

**News**



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For release:

IMMEDIATE

MICROSOFT AND ASHTON-TATE ANNOUNCE APRIL 1989 AVAILABILITY  
FOR OS/2 SQL SERVER

Ashton-Tate Sets SQL Server Price Tag at \$2,495

LAS VEGAS, Nev., Nov. 16, 1988 -- Microsoft Corporation and Ashton-Tate Corporation today announced that the Ashton-Tate/Microsoft SQL Server database server for OS/2-based personal computer networks will be available on or before April 30, 1989. SQL Server is a high-performance, multi-user relational database engine using Structured Query Language (SQL), the predominant data manipulation language by which application programs communicate with relational databases.

Separately, Ashton-Tate announced that SQL Server will carry a suggested retail price of \$2,495 per server and would be made available through qualified network-oriented retail, distributor and value-added reseller channels.

The companies said developers can start creating SQL Server applications immediately by purchasing the SQL Server Network Developer's Kit (NDK). The kit, which began shipping last month, is available from both companies for \$1,995. Included in the kit is a coupon which allows customers to upgrade to the final SQL Server for \$300 when it becomes available.

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The announcements were made before more than 250 network resellers at COMDEX, the computer dealer exposition where SQL Server is being demonstrated by both Ashton-Tate and Microsoft.

"SQL Server for OS/2 communicates with workstation applications programs, such as dBASE IV, and provides OS/2 workgroups with data processing capabilities previously available only on larger minicomputers and mainframes," said Edward M. Esber, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer of Ashton-Tate. "Today we are pleased to say that these capabilities, which are now available to developers, will soon be available to all customers."

"SQL Server is in its final testing and performance tuning stage," said Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft. "Developers who are now working with SQL Server tell us that the product is in very good shape."

Announced in January by both Microsoft and Ashton-Tate, SQL Server employs the client/server architecture where users interact with databases using high-level interfaces at the workstation. The server, usually from another physical location on the network, maintains common databases. The high-performance server engine responds to workstation queries, performs sorts and selections of data and maintains the integrity of databases.

SQL Server is based upon Sybase, Inc.'s field-proven database management technology, enhanced with networking technology from Microsoft and database technology from Ashton-Tate.

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## DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

According to Ashton-Tate, the primary qualification required to become a SQL Server reseller is that the applicant must first be certified by a major network vendor. Major networks include 3COM 3+Open, Ungerman-Bass, IBM Lan Server or Novell Netware.

In addition to SQL Server, certified resellers will also be eligible to sell and support dBASE IV Version 1.1 and other systems-level products from Ashton-Tate.

Trainers, consultants, corporate developers and network administrators are also eligible to participate in Ashton-Tate's Systems Products Certification program. This program will train individuals to install and support SQL Server and dBASE IV.

## OPEN PLATFORM

Ashton-Tate and other companies are developing workstation database tools which will serve as clients to the SQL Server. dBASE IV Version 1.1, a version of Ashton-Tate's newest database management system, designed to work with SQL Server is under development and will also be available in the Spring of 1989.

SQL Server provides a foundation for a wide range of group productivity applications. Microsoft and Ashton-Tate expect that in addition to dBASE, many leading PC-based applications and languages will use SQL Server as a multi-user database engine. SQL Server will provide the basis for transaction-oriented systems including accounting systems, document libraries, inventory management systems and other applications which have previously been implemented only on large-scale systems.

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Many of these applications, including dBASE IV 1.1 and Microsoft Excel, are being demonstrated this week working with SQL Server. The demonstration are being conducted by both companies at the COMDEX trade show.

#### NETWORK SUPPORT

SQL Server makes use of "named pipes" as the primary vehicle for network communications. Named pipes provide an efficient inter-process communications mechanism for moving SQL data across the network between SQL Servers and client applications.

"Ashton-Tate and Microsoft have worked closely to ensure that SQL Server works very well on Microsoft OS/2 LAN Manager networks," said Ashton-Tate's Esber.

In addition, SQL Server can take advantage of other LAN Manager facilities, when available. These enhancements include the ability to start and stop server across the network as well as allowing applications to quickly identify all SQL Servers available on a given network.

"We have also worked closely with Ashton-Tate to ensure that SQL Server will operate on other networks that support OS/2 and named pipes," said Microsoft's Bill Gates. "For example, based upon Novell's announced support of OS/2 and named pipes, we expect that SQL Server will work on future versions of Novell NetWare."

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Microsoft Corporation (NASDAQ: MSFT) develops, markets and supports a wide range of software for business and professional use, including operating systems, languages, and applications programs, as well as books and hardware for the microcomputer marketplace.

Ashton-Tate Corporate (NASDAQ: TATE), based in Torrance, Calif., is one of the largest developers and marketers of business applications software. Its products covers six applications areas including database management systems, word processing, integrated decision-support systems, spreadsheets, business graphics and desktop publishing.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

For Microsoft:

Marty Taucher/Kathryn Hinsch, Microsoft, 206-882-8080  
or Pam Edstrom/Claire Lamatta, The Waggener Group, 503-245-0905

For Ashton-Tate:

W. Knox Richardson, Ashton-Tate, 213-538-6220