

Apple gingerly steps into the server marketplace

Response to demands for more networking power

BY TOM QUINLAN

Apple Computer Inc. will make its first tentative move into the server marketplace this week with a "mostly Mac" family of solutions designed to give existing Macintosh users more power.

"A lot of our users were complaining that they didn't have enough power to handle networking tasks with just AppleShare, so they were being forced to move to NetWare," said Jim Groff, senior director of network services and servers for Apple's enterprise systems division. "Now they won't have to make that change."

The 68040-based Workgroup Server line will initially consist of the 60, 80, and 95 models, with prices ranging from \$3,079 to \$12,929.

Two System 7.1-based servers, the 60 and the 80, will be designed primarily for use as file and print servers. They will come with 8 megabytes of RAM, either a 230- or 500-megabyte hard drive, and AppleShare 4.0.

Apple's 95 model, a redesigned Quadra 950 with a processor direct slot and two SCSI Direct Memory Access Channels, will be based on a server version of Apple's A/UX operating system and will come preconfigured with AppleShare Pro, a more powerful version of Apple's network operating system.

AppleShare 4.0 and Apple-



Apple's Workgroup 95 server offers users the choice of either a high-end print and file server or a database server.

SharePro have been optimized for use with Motorola's 68040-based processor, with AppleShare 4.0 designed to handle as many as 150 concurrent users.

The more robust AppleShare Pro is designed to accommodate as many as 200 users simultaneously.

Combined with Oracle 7 from Oracle Corp., Apple is positioning the high end of the model 95 as a database server, giving Apple its best chance to break into the mainstream server market, Apple executives said.

"With this [database server] product, we have a chance to compete with mainstream enterprise servers," said Morris Taradalsky, Apple's vice president and general manager of the

enterprise systems division.

"[Managers] are still deciding how to implement database servers in the enterprise," Taradalsky said.

Issues such as how much direct service and support Apple will provide customers have not been decided, Taradalsky said.

The company is still determining how and when to broaden its server lineup to go beyond managing LANs that are primarily made up of Macintoshes.

The WorkGroup Server 60 and 80, and the \$1,899 AppleShare 4.0, will start shipping this summer.

AppleShare Pro and the model 95 are scheduled to start shipping by the end of April. Oracle 7 will ship this summer.

Contracts move IBM toward its goal of dominating the 486 chip market

BY SHAWN WILLET

IBM took another large step toward becoming a major player in the 486 chip world with two contracts totaling \$344 million.

Under the agreements, IBM will produce motherboards based on the 486SLC2 processor for two component firms, Alaris Inc. and ETEQ Microsystems Inc.

"The [IBM] technology products [division] is positioning itself as a strong force in the market for 486 subsystems," said Dennis Gaetano, manager of OEM tactical marketing for IBM's technology products division. "Our goal is to be the leading supplier of microelectronic subsystems," he added.

The 486 chips used in the

motherboards will be supplied by IBM's Burlington, Vt., facility.

IBM is building the motherboards according to the specifications of Alaris and ETEQ, based in Fremont and Milpitas, Calif., respectively, who will then distribute the motherboards to systems makers and integrators.

The agreements for motherboards help IBM work around a licensing agreement with Intel that prohibits it from selling the chips by themselves.

Alaris officials said they will work with IBM to produce motherboards based on other 486 chips in the future, according to Raymond Yu, Alaris president.

"IBM has broken themselves

off into these smaller companies that are really taking the initiative to be profitable," Yu said.

Yu said that his company's portion of the contract, \$127 million, translated into "hundreds of thousands" of 486 boards.

Analysts said it is difficult to forecast whether IBM can ship enough volume to surpass chip companies such as AMD and Cyrix.

"It has been difficult to track them because in the past most of their production has been for internal use within IBM," said Morry Marshall, an analyst at Instat, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Last month, IBM announced a 486 upgrade kit that was to be distributed by Kingston Technology Corp.

CompuAdd to close all its retail stores, lay off 600

BY SHAWN WILLET

CompuAdd Computer Corp. said last week that it will shut down its 110 retail stores by year end and concentrate on its direct marketing PC business.

The rise in superstores was partially to blame for the demise of the smaller CompuAdd retail stores, according to company officials.

"We reached a strategic crossroads," said a representative of the company. "We could have taken the retail stores to the next level of full-fledged superstores with multiple CPU lines, but we decided our resources were better spent concentrating on our direct marketing channel."

The stores are located in 38 states, with the bulk of them in the Southwest. They sell CompuAdd hardware and peripherals and software from various companies.

The company said it will re-

double its efforts in the direct marketing channel, which is 70 percent of its business.

"You will see us getting more aggressive," the representative said. "We plan to cut prices again in the near term, and we will be introducing some new notebooks," he added. "By summer we will have a completely redesigned product line."

CompuAdd officials said the direct channel is more attractive because it has less of a cost structure and is experiencing faster growth.

CompuAdd, which is privately held, grew to \$524 million in revenues in 1992, with 1,100 employees, according to company officials.

Approximately 600 CompuAdd employees will lose their jobs as a result of the store closures.

CompuAdd, in Austin, Texas, can be reached at (512) 250-1489.

Mannesmann to ship portable PCL4-compatible printers

BY KELLEY DAMORE

At New York's Laptop & Palm-top '93 Exposition last week, Mannesmann Tally Corp. unveiled two portable printers designed for off-site applications.

Both printers are based on an 8-pound proprietary thermal transfer engine designed for plain paper and transparencies.

The \$895 MobileWriter offers 6-page-per-minute printing and PCL4 compatibility. Its \$999 PostScript counterpart, the MobileWriterPS, offers 35 PostScript compatible fonts, a Centronics parallel port for Macintosh connectivity, and an AppleTalk port for Macintosh.

"The [MobileWriter] provides print quality comparable to

laser printing," said Bill Gott, an analyst for InfoCorp, a market research firm in Santa Clara, Calif. "What distinguishes these printers is that they are PCL4 [compatible], giving them a lot more compatibility with applications and fonts."

InfoCorp said the portable printing market accounted for 18.8 percent of the ink-jet market.

Both devices feature 1 megabyte of memory and a 300-dot-per-inch resolution.

The MobileWriter is based on an 8-MHz 68000 processor. The PostScript version has a 16-MHz processor.

Both printers feature a built-in nickel-cadmium battery that can print as many as 150 pages per charge.

The printers include a fold-out sheet-feeder that holds 80 pages of letter-, legal-, or A4-size paper. They both ship with an AC Adapter/Charger.

The MobileWriter ships this month; the MobileWriterPS is scheduled to ship in April.

Mannesmann Tally, headquartered in Kent, Wash., can be reached at (206) 251-5500.



Mannesmann Tally is entering the portable ink-jet printer market with two systems.