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Microsoft Outlines DOS 5.0 To Ward Off DR DOS

By Paul M. Storer

Although the release of Microsoft Corp.'s new MS-DOS 5.0 operating system is months away, product details are emerging in a steady stream.

Most MS-DOS 5.0 features mirror those in DOS-compatible DR DOS. The program also delivers new features, such as combined File and Program Managers in the DOS shell, a file-transfer program and a command that lets MS-DOS 5.0 emulate earlier versions of DOS, according to Microsoft documents.

MS-DOS 5.0 will sell for \$70, according to the documents, sources report an upgrade price of about \$60. Both DR DOS and MS-DOS 5.0 are the first versions from each company that will be sold through retail and OEM channels.

Microsoft—in a shift in its policy of not commenting on unannounced products—has been unusually cooperative in confirming details about MS-DOS 5.0.

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Microsoft officials said the company is enacting the plan because there is no guarantee there is no MS-DOS 5.0 when everyone knows there is.

"It's more of a service to customers than shrewdness," said Mark Chest-

er, Microsoft's MS-DOS 5.0 product manager in Redmond, Wash.

Storer observes any Microsoft is simply engaging in a familiar industry ploy: If you can't sell software that equals the competition, sell upsware instead.

They cite information that surfaced about MS-DOS 5.0 the same week in June that DR DOS announced DR DOS 5.0. Microsoft will not ship MS-DOS 5.0 until at least the first quarter of 1991, according to company officials.

Microsoft Vice President Brad Silverberg denied that the company was using operations as a ploy against DR DOS. The main attraction of MS-DOS 5.0 is its memory-management capabilities, which provide more memory for DOS applications and for Windows. ■

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