EEVblog Electronics Community Forum

Products => Test Equipment => Topic started by: Loddestuen on February 02, 2017, 02:46:47 pm

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Title: **HP 37900D - Want to use it like a HP 80 series**
Post by: **Loddestuen** on **February 02, 2017, 02:46:47 pm**

Hello all,

This will be my first post :-)

I have recently acquired a HP 37900D Transmission- and line Tester. It has an FDD and a HDD and HP-IB.

I really do not think i will ever use it to Transmission- and line Testing but i hoped to be able to use it as an instrument control computer. :-BROKE
HP 80 series are rare and very expensive in Europe.. And i got the HP 39700D for 40€ plus shipping from Germany - i think that is an ok price..

I want to play around with my old HP equipment (a 3324A signal generator and a 3561A spectrum analyser) and control it over GPIB by learning to write small programs. Im into old reel-to-reel and cassette stuff and do my own repairs and adjustment using a good soundcard and AudioTester. But i really want to use the signal generator and the spectrum analyser for doing the test and adjustments of the tape decks - so i will need to learn make small programs and make data acquisition.

According to this site: http://www.museum-nt.de/objekte/hp_37900d.html (http://www.museum-nt.de/objekte/hp_37900d.html) the MB should be the same as HP 9000/332 - Here is a translation from German:

"The HP 37900D is based on the proven technology of HP computer products. The main board of the system is identical to that in the HP 9000/332 computer and uses a Motorola MC68030 processor. The interesting thing about the HP 37900D are its integrated drive (a 52 MB SCSI hard disk), the flat screen in amber-coloured font and the directly attached keyboard."

 :blah:

My question at hand is, what kind of software should i try to install on the HP 37900D in order to get it to function as a scientific HP computer rather than a signal tester?? And where do i get it??

I have only MS-DOS experience - but i want to learn the HP stuff. This might be a steep learning curve for me.. :phew:

Thanks for any good idea!

Title: **Re: HP 37900D - Want to use it like a HP 80 series**
Post by: **sportq** on **February 08, 2017, 02:28:08 pm**

I worked in the HP division in Scotland that made these and yes they're based on the HP300/400 (Motorola 68k) systems. If I recall correctly they have DIO (and possibly DIOII) slots so other more useful general purpose I/O cards could be installed.

Have you seen the HP Computer Museum in Australia? It's got all the info you could want about these systems. There was another system based on the same system board, the R/332 Instrument controller: http://www.hpmuseum.net/display_item.php?hw=1012

(http://www.hpmuseum.net/display_item.php?hw=1012)

It should HP Basic and possibly Basic/UX. HP-UX (HP's Unix variant) might be a stretch with only 4MB of ram (if I recall correctly). All the software is theoretically available from the above site too.

PM me if you have any other questions. There was one on the local Gumtree recently (a fellow HP employee I'm guessing) I was tempted to get it as it was very cheap and worth it for the nostalgia alone.

Peter