News

Immediate

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ASHTON-TATE ANNOUNCES POWERSTEP

Spreadsheet software developed for NeXT
maximizes the machine's leading edge technology

PALO ALTO, California, September 5, 1990 -- At a press
conference today, Ashton-Tate Corporation (NASDAQ:TATE) announced
PowerStep, the company's new spreadsheet software for NeXT machines.
Designed specifically for the NeXT platform using NeXT's Interface
Builder, PowerStep includes such features as 3-D graphics, voice
annotations, spreadsheet publishing capabilities and an intuitive,
easy-to-use graphical user interface.

PowerStep is in beta test now; availability and pricing were not
announced.

At the press conference, Bill Lyons, Ashton-Tate's president and
chief operating officer, said, "The combination of NeXT and PowerStep
will offer customers the power and ease-of-use that maximizes their
productivity. PowerStep takes full advantage of the graphical and
audio output capabilities offered by NeXT machines, so our customers
can benefit from these leading edge capabilities."

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Added Steve Jobs, president and CEO of NeXT Computer, Inc., "PowerStep answers the need of a good number of our current and potential customers for a well-executed spreadsheet for their NeXT computers. PowerStep on the NeXT platform is a 'best of breed' product, with the versatility users need from a spreadsheet and the accessibility that comes from fully using NeXTstep and NeXT's Interface Builder."

PowerStep Features and Benefits

Spreadsheet Features

-- Virtually unlimited worksheet size
   A 16,384 x 16,384 cell matrix can include financial, math, string and user-defined functions. As a result, users are not limited to what has traditionally been a smaller cell matrix.

-- Consolidation of multiple spreadsheets
   A virtually unlimited number of spreadsheets can be combined with a point and click of the mouse. This simplifies what could otherwise be a timely and cumbersome task.

-- Spreadsheet linking
   Users can call up multiple resizable windows of text, graphics and numbers and set up live links among them. This is accomplished via a simple point and click of the mouse, again saving time and maximizing productivity.

-- Lotus 1-2-3 file import and export
   Easy data import and export from this popular DOS spreadsheet eliminates data re-entry and expands PowerStep's usefulness. This is particularly useful for companies that have both DOS and NeXT computers.

Graphics Features

-- 3-D charts with live rotation
   Users can directly control the rotation, elevation and perspective of 3D bar and surface charts using the mouse. This way, users can quickly and easily create 3-D charts that appear exactly the way they want.

-- 13 chart types
   These include pie, bar, high-low-close, area, line, scatter and 3D surface charts. All chart types are automatically updated as spreadsheet data changes, eliminating data re-entry.

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Usability Features

--   Ease-of-use
        PowerStep uses NeXT's Interface Builder for an icon-based,
        intuitive interface. In addition, commonly-used commands
        are conveniently located on the icon bar at the side of the
        worksheet. The result is a short learning curve, and
        maximum productivity for both novice and advanced users.

--   Voice annotation
        Using NeXT's built-in-CD quality sound, comments can be
        recorded directly on any spreadsheet.

--   Spreadsheet publishing features
        With PowerStep, users can combine numbers, text, charts,
        graphics and voice annotations on the same page. In
        addition, they can set page breaks, insert titles and add
        introductory text. This saves using a separate desktop
        publishing package, and provides professional,
        presentation-quality output.

--   WILMA programming language
        Users can take advantage of 161 macro commands and 11 macro
        statement types; these macros can be called from within
        spreadsheet formulas. This macro language gives developers
        the tools they need to extend PowerStep's functionality.

Product Specifics

    PowerStep will run on any NeXT computer; a hard drive is

recommended.

    Once the software begins shipping, it will be available through

the Ashton-Tate authorized reseller network. Unlimited, free

support, along with local access to the Ashton-Tate Bulletin Board

System, will be included with the product.

    Pricing and ship date are not available at this time.

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Headquartered in Torrance, California, Ashton-Tate Corporation develops and markets microcomputer business applications and advanced connectivity software. The company's major product categories include database management systems, word processing, integrated decision support, spreadsheets, graphics and software utilities. Ashton-Tate has operations worldwide, with products available in 20 languages in more than 50 countries. The company also offers a comprehensive line of training and support services for individuals, corporations and government agencies.

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