

COMPUTER SOFTWARE REVIEWS

WordPerfect X5. Corel, 1600 Carling Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 8R7 Canada. <http://corel.com>

Yes, Virginia there is a Santa Claus, and yes, there still is WordPerfect. While not as popular as Microsoft's Word, WordPerfect X5 is alive and well. This journal has been reviewing WordPerfect since 1989,^{1,2} and it remains an excellent but less used word processing software program. WordPerfect X5 comes in three different versions, costing from \$99.99 for the student and home editions, \$249.99 for the standard edition, and \$399.99 for the professional edition. The edition reviewed here is the standard edition, which has almost all the features of the professional edition.³ The X5 editions of WordPerfect come with Quattro Pro for spreadsheets, Presentations (Corel's PowerPoint alternative for slide shows), WordPerfect Lightning (a note-taking application/digital notebook), Paperport (for converting paper documents to digital), and an enhanced Mozilla Thunderbird for WordPerfect Office for email checking and management. The package also comes with a printed 300 page User Guide, four and a half by six and a half in., which is nice, small, and easy to use.

I installed from the CD-ROM first on my laptop and then on my home desktop PC. The installation on the laptop went without a hitch. For some reason, the desktop installation (both operating systems were Windows XP) was a problem. After I twice got to installation "73% complete", I got an error message that the system could not find a *ica.msi* file on the CD-ROM. And then I got an registry corrupt message—"The UI language registration list is invalid". The latter has been reported on Internet blogs. While it took two uninstallations, the third installation worked like a charm.

Why then would one want to use WordPerfect rather than join the mainstream crowd of Word users? While not a enormous list of useful and unique features, there are enough to keep some as loyal WordPerfect users. First and foremost is the "reveal codes" feature, which let one easily clean up a document by providing full control over formatting. When doing cutting and pasting from a number of sources (the web, other WordPerfect documents, Word documents, etc.), I would pull what little hair I have left trying to make a Word document look presentable.

This new version also includes support for some 60 file formats, dating back to what seems like the days of the Radio Shack TRS80 computer. The "make it fit" feature allows one to select a block of text and specify a resizing to fit the given number of pages you desire. This is neat! And this latest version allows for some amount of editing of pdf files. My experience with this feature left a lot to be desired. Only some 50% of the pdf files I tried to import worked. When it would not work, I would get the message—"The PDF file cannot be opened for editing because it is encrypted or corrupt". What I find most amusing is that the pdf file from the WordPerfect Web site, which compares the three different versions (student, standard, and professional), *wpx5_version_comparison_matrix_en.pdf*, gives this error message. One would be better to find a pdf plug-in for this purpose.

In conclusion, Corel has come out with a nice set of improvements in this latest version of WordPerfect, and I still find it a good solid word processing package to use for everyday work.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

- (1) Acock, M. Computer Software Review. WordPerfect for the Macintosh. *J. Chem. Inf. Comput. Sci.* **1989**, 29 (2), 127–128.
- (2) Zimmerman, S. S. Computer Software Reviews. WordPerfect 5.1 for Chemists. *J. Chem. Inf. Comput. Sci.* **1990**, 30 (2), 200–201.
- (3) According to Corel, the producers of WordPerfect X5, the professional edition features allow one to extend WordPerfect to fit your workflow with the Software Developers Kit, to gather and provide rich reporting and analysis of data with a powerful database, and to easily create databases with prebuilt samples and templates, and it includes development and custom integration tools to simplify installation and configuration.

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