



Star quality

The latest version of Star Office suite **looks good** — Terence Green downloads the free version.

Ironic, isn't it? We waited something like four years for Lotus SmartSuite for OS/2 Warp 4 to appear and, within months of its release, Star Division launches an OS/2 office suite which is free for personal, non-commercial use! Star Office has been around for several years but has been refined into its present, rather sophisticated, state in version 5.0. I briefly looked at version 3 a couple of years ago and found it to be a bit clumsy, but reader Jean-Yves Rouffiac pointed me at version 5.0 and suggested that I place it on our cover CD, so I had another look.

The free version, Star Office 5.0 Personal Edition is available as a web download and it's 75Mb! It comprises a word processor, spreadsheet, graphics and presentation module, news and mail readers, an HTML editor and a few utilities. All the components feature a standard user interface. I've had a look at the suite and it would certainly be worth placing on our cover CD. But there's a catch. The download requires a registration procedure which involves an individual key derived from your email address without which the program cannot be installed. And, once installed, the program will only work for 30 days without being registered. This is free but the combination of the download procedure and the licence for the free edition means that it is not possible to put this product on our cover-mounted CD.

I've contacted Star Division to see if something can be worked out but in the meantime any readers who have a reliable and fast connection to the net might wish to have a look for themselves.

One of the download sites is the Sunsite at Imperial College in the UK. With a fast modem, say 56K, the file should take under eight hours to download. At weekend rates for a local call that would cost under £5 provided you get it all on the first attempt.

Star Office has been refined into its present, rather sophisticated state



◀ **STAR OFFICE 5.0 PERSONAL EDITION FOR OS/2 IS FREE FOR PERSONAL USE BUT YOU FACE A 75MB DOWNLOAD**

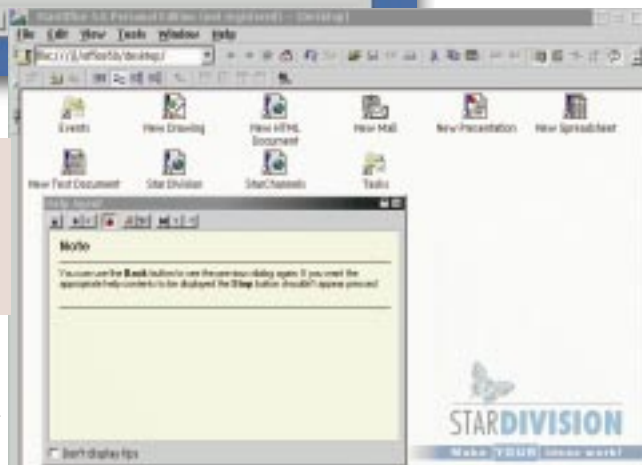
▶ **ALL THE STAR OFFICE 5.0 PROGRAMS USE THE SAME STANDARD USER INTERFACE**

Installing Star Office doesn't present much of a problem provided you can spare the space. The standard installation needs 130Mb of free space and the minimum install

wants 60Mb. A copy of Java 1.1.6 is included in the distribution. If you have already installed Java 1.1.6, Star Office will automatically configure itself to use that copy. If not, you can install the copy provided by Star Office after installing the main office suite and you don't have to have Java unless you want to use it in Star Office.

If you like the look of Star Office 5.0 you can upgrade to the full version for \$40 which includes a distribution CD and initial setup support. Printed documentation costs extra.

Documentation for the free download version is limited to an Adobe Acrobat file which you can find on the web, from the Star Division site, or you can get a hard copy via a mailing list.



A commercial single-user licence costs \$170 and from there you get into business pricing which also allows you to run it from a network file server. Star Office 5.0 (including the free Personal Edition) is available for OS/2, Windows, Linux, Solaris and the Macintosh and there is a pure Java commercial version.

• Talking of Lotus SmartSuite for OS/2, a maintenance Release 1.1 was available at the end of December. The main new features are Microsoft Word 97 and Excel 97 Import filters, additional Y2K support and Euro Support. More details from www.lotus.com/smartsuiteos2.

➔ **Aurora.** The web server in the next version of Warp Server, codenamed Aurora but officially to be known as 'OS/2 Warp Server for e-business', looks likely to be based on IBM's OS/2 port of the Apache web server. Aurora is set to ship in April and will include IBM's WebSphere Application Server. WebSphere is IBM's multi-platform web

TOP TIPS FOR OS/2

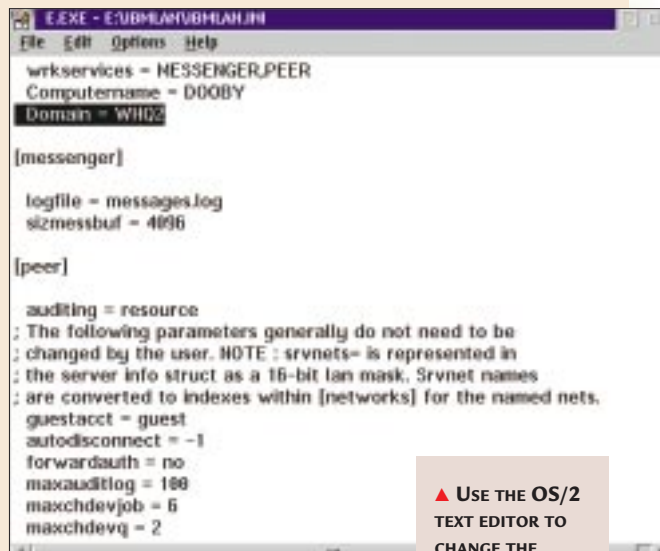
Readers Rupert Russell asked how to change the domain or workgroup name in OS/2 because he's replacing an old OS/2 server which will now be used in a different workgroup — it's easy to do with any text editor like Warp's E.EXE editor.

- Open the IBMLAN.INI file which is in the x:\IBMLAN subdirectory (where 'x' is the OS/2 boot drive) and look for the line 'DOMAIN ='. It is under the [requester] subhead but some way down the list just before the [messenger] subhead.
- Edit it to read 'DOMAIN = abcde' where 'abcde' is the name of the workgroup or domain.

If there are several workgroups or domains on your network and you would like the OS/2 network client to be able to see them as well, you can achieve this by editing another of the [requester] lines. Look for the 'othdomain' keyword which is near the top of the list and simply add the domains or workgroups separated by commas, as in 'othdomain = workgroup2, domain2, domain3' (see screenshot, right).

➡ **I'm no nearer** to discovering how to use REXX but you can learn more from 'REXX Tips & Tricks', and from an OS/2 INF file which can be found at hobbes.nmsu.edu/pub/os2/dev/rexx/ on the Hobbes OS/2 Archive. The file includes everything you need to get started with REXX.

➡ **If you have a laptop** computer or a desktop with PCMCIA card slots and you can't get it to see your PC cards as anything other than a memory card, try adding the following line to the beginning of the CONFIG.SYS file: **BASEDEV= RESERVE.SYS /mem:CA00,2000** This resolves a problem where the PCMCIA driver loads over a ROM address and prevents the card's ID from being read. What the command does is to reserve memory for the card.



▲ **USE THE OS/2 TEXT EDITOR TO CHANGE THE WORKGROUP OR DOMAIN NAME OF AN OS/2 CLIENT PC**

If you are still having problems with PCMCIA cards, have a look at Dr. Martinus' OS/2 Notebook site at www.os2ss.com/users/drmartinus/Notebook.htm. In fact, if you're planning to buy a notebook for OS/2, you should make a point of consulting the good doctor. He has a long list of notebooks categorised by their suitability for running Warp.

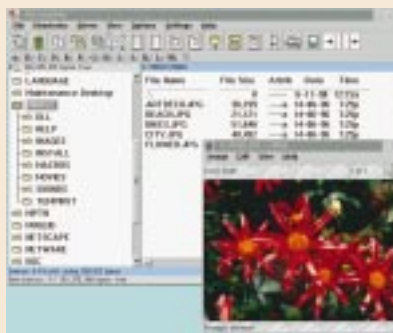
➡ **The IBM Technical Documents** database is another good resource if you're stuck on a Warp technical problem. You can search the database for new documents, or search by product at service5.boulder.ibm.com/pspdocs.nsf/.

➡ **Have a look** at the Jim Lewis OS/2 Web Page at chauvet.com/jim.lewis/ for some nifty, free OS/2 programs including a CONFIG.SYS checker, some Java games and several file utilities.

FILE FREEDOM 2.01

Iam always on the look-out for OS/2 Warp file managers. My latest find is File Freedom 2.01 — a trifling 120Kb download. And, it's free. It's a feature-rich graphical file manager which is not too difficult to get to grips with. It supports file viewing, drag-and-drop file management and viewing, including those in zip files. It is really easy to install and you can add as many additional

viewing programs as you need. File Freedom 2.01 is the work of Bruce Henry and you can find it at Hobbes in hobbes.nmsu.edu/pub/os2/util/browser/filef201.zip or on his personal web site at www.kw.igs.net/~brhenry.



▲ **FILE FREEDOM 2.01 IS A FREE BUT FEATURE-RICH FILE MANAGEMENT TOOL FOR OS/2**

application and development server package. It's pure Java and supports Java Server Pages and Enterprise Java Beans. It runs on most Intel and UNIX platforms including Windows NT, Solaris, AIX, the AS/400 and IBM mainframes using Microsoft, Netscape, Apache and IBM web servers.

IBM says Aurora is its entry-level e-business server. This is slightly misleading though, as Aurora will fit snugly into any network environment, especially Windows and UNIX networks as it supports the UNIX Network File System and IBM/Microsoft SMB networking on which Windows networks are based.

PCW CONTACTS

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