

BOOK REVIEWS

The following review is the collaboration of five contributors. The collaborative medium was a computer conference system at the University of Michigan called "Confer." The authors are writing a paper documenting their methods which will appear soon in *Information Processing & Management*.

Computer-Based Message Services. H.T. SMITH (Ed.) North-Holland, Amsterdam and New York (1984). x + 340 pp., \$40.50 (U.S.)/Dfl. 105.00. ISBN 0-444-87621-9.

This volume consists of twenty-seven papers that are organized into eight parts entitled Naming, Addressing and Directory Services; Message Architecture and Multimedia Systems; User Interface Architecture; Services and Cost-Benefit Issues; Regulatory and Security Considerations; Conference and Message Systems Interconnection; Message Server Implementation; and Teletex Systems. As the proceedings of a conference on computer-based message services sponsored by IFIP Working Group 6.5, the book aims to promote the interchange of information and discussion of system requirements related to computer-based message systems. Although, at present, issues of interest in this area deal primarily with technical aspects of interconnection, the editor claims that the ideas addressed in these papers are likely to be important after the anticipated transition to concern with value-added services.

Although the contributions in this volume are likely to interest computer professionals involved in committees that deliberate about standards, there is no intellectual thrust or focus to the book as a whole that integrates the various technical reports and results. Papers are presented covering such diverse topics as: emerging technology for message sending and teleconferencing (such as pocket-sized smart cards containing processors and memory); legal issues related to electronically negotiated contracts; and remote mail naming directories. Unfortunately, aside from grouping articles into sections, the editor has made little effort to transform these conference proceedings into a book.

One might have expected a book with this title to show what problems could be solved with computer-based message systems that could not, in principle, be solved without them or only with far less effectiveness or efficiency. One might have expected a discussion of the intellectual or scientific issues underlying the design and use of such systems. Readers with such expectations are likely to be disappointed in the technical, engineering approaches to computer-based message systems that are described instead.

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After Divestiture: What the AT&T Settlement Means for Business and Residential Telephone Service. S. A. SIMON, written with M. WHELAN. Knowledge Industry Publications, White Plains, New York and London. (1985). vi + 138 pp., \$34.95. ISBN 0-86729-110-9.

The acknowledgments at the beginning of *After Divestiture* notes that it "was initially published as a booklet". It still has many of the characteristics of a booklet; in large part it reads much like the pamphlets that come with monthly utility bills.

A rather slim work, totaling only 135 pages of text, including figures, tables, and index, it nonetheless attempts to provide an overview of the American telecommunications industry before AT&T's breakup, to summarize the forces which lead to divestiture, to summarize the new structure and its effect on pricing, and, finally, to provide tips for the individual and for corporate management on how to deal with the changes being wrought.