

MINCK,JOHN / HP0400/02 - HPDESK print.

Message.

Dated: 10/19/87 at 1054.

Subject: Feedback

Sender: John MINCK / HP0400/02

Contents: 3.

Part 1.

TO: George SPARKS / HP0900/EM

Part 2.

Here's a short note for your background, George.

Good luck on your new assignment.

Part 3.

hp	HEWLETT
	PACKARD

Stanford Park Division * Palo Alto, CA 94303-0889 * 415-857-2060

From: John Minck

Date: Oct 19, 1987

To: George Sparks

Re: Instrument controllers

Happy to see the news of your recent coronation, George. Perhaps it will help us in our problems with instrument controllers.

1) There has been an arrogance in Ft. Collins since HP-IB was invented. I had suggested the need for a comprehensive and modular controller strategy when Negrete was running things. I think I was in AMD in the early 70s. It went along the lines of a strategy where you could start with a secure controller with a loadable ROM and a run-only panel, through a key-secured touch panel, through several versions of keyboard controllers.

Negrete's answer for better or worse was that if you looked at what customers wanted in instrument controllers, you found they always needed to have a keyboard, and therefore the 9835s and 9825s were just right. The part he was right about was the fact that at some point in the test development cycle (on a production test line for example) the engineer did in fact need a keyboard.

As the years passed, my Metrology friends in the industry were telling me that PCs were becoming more and more attractive because they really just wanted to use them for instrument control and simple data manipulation. They were using Radio Shack and finally IBM. They didn't need the horsepower of 9836s, etc. Even though some customer studies were showing that large percentages of HP desktops were running instruments, Ft. Collins had only modest acceptance. There were sops from time to time, such as assigning Mike Forman to work the internal instrument control marketing. But support for him lagged and he and presumably the commitment went away. In the meantime, the PCs took over, not only in the Metrology segments but a good portion of other instrument control.

2) A completely separate issue is use of HP Desktops for trade shows. SPD

is probably a typical example of a microwave division going to trade shows and HP-only seminars like the RF/Microwave symposium. Our marketing group has few new computers like the 300 series--I think two. When we go to shows, those new computers are usually tied up for writing software, and I cannot get them for displays. So what do I do? Yep, use 9816s and 9836s.

Our experience borrowing computers from Ft. Collins has been so distastful and problem-strewn, that it is simply not worth the effort. I know HP would be better off with modern displays, but I don't have the patience to make the effort anymore. So be it.

I'm not sure if your new job will be involved with either of these issues, George? But I did want to make you aware of them in case you can have any influence with the situation. Realistically, I suppose Ft. Collins will go on their merry way. But perhaps with your orientation to instruments, we will get new focus. I for one would like to see a loan pool of modern computers to be used for shows and travelling seminars.

Good luck to you in your new incarnation.

Cheers,