

Tatung Einstein

The **Tatung Einstein** is an eight-bit home/personal computer produced by Taiwanese corporation Tatung, designed in Bradford, England at Tatung's research laboratories and assembled in Bridgnorth and Telford, England. It was aimed primarily at small businesses.

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History

The Einstein was released in the United Kingdom in the summer of 1984, and 5,000 were exported back to Taipei later that year. A Tatung monitor (monochrome or colour) and dot matrix printer were also available as options, plus external disc drives and an 80 column display card. It was also capable of emulating the Spectrum 48k with the "Speculator" addon.

More expensive than most of its rivals, the Einstein was popular with contemporary programmers but was commercially unsuccessful.^[1]

A later, revised version, called the Tatung Einstein 256 suffered a similar fate.

Design

The machine was physically large, with an option for one or two built-in three-inch floppy disk drives manufactured by Hitachi. At the time, most home computers used ordinary tape recorders for storage. Another unusual feature of the Einstein was that on start-up the computer entered a simple machine code monitor, called MOS (Machine Operating System). A variety of software could then be loaded from disk, including a CP/M-compatible operating system called Xtal DOS (pronounced 'Crystal DOS', created by Crystal Computers in Torquay), and a BASIC interpreter

Tatung Einstein TC-01



Manufacturer	Tatung
Type	Professional Computer
Release date	1984
Introductory price	GB£499 (equivalent to £1,575 in 2018)
Media	3-inch floppy disk
Operating system	Xtal DOS
CPU	Zilog Z80 clocked at 4MHz
Memory	64KB RAM, 16KB VRAM, 8KB-32KB ROM
Storage	3 inch floppy Drive 1770 FDC
Display	256 × 192 resolution, 16 colours
Input	51 key Keyboard, Joystick
Connectivity	RS232
Dimensions	43.5 × 51.5 × 11.5cm
Successor	Einstein256

(Xtal BASIC). Thanks to the reliability of the machine, and ample memory, the machine proved useful by many software houses to use for programming, and then porting the code to the machines they were made for, namely the Spectrum 48k, Amstrad CPC, and Commodore 64. Eventually, it was superseded by the PC and Atari ST as the development systems of choice.

The follow on machine, the Einstein256, basically was the same as the original, with improved video (Yamaha V9938) and a more slimline black case.

Technical specifications

TC-01

- CPU: Zilog Z80A @ 4 MHz
- 64K RAM
- 8K to 32K ROM
- Z84C30 CTC
- Z84C20 PIO
- intel 8251 SIO
- 1770 FDC Floppy disk Controllers
- Z80 'Tube' bus/interface
- Analogue joystick Ports
- RAM: 64 KB system RAM; 16 KB video RAM
- Video: Texas Instruments TMS9129 16 colours, 32 sprite planes
- Audio: AY-3-8910 (Also Reads keyboard Matrix)

Like the MSX specification

256

- 64K User RAM 192K Video RAM
- Video : V9938, 512 colours

See also

-  Category: Tatung Einstein games

References

1. The Tatung Einstein at old-computers.com (<http://www.old-computers.com/museum/computer.asp?st=1&c=86>)

External links

- Einstein Community Forum (<http://einstein.lefora.com/>)
- Tatung Einstein Computer Web Site (<http://www.einstein.talktalk.net>)
- Tatung Einstein Computer Group (http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tatung_einstein/)
- Tatung Einstein Reborn (<http://www.tatungeinstein.co.uk/>)

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