

MICROSOFT RIDES ON ASIAN INFO HIGHWAY

by Yap Cheng Theng

MICROSOFT wants to play a significant role in the development of the information highway in Asia. In his recent visit to Malaysia and Singapore, CEO Gates hinted at possible tie-ups with local telecoms providers.

"We do not build rich networks and we do not make chips. But we will work in partnerships with phone companies to provide good on-line service and broadband network," said Bill Gates, chairman and CEO of Microsoft.

Gates was replying to a question by ACW on Microsoft's role in Asian countries like Malaysia and Singapore, where the infrastructure for an information highway is being



Bill Gates paints his vision for computing in Asia.

concluded any strategic partnerships in the region.

Earlier, in his public presentation, Gates continued to echo his confidence that digital connections on the information highway would be the key to the future.

As innovations for the next six years continue to scale up, speed, storage and network bandwidth

computer technology and higher network bandwidth like ATM into the mainstream.

On a realistic note, he admitted that applications will be used primarily in business.

But, Gates stood firm in his belief that IT would change everyone's lives.

"It may take 15 years for day-to-day applications to enter the home but it will be there," he said.

By 1996, he believes applications for the information highway will be rolled out. And by the year 2000, 20 million homes will be connected.

"By then, nations will compete on how fast they can build the infrastructure for the information highway," he said.

"Because by then, computers will be available on every desktop and in every home."

"The information highway is like taking all networks into a singlefold network. There will not be any need for anyone to wait for anybody to use the network," he said.

His confidence stems from the fact that technology will bring about more social interfaces to guide users to use applications, more TV sets with intelligence, more advanced PCs with communication and

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developed during his trip to Kuala Lumpur recently.

"We want to make sure that we (Microsoft and local telecommunications operators) can work together to build a network which will be in time for the applications. Such an investment is invaluable," he continued.

For now, however, Gates clarified that he has not

could be expected to double in two years without any increase in cost, he said.

Moreover, with rapid improvements in flat screen technology, video capability, voice and handwriting techniques as well as intelligent interfaces, there will be incredible performance that applications can leverage on.

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SMS TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS

THE SINGAPORE Micro-computer Society (SMS) is starting a drive to attract more people who have interests in micro-computing.

According to Edmond Ng, chairman of the computerisation group of the SMS, the society aims to disseminate technology and provide more in-depth knowledge of both hardware and software integration in microcomputing.

During the show, SMS will be working with Singapore Telecom in a joint promotion to extend the Teleview bundle with the Pro-link 14,400 bps modems.

New members signing up during Informatics '94 will receive free software directories, as well as CD-

ROMs on a first-come-first-served basis, while stocks last.

Members will also get to attend the coming talk on "Introduction to Internet", scheduled on Oct 21 1994, free-of-charge, as well as other talks organised under SMS.

Members will also have free access to the SMS bulletin boards, one of which is toll-free.

In line with a recent SMS survey indicating a growing interest in data communications and multimedia, the SMS will make available shareware versions of data-communication tools, as well as a database of all the listed bulletin boards available in Singapore. Also available will be SMS Classix shareware.

New President for the SMS

EARLY this month, the Singapore Microcomputer Society (SMS) announced the appointment of a newly nominated President, Edmond Ng. Mr Ng will officially take over all the duties of the immediate past President, with effect from next month.

In Mr Ng's address to the press, he said that with the new committee, the SMS hopes "to work towards achieving a nationwide implementation of IT at its best, reaching out not only to members of the Society but also to the general community, towards a better life-style through the use of technology."

Mr Ng said that membership to the SMS does not require a prerequisite nor a criteria. The SMS, he said, "will open itself to anyone of any status to become members and provide them with the steps towards a better concept and knowledge in the information technology industry."

With the election of the new President, the Society also nominated and re-elected office bearers for key positions as follows:

Vice President: Mr Sheikh Shohrab Uddin
Treasurer: Mr Clement Puah Neo
Hon Secretary : Mr L M Mani

Proposals were also made for the appointment of the chairman of the various Interest/User Groups of the Society as follows:

Chairman, Interactive Multimedia Applications Group: Mr Ronnie Toon
Chairman, Data Communications Interest Group: Mr Teo Soon Bock
Chairman, Programmers' Application Interest Group: Mr Darren Chow
Chairman, Computerisation Group: Mr Bay Hock Seng
Chairman, Networking Group: Mr Lam Jyh Kueen
Chairman, Recreational Interest Group: Mr Philip Langdale
Chairman, Trade Shows: Mr Ellery Chua
Chairman, Members Interest Group: Mr B T Tan