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References:
Reply-To: rmariani@watnot.UUCP (Rico Mariani)
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Summary: The ram board is alive and well and living in Toronto

I Repeat: This is somewhat commerical, read at your own risk....

Due to the number of requests I've had for info re: the memory board
I've been using (and also due to the article I'm following up) I've
decided to risk commercialism... here goes nothing.

In article urjlew@ecsvax.BITNET (Rostyk Lewyckyj) writes:
 > Keywords:Microsoft BASIC,vendor attitudes,COMSPEC
 > [Microsoft Basic comments/bugs removed]
 >
 > Also while in Toronto I tried to call COMSPEC at the number
 > published on the net a little while ago. COMSPEC has pre-
 > announced a 2 meg memory expansion card for around $800. CDN.
 > Because I was not a reseller or a school, the head office
 > would not talk with me. They referred me to their retail store
 > on [CENSORED]. tel. [--CENSORED--]. The personnel at the store
 > had no specific information about the board. The answers were
 > all "I can't tell you". Supposedly the board will only be
 > available fully populated and will get its power from the main
 > box. Questions I wanted answered were: would it allow further
 > expansions, What kind of chips, static (highly unlikely),
 > 256k x 1, 64k x 4, with or without parity, full speed or with
 > wait states. Some of these questions are perhaps irrelevant,
 > but some answers would be a better indication that the
 > hardware already exists.

Good news and bad news for Amiga lovers... the board already exists and
I've had a Beta test version of it connected to my Amiga already. It
uses dynamic memory (don't know what kind of chips off hand, does it
matter?) with no parity checking and no wait states. Well actually
that's not *quite* true, if you try to access the same memory that is
being refreshed then the CPU may see as many as 3 wait states. From

what I understand, this happens very infrequently. As for expandability,
the boards will be stackable; i.e. plug one into the Expansion port,
the plug another board (or other Amiga peripheral) into the board's
expansion port etc. etc. As I understand it COMSPEC has held off
releasing the board because the Amiga's "autoconfig" on the expansion
port has not been documented yet, this standard is what allows the
COMSPEC board to be compatible with other Amiga peripherals...
Apparently the autoconfig documentation will be available any second
now... (Have I got that right Amiga people? Well what do I know anyway...)
the COMSPEC boards should follow very shortly thereafter. The board
does indeed get its power from the Amiga.

Now for the bad news, the price. It is going to be somewhere in the
$1000-$1500 range (not $800 as mentioned before). Those figures are
in $Canadian. In any case I am *sure* that the price will go down
if COMSPEC starts getting large orders.

As I said before I've actually used one of these boards so here are
some pros/cons

-ram disk makes compiling/editing/copying/etc. much faster and
 generally 'nicer'

-ram disk doesn't survive CTRL-Amiga-Amiga

-extra memory is very useful when linking *large* programs (i.e. you
 can still have a other tasks going)

-commercial programs don't all work from ram: mostly the problems happen
 with programs that are too stupid to ask for chip memory when
 they need it (see my other article)... I don't think it would
 be wise to name names. Some *copy protected* (wink, wink,
 nudge, nudge) programs don't like being moved into ram) This
 is *VERY* ****V*E*R*Y**** ANNOYING!!!!!!! At least all the
 utilities I tried work fine with ram: under V1.1.

If you need any more information, you can contact COMSPEC in Toronto.
I will be happy to provide the Address and phone number to anyone
who wants it but I feel that it is unappropriate to post it here.
Feel free to mail me requests for same. Send me mail, I *love* mail.

DISCLAIMER: I have enjoyed a very long relationship with COMSPEC
      hence any or all of these view may be biased in their
      favour. I have tried to "stick to the facts".

      The University of Waterloo has nothing to do with ANY of
      this; I don't care where they get their ram boards from.

This article does not represent the official views of
either COMSPEC or The University of Waterloo. Leave them
alone.

Lo Song
 -Rico

...{utzoo,allegra,linus,decvax,ihnp4}!watmath!watnot!rmariani

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