

Homebrew Computer Club views Intel's superchip

By Michael Swaine, IW Staff

PALO ALTO, CA—At a recent meeting of the Homebrew Computer Club here, members had a chance to learn about Intel's just-announced iAPX 286 superchip, about the semiconductor company's current products and techniques and about its plans for the future.

Bob Greene, Intel Microprocessor Marketing Manager, spoke to the club about the new microprocessor, which uses a superset of the 8086/8088 instruction set and addresses a gigabyte (one billion bytes) of virtual memory. The 286 has a physical memory space of 16 megabytes, supports memory

management and multilevel protection schemes, and uses pipelined instruction processing.

The chip will be produced under a new production technique and will soon have its own version of the MP/M operating system.

Currently being designed with Intel's HMOS II semiconductor design methods, the 286 is scheduled to be produced in production runs under HMOS III. HMOS is Intel's own term for the metal-oxide semiconductor technology used in producing its chips.

The 286 is the next generation of Intel's processors beyond the 8086 and 8088. The 8088, a processor with 16-bit

internal architecture and an 8-bit data bus, was designed under HMOS II, while the (earlier) 16-bit 8086 was designed under the older HMOS technology. Using the product of gate delay and power dissipation as a measure, Intel rates HMOS III at twice the performance of HMOS II, and four times that of HMOS.

Digital Research is producing an operating system for the 286. MP/M-286 will take advantage of the processor's memory management and protection and virtual memory support. Digital Research is promising "complete" compatibility with its MP/M-86 and CP/M-86 for the 8086



Intel's Bob Greene addresses the Homebrew Computer Club

processor. Intel is supplying Digital Research with the hardware to develop and test MP/M-286.

Greene spoke briefly of the planned 432, Intel's next major processor. The 432 processor will be "a message-driven machine," he told the group, "while others are interrupt- or I/O-driven."

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