♥MoHPC♠   *The Museum of HP Calculators*

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Was Re: Therapy: Please repeat after me . . .

Message #1 Posted by Valentin Albillo on 10 Nov 2003, 1:10 p.m.

Paul Brogger posted:

"Therapy: Please repeat after me ... H-P is producing several RPN models again ... "

KINPO is producing several RPN models ...

"The new models, whatever their quirks, represent attempts to respond to customer requests ... "

The new models, whatever their quirks, do NOT represent attempts to respond to customer requests but pathetic attempts to still milk some profits from the dying RPN cow at the least possible cost. They merely copy-paste older models, blindly, inefficiently, so they do not take advantage of the much more modern hardware at all (HP33S's 32Kb RAM, yet only 26 data registers), and besides they do introduce careless bugs (HP12CP 'GOTO'-bug, etc).

"There are positives and negatives associated with everything -- just because the new models don't live up to the old company's standards in all ways, they still have their worthy attributes ... "

There are positives and negatives associated with everything -- but the new models don't live up to the old company's standards in ANY ways whatsoever, they merely copy-paste attributes without any innovation at all, even the ultra-logical ones, yet with degraded quality and usually bug-ridden, no attention to detail or Q&A at all despite the premium price.

"I should resolve to see progress as well as shortcomings, and to balance the one with the other ... "

I will see progress when there IS progress. As of now, I only see shortcomings, so there's no possible balance and further they want me to pay dearly for it.

"I am an H-P calculator addict. I cannot cure my devotion to their old models, I can only control it."

I am NOT an HP calculator addict at all. I'm addicted to nothing whatsoever in this world, and re calculators, I only like and collect worthwhile, quality machines, be they HP, SHARP, Casio, or whatever. I really pity real addicts, that are fully blinded by their mindless addiction and simply cannot see the true facts even if they're

painfully obvious to any objective mind.

The moment KinHPo does produce a worthwhile machine, I'll get it. Meanwhile I refuse to surrender to the defeatish view that we must be obligued to KinHPo for the low-quality items it's producing, and thus we must express our thanks by purchasing said lowly-but-expensive items, lest KinHPo would cease production, horror, shock !!

Some years ago, I was indeed indebted to HP's USA-based engineer teams, as they would go to extreme lengths to deliver the absolutely very best, no compromises. They would charge an extremely hefty premium price, but they would deliver, in spades. To these incredible people I'm indebted for life, and I don't regret any of the many cents I spent acquiring their wonderful products.

This I cannot say at all about the current offerings, and such a person as me won't degrade to beg for some lousy taiwanese-produced RPN crumbs to calm my RPN hunger. I won't worship this false idol, but you can do as you see fit.

Ah, and thanks a lot for your 'well-meant Therapy', but If you think that mocking my rational stand in this theme requires it, perhaps it's you who's in need of major therapy yourself, to cure that serious and blinding addiction you've got.

Best regards from V.

Therapy: Hey, I'm already in treatment!
Message #2 Posted by Paul Brogger on 10 Nov 2003, 2:16 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo

Obviously, your position is well thought out, and your conviction is deeply felt. I applaud your passion!

By the way, I've got a SHARP PC-1360 on the way, based entirely upon *your* recommendation. If it isn't everything you promised, I don't know whether I'll be able to forgive you!

(The last sentence is a joke, too . . .)

Re: Therapy: Hey, I'm already in treatment!
Message #3 Posted by Valentin Albillo on 11 Nov 2003, 6:19 a.m.,
in response to message #2 by Paul Brogger

Paul Brogger posted:

"By the way, I've got a SHARP PC-1360 on the way, based entirely upon your recommendation. If it isn't everything you promised, I don't know whether I'll be able to forgive you!"

Let's hope that you'll find it acceptable, then. Anyway, though the SHARP PC-1360 is an extremely fine vintage machine, its layout is not that of an standard scientific calculator, but a BASIC-language pocket computer. This means you won't find a [SIN] key or a [LOG] key, say; you must spell them out on the command line, so you don't do

```
        30 [SIN]
```

but instead

```
        [S][I][N] 30 [ENTER]
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There are a number of SHARP models that do indeed feature the best of both worlds, featuring BASIC-language programming and full algebraic expressions evaluation plus a numeric keypad which includes calculator-type keys (SIN, etc) and calculator-style evaluation (30, SIN), so that you can use the operating style that best suits the situation and your mood. One such a model would be the SHARP PC-1403H, that also features 32 Kb of RAM (fully usable, unlike the HP33S') and a 24-char alphanumeric display.

Nevertheless, your SHARP PC-1360 is far better, IMHO. It has a wonderful 4-line x 24-char display, bot alphanumeric and 32x150 graphics, pixel-addressable so you can do very fancy displays and menus (even with icons, Windows-style), has full I/O, can drive a printer/plotter with a full set of BASIC commands (including CIRCLE, labels, etc), and can accept up to 64 K RAM expansion. It's also user-programmable in machine language (PEEK, POKE, CALL). A wonderful machine, indeed, if you're even a little 'hacker' you'll have an extremely good time controlling external devices with it and writing lightning-fast machine-code routines.

As for the lack of calculator-type keys like [SIN], you can assign keys on the keyboard to perform any function or expression you want, when prefixed with DEF, so you'll be able to assign, say "SIN" to some key for faster execution.

Congratulations on your purchase. I hope you'll give it a fair chance and will actually study its possibilities and get fully used to it in order to make a fair judgment. But I want to help as well, so as a bonus to express my appreciation for your brave attempt to break your limits and broaden your knowledge, please post a valid e-mail address (if briefly) and I'll send you my Othello program for your SHARP PC-1360. It uses menus, takes full advantage of the graphics display by showing the 8x8 board at all times, will accept entries either by coordinates or using a graphics cursor, can suggest hints, offers several openings and playing strategies (including a randomized one than guarantees the program will never play the same way), keeps the score, checks for illegal moves, and will do the final counting and announce the winner, all in less than 100 lines of pure BASIC.

It needs at least 8K to run, but it makes an impressive demo of the machine's capabilities, can teach some interesting programming techniques (such as keeping the strategy in an ever-shrinking string array and custom-graphics creation), and last but not least, offers an interesting playing challenge as well. :-)

Best regards from V.

Re: What a generous offer . . .

Message #4 Posted by Paul Brogger on 11 Nov 2003, 12:40 p.m.,
in response to message #3 by Valentin Albillo

Thanks for your information and offer of help.

I looked at all the models mentioned in your previous post -- the one full of links to various SHARP models.

The 1460's do look more calculator-like and shirt-pocket-portable. In fact, the 1360 was the first of either type (IIRC, 1350/60 or 1460/1/2) that I found for what seemed like a good price on eBay.

I suspect that the lack of an off-unit storage option will be a hindrance at first (and any pursuit of such on my part will be a sure indication of continued interest).

I look forward to an email exchange.

I've included a near-valid email address with every single post I put up here -- just take the "NoHormel" out of the email address in the link above, and fire away. (I mangle it in what seems to me to be a pretty obvious manner in a so far successful attempt at avoidng spam.) BTW, The Hormel Co. is the maker of the widely-loathed "Spam" meat product for which unwanted email has been named. (If you already knew that, I'm sorry if I sound condescending.)

-- Paul B.

Re: Was Re: Therapy: Please repeat after me . . .

Message #5 Posted by bill platt (les Estats Unis d'Amerique) on 10 Nov 2003, 2:44 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo

Hi Valentin,

I bought some extra 20s calculators some time ago--because I felt that, in the long run, the algebraic logic was less of a problem than the potential of having a bad keyboard. In other words, I don't mind using algebraic--especially a nice one like that 20s has (swap, last, 10 storage registers, keystroke programming)--if it means that the buttons are good, the machine is reliable, and the results can be trusted and verified by good documentation etc.

You are right about the false idol business. If I had my druthers, I guess I would start a new calculator company--and build them in Europe or Canada, where there are dedicated workers willing to produce a good product, less liablity and business/CEO bloat, and ultimately more interest in the business community in making things. Unfortunately, in the US, there is no interest in making things anymore--the financial markets shy away from manufacturing.

(Norm: your comments too, please)

So, that is what is so special about the HP's we know: they are the last in a long line of great American ingenuity in the industrial age. The new HPCOMPQ or whatever is not the same, and we should vote with our pocketbook.

Regards,

Bill

Re: Was Re: Therapy: Please repeat after me . . .
Message #6 Posted by Michael Meyer on 10 Nov 2003, 10:15 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo

Am I addicted?

I have no desire to purchase calculators just for the sake of buying....and I turn down opportunities daily. I'm a collector, and I'd add the newer HP's only if I could purchase them for what they're worth to me... (not much).

But I love the antiques. I have gone to some lengths to complete a collection of HP models up until and including the Pioneer series. And I have trouble going to bed at night if I've received a non-functional HP in the mail that I know I can repair....

Well, I guess I'll get back to basics here in defining "addiction":

I very much enjoy and get a euphoria from the restoration and use of the beautiful machines of the past. I definitely have a degree of "craving", and even some "withdrawal" when I haven't enjoyed the hobby for awhile. Still, I enjoy the whole realm of the collection: obtaining, restoring, and then learning to use each model. I'll even pull a different machine off the shelf and play with it for several days. Luiz calls them, "his babies", and they do have special meaning to me.

I'll propose that not all "addictions" are unhealthy, but it may simply be a bastardized use of the term; most of us are "addicted" to love, family, etc.

(BTW, I think one of the biggest addictions in modern days is the addiction to refined carbohydrates: sugar. But that's another topic.)

I applaud anyone who is free of all addiction, but I would propose that some are healthy. But again, it may simply be my definition. Would "obsession" be better?

I do have a couple of cheaper, newer HP's in the collection, if nothing else to historically document the decline in quality over the years. They were gifts-- non-functional upon receipt.

If addiction is a blind obsession, then hopefully I'm not addicted. But, is a purposeful and historical collection an addiction? If so, I'm not alone... example being the very site we're on.

I'm not trying to be contrary; just commenting on the term. I'm still missing some key machines, but I have to wait until the time and price is right.

Michael

Just as I was saying . . .

Message #7 Posted by Paul Brogger on 10 Nov 2003, 10:30 p.m.,
in response to message #6 by Michael Meyer

The good, philosophical doctor (with the fine license plate) wrote:

"*... I'm still missing some key machines, but I have to wait until the time and price is right.*"

I rest my case. Repeat again, "I am an H-P calculator addict. I cannot cure my devotion to their old models, I can only control it."

;^)

Re: Was Re: Therapy: Please repeat after me . . .

Message #8 Posted by Juan J on 10 Nov 2003, 11:55 p.m.,
in response to message #6 by Michael Meyer

When referring to Oppenheimer, the late Edward Teller used to say that while he did not question his knowlegde, he did question his loyalty and judgement. The quote is not exactly literal, and no offense is intended, but this comment has come to my mind lately when reading Valentin's posts.

Your arguments are good and your reasoning is remarkably solid, Valentin. As one of the contributors wrote, I would much like to attend a lecture of yours in Mathematics. Your knowledge is certainly valuable. But...

"Addict" is a very delicate word to use, and care should be taken with it. Maybe I am wrong, but most of us take pleasure in dealing with our machines, have fond memories about them, enjoy using and repairing them, among other things. And we all prefer RPN when it comes to dealing with a calculator. Yes, it was an efficient way of using limited memory space; yes, it provided intermediate answers that enabled us to track our calculator results better and yes, it is becoming a thing of the past. Yes, calculations can be made a thoudand times faster on a PC. And yes, HP as we knew it is gone. But a user turned into collector is no freak hunting after every HP calculator he/she finds, and is definitely not a person who deserves pity (which in turn, is another word to be used with caution.)

If me or any other RPN/HP enthusiast likes to collect, restore and enjoy, it is because we choose to do it, be it because of nostalgia, efficiency or whatever reason. From our point view, it is a nice activity or hobby or pastime, you name it. And nobody should label other people's likes using words that can become harsh if used without proper caution.

A wise man/woman always knows when to behave properly. And how to state his/her position both carefully and tactfully. We all know what happened to Teller and Oppenheimer, and we all know better than that.

Re: "Addict"

Message #9 Posted by Paul Brogger on 11 Nov 2003, 12:43 a.m.,
in response to message #8 by Juan J

I think I was the first person to use "addict" in connection with this discussion -- and it's not the first time I've caused offense with ill-considered humor.

Please accept my apologies, any who may have taken my "cute remarks" as an affront.

'Addict' ?

Message #10 Posted by Valentin Albillo on 11 Nov 2003, 5:32 a.m.,
in response to message #8 by Juan J

Hi, Juan J:

Juan J posted: *"'Addict' is a very delicate word to use, and care should be taken with it [...] nobody should label other people's likes using words that can become harsh if used without proper caution."*

First of all, thanks for your mesurate, non-flaming reply. Things can always be discussed politely and there's never any excuse to resort to personal attacks, and this forum's contributors and contributions are the finest example I know of.

That said, as Mr. Paul Brogges has already admitted, he was the one who mentioned the term "addict", not me, implying that I was one, even if it was an unsuccessful attempt at humor. Now, for me, "addict" is indeed a very strong word which has nothing to do with me, but might be applied to a number of HP fans, see these dictionary definitions and judge by yourself:

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ad·dic·tion
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1. Compulsive physiological and psychological need
   for a habit-forming substance

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  2. The condition of being habitually or compulsively
     occupied with or or involved in something



Source: The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English
        Language, Fourth Edition
        Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company.


  1: being abnormally dependent on something that is
     psychologically or physically habit-forming


  2: an abnormally strong craving


Source: WordNet ® 1.6, © 1997 Princeton University
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I honestly think that (2) and (2) above do apply to many, many, many HP fans, in relation with their calculators. They spend an inordinate amount of time using them, collecting them, repairing them, talking about them, reading news and forums related to them, buying books about them, scanning eBay and adds sections for them, browsing the Internet for anything on them, and eagerly posting and reading any topics related to them. Can you see the pattern ?

Anyway, my definition of "addict" and "addiction" is probably stronger than the one in the dictionaries. For me, an addict is a person whose rational judgment is strongly biased by the addiction itself, to the point where the person can no longer see objective truths if they contradict the object of his/her addiction, and will invent whatever excuses and reasonings he/she finds comfortable with to justify it, even if they don't make any rational sense. Such a person loses objectivity, is 'blinded', and will even take decisions that are objectively wrong as long as they fit with the addiction, truth and sound insight take second place.

That, I don't want to become.

Best regards from V.

Re: 'Addict' ?
Message #11 Posted by Michael Meyer on 11 Nov 2003, 2:15 p.m.,
in response to message #10 by Valentin Albillo

Valentin,

I see your point. Defined in terms of loss of judgment, "addiction" is a bad state for collectors.... (see some of the insane prices paid in the past for these calculators. I'm glad, as a collector, that we're in a bit of a lull right now on eBay).

It's how I functionally define the difference between mania and hypomania: loss of judgment.

In the milder definitions; one of a compulsion, I fit it to a degree. I certainly spend some time on it, but it doesn't consume me, and hopefully hasn't clouded my judgment.

Well, maybe a little. <grin> I'll always be an open-minded skeptic. (I was born in Missouri, USA... "SHOW ME.")

Be well, Michael

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