

News from Acorn Computers

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Acorn Questions Apple over PowerPC Claims

Apple Computer Inc. has agreed with Acorn Computers Ltd to review claims made in Apple's 'PowerPC Technology: The Power Behind the Next Generation of Macintosh Systems' product literature. Distributed as part of 'The Apple Report on PowerPC' advertising campaign, the brochure makes four statements that Acorn believes need modification in order to represent accurately both Acorn and Apple's position in the development and commercial commitment to RISC technology.

"We are pleased that Apple has responded so quickly to our requests," comments Kevin Coleman, Corporate Affairs Manager at Acorn Computers. "Acorn has always had a very positive working relationship with Apple, in particular our partnership in ARM Ltd and we believe Apple's constructive response to our request is testament to this."

To address concerns, Apple Computer Inc. has agreed to review and revise where appropriate any ambiguities in its product literature.

The statements that Acorn believes need clarification are as follows:

"To date, RISC technology has been used only in systems designed for raw computational power."

Acorn has shipped over 300,000 personal computer systems based on RISC chip architecture. For example, of the computers purchased by UK schools between the 2nd and 4th quarters of 1993, 50% were Acorn RISC based machines. Acorn also supplies RISC based computers to consumer and professional markets. These systems are not designed specifically for raw computational power but rather to provide cost effective performance and sophisticated solutions for Acorn's customers.

"Apple is the only personal computer vendor publicly committed to moving its entire product line to RISC technology".

Acorn committed to the use of RISC chips when a team was set up to develop the company's own RISC chip in 1983. This was followed in 1987 by a public statement of Acorn's commitment to use RISC across its product portfolio with launch of the Archimedes range. The evidence of this commitment is Acorn's continued development of RISC based products over the past seven years.



"... has resulted in the first mainstream RISC microprocessor that can be used in low-cost computers".

As measured by an independent authority, more ARM processors were shipped than SPARC chips in 1993. ARM has also sold 3 times more chips than the PowerPC consortium: As the latest research shows that ARM processors are mainstream processors, Acorn contends that this statement is untrue: (Source: Inside the New Computer Industry, 14th January 1994).

"No other personal computer company is making the fundamental commitment to RISC demonstrated by Apple."

Acorn launched its first 32 bit RISC computer in 1987 and although Acorn did not invent RISC, it designed and produced the first low-cost, high volume chips. Over the past seven years, Acorn has constantly promoted the case for RISC and has designed and sold products based on ARM's technology.

Coleman of Acorn continues; "In 1990 Acorn expanded the availability of this technology by the formation of ARM Ltd in partnership with Apple and VLSI. The success of ARM Ltd and the strategy to widen the availability of RISC technology has resulted in its chips now being used in a range of products including the Apple Newton."

Founded in 1978, with 1992 revenues of £48.2m, Acorn Computers is the premier supplier of IT solutions to UK education and has been the leading provider of 32-bit RISC based personal computers since 1987. Acorn works closely with a strong community of other industry partners, users and software developers to provide innovative technology solutions for the education, consumer, publishing and international markets. Acorn Computers Limited is part of the Acorn Computer Group plc, which went public on the USM in 1983.

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