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INDUSTRY LEADERS ENDORSE HIGH PERFORMANCE DISPLAY CONTROLLER HARDWARE INTERFACE

MENLO PARK, Calif., March 25, 1986 -- Leading software, board, and chip companies joined forces today to introduce the Direct Graphics Interface Specification (DGIS), an open specification that supports high-performance graphics silicon and allows faster application development.

"DGIS will open up a flood of application support for a wide range of display boards, such as those based on emerging graphics processor chips. DGIS gives direct-to-hardware performance while it frees programmers from learning the complexities of each graphics chip's instruction set," said Graphic Software Systems, Inc. Chairman Tom Clarkson. "DGIS-based boards will be the easiest to program display controllers on the market. The minimal effort needed to write the simple DGIS driver allows programmers to quickly add DGIS-board support for new and existing applications."

Using DGIS ROMs, display controller manufacturers can create boards based on a wide range of graphics processor chips such as those from Texas Instruments, Intel, and those based on

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the EGA standard, custom gate arrays, and standard cell designs. GSS is working with Intel, TI and others to provide DGIS firmware for current and future generations of graphics processor chips.

"TI is pleased to have a firmware contract with GSS, and DGIS complements that development work," said Texas Instruments spokesman Kevin McDonough. "DGIS is an upgrade path to boards based on high-performance graphics processors like the TMS 34010. Existing software will run five to ten times faster on those new boards."

"Intel supports standards, and we see DGIS as an important industry direction," said Intel Graphics General Manager Garth Wilson.

According to Chips And Technologies Marketing Director Ron Yara, "DGIS gives display board designers a painless upgrade path from simple graphics chips to more powerful designs based on the EGA and future high-performance technologies. A large application base for the new boards is virtually assured because programmers will need only one rich, high-performance interface."

Paradise Systems President Lawrence G. Finch said, "DGIS will help us maintain compatibility with a rapidly growing software base while our video board product line evolves. The specification makes it much easier for us to offer a range of future products that support a common set of applications."

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According to Ashton-Tate Chief Scientist Robert Carr, "DGIS is a technically excellent approach to solving problems that stand in the way of developing graphics-based user-interfaces in PC application software. By providing one rich interface to a growing number of powerful graphics processor chips, DGIS enables application developers to take advantage of high-performance, high resolution color boards as they become available."

"We at Lotus believe that graphics is becoming an integral part of all software, and we welcome a new standard that provides IBM PC users with faster, easier to use applications. The open driver concept of 1-2-3 and Symphony should encourage widespread adoption of the DGIS specification," said Lotus Technical Marketing Director Jim Kinlan.

Software Publishing Corp. R&D Manager Lee Harris said, "With pfs:GRAPH and our recent introduction of Harvard Presentation Graphics, Software Publishing Corp. has shown it has been a strong proponent of computer graphics. We look forward to supporting this standard interface for next generation graphics boards. DGIS will get more flexible and powerful image and text applications into the hands of end-users faster because we will be able to concentrate our resources on graphic functionality rather than writing device drivers."

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"Number Nine Computers can rely on the flexibility of DGIS to provide us with the design freedom we need to continue innovating new high resolution color graphics boards for the PC," said Number Nine Executive Vice President Will Frentz. "Freedom to innovate is vital for our company's continuing commitment to pioneer powerful business and professional-level graphics controller boards for the PC."

By selecting DGIS as a board-level interface, manufacturers can provide software consistency across a family of products that offer a range of price, performance and functionality. In addition, programmers will not have to rewrite their applications to take advantage of the unique features of a new board. DGIS inquiry functions inform the software of display controller capabilities, giving the application immediate access to the added performance and functionality of new hardware.

The published Direct Graphics Interface Specification document is publically available. Contact GSS for information on how to obtain it.

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