

SIRONIX Software - UNIX* System III: Multi-user Operating Systems in Australia

Richard Tweedie

SIROMATH Pty Ltd, Sydney

By the time you read this, SIROMATH Pty Ltd, under licence from CSIRO, will be offering licences and maintenance of software derived from UNIX* System III under an agreement signed with the American group, AT&T. SIROMATH will market the software as SIRONIX, and it will be available in binary form. SIROMATH have set up a group to maintain and configure, as well as market and distribute, the SIRONIX systems.

SIRONIX will also have substantial backup within Australia, drawing on SIROMATH and CSIRO experience of UNIX operations over several years.

Multi-user - Machine Independent

UNIX System III is a remarkably friendly multi-user operating system which is portable: in setting up a UNIX system, there is no need to become locked into specific hardware. UNIX versions currently exist for VAX, PDP-11, Perkin-Elmer, HP9000, IBM, Z8000 and many other machines; UNIX can be configured for the new M68000-based systems such as SUN, or the Australian-developed UNISON.

SIROMATH will initially concentrate on PDP-11, VAX and UNISON users, although binary licences will be available on any machine for which a UNIX version can be supplied.

SIRONIX - A Flexible System

SIRONIX will be available as a bundled package, which is more than competitive with operating systems normally available. It will feature:

- Fortran 77 processing
- Pascal processing
- Basic processing
- C programming language
- Full screen editor
- Word-processing capabilities
- Batch facility

SIROMATH also expects to develop or market UNIX-based statistical packages, database software, business systems and graphics software. In particular, SIROMATH expects to implement and market the MISTRESS database system developed by Rhodnius Inc in Canada to utilise the full capabilities of UNIX.

One of the major attractions of SIRONIX is its linking ability. SIRONIX supports good networking facilities, with working interfaces to CSIRONET

already developed by DCR and Sydney University. These enable smaller machines running SIRONIX to access the full CSIRONET capabilities when needed.

User-friendly Environment

SIRONIX has been designed to provide an environment for programming and development which is particularly friendly to the user.

Within CSIRO, SIRONIX is being used to develop software ranging from robot-controllers in the Division of Manufacturing Technology, to statistical packages in the Division of Mathematics and Statistics. The VLSI project of DCR is using SIRONIX as a working environment, and Cybergraphics Pty Ltd has acquired SIRONIX to develop very high level graphics software on VAX machines.

An Economical Option

SIRONIX will be offered by SIROMATH with the objective of providing users with an economical multi-user operating system.

Because of the relationship between SIROMATH and CSIRO, CSIRO users will be offered SIRONIX at a significant discount.

Universities and other educational institutions currently operating with AT&T educational source licences will also benefit from the availability of low-priced binary licences, enabling them to carry out non-educational and commercial work using their current UNIX systems.

SIRONIX on Super-micros

Perhaps the most exciting new-generation prospect is the use of SIRONIX on super-micros, based initially on M68000 processors. SIROMATH will provide SIRONIX to L & L Australia who will be manufacturing UNISON, an Australian-developed super-micro with hardware designed specifically to utilise the capabilities of UNIX.

Further information can be obtained from the author at SIROMATH, 71 York Street, Sydney, phone (02) 295352.

*UNIX is a trademark of Bell Laboratories. ■

Editor's Note: Interested people are advised to consult with DCR before considering UNIX host connections to CSIRONET since this requires special node software which cannot be supported in all types of node.