

INTERDEPARTMENTAL

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 02139

from the office of

November 30, 1970

Mr. Morton Berlan
Telecommunications Office
E19-204

Dear Mort:

Thanks for sending me a copy of your November 23 letter of intent to Tuck Electronics for 180 of their model 1033AA datasets. It did recall some questions which I do not remember resolving at our meeting with Wes, Tom, and the Tuck salesman.

Are we sufficiently sure that the Tuck datasets are precisely interchangeable with Bell datasets that we can risk a complete cutover of all three systems simultaneously? The possibility that worries me here is that without a plan to backup if problems are encountered, one or all of the three systems could be effectively shut off from their users. In the case of Multics, a day of lost revenue would more than pay for a month's rental of the Bell System datasets. Perhaps we should be cutting the systems over one at a time, so that if problems are encountered on one system, they can be resolved before service is disrupted on one of the others.

Is there any plan for physical cutover in the GE-645 machine room? Space there is very tight, and swapping equipment in and out is usually a very tricky operation. Because of the space squeeze, some strategy is needed to minimize the time when neither the old nor new datasets are usable.

Finally, I have still not seen spelled out an economic analysis of all the consequences of this change, which includes:

- . purchase price of Tuck datasets, as modified to allow computer setting of busy state
- . monthly maintenance charge for the Tuck datasets
- . monthly charge for Bell data access arrangement
- . installation charge for Bell data access arrangement
- . installation charge for the Tuck datasets
- . estimate of lost revenue from users during cutover period

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The economic analysis should probably include an estimate of the number of months the Tuck datasets must be used in order to break even, and an estimate of the net savings over, say, a 2-year period. It would probably be a good idea to have this information immediately available in case a slight service disruption at cutover prompts any of our users to ask why.

I suggest that we be very sure of the answers to these problems before actually pulling any plugs on present equipment, since the repercussions of a slip-up could be quite serious.

Sincerely yours,

Jerome H. Saltzer
Associate Professor of
Electrical Engineering

JHS/mw

cc: W. Burner