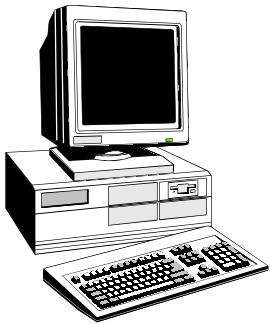

◆ Dan's Desktop ◆

Issue 3

June 1995



If you have a 486 SX or DX processor, you don't need to buy a new PC to run the latest and greatest software. There are ways to upgrade.

Technology Keeps Advancing, What to Do?

I and many of my customers have PCs with 4 meg of RAM, 200-300 meg harddrive, a 2400 or 9600 baud internal modem, and a 386 or 486 processor operating at a speed of 25-50 mhz. (I have upgraded my two machines to 8 meg of RAM and use Stacker to double my hard drive space. I also recently installed an Intel overdrive processor in one machine which doubled the processing speed to 50mhz.)

As you've probably seen in the ads in the Sunday papers, the following configurations are beginning to become common and the prices are probably similar to what we paid a year or so ago for our machines:

- RAM: 8 meg
- Hard drive: 1 gigabyte (1000 meg)
- Processor: Pentium
- Processing speed: 66-100+ mhz
- Modem: 14.4 Kbaud (14,400 baud) or better
- CD ROM: Quadruple speed

As if that isn't depressing enough,

Software: Read the Label!

Not all IBM compatible software is necessarily compatible with your PC. You need to carefully check out the system requirements which are usually listed on the back of the box. Your machine's RAM, cpu processor (386, 486, pentium), or other features (CD ROM, hard drive space available, other software installed, modem, ...) may not be sufficient.

the new models often include things like speaker phones, voice mail systems, bigger speakers, and even a second CD ROM drive. At least if you trade up you can use the same monitor!

You might ask, is this overkill? I don't think so. If you've worked with CD ROM at all, you've probably had the experience of waiting for the CD ROM to be read before you can go on. Four meg of RAM has turned out to be inadequate for many applications. And, you really need at least as 14.4 Kb modem to navigate the Internet. The gigabyte hard drive might be a little overkill, but if you like acquiring and installing software or want to do a

Intel Overdrive Can Boost Your PC's Speed

If you have a 486SX or 486DX processor that runs at only 25 or 33 megahertz, you may have experienced some problems operating some software packages. You don't need to buy a new PC. Many 486 PCs have a socket that allows an Intel overdrive processor to be installed. Processors are available that can double or triple the speed of your PC. Since this involves opening up your PC, you might want to have a service technician do this for you. Overdrive processors now cost about \$200. Installing an overdrive processor and adding more memory should boost your PC's performance and enable it to run the latest software titles.

Cruising the Internet With My New 14.4 Kb External Modem

I recently was excited to find out that Prodigy now provides access to the World Wide Web which is one of the key ways of accessing all sorts of information on the Internet. Prodigy has pretty consistently been the first to offer access to various Internet features. Prior to this they provided the ability to email anyone connected to the Internet (including users of other online services). Last November, they began providing access to Usenet Newsgroups which are huge bulletin board-like areas.

I was disappointed to find out that either a 9600 baud or 14.4 Kb modem was a prerequisite to use WWW. Probing further I found it was also now possible to access Prodigy at a modem speed of 14.4Kb.

After some thought, I decided to buy an external 14.4 Kb modem. I bought it at Service Merchandise for about \$120. I choose an external modem since it could easily be connected to any of my computers as needed. (I also wasn' t in the mood to install anything inside my machine.) An internal model can be bought for under \$100. Care must be taken that the correct type of modem is purchased. In particular, be sure that the speed of the modem refers to data modem rather than fax modem speed. I recommend you check with your online service provider for specifications before buying.

I now cruise the Internet on occasion. If I had the time, I could easily get caught up traveling around viewing all the information that' s out there. That could get very expensive as after the

Would You Like to Go on a Cruise This Summer?

This summer I will be hosting sessions to explain the Internet and to provide a demonstration of its features such as Usenet and World Wide Web. I plan to do this with no more than three people at a time, so I can tailor the presentation and the "cruise" to your interests. Each session will be about two hours long and will cost \$30 including Connecticut sales tax.

Tours will begin "departing" this summer on weekdays, evenings, and weekends.



Software: Check Package Contents

I recently encountered problems with software purchases I made at two separate stores. In one case, when I started to install the software, someone else's name came up as the user—the software had been used! In the other case, a free upgrade coupon was missing from the box. These programs cost \$70 and \$170 respectively, so I returned them to each store. Exchanging the software was not a problem. I requested that the packages be opened before I brought them home. At this point, it became clear that the packages I had originally bought had been repackaged after having been used. The two stores involved were *Electronics Boutique* at the Buckland Hills Pavillons and *Electronics Boutique* at West

Call now to sign up for a World Wide Web cruise on the Internet!

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