

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – John A. Ernste

John A. Ernste is an experienced finance and marketing executive. He has a BS degree in business finance from the University of Minnesota – Mankato, and his professional background includes assignments in multiple finance-related areas; **cost analysis and estimating, pricing, budget planning**. He also has worked extensively in **worldwide product market planning and deliverables**, has led marketing teams on large special bid opportunities, and has supported numerous efforts in providing meaningful competitor analysis.

In 1968, Ernste began a career with **IBM** in Rochester, Minnesota, as a **staff cost analyst** in the site Controller's office and later in manufacturing organizations where he progressed through a number of various finance and budget planning assignments as a **team leader and manager**. During his early years, he held special assignments in IBM sites located in Manassas, Virginia, and held key management and staff assignments in White Plains, New York, and San Jose, California.

Ernste moved to advanced IBM corporate staff positions in product pricing and competitor analysis in 1980, and later held positions in new product planning and marketing management. He was also a **manager** in IBM Manufacturing, and served in assignments related to the introduction of new products to the production line. Ernste's **New Product Teams** served as both the interface to Development to assure manufacturability of each new product, and also as creator of new manufacturing processes and process documents. He also led an effort to transfer an entire system production line from an IBM site in Austin, Texas, to Rochester Manufacturing.

The last 10 years of his career Ernste was a **marketing executive** with IBM and later, with **Western Digital Corporation (WDC)**. He worked with Customers and peer marketing/sales groups in Europe, Asia-Pacific, and the Americas.

In 1997 he formally retired from IBM and became a **worldwide marketing manager** for intermediate and small accounts at Western Digital. Ernste joined the WDC with responsibilities for small accounts in both the USA and Europe, and the "Big 5" accounts in Japan. He was later named **Manager of Small and Intermediate Accounts** at WDC; during his tenure as manager, small account sales grew nearly 20% in each of the three years he held that job. His work with small accounts in particular earned him and the sales team he supported numerous awards for establishing new accounts and attaining significant sales volume increases.

Ernste continues to serve as a part-time **IBM New Program Manager** and is responsible for the release of new IBM storage products which includes sales manual documentation, creation of new product websites and marketing brochures, coordinating special bid opportunities, and doing product cost analyses. He is active in local community activities, and had served as **President** of the **Rochester Kiwanis** for the past two years.