The reviewer responds:
Mr. Souvestre brings up three issues that should be addressed:
(1) Reviewers must work with the products that are on hand, not products that have been announced, are being shipped, or otherwise unavailable for actual testing. In an industry notorious for "vaporware," software reviewers cannot ignore submission deadlines while waiting for new products to arrive. Version 2.0 of Modula-2/86 was not available at the time of the review — it was just announced, as stated in the review. (It is worth noting that I am still waiting for one unrelated product that was announced five months ago and scheduled to be shipped more than two months ago.)
(2) Software reviewers should test systems on the minimum hardware configurations permitting practical application of the product. Given data from tests conducted on minimum configurations, readers can extrapolate performance data for larger systems. The opposite view does not hold: a glowing review of a PC product tested on an AT machine provides no useful information to PC and XT owners. Modula-2/86 is advertised as requiring a 128K IBM PC-compatible machine with two floppy disk drives. I conducted my tests with 320K because 128K proved to be inadequate. The review concluded that Modula-2/86 is a "good system for experienced Modula-2 programmers working in a production environment using IBM PC XT-compatible machines with 640K bytes of RAM." This conclusion was based on tests run on an IBM PC — without which, no such conclusion could have been made.
(3) The Modula-2 market for small machines is still developing. Recall the proliferation of Pascal programming environments between 1980 and 1982. It took a few years of intense competition before the leading products emerged. I believe a similar shakedown will occur in the Modula-2 market. Recall the almost 1:18 ratio of local runtime (compile plus link plus execute) between Pas- cal code and comparable Modula-2 code reported in my review. This indicates that the new Modula-2 programming environments must undergo drastic revision before they can compete head to head with older programming systems that have a well-established reputation and user base.
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Editor's note:
The software reviewed in IEEE Software is supplied by the vendor. In this case, Logitech supplied us with Modula-2 Version 1.1. Logitech was given an opportunity to respond to the review, but did not.
The reviewer noted both the configuration he used and what he thought would be a better, faster configuration.
Part of the confusion on the timeline of the review may be due to misunderstanding of the Software Reviews department's intent. Software Reviews evaluates operating systems, applications, and utility software in widespread use. Another department, New Product Reviews, deals with new products.

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