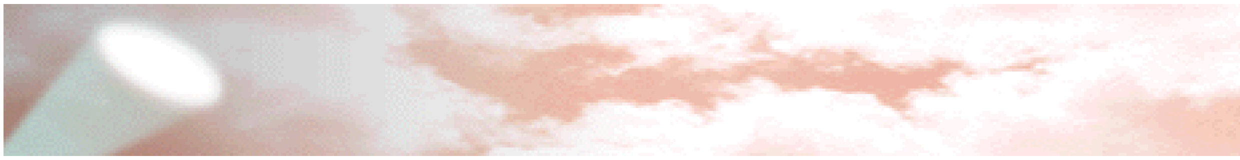

Common Open Software Environment (COSE) Update

by Michele Goodman

The Common Open Software Environment (COSE) announcementmade at the 1993 UniForum Conference represents one of the most important open systems cooperative efforts. COSE is an initiative between the most important players in the UNIX industry, including SunSoft, HP®, IBM®, SCO®, Univel, and USL.

The initiative is designed to foster open systems through a consistent look, feel, and behavior of both client and server systems for all UNIX platforms. COSE includes technologies ranging from window systems and graphics, networking, desktop integration and user interfaces, to inter-application integration, objects, and multimedia.

Open Specifications
To ensure open specifications, COSE employs X/Open,™ a non-profit standards organization, which will perform certification and branding of compliant vendor products.

The first COSE specifications will be available in late-1993. A joint Developer Conference is slated for October 26-28, 1993 in San Jose, California.

An important part of COSE is the Common Desktop Environment (CDE) which provides a consistent look and feel. The major components of CDE contributed by SunSoft are an application builder, audiotool, calendar manager and its API, desktop integration, mail, the messaging framework and the software developer kit (SDK). The CDE specification was submitted to X/Open in June 1993. CDE environment implementations will be come available by mid-1994.

A major objective of the initiative is to preserve compatibility with existing applications. Developer's executables will run on future versions of the Solaris operating environment without the need for recompilation.

In the COSE announcement, SunSoft reported a number of changes to its environment, the most important being the migration to the Motif® toolkit and user interface.

When evaluating the impact on their product plans, we suggest that developers measure their level of investment to determine if any changes should be made to their porting strategy. Applications built with the OLIT and XView™ toolkits will run on all existing and future Solaris environments, including those based on COSE. If you are planning new development, we suggest you use the Motif Toolkit. If you are in the middle of development, you should look at how much you've spent on the port thus far to determine if you should change your development strategy or continue with your current development.