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CSCI 101

HW 5

October 25, 2019

1. My favorite computer in the collection is the Apple II. It is by far the sleekest looking computer on the list. Its self-contained keyboard and matching monitor give it a stylish simplicity that Apple is known for, even to this day. It was also on the leading edge of pc technology. It used floppy disks to transfer data, a relatively new innovation, and was the host of a variety of influential software, like the first spreadsheet program. Another astonishing thing about the Apple II is that is stayed popular for over 15 years. Considering how quickly computer technology advanced during that time, this is an incredible feat. It would be like buying a new computer today that was designed and first sold in 2003. And finally, of all the computers on the list, apple is the only company that is still actively competing in the PC market, 42 years later.
2. The CDC 6500 stood out to me as one of the most impactful computers on the list. While it is one of the most expensive computers listed, it is also the most powerful. Its impacts were mostly in terms of aiding design, from nuclear weapon designs by national laboratories, to car design by Ford, this computer was a major innovation. These computers likely would have run early CAD programs, as well as various simulations, such as the impact of a car crash or the forces on an airplane during flight, as it was the computer best capable of running those simulations at the time. While this computer was incredibly powerful for its time, it has been outpaced with time, and would be obsolete today. Still, its was an important pillar to innovation, and a steppingstone of further CDC 6000 series computers, such as the 6600.
3. I have not seen or worked on any of these computers, or anything of this age, outside of museums. I believe the oldest computer I have worked in is some early 2000s laptops and desktops as a kid.
4. I would not consider a sun dial a computer, but a smoke detector would be a computer. The difference is that a smoke detector does some calculation with is data. Not only does it response to smoke, but it monitors its own battery and the test bottom. It must process the data it is given in some way, depending in the circumstances. A sundial on the other hand, does not do any calculations with its data. It does the same thing no mater what. It lacks any sort of logical process, and so it is not a computer.