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ASHTON-TATE ANNOUNCES FIRST PHASE OF  
COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT AND SERVICE PROGRAM

Company to Remove Copy Protection From All Products

TORRANCE, Calif., August 19, 1986 -- Ashton-Tate today announced the first phase of a new comprehensive support and service program for corporate customers and individual users of Ashton-Tate products. The company also announced the removal of copy protection from its products for all customers.

The new program, revealed today at a New York City press briefing, is the first offering from Ashton-Tate's Systems, Service and Information Division (SSID) formed in June. It provides a variety of support plans for individual users, ranging from a no-charge 90-day Basic service to a \$150-per-year Professional service, as well as a number of support programs for corporations.

"We have spent more than a year studying the issues surrounding support and service and have developed a program that we believe meets our goal of providing our customers more and better service at a reasonable cost," said Edward M. Esber Jr., Ashton-Tate chairman, president and chief executive officer.

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"In conducting our research, we found a wide diversity of opinion on what customers wanted. We looked at many issues, including site licensing, on-site disk duplication, unbundling software and documentation and volume purchase agreements and trial-ballooned them with our customers.

"We have taken the feedback from our customers, reconciled the differences, and come up with the foundation for our comprehensive support and service program -- a program that we believe meets the fundamental support and service needs of all our customers," Esber said.

The three main elements of today's announcement are removal of copy protection, the Custom Support Plan and the Corporate Support and Services Program. Both Custom Support and Corporate Support and Services offer several options for individual users and corporate customers.

As part of the program to deliver improved support and service, Ashton-Tate has increased its technical support staff to more than 125 technicians and eight dedicated telephone operators worldwide. In addition, the company has redesigned its telephone systems to provide for faster service.

Copy protection will be removed from Ashton-Tate's IBM PC, PC-compatible and Macintosh products. The MultiMate line of word processing products is already non-copy protected.

New versions of dBASE III PLUS, dBASE III PLUS LAN PACK and Framework II, with copy protection removed, will begin shipping

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today. They will be available at the company's more than 4,500 authorized dealers, at their current suggested retail prices. In addition, the new dBASE III PLUS LAN PACK will allow up to five users to access dBASE III PLUS on a network for the same price as three users in the initial version.

Registered owners of Ashton-Tate products purchased before July 5, 1986 will receive upgraded versions for \$45. Those who purchased the products after July 5 will be upgraded at no charge. Registered users of Ashton-Tate products will receive an information pack detailing the upgrade procedure. Unregistered users can call 1-800-2-ASHTON for further information.

In addition, registered owners of dBASE III, dBASE II, Framework and Friday! also can receive upgrades to the new products. Upgrade prices in quantity 1-24 are: dBASE III and Framework, \$175 through Dec. 1, 1986, \$225 after that date; dBASE II and Friday!, \$275. Volume discounts are available.

"We are responding to customers' concerns about the problems caused by copy protection, such as the difficulty in installing and backing up products on a hard disk or RAM disk," said Roy E. Folk, executive vice president and general manager of the Software Products Division.

"We are concerned with the increase in illegal copying of microcomputer software, and intend to vigorously enforce our copyrights. Yet, we are encouraged by our corporate customers' efforts to devise plans to deter software piracy," Folk said.

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## CUSTOM SUPPORT PLAN

The Custom Support Plan offers end users four levels of support: Basic, Extended I and II and Professional. Basic Support is available to all purchasers of Ashton-Tate products and provides 90 days of free technical telephone support.

The other three levels of support offer a fixed number of telephone calls, plus additional support such as discounts on Ashton-Tate books and publications, a utility disk, Norton-Lambert's Close-Up debugging service, an Express Support Queue, an electronic mailbox and a subscription to CompuServe. The program prices are: Extended I, \$50 per year; Extended II, \$80 per year and Professional, \$150 per year. All prices are for support on a per product basis. Volume discounts are available for customers with 25 or more products.

## CORPORATE SUPPORT AND SERVICES PROGRAM

The Corporate Support and Services Program, designed for large corporations with internal support centers, is made up of the Corporate Support Program and the Software Care Program.

The Corporate Support Program has an annual fee of \$4,000 and includes a number of unique features, including a dedicated Corporate Service Representative, a toll-free number for technical support and the opportunity to preview new products. The program also provides discounts on publications and courseware, "train the trainer" seminars and potential membership on Ashton-Tate's Corporate Advisory Board.

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Corporations with multiple sites requiring Corporate Support Program services will be charged a \$2,000 yearly fee for each additional site.

The Software Care Program ensures that customers have up-to-date versions of Ashton-Tate products. It consists of two options; the Annual Maintenance Plan and the Corporate Upgrade Program.

Corporations choosing the Annual Maintenance Plan will pay one price for each product they own and automatically receive all updates and upgrades for one year. Prices range from \$275 per product for quantity 1-24 to \$200 for quantities over 100. The Corporate Upgrade Program makes upgrades and updates available to corporations on an individual basis. Prices vary depending upon the product and quantity.

"We are offering a wide range of support programs to individual users and corporations in an attempt to meet everyone's needs," said Ron Posner, executive vice president and general manager of the Systems, Service and Information Division. "While we believe this is a major first step in meeting the diverse service and support needs of our customers, we expect and welcome customer feedback to aid us in fine tuning our program to make it the best in the industry."

"Ashton-Tate's program goes a long way toward meeting our support and service needs," said Jeff Knepper, director of advanced technology - tax at Touche Ross, and a member of Ashton-

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Tate's Corporate Advisory Board. "It reflects the input we have provided Ashton-Tate over the past year about a wide range of important issues such as site licensing, buying direct, copy protection and special services."

All service and support programs announced today are available directly from Ashton-Tate. "We will continue to sell all microcomputer software products through our retail distribution channel," Folk said. "Our authorized dealers have been extremely successful selling our products and have made a tremendous commitment to us. We have no plans to alter the way we distribute microcomputer products."

Ashton-Tate markets best-selling products in three major categories: database management software, with the industry-standard dBASE family of products for the IBM PC and Macintosh computer; word processing with the MultiMate product line; and integrated software with Framework II.

It recently signed a letter of intent to acquire Decision Resources, Inc., of Westport, Conn., the developer and marketer of the best-selling MASTER series of business graphics software.

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