Society of Exploration Geophysicists
Annual Conference and Exhibition
Salt Lake City Utah, October 2002

Figure 1 Hardware dominates Salt Lake SEG

1 Highlights

The further the SEG travels from Houston, the less well attended are the annual conferences and exhibitions. This impacts the exhibitors who seem to tone down their presence in anticipation of a quiet time. There were correspondingly fewer press releases and press events – maybe having the SEG back to back with the SPE had tired folks out some. Having said that, there is one sector where things are booming and that is hardware. Instead of a couple of small booths with esoteric storage devices, high end storage, network devices and clustered PCs are now mainstream to geophysical data processing and interpretation support. There is equally a lot going on at the hardware/software interface – particularly in the visualization arena, where clustered PC's are used to offer 'supercomputer' performance for volumetric visualization. The Linux movement continues – with Landmark particularly active – with bold claims for massive performance improvement over UNIX based machines. If these claims are to be believed, it would appear that there is little future for Sun, SGI and the other high-end manufacturers. On the other hand, both Sun and especially SGI continue to put up a big show for the SEG. Schlumberger is engaged on a change in direction – with a de-emphasis on software sales and new focus on service provision. A new session on workstation software offered vendors a chance to present their wares without the usual constraints on commercial presentations. Another session looked into the future of upstream computing – to conclude as is often the case, that the future looks very much like the present! Finally we bring you an exclusive report from the SEG Standards Committee.

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