

# Home computers

## Industry enjoys phenomenal growth in sales potential uses

NEW YORK — Within a few years it could be difficult to make a living unless you can work at a cathode ray video display terminal and color graphic home computers could give tomorrow's workforce a head start.

Many parents are willing to pay from \$450 to \$2,000 for a free-standing computer with a video display terminal (also called a CRT) and keyboard to be used in the home, said Peter J. Curnin, president of Intelligent Systems Corp. of Atlanta.

ISC makes small computers for business and a series of CompuColor household computers.

"There are fewer than a dozen companies making household com-

puters with standard-size display terminals," Curnin said. "Perhaps five have substantial sales, but the sales gains of the successful companies are phenomenal — up to 200 percent a year."

ISC said it has an estimated 28 percent market share. The firm's sales have grown from \$60,000 in 1975 to \$4 million in 1978 and an estimated \$15 million for fiscal 1979.

"Taking a guess, I would say overall industry sales could reach \$500 million a year," Curnin said.

While the home computer is not an item that's desperately needed, it's no mere toy or status symbol either, Curnin said. Its potential for life enrichment and for learning is

enormous and just starting to be realized.

Some companies selling home computers emphasize their usefulness for household and small business accounting. CompuColor does that too, but Curnin, who came to ISC recently after 23 years with International Business Machines Corp., said that is being stressed too much.

More emphasis should be put on

the level of sophisticated cultural, educational and recreational pursuits the home computer gives the family, he said.

The home computer can familiarize children as young as six with the basic principles of the computer and VDT, which are fast becoming both the communicating and calculating tool of commerce, industry, science, education and even the arts," he said.

In addition it is a fascinating game-playing device. This is particularly true of the color display terminals, which can be used not only to play a wide variety of programmed games but for creative artistic designs.

Curnin said he discovered recently by accident that the home computer can offer real help to children who don't take readily to reading or to drawing with their hands.

"The dyslexic child who can't draw a cube or write figures or letters on the blackboard can accurately punch keys and do as well as the normal child on the home computer's VDT," he said.

Children who don't have a learning disability but are slow in the classroom may do much better on the home computer tube, Curnin said, because they can proceed at their own speed. The youngster feels freer

to exercise his or her imagination than would be the case in the classroom and will work harder.

As a learning machine, CompuColor can teach languages, science, mathematics and elementary design. It will balance your checkbook, calculate your income tax, keep up with the mortgage and tax payments.

And it can be used to convert a recipe for a dish for four to the quantities to serve nine or 20.

# Chinese modern art to be brought to America for sale by dealers

PEKING — Somewhere, China might have a modern artist as good as Pablo Picasso or Marc Chagall.

If so, a smart art dealer might make a bundle by introducing his pictures into the United States and Europe.

With that in mind, a small trading company based in Vermont has made a deal to take between 500 and 600 modern Chinese oil and water-color works, painted since the 1920s, to the United States.

"The paintings we have looked at range from absolutely terrible to extremely good, and few people outside China have ever seen any of them," says Con Hogan executive vice president of International Coins and Currency Inc., of Montpelier, Vt.

Hogan is in China as the head of a five-man team of traders and art experts. They are dealing with China's Arts and Crafts Corporation, which manages the sale of art goods overseas.

The 1949 communist revolution cut China's contemporary painters off from the mainstream of world art.

As in the Soviet Union, they were told to serve the socialist state. They painted representational paintings of great moments in Chinese communist history.

However, a lot of them quietly kept on painting things that interested them. Since the end of China's 1966-76 cultural revolution and the death of Mao Tse-tung, it has

become acceptable for them to bring out works previously unacceptable.

The art works range from variations on traditional Chinese art to street scenes of modern Chinese life.

The artists' names certainly are not household words in the West. But a few, such as Wu Zoren and Li Keran, were known to overseas Chinese before the 1949 revolution. Both are now in their 70s and are teachers retired from the Peking Art Academy.

Even if their paintings sell in the West, the Chinese artists don't get as rich as Picasso, who died a multimillionaire. The American Corporation, not individual artists, are generally salaried workers in China.

"I don't know if the artists will get any of the money, but we can get them international recognition, I'm sure of that," Hogan says.

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## Orange prices to drop, record crop expected

LOS ANGELES — Oranges, because a record 64.3 million cartons of navel are expected this year, will be a good buy for consumers, says Russ Hanlin, president of Sunkist.

Hanlin says most of Sunkist's 6,500 members in California and Arizona have had excellent crops on this year-around commodity.

Hanlin said growers' profits vary, depending on where they are, and their own costs.

"Say they are selling at the packing house for \$5 for 40 pounds and out of

that there are marketing, advertising and packing expenses.

"So, after the owners pick and haul, which is the better part of a dollar for 40 pounds, there's about \$2.50 of that amount left."

Hanlin said the grower's return on the cost at the packing house of the 40 pounds of oranges may be 35 to 40 percent before the grower's cost.

Then, he said, the cost amount of the oranges is doubled by the time it gets to the market shelves because of transportation and other factors.

"So 40 pounds would be \$10 to a consumer. Both California and Flor-

ida have had large crops of good quality fruit," Hanlin said, "and this had a depressing effect on prices very much to the benefit of the farmer, but not to the advantage of the grower."

This year, the winter lemon supply was smaller than normal, lemons were expensive. The harvest for the summer, however, is expected to be excellent, so prices are dropping.

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## Oil profits up for 5 firms

United Press International  
Marathon Oil Co., the 16th largest U.S. oil company, Thursday reported its first-quarter profits rose 10 percent and attributed the gain to higher domestic crude prices.

Five of the nation's biggest oil companies, which benefited from gradual decontrol of U.S. crude prices before the windfall profits tax took effect March 1, announced last week that their first-quarter earnings gains exceeded this week.

Standard Oil Co. (Ohio) posted a 169 percent profit increase, Exxon Corp. a 101 percent rise and Texaco Inc. a 96 percent jump.

Occidental Petroleum had a 23 percent surge, but a substantial part of the increase came from the liquidation of silver contracts before the metal plummeted in value.

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