



Marketing
Bulletin

STRIDE MARKETING BULLETIN

DECEMBER 1987

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Stride Announces New Distributor in Finland

MicroSage is pleased to announce the appointment of Midsell of Helsinki, Finland, who will represent our products in the Finnish market. Keeli Patterson travelled to Helsinki along with Wilbur Harvey to assist Midsell with the launch of the Stride 600 Series. Midsell is not a new company to the Finnish computing community but, is actually a division of a large company, Midec, which has been around for many years. They have worked with the Stride 400 Series in the past and have made the strategic decision to get more deeply involved in the UNIX marketplace, and in particular with the Stride 600 Series. Welcome aboard Marcus, Paul, and Harri and we wish you the best of luck in the future.

600 Series Shipping Update

Speaking of the 600 Series, many of you have taken delivery of your first 600 Series systems. We are pleased to report that we have not had a *single* system failure in the field which has been attributable to a hardware problem or defect. We have learned however, that the 600 Series machine is a much more complex product to manufacture than the 400 Series and as a result, lead time for new orders is currently running 4-6 weeks. We do expect some delays over the next few months as our manufacturing division gets up to speed and as more automated manufacturing and test systems are brought on line.

Power Supplies

We feel that the 400 Series is one of the most reliable products we have ever introduced. Over the last year, our technology (CPU and Winchester Boards) has proven to be extremely reliable and once installed, gives many years of service without much attention. Such is not the case however, with disk drives and power supplies which have a higher incidence of failure than our circuit boards. This is a problem within the industry and not just with MicroSage.

Our manufacturing division is working with R & D to develop new test and burn-in procedures for these products which should add considerably to our ability to detect problems before they occur.

On the subject of power supplies, you should understand that a power supply is a delicate instrument which is complex and always in need of attention. Our R & D group advises that you should check the output voltages of the PSU at least twice per year. We have seen several instances lately where systems have been damaged because of an over-voltage situation. This should not happen. A check of power supply voltages takes only a minute and if done regularly can help assure a long, useful, and uninterrupted life of your Stride computer investment.

Static Damage

Our R & D group has reminded us once again about the dangers of static damage and the effect on Stride computers. Damage can come in two ways:

First, in a normal office environment with plastic chairs, synthetic carpets and plastic mats, static charges can build up easily. Any computer can be damaged by static discharges and you should know that static damage can occur even when you do not physically see, feel, or hear the static discharge. Please make every effort to see that your investment in your Stride is protected. It is much cheaper to invest in an anti-static carpet than it is to pay us to repair your computer.

Board Handling Kills Boards

A large percentage of our customers do not take adequate precautions when handling boards. Yes, I am talking about you! For starters, you should not remove a board from any system unless you are in a suitable work environment which is equipped with anti-static mats. You should always use anti-static bags such as those used here at MicroSage. They are manufactured by 3M and have a code number stamped on the top of the bag "2100 Static Shielding Bag". DO NOT assume that a bag which is black and made from plastic is a suitable anti-static bag. If in doubt, we would be happy to pass these along at our cost. It is cheap insurance.

Wilbur Harvey estimates that 30 percent of the dead boards we see in our repair department are dead because of static damage!

Extended Disk Drive Warranty

Effective December 1, 1987, we will adjust our normal warranty of 90 days for the complete system to 90 days for the system and nine (9) months for the disk drive. In order to qualify for this extended warranty on the disk sub-system you must:

- 1) Request and receive an RMA number from MicroSage within 9 months from the invoice date and
- 2) Return the disk drive within 30 days of the date of the RMA and
- 3) Return the disk drive properly packaged with a packing slip which references the RMA number.

Please note, the above procedures will be strictly enforced!

Disk Capacities

Formatted or Unformatted? A confusing subject since there is no standard in the industry. We have enclosed a listing of the formatted and unformatted capacities for our disk sub-systems, excepting streaming tape drives.

New Product Announcements: Guess what R & D is up to.

The last year has been one of the most productive ones in the history of our company. Our primary emphasis over the last several months has been the introduction of the 600 Series, the basic system. We do not see things changing soon since the 600 Series is designed around a concept of MULTIPROCESSING which is new, different and continually being enhanced.

However, a few items worthy of mention which are expected to be introduced by March, 1988, are:

* p-System on the 600 Series

32 user MU.BIOS

* For UNIX on the 600 Series

RAMDISK
MirrorDisk
Ethernet
Windows
SCSI to ST-506
Performance tune-ups
New Documentation
SUN Network File System (NFS)¹

Please do not call and ask us about these products because we will not tell you more. We are too busy developing them!

New Employees

Sky Archuleta	R & D, Engineering Technician
Ron Sheen	R & D, NCR Compatibility Engineer
Mark Sorensen	Promotion within Sales and Marketing, Northwestern Sales
Ken Stieha	Vice President of Finance
Reta Cunningham	Accounting (Welcome Back!)
Kathy Smith-Miller	Technical Support

Welcome aboard!

Preliminary Benchmarks for the 600 Series

We have been quite busy establishing a suite of benchmarks for the 600 Series. We expect that this will take another 60 days to complete and longer to put into a marketing document. As you know, we at MicroSage set out to build a better 68020 machine, but more than that, we set out to build a fast and affordable 68020 system which can be expanded into a MULTIPLE CPU (Multiprocessing) architecture, also at an affordable price.

Our primary focus has been to compare the 600 Series to similar computers offered by NCR.² We are pleased to report that our preliminary tests, involving more than a dozen benchmarks, show the Stride 600 Series (in Uni-processor mode) running about thirty-four percent (34%) faster than a similarly equipped NCR² 32/400.

We are also "running" less expensive. In the area of \$8,000 to \$10,000 less at the low end and becoming even more price/performance competitive as the system configuration grows.

SAGE Trade In Policy Renewed

Due to the popularity of the program, MicroSage has renewed its SAGE Trade In Policy. Please review the enclosed flyer.

¹NFS is a trademark of Sun Microsystems

²NCR is a trademark of NCR Corporation.

FAX Machine Installed

We now have a FAX machine installed in-house. Our FAX number is (702) 322-7975.

Unlike telex machines, FAX machines let you transfer a copy of a page, just as it appears. With telex machines we are limited to uppercase alphabetic/numeric characters. However, a FAX machine is not limited by any special characters, and can even transfer pictures! Needless to say, we are very excited about our new communication device.

Chess Champion

At the Sixth World Microcomputer Chess Championships held this year in Rome from the 14th to 20th of September, Richard Lang of the UK won the title of

1987 World Personal Computer Chess Champion

using a Stride 440 with a 68020 Engine supplied by our Stride reseller, Strategic Group (London).

Richard competed against systems from the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia, Hungary, and the UK. This is Richard's third successful defense of the title he first won in 1984, establishing his reputation as the premier author of chess applications. Congratulations to Richard (and the Stride 440) and to Strategic Group (London) for keeping us posted!

VLM for the p-System ... Not Yet

If you received the Pecan newsletter, "System.Miscinfo", you have more than likely noticed the announcement for VLM, Pecan's 32-bit operating system. Unfortunately, the marketing department at Pecan accidentally raced ahead of their programmers. VLM is not yet ready to roll out the door. We have been waiting as anxiously as you for this new product, and you can bet your boots that we will let you know when VLM is available for the Stride!

HITS System News

Jim Benner of Benner Data Services, Inc. (BDSI) has taken over the distribution and support of HITS products. Inquiries should be sent directly to:

Benner Data Services, Inc.
R.D. 2, Box 180
Centreville, MD 21617
Tel. (301) 758-0381

HITS is in the process of releasing a new product, a menu-driven program on p-System for the 1/4" cartridge drive. The dealer price is \$215 (the price includes software and a manual). There is one version for cache and one for RAM disks. The program has such features as tape directories, file-by-file transfers using wildcards and a tape retention option.

The HITS interface package for connecting a Stride 440 or 460 to a Kennedy or Cipher 1/2" mag tape drive has come down in price. The new dealer price is \$3897. This includes the interface hardware, installation manual, software and a software manual, but not a tape drive. Drives are available through Benner Data Services, but end users are advised to check with their local dealers first.

UNIFY

Currently the Stride supports UNIFY 3.2. However, we are all looking forward to the new UNIFY release, UNIFY 4.0, which will be available soon.

UNIFY 4.0 will offer some very nice features. Two new data types will be available, binary and variable-length-text. The binary data type will allow one to store scanned objects and the like. Fingerprints is one example of what can be stored in the binary data type. And variable-length-text is just that. For those of us who are verbose, this is a very nice feature! Those of you in the international market will be pleased to hear that the character type will become eight bits, rather than seven. And we understand that the SQL will be much faster than it currently is!

Bruce Thelen at MultiCo, our UNIFY distributor, asks that if you have questions on UNIFY to please contact him. MultiCo can be reached at:

MultiCo
P.O. Box 1298
Snohomish, WA 98290
Tel: (206) 483-4100
Telex: 910 2408993

600 Series Technical Manual

The 600 Series Technical Manual is available in preliminary form to resellers only. The price of the manual is \$495. The manual includes schematics and is very thorough in its dealings with the new mSBC board. Contact your sales representative for more information.

Delta Data Locations

Delta Data, our nationwide service center, is always in search of Strides to service! If you are interested in the nationwide service, you can contact Delta on the east coast or the west coast at the following locations and telephone numbers. The contacts have changed in the past few months, so please do make note of them.

Delta Data Systems Corporation
8310 Guilford Rd., Suite F
Columbia, MD 21046
(301) 290-6400, 01, 02
contact: Mr. George Gordon

Delta Data Systems Corporation
3014 Glen Manor Place
Los Angeles, CA 90039
(213) 662-2313
contact: Mr. Nick Bennett

Third Party/NCR Software List

MicroSage is updating our current Third Party Reference list. If you have products (or new stuff on your product) that you would like us to know about, please telex or write us a quick paragraph with information including pricing and dates available.

We have enclosed the latest software list. You should notice some new additions to the NCR list. And as a reminder, if you have any NCR software that you would like to have tested, we would be more than happy to test it for you. Contact your sales representative for information.

Software Updates*Modula 2*

Modula 2 under the p-System is no longer being carried by MicroSage. However, for any of you with an interest in forming a "self-help" club for Modula 2, you may contact Dr. Bob Spitzer of Nervous Systems, Inc. His address is:

Nervous Systems, Inc.
4375 W. Borland Ave.
W. Bloomfield, MI 48033
Tel. (313) 745-8328

For those of you who work with UniStride and are interested in Modula 2, Masthaven Software's Modula 2 is the ticket for you! The Masthaven compiler is available from:

Metacomco
115 Glenfrome Road
St. Werburghs
Bristol BS2 9UY
ENGLAND
Tel. (0272) 550756
Tlx. 44220 (COMTEL)

Here in the states, feel free to contact your sales representative at MicroSage.

UniPlex II

UniPlex II is no longer directly available from MicroSage as our supplier no longer carries UniPlex. However, the NCR version of the UniPlex II Plus product has been fully tested on the Stride and found to work well. We suggest you order this product through your local UniPlex distributor. If you are running UniPlex II Plus on a 400 Series UniStride machine, ask for the NCR Tower XP version of UniPlex. If you are using a 600 Series machine, ask for the NCR 32/400 version.

*Crystal Writer Plus***PREVIEW A NEW PUBLISHING SYSTEM:**

Syntactics kicks off the new year by making a SPECIAL PREVIEW OFFER to MicroSage dealers. 1988 will see the release of the NEW

Crystal Document Management System.

You may already be familiar with Crystal Writer Plus, a user-friendly WYSIWYG word processor with an 80,000 word dictionary. The new Document Management System adds ADVANCED word processing and a document format database for daisy wheel, dot-matrix printers and simple laser printer functions. Plus, it provides fully integrated AUTOMATIC typesetting when used with LaserPak. LaserPak provides laser printer device support for either HP Laser Jet or Postscript printers.

Under the special PREVIEW offer, MicroSage dealers can be among the first to see this new publishing system at a very discounted price:

\$250 Document Management System
\$150 LaserPak

Other products from Syntactics include SpellPak, a specialized dictionary of 11,000 legal terms and 25,000 medical terms.

Your preview copy will be shipped to you in late January 1988. You will also receive a final copy (currently scheduled for early March) at no extra charge. These are fully working copies, but marked "not for resale".

Take advantage of this generous offer from Syntactics and order your dealer copy today! Offer limited to one per dealership.

Motorola Information

Information is available from Motorola just for the asking. We have enclosed a list of just some of the literature Motorola offers. If you would like to receive any of this information, do contact your local Motorola representative. This information may be valuable to you and your customers.

New Technical Bulletins

Some new technical bulletins are out. One bulletin that deserves close attention is TB0024, Power Supply & Wiring Harness Reference. TB0024 puts together an historical list of power supplies used in the Stride 400 Series and the correct wiring harness for each.

Finding the correct wiring harness for a particular Winchester/Power Supply configuration has been a magical task in the past. Now, it is easy to look up what wiring harness is necessary for your particular Winchester/Power Supply configuration. We have enclosed a copy of this technical bulletin for your use.

The technical bulletin TB0026 will give you a list of the Winchester drives offered in the Stride products, along with their specifications. Please note that in the price list, Winchester sizes are listed in unformatted capacities. This technical bulletin will give you the formatted capacity.

Books

Advanced UCSD Pascal Programming Techniques

by Willner and Demchak

ISBN 0-13-011610-6 (Prentice-Hall, Inc.)

For those of you who run into nasty programming problems in UCSD Pascal, we recommend Willner and Demchak's book, Advanced UCSD Pascal Programming Techniques. Technical support has been able to address a number of customers' problems with the help of this text. However, this text is not to be used as an introductory text. For that purpose we recommend Oh! Pascal by Cooper and Clancy. It is now in its second edition and is an excellent learning tool. You can order these books from your local book store.

Price List Changes

The following changes will appear in the next issue of the Price List.

Pg. 13 - Modula-2 from ScenicSoft, part number SF0166, will no longer be available.

Pg. 15 - UniStride 17-32 User Licenses, part numbers SF0216 and SF0283, will be changed to \$1695.00 wholesale. Retail prices remain the same.

Pg. 17 - NCR Tower-compatible Applications - MicroSage will now resell any application for retail plus 20%, or a minimum of \$100 for handling, whichever is greater.

Pg. 27 - 460 chassis upgrade, part number SU0061, is now \$1200.00.

A couple of final notes: If you are considering upgrading from a 400 Series to a 600 Series, please contact the Sales Department. We are currently finalizing a more attractive option than has been available before. Also, please take note of the special offer from Syntactics Corp. on their CrystalWriter packages.

Holidays

And by the way, all of us at MicroSage would like to wish each and everyone of you HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!