

Introduction to XEDIT

James Vincent
July 2026

- XEDIT – what is it
- The XEDIT screen
- Basic usage

XEDIT is the editor for z/VM

- In order to be productive, you need to know XEDIT

Extremely powerful, (almost) infinitely tailorable

- Macros allow subcommand/function extensions

Few users fully exploit XEDIT

- *But that is okay!*

Note, editor choice is a preference usually

- But XEDIT is the best one... 😊

XEDIT fname ftype fmode (options...

- XEDIT PROFILE EXEC
 - Filemode omitted – searches for file; if not found A is used for new file
 - Options are... Optional

X is the easy, short form

- X PROFILE EXEC

Don't like XEDIT or X?

- HELP SYNONYM
- Learn REXX and build your own command

Default XEDIT Screen

```
PROFILE EXEC      A2  V 130  Trunc=130 Size=372 Line=15 Col=1 Alt=0                                07:32:44

===== * * * Top of File * * *
===== /*
===== /* Common file to be used on ALL LPARS
===== /*
===== /* ** Update on the SHAREDTOOLS directory ONLY **
===== /*
===== Address 'COMMAND'
===== Arg processopt otheropts
===== If processopt = 'LOADEXEC' Then
=====   Call LoadExecs
=====
===== Call Diag 8,'SPOOL CONS START TO * CLASS C NAME' Userid() 'CONSOLE'
===== Call Diag 8,'DETACH 1CF0 2CF0 3CF0 4CF0'
=====
===== isJames = (Userid() = 'JAMES')
===== isJames2 = (Userid() = 'JSVDEV')
===== |...+...1...+...2...+...3...+...4...+...5...+...6...+...7...+...8...+...9...+...10...+...11...+...12...+...1>
=====
===== /* Get the parms passed to SYSPROF */
===== Call CSL 'DMSCALLR RC callee 2'
===== If rc = 0 Then
=====   Do
=====     Parse Var callee e1 e2 .
=====     If e1 e2 = 'EXEC SYSPROF' Then
=====       Do
=====         'PIPE VAR INSPARMS 1 | VAR INSPARMS'
=====         Say 'CP IPL Parms were:' insparms
=====       End
=====     End
=====   End
=====
===== Parse Value '1 1 1 1 0' With savecons lcltools webcal checkwebserve clock
===== 'PIPE (NAME PROFILE:235 ENDCHAR ?)',
===== 'FILEFAST PROFILE SETUP A',
===== 'STRIP',
===== 'LOCATE 1',
===== 'NFIND /*',
===== 'STEM SETUP.'
===== Do i = 1 to setup.0
=====
=====>
```

X E D I T 1 File

Personalized XEDIT Screen

```
PROFILE EXEC      A2  V 255  Trunc=255 Size=372 Line=0 Col=1 Alt=0      13:Var 14:Unline 15:Then 16:Pipe 17:Do 18:Comment      08:26:24
==>
|...+...1...+...2...+...3...+...4...+...5...+...6...+...7...+...8...+...9...+...10...+...11...+...12...+...13...
00000 * * * Top of File * * *
00001 /*
00002 /* Common file to be used on ALL LPARS
00003 /*
00004 /* ** Update on the SHAREDTOOLS directory ONLY **
00005 /*
00006 Address 'COMMAND'
00007 Arg processopt otheropts
00008 If processopt = 'LOADEXEC' Then
00009     Call LoadExecs
00010
00011 Call Diag 8,'SPOOL CONS START TO * CLASS C NAME' Userid() 'CONSOLE'
00012 Call Diag 8,'DETACH 1CF0 2CF0 3CF0 4CF0'
00013
00014 isJames = (Userid() = 'JAMES')
00015 isJames2 = (Userid() = 'JSVDEV')
00016
00017 /* Get the parms passed to SYSPROF */
00018 Call CSL 'DMSCALLR RC callee 2'
00019 If rc = 0 Then
00020     Do
00021         Parse Var callee e1 e2 .
00022         If e1 e2 = 'EXEC SYSPROF' Then
00023             Do
00024                 'PIPE VAR INSPARMS 1 | VAR INSPARMS'
00025                 Say 'CP IPL Parms were:' insparms
00026             End
00027         End
00028
00029 Parse Value '1 1 1 1 0' With savecons lcltools webcal checkwebserve clock
00030 'PIPE (NAME PROFILE:235 ENDCHAR ?)',
00031     ' FILEFAST PROFILE SETUP A',
00032     ' STRIP',
00033     ' LOCATE 1',
00034     ' NFIND /*',
00035     ' STEM SETUP.'
00036 Do i = 1 to setup.0
00037     Interpret setup.i
00038 End
00039
00040 say '-'
00041 'CP TERMINAL MODE VM'
00042 'CP SET DATEFORMAT ISODATE'
00043 'CP SET CPCONIO OFF'
00044 'CP SET EMSG ON'
```

Cursor location will matter

- Entering data into the file / lines
- Entering a command on the command line
- Entering prefix commands
- etc...

SAVE & QUIT do exactly that

FILE command is a synonym for SAVE + QUIT

If FILE, SAVE or QUIT is *really* what you want, but you got an error:

- DMSXCT594E File SOME FILE A1 already exists or changed; use FFILE or SSAVE
- DMSXSU577E File has been changed; type QQUIT to quit anyway

Double the first letter and try again!

- FFILE, SSAVE or QQUIT

QQ is short for QQUIT

- Quit without saving – get me outta here!

And “FF” for FFILE and “SS” for SSave

FOrward (F8) or BAcKward (F7)

TOP

- Move to line zero (top of file, not 'first line')

Bottom

- Move to the bottom of file

(any number)

- Move down that many lines (positive) or up that many (negative, ie -7)

/ (in prefix area)

- Bring that line to the current line

:# (colon + number)

- Go to that specific line number (ie, :10)

LEFT

- Move left a number of columns
 - LEFT 0 resets

RIGHT

- Move right a number of columns
 - RIGHT 0 resets

You can XEDIT multiple files at once

- Use "XEDIT fn ft fm" on the XEDIT command line

X or XEDIT will round-robin forward through the ring

- Macro: XP (shows you the PREVIOUS file)

QUERY RING will show you what files you have

CANCEL quits all unmodified files in the ring

```
/* Go backwards in the XEDIT ring */  
Address 'XEDIT'  
'EXTRACT /RING/'  
last = ring.1 + 1  
Parse Value ring.last With fn ft fm  
'XEDIT' fn ft fm  
Exit
```

SET SCREEN will allow viewing multiple files at once

- SET SCREEN 2 Horizontal (horizontal view)
- SET SCREEN 2 Vertical (vertical view)
- Combinations of both

Macro: ATSCR XEDIT

- Splits the screen at the cursor location

```
/* Set the SCREEN for multiple sessions at the cursor loc */  
Address 'XEDIT'  
Arg hv .  
'EXTRACT /CURSOR/LSCREEN'  
If hv = '' | Abbrev('HORIZONTAL',hv,1) Then  
    resize = 'SIZE' cursor.1 lscreen.5-cursor.1  
Else  
    resize = 'WIDTH' cursor.2 lscreen.6-cursor.2  
'SET SCREEN' resize  
Exit
```

/string...

- Locates the string entered on the command line after the /

ALL /string/

- Show any lines with that string

CHANGE /this/that/ * *

- Replaces text – see HELP XEDIT CHANGE

GET fn ft fm

- Reads the specified file and inserts the contents after the current line

STATUS Command

```
APL OFF
ARBCHAR OFF $
AUTOSAVE 20 A
BFSLINE NL
CASE MIXED IGNORE
CMDLINE TOP
COLPTR OFF
CURLINE ON 4
DISPLAY 0 0
ESCAPE OFF /
ETMODE OFF
FILLER
FMODE A5
FNAME PROFILE
FTYPE XEDIT
FULLREAD ON
HEX OFF

IMAGE OFF
IMPCMSCP ON
LINEND ON #
LRECL 307
MACRO OFF
MSGLINE ON 3 20 OVERLAY
MSGMODE ON LONG
NAMETYPE CMS
NONDISP ;
NULLS ON
NUMBER ON
PACK OFF
PREFIX ON LEFT
RANGE :1 :600
RECFM V
REMOTE OFF
SCALE ON 3

SCOPE DISPLAY
SERIAL OFF 10 10
SHADOW OFF
SPAN OFF BLANK 2
SPILL OFF
STAY ON
STREAM ON
SYNONYM ON
TABLINE OFF -3
TERMINAL DISPLAY
TEXT OFF
TOFEOF ON
TRUNC 307
VARBLANK OFF
WRAP OFF
ZONE 1 307

SCREEN SIZE 48
MASK
TABS 1 4 7 10 13 16 19 22 25 31 37 43 49 55 79 80
VERIFY OFF 1 307
CTLCHAR OFF
COLOR ARROW      DEFAULT NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR CMDLINE    GREEN NONE NOHIGH PS0
COLOR CURLINE    RED NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR FILEAREA   GREEN NONE NOHIGH PS0
COLOR IDLINE     DEFAULT NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR MSGLINE    WHITE REVVIDEO HIGH PS0
COLOR PENDING    RED NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR PREFIX     BLUE NONE NOHIGH PS0
COLOR SCALE      BLUE NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR SHADOW     YELLOW NONE NOHIGH PS0
COLOR STATAREA   DEFAULT NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR TABLINE    DEFAULT NONE HIGH PS0
COLOR TOFEOF     RED NONE NOHIGH PS0
PNAME
```

QUERY option

- Shows you XEDIT setting/environment values
- ie, QUERY RING shows you what you the XEDIT ring – all files being XEDIT'd

SET option

- Allows you change XEDIT settings

There are TONS of options!

Use HELP XEDIT MENU to learn more

What is the shortest form of the XEDIT command?

Answer: **X**

What is the command to change characters in the file?

Answer: **CHANGE**

The *Prefix Area* (==== or line numbers) accepts many commands

- d Delete current line (follow with number for more)
- m Move current line
- c Copy current line
- f Following this line (for move/copy)
- p Preceding this line (for move/copy)
- i Insert (follow with a number of lines, default 1)
- si Structured insert; allows you to insert many lines
- Select ranges with **dd**, **mm**, or **cc** at first and last line to delete/move/copy a block of lines

Press ENTER to activate the prefix commands you have typed

Use RESET command to clear pending prefix commands

INPUT on command line

- Allows you to keep typing new text
- ENTER key gives you more input space (new line)
- ENTER on an empty line exits input mode
 - Type at least one space for a blank line

SI in the prefix area will do something similar to INPUT, but lets you see the rest of the file too (SUPER useful!)

FILE/SAVE as another File

FILE and SAVE allow you to save the content of the file to another file

- FILE fn ft fm
- SAVE fn ft fm

You can set *names* to different areas within your file

- Type *.here* in prefix area to name that line "here"
 - *.here* on the command line will take you to that line
- Can be used as a target too: `CHANGE /this/that/ .here`
- If you delete the line that was named, that name is gone
- **QUERY POINT ***
 - Shows you all the named lines
- **SET POINT *.here* OFF**
 - Turns off *.here* named line

Contains customizations for your XEDIT session, usually in REXX code

- The default on a new z/VM system is no PROFILE – you get the defaults for all settings

An example PROFILE XEDIT:

```
/* Sample XEDIT profile */  
'SET NUM ON'  
'SET NULLS ON'  
'SET CASE MIXED IGNORE'  
'SET PREF ON RIGHT'  
'SET CMDLINE TOP'  
'SET MSGLINE ON 3'  
'SET SCALE ON 4'  
...etc...
```

LOCATE subcommands can be chained

Another subcommand can be used after a LOCATE

- If locate succeeds, then the subcommand is executed
- If locate fails, the subcommand is ignored

Example: `/this/&/that/ 2 c/what/where/`

- Locates a line that has "this" and "that",
moves down 2 lines and changes string "what" to "where" on that line

REPEAT *

- Repeats the last command until the end-of-file

SET CASE controls how data is entered and searching

The defaults: Mixed or Upper is based on file type and RESPECT
SET CASE MIXED IGNORE is usually best

- MIXED – allows mixed-case data in file
- IGNORE – searching is case independent

Converting lines to upper or lower case

- UPPER * or UPPER # (ie, UPPER 10 to uppercase 10 lines)
- LOWER * or LOWER # (ie, LOWER 10 to lowercase 10 lines)
- Text between the ZONE columns is changed
- Useful if SET CASE UPPER is set and entire line(s) get upper-cased

Files can be **FIXED** or **VARIABLE** length records

- On the file info line, you will see F or V
 - Or FILELIST / LISTFILE will show you the RECFM
- SET RECFM F or V will change the record format

Changing the LRECL of **VARIABLE** length files

- XEDIT fn ft fm (WIDTH nnnnn

Changing the LRECL of **FIXED** length files

- XEDIT fn ft fm (WIDTH nnnn
- SET LRECL nnnn
- SET TRUNC nnnn
- SET ZONE 1 *
- SET VERIFY 1 * or SET VERIFY 1 nnnn

Easier: **COPYFILE** fn ft fm (LRECL nnnn RECFM F|V

Other Useful Commands

SET ZONE	(defines columns for targets)
SET VERIFY	(how much to see on each line)
SET PREFIX	(turn on/off the prefix area)
SET NUMBER	(turn line numbers on/off)
SET COLOR	(change colors for areas of XEDIT)
SET SHADOW	(turn on/off shadow lines)
SET STAY	(whether line pointer moves when a locate is not found)
SPLTJOIN	(split or join lines; F11)

XEDIT is very powerful and rich with function

- FILELIST is XEDIT with a fancy macro!

Learning as much as you can will make you even more productive

- Ie, How do you get to Carnegie Hall?

Read the manuals!

- XEDIT User's Guide
- XEDIT Commands and Macros Reference

Mess with it – try commands and see how they work for you

REXX macros will make your life a lot easier too

You have some homework to do! Homework will be checked before the completion certificates are sent out after the end of the class.

Your task:

- Logon to your class userid provided to you
- XEDIT a file called MOVIE QUOTE A
- In the file, enter a quote from a favorite movie or show in mixed case
- When done, file it and in CMS enter:
 - SENDFILE MOVIE QUOTE A TO HOMEWORK

That's it!

Thank you for attending!

More questions? Send to: questions@velocitysoftware.com

Training, Education and Information

<https://velocitysoftware.com/educate/>

Presentations and Handouts

<https://velocitysoftware.com/pdfs/>

