Microsoft OS/2 Software Development Kit

Software professionals will soon be able to explore the new operating system environment created by OS/2 when Microsoft presents the Microsoft Operating System/2 Software Development Kit, or SDK. The kit will include:

- Microsoft OS/2 Version 1.0, which includes the Windows presentation manager
- The OS/2 LAN Manager, Version 1.0
- Microsoft C Optimizing Compiler, Version 4.5
- Microsoft Macro Assembler, Version 4.5
- The CodeView debugger, utilities, LINK, MAKE, LIB, IMPLIB, and a protected-mode text editor
- A one year subscription to Microsoft DIAL
- Attendance at one of the Microsoft OS/2 Developers Conferences
- Full documentation for all components of the kit

Since run time versions of the Windows presentation manager and the LAN manager are not yet ready to be released, the SDK only includes them as reference materials. Microsoft will offer updates to the run time versions and all other components of the kit free of charge until the final OS/2 product is ready for distribution.

The DIAL system has been created for the purpose of giving developers fast and direct access to Microsoft both to report problems and to receive solutions (See MSJ Volume 2, No. 1 for a detailed description of DIAL).

The Microsoft C Optimizing Compiler Version 4.5 offers substantial new features that will allow applications to take full advantage of MS OS/2 while retaining full compatibility with Version 4.0. The major programming tools include new versions of the Microsoft C Compiler and Macro Assembler.

Fully compatible with the Microsoft Macro Assembler Version 4.0, MASM 4.5 is up to 25% faster in assembly speed. The assembler works under both OS/2 and MS-DOS, provides support for the CodeView debugger, simplified segmentation, and a new Mixed-Language Programming Guide and template programs for easy interface to C and other languages. MASM 4.5 supports the 386 instruction set, both for protected-mode and real-mode applications.

The Microsoft C Optimizing Compiler Version 4.5 offers new features that will allow applications to take full advantage of MS OS/2's protected, real, and compatibility modes while retaining full compatibility with Version 4.0. The new compiler contains a loop optimizer, which utilizes automatic enregistering, loop variants, and constant folding to increase the execution speed of programs by 20% to 30% over Version 4.0.

An integral part of the SDK will be free admission to a software developers conference. The seminar will give developers an opportunity to spend a considerable amount of time with Microsoft experts who can answer questions directly and in detail. Informal discussion groups are expected to be a part of the overall conference structure.

The primary purpose of the SDK is to make available to developers the tools necessary to begin working with MS OS/2. Microsoft Product Manager Mark Mackaman feels that "First, developers will port their existing MS-DOS applications to the new environment. Second, after the first rush of applications porting you will see the next generation of products for MS OS/2, which will offer dramatic improvements in functionality and ability, similar to the leap from VisiCalc to Lotus 1-2-3."

The software provided by the SDK will run on the IBM PC AT, the Compaq DeskPro 286 and 386 machines, and most other true compatibles. The software requires a minimum of 1.5 Mb of RAM, a high density (96 TPI) disk drive, and a hard disk. A graphics display and adapter are also recommended.

The cost of the complete SDK package is $3,000. To be made available in early summer, the SDK will provide all of the tools necessary to begin preparing for the leap to the next generation.

For more information, including information on ordering, you can contact Microsoft directly: Microsoft Corporation, Dept. MS OS/2 SDK, 16011 NE 36th Way, Box 97017, Redmond, WA 98073-9717.