Commodore 64 Turns 30

The Commodore 64 (C64) was an 8-bit home computer that was introduced in January 1982 by Commodore International and began shipping in August 1982. The C64 took its name from its 64 kilobytes (55,535 bytes) of RAM, and had favorable sound and graphics when compared to other more expensive systems back then like the Apple II. It also competed with the Atari 8-bit 400 and 800. Back in the mid 1980s the C64 became the best-selling single personal computer model of all time with sales of nearly 17 million units! The Commodore 64 cost $595, affordable when it came out in 1982. According to the United States Department of Labor that $595 price tag in 1982 is comparable to about $1,415 in 2012 after you factor in inflation.

The machine was hugely successful for its time, helping to encourage personal computing, popularize video games and pioneer homemade computer-created music. Commodore highlighted the fact that since it had designed and manufactured its own chips, it had been able to keep costs down — and the advantage helped it become the best-selling model in North America. The Commodore's ability to display 16 colors, smoothly scroll graphics and play back music through its superior SID (sound interface device) chip — even while loading programs off tape — helped win over fans, but it did not become the market leader until the late 1980s.

Gigabit per Second Internet Plan

"A partnership between Gigabit Squared and non-profit Gig.U will deliver superfast Internet connections to six communities across the U.S."

Six lucky communities in the U.S. will soon have Internet connections that are 100 to 1,000 times faster than what most Americans have. The new, superfast broadband Internet connections come courtesy of a partnership between Ohio-based startup Gigabit Squared and non-profit the University Community Next Generation Innovation Project, or Gig.U for short, a coalition of 30 private and public universities.

Dubbed the Gigabit Neighborhood Gateway Program, the $200 million project aims to deliver gigabit-per-second in six communities with populations ranging from as little as 5,000 people, up to 100,000, according to the official announcement. The point of the initiative is to show what is possible with superfast Internet connections, to ignite economic development in local communities, and to push innovative services in education, health care, and scientific research.

Gigabit Squared says it plans to announce the communities where the initiative will be implemented sometime between November 2012 and March 2013.

Gig.U was founded by Blair Levin, who orchestrated the Federal Communications Commission's 2010 National Broadband Plan. Levin currently serves as Executive Director of Gig.U.

"What makes the Gigabit Squared approach so exciting is that it goes far beyond normal industry business models in how to successfully and creatively improve broadband access speeds for university communities, which is exactly the premise upon which Gig.U was founded," said Levin in a statement. "We intuitively knew this, but to see Gigabit Squared emerge so strongly today proves that yes, America needs an upgrade; and that yes, there are innovators and investors willing to step up to get it done."

To say that America "needs an upgrade" is something of an understatement. According to Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Internet content delivery network Akamai Technologies, the U.S. currently ranks 13th in the world for Internet speed, with the average connection clocking in at about 5.8 Mbps. South Korea tops the list at 17.5 Mbps, followed by Japan and Hong Kong, both of which have average Internet speeds of around 9.1 Mbps. Even countries like Romania, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic can load YouTube videos faster than most Americans.

One of the primary goals of the Gigabit Neighborhood Gateway Program is to jumpstart a move toward faster Internet speeds across the U.S. Some progress has been made thanks to the FCC's National Broadband Plan, but Mark Ansboury, president of Gigabit Squared, believes his company's initiative holds the key to further progress.

"The Stimulus Funding was a great jumpstart to get broadband initiatives on track in the U.S. But it is just a starting point," said Ansboury in a statement. "In order to realize true economic revitalization, we're urging our national and community leaders to think and act in more creative ways. And we're backing those efforts with significant investment of our own."

…by Andrew Couts
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http://www.digitaltrends.com/web/gigabit-square-gig-u-unveil-gigbit-per-second-broadband-internet-plan/

August Calendar

August 13 — Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter
    7:30 PM — Main Grand Prairie Library
    901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

August 13 — Board of Director's Meeting
    Approximately 9:15 PM — Location TBD

August 27 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

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