FMC invests $3.5 million in knowledge-based systems

FMC Corp., a major international producer of machinery and chemical products, has invested $3.5 million in Teknowledge, Inc., a developer of software for building knowledge-based systems. FMC's president said the move was made to signal the firm's "commitment to incorporating AI technology into our mainstream products."

Earlier this year, General Motors invested an additional $1.05 million in the Palo Alto, California-based Teknowledge, increasing its stake to $4 million. Two French firms—Frame-tome, a nuclear engineering and manufacturing company, and Elf Acquitaine, an oil company—also have large stakes in the AI firm.

IBM security package gets DoD's C2 rating

The Top Secret IBM mainframe security package developed by CGA, Inc., has been awarded a C2 rating by the Department of Defense Security Center, the Holmdel, New Jersey-based company announced. No comparable product has a higher rating.

US, Japan AI firms enter joint ventures

Carnegie Group, Inc., of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Intelligent Technology, Inc., of Tokyo, Japan, have signed a joint venture agreement. Under the terms of the pact, the Japanese firm will serve as the master distributor in East Asia for Carnegie Group's artificial intelligence products.

Carnegie Group, maker of the Knowledge Craft and Language Craft software lines, will also become a major shareholder in Intelligent Technology.

The two firms also agreed to joint development efforts to create new AI products for Japan. Initial work will be on making Japanese language versions of Carnegie Group's current products.

In a separate announcement, Carnegie Group appointed Jack Geeras as director of marketing. Geeras had worked for the Knowledge Engineering Division of McDonnell Douglas Information Systems Group.

New firm to publish scientific software

American Channels, Inc., was recently formed to publish and distribute high-technology applications software for engineering and scientific markets.

It plans to concentrate initially on software products in the $10,000 to $60,000 range for mechanical and civil engineering departments. The products will be hosted on Apollo workstations and DEC VAX superminis. The company plans to get its initial products from software authors, development companies, and systems houses in Europe and Israel. "They fill important holes in the spectrum of software available to the US engineering community," said Roy A. Finney, the new firm's president.

However, American Channels will also market software made in the US. The imported products would be reworked for American standards and documentation.

Ashton-Tate to buy Framework developer

The microcomputer software development and marketing firm Ashton-Tate has reached an agreement in principle to purchase Forefront Corp., the developer of the Framework multifunction program.

"The purchase of Forefront Corp. is part of Ashton-Tate's corporate strategy to expand our development strength," said Edward M. Esber, Jr., Ashton-Tate's president.

Forefront's Framework software accounted for 18 percent of Ashton-Tate's revenues in 1984. Ashton-Tate marketed the software package for Forefront:

Forefront's 17 employees will continue to operate in the Silicon Valley city of Sunnyvale, California. Ashton-Tate is located in Culver City, California, a suburb of Los Angeles.

British display database services

Fourteen British companies took part at the National On-line Conference in New York this spring, where exhibitors demonstrated database services and database aids.

Inspec, a subsidiary of the UK's Institution of Electrical Engineers, showed its database of more than 2.25 million bibliographic records, including improved coverage of Japanese literature. The Pharmaceutical Society displayed its information retrieval facility for data on more than 5000 drugs and ancillary substances.

Extel offered a database of corporate financial information covering more than 3500 UK and overseas firms. ICC Information Group presented its Dialog on-line record-search service, while Electronic Data Systems exhibited its monthly industrial trade statistics databases.

Data storage dilemma: more 'parking lots' not the answer

Finding data storage space in a DP center can be like trying to find a parking spot in downtown New York. But the solution to the storage dilemma is not more "parking lots" for data storage but better management of the available storage space, said Jim Johnson, president of Software Laboratories in San Bernardino, California.

Even IBM's latest high-end magnetic storage devices will not solve the space shortage while the demand for information services increases 15 percent annually and the demand for on-line storage jumps more than 50 percent a year, he said.

One solution is data compression, another is better management of the data.