



Virtualising DOS - Part 3

Useful Links

In [Part 2](#) I began testing these three DOS emulators with some Word Processing applications, WordStar 4 and WordPerfect 5.1.

- [Virtualising DOS - Part 2](#)
- [DOS Software Index](#)

In this Part 3, I will continue testing, starting with some Spreadsheets, then moving to Finance applications, and finally Databases.

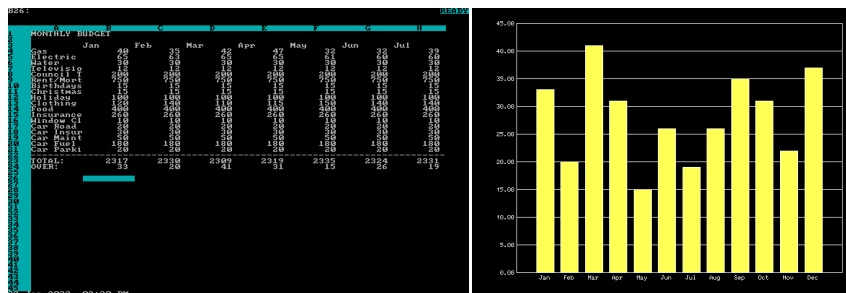
As I discovered, only VirtualBox seems to support the extended text mode of 132 columns, so the remainder of my testing will stick to good old 80 x 25 (or whatever the application chooses to run in after a clean boot into 80 x 25 text mode).

Spreadsheets

The kings of the spreadsheet world in the DOS era were Lotus 1-2-3 and Borland Quattro. I will test Lotus 1-2-3 Release 3.3 and Quattro Pro 2.0 here:

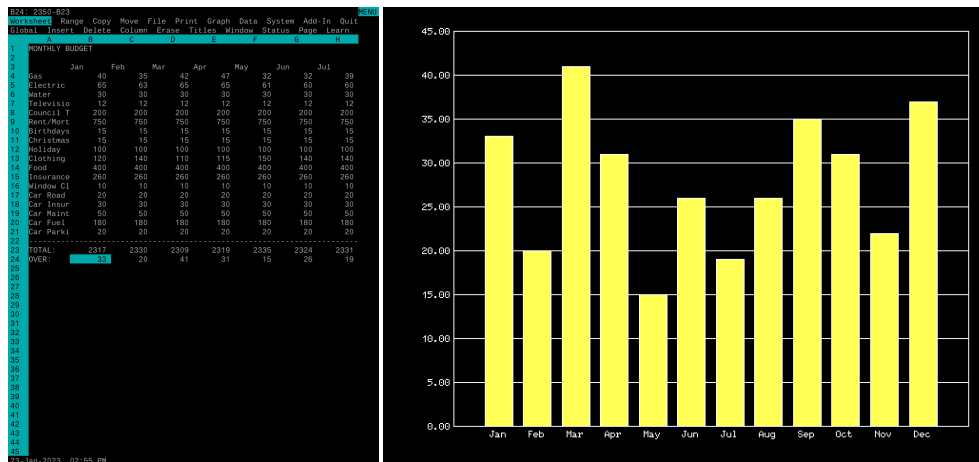
Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.2

DOSBox ran 1-2-3 without any issues. In fact, it seemed to default to an 80 x 50 text mode - maybe that's normal (it's been many years!). I put together a basic spreadsheet with enough information to generate a graph:



Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.2 running on DOSBox 0.74

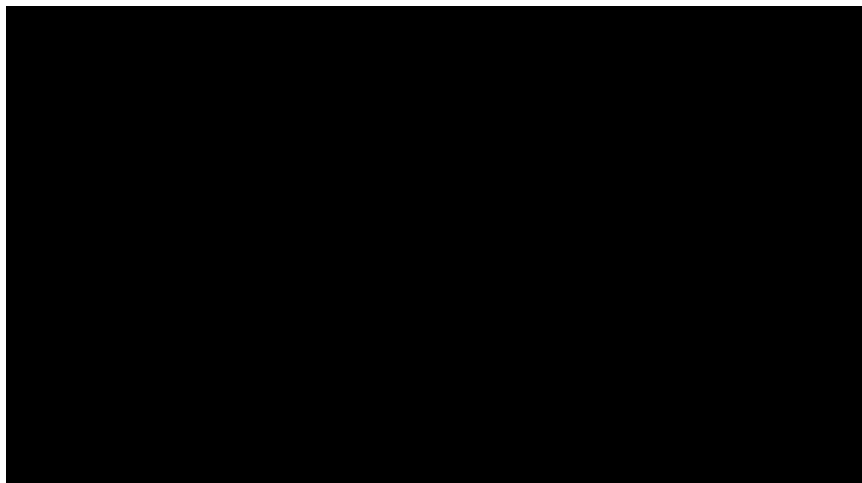
vDosPlus also ran Lotus 1-2-3 just fine, again defaulting to an 80 x 50 text mode:



Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.2 running on vDosPlus

With VirtualBox 7.0, I tried both the standard 80-column default that FreeDOS 1.2 boots into, and then also running MODE to set the columns and rows (both 132x43 and 132x50) - in ALL cases, after the splash screen briefly showed the version number of Lotus 1-

2-3, I was presented with just a black screen with flashing cursor:

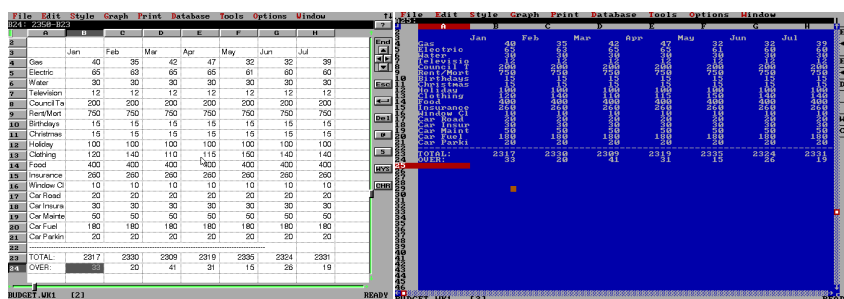


Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.2 failed to run under VirtualBox 7.0 (booted into FreeDOS 1.2)

Borland Quattro Pro v3.0

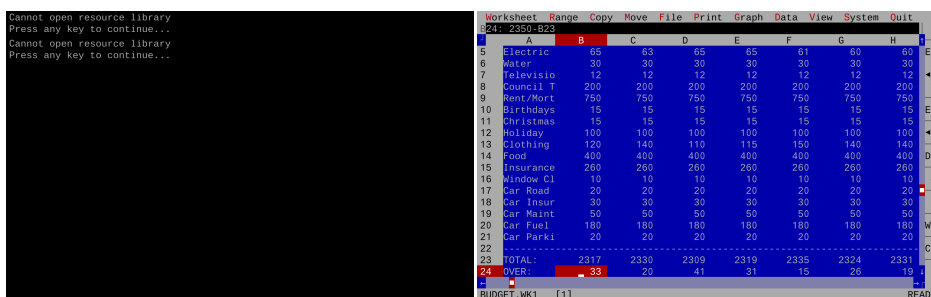
Quattro Pro introduced WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) display mode, which went part-way to giving you an idea of how something might look if it were printed. It worked well and was pretty, though was much slower in terms of navigating around.

DOSBox 0.74 had no problems at all running Quattro Pro in both WYSIWYG mode and text mode:



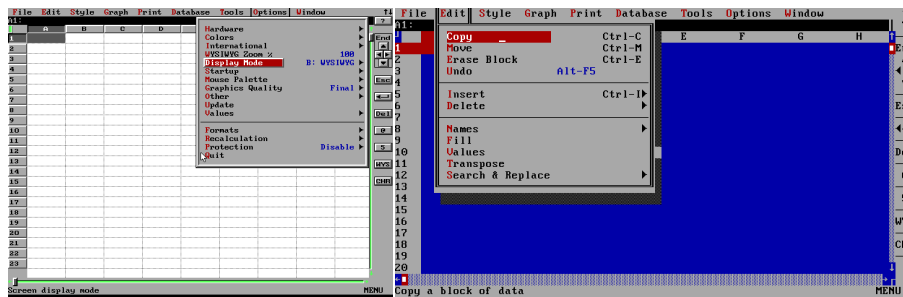
Borland's Quattro Pro 3.0 running in DOSBox 0.74. (Left): WYSIWYG mode, and (Right): 80x50 Text mode

Next up was vDosPlus, and unfortunately I wouldn't start in WYSIWYG mode, complaining about a resource file that could not be found. I reverted back to text mode and it ran fine:



Quattro Pro 3.0 running in vDosPlus: (Left): WYSIWYG mode, and (Right): Text mode

VirtualBox also runs Quattro Pro 3.0 well, though its performance is slower than that of vDosPlus and DOSBox



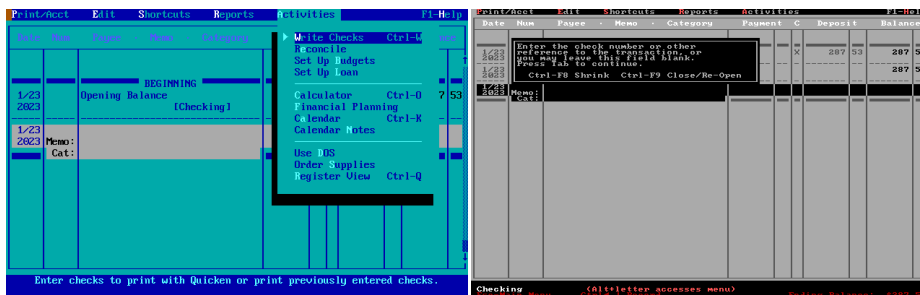
Quattro Pro 3.0 running in VirtualBox 7.0: (Left): WYSIWYG mode, and (Right): Text mode

Finance Applications

For this one, I'm going to just use **Intuit's Quicken**, which came out in 1984, though I'm testing Quicken 7.0 which is from 1993, and was the final version before they moved to Windows. *Microsoft Money* was only released for Windows, so I have to ignore that for this set of virtualisation checks.

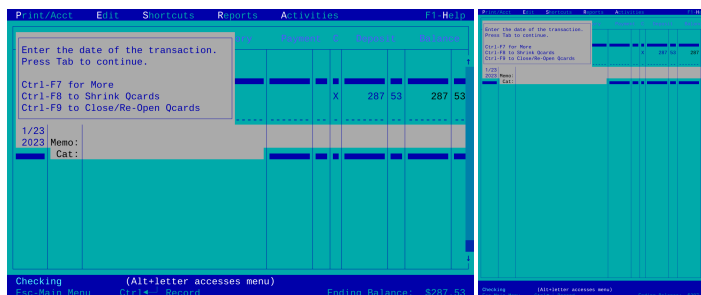
Quicken 7.0

DOSBox ran Quicken really well. The colours are a bit difficult to get used to out of the box ("Navy/Azure" is what they call it), so I changed it in the second image below, while at the same time tested the 43-line mode, which also worked well:



Quicken 7.0 running on DOSBox 0.74: (left) Standard 80x25 mode in default colours, and (right) 43-line mode and modified colours in Set Preferences->Screen Settings

It also ran well under vDosPlus - no issues changing into a different text mode either:



Quicken 7.0 running on vDosPlus: (left) Standard 80x25 mode in default colours, and (right) 43-line mode selected in Set Preferences->Screen Settings

Database Applications / DBMS

Databases became very popular during the DOS era, and the market was awash with choice. For the purpose of this testing, I will look at **Borland Paradox 3.5** and **dBase IV**.

** More to come **