September 20, 1984

Portable Personal System Introduced Today In New York
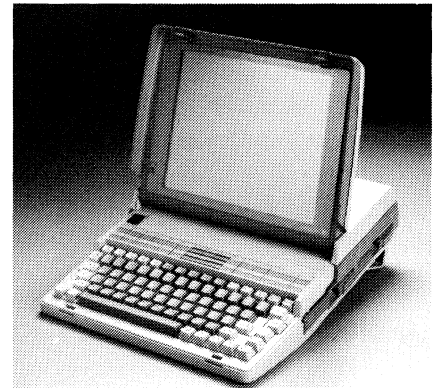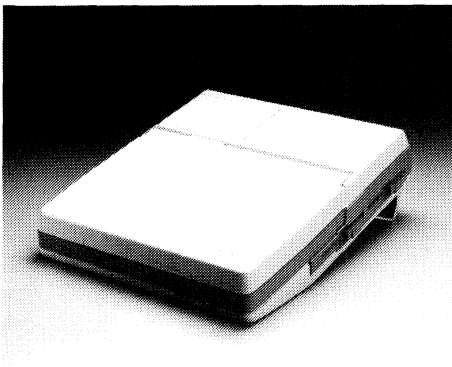
The DATA GENERAL/One: full personal computer functionality in a package smaller than a bread box.

Data General today introduced a 10-pound portable computer system that, while smaller than a briefcase, performs all the functions of larger, heavier desktop personal computers.

The DATA GENERAL/One Personal System is the computer industry's first portable personal computer to incorporate a "full-size" liquid crystal display (LCD) capable of displaying text and graphics with the resolution and character proportions of a convential computer terminal screen.

Prices for the DATA GENERAL/One system range from $2,895 to $5,595. The basic system includes 128KB of main memory, a 3.5 inch disc drive, an AC adapter and the MS/DOS operating system.

About 2,000 customers, industry analysts, and trade and business editors were expected to be on hand for the introduction of the portable system at Avery Fisher Hall in New York City.

The system runs industry-standard operating systems MS-DOS, CPM-86 and Venix, an AT&T licensed implementation of UNIX. Data General also will offer users an IBM PC-compatible expansion chassis for the new portable. The chassis will accept up to five full-size expansion boards, providing users with additional system features such as color and monochrome terminal support and memory expansion.

The DATA GENERAL/One system offers two optional built-in features not commonly available in conventional desktop computers: a 300 baud modem enabling users to plug the system into a standard telephone jack for communications to larger Data General ECLIPSE/MV Family computers or public data bases; and a rechargeable, nickel-cadmium battery pack, that can run the computer for up to 10 hours of constant use.

By using a special software link called the CEO CONNECTION, the computer is able to translate documents and files from popular software programs such as Wordstar and Multiplan and transfer them to larger computers in a Data General CEO Comprehensive Electronic Office office automation network.

Engineers will find the DATA GENERAL/One ideal as both a stand-alone system for in-the-field applications, or as a remote extension of their existing engineering network for applications requiring off-site data acquisition and analysis.

"Surrendering full functionality in a desktop in order to have computer mobility is a thing of the past," says President Ed de Castro. "The DATA GENERAL/One is a fully-functional personal system, as well as a true portable. There is no other personal computer manufacturer, desktop or otherwise, that can make the same statement."

Because the system will appeal to many diverse customer groups with varying levels of computer experience, it will be distributed through computer retail outlets, Data General's established network of OEMs, and through the company's Sales force.

Design, Manufacturing Key To DATA GENERAL/One

State-of-the-art technology used in the design and manufacture of the new DATA GENERAL/One computer gives the portable the functionality and high-reliability of a much larger system.

"Up to now, people who needed mobile computing had to settle for a subset of desktop system functionality," says Bob Miller, senior vice president of the Business Divisions. "We chose instead to apply technology in such a way that we came up to the level of desktop system performance and kept on going, by offering users the freedom to use that performance anywhere, anytime."

The portable was designed and developed jointly by a team of engineers from Nippon•Data General and from U. S. development groups in North Carolina and Massachusetts. It is manufactured on a specially-designed automated assembly line at Nippon•Data General's Gyoda manufacturing plant.

Key among the technological highlights of the new system is the extensive use of C-MOS semiconductor components. Unlike older N-channel MOS parts, a C-MOS based system consumes less power and produces less heat; it will operate for up to 10 hours from a rechargeable battery pack.

Because of two custom designed C-MOS gate array components, the new system emulates the display functionality of the IBM PC, but in a dramatically compact package. The dense components allow Data General to take advantage of currently evolving LCD technology. The DATA GENERAL/One display is 25 lines by 80 columns, the same viewing area as a standard 12-inch CRT and the only full-sized LCD offered today on a commercially-available portable system.

The C-MOS technology also accounts for this system having one of the highest internal memory capacities of any battery-powered system. Memory is expandable to 512KB in 128KB increments.

In order to manufacture the system, 20,000 square feet of manufacturing space, dedicated to producing the computer, were added to the Gyoda plant. The plant employs the most advanced automated fabrication, assembly, inventory and test systems available today. Many of the production concepts used in the Gyoda plant have been proven in high-volume consumer product manufacturing, such as videocassette recorders.

According to Nippon•Data General President Hisashi Tomino, "It was necessary for us to secure the most advanced automated manufacturing systems in order to bring the full advantages of advanced computer technologies to users of the DATA GENERAL/One. By doing this, we could be sure of producing a product with high reliability at a reasonable cost."
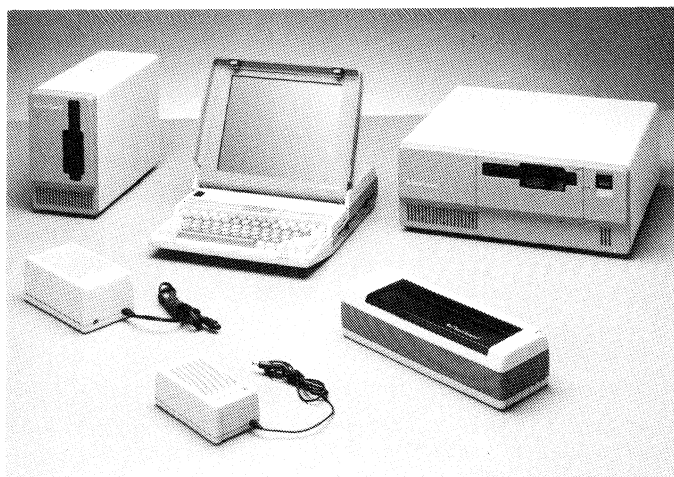
Why A Portable?

In launching a new portable personal computer, Data General believes it may have launched a new generation in personal computing.

Because the DATA GENERAL/One is a fully-functional personal computer, users no longer need to sacrifice capabilities in the interest of having a computer they can take with them wherever and whenever they work.

According to Future Computing, 147,000 portable computers, valued at more than $510 million, will be shipped this year in the U. S. They estimate the sales of battery-powered portables for personal and business use will exceed $3.9 billion in 1989.

"Someday all computers will look like this, small compact, light and with full functionality," says Portia Isaacson, president of Future Computing, commenting on the DATA GENERAL/One. "The demand for compact, 'pick up and go' systems cannot be ignored and seems to imply a changing definition of the workplace."

According to Desktop Division Vice President Herb Shanzer, the new system establishes a new precedent for low-end systems. "We believe we have actually created a new category of personal system; this is the only machine of its type. Previously, the term 'portable computer' was synonymous with 'limited functionality.' However, the DATA GENERAL/One offers all the functions of a personal computer and also offers portability."

The DATA GENERAL/One computer comes with a complete line of peripherals: a diskette drive, an expansion chasis, an AC adapter, a battery charger and a portable printer.