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BACKGROUND: Software Dealer Program

Authorized Ashton-Tate microcomputer software dealers anxious to keep ahead in the competitive corporate sales area will be briefed on the firm's new "Corporate Emphasis" program at seminars in five U.S. cities April 1 through 24.

Karen Orton, Ashton-Tate's director of corporate marketing, said, "At these dealer seminars, attendees will learn about the issues and trends that impact corporations as they make software purchase decisions. . . Because the microcomputer market is growing and changing so quickly, many retailers aren't aware of the vast range of needs that software vendors like Ashton-Tate must meet, or the sales opportunities available at the Fortune 1000 level."

One-day seminars for retailers will be held Monday, April 1 at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel; Tuesday, April 9 in San Francisco at the Mark Hopkins Hotel; Monday, April 15 in Dallas at Loew's Anatole Hotel; Thursday, April 18 in Chicago at the Sheraton O'Hare Hotel; and Tuesday, April 23 in New York City at the Helmsley Palace Hotel. The agenda will feature sales tips and strategies plus discussions and demonstrations of computer networking, micro-to-mainframe linkages, application development processes and information resource sharing.

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The newly-launched Ashton-Tate Corporate Emphasis program will provide product and technical support, training and information exchange programs directly to corporate users of the firm's best-selling dBASE III and Framework product lines. In conjunction with the planned dealer seminars, an additional half-day program will be hosted in each city for MIS/DP professionals involved with software acquisition and support.

"Extensive field research conducted with MIS/DP executives across the country revealed a clear message--large corporate users want software products that address three key areas: desktop processing, application development and information resource sharing," Orton said.

"We also learned that, in this milieu, continuing support from the software publisher is just as important as the product itself, and is a key consideration before purchase," she added, pledging that Ashton-Tate plans to stay close to corporate users and keep pace with their rapidly-evolving needs.

The Corporate Emphasis program is designed to foster dealer sales of Ashton-Tate products. The company has no plans to sell directly to large accounts, Orton said.

Dealers who attend the one-day seminar will receive a presentation set of slides and script plus a sales manual. These tools will help dealers professionally present Ashton-Tate products and support offerings to their corporate user base.

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