

Message.
Subject: Intelligence gathering
Sender: John MINCK / HP0400/02

Dated: 11/04/87 at 1425.

Contents: 2.

Part 1.

TO: Mike CUEVAS / HP0400/02
Greg HOBERG / HP0400/02
Dana KREITTER / HP0400/02
Chris PEDERSEN / HP0400/02
Wally RASMUSSEN / HP0400/02
Carel VEENHUYZEN / HP0400/02
David WHITE / HP0400/02
Bill WHITNEY / HP0400/02

CC: Marc SAUNDERS / HP0400/02

Part 2.

Bill Pastori of Eaton/AilTech mentioned to me at Autotestcon that someone from HP called him, identifying themselves as the secretary of John Minck, and asking some detail on their agile synthesizer.

While I don't like people using my name unnecessarily, and I don't even want to know or care who did it, I think the matter does bring up the need to remember some important principles on methods of gathering technical and market intelligence.

1) Everything we do must be above-board, and have no taint of shading of truth. It is not acceptable to use false names to order literature or call into a competitor asking for data. The Jolly Blue Giant already has so much clout that little guys almost claim unfair practice without our intending to hurt anyone.

John Doyle used to describe IBM as a friendly elephant who could squash a competitor without intending to just by turning around. There are some of the same aspects with HP.

2) Tracking serial numbers is OK (I think) if you find a friendly customer who is willing to let you take a number. It is not acceptable to go to a competitor booth at a show when no one is there and run their gear or read serials.

3) The preferred way to ask for technical data explanations is to call and identify yourself and offer to send HP published material in return. They may not have our latest TDS or Appl notes.

4) Talking with competitors in general is an iffy matter. It is legal for the normal technical matters. But if the other person is skilled they will often get more than they give. I find it useful to talk with competitor A about competitor B, but purists and lawyers would probably find something wrong with that.

Anyway, I guess we should maybe talk more about this sometime. With many new people, anything can happen.