Digital Equipment VAXft 3000

New Product Announcement

Vendor
Digital Equipment Corp. (DEC)
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Technology
Fault-tolerant computer systems.

Date Announced
The VAXft 3000 was
announced in February
1990.

Scheduled Delivery
The VAXft 3000 and
related peripherals will
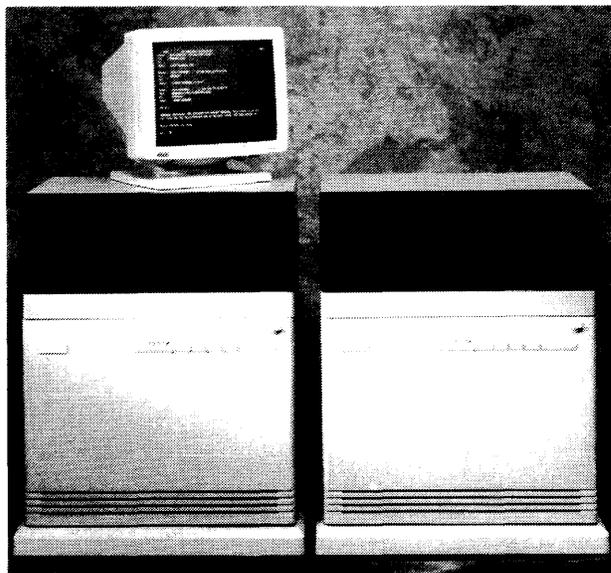be available in June
1990.

Pricing
Prices for the VAXft
3000 Model 310 start at
$229,000. Peripherals
for the VAXft 3000 in-
clude the TF70 tape
subsystem, priced at
$7,100, and RF31-JA
and RF31-KA disk
drives, priced at $9,600

and $8,500, respectively. 32M-byte
mirrored memory modules are
priced at $48,000 per pair.

Company Background
Founded in 1957, Digital designs,
develops, manufactures, markets,
and services computer systems, in-
cluding VAX and MicroVAX com-
puters, and RISC-based DECstations
and DECsystems. Digital has entered
the fault-tolerant computer market
with its VAXft 3000 Model 310.

*The new VAXft 3000 Model 310 features fully
duplicated components in its fault-tolerant
design.*

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Computers

Digital Equipment
VAXft 3000

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Product Definition

Digital announced the VAXft 3000 Model 310 as the first in a series of fault-tolerant computer systems. Digital also announced new tape and disk drives developed especially for the new fault-tolerant environment.

The VAXft 3000 essentially features two fully mirrored MicroVAX 3800s. Every component is duplicated so that there is no single point of failure. The system is contained in two identical cabinets, linked by cables which provide parallel data paths. The VAXft 3000 is fully compatible with other VAX systems and can be used as a standalone system or as part of a VAXcluster or network system.

The VAXft 3000 is for critical applications where downtime is not acceptable. Both CPU subsystems run synchronously, so if one system fails, the other continues processing without any loss of data. Digital maintains that no transaction can be lost as a result of a subsystem failure.

The VAXft 3000 features mirrored ECC memory for full redundancy; the system supports up to 128M bytes of mirrored memory, available in 32M-byte module pairs.

The VAXft 3000 also features volume shadowing of mass storage. Essentially, all data written to a disk is duplicated on another volume. This ensures continuous access to data.

Digital announced fault-tolerant versions of several of its peripheral products for use with the VAXft 3000.

The TF70 tape drive, based on the TK70 drive, is designed with an interface to the Digital Storage Systems Interconnect (DSSI) bus used in the VAXft 3000. The TF70 provides 296M bytes of storage and a transfer rate of 125K bytes per second. The TF70 is fully compatible with the TK70 and read compatible with the TK50 and TZ30 tape drives.

The RF31-JA and RF31-KA 381M-byte disk drives also feature an interface to the DSSI bus. The RF31-JA is a removable drive; the RF31-KA is a fixed drive. The VAXft 3000 supports up to 11 drives, for a total formatted capacity of 4.2G bytes.

Relationship to Current Product Line

The new fault-tolerant line is fully hardware and software compatible with other VAX/VMS systems and can be configured in clusters with non-fault-tolerant systems.

Market Position

Digital has entered a market dominated by Stratus and Tandem fault-tolerant computers. The Digital advantage at this point is its VMS operating system and compatibility with its other VAX/VMS computers.

The VAXft 3000 Model 310 is for mission-critical applications where downtime translates into large financial losses, such as in the banking industry. Digital already markets dual-host and VAXcluster configurations which provide high degrees of system availability; it is unlikely that users of these systems will migrate to the new fault-tolerant model.

Characteristics

System Features

The VAXft 3000 achieves its fault tolerance through a design that features:

- Two fully duplicated sets of hardware components.

- No single point of hardware failure.

- Ethernet interface that supports both Thickwire and Thinwire.

- Up to 1.9G bytes of shadowed disk storage.

- Full VAX/VMS compatibility.

A summary of system characteristics for the VAXft 3000 Model 310 appears in the following table.

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**Digital Equipment
VAXft 3000**

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Computers

System Characteristics: VAXft 3000

Characteristics	Model 310
CPU Type	—
Operating System	VMS
MIPS	3.8 VUPS
Proc. Clock Speed	—
I/O Transfer Rate	4M bytes/sec.
Memory	—
Minimum Capacity (bytes)	32M
Maximum Capacity (bytes)	128M
Expansion Increments	32M
Disk Storage	—
Minimum Capacity (bytes)	381M
Maximum Capacity (bytes)	1.9G
Number of Workstations	—
Direct Connect/ Shared Access	—
Maximum no. of users	—
Purchase Price ($)	229,000

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