FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Reader;

So what's new in our business, you ask? The turmoil in computing has reached such a level as to be on the front page of a weekly news journal I just read. Not only is the mainframe world in turmoil, but the mini and desktop worlds are equally unstable.

In the mainframe world, the number of 370/390 data centers in August 1990 was estimated by an independent research company at approximately 13,000. In March of this year, the number had diminished to about 9,500 sites, or about a 27 percent decrease in the number of sites. When coupled with the headcount reductions that we have all heard about during the last three years, we estimate that about 40 percent of the people in our profession have left the mainframe world for greener pastures. Those pastures, of course, are UNIX, AS/400 and PC/LANs.

These other areas are not without their own major problems, of course. The UNIX world has yet to really stabilize and mature. This leaves the door open for entrepreneurs to develop interesting and useful products, but not knowing which products are going to survive makes it hard for buyers to commit to UNIX.

In the LAN and PC world, it looks like Novell has sewn up enough market share that they are beginning to look like the IBM of the desktop world. Or is the IBM of the desktop world Microsoft? We won't know until the Windows NT and OS/2 battle subsides and a clear winner can be seen. Since the battle hasn't even begun, this may take awhile. Until then, however, developers and the business community alike will have trouble deciding under which platform to develop their products. Until there is a clear winner, everyone will have trouble committing to a solution.

So where does all of this trouble and indecision leave us? Professionally, it leaves us with a lot of opportunity in the technical professions within corporate computing. Unfortunately, for those of us in the mainframe world, if we get involved in another technology in addition to the one that we already know, and the new technology ultimately doesn't make it in the marketplace, we could find ourselves professionally behind the proverbial eight ball.

So what to do with our careers? In a sentence, stay as mainstream as possible. If your job is sending you off on a tangent installing, programming or whatever on the latest computing Edsel, perhaps you should reconsider.

ON THE NASPA FRONT

Our *IN-DEPTH* **Reports** continue to evolve. This month, you will notice that we have jumped to 48 pages and four-color. These changes are made possible, in part, by the vendors who have entered into sponsorship agreements with NaSPA, Inc. This agreement says that these vendors care enough about the industry and profession to participate at the highest levels within the association. Innovation Data Processing, Empact Software and Levi, Ray and Shoup have gone on record for all to see that they believe in giving support back to the professionals who have made their companies succeed.

Welcome aboard Innovation Data Processing, Empact Software and Levi, Ray & Shoup!

September will mark the start of our third *IN-DEPTH* **Report**, focused on LANs and PCs. This report is aimed at those interested in learning about PC distributed systems. If you are interested in receiving this *IN-DEPTH* **Report**, please contact our membership department at (414) 423-2420 ext. 116.

Finally, thanks for your perseverance while we have gone through many changes this past year. Most of our changes are complete, but there are a few more to go. Not all of our ideas work, but with your support and feedback, we will continue to evolve and stay as strong as ever.

Sincerely,

Scott Sherer

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