



The Valdocs. Environment Manual

by Chris Rutkowski

THE VALDOCS ENVIRONMENT MANUAL

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PREFACE

VALDOCS+ is the best version of Valdocs ever released. It is faster. It has more features. It is programmable. And in almost every way, it is more reliable.

But this is *not* the best version of Valdocs that is *going* to be released. During the coming weeks, not only more features but entire *programs* will be added to the system. And these updates will be sent to you as soon as possible.

This cycle of improvements and releases will repeat itself several times during the coming months - improvements will occur at an unprecedented pace - all heading toward the completion of the Valdocs environment as laid out in the chart of *The Valdocs Environment*. And at every step you will continue to receive updates.

The rate at which this product is undergoing change creates an enormous problem for documentation. Almost before you can document a "feature" it gets modified or added to and the documentation you just worked so hard to create is suddenly obsolete. What to do?

The answer was obvious - after a lot of brainstorming. Valdocs has proven easy to use over the years. Many users are successful without ever opening a manual *at all*.

This was only possible because Valdocs is organized around a set of *principles*; basic *rules*, that can be applied in almost any circumstance. These basic rules are of themselves *simple*. They constitute what we call HASCI - the "Human Applications Standard Computer Interface". And those principles *will not change*. Accordingly, we have made every attempt to discuss and reveal those principles in as many ways as possible and as often as possible.

That doesn't mean that this manual ignores the details of Valdocs+. On the contrary, an *enormous* amount of material has been packed into a relatively few pages. We've documented features that have never even been discussed before. But while the material covers every module, we've given the greatest attention to the new features of Valdocs. Being new, there are no experts in the field to turn to - so it is clearly *our* job to stand over your shoulder and help point the way. Secondly, some of the new features are among the most advanced we have ever provided. Thus, while their menus may work in the same fashion as others, *what to do with them* may be far less obvious.

We have received over 3000 telephone calls since the release of Valdocs 2 - and many hundreds of letters as well. This has help us isolate the elements of Valdocs with which you needed the greatest amount of help. Where possible we changed the software to eliminate the problems at the source. B ut in some cases, all that seemed necessary was an explanation. We have attempted to provide those explanations in this manual. (This is why your feedback is so important.)

Updates to this manual will be as frequent as updates to Valdocs itself; as each new release is prepared, addendum sheets, corrections and new material will be provided.

As Valdocs approaches final completion, so too will this manual - at which point it will be printed and distributed to all.

But don't forget, while there will be more to enjoy in the future, there is a *tremendous amount to enjoy right now*. This manual will help you maximize that enjoyment.

Should you desire additional features for future versions of VALDOCS, write. And should you require additional assistance in using VALDOCS+, please contact our Customer Services Department at: (213) 373-9127

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is divided into 5 sections, a set of comprehensive Appendices, and an INDEX.

Section 1 describes the floppies you have received with Valdocs+.

Section 2 gets Valdocs+ up and running for the first time, and shows you how to use COPYDISK to protect your disks.

Section 3 takes you on a *guided tour* of Valdocs+, demonstrating basic rules that apply everywhere in the system, and introducing you to Valdocs' data integration.

Section 4 introduces you to *the Programmable Environment*. It discusses DEFKEY, and shows how it can be used to create your own version of *Mailmerge*.

Section 5 provides a more detailed look at the individual modules of Valdocs. These will change and be added to tremendously in the editions of this manual to come.

The Appendices deal with topics which relate to the more technical side of living with Valdocs. Converting Version 1 files, how to use Printers, Ramdisks, Hard disks, SETUP, and more.

And last, the *INDEX*. For many of you this may be the most important piece of this manual. It lets you find information by *topic*. Want to Center a Line? Look up "Lines, Centering". Want to Delete a Document? Check "Documents, Deleting".

I believe that *every* user of Valdocs, regardless of his level of experience, will find valuable and useful information contained in these pages.

Regardless of your experience level, I advise that you spend a few minutes and cover the first 2 sections of the manuals. The organization of the disks has changed, and those changes are important.

Furthermore, as discussed in Section 2 of this manual, when you boot up Valdocs+ for the first time, the system will attempt to reset your previous SETUP. That can be overridden if you know how: *However, I strongly RECOMMEND that you allow the re-initialization to proceed* (See Section 2).

Every other piece of information in this manual is optional.

PRODUCTION NOTES :

This manual was written entirely with *VALDOCS+*.

The master copy was printed on an Epson LQ-1500 printer. No special papers or ribbons were used to generate the camera-ready copy. However, several fresh ribbons were used to ensure reasonably consistent tonal quality throughout.

Except where print samples are included as such, screen dumps of menus and screens were made on either an Epson FX-80 or LQ-1500 printer. These were later pasted into the camera-ready copy. Again, no special efforts were made to enhance the printout quality.

The manual was written as about 15 separate files for maximum flexibility in editing and organization; the final draft was printed as one document with consecutive page numbering. The INDEX was printed with narrow margins and then pasted up as columns.

While not of "typeset" quality, this document demonstrates the *useful* quality of which a modest system is capable.

A MOST IMPORTANT RULE

Because of hardware limitations, it is impossible to guarantee that the system knows when you have changed one of the floppy disks. The system makes a "map" of the data on each disk, and if it uses the wrong map for a different disk, *data will be destroyed.*

***NEVER CHANGE A FLOPPY DISK UNLESS
THE SYSTEM SAYS TO DO SO.***

Sometimes a program will realize that *it* needs another disk. At such times *it* will ask for it. However, at other times, such as when working on a text document, *you* may want access to data that is on another disk. In such cases *you* must tell the system that you want to CHANGE THE DATA DISK. This choice is always under the MISCELLANEOUS choices in the program.