EASY HELP for CICS

Create 'HELP' screens without programming
EASY HELP for CICS gives users the ability to request help on individual fields on the screens they use. It also allows users to maintain the help text themselves, without involving data processing personnel.

How EASY HELP for CICS saves time and money

Reduce data entry errors - entry personnel are more likely to check a help screen than to look in a manual.

Improve data entry productivity - checking a help screen is faster than looking in a manual or interrupting another employee.

Programmers don't waste time programming for help screens in their applications.

Users see a common HELP facility for all systems - less training is required.

Changed procedures are done quickly by updating a help screen instead of printing changes for every user's manual (and hoping they all file the new pages).

All EASY HELP for CICS management is done online.

Works with no application program changes.
How do you request HELP?

Position the cursor on a specific field.

Press a predetermined ‘PA’ or ‘PF’ key.

A Pop-Up window of help text is displayed with the ability to page forward or backward. The window can be expanded to a full screen of help text. Up to 99 pages of help text is allowed for each field.

Easy Help will display the help text for the requested field in a pop-up window so that the field in question and most of the rest of your screen is still visible. Initially one third of the help text is displayed. If you want the full screen of help text, you can press the Expand PF key (PF10 in this case). You can also page up and down in the window to read more of the text.
**How do we control who can update the HELP screens?**

Give different users various levels of access from full update to display-only capability.

Every user who is authorized to use EASY HELP must be defined in the user table. Users can be identified by Userid, Opid, or Termid. This is made easy with generic representation.

A ‘+’ can be used to match any character. An authorization level can be assigned to limit access to EASY HELP functions. ‘0’ gives the lowest level access (display help only) and ‘5’ the highest level.

In the example below, every user, ‘++++++++’, has been given access to display help information (authorization level = 0) regardless of the terminal they are using (Termid = ‘+++’).

Users with the first three characters ‘AFG’ and ‘DFB’ have been given a higher authorization, ‘1’. They will also be able to update help information.

User ‘BCH1’ has been given the highest level of authorization. This user can use any of the EASY HELP functions, but only on terminal ‘T09A’.

All entries are listed in alphabetic order. PF7 and PF8 scroll backward and forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Userid</th>
<th>Termid</th>
<th>Auth. Level</th>
<th>File Suffix</th>
<th>Notes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFG+++++</td>
<td>++++</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Any user not in the list is unauthorized by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCH1</td>
<td>T09A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFB+++++</td>
<td>++++</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Userid and Termid may contain one or more plus signs (+) which mean match any character in this position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+++++++++</td>
<td>++++</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PF3-Menu PF7-Bwd PF8-Fwd
Exclude transactions from help requests
Assign different help keys by transaction

If no entries are made in the list, then all CICS transactions are included for help requests and the help key will always be the default help key that you specify on your ‘System Configuration’ screen.

Transaction codes can be specific transaction ids or generic names. Generic names are made by entering ‘+’ for one or more of the characters in the transaction-ids. The ‘+’ will match any character in that position.

All transactions with the first two characters ‘AC’ are excluded from help except AC01 and AC02.

Transaction SEC1 and SEC2 have been excluded from the help system.

Transactions AC01 and AC02 will use help key PF10 instead of the default help key.

Transaction codes can be specific transaction ids or generic names. Generic names are made by entering ‘+’ for one or more of the characters in the transaction-ids. The ‘+’ will match any character in that position.

All entries are listed in alphabetic order. PF7 and PF8 scroll backward and forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tranid</th>
<th>Include</th>
<th>Help key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC01</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>PF10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC02</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>PF10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC++</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>PF10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEC1</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEC2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. Any Tranid not in the list is "Included" by default.
2. Tranid may contain one or more plus signs (+) which mean match any character in this position.
4. If "Include" is specified as "N", the help key is ignored.
5. To delete an existing entry, specify the Tranid to be deleted with "XXXX" in the help key.
How are HELP screens created?
Press the HELP key.
If no HELP screen exists, you will be asked to create one. You identify the screen with some fixed unique data (5 to 80 characters such as a heading or MACK002 in this example) marking the data by positioning the cursor on it and pressing PF1.
You enter the general help overview for the screen.

Create help information for fields
You identify the field by positioning the cursor on your screen at the beginning and end of the field to be described and pressing PF1 each time.
You then enter the help information for the field.
Each time the user presses the help key while the cursor is located within the bounds of the field you have defined, the help screen for that field is displayed.

We could mark 'M' as the beginning of the field and the last position as the end.
**How does it work?**

EASY HELP uses a CICS terminal control exit program named HELPXZCP.

The exit program looks at the function key pressed. If it was the HELP key, the identifier for the transaction to be started is changed to invoke the HELP system instead. The user's application screen is saved along with all other data necessary to restore the user's application screen upon exiting the HELP system. EASY HELP identifies the proper help text by the screen contents, then individual fields are identified by location.

EASY HELP handles BMS maps, native 3270 data streams, and can even be used from a clear screen to provide a generalized on line documentation facility. Simply enter a subject on a clear screen and press the Help Key. EASY HELP will then lead you through setting up help text for that subject. The next time you enter the subject and press the Help Key, the help text is displayed.

**Two batch programs provided**

1. Report generator prints the following information:
   - Full or partial screen directory
   - Field directories (by screen)
   - Application screen images
   - Help text

2. A Utility for initializing, backing up and restoring the HELP files is included.

**Multiple help files allowed**

Different groups of users may each use their own set of help files, if desired, for security purposes or to optimize the speed of the help system.

**Conversational transactions ARE NOT supported**

HELP cannot be requested for screens of a conversational task, only pseudo-conversational tasks. Most installations and most software packages use pseudo-conversational techniques since they provide for the most efficient usage of CICS resources. Therefore, in most cases, this will not be a problem. If the HELP key is pressed while on a conversational screen, the application program will receive the PF key instead of the HELP program.

**Easy installation**

EASY HELP for CICS can be installed in less than two hours and users can be taught to use it in minutes. Users can be allowed to enter the help text for their own screens. Supports CICS 2.3 through Transaction Server 1.3.

**Conversion service is available**

If you are using a competitor's HELP system for CICS and would like to save money by moving to EASY HELP for CICS, we may be able to help convert your existing HELP data. Please contact MacKinney Systems for a custom quote to migrate your help data to Easy Help for CICS.

**Free 30 day trial available**

(417) 882 8012 or download from www.mackinney.com