Exhuming CTOS:
The Convergent Technologies Project

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May 17, 2006
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