

Retro-Psion

Will Green takes a look at all that's retro in the Psion world - this issue: a Boris Cornet special!

Welcome to this Issue's Retro section, which is unashamedly dedicated Boris Cornet.

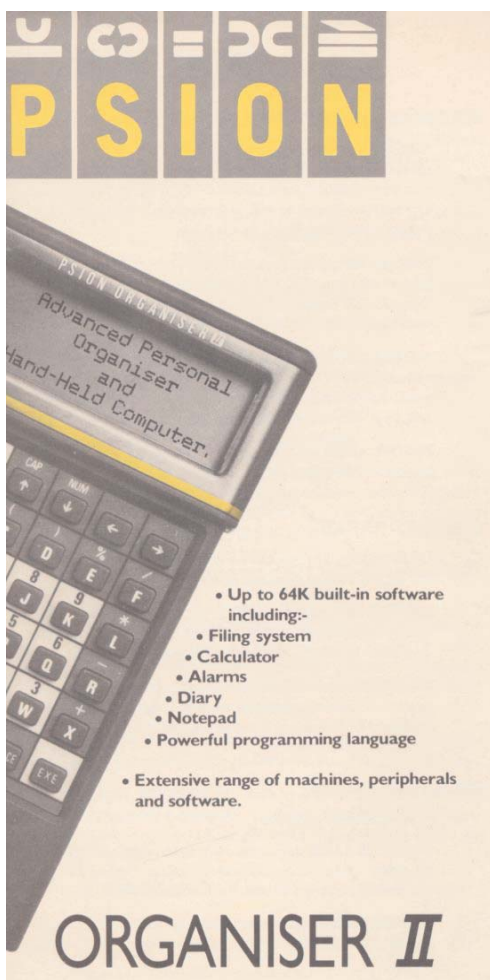
Boris is the organiser behind the Organiser II's most celebrated and useful web site, which can be found at;

<http://members.surfeu.at/org2/>

Originally Boris' site was a mirror of the original Org2.com site, however the new site is being added too continually.

Recent additions include a download for the HD6303X manual and an updated version of Psi2Win (Commslink Server for Psion Organiser II), as reviewed in last issue's P.C.J.

However most exciting for the Psion Retro enthusiast is a downloadable PDF facsimile version of



IPSO FACTO, the Newsletter of the International Psion Pocket Computer User Group.

Boris has been able to acquire Volumes III 1989/90 to VI 1992/93. Check out the screen shot - fantastic.

Of course this isn't all <http://members.surfeu.at/org2/> has to offer, The Psion Organiser II Forum, Technical Manual downloads, User Manuals

downloads, Software Downloads, I could go on and on - you really need to check it out.

The web site is also supported by a growing team of fellow Retro enthusiasts, who are eager to help any new comer to the retro scene.



IPSO FACTO



The Newsletter of the International Psion Organiser User Group

Volume III, No. 11, January 1990

IPSO FACTO was a printed newsletter posted to PSION Organiser enthusiasts throughout the world.

You can download PDF facsimile of these newsletters from <http://members.surfeu.at/org2/>.

If you're a Retro fan they are essential reading!

An Interview with Boris Cornet.

When did you first buy a Psion and what model is/was it?

Well I *bought* my first organiser just a few years ago, but my first contact was much much earlier:

After finishing school in '79 I began studying computer science at the University of Vienna. After 2 years of hauling punch cards, I decided that being a computer nerd was not what I wanted to do for a living.

So I moved to West Berlin and became part of the squatting scene. I discovered the Psion Organiser II when I was studying (media-pedagogic) again in the mid 80'ies. Somebody approached the Students' Job Board' asking for BASIC lessons - I got the job, and was confronted by an enthusiastic Organiser II fan who wanted to gain control over his 'Cyber Pocket Assistants'.

I immediately fell in love with the Organiser II - which is a truly

amazing piece of technology: so much potential and so small!

I struck a deal for my work - one XP for me, and the lessons for (almost) free.

From that day on, the Organiser II has become a constant part of my live: It replaced my calendar, wrist-watch and notebook.

I wrote several programs including a word processor and a filing system with folders etc. I even programmed my XP in bed! - and I still believe the Organiser II is the only handheld which can be programmed comfortably in bed.

Later the interest in the Organiser II was partially replaced by the Amiga 1000 which was fascinating because of its graphics potential - remember VGA wasn't even invented at that time and the 8086 was the state-of-the-art processor for mess-DOS machines then.

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But disaster struck - on one doomed night, somehow a mysterious power defect not only blew up my Organiser but also wiped all the data on my packs!

At that very moment I learned the importance of backups the hard way. That was the end of a long-term hobby - at least that was what I thought at that moment. And so it was, until...

Meanwhile I left Berlin (still "West-") because of what I call the "final wall tantrum (der endgültige Mauer-Koller)" just a few months before the wall finally went down (history does play tricks on you sometimes).

Back in Innsbruck, I convinced the Tyrol branch of the Austrian Traffic Security Board (KfV) of doing road accident statistics via computer instead of counting numbers on printouts. That's how I got the job I'm still doing today (I call it computersitting or computer occupation-therapy whereas most people would say network administration or even determining).

I also do Clipper and Visual Basic programming and geographical information systems are a new challenge.

...one day someone asked me if I knew as solution to a problem:



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An automated speed display (primarily an educational device) is hired to schools etc. The idea was to store the data in a rough trade removable device capable of recovering after all sorts of misuse.

I checked the market, but my first idea kept being the best solution: the good old Organiser II! So that's how I came back into business.

The project almost died because Psion PLC had ceased support for the Organiser II. If I hadn't found Dave & Jaap's marvellous Psion Organiser II CM, XP & LZ homepage the handshake lines would have driven me nuts.

Do you use or own a more current Psion, for example a 5mx?

Call me old fashioned, but no, I don't use PDAs. Lotus Notes reminds me of appointments at the office, and so my cell phone does for private ones. However, part of my "Museum of Abandoned Technologies" are two Psion 3's (the first one, without a trailing a, c or mx), and I use it occasionally for writing texts on train rides.

Do you use a Org II on a regular basis as your main Organiser?

No, see above. But It is still used for data collection (the speed display, and for inventory in con-

junction with a bar code reader)

What is it you love of the Org II?

First of all: Its merely unbreakable!

Next: It is easily programmable

Third: It is a wonderful machine code trainer.

Last: I love 'em retro things!

What is your favourite Org II application?

The HD6303 cross assembler (not the Psion one but the freeware PCMAC adaption by Brian Smith) and my upcoming overlay linker.

6. Do you have any advice for readers new to 'retro-computing'?

Stick to the best-selling PDA ever: the good old Organiser II ! About a million (former) users can't be wrong!

And if you are really into retro computing: visit my IBM 6830 and watch it booting for 10 minutes (its worth waiting, because seeing those chain printers in action is still amazing)!

8. How do you see the future of the Retro-Psion (Org II) scene?

As I can judge from the response I get on the ORG2 pages & forum: Organiser II is not dead, it doesn't even smell funny! (a somehow adapted Frank Zappa citation <BG>)

To be serious: If someone needs a rugged and cheap data collection device, the organiser II is still one of the best choices (even the XP despite of the y2k bug).

In next month's Retro section - can you replace your modern organiser with a retro-replacement?

A guide to the pinnacles and pitfalls of such a venture!

