GETTING STARTED IN VISTA

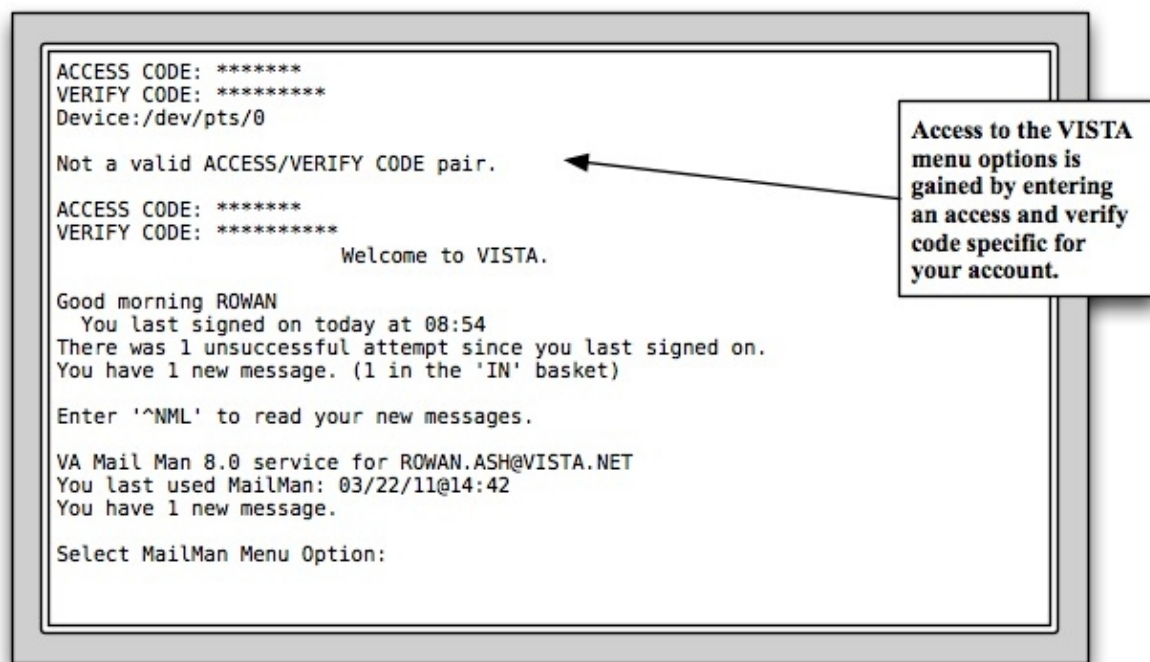## KATHY ICE

VISTA
EXPERTISE NETWORK

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CHAPTER 3: SIGNON AND NAVIGATION

In Chapter 2, you learned about your access and verify codes, and how to keep them secure. Now it's time to sign on to VISTA and learn how to move around.

Signing On

When you type your access code and verify code at your keyboard, you won't be able to see them on your screen—you will see asterisks instead. This is a security feature, to keep others from learning your codes from watching you log on. If you make a mistake entering your codes, you won't gain access, but you will get at least one more chance to enter the correct codes. If you fail repeatedly, your terminal will lock. For a period of time, you won't be allowed to log on at your computer; nor will anyone else. This lockout feature secures the system against unauthorized access. If you accidentally lock yourself out of your terminal, contact your Application Coordinator or IT department for assistance.

FIGURE 3.1: SIGNING ON

```
ACCESS CODE: *******
VERIFY CODE: *********
Device:/dev/pts/0

Not a valid ACCESS/VERIFY CODE pair.

ACCESS CODE: *******
VERIFY CODE: **********
                    Welcome to VISTA.

Good morning ROWAN
   You last signed on today at 08:54
There was 1 unsuccessful attempt since you last signed on.
You have 1 new message. (1 in the 'IN' basket)

Enter '^NML' to read your new messages.

VA Mail Man 8.0 service for ROWAN.ASH@VISTA.NET
You last used MailMan: 03/22/11@14:42
You have 1 new message.

Select MailMan Menu Option:
```

> Access to the VISTA menu options is gained by entering an access and verify code specific for your account.

When you sign on, the server gathers information from your computer to determine what kind of emulator it is running. This should happen automatically. If you see a "Select TERMINAL TYPE NAME:" prompt, ask your supervisor or Application Coordinator for help.

After you complete your work in VISTA, you must remember to sign off. If you fail to sign off,

someone else could use your computer to perform operations that will be attributed to you. Remember, you'll be held accountable for any action that another person takes while working under your identity. You can sign off vista by using either the Halt or the Continue command, discussed later in this chapter.

Primary, Secondary, and Common Menus

After recognizing your signon codes, the server will present your first menu, which will probably be your *Primary menu*. It is one of three basic menus you may have: Primary, Secondary, and Common. After the menu, you should see a menu prompt asking you to select one of the options.

The Primary menu is the menu you see when you first log on. It includes the options that are available to anybody with your specific job role. Your *Common menu* includes options that are available to all users of vista. Your *Secondary menu*, if you have one, has options selected for you, specifically.

To call up the Secondary and Common menus, enter **??** at the Primary menu prompt. The computer will display your Primary, Secondary, and Common menus. If these menus are lengthy, the computer will show you as many options as it can, along with the prompt "Press RETURN to continue, ^ to stop." By pressing <**RET**>, you can scroll through all the options to find the ones that you want. Once the computer has displayed all the options, it will again give you the menu prompt asking you to select an option.

Using Menus

Most of your work in vista will involve working with menus. From each menu, you can select the option you want by typing the name of the *menu item* and pressing the return key. Instead of typing the entire name of the menu item, you may enter the first few characters of the *menu text*. This type of entry is called an *abbreviated response* (see Chapter 5 for more information about abbreviated responses).

Sometimes, a menu item will be associated with a *synonym*. Menu synonyms are usually numbers or letters that appear to the left of menu text. If you've reached a menu that has synonyms such as nml for New Messages and rml for Read a Message, you can enter either the full menu item, or the abbreviated response, or the synonym.

FIGURE 3.2: USING SYNONYMS

```
Select OFFICE MENU Option: MAIL
Select MailMan Menu Option: ?

   NML     New Messages and Responses
   RML     Read/Manage Messages
   SML     Send a Message
           Query/Search for Messages
   AML     Become a Surrogate (SHARED,MAIL or Other)
           Personal Preferences ...
           Other MailMan Functions ...
           Help (User/Group Info., etc.) ...

Select MailMan Menu Option: NML
```

If a menu option has a synonym, you can type the option's name OR the first few letters of the option's name OR the listed synonym.

Menu Trees

Selecting from a menu won't always take you to your final destination. Instead, you'll often see another menu, and another menu prompt, with instructions to select again. If you look at your menu, you may notice that three dots appear after some of the items that are listed. Each of these items leads to another menu, called a *submenu*. You may encounter several levels of menus and submenus before you reach the specific option that allows you to perform your work. A series of menus that leads you to an option is called a *menu tree*.

FIGURE 3.3: MENUS AND SUBMENUS


```
Select Common Menu Option: ?

        Halt
        Continue
        Restart Session
MM      MailMan Menu ...
TBOX    User's Toolbox ...
VA      View Alerts
VER     Voe Version Text
        Time
        Where am I?

Select Common Menu Option: TBOX
```

> Frequently when you select from a menu, you are selecting another menu. You may need to go through several levels of menus before you reach an option that allows you to enter, edit, or display data.

```
Select Common Menu Option: TBOX

        Change my Division
        Display User Characteristics
        Edit User Characteristics
        Electronic Signature code Edit
        Menu Templates ...
        Spooler Menu ...
        Switch UCI
        TaskMan User
        User Help

Select User's Toolbox Option: EDIT USER CHARACTERISTICS
```
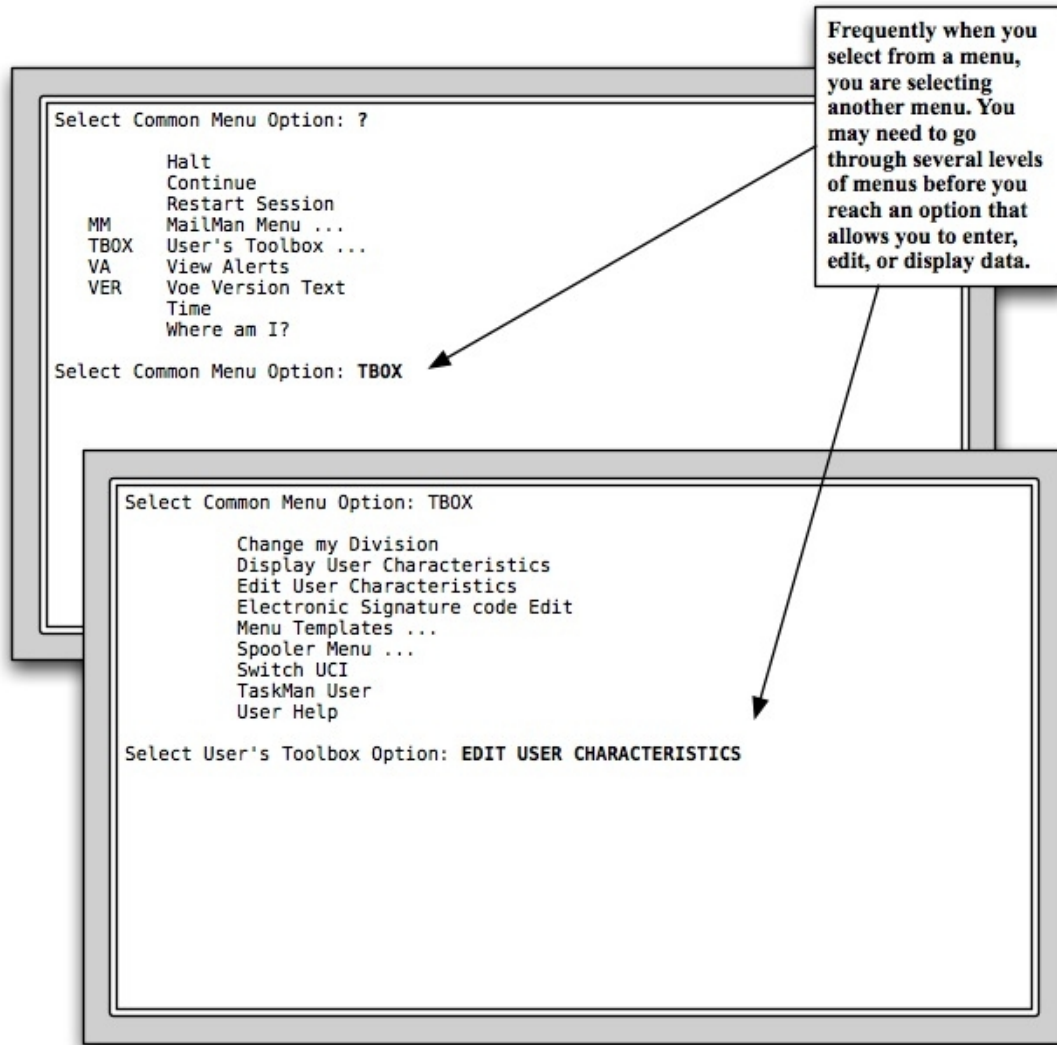
Figure 3.4 is a depiction of a menu tree for the User's Toolbox, one of your Common menu options. This particular menu tree has several branches, including two submenus with their own options. To reach an option in which you could actually enter or edit data, you might need to enter a selection from both the menu and one of the submenus. Not all menu trees possess this degree of complexity, but all of them require making some selections from menus before actually entering and editing data. Note that this diagram is presented only as an example; there is no need to memorize it or learn all the possible routes.
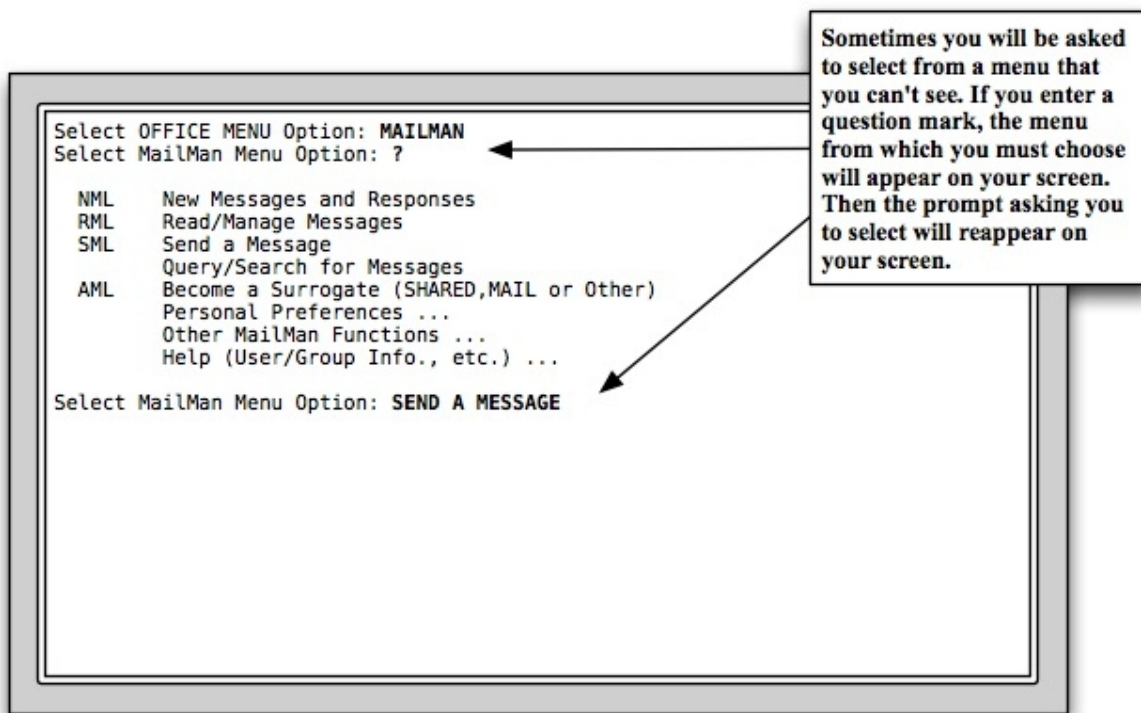
FIGURE 3.4: MENU TREE FOR THE USER'S TOOLBOX
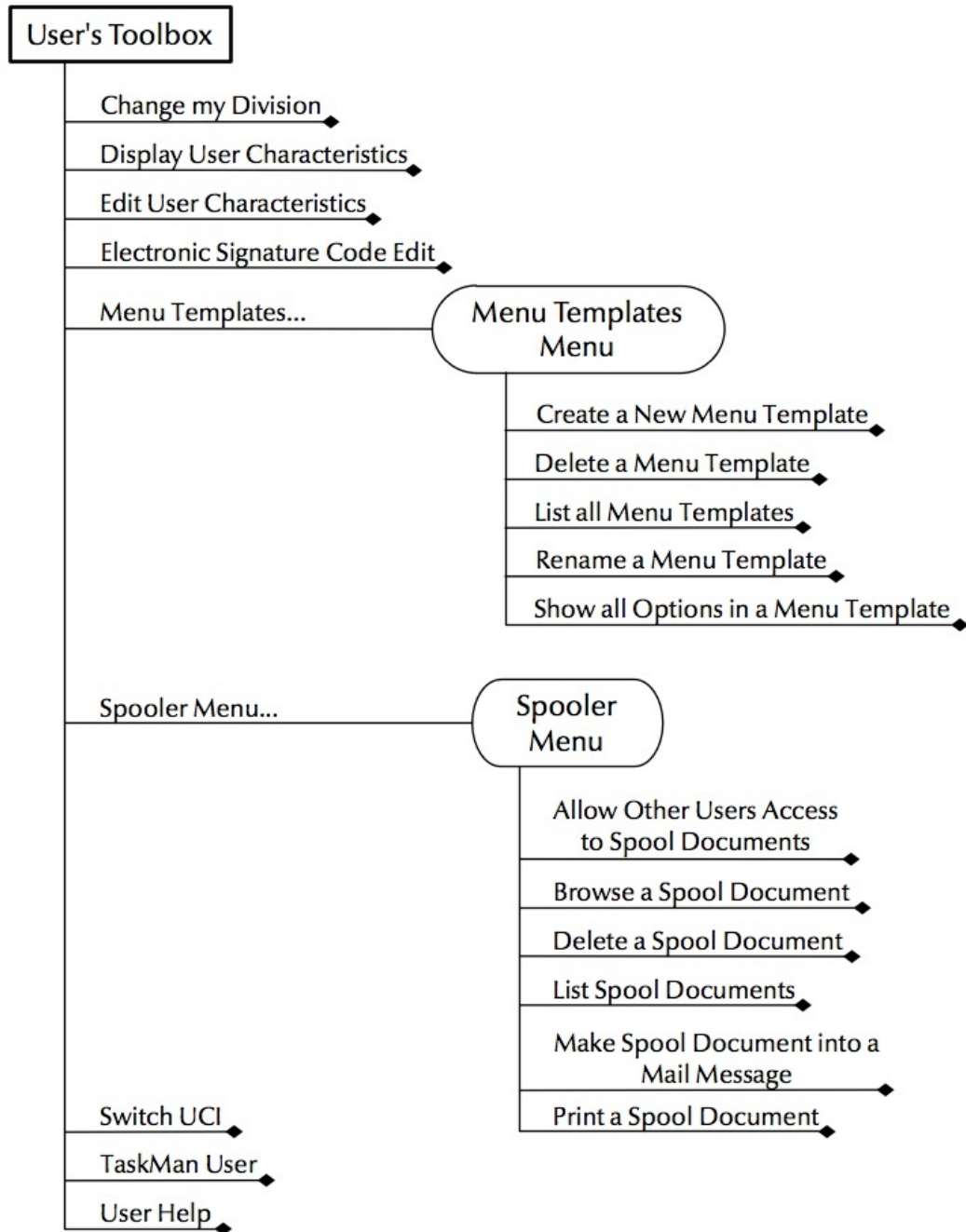
Auto Menu Display

Sometimes, vista may give you a menu prompt without actually showing you the menu. If this happens, don't be alarmed. A feature called *auto menu display* controls whether or not the menu items appear. This feature can be turned on and off. If you don't see your list of menu items, simply type a question mark (**?**) and press the **return** key. At this point, the menu items should appear on your screen, followed by another menu prompt. To control whether your menu items are displayed, you can use the Edit User Characteristics option described later in this section.

FIGURE 3.5: ANSWERING A MENU PROMPT WITHOUT A MENU

```
Select OFFICE MENU Option: MAILMAN
Select MailMan Menu Option: ?

   NML    New Messages and Responses
   RML    Read/Manage Messages
   SML    Send a Message
          Query/Search for Messages
   AML    Become a Surrogate (SHARED,MAIL or Other)
          Personal Preferences ...
          Other MailMan Functions ...
          Help (User/Group Info., etc.) ...

Select MailMan Menu Option: SEND A MESSAGE
```

Sometimes you will be asked to select from a menu that you can't see. If you enter a question mark, the menu from which you must choose will appear on your screen. Then the prompt asking you to select will reappear on your screen.

Backing Up

If you don't want any of the choices that appear on the menu, press the return key without first typing the name of one of the menu items. This tells the computer you don't want any of the choices that were offered. Pressing <**RET**> will take you back to the menu from which you made your last choice and will allow you to make a different choice from that same menu.

If you press <**RET**> again without typing any information, you'll back up again, to the previous menu. If you press <**RET**> enough times, you will eventually reach your Primary menu (the menu you saw when you first signed on). If you press <**RET**> here without typing in an option, you are telling the server you want to sign off now. It will ask you if you are sure, so if you pressed <**RET**> by mistake, you can keep your VISTA session going.

Jumping

Instead of just backing up, you can use one of the *jump* commands: the *up-arrow jump* or the *double up-arrow jump*. Pressing the shift key while pressing the 6 key produces a caret, which VISTA often calls an up-arrow. If you enter an **up-arrow** and press <**RET**>, you will return to the menu from which you made your last choice. Using up-arrow jump in this way is exactly like pressing <**RET**> as described above.

Of course, the up-arrow jump is much more powerful than that. If you type the **up-arrow**, followed by the name of the option you want to reach, you can jump directly to that option. You can do this even if the option you want is on a different menu tree entirely. When you are finished using the option you selected, you will remain in that option's menu; you will not return to your starting point.

If you would like to jump quickly to another option, but then return to your starting point when you are finished there, then you want the double up-arrow jump, or *rubber-band jump*. To use this jump, type **two up-arrows** (^^) followed by the name of the option you want to reach. As with the up-arrow jump, you can jump anywhere, even to an option on a different menu tree. Unlike the up-arrow jump, however, the rubber-band jump returns you to your starting place when you finish working in the option you selected.

If you enter **two up-arrows** and then press <**RET**> without typing the name of an option, you will move from your current menu directly to the Primary menu.

Help with Menus

All VISTA packages provide some degree of *on-line help* for users. Within the menu system, the help function presents brief information about your options—information that should enable you to make the proper choice. Whenever you ask for assistance, the help function displays either a list containing the names of your available options or brief descriptions of many of your available options.

?	Display Menu	If you enter a single question mark, you will be given a list of the menu options available to you. Only the options that pertain to the specific application you are using will be listed.
??	More Options	Two question marks will call up not only your Primary menu options, but also your Secondary and Common menu options. Though you probably won't see them on your menu, you can retrieve the Secondary and Common menu options from any program in which you are working.
???	Describe Options	Enter three question marks to call up brief descriptions of the options from which you can choose.
????	Menu Help Frame	Four question marks will call up the help frame for the menu, if one is available.
?OptionName	Option Help Frame	One question mark plus the name of the option you wish to learn more about will provide a help frame if one is available.

Common Menu Options

Outlining every user's possible Primary and Secondary menu options is beyond the scope of this manual. However, all VISTA users share the same Common menu options. This section discusses some of the Common menu options you are most likely to use.

Continue

The Continue option is a way of telling VISTA that you would like to sign off, but pick up where you left off the next time you sign on (rather than starting with your Primary menu). You can use the Continue option from any menu prompt; you do not have to go into your Common menu in order to use it.

Let's assume, for example, that you are at the "Select Mailman Menu Option:" prompt. If you enter **cont** for **Continue**, the system will ask if you want to halt and continue with this option later; if you say **Yes**, you are signed off. The next time you sign on, you will see a prompt asking if you wish to continue with the Mailman Menu.

Halt

The Halt option works in much the same way as the Continue option; you can type **halt** at any menu prompt and sign out immediately. When you sign out using Halt, you will not pick up where you left off when you sign on again; you will once again start with your Primary menu.

Although both Halt and Continue can be used from any menu prompt, it is important to make

sure you really are at a menu prompt before trying to use either of them. Select prompts also begin with the word "Select", but they are not menu prompts, and you cannot use Halt or Continue from them. A true menu prompt usually says "Select [menu name] option:". Look for the word "option" to make sure you are really at a menu prompt before using Halt or Continue (you will learn more about select prompts in Chapter 5).

Mailman Menu

This option opens Mailman, VISTA's email system. You will learn more about how to use mailman in Chapter 12.

View Alerts

The View Alerts option is what you will use if you ever encounter an *alert message*. An alert message is a notice that a particular problem requires your immediate attention—your department's supplies have dropped to a certain level and it's time to order new supplies, for example; or a patient's lab test results are abnormal and it's time to contact both patient and physician. The alert message may appear on your screen anytime you encounter a menu prompt—when you first sign on or when you have finished a task and return to the menu.

Some alerts simply present data or inform you about tasks you need to perform away from your computer. This type is called an information-only alert, and the letter "I" appears in front of it. Other alerts require some kind of action on your part at the computer. However, you will need to use the View Alerts option to process all your alerts—even the information-only alerts—or they will continue to come up every time you encounter a menu prompt.

Entering **VA** at the Common menu prompt calls up a numbered list of your alerts. Beneath the list, you'll see the "Select from" prompt. Here, you may enter any one of the following responses:

- **A** to process all of the alerts in the order in which they're listed

- **D** to delete a specific alert (note that some alerts cannot be deleted)

- **F** to forward one or more specific alerts

- **I** to process information-only alerts

- **M** to receive a Mailman message containing a copy of the pending alert

- **alert number** to process only one particular alert

- a **range of alert numbers** to process all alerts in that range (for example, 4-7)

- **P** to produce a printed copy of any pending alerts

- **R** to redisplay the pending alerts

- **S** to add or remove a surrogate to receive alerts for you

- ^ to exit
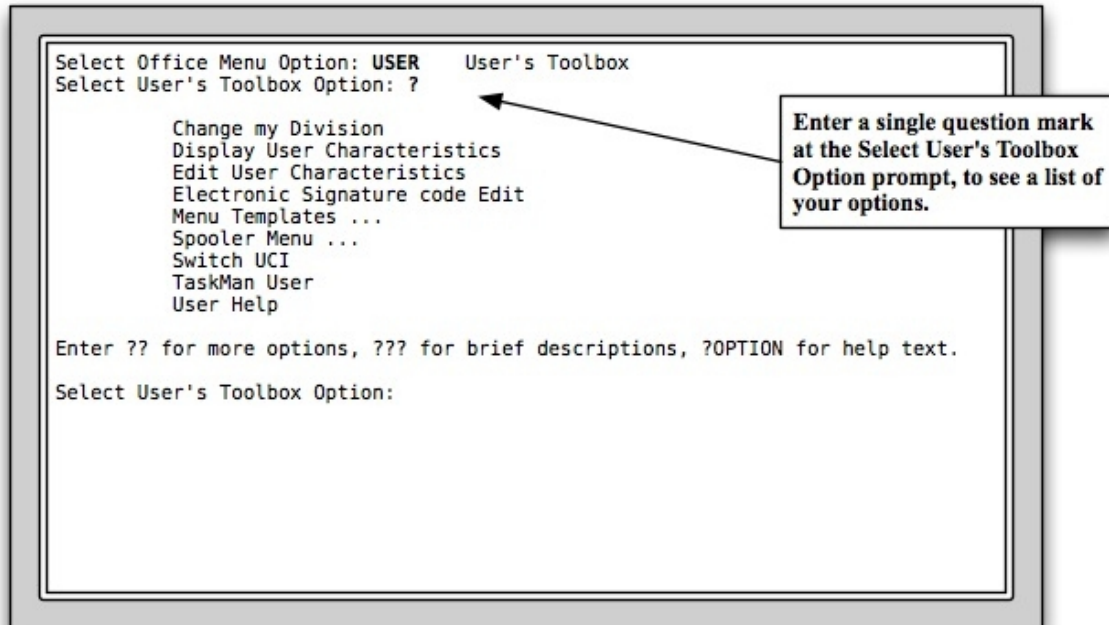
- **?** to display information about alerts.

Where Am I?

This option presents you with information about your current location in vista. The information this option presents, however, is more technical than most users want. A better way to figure out where you are in a menu tree is to use the "Display User Characteristics" option in the User's Toolbox.

The User's Toolbox

To reach the User's Toolbox, begin by entering **user** at the "Select primary menu Option:" prompt. Then, at the "User's Toolbox:" prompt, enter **?** to see a list of the possible responses.

FIGURE 3.6: EXPLORING THE USER'S TOOLBOX

```
Select Office Menu Option: USER     User's Toolbox
Select User's Toolbox Option: ?

          Change my Division
          Display User Characteristics
          Edit User Characteristics
          Electronic Signature code Edit
          Menu Templates ...
          Spooler Menu ...
          Switch UCI
          TaskMan User
          User Help

Enter ?? for more options, ??? for brief descriptions, ?OPTION for help text.

Select User's Toolbox Option:
```

Enter a single question mark at the Select User's Toolbox Option prompt, to see a list of your options.

Here is a brief description of the operation that each User's Toolbox option performs. For a "big picture" view of your User's Toolbox options, you can also review the menu tree diagram earlier in this chapter.

- **Change my Division** allows you to change the *division* to which you are currently assigned. If you only have one division to select from, you will see your current division and a notice that you cannot change it.

- **Display User Characteristics** presents information about your profile attributes, including your *sign-on device* and *keys* and the menu pathway that you used to reach this particular User's Toolbox option.

- **Edit User Characteristics** allows you to edit certain of your profile attributes. Depending on your local site management decisions, you could edit your verify code, auto menu, *type-ahead*, *nickname*, or your terminal type.

- **Electronic Signature Code Edit** allows you to enter or change your initials, signature block title, and office telephone number, as well as the code that represents your signature.

- **Menu Templates** allows you to create, name, and save a shortcut script used to reach a destination option more quickly.

- **Spooler Menu** allows you to work with print jobs you have previously sent to the *spooler*. You'll learn more about spooling documents in Chapter 11.

- **Switch UCI** is a utility left over from older versions of VISTA. Most modern VISTA systems do not use this option.

- **Taskman User** presents information about current tasks such as a *queued* print job and permits you to modify, to reschedule, or to stop each one of your tasks.

- **User Help** displays on-line help options. You can enter *keywords* and numbers to call up descriptions of your menu options and other VISTA features.

Reading on-line help is a good way to become familiar with your User's Toolbox options. To reach your help instructions, enter three question marks at the toolbox prompt; or enter a question mark and the first few letters of the toolbox option that you wish to study. Entering **???** calls up, for example, descriptions of all the options listed under your toolbox menu. Within some of the *option descriptions*, you'll see the phrase "extended help available." When you see this phrase, you'll know that you can reach detailed information about a particular option. Entering **?SPOOL**, for example, calls up *help frames* that provide additional information about spooler operations.

Of all your toolbox options, the *Menu Templates* option probably offers the greatest challenge and the greatest rewards. Used for quick access to commonly used options, templates operate somewhat like *macros* or scripts. You can create a template, give it a name, store it, and then use it

as a shortcut to a destination option. Once you've created a template, you can invoke it at any menu prompt by entering a left square bracket (**[**) and then your menu template name.

You probably want to wait on creating templates until you have a pretty good idea of which options you tend to need for your daily work. When you're ready to create your template, entering **?** at the "Select Menu Templates Option:" prompt yields a list of options that you'll use to define and save your template.

Other Shortcuts

Earlier in this chapter, you learned how to back up using <**RET**>, and how to jump directly to the option you want using the up-arrow jump or rubber-band jump. You also learned how to quickly call up your option from a menu using an abbreviated response or a synonym. There are two more shortcuts you can use to reach your destination more quickly.

To quickly select a Common menu option, enter a single double quote and then the menu text or synonym--for example, enter "**TBOX** to reach User's Toolbox, "**Edit E** to reach Edit Electronic Signature Code, or "**VA** to reach View Alerts.

Here's a nifty trick. When you sign on, enter your access code, a semicolon, your verify code, a semicolon, and the menu text or synonym of the option you wish to invoke. For example, you might enter **userone;oatgj1att1atw;spool** (remember: you won't actually see your codes on the screen; they're visible only within this guide). After pressing **return**, you would be logged in and taken directly to the spooler menu.