Once upon a time, in a long ago age called the 1990s, I attended a class on operating systems. It was my first hands-on exposure to UNIX-like operating systems and the course focused on Solaris. One feature which was relatively new to Solaris at the time was the Common Desktop Environment (CDE).

CDE took an approach to the desktop concept I had not experienced before. Windows, at the time, focused on launching applications from its Start menu and then tracking open windows with a task manager; and macOS was mostly driven by a global menu at the time. CDE took a different approach which seemed designed to truly reflect the concept of a literal work desk. A panel along the bottom of the display contained drawers and toggle buttons. Programs and files could be accessed by opening the drawers and placing work items on the desktop. (It might be more proper to say "desktops" since CDE offered four virtual desktops by default.) Items on the desktop could be minimized or moved off to the corner of the desk when not being used.

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