Title:
Let's take a look back in time to see how the computer has evolved.

Word Count:
305

Summary:
In many ways, man has been using computers for millennia: an abacus is, after
all, simply a very basic form of computer.

Keywords:
computers, pc, technology

Article Body:
In many ways, man has been using computers for millennia: an abacus is, after
all, simply a very basic form of computer. The first mechanical calculator (the
'calculating clock') was built in the 17th century. Programming with punch-cards
has been around for about 200 years now.

It was in the 1940s, however, that the first electronic, digital computers
started to appear – that is, computers as we know them today. These computers
were massive machines, filling a large room (in some cases, a whole building)
and yet having less computing power than a simple calculator does today.
Reprogramming them often required extensive amounts of physical rewiring, as the
only way the computer knew what to do was by how it was connected together.
Still, these computers were helpful in the war effort – most famously, the
British code-breaking computers at Bletchley Park that broke the Germans' code
is widely thought to have shortened the war by years.

Fast forward to the '60s. This was when wires and tubes were replaced with the
transistor – an overnight leap forward in technology that reduced computers'
size to an amazing degree, replacing the hefty vacuum tubes that somewhat like
those still used in CRT TVs and microwaves. Combined with the invention of
semiconductor integration circuits, by the '70s, it was possible to make
personal computers small enough for people to have in their homes.

This is generally regarded as being the beginning of the 'computer age', as the
popularity of home computers quickly drove prices down and made them very
affordable. Computer companies sprung up left, right and centre, hoping to carve
themselves a piece of this exploding market. The result was chaos and buyer
confusion, and few of them survive today. However, the stage was set for a huge

computer battle that led to the machines we know and love today.