

HARDWARE GALLERY

Boost your drive's speed even more dramatically with this upgraded version of JiffyDOS.

JIFFYDOS.....A+

*Speed and Versatility
Are the Keynotes
Of This Update*

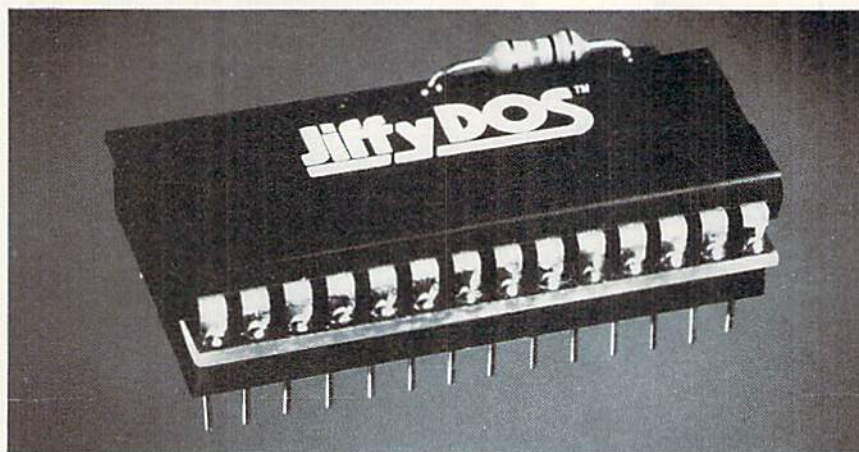
The weak link in Commodore 8-bit systems has always been the disk drives. They are slow, the 1541 brutally so. This inadequacy has resulted in the emergence of various means of increasing disk-access speed, the most popular of which has been a cartridge plugged into the computer's cartridge port. The arrival of the RAM expansion unit, however, made this a less than ideal solution. The two pieces of hardware could not easily co-exist; you usually had to remove one in order to use the other.

Enter Creative Micro Designs with an elegant solution called JiffyDOS. Rather than adding a plug-in cartridge to your system, you upgrade it by making chip replacements to both the Kernal ROM in your computer and the DOS ROM in your disk drive(s). This results in decreased load times while leaving the cartridge port open.

JiffyDOS requires that you open up both your computer and disk drive. This obviously voids any warranties that are in force, and hence is probably not an operation you want to make on new equipment. However, since there are fewer new C-64s and no new C-128s entering the market, this won't be a problem for most people much longer.

The instructions for making the chip replacements are clear, complete and easy to follow. One piece of advice—take your time. I ran into some problems, but they were my own fault, not that of the product. Before inserting the chip, make sure the pins line up with the holes in the socket, lest you end up, as I did, with a chip resembling a bowlegged caterpillar.

The replacement process is fast; two drives and a 128 took me less than 45 minutes. Once you've replaced the chips, the final step is to drill a hole in



the side of your computer for a small toggle switch, permitting you to turn JiffyDOS off and on. Put the case back together, and you're in business.

Creative Micro Designs has released a sixth version of their product, with enhancements that include a two-drive file copier, a printer/screen output toggle, the ability to adjust the sector interleave, full support of an REU running under RAMDOS, program-

mable function keys in 64 mode, and automatic sensing of uppercase/graphics and lowercase print modes during screen dumps.

The DOS ROM and Kernal ROM chips supplied with JiffyDOS version 6.0 incorporate all of the latest upgrades from Commodore. They are also compatible with any other chip upgrades that you might have made to your system. For instance, over the years, my 128 has acquired a Basic 8 chip, as well as a 64K video chip. Both worked without a hitch after the JiffyDOS 6.0 installation. If you encounter a program that balks at the presence of JiffyDOS, simply flipping the toggle switch mentioned above reverts your setup to a stock system.

The first thing you'll notice with JiffyDOS is that it changes the function keys. Gone are the graphics, screen clear and monitor commands. In their place are definitions that let you scratch a file and list a Basic program or a text file from disk. The function keys work in both 64 and 128 modes.

The additional commands in JiffyDOS provide you with the power to redefine your default drive, dump a text screen to a printer, redirect all output from the screen to a printer, un-New a program, freeze a program listing and list a program one line at a time. There is also a command disabling the infamous 1541 head banging that occurs when disk errors are read.

As nice as all of this is, the main reason for purchasing JiffyDOS is to speed up ▶

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An exceptional product that outshines all others.
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loading times. Does it? Yes, very much. While the effects of JiffyDOS 6.0 vary according to the drive, the mode in which you're using it and the individual program, there are any number of situations where the increased efficiency is nothing short of awesome.

The presence of JiffyDOS 6.0 is felt most profoundly when you're using a 1541 drive (or a 1571 in 1541 mode) with a C-64 or a 128 in 64 mode. When used in configurations other than these, JiffyDOS usually has some impact, al-

been made in the Kernal ROM, not the DOS ROM, so owners of earlier versions only have to change the chips in their computers, not their drives, to obtain the benefits of the latest edition. The cost for JiffyDOS owners to upgrade is \$36.95 for the C-64 and \$49.95 for the C-128. The package includes the Kernal ROM and one DOS ROM. There is also a trade-in policy: Return your old JiffyDOS Kernal, and the price drops to \$19.95 and \$29.95 for the 64 and 128, respectively. For first-time buyers,

Table 1. Sample load times.

C-128 in 128 mode	Stock 1571	Stock 1581	With JiffyDOS 1571	With JiffyDOS 1581
Pocket Filer 2	1:02 min	--	1:02 min	--
180-block data file	:49 sec	:32 sec	:30 sec	:26 sec
Fontmaster 128	:32 sec	:20 sec	:30 sec	:20 sec
BobsTerm Pro 128	:30 sec	:23 sec	:30 sec	:18 sec
Trinity (game)	2:51 min	--	1:39 min	--
Beyond Zork (game)	2:12 min	--	1:38 min	--

C-128 in 64 mode	Stock 1571 in 1541 mode	Stock 1581	1571 in with JiffyDOS	With JiffyDOS 1581
EasyScript	1:02 min	--	:31 sec	--
RUN Script 64	:48 sec	--	:10 sec	--
Multiterm 64	1:22 min	--	:32 sec	--
Xmobuf 7.4 (terminal program)	:51 sec	--	:10 sec	--
PHM Pegasus (game)	2:48 min	2:21 min	:33 sec	:32 sec
International Karate II (game)	2:25 min	1:56 min	:37 sec	:30 sec
Archon (game)	3:13 min	--	1:15 min	--

though not as dramatic. In some situations, it has little or no effect—on a program such as GEOS, for example, which has a built-in, fast-load routine that bypasses the Kernal.

Even programs that don't seem to respond to the presence of JiffyDOS can sometimes get a performance boost. Ways to accomplish this can range from simply copying a file to a JiffyDOS formatted disk, to the more complicated task of adjusting the sector interleave on a 5¼-inch floppy (which has no effect on a 1581 drive). Simply put, the latter operation means adjusting the physical distance between blocks of a file to optimize access time. This entails a bit of experimentation, but the instructions to perform the task are quite clear.

The changes in JiffyDOS 6.0 have

the prices are \$59.95 for the 64 and \$69.95 for the 128.

JiffyDOS version 6.0 does what it's supposed to, and does it well. No, it won't decrease the loading times for all programs, but in many of those cases nothing else will either. JiffyDOS co-exists with all other equipment, doesn't affect copy protection schemes, offers a nice selection of extra commands and, best of all, leaves your cartridge port free. Add to this a company that provides excellent customer support, and you have a combination that's hard to beat. Now that I've used JiffyDOS, I'll never give it up. (*Creative Micro Designs, PO Box 789, Wilbraham, MA 01095.*)

—MICHAEL CAVANAUGH
LEVITTOWN, PA ■