PERSONAL COMPUTER

A **personal computer** is a general-purpose computer whose size, capabilities and original sale price make it useful for individuals, and is intended to be operated directly by an end-user with no intervening computer operator. A related term is "**PC**" that was initially an acronym for "personal computer", but later became used primarily to refer to the ubiquitous Wintel platform. Software applications for most personal computers include, but are not limited to, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, web browsers and e-mail clients, digital media playback, games and myriad personal productivity and special-purpose software applications. Modern personal computers often have connections to the Internet, allowing access to the World Wide Web and a wide range of other resources. Personal computers may be connected to a local area network (LAN), either by a cable or a wireless connection. A personal computer may be a desktop computer or a laptop, netbook, tablet or a handheld PC.

History

The Programma 101 was the first commercial "desktop personal computer", produced by the Italian company Olivetti and invented by the Italian engineer Pier Giorgio Perotto, inventor of the magnetic card system. The project started in 1962. It was launched at the 1964 New York World's Fair, and volume production began in 1965. [*unreliable source?*]

NASA bought at least ten Programma 101s and used them for the calculations for the 1969 Apollo 11 Moon landing. Then ABC used the Programma 101 to predict the presidential election of 1969, and the U.S. military used the machine to plan their operations in the Vietnam War. The Programma 101 was also used in schools, hospitals, government offices. This marked the beginning of the era of the personal computer.

By the early 1970s, people in academic or research institutions had the opportunity for single-person use of a computer system in interactive mode for extended durations, although these systems would still have been too expensive to be owned by a single person.

Early personal computers—generally called microcomputers—were often sold in a kit form and in limited volumes, and were of interest mostly to hobbyists and technicians. The first successfully mass marketed personal computer was the Commodore PET introduced in January 1977. During the early 1980s, home computers were further developed for household use, with software for personal productivity, programming and games. They typically could be used with a television already in the home as the computer display. In the same year, the NEC PC-98 was introduced, which was a very popular personal computer that sold in more than 18 million units.[13] Another famous personal computer, the revolutionary Amiga 1000, was unveiled by Commodore on July 23, 1985. due to the influence of the IBM PC on the personal computer market, personal computers and home computers lost any technical distinction. Business computers acquired color graphics capability and sound, and home computers and game systems users used the same processors and operating systems as office workers. In 1982 "The Computer" was named Machine of the Year by *Time* Magazine.

In the 2010s, several companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Sony sold off their PC and laptop divisions.

Types

Stationary

Workstation

A workstation is a high-end personal computer designed for technical, mathematical, or scientific applications. Intended primarily to be used by one person at a time, they are commonly connected to a local area network and run multi-user operating systems. Workstations are used for tasks such as computer-aided design, drafting and modeling, computation-intensive scientific and engineering calculations, image processing, architectural modeling, and computer graphics for animation and motion picture visual effects.[53]

Desktop computer

Prior to the widespread usage of PCs, a computer that could fit on a desk was remarkably small, leading to the "desktop" nomenclature. More recently, the phrase usually indicates a particular style of computer case. Desktop computers come in a variety of styles ranging from large vertical tower cases to small models which can be tucked behind an LCD monitor. In this sense, the term "desktop" refers specifically to a horizontally oriented case, usually intended to have the display screen placed on top to save desk space. Most modern desktop computers have separate screens and keyboards.

Gaming computer

A gaming computer is a standard desktop computer that typically has high-performance hardware, such as a more powerful video card, processor and memory, in order to handle the requirements of demanding video games, which are often simply called "PC games". A number of companies, such as Alienware, manufacture prebuilt gaming computers, and companies such as Razer and Logitech market mice, keyboards and headsets geared toward gamers.

Single unit

Single-unit PCs (also known as all-in-one PCs) are a subtype of desktop computers that combine the monitor and case of the computer within a single unit. The monitor often utilizes a touchscreen as an optional method of user input, but separate keyboards and mice are normally still included. The inner components of the PC are often located directly behind the monitor and many of such PCs are built similarly to laptops.

Nettop

A subtype of desktops, called nettops, was introduced by Intel in February 2008, characterized by low cost and lean functionality. A similar subtype of laptops (or notebooks) is the netbook, described below. The product line features the new Intel Atom processor, which specifically enables nettops to consume less power and fit into small enclosures.

They can be also portable as the laptop, netbook, the tablet and the pocket pc.