

16 May 1998

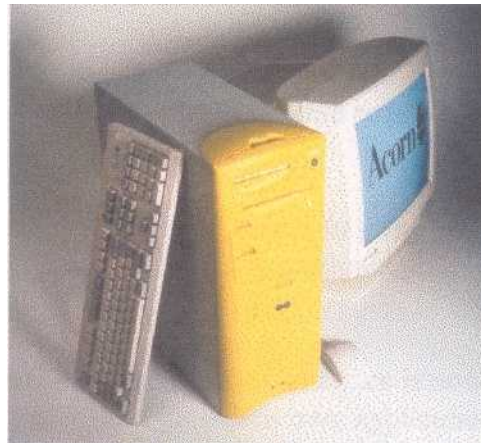
Show: The Wakefield Acorn Spring Show
Date: 16/17 May 1998
Stand: No. 1

**It's New..... It's FastIt's Yellow
*but it's still an ACORN!***

Acorn Previews Phoebe at Wakefield Show

Clan members to the Acorn User show at Wakefield this weekend are in for a real surprise when they see the bright yellow box that is the new face of Acorn's brand new computer - the Phoebe 2100.

This exclusive preview of the prototype machine, which will be formally launched next September, should be a pleasant surprise as Acorn aficionados come to appreciate that the change of colour heralds a host of highly significant advances on the inside too.



But - and it's a very important `but' - they'll be delighted to recognise that all the important characteristics which make an Acorn computer what it is are still there.

Chris Cox, General Manager of the Workstations Division comments: "With the Phoebe 2100, Acorn has built on the success of the Risc PC, in particular the easy to upgrade processor which has worked so well. We have addressed many of the weaknesses, such as the VO capability, memory architecture and speed and delivered a new machine which is designed to be expandable, easy to upgrade and, of course, increased performance, harnessing the full potential of StongARM. Our new computer offers PCI capability, the best possible graphics performance and innovative casing."

Chris continues: "The design of the Risc PC was like a Cosworth engine in a Beetle car. Acorn was determined to open up the potential of the functionality of the RISC OS and really let it fly.

"The Phoebe 2100 is the result."

New architecture adds power and speed

At the heart of the advances incorporated in the Acorn Phoebe 2 100 is the new memory and I/O controller with its 0.35u geometry which builds on the 233MHz SA 110 chip giving the new machine the power and speed to outwit its more conventional rivals. With its improved 64MHz bus speed, the new hardware lets the user take full advantage of the greatly enhanced RISC OS operating system functionality featured in the new Acorn.

OS development

While still compatible with existing RISC OS application packages, the improved OS allows faster, simpler task swapping, supports more files in a directory, allows the use of longer file names and supports larger capacity disc storage - up to 128GB for IDE.

Desktop advances

The combination of a 64MHz bus and enhanced OS has meant that Acorn has been able to take a fresh look at the PCs GUI and introduce a set of fresh and sexy new icons.

In itself, this may not mean a great deal but the new icons give access to some greatly improved desktop functionality with Filer, Configure and Help, in particular, considerably improved.

"We gave particular attention to the Configure," says Chris. The Configure is now open-ended and will allow third party developers to configure their own applications whilst Help will 'pop-up' throughout the desktop.

Serious fun and games

For sheer versatility, the Phoebe 2 100 continues the Acorn tradition with even better video (up to 100 per cent faster!) and sound systems, the latter incorporating a new Midi interface and Soundblaster. Staying on the lighter side of computer use, the new Acorn features a PC style games port.

Inside the yellow box

Turning to the yellow box itself, users will find it easy to get inside (no screws involved) to access the works of what has to be the most expandable PC on the market. In fact, the motherboard is designed to simply roll in and out making it easy to change a DIMM or any other peripherals - without clambering across a pile of cables.

Processor upgrades, PCI card swapping (four slots) and memory expansion could hardly be simpler than the new the interior configuration allows and a combination of two serial ports, IrDA support and a parallel port mean that connectability is first class too. For good measure, a new power supply unit provides an assurance of reliability that does nothing but build on the Acorn tradition.

Contd...

Chris concludes: "Acorn thought long and hard about the weaknesses of our previous offer and have addressed these with Phoebe. We've updated the RISC OS to provide support for new hardware, updated the device drivers and improved the overall look and feel whilst still allowing Acorn users to run existing applications.

"The machine on show today is still very much a prototype and we welcome reaction. But be assured, Phoebe is set to take the world of computing by storm."

ends

All press enquiries:

Lindsay Edmunds/Amanda Horlington
MIDNIGHT COMMUNICATIONS
Phone: 01273 709977
Fax: 01273 709966
Lindsay/amanda@midnight.co.uk

Chris Cox
ACORN WORKSTATIONS DIVISION
Phone: 01223 725231
Fax: 01223 725331
ccox@acorn.com