

Acquisitions Spur Software Growth

CompuServe's recent appetite for software companies has created the youngest of the divisions, the Software Products Division. Its acquisitions provide the company with software products complementary to its network abilities.

"No doubt about it, we're shooting for \$100 million a year in sales by 1992," said Bob Massey, executive vice president of SPD. "We've established ourselves as solid players in the software industry."

Acquisitions that make up SPD are Access Technology, manufacturer of 2020 financial spreadsheet software; Collier-Jackson, a manufacturer of financial, human

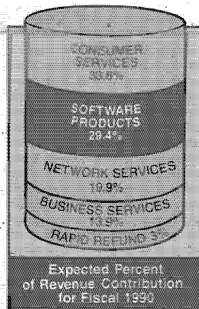
resource and newspaper-management applications; and CompuServe Data Technologies (formerly Software House), manufacturer of 1022 and 1032 database management software.

All firms produce software for the Digital environment, in addition to other platforms. "We're comfortable with the DEC environment," said Charlie McCall, president and CEO, in an interview with *Digital News*. "We want to expand our product offerings into the software area, because we feel software will have good growth rates into the 1990s." McCall added since there isn't a major player in the DEC VAX software marketplace, CompuServe could easily become one through its acquisitions.

While management structure for each subsidiary has remained intact, Massey said combined sales forces will mean increased sales for all. "Our biggest challenge is in developing new contacts for the products," said Massey. "Each of our acquisitions already has excellent products, customer service and support mechanisms in place. We can now use our strengths as a reputable company with multiple distribution channels to bring our products to the attention of qualified prospects."

Massey encourages teamwork among subsidiaries. Each shares competitive sales information, customer base, sales, support and

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Technology Keeps CompuServe Ahead

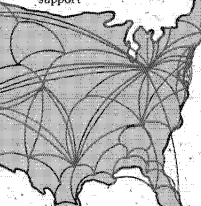
Where CompuServe's systems and support groups are concerned, change has been the essence of success. CompuServe's role as a network leader is a direct result of behind-the-scenes systems development.

"CompuServe started out as a back-office processor for the Golden United Life Insurance Company," said Sandy Trevor, executive vice president of support services. "In 1969, the most significant product was LIDIS, a life insurance software package. If it hadn't worked, there would be no CompuServe."

As CompuServe moved into the time-sharing business in the early 1970s, the back-office processor evolved into systems independent of commercial software. "Our next significant activity was creating our own operating system," said Trevor. "That enabled us to add features and improve reliability so that CompuServe initially had something dependable to sell."

Later on, having our own operating system helped us maintain competitive pricing in the time-sharing business."

Later developments included special interfaces to support the network and third-party peripheral devices. More recent projects support



IBM-compatible disks, and expand memory. Each enhancement took over a year to complete.

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THE ASSOCIATE

Vol. 1, No. 1 A Newsletter for CompuServe Associates June 1989

"Know Thy User" Tactics Pay: 500,000 Subscribers Log On

For the CompuServe Information Service, the adage "there is strength in numbers" definitely holds true. Its subscriber base has grown to 500,000-plus, and the service has become a prominent part of the company's business operations. At a mere 10 years old, it has outlived many of its earlier competitors and is often considered the standard by which other services are measured.

Ever heard of Viewtron, Times-Mirror, TelAction? These services, once thought sure bets to gain some of the information service market share, have since ceased operation. And newcomers such as GENIE and Prodigy are aggressively pursuing the personal computer-equipped consumer. "GENIE seems ready to fight to capture customers from CompuServe," stated the industry newsletter *Interactivity Report* over a year ago. Subscriber counts from competing services suggest such attempts were unsuccessful.

CompuServe's previous business ventures prepared it for entry

Information Service Subscriber Counts*

Delphi	50,000	
Dow Jones		275,000
GENIE		150,000
Prodigy	65,000	
The Source	55,000	500,000
CompuServe		

*estimated counts as of 3/89

into the realm of online communication. As its time-sharing business evolved to take advantage of microcomputer development, CompuServe sought to reach personal computer owners with the service. But as micros become commonplace, computer owners are no longer necessarily programmers, making it necessary for

CompuServe to continually change the way it promotes the service.

"In the early days, most people didn't understand enough about computers and online information to know what they wanted," said John Meier, vice president of market development and services

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Product Marketing Is Key To Business Services Success

What makes the Business Services Division what it is today? According to Clark Woodford, executive vice president, marketing savvy and company resources put CompuServe's business applications in the limelight.

Two CompuServe products — electronic mail and value-added networks — gave BSD the edge it needed. The next step was providing these applications in forms that would be attractive to a variety of companies. "We first sold electronic mail as a separate product in 1978," Woodford said. "We priced it as a

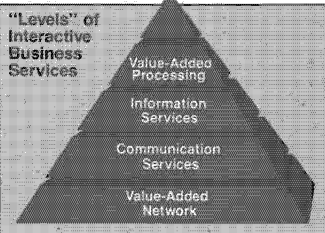
transaction and got away from system resource units and connect time. We took a business that had two or three users per customer and turned it into hundreds and thousands of users per customer."

The value-added networks were a natural extension of CompuServe's early days as a time-sharing company. In 1982, the BSD staff took that same idea and repackaged it, combining CompuServe's databases and electronic mail, providing customization when necessary, and offering the option of connecting to the customer's host and/or CompuServe's host.

Competitors offering similar services but less flexibility in implementing them, did not share CompuServe's BSD successes. "Look at the people who were our main competitors back in 1977-1978 — Rapidata, Online Systems, Service Bureau Corp., ADP

Cybernetics — none of them are doing anywhere near the business we're doing now," Woodford said. "Rapidata has been sold three times and is now being dismantled by EDS. Online Systems has been folded into something else. ADP is still in business but they're mainly doing payroll processing."

The division expects \$65 million in sales this year, primarily from



value-added network and communications services sales. "When I started with the company in 1977, the whole company was doing about \$8 million, and 100 percent of that was SRU-based processing on our

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H&R BLOCK

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Corporate Headquarters
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Kansas City, Missouri 64111
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Henry W. Block
President and
Chief Executive Officer

Dear CompuServe Associates,

Congratulations on your 20th anniversary. It was with great excitement that we welcomed CompuServe to the H&R Block family in 1980. Your company has grown considerably since then, and we look forward to a more exciting and mutually rewarding partnership in the years ahead.

We at Block are pleased that CompuServe continues to attract and retain high-quality, goal-oriented associates, while creating an open, positive environment that supports personal and professional aspirations. We believe that one of CompuServe's greatest strengths has been anticipating change and positioning itself to best take advantage of that change.

As we head into the 1990s, we see CompuServe continuing to:

- Strengthen and expand its proprietary, value-added telecommunication network worldwide.
- Enhance the range and quality of its online services.
- Develop entrepreneurial individuals and the organizational structure on which continued success depends.
- Maintain aggressive national advertising and retail marketing programs, including marketing arrangements with major computer and computer peripheral manufacturers.
- Continue to work with us to make acquisitions such as Access Technology, CompuServe Data Technologies and Collier-Jackson.

We at Block continue to be impressed by how CompuServe meets the ever-increasing demand for enhanced services and information. As personal computers continue to proliferate and as users become familiar with applications beyond word processing and spreadsheets, the value-added communications and information services will continue to grow.

During the 1989 tax season, CompuServe played an important role for H&R Block by being responsible for the systems development and telecommunication functions of Block's greatly expanded Rapid Refund electronic filing program. During the 1988 tax filing season, the Rapid Refund electronic filing program was offered in 1,579 company-owned and franchised offices; that number is expected to reach approximately one-half of all United States offices during the 1989 tax filing season. It would have been impossible for us to contemplate this expansion without the expertise of CompuServe. We're certain your participation will significantly improve and enhance services offered through Rapid Refund and its Refund Anticipation Loan product.

CompuServe is changing the way people obtain and use information. During the next 20 years, changing attitudes about information management will open up new opportunities for you to develop innovative data communications systems. We at H&R Block are excited about these opportunities because we believe that CompuServe has the people, the strategies, the momentum and the commitment to excellence essential for success in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Henry W. Block
Henry W. Block

The Associate Open to Reader Exchanges



Charlie McCall
President and Chief
Executive Officer

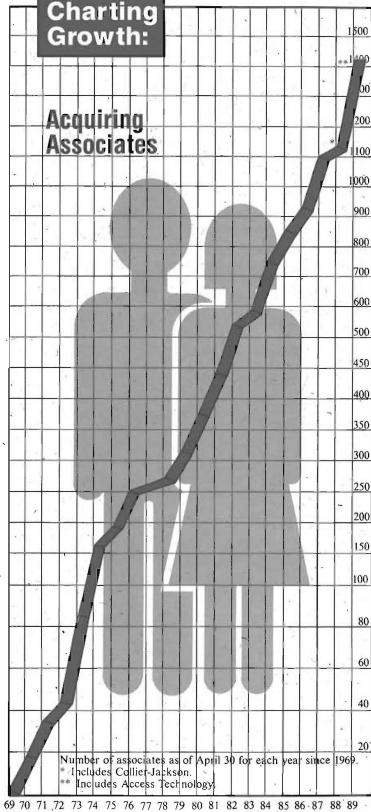
In focus groups and surveys, associates have told us that they want more feedback, more direction from the different executives. As the company has grown, in number of associates and in the different businesses that we are in, the problem of keeping everyone informed has become increasingly challenging.

That's why *Comment* has changed — to meet the challenge. This new format, the timeliness of the information presented, the opportunity for associates to participate in a question-and-answer forum with executives, the shorter, more concise stories — all of these form the ideal communications vehicle for this growing company.

I see *The Associate* as a current, ongoing exchange of information and ideas. It's CompuServe news, the kind of news associates have asked for, the news they have a part in creating. I strongly encourage associates' participation in this endeavor.

Charting Growth:

Acquiring Associates



Happy 20th Anniversary CompuServe!

It is in celebration of our 20 years that we introduce this new publication. CompuServe has grown and changed so much since 1969, as associates quoted on these pages will tell you. Our corporate structure, the variety of products and services we offer, the distant places associates are located — all of these have grown to meet the needs of an increasingly technical society.

The Associate has grown, too, and the new name reflects that growth. CompuServe employees asked to evaluate *Comment* said they wanted more up-to-date information in a company newspaper. They needed shorter, news-oriented stories to read during in-between times in a busy day. They wanted to ask questions and have those questions answered by the right executive. They wanted to know more — about each other, about the state of the company, about the company's plans for the future.

With your help, *The Associate* will provide that information. To ask questions, or to make comments or suggestions, use the form located under "Human Resources" on the CSI Menu. Suggestions can be made anonymously.

The Associate should serve as a communication channel between branches and subsidiaries, associates and managers. After much discussion and preparation, the channel is open. Early responses to these efforts have been favorable. With teamwork, they will continue.

Gayle Brown
Editor



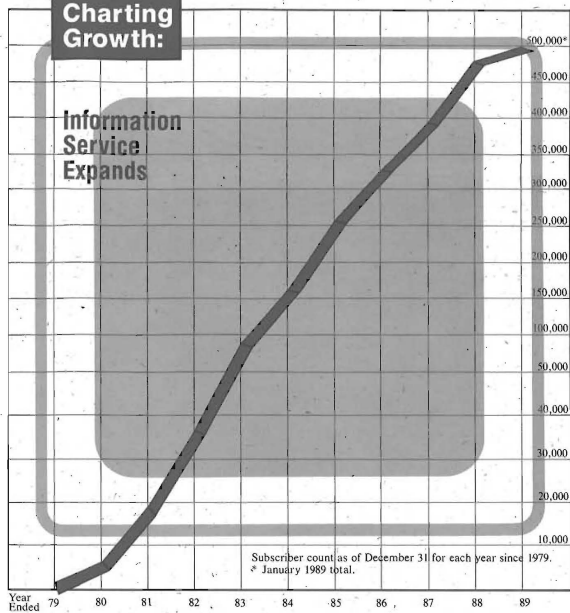
CompuServe's 20th Anniversary logo is a culmination of efforts from the design and production department. Cal Hamrick, manager of design services, reviewed associates' logo ideas for visual impact and flexibility in application. The winning logo idea was submitted by Barb Cagley, a former associate. Look for the logo on stationery, mugs and other items during this anniversary celebration.

“ When I worked for Digital Equipment Corp. I installed System 3 at the old West Fifth Avenue address. Later I visited the newly-built Building 1. Sitting in a 6-by-12 foot canteen having a cup of coffee with Dr. John Goltz, I first heard of a plan to build a network linked to PDP-10 host systems. I thought Compu-Serv was full of dreamers and this type of network had little value. Three years later, I joined the dreamers.”

—Jim Ward
systems maintenance manager
associate since 1976

Charting Growth:

Information Service Expands



“ It's difficult to say which is more memorable, the floods in the computer room or the day the computer room air-conditioning failed. But who could forget the disk pack that launched itself from a running drive and spun across the floor like a top? I still say Joe Beauchamp was trying out a new launch pack command.”

—Gary Onosko
systems engineer III
associate since 1976

“I remember the limited space we started with on West Fifth Avenue. The three DECsystem 10s were so tightly packed into the computer room that the doors couldn't be fully opened to work on the equipment. We had to remove them when repairs were needed.”

—Len Kaiser
director, administrative services
associate since 1973

1969

Harry Gand founds Compu-Serv Network Inc, an in-house computer processing center for Golden United Life Insurance Co.

1970

Compu-Serv, with just five associates, sells data-processing capabilities to business users.

Compu-Serv's first regional sales offices open in Dayton, Cincinnati and Indianapolis.

1972

Compu-Serv, with more than 425 accounts nationwide, is listed among the nation's leading computer service companies.

1974

Network II debuts. It allows simultaneous access via local phone calls throughout the country.

1975

Compu-Serv becomes an independent, publicly-held company. Compu-Serv is listed on NASDAQ, an over-the-counter stock exchange, with the ticker symbol CMPU.

1976

Branch sales offices open in New York City, Stamford, Conn., and Houston. Compu-Serv now has 24 sales and service facilities.

Twenty Years With CompuServe? Shelley Says It's No Big Deal

by Carol Houze Gerber

"It's tough being 'a grand old man' when you're only 41 — just ask Larry Shelley, who reluctantly bears the distinction of having been employed by CompuServe longer than any other associate. Shelley, who joined the company as a systems analyst in 1969, is sometimes referred to as CompuServe's oldest associate, an inaccuracy that makes him groan.

"Although 20 years of service with one company is definitely the exception these days, Shelley said it is nothing to crow about. He's just as soon be left alone to get his work done in peace and quiet. "I'm a private person," he explained. And, it might be added, a hard-working one.

Because the associates he manages are scattered in other arenas, he's often away from his desk. "Business author Tom Peters calls it 'MBWA.' That stands for 'Management By Walking Around.' Instead of a photograph of me, why not take a picture of my empty chair?" Shelley joked. "That's what people often see when they come to my office."

Originally from New York, Shelley grew up in Arizona and studied electrical engineering at the University of Arizona before he joined CompuServe. In his two decades with the company, he has worked as a systems analyst, as manager of operations, as a proposal writer in the government marketing group and as manager of entertainment technology.

Most associates take for granted CompuServe's state-of-the-art computer facilities, but Shelley remembers the early days when the company owned its own equipment. "We used Ohio State University's PDP-9 until CompuServe bought a DEC PDP-10 mainframe in 1970," he recalled. "It was installed at CompuServe's 1387 West Fifth Avenue location in Columbus. The site had previously housed a hardware store and an integrated circuit manufacturer."

Computers were up and running at the Arlington Centre Blvd. site when Shelley began working in entertainment technology in 1982. "Sandy Trevor, executive vice president of support services, felt that games had vast potential," Shelley said. "Sandy put me in charge of developing games for the CompuServe Information Service. Although I had little to do with the beginnings of the Information Service in 1979, I was involved in promoting the idea of finding uses for the mainframes at night.

Presently, Shelley is working with associates Ken Stoll and David Jurgens on a new multi-



Larry Shelley: Hard at work — in his office, for a change.

player distributed intelligence game called *The Electronic Battlefield*. "I'm excited about the potential of this product. We've been working on the concept with other developers for nearly a year," he explains. "The *Electronic Battlefield* marks a new generation of games that use high-resolution, animated color graphics. Users will interact with the game using two joysticks rather than through their keyboards, a setup unique to this new class of games.

"We know that overall, game players use seven to 11 times more connect-time on CompuServe than non-game players," he said. "It's probably a good thing I'm interested in making up games instead of in playing them. People in game development who are game players tend to add features that may enhance the game but are of no economic value to CompuServe. I think *The Electronic Battlefield* has the greatest capacity for generating revenue of any games we've offered so far. It's going to blow subscribers' socks off."

As its name suggests, *The Electronic Battlefield* is a war game, and it is designed on a grand scale. Depending on what software subscribers use — there will be a simulator for each type of military equipment — they can fly F-16 fighters, A-10s or Apache attack helicopters. They can drive armored tanks, command infantry units or be in charge of ground-based missiles or armored units. They can, in short, wreak the most

complicated types of military havoc, all in fun, from the comfort of their own homes.

"The game simulates all-out war," Shelley explained. "When a player accesses *The Electronic Battlefield*, he will be in a conversational mode. After conversing with others who've also accessed it, he will decide what kind of game he wants to play — who will be his allies, for example, and what kind of mission they will carry out. Our host computer then puts together a series of players according to who's available and what each wants to do."

Shelley said the game should be ready early next year and added that, as usual, associates will have the opportunity to help test the new product. "We've never developed anything quite this complex, so I can't say for sure when it will be up in the 'Play Test area,'" he said. "We do send out electronic mail notices of new games to people who have been in the test area in the recent past. Those associates who are current testers should watch their mailboxes."

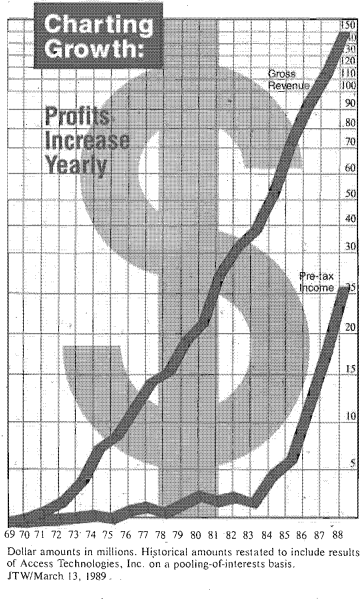
Shelley, who is most emphatically not a "games freak," said his interest in developing games lies in the challenge presented by the complexity of the software and in the potential revenue the games generate for CompuServe. His many years of experience, as well as his interest in the bottom line, add much to the company's (and his) future success.

"I have copies of the in-house magazine we had for a few years. Many of the people pictured in it are still here, and it's interesting to see how few of them have changed! When Jeff Wilkins hired me, I had no idea that I would do writing, paste-up — the whole kit and kaboodle — along with the regular responsibilities I had working for him and four vice presidents."

—Flo Shama
manager, real estate and purchasing
associate since 1973

"I was one of the first three customer service reps who worked over in the 'Capitol building' (now the Beneficial building), and the only one who stayed after 5 p.m. Our users would start logging on at about 6 p.m., and that's when the phones would start ringing. One by one, all the phones on the floor would start to ring, with me frantically trying to answer as many as I could. To this day, I still can't stand the sound of a telephone ringing!"

—Dale Stevenson
database project coordinator
associate since 1978



"Who could forget the fire! When they were getting ready to put up building 5, they hung traps to protect the big glass windows that used to wrap around building 4 to the canteen. But when they were welding some of the steel beams above the windows, the traps caught fire. When the fire alarm went off, I went to get Rick Brownell, who worked at the other end of the hall. He said, 'I'll be there in a minute' and kept typing away. I said, 'Rick, stop working. This is a real fire!' That got him out of his chair."

—Pat Phelps
marketing manager II
associate since 1974

1977

Shareholders gain a two-for-one stock split.

The board of directors changes the company name to CompuServe, Incorporated after surveying the corporate image.

Ground-breaking begins for the Dublin, Ohio, computer facility.

1978

InfoFlex debuts, and is first used by Owens-Corning Fiberglas, Eaton Corp. and Coopers & Lybrand.

Revenues top \$15.7 million, ranking CompuServe among the top 10 computer service companies.

1979

MicroNET, the forerunner of the CompuServe Information Service, goes online. Financial services offered include stock market reports, commodity news, databases of corporate financial histories and financial newsletters.

1980

The MicroQuote database, providing current trading statistics and information on more than 32,000 stocks, is available through MicroNET.

CompuServe merges with H&R Block, providing financial support for expanding the network and Information Service. CompuServe continues to operate independently and maintain its own board of directors.

CompuServe and Tandy Corp. plan to market the newly named CompuServe Information Service in Radio Shack retail stores. The Associated Press and several newspapers join forces with CompuServe to explore electronic news delivery, eventually forming the Associated Press Videotex and the Executive News Service.

The *Columbus Dispatch* becomes the first electronic newspaper and is distributed via the CompuServe Information Service.

CompuServe offers 24-hour access to its 4,000 Information Service subscribers.

1981

CompuServe markets the value-added data network, allowing any corporation's employees, customers and suppliers to connect with a host computer via personal computers or terminals.

"Ask Aunt Nettie," the predecessor to Customer Feedback, goes online.

The Information Service offers 1200-band communication.

EMAIL, the forerunner of EasyFlex, is introduced.

Today Magazine premieres, offering news of the electronic community to Information Service subscribers.

The Information Service is made available in Canada.

1983

The *Washington Post* goes online on the Information Service.

The Electronic Mall opens. It is the first information service shopping service to offer merchandise from national merchants to personal computer users.



• GROWTH from page 1
and former general manager of the Information Service. Testing subscribers' likes and dislikes was a trial and error process. "If you had a product idea, and could put it together, we put it up on the service," said Meier. "If people used it, we felt it was successful."
Maury Cox, executive vice president of the Information Services Division, says the decision to distribute IntroPaks in Radio Shack stores is one of the reasons the service is so well-known today. "In 1983, CompuServe also decided to invest in quality advertising for the service," said Cox. The investment paid off. In 1984, the service gained its 100,000th subscriber, just five years into the business. Other milestones were agreements to dis-

tribute the Information Service in Japan and Europe.
Quality control also became paramount. These days, products are carefully planned and researched before they get online. And subscribers' opinions of the service are actively sought through online surveys, forum discussions and focus groups.
The next step, said Cox, is to tap into the growing power of the personal computer. "The new VISION software will change the way subscribers view the service," said Cox. Features such as rapid movement through the service via windows, local message editing and downloading entire message threads take advantage of personal computer power and the variety of products on the service. In VISION, Cox sees unlimited possibilities.
"We're already recognized as the leader in this business," said Cox. "We now have the opportunity to connect the world."



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training facilities. The training program, directed by Peter Rogers, manager of SPD sales, showed new SPD telephone sales representatives how to find and verify sales prospects, and then channel qualified leads to the proper subsidiary salesperson. SPD telephone sales reps also support marketing events for all subsidiaries, including trade shows and user conferences.
Successful sales efforts outside the U.S. is another long-term goal. "Successful software companies gain about half of their revenue outside the United States," said Massey in a recent *Comment* interview. While Access' 20/20 is well-known in Europe, Massey wants to establish that and other SPD products in places such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, Japan and Canada.
When *The HP Chronicle* spotted Massey at the North American Hewlett-Packard User Conference in Orlando last September, he said he had but one objective. "We're shopping," he said, "for a spreadsheet product-to complement *CP*'s financial applications." Has the Access acquisition ended this shopping spree? Only time will tell.

Editor's Note: Apparently not. On May 12, SPD finalized the acquisition of Applied Computing, an Australian-based distributor of spreadsheet and test software, including 20/20.

"I remember going to Ohio State University with Larry Shelley to work on its computers when Compu-Serv had an office at Golden United Life Insurance on Fishinger Road. I later asked Larry what I had been doing and he said I had been programming. That was the first time I had ever seen a computer."
—Donna Zimmerman, manager, human relations associate since 1976.

• SUPPORT from page 1
Pre-dating the personal computer, CompuServe's time-sharing sales enabled users to buy raw time on host mainframes. "We were selling Fortran and BASIC to people and letting them write code on our PDP-10 mainframes," said Trevor. Time-share buyers were connected to CompuServe via dial-up modems and a four-city network.
"After we got our first customer in 1970, we realized that all customers were not going to be in Columbus, Ohio, and that they needed to be connected to us somehow," said Trevor. Trevor and others went to work on the first phase of the network software.
Right after finishing Network II, Trevor's development teams realized using time-division multiplexers was the next logical step. This allowed the network to handle more users per dedicated phone line.
"In 1973, we started thinking about packet networks," said Trevor. "Our first model was ARPANET, the government network. Then Doug Chinnock and John Goltz came up with a network design based on logical circuits and sub-networks, instead of pure packet switching. Logical circuits pick the best path to route data between sub-networks without going to the host for help. Pure packet networks send data to the host in increments, or packets. The host sends each packet out again to its destination."
This design made CompuServe's network more efficient than other packet networks such as TYMNET and Telenet. "TYMNET's network was closely modeled after ours, but they have a central master," said Trevor. "If the master breaks down, the whole network goes down, until the back-up takes over. We don't have that problem because network power is distributed throughout."
Trevor says his division will continue enhancing the network to keep ahead in the industry. Current projects include rewriting the network software in a higher level language and using faster processors in the network. Beyond that, he's not talking.

"I remember coming here to interview, all dressed up, on a Saturday morning because that was the only time I could make it. The person interviewing me was wearing bermuda shorts and I remember wondering if this was a place where I really wanted to work! But I had been referred by someone who knew Jeff (Wilkins) and had read a lot of favorable things about the company, and so was willing to take a chance."
—Judy Reinhard, vice president, human resources associate since 1974.

• BUSINESS from page 1
mainframes," Woodford said. Woodford still remembers closing that first InfoPlex deal. "I have a copy of the first check from our first customer, Owens-Corning Fiberglas, from November 1978," he said. "It took us several months to convince them to go for it."
CompuServe had a similar application under a time-sharing contract with NCR. Owens-Corning Fiberglas was the first customer to buy electronic mail as a product, without a time-sharing contract.
Other BSD sales followed, with the most notable to date being a five-year, \$30 million agreement with VISA Corp.
VISA is the first BSD client ever to bill \$1 million per month. "VISA and the point-of-sale product went from just an idea in 1983 to become, in 1986, one of the largest accounts we've ever had," said Woodford.
VISA's first attempt to use a competing network was unsuccessful. "Telenet just wasn't willing to change the network to make it work," said Woodford. "We modified our network to effect a quick log-on, and had them hooked."



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The Associate is published monthly. Please send suggestions, questions or comments via the CSI Menu.

"I remember Harry Gard taking my department to the river in his camper for picnics. There were eight of us technical writers then. Everyone would bring something, and off we'd go. And Jeff Wilkins was known for running down the hall with a squirt gun. But they really knew how to get you fired up on some project, and they knew how to celebrate the results of those things, too. They were real visionaries, and I think they made the Information Service what it is today."
—Sue Downey, publications manager associate since 1974.

"In 1970, our much larger competitors had many mainframes and 24-hour customer service lines. To try to compete, Compu-Serv's sales staff was 'encouraged' to list home phone numbers on business cards. My phone rang at my bedside day and night with customers' questions. Of course, they thought we were on duty around the clock, so it was hard to explain away the down time needed for maintenance on our one mainframe. Compu-Serv had about 20 employees then, but many customers mistakenly assumed we were as large as a General Electric. Things are certainly different now."
—Jim Smith, product manager III associate since 1970.

"In late 1970 or early 1971, after working about all the secrets that someone might be gleaming from our trash dumpster, someone ordered a listing shredder. When it finally arrived, everyone gathered around it to watch it operate. And I had to get a real close look. All of a sudden, I felt a tug on my neck and saw the shredded ends of my tie hanging from the back of the shredder! When I got it to stop, about three inches of my tie were regurgitated by the monster and three inches were left intact below my neck. I don't know if I ever tried to read paper shreds again. I do remember that my tie was hung above the shredder as a warning for some time after that."
—Doug Chinnock, vice president, research and development associate since 1970.

1984
Interchange debuts, a private information service for business customers that integrates electronic communication and delivery products in a single environment.
A \$5.8 million expansion project to more than double the size of CompuServe corporate headquarters is nearly completed.
Online Today Electronic Edition debuts, providing daily updates on videotex and computer industry news.

1985
EasyPlex replaces EMAIL as the electronic mail service used by its personal computer customers.
The Information Service now has 250,000 subscribers across the U.S.
Jeffrey Wilkins resigns; Charles McCall succeeds him as president and chief executive officer.

1986
CompuServe acquires Software House, a database management software company based in Cambridge, Mass. The Software Products Division is formed.

1987
CompuServe and Computer Sciences Corp. agree to market communication and financial systems to European and Far Eastern companies.
Two major Japanese firms agree to offer the Information Service to personal computer users in Japan.

CompuServe's Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) goes online in the Information Service, allowing the exchange of graphics files between non-compatible microcomputers.

CompuServe acquires Collier-Jackson, a Tampa, Fla.-based applications software company that develops, markets and supports

1988
CompuServe provides the network for H&R Block's Rapid Refunds, allowing taxpayers to file returns electronically and to receive tax refunds quickly.

CompuServe acquires Access Technology Inc., based in Natick, Mass., a developer of spreadsheet modeling software.

EasyPlex and InfoPlex, CompuServe's electronic mail systems, add FAX messaging capabilities.

CompuServe finalizes an agreement with Radio-Schweiz, a Berne, Switzerland-based provider of database services, to distribute the CompuServe Information Service in Europe. Flats also call for Radio-Schweiz to develop services based on CIS in England, Switzerland,

1989
The CompuServe Information Service becomes the first online information service to reach 500,000 members.