Workstation uses distributed processing for stress analysis

A new engineering workstation, the DP8400 from Boeing Computer Services Company, is designed to automate the most time-consuming stages of finite element model building and structural analysis. As a single workstation, the DP8400 consists of a DEC PDP 11/23 microprocessor and related peripherals, an input/output desk, software for local processing, and a communications controller. An executive control package links local hardware and software to the BCS Mainstream-EKS remote computing service utilizing Cyber and Cray hardware.

The DP8400 includes a color terminal that serves as the primary interface device for menu control and the finite element modeling (FEM) editor and color output display. A data tablet allows command entry or menu selection from a command board. An additional monochrome terminal provides high-resolution graphics. Each system also has a hard-copy unit.

Engineers using the DP8400 in local mode to prepare models interactively, can then with one command send the completed model to the Mainstream-EKS remote computing service for batch solution. The distributed processing approach provides a cost-effective means for performing stress and structural analysis and solving engineering problems, according to BCS.

The DP8400 is available in both single and multiple workstation configurations. The multiworkstation configuration requires a VAX 11/730, 11/750, or 11/780 for local processing.

Software for the DP8400 single workstation configuration is available for a monthly fee of $3000 based on a one-year lease plan; multiworkstation, $4000 monthly. (There is also a one-time installation/license charge equal to one month's fee.) Mainstream-EKS processing is charged at standard rates. Hardware for the DP8400 can be purchased either from BCS or directly from Digital Equipment Corporation; from BCS, the PDP 11/23 is $85,000.

Reader Service Number 49

Video film recorder designed for business graphics

The Model 4500 video film recorder from Ramtek photographs computer graphics displays via an RS-170 interface on 35mm Kodak Ektachrome color slide film. Slide resolution is 640 x 480/512 pixels. Special features of the camera include a preview display port, front panel controls, film frame counter, and automatic film rewind.

The unit was designed by Ramtek to convert computer graphics display images from the company's 6211 color graphics terminal into low-cost 35mm slides for business presentations.

The Model 4500 video film recorder sells for $2495; delivery is 30 days ARO.

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