ASHTON·TATE

For release:

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dBASE DIRECT/36
MARKET BACKGROUND INFORMATION

An advanced link between data files residing on IBM System/36 minicomputers and dBASE III PLUS on microcomputers, dBASE DIRECT/36 provides users with a gateway to database applications that previously required professional RPG programmers. It is the result of user demand to fill the void between data processing and end-user computing.

There are more than 100,000 System/36 installations that lack relational database capabilities. Independent software developers have often abandoned the System/36 in favor of developing for the DEC VAX and IBM 9370 markets. Lack of industry interest and the sophisticated power dBASE III PLUS offers creates a fertile market for dBASE DIRECT/36.

Traditional database applications development for the System/36 requires highly trained systems programmers. RPG II and RPG III are the IBM-supported development languages for the System/36. Although RPG is a high-level programming language with report formatting, it lacks the power and flexibility of products such as dBASE III PLUS.

The phenomenal growth of the microcomputer market over the

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past six years has led to an installed base of 28 million
such systems. Nearly 10 million are IBM PC compatible and more
than 1.5 million are equipped with dBASE.

For more than 20 years, IBM has lead the minicomputer
market. IBM'S minicomputer growth has declined since the
introduction of Digital Equipment Corporation's VAX mini-
computers, but in terms of installed base, IBM still dominates.

Ashton-Tate estimates there are more than 65,000 installed
System/36 units in the United States. The IBM System/38 and
System/34 account for another 44,000 U.S. installations. Digital
Equipment Corp. has installed nearly 40,000 domestic VAX systems.
Hewlett-Packard has installed more than 15,000 HP 3000 Systems.

Of the 100,000 Systems/36 minicomputers installed worldwide,
Ashton-Tate estimates 75 percent have personal computers attached
to them. The IBM PC accounts for 80 percent of that group.

The broader understanding of data processing now held by
many organizational managers encouraged the development of dBASE
DIRECT/36. Managers are no longer willing to wait months or
years for a database application. They now turn to microcomputer
database applications, such as dBASE III PLUS, with their
fourth-generation programming power.

Coupled with dBASE DIRECT/36, dBASE III PLUS lets
System/36 users build database applications quickly. dBASE
DIRECT/36's on-line access to System/36 data and dBASE III PLUS
combine to provide managers with timely databases for decision
support applications.

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No products compete directly with dBASE DIRECT/36, but a few offer some similar functions. These products include Query/ 36 from IBM, Fusion from Pansophic Software and Omnilink from On-line Software.

For many companies, the limitations of other products force managers into time-consuming custom programming in RPG. This restricts user-driven ad hoc computing. To dramatize the differences between RPG and dBASE programming, the dBASE DIRECT/36 documentation includes a sample RPG program covering several pages. It also includes a functionally identical dBASE DIRECT/36-dBASE III PLUS program that is less than a single page of code.

PRICING AND DISTRIBUTION

Priced at $1,695, Ashton-Tate sells dBASE DIRECT/36 on a per System/36 central processing unit (CPU) basis. Ashton-Tate requires only one copy of dBASE DIRECT/36 per System/36 CPU, regardless of the number of attached personal computers. Each PC attached to dBASE DIRECT/36, however, must have its own copy of dBASE III PLUS.

Ashton-Tate distributes dBASE DIRECT/36 via a new category of resellers who specialize in both System/36 and Ashton-Tate product support. Ashton-Tate will support dBASE DIRECT/36. For distributor information, call Ashton-Tate directly at (213) 327-1111.

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