ASHTON-TATE READIES dBASE IV FOR SHIPMENT

CENTURY CITY, Calif., September 14, 1988 -- Ashton-Tate
Corp. (NASDAQ: TATE) chairman and chief executive office, Edward M.
Esber Jr., today said his company is "continuing on the target path
to ship dBASE IV by September 30, 1988," during his welcome address
to participants of the "Meeting of the Minds" Developer Conference in
Los Angeles.

Speaking before more than 1,000 corporate, government and
independent applications and add-on software developers, Esber said,
"We have made incredible progress on dBASE IV. This week, we expect
the product to enter our certification process, which is a final
series of tests and debugging."

Also during his speech, Esber introduced two new developer-
oriented products -- the dBASE Professional Compiler and Step IVward,
a dBASE language conversion utility -- and outlined plans for
establishing a new dBASE Language Advisory Board.

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"Very Satisfied"

Elaborating on the status of dBASE IV, Esber said, "We are very satisfied with the progress we've made on our performance benchmarks, and we are confident dBASE IV will be everything we promised it would be at its introduction last February (1988)."

During his speech, Esber introduced the SQL Server Network Developer's Kit, a development package that includes pre-release code, documentation and SQL Server applications programming interface specifications.

"The SQL Server Network Developer's Kit will give developers a head start in building applications for the Ashton-Tate/Microsoft SQL Server," Esber said. It will be available in October, he said.

"Intend to Earn Support"

Speaking candidly to his audience, Esber acknowledged that Ashton-Tate failed to properly service its large applications and add-on development community in the past.

"We let third parties who listened better than we did fulfill your needs with a host of products from fast clones to compiler add-on products," he said. "We didn't provide the timely releases of dBASE nor some of the dBASE features and tools you requested."

However, Esber reassured his audience that his company is committed to bringing the development community "back home" to Ashton-Tate.

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"Without your support, dBASE wouldn't be the choice of millions of users, thousands of applications developers and hundreds of add-on product developers," Esber said. "Today we intend to earn your support for a new standard, dBASE IV."

"Superior Performance"

Following these remarks, Esber introduced the dBASE Professional Compiler and Step IVward, two software programs designed to help applications and add-on developers design better software products based on dBASE IV.

The dBASE Professional Compiler is a native code compiler designed to combine ease of use and high performance, according to Esber.

"Because it (the dBASE Professional Compiler) adheres to the dBASE standard completely, it establishes a standard for dBASE compilers," he added. "As the standard, the dBASE Professional Compiler will achieve superior performance over all existing compilers and interpreters currently available."

Esber said Ashton-Tate plans to release the compiler in the first quarter of 1989.

Step IVward is a dBASE-dialect code converter designed to take existing code written using Clipper, FoxBASE and Quicksilver and translate it into executable dBASE IV code.

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"We believe a lot of developers currently using FoxBASE, Clipper and Quicksilver are ready to move back to the dBASE IV family," Esber said. "Step IVward provides the instant migration path they need. It will allow automatic conversion of applications and duplicate all functionality found in these clones."

Step IVward carries a list price of $89.95 through the company's direct mail catalogue. For users of Quicksilver, Clipper or FoxBASE, a special price of $9.95 is available to purchasers who submit the first page of the documentation from their dBASE-dialect products to Ashton-Tate. Step IVward is slated to ship during the fourth quarter, 1988.

"Better Align Ourselves"

Esber also outlined Ashton-Tate's plan to assemble the dBASE Language Advisory Board (dLAB), a broad group of dBASE experts who will be vested with the power to impact the design and development of future releases of dBASE.

"We acknowledge that a good portion of Ashton-Tate's success stems from the work done by institutional and independent developers," he said. "We believe it is imperative that we better align ourselves with your future needs. It's crucial that our products meet the requirements of demanding applications."

dLAB will convene semi-annually and consist of representatives from Fortune 500 companies, federal and/or state agencies, independent software applications vendors and independent software add-on and extension vendors.

"Committed to Growth"

Esber concluded his address by recognizing a number of groups and individuals who "have supported and nurtured," the dBASE language and were "committed to its growth as a computing environment" during the past seven years.

"Without their support, dBASE would never have reached its current stage as an industry standard," he said.

Ashton-Tate honored Adam Green, a noted dBASE author and instructor, with the dBASE Lifetime Achievement Award. Developers Awards for Excellence were presented to Wayne Ratliff, the "father of dBASE"; Jeb Long, lead developer of dBASE III PLUS and a current Ashton-Tate software architect; Ashton-Tate's entire Glendale development team for their overall contribution to dBASE III and dBASE III PLUS; and the Ashton-Tate dBASE IV development team for its contributions to dBASE IV.

Based in Torrance California, Ashton-Tate Corporation markets best-selling applications for DOS, Macintosh and OS/2 environments. Products are available in six major categories: database management systems, word processing, graphics, integrated decision support, spreadsheet and desktop publishing. The company also markets a comprehensive line of service and support programs for individuals and government agencies.

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