"Bytes and Bites: An Economic Analysis and Functional Comparison of the Macintosh Quadra 650 and the K9-ST"

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(who passed up the opportunity to purchase the ASIS Name Enhancer)

Information specialists are faced with a plethora of products designed to support a wide variety of information processing functions. Making sound purchase decisions demands a full understanding of the capabilities and limitations of systems under consideration. This paper will examine two commercially-available products evaluating their performance with respect to many frequently-used applications programs and other functionalities.

The following is an outline of the presentation, and is supported by Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1, all found at the end of this document.

?? Introduction
  o Earlier research:
    Gorman, James. “Man, Bytes, Dog” New Yorker. v. 60:33. (July 2, 1984)
  o Relationship to conference theme

?? Specifications
  o Both are produced according to applicable standards
  o Basic packages:
    Quadra:
    - computer with integrated CD ROM drive
    - microphone
    - mouse
    - power cord
    - keyboard
    - printer (extra)
    - color monitor
    - manuals and disks
    K9-ST
    - single unit with pre-installed operating system, no manuals or system disks

?? Costs
  o Quadra 650 [* now discontinued, cost is give for $2599 (without printer) Power Macintosh, a comparable product]
  o K9-ST $400 (no printer)
Features

- **Space and power requirements:**
  - **Quadra**
    - Requires power strip with surge protector and standard electrical outlet
    - Inoperable during power outages
    - Footprint: 13” x 16” (excluding printer)
  - **K9-ST**
    - Self-powered even during outages though some models operate erratically during thunderstorms
    - No surge protector required
    - Smaller footprint but potential for multiples, especially on the sofa

- **Operating system:**
  - **Quadra**
    - System 7 and up, will need updating regularly
    - Entire system will be obsolete in less than 5 years
    - Service contract advisable
  - **K9-ST**
    - Common operating system shared by all K9 systems
    - No updating required
    - Annual servicing usually all that is needed
    - (This model substantially the same since late 19th century; standard for its production developed almost 100 years ago)

- **Compatibility:**
  - **Quadra**
    - Peripherals not always compatible if not manufactured by Apple
      [*Although this situation is improving, choosing wrong components can vary from merely aggravating to disastrous]*
  - **K9-ST**
    - Generally compatible with everyone
    - All K9’s share common operating system
    - Can communicate for short distances with no additional hardware or software

- **Features comparison:**
  - **GUI**
  - **Voice recognition**
  - **Fuzzy logic capability**
  - **User friendly**
  - **Carpal tunnel syndrome**
**Table 1. Basic Features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quadra</th>
<th>K9-ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>$2600 (without printer)</td>
<td>$400 (printer not recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>System 7+</td>
<td>common to all K9’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System documentation</td>
<td>user manuals, online</td>
<td>not necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpal tunnel syndrome</td>
<td>probably</td>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User friendly</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>unexcelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Features and Software**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quadra</th>
<th>K9-ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GUI</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice Recognition</td>
<td>maybe</td>
<td>highly sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuzzy logic</td>
<td>potentially</td>
<td>built-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word-processing</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheets</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetch</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gopher</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotherapy</td>
<td>primitive</td>
<td>standard with operating system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1 (next page). The Two Systems**