Trade Press News

Rafael Alonso
Matsushita Information Technology Laboratory
2 Research Way
Princeton, NJ 08540-6628
alonso@research.panasonic.com

In this issue, we once again reprint an article that appeared previously in the trade press. The article is titled "A Comparison of Three User Interfaces to Relational Microcomputer Data Bases" by Carl Medsker, Margaret Christensen, and Il-Yeol Song. It first appeared in Data Base Management, a publication of Auerbach Publications.

The article describes a case study carried out at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. The authors studied the interfaces provided by three different data management systems: HyperCard, Oracle and Paradox.

The authors show that different styles of user interfaces can dramatically affect database capabilities. An important distinction is made between the end-user interface to the application and the programmer interface to the database development system. The user interface affects data integrity, productivity, product satisfaction, and system acceptance. The programmer interface affects the ability to deliver the requisite application in a timely manner. The paper describes the effect of each interface style on functional capability, design options, and production efficiency.

Their methodology and results should prove of interest to many readers who recognize the importance of interface design.

I profusely thank Kim Horan Kelly (Publisher) and Debra Rhoades (Managing Editor) for making this piece available to the RECORD readers. For further information regarding Auerbach's publications please call 1-800-950-1216.

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As a final comment I would add that I am still interested in hearing from any of you that has found a trade press article to be of use in your work. Please email me the title of the article, date of publication, and the publication name and I will do the rest. So far we have found editors of the trade press to be remarkably eager to collaborate. The main difficulty I have found is in locating suitable articles, and so I request your help in this matter.