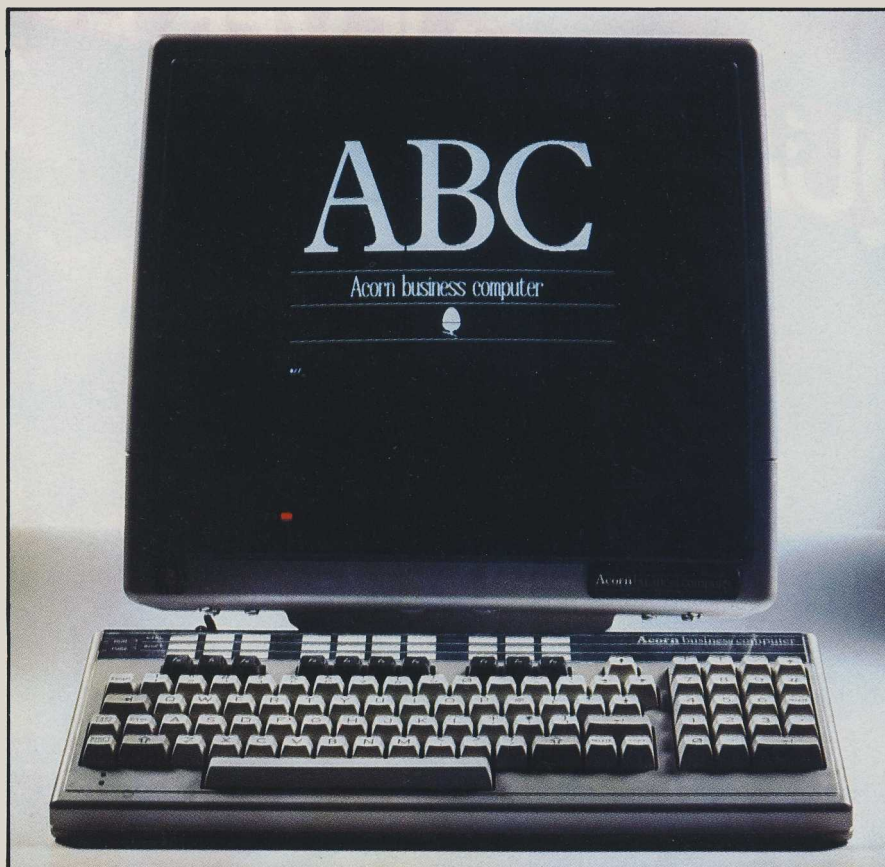# New Acorn micro

ACORN'S new business range will be based around a repackaged BBC micro with two 16-bit second processors available. There will be eight variants under the generic name ABC—Acorn Business Computer.

Top of the range is the ABC310 running an Intel 80286 second processor giving IBM PC and XA (Popcorn) compatibility, with ikon software and high-resolution graphics.

The 16-bit operating system will be Concurrent, a development of version

SCOOP: first sight of Acorn's much-awaited business computer

3.1 from Digital Research. It is capable of performing several tasks at the same time and dividing the screen into windows.

As our picture shows, a full professional keyboard with separate numeric keys links to a box containing the 6502 processor used in the Beeb, topped by a monitor.

The monitor tips forward, giving access to internal sockets where second processor and hardware cards can be added.

The machines should be on view at dealers in November, with deliveries starting in the New Year. The whole range

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should be available by Easter, says Acorn. Prices have yet to be released.

Bottom of the range is the Terminal, which is exactly what its name says. It will not be expandable, and comes with terminal emulator software and Econet as standard. The monitor is a 14in monochrome with 32k RAM and no disc drive.

Next up is the Personal Assistant wordprocessor. It

comes with one double density, 5.25in drive giving 700k of storage. A 12in monitor comes as standard, as do View and Viewsheet. Second processors and other hardware can be added, right up to the top of the range configuration.

The ABC100 includes the Z80 second processor running CP/M and two 700k drives as standard. The three Plan software packages are included, and have been enhanced (see June's *AU)*. The ABC110 is similar, but with one drive replaced by a 10Mb Winchester

hard disc and colour monitor.

Whereas the 100 machines cover office productivity, the ABC200 and 210 are loosely described as 'academic work-stations'. The 32016, the 16/32-bit chip is included with disc variations as above. Standard RAM is 256k. A choice of programming languages will include C, Modula2 and Pascal. The Xenix operating system comes with the Winchester on the 210.

Flagship of the series are the 'executive workstations' with the 80286 16/24-bit chip. The 300 will carry two 700k drives and monochrome moni-

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tor while the 310 will have a single drive plus Winchester and colour screen. Again 256k RAM is standard, but upgradable to 1Mb.

A mouse will be released next year for the 300 machines, along with a modem card for the range.

Interfaces are as on the BBC, but with no TV socket and some of the connectors will be changed.

Howard Fisher, ABC project leader, said: 'Our research shows people want computers that work, and this range has

been designed to meet needs we have identified. They match very specific requirements.'

On the question of perform-ance, he declared: 'The 80286 machines are up to five times faster than the IBM PC on benchmarks.'

Tom Hohenberg, Acorn's marketing manager, added: 'The ABC range is a neater alternative for the BBC micro, aimed at business users. There is no conflict with the BBC itself.

'We've gone for a modular technique to save space and make it a doddle for the engineers.'