

A programming editor with some pluses

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PCEdit has gone through several revisions since I came across it 10 months ago. Each revision has improved the \$75 product considerably, adding functionality. The best improvement so far in this full-screen ASCII editor (Version 5.3) is the ability to toggle between document (basic word processing) and program (basic text editing). This means you can use the same editor for programs and for documents.

In document mode, word-wrap is active. The margins are changeable. In program mode, lines don't wrap and the "margins" are the maximum line length of 254 characters. Program mode also has automatic indentation, which is a necessity to handle nesting.

PCEdit has full-performance features like tagging (for moving, copying, and deleting), search, replace, copy to buffer (10 of them), and two-file windowing (with as many as 10 files loaded).

Nice touches in both modes include the abilities to change the case of tagged text, jump between files, toggle between insert and overtype mode, and display

directories of any disk or directory. Its on-line help and function key assignments are adequate, but its basic menu is so simple that you don't need to know how to use it to use it.

Despite the document-mode editing additions, the program is essentially an ASCII line editor. It does very well as a programming editor, but the document mode is limited by the program's line orientation. This forces such things as using a join command to connect a word broken across a line and reformatting each paragraph individually.

Its paragraphing logic assumes two Returns between paragraphs, so something paragraphed like this review would appear to the program as one long paragraph (as I found out when I reformatted what I thought was just one paragraph!).

You also cannot delete sentences or other blocks of text that don't fit into a rectangle on the screen (you need to delete each word separately in this case).

Some problems are addressed by the program's many function commands. But these are basically workarounds and

can get confusing. However, the program's author says, "The primary purpose of PCEdit is to be used as a programming editor and secondarily as a tool to allow programmers a way to document their programs without having to use such tools as Wordstar."

Given that goal, PCEdit has succeeded admirably. I wouldn't use its document mode to write or edit more than simple documentation or letters. But I would definitely use its programming mode and be happy that a simple document editor is also part of the package. It beats leaving the program in the middle and calling up a word processor that uses different keystrokes to do something simple.

The program runs on IBM PCs and compatibles running under DOS 2.0 or higher. The program uses all available memory when editing, but can get by with as little as 64K free RAM. For more information, contact Les Ventimiglia, 10711 Lehnhardt, Fountain Valley, CA 92708-1118.

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