



The new Intel chip is **so fast**, they didn't have time to think of a name.

The chip with no name

So here it is, half a gigahertz — that's 500MHz to you in real money, and enough of a big deal for Intel to dream up an original name for its brand new chip. I'd like to say that Intel has finally decided to employ one of its groovy-sounding processor codenames for general consumption, but as you can see from our cover and the inevitable avalanche of advertising, I'm afraid it has instead opted for the slightly uninspiring badge of Pentium *III*. Okay, it may be written in italicised roman numerals, but I reckon the public would be more than happy to invest in a Katmai, or the Mendocino, Deschutes or Klamath codenames which preceded it. Either way, a new processor from Intel is big news, so we've brought you the details of the chip and reviews of the first PCs to house it. Check out our results to see if a whole raft of new instructions are enough to persuade you to upgrade. Speaking of upgrading, the Katmai — sorry, Pentium *III* — is not our sole PC group test this month. Alongside the fastest PCs to grace our labs, we've tested

ten mid-range workhorses which will set you back the more than reasonable sum of £999 inc VAT. The upgradeable part came in when we asked the manufacturers to submit

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systems which could stand the test of time; PCs which have plenty of room and opportunity to expand and upgrade in the future.

But it's no good having a super-fast or ultimately upgradeable PC if it's giving you a headache. I'm referring to my favourite subject of displays, perhaps one of the most neglected areas of modern PCs. Admittedly the situation is much better than it was a couple of years ago, but there are still plenty of systems in operation with poor or badly set up monitors. Before you splash out on a punchier processor, more memory or a larger hard disk, why not consider perhaps the single greatest PC productivity enhancer, by treating yourself to a new monitor. Kiss your flickery display goodbye and welcome rock-steady, geometrically precise images. The cost? Cheaper than you think, and that includes the latest 19in flatscreen CRTs or waif-like TFT panels.

Also in this packed issue we've got the first of a ten-part countdown to the Year 2000, a group test of Java and visual programming tools, a report on IT training for your small business, and we find out whether Digital TV really is ready for public consumption. Reviews this month include the latest super-fast Silicon Graphics NT Workstation, the first colour palm CE handheld, and an in-depth look at the new Sega Dreamcast. This next-generation games console has made it into our sweaty palms almost one year before its anticipated release in the UK. When you consider it houses the latest NEC Power VR 3D graphics chipset, runs Windows CE and thrashes high-end PCs at games, with a price tag of around £150, we thought it well worth a look. Before I return for another go, turn to page 66 for details on how to take part in our biggest ISP speed survey to date — let's find out the truth about getting on-line.

Gordon Laing, Editor