

ASHTON·TATE



INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ASHTON-TATE ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT
TO PURCHASE FOREFRONT CORPORATION

CULVER CITY, CA., April 11, 1985 -- Ashton-Tate, a leading developer and marketer of microcomputer software, today announced it has reached an agreement in principle to purchase Forefront Corporation, the Sunnyvale, California-based developer of the Framework multi-function program marketed by Ashton-Tate.

"The purchase of Forefront Corporation is part of Ashton-Tate's corporate strategy to expand our developmental strength and capture the best and the brightest of the industry's technical resources," said Edward M. Esber, Jr., president and chief executive officer of Ashton-Tate. "With the addition of the creative team from Forefront, we will continue to be on the leading edge of product development. With Framework and the highly-successful dBASE II and dBASE III database management programs, Ashton-

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Tate is one of the few major microcomputer software firms to offer best-selling products in two major categories."

Ashton-Tate began shipping Framework in July 1984. The multi-purpose product accounted for 18 percent of the company's revenues for the fiscal year ended January 31, 1985, although shipping for only six of those months. Framework, which is one of the 10 best-selling business packages in the history of the microcomputer software industry, has been rated the top performing multi-function package by a majority of the editorial community and has also received international acclaim, being named "Software Product of the Year" in France.

Framework combines a spreadsheet and word processing with database, graphics, and communications capabilities, and provides users with an outlining function to organize thoughts and ideas.

Forefront Corporation is headed by its cofounders: Robert Carr, chairman and lead developer of Framework, and Marty Mazner, president. Forefront, which currently has 17 employees, will continue to operate in Sunnyvale as part of Ashton-Tate's research and development activities.

Forefront's relationship with Ashton-Tate dates from August 1983 when Ashton-Tate funded Forefront's work on Framework and acquired a

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minority interest in the company. "This is the culmination of our continuing relationship with Ashton-Tate," said Carr. "We have found that Ashton-Tate knows how to attract and nurture creative software developers."

"Together Ashton-Tate and Forefront Corp. will be a stronger force in the marketplace than we would be separately," said Esber. "Framework has already established itself as a market leader. With the combined resources of the two companies, we can expand Framework's domestic and international market penetration even further."

Ashton-Tate is one of the leading microcomputer software companies worldwide. The company also includes a publishing unit which produces books as well as a quarterly magazine. For the fiscal year ended January 31, 1985, the company had revenues of \$82.3 million.

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