

Rich's Ramblings for March 2010

(A short review of Corel® WordPerfect X5©)

Word Processing thru the ages:

Way back in 1981 when IBM first started selling the IBM-PC, they offered a word processing program (\$175) called "Easy Writer". Some people referred to it as "Not So Easy Writer"; It was crude and quite convoluted to create and modify documents, but most mastered the devil. Then along came WordStar, (April 1982, DOS Ver 3.0) The accolades were loud and shrill as now the PC had a real word processor.

Some jumped on the bandwagon for WordStar as it was quite a step above the Easy Writer word processor, But many a user ended up sobbing in their beer when they made the fatal mistake of removing the floppy disk from the disk drive before they saved their file and closed WordStar. This is after they had just spent 10 hours creating the "Great American Novel".

WordStar had a different way of keeping the files on your floppy straight and proper. WordStar read the entire diskette directory and File Allocation Table (FAT) into memory and then when you saved your document, WordStar re-wrote the FAT and directory of the floppy.

This worked, most of the time, but just don't remove that floppy until you have saved your document and closed WordStar. Or, what you then learned was that all the floppies that you put in the same drive had the same directory listing, Many learned the hard way, but disaster is a good teacher. <G>

Some of the Word Processors that came along, have dropped by the wayside included Volkswriter, X-Y Write and others. Word Perfect was one of the real early Word Processors and it is still in use today after going thru evolutions via Satellite Software, Novell and now Corel. I started using Word Perfect version 2.20 when it was first released for the IBM PC DOS Operating System.

Check out the wiki site at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WordPerfect> for historical background.

Corel has come out with another improved version X5 which is a newer suite of programs very similar to the Microsoft Office and Open Office suites.

I received a free copy of WordPerfect X5 Standard from Corel when I attended FOSE (Federal Office Systems Exposition) in March of 2010. Of course I have to mention that I have received copies of MS Office 2010 also free.

From the PR material received it looks like Corel is trying to out do Microsoft Office and Open Office. Except, I see where it really has tried to be different in that it supports lots of PDF file manipulation and creation options.

WordPerfect X5 standard includes (if you wish to install them) PaperPort from Nuance, Mozilla Thunderbird and support for Microsoft SharePoint services. I installed the Word Perfect program by itself and am using it to write this edition of Rich's Ramblings.

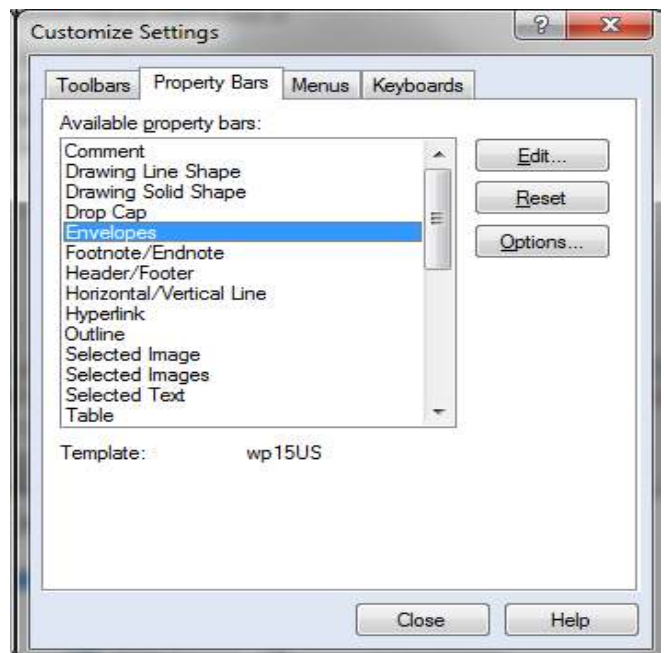
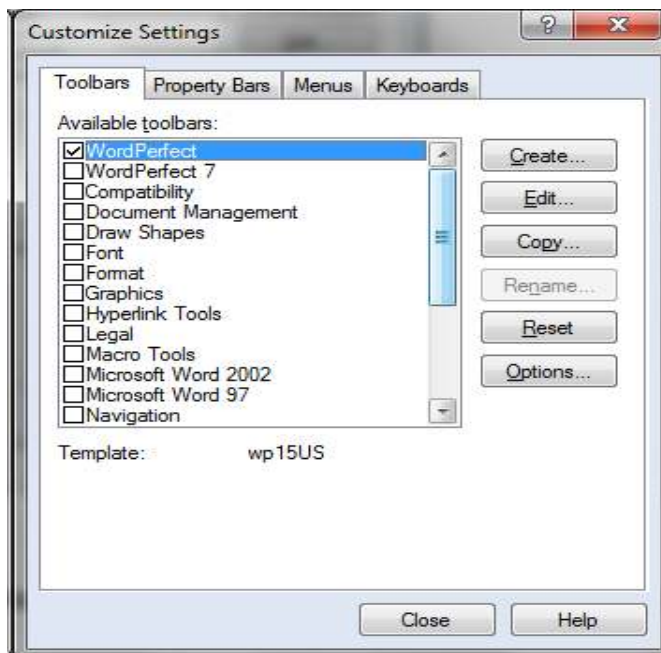
So Far, it has worked quite well, like an old shoe type of feel.

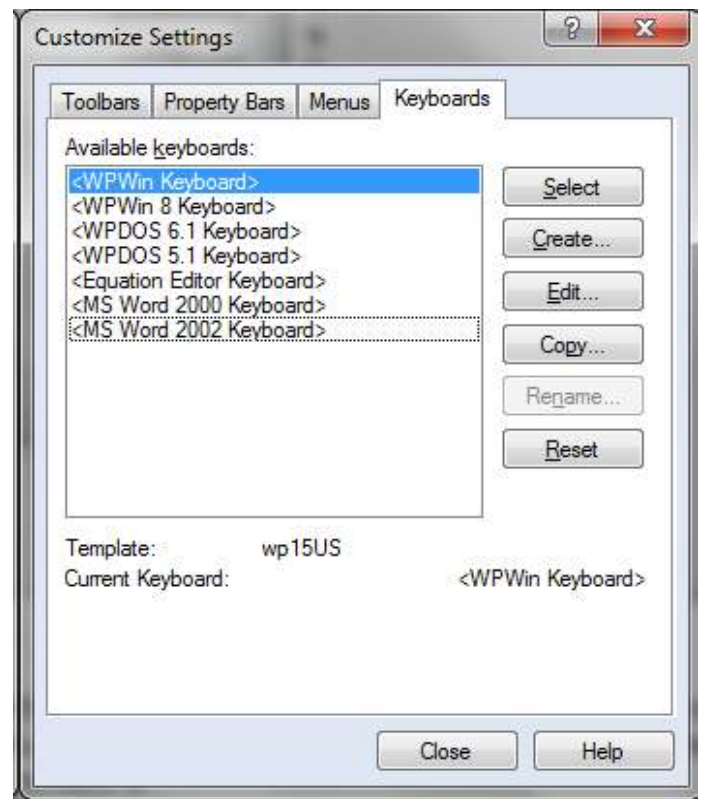
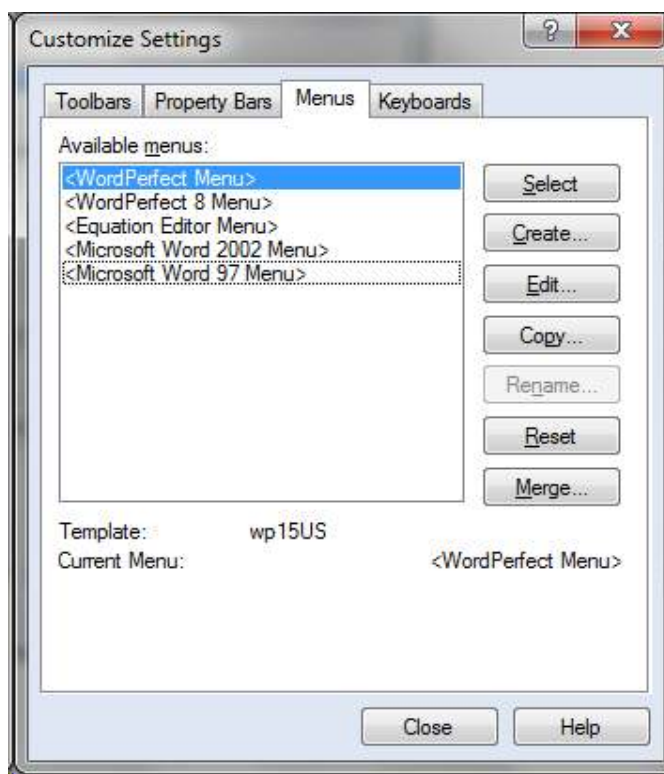
You have the options when you start WordPerfect using the following menu:



If you are a real old school WordPerfect person, Either classic or WordPerfect mode will make you happy. Uncheck the box at the lower left if you are satisfied that you want your selected option.

Customizing the look and feel of Word Perfect X5 is pretty simple but very robust, The classic mode 5.1 will allow you to use your old word perfect keyboard templates. I know you have a couple of them laying around. <G>





These are the (Tools/Settings/Customize) that you can modify to make WordPerfect X5 look more familiar.

This version of WordPerfect does seem like an “old shoe” for those of us who were brought up on the old DOS version of WordPerfect. I also have used and like (somewhat) the newer Microsoft Office 2010 (which is in free preview mode now). Even the newer version of Open Office looks pretty good and the price is right.

It looks like the battle of the bands again with WordPerfect X5 back in the swing of competition.

Now if Corel can successfully market it to the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturers) who put all those pre-setup systems in your local computer stores. That’s where people get familiar with a “trial” version of Microsoft Office products. Then when you get familiar with how it works, they hit you with the “pay or quit using it” mode.

All in all, the New WordPerfect X5 office suite is a pretty comprehensive package of applications that should easily satisfy the needs of those who lament the passing of DOS and earlier versions of WordPerfect. I believe that WordPerfect has a winner in this X5.

One thing that is very robust is the ability to save a file in so many formats, from Ami Pro 1.2 to X-Y Write III 4.0. Also, the ability to save/publish your documents in .PDF directly from the file menu. There just has to be some format that you would like to save it in. I think that almost every word processing format that was ever designed for the PC is listed.

One thing that really stands out for WordPerfect over the other Office products is that the top status line shows the full path and filename AND whether your active document has been modified.

To purchase the upgrade version of this product, you must own a previous licensed version of one of the following:

Corel® WordPerfect® Office 11 or higher

Microsoft® Office XP or higher

Microsoft® Works Suite 7 or higher

Prices Standard version upgrade is CAD169

full new version is CAD259

(that's Canadian Dollars)

<http://corel.com>

Capital PC User Group <http://cpcug.org> Members can receive a discount by on-line ordering using the code. CORELUGSAVE20 which will give you a savings of 20% on any order totaling more than \$50.00 when purchased on the Corel website

My conclusion:

I believe that Corel has a great product that should satisfy those of you who were weaned on Word Perfect for DOS and it's eventual upgrade to the Windows version. Those of you that Hate the Ribbon in the new Microsoft Office products will appreciate that Corel has kept their menu's so that you don't have to learn a lot of new options.

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