FutureNet targets Japanese CAE market

At present, exports of Japanese electronics products to the US dramatically exceed US shipments into Asian markets. This inequality could be changed by the US through the sharing of technology and software products of our computer-aided engineering industry to encourage more Japanese receptivity toward our CAE products, said Terry Zimmerman, vice president of market development at FutureNet Corp.

"Customized portations of US-produced software and engineering design tools to run on the bestselling standard Japanese desktop computer, the NEC 9801, might help to lessen an unhappy export situation for the US," said Zimmerman.

Zimmerman said that FutureNet saw this opportunity when it adapted its IBM PC-based DASH-2 Schematic Designer for operation on the NEC 9801 computer by building schematic symbols out of the Kanji characters of the word processor's character generator. The product is being distributed through Data I/O—FutureNet, Japan.

"Obviously, waiting for major US shipments of IBM machines to Japan didn't make sense—despite recent stronger moves by the US Congress to encourage Japan to increase US product imports," he said. "Developing a system to run on the NEC was an obvious method of encouraging FutureNet sales in Japan."

With the FutureNet NEC workstation, the Japanese engineer types out the Katakana language phonetically into the word processor, which interprets the keystrokes and looks up a library list of possible matches in Kanji characters. Once displayed on screen, the desired Kanji character is chosen by the operator. The translator transfers the Kanji character into the DASH graphics symbol editor to create a 16×16-inch dot matrix graphic.

According to Zimmerman, the Japanese market is not traditionally attentive to imported CAE, but foreign companies that do well there continually have to keep in step with Japanese technology. The market is very particular and critical of any tools purchased, he said.

"The Japanese market is very active currently with electronic design activities, with application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) becoming the emerging darling of the semiconductor industry," said Zimmerman.

For example, he pointed out that of the NEC personal computers sold last year, 35 percent were for engineering functions. This indicates that the Japanese have determined that personal computers on engineers' desks equipped with the proper software can save time and cost.

Videotape catalog lists IEEE courses

The 1985/1986 AMCEE Catalog of Videotape Courses listing 521 educational courses designed for engineers, scientists, and technical managers is now available to interested parties.

Twenty-eight university members of the Association for Media-Based Continuing Education for Engineers, Inc., provide the videotaped coursework. For the first time, the IEEE will list its courses, which are primarily videotapes of earlier satellite seminars put on by the society.

Electrical and electronic engineers may select from 168 listings, or one third of the catalog. Ninety-two computer science and engineering selections are available, as are three courses offered by the American Society of Metals.

The nonprofit consortium of engineering universities is also launching the NTU/AMCEE Satellite Network, which will provide six hours a day of noncredit short courses, seminars, and special events on September 3. Of special interest is a 13-hour (VCR) and one-hour (live) Interactive Computer Graphics course, which will appear on the network beginning September 4.

The course will be taught by Francis S. Hill, professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and author of articles on signal processing, communications, and computer graphics. Some of the course content includes programming issues, building graphics editors, using B-splines and curve control, and three-dimensional graphics. A $255 individual participant fee includes a course study guide.

Contact the AMCEE, 225 North Avenue, NW, Atlanta, GA 30332-0210, for further information regarding both the catalog and the new network.

Errata

Gouraud shading

IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications truly regrets the misspelling of the word Gouraud in the sneak preview of products introduced at SIGGRAPH '85, which appeared in the June 1985 issue.

We extend our apologies to the Robert Bosch Corporation for any confusion we may have created for its product.

Conference not cited

"Advances in Computer-Generated Imagery for Flight Simulation," by Johnson K. Yan, was printed in the August 1985 issue of CG&A without citing the conference at which the original paper was presented. The conference was the IEEE First International Conference on Computers and Applications, held June 22, 1984, in Beijing, China. CG&A regrets the error but wants readers to know that the proceedings from that conference are available ($75.00 for nonmembers, $37.50 for members) from Computer Society Press, PO Box 80452, Worldway Postal Center, Los Angeles, CA 90080. Ask for publication 541.