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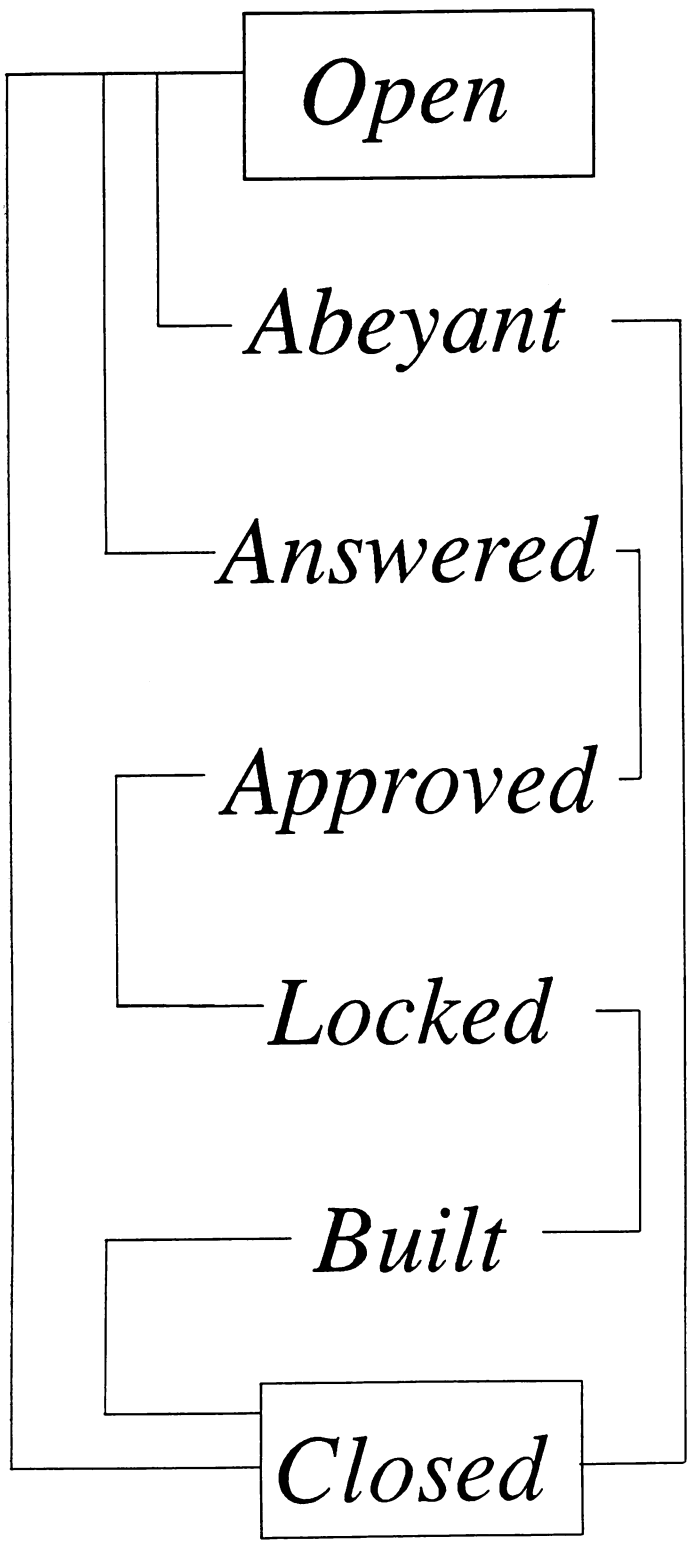
PTMs, PTRs and Other Creepy Crawlies



PTMs

I have heard many complaints against the "OPATS" system; that it's too bureaucratic, too complicated, and too unorganized. But when you consider the amount of work that needs to be done, and the number of people working on the system (there are 396 users listed for 1.2), you will see that it gets the job done fairly effectively. For those of you who are new and those of you who are not so new, but never really knew the details, here is a description of the OPATS system.

OS/2 bugs are currently kept in a database on a mainframe at IBM in Boca Raton, Florida. The mainframe is usually referred to as VM or PCV. I, and several other people, have direct lines to VM. The database is called OPATS — On-line PTM/APAR Tracking System. (APAR's are another kind of bug that we do not have to deal with). Each bug report is called a PTM — Program Trouble Memorandum. The PTM process consists of 7 tracking states. To describe them in a nutshell:

1) OPEN. Bug is discovered and entered into OPATS. It is automatically assigned to whoever is responsible for the component it is found in. This person may assign it to someone who is working on the component with him/her.

2) ABEYANT. If the assignee has insufficient data to evaluate the PTM, it is put into abeyance. When the submittor sends the evaluator the information, he (the submittor) then opens the PTM out of abeyance. Sometimes, PTMs are put into abeyance if another PTM has to be fixed before the first PTM can be fixed.

3) ANSWERED. There are basically two kinds of answers. The first kind involves a source code change (closing code: PER). A non-source code change has several varieties: UNReproducible, REJected, USEr error, Temporary Restriction (TRS), Permanent Restriction (PRS), fixed by another PTM fix (UR1). If the PTM answer does not involve a code change, the submittor can agree and close the ptm, or he/she can REOPEN it with a rebuttal as to why it should still be fixed. If the PTM answer does require a code change, the evaluator makes the delta and then the PTM is

4) APPROVED by the build group and then

5) LOCKED for the next build.

6) BUILT indicates that the problem's solution has been built in a build library.

7) CLOSED. The submittor tests to make sure that the problem has been solved satisfactorily, and then closes the PTM. If it has not, then the PTM is closed as TESTED BAD, and a new ptm is opened.

PTMs are bugs in the system. DCRs are Design Change Requests. These are processed through OPATS much the same way as PTMs. However, all DCRs are reviewed by the Design Review Team (DRT) in Boca. If a Microsoft developer submits DCRS, he must be represented at the meeting. Either in person, or by phone.

If you have any questions about how to submit a PTM or DCR, you can ask your supervisor, me, or someone else who has already submitted some.

	DCRs	PTMs	PTMs Requiring code change
1.0	727	13,379	6,127
1.1 *	143	3,091	2,060
1.2 *	79	1,241	938

*To Date

***PTMs** are entered into OPATS to report bugs against the OS/2 BASE. **PTRs** are entered into IDSS to report bugs against PRESENTATION MANAGER.*

PTRs

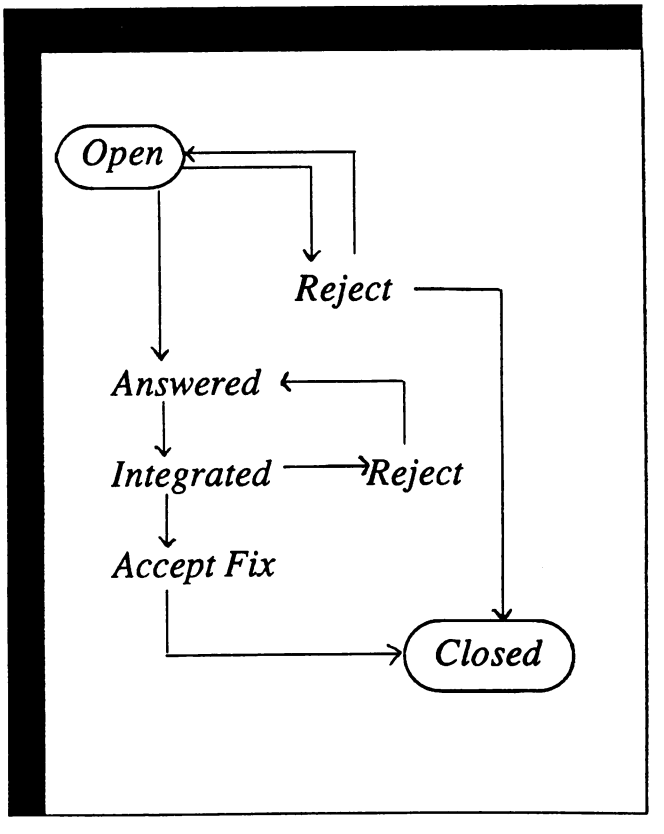
by Sara Owen

PTRS are submitted by IBM and Microsoft against a particular component and the system assigns it to a specific person. However, anyone working on the component may respond to the PTR. The first response to a PTR is to answer it. This may indicate that there is a real bug and code was changed to fix the problem. It might also describe the error the submittor made, or requests additional information. Now the submittor gets the opportunity to accept or reject the answer. If the PTR is accepted, it is closed and we are finished with it. If the PTR is rejected, the submittor returns it to the answerer with additional information.

Before anyone can submit PTRs, they must have an id set up on IDSS. Pertinent information - name, user id and phone are sent to me, and I take care of getting people set up. PTR transactions are entered in a file for transmission to Boca using the PTR program. This is a screen oriented program complete with help for each step. It was developed by Rick Dill. The transations are automatically sent to Boca every two hours to be entered into the IDSS data base. Files for the PTRs which have changed since the last transmission are downloaded at this same time.

Once a day we download summary files for active and closed PTRs. These summary files are used to make the reports and charts we use to keep track of our progress. It's from these summary files that the reminder mail is generated for each person with PTRs to respond to.

PTR FLOW CHART



Thanks to the Assistants

One of the best ways to get excercise around here is to try to chase down one of the Group Assistants or Administrative Assistants! Each of them has alot of work to do for the hundred or so of us in the OS/2 JDA Group.

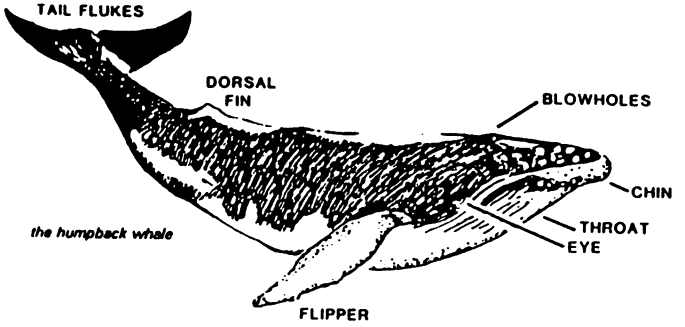
DEBBIE HILL has been Steve Ballmer's AA for just over 5 years. What she likes best about the job is the variety. It is never dull, always changing. Debbie has 2 beautiful daughters. She enjoys working in the yard and refinishing furniture.

KIM BURT has worked here almost five years as a System Group Assistant. What she likes best about her job is the PEOPLE she gets to work with. Kim's hobbies are badminton, cooking, and her kid and her dog. She would like to learn more about APPS and learn BASIC (in fact, I just now found out that Kim will be moving to APPS! We'll miss you!).

ESTHER DEKKER has been at Microsoft for over 3 1/2 years. She was a receptionist and the Switch Board Supervisor before she became Peter Neupert's AA. Esther is also a semi-professional studio musician. You can hear her voice in various commercials and albums. Sometimes her job reminds her of the TV sit-com "I Dream of Jeannie" at those times when everything goes wrong.

MARINA PIERCE has been working here since February 1 of this year. Before this job, she worked at Harbor View Hospital as a receptionist (so she has lots of experience with sick people breathing on her!). She has a degree in Speech and Communications from the University of Washington. Her hobbies are excercising and aerobics.
The best part of her job is the variety of people. To best help her to help you, just remember that her two favorite words are "PLAN AHEAD"!

MORE ON HAWAII



the humpback whale

THE HUMPBACKS OF MAUI

Humpbacks are named from their style of exposing the dorsal fin when they dive, which gives them a humped appearance. Between 7000 and 8000 humpback whales are alive today, down from an estimated 100,000 at the turn of the century. The remaining whales are divided into three separate global populations: North Atlantic, North Pacific, and South Pacific groups. About 500 North Pacific humpbacks migrate from coastal Alaska starting in November. They reach their peak in February, congregating mostly in the waters off Maui, with a smaller group heading for the waters off Kona on Hawaii. An adult humpback is 45 feet long and weighs in at a svelte 40 tons (80,000 pounds). They come to Hawaii mainly to give birth to single 2000-pound, relatively blubberless calves. Females nurse these young for about one year and become impregnated again the next. While in Hawaiian waters humpbacks generally don't eat, but wait until returning to Alaska where they gorge themselves on krill. It's estimated that they can live off their blubber without peril for six months. An enormous mouth stretching ⅓ the length of their bodies is filled with over 600 rows of baleen, a prickly, fingernail-like substance. Humpbacks have been known to blow air under water, creating giant bubble-nets that help to corral krill, then rush in with mouth agape and dine on their catch.

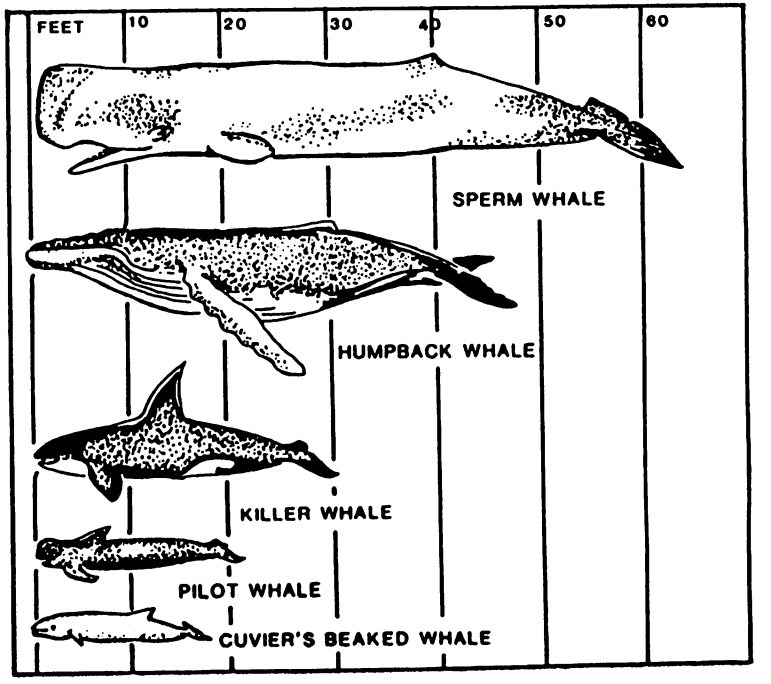
Like all cetaceans they breathe consciously, not involuntarily the way humans do; like other baleen whales they feed in relatively shallow waters and therefore sound (dive) for periods lasting a maximum of about 15 minutes. In comparison, a sperm whale (toothed bottom-feeder) can stay down for over an hour. On the surface, a humpback will breathe about once every two minutes and will sometimes sleep on the surface or just below it for two hours. A distinctive feature of the humpback is the 15-foot flipper which it can bend over its back. The flippers and tail flukes have white markings that always differ between individuals and are used to recognize the humpbacks from year to year. The humpback is the most aquabatic of all whales and it is a thrilling sight to see one of these playful giants leap from the water and create a monumental splash.

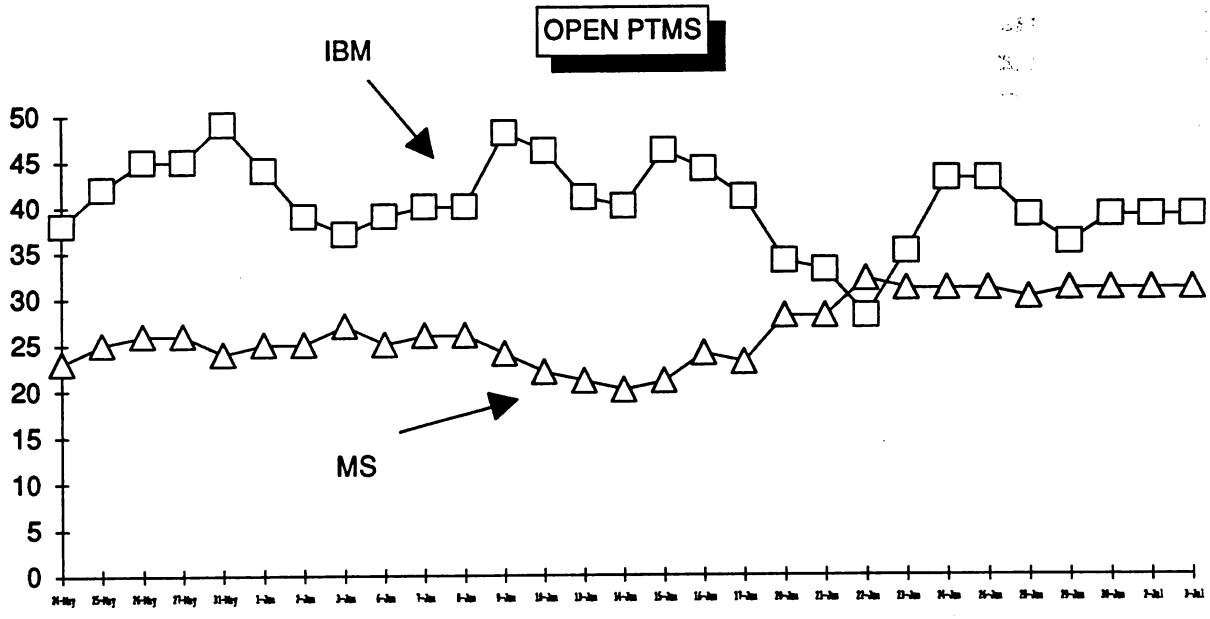
The humpback's song

All whales are fascinating, but the humpbacks have a special ability to sing unlike any others. They create their melodies by grunting, shrieking and moaning. No one knows exactly what the songs represent, but it's clear they're a definite form of communication. The singers appear to be "escort males" that tag along with, and seem to guard, a mother and her calf. The songs are exact renditions that last 20 minutes or more and are repeated over and over again for hours. Amazingly, all the whales know and sing the same song, and the song changes from year to year. The notes are so forceful that they can be heard above and below the water for miles. Some of the deep base notes will even carry underwater for 100 miles! Scientists devote careers to recording and listening to the humpbacks' songs. As yet they're unexplained, but anyone who hears their eerie tones knows that he is privy to a wonderful secret and that the songs are somehow a key to understanding the consciousness of the great humpback.

The Bark *Carthaginian II*

Just to the right of the Loading Dock in Lahaina Harbor is a restored 19th C. square-masted ship, the *Carthaginian*. It's a floating museum dedicated to whales and whaling and features an excellent audio-visual display narrated by actor Richard Widmark. The *Carthaginian* ($2) is open daily 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., but to enjoy the entire display allow at least an hour. As you descend into the hold of the ship and bright sunlight fades to cool shadow, you become a visitor into a watery world of the humpback whale. The haunting, mysterious "songs" of the humpback provide the background music and set the mood. Sit on comfortable captain's chairs and watch the display. The excellent photos of whales are by Flip Nicklin, courtesy of the National Geographic Society. The *Carthaginian* is a project of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation, P.O. Box 338, Lahaina, HI 96761 (tel. 661-3262). The Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to educational and historical restoration in Lahaina.

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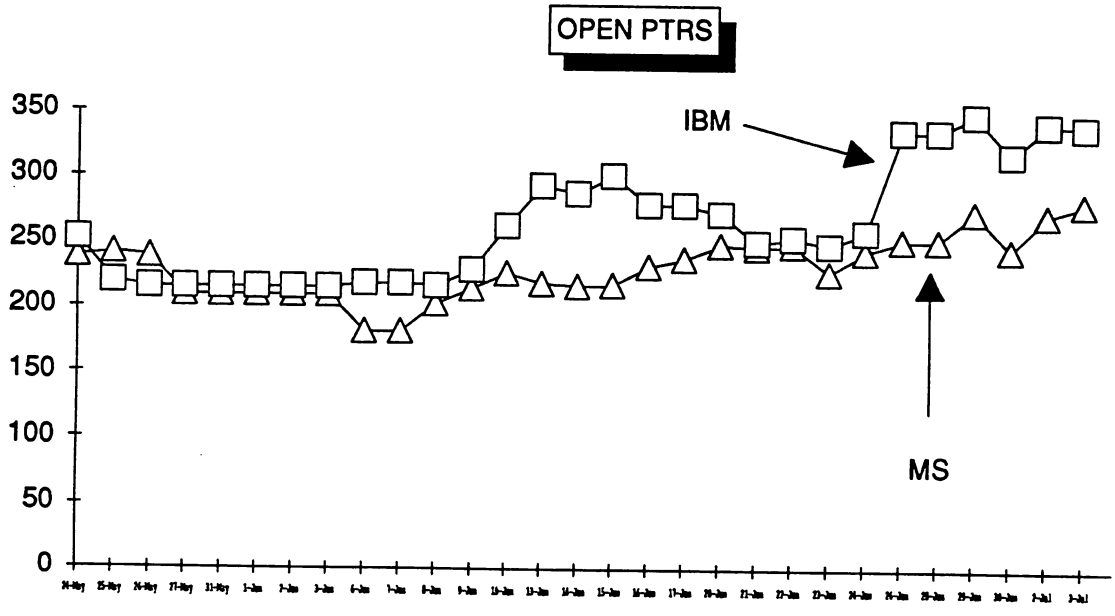
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