



**Figure 1: The FTE's Data Environment (Past)**

data processing users were asking for their own access to data analysis and data product-producing software. User demand to access software tools using their machines continued to multiply as their workstations became more powerful, but integrating new computing platforms into the mainframe-oriented computing environment was a difficult, complex task. New user interfaces had to be developed for each new computer-type adding to what was rapidly becoming a flight test data analysis network. Users had to learn many different computers, operating systems and networking protocols to process their data. Figure 1 shows a typical user's labor-intensive environment.

This environment had three major problems which added significant cost and cycle time to the end result: The user had to know computer-specific knowledge (languages, operating systems, etc.) ancillary to Flight Test Engineering to get results; transporting data between the mainframe, Unix, and PC environments was difficult, complex, and required manual intervention; and writing software that could be ported across these platforms and scaled according to user needs was expensive. The Flight Test Engineer, FTE, wanted and needed the environment shown in Figure 2, a single interface to accomplish all computer-related tasks.