

# RAL

## DESIGN & DISCOVERY

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**RUTHERFORD APPLETON LABORATORY**  
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL

## PROFS

### What is PROFS ?

IBM's **PROfessional OFFice System** - a combination of hardware and software components to be used in the office environment.

### Why Use it ?

To make routine office tasks more efficient and to handle information more easily.

### How is it used ?

**PROFS** runs on a mainframe computer with each user having access to a terminal or PC linked to the mainframe.



Figure 1. PROFS at work at RAL. A wide variety of users now have access to PROFS using PCs or terminals to link to the IBM mainframe.

### The Problem

In the past much time and effort was wasted in the office trying to arrange meetings by phone, analysing data, typing documents, making manual changes, photocopying, distributing mail etc.

**PROFS** provides a computer-based office system to help alleviate some of the problems of the standard office tasks. Anyone working at Rutherford or at the SERC headquarters in Swindon can use PROFS and is encouraged to do so, whatever their work function. The project has grown so that the population of 1000 registered PROFS users includes

senior managers, project managers, and administration and support staff.

### PROFS helps by:

1. handling management, administration, and technical information more efficiently,
2. reducing the need for paper mail and time spent on the telephone,
3. managing time - an expensive and valuable resource.
4. providing access to Decision Support systems such as databases, graphics and spread-sheets.



### How does PROFS do this?

1. Mail is sent electronically, both within SERC and externally, providing a quick and reliable method of sending and receiving notes and documents.
2. Received mail can be read, replied-to, forwarded to others, filed or erased.
3. Use of the note facility reduces the need for the telephone and does not require the recipient to be at their desk.
4. The diary manager keeps track of daily appointments and allows meetings to be arranged automatically, perhaps also scheduling conference rooms and items of equipment.
5. The document preparation facility enables documents to be written using a word-processing package, then edited, proofread, printed, circulated and stored. The ability to share documents stored in PROFS makes co-editing easier.
6. PROFS offers an efficient filing system allowing documents to be shared for ease of access. There is also a document search and retrieval facility which is quick and easy to use.
7. The links to other software packages from PROFS allow a user to analyse data and include the results in documents and/or file in PROFS. Links to PCs enable the use of PC-based applications such as graphics and spread-sheets including efficient transfer of data to and from the mainframe.

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PROFS (PROFESSIONAL OFFICE SYSTEM)  MAIN MENU  ADD
PRESS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PF KEYS.
PF1 PROCESS SCHEDULES  MENU 1  Time: 3:04 PM
PF2 OPEN THE MAIL
PF3 SEARCH FOR DOCUMENTS
PF4 PROCESS NOTES AND MESSAGES  1990  APRIL  1990
PF5 PREPARE DOCUMENTS           S M T W T F S
PF6 PROCESS DOCUMENTS FROM OTHER SOURCES  1 2 3 4 5 6 7
PF7 PROCESS THE MAIL LOG         8 9 10 11 12 13 14
PF8 CHECK THE OUTGOING MAIL      15 16 17 18 19 20 21
                                   22 23 24 25 26 27 28
                                   29 30
PF10 MAIN MENU NUMBER 2          Day of Year: 115
PF11 ADD AN AUTOMATIC REMINDER
5654-309 (C) COPYRIGHT IBM CORP. 1983, 1988  PF9 HELP  PF12 END
----- ANY PROBLEMS, RAL PHONE SERVICE LINE 6389, 50 PHONE 1123 -----

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Figure 2. An example of a PROFS menu allowing PF-key selection of options

### How does PROFS work?

PROFS is menu-driven with a choice of options on three main menus. An example of a PROFS menu is shown in Figure 2. You can select the option you want e.g. to look at your diary for the day by pressing the appropriate PF-key on your terminal. You can

also look at diaries belonging to other users. It is easy to choose what you want and PROFS provides help if you forget how to do it.

### What other facilities are available?

PROFS also provides access to other applications including graphics and spread-sheets. The menus include choices which will allow you to search main-frame databases containing a wide range of information e.g. Personnel and Accommodation data, Library, SERC grants, laboratory notices and so on.

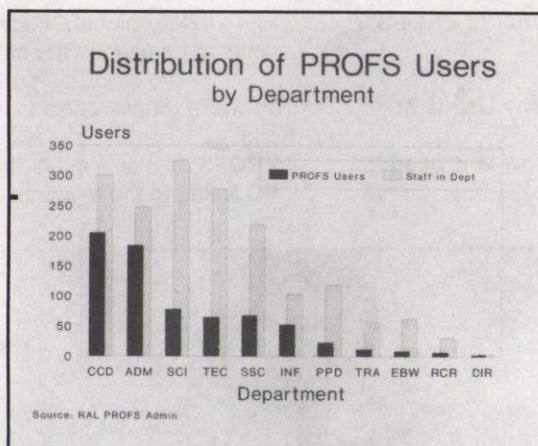


Figure 3. Data produced in PROFS can be exported to a PC and used in Harvard Graphics to produce high quality diagrams

### PROFS provides the complete service!

Information retrieved from databases may be included in documents prepared using PROFS. These documents can be edited or circulated for comments from colleagues using PROFS electronic mail, printed and finally stored in the PROFS filing system for reference or access by others.

### PROFS and desk-top publishing

This leaflet was prepared within PROFS. Text and graphics were produced on the PC using IBM's DW4 text-processor and Harvard Graphics, respectively. The layout involved the use of the desk-top publishing package Aldus Pagemaker.

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