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Humor: Eavesdropping at KinHPo ...

Message #1 Posted by [Valentin Albillo](#) on 11 Nov 2003, 7:56 a.m.

Hi all, here's some fragments on an alleged discussion at KinHPo's, not so long ago:

- P.: But J., we need to do something about this, it's plain frustrating for the user, having 32 K RAM and being unable to use it ! It just doesn't make sense ! Why on Earth would we include a 32 Kb RAM chip in the new HP33S and let the user unable to use it ?
- J.: We're including that dreaded 32 Kb chip because it's the **cheapest** one available. Any bigger or smaller and they cost more, because of obsolescence issues. Besides, Marketing said that it would look good in the specs sheet, as a sales point. And what d'you mean 'unable to use it' ? Isn't the chip included or what ? As long as it is, they can't sue us.
- P.: It is, but we haven't changed the original firmware ... out of those 32 K, you can use **less** than 1 % for your data, variables and such ! Not to mention matrices: not only does it lack matrix support in firmware, but the user can't write software to cater for it, as he can't even fit matrices that the venerable HP-15C ate for breakfast, 20 years ago, and in just 0.5 Kb ! It's preposterous !
- J.: So what ? At least they can use it for programs, or its internal workings or whatever, right ?
- P.: But that's hardly so. As it is, the user's got just 26 labels, which can't be duplicated and reused, and any non-trivial program will need at least a few. With just 26 labels for 32 K, and as we don't allow branching to numbered steps, there would need to be more than 1 Kb worth of program lines between consecutive labels, on the average !

J.: Big deal !

P.: But J., this means you'll run out of labels long before you can use that much memory. We actually need to upgrade the firmware, J., to provide indirect access to more data registers, more labels, or at least let the user re-use the labels or branch to any step ! We did it on the HP-34C, eons ago, it even had **automatic** memory allocation between program and data, and it only had 210 bytes of RAM, for crying out loud !

J.: We-Don't-Change-The-Firmware !! Changing the firmware does **cost** money and so reduces any profits this thing can make us, which I doubt, so We-Do-Nothing, is that clear ? Besides, we can always say those blasted 32 Kb are used internally, to maximize efficiency or remove memory restrictions, or whatever !

P.: But that's not true, J.! The original 32SII firmware was so starved for memory that most advanced functions would easily run short of it. That's why the Integrate function wouldn't work together with Solve, the reverse being true as well, unlike such primitive models as the 34C, which would indeed allow that. Users know this, and having so much RAM they'd logically expect that this restrictions are removed, so they can integrate implicit functions or find roots of functions defined by integrals. For heaven's sake, the 34C did it, the 15C did it, everyone and his uncle did it ... but the new, 32Kb-33S doesn't !! And there's no reason why we don't remove this restriction !

J.: Read my lips, P.: There-Is-A-Reason, and I'm getting real **sick** with you don't getting it: any such improvements require some firmware changes, big or small. Any firmware changes does cost us money, big or small. And any extra costs reduce our profits, big time ...

P.: But the users deserve ...

J.: ... and it goes without saying that if profits aren't as expected, **your** head and mine will be up on a pole fast. This is **not** a charity, but a profit-driven corporation. C.'s company policy is crystal-clear: we must maximize profits, and every department has some profitability goals to meet. Do you really think we're making any big money selling these RPN things that noone wants ? Do you think that it will sell "like mad", despite that stupid phone-like aspect

and rushed algebraic mode that Marketing forced upon us, to try and attract some unsuspecting students ? Would you imagine many a respectable engineer or valued professional being caught *dead* using something like THIS ?

P.: ... no, not really ...

J.: Well then, stop pestering me with your RAMs and ROMs and firmwares and see if you can get some big order for these things. Go !

Best regards from V.

ROTFLMAO! Excellent Valentin! (n/t)

*Message #2 Posted by **james (uk)** on 11 Nov 2003, 8:10 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo*

;~)

"Our lawyers will be contacting you."

*Message #3 Posted by **C.F.** on 11 Nov 2003, 1:05 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo*

Your information is totally false (the engineers initials were not P & J). The information was confidential and not meant for distribution.

Re: Keyboard design costs

*Message #4 Posted by **rsenzer** on 11 Nov 2003, 11:08 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Valentin Albillo*

... Of course the real cost was the design work in building a calculator keyboard that would prevent carpal tunnel lawsuits.

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