

MEDIA RELEASE

542 S.E. 5th Avenue • Delray Beach, Florida 33444 • 305/276-3929

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attn: News
Features
Products

CORE
INTERNATIONAL

RELEASE: NO. 21985/1723
Contact: Bennett Greene
V.P. Marketing

PC-51 SOFTWARE REPLICATES
IBM 5110/5120 OPERATING ENVIRONMENT;
BASIC PROGRAMS RUN WITHOUT MODIFICATION

DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA -- Don't let anyone tell you that the IBM 5110/5120(TM) Series of small computers is obsolete. CORE International, Inc., a rapidly growing computer technology company in Delray Beach, Florida insists that the IBM 5110s and 5120s are very much alive and well, and via CORE's long list of support services and products, are likely to be in use for a long time to come.

The IBM 5110 and 5120s were originally developed as a business-oriented version of the IBM series of small computers used by NASA back in the early 1970s. Before the PC revolution, the 5110 was designed and a few were built at IBM's Rochester, NY plant. Later, the 5110s and 5120s were produced at the IBM facility at Boca Raton, Florida. CORE says they're good machines, solidly engineered and immensely powerful.

In the face of incredible advances in the Personal/Business field, many users like the power of the advanced Basic Language on their 5110/20s -- it can run business oriented programs that heretofore simply were too much for even the "best" of the PC Basics. That's why there are over 30,000 of them still in use today. And CORE has grown to be the largest independent service and support organization for IBM 5110/20 systems, as well as the sole source for IBM 5110/20 expansion hardware and software.

Unfortunately, the 5110/20 user was not left an upward expansion path by IBM. Since most of the owners have a considerable investment in custom 5110/20 programs, IBM's plan to have 5110/20 users move on to a larger system, such as the incompatible S/36, is not always a satisfactory solution.

CORE INTERNATIONAL recognized the need for economical solutions that could tap the enormous capability in the 5110/20 machines. In 1982 they introduced the first series of hard disk drives designed and built specifically for the 5110/20 computers. For the first time, 5110/20 owners could have mass storage ranging from 6 to 170MB.

-more-

According to CORE, Users enjoyed fantastic increases in processing speed since the CORE hard drives could read/write and transfer data at least 10 times the speed of the IBM floppies. For example, according to CORE, a 3,000 random record SORT was done from the CORE hard disk in 1 min. 40 sec. -- the same 3,000 record file took 12 min. 35 sec. when using floppies.

The impact of this CORE development gave the 5110/20s a second life. Expansion was now a reality. Speed and storage were increased dramatically. The tedium of swapping floppies was gone. General Ledger programs that were previously limited to a few thousand transactions now were virtually limitless. Inventory, Accounts Receivable and Sales Analysis programs could work with ease, since the massive amounts of data weren't spread out over many diskettes.

While the CORE hard disk systems were a breakthrough to 5110/20 users, demand was increasing for additional 5110s and 5120s to serve as smart terminals on COREnet(TM), a high speed parallel network LAN based on the CORE ALPHA Series of hard disks and intelligent controllers.

Since no new IBM 5110s or 5120s were in production and few pre-owned were available, CORE immediately began working on software that would allow users to move their custom and commercial 5110/20 Basic programs and data from the 5110s and 5120s to reliable yet relatively inexpensive hardware. After nearly two years of development, CORE's PC-51(TM) operating system and advanced business Basic was recently introduced.

PC-51 is a software package that allows 100% transportability of IBM 5110/20 programs and data files to be run, written to, and read, on IBM PCs, XTs, and ATs. PC-51 supports 5-1/4" and 8" floppies, the XT and AT hard disks, and the CORE ALPHA SERIES of hard disk drives that support COREnet LAN as high-speed servers.

"Now CORE has gone the next great leap in serving the IBM 5110/20 user. PC-51 is a revolutionary Operating System and super powerful business Basic that will run all of a user's 5110/20 programs on the IBM PC, XT, or AT. It presents an exceptional value, especially when considered in the context of conversion to a System/36(tm) -- PC-51 eliminates the costs and problems associated with reprogramming and operator retraining. Your operators will continue to be productive because PC-51 even reassigns the PC keyboard to emulate that of a 5110/20." says Hal Prewitt, CORE's President.

"Imagine a multi-user network using IBM PCs as smart terminals, all running original 5110/20 Basic Programs without changes, each workstation costing about 1/4 of what a new 5120 did, and with 1/3 the maintenance costs."

The key to CORE's success appears to be the focus on customers' total needs, including educating the prospective buyer about CORE's systems, moving logically from price preoccupation to value consciousness. For example, why would CORE position its parallel PC/XT/AT based LAN -- COREnet, head to head with a minicomputer such as the baby System/36?

According to CORE, the answer is value. The company believes that IBM's decision to leave no expansion path for the 5110/20 user was based on these assumptions: 1) Users would grow at IBM's rate thereby requiring total upgrade to a mini-computer (S/36) after five years or, 2) they would hardly grow at all thereby needing no minicomputer nor 5110/20 expansion.

According to CORE's V.P. Marketing Bennett Greene, "Somewhere amidst these polarized assumptions are 5,000 to 30,000 users of 5110s and 5120s, each needing some degree of expandability, yet they're understandably reticent to abandon custom software that took the better part of five years to debug and optimize. Now, when they finally have it working right, IBM tells them to junk it, and start the process all over again."

"Conversion from 5110/20 Basic programs to System/36 Basic is at best a major revision, at worst -- a total abandonment of the 5110/20 user's software investment. Even a revision at today's rate may be impractical.", suggests Greene.

"Moreover, there's the matter of "fat". A System/36 is burdened with an operating system so huge it takes up about 20 megabytes of the 30 MB hard disk. So the user gets only 10 MB of hard disk data and application program storage."

At under 200 KB in size, CORE's extremely lean PC-51 operating system resides in a 256KB (minimum) PC, XT or AT's machine memory, not on the CORE hard disk. So PC-51 users who have a 42.4 MB ALPHA Series hard disk get the use of all 42.4 MB. And the CORE hard disk control program is even leaner, needing only 4 KB of memory. All considered, CORE's LAN overhead, including PC-51, is about 1/100 the size of the S/36 operating system.

First came the hard disk. Then networking up to eight 5110s and or 5120s. Now PC-51 and COREnet mixing up to eight 5110/20s and up to 32 PCs, XTs, and/or ATs. Where does CORE INTERNATIONAL see itself now, and over the next five years?

According to Greene, "CORE INTERNATIONAL is a full spectrum organization. By this I mean that we design, manufacture, service, supply, and provide total support, hardwarewise and softwarewise to the IBM 5110/20/PC user."

"As an authorized Value Added Dealer for IBM Personal Computers", Greene continues, "CORE adds special software such as PC-51 and includes a full year of their comprehensive "Sudden Support" maintenance on the IBM PCs, XTs, and ATs."

"In effect, we are very much like having an in-house EDP department including programmers, maintenance personnel and systems analysts always on-call, but without the overhead of a full time staff.

"Our agents across the nation are all professional 5110/20/PC programmers and we require their successful completion of our CORE/IBM Systems Integration Curriculum before they are permitted to represent CORE INTERNATIONAL. This ensures that each CORE customer receives a satisfactory installation. CORE's customer support philosophy begins with the sale."

"One example is our maintenance program -- if your CORE or IBM equipment fails, and it is under our maintenance, we'll fix it, or replace it within 24 hours. And that stands for any installation in the continental U.S. served by 'next-day air-freight' services." Greene continued.

Another area that Mr. Greene is particularly proud of is the CORE Sudden Support Toll-Free Hot Line. CORE software is supported as well as their hardware -- he says that more often than not, problems are transient, most of the calls CORE gets on the Hot Line are software or operator related as opposed to hardware casualties. So CORE makes sure that there's a CORE certified technical consultant available to help interpret error messages and "talk" a customer through these problems.

As a Value-Added Dealer for IBM products, CORE INTERNATIONAL offers the IBM PC/XT/AT PC-51 in various package configurations, a number of which will satisfy the needs of most single-user 5110/20 systems. CORE also offers its own line of 8" floppy diskette drives in a PC styled cabinet that is 100% 5110/20 compatible, and plugs right into a PC. This converts a PC or XT into a direct machine-for-machine replacement for 5110s and 5120s, when running under PC-51.

CORE offers a series of standard packaged network configurations where users looking for expansion of their 5110/20 system can save thousands of dollars. Likewise, when these standard packages are insufficient for customer needs, CORE offers systems integration services to find solutions for even the most demanding operations center. They have the resources in technical expertise and hardware inventory to meet the needs of virtually every IBM small system user.

-more-

While the PC-51 operating system will run 5110 and 5120 programs without modification, the implementation of basic 5110/20 programs in a multi-user (COREnet) LAN environment will require some minor programming enhancements. CORE suggests that end users expanding their 5110/20s to COREnet take advantage of the professional programming assistance available from COREagents in their area. At the same time, CORE says that there is nothing difficult or mysterious about a COREnet installation, provided one reads and studies the documentation carefully. So most house programmers can provide a satisfactory installation.

Recently CORE has been offering High Performance Hard Disk Upgrade Kits for the IBM PC-AT. Marketed under the trade name ATplus(tm), the kits come in 20, 30, 40, 56, and 72 MB capacities, are plug ready, including cables and AT mounting rails. They're also available with a set of 128 kilobit (150ns) DRAM chips boosting memory of a 256KB base AT to 512 KB. The drives are manufactured exclusively for CORE by Control Data Corporation.

Contact CORE INTERNATIONAL, Inc. at 542 S.E. 5th Avenue, Delray Beach, Florida, or call 305/276-3929.