

InfoNews/Software

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Texas Instruments announces its **Course Designer** authoring software package for the TI 99/4A computer with the new TI Video Controller. The Video Controller links the TI 99/4A with selected videotape players or the Pioneer Video Disc player (VP-1000) so the computer can automatically direct a tape or disk to predetermined segments. The Course Designer software allows you to design or update courses without programming the computer. Text, questions or video segments can be incorporated into the course in any order.

A wide vocabulary of synthetic speech to instruct students is also featured. Industrial training and vocational courses or remedial programs can be designed to work interactively and progressively. Price of the Video Controller is \$699.95; the Course Designer software package is \$199.95. Texas Instruments, Inc., Customer Relations, P.O. Box 53, Lubbock, TX 79408.

Legal Accounting is Exidy Systems' latest package for the Sorcerer computer. The package accumulates lawyers' time in 15-minute increments and calculates the dollar amount for

the monthly statement. Three internal reports—a billing summary, a time-keeping summary and an accounting report—are generated as well. A Sorcerer computer with floppy-disk I/O is required. Price is \$450. Exidy Systems, 1234 Elko Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Zenith Data Systems is now supplying **Magic Wand**, a CP/M-compatible word-processing program, with the Zenith Z89 and Z90 microcomputers. Editing features include merging and block move. Printing features include subscripts, superscripts, boldfacing,

underscoring, justification and centering. The program is available on 5 1/4-inch or 8-inch diskettes. Price is \$295. Zenith Data Systems, 1000 Milwaukee Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025.

PK Systems announces the **Attorney's Time and Billing** system, part of its Business Manager series for the Zenith Z89 microcomputer. The system performs all timekeeping, billing and accounts-receivable functions required in a law office.

A turnkey system is available in two forms. The first uses the Z87 dual 5 1/4-inch disk drive and will handle up to 375 cases, 1500 work-in-process records, 999 billing codes and 850 accounts-receivable records. With the Z25 dot-matrix printer, it is priced at \$7090.

The larger system uses the Z47 dual eight-inch disk drive, will hold three to five times the information of the first system, and costs \$9090 with the Z25 dot-matrix printer. The software is also available separately at \$950 for a single-CPU license. It is written in Microsoft BASIC-80 for CP/M 2.2 and requires 64K. PK Systems, Inc., 113 North Center, Bloomington, IL 61701.

InfoWorld is unable to test every product announced in this section. All claims attributed to the products have been made by manufacturers or by firms marketing the products.

PL/I-80

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PL/I-80. The language manual describes the syntax of the language in sufficient detail for most users to grasp easily. It includes a quick reference guide to the instructions and functions. A pocket-sized version of the command summary is provided that includes the compile and link options and error codes.

The applications manual is designed to pass on advice about the efficient use of PL/I-80. It has programming examples of I/O conventions, exception processing, string and list processing and the use of recursion. Since the more common languages do not allow recursion, this guide is a valuable aid in getting the most power out of the language.

The operators' guide contains a detailed explanation of the compile and link procedures. It also includes assembly-language listings of the various library routines PL/I-80 provides. Programmers can use these routines in their original form or modify them for special purposes.

Digital Research took more than a little criticism for the documentation of CP/M. The company apparently learned a lesson from that experience and has provided PL/I-80 with excellent guides to the theory, operation and application of the language.

Summary

The number of CP/M-capable machines is growing rapidly and Digital Research should find a strong market for the powerful PL/I-80 compiler. It is a fine tool for anyone wishing to develop or market fast-running compiled programs.

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