

VIEWPOINT

Interactive Video Workstation

The Product

Viewpoint from Acorn is an Interactive Video Workstation designed for ease of installation and use in training and office applications. A powerful Interactive Video system is constructed from just two units: the Viewpoint Workstation and a Laservision Video Disc Player. With the Viewpoint Workstation, high quality colour displays may be presented consisting of video and sound sequences from the Laservision player combined with computer generated text and graphics.

technologies which is used extensively in Computer Based Training, Point of Sale and Office Information retrieval and display applications. The Laservision Video Disc system allows up to 72 minutes of video to be displayed from both sides of a 12 inch diameter optical disc. A disc contains 54,000 video frames any one of which may be randomly accessed for display as a still frame or to commence a moving sequence. Two sound channels accompany the video on the disc.

Acorn will be pleased to offer advice and support on any application of Interactive Video which incorporates the Viewpoint Workstation.

The Application

The Laservision player control software allows the user or programmer to control the player with simple commands. The player can be instructed to search for particular video frames and to display them as moving or still pictures. A number of different types of Laservision players are supported by this software. Commands are also included to control the sound output from the player which is heard through the Viewpoint Workstation's loudspeaker or headphones.

In order to program an Interactive Video session the Microtext Plus authoring language is used. Programs written in Microtext Plus are held on the Viewpoint Workstation's 3.5 inch floppy disc and they may form part of training or information retrieval and display application packages. Microtext was developed by the National Physical Laboratory and it allows programmers to produce material quickly and easily. Microtext is a frame orientated language permitting dialogue with the Workstation's user. Information held in each frame controls the sequence of events depending on the user's response. At the same time commands may be issued to the Laservision Video Disc Player so that text and graphics in the Microtext frames are accompanied by appropriate video disc pictures.

Illustrated here is the Viewpoint Workstation model AVC900 with a Philips VP831 Professional Laservision Player.

Also available from Acorn is an Interactive Video system, model AVC128, based around the Master Series BBC Microcomputer. This system offers similar facilities and specifications within an alternative hardware package.

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Based on the highly acclaimed Model B Plus BBC Microcomputer architecture, the Viewpoint Workstation incorporates two 1 MByte 3.5 inch disc drives, a 14 inch colour display screen, a loudspeaker and a 92 key keyboard including a separate 20 key numeric keypad. Stereo headphones may also be used. The Viewpoint Workstation contains a 6512 microprocessor with 64 KBytes of Random Access Memory and offers a selection of eight different graphics and text display modes. Firmware is contained in 96 KBytes of Read Only Memory and consists of the Machine Operating System, BBC BASIC, the Advanced Disc Filing System, Laservision player control software and the Microtext Plus authoring language.

The Technology

Interactive Video provides a powerful combination of computing and video

Laservision Video Discs are already available to cover a wide range of topics. In addition, users may decide to commission and produce their own discs using widely available facilities. A single disc may cover a range of subjects with supporting Viewpoint Workstation programs selecting only the material required for a particular user.

Large amounts of video information may be presented from the Laservision discs in the form of still frames or moving sequences with data and programs being provided from 3.5 inch floppy discs. In this way the video information is supported by programs and data which can be easily modified or updated. The Viewpoint Workstation contains the necessary components to combine these two information sources onto a single display screen.



The Acorn Viewpoint Workstation is designed and manufactured in the UK by Acorn Computers Limited. Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this leaflet is correct, but we reserve the right to make alterations to the system at any time. No responsibility is accepted for errors or omissions.