

Say goodbye to cluttered offices

Wastepaper baskets? There are none at Micronet's Paperless Office in Washington, D.C. This experimental prototype office of the future was established as a laboratory for observing human behavior and reactions to change.

The paperless office is far from the norm, but greater numbers of offices are becoming more electronic and automated. A survey of the top 1,300 Fortune companies by Kelly Services, a Troy-based temporary office help supplier, found that 98 percent of the firms currently own some sort of word processing or data process equipment.

The survey also indicated more than 80 percent of the companies are considering additional purchases of office-automation hardware. Observers estimate that the current \$2-billion word processing industry may swell to \$8 billion by 1985.

At the heart of a "paperless office" is the "electric pencil," or word processor. Word processing is a method of translating ideas into words. Word processors not only put words on paper but also can communicate the words by electronic equipment and sophisticated communications facilities. In essence, word processing equipment can "talk" to other similar text-editing units or large computer systems.

Basically, a word processor is a computerized system programmed for rapid, efficient production and editing of letters, memos, reports, business records or other documents. The hardware used at a word processing workstation includes a keyboard, video display, memory storage on magnetic tapes or diskettes, and a high-speed printer.

WORD PROCESSING systems are available in a wide variety of configurations ranging from stand-alone to



high tech
Ronald R. Watcke

shared logic systems. Stand-alones can be dedicated exclusively to word processing, or they can be microcomputers used primarily for data processing. Every microcomputer on the market today has a word processing software package available such as Wordstar, Scriptwriter, Appletwriter, Atariwriter, Microscript, Wordpro. These software programs can turn an inexpensive microcomputer into a high-quality word processor.

Many micros have additional software that can correct spelling and grammatical errors, paginate automatically, justify the type within margins, and arrange documents in columns. Both visual display and typewriters are widely used as terminals in word processing systems.

Simply stated, this is how a word processing machine works. The operator enters data on the keyboard in rough form. The data shows up on the display screen. After finishing a page, the operator can look at the screen, find errors, if any, and then correct them. When the copy is correct, the operator pushes a button to store the text in the system on a diskette, or to print it out at the typewriter or printer. The data stored on the diskette also can be used to command the word processing machine to type automatically as many copies as needed of an original with all changes and corrections.

Data entry remains a major problem in office operation. All of what has been

said above depends upon the initial entry of information. Keyboards probably will still be used for the next several

years, but in time, most data will be entered directly from source documents and therefore not require the intermediate step of keyed entry. Mechanisms for source-document entry include sheet scanners, mark-sense card readers, magnetic and optical codes (such as those on grocery products and checks), and voice recognition.

A Troy resident, Ronald R. Watcke has a Ph.D. in education and is dean of liberal arts at Wayne County Community College.

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Free Oakland County maps

Revised 1983 street maps of Oakland County are available free to the public through the county planning division.

The street index maps are divided into four quadrants and contain information about Oakland County and all of its municipalities.

The full-color maps list police, fire, library and chambers of commerce phone numbers and describe county services. In addition, each county commissioner and his or her district is pictured.

To obtain a map, contact Marlin Rubin in the planning division at 858-0720.

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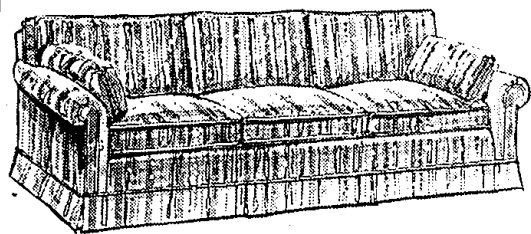
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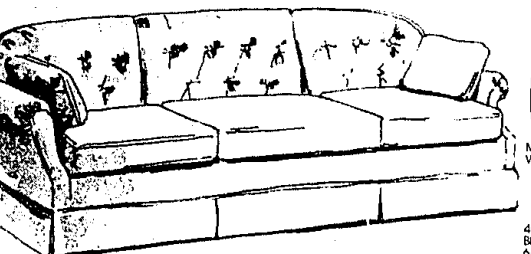
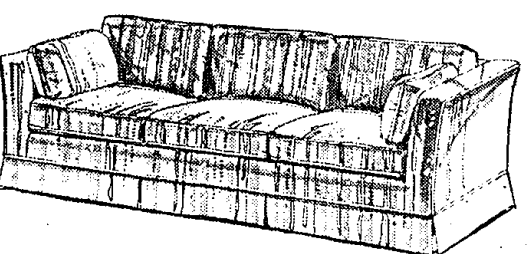
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