

..NEWS EXCLUSIVE...NEWS EXCLUSIVE

Psion Series 5 arrives

Psion has launched the long-awaited next-generation version of its hand-held PDA (personal digital assistant).

Set to challenge the new Windows CE-based hand-held PCs, the Series 5, successor to the Series 3 (odd numbers, it seems, have more appeal), has a new design inside and out. It should be on sale by the time you read this.

Based on an ARM 7110 RISC processor (running at 18MHz), the Series 5 comes in 4Mb and 8Mb versions. The case is a similar size and shape to the Series 3c, and has the same rubberised finish.

Digital audio controls are now built into the lid, so that recordings can be made without opening the case (the 8Mb model should store up to half an hour of audio). The lid also has an LED that can be used for visual alarms.

The small calculator-style keyboard used on the Series 3 has gone, replaced by what looks and feels like the keys of a conventional keyboard. The innovative Series 3 hinge has also been replaced by an equally innovative mechanism that slides the keyboard into place when the case is opened.

All but filling the inside of the lid, the Series 5's screen is now a 640x240 backlit unit with 16 grey shades. Although touch-sensitive, there's no built-in handwriting recognition, but a stylus is supplied for program navigation and selec-

tion. Touch-sensitive icons, for setting options and starting or switching between programs, extend along the left and bottom of the screen.

All applications have been rewritten to take full advantage of the 32-bit EPOC operating system and the look and feel is more 'Windows' than ever. Applications have a three-dimensional appearance with cascading menus and sculpted buttons.

Most applications also support embedded objects; so, for example, graphics can be included in spreadsheets and sounds in word processor documents. File formats aren't compatible with the Series 3, though older files can be imported using PsiWin 2. The Series 5 supports long file-names (up to 256 characters).

Other additions include a bitmapped image editor with clip-art library, a scientific calculator, and a minesweeper-style game called Bombs. The OPL program editor is still there and will import code created on older machines for recompiling.

Psion has replaced its two proprietary SSD



Tiny, the PC retail chain, has recently increased its high street presence with the opening of two new showrooms – one in Bromley, Kent and one in Exeter.
Tiny: 01293 821333

Iomega is recalling a sub-standard batch of its high-capacity Jaz disks. Owners of disks with a date code between 13 March and 20 April should call +353 1 807 5599 (Ireland) for assistance.

Eclipse V2.0 for Windows will turn your pictures into spinning, bouncing, or flying screen savers. A Personal Edition licence costs £81.66 (inc VAT).



Active Media Technology: 01942 253776

Tekdata has unveiled a new range of CD-ROM drives, including two 16-speed versions and the Plextor 12/20Plex which reaches a maximum 20-speed.
Tekdata: 01782 577677

Aztech has launched the DPD-200, a desktop photo developer. Plugging into a PC's parallel port, it accepts a range of graphics formats and produces smudge-free photos.
Aztech UK: 01734 814121

Cherry Electrical Products has released details of a new compact keyboard that incorporates a touchpad. Useful in restricted workspace areas, the Cherry 11900 costs £169.19.
Cherry Electrical Products: 01582 763100



memory-card slots, not with PC Cards, but with a single compact-flash slot. Initially 2Mb, 4Mb, and 10Mb cards will be available, and a 20Mb card is in development.

Although flash memory cards are relatively inexpensive and energy efficient, they can only be used for memory. In other words, Web browsing must still be done with an external modem. Connection to a PC or modem is via an enhanced version of the Series 3's fast serial port (the speed is doubled, at 115.2kbps).

Prices for the Series 5 have yet to be fixed but expect to pay around £550 for an 8Mb model. Thankfully, Psion has sensibly opted to include the necessary cabling and PsiWin 2 software in the box, so linking to a PC won't involve added expense.

Psion: 0990 143050

More processors join MMX range

Two new versions of Intel's Pentium MMX (multimedia extensions) processor have been released.

At the lower end of the performance scale, a 133MHz version is designed for use in notebook computers. Intel is hoping this new chip will finally bring mobile multimedia computing to the masses.

At the other end of the scale is the 233MHz Pentium processor with MMX technology. Although not the quickest MMX processor, it is the fastest model aimed specifically at the mainstream consumer PC market.

The majority of users will just want to buy a fully-built Pentium MMX 233MHz PC, but if you've got a large number of machines to upgrade Intel will sell you 1,000 of the processors at \$594 a piece.

Intel: 01793 403000



Libretto lands in the UK

Toshiba has launched a bevy of new PCs this month, including its first ever desktop PC.

Most interesting is the Libretto notebook. *What PC?* previewed the Japanese version of this hand-held PC in the April issue but at the time Toshiba had no plans to introduce it to Europe. That has now changed and the Libretto 50CT should be on sale now at around £1,800.

The Libretto has a Pentium 75 processor, 16Mb of RAM, an 810Mb hard drive and a 6.1in TFT screen displaying 640x480 pixels in 24-bit colour. The roughly A5-size

case houses a condensed but usable keyboard and a track-point pointing device which is built into the lid.

Also new is the Portégé 300CT. Smaller than previous Portégés, the 300CT has a Pentium 133 processor, 32Mb of RAM and a 1.4Gb hard drive. The screen is a 10.4in TFT pane, but with a 16:9 aspect ratio, capable of displaying at 1,024x600. Expect to pay around £3,050.

Finally, Toshiba's range of business desktop PCs are now on sale. The Equium range



starts with a Pentium 166MMX model with 32Mb of RAM and a 2Gb hard drive. Prices weren't fixed at the time of writing but you can expect more details in our next issue.

Toshiba: 01932 828828

Innovative screen improves image

Panasonic's new PanaFlat PF70 is not just another FST (Flatter, Squarer Tube) monitor.

Instead, it has a truly flat 17in screen, the product of a new type of tube manufacture, designed to eliminate distortion at the corners and edges of the picture.

The specially coated flat surface also significantly



reduces the effects of reflected office lighting. This innovative monitor is expected to sell at a street price of around £600.

In general, monitor prices are coming down, with recent reductions from Sony, including the 15in 100SFT, an intelligent multi-scanning monitor, now priced at £334.88.

Even cheaper, and benefiting from a built-in amplifier and DOME speakers, is the latest StudioWorks 5D 15in monitor from LG Electronics at £327.83. But Sony and LG both face stiff competition from German company Maxdata, whose Belinea range of 14in to 21in monitors is being launched in the UK at prices from £163.33.

LG Electronics: 01753 500400

Maxdata UK: 01189 362900

Panasonic: 0500 404041

Sony: 0990 424424

Global Internet will be giving faster Internet access to customers from June, when it will start to support both US Robotics X2 and Rockwell/Lucent's K56Flex technologies.

These allow users with suitable modems to connect to the Internet at 56Kbits/s compared to the more usual V34 speeds of 28.8Kbits/s and 33.6Kbits/s.

As yet, neither of the competing 56Kbits/s technologies has emerged as market leader and many would-be users are holding back on modem purchases to see which comes out on top. Global Internet's decision to support both standards could solve their dilemma.

Global Internet: 0181 957 1000

Competition for the home market in flatbed scanners is driving prices down to below £200 for machines that, only a year ago, would have cost much more. **Primax** and **Umax** have both announced 30-bit colour flatbed machines capable of scanning 300x600 dpi (dots per inch) or up to 4,800dpi using software enhancement. The Primax Jewel 4800 costs £199.99 and the Umax Astra 600-S is £198.58.

Primax: 01235 546020; IMC Distribution(Umax): 01344 872800

Gateway 2000 is to take over from Compaq as **Dorling Kindersley's** recommended PC partner for all its CD-ROM titles. Dorling Kindersley is a publisher of both printed and electronic reference works and, like Gateway 2000, it sells its products direct to the public.

Both companies have established strong reputations in meeting the needs of home users and although details of the companies' plans have yet to be released, we can expect to see compilations of DK products such as *The Way Things Work*, *The Ultimate Human Body* and the *Eyewitness* series being used to augment the Microsoft productivity software which Gateway customarily bundles with its PCs.

Gateway 2000: 0800 552000

Dorling Kindersley: 0171 753 3488

Ricoh has extended its multifunctional fax range with the launch of the inkjet 680MP, which combines PC-fax capabilities, copying, and colour inkjet printing. Aimed at the SOHO (small office/home office) market, the 680MP will be available from July, and will cost £880.

As a photocopier, the 680MP can produce up to 99 A4 copies at a time, while as a printer it can print in black and white at 300dpi (dots per inch), at up to three pages per minute. It can also print in colour, and has a paper tray with a capacity of 150 sheets. As a fax machine, the 680MP has a speed of 9,600bits/s and has an 18-page memory.

Ricoh: 01782 717100



Bug hits Pentium II PCs

The first wave of Pentium II PCs has arrived amid reports that the Intel-produced processor contains a bug.

Gateway, Viglen and Carrera have all announced machines based on both the 233MHz and 266MHz versions of Intel's new flagship processor, with prices starting at under £2,000.

Looming over these products is a bug in the Pentium II's maths capabilities. While the bug is not thought to be as serious as the one which plagued early Pentium processors, Intel has come under fire as reports of the bug's existence appeared on the Internet.

The reports centre on the fact that the Pentium II processor does not report an error that can occur during certain types of mathematical operation. This could potentially cause problems with programs that make heavy use of mathematics, such as high-end CAD (computer-aided design) applications.

Intel has acknowledged the bug, which is also present in Pentium Pro chips, and published details on its Web site (www.intel.com). It is currently working with software manufacturers on a solution.

Meanwhile, Gateway is offering a 266MHz G6-266 XL

PC with a 6.4Gb EIDE hard drive, 64Mb of RAM, a SCSI tape backup unit and a 17in CrystalScan monitor at a price of £2,643.

Viglen, whose 233MHz Genie 2 systems start at £1,919, offers a top-end Genie 2/266 with a 9Gb SCSI hard disk and 128Mb of RAM for £3,529.

Carrera's 266 models start at £2,090 with 32Mb of RAM, a 2.5Gb hard disk and a 15in monitor.

Intel: 01793 403000

Carrera Technology: 0171 830 0486

Viglen: 0181 758 7000

Gateway 2000: 0800 552000

Adobe graphics tools revamped

Adobe is set to launch version 7.0 of its industry-leading vector graphics package, Illustrator.

Both Windows 95 and Mac versions are due for release, with virtually identical interfaces which will aid cross-platform productivity. The expected street price of Illustrator 7.0 is £347, with upgrades available from any previous version for £99.88.

Two of the most popular support packages for Illustrator: Adobe Dimensions and Adobe Streamline, have also been updated. Dimensions 3.0 is a 3D rendering package and Streamline 4.0 converts images into editable line art with full colour control.

All three programs offer complete file compatibility between Mac and PC versions, and to make it easier for users to switch between hardware platforms, all the menus, tool-boxes and keyboard shortcuts are identical.

In a related move, Adobe is to release version 3.1 of After Effects for Windows 95 and NT.

This will bring the PC version of After Effects, the 2D animation and special effects package, into line with the current Mac version.

Adobe: 0181 606 4001

Windows upgrade on the way

This month *What PC?* can reveal details of the next major version of Microsoft's all-conquering desktop PC operating system, Windows.

Code-named Memphis, the new Windows version features many improvements over Windows 95, including support for large hard disks and even closer integration with the Internet.

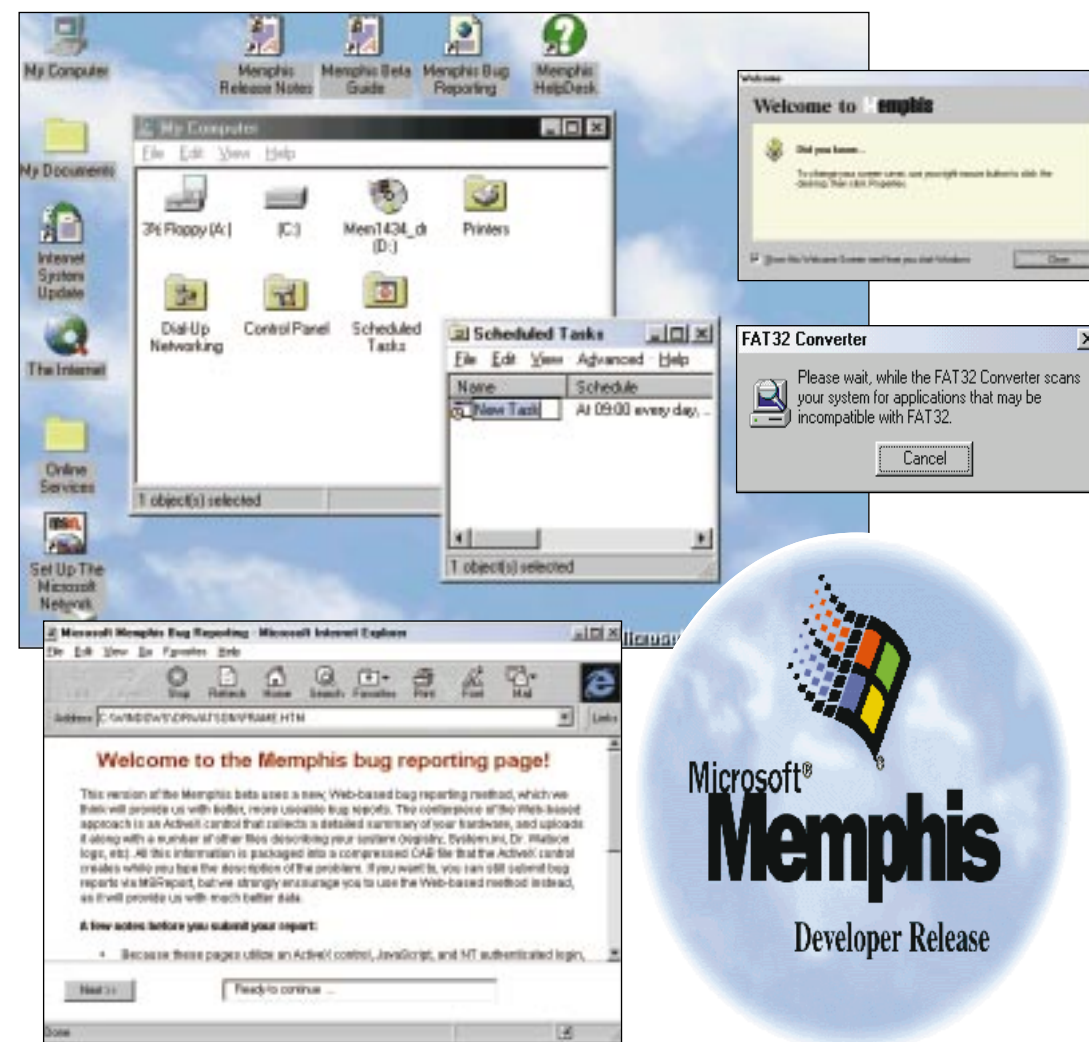
Memphis has a 32-bit file allocation table, known as FAT32, that allows the creation of hard disk partitions of over 2Gb. Hard drives with existing partitions can be converted as well.

In addition, support has been added for multiple displays, meaning that power users can make use of two display cards and monitors simultaneously as one work surface.

Microsoft claims that the operating system's performance has been enhanced so that setup, hardware detection and applications load times all benefit.

Pencilled in for a launch before the end of this year, Memphis is expected to eventually replace Windows 95 as the leading desktop operating system.

Microsoft: 0345 002000



New digital cameras add to picture

Hot on the heels of our group test (see page 92), this month sees the launch of two new digital cameras.

The PowerShot 350 is Canon's second entry into the digital camera market and will be sold alongside the higher-specification (and higher-priced) PowerShot 600. The 350 costs £586.33 and measures 90x95x50mm.

The camera has a built-in flash, autofocus lens and a



maximum resolution of 640x480. A removable 2Mb flash card stores up to 47

images which can be previewed on the colour LCD.

Panasonic's KXL-600A is similarly sized, measuring 134x21x62mm, but lacks a flash and LCD screen. Up to 96 images can be stored on a 2Mb flash card, which can then be read by a PC using a supplied PC card adaptor. The KXL-600A costs £299 and will be reviewed next issue.

Canon: 0121 680 8062

Panasonic: 0500 404041

As part of The Samaritans' Week '97, The Samaritans have launched a new Web site - www.samaritans.org.uk - with the aim of reaching out to young people in need of emotional support.

The site, designed by Whitewater, has information about The Samaritans' services, its press releases, a list of the charity's branches and much more besides. The Samaritans already operate a successful e-mail service and hope that the new Web site will encourage more young people to make contact with them and express their feelings.

While only a quarter of phone callers acknowledge suicidal feelings, as many as 63 percent of The Samaritans' e-mail callers admit to such despair.

Diamond Multimedia has launched the first of its 56K modems. The external SupraExpress 56e is based on the Rockwell/Lucent K56Flex technology, which gives a theoretical data transfer speed of 56Kbits/s over ordinary telephone lines. ISDN operates at 64Kbits/s.

The £139 SupraExpress 56e's flash memory allows easy upgrade to future 56K standards. It also supports the V.80 video-phone standard.

Like US Robotics' X2, K56Flex requires support

from an ISP (Internet Service Provider) before the improved data transfer is possible. Although the two systems are presently incompatible (future modem standards may change this), the chances are that ISPs will provide support for both.

Diamond Multimedia: 01189 444 400

Lotus has announced a new version of its PIM (personal information manager), Organizer. Organizer 97 Group Scheduling Edition (Organizer GS) has a variety of features for network use and allows users to schedule meetings by looking at each other's free time using the standard Organizer interface.

The program can also query a Lotus Notes address book for contacts and can download contact and appointment information from the Internet, thanks to its vCard and vCalendar compatibility. The price of Organizer GS has yet to be fixed, but is expected to be around £70.

Lotus: 01784 455445

Umax has revamped its professional-level PowerLook ColourStudio II scanner. This 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) scanner (9,600dpi with enhancement) is bundled with Macromedia's Freehand Graphics Studio and PhotoShop LE for £888.88.

Primax: 01235 546020

IMC Distribution (Umax): 01344 872800

A new, budget-priced scanner has arrived from Artec. Priced at just £151.58, the Scanrom 4E can scan photos and positive films

without the need for an additional transparency kit.

The scanner just plugs into the parallel port of a PC, and is operated via an easy-to-use driver. It is about the size of an external CD-ROM drive and takes paper sizes of up to 4x6in. Pictures for scanning are inserted via a sliding tray.

Artec: 01952 588907

Hitachi is to ship sample units of its GF-1000 DVD-RAM drive in June. DVD-RAM is an extension of the DVD-ROM format allowing users to store up to 5.2Gb of data on a single rewritable disc, with 2.6Gb of information on each side.

The drive can also be used to access conventional CD-ROM discs and to read data from non-writable DVD-ROMs at twice the standard DVD transfer rate of 1.2Mb per second. External and internal versions will be available with a choice of EIDE or SCSI-2 interfaces and all models will employ a tray-loading mechanism permitting vertical or horizontal mounting.

Hitachi: 01628 585000

Canon's LBP-660 laser printer churns out 6ppm (pages per minute) at a resolution of 600dpi (dots per inch), and by using built-in image refinement techniques and micro-fine toner powder it boasts an effective resolution of 2,400x 600dpi.

The price tag is a mere £351, kept down by the printer's use of the Windows Printing System, which allocates memory and processing resources from the host computer to help the printer do its job.

Canon: 0121 680 8062

Fujitsu has announced four new printers, ranging in price from £622 to £1,256 (inc VAT). Aimed at small business users, the basic Fujitsu 10V has an expected life of half a million pages and running costs claimed to be the lowest in its class.

All four printers come with 3Mb of RAM and a one-year on-site warranty as standard. Their maximum resolution is 600x600dpi (dots per inch); this can be increased to 1,200x1,200dpi using Fujitsu Enhanced Image Technology.

A 500-sheet bulk paper feeder, duplex module and Postscript capability are standard on the top-of-the-range Fujitsu 14ADV, with all of these available as options throughout the range.

Fujitsu: 0181 573 4444



McAfee has been hauled over the coals by the Advertising Standards Authority for recent adverts which suggested Alan Solomon had abandoned rival company Dr Solomon's.

McAfee: 01344 304730
Dr Solomon's: 01296 318800

Microsoft is set to introduce real-time interactive media to Internet Explorer, with the acquisition of Dimension X, a company devoted to the Java multimedia market.

Microsoft: 0345 002000

NetMeter from **CCA Software** is a new program that calculates and displays the costs you are incurring during your connection to the Internet. It costs £14.99.

CCA Software:
0161 429 7095

Direct Net @ccess is offering a 28,800bps internal modem free with every yearly Internet subscription. The deal includes three e-mail addresses and 10Mb of Web space.

Direct Net @ccess:
01232 330311

Iomega has reduced the price of its popular Jaz Drive in Europe, which stores data on removable 1Gb disks. The street price drops to £359 from 20 May.

Iomega: 0800 898 563

Finjan Software has launched a range of Surfinshield products, designed to block illegal access from Java and ActiveX applets when accessing the Internet.

Integralis: 0118 930 6060



300MHz Mac imminent

Motorola's latest StarMax Mac clone could be the world's first Mac-compatible system to run at the dizzying speed of 300MHz, but only if Motorola meets its promised May deadline.

If not, the StarMax 5000/300 could be eclipsed by Apple's recently announced 6500/300 model.

The StarMax 5000/300 is based on the PowerPC 603e processor and is equipped with 32Mb of RAM, a 4.3Gb

hard disk, a 10BaseT Ethernet connector, a 16-speed CD-ROM drive and 4Mb of VRAM graphics memory.

In addition, the mini-tower case has five PCI expansion slots and houses a 100Mb Iomega Zip drive.

In the US, the machine is being targeted at corporate buyers, home offices and graphics professionals. It costs \$3,189, and for \$3,739 there's a model with souped-up graphics provided by an

IMS Twin Turbo video card with 8Mb of memory.

Like all StarMax systems, the 5000/300 includes MacOS 7.6, an internal SCSI connector to make it easier to fit integrated drives and devices, and an adaptor to enable users to hook their machines up to either PC or Mac monitors. It has not been decided whether the StarMax 3000/500 will be released in the UK.

Motorola Computer Group:
www.mot.com/computer

ALPS reduces cost of quality printing

Low-cost photographic-quality printing has become a reality with the launch of the ALPS MD-2300.

The £821.33 printer uses a dye-sublimation print process to produce continuous-tone photographic prints up to A4 in size.

The MD-2300 is based around the Micro Dry print process, first seen in the Citizen Printiva and other ALPS printers. The difference with the MD-2300, however, is its dual cartridge system.

Although the printer will work as a standard Micro Dry printer, printing high-quality colour images onto plain paper, it can also use special Photo ink cartridges. Together with

special paper and a heat-transfer print process, these produce full-colour glossy prints that are all but indistinguishable from a genuine photograph.

The MD-2300 will be available in both PC (Windows 3.1x and 95) and Mac versions, and will come bundled with Adobe PhotoDeluxe software. Two sets of ink cartridges will also be included, as is a sample of print media.

ALPS: 0800 973405



Top 20 software packages according to Romtec figures

Position	Package	Publisher/supplier	Type	Last month
1	MS Windows 95	Microsoft	Operating system	1
2	MS Office V4.2 Standard	Microsoft	Office suite	3
3	MS Office Pro for Win 95	Microsoft	Office suite	2
4	MS Office Standard for Win 95	Microsoft	Operating system	5
5	PK ZIP for DOS	Atlantic Coast	Utility	—
6	MS Office Pro 4.3	Microsoft	Office suite	6
7	MS Windows for Workgroups	Microsoft	Operating system	9
8	MS Windows NT Workstation	Microsoft	Operating system	4
9	PK ZIP for Windows	Atlantic Coast	Utility	11
10	Lotus Notes for Windows	Lotus	Groupware	10
11	MS Exchange for Windows	Microsoft	E-mail	7
12	VirusScan for Windows	McAfee	Anti-virus	—
13	cc:Mail for Windows	Lotus	E-mail	8
14	WordPerfect Suite for Windows	Corel	Office suite	—
15	Lotus SmartSuite V3/4	Lotus	Office suite	12
16	MS Word for Windows	Microsoft	Word processor	18
17	Dr Solomon's AntiVirus for Win 95	Dr Solomon's Software	Anti-virus	19
18	OS/2 Warp	IBM	Operating system	—
19	MS Project for Windows	Microsoft	Project management	16
20	MS BackOffice	Microsoft	Utility	—

Figures for March 1997, source Romtec. Business application and desktop operating systems unit sales only, OEM sales excluded.

Romtec figures are calculated by grossing up sales from resellers. If you are interested in joining Romtec's Reseller Panel and finding out how as a reseller you can benefit, call direct on: 01628 414013.