VAX HOTLINE

VAX Software Acquisition Policy

Commercial Software

Some VAX users have been asking Computing Center staff members about acquiring additional commercial software for the VAX, beyond what is presently installed or planned for installation in coming months. Center budget constraints make it unlikely that any such packages can be acquired before July. However, users may submit requests for new packages to be considered for the next fiscal year. Again, budget limitations may preclude their acquisition, even if they are clearly desirable.

If you would like to submit such a request, direct it to Patrick Holleran, University Computing's Assistant Director of Computing Services (686-4394). Include in your request

- the package's name and what it does

- what capabilities it offers that are not available in software currently installed

- who in the university community might benefit from it

- what other system resources (languages, etc.) it might require

- its cost and the vendor that markets it

- the level of Computing Center support required

Free Software

Software that is written by users, or packages that can be acquired at no cost to the Computing Center, may be considered for addition to the VAX's "no-support" library. This library comprises software that is neither supported nor maintained by Center staff (i.e., consulting, Center documentation, and debugging are not provided).

Submit proposals for this type of software to JQ Johnson, University Computing's Director of Network Services. Requirements for the acceptance of such software include

- a demonstrated need for its capabilities by at least several people

- adequate documentation, including an online help file that can be installed on the VAX

- easy installation

- instructions for deleting program files when the package is no longer useful

- a commitment to limited support by the contributor

In either of the above situations, the Computing Center staff will evaluate the information submitted and provide you with feedback as to the possibilities of future acquisition or installation of the requested software.

- Patrick Holleran

VAX Charges Begin Soon

During the period of transition to the VAX, early users have been able to test the new system free of charge. As of February 26th, however, charges will begin to be levied.

The VAX charge rate schedule is reprinted below. Note the modification in the "unstaffed periods" charges.

VAX Charge Rates Amendment

The last issue of Computing News erred in announcing a reduced rate for using the VAX during unstaffed periods. The reduced rate will initially be available by submitting jobs to a special batch queue named LOW$BATCH. Machine charges for such jobs will be 25% of the normal CPU-time rate. The fee schedule is reproduced below, with IBM 4341 rates on CMS listed for comparison.

	VAX	IBM
• Connect time, per hour	$0.96	$0.96
• CPU time, per minute	$3.30	$3.60
• Disk space, per 100 blocks (51,200 bytes) monthly	$0.30	$0.30
• Pages printed (standard forms)	$0.06	$0.06

New VAX Documents Arriving

A preliminary edition of the U of O's *VAX 8800 User's Guide* was published in January for early VAX users. The official first edition should be available sometime in Spring Term. Copies of the preliminary edition are available in the Computing Center Documents Room (205) and the

University Bookstore. The $5 purchase price is applicable toward the purchase of a later edition.

Two new Computing Center write-ups, "SAS on the VAX 8800" and "BMDP on the VAX 8800," are now available for sale in the Documents Room. These write-ups provide particulars on running the SAS and BMDP packages on the VAX, issuing commands, input and output files, and diagnostics. They include complete lists of reference sources and sample runs. A similar write-up on the SPSSx package is in the works.

Other VAX documents currently in progress include handouts for accessing the VAX and using a PC as a workstation, VMS and EDT reference cards, and a VAX conversion sheet. These should be completed and available in the Documents Room by late February.

In addition to the completed user's guide, Spring Term should see MAIL and EMACS reference cards, a handout for VAX users at Macintosh workstations, and magnetic tape and BITNET write-ups, revised for the VAX, among other documents. Watch VAX log-in messages for new documentation announcements.

IBM 4341 NOTES

Goodbye, IBM Card Reader...

On June 30, 1988, the IBM 2501 card reader is scheduled for removal. At this time, IBM will remove the 2501 from its maintenance contracts.

The few users of the card reader have already been contacted and advised of alternative methods for entering data. If you use this device and have not been contacted, please call Susan Hilton, the Center's Programming Services Manager, at x4394.

Keep CMS Readers Clean

CMS users should keep in mind that their virtual reader is not the place to store files for long periods of time. Spool space is limited and is shared by all, so poor housekeeping habits can have a negative impact on others.

Please clear your reader frequently and save large files on one of your mini-disks. Using public spool space instead of private disk space for storage is a policy violation; reader files will be purged if stored longer than thirty days—even sooner if they are oversized or if you spooled them there to avoid disk charges.

Library Offers Public-Access Micros

On January 6, the University Library acquired two Macintosh Plus systems with 800K external drives, a selection of Mac software, and an Imagewriter II to augment its public services. The new microcomputers are housed on the third floor of the library, with entry from the Microform service desk.

Anyone with a currently valid UO ID card is eligible to use this facility. The equipment may be used for a maximum of two hours at no charge. The software is on reserve at the Microform desk and is loaned to users for two hours. Fines are imposed if the software is overdue.

Current software inventory includes

- Mac Guided Tour
- Software Sampler
- MacWrite (version 4.6)
- MacPaint
- MacDraw

Microcomputer room hours coincide with regular library hours:

Monday - Friday	8 am - 11 pm
Saturday	9 am - 11 pm
Sunday	10 am - 11 pm

BITNET Correction...

Our December article on BITNET's electronic magazines gave the mistaken impression that members could subscribe only through CMS on the IBM 4341. In fact, electronic digests are available via mail to *any* computing system that has access to BITNET, including, but not limited to, CMS, the DEC 1091, and the VAX 8800.

Our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.