

SAC - TUG

SACRAMENTO

TANDY USERS' GROUP.

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MARCH 1987

The President Speaks.....

We hope to have Ron Barnes from the Southgate Radio Shack Store at the next club meeting. Ron will bring a COCO III for us to look over.

The 12th West Coast Computer Faire will be held March 26-29 at Moscone Center in San Francisco so now is the time to make plans to attend. I, for one, hope to attend at least part of the fair. That means I'll be able to report on the show at the March meeting. If you plan on attending the Faire then you can save some money by buying your tickets

through one of the BASS ticket outlets. I'll bring information on all the events to the club meeting.

If you have some ideas on the subject of meeting programs, let's get together and discuss them. We'd like you to share your area of expertise with fellow club members. You could do a presentation at any club meeting (we could sure use your help). Also if you have any Public Domain Software, please take time to add it to the club library.

.....Richard Larry Ward

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>FEATURE</u>
2,3,4,5,6.	MS-DOS PROMPTS.
7.....	COMPUTER TERMS.
8.....	TRS-DOS LIBRARY.
9.....	APPLICATION.

Come on out to the March meeting, bring a friend and enjoy a great evening with our second love (first love, if you're not married).

SAC-TUG

The SAC-TUG NEWS is published monthly by the Sacramento Tandy User Group. Membership in SAC-TUG is \$12.00 annually. The membership fee includes a one year subscription to the SAC-TUG NEWS.

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SAC-TUG maintains a newsletter exchange with other clubs. To join the exchange program, send us a newsletter.

The deadline for the SAC-TUG input will normally be the 25th day of the month. Anything received after this date will be held for publication in the following month's issue. Any questions should be directed to the editor.

Your mailing label will tell you when it is time to renew your membership. Renew promptly to avoid missing a single issue of the SAC-TUG NEWS.

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Our thanks to the National Capital Tandy computer Users group Newsletter (December 1986) for the following

Customizing Your MS-DOS Prompt
by Mike Guffey

Reprinted from "the KAYPRO KNEWS", a newsletter on THE SOURCE database.

(This article assumes the reader has progressed beyond the status of novice)

DOS user and can decipher some of the less cryptic passages in Microsoft DOS documentation. Where additional instruction might help, another source of information will be cited. Technical explanations of what is happening will not appear here.)

Your MS-DOS (or PC-DOS (2.11 or above) documentation lists a resident (built-in) command which allows you to change the A> or B> prompt. Depending on your particular documentation, you may be able to use some of

this command's features, but probably not all (until you read the article below). This is an overview of just what you can do with the "prompt" command.

Most documentation explains (usually less than lucidly) how to change the basic A> or B> prompt. But some MS-DOS users never realize that in addition to the basic options of "prompt", they can probably:

- cause the prompt to display in reverse video (text in normal video)
- redefine the Cntl, Alt, and Shift combinations of the ten function keys
- redefine other keys as well
- perform these "tricks" from the DOS command line or with .BAT files

==> Basic Nifty Tricks

Why change the DOS prompt from the basic A> or B>? Let's suppose that, for some reason or another you have either different disks or the DOS COMMAND.COM file on several specific-function disks. It might be nice to know, whenever you are at the command level, which special function disk you are using. Or perhaps you don't have an on-board clock and might find it handy to display the time each time the prompt is displayed. Or maybe you are simply tired of the humdrum A> or B>.

It is these needs that most DOS documentation addresses. But many of us never read the documentation/instructions unless all else fails. So here are a couple of quick examples

of what "prompt" can do. (For additional instruction, read/re-read your DOS documentation or obtain the excellent book, "RUNNING MS-DOS" by Van Wolverson (ISBN 0-914845-07-1.)

The "prompt" command has several operators/characters that produce specific results. In order to use them, they are preceded by a dollar sign. Several or all of these operators can be used on the same command line (or within the same .BAT file). When invoked, they are NOT separated by spaces.

For example, the command:

```
prompt $t_$p_QMODEM IN:A ==>$g  
THIS IS DRIVE n$g
```

might display:

```
15:36:03:63  
IBM Personal Computer DOS  
Version 2.11  
Current Directory = B:  
QMODEM IN A ==> THIS IS DRIVE  
B>_
```

A detailed discussion is pointless here. (The operators are listed in your DOS documentation.) You can do several things after reading your own basic "prompt" documentation. But very seldom will you encounter this information: Typing the "prompt" command without operators (arguments) will restore the basic A> or B> prompt. (But it will not cancel everything you can achieve with the "prompt" command.) This is nice to know if you are doing a lot of disks swapping and it no longer becomes important to know some of that the "prompt" command

will tell you. So the above complex display will cease and merely show the current drive if you will type the "prompt" command on a line by itself and follow it by a <return> or an <enter>.

==> Intermediate Level Trick

Some of us are always meddling. For those of us who do, there is another feature of the "prompt" command which will allow the prompt to be displayed in the reverse video and the other command line data in normal video. This will not work in all situations. You will need to be using the normal ANSI.SYS device driver on your initial COMMAND.COM disk.

For example, the command:

```
prompt $e[7m$n#g$e[
```

will cause the normal A> to B> prompt to appear in reverse video. The remainder of the command line (what you enter) will appear in normal video.

And for example:

```
prompt $e[7m MSDOS $n#g$e[
```

might cause the prompt " MSDOS A>" to appear in reverse video. The leading blank makes the display more clear on some monitors. (The "\$n" above will cause the letter of the currently logged drive to appear in the command line.)

Remember ==> this trick will NOT work if you are not using ANSI.SYS in a normal fashion on the COMMAND.COM disk you initially boot the system with.

Some users will discover

that by playing with the sequences following the "\$e" above, they may achieve some interesting results on color monitors. The "\$e" allows usage of an "escape sequence" and is beyond the scope of this article. (Hint: "[m" = "[0m")

==> Advanced Level Usage

One of the most interesting uses of the "prompt" command was recently discussed by Harold M. Bauman in his Health/Zenith column in the June '85 issue of "COMPUTER SHOPPER". His techniques apply to almost all IBM compatibles and are explained in less technical fashion below. The "prompt" command can be used to redefine keys either from the DOS command level or with use of a .BAT file. The keys can either be redefined one-at-a-time or in a sequence of commands. So =YOU= can determine the definition of some keys to be anything from a single keystroke to numeric formulas to complex strings of data. (Harold Bauman's column is a little more comprehensive in explaining some of the other possibilities of this technique than the description below.)

This means that in many applications, you do not need commercial or public domain software to redefine keys. You can do it all yourself. But...it will not work with all applications programs and it may interfere with or override the preset definitions to software. It may be of use in adding additional keyboard definitions to programs which only have a limited number of specially defined keys. (For example, SYMPHONY only uses

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about 23 of the possible 40 function (F) key combinations.)

The syntax of the basic redefinition command is as follows:

```
prompt $e[0;n;"def";13p
<-- 1 --> 2 < 3 > <4>
prompt
< 5 >
```

where:

- 1 - basic setup, needed in most definitions
- 2 - numeric value of key to be redefined
- 3 - alphanumeric string assigned to the key (quotes required)
- 4 - places a <return> at string; deletion of 13 ends string w/o <return>
- 5 - see note 4 in Appendix A

Here is an example of what can be done from the command level:

```
prompt $e[0;68;"DIR /p";13p
prompt
```

redefines F10 to give a paged DIR command of logged drive and restores basic MSDOS prompt.

A .BAT file can be created to define keys more simply and without having to worry about getting the syntax exactly right for each definition. The following is an example you might call DEFINKEY.BAT:

```
prompt $e[0;%1;%2;%3;13p
prompt
```

Then, the command sequence

```
Definkey 68 "DIR /P"<return>
```

will achieve the same results as the more complicated example

above. This method can allow strings of up to 8 words (alphanumeric combinations separated by spaces) to be defined. (The %1 above is used to allow for redefined key to be specified. %2 and %3 are for two "words" in the string.) This .BAT file technique has limitations and may not save you much time.

Commands can also be added to an AUTOEXEC.BAT file to define several keys on start-up. In such situations, the full syntax "prompt" commands should be used to avoid confusion and to maintain consistency on each startup.

This undocumented usage of the DOS "prompt" command has many possibilities limited only by a user's imagination or willingness to experiment. There is more to this "trick" than an alternative to key redefinition software. It is a demonstration of the real power of Microsoft DOS.

APPENDIX A

When redefining keys with "prompt":

1> the new definitions will NOT be recognized by programs or applications which bypass DOS to get keyboard information. BASIC is an example.

2> use of the "prompt" command without operators or arguments will NOT restore the original keyboard definitions. The system must be rebooted (i.e., Cntl-Alt-Del).

3> if the keys are redefined with "prompt" in a .BAT file, the ECHO command must be =ON=

SAC-TUG

or the redefinitions will not be recognized.

4> after a sequence of redefinitions with "prompt", the MSDOS prompt itself must be redefined (as shown in the Basic section above) or the "prompt" command (without operators) must be entered. Otherwise there will be no prompt at the MSDOS command level and the cursor will blink at the far left column.

APPENDIX B

Key values used for redefining keys with "prompt"

F1 = 59 F2 = 60 F3 = 61
F4 = 62 F5 = 63 F6 = 64
F7 = 65 F8 = 66 F9 = 67
F10 = 68 (F11 = 152 F12 =
153 on some compatibles)

SHIFT F1=84 SHIFT F2= 85 SHIFT
F3=86

SHIFT F4=87 SHIFT F5= 88 SHIFT
F6= 89

SHIFT F7=90 SHIFT F8= 91 SHIFT
F9= 92

SHIFT F10= 93
(SHIFT F11= 162 SHIFT
F12=163)

CTRL F1= 94 CTRL F2= 95 CTRL F3=
96

CTRL F4= 97 CTRL F5= 98 CTRL F6=
99

CTRL F7= 100 CTRL F8= 101 CTRL
F9= 102

CTRL F10= 103
(CTRL F11= 172 CTRL
F12=173)

ALT F1= 104 ALT F2= 105 ALT F3=
106

ALT F4= 107 ALT F5= 108 ALT F6=
109

ALT F7= 110 ALT F8= 111 ALT F9=
112

ALT F10= 113
(ALT F11= 182 ALT F12=
183)

ALT 1= 120 ALT 2= 121 ALT 3=
122

ALT 4= 123 ALT 5= 124 ALT 6=
125

ALT 7= 126 ALT 8= 127 ALT 9=
128

ALT 0= 129 ALT _= 130 ALT -=
131

ALT A= 30 ALT B= 48 ALT C= 46

ALT D= 32 ALT E= 18 ALT F= 33

ALT G= 34 ALT H= 35 ALT I= 23

ALT J= 36 ALT K= 37 ALT L= 38

ALT M= 50 ALT N= 49 ALT O= 24

ALT P= 25 ALT Q= 16 ALT R= 19

ALT S= 31 ALT T= 20 ALT U= 22

ALT V= 47 ALT W= 17 ALT X= 45

ALT Y= 21 ALT Z=44

HOME =71 UP-ARROW =72

PgUp =73 LeftArrow =75

END =79 DnArrow =80

PgDn =81 RightArrow =77

INS =82 DEL =83

Ctrl PrtSc =114 Ctrl LeftArrow
=115

Ctrl END =117 Ctrl HOME
=119

Ctrl RightArrow =116

Ctrl PgUp =132 Ctrl PgDn
=118

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Dictionary Of Useful Computer Terms

ASCII: One method of getting down a mountain

AUTO-LOAD: The resulting condition of "AUTO-DRINK"

AUTO-BOOT: The action taken by the bartender at closing time

BATCH: A minor gripe

BIT: The increment by which programmers slowly go mad

BUFFER: A nude computer user

BUG: An unnecessary item that becomes useful when debugging

CARRIAGE RETURN: Where empty store carts go

CHAINING: A method of attaching programmers to desks to speed up production

COUNTER: The guy at the door with the hand clicker.

CURSOR: A hacker who "batches" a lot

DISK DRIVE: A popular address in Carmel

DISASSEMBLER: An unattended 12 year old

END USER: Programmers who sit a lot

ERROR: The most common statement that critics make

EXTERNAL STORAGE: A wastebasket

FLOW CHART: A graphic representation of the shortest

FREQUENCY: The disease suffered by video game freaks

GLITCH: A major BATCH

INPUT: Junkfood, booze, aspirin, etc..

LINE FEED: "....of course I'll still respect you in the morning...", or "....married? Who me?"

MACRO: A popular food on Friday

MEGABYTE: A painful sting on the Mega

MEMORY DUMP: Instant amnesia

MACHINE LANGUAGE: Chug chug, putt putt, clank clank....

POWER-DOWN: The resulting state that your computer stays in after you have neatly rearranged all of the wires, cables and connectors at the back of you system

PRINTER: a. A device to confirm what you don't believe is on the screen. b. The guy that smudges up your newsletter to make it unreadable

PROGRAMMER: A red-eyed, grumbling, unfriendly insomniac, usually divorced

RAM: Where most of the bugs are kept

ROM: Where the bugs go that can't find room in RAM

SOFTWARE: What programmers wear under their HARDWARE

--- END ---

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The following is a list of some of the TRS-DOS programs in the club library.

1. PWDECODE/CMD- Password compress and reconstruct program
2. INOUTPUT/BAS- Horizontal input/output subroutine demonstration
3. HEX2DEC- Hex to decimal program
4. ADVHINTS/SAB(BAS)- hints for Adventures 1-10
5. LINEARPR/BAS- linear program
6. MEMO/CMD- Writes short memos
7. KBMOD/DOC- Document file
8. FASTMA2/NEW(BAS)- Fast math Program
9. ADIR/CMD- Directory alphabetizer
10. GOIFF/NEW(BAS)- Greatest difference math game
11. MATRIX/BAS- Matrix addition, subtraction, scalar multiplication
12. CASHREG/NEW- Cash registrar education game
13. FACTORS/NEW(BAS)- Factoring education
14. GIANTS/NEW(BAS)- Strategy Education
15. MX80INT/CMD- Printer parameter program for the Epson with Graftrax
16. MATHATCK/NEW(BAS)- Math education (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
17. CYLON- Space game
18. DOMEODTH- Space game
19. LADDERS- Game of strategy
20. BBSLIST/BAS- List of bulletin board systems
21. SPEED/CMD- System speed
22. TRIANGLE/BAS- Parts of a triangle
23. MATCHING/NEW- Matching of shapes (elementary level)
24. SNOOPY/NEW- Math drill (number line)
25. INTDRILL/NEW- Integer math drill
26. ANGLOTOM/BAS- Temperature conversion of Fahrenheit to celcius
27. ROOTQUAD/BAS- Roots of quadratic equations.
28. FUNCMACH/NEW- Guessing number patterns
29. TERMLoAN/BAS- Term of loan
30. GEOREG/BAS- Geometric regression
31. SALVAGEV/BAS- Salvage value price after "X" number of years of depreciation
32. ADDSHOOT/NEW- Addition education
33. MATRIXIN/BAS- Matrix inversion
34. MURPHY/NEW- Math (multiplication)
35. PROVcaps/NEW- Capitols of Canada
36. FLOAT/NEW- Water displacement
37. CLOCK/NEW- Time teacher
38. POLUTE/NEW- Pollution teacher
39. TICTACAR/NEW- TicTac arithmetic

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Name: _____ Phone: _____

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I DO NOT wish my name be released to others for mailing lists, etc.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To access club library, pay an additional one time fee of (\$5.00)
One year membership to SAC-TUG (\$12.00)
Please mail this form and remittance to:

SAC-TUG
3910 RENICK WAY
NORTH HIGHLANDS, CA. 95678
Attention: Secretary

The public is invited to attend the monthly SAC-TUG meeting. Members will receive our monthly newsletter, "THE SAC-TUG NEWS" and other special privileges. SAC-TUG meets at 7:00 pm the first Thursday of every month at the SMUD training building 59th ST. and Folsom Blvd. directly behind Corti Bros. store. Please stop in and join us.

~ THE

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NEWS ~

MARCH

1987

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SACRAMENTO TANDY USER'S GROUP

----- IN THIS ISSUE OF THE SAC-TUG NEWS -----

CUSTOMIZING YOUR MS-DOS PROMPT

A COMPUTER TERMINOLOGY DICTIONARY

----- MARCH SAC-TUG MEETING -----

RON BARNES OF THE SOUTHGATE STORE WILL STOP IN
TO TALK ABOUT THE COCO 3 AND OTHER SUBJECTS, AND
CAN TAKE TIME TO GET BACKUPS OF THE CLUB LIBRARYS.....



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*** WHERE'S WINTER...SPRING IS HERE ALREADY ***