

## Background



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### CUSTOM SUPPORT PLAN

The Custom Support Plan provides businesses and individual users of Ashton-Tate products with quality technical support and service. The plan offers four levels of support that address a variety of computing needs, from basic telephone support to a full range of technical services.

"The Custom Support Plan provides our individual and business users with quality technical product support at a fair price," said Ronald S. Posner, executive vice president and general manager of Ashton-Tate's Systems, Service and Information Division. "It reflects extensive research, including direct input from customers and focus groups," Posner said.

In order to deliver better quality support and services, Ashton-Tate has expanded its support staff by 75 percent to more than 125 trained technicians and eight dedicated telephone operators worldwide. Also, the company has redesigned its telephone systems to provide for faster, more efficient service.

Businesses and individual users now can choose from among four product support plans to match their particular needs.

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BASIC SUPPORT -- Free

As of September 1, 1986, all registered users will receive free, unlimited technical telephone support for 90 days, regardless of product purchase date.

Unregistered customers must register within 30 days of the date of purchase to become eligible for the Basic Support Plan. Those who register their products after September 1 will receive 90 days of free support beginning on the product purchase date.

After 90 days of Basic Support, users can subscribe to any of the three additional support packages at a minimal cost.

EXTENDED SUPPORT I -- \$50 per year, per product (10 calls)

EXTENDED SUPPORT II -- \$80 per year, per product (20 calls)

The Extended Support Plan is designed for individual users who need occasional access to telephone support but do not require the full range of support services. Extended Support consists of:

- o Telephone Support

- One year of telephone support with a 10 or 20 call limit, depending on which version of the plan is purchased.

- o 30 Percent Discount on Selected Ashton-Tate Books.

- Users receive a 30 percent discount on selected books and book/disk packages from the Ashton-Tate Publishing Group. This also includes a 10 percent discount on a one-year subscription to the Ashton-Tate Quarterly, a journal designed to help non-technical business and professional users optimize their use of the company's products.

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PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT -- \$150 per year, per product; \$100 per year for any additional product.

The Professional Support Plan is for power users who need quick access to telephone support and a variety of support services. Professional Support contains:

- o Telephone Support
  - Users are allowed 20 telephone calls per year, which are fed into the Express Support Queue and handled by senior support technicians.
- o Electronic Mailbox
  - Users are provided a private electronic mailbox at Ashton-Tate as a secure means of sending files during a support session.
- o Utility Diskette
  - Members of this plan receive a utility diskette, which contains "power" utilities and helpful routines for optimum use of Ashton-Tate products.
- o Remote Debugging Service
  - Ashton-Tate provides Norton-Lambert's Close-Up, a communications utility and remote debugging tool that allows a support technician to operate any Ashton-Tate product remotely on a user's computer, via a modem. This service is billed at \$75 per hour.
- o CompuServe and Ashton-Tate's Electronic Bulletin Board
  - This includes a subscription to the CompuServe information network and access to Ashton-Tate's special interest group and online forum. Users receive \$15 worth of free connect time, after which they are billed standard CompuServe rates. The online forum is run by the company's Software Support Center and provides a variety of technical information from usage tips and sample programs to new utilities and drivers.

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- o TechNotes

- Members receive a one-year subscription to TechNotes, a monthly journal written by Ashton-Tate's support technicians. TechNotes includes technical articles, sample programs, usage tips and responses to technical questions.

- o 30 Percent Discount on Selected Ashton-Tate Books

- As with the Extended Plan, members of the Professional Plan receive a 30 percent discount on selected Ashton-Tate books and book/disk packages as well as a 10 percent discount on a one-year subscription to the Ashton-Tate Quarterly.

Registered Ashton-Tate product users can subscribe to the support packages at any time. Each support package covers one registered Ashton-Tate product. If users require support for more than one product, additional support packages must be purchased. Volume discounts are available for customers with 25 or more products.

Users do not sacrifice their 90-day free Basic Support if they purchase Extended or Professional Support. If a user purchases Professional Support before the expiration of Basic Support, the remaining free support time will be converted to Professional Support at no extra charge.

To obtain the prices listed above, users must subscribe to Extended or Professional Support before the 90-day Basic Support Plan expires. A lapse in service is subject to a 25 percent restart fee.

For further information about the Custom Support Plan, users can contact Ashton-Tate at (213) 538-8880.

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