

Token Fees

The latest release of NEiNastran, version 9.0, will be available on a flexible-charge system that will let customers take licenses geared to their use of the software.

The software developer, Noran Engineering Inc. in Westminster, Calif., said it will offer version 9.0 under a token-based pricing system. The price of a license will be based on the amount of the software that the customer will use.

The token pricing system is expected to make NEiNastran available at much lower cost to users. The license fee isn't based on the number of computers that have the software installed. Instead, the customer pays according to how many computers will be permitted to access the software at any one time.

Noran Engineering said the new pricing arrangement relies on FLEXnet Publisher from Macrovision Corp. The engineering software can be loaded onto every computer workstation on a network, but the number of computers that can access NEiNastran at one time is determined by the number of tokens that the customer has purchased.

Dennis Sieminski, the company's manager of marketing and international sales, said there will be different values for accessing different parts of the FEA software package. Using linear statics or other functions in NEiNastran Basic engages 50 tokens. Advanced dynamics and other features of NEiNastran Expert take 100 tokens. The pre-post processor needs 40 tokens; the editing tool, 20, and the translator, 15. (More information on the new version appears in Software Exchange, on page 18.)

"The actual cost of the tokens is going to depend on a number of customer-specific conditions," Sieminski said. "So we will have to generate specific proposals. However,

it is fair to say that cost reductions can be significant."

Sieminski said, "They will have the whole package, but only pay for what they use." Version 9.0 is scheduled for release sometime this month.

David Snidarsic, Macrovision's vice president of technology, did not comment on Noran Engineering's announcement, but told us how FLEXnet Publisher works. At the heart of the system is control software residing on a network server. When a program is launched locally on a computer, it contains directions to refer to the central control software for permission to proceed.

Arrangements can be made to permit other forms of controlled use, such as downloading to a specific laptop that needs to be taken into the field. The software provides means for customers to control that kind of usage as well. H.H.