
Enter the 128k Beeb

FOLLOWING in the wake of the 64k BBC B+, Acorn has announced the 128k BBC B+, a micro with double the memory capacity.

The new computer should be in the shops for Christmas selling at £499, and existing BBC B+ owners will be able to have their machines upgraded by Acorn approved dealers.

The extra 64k of memory is provided as four 16k sideways RAM banks that can be used to run languages and utilities loaded in from disc. However this memory may also be used as one continuous block to store long Basic programs, thanks to an upgraded version of Basic 2, BAS128.

When the micro is switched on it is configured as a standard 64k BBC B+, with four banks of sideways RAM. To transform this memory into a full 64k of memory for use by long Basic programs it is only necessary to load the BAS128, which is supplied on disc.

Although it's standard Basic 2, BAS128 is 19k in length,

the extra 3k being new routines to handle the extra memory. Due to its increased size BAS128 does not occupy any sideways ROM/RAM memory but loads into the screen memory.

The 128k B+ is fully compatible with all existing hardware and software. However packages such as the View family cannot take advantage of the increased memory.

Acorn has also released an affordable disc upgrade for cassette-based BBC micros. The 1770 disc interface, supplied as standard on the BBC B+, is now available to model B owners for just £49.95.

The interface plugs into the big 8271 controller chip socket and is supplied with the 2.1 DFS. To take advantage of the double density capabilities of the 1770 floppy disc controller chip, the Advanced Disc Filing System (ADFS) is also available in ROM for an extra £29.99. Disc capacity is increased to 1.28Mbytes from 800k (though still limited to 31 files per side of disc).