



Presidents' Forum: Current Issues in Computer Graphics

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Computer Graphics has been an integral part of the computer environment since the mid-1950's with origins in military, academic and industrial applications.

Computer Graphics in the early 80's has matured from the early role of often being a cure for no known disease, to being an indispensable element in many applications. By the end of 1982, forecasters expect computer graphics to be a 4.6 billion dollar industry, with 250,000 graphic devices in place, with a user community of perhaps 400,000, and with about 90,000 people employed in the design, manufacture, selling and support of computer graphics hardware, software, systems and services. By the end of the decade, the industry is expected to grow to 15 billion dollars a year.

Presidents of several leading computer graphics companies will discuss some of the issues they see facing this dynamic industry. One president believes that the 1980's will belong to the systems integrators because of the rapid rate of change in both technology and the competitive environment. Vertical integration will not be a successful strategy for the 1980's.

Another president is concerned that industry research analysts are misusing the term "CAD/CAM" and that, in fact, most of today's CAD/CAM systems are simply productive drafting systems. He is concerned about the confusion between realistic pictures and solid modeling and about the proper mix of functionality and interactivity.

Still another president believes the crucial issues in computer graphics are those that concern users; those that have access to the tools and those of future development of hardware and software to meet their needs. He suggests that only about one to five percent of the potential users have adopted computer graphics. He is concerned about providing increased access to computer graphics facilities and about removing the widespread psychological barrier of "I can't use the computer to do what I want!".

Other current issues will also be addressed.

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