Guest Editor's Introduction

Computerized Slide Making

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In December 1981 the Institute for Graphic Communications, in Boston, organized its first conference, called “Slide Making with Computer Graphics.” Because of the considerable interest generated by the topic, several more conferences on the subject were held the following year. As a participant in one of the conferences, *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications* Editor-in-Chief Michael Wozny suggested that the material presented might provide the basis for a special issue. As conference organizer and editorial board member of *CG&A*, I agreed to solicit papers from the various conference leaders, asking them to submit printed versions of their conference presentations. The articles included in this special issue resulted from that solicitation.

These articles cover a range of topics from available hardware and software, to users’ experiences, to the market for computer-generated slides. The three articles by Wayne Huelskoetter of Dictem, by James Teter and Donna Roberts of Management Graphics, and by Raymond Gust of Xerox represent supplier points of view. Joan Wright of Pitney Bowes and Norma Frye of Digital Equipment Corporation are users, and in their articles they discuss the advantages and problems associated with using commercial systems. Thomas Hope, a market analyst, discusses the market for computer slides.

It is appropriate to include in this introduction part of the purpose statement from the 1982 IGC conference brochure:

The leading newsletter of the photographic industry, *The Hope Report*, estimates that about $2 billion worth of 35mm slides were made in 1980. Industry spokespersons suggest that at least one-third of those slides could have been effectively generated using computer graphics techniques. Although computer-generated slides can often be produced less expensively and more quickly than manually produced slides, less than 10 percent of that potential had been realized by the end of 1980. Until recently, presentation-quality 35mm slides could only be produced by purchasing an expensive ($300,000) film recording system, or by using service bureaus that had such systems. Today, many more options are available to the organization that wishes to benefit from computer slide making. Potential users can now also consider renting or buying in-house terminals (some using personal computers) that are connected by phone lines to a service bureau precision film recorder. Lower-cost (less than $20,000), somewhat lower-output quality film recorders have become available in the past few years. Software can be purchased (or leased) to produce slides with the user’s present equipment. Complete slide-making systems, including display, computer, software, and film recorder, can be purchased for less than $50,000. Plotting systems to produce color transparencies can be purchased for under $20,000, including computer graphics terminal, software, and plotter. This growing availability of a wide spectrum of software, hardware, system, and service products provides a broad range from which the prospective user can choose a process most appropriate to the application. Growing user interest and need, coupled with expanding product availability, suggest that by 1989, about $500 million worth of computer-generated slides will be sold that year, and about $2.5 billion worth of slide-making systems and components will be purchased. This conference has been organized to give users, prospective users, and suppliers information about the state of the art and future prospects.

In addition to these articles from the IGC conference, we include as a special feature an article by Aaron Marcus, “Graphic Design for Computer Graphics,” which clearly is pertinent, but not limited, to the theme of this issue. Marcus explains how principles of graphic design can be applied to improve the communication effectiveness of computer graphics displays.

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