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ASHTON-TATE SHIPS FRAMEWORK II DEVELOPER'S TOOLKIT

TORRANCE, Calif., March 10, 1987 -- Ashton-Tate Corporation today announced it has begun shipping the Framework II Developer's Toolkit, a collection of routines and programs designed to aid developers in writing faster and more efficient custom applications using Framework II's FRED development language.

"The Framework Developer's Toolkit exemplifies Ashton-Tate's commitment to third-party developers," said Ashton-Tate marketing vice president Lydia J. Dobyns. "The Toolkit allows developers to harness FRED's power to more easily create custom and vertical market applications." Dobyns noted Framework II is the only integrated software product with a sophisticated high-level development language.

The program gives Framework II developers the tools to create and customize printer and plotter drivers, create new import and export file utilities, maintain and use dBASE files (.DBF) from within Framework II and develop computer-based training materials. It includes more than 30 user-defined library functions designed to provide shortcuts in writing applications based on Framework II.

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The utilities contained in the Toolkit come complete with documented source code and are illustrated by the Toolkit's model application. The kit also contains previously undocumented features, including the Framework II assembly/high-level language interface that serves as a link between Framework II and the advanced capabilities of the personal computer.

"The Toolkit meets a distinct need for Value Added Resellers (VARs) by slashing development time," said Wes Geer, president of Harmon Professional Analysis, a southern California microcomputer consulting and development firm. "The user defined functions in an early version of this product allowed us to delegate tasks to programmers less proficient in FRED -- freeing our most talented FRED programmer for major projects."

Alistair Davidson, chairman of Alacritous Inc., a Canadian company that markets a financial analysis package described as an "MBA In a Box," found the Toolkit allowed him to develop bigger and faster applications linked to Framework II. "We've been able to build an extremely large and sophisticated application in Framework II -- a strategic expert system with 3,000 business rules. This would have been hard, if not impossible, without the Developer's Toolkit or with another program."

Hardware requirements for the Toolkit are an IBM PC, PC/XT, Personal Computer AT, 3270 PC and compatibles with 384K bytes of RAM and two 360K-byte floppy drives, or a single 360K-byte floppy and a hard disk. Both color and monochrome monitors are supported. The utilities may be used with Framework II version 1.0 or 1.1.

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The package, which includes two disks and a reference manual, is available directly from Ashton-Tate at an introductory price of \$99.95. After May 30, the suggested retail price will be \$149.95. To order or obtain further information, call 1-800-437-4329.

Framework II, Ashton-Tate's multifunction software product, combines a word processor and spreadsheet with ancillary graphics, file management, and communications capabilities. Its FRED programming language permits the development of specialized applications.

In addition to Framework II, Ashton-Tate markets products in three major categories: database management systems, with dBASE III PLUS and RapidFile; word processing, with the MultiMate product line; and graphics, with the MASTER-GRAPHICS Series featuring CHART-MASTER, SIGN-MASTER, DIAGRAM-MASTER, and MAP-MASTER.

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