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# Computers: New Tool for Business and Education

By RUSTY PECK

As today's business world becomes increasingly complex, many firms are turning to computer technology to assist in their operations and to cut costs.

With the growing needs of the business structure, rising manpower costs, and the increasing job requirements of today's business managers, computers are becoming an important part of everyday business activity.

"Successful managers of the '80s will have at least one requirement for climbing the corporate ladder that their '70s counterparts have only recently begun to face: understanding and mastering electronic technology," said Ms. Randy Goldfield, a principal of Booz & Allen & Hamilton, an international management consulting firm.

"The time is not far off when a manager's computer terminal will be just as important as his or her telephone," Goldfield said in a January 1980 article for the *MBA Executive*.

Goldfield's article pointed out a myriad of potential uses for the computer in business. Among the possibilities are increased use of word processing units, "speech-mail" systems, electronic mail systems and teleconferences.

"Approximately 50 percent of a manager's typical business travel could be eliminated through teleconferencing — using audio and video computer hookups to hold meetings across long distances," Goldfield said citing a Booz & Allen estimate.

The growing use and development of computers has also sparked another need of business today — trained personnel able to put the new technology into operation.

"As the availability of computer use is recognized, so grows the need for responsible, trained personnel to install and operate them," said Dr. Ken Heideman, assistant professor in the Department of Business Analysis and Research at Texas A&M.

"This mushrooming demand for computer programmers or data processors has resulted in a heavier emphasis being placed on preparing business students for the computer field," Heideman explained.

Although the College of Business Administration currently offers no undergraduate degree program in data processing, other departments of the College and

University rely on the Department of Business Analysis and Research to train students in the use of the computer and business statistical methods in management.

"The requirements for computer courses in the other business degree plans has been increasing steadily," said Dr. Warren Rose, head of the Department of Business Analysis and Research. "All four degree plans (Accounting, Finance, Management and Marketing) require our basic Data Processing Concepts course, and three of the four require a FORTRAN or a COBOL course."

Rose also indicated that use of the University's AMDAHL 360 computer by undergraduate students has increased.

In mid-February, the Department of Business Analysis and Research purchased an Alpha Micro Computer System.

The microcomputer is currently available for faculty and graduate student use, and can support three users interactively. The computer and its floppy disc storage were purchased for \$11,500 with discretionary funds provided by Atlantic Richfield, Texaco, and Shell, Rose said.

The computer can later be expanded to accommodate up to 10

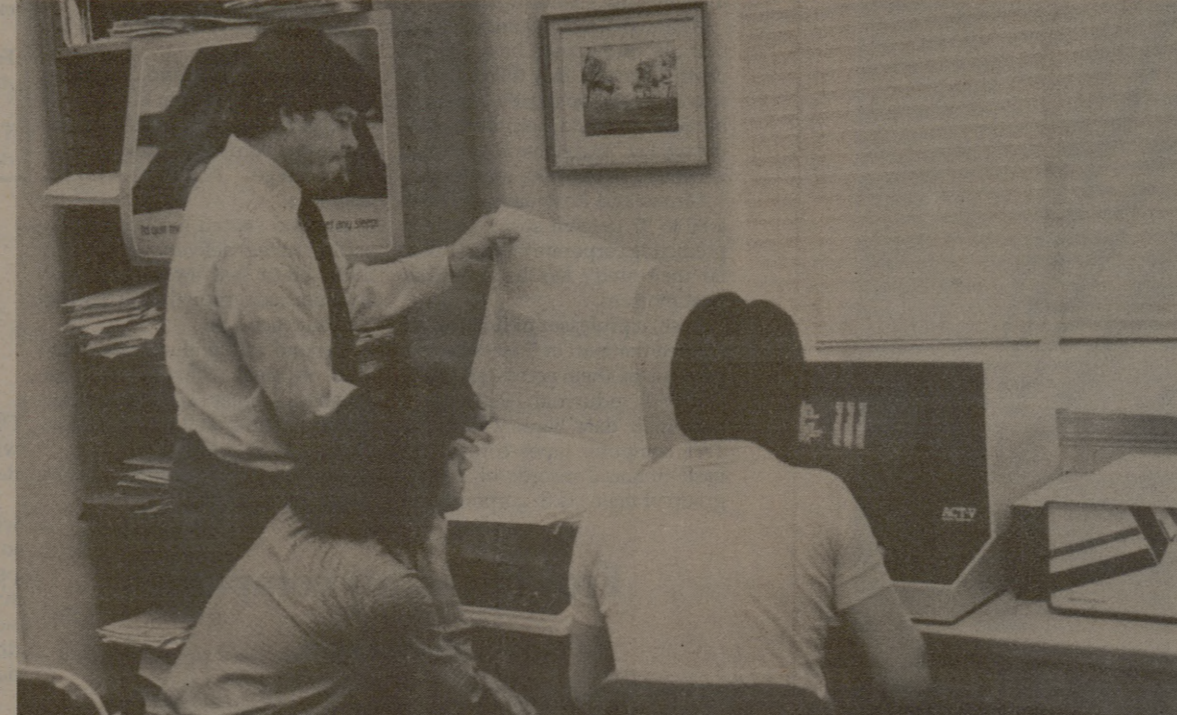
Pat Melugin, vice president of *The Dallas Pen Company*, looks over the readout of the company's computer system. *Dallas Pen* uses the computer to keep track of inventory, accounts and payroll.

users concurrently, he said. This expansion would cost an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000.

"The purchase of the microcomputer system is to give graduate students exposure to the capabilities and limitations of microcomputer hardware and to allow them to develop interactive capabilities that the current AMDAHL system doesn't have," Heideman said.

Among the capabilities of the Alpha system are many financial and technical applications including accounting, inventory, payroll, forecasting, and production coordination. Its overall function as a learning tool makes it a potential subject for undergraduate instruction, Heideman said.

The Department of Business



|                      |        |        |        |
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| LES EXP              | 444.4  | 321.1  | 244.2  |
| TEL                  | 207.9  | 208.6  | 433.8  |
| INSUR                | 464.5  | 512.8  | 573.8  |
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| DEPRIC EXP           | 771    | 771    | 771    |
| OFFICE RENT          | 3420   | 3420   | 3420   |
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| CONTRIBUTION MARGIN  | 13045  | 10587  | 6483   |
| OP PER CHARGES       | 2,000  | 2,000  | 2,312  |
| FIXED EXP            | 1070   | 1070   | 1070   |
| NET INC BT           | 7,333  | 7,588  | 8,499  |
| LARGE INC PER        | 18,200 | 11,200 | 12,211 |
| TOTAL INC PER        | 11,450 | 11,374 | 13,450 |
| TOTAL EXP PER        | 10,700 | 10,700 | 10,700 |
| INDEBTABLE EXP PER   | 5,770  | 5,770  | 5,770  |
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ACT-V  
MICRO-TERM INC.

Dr. Winston Shearon, (standing) of the Department of Accounting, explains the uses of the department's microcomputer to graduate students, Leona Agnello and Ted McElroy.

This close-up of the video display screen of the Accounting Department's computer shows some of the information the system contains. A new addition to the system allows users to pose hypothetical questions to the computer and receive the answer within seconds.

Gains professional and practical experience

## Student benefits from co-op

By ANDRIANNE GIOVANNINI

Junior finance major Susan Gulig was just like many other students at Texas A&M — until this past summer. Before, she really didn't know what she wanted to do after graduation.

Now after spending a summer as a student accountant in the internal auditing department of Texas Utilities Company in Dallas, Susan is a bit more sure of herself.

"Until I worked at Texas Utilities, I didn't know what I was going to do," she said. "The choices available to a finance major are pretty broad, and without work experience you don't really know what is available."

Gulig was the first student to participate in the College of Business Administration's newly developed Co-operative Education Program.

The program, pioneered with Gulig, now has seven A&M business students on job assignments for the spring semester. That number should double for the summer.

"Co-op jobs aren't work-study programs for the summer, nor are they 'do us a favor' arrangements with industry," said C. Wayne

Terrell, coordinator for cooperative education in business administration.

"This is a good recruiting tool for the companies," Terrell said. "They get to evaluate a student's on-the-job performance before making a long-term employment commitment."

While the co-op program is used extensively in many engineering schools, Terrell said that not many other business schools in the Southwest offer the program.

"There's a competitive edge that a co-op student has when interviewing," Terrell said.

To enter the co-op program in Business Administration a student must have a grade point ratio of 2.5 or better and 45 credit hours. To qualify for a cooperative education certificate on graduation, a student must acquire a minimum of 12 months on-the-job experience on an alternating semester basis during the college career.

In addition to work experience and a monthly salary which may range from \$600 to \$1,000, the co-op student earns two semester credit hours for each work term, Terrell said.



Susan Gulig (center of photo) addresses the Undergraduate Business Student Council during a recent meeting. Gulig is an active council member and was a recipient of a Sophomore Recognition Award in the 1979 College of Business Administration academic achievement awards ceremony.

Beyond developing a better perspective on her field, Gulig said she also gained some valuable practical experience while co-oping.

"I learned a great deal about relating to other people, developing good work habits, and dressing and acting like a professional," she said.

"Also, just living alone in a large business center like Dallas was an

education in itself." Gulig plans to return to work for Texas Utilities this next summer and is seriously considering working for the company after graduation.

"After working for them one summer, I found that I really enjoy internal auditing," she said. "It's a lot more fun than just ledger accounting because the duties are more broad."

## Forum

Continued from page 1.

Erb developed the Forum in conjunction with a new graduate-level course he teaches, *Transportation Systems Economics*, and sees it as a great learning experience for his students.

"We've been talking about this type of forum for the past three or four years," Erb said, describing the emphasis the Department of Business Analysis and Research places on transportation and physical distribution.

The department recently completed its Sixth Annual Conference on Physical Distribution Management. The conference brings distribution/transportation executives to A&M to discuss developments in the field.

Among the panelists involved in the Forum are: A. Daniel O'Neal, immediate past chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission; Donald Boyes, president of the National Industrial Traffic League and director of transportation of Reynolds Metals Company; and William H. Dempsey, president and chief operating officer of the Association of American Railroads.

Among the invited participants to the Forum are: Stoney M. Stubbs, Sr., vice-chairman of Frozen Foods Express; W.W. Callan, Sr., chairman of Central Freight Lines Inc.; and N.M. Lorentzen, president and chief executive officer of Burlington Northern Railroad.

Ample time has been scheduled into the Forum agenda for open discussion among participants, Erb said. A large turn-out is expected including many of the top executives in the transportation field and the Texas Transportation Institute's Advisory Committee.

## MBA Competition

Continued from page 1.

far, everyone is pretty excited about it."

Selection of the team to represent Texas A&M was based on its "balance" or breadth of background of its members, its familiarity with and skill in handling case analyses, the communications skills of its members, and its ability to respond effectively to stress situations.

Micky Foster of Finance, Phyllis Vincent Ward of Marketing, and Niles Woods of Accounting have been selected to represent Texas A&M.

Case presentations are scheduled to begin at 1 pm Saturday in Rooms 501 and 701 of the Rudder Tower and are open to the public, Weaver said.

An Awards Banquet will be held beginning at 7 pm Saturday at the Ramada Inn Ballroom and will feature Dr. Lawrence E. Fouraker, former dean of the Harvard Business School, as guest speaker. Tickets for the banquet are \$10 per person and are on sale in Room 214 of the Old Engineering Building and on the first floor of Francis Hall.

Anderson Clayton, Gulf Oil Foundation, and Conoco are the industry sponsors of the event, Weaver said.

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## Honor society to hold banquet

Beta Gamma Sigma, the national business honor society, has announced a banquet to be held 6 pm Tuesday, April 15, at the Briarcrest Country Club.

The banquet is in honor of 108 student inductees and Pete Wehner, Executive Vice President of Blocker Energy Resources, who is an honorary inductee to the society.

The banquet is limited to members and guests of society.