

# Hufact™ Quarterly

A current awareness resource

In this issue:

Volume 1, Number 1

Spring 1987

News, trends & issues  
(pages 2-11)

- Ergonomic fashion (page 2)
- Perspective: Welcome to Hufact Quarterly (page 3)
- User interface management systems—What are they, what are they good for, and how do you choose one? (pages 4-6)
- AURICLE receives first software patent (page 7)
- Personality & individual differences would be focus of new HFS technical group (page 7)
- Software test & evaluation specialists (found organization) (page 7)
- *ERGOSCALE* helps improve VDT workstation ergonomics (page 8)
- Forthcoming books—Curtis on programming psychology, an Ergonomics Sourcebook, and *VDT Health & Safety* (pages 8-9)
- What's on the human factors horizon? Six prominent figures share their forecasts (page 10)
- Letters-to-the-editor (page 11)

Conferences  
(pages 12-15)

- Exclusive Hufact Quarterly report on CHI + GI '87 (page 12)

Clearinghouse  
(pages 16-31)

Advertising  
(pages 32-39)

News

## AURICLE: First software patent

by Bernard O. Williams, PhD  
Research Director

The software, which is independent of machine design & uses a natural language interface, won EMMYs and Academy Awards for its developers.

Richard and Ron Grant of Auricle Control Systems, Sherman Oaks, CA, have been granted the first U.S. Patent for an invention or process which can be entirely executed in software.

A Supreme Court ruling had cleared the way for issuing patents on software. Although patents had previously been granted on machine designs involving specified software control systems, this is the first patent for software that is independent of a specific machine design.

The commercial name is AURICLE, but the formal patent title is "Integrated Environment Computer System Control Structure With Natural Language Interface." AURICLE is a man-machine interface control structure that uses a consensus model natural language driver. The flexibility of the non-linear control structure allows custom tailoring by each individual user.

The first commercial application of "the auricular environment" was "The Film Composers Time Processor" (FCTP). Running on a small personal computer, the FCTP is used by film composers to manage tempo shifts for motion picture musical underscoring. The Grant brothers have been awarded both EMMYs and Academy Scientific and Engineering Awards for the FCTP. AURICLE is application independent and can be used to manage complex interactive processes.

The Grants are looking for OEMs to license AURICLE for user interface management in sophisticated applications. **HQ**