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Enhanced simulation output through

the use of spreadsheet software

by

Jonn Patrick Dieltz

A Thesis Submitted to the

Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Industrial Engineering

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the development of a technique to display microcomputer simulation output data graphically, using spreadsheet software. The simulation data was generated by GPSS/PC^T simulation software and displayed using Lotus $1-2-3^{2}$ spreadsheet software. Snapshots of data were taken at regular intervals during the simulation. The simulation output data files were then translated into Lotus 1-2-3 worksheet files by use of the Data Interchange Format (DIF). Once translated into the worksheet format the snapshots of data were combined onto a single worksheet which contained macros to generate the graphs.

Macros were written to generate and save each graph setting. A separate macro was written for queue statistics, utilization statistics, and a schematic presentation of the problem. For later display, other macros were used which recalled the previously stored graph settings. The snapshot method can, if the time interval between data summaries is

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 $^{^{2}}$ GPSS/PC is a registered trademark of Minuteman Software.

small enough, reach a nearly animated condition when the graphs are recalled.

All types of Lotus 1-2-3 graphs were used to display the simulation output; bar charts, line graphs, XY plots, and pie charts. Each macro generated a series of graphs which showed how the the queue or utilization statistics of the model changed during each snapshot interval. The XY plot was also used to generate a schematic diagram which included combined queue and utilization statistics of the system being modeled.

Lotus 1-2-3 offers the modeler many graph types to present simulation results in a format best suited to the particular data. The graphics can be attractively presented using output from proven discrete event simulation languages, such as GPSS and SLAM, without buying expensive graphics software tailored to a specific language.

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INTRODUCTION

Use of microcomputers is the latest trend in simulation. Mainframe languages have either been adapted for use on microcomputers or are in the process of being rewritten for micros. Increases in the use of microcomputers in the workplace and the availability of larger memory capacity on the latest micros make microcomputer simulation a possibility for organizations of all sizes. Some of the language adaptations are transparent to those experienced in the language, while in some cases, the micro versions of simulation languages make use of the interactive capabilities of micros.

Computer simulation output data contain detailed information that may not be apparent to anyone other than the computer professional or engineer who developed the simulation model. This presents a problem for the modeler when presenting the results of a simulation analysis to the decision makers in management. Key points from the simulation model may be lost in the printed output simply because the data was not in an easy to understand format.

Graphics packages are available for some mainframe simulation languages which allow the modeler to select

different kinds of displays for the various types of data in the model. Mainframe languages may also offer animated graphics or the ability to interface with other packages or languages which can animate the output data. These various methods offer the simulation modeler the flexibility to present the model output data in a form that is easily understood by those not directly involved with the simulation modeling.

A look through current microcomputer magazine or journal advertisements indicates a trend toward graphic output displays for almost any kind of data. These packages cover a broad range in both sophistication and cost. The criteria for this project were to get the simulation data in an interesting and readable format and do it at minimum cost.

The minimum cost criterion required the use of a readily available package with graphics capability. Lotus 1-2-3 satisfied this criterion. It is an integrated spreadsheet and data management software package with graphics that has enjoyed widespread popularity in business and industry since its introduction in 1983 (14).

At the time this project was beginning only one of the

available microcomputer simulation languages had a graphics capability (3). This language required the use of a specific model microcomputer which was not available for this investigation. The simulation language used, GPSS/PC, will run on an IBM or compatible microcomputer. Attempts to use it on another microcomputer were unsuccessful because a unique plug-in security device is required to run the simulation.

REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

What is the advantage of displaying simulation data in graphical form? The simple answer is communication. In other words, graphs are an easy to understand way of presenting some of the complex relationships that exist in a simulation problem (19). They may also be used to call attention to a particular aspect of a simulation while the normal printed output may be used to study the details (16). Graphics put the old phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" to work.

Simulation, to some, is like a foreign language (6). The output of the simulation analysis may be equally as foreign. Using graphics with the simulation facilitates understanding of the data by decision makers. Taking the mystery out of the simulation process helps both the modeler and the decision makers in understanding each other and using simulation of plant operations to best advantage. Ford Motor Company has found this to be the case in their European and North American operations (6, 16).

The precedent for using graphic display of simulation data was established with mainframe computers. Numerous graphics packages are available for use with mainframe and

minicomputer simulation languages (19, 27, 29). Some of these such as TESS (27) and IDEF2 (29) work only with a specific simulation language. Other packages, such as AID (19) and SIMCHART (19), can be used with any simulation model.

These graphics packages all give the modeler the capability to display simulation data in histograms, bar charts, pie charts, and plots. TESS and IDEF2 also allow the modeler to construct the simulation model using graphics (27, 29). Kachitvichyanukul and Lloyd (10) state that TESS is the only truly integrated simulation software system available for mainframe applications. An integrated simulation system is a software system which supports the pre-simulation model development with statistics collection, the actual model entry with graphics or other support, and the post-simulation data handling with report generators and graphics. They argue that the lack of integrated systems for model development and data display takes a large amount of the modeler's time and skill away from the actual simulation.

Real-time display of the simulation is also possible with the use of animated graphics. Animation is also cited as one way of getting decision makers to see that model

characteristics are valid (6).

The advent of the microcomputer brought investigations into its use for simulation. Early attempts were confined to the 8-bit processors with limited amounts of Random Access Memory (RAM) (16). Later, 16-bit processors with increased RAM made more complex simulations possible. Ford of Europe uses a two-stage modeling process to alleviate size and speed problems associated with micro based simulation (15). They generate what they call "data packets" from models of sections of the plant to be fed into models of other sections down stream in the production process. The complexity of this system requires complicated models to be done by their operations Research Group. Their industrial engineering staff is limited to developing simple models.

Kachitvicnyanukul and Lloyd (10) took another approach to using microcomputers in simulation. They used a relational data base management system as a central point in what they call an integrated simulation support system. They used the data base management system to collect the pre-modeling data and to store and display the post simulation data.

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Another study by Vasudev and Pruett (28) focused on a comparison between micro and mainframe simulation capabilities. Using SIMBASIC and SIMPAS, simulation languages based on BASIC and PASCAL, they compared the results of 8-bit and 16-bit microcomputers with those of a 32-bit mainframe. The study noted that while the actual data from each computer system varied, they fell into a range which was reasonable enough for sound decision making. The accuracy of another microcomputer simulation done by Mourant (22) also compared favorably with results obtained from an established simulation language on a mainframe. In other words, used individually, the data would have led the decision maker to reach the same conclusion.

Having established the accuracy of the data from the different computer systems, Vasudev and Pruett (28) went on to look at how the systems compared in terms of timeliness and cost-effectiveness. When timeliness was measured in terms of Central Processor Unit (CPU) time, the mainframe computer was the clear winner. However, when other factors such as accessibility and time sharing were considered the microcomputers compared favorably. The study concluded that if mainframe computer costs are in the \$500 to \$1000 per CPU hour range, microcomputer based simulation is more cost-effective. Favreau, Murtha, and Marr (5) state that

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the speed of execution for microcomputers is irrelevant. Their reasons are that a micro is a single-user system which provides quicker feedback with an execution cost of almost zero.

While the criteria in the Vasudev and Pruett (28) study; accuracy, timeliness, and cost; favored the microcomputer, one shortcoming was noted. At the time of the study, the more commonly used simulation languages were not available for microcomputers. The authors noted that as simulation languages are adapted for microcomputers and as the capabilities of the microcomputer increase, microcomputer simulation will be more and more common (28).

Since the above mentioned study, some of the most widely used mainframe languages; GPSS, SIMSCRIPT, and SLAM (1); have become available for microcomputers. One of these, GPSS/PC, is the microcomputer version of General Purpose Simulation System (GPSS). In its conversion to the micro, a built-in program editor and a system of commands were added which allow interactive modeling techniques (12). Due to limitations of microcomputers, certain features of the mainframe language were omitted on GPSS/PC. These features deal primarily with interfacing the simulation program with other computer languages for subroutine

manipulation of data or the output of data to separate files (12).

These shortcomings are somewhat offset by the addition of features which capitalize on the interactive environment of the microcomputer. The most notable feature is the addition of the program editor. The on-screen editor checks each model statement as it is entered for syntax errors (12). The interactive structure of the program also allows the modeler to change model characteristics by adding or deleting blocks or changing values during a modeling session. The effects of changes can be seen by using a PLOT statement to view a System Numerical Attribute (SNA) during a simulation run (8, 12).

Favreau, Murtha, and Marr (5) have stated that simulation software systems have lagged behind the development of other areas in microcomputers. They suggest that a spreadsheet be one of the packages available to the microcomputer simulation modeler. Indeed, spreadsheet programs have been used for many types of problems including simulation analysis. The keyboard macro commands of Lotus 1-2-3 provide the user with an ability to write programs (20, 25). The macros are as powerful as a computer language and have been called the most powerful programming language

in business today for small applications (7). The key advantage of using spreadsheet macros is that they don't require an extensive programming background (17).

Spreadsheet simulations have been done using macros, but the macros lack some of the built-in functions of a simulation language (25). A simple step performed in a simulation language such as establishing a queue requires a number of operations on a spreadsheet. This is not to say that the final results obtained are any less accurate. Masri and Moodie (17) compared the results from a flow shop simulation done on a spreadsheet with those from a simulation language model and found them to be similar.

Even though Lotus 1-2-3 nas some shortcomings in the actual simulations, its graphics capability has won hign praise (17, 25). Its ability to convert statistics into graphs makes graphing a "thinking tool" (20). Reese (25) has suggested that future simulation languages adopt the graphic capability of a program like Lotus 1-2-3.

Spreadsheets are used to solve a broad range of problems. They are being used in such diverse applications as circuit design (9), network analysis (2), to project space requirements (23), scneduling (20), manpower planning

(20) and a host of various types of financial analysis (20). Spreadsheets can be used on such diverse types of problems because the solutions rest on the data relationships. These relationships can be described by defining the relationships between the cells in the spreadsheet. The process of defining the cellular relationships has been called declarative programming (11). This is much different from the procedural steps of programming languages such as FORTRAN or BASIC. The declarative programming done on the spreadsneet is very straight forward and doesn't require the user to learn all of the intricacies of a procedural language. The relative ease of using the spreadsheet on such a vast range of applications has led to spreadsheets being the most widely used computer applications program (11).

Lotus 1-2-3 is one of the most popular spreadsheet programs (14). One reason is that it has more capabilities than other spreadsheets (20). It offers a unique combination of a spreadsheet, built-in special functions, data management, and graphics. As stated above, the keyboard macros and special functions also give it an extensive programming capability. The macros and special functions have been expanded in the newest version just released (13). In a survey of 1-2-3 users, Lotus nas found

that the graphics are one of the least used portions of the package (18).

Lotus is unique in another aspect. It is probably the only software package that is now supports its users with their own magazine (2, 11, 13). The magazine offers articles on ways to best use the capabilities of 1-2-3 as well as giving readers advice on ways to overcome problems they have encountered using the software. Lotus 1-2-3 has also spawned an entire industry of support products. Issues of Lotus and Byte magazine contain many advertisements for products made to work with Lotus 1-2-3.

Graphic presentation of simulation results aids management's understanding of the simulation process. Simulation on microcomputers is a way of putting simulation within the reach of almost any organization. Lotus 1-2-3 is a widely available software package which offers a way of displaying the output data of microcomputer simulation in graph form.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study was to investigate the capabilities of a spreadsheet program to display the output of simulation models on a microcomputer. Lotus $1-2-3^1$ was the spreadsheet used to display GPSS/PC² simulation output data. Real-time animated graphics will not be possible due to GPSS/PC's inability to interface with other language subroutines or data files during simulation. A series of stop-action "snapshots" of the data can be taken and then presented in sequence on 1-2-3 to give a semi-animated display.

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The investigation was conducted with Lotus 1-2-3 version 1A and GPSS/PC version 1.1.

¹Lotus 1-2-3 is a registered trademark of Lotus Development Corporation.

²GPSS/PC is a registered trademark of Minuteman Software.

PROCEDURES

The procedural steps discussed in this section can be divided into two areas. First, a discussion of the GPSS/PC steps used to generate the data files from the model and, second, the Lotus 1-2-3 procedures used to produce the graphics.

GPSS/PC

The steps used will be illustrated by an example problem. Before the actual development, however, the unique aspects of GPSS/PC language will be discussed. This discussion is necessary because some of the differences in this version of GPSS were limiting factors in the final outcome.

GPSS/PC lacks the blocks normally found in other versions of the language which allow interface with outside storage media. Specifically, the CHANGE, JOBTAPE, REWIND, READ, WRITE, and PRINT blocks are not found in GPSS/PC. These blocks allow the modeler to work with tape or other storage devices to write data to outside files. These files could then be accessed by specially designed subroutines to generate animated graphics or unique reports.

Another missing block is the HELP block. This block is used to send data directly to subroutines for specially required manipulation. This is useful in cases when there isn't a GPSS block which accurately describes the process being modeled. The ability to access outside subroutines increases the modeler's flexibility in applying the language to a given problem. The HELP block is another way the modeler could pass control to an outside subroutine to generate the data necessary to produce animated graphics. Lack of a HELP block also prevents any real-time processing of the data and limits the modeler to post-simulation report data.

The result of the omission of the above blocks from the microcomputer version of GPSS limits the modeler to using the data generated in the standard output summary. There aren't any provisions in the language for generating specialized report formats. The modeler is limited to the standard report supplemented by tables, savevalues, matrix savevalues, and functions. The modeler can use these to record any of the System Numerical Attributes (SNAs) desired.

Another feature omitted in this version of the language

is the Snap Interval Counter. The "C" operand of the START statement is inoperative. This prevents the modeler from automatically getting intermediate data summaries at selected intervals. This can be overcome as illustrated in the example below by using a series of the REPORT commands successively with START commands to obtain the desired interval of reporting (8).

While there are the omissions from the language as noted above, there are also some additions worthy of mentioning. The foremost of these is the on-screen editor. This facilitates model development by checking each block statement for syntax as it is typed. As each entry is made the cursor advances to the next required entry in the correct column. If an error is made in the entry the cursor will not advance until the correction is made. It also requires that only the first three letters of a block statement need be entered. For example, if the modeler wishes to place a GENERATE block in the model, ne only needs to type GEN followed by a space. The editor completes the word and advances to the correct column for the A operand.

The EDIT, RENUMBER, DISPLAY, and DELETE commands are used in model development to edit the model statements (8). Model statements can be entered in two different ways. The

statements can be completely interactive, in which case they are entered without line numbers. Each line is then executed as it is entered. The model can also be developed as a "savable program" by numbering each line. The SAVE command saves the numbered model statements to an ASCII format disk file. The model can also be developed with a savable "core" along with some unnumbered control statements used to start and stop the simulation or vary certain parameters. After the model is developed, statements can be changed with the EDIT or DELETE command, or by substituting a new statement with the same line number as the previous statement.

Other statements unique to GPSS/PC are the STOP and CONTINUE commands (8). The STOP allows the modeler to insert a condition in the model which will stop the simulation. This is one of the features which capitalize on the interactiveness of the microcomputer. When the stop condition is reached, the modeler may modify statements within the model and use the CONTINUE command to resume the simulation.

The PLOT (8) command gives the modeler limited ability to view the simulation in real-time. A selected SNA can be viewed on an XY graph during a simulation run. Time is

displayed on the x-axis and the value of the desired SNA is plotted on the y-axis. The SNA values are plotted over time as the simulation develops. Up to two PLOT statements can be viewed at a time on a split screen. The data are displayed on the screen only and not part of the standard data report.

Online help is also available during model development. Simply pressing the [?] key will call up a help screen which will display the options for the entry being considered (8).

The simulation problem used to develop the graphics procedures is found in Schriber (26) example 2F:

"Assembled television sets move through a series of testing stations in the final stage of their production. At the last of these stations, the vertical control setting on the sets is tested. If the setting is found to be functioning improperly, the offending set is routed to an adjustment station, where the setting is modified. After adjustment, the television set is sent back to the last inspection station, where the setting is again inspected. Television sets passing the final inspection phase, whether the first time or after one or more routings through the adjustment

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station, pass on to a packing area."

"Television sets arrive at the final inspection station from the previous station every 5.5 plus or minus 2 minutes. Two inspectors work side-by-side at the final inspection station. The time required to inspect a set is 9 plus or minus 3 minutes. About 85 percent of the sets pass inspection and continue on to the packing department. The other 15 percent are routed to the adjustment station, which is manned by a single worker. Adjustment of the vertical control setting requires 30 plus or minus 10 minutes."

The simulation was performed to determine the amount of staging space required for television sets waiting for inspection and adjustment. Pritsker (24) also uses this problem as Example 6-2 and asks the modeler to determine how long the television sets are in this final inspection and adjustment station. The simulation code to determine the required staging space and throughput time is in Figure 1.

The savable program code of Figure 1 does not include control statements because control is maintained interactively by issuing commands from the keyboard during

the simulation session. The control statements in Figure 2 were entered unnumbered and executed immediately by the program. The model was run for one week of simulated plant operation, as in Schriber (26).

****** 10 20 TV INSPECTION AND REPAIR 30 * 40 ************************** 5Ø 60 61 * Table Definition 62 * 63 RTABLE TABLE M1,150,150,5 ;Residence Time 64 * 70 * Storage Capacity 80 * 90 INSP STORAGE 2 ;Two Inspectors 100 * 110 * Model Segment 1 120 * 130 ;T.V. Arrivals GENERATE 55,20 140 STA1 UEUE LINE ;Wait for Inspection ENTER 150 INSP ;Capture an Inspector 160 DEPART LINE ;Leave Waiting Line 170 ADVANCE 90,30 ;Inspection Time 180 LEAVE INSP ;Release Inspector 190 TRANSFER .15,,STA2 ;15 % Failure Rate 195 TABULATE ;Record Residence Time RTABLE 200 TERMINATE 210 STA2 QUEUE LIN2 ;Wait for Adjustment 220 SEIZE ADJT ;Capture Repairman 230 LIN2 DEPART ;Leave Waiting Line 240 ADVANCE 300,100 ;Adjustment Time 250 RELEASE ADJT ;Free Repairman 260 TRANSFER ,STA1 ;Return to Inspection 270 * 280 * Model Segment 2 - Time Unit = 0.1 minute 290 * 300 GENERATE 4860 ;8-hour day 310 TERMINATE 1

Figure 1. GPSS/PC model code

The RMULT statement was used to reseed the first random number generator prior to each run. This was done to insure the data from each run was generated by the same random number stream. The CLEAR statement was used to return the starting conditions to the same unused state prior to the run.

RMULT	111			
REPORT	B:DAYL.GPS	;DAY	1	SUMMARY
START	1			
RMULT	1 i l			
CLEAR				
REPORT	B:DAY2.GPS	;DAY	2	SUMMARY
START	2			
RMULT	111			
CLEAR				
REPORT	B:DAY3.GPS	;DAY	3	SUMMARY
START	3			
RMULT	111			
CLEAR				
REPORT	B:DAY4.GPS	;DAY	4	SUMMARY
START	4			
RMULT	111			
CLEAR				
REPORT	B:DAY5.GPS	;DAY	5	SUMMARY
START	5			

Figure 2. Supplementary control statements

The REPORT command assigned the unformatted simulation data to the file name declared in the command. The comment portion of the REPORT command, the text after the semicoion, contains the title GPSS/PC assigns to the report output.

The simulation session was ended by the END statement.

The result of the session was five unformatted data files which were then processed by the GPSS/PC report processing program. GPSSREPT processes the unformatted output data files into the standard report format. An example of the standard report format appears in Appendix A. The formatted reports can be displayed on the screen, sent to a printer, or saved in an ASCII format disk file from GPSSREPT.

After saving the formatted reports on disk files, they were translated to Data Interchange Format (.DIF) files using a GPSS/PC program called Differ. The .DIF file is a structured format used to exchange data files from one program to another (4). The .DIF is a standard way many programs use to exchange data from one to the other. It is used by spreadsheets such as Lotus 1-2-3 and VisiCalc and by other simulation languages, such as SLAM. Each .DIF file must have the four required header entries and end of file entry seen in Figure 3. An entire GPSS/PC formatted report converted to a .DIF file appears as Appendix C. Numeric values appear in the file as numbers while character strings are enclosed by quotation marks.

The original version of GPSS/PC used for this investigation had an error in the .DIF translation program. The TUPLES statement was missing and 1-2-3 could not

translate the file to the Lotus 1-2-3 worksheet format. A TUPLE is a data record and the TUPLES statement tells the program which translates the .DIF file to another format how many records to translate. A .DIF file cannot be translated without the TUPLES statement. It was possible to overcome this by manually counting the number of records in the file and putting a TUPLES in the correct place in the file with a text editor.

Explanation of Terms .DIF statement TABLE -identifies file as .DIF 9,1 12.12 VECTORS -specifies number of vectors in file 0,50 (entries between BOT) TUPLES -the length of each vector 0,10 (number of tuples) DATA -last header item, data follows 0,0 -1 , Ø BOT -beginning of tuple -end of data EOD

Figure 3. Example of .DIF header and end statements

Minuteman Software, the producer of GPSS/PC, was notified of the error and made a correction to the program. The revised version of the Differ program translates the data files into .DIF files which contain the TUPLES

statement.



Figure 4. File processing summary

The process involved in getting from the GPSS simulation code to the .DIF file is summarized in Figure 4. These steps do not have to be done sequentially for each run. In this case, the five output files were produced in one simulation session. After the simulation session, the five unformatted files were formatted and saved to disk files. An example of a formatted report file appears as Appendix A and an unformatted report file appears as Appendix B. The Differ program was then used to translate the five formatted files to five .DIF files. During this process none of the files from the previous step are destroyed unless the modeler takes steps to delete them with an operating system command.

LOTUS 1-2-3

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Lotus 1-2-3 nas five types of graphs for displaying data in different ways. The pie chart can be used to display only a single type of data while the bar, stacked bar chart, and line graph can display up to six data ranges. The XY graph can be used to display a variable which varies with the values of a second variable, this is called two dimensional data (15). Each graph type can be selected by the modeler to display the desired data to best advantage.

The pie chart is the most limited since it can only display a single set of data. It can, however, be a very effective way of displaying that single set of data. Each data entry in the set is assigned to one piece of the pie. The pie chart automatically computes and displays the percentage of the pie occupied by each data entry. Labels can also be assigned to each segment of the pie chart as

well as adding titles to the graph. The pie chart shows the relationship of each data entry to the entire set of data.

The bar and stacked bar chart are similar to a histogram which can display six data ranges. To be most effective, the data ranges should have similar units. 1-2-3 automatically adjusts the vertical scale to accommodate the largest value being displayed. The bar chart gets more complicated because legends can be assigned to each of the data ranges, the X-axis can be labeled, the Y-axis can be labeled, and a vertical or horizontal grid can be displayed with the data. The user can also set the vertical scale to a fixed maximum value if desired. If a color monitor is available, the graph will display each data range in a separate color. When displayed on a monochrome monitor, each data range has a separate cross-hatched pattern.

A line graph can be used to display the same type of data as the bar chart. In the line graph, the user can elect to display the data with data symbols at each data point, with lines connecting the data points, or with both data symbols and lines. When symbols are used, 1-2-3 has a separate symbol for each data range. Each line and its associated symbols will be a different color if the color option is selected.

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The XY graph is the only 1-2-3 graph which can display two dimensional data. It is the only graph which assigns a numerical scale to the x-axis as well as the vertical. Each data point represents the intersection of a pair of X and Y values. Like the line graph, the points can be represented by lines, sympols, or both.

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Figure 5. Spreadsheet organization scheme

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Before getting into the actual procedures used to develop the graphics, it is helpful to consider the overall layout of the final 1-2-3 spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is really a large piece of electronic paper which can be divided into areas. It aids the organization and later use of the system to reserve specific areas of the spreadsheet for simulation program data, tables, macro commands, and others. The organization scheme used in this investigation is illustrated in Figure 5.

A number of steps are required to get the simulation data into the necessary format for graphing. First, the .DIF files must be translated into Lotus 1-2-3 worksneet format files. This is done to each of the five summary report .DIF files with the translation utility program provided by 1-2-3.

Second, the data from the five simulation summary reports were combined on a single worksheet file. Lotus 1-2-3 offers three ways to combine worksheet files. They can be added together, subtracted, or just copied to a specified location on the worksheet. In this instance, the File Combine Copy command was used to get the five summary reports on the same worksheet in ascending order. The combined simulation data worksheet was then saved in a separate data file for later inclusion on the graphic macro command worksheet.

The keyboard macro is a stored sequence of spreadsheet commands activated by a single keystroke (15). Macros can be used to simplify repetitive tasks which require many keystrokes or to cut down the amount of time needed to

complete an operation. Macros execute commands much faster than they could ordinarily be typed. A macro can also be developed so a nontechnical user can perform complicated functions with minimal instruction.

In this application, two sets of macros were used for each set of graphs. The first macro generated a set of graphs from the simulation data and assigned a name to each graph. The second macro was used to recall the named graphs in sequence for viewing. Only one macro was planned to generate and display the graphs in sequence without assigning each a name. However, with only one macro the time between successive graphs was long and a number of other pictures of the spreadsneet data flashed on the monitor screen. The length of time and the flashing screens were distracting to observers. When the two macro system was used the time between successive graphs was almost cut in half.

Each of the macros has some similarities. First, each begins by resetting all of the graph settings in the spreadsheet. This is like starting out with a clean sneet of paper before constructing a new series of graphs. Second, each uses range names to address the data rather than cell locations. Ordinarily, 1-2-3 will change the cell
addresses in a formula to compensate for the formula being moved to another location. Range names were used to allow the flexibility of moving the macros on the spreadsheet as well as being easier to read than a cell address. Since 1-2-3 will remember the range names but not display in a group, it was helpful to display them on a portion of the spreadsheet for easy reference. The range names are shown in Figure 6.

MACRO Range Names

Name	Range	Name	Range	Name	Range
QIMI	06	QIAL	Q6	INSL	U6
Q1M2	06.07	QIAŻ	<u>06.07</u>	INS2	U6.U7
QIM3	06.08	Q1A3	06.08	INS 3	06.08
Q1M4	06.19	01A4	06.09	INS4	U6.U9
ŨтМ	06.010	QIA	<u>0</u> 6.010	INS	US.U10
02M1	R6	Q2A1	Τó	ADJ1	V 6
02M2	R6.R7	Ū2A2	т6.т7	ADJ2	V6.V7
02M3	R6.R8	02A3	T6.T8	ADJ3	V6.V8
02M4	R6.R9	Ū2A4	T6.T9	ADJ4	V6.V9
Q2M	R6.R10	Q2A	T6.T10	ADJ	V6.V10
FLD1	AY5.AY89	FLX	AW5.AW89	DUM	W6.W10
FLD2	AZ5.AZ89	FLY	AX5.AX89	DAY	N6.N10
FLD3	BA5.BA89				
FLD4	BB5, BB89				
FLUS	BC5_BC89				

Figure 6. Range name references

es.

The data from the simulation cannot be accessed directly by the graphing macros. The data to be graphed must first be copied to another location where similar data from each run appear in adjacent cells on the spreadsheet.

In this case the data was copied into the table format in Table 1. The range names from Figure 6 address the cell in the table. The graphs, in turn, address day 1 data, then day 1 plus day 2, then day 1 plus day 2 plus day 3, and so on.

Another common feature of all of the macros, like any good program, is sufficient documentation. Figure 7 snows the macro used to generate the queuing statistics graphics with the associated documentation. The Peries of single keystrokes which makeup the macro become rather cryptic with the passage of time. They are the first letters of 1-2-3 commands. The documentation in the next column gives a snort explanation of each macro line for later reference.

				Data Su	mmary	Taple		
		INSI	P LINE		ADJST	LINE	INSP	ADJST
Days	M	AX CI	JR AV	'E MA	X CUF	R AVE	UTIL	UTIL
Day l		3 (ð Ø.7	4 4	3	1.57	0.936	0.898
Day 2		3 (J U.7	0 6	4	3.01	0.952	0.949
Day 3	i	4	3 Ø.7	79	7	4.27	0.954	0.966
Day 4	:	4 (J 0.8	4 12	10	5.52	0.955	0.974
Day 5	I	4 (0.8	17 12	7	0.01	0.954	Ø.979

Taple 1. Consolidated data table

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All of the graphics generation macros generate a series of five graphs which display the data summaries for each of

the five days sequentially. The first graph displays the summary statistics for the first day and the second graph displays both the first and second day summaries, and so on. Each day represents a single set of data to be graphed. The horizontal scale depicts days and data from at least two days was needed because 1-2-3 would not graph just a single set of data. This problem was overcome with the use of a dummy data range. The dummy range was called "DUM" and represented a range of five plank cells. This was enough to make the 1-2-3 graphing function "see" five sets of data and display the set of data for the first day.

The final feature each macro has in common is the use of fixed scales. Ordinarily, 1-2-3 adjusts the vertical scale to equal the maximum value to be displayed. This was distracting to those viewing the graphs initially because the vertical scale changed with each new graph in the series. A fixed vertical scale set to the maximum value to be displayed for the entire series was used later which allowed viewers to focus on the data being displayed and not on the changing scales.

The queuing macro in Figure 7 generates five successive bar charts which display the maximum and average values for the inspection and adjustment stations. The inspection data

are displayed in the A and B ranges and the adjustment data are displayed in the D and E ranges. The C range contains the dummy data.

Commands

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Description

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/GRGTBAQ1M1~ Bar Graph, A=QlMax BQ1A1~CDUM~ B=QlAve, C=Dumb DQ2M1~EQ2A1~ D=Q2Max, E=Q2AveX-axis XDAY[^] Label A Legend OLAInsp Que Max~ Label B Legend LBInsp Que Ave~ LDAdjt Que Max~ Label D Legend LEAdjt Que Ave Label E Legend TETV INSPECTION AND REPAIR First Title TSQueue Data~ Second Title TXDAYS[~] Label X-axis Label Y-axis TY# Waiting~ SYL~U12~MQ Manual Y-axis Scale Color, Horizontal Grid CGHQ VNCQUEU1~ View, Name Graph AQ1M2~BQ1A2~ Add Second Day Data DO2M2~EQ2A2~ VNCQUEU2^{*} View, Name Graph AQ1M3~BQ1A3~ Add Third Day Data DQ2M3~EQ2A3~ VNCQUEU3~ View, Name Graph AQ1M4~BQ1A4~ Add Fourth Day Data DQ2M4~EQ2A4~ VNCQUEU4~ View, Name Graph AQ1M~BQ1A~ Add Fifth Day Data DQ2M~EQ2A~ VNCQUEUE~ View, Name Graph

Figure 7. Macro to generate queue graphs

Once the graphs are generated and checked by viewing, they are named by the macro before going on to the next set of data. Naming the graph saves the graph settings for that particular graph and makes it possible to use the shorter macro in Figure 8 to recall the graph. Adding this extra

step cut the time between displayed graphs almost in half. The graph leaves the screen for approximately three seconds, while 1-2-3 recalls the settings for the next graph.

Command	Description	
GNUQUEU1~	Use Graph QUEU1	
NUQUEU2	Use Graph QUEU2	
NUQUEU3~	üse Graph QUEU3	
NUQUEU4~	Use Grapn QUEU4	
NUQUEU~	Use Grapn QUEU	

Figure 8. Macro to display queue graphs

Command

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Description

/GRGTLAINS1 [~]	Line Grapn, A=Insp
BDUM [~] CADJ1 [~]	B=Dum, C=Adj
XDAY~	X-axis
OLAInspectors	Lapel A Legend
LCAdjuster~	Label C Legend
TETV INSPECTION AND REPAIR	First Title
TSStation Utilization Rates~	Second Title
TXDays	Label X-axis
TY% Busy~	Label Y-axis
SYL.89~U1.0~MQ	Fix Y-axis Scale
CGHQ	Set Color, Horizontal Grid
VNCSERV1~	View, Name Graph
AINS2~CADJ2~	Second Day Data
VNCSERV2~	View, Name Graph
AINS3 CADJ3	Third Day Data
VNCSERV3~	View, Name Graph
AINS4 [~] CADJ4 [~]	Fourth Day Data
VNCSERV4~	View, Name Graph
AINS~CADJ~	Fifth Day Data
VNCSERV5~	View, Name Graph

Figure 9. Macro to generate utilization line graphs

The utilization rates of the inspectors and the adjuster are compared in a series of graphs generated by the macro in Figure 9. This macro uses a line graph with both

symbols and lines connecting the symbols to display the data.

Command

Description

XY Graph, Set X Range
Set A Range
Manual Y-axis
Manual X-axis
Lines Only
First Title
Second Title
First Day Data
View, Name Graph
Second Day Data
View, Name Graph
Third Day Data
View, Name Graph
Fourth Day Data
View, Name Graph
Fifth Day Data
View, Name Graph

Figure 10. Macro to generate schematic diagrams

The queuing macro and utilization graphs each display like quantities. The macro in Figure 10 uses an XY graph to display queue and utilization data together. This macro uses the information from Figure 11 to draw the schematic diagrams of the inspection and adjustment operation seen in Figures 22 through 26. The utilization rates and the current number of TV sets waiting at each station are also displayed at the appropriate location on the graph. The X and Y coordinate numbers were selected to achieve a proportional representation of the operation based on the maximum X and Y scale values. 1-2-3 views these numbers as data points and connects those in adjacent cells with a line. Separate figures or lines are achieved by the blank lines between sets of numbers. The data and labels on the diagram are placed there by using the data-label option with the selected data points.

The macros were developed after the simulation data were generated, translated to Lotus 1-2-3 worksheet format, and combined on a single spreadsheet. Subsequent simulation runs of this problem require the simulation standard reports to be translated and combined. This combined simulation report can then be copied over the first run data and the relevant data copied to the consolidated data table. This spreadsheet can be saved in a separate file and the process repeated for more runs if necessary.

2	l-axis	Y-axis	X	-axis	Y-axis	5
Waiting	j 7	15	Depart	29	17.5	
Insp	7	20	-	35	17.5	
-	17	20				
	17	15	Insp to	22.5	24	
	7	15	Adjust	22.5	35	
	•	13	najase	26.5	35	
Inso#1	21	19		20.5		
1	21	23	Walt to	37 5	35	
	24	22	Adjust	39.5	35	
	24	10	Adjust	72.7	55	
	24	10	Doburn	4 °) E	25	
	21	19	Return	43.5	35	
	a .		to insp	4/	35	
Insp#2	21	16		47	42	
	24	16		12	42	
	24	12		12	21	
	21	12				
	21	16	Labels	4	20	Arrivals
Waiting	j 27	32.5		40	17.5	To Shipping
Adjust	27	37.5				
	37	37.5		22.5	10	Inspection
	37	32.5				-
	27	32.5		12	13	# Walting
Adjust	40	32.5		32	30.5	# Waiting
	40	37.5				
	43	37.5		25	44	Return for
	43	32.5				Inspection
	40	32.5		41.5	30.5	Adjustment
		-	Data			···· ·
Arrival	2	17.5	Adi Ut	41.5	28	0.898
f.ine	6.5	17.5				
0 me	0.5	11.3	Inso Ut	22 5	7	4 936
	18	17 5	TUSP OF	22.5	'	0.550
	24 5	21	Wt Inch	10	17 5	1
	20.5	21	we map	12	11.0	Ø
	17.5	17.5	Wt Adj	32	35	3
	18	17.5	-			
	20.5	14		35	10	Day l
						-
	24.5	21				
	29	17.5				
	24.5	14				
	29	17.5				

Figure 11. Data for schematic

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The figures in this section illustrate the results of using Lotus 1-2-3 to display GPSS/PC simulation data. Once the simulation data were consolidated in the form seen in Table 1 above, the 1-2-3 macros generated these graphs with a single keystroke. When generated, they can be called up on the microcomputer monitor at any time with a single keystroke.

A number of steps were required to get the data into the format of Table 1. The model in Figure 1 was run with the control statement sequence from Figure 2. This generated five unformatted report files such as the one in Appendix B. These five files were formatted and saved using GPSSREPT, the GPSS report processing program. The formatted reports were then translated to .DIF files using the DIFFER program supplied by GPSS.

The .DIF files were then translated to the Lotus 1-2-3 .WKS format using the 1-2-3 translation utility. The five .WKS files were combined on a single spreadsheet using the 1-2-3 File Combine Copy command with the cursor placed in a cell immediately below the previous summary report. This single file was saved and later combined onto the macro

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spreadsheet using the same File Combine Copy command. The important step here is that the combined simulation data must be copied to the macro spreadsheet because the macro spreadsheet contains all of the named command ranges from Figure 6. If the macro spreadsheet is copied to the simulation data spreadsheet, all of the range names will have to be renamed using the Range Name Create command. The macros and the data in Figure 6 will be combined on the simulation data spreadsheet, but the command ranges themselves are not transferred.

With the five simulation runs on the macro worksheet, the selected data to be graphed are copied to the appropriate cell of Table 1. As can be seen by a comparison of the summary report in Appendix A and the data in Table 1, not all of the simulation data were displayed graphically. This is a decision of the modeler based on the specific areas of interest in the simulation analysis. In this case, data on average service times at each station, number of entries at each station or queue, or average time in each waiting line were not used.

The graphs are generated by invoking the appropriate range name for the individual macro. In this case, the queue graphs were generated and saved by the ALT Q command,

where Q is the range name given to the queuing macro. The server utilization graphs were generated by ALT S and the schematic diagrams by ALT F. The generated queue graphs can be recalled by ALT A, the server utilizations by ALT B, and the schematic diagrams by ALT P.

The data were separated into three categories for display. The categories were selected to snow how the data could be displayed in graph form. Queue statistics, maximums and averages, were compared with queue statistics in Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, because 1-2-3 can only display one set of units on the ordinate axis. The bar chart was chosen to display the queue statistics because it is one of the graphs able to display up to six separate data ranges.

In this example, the data were taken at the end of each day. The display then gives a series of "snapshots" of data for each day. The series of snapshots is begun with a single keystroke and halts at each snapshot for viewing the graph. The macro advances to the next snapshot when the RETURN key is depressed.

Figures 12 through 16 clearly snow the relationship of the queue data. The graph makes it easy to see that for

this simulation run, the inspection queue reaches its maximum value by the third day while the average remains constant. The adjustment queue continues to increase reaching an apparent maximum value on the fourth day while the average continues to increase over the entire five day period.



Figure 12. Queue data for the first day



Figure 13. Queue data for the second day

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Figure 14. Queue data for the third day



Figure 15. Queue data for the fourth day

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Figure 16. Queue data for the fifth day

A line graph was enosen to illustrate the utilization rates of the inspectors and the adjuster. The line graph displays a symbol for each simulation data point and connects the data points with a line. The line graph was chosen in this instance because it best illustrates the trends occurring in the utilization rates. The macro in Figure 9 generated the utilization graphs in Figures 17 through 21. Figure 17 displays only a single symbol for each utilization on the ordinate axis since it represents the first day. The graphs clearly show that the inspector utilization remains relatively constant on days two througn five while the adjuster utilization continues to increase during the five days.



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Figure 17. Utilization rates for the first day



Figure 18. Utilization rates for the second day

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Figure 21. Utilization rates for the fifth day

While comparing utilization rates to utilization rates and queue statistics to queue statistics is all well and good, it does not tell the whole story. It is also of interest to look at both the queue statistics and the utilization rates at the same time. 1-2-3 has difficulty displaying dissimilar quantities such as this on the bar chart or line graph. Displaying these quantities may also be a bit abstract for those not directly involved in the model development.

The solution to this problem was to develop a schematic flow diagram of the inspection and adjustment operation

which included data from the simulation. The graphs in Figures 22 through 26 were developed by the data in Figure 11. Queue and utilization data from the simulation run were added to the figures using a 1-2-3 data labeling technique. The macro in Figure 10 was used to penerate a series of schematic diagrams to display the data summary for each of the five days.



Figure 22. Scnematic diagram for the first day



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Figure 23. Schematic diagram for the second day



Figure 24. Schematic diagram for the third day



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Figure 25. Schematic diagram for the fourth day



Figure 26. Schematic diagram for the fifth day

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Finally, the model residence time table of the SNA M1 was graphed manually to illustrate a possible use of the pie chart. 1-2-3 automatically assigned a percentage figure to each segment of the pie and the data labels were modified from the simulation table. The image in Figure 27 appears as an oval because of the aspect ratio used by 1-2-3 to draw the circle. The pie would appear more circular if sent to a printer or plotter supported directly by 1-2-3 because 1-2-3 would then use the correct aspect ratio for the specific output device.





While this investigation focused on interfacing GPSS/PC with Lotus 1-2-3, the similar steps can also be done with other simulation software using .DIF. Data from the microcomputer version of SLAM II were also translated into a .WKS file from a SLAM II generated .DIF file. The SLAM MONTR statement was used to generate summary reports at the desired time intervals. Rather than go through a two step process from unformatted to formatted to .DIF file, SLAM gives the user a cnoice of a formatted report or a .DIF file output. The latter converts the unformatted summary file directly to a .DIF file. When this .DIF file is translated to a .WKS file it has the same data and format as the standard formatted report.

File Memory Required

REPORT.GPS635BytesBARSHOP.DIF15875BytesBARSHOP.WKS5305Bytes

Figure 28. GPSS/PC disk memory requirements

File

Memory Required

BARBR.TRA BARBR.OUT BARBR BARBR.DIF BARBR.WKS

91019 Bytes input translation 91019 Bytes execution 898 Bytes output 4269 Bytes 1479 Bytes

Figure 29. SLAM II disk memory requirements

Other differences were also noted between GPSS/PC and SLAM II which have some bearing on the usefulness of this technique on certain hardware configurations. SLAM has much greater intermediate disk memory requirements which became unwieldy with a number of intermediate data summaries. A comparison was made with a single server model for the same simulated time period which generated the files and data storage requirements of Figures 28 and 29. The same single server barbershop model on SLAM required substantially more disk memory requirements than GPSS/PC.

The large intermediate disk memory requirements make SLAM cumbersome to use on a microcomputer without a hard disk. GPSS/PC is able to perform the simulation directly from the source code without compiling an executable file like SLAM. Even with the two-step conversion from unformatted to formatted to .DIF file GPSS/PC uses less disk memory than SLAM II to accomplish the same simulation.

CONCLUSIONS

The techniques developed in this investigation show now Lotus 1-2-3 can be used as an effective means to graphically display simulation output. Although, pure animation was not possible, the semi-animated "snapshot" method developed may actually be more useful in certain situations.

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The snapshot method allows the analyst to focus management's attention on those times when significant critical conditions occur. The analyst is free to choose the desired time increment and could, theoretically, reach a nearly animated condition if the increment were small enougn. Use of the GPSS/PC PLOT statement can assist the analyst in determining critical time periods in the simulation. Frequent data summaries taken at intervals around the critical time periods could then be graphed on Lotus 1-2-3.

Lotus 1-2-3 macros make it easy for the analyst to develop a set of standard graphs which can be used over and over on similar simulation studies. A set of graphing macros could be developed for each of a series of problems being studied. Once the initial macros are developed it is relatively easy to adapt them to new problems with

additional queues or servers.

True animation was not possible because GPSS/PC does not have the statements to interface with storage devices and subroutines found in the main frame version of the language. GPSS/PC is only capable of writing an unformatted output file at the end of a simulation run using the standard output supplemented by user requested tables of SNA values or SAVEVALUES. This not only prevents the use of animated graphics, but may also limit the analyst's ability to develop a model which accurately reflects a unique situation outside the capability of GPSS/PC block statements.

Ail simulation projects require the involvement of management at some point. The more clearly management understands the benefits of the simulation results, the better chance necessary changes will be adopted. In other words, simulation analysts must sell the simulation results to the decision makers. Graphics are one method to enhance the selling of the simulation study. Without good salesmanship, the results of the best simulation study may not be understood or adopted by management.

The techniques developed in this study enable the

simulation modeler to get graphic output from a simulation model with minimum programming effort and cost. Lotus 1-2-3 offers the modeler the flexibility to choose from a number of different graphs and cnarts to present the results in a format best suited to the particular data. With some additional effort, the modeler can use 1-2-3 to draw flow diagrams or any other type of graphic the modeler requires. Use of Lotus 1-2-3 in conjuction with GPSS/PC makes it easy for the modeler to present simulation results in a readable and interesting format.

Further research could be done on this technique to develop a more generalized framework for graphic display of simulation data. Perhaps a system could be developed which would not require major changes to the display generation macros for each new simulation model. Another area for further study would be to assess the actual benefits of displaying simulation output data graphically versus the standard output. Additional work could be done to investigate the improvements made in Lotus 1-2-3 version 2. Regression analysis and other features have been added which could be of use in analyzing pre-simulation data from the workplace.

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While a project like this is generally the work of one person, it is, in fact, the result of the efforts of many people. I would like to thank Springer Cox and Minuteman Software wno made the entire project possible by donating the GPSS/PC package to the department. I would also like to thank Dr. Thomas A. Barta, my major professor, and committee members, Drs. Keith L. McRoberts and Arthur E. Oldehoeft, for their guidance and support throughout the project. My wife, Karla, and children, Karen and Stephanie, also have my gratitude for putting up with yet another move and changes in their lives so I could work on a second degree. Lastly, but most importantly, I would like to thank the United States Air Force for their faith in my ability and support in my return to academia after such a long absence.

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APPENDIX A

GPSS/PC STANDARD FORMATTED REPORT

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