No-wait-state, 20-MHz board speeds PCs

CSS Laboratories is offering its 16/20-MHz 386 Performer motherboard to upgrade performance of IBM PCs and compatibles. According to the company, a Norton Utility benchmark run on the zero-wait-state board shows a rating of 18.7 at 16 MHz.

The AT-size version of the 80386 is keyboard selectable for 8 MHz or 16 MHz and features one 32-bit memory slot, five 16-bit, and two 8-bit expansion slots. On-board, 1M-byte, static column RAM can be upgraded to 2M bytes; the 16-MHz 386 board can be upgraded to 20-MHz by adding both memory and microprocessor. An adapter board socket for the Weiteck extended coprocessor permits CAE/CAD applications to be processed.

The list price for the 386 Performer from CSS Laboratories is $1980.

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Standards breakthroughs announced

A new committee to produce urgently needed international standards for open systems interconnection, microprocessor systems, computer graphics, and data communications will meet in Tokyo this November 17-20.

Formation of the ISO/IEC Joint Technical Committee 1 has been approved by the councils of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), while the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) will administer the international secretariat of JTC 1, Information Technology.

ANSI, a participating member of the committee, is organizing a US technical advisory group (TAG) to obtain US viewpoint and provide representation at international meetings.

JTC 1 will integrate the activities of ISO Technical Committee 97, Information Processing Systems; IEC Technical Committee 83, Information Technology Equipment; and IEC Subcommittee 47B, Microprocessor Systems.

Progress toward a multilingual code standard for worldwide communication was announced after a recent West Berlin meeting of an ISO International subcommittee on character sets and information coding. After several years of work, a specific structure was selected for the development of a multiple octet code to serve as basis for the standard. The code will be composed of characters from existing one- and two-byte national and international character and control code sets with space for future additions.

Also of note is the recent publication of the first American National Standard to result from the work of ANSI-Accredited Committee on Telecommunications, T1. ANSI T1.101-1987 describes and specifies types of digital network interfaces carrying synchronization reference, signal specification for DS1 and 2.048-MHz reference signals, and performance specifications for synchronization parameters at network and equipment interfaces.

Copies are available for $10 each from ANSI's sales department, 1430 Broadway, New York, NY 10018.

RISC and GaAs IC trends diverge


According to "RISC: Applications, Strategies and Markets," released by Market Intelligence Research Company, RISC-based superminis represented 41 percent of the total $540-million RISC market in 1985. Between 1985 and 1991, advanced PCs are anticipated to provide the largest market growth.

Not so impressive is the GaAs IC market, which is existing on a commercial level solely because of military interest, according to "The GaAs IC and Wafer Markets" by MIRC. Reasons given for lackluster GaAs market performance range from low levels of integration of components on a chip due to SSI and MSI technology to longer lag times to chip insertion in the military sector.

These reports are for sale for $995 each from Market Intelligence Research Company, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

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New IEEE Tools Task Force invites participation

The Computer Society's Technical Activities Board has announced the formation of a task force chartered to provide tool-related services to individuals and organizations developing hardware and software products. New participants are being sought for working groups within the task force to pursue two startup development activities: hardware and software tool interface standards, and a tools inventory service.

Standards activities now underway include

1. the interface between requirements definition tools and design tools,
2. the interface between requirements definition and testing tools, and
3. an engineering database scheme with which other tools may interface.

In the proposed inventory service, vendors would enter data about available tools directly into a main database via dial-up telephone service. Inventory service users could dial up the system and query it for specific tool information by entering requirements into a fill-in-the-blank screen. Names and descriptions of the vendor-reported tools that matched the query would be provided to the user on screen or in a hard-copy report.

For more information, contact Robert Poston, Programming Environments, 4043 State Hwy. 33, Tinton Falls, NJ 07753; Compmail + r.poston.

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