

XEROX

Information Products Group
Systems Development Division
May 17, 1977

To: Wendell Shultz

Copies to: D. Liddle, R. Rider, R. Metcalfe, C. Simonyi, S. Wallace, D. Stottlemyre,
B. Lynch, J. Szelong, P. Heinrich, L. Bergsteinsson, E. Harslem, D. DeSantis

From: Charles Irby

Subject: May Status Report for Common Software

Filed on: <Irby>Progress.May

Management Review Committee Demo

Ralph Kimball and I are assisting in the comparative analysis presentation of a Wang 20, IBM office system 6, and Alto-based prototypes to Xerox top management -- the Management Review Committee. This is a high priority, short lead time activity that is consuming and will continue to consume considerable amounts of our time. Ralph and I will be operating the equipment during the presentation and are to be very knowledgeable of the available features. Since we must make the presentation shortly after the arrival of the equipment, we are forced to do considerable travel and other background work in order to become as familiar as possible with the equipment in the absence of on-site equipment of our own.

Trip to Dallas

Ralph, Betty Burr, Peter Heinrich, Ginger Engstrum, and I spent two days in Dallas visiting OSD Marketing (Mal Williams, Marnie Oxford, Jannette Kleinmeyer), OSD Engineering (John Patterson, Carlo Enfante), and HF/ID (Robin Kinhead).

Marketing: We had extremely fruitful interchanges and demonstrations regarding the Janus product family, Troy SD, and Troy LD. We also informally reviewed the Janus-1 Requirements. Betty spent three days in the Troy SD training class as a student and spent an additional day interacting with Marnie and Jannette about training procedures, materials, training diskettes, and on-line help facilities. A good working relationship should result. Marnie and Jannette will be visiting us in Palo Alto on May 23rd and 24th.

Engineering: Ralph and I discussed display problems and potentials with Carlo. Ralph gave Carlo his first real demo of text and graphics manipulation on an Alto. Carlo has been given the job of doing the square tube and quarter page display study requested by Hal Lazar's office. We will assist him in any way that seems reasonable. The Sterling program is now somewhat uncertain and the keyboard is perhaps to be separated out from the main program. It was suggested that we change our baseline to assume a Troy keyboard. The Jason printer has been turned over to Diablo, although people in Dallas are still working on it and reporting to Diablo. It will be known as the Hitype IV. It was suggested that we use the Troy printer as our baseline. Dave Deetz now has engineering responsibility for Janus peripherals produced by OSD. We did not have a chance to speak with him. The engineering group is beginning to look seriously at engineering a reliable, less expensive mouse pointing device. They await direction from SDD on which pointing device to

actually build, however.

Human Factors: Robin showed us slides of equipment shown at a word processing show in Europe. We presented some display mockups to Robin (and Mal, Marnie, and Jannette) showing possible tradeoffs of different sizes, shapes, and orientations of the display. We also showed Robin and Carlo the Bob Ayers prototype system.

User Interface Specification

Dave Smith, Ralph, and I are helping Eric Harslem's group write the Janus-1 Functional Specification. This is accounting for a large amount of Dave's time and much of Ralph's and mine. This activity is progressing well, all things considered, with drafts of several major sections in hand. The Early Bird Specification will consist of pointers to the Janus-1 Functional Specification, enumerating those features to be included, excluded, and alternatives to be attempted. We are travelling to LA once a week and Eric's group is coming here once a week. We expect to release a sneak preview around 10 June, with wide SD distribution around the middle of July. Following this, we will turn our attention to other, longer term features to be prototyped for Functional Test and Marketing. Several good scenarios were produced within the last few weeks. These were distributed to Eric's group and informally to Mal, Marnie, and Robin.

Data Management

The data management group is participating heavily in the file and data management working group. Designs for the file system are beginning to take shape. Division of the file system into a Basic layer (to be built immediately) and a transaction layer (to be constructed for use in later systems) has been successfully accomplished. Updates to the Pilot Functional Specification are being made. A design review will be conducted within the next month.

Peter Bishop joined us on the 16th of May from MIT.

Graphics and Text Editing in Diamond

Jack Newlin is beginning to work with Charles Simonyi's people to implement the graphics facilities of Diamond. Jack and Bob Ayers are exploring some additional graphics ideas in Bob's prototype system. Bob and Dave Smith are to begin learning the Diamond software so that they can implement an editor interface to the Diamond underpinnings. A draft specification of these facilities has been produced. This activity will be somewhat slow at the beginning because of other commitments on Bob and Dave's time and operational difficulties in Diamond.