New Products

The Turning Tide
— An Editorial

It is happening — the leaders in the computer industry are investing significant sums of money in planning the products which will be marketed in the early and mid-seventies. The present phase consists of market research — the evaluation of present and planned computer architectures, the competition, and the attitudes of the users. Product definition and market strategy phases then follow. Next will be the development phase which takes another four to six months for some equipment, such as terminals, and upwards to two or more years for new computer systems. May or June should find design engineers and programmers busily occupied turning product definitions into a form which can be released to the model shop, and ultimately to the factory and sales force.

Is it for real? Absolutely! The frequently quoted 20% yearly decrease in price and 20% yearly increase in performance of minicomputers, for example, did not stop because of the recession. In fact, the need to keep the factory busy in a declining market probably was sufficient incentive to push the improvement in the cost/performance ratio to even higher levels. And, as a result, the computer industry will find that even more markets can now justify the use of computer technology. There are, for example, a whole host of data-base related applications which need economical solutions. Labels like teleprocessing, point-of-sale, computer output whatever, management information systems, and front-end systems have gotten misused. The goals were right but the approaches often left a lot to be desired.

The sadder but more mature computer industry still needs a few months to shake off the effects of the recession, but the next seven years can be a period of significant and lasting progress. We can’t get there by moaning about the past, but rather by looking for specific problems (they are everywhere) and figuring out how to solve them on a cost-effective user-oriented basis. Let’s get busy.

— Cecil R. Frost
New Products Editor

Plated Wire Memory for Minicomputers

Memory Systems, Inc., Hawthorne, California, has announced the OmniROM, a family of “plug compatible” EAROMs (Electrically Alterable Read Only Memories) especially configured for popular minicomputers. This new member of the MSI plated wire EAROM family now allows users to instantly reconfigure their ROM by keyboard or paper tape entry, and because of the nonvolatile storage, retain data indefinitely, even through power shutdown.

Many diverse applications exist for the OmniROM, including machine level software debugging in real time, alterable architecture machines, format control for data communication front-end processors, and machine tool control. OmniROM units are available for the Micro 800, and the CIP 2000, the Nova and Super Nova, and Interdata Models 2, 3 and 4. Full clock speed is maintained as well as interface compatibility according to manufacturer specs. Service and warranty is provided in the purchase price. Delivery is 60 days ARO. OEM quantity prices are under $2,000, depending on configuration.

CIRCLE 46 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Hardcopy for Data Terminals

Light, rugged, reliable and totally silent, the new Litton Datalog MC-100 Non-Impact Strip Printer provides hardcopy without the bulk, noise or high cost of other data terminal readout devices. At less than $200 in OEM quantities, it is ideal for ticketing, reservations, inventory control, credit verification or mobile communication systems.

Using the unique Litton non-impact process, the MC-100 prints at 10-65cps in total silence and with only one moving part, the paper feed. Printout is on 8 1/2” wide paper that comes in easy-load, throw-away cassettes, priced at just $1.00 fully-loaded with 350’ of paper.

The MC-100 weighs 1 1/2 lb and measures 6 1/2” x 6 1/2” x 2 1/2”, with a variety of optional mounting configurations available. Fully DTL/TTL-compatible, it is easily interfaced to computer or telecom lines. Engineered for long life and low maintenance, the MC-100 is covered by a 3-year warranty.

CIRCLE 46 ON READER SERVICE CARD
4096-Bit Bipolar Read-Only Memory

Signetics has developed a highly dense, extremely fast 4096-bit bipolar read-only memory integrated circuit that is now available from Signetics Memory Systems, Inc. Organized 1024 x 4, the new ROM has a typical access time of 55 nanoseconds and dissipates 125 microwatts per bit.

Custom versions of the SMS8228 can be delivered within four weeks of the date an order is received. When a computer designer uses read-only memories, the producer of the ROMs becomes part of the design cycle and any delay in processing custom ROMs can significantly slow the development of an entire system. For this reason, Signetics Memory Systems employs a computerized design automation facility to generate the final "mask" which is used to store data in the read-only memory.

SMS will also offer standard versions of the "8228," the first of which will be the SMS8228-00001, a high-performance ASCII character generator. The SMS read-only memory is manufactured in a 16-pin dual-in-line ceramic package. The standard "SMS8228-00001" Character Generator is priced at $67 each when ordered in quantities between 25 and 99.

CIRCLE 48 ON READER SERVICE CARD

MOS Read-Only Memory

Signetics has announced two versions of a high-speed 2560-bit static MOS read-only memory with 3-state outputs for use in row-output raster scan CRT displays, as printer character generators, in panel displays and billboards, for micro-programming applications, and for code conversion.

Designed for computers and peripheral systems that are buss-organized, these two MOS memory elements have three-state outputs—that is, "1," "0," and "OFF." The tri-state output is controlled by "chip enable." Data output buffers are capable of sinking at least 1.6 milliamperes, sufficient to drive one standard TTL (Transistor-Transistor Logic) load.

The two versions include the "2513" high-speed generator, which can be organized either 64 x 7 x 5 bits or 64 x 8 x 5 bits, and the "2514" high speed static read-only memory, organized 512 x 5 bits. Typical access time for both devices is 450 nanoseconds. All inputs can be driven directly by standard bipolar integrated circuits.

CIRCLE 49 ON READER SERVICE CARD

NDRO Core Memory

Electronic Memories has announced the first in a line of ferrite memory cores especially designed for nondestructive read-out (NDRO). Designated the Model 31-105, the new NDRO core is a 30-mil toroidal, square loop ferrite device which produces 12 millivolts: ONE signals or 5 Millivolt ZERO signals when interrogated with 116-millampere Read current pulses. Write and Digit currents required to store initial data into the core are approximately 105 milliamperes each.

Computer system architects making greater use of micro-programming, table look-up and character generation have created the demand for this product. NDRO core memories offer an opportunity to exploit advanced computer architectures without suffering the risk of schedule delays, fluctuating costs and field surprises characteristic of plated wire and semiconductor memories.

CIRCLE 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD