

Reports from HEPVMx and HEPiX

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Abstract

The HEPVM Collaboration has evolved considerably in the past year or so, and currently covers a much wider role of activities than foreseen. The original goal, of aiding the itinerant physicist to find a common environment based on VM/CMS, has long been satisfied to the point of being no longer an issue. The normal way of working now takes into account the need to harmonize across the different sites where possible.

As a result, HEPVM now provides for an important inter-site collaboration, on many topics of general interest to the support staff and users in those sites that learned to work together through HEPVM. These discussions go far beyond VM/CMS as an operating system, and some have nothing or very little to do with VM. In particular, several new "chapters" or subsidiary meetings have been created such as HEPOPS, which is dealing most usefully with operational activities, such as tape exchange, and "lights-out" or further automated operation.

A new and important Chapter is that dealing with Unix-related matters, notably those connected with batch processing on farms of workstations, and the integration of such workstation-based facilities with the existing services and mainframes. The use of AIX as a mainframe operating system is another topic. The provision of a standard Unix HEP workstation environment has inevitably been discussed. This has been organized by John O'Neall from IN2P3, and the four meetings held so far have been very successful.

The HEPVM Collaboration decided in May 1991 to change its name to **HEPVMx** in order to reflect this extended role.

A proposal was made at CHEP'91 to form the **HEPiX** Collaboration, modeled in many ways on the HEPVM pattern, in order to "promote alignment of the Unix environment for HEP". An inaugural meeting was held in Fermilab, which resulted in the appointment of a committee, and the establishment of email lists etc., but little activity has taken place in the year since. A second meeting has been organized to take place at CERN after the CHEP'92, and a "Birds of a Feather" session has been added to the CHEP'92 Programme in order to discuss how best to deal with these issues in the future.

One possibility, which seems valid in Europe at least, would be the formation of an "Umbrella Meeting" with a new name, (not HEPVMx), with separate Chapters dealing with VM, Unix, Operations etc., which could meet in one place and time, thereby resolving the travel and time problems of those, especially in the smaller sites, who are involved in several activities and operating systems.