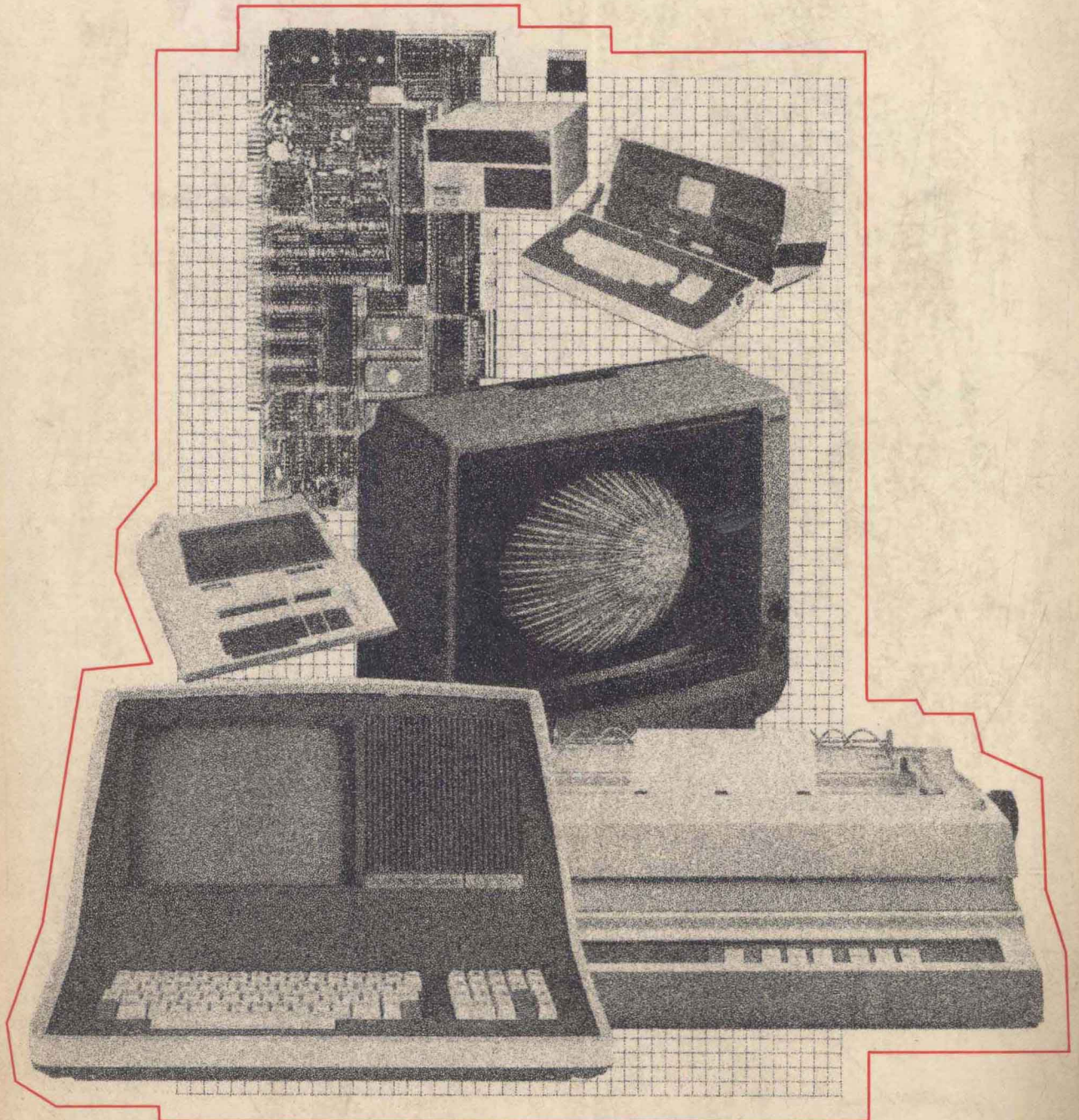


TONY WEBSTER

MICROCOMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE

*The Most Complete and Timely
Guide to Microcomputers
Available, Reviewing in Detail
Over 180 Companies!*



HELPS YOU CHOOSE THE SMALL COMPUTER YOU NEED!

MICROCOMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE

1983 EDITION

TONY WEBSTER

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PREFACE

SECOND EDITION

This second edition of the MICROCOMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE is a much expanded and updated version of the first edition which appeared in June, 1981. Whereas the first edition included only 53 microcomputer manufacturers, this second edition now includes over 180 companies.

The purpose of the MICROCOMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE is to provide extensive details on the large range of microcomputers and microcomputer systems currently available. The information contained within covers the central processing system, peripherals, operating systems and application packages provided by microcomputer manufacturers.

The book is divided into the following parts:

- **Part I** – *General Microcomputer Information.*
- **Part II** – *Microcomputer Software Packages*
- **Part III** – *IBM Personal Computer Independent Vendors*
- **Part IV** – *Microcomputers and Microcomputer Systems*
- **Appendix A** – *Comparison Tables*
- **Appendix B** – *Glossary of Terms*
- **Appendix C** – *Updating Details and other Publications*

The term microcomputer, as used in this Guide, refers to a class of computers which is generally low in cost and which provides entry-level computing capabilities across a wide range of industries and applications. With the new powerful 16-bit microprocessors emerging in many microcomputer systems, the "entry-level computing" definition is probably not quite so applicable any more. These systems are referred to by a number of different names in the industry –small business computer, personal computer, desk top computer, professional computer and intelligent workstation are some typical examples. We have used the generic term "microcomputer" to cover this range of systems.

How does one define a microcomputer? There is no industry accepted hard and fast rule in this area but the following general guidelines have been followed in this Guide. Virtually any commercially available system based upon an 8-bit microprocessor is referred to as a microcomputer. Popular microprocessors of this type include the Intel 8080 and 8085, Zilog Z80 family and the Motorola 6800 and 6809. In addition, a number of 16-bit microprocessors are appearing from two different directions. First, the semiconductor manufacturers mentioned above have expanded their 8-bit microprocessors into upwards compatible 16-bit units. Models now available include the Intel 8088 and 8086, Zilog Z8000 and Motorola 68000. Second, some of the major 16-bit microcomputer manufacturers have developed single-chip versions of their processors to compete in the microprocessor area. Examples include the Digital Equipment LSI-11 family and the Data General microNOVA and microECLIPSE range.

From the above general descriptions of what is a microcomputer, products described in Part IV of this Guide therefore cover both 8-bit and 16-bit microprocessors, and include systems suitable for application across the industrial, commercial, scientific, educational and hobbyist areas.

A general summary of the different parts follows:

Part I General Microcomputer Information.

Part I incorporates useful information on microcomputer theory and other general information. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to theory including hardware, peripherals and software. Chapter 2 looks at the historical development of the microcomputer industry and projects the growth expected during the 1980s. Chapter 3 provides guidelines for selecting microcomputers, particularly for those people contemplating commercial applications.

Chapter 4, contributed by John Rehfeld and Harry Garland, looks at the Japanese penetration of the U.S. computer marketplace. These two contributors provide differing views on the possible dominance of this industry by the Japanese.

Part II Microcomputer Software Packages

Part II provides useful microcomputer software information. Chapter 5 describes many of the popular 8-bit and 16-bit operating systems and high level languages. Chapter 6 looks at a number of popular application packages used by many microcomputer manufacturers. Chapter 7 discusses a method of finding microcomputer software using a software data base approach.

Part III IBM Personal Computer Independent Vendors

Part III is useful for those organizations or persons owning or contemplating purchasing an IBM Personal Computer. By courtesy of Personal Computer Age Magazine, Chapter 8 lists alphabetically a large range of IBM add-on suppliers in hardware, software, services and publications.

Part IV Microcomputers and Microcomputer Systems

Part IV makes up the major contents of this Guide. It provides a summary, between one and four pages, on over 500 microcomputers and microcomputer systems from more than 180 major suppliers. The different models are generally summarized under the following headings:

● **Overview** ● **Central Processing Systems** ● **Peripherals** ● **Software** (including applications software) ● **Pricing** ● **Head Office.**

Appendix A Comparison Tables

Appendix A, contributed by Eric Westerling, provides detailed tabular comparisons on forty of the popular systems described in Part IV.

Appendix B Glossary of Terms

A brief glossary of microcomputer terms is included for those people unfamiliar with computing terminology.

Appendix C Updating Details and Other Publications

Appendix C provides updating information for purchasers of the MICROCOMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE, as well as details on two other Buyer's Guides soon to be published

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PART I

**GENERAL
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