

ISV Department news from Acorn No. 13 - April 1989

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Product Announcement From Acorn

A news release leaflet is enclosed giving information about extensions to the Archimedes product range and an indication of an announcement to be made in mid-May.

Watch this space!

Prices

From 3 April, Acorn has altered its recommended retail prices for Archimedes 310 and 310M computers - reflecting the greatly enhanced performance offered by RISC OS. The RRP for Archimedes 310 base systems is increased from £835.00 to £899.00 (excluding VAT) and for 310M base systems from £895.00 to £959.00 (excluding VAT).

Additionally, from the same date, the RRP of the BBC Master 128 computer increased from £399.00 to £439.00 (excluding VAT).

New ISV prices for Archimedes 310, 310M and Master 128 computers are as follows:

First Purchase		Subsequent Purchases	
excluding VAT	including VAT	excluding VAT	including VAT
AKB15 £ 647.28	£ 742.75	£ 701.22	£ 804.65
AKB30 £ 690.48	£ 792.43	£ 748.02	£ 858.47
AMB15 £ 316.08	£ 362.41	£ 342.42	£ 392.61
AKB20 £1,820.88	£2,092.39	£1,972.62	£2,266.76

A revised ISV price list dated April 1989 is attached. Please destroy the February 1989 ISV price list.

RISC OS Guidelines

RISC OS offers enormous opportunities to software developers. It is vital, however, if the full potential of RISC OS is to be realised, that software producers adhere to the guidelines for RISC OS applications.

The RISC OS Guidelines appear on the documentation disc supplied to ISVs at the RISC OS seminars and to others by request (on receipt of a formatted disc as mentioned in Newsletter No. 11). If you require the documentation, please supply a formatted 800K disc.

Feedback from the Acorn Sales Force emphasises that end users are requesting a common approach to and appearance of the desktop / user- interface.

Please read the Guidelines and abide by them.

Technical Issues

N-Key roll-over

You should not assume that n-key roll-over is a feature of any particular Acorn computer product.

Please remember that your software should preferably require no more than two keys to be pressed at one time. There are eight keys with n-key roll-over: Print, Home, the two Alt Keys, the two Shifts and the two Controls. You may use any of the above with no more than any two others. The result of ignoring this advice is that your software may experience spurious ghost key action e.g. Escape or Break. If the use of more than two keys is essential then please take ghost key action into account when selecting keys.

If this gives you particular concern, please do discuss it with me so that I can pass on that concern to my colleagues.

Two different keyboards have been used with Archimedes systems, one with n-key roll-over and one without. Your customers could have either version. You cannot, therefore, assume n-key roll-over.

IRQ Latency

The introduction of a computer desktop environment within RISC OS has, under some situations increased the IRQ latency of the system. This has caused problems for some developers. Work on optimising performance has produced a loadable module that substantially improves IRQ response. If this affects you, please WRITE explaining how it affects you so that I can send you the appropriate disc.

Use of Other Companies' Filetypes

With the advent of co-operative tasks it becomes appropriate that software should be able to output to and/or receive files from other packages. Thus it is sensible that, where a company has been allocated a filetype of a certain sort, e.g. compressed screens, and another company also needs a similar filetype, then they should use the same one.

It makes sense for companies to standardise on certain filetypes. It is clearly a good idea to avoid a proliferation of formats doing the same job. Therefore, developers should use existing formats wherever possible. Acorn, however, would not necessarily endorse the use of any company's format by a company other than the one to whom it was allocated. Naturally, it would be sensible, as a matter of courtesy, for the company using another company's filetype to inform that company of their intent.

Econet 89

A document is enclosed giving preliminary details of the Econet 89 Networking Conference. If you require further details about the conference and about participating in the exhibition, please write (on that subject only) to the Communication Product Manager at the above address. Please mark the envelope CLEARLY in the top left hand corner ECONET 89'. The Communications Product Manager will not be dealing with such enquiries himself but

will need to pass them on unopened.

CHEST

A brief description of CHEST was given in the October 1988 Newsletter. I have been asked to give you further details of the new catalogue in preparation.

A new CHEST catalogue is being produced for the new academic year. Copy for the catalogue should be sent to CHEST by 1st May (CHEST, Computing Services, Leicester Polytechnic, PO Box 143, Leicester, LE1 7RH). The current catalogue has over 400 products listed and is circulated to 10,000 higher education departments. Entry to the CHEST catalogue is free. A condition for entries to be included in CHEST catalogue is that the dealer and/or the supplier should offer educational discounts. Be aware that one individual within an academic institution may collect orders from various departments thus placing a substantial one-off order with a supplier rather than several individual orders. This will help to cut your administrative costs.

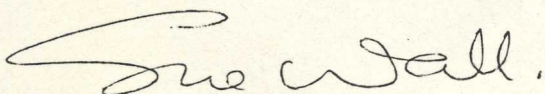
Acorn is hoping to sponsor the catalogue, so there will be a high visibility for Acorn-related products. From information provided by ISVs and IHVs to this department, we have identified a number of companies we believe to be producing software relevant to higher education market-places. Those people will find enclosed a copy of the CHEST Directory Update Form.

Should any other company feel that they have relevant products for inclusion, please contact me and I will send them a form also.

Master 128

Please note that in Master 128 computers the internal 20-Way Zero Insertion Force (ZIF) socket PL12, that is commonly called the Modem socket has not been fitted for some months due to a Tool breakdown at the socket manufacturers in Italy, who at later time decided not to replace the tool but to discontinue manufacture. A standard in-line connector is currently being fitted.

If this affects your products and you require more information - serial numbers etc. - please contact me and I will send details.



Sue Wall
ISV Product Manager

Enclosures:

CHEST document (if appropriate)
April 1989 ISV Price List
Econet '89 leaflet
News Release - Extensions to Acorn Production Range.
News Release - Desktop Multi-Tasking from Acorn