

NEWS

# IBM sets sights on software onslaught

by Keith Holder

IBM's future operating system strategy is firmly based on its need to make software and program products pay, and will include merging of products, reduced maintenance and restricted access to source code for users and third party suppliers.

So says Fred Moore, Storage Technology's senior technology expert and market strategist.

Moore says IBM is leaving clues to the shape of its next round of changes to MVS and VM operating systems, and the products which run under them.

This has implications for maintenance, installation and storage management which

will turn IBM software business into a major revenue earner.

Key to this strategy, says Moore, is the continuing onslaught of Extended Architecture (XA) for both operating systems which, because of its 31-bit address, allows much bigger programs to be written.

Users are already moving to XA systems in greater numbers, he says. "When we (Storage Technology) looked at the number of US sites running XA last August it was around 20%. This year it is 50% and rising fast reaching perhaps 85% by the end of this year."

The XA version of VM is also shaping up nicely, he says, and is evolving towards



MOORE . . . "IBM leaving clues to next round of changes."

a merger with MVS, particularly with storage management and control of input and output.

Increasingly functions are being offloaded from central processors to external specialised processors. These will require bigger programs to manage them, which is why IBM users will need 31-bit, XA type systems. The problem facing IBM is that only a few of its primary program products are in any shape to do this.

New products like IBM's

database manager DB 2 have been written for 31-bit systems, but older products like CICS and VTAM were not, and need modification. For VM users the problem is compounded by the late arrival of VM/XA, which only appeared in February.

Moore reckons IBM will move to standardise maintenance, perhaps to weekly schedules, and an operator driven console will enable users to add items like discs, printers or tapes without shutting down the system.

*Original copy is hand dated 12/9 and is adjacent to article referencing a sale of Cable & Wireless which took place in December 1985*