Acquires Informatics Products SDA Moving Into IBM Software Market

By Connie Winkler CW Staff

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NEW YORK – Software Design Associates, Inc. (SDA) has acquired its second software product line to position itself for the new day of telecommunications and 370-compatible systems.

SDA President Jay N. Goldberg recently announced the acquisition of the Intercomm and Minicomm products from Informatics, Inc. of Woodland Hills, Calif. This comes on the heels of SDA's takeover in March of Software Systems Corp. of McLean, Va., and its main product, Dimension V.

This marks the beginning of a product line for SDA, which until now has only offered software services. A wholly owned subsidiary, SDA Products, Inc., has been formed to market the products.

Dimension V and Intercomm, supplemented by SDA's 250 software professionals, should make the right combination to launch SDA into the IBM 4300 generation and the next decade, according to Goldberg. "Ten years from now, we want to be positioned as one of the major firms providing software and professional services," he said.

In its first 10 years, SDA has provided a gamut of information processing services to 100 banking, utility and insurance companies in the Fortune 500. Still privately owned, SDA started with three founders in 1968; by the end of 1979, it will have 300 employees and sales of \$14 million.

Rival of CICS

"We feel there is a lot of opportunity in communications," Goldberg said about the purchase of Intercomm and Minicomm. "This was our opportunity to get into communications software, and we jumped at it." Intercomm, a head-on competitor with IBM's Customer Information Control Sys-



Jay N. Goldberg

tem (CICS), is one of the oldest, tested telecommunications monitors used primarily with large networks. "It's really a quality product which Auerbach Publishers, Inc. rated higher than CICS," the SDA president claimed.

SDA sees Intercomm and Minicomm as the start of a large software line for big users of data communications. Minicomm is a DOS teleprocessing monitor that reportedly allows small DOS shops to have on-line systems up and running in one day. Minicomm could become the basic product of SDA's software product line for small distributed processing systems.

The 30 employees involved with Intercomm and Minicomm will be incorporated into the SDA staff, as have the 10 from Software Systems Corp. SDA acquired Software Systems Corp. in March because of the potential of Dimension V, a data center scheduling system.

"Dimension is a sophisticated on-line scheduling system that really cleans up the data center operation, where much scheduling has been done manually," Goldberg said. Dimension allows managers to schedule jobs throughout the year via a data base built by SDA, as well as call jobs on demand.

It allows operators to know where the job is and allocates the hardware required, thereby reducing reruns and giving the operator a tremendous amount of control, Goldberg said.

Dimension V, which is the outgrowth of earlier Deadline, Streamline and Bottomline software products, runs on large-scale 370-type machines under OS. It also allows the data center to do sophisticated modeling, so DP managers can determine what their future systems plans would actually allow them to produce.

Dimension V sells for about \$60,000, which includes installation and training.

The 10-person Software Systems Corp. was struggling to sell the relatively new product. "They needed resources to exploit the system," Goldberg said. "It was a good acquisition for both of us. The customer lists of SDA, Intercomm and Software Systems Corp. overlap considerably."

Most Important Product

While SDA sales representatives have always actively sold professional software services, they will now also be selling SDA's training expertise, Intercomm and Dimension.

But SDA's most important product remains its people, Goldberg said. He likens the software house to other service industries such as advertising or accounting firms. In the same way advertising firms have account executives, SDA has people managers, 10 full-time managers whose hours are nonbillable and who visit SDA employees at client sites every week.

To build its staff, SDA provides generous incentives including \$1,000 for each in-house referral of people actually hired. "Where better for software professionals to practice than a software firm?" Goldberg asked. "If I were an accountant, I would want to work for a CPA firm.