

Microsci debuts Apple II workalike

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SANTA ANA, Calif.—Microsci, the disk drive and home software manufacturer, is off and running with its new 64K, Apple II workalike home computer called Havac.

Dan Gomez, Microsci's marketing director, described Havac as the computer specialty store's \$850 answer to the low-end Commodore, Coleco/Adam and Atari computers sold by mass merchants and discounters.

Havac "fills a niche" in the specialty stores' under-\$1,000 product line, Gomez insisted. (While Apple has not come out with a microcomputer priced under \$1,000 yet, there is much speculation that a soon-to-be-introduced reconfigured IIe will fill that void.)

Microsci has earned some shelf space already. Peachtree Microsystems, Stone Mountain, Ga., described by its co-owner Michael Smith as a "neighborhood computer store, added Havac to its mix of Apple IIe, Franklin, Eagle, Corona and Fortune.

Peachtree is one of approximately 150 specialty computer store dealers selected by Microsci to evaluate and debut its new computer.

Peachtree's Smith noted, "It gives you an Apple-com-

patible system for under \$1,000. It's a real nice computer for a first-time user." And, he added, "it's got the most well-equipped operating system I've ever seen in a microcomputer of its size, class and price," referring to the communications software and typewriter program built into the operating system. "The typewriter program should have been included in every Apple ever sold," he insisted.

While Smith is primarily bullish on Havac, he does see one bear. "The only drawback, for a first-time user, is that the operating system must be booted up each time from the diskette. You can't achieve a cursor from turn on or reset."

This is because Applesoft is on the disk, not in the computer's PROM or ROM, Smith explained. But this does teach the user a more structured operation of a computer, he added.

The basic 6502-based Havac system includes 64K RAM and 8K ROM with no expansion slots, a single 5¼-in. 164K floppy, upper and lower case keyboard with four cursor keys, color graphics, serial port, printer port, game port, video hookup, HavacDOS and free "teaching" software. The system retails for \$850.

Add an inexpensive printer,

monitor and some extra software, and a buyer could squeak by for around \$1,000 or \$1,100, according to Gomez. (A second disk drive is optional.)

HavacDOS, Typewriter, Utilities and HavaCOM (communications) software are now being shipped. Card File, Calculator and Havac Basic will follow. In addition to this software, owners will be able to add from more than 1,000 of the most popular Apple programs.

Microsci plans to kick off a consumer advertising campaign March 15 "to generate consumer interest in Havac for the 20 Los Angeles dealers," Gomez said. The initial 30-to-60-day campaign, budgeted at \$115,000, will focus on the Los Angeles market, using the *Los Angeles Times*.

To generate national dealer interest, Microsci will launch a three-to-four-month ad campaign in national trade publications in April (\$20,000 per month). The dealer advertising will promote Havac as the computer specialty stores' tool to "break the tightening stranglehold at the very low end of the market," Gomez said. "We will not sell Havac to mass merchandisers, discounters or department stores," he added. ●