

digital review

THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER & TEST LAB OF DEC COMPUTING

Vector option for VAX 6000 due to arrive at DECUS

By Eric Smalley

NEW ORLEANS — DEC will announce at this week's DECUS meeting that the vector processor option for the VAX 6000 series is being shipped and has exceeded DEC's expectations for performance.

Also, DEC officials last week reiterated the company's long-standing commitment to its VAX 6000 platform strategy.

That strategy guarantees plug compatibility of CPU, memory and system bus between the different generations of the VAX 6000 line of machines.

VAX 6000, PAGE 8

SQL Solutions to release RDBMS management tools

By Melinda-Carol Ballou

Mass. — SQL Solutions this week will announce two offerings designed to meet the needs of SQL developers and system administrators: SQL Advantage, a productivity environment designed to make it easier to write and debug SQL code over a range of relational databases, and SA Companion, a control environment designed for Sybase client/server database architecture.

SQL Advantage lets developers write and debug SQL code easily without leaving the editing environment,



DEC, Apple alliance finally yields results

By Kimberly Patch

NEW YORK — The fruit of more than two years of labor by DEC and Apple is the integration of 14 new and existing Macintosh-to-VAX software packages to be available in September.

With DEC LanWorks for Macintosh computers, users finally will be able to obtain software from DEC that ties Macintoshes to DECnet, allows VAX/VMS systems to

be servers on an AppleTalk network and links disparate AppleTalk LANs via a DECnet backbone.

DEC LanWorks software is made up of VMS server software, Macintosh client applications and network software that integrates AppleTalk networks with DECnet/Open Systems Interconnect networks and developer tools. The package provides Network Applications Services, which allows VAX and Macintosh users to share files and printers, compound document interchange and electronic mail.

The products will be available through DEC resellers. Apple will not sell the products. According to Apple CEO John Sculley, DEC is better-equipped to sell and service LanWorks. However, Sculley said, "Now that the platform is there, you'll see Apple active in trying to encourage third parties to develop for the platform." Sculley compared the DEC-Apple offering to IBM's Systems Application Architecture (SAA). "We believe [LanWorks] is the equivalent level of

Code converter punches up Oracle RDBMS performance

By Melinda-Carol Ballou

LONG BEACH, Calif. — Oracle users seeking to bolster the performance of SQL*Report and speed text retrieval from Oracle applications can turn to RPT²C and SQL*Text products

from Management Information Technology Inc. (MITI).

RPT²C version 3.0 converts Oracle's SQL*Report code into ANSI C code, enabling users to run their reports many times faster, company officials said. Converting the SQL*Report code to C code also opens the application to portability and easier modification by programmers.

"We convert the RPT, Oracle's interpretive code, into executable C, eliminating the need to run an interme-

diated file, which reduces the I/O by 70 percent," said Paul Belmonte, MITI's director of marketing and sales.

"We also offer built-in array charts, array fetch and debugging, and enable users to incorporate non-database files into reports," Belmonte said. "With release 3, we eliminate the need to run RPF, Oracle's report format, which is time-consuming and I/O-intensive. You go from the report to screen or paper as soon as the execution command is given."

With this new version of

RPT²C, reports can be viewed or printed as they are created. Users can add free text to reports using the LONG data type, check SQL syntax without having to run the report and execute reports from Oracle's SQL*Forms.

Users don't have to learn anything new to take advantage of RPT²C's capabilities, Belmonte said, because the tool is invisible to the user.

"There is no learning curve, and it takes around

ORACLE, PAGE 89

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CLOSER LOOK

Independence from database tyranny is at hand

By Melinda-Carol Ballou

As Eastern Europe opens up ideological and economic barriers to the West, the latest trend in the database arena is to free users from the confines of particular databases by letting them run applications over multiple databases.

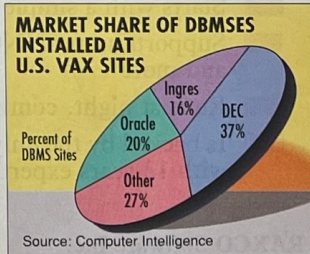
Surprisingly, for a marketplace in which players have stridently emphasized the advantages of their proprietary solutions, many

database vendors agree that interoperability between databases is desirable.

"I think [database interoperability] is something that's really good for the market... These kinds of tools are going to be [more] common," said Nimish Mehta, manager of tools marketing at Oracle of Belmont, Calif.

"Eventually, giving people

INTEROPERABILITY, PAGE 90



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Convex licenses graphics software from Stardent

By Ted Smalley Bowen

Supercomputer builder Convex of Richardson, Texas, has joined DEC in licensing Application Visualization System (AVS) software from Stardent of Newton, Mass.

The agreement entitles Convex to license and market AVS with its own offerings, according to Stardent Chief Operating Officer Ian Edmonds. The deal makes Convex the first supercom-

puter company other than Stardent to have access to AVS, company officials said.

The system will link Convex supercomputers with graphics workstations. "Convex doesn't have its own graphics platforms, but its systems can interconnect the software's modules," Edmonds said.

The licensing agreement bolsters the perception of AVS as a de facto standard for high-end visualization software, said Carl Mach-

over, president of Machover Associates, a market research company in White Plains, N.Y.

Because Silicon Graphics commands a strong presence in the 3-D market, Stardent needs to differentiate itself from Silicon Graphics' offerings, Machover said.

However, the acceptance of AVS among large players does not signal an industry-wide trend toward a single visualization standard, he said.

"The idea of a single stan-

dard probably is not practical in this market. I think we'll see a duality in terms of visualization software," Machover said.

Although AVS is viewed as a high-end visualization product, Stardent plans to port it to smaller systems, according to Edmonds.

"There's no reason AVS couldn't run on PS/2. We have been looking at ways to address memory issues and to provide a lower-cost version," he said.

SCSI controllers give VAX users low-cost option to DSSI

By Steven Kovsky

NEW ORLEANS — Micro Technology Inc. (MTI) has unveiled a pair of **DEXPO SOUTH** SCSI controllers that will eventually give groups of Q-bus- and Unibus-based VAXes access to less-expensive SCSI peripherals. The controllers are supplied to MTI by CMD Technology.

By capitalizing on SCSI's inherent ability to support multiple hosts through use of the DISCONNECT and RECONNECT commands, the controllers will allow users to build SCSI-based clusters linking as many as three VAX CPUs, according to MTI Marketing Director, Tom Raimondi.

"The function of these SCSI-based clusters would be similar to more conventional clusters based on DSSI," Raimondi said.

However, users would gain the advantage of access

to SCSI peripherals, which generally are more moderately priced than peripherals designed for DSSI clusters, he said.

The initial release of the QTD30 for Q-bus systems, and its Unibus counterpart, the UTD30, will not support multiple hosts, he said. Support for multiple hosts will be available July 1.

Initially, the controllers will be offered with MTI's Mustang series of 780MB and 1.2GB disk drives, 8mm cartridge tape drives, streaming nine-track tape drives, and 600MB and 1GB erasable optical disk drives.

Subsystems featuring the QTD30 or UTD30 controllers will range in price from \$8,500 to \$74,000. The products will be available next month.

MTI will be exhibiting at Booth 700 at Dexpo South.

Micro Technology Inc. is located at 5065 E. Hunter Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807, (714) 970-0300.

Inexpensive microwave Ethernet bridge replaces T1 links

By Eric Smalley

BRAINTREE, Mass. — Microwave Bypass Systems has unveiled a low-cost version of its microwave Ethernet bridge that is designed to take local phone companies out of the data communications business.

Etherwave II gives users a means to establish a point-to-point link between remote Ethernet networks for less than \$30,000, said David Theodore, Microwave Bypass Systems' president.

An increasing number of users are looking for alternatives to telecommunications systems for wide area networking. (See "Do-it-yourself communications links on the rise," DR, April 16, page 9.)

Etherwave II includes a microwave link, a microwave-to-Ethernet interface and Ethernet bridges. The bridges perform packet filtering and learn node addresses on the network automatically, according to Theodore.

Critics of microwave technology

have charged that microwave links are susceptible to weather and can be knocked out by rainfall.

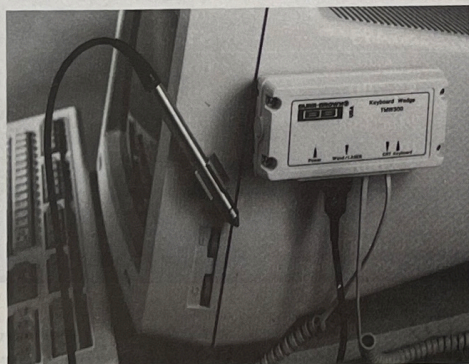
"Microwave is not susceptible to rain. Only the wrong system, improperly installed and configured, will be problematic in the rain," Theodore said.

Etherwave II is available now. A turnkey system is priced at \$26,000. Installation charges are separate.

Microwave Bypass Systems Inc. can be contacted at 25 Braintree Hill Park, Braintree, MA 02184, (617) 843-8260.

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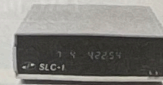


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