**ON THE HORIZON**

Inspired by breakthroughs in processing technology as well as as changing market needs, developers of system and utilities software are continualy brainstorming new programs and improvements to existing software. Although trying to divine the paths of software development is risky, some of today’s leading-edge technologies provides clues to the future.

**User-Friendly System Software**

Understanding and using system software an operating systems has long perplexed many users, especially those with little or no training. Recognizing this problem, software manufacturers strive to make new system software more user-friendly. Very soon these programs may include wizards similar to the wizards currently built into many application programs. In the future, system software user’s may be able to click on wizard icons to automatically perform tasks such as formatting disks or copying files.

**Improved Utilities Software**

Many software products now available are segmented, meaning users must buy several products to have all the utilities they need. Although some manfacturers currently offer products that include a variety of programs, users soon may be able to more easily purchase a suite containing all needed utilities, including antivirus programs, a firewall that automatically blocks hackers using the Internet to gain access to the user’s computer, and even programs that can identify hacker locations.

**New User Interface Desgin for Operating Systems**

Like other types of software, operating systems for the PC are evolving in a “all-in-one” direction. New designs are likely to incorporate speech and handwriting recognition, multimedia elements in the display, a web browser, and even gesture recognition. The intagration of these technologies into a single interface will meet the classic market needs of faster, easier interactions with the user.