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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOFTWARE PUBLISHER ASHTON-TATE RESTRUCTURED;  
ESBER NAMED PRESIDENT, COO

CULVER CITY, Calif. Leading microcomputer software publisher Ashton-Tate today (Sept. 4) announced a major restructuring of the company into three separate operating divisions.

The new divisions, the Software Products Group, Ashton-Tate International and New Business Development, will have full profit and loss responsibility.

In a related move, David C. Cole, who has been president and chief executive officer of Ashton-Tate since February, 1982, has been appointed chairman, a position left vacant since the recent death of Ashton-Tate co-founder and chairman George Tate.

Cole, who will retain his role as chief executive officer, announced that Edward M. Esber has been appointed president and chief operating officer. He will report directly to Cole.

According to Cole, the naming of Esber, who has served as the company's executive vice president, marketing and sales, since May 1984, is a milestone toward consolidating Ashton-Tate's position as a major long-term player in the microcomputer software marketplace.

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"Ed has been instrumental in the recent introduction and marketing of our two major new products, dBASE III and Framework," said Cole. "We feel confident that his background in our industry, combined with his experience in related fields and his education, gives him the depth and expertise necessary to maintain and expand upon Ashton-Tate's position as an industry leader."

Esber said the company's restructuring lays the groundwork for future growth.

"The creation of divisions with distinct charters and responsibilities enables us to organize people within functional groups along product lines," he said. "This will allow each group to focus on specific markets and distribution channels. We are confident that this structure will significantly increase Ashton-Tate's competitive edge."

The Software Products Group will have full responsibility for developing, marketing and supporting Ashton-Tate's current and future business software products in the United States and Canada. Esber will serve as general manager of the group.

The new Ashton-Tate International division will focus on expanding the company's worldwide operations and will market and support all Ashton-Tate products outside the United States and Canada. Ashton-Tate made its first major move into international markets in early 1983. During the fiscal year ended January 31, 1984, 17% of the company's pro forma net revenues were generated by international sales. The company currently has three European subsidiaries, as well as distributors and sales representatives worldwide.

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Ronald S. Posner, a member of Ashton-Tate's board, will remain as acting vice president, Ashton-Tate International and also will serve as the division's acting general manager. Posner will report to Cole.

Ashton-Tate's New Business Development division will identify and develop new areas of business, said Esber. The group currently includes Reston, Virginia-based Ashton-Tate Amazelements, which is spearheading the company's move into educational/recreational software and book/software markets and Ashton-Tate Publications, the company's book publishing operation in Inglewood, Ca.

The division will be headed by Lawrence Benincasa, vice president and general manager, new business development, who will report to Cole.

Esber also announced that Norman H. Block, executive vice president, finance and administration, will continue to be responsible for many corporate functions, including corporate finance, legal services, human resources and corporate information. Block, formerly executive vice president, finance and operations, will report directly to Esber.

Also announced was the appointment to the board of directors of Jill Weissman-Tate, formerly distributor sales manager for Ashton-Tate. Weissman-Tate joined the company in April, 1982 and became dealer sales manager in June of that year. From April 1983 until March 1984, she served as national sales manager.

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To enhance Ashton-Tate's strategic planning capabilities, C. Wayne Ratliff has been named chief scientist, reporting to Cole. Ratliff, formerly vice president, new technology, will serve as the chairman of the company's new technology committee, said Esber. He will also be responsible for assessing hardware and software trends and will contribute to the development and acquisition of specific products.

Ashton-Tate is a leading publisher of microcomputer software and related books. Its software products include dBASE II and dBASE III database management systems and Framework, a multi-function productivity package.

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