

In the last issue of *RADICAL SOFTWARE* (number 3), we detailed a plan for the distribution and exchange of videotapes. Our concept was that people themselves know best what information is useful to their lives so rather than producers who anticipate "markets" for video information, there has to be a system which reinforces indigenous information processes.

Our distribution plan had two modes. One was the outright sale of video software for money, or (less) money and blank videotape to do the copying on. The other was an information marketplace where one videotape maker could exchange software with another.

Then, out of the videotapes we received in exchange for our own (Raindance) software, we proposed to assemble a *Video Access Catalog*, which would be a program tape offering excerpts from the best tape coming in. That composite tape was then to have been available for outright sale by itself.

The final component of the distribution plan was the outright sale of videotapes made by individual producers to video centers like universities (and later homes via cassettes) which have playback equipment, an audience and money, but which have not yet begun to make their own tapes for distribution.

The availability of these tapes would be known through the *Video Access Catalog*, announcements in *RADICAL SOFTWARE*, and promotional mailings.

To avoid an overly centralized role on our part, we designed the system so that master tapes would stay with the producers and we would pass on sales orders to them so that they could do their own distribution. Or, they could agree to let us hold their masters and do their distribution for them.

In either case, we hoped that others would set up their own distribution system. To aid that process we pledged ourselves to *Process Print-Out* which would be a periodic debriefing of how the plan was going. Here is our first report:

In the past 3 months we have exchanged videotapes with 15 groups or individuals. We have sold tapes to 8 other people. (A complete listing of those transactions is in the box below.)

These sales were made at our original price structure of \$55 an hour for outright purchase, \$28 a half hour. That price includes blank tape, handling and mailing.

In addition to those sales and exchanges, we received some finished tapes whose producers want us to do distribution. Along with a sales form, they are listed on the inside back cover of this issue of *RADICAL SOFTWARE*.

Aside from the original publicity about the plan in *RADICAL SOFTWARE* number 3, the only sales attempt we made was a special mailing to our own list of people we know have playback equipment. We did this as part of an agreement to help distribute a composite videotape made by people at the Mayday demonstrations in Washington who called themselves the Mayday Video Coalition. Along with the Mayday tape we offered those listed in this issue.

These are our temporary conclusions:

The exchange part of the network has been more successful than the sales attempt. This is because most people actively involved in alternate television know each other while straight cash customers are just now learning of our work.

While we are buying blank videotape at below our original estimate, the rise in postal rates and low volume have led us to keep our sales prices the same.

PROCESS PRINT-OUT

VIDEOTAPE SALES: April thru June 1971

<u>Purchaser</u>	<u>\$ (raw tape) paid</u>	<u>Software sent (minutes)</u>	<u>Postage</u>
1. JIM LANDIS	\$65.00	Isle of Wight, Altamont, Woodstock (60)	picked-up
2. ANTIOCH COLLEGE Columbia, Maryland	\$60 plus 2(60)	Tender is the Tape II (60) Clinton Project (60)	\$1.42
3. CENTRAL MICHIGAN U. Mount Pleasant, Mich.	4(30 min. tapes)	Clinton Project (30) College Life, Buffalo (30)	\$1.80
4. UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA Alberta, Edmonton, Can.	\$178.70 plus 6(60)	Best of the Raindance data bank 6(60)	\$24.76
5. H. KLEINFELTER	\$55.00	Mayday (60)	no record
6. VIDEO THEATER PRODUCTIONS 24 Brighton Avenue Allston, Massachusetts	\$90.00	Frost, Cleaver-Leary, Media Primer, Cuko (80)	\$6.09

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VIDEOTAPE EXCHANGES: April thru June 1971

<u>Producer</u>	<u>Software (minutes)</u>	<u>Software (minutes)</u>	<u>Postage</u>
1. COMMUNIVERSITY 211 Bay State Rd. Boston, Mass.	we initiated ⁺⁺	Tender is the Tape II (60)	picked-up
2. HARVEY KORNSPAN American Film Instit. Beverly Hills, Calif.	Los Angeles county art museum (20)	we dubbed his software on our tape and returned his tape	\$2.20
3. CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE/ARTS Los Angeles, California	we initiated	Clinton Project (60)	\$1.68
4. J.O. MALLENDER Villagatan 12 Helsinki 15, Finland	we initiated	Bucky Fuller, Wise Gallery show, New York scenes, St. Patrick's Day parade (60)	\$6.00
5. Eric Siegel 110 W. 13th Street New York, N.Y.	Eric Siegel's N.Y: Central Park En- vironment April 1971	\$20 royalty*	delivered
6. THE ULTIMATE MIRROR 308 West 82d Street New York, N.Y.	Ibiza	\$20 royalty*	delivered

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⁺⁺no return software received for tapes we initiated as of July 8, 1971

*royalties paid by Raindance for tapes used at college gigs

Sales of videotape is not a self-supporting enterprise and definitely cannot yet support a straight exchange. (Our losses, however, are minimal, as we are using our existing hardware and administrative structure to handle requests. It receives support from *RADICAL SOFTWARE* sales, New York State Council on the Arts grant money, and consultancies.)

We are hesitant to push the plan and have it appear as something it is not intended to be (i.e. a super-slick "underground" videotape network mail order service.) However, we feel there is a difference between traditional marketing, where people are forced to buy; and access, where critical information is available to allow users to make their own decisions. Thus, we want to accelerate the availability of videotapes in as intelligent a manner as possible.

At this point our own affairs enter in. We have decided to relax business activities over the summer and concentrate on creative ones. This means our administrative structure will function solely on existing projects: *RADICAL SOFTWARE* distribution, preparation of a New York State index of video activity, and response to current (including this one) tape offers.

During the summer period (July and August) we are going to do a variety of things. Beryl and Ira will spend part of their time traveling and videotaping through the Mid- and Far West. They plan to attend a convention of the National Student Association in August

(in Colorado) and see what interest heads of college governments have in a university tape exchange network.

Louis, Megan, and Jodie plan to remain in or near New York to administer distribution of tapes and circulation of *RADICAL SOFTWARE*, and help ease the transition to our new loft (see inside front cover).

Michael will be traveling and videotaping through Japan and the far East.

And Dean and Dudley will be working out of a country home in upstate New York on a local CATV project along with tape editing and duplication. They will also run student videotape workshops in conjunction with the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In the fall, our current grant (which pays salaries) from the New York State Council on the Arts expires. While we have applied for renewal and expansion (to include computers in symbiosis with video), we are not planning on it. This is not out of pessimism, but because we want to maintain flexibility so that if we do receive more money it will aid an ongoing structure, not resuscitate a dying one.

Thus, the role of a distribution network becomes very important to

our own future. If we are to do it, it has to be self-sustaining. And we need it to distribute our own videotapes.

Our distribution strategy will be a synergy of the intelligence we accumulate from visiting people and seeing their tape, and what they say their needs are.

We will implement it through personal contacts and our own mail order network which includes *RADICAL SOFTWARE* subscribers (more than 1,000 past and present), returns from questionnaires we have distributed asking people if they have hardware, and other mailing lists we have access to (e.g. Sony dealers, schools).

While we have only committed ourselves to six issues of *RADICAL SOFTWARE*, we now plan to maintain some print presence (with a less expensive and time-consuming format) and that will help maintain access to the network.

So, in short, we commit ourselves to making the network self-sustaining. (We may offer it as a service to groups with enough money to support an ongoing subscription.)

If you have tapes you think we can help with, if you want to exchange tape, or if you have general feedback, please let us know.

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PROCESS PRINT-OUT

VIDEOTAPE EXCHANGES: April thru June 1971

<u>Producer</u>	<u>Software (minutes)</u>	<u>Software (minutes)</u>	<u>Postage</u>
7. HOMESKIN P.O. Box 3125 San Francisco	Doukhobors community in Skaskatchewan 2(30)	San Francisco Oil Spill (30); Ezekiel Family commune (30)	no record
8. MEDIA ACCESS CENTER 1115 Merrill Street Menlo Park, Calif.	Video Potatoes: California living composite (60)	Jack Moore European underground tapes 2(20) plus \$30 royalty**	nr
9. ANTIOCH COLLEGE AV DEPT. Yellow Springs, Ohio	Ohio farm environment (20)	Clinton Project kids make own TV (30)	\$1.07
10. JOHNNY VIDEOTAPE 465 9th Avenue Santa Cruz, Calif.	Economics of video (40)	Tender is the Tape II: Raindance composite (60)	
11. CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE Montreal, Canada	we initiated	Tender is the Tape II (60)	nr
12. STATE UNIV. OF NEW YORK Buffalo, New York	Composite: University life (60) & raw (60)	Yippies invade Frost, Cleaver (60); Altamont (60)	nr
13. BOB WITHERS 275 Dwight Street New Haven, Conn.	Abstractions (30)	Knowledge & Industry III: Raindance Media primer (30)	\$.98
14. BLACK PANTHER PARTY BP 118 Grande Poste Algiers, Algeria	we initiated	D.C. demonstrations 1970, Nixon peace speech, moonwalk, astros party (80)	\$6.09
15. BRIAN SMITH 2417 Dupont Ave. S. Minneapolis, Minn.	borrowed tape, software promised later	Clinton Project (30)	\$2.40
16. ANT FARM 247 Gate 5 Road Sausalito, Calif.	Wild Seed: media nomad composite (30)	Raindance composite: double feedback, Altamont, rap on junkies 2(30)	picked-up
17. X-TV 9945 86 Avenue Edmonton, Canada	Electric Letter: sights of Edmonton, rock music, FLQ raps (20)	Clinton Project (20)	nr
18. FREE VIDEO P.O. Box 11 Station N Montreal, Canada	Free Video Festival, March 1971 (30) on (60) tape	Ecology edit, motorcycles, farming (60)	picked-up
19. SOURCE COALITION 2115 S Street NW Washington, D.C.	we initiated	Bucky Fuller, Nixon off-air (80)	picked-up
20. VIDIOTS c/o Fred Endsley UCLA Dickson Art Center Los Angeles, Calif.	Information Sampler: organic farming, jamming, studio work (20)	Bucky Fuller (30)	nr

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*Royalties paid by Raindance for tapes used at college gigs