ADMINISTRATION

Princeton University Libraries choose NeXT for of®ce automation
Princeton University Libraries

When the Princeton University Libraries decided to upgrade their of®ce automation systems, the staff's top priority was to ®nd machines that were both powerful and very easy to use.

ªLibrarians are not computer technicians, but their applications require sophisticated computing technology,º says Phil Menos, systems analyst.

The staff needed a machine capable of running word processing (with utilities to index documents of up to 1,000 pages), electronic mail, spreadsheet, database management concurrently, as well as desktop publishing capabilities and networking facilities that could provide easy access to academic and research networks.

They considered Macintosh and PC con®gurations, a minicomputer network, and a network of NeXT machines. After extensive research, they decided to purchase 27 NeXT machines. Today at Princeton's libraries, all administrative managers and their support staff have NeXTstations™ on their desks.

ªThe NeXT is the leading edge in computing: the best graphical user interfaces yet developed to assist the operation of the UNIX multitasking environment along with high-level standards, such as Display PostScript for a WYSIWYG display capability and Ethernet for high-performance networking,º says Menos.

Library administrators use Lotus Improv for compiling cataloging production statistics and salary administration. They also use DataPhile for creating and storing employee performance appraisal forms and tracking inventory of computing equipment. They use WriteNow and WordPerfect to write grant proposals and correspondence and Draw to create organization charts and presentations. They communicate with one another as well as with librarians throughout the world via NeXTmail™ on the Internet.

ªAs a UNIX machine,º says ªMenos, NeXT is the leader in communications, allowing good access to other systems, including access to Bitnet and Internet. This is especially important in a library environment,

where the ‾ow of information moves across several hosts. Support for Ethernet is built into NeXT whereas it is only an option on Macintosh
and MS-DOS machines.º

He continues, ªThe NeXT's e-mail program is among the most powerful and easy to use available. NeXTmail was a key reason we bought NeXT machines. With NeXTmail, if two colleagues are working on a budget or a grant together, they now just send the Improv ®le or the WordPerfect ®le back and forth to each other via e-mail. It's simple.º

Before purchasing the NeXT machines, Menos says, ªEverything was single-tasking. We'd have to log off one machine and get on another to perform another task. Since NeXT is multitasking, the staff can be running e-mail, working on a grant in WordPerfect, and searching a databaseÐor a number of databasesÐon the InternetÐall at the same time. That we can do all of this from one system is very important to us.º

Menos adds that the library staff was also impressed with the amount of software that came bundled with the NeXT machines: ªThe software that's bundled with the base system is generous and capable. Plus, there is a growing software market with software available to meet every business needÐmuch of it original and creative work that has been written to take special advantage of the NeXT's unique user interface.

ªThe NeXT bundled software even includes DataVizBridge™ for transferring ®les to a Macintosh as well as for converting ®les to Word or Excel. For those who share work with Macintosh and MS-DOS users, or who wish to bring work home to a different kind of computer, there are ef®cient and effective ways to move ®les.º

Concludes Menos, ªNeXT combines the most innovative technology with the most features at the most competitive price. The machine has met the library's administrative and research needs in an effective manner that is best positioned to expand in the future.º

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