

NEWS

75-MHz Pentiums deskbound

Gateway, ALR put speedier Intel chip in desktop PCs

BY BOB FRANCIS

Desktop PCs powered by Intel Corp.'s new 75-MHz Pentium are being sold by at least one manufacturer, and more will be announced by Comdex in November.

Gateway 2000 Inc. is already selling an unannounced 75-MHz system priced at \$2,499, the price of its 66-MHz Pentium systems.

The Sioux Falls, S.D.-based company will announce the 75-MHz P5-75XL soon, along with a price cut on its 66-MHz model, company officials said.

Advanced Logic Research Inc. (ALR) is also planning to introduce 75-MHz Pentium desktop systems just prior to Comdex. The ALR Evolution X/75 will be priced around \$2,200, company officials said (see chart).

Sources familiar with Dell Computer Corp.'s plans said the manufacturer will also announce a 75-MHz desktop system in the coming weeks. IBM introduced a 75-MHz Pentium-based system as part of its IBM PC Series 700 line two weeks ago.

The 75-MHz Pentium is a low-power (3.3 volt) P54C design that was developed for

the notebook market.

But PC company designers hope the chip will be the entry point for desktop Pentium systems in the corporate market.

Analysts said the 75-MHz Pentium systems avoid the pitfalls of the 60-MHz and 66-MHz Pentium systems, such as poor system design. Those systems were seen by corporate IS users as an intermediate step to the P54C design anyway.

"The corporate users knew that the [60-MHz] and 66-MHz systems were not going to be their standard computing platform," said Martin Reynolds,

an analyst with Computer Intelligence InfoCorp, in Santa Clara, Calif.

"We tested the early Pentium systems and just didn't feel like they were what we needed at that price," said an IS manager with a utility company in the Northwest. "We'd be much more attracted to a design with a good price and a smaller footprint," he said.

Intel expects that the 5-volt 60-MHz and 66-MHz Pentium systems will continue to be significant for individual users, but it expects corporate users will adopt the 75-MHz chip.

75-MHz desktop systems

Advanced Logic Research Inc.'s Evolution X/75 Model 1

Processor : 75-MHz Pentium

Memory: 8MB of RAM

Local bus: PCI

Expansion slots: Three PCI slots, four ISA slots, and one PCI/ISA slot.

Storage bays: Two internal 3.5-inch drive bays; three external bays.

Price: Approximately \$2,200, not including monitor and hard drive.

Gateway 2000 Inc.'s P5-75XL

Processor : 75-MHz Pentium

Memory: 8MB of RAM

Local bus: PCI

Expansion slots: Three PCI slots, four ISA slots, and one PCI/ISA slot.

Storage bays: Two internal 3.5-inch drive bays; four external bays.

Price: \$2,499 with 15-inch monitor and 730MB hard drive.

IBM to showcase its workgroup strategy based on UltiMail app

BY DOUG BARNEY

At Comdex, IBM will unveil a broad new workgroup strategy that is very different from the one espoused by close groupware partner Lotus Development Corp.

IBM has been reselling both Lotus Notes and cc:Mail, but it is now prepared to put its weight behind its own client/server line, anchored by new versions of UltiMail, a multimedia-ready E-mail package that supports fax, video, voice, and enriched text.

In the first half of next year, versions of UltiMail will work with AS/400 and OS/2 servers and will initially support Windows and OS/2 clients.

Macintosh and IBM AIX clients are also in the works, as is an AIX server.

Instead of exclusively pushing Lotus back ends, IBM will pitch its MQSeries of messaging backbones. The series is currently designed to let appli-

cations, such as transaction systems, exchange information.

IBM is reworking the series to support messaging. It will tie both UltiMail and applications such as its Time & Place scheduling packing, FlowMark workflow system, and Visual Document Library electronic text management library, into the MQSeries.

These links will ship in the second half of 1995, said Dick Sullivan, director of workgroup solutions marketing for IBM's Software Solutions group.

While the IBM line is in competition with Lotus products, IBM sources stressed the company's support for Lotus' Vendor Independent Messaging protocol, which makes IBM and Lotus products compatible.

IBM admitted that IBM and Lotus products "overlap" but denied there was a serious rift.

"It's not that we are going right and they are going left," said Steve Mills, general manager of Software Solutions.

New markets heat up printer rivalry

Tektronix, Xerox challenge HP

BY TOM QUINLAN

The first color laser printer from Tektronix Inc. and a multifunction inkjet printer from Xerox Corp. are scheduled to make their debuts this week, as both companies take aim at market leader Hewlett-Packard Co.

Tektronix, which is also introducing a \$1,695 color bubble jet printer, is hoping more functionality and its reputation as a color printer manufacturer will let it compete against HP's Color LaserJet.

The Phaser 540 color laser printer offers support for a true 600-dpi resolution, 20MB of RAM, four page-per-minute (ppm) color print speed (14 ppm for monochrome printing), and PostScript Level 2, for \$8,995.

Although its printer costs \$1,700 more than HP's entry-

PS/2s won't Plug and Play with Windows 95

BY DOUG BARNEY

Nearly 10 million IBM PS/2 Micro Channel Architecture (MCA) customers will be able to run Microsoft Corp.'s Windows 95, but they won't be able to take advantage of its Plug and Play capabilities, at least not right away, an IBM official confirmed last week.

IBM is working on an "enumerator" that will help the operating system track board configurations. Microsoft will put that technology into Windows 95 when IBM finishes building the enumerator, but that may take a while.

"Code is being worked on. The schedule is kind of open for now, but it won't be in the first [Windows 95] ship. If it [Windows 95] tries to dynamically configure the system, it won't have information about the Micro Channel," said Dhruv Desai, IBM senior technical staff member for commercial desktop development.

"In the future, MCA systems will have a Plug and Play BIOS, but it will be sometime in late '95 at the earliest," said Desai.

Existing Micro Channel cards will be able to coexist with Windows 95, but won't be able to take advantage of the Plug and Play capabilities, because

bootable devices, such as floppy and hard drives, can only be automatically configured if a Plug and Play BIOS is present.

Hardware makers can swap in these new BIOSes as long as their PCs have either removable ROMs or flash ROMs, said Scott Hay, technical marketing engineer for Intel Corp.'s Software Technology Lab. IBM plans to build Plug and Play BIOSes for new MCA systems and to upgrade its few existing systems that use flash BIOSes.

The lack of Micro Channel support for Windows 95 Plug and Play capabilities could leave PS/2 users at a disadvantage compared to users of older ISA- and EISA-based systems, which will be able to take some advantage of Plug and Play, even without a special Plug and Play BIOS.

For example, Plug and Play-compatible peripherals that aren't used as boot-up devices, such as sound cards, printers, scanners, and mice, will still be able to use Windows 95's self-configuring features.

Although IBM has de-emphasized MCA, this month the company announced the IBM PC Series 300 and Series 700, which will support both PCI and Micro Channel.

level system, Tektronix wants to establish itself as the market leader by offering substantially more performance.

HP's color laser printer offers 300-dpi resolution, 8MB of RAM, a 2-ppm color print speed (10 ppm in monochrome), and PCL5 with color. A PostScript option costs \$795.

Tektronix's printers will ship in mid-November.

Xerox will challenge HP in the multifunction printer market with a similar strategy.

The Xerox 3000 series offers users three models, with the main difference being a 9600bps modem with the 3002 model and 14.4-Kbps in Models 3006 and 3004.

All three models offer 300-dpi printing at three ppm, with similar scanning and copying quality.

With its printer prices ranging

from \$1,550 to \$1,850, Xerox is attempting to distinguish itself from HP's sub-\$1,000 system in the small workgroup market with state-of-the-art fax features, company officials said.

The 3000 series can support 35 pages of faxes in memory, can have access to as many as 10 mailboxes and 80 stored speed dial numbers, and can store faxes to send later at a specified time.

The 3006 and 3002 are shipping now. The 3004 will ship in January.



Tektronix's first color laser printer, the Phaser 540, offers 600-dpi resolution.