

My initial "marriage" with WordPerfect was not a love match it was a marriage of convenience.

In 1988, the Republican National Convention was held in New Orleans. After the convention was over the Committee donated its networking equipment and software including WordPerfect 4.0 to the City. As the primary desktop computer user in the Mayor's Office it was my job to make this network and this software which I had never seen before and for which we now had 40 copies work for the 3 departments which were to be networked.

It took us about 6 months to get the wiring in place and the networks set up on workstations during that time I learned the word processor (WordPerfect), spreadsheet, and database programs, in my off hours. I started my own office, Data Analysis, on using this software so that I could identify problems which might occur. Then I started to write my in-house manuals. We started our in-house training program with 6 microcomputers, my manuals, and people who were hostile to the change.

Besides my work with the microcomputer networks I was actually in charge of the data and research center so my job required us to put out large books, applications, etc. You cannot teach a software without thoroughly learning it yourself. If you do, you are cheating your students. I personally found that I could make WordPerfect run circles around any other word processor (and I still can.)

By the time networking caught on, in about a year, we had moved up to 6 departments and a site license for WordPerfect. We used every version of WordPerfect through WordPerfect Corporation, Novell, and then Corel. I have myself purchased every version so that I could keep up to date and support those out there who still call be or ask me for assistance from time to time. WordPerfect has been my word processor of choice. The Office Suite introduced under the Novell banner for DOS was a great improvement on the stand-alone . When the Windows operating system came in WordPerfect came of age as a Word Processor with the addition of desktop publishing capabilities. This meant we did not have to buy other separate desktop publishing programs for some of the departments which created standard documents with graphic insertions.

In 1991, I was made the City's Supervisor of networks. By 2002, we had expanded to a 121 site, 4800 person network with WordPerfect Office as our standard office suite. We were training about 2300 people per year in our dedicated classrooms to use the WordPerfect Office Suite. We had four levels of classes so that each department could have an expert. This in-house training program won awards from a local government research group..

We did not stay with WordPerfect because it was the only programs we knew. We would compare each version of competitive products as they came out and make our recommendations based on what the departments needed. The WordPerfect Office Suite was the best and fortunately the most economical solution generally for the network.

We used WordPerfect to create templates, databases, tables of authorities, and documents to help our employees do their jobs better. We ran a help desk with people who could pull up the programs and talk people through their problems. This was one of the most rewarding periods of my career as I watched our workforce move into the automated arena with confidence and improved efficiency.

In 2002, the elected administration changed. The new administrators were convinced that the City was in the dark ages because we did not have the largest selling office suite products as our standards. He terminated our WordPerfect contracts and stopped our training programs.

The employees were extremely upset and many hid away systems so that they could maintain their old programs. The existing computer and software support team was dismantled and not allowed to provide support. Some outside agencies detached themselves from the City network so that they could continue with the software they understood. Many of the law department clerks went to private firms where they were valued because of their WordPerfect knowledge.

I was forced to retire in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina suspended our classified service rules. However, I have continued to purchase my upgrades and use WordPerfect for my consulting work and for desktop publishing activities. I recommend WordPerfect to any of the people who ask me questions about word processors. I have provided my level 1 training manuals to some of them just to get them started.

I tell them not to worry about compatibility with word processing documents. I explain that documents in WordPerfect can be saved as documents for other word processors and that WordPerfect can read and use documents from other word processors and spreadsheets. I tell them about the superior handling of PDF documents which can be pulled in as text (fortunately this has gotten better with each version.)

Besides WordPerfect, I have used Quattro Pro since it was attached to the Office Suite. The of tabs, templates, and then eventually the largest workbook available in Quattro Pro made the transition from other spreadsheets easy. I find that I use Presentations and other popular slide show program interchangeably according to the type of presentation I am making. Finally, I am really glad that the original Paradox which became WordPerfect Office's database has been updated to work with Windows 10. I have kept a Windows XP legacy machine for all of those databases I wrote in Paradox.

I find that every version of the competing word processor has changed the look and feel of its product, changed the little things that make people comfortable. Even though the functionality stays the same, the user suffers a learning curve.

I love that the functionality of WordPerfect still grows, yet I feel comfortable moving from version to version. I can still pull up my old documents if I had the need. I could not think about losing reveal codes and the ability to make many headers and footers in a single document, or change the page numbers in each chapter.

I love to make my own toolbars with the icons I use. This makes it so easy to bring my writing style into the document. I have some toolbars I started with the first WordPerfect for Windows which I still use.

Over time WordPerfect has added many desktop publishing features, almost all of the desktop publishing programs of any value for the occasional user are gone now. Competing programs which have added desktop publishing features bury them in layers of menus, but these programs still don't understand that a large document must hold together.

WordPerfect is my word processor. I will continue to upgrade its versions, to support its use where I can, and to demonstrate by my use of the program its many capabilities. I cannot imagine being without WordPerfect now after 28 years of use.