

JP UK Company Claims Major Video Codec Breakthrough 06/19/96
CROYDON, SURREY, ENGLAND, 1996 JUN 19 (NB) -- Origin UK says it has developed a generic technology that is capable of doubling the performance of video codecs, regardless of which compression system they use.

Codecs are devices that take an analog signal, digitize it, and compress the resultant signal down to as small a bandwidth as possible, with the proviso that the codec must operate in real time.

Codecs are typically found in mobile phones and, in the case of video codecs, in videoconferencing systems.

Origin, which forms part of the Dutch Philips group of companies, has developed a video content analysis processor (VCAP) engine that sits in front of the codec and examines the video images for movement, deciding which parts of the picture are the most critical.

Armed with this information, the VCAP is able to only feed that video data to the codec which represents the most important regions in the motion video stream. At the other end of the link, a second VCAP processes the data and reconstitutes it to form an image very close to that originally encoded.

According to Origin, the VCAP system can compress a 64,000 bits-per-second (bps) videoconferencing data stream down to as little as 24,000 bps -- under the 28,800 bps data stream limit of a V.34 analog modem. This, the company claims, could see the arrival of ISDN (integrated services digital network) quality videoconferencing systems that work across POTS (plain old telephone service) lines.

Origin claims that VCAP is applicable to all types of digital video, being capable of reducing digital video noise and tracking moving targets, but is especially relevant to low band width applications such as video telephony and the Internet.

Philip Gilks, Origin's business development manager, said that the company's R&D staff were among the first in the industry to develop real-time fractal video compression technology back in 1993.

"For the last three years, the team has been analyzing video streams to establish the most efficient ways of encoding them. We're already in discussion with several major organizations with regards to licensing this technology," he said.

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1 -> PC Expo - Sony Intros "PC TVs" With MPEG, 3-D Graphics --

REPEAT/With features that include a Motion Picture Experts Group (MPEG)

decoder, three-dimensional (3-D) accelerated graphics, a full-duplex speakerphone, and a 28.8 Mbps modem with digital simultaneous voice/data (DSVD) exchange, Sony's new PCV-70 and PCV-90 multimedia PCs can be accurately dubbed "PC TVs," contended Sony officials during a press conference at the Sony Music Studios in Manhattan.

2 -> Capital Cities/ABC, AOL Launch Style Channel -- REPEAT/Capital Cities/ABC and America Online (NASDAQ:AMER) (AOL) said they have formally launched the "Style Channel" within the AOL service. The new channel will combine the online features of AOL with the resources from ABC-owned Fairchild Publications magazines; including Women's Wear Daily (WWD), "W," and other fashion titles.

3 -> ATM Forum Clarifies Anchorage Accord, Emphasizes Wireless -- REPEAT/The body that oversees standards for asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) networking has more clearly defined its guarantees of interoperability among existing and future specifications, by selecting the specifications that will be part of the Anchorage Accord established at its April meeting.

4 -> Ads Don't Get Left Behind On Web With Pekoe -- REPEAT/For firms placing ads on an Internet World Wide Web page, one problem that occurs when the reader clicks on a hyperlink and leaves the page, is that the advertiser's ad gets left behind. Not anymore, according to New England Internet Company Inc. (NEICO), which has just released Pekoe.

5 -> PC Expo - Lotus Unveils Domino, Releases Components -- Lotus will today take the wraps off of "Domino," a fine-tuned blueprint for Notes/World Wide Web integration, officials said, in a meeting with Newsbytes at PC Expo about the newly announced availability of the Lotus Components Starter Pack both electronically and in shrink-wrapped form. The first two members of the Components Starter Pack, known as "project scheduler" and "draw diagram," can now be downloaded free of charge from the Lotus home page on the Web.

6 -> ****PC Expo - Sharp Previews Wide-Screen Notebook PC -- This fall, Sharp plans to roll out the first notebook PC in the industry to use a "wide format" screen, officials revealed, during a press conference at PC Expo in New York City. Sharp has not yet named the less than four-pound unit, being demonstrated at the show in prototype form.

7 -> ****Internet Update -- This is today's roundup of new and updated resources and services on the global Internet, including: PC Computing in three flavors; it's official, the Highlander is online; everything about British Trains; online publishing acrobatics; MCI spreads Web wider; Star Tribune online; pensions advice for job changers; opinions from Venezuela; when 9 to 5 isn't good enough; new on Usenet; new Request For Comments issued; across America - 28 New Sites All In One;

online today.

8 -> Asia Technology Newsbriefs -- This is a roundup of technology related news from Newsbytes sources and the leading English languages newspapers of East Asian countries, including Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam

9 -> 120MB Floppy Disk Format Gets Boost From Maxell, Mitsubishi -- The new LS-120 floppy disk format has received a boost from Japan's Maxell and Mitsubishi, which have both announced they will support the new format. LS-120 is battling for the place as successor to the floppy disk.

10 -> ****Japan/US Chip Talks End In Failure Again -- Bilateral talks between Japan and the United States ended in failure again on Tuesday when each side announced no progress had been made in negotiations over whether to renew a controversial chip pact. The US/Japan semiconductor pact expires on July 31 and the US continues to push for renewal, while Japan says it wants an end to government involvement in semiconductor trade.

11 -> Fujitsu Enters Data Warehousing With Fastest Processor -- Fujitsu Ltd. has announced it is entering the data warehousing market and has an ambition to become the world leader in the sector. It also announced, what it claims is, the world's fastest data warehousing processor and a strategic partnership with Arbor Software of the United States.

12 -> Newsbytes NewsReel - 12 Years Ago This Week -- Twelve years ago this week in the computer industry, June 19, 1984: The Clamor of Clones; Amiga Arises and So Does Osborne; Trilogy Trashed along with This & That. These stories were taken from the extensive archives at the Newsbytes Web site at <http://www.newsbytes.com>

13 -> New Jersey College Puts Impaired Students On The Net -- Thomas Edison State College said it is the first educational institution to offer campus -wide Internet access to visually impaired and dyslexic students.

14 -> Computer Telephony Integration To Enter Mainstream - Report -- According to a major new study from Schema, which claims to be one of Europe's leading independent telecoms consultancies, the computer telephony integration (CTI) marketplace in Europe has entered a period of rapid and accelerating growth.

15 -> UK Mobile Phone Dealers Protest Over Govt Impositions -- Some of the UK's mobile phone service providers have reacted with almost hostility to the proposals to outlaw "unfair" contract terms in mobile phone contracts. The concerns voiced by the Federation of Communication Services (FCS) come as a result of an Office of Fair Trading pronouncement early last week that it did not like the cellular

industry's unfair contract terms.

16 -> Bigfoot Offers Permanent E-Mail Address -- Bigfoot Partners LP, creators of the Bigfoot e-mail directory, is adding "Bigfoot For Life," a free service that gives e-mail users a permanent e-mail address. Once signed up, a user can have one address, and have all of their messages forwarded.

17 -> NetGravity Tames The Web Cookie Monster -- You might not realize it, but every time you use one of the main line browsers and hit a World Wide Web site, a little message is left behind on your system. The message, called a cookie, resides on your browser to be read by the Web site when you call back.

18 -> Poland - First GSM Cellphone Net Operational This Fall -- Polska Telefonia Cyfrowa (PTC) one of the two phone consortia awarded Polish GSM (global system for mobile communications) licenses earlier this year, plans to have its network in full operation in Warsaw, Krakow, and other major cities in Poland by this coming October, Newsbytes has learned.

19 -> Nortel's Proximity Radio Telecoms System Gains Ground -- Nortel's Proximity wireless fixed-line telephone service, a radio hop system offering wireless local loop services at 3.5 gigahertz (GHz) is gaining ground in the international market, the company claims.

20 -> UK Company Claims Major Video Codec Breakthrough -- Origin UK says it has developed a generic technology that is capable of doubling the performance of video codecs, regardless of which compression system they use.

21 -> UK - Next-Generation Web Development Tool -- Intelligent Environments, a software development company, has unveiled Amazon, an advanced Internet/intranet development package that it claims is suitable for the "next-generation of World Wide Web applications."

22 -> Czech Republic - SPT Telecom Privatization Gets Rolling -- SPT Telecom, the former state-run Czech telecoms company, has announced that its shareholders have approved the sale of bonds worth \$570 million. The move will allow the Czech telco to raise the much-needed cash to upgrade its aging national telecoms infrastructure.

23 -> British Telecom Offers Disaster Recovery Service -- British Telecom (BT) has taken the wraps off a new company disaster recovery service called Data Commsure. According to Brett Van Toen, the company's business continuity marketing manager, the service protects vital data comms equipment by providing rapid assistance to companies if their information technology (IT) hardware is damaged or breaks down.

24 -> ****E-mail - More Than Just For Sending Messages -- Whether you've got nothing more than an e-mail connection to the Internet or

access to the complete range of tools via a dedicated line, don't ever think that e-mail is just for sending messages. If you want to know the latest weather, news, send a free fax, join an interesting discussion or any one of hundreds of other services, just fire up your e-mail client.

25 -> Lucent Sells Paradyne Subsidiary -- Lucent Technologies Inc. (NYSE:LU) said it has signed a definitive agreement to sell AT&T Paradyne, a Largo, Florida-based subsidiary that makes network access products, to Texas Pacific Group for \$175 million.

26 -> NewsPix Update For Newsbytes Publishers -- This update will be posted each Wednesday and Friday to reflect the daily picture additions. The updates will in turn become part of the main NewsPix Bulletin issued on Monday.

27 -> TCI & 3M Spin-Off Business Units -- Two companies, Tele-Communications Inc. (NASDAQ:TCOMA) and 3M (NYSE:MMM), said in separate announcements they have spun-off business units within their companies. TCI spun-off its direct broadcast satellite subsidiary, while 3M did the same with its data storage and imaging systems business.

28 -> Iomega Intros New Products After Stock Drop -- Iomega Corp. (NASDAQ:IOMG) has made a flurry of announcements regarding its Zip drive system, after the company's stock took a plunge on Wall Street. Iomega's shares, which had been bolstered in the past few months because of the Zip drive, fell \$10.25 to \$26.75 yesterday after Mitsubishi said it would introduce a drive to compete with Iomega's Zip drive.

29 -> Netscape's Browser Tops 38 Million Users -- Claiming to outsell such popular Microsoft Corp. (NASDAQ:MSFT) applications as Word, Office, and Excel, Netscape Communications (NASDAQ:NSCP) cited an International Data Corporation (IDC) study in calling its Internet browser the "world's most popular application." Available for 18 months as a commercial product, Netscape Navigator is claimed to have more than 38 million users and, says the company, its intranet products are accepted by Ford, GE, 3M, and other major corporations.

30 -> Acorn Computers' Set-Top Internet Box Technology -- Acorn Computers, a leading light in the educational computer industry may be on the verge of emulating the success it enjoyed with the BBC Model B and Archimedes computers, with the NetStation, a UKP399 (\$600) device for easy access to the Internet.

31 -> CompuServe Revenues Up 31% In 4Qtr -- With the addition of Sprynet and its new family online service, Wow!, CompuServe has reported gross revenues of \$215.2 million for its first quarter on the NASDAQ exchange. The recently ended fourth quarter ends the company's fiscal year with net income of \$49.1 million compared to fiscal 1995 income of \$8.8 million.

32 -> PC Expo Concentrates On Internet -- PC Expo began its New York City run with a heavy Internet focus. The annual show, running at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center through June 20, is expected by the show producer, Blenheim Group USA Inc., to draw more than 130,000 attendees

33 -> ****PC Expo - IBM's Whiteside Sees Info Utilities Developing -- John Whiteside, general manager, IBM Global Networks, addressing attendees at New York City's PC Expo, told the audience that IBM is "committed" to becoming a major player in the developing world of "information utilities."

34 -> PC Expo - Radnet's WebShare For Web Groupware Apps -- In a press conference at PC Expo, Radnet, a start-up formed by former Lotus employees, announced the release of WebShare, a new environment for developing groupware applications for the World Wide Web.

(Ian Stokell/19960619)