HOW BIG IS CP/M ON THE MIRAGE SYSTEM?

As you read through catalogues of CP/M software, you have probably seen notes such as: "Requires 56K CP/M 2.2" or "Requires 48k CP/M". What does this mean to the MIRAGE user? Each MIRAGE user's CP/M system includes 64KB of memory. Does this mean that you are running "64K CP/M"?

The "size" of a particular CP/M system originally referred to the total amount of memory available for both the memory resident portion of CP/M and user programs. In the early days of CP/M, the memory resident portion of CP/M only needed to support one or two floppy disk drives. Therefore, a "64K" system set aside about 5K of memory for the system itself, leaving about 59K for user programs.

As the capacity of disk drives grows, more buffer space must be set aside to support those disks. The MIRAGE CP/M system supports four "virtural" drives of up to 8 megabytes each, as well as an external physical floppy drive. This requires additional buffer space, so the CP/M system on MIRAGE is, in fact, a "60K" system, with about 55K available for user programs.

This does NOT mean that MIRAGE is running only a "55K" system. A "56K" system, of which the Apple II computer with the MicroSoft SoftCard is an example, has only about 51K available for user programs. The MIRAGE system, as we said above, is a "60K" system. We have not encountered any common CP/M programs (including programs like WordStar, dBASE II, Multiplan, etc.) which won't run on the MIRAGE system due to lack of memory.

For the more technical reader, the base address of BDOS is:

DC06 (hex) Revision 1.20 60k system

* This Application Note replaces note #02 dated 3 August 1983.