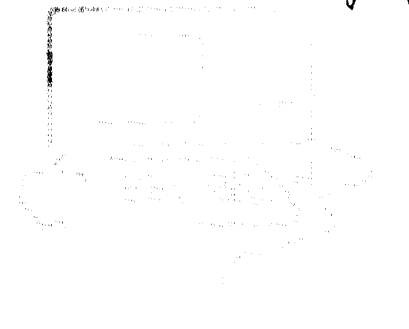


🍏 Apple Lisa Computer
Technical Information

🍏 Apple Lisa Computer:
Chronology
(Dave Redhed)
December 1985

Lisa Computer: 1983 - 1985

- Orphan Support



December is traditionally the time when we look back over the year and try to draw some conclusions about where we have been and then speculate about where we think we are going. For those who like to reminisce, and especially for those who have not followed the Lisa from the beginning, I would like to focus on the last two years and ten months. For a synopsis of this thirty-four month period, look at the accompanying charts. They tell the story of Lisa from the beginning to very near the end. The only thing that Apple has not eliminated is the development environment of the Lisa Pascal Workshop. (By the time this is in print, Apple may have announced their development system for the Mac. I expect that very shortly after that announcement, they will drop support for the Lisa Workshop.)

For those who bought the XL as a Macintosh and have never experienced the Lisa environment, this bit of history may not be of great interest. I do not wish to criticize them for their choice nor do I wish to reproach Apple for what they have done to the Lisa. I have included this review of Lisa's history to create a context for some additional comments and observations I would like to make.

A Salute To Greatness

As a voice of support for those who invested in Lisa and have learned that computers can be helpful without demanding a great deal of extraneous knowledge from their users, I wish to put something in print that has been a long time coming. The demise of Lisa has deprived the microcomputer industry of a computer system that has no equal among single-user systems. Regardless of the Lisa's obvious failure to gain acceptance, I wish to salute Wayne Rosing, Bruce Daniels, Larry Tessler, John Couch, and the other members of the Lisa development team. They created the most thoroughly-designed and well-balanced system that I have ever had the good fortune to use. I do not mean to say that it is a perfect system with no flaws, merely that it comes closer to being an ideal end-user system than any other

The MACazine

| 1983 | |
|------|---|
| Feb | Apple announces a revolutionary new computer, the Lisa |
| Mar | The Lisa is introduced to developers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the primary market is the medium sized office - Lisa will dominate the high-end micros |
| June | First shipments of Lisa take place in some quantity |
| Aug | Second presentation of Lisa to Developers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there will be a "Lisa Family" of computers with a 10 year life - The opportunity with Lisa is IMMENSE - "Applications on Lisa will not be limited by the technology, but by our imaginations" |
| Nov | The Lisa 2 series is announced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lower prices - additional models available |
| Dec | The first Apple-sponsored ToolKit class is held |

| 1984 | |
|------|--|
| Jan | Version 2.0 of the Lisa Office System is released |
| Feb | The Macintosh is announced - an "insanely great" computer |
| Apr | Developers are informed that Apple is dropping support for the ToolKit, but will sell it as an unsupported product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apple releases the Lisa Workshop Supplement for Macintosh development |
| July | Lisa 7/7 announced (version 3.0) MacWorks is available to developers |
| Oct | The "Spring Release" of the Lisa Pascal Workshop is Available (Version 3.0) |

| 1985 | |
|------|--|
| Jan | Lisa 7/7 bug fixes released as version 3.1 |
| Feb | The Lisa is renamed the Macintosh XL |
| Mar | A concept called the Macintosh Office is announced with the Macintosh XL appearing as the high end model |
| May | The Macintosh XL is discontinued as a product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apple commits to 5 years of support - Apple announces a Screen Modification Kit - Apple announces a software Migration Kit |
| Sep | The Macintosh Office is discarded as a marketing tool |
| Oct | The Screen Conversion Kit is available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changes to the Macintosh screen pixel format - the XL will no longer run Lisa software |
| Nov | The Migration Kit is available from Apple <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - converts from Lisa 7/7 to Lotus (jazz) or to Microsoft (Excel, etc.) |

system I have seen in my 28 years of working with computers.

Obviously, much of the world disagrees with me and the many other Lisa users who believe in its underlying design philosophy. Those who know Macintosh and Lisa on a superficial level will argue that there is really very little difference between them. To these people who think that windows, pull-down menus, and a mouse are the real essence of Lisa and Mac, nothing I can say will be of use. For those who know Macintosh well and Lisa only casually, most of the things they wish their Mac would do more conveniently and with less jeopardy of data loss, the Lisa does as a natural part of its operation.

The segment of my profession which disappoints me most are those who really believe that computers should not be as easy to use as Lisa. For instance, they do not like the fact that turning off Lisa is a software function that ensures the proper state of the system before power is actually turned off. They take offense that Lisa does not have a hard-wired power switch. They believe that if a person does not have the training to turn the computer off at the right time, he or she should not be using a computer.

Then there is the crowd that thinks that Switcher and several applications are a perfectly good replacement for Lisa 7/7. While I do not wish to take away from the technical achievement of Switcher in the Mac environment, it is a kludge that is necessary because the Mac operating system is not a multi-tasking system. True, you can switch between applications a lot faster than you can in Lisa 7/7, but there is a price to be paid and the down payment is that you have to somehow make sure that the applications will co-exist without problems. While the Macintosh has a number of good features and some really innovative design concepts, the fact is that, as an end-user system, the Mac is not in the same class with Lisa; it has a different set of underlying design goals. Lisa stands alone as a hardware/software system created to help the user accomplish a task that exists apart from the computer itself.

For a short period of time a very talented and dedicated people came together at Apple to build a computer system designed to be used by ordinary people. What specific circumstances created this conjunction of technical talent is beyond my knowledge. However, it did happen and for a brief time there was an unparalleled flash of brilliance that is now a fading image.

A year ago, I was very unhappy with Apple for what I considered a tremendous blunder that not only disappointed me but cost me many thousands of dollars. I had contact with hundreds of Lisa owners (users and developers) who were hurt and

bewildered as I was. Now I have come to understand that the real accident in this bizarre series of events is that Lisa was spawned in the first place. Probably the experiment could only have happened at Apple; it is the only company I can think of that would have even considered carrying such radical innovation to the market place. With that capability also came the freedom to readily abandon Lisa in favor of whichever project bore the blessing of the person in the driver's seat at that time. The IBM PC certainly was not very innovative, but it is still there and will be for some time to come.

I have worked for over two years with my dream computer system, and I expect to have another year or two. For this I am very grateful. I wish to encourage all other Lisa owners who are plagued with thoughts of bitterness towards Apple to recognize the tremendous experiences that you have been through. How many people can say that they have ever worked on a system that they regard with the fondness you have towards your Lisa? (I have never talked to a PC user who relates to his or her system as you and I do.)

But now the end is in sight. The prospect of never being able to use the LaserWriter with 7/7 is very discouraging. New devices will be coming out, and there will be no way to create new drivers for Lisa to support them. Development of new applications is possible with the ToolKit, but all the developers have gone elsewhere. (Why stick around when the vendor walks away?)

Why doesn't someone pick up the software and support the Lisa users? While the alleged 60,000-80,000 Lisa systems out there seem like a feasible market size for some kind of venture, no one has been able to organize even a tenth of this number in order to try. A year ago, an effort of this type might have made sense (assuming that Apple had been agreeable), but now it is probably too late. Apple has successfully shifted the momentum from Lisa to the Macintosh. (In so doing, they may have shifted some of it away from Apple also, but that is another story.) With the upcoming Christmas season I do not want this to sound like a wake, for I really do not feel that way. I am content to live in two worlds, for I know that all of my really productive time will be on Lisa. I also know that several years from now I will probably have no more Lisa documents. I feel sure that the system I will be working on then will not be as good as Lisa, but it certainly will be better than either my Apple II or the PC. There is no doubt in my mind that Lisa will have been an important part of that development process.

The Final Insult

I suppose that someone at Apple just thought it was the natural thing to say, but

I think it really shows a distinct lack of sensitivity. When you install the Migration Kit software on Lisa the message on the screen reads: The Macintosh XL Is Installing The Migration Kit Software. The irony of this message coming out of a program running under the Lisa operating system is almost too much to bear. I will not demand an apology from Apple, but I do hope that someone is just a little embarrassed.

Curing Some Troubles With Mac Works

For those of you who are having troubles with MacWorks on a hard disk, try the following steps:

- (1) Save all your Mac documents on diskette
- (2) If it is a shared disk, save all your Lisa documents on diskette
- (3) Reformat the disk with the Lisa 1 diskette, version 3.1.
- (4) Reformat the disk with the Hard Disk Install for Macintosh (either all or part of the disk)
- (5) Copy all of the documents from diskette back onto the disk

For reasons I have not been able to understand, there is something that happens in the Lisa disk formatting process that can affect the operation of MacWorks, even after the disk has been re-formatted with Macintosh. The main source to this problem is that most people may not have reformatted their disk with the Lisa 3.1 version, since it was not a necessary step when updating to 3.1. I could not get MacWorks to boot directly from the hard disk even though the entire disk was devoted to Macintosh. As soon as I followed the above procedure, it booted as it should. (However, it still screws up my Lisa preferences and I have not found out if there is a fix for that problem.)

Lisa People Have Feelings Too

Don't forget your favorite Lisa person over the holidays. LisaVision and the Bit-Fixer cost less than \$100, and without the manual either will fit in a stocking. For the more economy-minded, the Accessory Pak 1 from Silicon Beach Software is a neat XL utility at \$39.95.

—Dave Redhed

Dave Redhed is a Contributing Editor. Send comments to him via CompuServe 70167,613.