Latest Report Shows Over 60% Growth in MacOS Market

6th March - DNWire -- Computer Intelligence has published a report on the 1996 US retail market which shows that sales of MacOS-based computers grew by 61.4 percent over the course of the year. The MacOS took market share away from Intel-based PCs, whose sales dropped by 5.1 percent. The results have been attributed to Motorola's successful establishment of a brand name for Macintosh clones.

The Mac platform reached an 11.2 percent share of the US business computing market in January 1997, a rise from 9.5 percent in December 1996 and 7.8 percent in November.

Analysts at Computer Intelligence stated that the unit growth of Apple's Macintosh operating system in the US dealer channel was "dramatically higher than the growth of Intel's X86 platform" in 1996. X86 is Intel's family of microprocessor chips for Wintel systems. "Thanks to Mac OS clones, the Mac platform is anything but dead in the dealer channel," concluded CI analyst Matt Sargent. Motorola shipped over 40,000 units last quarter.

Computer Intelligence's report only covers traditional retail channels, part of whose growth is due to the strong customer support services that many US dealers and retail stores provide. The does not cover Macintosh direct sales channels, currently dominated by Power Computing, nor third party mail orders.

The report will not necessarily bring widespread jubilation for Apple Macintosh fans. Although cloner success arguably preserves customer demand for Macs while Apple considers its new focus, following the recent difficulties, there are still some fears that Apple's MacOS licensees could damage Apple's own share in the Macintosh market. Guerrino DeLuca, Apple's Marketing VP has been reported as saying that clone manufacturers could cost Apple $1 million a day in terms of gross margins.

DeLuca announced this week that licensing fees may be raised for Tempo, now known as MacOS 8.0. It is not clear how much a MacOS license costs at present, but US reports quote Apple internal sources as saying that new rates could be between $100 and $1,100 per system sold, depending on the price/performance rate of each model.