

## Stories

OS/2 Warp 4 Arrives!  
Review: Page 5  
Launch: Page 6

Corel Office for JAVA!  
Article: Page 2

OS/2 Essentials  
Page 15

Sneak Peek:  
Entrepreneur  
Where: Page 12

# Stardock™ MAGAZINE

Winter 1997

http://www.stardock.com

SPECIAL  
REPORT!

GAMES  
for  
OS/2 Warp!  
Page: 8

The Magazine dedicated  
to OS/2, Windows NT, and  
Windows 95 users!

## Object Desktop Professional storms the market!

### Process Commander now available!

Anyone who's ever had their system hang, wanted to manage processes/threads, or modify their keyboard likely to be interested

Stardock has put Process Commander through a rigorous and public beta program to ensure that it is extremely reliable.

Process Commander, a project started over a year ago when the Object Desktop team joined forces with the team that developed WatchCat, is designed to allow users to truly control their OS/2 systems.

Many observers believe that Process Commander may challenge Object Desktop for supremacy of the OS/2 market from a sales point of view. "If you have OS/2, you should really have Process Commander," said one Internet user.

Process Commander not only lets users recover from system hangs reliably but also gives OS/2 users new shutdown options, keyboard enhancements, and low level process management.

(More on Process Commander on Page 3)

### Next Generation Business Environment surpasses Stardock's sales expectations

Object Desktop Professional was and is targeted only at corporate desktops and power users. The \$179 business environment was expected to take a back seat to Object Desktop in the sales arena when in fact the opposite has occurred.

"Ironically, Stardock has been forced to rethink its marketing strategy with Object Desktop Professional because of the unbelievable demand," said Brad Wardell, President, Stardock Systems, Inc.

While features such as universal file viewing (ability to read, copy, and print from virtually

any type of document format), security, desktop management, and system backup have brought in a flood of new customers. Other less stressed features are also building a following. Features such as the Object Scheduler which allows users to run a program at a specific time has made it very popular.

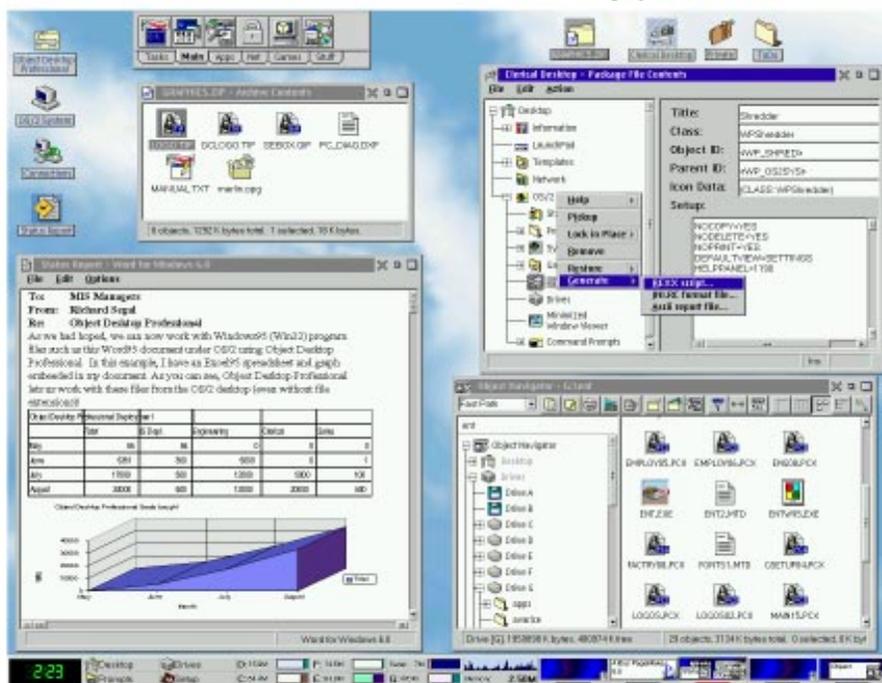
"Users really like the ability to run a virus scan or backup of their system or internet mailing program in the middle of the night automatically with a drag and drop," said Pat Ford, Technical Advisor, Stardock Systems, Inc. "It's so easy to use that it requires no training and is integrated so well that it acts as if it were a base feature of OS/2."

Another feature winning converts is the Desktop Backup Advisor. While it allows corporations and end users to backup their desktop (either for safe keeping or to standardize across the company), it also has the side effect of completely cleaning/repairing INI files in the process of restoring. In fact, it does it so well (better than many commercial stand alone INI (Continued on page 13)

Get on the FREE

Stardock  
Magazine  
Mailing list

(page 16)



Object Desktop Professional 1.5.2 can take advantage of performance and visual features when OS/2 Warp 4 is installed.

## We're Listening...

This is our first widely distributed issue of Stardock Magazine. In the past, it has primarily gone out to corporate customers, user groups, and resellers as a way to let people know what is happening at Stardock and in the OS/2 market.

Contrary to "mainstream media", OS/2 is not going away. With 14 million users today and more moving to it everyday, OS/2 represents a strong alternative to the "Windows everywhere" solution. With its excellent multitasking, networking, and scalability, OS/2 is a great solution for corporations, power users, and even home users.

While Stardock itself intends to become a cross-platform company in an effort to satisfy its growing customer base, it remains heartily committed to the OS/2 platform. In the future, many of its products may appear on not only OS/2,

but Windows NT, Windows95, Unix, and emerging platforms. Where ever our customers want us to be, that is where we'll be.

Because this is our first issue that many people will see, we're interested in hearing your opinions and suggestions on this magazine, our software, and how our technical and marketing services can better aid you.

We are also interested in hearing success stories with Stardock software or OS/2 or Windows NT in general. Stardock Magazine will try to publish success stories in forthcoming issues.

Remember, this magazine is FREE. It costs nothing to subscribe to. Just fill out the back page of this magazine and send it in to us.

The revenue this magazine generates in increased orders and corporate sales pays for the magazine. Moreover, several OS/2 ISVs have contacted us with interest in advertising in Stardock magazine. Don't be surprised to see Stardock magazine grow over time into a leading 32bit magazine.

Editor@stardock.com

## HEADLINES

### PlusPak for OS/2 Warp 4 to be released on February 14, 1997.

Stardock's much anticipated add on designed for OS/2 Warp 4 users has been delayed until early 1997. Stardock, finding itself releasing no fewer than 5 OS/2 products in the second half of 1996 simply did not believe it could give the PlusPak the marketing resources it deserved if it pushed it out the door in 1996. Stardock intends to turn the PlusPak into a series instead of a single monolithic product. The first in the series will be called "PlusPak: Themes" which will let OS/2 users greatly enhance the look of OS/2.

The PlusPak will help launch Stardock's upcoming Electronic Commerce strategy.

### JAVA Paves way for OS/2 to get mainstream application support!

For the past year and a half, OS/2 users have had to watch their current application mix get further and further behind the applications on other platforms.

While Lotus has repeatedly stated that Smartsuite is coming "real soon now" and indeed, Word Pro is now here, and Star Office has finally begun to hit the street, the mainstream Windows market has largely ignored the OS/2 market.

That's all about to change thanks to JAVA. Pictured here is Corel Office running on OS/2 (with Object Desktop installed of course). Word Perfect, Paradox, and the rest of Corel Office will now run natively on

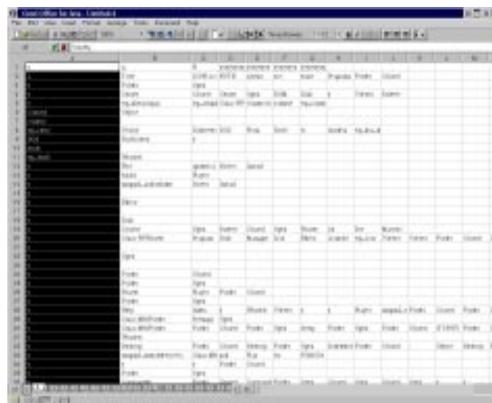
### Merlin Enhancement Kit available for Object Desktop and Object Desktop Professional

Users of Object Desktop 1.5 and Object Desktop Professional 1.5 can now pick up Fixkit #2 from Stardock's support sites. Fixkits (which now are cumulative) #1 and #2 when combined can now take advantage of new OS/2 Warp 4 performance hooks as well as improve the cosmetics of OS/2 Warp 4.

### Matrox about to release new graphics driver

The popular Matrox card whose 2.x drivers have broken most OS/2 multimedia applications (including Galactic Civilizations II) are about to be fixed by Matrox. Users can obtain the new drivers on their Compuserve forum (GO MATROX).

OS/2 Warp 4. While IBM admits that the built in JAVA support is not particularly speedy, IBM plans to greatly enhance the JAVA support in both feature and performance shortly. OS/2's possibilities have just grown!



## Top 5 OS/2 shrink wrapped products

Sept/Oct 1996

#1 Object Desktop 1.5 (Stardock)

#2 Partition Magic (PowerQuest)

#3 AVARICE: The Final Saga (Stardock)

#4 Object Desktop Professional (Stardock)

#5 Gammatech Utilities (SoftTouch)

Source: September/October SDS reseller survey.

## Top Ten Signs you're a Techno Junkie!

#10 You get uptight when you see people running their monitor at 60hz refresh!

#9 When you go into a computer store, you eavesdrop on a salesperson talking with customers and butt in to correct him and spend the next 20 minutes answering customer questions while the salesperson stands by silently, nodding his head.

#8 You actually put a :) or <<grin>> in a regular letter.

#7 Dots per inch is more important than gas mileage.

#6 You can't sit through a movie without having at least one device on your body beep or buzz.

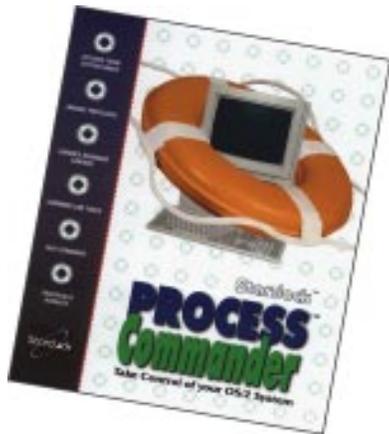
#5 When you go to stores or go for travel, you try to see what software they are running on their PC's or terminals.

#4 You get upset if your friends aren't using the same operating system as you.

#3 You own a set of itty-bitty screw-drivers that you actually use regularly.

#2 You no longer ask people for their "phone number", you now ask for their "voice" number.

#1 You're more interested in the number of gadgets your car has on the interior rather than the horsepower of the engine.



## Process Commander: The Must-Have OS/2 Product

There are so many reasons why every OS/2 user needs Process Commander. When Process Commander went into beta, some OS/2 users discovered that it became so essential to them that they could not imagine running their system without it again.

So what's so great about Process Commander? What's all the excitement about?

Well, for one thing, now that OS/2 Warp 4 is out and the potential message queue hang issue is still alive and well, Process Commander's ability to recover from hangs and lockups makes it pretty attractive. If your system hangs, slows down, or locks up, by hitting Ctrl+Alt+Del you

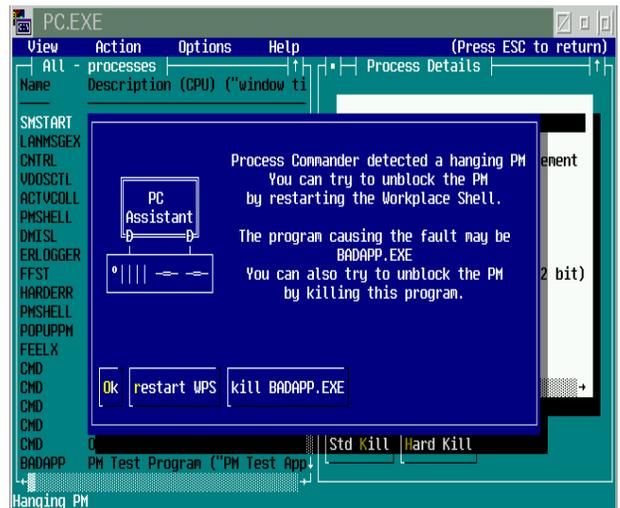
can often recover. When you hit the "three finger salute" it now brings up a full screen process management screen that allows users to usually terminate the process that is hanging their system.

In other words, if your system has ever hung, you'll want to make sure you get Process Commander.

Another very useful feature is the graphical Process Commander tool that displays all the running programs. Not only can you modify the priority of programs, view how much shared memory they use, and lots of other details, but it is extremely useful in improving system performance. For example, most users do not realize just how much "stuff" is running on their system on a "clean" boot up. Lots of unnecessary and usually hidden programs are running that really aren't necessary that use up memory and CPU. One simple example is the ARTCHRON.EXE program. In OS/2 Warp 4, this program is loaded whether you want it or not unless you take action. Most users didn't even know it was loaded until Process Commander beta testers discovered it. They also discovered that it was slowing down the system immensely during the OS/2 Warp 4 beta and were able to notify IBM about it thanks to the Process Commander beta. The

ARTCHRON program (which is an auto registration program) is still in OS/2 Warp 4 though. Users of Process Commander could see that it is loaded, find out where it is loaded from, terminate it and delete the program from their system and hence save memory and CPU usage. This is one simple example of where Process Commander can help and there are plenty of other examples.

In other words, if you want to know what your system is really running and improve your performance, make sure you have Process



Users can now recover from system hangs by hitting Ctrl+Alt+Del which activates the Process Commander full screen module. From here, Process Commander will identify the problem and allow you to recover from it.

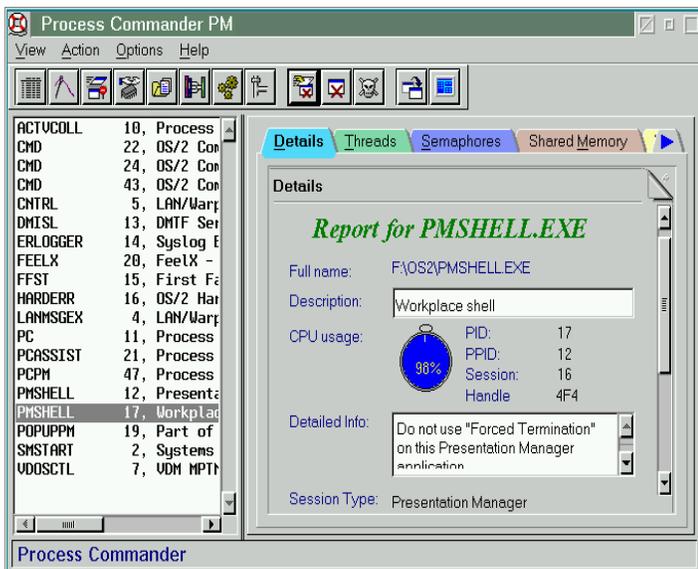
Commander.

Process Commander also has a terrific feature that is unique to it: The Shutdown folder. OS/2 has a "Startup" folder that loads things when you first boot. The Shutdown folder works just the opposite. When you shutdown your system, anything in this folder will be executed. For example, let's say that at the end of the day you want your system to be backed up or you want a virus scan to be run, just drop that program in the Shutdown folder and it'll be run when you shutdown.

One common complaint from OS/2 users is that new computers now come with special "Win95" keys. These might be useful if you're running Windows95 but for users who have upgraded to OS/2 Warp, they are of no use. But with Process Commander, you can now assign those keys to do something. Modifying those keys is not the only thing that Process Commander does for your keyboard. It can also allow you to set the boot-up Num-Lock condition (to be ON or OFF) as requested by thousands of OS/2 users. It can also allow users to swap certain keys to make their keyboard behave more like a Unix keyboard or terminal keyboard.

For power users, Process Commander comes with a plethora of command line tools. Users can actually modify process's priorities from the command line. It also provides a true KILL -9 capability that many long time OS/2 users can appreciate. Any function you could imagine performing on a process can be done from the command line now.

But Process Commander is not just targeted at power users, it is also aimed at corporate users



For developers and end users, Process Commander's graphical interface is intuitive, safe, yet powerful. Users can find out how much shared memory programs are using, modify thread priorities, and view essentially anything they want about a process/program running on their system. Very useful for optimizing system performance.

and IS managers. For IS managers, Process Commander actually allows remote process management. That is, you can terminate processes on a remote machine. For example, imagine if your server has hung and it is a considerable distance away. Instead of having to reboot the server, an IS manager could logon to it remotely and terminate the offending application from his or her machine.

Process Commander has been designed from the ground up to be flexible enough for power users but safe enough for IS managers to place on their corporate users' desktops. It is remarkably easy to use, has a friendly GUI interface, has built in advisors that can optionally advise users on what is causing a system hang and each process is described in plain English. For example, PMSHELL.EXE isn't just listed, it also explains that this is the main UI for OS/2. Moreover, all of the above features can be selectively installed such that IS managers can decide which features they want their users to have access to.

With these features alone, it's easy to see why so many end users, power users, and corporations are eagerly picking up Process Commander. Not many products are truly "must have" but Process Commander would certainly qualify as a must-have utility for all OS/2 users.

## Process Commander:

\$69.95 (special \$65 price in Stardock Magazine). Requires OS/2 2.11, 3.0, or 4.0.

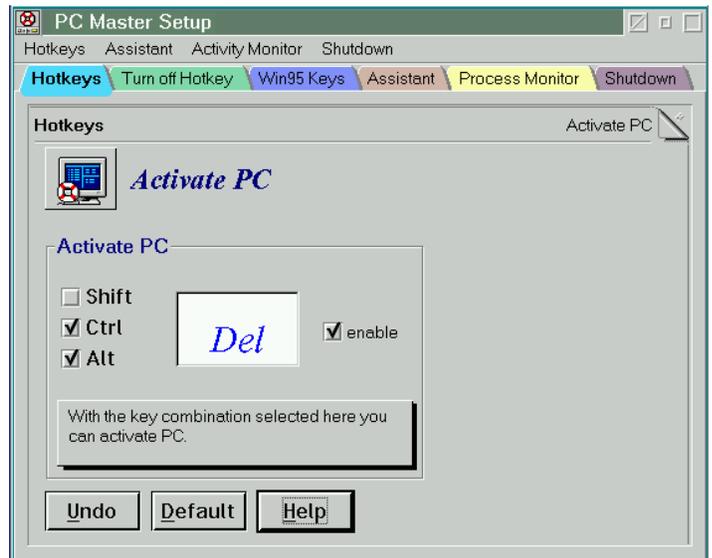
# Process Commander: A summary

**With so many features, it's easy to get confused on whether you need these features or not. For that reason, let's discuss in a nutshell what Process Commander does. If you own a copy of Process Commander, here are just a few of the things you'll be able to do. This is by no means a complete list.**

- 1) If your system has ever "hung", instead of having to reboot you can hit the Ctrl+Alt+Del keyboard combination and Process Commander full screen interjects. Because the full screen version is not subject to OS/2's message queue, it isn't usually affected by system hangs. From here, Process Commander can usually identify the cause of the system hang and offer suggestions for recovering (such as terminating a bad application). This feature is also useful for those who don't want their users or themselves to accidentally reboot their systems with the Ctrl+Alt+Del combination.
- 2) It provides new ways to shut down. OS/2 (especially OS/2 Warp 4) can often take some time to shutdown. Process Commander provides two new types of Shutdowns: Enhanced and Quick. Enhanced Shutdown acts the same as OS/2's standard shutdown except it also offers the option to reboot when it is done. Quick Shutdown writes the contents of the cache to disk and shuts down which is much faster than the Enhanced shutdown. It won't save the positions of your icons but this is normally not something you want to do. It too gives the option of rebooting after shutdown. For many users, the auto-reboot feature is a real "must have". On network systems or on power user systems, it can take a long time to shut down. Now, users can have it shutdown and reboot while they get up and do something else in the office.
- 3) You can access a wide range of command line utilities such as a true "Kill -9" utility. This is essential for those who write REXX scripts or like to work from the command line.
- 4) The graphical version of Process Commander allows users to optimize their systems by looking at what the system loads on boot up. In most cases, OS/2 loads a lot more things than is needed. It will also allow users to modify the priority of threads, look at shared memory, , semaphores, etc. If you are an OS/2 developer, corporate desktop user, or IS manager, this feature is very attractive.
- 5) Any user of Unix knows that if a Unix system "crashes", they can usually recover by TELNETing to it from a remote machine and terminating the app that is causing the Unix machine to hang. Until now, OS/2 users did not have this ability. Process Commander allows users to TELNET onto a remote machine (from anywhere) and manage processes remotely (including termination). Security measures are also built in for those who want to keep others from doing this.
- 6) Process Commander also enhances the keyboard driver in many ways. For example, it allows OS/2 users to use those "Windows95 enhanced" keys on many new keyboards. Users can also redefine many other keys on the keyboard as well.
- 7) As a side note, Process Commander also "fixes" the long complained about Num-Lock startup value. OS/2 users since 1.3 have asked for the Num-lock state to be settable since many corporations use OS/2 as a data entry front end. With Process Commander, the Num-Lock setting can be set on boot up which can reduce training costs (and is convenient).



Process Commander not only gives you new shutdown options, it can reboot the system for you when it completes a shutdown. This convenience alone makes Process Commander very attractive



Process Commander also gives an extraordinary amount of control over your keyboard. Moreover, it will even allow OS/2 users to take advantage of Windows95 enhanced keyboards.

# OS/2 WARP

Version 4

desktop objects: Connections, Programs, OS/2 System, and Help Center.

The Connections folder lists drives, internet websites, network drives, and printers. This is a

wonderful way to get to your connections, even better than "My Computer" on NT/Win95 because the connections folder starts out in a simple tree-view instead of icon view.

The Programs folder contains the applications, utilities, and other programs you'll be running. Instead of segregating programs into "Windows Apps", "OS/2 Apps", "DOS Apps", they are now organized by what type of program they are "Applications", "Utilities", etc. Since OS/2 runs DOS, Windows, and OS/2 programs very well, it does not make sense to try to distinguish amongst them. It would have been nice if IBM would have spent the time to make Windows programs LOOK like OS/2 programs which would not be difficult to do.

The Help Center object is designed for new users to get help from. By default, OS/2 has a new interactive help system "coaches" which can actually (as was explained to me in January) observe the way you use the OS and rates your proficiency level at the OS and suggest faster and easier ways to get things done over time. Users who have the patience to deal with the early interference of the coaches and not turn them off may be surprised to learn some tips and tricks on using OS/2 later on.

OS/2 System stores system specific objects. You can change the way OS/2 works from here. Lots of subtle interface changes can be made from here. Next week Stardock's webpage (<http://www.stardock.com>) will begin listing tips on improving Merlin performance.

IBM also includes a modified version of Lotus's "Smart Center" which is now called the Warp Center. I believe IBM should have stayed with the LaunchPad (now called toolbar) as its main program launching interface. While the Warp Center is much more powerful, it is much more difficult to use and most OS/2 power users will find it inadequate and have moved to Stardock's Object Desktop anyway which

provides the Control Center, a true OS/2 integrated center that also provides virtual desktops, greater flexibility and performance. In other words, Warp Center, while better for power users than the LaunchPad, is too much for end users (i.e. the majority of OS/2 systems are in use in large corporations where they are looking for something like the Toolbar - or the Tab Launchpad in Object Desktop to launch programs), and most power users will prefer the Control Center in Object Desktop.

My biggest cosmetic complaint about OS/2 V4 is the font quality. While IBM made a good move by replacing the ugly system font with the new Warp font, the outline font quality went down the tubes and many programs that used outline fonts look strange and jagged. On the other hand, OS/2 now supports True Type fonts making True Type the de-facto standard PC font standard for most users.

But OS/2V4 looks very nice. The windows, like in NT 4.0, have a 3D look to them and the ugly old system controls have been updated to look more embossed. The buttons now look a lot nicer, I think I prefer them to the NT 4.0 buttons but it's purely a matter of taste.

Also, OS/2 now can view common graphic types such as GIF, JPEG, TARGA, TIFF, etc. which can make dealing with graphics very nice.

By default now, when you drag and drop objects to the desktop, they are shadowed. New OS/2 users will appreciate this (or more to the point, help desks at corporations will appreciate this) but existing OS/2 users will quickly learn to change it back from the "System" object.

Full drag is also implemented to bring it up to NT 4.0 in this cosmetic area. The full drag isn't quite as smooth as it is in third party products such as FeelX and Stardock's Object Desktop but more than good enough for most users.

Performance is quite good, slightly better

## Summary:

### The Good:

- Improved look and feel
  - Bullet Proof installation
  - Voice Type Dictation Integration
  - Internet Integration
  - World's greatest object oriented interface
- ### The Bad
- Basic underpinnings not worked on
  - Terrible disk I/O
  - Single Input Queue still not taken care of
  - Java support does not live up to billing
  - True Type Support not well polished

OS/2's first significant upgrade since 2.0 demonstrates IBM's new vision of a PC on every desktop working with local Intranets, Notes, and the Internet and running software from whomever fits the users needs the most. Excellent Internet integration, cosmetic improvements, and administrative improvements make OS/2 a must-have upgrade to existing OS/2 users. On the other hand, IBM has failed to address basic problems with OS/2 such as its slow cache system, single input queue, and ancient device driver model.

## Introduction

IBM made an unfortunate error in releasing the Merlin beta in June when it was unstable and not following up with a second beta in late July. Many users, including myself, believed that Merlin would end up a bug-fest and installation nightmare without a second beta. I am pleased to admit I was wrong, Merlin is very stable, and feels very complete. For the past 3 weeks, my employer has switched much of its internal resources in working with IBM to gamma-test OS/2 (23F and on) and been on the phone until very late at night with IBM developers in tracking down bugs, making suggestions, etc. The net result is that IBM, in including "outsiders" and also listening to them may have the most stable release of OS/2 since 1.3.

## Living with OS/2 V4

Since OS/2 2.0, a default OS/2 installation left a huge myriad of icons, folders, and other "junk" on the desktop. The experienced OS/2 user would sigh, straighten out the mess and either hand it over to a new user or begin working on the OS. With V4, IBM collaborated with a certain OS/2 ISV on how the OS/2 desktop should be setup. Now, OS/2 V4 installs with just four



OS/2 Warp 4 gets a new look and feel.

than Warp Connect. Users will have to be very careful about what they install. OS/2 V4 can require as little as 8 megs of ram if you keep an eye on what you are installing and as much as 32 megs if you install the VoiceType dictation.

But not everything is a bed of roses. OS/2 has a disk cache for every conceivable type of drive format. There's one for FAT partitions, another for HPFS partitions and another for CD-ROMs. While Merlin includes the "SIQ fix" from Fixpack 17, it is a band-aid for a much larger problem. The system hangs and while everything may be running, you are forced to reboot. This happens much less frequently under OS/2 Warp 3.0 with FP22 installed but Merlin adds so many new features to the mix (light table integrated, OpenDoc, Voicetype, Coaches, etc.) that it remains an issue. For Stardock, this is a dual edged issue. We would have loved to see IBM fix the hang issue but on the other hand, Stardock's Process Commander, which offers a solution to this problem, will benefit as potentially millions of users purchase it for their needs. Overall though, a carefully installed OS/2 Warp 4 system is definitely the most stable version of OS/2 I've ever used.

## VoiceType Dictation

VoiceType screams "gimmick" to most people including myself. If it isn't as good as Star Trek's voice recognition, it is not likely to be good enough. VoiceType requires a lot of voice training to be usable. It makes a great demo when properly trained but it will be some time before it is used by mainstream users. However, for physically disabled users, VoiceType makes OS/2 the best choice for getting work done.

## The Internet Integration

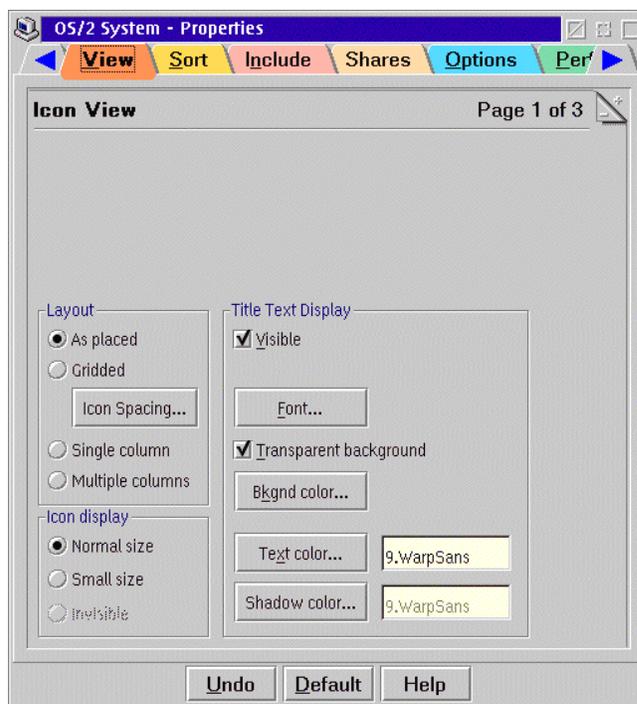
This is a mixed bag. IBM scored a home run on the web integration and FTP integration but the Java support is little more than a marketing bullet at present. IBM has said that they will continue to enhance and improve OS/2's JAVA support in the coming months. On the other hand, the FTP integration is great. Make sure you take advantage of it as it is not an obvious feature. You must go to your templates folder and drag a "FTP host" to get started.

### The User Interface

OS/2's biggest strength is the Workplace Shell (backed by SOM). Without this feature, OS/2 would probably not be a significant force today. Let me explain to non-OS/2 users (and remind existing OS/2 users) the power of OS/2's interface.

I can change any object (i.e. file) on the computer to the way I like. That means I can change its icon, its attributes, give it a description, associate file types to it, etc. It is extremely consistent and Merlin's notebook controls are a generation ahead of NT 4.0's.

In OS/2, the type of file has nothing to do with the .3 extension. Describe Word Processor knows its own file because it attaches an extended attribute to the file. Net result, documents with names like "Letter to mom" as opposed to "Letter to mom.DOC" as you would have under Windows95/NT. In short, OS/2 is the OS that takes the best features of the Macintosh and adds power to it. OS/2 V4 is everything the MacOS hopes to be someday. It is quite interesting that certain members of the media proclaim Windows95 as being as easy to use as a Macintosh. Mac users shake their heads at those sorts of statements. OS/2 is much more



The new OS/2 Warp 4 notebooks are easier to use and more attractive than the notebooks in previous versions of OS/2.

like a Macintosh than Windows95 is and has the power and multitasking of a high end Unix workstation.

## Polish

OS/2 really falls down in the polish area. V4 is by far the most polished version of OS/2 but try this on your OS/2 V4 system: Right click on a folder and choose "Create Another", then choose "Default". Instead of it creating a folder, it brings up a dialog asking where you want to put it and has a default name of "Peer WPS Folder Class" or some yucky name like that. It's actually a bug, though cosmetic. Another example is doing a local logon. It takes several seconds to verify that you have entered the

correct password and get access to the network. This too is listed as a bug internally at IBM as it does a huge network scan before looking on your local system for the password. And finally, double click on a remote machine, double click on a shared drive. It comes up in tree view, that's fine. Now double click on a sub folder, you get just that folder in a tree-view. This too is a bug but again, overlooked. I would have been willing to go without JAVA support and VoiceType dictation (and have IBM come up with a \$89.95 Internet Enhancement Kit and another \$89.95 Voice Integration Kit later on) for these and the other issues I mentioned to be taken care of.

Not to mention that network resources cannot be accessed from OS/2's ancient file dialog box.

Another example is that the default editor, E.EXE asks the user for what type of file you are creating on saving a document which is totally unnecessary but very annoying.

They also did not finish the icons. Most of the icons have the new Merlin look and about a third are leftovers from Warp. (Shameless plug time: Luckily, Stardock is creating the OS/2 V4 PlusPak for early next year which provides "themes" with beautifully rendered replacement icons that replace virtually every icon on the system plus a bunch of other "icing on the cake" features).

But there is great polish on other parts of the OS. The new notebooks are magnificent, the new look of OS/2 is great too. The problems I discuss here are largely because IBM is developed mostly in Austin but also in places all over the world and communicating a consistent design message is probably very difficult.

So it's not so much that OS/2 V4 isn't well polished, it's just not as well polished as NT 4.0. NT may have a mediocre interface, but it feels like a completed mediocre interface. OS/2 has the greatest interface in OS history but it feels like an incomplete one in certain corners.

## Conclusions

OS/2 Warp 4 is a definite must-have upgrade for OS/2 users and especially corporations. It addresses a lot of "bugs" that were in OS/2 Warp 3, adds significant features and performs better in many ways. But users looking for a complete overhaul of the infrastructure will be disappointed. It is clear that IBM wants to ensure OS/2's long term stability and not mess around with the underlying plumbing.

Brad Wardell  
wardell@ibm.net

# The OS/2 Warp 4 Launch!

Stardock was invited as one of the select few ISVs to attend the OS/2 Warp 4 Launch in San Francisco California on September 25. Here's a wrap up of the events of that day.

## The ISVs...

There were actually only a few true OS/2 ISVs there. That is, software companies that develop specifically for OS/2 as opposed to developing for a bunch of platforms at once.

For example, MGI Imagine which ported a relatively unknown graphics program from Windows to OS/2 was there (they used Open32) but DevTech, CDS, and SofTouch, who all have "bet the farm" on OS/2 were not. While my views on this are mixed, I can only say that it must have been very difficult to choose who to invite. Do you choose ISVs who have supported your platform for years or ones that are exploiting the key technologies that IBM is currently advocating (such as Open32)? IBM clearly went the path of choosing ISVs that are currently exploiting the newer OS/2 technologies. Pinnacle is using IBM's new security services that are in OS/2 Warp 4, Innoval is a significant internet developer for OS/2, and Stardock, is the leading developer of SOM and workplace shell applications, integrates its products into the internet, uses DART, DIVE, and other newer IBM technologies, and is also developing JAVA software.

Other ISVs there included: Adobe (showing Acrobat), Apple (showing Quicktime for OS/2), Bulletproof (showing a JAVA app), JSOFT (showing a JAVA app), Lotus (showing WordPro

and the rest of SmartSuite 97 for OS/2), Global Village (showing FaxWorks), TrueSpectra (showing their OpenDoc technology), Cytrix (showing their NT server that allows OS/2 to run Win32 programs from remote), CyruX (showing their CD ROM creation software), and a few other ISVs that I can't remember off the top of my head.

JAVA was by far the main focus of the show. I couldn't help but feel like some people at IBM who make decisions read too much PC Week, Computerworld, and InfoWorld. They really went out of their way to boost the companies who write for JAVA.

As an example, IBM ran a 5 minute video praising the power of JAVA. Make no mistake, JAVA has a lot of promise — key word PROMISE. Much of the video was spent praising and highlighting Bulletproof who essentially writes JAVA stock tickers and other applets of dubious commercial value. It did not seem to occur to IBM that long time OS/2 ISVs may have had state of the art internet technologies just now coming available or available shortly (such as Object Advisors in Object Desktop Professional).

I know others felt similarly seeing JAVA start-ups making inconsequential JAVA applications getting IBM's primary attention to be ironic. Afterall, they could largely care less about OS/2.

## On a brighter note...

IBM went out of its way to assure its customers and audience that OS/2 isn't going away. And in fact, JAVA may have well saved OS/2 from being put in maintenance mode. It has been an IBM trend to not push products that don't dominate their respective markets. OS/2, with about 8% of the overall PC OS market, is certainly well behind the Windows everywhere market (at about 80%). But a strange thing happened,

testing labs I believe).

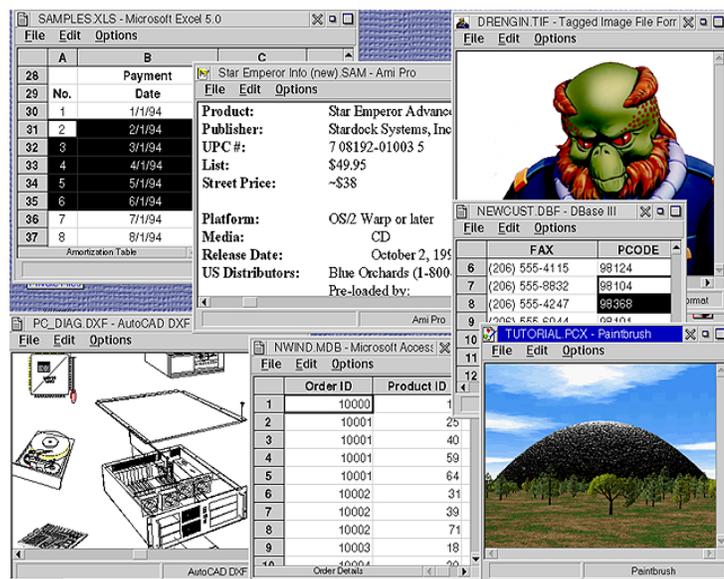
So imagine this scene at IBM. Those same non-PSP IBMers who once said "OS/2-who?" are suddenly saying "Good grief! We've got to thwart this! Let's turbo-charge OS/2 and send it after NT!" But then PSP replies "It's too late for the API wars, you didn't support us enough to challenge the Win32 API so at this point, the OS/2 API cannot win." After some thought it occurs to them "JAVA! Yes, we can standardize our API on the new JAVA language from SUN. In fact, we can ensure that all our platforms (OS/2, AS/400, AIX, System 360, etc.) all run JAVA apps natively. With the entire industry getting behind JAVA and OS/2 to be the first PC platform that runs JAVA natively, the only thing left was to sign a deal with Netscape and get them, to support OS/2. Netscape could use any ally, especially a powerful one with the #2 PC desktop OS in the world and IBM was willing to pay bucks to get that support. With that done, OS/2 suddenly went from being the OS that only PSP cared about to the one that everyone at IBM suddenly cares about. Because left unchecked, Microsoft will squash JAVA, Netscape, and in 10 years you'll have Win32 everywhere on massively parallel Sentium Pros (or whatever) up against IBM's cash cows.

At this point, I don't think it takes a guru to figure out that IBM really does care about OS/2's success and has no plans to abandon it. In the past, IBM's loyalty to its customers (according to John W. Thompson, the customers who use OS/2 represent \$30 billion of IBM's business from other areas. You don't want to make them mad). But now, they have that plus they have to keep Win32 purely on the desktop and with help, as a niche API on the desktop with JAVA being the main platform for software.

IBM's job in the next year is to make OS/2 the premiere network OS. That is, to make JAVA run faster on OS/2 than any other OS, to connect to a variety of platforms the easiest, to run the fastest and to use its own advantages (SOM, the Workplace Shell, OpenDoc, Voice Type) as ways to differentiate OS/2 from other platforms.

If JAVA takes off and if OS/2 becomes the best place to run JAVA apps, those in the press who have been realistic about OS/2 (with 5 times the installed base of NT) will have the last laugh over their counterparts who talk of the "NT momentum" (which gained it about 800,000 users this year — wow, what momentum). But those are two BIG ifs. JAVA is not ready yet for prime time applications. The JAVA word processor they showed could not print because JAVA doesn't support printing yet (to my knowledge). I am also not sure how it saves to a local disk yet. How are you going to drag and drop to and from a JAVA app? What about OLE or OpenDoc JAVA documents (Javabeans is a big unknown to me)? And of course, what about performance? I have a hard time believing we'll see Autocad on JAVA any time soon but only time will tell.

Brad Wardell, wardell@ibm.net



Stardock attended the "Merlin" Launch to show off Stardock's latest technology such as Object Desktop Professional's viewing technology and Internet/Intranet integrated help (Object Advisors). In this example, Object Desktop Professional views a half dozen different types of files.

# Let The Games Begin

## SPECIAL REPORT GAMING ON OS/2!

OS/2 has come a long way from the days of Mind sweeper and card games. Today, OS/2 has no less than a dozen full fledged native OS/2 commercial titles that compete and often exceed the quality of the games in the DOS/Windows market. With this Christmas approaching, here's a list of some of the hottest and best games available for OS/2 from Stardock, the leader in OS/2 games...

To say that Stardock is a leader in the OS/2 consumer market would be an understatement. According to a recent reseller survey, Stardock holds over 95% of the consumer market and nearly 40% of the overall OS/2 shrink wrapped market. Gaming on OS/2 is serious business and many gamers looking for cutting edge games turn to OS/2.

Why? Because OS/2 brings the power of a mature 32bit multitasking, multithreading operating system that leverages the advantages of a modern operating system with the power of direct access to the hardware via DIVE and DART. While Windows95 is beginning to see some of these features (DirectX) and can multithread to a limited extent, games such as Avarice and Galactic Civilizations could simply not have been developed under Windows95. While NT would be a good candidate, it simply does not have the market share to justify developing a game solely for it presently.

### AVARICE The Final Saga

A long time ago...on a computer long long gone, there were real adventure games. Adventure games like ZORK, Planetfall, Enchanter, etc. These were the classic games

One of the features that makes Avarice stand out from other adventure games is that everything in the Avarice world is an object.

In this example, you find an orange. Look at what you can do with the orange.

Players can peel the orange, break the orange into parts, burn the orange pieces, or even eat the orange --virtually.

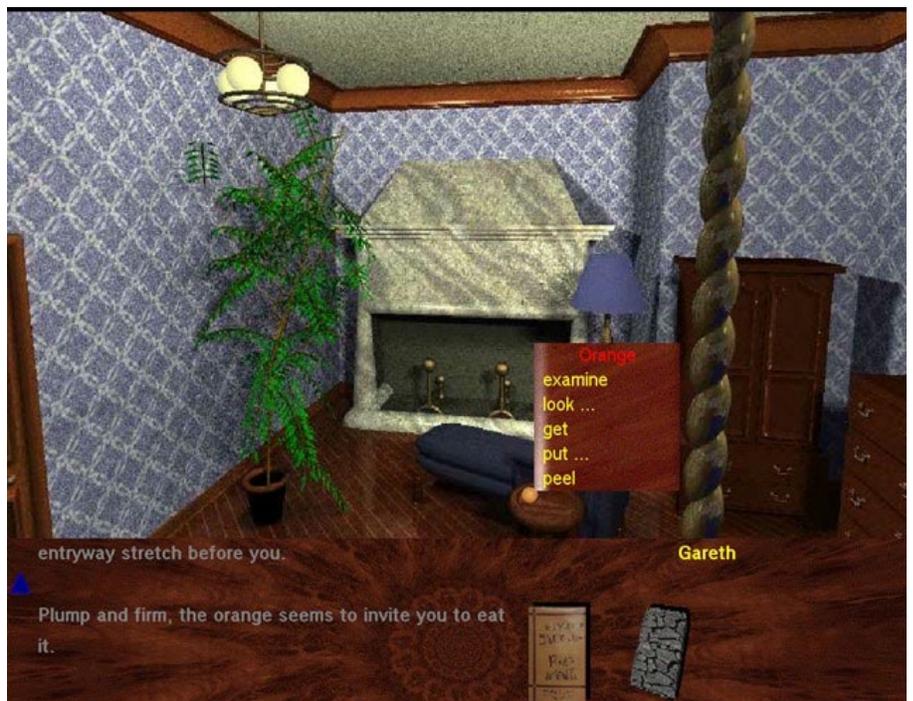


where players had to really think their way through the game. They had to gather objects and figure out what their relationship was. The only downside, if any, was that they had no graphics. The player had to imagine what the world looked like. Luckily, the text descriptions were often so vivid that graphics could not do them justice.

In the past few years, adventure games have become prettier but often not nearly as fun or imaginative as they used to be. They have also, in many cases, become embarrassingly easy to solve. Even worse, gathering objects in the game became a chore because it was either a "click fest" to discover ways to use or an object that you needed was extremely obvious because it stuck out.

Enter AVARICE: The Final Saga.

Developed by Continuous Software Systems, Avarice took 2 years to make and it shows. The depth of the Avarice world is amazing. It is an extremely complex game targeted at high end systems that can handle it. In Avarice, the world is rendered in true 24bit color (up to 16.8 million colors) and it has no fewer than several thousand objects. Users looking for a simple and pretty game will not like Avarice. This is a game for people who want to become immersed in a graphical world and solve some real mysteries in ways that make sense. In short, Avarice strives, and succeeds, at being one of the



In Avarice, everything you see is an object. You can pick up and interact with the orange, the plant you see, the fireplace, the chair, the dresser, the wallpaper, the lights, etc. This is the closest to true virtual reality PC gaming has gotten so far.

first true virtual reality games. For example, in a typical game that has a library, there is only one book that you could read and it would have a clue in it. In Avarice, there is a library but all of the books are real books. Players could read the entire "Wizard of Oz" series or "Journey to the Center of the Earth" and so on. The smart player won't try to read all the books just as in real life a detective would not sit down and try to read all the books in a library. If there is something they need to know, they'll come across a clue elsewhere. But the point is, the realism factor is there.

Because of the complexity of the messaging model for the objects, Stardock strongly recommends users own OS/2 Warp 4 or at least OS/2 Warp 3 with the latest fixpack. And while performance is well beyond that of Windows and DOS based games of its genre (because Avarice can load graphics in the background thanks to OS/2's built in multithreading), a Pentium system is also highly recommended.

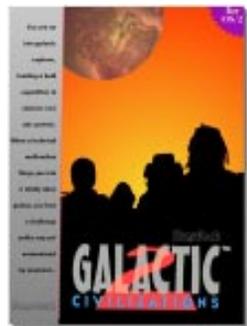
Avarice begins with a letter from your uncle that mentions "the opportunity of a lifetime". When you arrive, it sounds as if there is a great treasure within your missing uncle's estate. But there is something sinister in the air...something very evil indeed. Those who solve the game will realize that indeed, the opportunity of a lifetime awaits them in Avarice...

### AVARICE: The Final Saga

Price: \$69.95

#### Requires:

- OS/2 Warp 3.0 or later (OS/2 Warp 4 recommended)
- 486DX or faster system (Pentium Recommended)
- 12 Megabytes of RAM
- 2 speed CD ROM drive or faster
- OS/2 compatible sound card

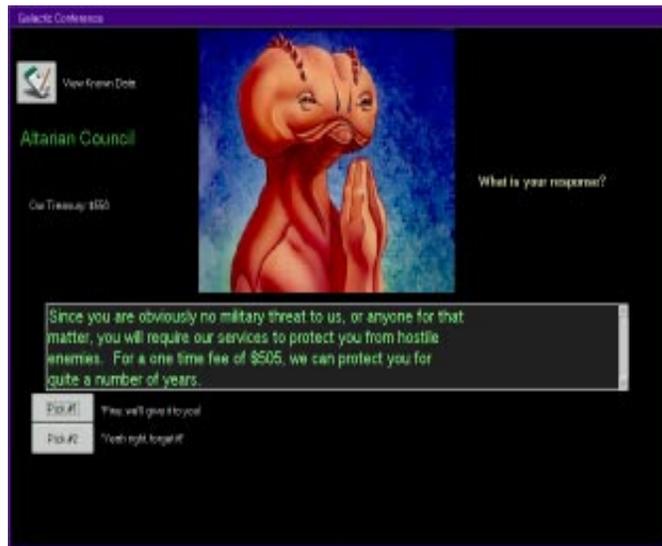


Galactic Civilizations II v2.5 arrives just in time for Christmas! Galactic Civilizations, the most popular OS/2 game of all time. The game that shocked the world by winning the 1995 "Game of the Year" award from the prestigious Internet PC Games chart group. A chart that companies like Westwood (makers of Command & Conquer), ID (makers of DOOM and Quake), and many others use in their advertising to prove that their game is good (because their games are in the top 10 but Galactic Civilizations was #1) The first and only game ever to win an Editor's Choice award from OS/2 Magazine.

Now, 2 years later, Galactic Civilizations has

a sequel and an updated one at that. Thousands of OS/2 users all over the world know the fun, excitement, and power of the game that was designed from scratch to take advantage of OS/2's unique abilities. A game with arguably the best computer players of any PC strategy game. The first commercial PC game that supported 24bit graphics. The first commercial PC game to use the advanced features of the new operating systems such as multithreading.

To put this into context, let's look at an example. Anyone who has ever played a computer Chess game knows the pain of having to wait and wait for the computer player to decide what to do. Most PC strategy games shorten this time by having the computer AI cheat and thus not follow the rules making it not take long to make its move. Galactic Civilizations II does it differently, while you are moving your units, managing your economy, building social projects, etc. the AI (artificial intelligence) is generating its strategy in the background. When you are done with your move, it has already decided on



There is a complex political web to interact with in Galactic Civilizations II.

what it does and simply makes its move. This makes for much faster gameplay and computer opponents who don't cheat.

It also allows for a much more rich game in terms of detail. An entire interstellar economy is simulated in the background. A complex political web is able to be interacted with.

The game takes place in the early 22nd century. Mankind has sent its first colony ship into deep space. When the colony ship comes into contact with a wormhole, it suddenly finds itself in a distant galaxy where there are other space faring races looking to carve out an interstellar empire. After colonizing a planet, you must decide what to do next. You control where



While a skilled politician or trader can often meet their objectives diplomatically, there are times when military action is necessary.

## Shipyards for Galactic Civilizations II a hit with gamers!

So it's not enough to just research new technologies to gain access to new types of ships eh? The developers at Stardock took this into account that some people just might want to have more control over the star ships they fly. To this end, they created Shipyards for GalCiv II. With Shipyards, players can actually design their own ships from scratch. With the technologies they discovered, they can piece together the ship's armor, weapons, shields, engines, and size.

Moreover, the GalCiv AI can take advantage of Shipyards and design its own ships. Humans and Aliens alike can choose what their ships look like and believe us, you'll see some strange looking star ships flying around.

Shipyards has been consistently one of Stardock's most popular products and possibly the most popular add-on in the OS/2 market. It does what it is supposed to do and does it very well. Shipyards costs \$19.95 (\$14.95 special pricing for this issue only).

your planetary resources go. For example, you can put resources into researching new technologies which allow you to build newer and better ships, newer planetary improvements, etc. You can also put your resources into building weapons and ships faster, or put your resources into building up your planet's defenses and social programs. Galactic Civilizations II also provides the means to becoming an intergalactic trading empire. Unlike most games, when war breaks out, trade with your enemy comes to a halt. This means that your enemies are much less likely to go to war against you if they rely on you for much of their wealth.

You win the game either through conquest, uniting the galaxy together under an alliance, or researching enough technology to go to a higher dimension.

This Christmas, discover what thousands of other OS/2 users have discovered, discover a new galaxy filled with endless possibilities.

## Galactic Civilizations II

List: \$59.95

Special Price for this issue: \$25!

### Requires:

- OS/2 Warp 3.0 or later
- 486DX or faster system
- 8 Megabytes of RAM
- CD ROM drive
- OS/2 compatible sound card

# MASTER of the EMPIRE

**A classic in the making. Go to strange new places, meet new people and conquer them!**

Ask people what the three classic military strategy games of all time are and the answer usually is: Empire Deluxe, Warlords, and Civilization. While there are hundreds of other games of this genre that are worth mentioning, none of them provide the general strategy gaming that these three provide. Trillium Software Products has created a game that brings some of the best features of each of them and combines them to create a new product that was designed from the ground up for 32bit operating systems: Master of the Empire.

In Master of the Empire, you

take control of a nation who has its own economic, resource, and military strengths and weaknesses. Using superior strategy and by trying to control the world's resources, you can bring the rest of the world under your control.

## Built in Campaigns or stand alone games!

You start a game by first choosing whether you want to begin a standard game which launches you on a campaign or by having it generate a random map for a single world to conquer. The campaign mode brings to life carefully created worlds which feature increasingly difficult obstacles to overcome in achieving your ultimate objective: Worldwide domination. Once you have made that choice, you are presented with a capital city to begin your conquest from.

## Natural Resources are critical to success!

Where Master of the Empire really begins to shine is in taking into account the resources of the world. World War II, for example, was won not only because of military genius but the fact that the Allies had a huge advantage in natural resources. Master of the Empire provides this realism as well. Each city will have different natural resources and the military units will require some of those resources to be built. You may have a lot of money but if you don't have steel (which you get by having mineral wealth), you can't build too many tanks. Luckily, Master of the Empire also provides a world market from which you can buy from with the money you've collected in taxes and from trading natural resources. Of course, when push comes to shove, your enemies are not likely to make their resources available on the market if they know you are in need of them.



The world market is where you can trade natural resources for money to buy other resources you may not have.

## The strategy of controlling strategic geographic locations!

The types of units you can build range from infantry to armor (tanks) to ships to bombers as well as spies and engineers. Each unit requires different resources to build, has different movement points, and has hitpoint as well as attack and defense values.

Moreover, the strategy elements of Master of the Empire are quite clear as you discover mountain passes, roads, and other types of terrain that aid or harm the ability to move ground forces to their destination. In this way, players will have to focus their attention on what priorities to place on their forces. Guard a strategic bridge or attack a city rich in resources? These are the decisions generals have to make in war and they

## Master of the Empire: AI for the next generation!

After playing a new game, have you ever wished you could modify the gameplay or how the computer players work? Not just editing some text files but really changing the way the game works?

The creators of Master of the Empire have wanted to do this and so they made the AI (Artificial Intelligence) of the game programmable. While most people won't need or want to change the AI, power players may want to "tweak" something to their liking. And the AI in Master of the Empire is written in ANSI Pascal (the rest of the game was developed in C++) such that modification from end users is easy. The AI can play fair or cheat or do whatever else you want it to do. Many AI journals have suggested that this may be the wave of the future and it's here today! With Master of the Empire, your strategy possibilities are nearly endless!



From your capital city, you must build up a military machine to begin your conquest of the world.

are the decisions you will make as the leader of your nation.

**Built in Scenario Creator!**

Master of the Empire also comes with a scenario builder. Create your own worlds to conquer or share them with your friends. Create a world based on Earth or one out of a book you've read or where ever you can think of one.

Game players looking for a strategy game with the classic elements and adds on state of the art graphics, sounds, and movies, Master of the Empire is it. Trilliun Software Products will be releasing MOTE in early 1997.

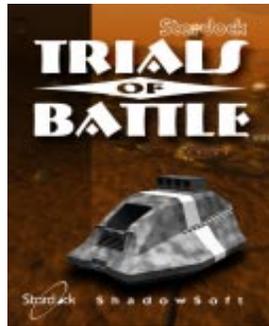
**Master of the Empire  
By Trilliun Software Products**

List \$59.95  
Special Introductory Price: \$45!

- Requires:**
- OS/2 Warp 3.0 or later
  - 486DX or faster system
  - 8 Megabytes of RAM
  - CD ROM drive
  - OS/2 compatible sound card



In the arena, those who may be your friends at the office may not be your friends in battle. Often times on the battle ground it is a shoot first, ask questions later strategy.



**Trials of Battle!**

**At last! A first person action game designed to use OS/2's power!**

You may never have believed in alien abductions before but Trials of Battle will make you a believer. Taken to a distant world, you must compete in the ultimate arena of competition in your heavily armored hover tanks. Equipped with weapons that are far beyond what is available on Earth and with deadly extras to add a little

surprise to your enemy's day, you are ready to face the best of the best from all across the galaxy. You may be good but remember, no human has ever made the rank of Battle Master!

**Fast Action Battles in the arena!**

Trials of Battle puts you in the cockpit of a hover tank. Before each battle, you must buy equipment to add to your hover tank's weaponry, defenses, or special abilities. During battle, you will compete against deadlier and deadlier opponents. These opponents, either controlled by the computer or by people on the network, on a modem, or via the Internet, will have the same goal as you each round.

After the battle, you can use your points to upgrade your hover craft. Add plasma weapons or better armor or equip it with jump jets or better sensors or tracking systems. You have the ability to modify your hover craft to fit your playing style!

**Play against the computer or against people via modem, LAN, or Internet!**

While Trials of Battle's single player play is exceptional due to its native OS/2 AI (artificial intelligence) engine, Trials of Battle really shines in multiplayer play. If you have a modem, are on a network, or are on the internet, you can play your friends (or strangers) in the arena. Unlike most games (including Quake), Trials of Battle can combine the multiplayer options. This means



Trials of Battle isn't merely about fast reflexes. There is also the strategy of building up your vehicle. Buying the right weapons, armor, and other components essential for victory.

that if you are on a LAN but a friend of yours isn't, your friend can call in and join the game with you and your friends on your LAN. Few games can compete with Trials of Battle when it comes to multiplayer play.

### Designed from the ground up for 32bit multitasking operating systems!

The gameplay of Trials of Battle could be described as a combination of Quake (fast paced, true 3D texturing) and Mech Warrior (preparing your armored vehicle, locking weapons, and hostile landscapes). This makes for very potent play. Stardock believes that Trials of Battle may become the action game for 32bit operating systems. Trials of Battle is currently only available on OS/2 but Shadowsoft, the developers of Trials of Battle, hopes to be able to have versions for Windows95 and WindowsNT later on so that the OS wars can take on a new meaning...

Trials of Battle, released in time for Christmas, should be on the Christmas list of every OS/2 gamer. At last, OS/2 gets a true state of the art first person action game!

#### Trials of Battle

List: \$49.95

Special Introductory Price: \$45!

#### Requires:

- OS/2 Warp 3.0 or later
- 486DX2-66mhz or faster system
- 8 Megabytes of RAM
- CD ROM drive
- OS/2 compatible sound card

## Star Emperor Advanced

### A fast paced space war game!

Galactic Civilizations II may get the limelight but Star Emperor Advanced has quite a few fans of its own. Based on the Galactic Civilizations game engine, Star Emperor was designed for players who wanted a more tactical war game in space. Whereas GalCiv brings in the influence of diplomacy, trade, and resource management, Star Emperor eliminates those concerns to bring a hard core war game in space.

In Star Emperor, each planet in the game builds its own unique star ship or provides a unique technology. You cannot research technology and you cannot build other types of ships on just any planet. So conquest of the galaxy is heavily influenced by your decision to go after planets with specific technologies, a specific type of star ship, or have a strategic location.

The length of a typical game is also far less. Whereas a game of Galactic Civilizations II can take as few as a few hours or as long as months (depending on how large of a galaxy you choose), Star Emperor Advanced games usually only last a couple of hours.

Star Emperor Advanced has the same requirements as Galactic Civilizations II.

## OS/2 Games on the Top 40 Games Charts!

Thousands of OS/2 users have discovered that OS/2 is quite a powerful game platform as well as the world's best corporate desktop OS.

Anyone looking for proof that gaming on OS/2 is alive and well need look no further than the Internet Top 40. This independent survey of favorite games from thousands of game players clearly shows OS/2 gaming is serious business. Galactic Civilizations was the #1 game of 1995. Galactic Civilizations II is in the top ten at the time of this article and Avarice was climbing rapidly.

Commercial Top 40				Edition 201 - Week 45 - November 4, 1996			
TW	LW	NW	Title	Developer/Publisher(s)	Cat	HI	ID Points
1	1	35	Civilization 2 {W}	MicroProse	ST	1	[1879]1293
2	2	14	Quake {reg}	Id/GT	SH	1	[1999]1214
3	3	58	Command & Conquer/Covert Ops.	Westwood/Virgin	WG	1	[1729]1067
4	4	48	Warcraft 2/add-on: Tides of Darkness	Blizzard	WG	2	[1817]1018
5	5	26	Duke Nukem 3D {reg}	3D Realms/FormGen	SH	2	[1923] 776
6	6	45	Galactic Civilizations 2 {O}	Stardock	ST	3	[1828] 459
7	7	15	World Circuit Racing/F1: Grand Prix 2	MicroProse	RA	6	[1857] 373
8	8	57	Heroes of Might and Magic	New World	ST	6	[1737] 323
9	9	34	Descent 2	Parallax/Interplay	SH	5	[1891] 267
10	12^	6	The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall	Bethesda/Virgin	RP	10	[2032] 266
11	11	37	Wing Commander 4	Origin/Electronic Arts	AC/SI	4	[1867] 248
12	10	66	MechWarrior 2/add-ons: The Clans	Activision	AC	6	[1697] 274
13	14^	108	Master of Magic	SimTex/MicroProse	ST	3	[1501] 293
14	15^	10	Z	Bitmap Brothers/Renegade/Virgin	AC	14	[2017] 199
15	13	108	Doom 2: Hell on Earth	Id/GT/Virgin	SH	1	[1502] 263
16	16	49	Stars! 2 {W} {reg}	Star Crossed	ST	11	[1786] 193
17	17	57	Need for Speed	Distinctive/Electronic Arts	RA	12	[1738] 189
18	20^	20	The Settlers 2/Die Siedler 2	Blue Byte	ST	15	[1953] 173
19	18	44	Avarice: Preview {O}	CSS/Stardock	AD	14	[1837] 154
20	19	48	Fifa Soccer 96	EA Sports/Electronic Arts	SP	13	[1787] 153
21	48*	3	Avarice: The Final Saga {O}	CSS/Stardock	AD	21	[2061] 181
22	21	97	Descent {reg}	Parallax/Interplay	SH	1	[1565] 167
23	22	44	Gabriel Knight 2: The Beast Within	Sierra	AD	12	[1832] 129
24	26^	55	Steel Panthers	SSI/Mindscape	WG	15	[1757] 142
25	24	161	Master of Orion	SimTex/MicroProse	ST	2	[1344] 278
26	25	7	Jagged Alliance: Deadly Games	Sir-Tech	ST	25	[2031] 129
27	23	83	X-COM 2: Terror f.t. Deep	Mythos/MicroProse	ST	8	[1600] 144
28	30^	102	Warcraft: Orcs and Humans	Blizzard/Interplay	WG	4	[1528] 170
29	32^	32	Fantasy General	SSI/Mindscape	WG	29	[1900] 126
30	27	7	Crusader: No Regret	Origin/Electronic Arts	AC	26	[2030] 116
31	28	89	Dark Forces	LucasArts/Virgin	SH	2	[1585] 138
32	34^	48	11th Hour: Be Afraid of the Dark	Trilobyte/Virgin	AD	15	[1809] 117
33	29	55	Championship Manager 2	Domark	SP	27	[1746] 109
34	31	101	Panzer General	SSI/Mindscape	WG	11	[1522] 145
35	33	8	Deadlock {W}	Accolade	ST	28	[2023] 106
36	36	12	The Pandora Directive	Access	AD	36	[2003] 107
37	43^	5	Star Control 3	Time Warner	AD/ST	37	[2046] 106
38	37	48	The Dig	LucasArts	AD	21	[1798] 90
39	35	49	Worms/Reinforcements	Team 17/Ocean	AC/PU	17	[1784] 84
40	38	133	U.F.O./X-Com: Enemy Unknown	Mythos/MicroProse	ST	1	[1437] 139

If you want to have the Top 40 game list sent to you, all you have to do is vote for a game you like. To vote for Galactic Civilizations II and AVARICE, for example, simply send email to:

TO: pcgames@worldcharts.nl  
Subject: Vote

5 Galactic Civilizations II [1728]  
5 Avarice [2061]

The format of your vote is as follows:

POINTS TITLE [ID]

You can give any title up to 5 points but no more than 20 points given in a single week total. (i.e. you can't give more than 4 games 5 points). After that, you will receive the list for a number of weeks until it is time to vote again. Only vote for games you would recommend to others to play so that this list's integrity isn't compromised. The general rule of thumb is that any game that gets into the top 10 is a "gotta buy". At press time, Trials of Battle and Master of the Empire were not generally available and thus not on the list. Avarice, The Final Saga, is still very new and climbing up the list rapidly.

# Sneak Preview: ENTREPRENEUR!

From the designer of Galactic Civilizations comes the war game for the 21st century: Corporate warfare!

Entrepreneur is a game of worldwide domination. Use superior tactics and overwhelm your enemies with fire power, propoganda, and political intrigue.

What? This sounds like a war game? That's right and welcome to the real world. Entrepreneur brings to life what it is like to compete in today's world.

In it, you start a company, choose a market to be in, and conquer the world. You design and license products, research the components of those products and send them to regions around the world. Each region has its own tastes, economic levels, and wealth level. You have to balance your resources in order to succeed.

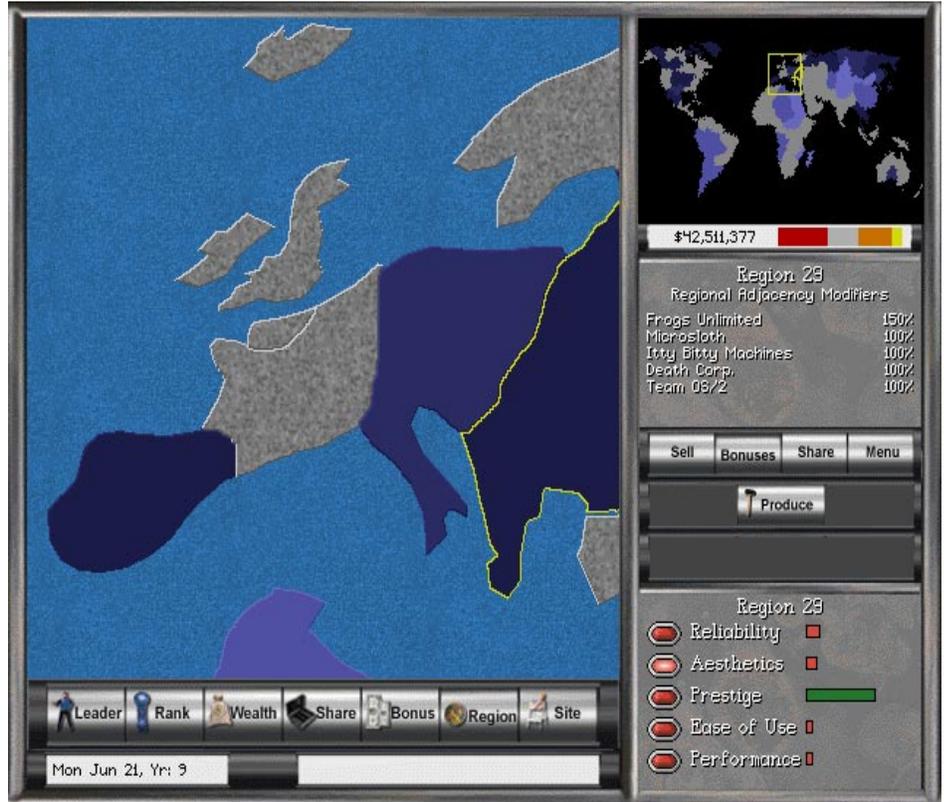
You also have to know how to market your products. Do you try to promote your products or spread FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt) about your opponents.

Entrepreneur also sports excellent graphics, one of the best multiplayer engines (join games in progress from the Internet or LAN). It also has Stardock's renowned SDS/ AI meaning single player games will be great. This Winter, be prepared to conquer the world -- economically.

For Windows NT, Windows 95, and OS/ 2! General availability in Fall of 1997.



In places where the game would get bogged down in simulation, Stardock is creating "Direct Action Cards" (DACs) allowing players to do many real-world things to their opponents!



In Entrepreneur, you must conquer regions of the world with the products you invent! Your marketing skills, technological prowess, industrial capacity, and tactical abilities are all put to the test!



Build up your sites with buildings that will enhance your research and development abilities as well

**Stardock is now taking BETA testers for Entrepreneur! Check out the back page for more details!**

# Object DESKTOP PROFESSIONAL

## The Next Generation Business Environment finds a home in corporations and power user desktops around the world!

Usually corporations and power users don't mix. Corporations want to restrict what their users do and power users don't want to be restricted. Object Desktop Professional provides the features both groups want. With powerful security features, Object Desktop Professional can keep users from mangling their system or desktop objects. For power users and IS managers, Object Desktop Professional provides a great deal of features that most would agree saves time, money, training, and effort.

What is in Object Desktop Professional that isn't in Object Desktop 1.5?

Object Desktop Professional contains all the features of Object Desktop PLUS:

### Object Viewing

Object Desktop Professional integrates document viewing into the base operating system. Hundreds of file formats are now recognized automatically when you double click an object on the desktop. Using Object Desktop Professional, computer users will no longer have to worry whether they have Word Perfect 5.1 on their system when someone gives them a disk full of documents. Presenters will no longer have to worry whether the presentation they give is in PowerPoint or Freelance. Object Desktop Professional doesn't just support a few of the most common file types, it supports hundreds of file types from databases, word processors, spread sheets, internet, graphics, presentation packages, and more. The basic rule of thumb is, if the format has ever had an installed base of more than 50,000 users, it's probably supported.

### Object Security

Both IS managers and end users often find it necessary to secure and protect their desktops. Object Security offers an impressive array of features that allow administrators to prevent custom desktop environments from tampering. Object Security can keep icons from being moved, deleted, changed, etc. IS managers in particular

will like the ability to "keep their users from messing up their system." Any end user that shares his or her system with others will also appreciate the ability of securing and protecting their desktop.

### Desktop Backup Advisor

One of the more anticipated features of Object Desktop Professional is the Desktop Backup Advisor which can perform two important functions.

First, it allows users to quickly and easily manage, backup, and restore packaged desktops. Having a "wizard-like" user interface, the desktop backup advisor is very easy to work with. Users and/or IS managers can easily package and distribute desktops across the enterprise using the Desktop Backup Advisor which uses Stardock's advanced Object Packaging technology. Corporations looking to deploy a standard desktop will find the Desktop Backup Advisor an essential tool to this end.

One test site has used the Desktop Backup Advisor to deploy a standardized desktop with three variations — one for technical users, one for their end users, and one for managers. When a new machine goes on the network, they open the Desktop Backup

Advisor, choose the desktop they want and it unpackages it.

Secondly, it completely repairs OS/2 INI files. The most common cause of system instability and performance loss are damaged INI files (os2.ini, os2sys.ini). Over time, OS/2 INI files collect a great deal of unused "junk" that can slow OS/2 down and make odd behavior creep in. While INI repair programs go far to help the situation, there is no replacement to being able to totally cleanse the INI files without losing user customizations. The desktop backup advisor, simply by restoring a desktop, completely cleanses the INI file and ignores all the damaged and unused data. The net result is that a system that has used the desktop backup advisor behaves



Among its many features shown, Object Scheduler (top left) can help automate important tasks. It behaves like the Startup Folder except you decide when a program or script is to be run.

(Object Desktop Professional: Continued from Page 1)

repair programs), that many users are simply using it instead of a third party application. "It would be like washing your car and discovering that the oil has been changed for you at no charge and automatically," said one customer.

Users have also discovered that it actually comes with a pseudo-registry editor. In the past, users have edited their config.sys's in order to gain more memory (by eliminating device drivers they don't use). Unfortunately, most modern OS/2 programs store their special devices in the "Class Table". For example, if you're using TCP/IP, Utmal is using of quite a bit of ram all the time whether you use it or not. The same is true with the other Bonusapp applications. Under OS/2 Warp 4, a minimum install will include many special modules that are loaded whether you want them or not. The Class Table editor allows OS/2 users it safely and easily disable these modules which can literally save megabytes

of RAM.

At the OS/2 Warp 4 launch, many members of the press and customers were able to see Stardock's advanced help desk technology known as Object Advisors. Object Advisors integrates on-line help into the internet/intranet. The on-line help is written in HTML which means that it can be interactive help and even include JAVA applications within the help. Imagine downloading PMMail and wanting to get the latest version of it. By selecting its advisor, it can seamlessly download the latest version right from the internet from the advisor window. Similarly, corporations can create a powerful help desk application that can greatly reduce training costs.

The fact that it includes the hundreds of features of the standard Object Desktop don't hurt either or the fact that it's less than \$200 for a product that on other platforms would cost several times as much. Either way, Object Desktop Professional is clearly becoming Stardock's flagship product.

like a freshly installed OS/2 system without losing any of their class registrations, customizations, or their desktop.

The beauty of the Desktop Backup Advisor is that it itself is a tool used to backup and restore your desktops but the very fact that when you use the tool it cleans your INI files almost sounds too good to be true but it's not.. "I have seen 486 systems that were crawling and would have weird errors pop up on a daily basis get a big performance boost and become rock solid simply by using the desktop backup advisor. It's a lot easier than reinstalling OS/2 from scratch and a lot cheaper than buying a new machine." said one user.

### Object Schedule

A user may want to do a backup, a virus scan, a defragmentation of the hard disk, and begin compiling in the background. Another user may want to run a script that resorts the database and charges batches. Another user may want to run a program that downloads email automatically. What do all these have in common? They are tasks in which human intervention is not necessary. Yet, users end up having to have these tasks running in the background during the day. Luckily, OS/2 is a great operating system for multitasking but even OS/2 will slow down if you have tasks running in the background.

Enter Object Schedule. With Object Schedule, a special OS/2 folder that has much in common with the Startup folder, users simply drag and drop their programs into the Object Schedule folder and assign a date and time for the program or job to run. In the above examples, the virus scan, backup, and database update could be scheduled to run at 3:00am when no one is using the PC. When the user returns in the morning, the

job is completed. Object Schedule is easy to use and helps automate your office as well as your desktop.

### Object Advisor

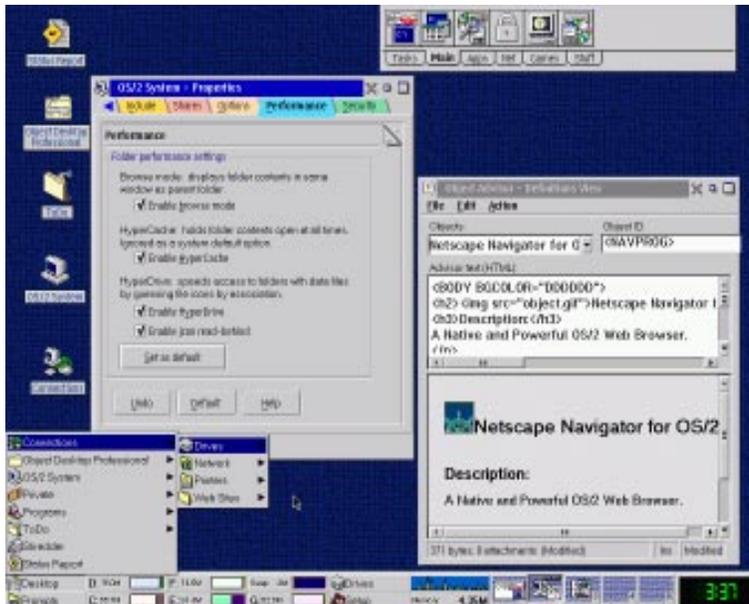
The Object Advisor is possibly the most innovative feature of Object Desktop Professional. This advanced technology is intended to address the huge costs associated with training and re-training end users in corporations that have any amount of turnover. The Object Advisor feature allows corporations to develop custom computer based training materials that display when a user doesn't understand how to perform desktop operations. The on-line help technology provided with Object Advisor is authored with industry standard Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), which allows for leveraging next generation internet/intranet technologies in a corporate environment, including new internet features such as JAVA. It truly demonstrates the benefits of the web/internet in a way that anyone can appreciate.

### Object Backup

While backup solutions exist in many forms on OS/2, the powerful easy to use Object Backup feature integrates itself with the OS/2 desktop and even supports the new ATAPI/IDE standard. Users can now backup their system to floppy, tape, and/or network drives. Object Backup is not a "lite" backup package—feel free to compare the included Object Backup features head-to-head against any backup package on any platform.

### Object Navigator Professional

Object Navigator Professional not only is a powerful and intuitive file manager that can see long file names on FAT, works with OS/2's associations (and is the only commercial OS/2 file manager available that does that), makes working with multiple drives easy, but now, in Object Desktop Professional, users can quickly and easily view virtually any type of file. Object Navigator Professional allows users to open of a "View Pane" that is part of Object Navigator Professional. When the user double clicks on a file (any file) it will read it, interpret it and display it. Whether it's an Excel95 spreadsheet, a TIFF graphics files, a Power Point for Macintosh presentation, or even a Windows 3.1 DLL. Object Navigator will read and display it in a flash. The view pane's performance is quite impressive. Within a second, users can jump from file to file and it displays that file with all the appropriate formatting, embedded graphics, etc.



Object Advisors, invented by Stardock, is the first (and only) way to integrate system wide on-line help into the Internet/Intranet. Companies all over the world are flocking to take advantage of this easy way to reduce training and support costs.

Features	Object Desktop	Professional
CID Enabled Install	x	x
OS/2 Performance Enh.	x	x
Alt-Tab Task Switching	x	x
Browse Mode	x	x
Virtual Desktops	x	x
Object Package	x	x
Resource Monitoring	x	x
Fly-Out Folder Menus	x	x
Extended System Objects	x	x
Enhanced Folders	x	x
Enhanced Window List	x	x
HyperCache	x	x
HyperDrives	x	x
Keyboard LaunchPad	x	x
ZIP files behave as folders	x	x
Object Navigator	x	x
TabLaunch Pad	x	x
Window Close Button	x	x
Master Setup Object	x	x
Object Package	x	x
Rollup Button	x	x
Stardock Internet Shell	x	x
Universal File Viewing		x
Internet Integrated Help		x
System Backup		x
Object Inspection		x
Security		x
Universal File Viewing		x
Auto INI Repair		x
Class (Registry) Editor		x
Object Scheduler		x
Desktop Standardization		x
Price	\$89.95	\$179

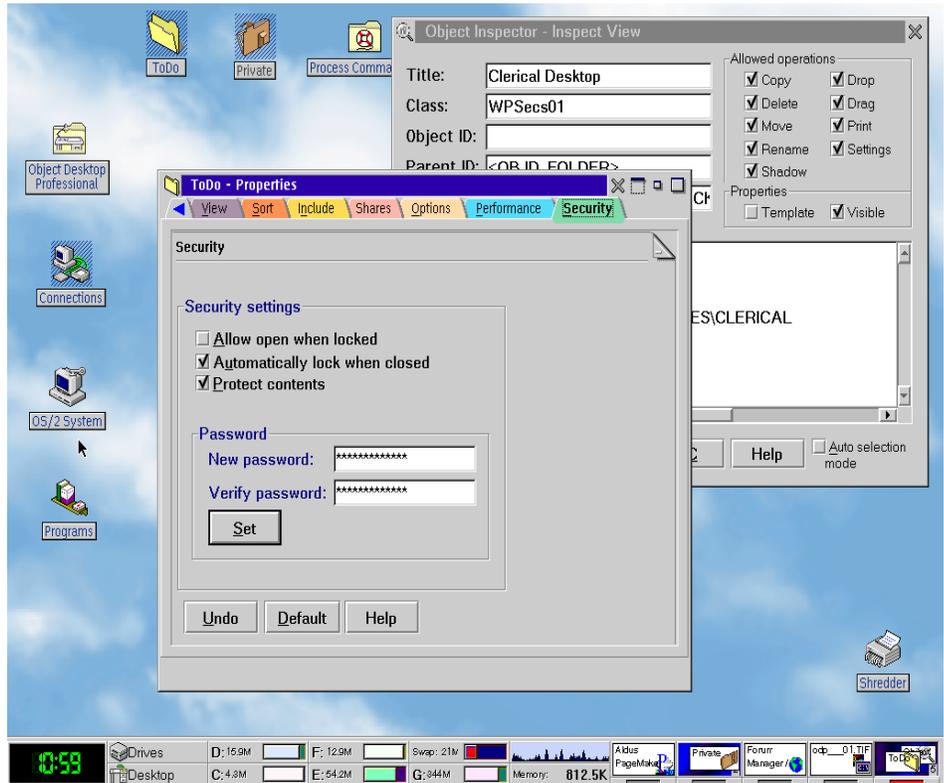
Feature comparison between Object Desktop 1.5 and Object Desktop Professional 1.5

Object Navigator Professional works very well with compressed files such as PKZIP (.ZIP) files. It can view a ZIP file even faster than Object Desktop's own Object Archives by trading off the folder metaphor for raw speed. Users who have a large library of documents, graphics, etc. in ZIP files can now quickly browse them and view the files they want saving many megabytes of disk storage.

## Object Inspector

Anyone trying to manage an OS/2 desktop knows the difficulty of working with Workplace Shell objects. Finding out an object's "low level" settings can be frustrating and time consuming. Network managers spend countless hours setting up workstations so that they are easily used but standardized to a corporate reference point. Object Inspector provides the tool to make these chores easy.

To discover any object's "under-the-cover" properties, simply load the Object Inspector and Workplace Shell objects are instantly displayed and presented in an easily manageable form. Users can even create REXX or RC scripts to regenerate objects across an enterprise.



Object Desktop Professional's security features rank amongst the final in the industry. Easy to use, very difficult to violate. IS managers can decide how much they wish to restrict their users through the standard settings notebook interface.

## Conclusions

Special Upgrade pricing is available to customers who have Object Desktop 1.5. Because Object Desktop Professional comes so soon after the release of Object Desktop 1.5, users who already have Object Desktop 1.5 can upgrade to Professional for only \$99 (over 60% off the list price!).

Those who are still using v1.0 of Object Desktop can move up to Object Desktop

Professional for only \$119.

**Object Desktop Professional**  
 \$179 (\$149 special for OEM version)  
 Upgrade from Object Desktop: \$99

## Object Desktop

\$89.95

**Requires:**

- OS/2 Warp 2.11 or later

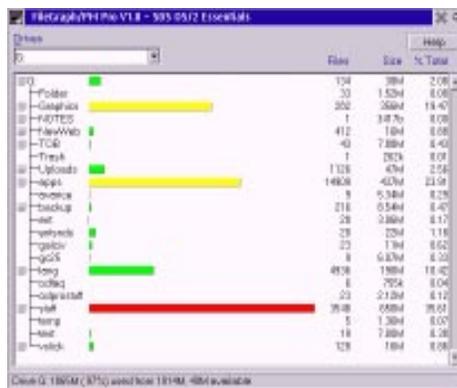
## OS/2 Essentials

**The quietly reliable utility suite running in corporations around the world...**

With high profile business products such as Object Desktop, Object Desktop Professional and Process Commander, it can be easy to forget something as simple and non-flashy as OS/2 Essentials.

Truth be told, OS/2 Essentials has gathered quite a following over the past year and a half and in some corporations, has rivaled Object Desktop in gaining site licenses.

What does OS/2 Essentials do? Lots. Features include a full blown file manager that is considered by many to be the fastest and most powerful file manager available for OS/2 -- DirMaster Pro. While not backed by the big budget marketing that some stand alone file managers have, DirMaster Pro meets or exceeds stand alone file managers in almost every category. And keep in mind, DirMaster Pro is just one of the features of OS/2 Essentials.



FileGraph/PM Pro can graphically show where your disk space has gone. This feature alone makes OS/2 Essentials very... essential!

Another feature and perhaps one of the most compelling in the product is FileGraph/PM Pro. Users or IS managers wanting to track where their disk space has gone will find it...well essential. You can even right double-click on a directory and it will open it up so that you can clear space from that directory.

Corporations using OS/2 have also found

that the screen saver in OS/2 Essentials to be very useful. Not because of the flashy screen savers (which it has) but because of the built in power management features and security. It is not real well known but OS/2's lockup command has a fairly serious bug. When the lockup command is activated, it resets all the threads on the system to normal priority. This means that processes or threads that were running in idle priority or low priority are now using up a lot more CPU power. This can bring a system to a crawl or at the very least slow it down. Many OS/2 shops have recognized this and OS/2 Essentials is their solution.

These are only a few of the features of OS/2 Essentials. One of the most compelling features is the price, only \$39.95. This is lower than any of the features would cost as stand alone products. OS/2 Essentials has been designed to make up its costs in quantity sales instead of high margins. If you don't already have OS/2 Essentials, it is definitely worth the price.

**OS/2 Essentials v1.1**  
 \$39.95



**Stardock Systems, Inc.**  
7977b Ronda Dr.  
Canton MI 48187

## How to Contact Stardock

By Phone: 1-800-672-2338 (for orders) or 313-453-0328 (info, support) By Fax: 313-453-1480 By Email: info@stardock.co.  
By Web: <http://www.stardock.com> By CompuServe: GO STARDOCK. Site licensing is available.  
Send Orders to: Stardock Systems, Inc. 7977b Ronda Dr. Canton MI 48187

### ISSUE SPECIAL: Galactic Civilizations II ONLY \$25 (normally \$59.95)

#### Applications/Utilities

- Object Desktop 1.5 \$89.95
- Object Desktop Professional 1.5 OEM \$149
- Process Commander \$69.95
- OS/2 Essentials \$39.95
- PlusPak for OS/2 Warp 4 \$29.95
- Process Commander 5 User License: \$275
- ObjDesk Professional 5 User License \$599

#### Games

- AVARICE: The Final Saga \$69.95
- Galactic Civilizations II \$25 (**issue special**)
- Shipyards for GalCiv II \$14.95
- Trials of Battle \$45
- Entrepreneur for OS/2 (BETA + Final) \$36
- Entrepreneur for NT (Beta + Final) \$36
- Entrepreneur for Win95 (Beta + Final) \$36

#### Upgrades:

- Object Desktop 1.0 to 1.5 \$37
- Object Desktop to Professional \$69.95

#### FREE:

- Add me to the Stardock Magazine mailing list!** (No Purchase Necessary)

Payment Type:  VISA  Mastercard  Check

If CC: # \_\_\_\_\_ exp \_\_\_\_\_

#### Your Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip/Country

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone

Shipping: FREE In USA! (\$10 outside USA)

OEM version = Full version minus shrink-wrapped box.

**Stardock Systems, Inc.**

7977b Ronda Dr.  
Canton MI 48187

