Psion MC sets new industry standard

The Psion Mobile Computer range, launched at the PC Show in London on September 27, heralds a new generation of personal computers that set new standards in the computer industry.

Psion have long had the vision that personal computing should be as mobile as people, operate in a manner compatible with the way individuals work and become a natural part of everyday business and personal life.

To achieve this Psion have developed the Psion Mobile Computer range — the first truly Mobile Computer with no compromises in computer functionality, user interface or quality.

The Mobile Computer weighs only 4.5lbs (2kg) is approximately A4 x 2" thick, and models in the range will operate on batteries for up to three months (60 continuous operating hours).

Incorporating a new standard of memory storage, the Solid State Disk (SSD), the MCs also boast the latest LCD screen technology, full travel professional quality keyboards, and advanced connectivity to other computer systems. Designed to incorporate future technologies, they can even store and replay speech data in a highly compressed manner.

While the computer industry has been pursuing a completely different vision — that of simply miniaturising desktop computers — Psion have developed new technologies that set their new machines apart from other “personal” computers in the market today.

Introducing two ranges of MCs with different built-in operating systems, Psion aim to service both the IBM PC compatible markets and also what is widely considered to be the standard of the future, The Graphics User Interface.

Graphics Interface Range

The MC 200 and MC 400 models feature a user interface based on graphical images, utilising application windows, icons, a pointer device and pull down menus.

This generates a more natural interaction with the computer, and reflects an industry wide movement towards such graphic interfaces.

The Graphics Interface range also

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Psion MC launch
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Boasts a multi-taking operating system and a range of built in software applications. The result is that there is never any need to close down one application before starting another.

Thus it is envisaged that the user will have at least one text processing task, one diary task, one calculator and one database task permanently open, each displayed in its own re-sizeable windows.

To facilitate this, each application window can be shrunk to a graphics symbol (an icon) and which when selected will expand to its full size ready for use.

The Graphics Interface range features a built in touch sensitive surface which directs the pointer on the screen.

It has an advantage over a conventional mouse in giving a direct relationship to the screen — the centre of the Touch-Pad corresponds to the centre of the screen.

Built in Applications

The MC 200 and MC 400 are supplied complete with a range of productivity applications to create a complete system from the word go: a powerful Text Processor for writing letters and reports, a Personal and Business Database, a Diary and Time Manager, a Scientific Calculator, a Terminal Emulator for communicating with other computers and Psion’s own programming language, OPL.

The PC Compatible range

And for those who want all the mobility and usability of the MC 200 and 400 but need to run standard PC software, the MC 600 has full PC compatibility with a PC-related keyboard, function keys replacing the Touch-Pad.

The MC 600 runs built-in MSDOS 3.22 executed from the ROM and combined with built-in Laplink communications facility, provides a truly mobile PC compatible computer.

New Technology, New Standards

One of the key technological developments which make the MC possible is the development of Solid State Disks. Working closely with Intel and Microsoft to create industry standard file format, Psion are the first in the world to implement Flash EPROM memory in matchbox size, plug-in units.

With no moving parts which can ‘crash’, they offer unprecedented data integrity, low power consumption and flexibility, being electrically eraseable in situ.

RAM memory variants of SSDs are also available, and up to four SSDs can be inserted in the MC at any time.

Besides the new SSDs, Psion are pioneering the use of Retardation Film LCD Screens in a computer of this size, utilising new production technology in circuit boards and microchips, and have invented the Touch-Pad and developed new voice compression techniques.

SSD: the new alternative to floppy and hard disks.

And all the MCs use a data structure compatible with MSDOS-based systems.

Many Peripherals

Peripherals include an External Disk Drive, a Fast Serial Interface and an External Drive for SSDs, and all the MCs will work with a full range of printers.

Expansion Modules including a Quad Modem and a Voice Module and extra battery packs are also being made available.

The Psion Mobile Computers are light, compact, versatile, instantly usable and eminently useful and point the way forward for the computers of the future.

On September 26th we launched not just a product or a product family, but a new generation of computers.

We are probably the first in the world to introduce fully featured PC and GUI (Graphic User Interface) computers which are light enough to be with you, which last for weeks or months not hours on their battery power, which use entirely static CMOS and surface-mount technology and are totally solid-state and which introduce DOS compatible solid-state disks — the way of the future.

All this is aimed and provides, not a PC squeezed into a clumsy, heavy, power-hungry “laptop” but a mobile computer compatible with the way that we as humans work.

For nearly three years we have been studying fundamental technology trends around the world. We have worked with the major companies and technology leaders to identify the relevant technologies in performance and cost throughout the 1990s. And with this understanding, collaboration and internal development and engineering, we have built into the mobile computer the fundamental future performance.

The markets for these products are not only existing corporate applications but they are indeed the transistor radios of the 1990s in the computer world. We shall all be using these by 1995, whether as an individual, a professional or in a dedicated company application.

Many companies have worked with us around the world to contribute to this new technology for the 1990s. They include Hitachi in the SMT semiconductors, displays and production methods, Intel in microprocessors and solid-state disk technology, Microsoft in solid-state disk file handling and DOS, Maxim (Santa Clara) in custom logic power-control chips and Texas Instruments in ASICs and voice. All playing a part in introducing this revolutionary new range of mobile computers.
Hard case sorts out the tough guys

Forests, building sites, factory or workshop floors, these are all places where you will now find the Psion Organiser II.

But with this extension beyond the office comes the need to provide extra protection against severe weather conditions, grease, solvents and unusually rough handling.

SES Data Systems Limited have found the answer with a specially toughened case which fits snugly around the Organiser ensuring total protection at all times.

Aimed at professionals such as architects, surveyors and engineers, the R.O.C. (Ruggedised Organiser Case) is made from Supertough Nylon, a material which resists most solvents and mineral oils and can withstand repeated impact without breaking.

Inside the case, rubber pads cushion the Organiser II for added shock protection, while minimal contact points with the external case and the removal of wind chill — by means of an air gap around the Organiser — all provide better protection against extreme temperature.

A tactile keypad — each key is dome-shaped and springs back once it has been touched — fits over the existing Organiser II keys. This silicon rubber pad is inert to a wide range of substances and environmental hazards. Compressible rubber seals protect the case from water penetration.

A printed label on top of the keypad area provides additional keypad graphics and indicates shiftkey alternatives. Graphics are available for either the standard Psion Organiser II or corporate variants on request.

Two versions of the case are available: the R.O.C.1, comes complete with wrist strap which houses the standard Organiser II, two or four-line display and the R.O.C.2, with built-in RS232 and/or Bar Code Reader Electronics.

“Psion Organiser II is a very powerful pocket computer and the R.O.C. makes it capable of being used in a more extensive way.

“It’s ideal for industrial use in general and in engineering, shipping and public utilities," says Tony Jephcott of SES Data Systems.

SES Data Systems are based at Rilmac Building, Kenworthy Road, Stafford ST16 3DY (Tel: 0785 213777).

Keying in

Psion Technical Support are providing a new service for anyone requiring information about the Organiser via Kyberness (London) TBBS, an electronic bulletin board. Kyberness was set up for church and charity computer users and provides technical advice and guidance 22 hours a day.

Psion Technical Support staff check daily to answer questions about the Psion Organiser range. In addition technical articles and Organiser public domain software can be acquired (downloaded) via the telephone line.

Psion’s Technical Support Manager, John Phillips, said “There are a lot of bulletin board systems available these days. We decided to support Kyberness because it is popular with many Organiser users and has a messaging system which is networked with other bulletin boards so we can achieve a much wider coverage.”

Kyberness runs with commercial TBBS and Seadog bulletin board software on a PC XT compatible with a 60 megabyte hard disk. The software and hardware have been donated and funds have been provided for the installation of an exclusive telephone line.

For further details contact: Arthur McBryan, 252 Poynders Gardens, London SW4 8PQ. Tel: 01 673 3873
Organising the NHS

The National Health Service are making significant savings every year by replacing outmoded paperwork procedures with Psion handheld technology.

All told, more than 9,000 Organisers are being used by over 30 health authorities throughout Britain to equip health care workers from health visitors and district nurses through to pathologists and paramedics.

Community Care

Community healthcare professionals play an important role within the NHS and the information they collect on visits is vital. Not only does it help ensure the well being of the patient by maintaining a record of treatment but it is also necessary to enable the NHS administrators to improve the management and efficiency of the community care.

These two objectives have been met by equipping health visitors with Psion Organiser IIs complete with specially written software. Data such as patient name, treatment, equipment used and time spent travelling is all recorded on Datapaks, which the health visitor returns to the District Computer Centre once a week. A fresh colour-coded Datapak is then slotted into the Organiser II for use the following week.

At the District Computer Centre the information is uploaded to the minicomputers or PCs and integrated into the district patient care records and transferred direct from the Datapaks via a sophisticated communicating Files Processor supplied by Data Innovation to the host computer system.

Software and systems house Data Innovation developed and market the CARE II and FIPCARE software systems for use with the Organiser and both have proved to be time and money savers for the NHS.

Laboratory Services

In 50 pathology laboratories throughout Wales, lab technicians are having their workload eased with the Psion-based Pathology Workload Management System. Developed by Altim Medical Systems, the scheme has helped to reduce the unwieldy but necessary paperwork involved in tracking thousands of samples each week. Within the laboratory the work is divided into “scheduled work units”, each of which can be defined by one of the Psion Organiser II. At the hospitals in Leeds, Wakefield and Hull all the items such as medical supplies, food and stationery are bar coded with a product code. In addition, each product has a second bar code giving the minimum reorder quantity. As the two

Psion products — now introduced in pathology labs.

four specialities — haematology, histopathology, chemical pathology and medical micro biology. The schedules cover a range of over 2,500 tests which the labs may have to carry out. All samples have to be subdivided by source category, speciality and consultant, a time-consuming task.

The new Altim system allows regularly performed tests to be allocated a bar code. Then as batches of each test are submitted to the lab a barcode reader attached to a Psion hand-held terminal records details such as the number of tests in the batch, the workload unit against which they are allocated and the source of the tests.

A joint working party from the Royal College of Pathologists and the Association of Clinical Pathologists is recommending that the scheme should be adopted for use in pathology labs throughout England.

Stock Control

Ordering and keeping track of every item needed by a hospital — from a bandage to a kitchen sink plug — is a mammoth sized operation. Three hospitals in West Yorkshire, however, have overcome the problem through a simple stock control system based on codes are swiped, the difference between the stock and order level is recorded onto a Datapak and the data is downloaded into the hospital central computer system which generates the appropriate requisitions for the ward or department.

The requisitions are then input into the supplies system and the following week the goods are delivered to the hospital from West Yorkshire Regional Health Authority’s warehouse. The success of this scheme to date means it is likely to be introduced at all 150 hospitals in the West Yorkshire area.

A similar system has been introduced at Birmingham’s Queen Elizabeth Hospital where the Psion Organiser is used to monitor stock control of sterile items like swabs and needles. The system, developed by Altim, has also attracted the interest of administrators at Nottingham’s medical centre where it was implemented this month (September).

For further information contact: Data Innovation Ltd, 39 Mark Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 7DN; Altim Medical Systems, 41 King Street, Belper, Derbyshire DE5 1PX; ICS, Tempus Business Centre, 57 Kingsclere Road, Basingstoke, Hants RG2 2XG.
Hat-trick for Psion

Psion have won a contract with the National Westminster Bank to supply a financial illustration system consisting of 4,500 units worth nearly £1.4 million.

This is in addition to some 900 units currently in use with Printer IIs, 128k Datapaks and custom software developed for NatWest by Psion.

This order was secured following successful trials conducted by NatWest throughout England and Wales over the last nine months.

The system utilised by NatWest will help staff, from junior members to Senior Managers, provide immediate information and illustrations on a wide variety of financial services, including mortgages and pensions both in branches and on customers' premises.

"This order firmly establishes Psion as a major solution supplier in the financial marketplace," commented Ian Quint, Psion’s Senior Account manager.

British Telecom

British Telecom are to introduce the CIPHER paperless recording system for groups of field engineers nationwide following two years of development and its successful implementation in Southern London District (see Issue 7 for details).

The order is for a minimum of 3,000 systems. Each system consists of a Psion P250 Hand Held Terminal with associated Datapaks and Software.

It is planned to extend the system further in the future.

Post Office

The Post Office Purchase and Supply Department in Swindon have recognised the diverse uses to which the Organiser II can be applied.

Accordingly a national call-off contract has been placed by the Post Office allowing any of its UK offices to order their required Psion product(s).

These include specifically labelled Organiser IIs, Datapaks, Eraser 16s, Mark III copiers and Developers.

Driving out the paperwork

Purchasing a car is a big step; but Rover cars ensure it is made as easy as possible through their comprehensive customer satisfaction initiative.

The scheme began in 1988 when Rover developed a comprehensive set of standards against which dealers' performance was assessed and a score allocated.

The system proved highly successful in helping to pinpoint and develop the service offered to customers.

As with any paper-based scheme, Rover found the system time-consuming both in its processing and production of results from each audit.

Commented Don Lindsay, Director of Rover’s Marketing Institute, “To ensure we provide good service to our customers we need to work with our dealers to respond to any identified standards problems quickly, which is why we looked for a faster and more accurate electronic method of data capture.”

Now 80 Rover field staff involved in dealer standards assessment are being supplied with Psion LZ24s, a Psion Printer and Datapaks loaded with application software.

In order to run a continuous quarterly standards audit, a made-to-measure system was developed by Softa & Co.

On completion of the audit staff had to be able to produce on-the-spot printouts of the audit along with a provisional performance score.

The equipment had to be highly portable and flexible, enabling the auditor to wander freely round the dealership whilst assessing performance.

Initially proven in Rover’s Southern region the electronic database system has resulted in more accurate and consistent scoring and the timely management reporting of audits.

This has enabled Rover to implement both individual and collective improvements of standards through local, regional and national support programmes.

Softa & Co Ltd are based at Townsend Avenue, St Alban’s, Hertfordshire AL1 3EL (telephone 0727 69234/41996).
Fax cards have made it possible to send faxes directly from a PC without using a conventional facsimile machine.

This is ideal for individual users, but the cards have not been designed for use with either networked PCs or dumb terminals (which are part of a larger office automation system.)

Dacom’s latest standalone modem — Datafax — has changed all this. By combining data and facsimile facilities any office system which has simple asynchronous communications can now transmit faxes directly from the various linked terminals.

A typical application might be ‘dumb’ terminals linked to DEC, Hewlett-Packard, Wang computers etc. Datafax would typically be sited alongside the central processor.

Using suitable software, both text and graphics images can be prepared at the desktop terminal and then automatically transmitted as a fax.

Datafax provides group three facilities — enabling an A4 page to be transmitted in less than a minute.

Datafax also offers standard dial up communications at speeds of up to 1200bps (V21/V22) for access to both public and private databases.

As this product is for use with larger systems it is being targeted at VARs (value added resellers) rather than individual end users.

VARs are already supplying messaging packaging, into which software to drive the Datafax can be incorporated. Dacom are able to provide assistance to the VARs in producing this software.

Psion’s bid to push mobile communications into the 1990s has been further strengthened with the launch of Cellquad by Dacom, the first dual function modem for use over either cellular or standard landline telephone networks.

Cellquad is a range of modems designed to fit inside most popular makes of portable and laptop computers. Using Cellquad, the equivalent of an A4 page of text can be sent in about four seconds via the cellular network and two seconds if the landline dial-up network is used.

As its name implies, Cellquad incorporates four different operating speeds — V21, V22, V22bis and V23 — and high-speed, error-free data transfer and compression is achieved by using the industry standard MNP5 protocol.

It is particularly suitable for mobile use not only because it can be used with a variety of cellphones, but also because of its low power consumption.

Computers get together
Saving energy helps preserve resources

Wherever you turn these days, people are talking about “Green” issues. High on the list is energy conservation and how we can make the most effective use of the resources we have.

Dacom are playing their part to make sure this happens through the use of the Dacom 2123 autodialling modem, used in the Allen-Martin energy management system. Allen-Martin Conservation Limited are UK specialists in the development and manufacture of computerised energy management systems.

The system itself monitors and controls a company’s use of electricity and other types of power at local and remote sites. The Dacom 2123’s key role is to transfer data between a central location and remote, often unmanned, sites. This system has been installed with local authorities, schools, hotels, large manufacturing companies and even RAF bases.

A typical installation comprises a number of outstations sited adjacent to heaters, pumps, boilers, fans, etc.

These are linked to a main computer, either on-site or at a central location, via the Dacom 2123 modem, which is neatly fitted inside the door of the controller casing.

Each outstation can be interrogated by the computer via the modem link, and any time changes, new temperature settings or other alterations can be input remotely.

The outstation can also alert the computer – via the modem – of any faults or if the temperature falls below a set limit. Engineers can then diagnose the fault without leaving the central computer.

The Dacom 2123 modem was chosen for its high speed of data transmission and its excellent performance record over the last four years.

On the move

In just eight years Dacom have become one of the top five UK modem manufacturers, supporting in-house design, product assembly, testing and quality control facilities. With approximately 100 staff, the company have outgrown their existing location, three factory units on an industrial estate in Milton Keynes.

The new premises are purpose-built on a prime site in “Silicon City” – Milton Keynes — and will house all Dacom staff under the same roof.

It provides Dacom with prestigious corporate headquarters which combines office and factory accommodation and is about twice as big as the three previous premises put together, covering some 25,000 square feet.

The new address is: Dacom Systems Limited, Dacom House, Presley Way, Crownhill, Milton Keynes, MK8 0FF.
Psion go Dutch

Psion Nederland BV are the latest addition to the Psion group of companies.

This is Psion’s first joint venture set up to expand sales in Western Europe’s sixth biggest export market — Holland.

The new company formed in August 89 are 50 per cent owned by Psion and 50 per cent by two Dutchmen — Peter Houtzagers and Hawld Goddijn — acting as joint managing directors.

Houtzagers has extensive experience in the computer industry, especially leasing, while Goddijn is a qualified accountant with experience as a joint venture capitalist.

During the next 18 months, Psion Nederland BV plan to strengthen and build their retail distribution, using a year end advertising campaign to help the push.

Corporate sales will also be developed by Psion BV and a whole host of VAR’s. Psion’s Export Manager David Elder explained, "With a population of 15 million, Holland has great potential and with our new partners we’re confident we will be able to address this and achieve substantial sales."

Psion BV are based in 200 square metres of office space in a new business complex in Hoofddorp at Schipol Airport and currently employ four people; Peter Houtzagers, joint MD and Sales Director; Hawld Goddijn, joint MD and Finance Director; Rodolphe Becker, Corporate Sales Manager and Ron Van Klee, Technical Support Engineer.

Psion Nederland BV, Avio Trade Park, Zandsteen 54, 2132, Netherlands. Tel: 010-31 2503 21444

High tech on the high seas

The Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race’ appears daunting to most people. But not to members of the Swiss Ocean Racing Club — who are entering a crew on the Maxi-Yacht “Merit”. Supported by several Organisers the crew are now able to keep a record of all sponsors and suppliers whilst on the high seas. We wish them "Bon Voyage".

Distributors set record at London conference

Delegates from 32 countries descended on the Churchill Hotel in London for this year’s Export Distributor Conference.

It was the biggest and most successful distributor event to date with 60 Psion representatives from all over the world, and this year this twice-yearly event was preceded by a two-day technical conference, with briefings on Psion products and OPL. Each delegate had the opportunity to get answers to spe-
Flying high with the Diners Club...

When the Scandinavian airline and leisure giant SAS linked up with Diners Club to introduce a card membership scheme for business travellers, they chose Psion hand-held terminals to monitor the project.

SAS launched the Club Euro Class Card to help woo passengers away from rivals, especially the American airlines who are offering free miles to customers.

SAS designed the card with a view to bringing real benefits to their passengers. This includes priority for "stand-by" flights, a 30 kg baggage allowance, and free telephone calls to anywhere in the world from SAS lounges in Scandinavia, membership of the Hertz No 1 Club, a double room for the price of a single in SAS-associated hotels plus a free weekend for every 10 nights accommodation, a complimentary high coverage insurance and a second card for private expenses.

The Psion P250 hand-held terminals enable the airline to monitor flights, the frequency of use by card-holders and other information.

The P250 with attached magnetic card swipes are used in specifically-designed portable boxes which allow the units to be moved between various boarding gates at airports.

To date, 600 P250s and magswipes and more than 1000 Datapaks have been supplied by Psicom-tech, Psion's Danish distributor.

All the details collected worldwide can be uploaded to the mainframe for assimilation of the data into the company's records.

Following the success of the scheme in Scandinavia, SAS are planning to extend the scheme to the United States, Britain and other countries served by SAS flights.

Pers Nielsen, leader of the Diners Nordic EDB, one of the SAS in-house software companies, explained: "Compared in the competition, the Organiser II has the advantage of being a reliable, well-known and cost-effective device. It has the added benefit of being supported by Psicom-tech.

Sweeps brush up on benefits of science

There doesn't seem to be any area these days that doesn't feel the impact of computerisation, and that's certainly true for chimney sweeps in West Germany who are now doing a better job, thanks to the Organiser II.

Using the Organiser II as a data capture unit, German company Manfred Jung Computersysteme have developed a method of recording pollution levels in boilers, prior to submitting figures to a government department for analysis at the end of every year.

Having entered data on the boiler age, type and amount of measured emission, the Organiser calculates the acceptable level of performance for the model and age of boiler, and relates this to the actual level recorded. From this a chimney sweep can easily tell if a boiler falls below the required standard.

The system saves the sweep time, gives him more accurate information faster and allows a customer to have on-the-spot estimates for any maintenance work that may be required.

Psion GmbH staged their first software conference at the Steigenberger Airport Hotel on July 11.

The 14 software houses and 39 visitor firms who took part in the conference collected many new ideas concerning the use of the Organiser II in their differing markets.

There will be a second conference some time between November and February.
An aid for the handicapped

The important role Psion technology can play in aiding the physically and mentally disadvantaged has been underlined by a link-up between Psion Inc and Mantis Technologies, an American software and development group.

Under an exclusive agreement, Mantis Technologies, who have developed applications for the mentally retarded and those suffering from speech and hearing impediments, nervous disorders and learning disabilities, will market their Psion Organiser II-based applications to school systems and rehabilitation facilities throughout the United States and Canada.

Psion Inc Vice President, Steve Sholder, said “This development represents a major breakthrough in the field of adaptive technology.

Our products, when used in conjunction with Mantis software, offer a new opportunity to thousands of people who have difficulties communicating and cannot afford existing special education computer equipment.”

The company, comprising many renowned child psychologists, psychiatrists and teachers, all experts in the field of computers, were supplied with Psion Organiser IIs, barcode readers and Psion Printer IIs by Psion Inc who also provide technical and marketing support to Mantis.

Mantis estimate that in the United States one million school children suffer from a partial to total hearing loss, six million people are mentally retarded and up to 28 per cent of all children have learning disabilities.

As a communications aid for the retarded or those with impaired speech, a Psion Organiser II is linked to a speech synthesiser capable of producing words and sentences.

By using a barcode reader attached to the Organiser II, the user simply scans a barcode representing a letter, word or phrase enabling the synthesiser to pronounce the required words. As an alternative device for writing, disabled users scan the barcode over the letters and complete words using a specially coded sheet like a word processor.

Boon for Memory Loss

In recent experiments top American medical experts in California have shown that the Psion Organiser II is a useful aid for patients suffering memory disorders.

A patient, suffering a significant memory disorder which led her to miss or mistake the time of appointments, was the subject of tests carried out by Gordon Muir Giles, Clinical Director of Transitions, and Clinical Neuropsychologist, Michael Shore at Berkeley, CA.

The patient was taught to use a paper-based pocket diary in which each day was divided into half-hour periods. The woman was asked to carry out ten normal household activities such as watering the plants, feeding the cats and emptying the rubbish at specific times over the weekend. The times she performed them varied to avoid a practice effect. The instructions were given to her on the Friday and the results collected the following Monday.

In the first experiment the patient used the paper-based diary. In the second she was taught to use the Psion Organiser II.

The results of the first trial with the paper diary showed she had successfully completed eight out of the ten appointed chores, six of them on time or within half an hour of schedule. But by using the Psion Organiser II she carried out nine out of ten activities, all within the half an hour grace period.

“Since this work was carried out we have had comparable results with another patient with similar deficits,” explained Muir Giles and Shore.

The two medical men stressed that the Psion Organiser II represented a major advance over earlier memory aids and was best suited for patients who had not suffered extensive memory loss.
Psion are a member of the One Per Cent Club which means that we donate one per cent of our profits to charity. Our chosen charity is ActionAid, the UK’s fourth largest development agency.

In this and future editions of Psion News we will be covering stories about some of the projects that Psion are assisting with in the developing world.

We selected ActionAid because their philosophy is to use the resources available through integrated rural development to foster long term sustainable growth by working with the communities they assist. To date Psion have donated over £15,000 worth of funding to key projects in South-East India and Western Sudan.

In this issue we bring you up to date on how the local people of Wali Kurundu in Sudan have used the cash to break the grip of poverty and, while they are contributing everything they can to that, Psion’s donation means that ActionAid can help provide the things that would otherwise be out of their reach and help the community gain a real foothold on the development ladder.

The children of Wali Kurundu had a ten mile walk to and from the next village to go to school. Needless to say, few made the journey as the daily tasks such as collecting water take priority.

However, the people of Wali Kurundu were determined that schooling should be available for all their children and now they have the chance to set up a school in their own village by combining their own efforts with those of ActionAid staff.

The community supplied all locally available materials and labour for the new school as well as saving up to pay for skilled labour where needed, while ActionAid supplied the imported building materials required to construct a durable, low maintenance building.

With the help of visiting former residents now living in the city, the villagers set up a brick-making camp and started collecting money so that work on the mixed primary school could begin. By introducing new methods of production the reject rate from brick making dropped from 25 per cent to just 5 per cent.

The new school means that children will have time both to receive an education and to help out at home. Up to 70 children now attend each of the two classes, specialising in the "three Rs".

Adult literacy programmes have also been established — with 1300 people having completed the course. The school has also presented an opportunity to teach the male adults valuable practical skills such as improved masonry methods.

Elsewhere, well building is also being taught which is especially helpful during the dry season. Previously, the villagers had to walk long distances to fetch water but now, thanks to their newly acquired skills, they have an all year round supply of fresh water.

Clearly the opening of the school has provided an educational opportunity for all members of the community and enabled Wali Kurundu to benefit in both the short and long term.

**Boost to farming**

Since livestock is regarded as an investment in this community, the health of the animals is very important. So the locals and ActionAid have joined together to build a veterinary clinic.

With the provision of vaccination facilities by the clinic, the lifespan of the animals is prolonged which in turn increases the long term prosperity of the villagers.

A "Credit Group" project has also been established. ActionAid supplied an initial fund from which farmers borrow to buy simple tools such as hoes and then pay back with interest, thereby increasing the size of the fund.

ActionAid's work in South East India will be covered in the next issue of Psion News.

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A Wali Kurundu mother and child.

A Wali Kurundu mother and child.

These villagers are helping themselves to a brighter future.

A Wali Kurundu mother and child.
Speedboard’s winning quality

Speedboard Circuit Boards of Windsor have won the 1988 Psion Supplier of the Year Award. Joint managing directors John Verti (pictured left) and Glyn Thurston received a specially designed award from Psion’s Chairman and Managing Director Dr. David Potter (centre).

The award scheme was set up in 1987 to recognise outstanding service. Speedboard scored top points for responding quickly to Psion’s needs and solving tough manufacturing challenges.

The award takes into account factors such as quality of product, the ability to plan ahead with Psion and to produce schedule, pricing, sales support and above all, an understanding of Psion’s business needs. Speedboard were set up in 1984 and employ 20 people. They are one of Psion’s three surface mount production suppliers.

Challenging task for our judges

No, we haven’t forgotten the Worldwide Software Challenge featured in issue six — the truth is we’ve been so swamped by entries that it’s taking longer to judge than we thought. Rest assured, we WILL be announcing the results in the next issue of Psion News.

News in Brief

Thanks to Psion’s support, Esmerelda — an Aldabra Giant Tortoise — is doing just fine.

And Esmerelda needs all the support he can get, because at 47 stone he’s the heaviest tortoise ever weighed — and has his own special entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

Psion supported Operation Curieuse, which aims to save the Giant Tortoise, now an endangered species, by supplying Organisers on which details of all the Giants Tortoises were recorded.

WARWICK University’s Engineering Department have just introduced a new streamlined accounting system using a Psion Organizer with barcode reader together with an IBM compatible personal computer.

The electronics group store has a yearly turnover of £25,000 and is run by one person. Under the old system, students, together with academic and departmental staff, used a docketing system to withdraw items from the store.

This was slow and left the department with no idea what credits were owing at any one time. It also took a member of staff a week to produce the accounts at the end of each month.

Under the new system, customers are issued with laminated barcoded passes, and all stock items are stored in component cabinets with barcodes printed on them.

To withdraw a component, the customer simply uses the Psion Organizer to scan his pass, which virtually acts as his signature. The

ONE man who made “sense” of Billy Graham’s recent LIFE tour of the UK in a very down-to-earth way was parish community worker Arthur Mc Bryan.

Arthur was asked to organise the parking for some 200 coaches at the London Victoria Docks for the Billy Graham meeting in West Ham, and he decided to use his Psion Organizer to do it.

To avoid any major headaches, Arthur set up a special traffic management database on his Organizer, telling him the exact location and registration number of each

Giant Tortoise Esmeralda takes it easy in The Seychelles. (See top story.)
Winning post!

Yet again our postbag has been full of letters telling us about the interesting and varied uses to which Organisers are applied.

This issue’s winners come from as far apart as Wellington, New Zealand, and Sheffield, South Yorkshire. I’ll let them tell you in their own words how they benefit from the Psion Organiser II.

Don’t stop writing, however, as in the next issue you could find your letter in print and win a 32K Datapak. Send all letters to: The Editor, Psion News, Psion House, 17 Harcourt Street, London W1H 1DT, UK.

Schoolboy Robert Schone of Wellington, New Zealand, now makes light of his paper round thanks to the Organiser. He writes: Dear Editor, I have been using a Psion Organiser II XP for six months now and would like to enter your competition for a novel way of using the Organiser. I use it for keeping track of papers delivered on a paper run and I have written a program in OPL to help me with this task.

After entering the list the program allows you to edit it (with a start/stop option for when people go on holiday), check it and wipe it.

When you actually start the run, the Organiser prints the first address and after a key press automatically turns it off. When it is turned on, it displays the next address, and waits for another key press before turning off again.

I do the paper run on a bike, so the Organiser is attached to the inside of the bag, just below the handlebars. I find this better than keeping a list on card, because the paper runs change consistently, and the card soon gets very cluttered with all the changes.

Card lists also get worn and ripped and usually do not last long. And the Organiser is easier to follow, automatically printing the next paper, rather than having to search a list for your place.

***

In South Yorkshire Mick Shuker and his Organiser are a regular sight “on the buses”. He writes: Dear Editor, I work as a Bus Inspector for a large PSV operator (South Yorkshire Transport Ltd.). My main duties consist of travelling on buses checking tickets, passes and permits.

Every bus travelled on has to be recorded as well as other information such as route number, passengers on board, overriders, time, etc.

As I have always had an urge for a small pocket computer, when I read about the Psion Organiser I saved up and bought one, though I could only afford the CM model, EUREKA! I quickly adapted to OPL, and was able to store all the information I needed.

The Psion also automatically records the time buses are boarded, collating the data held in the different fields.

At the end of my shift I transfer the files direct on to my PC (an Amstrad 1512) through the Comms Link and then on to my report sheet, via the printer.

I have also written programs for when I am asked to stand recording bus data out in the cold for hours on end.

Having to press buttons in the freezing cold whilst riding on a bus is a lot easier than writing. I can tell you!

My employer has now become interested in the Psion and is evaluating it for its possible use by other inspectors.

Psion’s Ross Napier and Colin Francis found themselves “driving” for a good cause at British Telecom Southern London region’s charity golf day on June 16, which was partly sponsored by Psion.

The day was a tremendous success — a staggering £10,000 was raised for two charities — the Royal Marsden Hospital for leukaemia sufferers and the St Heller Hospital for kidney research.

“We chose these charities not only because they are local hospitals, but also because family and friends of Telecom staff have been patients there, so it’s particularly close to home,” explained BT Assistant Advertising and Sales Promotion Manager Deborah Roper.

About 60 golfers played and Ross Napier put up a creditable performance, winning two prizes.

Psion donated a top of the range Organiser as a prize, which was won — on the 18th hole — by a British Telecom employee for the longest drive.

At the end of the day, representatives dressed as clowns went along to each hospital to hand over the cheques and gave out balloons and flags to children.
Win a Psion MC400!

Here’s your chance to win one of Psion’s revolutionary new Mobile Computers as featured on page 1. As the winner will be one of the first owners of a Psion MC, we decided that the competition had to be tough.

All it requires is a bit of research, as all the questions relate to the history of computing. Your knowledge of the developments in computing technology could result in you using the latest in technology.

Tell us the answers to the questions and send them to Psion plc, FREEPOST 3, London W1E 1EZ and include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Overseas entries should be sent to the address on the back page. The judges’ decision will be final and all entries must be received no later than Friday 10th November.

1. Which race of people are said to have invented the abacus — and when (approximately)?
2. The first mechanised calculating machine was invented in 1663 — by whom?
3. How was Charles Babbage’s Analytical Engine powered?
4. Who adapted this machine for an engineering exhibition in 1855?
5. For what purpose did Herman Hollerith develop his data-processing machine in 1890 and how did it work?
6. By what name are Hollerith’s Tabulating Machine Co now known?
7. Who built the first commercially available computer, and when?
8. When was the integrated circuit chip invented?
9. Who developed the first Electronic computer and when?
10. What was the name of this machine?
11. When was the first personal computer invented, and what was the name of the model?

And congratulations to G. Duke of Banstead, Surrey, who had the first correct entry out of the bag for the competition in Issue 7. Elementary!

---

### Third Party Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME AND TEL NO</th>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langdale Systems Ltd 11 Dorcan Business Village Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 3HY Tel 0793 693197</td>
<td>Question master</td>
<td>Intelligent paperless questionnaire. PC set up, answers direct into database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widgeon Software Ltd 121 London Road Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6EX Tel 0434 815444</td>
<td>Paraline</td>
<td>Print direct from Organiser to parallel printer. Widget now own world rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widgeon Software Ltd Tel 0438 815444</td>
<td>Transfile STCL</td>
<td>Receives and sends data from Atari ST via the Comms Link.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Computing Haupstrasse 10 D — 7197 Bad Friedrichshall West Germany Tel 010 49 (0) 7136 20016</td>
<td>Transfile STCL</td>
<td>German version.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME AND TEL NO</th>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cristle Electronics Ltd Bonds Mill Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 3RG Tel 045 262 3611</td>
<td>Peatson C N C</td>
<td>C N C transfer and storage system and consultation services, plus gauge control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubbings Engineers Ltd Mayflower Close Chandlers Ford Industrial Estate Eastleigh, Hants SO5 3AR Tel 0703 267158</td>
<td>C N C Manager</td>
<td>Uploads and downloads data for C N C / C N C control systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Physics Ltd Unit 8 Ascot Park Industrial Estate Sandacre, Nottingham NG10 5JY Tel 0602 394577</td>
<td>Mobile Sales</td>
<td>Vehicle based high quality invoice production and PC accounts update.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar Business Systems Ltd 2 Maeser popular Road Daventry, Northamptonshire</td>
<td>Ferret Information Systems 20 Fonthill Road Brechgrove Cardif</td>
<td>Helper-Plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CP4 1UA Tel 0222 691262</td>
<td>In Work Helper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programs

From your letters we know that you enjoy the programs that we print. So why not write and share your programs with us. Three of these programs, DESK, PRINTDIG and UDG show a desktop clock on the Organiser II screen when DESK is run. The fourth program, morse, will print and beep the morse signals from A to Z.

morse:
LOCAL a$$(26,5), m$(1), a$, k$, s$, x$, h$, len$
KSTAR 1
a$$(1)" := -" :REM Array containing Morse Codes
a$$(2)" := -" :REM for letters A to Z
a$$(3)" := -" :REM
a$$(4)" := -" :REM
a$$(5)" := -" :REM
a$$(6)" := -" :REM
a$$(7)" := -" :REM
a$$(8)" := -" :REM
a$$(9)" := -" :REM
a$$(10)" := -" :REM
a$$(11)" := -" :REM
a$$(12)" := -" :REM
a$$(13)" := -" :REM
a$$(14)" := -" :REM
a$$(15)" := -" :REM
a$$(16)" := -" :REM
a$$(17)" := -" :REM
rem (Translate using Xtran and on models LS or L264)
pokeb $$180,64*x%=8
pokeb $$181,a$
pokeb $$181,b$
pokeb $$181,c$
pokeb $$181,d$
pokeb $$181,e$
pokeb $$181,f$
pokeb $$181,g$
pokeb $$181,h$
return

PRINTDIG: (topudgs, num$
rem Used by DESK to print large digits on screen
rem (Translate using Xtran on models LS or L264)
local bottudgs
bottudgs=topudgs+4
if num$=0
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,27,27,27,27,27)
udq: (bottudgs, 27,27,27,27,27,27,31,14)
elseif num$=1
udq: (topudgs, 2,6,14,6,6,6,6,6)
udq: (bottudgs, 6,6,6,6,6,15,15)
elseif num$=2
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,27,3,3,7)
udq: (bottudgs, 14,28,24,24,24,31,31)
elseif num$=3
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,3,3,15)
udq: (bottudgs, 15,3,3,27,27,31,14)
elseif num$=4
udq: (topudgs, 24,24,24,24,24,24,27,27)
udq: (bottudgs, 27,27,31,31,3,3,3)
elseif num$=5
udq: (topudgs, 31,31,24,24,24,30,31)
udq: (bottudgs, 3,3,3,27,27,14,14)
elseif num$=6
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,24,24,24,30,31)
udq: (bottudgs, 31,31,27,27,27,27,14)
elseif num$=7
udq: (topudgs, 31,31,3,3,3,7,14)
udq: (bottudgs, 28,28,28,28,24,24,24,24)
elseif num$=8
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,27,27,27,14)
udq: (bottudgs, 14,31,27,27,27,27,14)
elseif num$=9
udq: (topudgs, 14,31,27,27,27,27,14)
udq: (bottudgs, 15,3,3,27,27,31,14)
esend

DESK:
rem Desk Top Clock for any model of Organiser II
rem (Translate using Xtran on models LS or L264)
local hr$,mn$,mask$
local dot$(1),date$(21),ldate$(21)
escape off
cls
print chr$(0);chr$(1);chr$(2);chr$(3)
print chr$(4);chr$(5);chr$(6);chr$(7)
do
ldate$=date$0
mask$=not mask$
mn$=minute
hr$=hour
date$=left$(datim$,21)
if date$<ldate$
printdig: (0,hr$);printdig: (1,hr$-(hr$-10)*10)
printdig: (2,mn$);printdig: (3,mn$-(mn$-10)*10)
at 7.1 :print left$(date$,10)
at 10.2 :print mid$(date$,12,4)
endif
dot$:chr$(9,if % and mask$) or (if and not mask$)
at 3.1 :print dot$
at 3.2 :print dot$
pause $=20
until key$=0
escape on
return
Paging the Organiser II

The Organiser II range gains a new dimension this Autumn with the introduction of radio communications to its many features.

The Organiser will in future receive messages and data over the airwaves including broadcast information services such as financial news, sport and weather, nationwide in the UK. Developments for other countries are currently being examined.

The Psion Wordcall Pager, to be introduced this Autumn, slots neatly into the top port of the Organiser, and connects it to the Vodapage paging network, which covers over 90% of the population of Great Britain."

Sending a message is as simple as telephoning the Vodapage Bureau and dictating the message. The Organiser will receive it within three minutes.

Messages and important information, up to 80 characters long, like appointment changes or month end sales figures can be reviewed practically anywhere — in your car, at the office, on the train, at a restaurant — and the Organiser can either alert you immediately, or store the message for later view, even if the Organiser is switched off.

This unique combination of radio paging and computer technologies creates both the world’s smartest Pager and further demonstrates the Psion Organiser to be the world’s most advanced hand held computer and electronic Organiser.

Unique features

Unlike other pagers, the wordcall Pager will tell you if you have missed any messages when you turn it on, date and time stamp every one as it’s received, and let you browse through all of them at your leisure or use the Find facility to search out a specific message. You can even post messages directly to the Organiser II Diary and the built in programming language, OPL, lets you write your own applications if you wish.

In addition to messages and information receiving, in the near future users of the Wordcall Pager will be able to subscribe to Broadcast Information Services. Business Information, weather and sports results are three examples of the type of data that could be transmitted.

Psion as a service provider

Besides developing and producing the Wordcall Pager, Psion has expanded its business horizons by also becoming a Service Provider on the Vodapage network. This means the company takes care of connecting Wordcall Pagers purchased through Psion, its retailers or distributors, simply by the purchaser completing a very brief form. The Pager is then activated remotely by Psion and the user is able to receive messages immediately. Subscription to the Vodapage network costs from under 70p per day.

The product has taken two years to develop and Psion have made a substantial investment in the Pager. Special software was developed giving the Pager its sophisticated message handling abilities. Its introduction represents the most significant development made in radio paging since the introduction of alpha numeric services in 1985, and gives the Organiser another vital information handling capability for the future.

Commenting on the launch, Chris Hobday, Business Manager said: “Radio communications is a natural extension of Organiser functionalty, enabling busy people to keep in touch with events around them. And with our corporate customers demanding simple solutions to the logistical problems of moving data around, I can see many corporate applications being generated.”

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Editor
Psion News
Psion House
Harcourt Street
London
W1H 1DT

Phone Numbers:
Psion House 01-723 9408
Technical Support
01-723 0553
10am – 4.30pm
Psion Inc 203 274 7521
Psion GmbH 61 723 7098
Dacom Limited 0908 322322
Circulation 100,000

Psion News is produced by Psion PLC in conjunction with Charles Barker Publications Ltd. Printed in England.
Connect your Organiser to the Pager network and save £100

The Psion Wordcall Pager is the latest in pager technology, and to make it even more attractive to Psion News Readers, we will discount your first year’s air time by £100, regardless of how many regions you decide to use.

To take advantage of this offer is easy. Just complete the order form on the back of this offer sheet and send it to Psion. On receiving your order we will despatch your Psion Wordcall Pager. Then decide which regions you wish to subscribe to, complete the Connection Form and Direct Debit Mandate (which are sent with the Pager) and return the forms to Psion. If paying by credit card we will deduct the £100; if paying by cheque, then deduct £100 from the total including VAT on the Connection Form.

How it works

The Psion Wordcall Pager connects easily to the Psion Organiser II and slips into your pocket, briefcase or bag, forming a powerful and flexible communications aid, with capabilities well beyond any other pager.

Messages are displayed clearly on the Organiser screen, date and time stamped, and can be up to 80 characters long.

Because of the Organiser’s powerful built-in software, there is great flexibility to the Wordcall Pager.

- It can alert you to an incoming message or store it quietly for later review.
- Even when set in quiet mode, it can interrupt you with messages you have designated as urgent.
- It will even tell you of the messages received but not acknowledged when you turn it on, so you don’t have to remember to look through the entire message file.
- You can set predetermined on/off times for your convenience.
- You can store up to 40,000 characters in the LZ64 model Organiser II.

- The sound alert can be turned off for privacy and the Wordcall Pager will still receive messages when the Organiser is switched off.
- Messages are kept in date and time order, and you can list them permanently in the Organiser’s memory or post them to the Organiser’s Diary.

Easy Access to Messages

The Wordcall Pager is controlled with a menu, as with all Organiser software.

- BROWSE allows you to scan all the messages.
- FIND lets you go to a specific message by typing in a clue, the same as in the Organiser II.
- INFO tells you how many messages have been stored and the number received today or this month.
- OPL, the built in Organiser programming language, lets you write your own applications.
The Psion Wordcall Pager - a unique way to keep informed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly VODAPAGE Tariffs for the Psion Wordcall Pager</th>
<th>REGIONAL TARIFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(All prices are exclusive of VAT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>£33.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Plus</td>
<td>£30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>£21.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Areas</td>
<td>£4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Connection Charge</td>
<td>£20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standard connection charge is £20.00, any subsequent additions and amendments of facilities will carry a flat charge of £10.00.

VAT will be added at the current rate prevailing at the date bills are issued.

The purchase of equipment and provision of Network Service are subject to the Terms and Conditions of Psion. These are to be found in the Psion Wordcall Pager carton.

Network services are charged quarterly in advance.

A pro-rata charge will be made to adjust payment to Psion’s fixed three monthly billing cycle.

All prices and services shown are subject to revision.

REGIONAL PLUS NORTHERN
Designed to provide a simple option to those requiring coverage from the Midlands, North.

REGIONAL PLUS SOUTHERN
An ideal choice for those who travel in England and Wales.

Full coverage
Light urban coverage, vehicles, residential etc.

Save £100 on the Psion Wordcall Pager airtime
Please complete and return to:- Psion UK Sales, Psion UK PLC, 85 Frampton Street, London, NW8 8NQ.

Please send me ☐ Wordcall Pagers at £169.95 (inclusive of VAT and FREE postage and packing).

Select Method of Payment:- ☐ I enclose a cheque for £_________ made payable to Psion UK PLC.
☐ Please debit my credit card for the sum of £_________

☐ Access ☐ Visa ☐ Amex ☐ Diner

Account No.                                      Expires

Name
Address
Postcode
Telephone (day time)                             Signature

I understand that delivery may take up to 28 days. Offer expires on November 8th 1991.