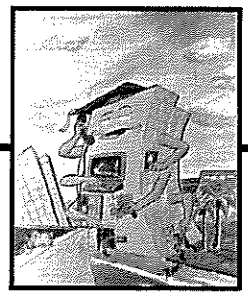
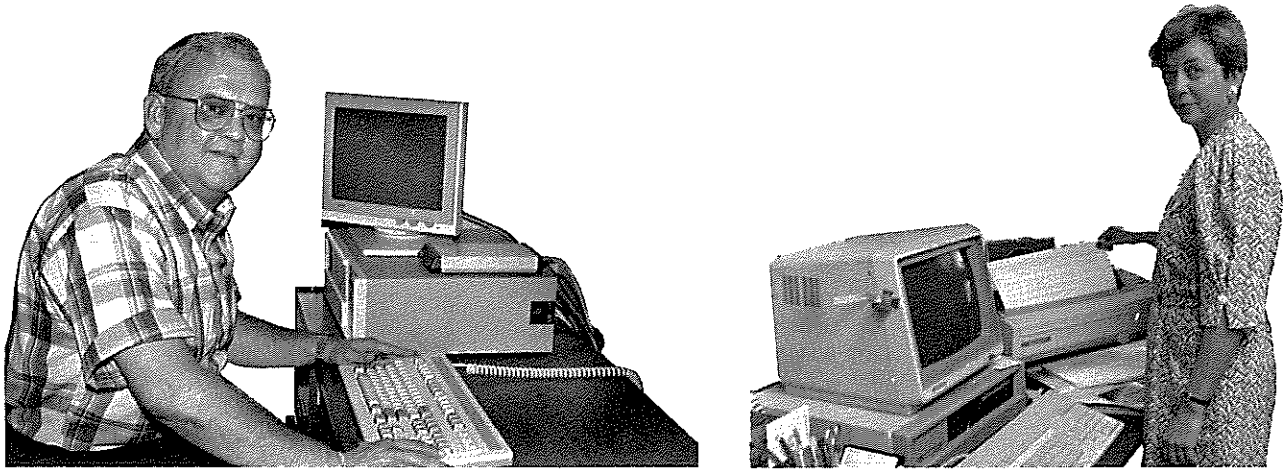




Max Worthy gave up his Rolodex for this computer, while Nancy Thomas manages more than 100 condo units with hers.

Adding Automation Ease to Property Management

by Diana Lomont

Managing properties can mean mountains of paperwork unless you have a computerized management system.

The investment in hardware and software eventually pays for itself when taking into account all the time saved from manual bookkeeping and tedious accounting. Typically, these systems can automatically bill tenants, issue maintenance work orders, print receipts for payments and run off checks for payroll.

Nancy Thomas, principal of Johnson Klark Inc./Thomas Properties manages more than 100 residential units in different buildings on the system she purchased in January – Yardi's Deluxe Property Management© program. The system is capable of handling 1,000 units, 1,300 tenants or 400 owners in up to 250 different buildings.

Thomas, who has used computers in property management for more than a decade, says a number of software programs are available for property management. The key is to find one that best handles the user's specific needs: commercial, retail, or residential.

"When I reviewed some of the programs," Thomas recalled, "I was looking for how the programs handled residential properties, and some of them that I reviewed did better handle commercial than residential.

"The program I'm using now handles commercial, and handles it okay, but it would not work for a very large office building."

Thomas and her staff of three use the computer on an almost daily basis for billing tenants, posting payments, generating late notices, and all other accounting tasks necessary to manage tenants.

Through her experience with property management software, Thomas has developed strong opinions about the essentials of a program. Some of the important features she thinks every system should have include:

- *Handling multiple tenants for one unit.* The program should be able to keep data on more than one tenant per unit. This, said Thomas, is necessary for keeping track of more than one tenant living in a unit, or a former tenant that still owes some money, and an incoming tenant.
- *Immediate posting.* This allows the user to input money received at any time and know the financial status of a tenant without having to wait until the end of a billing period.
- *Eraser capability.* A user should be able to go back and change an accounting entry (such as voiding a check) without a lot of trouble, while maintaining an audit trail.
- *Efficient posting.* If a tenant

Berkley Engineering is Proud to Announce that we are now the Master Distributor for

A-B QUALITY

ALLEN-BRADLEY
A ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL COMPANY

Technical Assistance, Pricing and Ordering:

Call Patrick Calabro for Motor Controls and General Industrial Controls
Call Ernest Lertola for Programmable Logic Controls
Call Mark Snyder for Variable Speed Drives and Controls

BERKLEY ENGINEERING
& EQUIPMENT CO., INC.
944 AKEPO LANE P.O. BOX 3856
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96812

A Computer is Only as Good as its Software . . .

And the best software is only as good as its support.

- Information systems planning, design & implementation
- Communications & networking
- Authorized dealer of software systems

Information Management Services is proud to be the exclusive distributor for LIBRA Software.

The LIBRA Property Management System handles the difficult and tedious paperwork for commercial and residential managers. LIBRA systems are used by owners/managers of apartments, office buildings, shopping centers, condominiums – just about any kind of property.

This system can stand alone, or can be integrated into the rest of LIBRA's accounting systems.

LIBRA
The Accountable Choice in Accounting Software.

Call for more information.

Information Management Services
1019 Waimanu Street • Suite 203A
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814 Telephone (808) 523-7833

sends in a check for all of his payments, the property manager should be able to simply enter the check amount and have the computer register that all of the charges are paid, or disperse the payment in order of priority.

- *Flexible billing scheduling.* A property manager should be able to bill his tenants, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, etc. and according to square footage or percentage of ownership.
- *Automatic assessment.* When a property manager must assess a charge, the program should automatically determine the share of each owner based on the percentage of ownership.
- *Future billing preprogramming.* A property manager should be able to preprogram future rent increases or other charges.
- *Maintenance scheduling.* The user should be able to program the system to remind him of regular maintenance scheduling or equipment purchases. Some programs will automatically generate a work order.
- *Tax forms.* The system should have the ability to generate all of the payroll tax forms required by the firm, including W-2, 1099, 941 and FICA forms.

Century Center's Special System

Max Worthy, president of Worthy Realty & Management, is proud to say that his property management system, specially designed in conjunction with Pacific Software of Honolulu, has most of the above features plus others.

Worthy uses the system – entitled Condo Manager© – at the 40-story mixed commercial/retail/residential Century Center complex in mid-Honolulu.

Condo Manager© was designed to meet the needs of the board of directors, the company's accountant, and a new submetering system supplied by Pacific Resources Inc. (see June *BMH*, pages 29-30).

With the partial donation of services by Pacific Software to develop the new program (which Pacific Software is now marketing), Worthy Realty & Management ended up paying just $1,000 more for the system than what PRI would have charged for its program that would have handled only the Intellimetering billing.

"This way," said Worthy, "we got everything we needed in one shot."

Worthy described the dramatic change in office management the new system afforded.

"Originally, down at the front desk, it looked like Rolodex heaven," he recalled. "There was a Rolodex for everything. There was one for tenants; there was one for parking stalls; there was one for security locks, ad infinitum."

Now, all that information is stored in the computer. It keeps track of the tenant, the owner, the size of the unit, assigned locker numbers, parking stalls, keys and other miscellaneous data. For mixed-use buildings like Century Center, it even records the zoning of each unit.

Century Center has a terminal at the front desk for access of this physical data by the resident manager. The resident manager does not have access to accounting data.

Mark Service, a Pacific Software consultant who helped design the program, illustrated how such data can come in handy on a day-to-day basis.

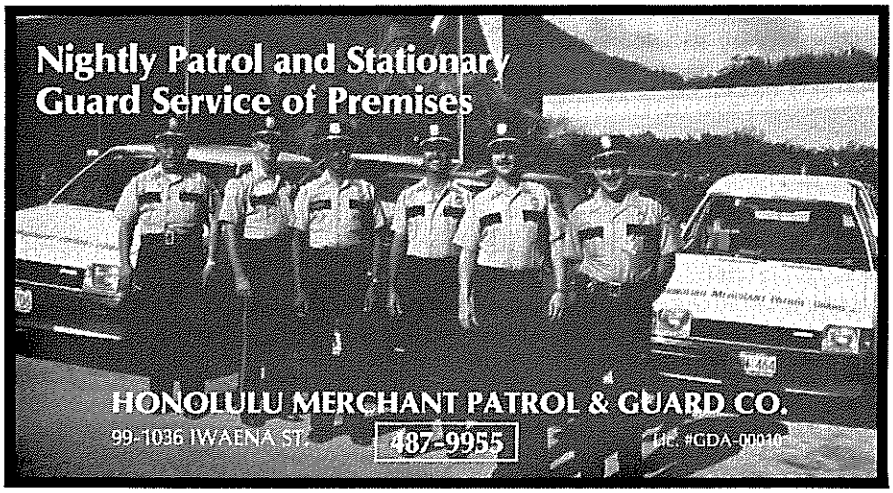
"An example might be somebody's parked in somebody else's parking stall," he explained. "And you don't want to tow a resident's car away without trying to find out who it is. So you can just type in the license number of the car, and it'll check to see if it belongs to a resident."

The units' square footage data are useful for balloting purposes, said Worthy, when tabulating the share each tenant's vote carries.

"Another nice thing, too, is when an owner lists a unit for sale and he doesn't remember all the original information – he can't find his original purchase agreement," said Worthy. "We used to have to go back to the HPR (Horizontal Property Regime laws) and dig out all the information on a unit. Now we just type it up on a screen."

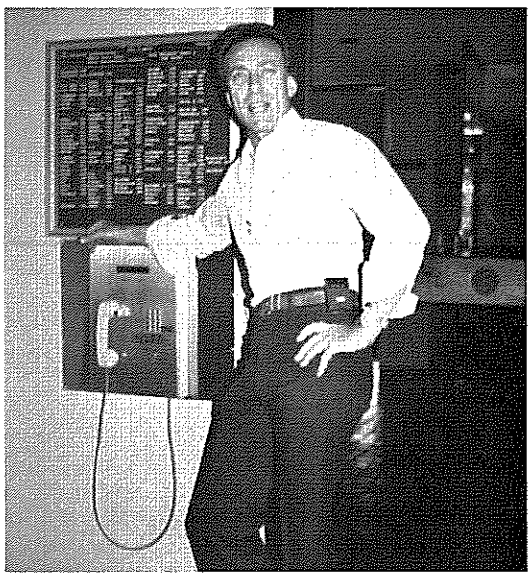
If Worthy sounds excited about the physical data the program keeps, he is equally appreciative of the many time-saving accounting functions the program has.

Take, for example, multiple billing. The program can keep track of billing an owner who pays the maintenance fees, a tenant who pays the electricity bill, and a bank that pays the lease rents. Information on a tenant's payment history can be kept for two



"Reynolds Security Alert provided us with a professional and very conscientious installation for our entry system.

The Sentex Entry System works very well and has required very little maintenance in the two years it has been in operation.



The few times we've had a problem Reynolds Security Alert responded immediately.

Overall, the Royal Iolani has benefited from our choice in the system and the contractor.

We are especially pleased with the marvelous savings over the previous leased system."

Mr. Jack Walter
General Manager
Royal Iolani Condominiums

Why rent? A Sentex System can pay for itself in as little as 6 months. All Sets available in handset or hands-free.

Sentex Systems work with rotary, tone and "Short Pulse". Battery pack not necessary to retain memory in a power outage.

Call **Reynold Security Alert** for a **free** estimate and a list of other satisfied customers.

Reynolds
Security Alert
(808) 262-2114

years.

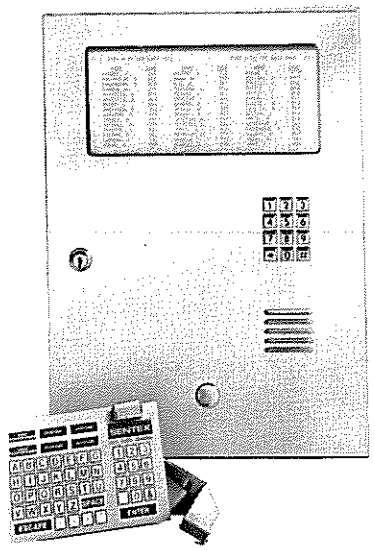
The program also makes it easier to bill for various amenities in the project, such as club dues for the athletic facilities, use of the bowling alley and in-house equipment purchases. All services used are itemized on the tenant's monthly statement.

Service pointed out how the system can even be useful at a board meeting. If association members want to know how much a large repair or maintenance project will cost the owners, the computer can produce a cost breakdown for each individual tenant.

One other feature specified by the management company's accountant, Janet Jensen, is to age the account receivables according to standard accounting practices.

"Most property management programs merely age the receivables by under 30 days or over 30 days," said Worthy. Century Center's system manages accounts in 30, 60, 90 days and over. □

THE INFINITY SYSTEM™



LIMITED ACCESS WITH UNLIMITED OPTIONS

Telephone Entry With Electronic Directory Combined with Unlimited Card Or Code Entry.

Now one system does it all. All the access control capability you could ever want, whether it is telephone, card or code entry is now available in one extremely powerful and flexible system.
With a built-in LCD electronic directory, names can be entered either locally or remotely, and are automatically alphabetized. No more long hours with letter kits or unnecessary trips to the site.
Each Infinity System also has two ports that will communicate with any standard serial printer, and transmit a record of all transactions that take place. Programming is simple and can be done from the unit or from a remote location.

For more information, call:

SENTEX

JOHN J. HARDING COMPANY LTD.
836-0941

2825 Ualena—Honolulu (near the airport)

LIC. # C-1480

OUR 40th YEAR of SERVICE to HAWAII

Property Management System Checklist

Following are a number of features every computerized property management system should include, according to recommendations by The Institute of Real Estate Management.

___ **User Manual.** Any software program should come with a manual explaining how to use the system and respond to error messages. The manual should be understandable to someone who is not a data processing professional. If the system was designed so that it could be run on more than one hardware make or model, the manual should include specific operating instructions for each system-compatible hardware environment.

___ **Technical Manual.** A separate technical manual should be provided, which explains how the program works, in overview and in detail, and how the interrelated programs interface with one another. The manual should include flow charts, file formats and sufficient information for an independent data processing professional to correct, maintain and revise the original programs.

___ **Security Documentation.** All instructions on the system's security procedures, including their implementation and use, and method of changing security passwords, should be isolated from the general user manual. This way, access to security information can be controlled.

___ **Program Backup.** The user should be provided with a backup copy of system programs when the system is installed and should be able to make a copy of the programs if needed.

___ **File Backup.** The system should provide for an automatic backup of all data files.

___ **Security Passwords.** System access should be controlled by a minimum of two levels of security passwords.