

Network General launches network analyzer for FDDI

By **TORSTEN BUSSE**

Late this month, Network General Corp. expects to ship its FDDI Sniffer, which will extend the firm's low-cost network analyzer strategy to fiber installations.

The FDDI protocol analyzer supports multiple topology installations, providing analysis of Ethernet, Token Ring, and FDDI environments. It also features full seven-layer protocol decodes of more than 140 protocols, company officials said.

At \$18,500 for the board and software, the Sniffer is a cost-effective alternative to most FDDI analyzers, which typically range in price from \$20,000 to \$30,000, said Lori Harmon, product marketing manager at Network General.

In addition, the analyzer offers capturing and filtering of Station Management packets, a yet loosely defined ANSI FDDI standard that determines the interoperability between different vendors'

FDDI implementations.

It also supports dual-ring backbones and single-station connections and provides snapshots of the FDDI ring station status, location, and identification. All station and network alarms are logged and collected, and statistics are stored for further analysis of network performance.

It features the same user interface as

the Standard Sniffer analyzer. "Anyone familiar with the standard Sniffer can use the FDDI Sniffer out of the box," Harmon said.

Late this year the company will integrate its Expert Sniffer technology — which provides an English explanation of network problems, suggestions for solving them, and real-time network analysis —

into the FDDI, she added.

Available in late June, the FDDI Sniffer Network Analyzer will cost \$18,500 for single attachment and \$21,000 for dual attachment board and software, company officials said.

Network General, located in Menlo Park, California, can be reached at (415) 688-2700.

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IBM, Motorola face off in wireless data market

has aligned itself with Ardis' most-noted rival, Mobitex.

Mobitex, operated by RAM Mobile Data and BellSouth, has been in development for more than a decade and is slated to be operational in 100 U.S. cities by June 1993, said Carl Robert Aron, president and CEO of RAM Mobile Data.

Even Ardis officials admit the genie is out of the bottle. "I don't think you're going to have a flurry of manufacturers rush in to make Ardis-compatible de-

IBM and Motorola have developed competing technologies for wireless data.

vices," said Motorola's Morris.

Sensing the end of the Ardis monopoly, IBM and Motorola have developed competing technologies that would allow cellular radio carriers to compete in the wireless data business.

Motorola is opening the RD-LAP 9,600/19,200-bit-per-second protocol now being used in Europe. It will be installed on the Ardis network later this year and also be made available to cellular carriers, allowing them to offer packet-switched data as well as their existing voice services. Motorola even has plans to extend its RD/LAP protocol to support the Mobitex wireless network.

For its part, IBM is developing a packet protocol of its own, called CelluPlan II, that allows carriers to offer data transmission without having to dedicate frequency channels to data. This is an important consideration for cellular carriers, which in some cities are facing a shortage of channels to carry voice traffic over mobile telephones.

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