

# Computers biting big market

**United Press International**  
**MENLO PARK, Calif.** — The home computer industry stands at a crossroad, which could lead it to huge new expansion, or down the path of oversupply and cutthroat competition.

Industry analysts say the direction is not clear because of one major uncertainty — how long the boom will last.

On the other hand, he says, because of new developments and uses, "We may be seeing a home computer with a real purpose that could launch the industry into a new, untapped market."

Heretofore the "home computer" was defined as a relatively simple device sold at a relatively low price for a relatively narrow reason — video game playing.

The more sophisticated and much more expensive "personal computer," with its capacity to process words, crunch numbers, receive and transmit data, has not yet become a major factor in the home market sales.

The entry with the potential to turn the flagging market around, according to Cottrell and other analysts, is a low-priced system featuring word-processing, computerized typewriter and letter-quality printing — the abilities of the personal computer combined with the game-playing capabilities of the present home computer.

Three such systems hope to lead the way in the marketplace — Coleco of West Hartford, Conn., IBM and Atari, Inc., of California's "Silicon Valley." "Coleco is the one who made the biggest noise about it with its 'Adam,' but I understand Atari

has a similar product at a similar price in the works," Cottrell said.

The IBM "Peanut" triggered a stock market selling spree among home computer issues when it was announced late in July by the trade magazine Computer & Software News. Investors, according to Wall Street analysts, were jittery over the entry of yet another contender in the field.

Atari, a leader but also an early loser in the home computer and video game price wars, has been mum about its anticipated plunge into the next stage of home computer technology.

IBM also has kept its cards close to the vest, but industry analysts say the Peanut probably will premiere this fall at a price of \$600 to \$900.

Coleco is out in the open with its intentions to aggressively market low-priced home computers with new capabilities.

"We think what Adam will do is literally open up heretofore untapped markets," said Arnold C. Greenberg, Coleco president and chief executive officer.

"We firmly believe that this whole home computer market, rather than being dead or dying as has been suggested, has just begun," he said.

"We are just now beginning to solve the question over what to do with these things besides playing games."

Coleco's solution, Greenberg said, is an affordable system that will offer state-of-the-art video game graphics and a self-contained word processing program, storage for the equivalent of 250 typewritten pages and a letter-quality printer.

"We're expecting to ship 500,000 units by the end of the

year," Greenberg said. "With software sales and other items factored in, that adds up to an excess of \$250 million in just the next four months."

"As for next year, we're thinking in terms of millions of units. We think the whole market is going to explode next year."

Cottrell at SRI said the new computers could affect not only the home computer industry but the electric typewriter industry as well.

"It's an awesome market they're after," Cottrell said. "After all, why would someone buy a \$300 electric typewriter when he can spend \$300 more and get

a word processor plus a computer and printer? The choice should be pretty clear."

While many analysts are enthusiastic about the new direction in home computers, others remain skeptical.

"How many people are going to rush home to write letters or term papers?" said Esther Dyson, president of the New York-based firm of Rosen Research.

"If Coleco can really deliver what it says it can, there's no doubt it will make a major impact on the market. But it still doesn't mean there is a universal use for every home."

Analysts "are all really smart,

well-educated, liberal people with imaginations," she said. "What they don't understand is that most people don't have imaginations, and they would rather just look at a box — television — than play with it."

"What you have is people looking at this industry who don't understand the people who are buying the products."

The home computer industry, she said, is in rough shape and "it's not going to get better quickly" with the advent of Adam or some other "computerized typewriter."



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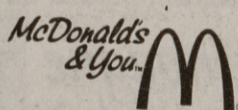
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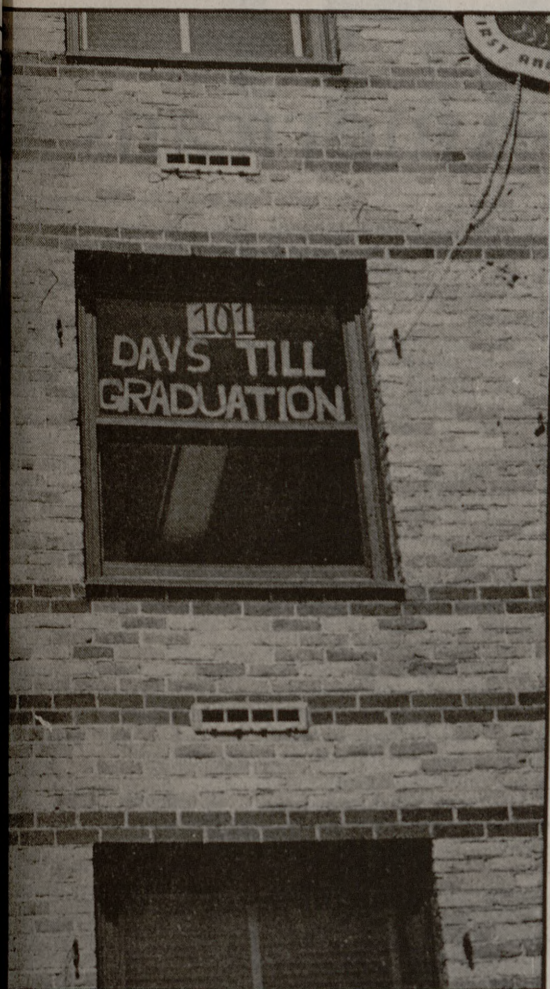
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### 101 Daysmotion

The countdown has already begun for a student living in Briggs Hall third floor. May graduation for the Class of 1984 was a short 101 days away Wednesday.

## Sick kids have wishes granted

**United Press International**  
**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** — Children who spend time in hospital have an overriding wish to get well.

Rosemary and Jim Baker grant that wish. But they can give just about anything else to a little boy or girl might want.

A puppy dog, a visit with Mickey Mouse, presents from Santa Claus and trips to Walt Disney World are some of the things 12 chronically ill children have received from A Wish Come True, a private nonprofit group the Bakers started in 1965.

"It begins to be that your whole life revolves around the hospital," said Linda Brassard of the daughter Melissa, who suffered from cystic fibrosis. "You get there's anything outside the hospital."

Melissa, a single be-ribboned child down her back, looks like an other active 5-year-old — except for the tube peeking out from her bandaged wrist. She spent nearly half her life in a hospital.

Melissa, her two sisters and her parents went to Disney World earlier this year, courtesy of A Wish Come True, because Melissa wanted to see Mickey Mouse. The organization picked up the \$1,800 tab.

Mrs. Baker, 37, of Tiverton, has three healthy teen-agers herself. She said she has always been involved in fundraising. She heard about a group in Arizona helping chronically ill children, and decided with her husband to start a similar group in Rhode Island.

Since then, she's heard about similar groups in other states, including Massachusetts, that have such organizations.

The Bakers' group is limited to helping children in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts.

"Right now we're really nickel and dime it, but people have been wonderful," she said. "The Tiverton Town Council increased their salaries, the fire-

men raised money for us, as have the Cub Scouts. The kids especially have been wonderful — it gives them a feeling of being able to help their own," she said.

Mrs. Baker said they have 30 volunteers around the state helping out with the program.

When she's not raising money for their project, Mrs. Baker is a nursery school teacher. Her husband is a self-employed truck driver.

Not every wish comes true. Sometimes there isn't enough time.

Mrs. Baker said one of the first wishes they tried to fulfill was for a 9-year-old leukemia victim named Michael, who wanted to visit his aunt and uncle in San Diego, Calif.

The doctors said he was too ill, so the relatives were flown to Rhode Island by A Wish Come True. Michael died the day they arrived. He never saw them.

"That's when we really realized these children are seriously ill, and in some cases don't have a lot of time," she said.

So far, no child has asked for a wish they can't grant.

The hospital usually tells the Bakers of a particular child, and they contact the parents. Mrs. Baker then finds a way to meet the child and discuss his hobbies without specifically mentioning what she is planning.

The wheels are then put in motion.

One child received a puppy. Another was visited at home by Santa Claus. Still another got a swimming pool. Several have gone to Disney World with their families.

Mrs. Brassard said the trip to Disney World she shared with her family is a memory they will always cherish.

"It was wonderful," Mrs. Brassard said. "This organization touched our lives and we'll remember it forever. People really need to see a wish come true."

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