

## Chapter 12 Hands-on Activities

### Activity 1

Benchmarking is the process of comparing system performance using measurements that can be quantified. The complexity, cost, throughput, failure rate and customer base are performance categories that a company may need to compare before acquiring a new system. Each of these categories can be quantified. For example, the complexity of a system could be measured by the average time it takes to train an individual who is learning how to use the system. The failure rate is quantified by measures such as mean time between failure (MTBF), mean down time and mean time to repair.

Create a table in Microsoft Word that compares x-ray film digitizing systems using the data below. Save the document as **ch12actsol1.doc**.

ACME's CS312X

Procurement cost: €15,900

MTBF (in hours): 8760

Scan time (in seconds): 55

Maximum resolution (dots per inch): 714

XPlus' CX Forte

Procurement cost: €10,000

MTBF (in hours): 35,000

Scan time (in seconds): 52

Maximum resolution (dots per inch): 300

What are the strengths and weaknesses of each product?

### Activity 2

In order to satisfy their software needs, companies frequently enter into contracts with Application Service Providers who allow the companies to use software over the Internet for a fee. Create a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that explains what ASPs are, the benefits and risks of using an ASP, a list of links to the major ASP Web sites and questions to ask the ASPs in order to determine the best provider for a company. You may wish to conduct research online to provide you with the information you will need. Incorporate the following features into your presentation:

1. Use a design template.
2. Insert a title page.
3. Include slide numbers.

Save the file as **ch12actsol2.ppt**.

### Activity 3

If a system is not too complex, end-users can sometimes develop it themselves using fourth-generation programming languages and software applications. One area in which nonprogrammers frequently develop their own applications is training. Operational managers often develop simple applications that provide the training that they themselves might otherwise have to provide in a face-to-face or classroom environment.

Create a table in Microsoft Word to compare the major software applications for the development of training modules. These products are Macromedia's Director, Macromedia's Authorware and SumTotal's Toolbook Instructor. Research these products on the Web, and then compare prices and learning curve (how hard it is to learn). Save the product as **ch12actsol3.doc**.

Companies frequently have to decide whether to outsource training application development or to have operational managers develop these programs. What are other costs that a company should factor into end-user development when comparing it to outsourcing?