

Exhuming CTOS: The Convergent Technologies Project

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CT in a Nutshell

- Founded August 1979
 - First hardware product: IWS (Integrated Workstation)
 - New operating system: CTOS (Convergent Tech. OS)
 - FCS October 1980
- Follow-on CTOS-based products:
 - AWS, 1982 (Advanced Workstation)
 - NGEN, 1983 (modular hardware) (Next GENeration WS)
- Notable non-CTOS product: WorkSlate
 - The first laptop (1983)

Why CT?

- First with many innovations for desktop
 - Networking
 - Email
 - Multitasking, context switching
 - Laptop computing
- Unique modularity:
 - Hardware
 - Software
- Highest quality

“CTOS was built on ideas from several other systems . . . What made it unique was the combination of a well-crafted operating system with innovative hardware design.”

--Jeffrey J. Krause
(CTOS Software Manager)

“I respectfully disagree . . . CTOS had a lot of innovations way before anyone else did.”

--Jodie Hughes
(NGEN Hardware Manager)

Why now?

- Designers still living, locations known
- Active CT alumni group
- Personal connections available
- People are starting to discard stuff
(25-year psychological boundary?)

First Steps

- Initial contacts have located:
 - AWS (multiple, probably operational)
 - NGEN (several, probably operational)
 - Documentation
 - Other materials (marketing, etc.)
- No IWS so far—probably unlikely
- Disk with CTOS 1.0 binary
- Unrelated “finds” (other systems)

Most Important Find

- CT Alums who want to participate
 - Jim Wheeler
 - Dick Toepfer
- Early designers to be interviewed
 - Jeff Krause
 - Drew Hoffman
 - Ben Wegbreit
 - Greg Walsh
 - Dave Stearns
 - David “Louie” Renaud
 - Jodie Hughes
 - And others

Next Steps

- Central participants meet to organize, learn from Paul and Phil
- Find interim storage for some items
- Start Web page/blog
- Start record-keeping of found objects