Grant to spur development of network for scientists and engineers

The National Science Foundation has awarded the University of Michigan $3 million over three years to help develop a nationwide electronic information exchange network for scientists and engineers. The project, called EXPRES, will facilitate closer working relationships with less travel.

Researchers will use new software designed for EXPRES to prepare and submit proposals to the National Science Foundation. Later they will produce mixed-media documents, including text, mathematical notation, graphics, and images, and exchange the documents among different computer brands. Eventually the system will support audio and video interaction.

EXPRES also has the potential to enhance information exchange between universities and industry. The project will receive another $2.5 million in equipment grants and technical support from Apollo Computer, Digital Equipment Corporation, IBM, and Sun Microsystems.

Test sites for the system will include all of the Big 10 universities, the University of Chicago, Stanford University, the University of California at Berkeley, Brown University, and MIT.

Computer scientists at Carnegie Mellon University received a similar grant for software development and will work cooperatively with the University of Michigan.

Computer Graphics New York exhibits steady growth

Starting with 42 exhibitors and 3200 attendees in 1984, Computer Graphics New York has grown to more than 125 companies and an anticipated attendance of 15,000 for its third show, scheduled for January 28-30, 1987, at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center.

Organizers attribute their success to New York's being the largest single market for desktop publishing and business and presentation graphics applications. "Instead of bringing the market to the show, we bring the show to the market," said David Wolstenholme, president of Exhibition Marketing and Management, producer of the event.

A "Graphics Card Shootout" sponsored by CADSource is intended to enable attendees to determine the card most suited for their particular application and system. Monochrome, 16-color, and 256-color cards will be rated on performance, compatibility, resolution, and ease of use.

Computer Graphics New York 87 also offers more than 30 different sessions covering business and presentation graphics, desktop publishing, PC graphics, film and video applications, CAD/CAM, CADD, and scientific applications.

Holy bitmap! It's a computer graphic comic book!

Bob Carlson, Assistant Editor

Pity poor Henry Vector, a mild-mannered mystery writer whose acquisition of a word processor suddenly propels him into the computer graphics world of Dimension V. Unknown to Henry, his computer has an evil history, and when it downloads its memory into his own brain cells, the terrifying and evil Modem pursues him relentlessly with just one goal: total repossession.

"Vector" is the creation of two comic artists, Jim McGreal and Rich Mrozek. Now Comics, a division of Caputo Publishing, has incorporated full-color computer graphics into the series as both a graphics production tool and a plot device.

"Real world" scenes use traditional line drawing methods, explained publisher Tony Caputo, but Dimension V is computer generated, as are the special effects of the rampaging Modem, who is out to pick Henry's brain. In this case, aliasing is desirable because it helps delineate the different dimensions.

Computer effects for the first two issues were produced on an old AT&T Frame Creation System. For the third issue, which incorporates even more computer graphics, Jim McGreal used Picture Painter software by Cableshare on an IBM PC, to which he added a Quik-Pel board. Images are printed with a Diablo ink jet printer.

The 32-page full-color comic is published bimonthly and sold in comic and specialty stores throughout the US and Canada. While the typical reader, according to Caputo, is a 14-year-old male with a word processor, fan letters have also been received from 40-year-old professionals.

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