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ASHTON-TATE ANNOUNCES 'VAR' PROGRAM;  
NEW dBASE III DEVELOPER'S RELEASE

CULVER CITY, Calif., July 1, 1985 -- Ashton-Tate<sup>R</sup>, a leading developer and marketer of microcomputer software, today announced a comprehensive value-added-remarketer (VAR) program, and a new version of dBASE III designed specifically for application developers.

The new VAR effort features dedicated product, promotional and information support elements for qualified remarketers who develop new programs using Ashton-Tate products. These include dBASE II<sup>R</sup> and dBASE III<sup>TM</sup>, industry-standard database management packages, and Framework<sup>TM</sup>, an award-winning, multi-function software tool which combines a spreadsheet and word processor with database, graphics, communications capabilities and a sophisticated programming language.

"The VAR program demonstrates our dedication to the support of the application development community," said John C. Merson, vice president of marketing. "With qualified VARs combining their products or services with the features and power of Ashton-Tate software, end users get the strongest solution available."

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A key component of the Ashton-Tate VAR program is a newly-announced version of dBASE III called "The Developer's Release"<sup>TM</sup>. Available July 1, this new product includes a copy of Ashton-Tate's "Advanced Programmer's Guide" and RunTime+<sup>TM</sup>. The Developer's Release contains more than 50 enhancements to the dBASE programming language, including eight new commands, 32 additional functions and a new command editing capability. RunTime+ is a pair of utilities that allow developers to encrypt and protect dBASE III custom applications. RunTime+ includes dBCODE<sup>TM</sup> for encrypting dBASE programs, and dBLINKER<sup>TM</sup> for linking dBASE program files together for faster execution. Also included in the RunTime+ package are sample programs that show several methods of writing applications in dBASE and a limited version of dBRUN<sup>TM</sup> that can be used to execute the sample programs or a custom application in a demonstration mode.

To qualify for the new VAR program, Ashton-Tate requires the bundled remarketing of its products with a proprietary software application or hardware system. The company will carefully screen applicants based on a comprehensive application process to insure the authorization of stable, financially-secure organizations.

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Ashton-Tate plans to offer advanced training for VARs through specially-designed application development courses.

In addition, "A dedicated VAR Hotline is being implemented as part of the program," Merson said. "We recognize prompt, high-level technical support as the single most important feature of our service to developers. We selected a special group of our experienced technicians, many of whom are developers themselves, and established a special phone number to contact them. We're confident that this will be a very popular aspect of the program."

Other elements of product support include "TechNotes", Ashton-Tate's monthly technical magazine, and the "VAR Update" newsletter, a quarterly publication.

Promotional support will include listings of VAR products in a new, comprehensive "Application Directory" planned for first publication in Fall 1985, and discounts on advertising rates in the "Ashton-Tate Quarterly", a publication offering tips on product usage and application development. The directory will be distributed at trade shows and to all Ashton-Tate sales representatives, authorized dealers, and subscribers to the Quarterly, as well as all corporate members of the Ashton-Tate

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"Corporate Emphasis Program" launched by the company earlier this year. In addition, approved VARs will receive the "VAR Handbook", a comprehensive management guide consisting of value-added marketing and promotional aids.

Efforts to facilitate an "information exchange" environment include a special, on-line bulletin board service, and a VAR Advisory Board comprised of developers using Ashton-Tate products. Board members will meet periodically to discuss Ashton-Tate's long-term product strategy and contribute to design and support decisions. Ashton-Tate will also coordinate an annual VAR Conference, to feature multiple workshops on technical and business topics.

"Attracting the best candidates to our program requires a strong product strategy which, at Ashton-Tate, includes extendability, compatibility, and usability," explained Karen Orton, director of marketing programs.

"The dBASE and Framework products include powerful, built-in programming languages for developing custom input screens, processing routines, special report formats, and new

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applications. The languages permit the development of advanced applications using dBASE and Framework together," Orton said. The products are also data-compatible with each other and with other major software formats. For example, dBASE and Framework read standard ASCII files. Framework also uses Lotus 1-2-3, WordStar, and DIF file formats. In addition, all Ashton-Tate products have consistent command structures, tutorials, and HELP menus for increased productivity and ease of use.

For information on the VAR program, contact the VAR Sales Department, (213) 204-5570.

Ashton-Tate is among the leading microcomputer software companies worldwide. For the fiscal year ended January 31, 1985, the company had revenues of \$82.3 million.

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