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ASHTON-TATE SHIPS RAPIDFILE

TORRANCE, Calif., January 21, 1987 -- Ashton-Tate today announced it has begun shipping RapidFile, a high-performance file manager for IBM personal computers and compatibles that allows business users to manage data, create reports, write form letters and produce mailing labels.

RapidFile began shipping January 19 and soon will be available at more than 4,900 authorized Ashton-Tate computer retail dealers nationwide.

"RapidFile's advanced technology makes it the best file manager on the market today, said Roy E. Folk, executive vice president and general manager of Ashton-Tate's Software Products Division. "It directly addresses the inherent limitations of currently available file managers in terms of speed, capacity and flexibility.

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"Major accounts and beta testers have responded positively to the product," Folk said. "Our order backlog far exceeds our original expectations."

With a suggested retail price of \$395, RapidFile is targeted at the growing number of business computer users who need to accomplish tasks quickly and easily but do not need a broad range of relational database power for applications development.

RapidFile directly uses dBASE files, providing a direct growth path to the advanced capabilities of dBASE III PLUS, the industry-standard relational database management system. Performance in this area has improved significantly from preliminary Beta test versions of the product. Benchmark tests indicate RapidFile accesses dBASE files up to 15 times faster than most competing file management products.

Ashton-Tate is supporting its dealers with a multi-faceted program designed to encourage awareness among the retail sales force. The program includes a direct mail promotional campaign to 10,500 salespeople, a sales training videotape, corporate video conference, training sessions in 10 cities nationwide, and demonstration disk offers via advertising with dealer referrals for responding end users.

National advertising campaigns to appear in the computer trade and business press will begin in early March.

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Major features and benefits of RapidFile include:

Choice of Interface -- Through support of familiar Framework II and dBASE III PLUS-like pull-down menus and a Lotus 1-2-3-like horizontal menu structure, the learning process is shortened.

Speed -- Through support of virtual memory, RapidFile combines the speed of a random access memory (RAM)-based program with the capacity of a disk-based program, and requires only 256K bytes of RAM.

Storage Capacity -- Through implementation of sophisticated data compaction techniques, RapidFile provides up to twice as much storage capacity on disk than other file managers.

All Functions on One Disk -- RapidFile contains a powerful file manager, report writer, memo writer and mailing label generator all on a single disk, eliminating the need to swap disks as users change tasks.

Multiple Layouts -- RapidFile provides users with the flexibility to view data from six different perspectives -- as a table, as a form, as a split table/form, as labels, as a quick report and as a custom report.

Ashton-Tate backs RapidFile with its established user support capability. The company's Publishing Group will release RapidFile Business Applications by Leo Brodie, and a workbook, An Introduction to RapidFile, in the first quarter of calendar 1987.

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RapidFile operates on the IBM PC, PC/XT, Personal Computer AT and 100 percent compatibles with 256K bytes of RAM (384K bytes when running on a network) and two 360K-byte floppy disk drives or one 360K-byte floppy and one hard disk drive. The product supports monochrome and color monitors. It is not copy protected.

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

The company is the second-largest developer of microcomputer applications software. In addition to the database category, Ashton-Tate markets leading products in word processing, with Multimate products, integrated software, with Framework II, and business graphics, with the MASTER-GRAPHICS Series.

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