

VISIBILITY IN THE STAR USER INTERFACE

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ABSTRACT

The Xerox 8010 "Star" Information System is a personal computer designed for office professionals. It incorporates many innovations in human-computer interface design. In 1982 it was chosen by *Computing* magazine as the most "user friendly" system in the world. This talk will focus on one aspect of Star's user interface: its large bit-mapped graphical display. Star's display contains 800,000 dots, each of which can be individually turned on or off, at a 72 dot-per-inch resolution. Obviously this has considerable graphic potential. I will discuss how we have exploited this potential in Star and the methodology by which we did the design. In the process, we made a surprising discovery concerning the way human beings perceive visual user interfaces: if everything in a computer system is visible on a display screen, *the display becomes reality*.

KEYWORDS: user interface, bit-mapped display, office system.