OS/2 VERSION 2.1
TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

By Stephen Force

INTRODUCTION

Every time that I see "tips" in a magazine, I read them. Even though I take the time to read provided documentation, maybe purchase a book on the subject and browse through the applicable CompuServe forums, I generally find a tidbit that makes the tips article worthwhile. Perhaps, you feel the same way, and maybe you can find something here of interest. This article is certainly not all inclusive, but contains some food for thought.

When I first envisioned writing this article, I wanted to include installation tips on NetWare for OS/2. However, Novell just recently started shipping NW for OS/2 and I did not receive my General Availability (GA) copy in time for the editorial deadline. However, NetWare for OS/2 will be the subject of an upcoming article.

I have been working with IBM's OS/2 operating system since 1989 (OS/2 Version 1.2) and think that OS/2 Version 2.1 is very good, even excellent.

When starting with the proper hardware, installing IBM's OS/2 2.1 is almost a pleasure. Installing OS/2 Version 2.1 is much simpler than the OS/2 of old.

PLANNING YOUR OS/2 INSTALLATION

First, read the README.INS file found on diskette 1. Along with information made available after manual publication, often the README files stress important points gleaned from the normal documentation. Read this material.

If you can, install OS/2 from a CD-ROM. This simplifies the installation process considerably.

Warning: Some newer CD-ROM devices are *not* SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface). If you have one of these, you will have problems installing from CD-ROM. If you have this problem, IBM provides an alternative solution by copying the CD-ROM data to diskettes, then doing the install from these diskettes. You had better have some spare diskettes laying around, because OS/2 needs 23 3.5" diskettes or 28 5.25" diskettes.

If you are in the process of purchasing a new PC, make sure that it is a supported SCSI. Several commodity PCs are sold with CD-ROMs included, but most of these are *not* SCSI. For example, Gateway 2000's popular 4DX2-66V comes with such a device. If you think that you can install operating systems from this device, think again. To install OS/2 2.1 (and SCO ODT 3.0) from CD-ROM, I had to install in my Gateway 2000 PC a SCSI device borrowed from another machine. This rendered the CD-ROM device shipped with the PC useless.

PLAN AHEAD: THINK ABOUT HOW YOU WILL BE USING YOUR PC

It is important to understand from the beginning how you will be using your PC. Today's PCs are very powerful and with enough disk capacity several bootable operating systems can be installed.

There are three possible ways to install your new OS/2 operating system:
• OS/2 only;
• Dual Boot (DOS or OS/2); or
• Boot Manager.

Seriously consider installing the Boot Manager, OS/2 and DOS as bootable operating systems. Activate the boot manager advanced mode. At PC power-up, this shows you useful partition information such as type of partition, file system type and accessibility.

A possible hard disk configuration might consist of four partitions:
1. Boot Manager (1MB);
2. "Primary" partition ("C" drive);
3. "Extended" partition ("D" drive); and
4. "Logical" partition - for data, network operating system (NOS) specific data structure or another operating system.

Format the "C" drive as FAT (file allocation table), then install DOS and Windows 3.1 (along with their applications) on this drive.

Next, format the "D" drive also as FAT and install OS/2 and OS/2 applications here.

FAT OR HPFS: WHICH ONE?

Unless you really need the High Performance File System (HPFS) features, consider using only the FAT format. FAT is the *only* file structure recognized by all operating systems. HPFS, like Window NT's file system (NTFS), is not recognized by all other

Intel-based operating systems.

MULTIMEDIA

If you have a CD-ROM, install the Multimedia Presentation Manager/2 (MMPM/2) even if you don't have a sound card. You can listen to music compact disks through headphones, if so desired, and watch videos via the Digital Video object in the Multimedia folder.

I stumbled upon something while messing around with the CD player: It can display the title of the CD playing! Not automatically—you need to manually type in the name—but once typed, the CD object will remember it. This is cool! Obviously, the OS/2 CD object will soon be able to read the CD index for title and track information. I hope it happens soon!

MISCELLANEOUS OS/2 TIPS

To help guard against data problems after a system crash, verify that the DISKCACHE statement in CONFIG.SYS has the "AC" keyword defined. "AC" means auto-check, which will analyze and fix data problems on the desired drive(s). For more information, see page 93 in the *OS/2 2.1 Using the Operating System* manual.

Always make a backup of the CONFIG.SYS and the AUTOEXEC.BAT before editing. This might sound rather basic, but it can possibly save some aggravation if you need to back out a change.

THE OS/2 PRESENTATION MANAGER

OS/2's Presentation Manager (PM) provides an object-oriented, message-based, CUA-conforming and device-independent graphical interface. It might seem rather cumbersome at first, but after some use, this interface becomes comfortable.

Here are some tips to help make PM more useable:
- Clicking both mouse buttons in an empty spot in the desktop will bring up the Window List. This normally is much faster than the comparable Ctrl+Esc combination.
- Using Alt+F4 is the fastest way to close an object or a folder.

- Clicking button two anywhere while in the PM screen will allow a fast path to the system setup.

COPYING AN OBJECT

To copy an object from one location to another, perform the following steps:
1. Click on the desired object.
2. Press and hold the Ctrl+Shift keys along with mouse button two.
3. Drag the object to the desired location (note the line connecting the copy with the original object).
4. Release the first mouse button, then the other two.

RECOVERING DELETED OBJECT

Sometimes, it is necessary to recover objects that were deleted. With a bit of preparation, OS/2 allows you to recover deleted objects.

To prepare your OS/2 system for object recovery, edit the CONFIG.SYS file and do a find on DELDIR. IBM ships OS/2 with DELDIR remarked out. To enable DELDIR, simply delete the REM just prior to the SET DELDIR statement and then exit. An OS/2 re-boot is necessary to activate this change.

For DOS sessions, edit the AUTOEXEC.BAT file the same way as was previously done to the CONFIG.SYS file.

To recover a deleted object:
- open either a DOS or OS/2 window;
- issue the UNDELETE /L command to see a list of deleted files;
- make a note of the COMPLETE path and file name; and
- issue the UNDELETE command, specifying the complete path and file name after the command.

For more information on object recovery, as well as how to place a recovered object back on the desktop, see page 148 of the *OS/2 2.1 Using the Operating System* manual.

OS/2 REMEMBERS YOUR DESKTOP UPON SYSTEM SHUTDOWN

The desktop is "remembered" if OS/2 is shut down normally. This means that when OS/2 is restarted, it

will restore the desktop to the point it was at when stopped. This also includes open applications.

Even though it doesn't happen often, OS/2 sometimes dies. It normally happens to me when I am testing a beta copy of some new software, but it can also happen in other situations (power outage, etc.) Normally, a re-boot is all that is required. Sometimes, however, your OS/2 system gets into the desktop graphical environment and then hangs. This may happen because a program was not terminated normally.

To prevent the automatic startup of these programs, perform the following steps:
1. Re-boot OS/2.
2. After OS/2 enters the desktop initialization routine (after all drivers are loaded), *immediately* press and hold the Ctrl, Shift and F1 keys simultaneously.
3. Hold these three keys for at least 10 seconds until the desktop appears.

WINDOW ANIMATION: YES OR NO?

Window animation means that windows are displayed with a gradual graphic effect. The default is animation. If animation does not appeal to you, it can be disabled by:
1. clicking mouse button two in any open area on the desktop;
2. clicking on "System setup";
3. double clicking on the "System" icon;
4. clicking on the "window" tab;
5. clicking "animation Disabled" radio button; and
6. closing the folder.

THE ENHANCED EDITOR VS. THE NORMAL OS/2 EDITOR

Developed by IBM's T. J. Watson Research Center, OS/2's Enhanced Editor (EPM) offers users a much more advanced editor than the standard OS/2 editor (E). Indeed, with an optional Speech Recognition product, OS/2 users can "tell" EPM what to do or dictate into EPM. EPM will then convert the user's voice into text. Twenty-first Century, here we come!

To use the Enhanced Editor, you can either:

• open an OS/2 full-screen or window; or
• click on the Enhanced Editor Icon in the Productivity folder.

I recommend placing a copy of the Enhanced Editor object into the desktop. This makes it readily available for use.

PULSE

The Pulse object graphically shows processor usage. Although not very sophisticated, it at least shows you processor activity.

Pulse can be started either as a command in an OS/2 session, or by clicking on the Pulse icon in the Productivity folder.

WINDOWS 3.1 TIPS

• Windows 3.1 code is included with OS/2 2.1: No separate license or software is needed.
• Windows 3.1 screen saver: Just start

a windows application, the screen saver will activate even if the window is minimized!

• Windows 3.1 applications can be started several ways: OS/2 is a true multi-tasking operating system. A user has several ways to run Windows applications on OS/2, the most common by opening the Program Manager folder. This gives the user the Windows GUI she/he is most familiar with.

SETTING UP WINDOWS APPLICATIONS TO EXPLOIT OS/2

The most powerful way to set up Windows applications to exploit OS/2, however, is by setting up individual Windows applications to run seamlessly on the OS/2 Desktop. This allows Windows applications to run side-by-side with OS/2 programs, providing crash protection. If a Windows application running in a single Windows environment abruptly ends, it could effect the other started

Window applications. This is not the case if the Windows applications run separately.

To perform the setup:

1. Double click on the OS/2 System Folder icon.
2. Double click on the Command Prompts Folder icon.
3. Close or minimize the OS/2 System Folder.
4. Single click on the WIN-OS/2 Full-Screen Folder icon.
5. Simultaneously press and hold the control (Ctrl) key and mouse button two, then "drag" (pull the mouse) the icon to an empty spot in your desktop.
6. Release the Ctrl key and mouse button two.
7. Select this new icon by single clicking mouse button one.
8. Single click mouse button two, then move the cursor to the "open" selection.
9. "Slide" the cursor toward the arrow, then select the "Settings" option.
10. In the "Program" panel, either type in the full path to the desired Windows application or click on the "Find" button to have OS/2 find the application for you.
11. Select the "Session" option. Click on the WIN-OS/2 window *and* the Separate session radio buttons.
12. Click on the WIN-OS/2 settings button.
13. Click on the 3.1 Enhanced Compatibility radio button.
14. Save it.
15. Click on the "General" option.
16. Type in the Windows application name.
17. Exit the "Settings" option.

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