



Acorn Staff Newsletter

In three busy autumn weeks Acorn attended three major computer shows: the Personal Computer Show, The Desktop Publishing Show and the Image Processing Show. All required a tremendous amount of organisation, commitment and enthusiasm from many Acorn staff, and it is due to their efforts that all three were such a success.

Personal Computer Show

Acorn's castle stand at PCS sheltered twenty-five third-party suppliers (representing a broad cross-section of Acorn's 'family') from the besieging crowds; inside the walls the theatre was always full. 'It was really hard work,' claims one exhausted employee, adding, 'but its great to know that our products, with their associated hardware and software, are exciting so much interest.' Over the weekend Clares gave flying lessons on the acclaimed Interdictor flight simulator. Ian Thomas, one of the newest additions to Acorn's sales force, demonstrated unparalleled skills as a pilot.

In the business hall the R140 stood out among the other, mainly Intel-based, UNIX products - indeed it was so attractive to one potential 'user' during the setting-up period that he walked off with a whole R140 system, complete with the hard disc and its suite of demonstration routines.

Desktop Publishing Show

The exhausting week at PCS fully prepared the stand manager for the DTP Show at the London Arena in Docklands from 4-6 October. It was a relaxed affair in comparison (but busy by any other standards). Visitors to Acorn's stand ranged from the home users through professionals in small businesses to corporate buyers: all took a close interest in the BBC A3000-based DTP system and



the stand was busy almost every minute of the event. One satisfied visitor was the TV scriptwriter who discovered that he can have a video playing in a separate window on Acorn's DTP system as he types up his plays. This enables him to grab a frame from the video and drop it into the script as a location shot or example screen - the only system he has found that can do this at a price he can afford.

Image Processing Show

After undertaking a mass of research, Acorn pinpointed image processing as the first of the new markets to attack. The RISC-based processing is ideal for this area, and the Archimedes' graphics capabilities and competitive price make the system unique in the field. Acorn's high profile at the Image Processing Show, held at Wembley from 10-12 October, indicates just how seriously the company is pushing into this market. The show was well attended; many visitors to the Acorn stand said how pleased they were to see Acorn moving into this market. The stand, which carried the whole range of Archimedes and R140 machines, was manned by a host of third party software vendors who displayed the wealth of application software available on Acorn's machines.

They have to get it 'Right First Time'

Before the staff from Coral Park arrived for their Quality Edge session with John Hammond they wondered how they could possibly talk about quality for a day and a half. Although the session had been scheduled for the beginning of the month, when the warehouse is usually less busy, they had had to work extremely hard on the Thursday morning, so that everything could be shut down safely while they were all away. Would it really be worth all that extra effort? Despite their initial misgivings, all the participants enjoyed themselves and thought that the time had been well spent.

John Hammond found the group very receptive and keen to participate. 'I soon realised that in the warehouse 'Right first time' is not just a slogan, it is an

everyday reality, central to the way they work.'

The problem the group voted to tackle was:

'How can we raise the profile of the Warehouse Group so that other parts of the company will anticipate our needs as internal customers, enabling all warehouse operations to become more efficient?'

This does not mean that they want to blow their own trumpet. They do want the rest of the company to appreciate that running the warehouse involves more than just taking goods off one lorry and loading them onto another. It takes two to

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'Right First Time' cntd.

three hours to turn an order round, depending on its size. Since the Federal Express vehicle leaves the site at 3.30pm every day, it helps to have the orders in plenty of time. 'I don't expect that we'll ever have all the orders in before lunch,' admits Sandy Boyd, 'but towards the end of the month, when we get frantically busy, delays can be disastrous.'

As part of their campaign the warehouse staff are inviting all the other Acorn departments to tour Coral Park. After using some people from the marketing department as guinea pigs, they took the Directors round. 'It was a great success,' said Sandy Boyd. 'They asked a lot of questions, and really helped to put

my team at their ease. After the tour the Directors held a question and answer session in the canteen area, and then started their weekly meeting. It must be the first time that they have held the meeting at Coral Park.' Mark Stephen felt that the tour had been very productive. 'It was a nice, informal way to meet John Barr, and Ken Parnis seemed very interested in what was going on,' he added.

Ian Laurence had a few surprises as he walked around. 'I thought I knew most of what the warehouse did, but there were a lot of extra things that I just hadn't realised went on,' he said. 'The whole concept was very effective. I left racking my brains to think of a way that my department could do something similar.'

The laser light fantastic shows

Did you see the non-stop laser slogans at the BBC Acorn User Show in July? Appropriately enough, it was generated on an Archimedes 310. Laser Grafix, specialists in laser shows for night clubs, entertainments and advertising, have incorporated Archimedes computers in all their Prisma control systems for state-of-the-art laser animations. The speed of the Archimedes processor allows them to create all sorts of fancy effects such as blanking, which introduces spaces between laser-generated letters, and 3D animation.

Laser Grafix has already installed an Archimedes computer to run the laser adventure at Alton Towers Theme Park. There is also an Archimedes computer on the top deck of a bus travelling up and down the front at Blackpool, projecting laser-generated images onto the buildings alongside. And on the 21 September an Archimedes system was helping to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Maltese independence, throwing laser graphics onto an enormous screen, watched by Prince Philip and other world leaders.

Compiled using Acorn Desktop Publisher by Jill Osler

S-Tech offers discounts on insurance

As some of you may know, S-Tech Insurance are Acorn's appointed independent Registered Insurance Brokers, involved in all aspects of personal insurance. Following discussions with them, they are pleased to offer all Acorn staff and their immediate families the benefit of preferential rates and terms in the classes listed below. The S-Tech contact appropriate to the class of insurance will be pleased to discuss your particular insurance requirements over the telephone.

Please note that any contact you make with S-Tech will be entirely independent of the company's dealings with S-Tech, except in so far as you are entitled to the discounts set out below; you must therefore satisfy yourself that S-Tech are capable of providing broking services for your insurance needs.

1. House buildings, contents, personal possessions, caravans, boats, horses, etc - up to 10% off insurers' standard rates. (Contact Sally Jessop).
2. Family accident and holiday travel and breakdown - up to 7.5% off insurers' standard rates. (Contact Sally Jessop).
3. Vehicle insurance - up to 2.5% off insurers' standard rates, on condition that legal expenses cover (£6 per vehicle) is taken out at the same time. (Contact Sally Jessop).
4. All life insurance and savings investments; mortgages and re-mortgages; pensions, pension transfers, freestanding AVCs; school fees - various discount levels or enhanced benefits dependent upon the type of contract. (Contact Kevin Brown).

The above discounts are available to new and renewal business conducted after 1 October 1989, providing all premiums are payable at inception date in respect of annual contracts under categories 1, 2 and 3 above.

Sally Jessop and Kevin Brown can be contacted at S-Tech Insurance Services Limited, 154-156 Victoria Road, Cambridge CB4 3DZ. Telephone Cambridge 324233.

Quality Edge process passes into practice

A working party has held its first meeting to determine how to make the Quality Edge process a practical part of everyday life. It comprises of John Marshall, Bruce Trotter, Chris Humphries, Phil Smith, Jeff Gorton, Andrew Cummings, John Hammond, Ken Parnis and Jim Merriman. Their brief is to establish mechanisms that will stimulate staff interest in the Quality Edge process, develop systems to manage, control and measure the implementation of the process at a departmental level, and collect and coordinate feedback on the attainments of the process.

The working party will develop ideas for future implementation to ensure that the Quality Edge concepts are firmly established with Acorn! Full terms of reference of the group will be issued shortly.

New names, new faces

We welcome the following people who have joined Acorn since the last issue of the newsletter:

Name	Department	Job title
James Bye	Technical	Software QA engineer
Ashley Stevens	Technical	Design engineer
Ian Stacey	Technical	Components engineer
Ran Mokady	Technical	Programmer
Stephen Thomas	Technical	Senior programmer, UNIX
Patricia Barham	Finance	Bought ledger assistant
Russell Hartley	Manufacturing & Operations	Product engineer
Elisabeth Clifford	Marketing	Marketing co-ordinator
Jane Butcher	Personnel	Payroll officer
Lorraine Buckman	Personnel	Personnel officer
Colin Dean	Technical	Section leader
Shaun Brown	Finance	Systems operator
Martin Ley	Technical	Technical author
Karen de Rosa	Facilities	Receptionist
Gavin Stark	Technical	Programmer
Geoff Bailey	Sales	Higher Education sector sales manager
David Greenaway	Finance	Financial controller
Trevor Steele	Manufacturing & Operations	Project planner
Tracy Kidman	Facilities	Admin assistant
Marian Caine	Personnel	Secretary Personnel/Finance
Susan Pawson	Facilities	Receptionist
Mary Callan	Customer Services	Data Entry/Clerical assistant
Mike Howieson	Sales	International sales support manager
Lesley Dodson	AR&D	Secretary
Barbara Smith	Sales	Secretary
Charles Whyte	Technical	Senior software QA engineer
Carl Sellers	Customer Services	Support specialist
Sarah Legg	Marketing	Student
Adrian Godwin	Technical	Senior test/development engineer
Alison Watson	Finance	General ledger controller
Adrian Critchlow	Manufacturing & Operations	Engineer