Occasionally we get a question on the helpline that proves difficult even for the Quanta seasoned veterans, however, there is always a way... (ed)

Q) Please give the procedure for converting Abacus files under Psion 4 (DOS) to Abacus files running on QL (QDOS) and QPC2.

A) I wasn't sure of the answer to this one so I asked for help on the QL users mailing list and the following people contributed suggested answers, to whom I am very grateful.

Bryan Horstmann:
As I understand it the Export command will only transfer the data, not the formulae. I was told long ago to zip the file, change format and then unzip but I haven't actually done that myself.

François Van Emelen:
Yes, only data can be transfered.
I use F(files) T(transfer) S(save) D(for 'dif' files) R(by rows).
On the QL I use the same method (S(save is of course replaced the L(load))

Bob Spelten:
Xchange for PC and QL both have the Transfer command (F3/Files), for moving data between Abacus's on different machines.
This process can keep formula & data intact, unlike export.
The help pages don't mention the "other" system but it should be worth a try.
If Psion 4 doesn't have this option, an upgrade to Xchange may be needed.

Dave Walker:
My TextTidy software can be used to convert files between the DOS and QDOS Abacus formats. This then needs to be used with appropriate transfer software (e.g. DiscOver) to get the files from QDOS to DOS if not running an emulator that can do this directly.

Timothy Swenson:

I created a test spreadsheet using the Psion Abacus for DOS. I saved the file as a transfer file (.abt). Changed the extension to _abt, and moved it onto a directory that Q-emulator has access to. I got into Xchange and Abacus. I loaded the file via the transfer option in the Files menu (as type psion not dif) and the spreadsheet loaded up just fine. The formulas were retained. Just for the record, I use DOSbox to run the DOS version of Abacus.