Kaypro II (alias Kaycomp II)

1 messages in topic.

From: **C70:info-cpm**
Date: Sat, Jul 31 1982 8:07 am
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>From PERILLI@Afsc-Hq Thu Jul 29 23:31:04 1982
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It seems the Non Linear Systems Kaycomp II is now called the Kaypro II. At least that's what the unit I received recently is labelled. After about 5 days of use, here are my observations:

    1. The case. Not very pretty, but functional. It's constructed of painted aluminum and seems reasonably sturdy. The power cord is stored on the outside of the case wrapped around four corner posts. There is no storage for floppies ala Osborne. Weight is about 24 lbs.

    2. The keyboard. One of the best features of the machine. Very similar to a VT-100. Codes generated by cursor arrows or any key on the numeric pad can be re-defined. The keyboard touch is excellent. Keyboard attaches with a nice long coiled telephone style cord with standard modular connectors at both ends. Caps lock key has a red LED indicator.

    3. The display. Good news and bad news. The good news is it produces a highly readable 80X24 display on a 9" P31 green screen. The memory mapped display is very fast and apparently doesn't take up any user address space (bank switched?). The bad news is the annoying presence of video "noise" on the screen during screen update (random flashes and specks). Also there are no video attributes available.

    4. The disks. The Kaypro uses two single sided double density 40 track mini floppies. STAT will report 191K on a freshly formatted disk. Disk I/O seems to be fairly fast. Disk copies and large program loads go at a brisk pace. A 5" Winchester option is in testing stages.

    5. The CPU. Removing the top cover reveals a single board computer with a 2.5 MHz (why not 4 MHz?) Z80 CPU with 64K bytes of RAM (8 64K chips). Included are one serial port and one Centronics parallel port. The ports use Zilog SIO and PIO chips. The floppy controller is a 1791. *ALL* chips are socketed. Workmanship looks good and servicability looks excellent.

    6. The software. The CP/M provided seems to be a reasonable implementation. The FORMAT and COPY utilities provided include verify options and work well. A BAUD program allows software definition of the serial port baud rate. Unfortunately, the CBIOS source code was not provided. I'm checking to see if it can be made available. The other software included is the SELECT word processor, SBASIC, PROFITPLAN, and UTILYZE. I'm not excited about SELECT, although it looks like it might be a good choice for a non computer oriented person. I will be bringing up some other CP/M editors as soon as I load them over from 8" disks. I haven't tried any of the other software yet, so can't comment on it.

----Summary----

In general, it seems to be a great buy at $1795 list. The Ozzie includes a better package of software, but the Kaypro seems to have the edge on hardware features. How well it stands up remains to be seen.

---Chuck
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