

EDTASM and VCC: A Usage Note

By M. David Johnson

2021/09/29

Abstract: Using a screen editor with EDTASM and VCC is shown to be a useful combination.

=====

Since Version 2.0.1b (November 2020), the VCC CoCo 3 Emulator has included a “Copy/Paste” Edit menu (Pierce, Change Log, np#).

The manual says, “Paste Text – Click this item will paste any raw data in your PC’s clipboard onto your VCC’s screen as if you typed it in. Good for command line entries and works well in most text editor. This function does not work well pasting BASIC listings, see below.” (Pierce, Edit Menu, np#).

That section then continues; describing the “Paste BASIC Code (Merge)” and “Paste BASIC Code (with NEW)” as superior options for pasting BASIC listings.

What some may have missed is that the “Paste Text” feature can actually be used to easily paste code from your clipboard into Disk EDTASM’s editor’s input mode.

I know I missed it. And I just finished typing in about 150 pages of code without taking advantage of this capability. (sigh!)

I’ve always liked Disk EDTASM and I pretty-much use it exclusively for writing CoCo Assembly Code. But its line-oriented editor is noticeably cumbersome in this modern era dominated by screen-oriented editors. Even NotePad is more powerful! (Yes, I know, I could graduate to NitroS-9. Bah! Humbug! — Really though - I do most of what I do on and for the 64K CoCo 2 even when I do it in VCC).

Consider the following piece of Assembly Code, just as I typed it into EDTASM:

```
00100 * TEXTPAD.ASM
00110 * MDJ 2021/09/15
00120 * FORMAT EXAM
00130          ORG      $7000      COMMENT
00140 TXTPAD   PSHS      A          DOES THIS WORK?
00150          LDA      #$00
00160          PULS      A
00170          RTS              FINISHED
00180          END
```

When you first start EDTASM, it brings up its editor and presents you with an “*” prompt. If you respond with “I”, the editor enters its input mode, automatically providing you with line numbers as you go along.

You then enter your code line-by-line. If you make a mistake or want to change something, you have to get out of input mode and go into editing mode by responding to the new “*” prompt with an “E” followed by the line number you wish to change.

To enter new lines in between existing lines, you respond to “*” with “I” plus the new line number and the line number increment you want to use. If you run out of space between existing lines, you have to renumber the program using something like “N100,10”.

AAAAARRRRGH !!!

I use TextPad (just a little fancier Notepad with a few more bells and whistles) and I’ve always thought it’d be neat to be able to prepare Assembly Code that way instead of line-by-line.

Getting a break in some other stuff, I just today tried writing the same code as above in TextPad and then pasting it into EDTASM in VCC right after the editor’s “I” prompt.

Well, EDTASM took the code in, but what I wound up with was:

```
00100 00100 * TEXTPAD.ASM
00110 00110 * MDJ 2021/09/15
00120 00120 * FORMAT EXAM
00130 00130          ORG      $7000  COMMENT
00140 00140 TXTPAD  PSHS     A       DOES THIS WORK?
00150 00150          LDA     #$00
00160 00160          PULS    A
00170 00170          RTS
00180 00180          END          FINISHED
```

So, I tried entering the code into TextPad without line numbers, like this:

```
* TEXTPAD.ASM
* MDJ 2021/09/15
* FORMAT EXAM
      ORG      $7000    COMMENT
TXTPAD PSHS    A        DOES THIS WORK?
      LDA      #$00
      PULS    A
      RTS                      FINISHED
      END
```

Not only did EDTASM take it in, properly numbering all the lines automatically; the program assembled properly without a single burp!

Try it Mikey! You'll like it!

A few format notes:

1. EDTASM uses four fields: label, command, operand, and comment.
2. Maximum line length is 127 characters.
3. Maximum Label length is six characters.
4. Any line beginning with an "*" is an all-comment line.
5. Except for the Comment field, EDTASM formats the fields as 8-characters wide, left justified, right-padded with spaces (\$20).

I like to follow that field formatting because it looks neat and well-organized. But, in fact, this layout performs just as perfectly:

```
* TEXTPD2.ASM
* MDJ 2021/09/15
* FORMAT EXAM
  ORG $7000 COMMENT
TXTPAD PSHS A DOES THIS WORK?
  LDA #$00
  PULS A
  RTS FINISHED
  END
```

Comments and labels should begin at the first position on the line. All other lines must begin no further left than the second position. There must be at least one space (\$20) between fields.

For further details, consult the EDTASM manual.

M.D.J. 2021/09/29
info@bds-soft.com

Works Cited:

Microsoft. Disk EDTASM+ 01.00.00. Fort Worth, TX: Radio Shack, 1983. Print.

Pierce, Bill. "VCC." TRS-80 Color Computer Archive.

<https://colorcomputerarchive.com/repo/Emulators/Coco%203/Vcc/> , Web. Last Accessed: 2021/09/15.

=====

END