New Product Proposal

Peripherals for the Apple Macintosh II Computer

Apple Computer recently announced the Mac II a substantially more powerful computer than the original. The Mac II has as much power as the higher priced Apollo and Sun workstations. At a third the cost of these workstations the Mac II should gain rapid acceptance.

Several departures from past philosophies make this a significant announcement. First of all the Mac II is an open design with six expansion slots for memory, peripheral or co-processor cards. For example one third party vendor has announced a 286 coprocessor card that will allow the Mac II with the Apple 5 1/4" Floppy drive to run IBM software. The new system can also support Unix, a powerful operating system that runs on the other workstations.

One of the most noticeable additions to the new Mac is color. The color video card that Apple supplies is capable of 256 colors (8 bits) on a 640 X 480 display. The computer is capable of handling up to 32 bits of color information, making it potentially as powerful, if not more, than the combination of an AT&T Targa board and an IBM AT. One difference is that a video board for the Apple doesn't require an onboard processor like the Targa which requires board specific application software. The powerful Motorola 68020 CPU of the Mac II handles all graphics functions, which means that all Mac software will be able to take advantage of the higher resolution color available on a 24 or 32 bit graphics card.

The NuBus slot design that Apple chose is relatively new but is robust enough to be around for quite of few more years. The boards or self- configuring, meaning they can be installed into any slot by the user without requiring the setting of DIP switches or running a software patch (User Friendly).

I feel the power and flexibility of this new machine will make it the ideal graphics workstation in the years to come. Desktop publishing and presentations are two markets that will continue to grow over the next few years and the announcement of the Mac II seems to verify Apple's belief in that.

My proposal centers around the development of a video card based on the NuBus design for the Mac II. This video card could be enhanced by adding other products we are developing as options. Some examples are; the still camera head as a color digitizer, the image compander for storing compressed images to hard disk, the transceiver for image transmission via computer, and the video printer for hard copy.

Some future products we are also considering; an 8 X 10 thermal printer and an 8 X 10 color print scanner would be good fits to this new digital imaging workstation.

