

o Horizontal Applications Software

Horizontal applications software is currently most sought after because it is easy-to-use, can readily improve productivity and produces immediate results. The major types of horizontal applications software are word processing, data base/application generator software, spreadsheets and accounting packages.

(i) Word Processing

The popular word processing software packages in Malaysia at the PC level are WordPerfect, Multimate Advantage and Multimate Professional, Wordstar and Microsoft Word. With the bringing into force of the Copyright Act 1987, local companies are now finding it worthwhile to acquire distributorship rights for various software packages. Imagineering Sdn. Bhd. for instance was recently awarded the distributorship of Ashton Tate's Multimate packages and Micropro's Wordstar; Pericomp-Sistech Sdn. Bhd. holds the right to Microsoft Word while PDX Computers Sdn. Bhd. is authorised to distribute WordPerfect.

Word processing for the higher-end systems is mainly the domain of the major hardware vendors. Global-Sistemaju, the sole distributor of Wang products, is believed to be the leader in dedicated word processing systems. Other vendors offer integrated packages that have word processing, electronic mail and calendaring (scheduling) functions. IBM is marketing its Professional Office-System, Digital Equipment its All-In-1 system and Hewlett Packard, the HP Office-Automation-System.

(ii) Database and Application Generator Software

Database management system (DBMS) relates to the storage, retrieval and management of information and typically forms the foundation of a computerised information system.

Ashton Tate's DBase has become the "standard" in the local PC database market and is distributed by Imagineering Sdn. Bhd. No similar standard, however, exists for DBMS in mainframe and minicomputer systems. Each major hardware vendor has either developed a DBMS in-house or licensed one from foreign software houses. IBM offers IMS and DB2; Hewlett Packard offers Image and AllBase; Wang offers PACE; Prime has Prime Oracle; Digital Equipment has Rally while Unidata provides Unify and Infomix.