

The PPC CD ROM Set: An Update

Jake Schwartz

At the HP Handheld Conference in Vancouver, Washington in August of 1998, a pair of CD-R disks was presented as the initial installment of what was hoped to become a growing archive of materials related to Hewlett-Packard handheld computing products. There would be an emphasis on PPC-related documents, but by no means would this be considered a hard and fast restriction. The first two disks contained a complete set of newsletters from PPC, CHHU and HPX, along with the full issues of HP65 Key Note, HP Key Notes and all handheld-related articles from the *HP Journal*. In addition to the above, the 1.3 gigabytes provided space for PPC's *Better Programming on the HP67/97*, materials from the two PPC Member Handbooks and all the Chicago-area CHIP newsletters and many of the Philadelphia-Area PAHHC handout articles up to the present day. However, not enough room was available for the 500-plus pages of the PPC ROM Manual. So, the initial 35-page introduction was included which at least gave a taste of the PPC ROM, along with valuable information on HP41 system architecture, plus a thorough introduction to Synthetic Programming on the HP41.

Version 1.0 of these two disks were distributed at the Conference and corrections and minor updates followed. This included more CHIP and PAHHC issues, the addition of two never-before-published issues of the PPC Journal from after its final official issue, plus a pair of final CHHU member letters published at the end of the CHHU Chronicle's run.

When attending the 1999 Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas this past January, a few dealers previewed new "80-minute" CD-R disks which were planned for release later this year. These would represent a six-minute increase in the audio capacity over the standard 74-minute disks, or approximately 50 megabytes additional computer file space. Based on the small amount of extra room which was left on PPC CDs #1 and #2, it appeared that with 80-minute disks, there might just be enough space to add the entire PPC ROM Manual. Over six weeks in the Spring of this year, this manual was scanned along with the PPC ROM Pocket Guide and the two-sided color PPC Pocket Hex Table. With some shuffling around, the effort was successful.

In the original set, disk one could only hold volumes 1 through 13 of the PPC newsletters, with the final volume 14 having to spill over onto disk two. With the larger disks, the full PPC newsletters were united on disk one. This shifting of 20-or-so meg of files provided space for the PPC ROM materials on disk number two. So as it stands, we have version 2.0 of disk one and version 3.0 of disk two, with under a few megabytes of unused space remaining out of 1.4 gig.

Enter Disk Number Three: A Work Just Begun

Early in the Summer, I received two email correspondences very close together in time related to the PPC CD disk effort. Both authors inquired about the disk project and also asked if any time soon I would be adding the HP71 Operating System documentation to the scanned library of materials. Since I owned these documents, and both people actually volunteered to help scan them in, it seemed to be a good time to start work on a third disk in the set. Also around this time, the details for this conference were being formulated, and Megha Shyam solicited speakers through the Conference Mailing List. I emailed him, suggesting that I make a presentation on the current state of the CD-ROM project, including the announcement of disk #3, which would include HP41 and HP71 operating-system materials. This info was then circulated to the mailing list, going to thirty or so other folks who had expressed interest in HP handheld conference dating back to last year's affair.

Within twenty-four hours, I received an email from Dave Hicks, stating that he already had volunteers working on scanning the HP71 documentation for his HP Calculator Museum CD set, and that they were already almost finished. Since my scanning these materials would therefore be redundant, the HP71 docs were deleted from the disk plans. At the current time, this disk is

only around one-third full. It contains (1) the 371-page HP41 VASM Assembly Listing (originally obtained from HP by PPC for the exclusive use of its members); (2) the HP75 Entry Points and O.S. Description document (another "NOMAS" PPC document obtained from HP); and (3) the eight promotional *HP Calculator Digest* issues from 1976 through 1981. The Digests were all scanned in color, since the majority of the pages contain color photographs.

The plans for the remainder of PPC CD #3 are not yet firm. Current ideas are to include perhaps the full set of the Australian PPC Technical Notes (containing valuable HP41 technical material) and/or the full set of HP Calculator Conference proceedings from 1979 to the present. Stay tuned to the web page (at <http://www.waterw.com/~jake-s/ppccdrom.htm>) for further details.

Making 80-minute CDs

It was thought that it might be helpful to share some information regarding the production of 80-minute CDs, since the activity is relatively new. In order to record a CD, one requires three items: A CD recorder, a blank CD-R disk and CD-recording software. Since I had already owned a CD recorder, I needed to obtain the new, longer blanks. Scanning the web led to a source at Americal Micro Products (check <http://www.americal.com>), where they were available relatively cheaply. Currently, they sell for 100 with paper sleeves for \$1.49 each.

Next, since my standard CD-recording software, Adaptec's Easy CD Creator, did not recognize the new disks to be any longer, I needed a new CD-burning program. Through some searching, the CDRWIN package from Golden Hawk Technology (at <http://www.goldenhawk.com>) was chosen. This powerful program gives the average user incredible capability to burn CDs with every variation one could possibly imagine in creating audio, data, CD-E, CD+Graphics, etc disks. The help file provides a full list of each and every CD recorder with which the program is compatible. CDRWIN is downloadable from Golden Hawk's website and may be used immediately in demonstration mode, with the only limitation being that recordings may only be made at 1X speed. The cost to purchase was very reasonable.

To use the software, the "File Backup and Tools" button is pushed, and the "Record Directories/Files Directly to an ISO9660 Disk (on the fly)" operation is chosen. After clicking a few additional options, one is creating an 80-minute CD from a hard-disk image. The full disk capacity is roughly 733 million-plus bytes, versus 681 million for a 74-minute CD. With the cost of the longer disks being insignificantly more than the originals, it would seem that the longer ones will soon become the standard for archiving large amounts of electronic data. This is a perfect fit for the mountain of HP handheld material that has been generated over the past 30-years.