

ASHTON-TATE NEWS

ASHTON-TATE CHARGES CANADIAN FIRM WITH SOFTWARE PIRACY

TORRANCE, Calif., Dec. 22, 1986 -- Ashton-Tate today announced it has filed a copyright infringement lawsuit in the Supreme Court of British Columbia against Softsave Information Services Inc., a software rental firm based in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The suit charges Softsave and individuals associated with the company with illegally reproducing copies of Ashton-Tate products, including dBASE III PLUS, MultiMate, CHART-MASTER and Framework II, and renting the programs to customers for a \$15 fee.

Serving as co-plaintiffs with Ashton-Tate in the trial are Lotus Development Corp., Microsoft Corp., Lifetree Software, Inc., Broderbund Software, Inc., Activision, inc. and Infocom, Inc. The Software Publishers Association (SPA) has been instrumental in supporting the software companies in the suit.

"Illegal copying of software is a major trade barrier facing U.S. microcomputer software companies in international markets," said Luther J. Nussbaum, Ashton-Tate's president and chief

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operating officer. "We are pleased that leading microcomputer software companies are banding together in combating widespread copyright violations in foreign countries," Nussbaum said.

Softsave's activities were brought to the attention of Ashton-Tate by several users and employees who received catalogs offering rental copies of popular microcomputer software programs for drastically reduced prices.

Ashton-Tate obtained a court order requiring Softsave to permit the attorneys for Ashton-Tate to search the Softsave premises and take into custody the infringing of software and copies of customer lists, which will be used as evidence in the trial. In addition, a 20-day temporary injunction was issued, prohibiting Softsave from destroying any evidence or making illegal copies of software.

Pursuant to the court order, Ashton-Tate's Canadian counsels entered Softsave's premises and took into their custody numerous copies of illegal software.

"We removed copy protection from all our products last August in response to users' demands for a less obtrusive means of using our software," Nussbaum said. "However, as in the past, we remain concerned with the increase in illegal copying of microcomputer software, and intend to vigorously enforce our copyrights."

Ashton-Tate successfully has pursued software piracy cases against end users and retail dealers in Brazil, France, Australia

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and Canada in addition to the United States. "We will continue to take a leadership role in eliminating international piracy," said Tom Chan, Ashton-Tate's international counsel. "In addition to taking an active role in joint litigation with SPA members, we recently have formed a coalition of major microcomputer software vendors to combat pirates outside of North America."

"We're delighted that Ashton-Tate has joined with six other publishers in filing this action," said Ken Wasch, executive director of the SPA. "The unity of all the publishers in this action is remarkable, and we think it sends a very important message to others who may engage in the unlawful duplication and distribution of microcomputer software."

In fiscal 1986, international sales accounted for 24 percent of Ashton-Tate's total revenues. That figure is expected to increase in the current fiscal year.

Ashton-Tate is the world's second largest microcomputer business applications software company. Its products include dBASE III PLUS, MultiMate Advantage, Framework II and the MASTER-GRAPHICS Series for IBM personal computers and compatibles.

For the first nine months of fiscal 1987 ended October 31, 1986, Ashton-Tate reported revenues of \$147.9 million and net income of \$19.5 million, increases of 85 percent and 83 percent, respectively, from the same period last year.

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