

Hot-selling sets of office applications offer consistency and cool prices. **See page 51**

We compare Windows' big three: Ami Pro, Word, and WordPerfect. **See page 66**

## Portable database tool due this quarter

V/Forms expected to boost 3GLs

BY KELLEY DAMORE

Users looking to easily move their legacy applications to a client/server platform can soon tap a tool designed to be portable across languages, database servers, and operating systems.

Start-up Visigenic Software Inc. this quarter will release its first offering, a design tool called V/Forms, which is based on object class libraries that can create database objects such as forms or reports. Each of these libraries will automatically generate the source code needed for a developer's native platform, according to Roger Sippl, president of Visigenic.

V/Forms will include both View Painter and Forms Painter. View Painter lets users pick fields from a

database; Forms Painter can create and modify all of the visual objects on the form, Sippl said.

Users and analysts said the tool could breathe life into existing third-generation language (3GL) applications.

"People are looking for a way to move their Cobol applications over [to client/server]," said Joe Pearson, president of JDP Computer Services, in **See DATABASE, page 99**



V/Forms will offer a transition from conventional programming to object technology.

## cc:Mail for Windows 2.0 marred by security flaw

Lotus ready with work-around; promises a free fix

BY DOUG BARNEY

Users of cc:Mail for Windows 2.0 beware: Your electronic mail may not be as secure as you thought.

The Lotus Development Corp. product, which shipped six months ago, does not adequately encrypt a user's password, allowing hackers with an

editor such as Borland International Inc.'s Brief to find and ultimately use their passwords to break into the system.

Lotus, flooded with calls from worried users, has come up with a quick fix and is preparing an update that eliminates the problem.

The company last week posted messages on CompuServe

and Internet admitting an unspecified security problem and requesting people call (415) 966-4905 for more information.

Lotus promised to have a cc:Mail technical support engineer return calls within one hour if made during normal business hours.

The problem is not found in **See CC:MAIL, page 99**

## IBM Peer OS/2 to offer access to LAN services

BY DOUG BARNEY

Six months after its promised delivery, IBM has released into beta its first OS/2 peer-to-peer networking product that sports tight integration with the WorkPlace Shell.

IBM had promised to ship

PC DOS and OS/2-based peer-to-peer services by June 1993. The company now plans to ship the product, dubbed Peer OS/2, in the second half of this year, said Walley Casey, director of marketing for Personal Systems Products.

The PC DOS version will

ship after Peer OS/2.

The delay is due to a change in plans, Casey said. IBM originally was developing what Casey called "quick and dirty" peer-to-peer networking with no access to server-based networks.

IBM decided to provide access to networks from a single client. This way, users will not need two different clients to access different network types. In addition, users can install a peer network and then upgrade **See PEER, page 99**

## IBM slips rare ThinkPad 750C to favored few

BY CATE CORCORAN AND YVONNE L. LEE

Users eager to get their hands on IBM's hot-selling ThinkPad 750Cs may wind up with something even better — but only if they are "special" customers.

Like all systems with large active matrix screens, the 750C portables have been almost im-

possible to get since they were introduced in November, because active matrix displays are in such short supply.

Now IBM is shipping, via "special bid" only, an enhanced version of the 750C called the 750Ce. It has the same coveted 10.4-inch active matrix screen as the 750C but boasts a faster processor and VESA local bus graphics.

Only customers with IBM sales accounts — generally Fortune 500 corporations — can order them, although a small number of 750Ces seem to have fallen through the dealer cracks and wound up in the **See THINKPAD, page 99**

## Cabletron develops cross-platform hub

BY BOB WALLACE

Cabletron Systems Inc. this spring will ship a high-end LAN switching hub that also routes traffic, lets managers build virtual networks from different topologies, and provides improved network management.

Cabletron's MMAC-Plus, slated to ship in May starting at about \$41,000 for 100 ports, uses a proprietary scheme that will enable the hub to route a wide array of protocols (see chart).

Without the new hub, network managers looking to link dissimilar LANs could install a routing card that costs between \$5,000 and \$10,000 in a hub, but that one card would support only a connection between one Ethernet and one Token Ring LAN segment, said Chris Oliver, Cabletron's director of engineering.

"Integrated routing could mean big savings for us by eliminating the need for routers in our [LAN] internetwork," said Sam Picture, vice president of telecommunications technology services at Home Savings, in Irwindale, Calif. He is **See CABLETRON, page 99**

## Cabletron MMAC-Plus hub at a glance



A 16-slot hub with an aggregate switching bandwidth of over 106 gigabits per second

Supports 168 LAN segments including Ethernet, Token Ring, and FDDI

**Top Features:**

- Can eliminate need for routers by supporting IP, IPX, DECnet, and AppleTalk, with Vines, OSI, XNS, and APPN by year end
- Any-to-any communications so users on different LANs can communicate as if they were on the same LAN
- Built-in network management by supporting the IBM® NetView — also offers two management applications: one for use with existing umbrella net management systems and a second on a stand-alone workstation

SOURCE: CABLETRON SYSTEMS INC.

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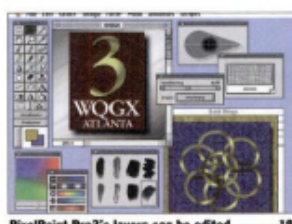
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AT DEADLINE

**Ambra may be first to ship clock-tripled chip in PCs**

Ambra Computer Corp. will be among the first—if not the first—systems makers to offer a clock-tripled processor in its line. Ambra will announce next week new configurations using the IBM-made 32-bit Blue Lightning chip that runs at 100 MHz internally and 33.3 MHz externally, sources said. Prices have not been set but are expected to start around \$2,200 for a system with a 240MB hard drive and a 15-inch screen, sources said. A similar system with a clock-doubled 33/66-MHz Blue Lightning chip lists for \$1,979. — *Case Corcoran*

**Lotus will fix OS/2 application bugs**

Lotus Development Corp. next month will release new versions of its OS/2 applications to fix bugs and enhance performance, company sources said. Lotus 1-2-3 for OS/2 2.01 will include bug fixes, font handling, and Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE) improvements; it will also repair problems for OS/2 2.1 customers. New features include support for Vendor Independent Messaging (VIM) and a 32-bit graphical installation module that will be the common installer for all OS/2 applications. Freelance Graphics for OS/2 2.01 will get similar bug fixes, and Ami Pro will get both performance enhancements and bug fixes. — *Doug Barney*

In other news, Lotus last week announced the shipment of the \$495 Lotus 1-2-3, Release 4 for Windows Multimedia Edition. — *Doug Barney*

**IBM gives up Pentium chip production**

IBM will forgo its right to manufacture Pentium and future Intel Corp. microprocessors in an agreement reached between the companies. IBM will receive a supply of Pentiums from Intel and boost its in-house production of 486 chips. — *Brooke Crothers*

**Intel to dismiss infringement claims**

Intel Corp. said it will drop its patent infringement case against Cyrix regarding Intel's Crawford patent, which deals with how system memory is used in combination with the microprocessor. This comes in the wake of a January 21 decision by the U.S. District Court in Sherman, Texas, which found that Cyrix did not violate cross-licensing agreements regarding the Crawford patent. (See "Cyrix wins right to patent but faces dwindling x86 chip supply," January 31, page 26.) — *Brooke Crothers*

**Vendors ready data storage standard**

Top LAN vendors will announce at next week's Networks Expo support for a new standard that will make it easier and cheaper to manage enterprise-wide data storage. Cheyenne Software Inc. will be joined by Microsoft Corp., Novell Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co., and Computer Associates International Inc. Other companies expected to ship products this year include IBM, AT&T, Sun Microsystems Inc., and Exabyte Corp. The standard, which vendors can implement now, specifies requirements to let storage systems from different vendors interoperate. — *Bob Wallace*

**Quark announces PowerPC plans**

Quark Inc. will release a native-mode PowerPC version of its QuarkXPress 3.3 desktop publishing program by midyear, the company said. It will be Quark's first product delivered on CD-ROM and will have the same base functionality as, and file compatibility with, the Windows and Mac versions but will cost \$100 more, at \$995. The CD-ROM will include AppleScripts, UserLand Software Inc.'s Frontier scripts, Quark libraries, templates, utilities, third-party fonts, and 12 QuarkXTensions. — *Willem Knibbe*



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## IBM, integrator offer networks ready to plug in

By STEVE POLILLI

IBM and start-up system integrator Advanced Modular Solutions (AMS) are shipping pre-configured departmental networks, providing non-network savvy users with a turnkey network solution.

Called LAN On Demand, the network can support as many as 20 users and comes with pre-loaded, preconfigured system and application software. Software choices include IBM's LAN Server Entry, a small-office version of LAN Server; a general accounting package from BPI; and WordPerfect 6.0.

AMS' pricing is dependent on user needs; for example, a 60-MHz 486 server costs \$7,600 with software. The system has a 525MB hard drive and network cabling. Diskless PCs, about the size of a brick, are \$1,400 with monitor.

Observers said the LAN On Demand program is part of a growing trend to offer simple networks to a certain category of user.

"There are buyers out there who want shrink-wrapped networks," said Frank Dzubek of Communications Network Architects, in Washington. "These networks aren't intended to be flexible, but some customers want it that way."

Users who would be attracted to a preconfigured LAN are workgroups without an on-site computer support person. Dzubek said. He said users who expect to continually change their network setups or applications are not well suited for preconfigured LANs.

The new relationship is similar to a pilot program, called LAN Select, started in December by the IBM Personal Computer Co.'s direct sales channel, whose primary mission is to move PC hardware. The IBM side of LAN On Demand is IBM's networking group, which does not sell servers or PCs.

LAN Select is managed by a different group within IBM and only offers IBM platforms, but it provides a choice of LAN Server or NetWare networks.

By contrast, LAN On Demand offers only IBM's LAN Server Entry operating system and uses AMS' ultrasmall PC hardware.

"We want to do all the things we can to make LAN Server available to more people," said Peter Greulich, IBM's LAN systems marketing planner. "Part of that is making LAN Server less costly to administer and install."

AMS, in Concord, Mass., is at (800) 266-3852.

### At a glance:

#### IBM's Person-To-Person for Windows

- Call Manager activates links to other call participants
- New features a personal information manager
- Chalkboard allows call participants to enter text and associate contents, including work with bit-mapped graphics
- Video allows up to four users to view real-time video or clips through IBM's ActionMedia hardware options. Not intended as a video-conferencing system
- Supports cut and paste through Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE)
- Extensions allow users to capture images from a scanner, VCR, or other device for transmission to other participants

## Conferencing software available for Windows

### IBM expands Person-to-Person

By STEVE POLILLI

A Windows version of IBM's Person-to-Person software, a communications tool that allows remote PC users to work collaboratively, is now shipping.

The \$280 Windows version expands support of this tool beyond the previous OS/2 support, shipping since March 1993. Part of an emerging class of tools generically called "whiteboards," Person-to-Person allows multiple users to interact while connected either remotely or on a LAN.

Person-to-Person offers one feature that observers said is notably lacking in many whiteboard products — multipoint connectivity. Whiteboards offer only limited value if the number of users is limited to two.

"In a LAN or other collaborative environment, you need to be able to conference with three or four people to make it worthwhile," said Sarah Dickinson, at Personal Technology Research Inc., in Waltham, Mass. "It's a workgroup product and has to be workgroup enabled to be effective."

Dickinson said the technology needed to make a whiteboard product work with more than two users is "no simple task" and that IBM's implementation

seems to work well.

With Person-to-Person a user might call up two colleagues in remote offices and launch the "chalkline" feature to let all three type messages that instantly displayed to each other. A document could be placed in the drawing board, enabling all parties to read and mark up the file. Data from a spreadsheet, an image, or another document could also be dropped in, as could live video of the other participants.

The Person-to-Person architecture defines "channels" as the logical links across the network, and "ports" as the devices, applications, or users at either end of a channel. Channels are always defined by the sending application and go to one or more receiving applications through a port at the end of the channel. Data can be sent through a standard channel or use one of three types of "channel sets."

System requirements include 6MB of RAM (8MB recommended); 5.5MB of available hard drive space; 16-MHz 386 or higher processor; Windows 3.1; and a modem for remote use. Person-to-Person supports use on networks with NetBIOS or TCP/IP protocols.

IBM is in White Plains, N.Y., at (800) 426-2255.

## Digital ships tools for mobile clients

By SHAWN WILLET

Digital Equipment Corp. rolled out a barrage of mobile computing products designed to provide remote DOS and Windows users with full client capabilities in the enterprise.

The products, dubbed the RoamAbout family, all require TCP/IP on the remote PC and are available now.

Analysts said that although a few of the products are still tied to Digital's VMS operating system, they do give network managers an enterprisewide approach to solving problems associated with mobile clients.

RoamAbout Mobile IP is client TCP/IP software that lets users roam among networks and subnetworks while keeping the same IP (Internet Protocol) address. This means users have access to the same files, services,

and applications no matter where or how they are connected to the network.

"This is a fairly unique product," said Richard Buchanan, analyst at the Forrester Group, in Cambridge, Mass. "It lets you walk around inside a building without having to manually reconnect to the server and processes you were on."

Each subnetwork server requires software that redirects packets and data to the user. The client piece is \$60; the server piece is \$320 per server.

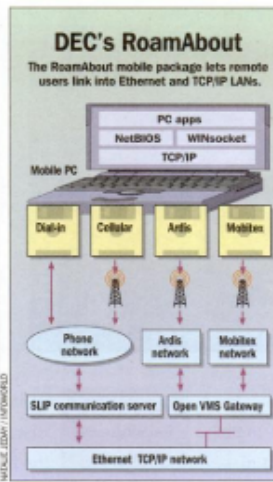
Another piece of client software, the RoamAbout Transport Communications Software, makes DOS mobile computers full TCP/IP clients.

In addition to regular cellular and CDDP (cellular digital packet data) support, the software works with Ardis and Mobitex services. The two latter services must be connected to an Ethernet TCP/IP backbone through a VAX gateway. The cellular or dial-up connections are routed through any communication server supporting SLIP.

Prices start at \$199 per client and \$799 per server.

In addition, Digital rolled out RoamAbout Wireless-to-Wired Access Point, a wireless remote communications hub priced starting at \$600. A new RoamAbout Wireless PCMCIA Network Adapter is priced at \$595.

Digital is based in Maynard, Mass., and can be reached at (800) 344-4825.



## Interlink package improves PC access to mainframe services

By SHAWN WILLET

Interlink Computer Sciences is shipping a version of software that lets PC users access mainframe services via TCP/IP and includes better performance and supports more users.

"We've increased the number of remote machines from 250 to 300 to about 5,000," said Charles Jepson, president of the firm.

Interlink's SNS/TCPAccess puts the TCP/IP protocol on IBM MVS mainframes, which makes host systems full participants in core TCP/IP services such as File Transfer Protocol (FTP) for transferring files; Telnet for host emulation and file sharing; and Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) for passing messages.

Separately, the company offers Enterprise Print Services

software to allow printing of mainframe applications to a LAN or LU3 printer and SNS/NFS software to put Network File System on the mainframe.

PC users can access these services with the help of TCP/IP products that run on top of DOS or Windows from third parties such as Wollongong, NetManage Inc., FTP Software, and others. According to Jep-

son, the company will soon announce a bundling deal with one of the TCP/IP vendors, although he declined to name them.

The product also works in conjunction with TCP/IP services on Unix workstations.

Pricing for SNS/TCPAccess is based on CPU size and starts at \$18,000.

Interlink, in Fremont, Calif., can be reached at (510) 657-9800.