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Hidden Love for Keyboards

Keyboards are used daily, in one form or another. For example, digital keyboards on a smartphone, or a physical keyboard that types millions of emails each day. The physical keyboard is more than just a tool to type, but an extension to everyone’s lives. It is an extension, obviously, but quite a necessary one because it is not entirely necessary for life, however, it could be beneficial. Today, electronics are used every single day in some form or another, either for professional use or leisure use, and to accompany most electronics, a keyboard is used. To write this essay, a keyboard is used. To get into a computer, the keyboard is used to type the password that allows entry into the computer. The keyboard is an item that is the passageway to many things that people have been ignorant about. The keyboard is used for many things that are not even the slightest looked at or praised, for example, innovation, inspiration, and a hobby.

To begin looking at a keyboard, going back to the roots of the invention that inspired the keyboard is necessary. The typewriter is the archaic father of the keyboard, patented in 1868 by Christopher Latham Sholes. The original typewriter only had 28 keys that were heavily influenced by a piano’s layout. The format of the typewriter changed three more times until it closely resembled the main parts of the keyboard currently: the most popularly known keyboard format; QWERTY (not including the F keys and the extra keys to the right of the enter key) (Brahambhatt). To give credit where credit is due, the invention of the QWERTY typewriter brought forth many pieces of history as physical copies, however, imagine if the people currently were to use typewriters to write an essay. The difficulties of just removing a singular mistake are abysmal. With the invention of the modern QWERTY keyboard, the singular mistake could be easily removed with the stroke of a key, and just as if nothing happened, people could continue back on track to what they were doing. Comparatively, the importance of keyboards cannot be overlooked. When working on a certain task has there ever been a moment of eureka that occurs, but not acted upon? The same idea goes for keyboard.

Has there ever been pondering about how the keyboard works? Just as if the backspace were to be pressed, what happens? The simple rundown of the inner mechanisms of the keyboard is that there are batteries, a simple printed circuit board and a microprocessor. When the keys are pressed, the keys send three volts of electricity through the conductive lines to be sent to the microprocessor (Branch Education 00:01:06-00:02:05). Through this interaction the microprocessor sends information to the main processor which then puts the information on the screen. The video’s explanation is much more intriguing compared to the simple rundown, and with the complexities of such an item, there is bound to be some inspiration to someone. On a larger scale, the intrigue could turn into something much larger, this could be an opportunity for people to pursue a certain field or as a hobby.

How could keyboards be hobbies? This question may have formed when reading the last sentence of the introduction paragraph. Keyboards are a hobby. Those two words being in the same sentence do not seem particularly right, however, it most definitely can be. There are many ways a keyboard can be a hobby. The simplicities and complexities in building a keyboard and modifying a keyboard could both be ways a keyboard could be a hobby. Building a keyboard from its components, previously stated in the second paragraph, could just be as interesting as putting together a car, but much less labor intensive. The simplicity of putting the keycaps on a keyboard, to the complexities of soldering certain parts of the circuit board in a keyboard could not just be calming but also in other aspects earn the person money. Having the viability of changing certain aspects of a keyboard for example, tape modding, lubing, coin modding, foam modding, band-aid modding, o-ring mods, holee mod, changing the keyboard itself, changing the switches and a bunch more things that could be done to adjust the satisfactory levels of the keyboard to the person’s liking (Bonifield and Coke). There are basically infinite amounts of modifications that can be done to a mechanical QWERTY keyboard is as intriguing as, for example, crocheting, where there are multiple skill sets that can be learned from and mastered, however, for keyboards, not one thing is certainly “mastered.” The product that is produced can have multiple intricacies that are easily failed, and that is why the hobby of keyboards is so intriguing.

When looking at a keyboard the next time, think back to the ways it has evolved, and the multiple ways it can contribute to society. Do the same with everything, question everything.

Audience

The audiences that could be applicable to my encomium are to the general population, but not really someone who does not use electronics, as they do not have access to keyboards. In other words, most people that live in first, second, or even some of the third world countries. The main audience I will refer to is the people who would not look twice at a keyboard without a second thought. Another set of people could be people that could be referred to, but barely referred to, are people that do not use the standard QWERTY keyboard. The people I am referring to are the people that use Colemak, or Dvorak as their primary keyboard style. A more general population could be people that could be inspired to try something new.

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