

ASHTON-TATE NEWS

ASHTON-TATE TO PUBLISH APEX'S 'FRONTRUNNER' SOFTWARE
FOR EASY DEVELOPMENT OF MEMORY-RESIDENT dBASE III PLUS PROGRAMS

Torrance, Calif., February 8, 1988 -- Ashton-Tate Corp., (NASDAQ: TATE) today announced it has acquired the publishing rights to FrontRunner, a popular dBASE III PLUS language development tool, from Apex Software Corp. of Pittsburgh, Penn.

FrontRunner is available now under the Ashton-Tate label through more than 5,700 authorized Ashton-Tate resellers. The suggested retail price is \$195. An extended limited runtime license is included free if FrontRunner is purchased before June 30.

"FrontRunner allows Ashton-Tate's dBASE III PLUS users to develop custom memory-resident dBASE III PLUS applications using a powerful subset of the dBASE III PLUS programming language. An extensive knowledge of assembler, 'C' or operating systems isn't needed," said Lawrence Benincasa, vice-president of publications for Ashton-Tate.

Memory-resident programs, sometimes called 'pop-up' programs, make their features available any time they are needed by the user. FrontRunner allows users to create entire dBASE III PLUS

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 ASHTON-TATE
20101 Hamilton Avenue
Torrance, California 90502-1319
(213) 538-7312

applications accessible at any time, no matter what program the user is currently running.

Developed by Jeff Cooper, president of Apex, FrontRunner was introduced late in 1987. It is more useful for quick access of dBASE III PLUS .dbf data files and for creating and running high-speed, memory-resident dBASE III PLUS programs.

"It is tempting to view memory residency capabilities as FrontRunner's primary feature," said Cooper. "But such a view is quite limiting, since several other features have been added which give FrontRunner its unique flavor." Other features include:

- * Optional memory-resident installation. While users may run FrontRunner without making it resident, this feature allows users instant access to all of FrontRunner's features from within any application.
- * Complete dBASE III PLUS file compatibility. No time-consuming import or export steps are necessary -- data is read and written directly to and from dBASE data and index files.
- * Ability to create memory-resident programs. A large subset of dBASE III PLUS language is supported allowing complete programs to be executed in memory-resident mode.
- * Unique keyboard enhancement feature. FrontRunner allows binding of commands and programs to a single hotkey for quick execution from within other programs.
- * User-extensible command synonyms.
- * Other features include PASTE commands, a window management subsystem, memory arrays and special debugging and tracing facilities.

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FrontRunner system requirements include an IBM-PC or 100 percent compatible system with DOS 2.1 or higher, 192 Kbytes of available memory after DOS, one floppy drive (hard disk recommended) and mono or color adapter card and monitor.

Terms of the agreement between Ashton-Tate and Apex were not disclosed.

Based in Torrance, Calif., Ashton-Tate markets best-selling microcomputer business applications software in five major categories: database management systems, with industry-standard dBASE III PLUS, dBASE Mac and RapidFile; business graphics with the MASTER GRAPHIC Series and DRAW APPLAUSE; word processing, with MultiMate Advantage II and MultiMate Advantage II LAN; integrated software, with Framework II; and desktop publishing, with Byline. Ashton-Tate also markets a comprehensive line of service and support programs for individuals, corporations and government agencies.

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