PC Review

Procomm Plus runs on IBM/PCs or compatibles using PC/MS DOS or higher with at least K of memory. On our PC, the communications software resides in MS DOS (Ver) directory named \PCPLUS.

Chapter 6 : CSDL | IEEE Computer Society

I never did migrate to Procomm Plus for Windows, although I remember salivating over it in a software store back when anything and everything modem-related exciting me. "Terminal" for Windows left a bad taste in my mouth, so I didn't use a GUI-based terminal emulator steadily until the Windows 98 era.

Chapter 7 : Results for Sharon-K-Octernaud | Book Depository

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Chapter 9 : Procomm Customers Receive Free Standard Care Support From Symantec | Symantec

Introduction to Linux - A Hands on Guide This guide was created as an overview of the Linux Operating System, geared toward new users as an exploration tour and getting started guide, with exercises at the end of each chapter.