

The NEC Astra

The distinctive
new business system.



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Meet the NEC Astra series. The smart new business computer that knows more about business than you'll ever need to know about computers.

That's because we designed Astra – from the ground up, using only the most advanced, proven technologies – to have a tremendous aptitude for business administrative work.

First, that means we designed Astra to be very easy to use – by anyone in your office. We've eliminated the cumbersome and confusing steps and procedures that used to go along with using a business system.

That also means that each Astra system is not just one computer but several very advanced small computers, all working together to provide the power you need to do several jobs at once – like process orders, check accounts receivable balances, and print reports – power that is needed in a typical business office.

The business aptitude of the Astra series also means that you can put the operator station – video display, keyboard and an optional printer – up to a mile away from the central system in local connection, and an unlimited distance away using remote connection via telephone lines. This allows you to put the computer power where the people who need it are working.

But business aptitude is not useful without business knowledge, and Astra has this also in Astra/BA, a series of business application programs designed to handle the most common



Up to one million characters may be stored on each Astra series diskette.

business activities. These include:

- Sales Order Processing
- Sales Analysis □
- Accounts Receivable □
- Inventory Control □
- Accounts Payable □
- General Ledger □
- Payroll.

These application program "packages" were designed by business experts and built by computer experts to take maximum advantage of the unique power and features of Astra. They can be used together as an integrated system, or independently if not all activities are required.

This all adds up to a system that is so well suited to business, and so easy to understand and use, that we'd like you to think of it not as just another business system, but as your new business partner. A business partner that never forgets, never loses reports, and is absolutely trustworthy.

And because your new business partner is such a hard worker in the office, you're going to have a whole lot more time to develop new business in the field. And when you do, Astra will be there to handle the extra load.

Best of all, while your new business partner is a very hard worker, it's also very easy to work with. So easy in fact, that it isn't really much harder to use than the telephone on your desk.

Sound incredible?
Read on.



The entire 2000-character video screen fills in less than 1/10 second.

How you use the NEC Astra.

Push a button. It's that simple.

That's because Astra uses a "multiple choice" approach that makes it easy for users to select the jobs they want to do. Here's how it works:

In most cases, when a user signs onto the system, a "menu" is automatically displayed on the video screen.

A menu is simply a list of activities or tasks that Astra has been set up to handle. For example, a menu might consist of a list of other menus for all the different jobs available on the system, such as Sale Order Processing, Accounts Receivable, or Accounts Payable. Alternatively, a menu might consist of the specific tasks concerned with, for example, Sales Order Processing. These would be such tasks as Sales Order Entry, Booking Report, Shipping Papers, and so on.

Users select the desired activity from the menu, and the system responds with a blank form on the video screen. The form is the means by which the operator interacts with Astra to perform the task. Identifying labels called "prompts" indicate, as on a normal paper form, what information is required in each position. The operator fills in the blanks from the keyboard, and Astra does the rest.



The bi-directional matrix printer produces crisp, clear reports at 120 characters per second.



NEC Sales Order Processing package allows quick entry of telephone orders.



The movable keyboard allows each operator to choose the most comfortable position.



What Your New Business Partner Does for You.

It Handles Your Daily Business Activities.

Whether they are sales order or cash receipts, inventory receipts or purchase orders, the daily activities must be handled quickly and, above all, accurately. That's why Astra has been designed to perform numerous tests on information as it is being entered, including check digit calculations, verification that entries fall within specified ranges, and validation by table look-up, without any operator action except the keying of the information itself. And, since many of these functions can be performed by the small computer included in each Astra operator station, the response is almost instantaneous.

Add to these capabilities the excellent clarity and the flexibility of the screen — which permits highlighting of areas by blinking, reverse image and high intensity — and you have a system that understands the clerical side of business.

It keeps your records organized.

Record-keeping is a necessary evil in business operations. It is a time-consuming, overhead-generating effort to keep track of all of the open orders, the inventory status of many items, the money owed to the business in accounts receivable and the money it owes in accounts payable. A business partner who thrived on these "housekeeping" chores would be an invaluable asset, and that's what you will have in Astra.

That's because the handling of all the business transactions on Astra permits the automatic updating of all of the associated



Random inquiries may be entered in English-like language for immediate response.



Unplanned reports may be easily defined on the video screen and printed out immediately.

files. For example, electronic "copies" of sales orders processed are added to the open order file. When an order is invoiced, its copy is removed from open orders, and a copy of the invoice is added to the accounts receivable file. The entry of an order reduces the available inventory, and its shipment reduces the on-hand balance.

For every transaction all of the records affected can be kept current automatically — in seconds. And Astra never forgets to leave you a precise, detailed audit trail, so that the flow of events can be re-traced as necessary.

It keeps you, as well as your files, up-to-date.

With all of the business records and files so well maintained, they could become a productive tool to increase revenue and profit if the information contained could be summarized and presented quickly and in different formats depending on the need. Again, your new business partner is designed to help you.

Sales analysis reports can tell you which salesmen and/or customers are contributing the most to revenue and profit. Inventory reports can tell you which items move fastest so you can optimize your investment. Accounts payable files can be scanned regularly to be sure that discount opportunities are not missed. And, just as important as these regular reports, inquiries can be

made into the files any time the need arises. Using simple English-like language, you can, for example, determine the balance on an inventory item, or whether the customer's last payment has been applied to his account. This is increased control, better service, more business — greater profit.

NEC Astra Security.

Is there a risk in having all of this information so handy? Yes. That's why Astra provides several levels of security to prevent unauthorized or improper use.

Whenever a user attempts to log-on to the system, Astra requests an identification number, which is then checked for validity. Additionally, passwords can be attached to these numbers, adding a second level of security.

Once access is granted, the system automatically keeps a log showing who used the system, at what time, and what programs and files were used. So your new business partner actually improves security while consolidating your records.



All major Astra series peripherals are designed and manufactured by NEC.



Inventory Control is one of seven integrated applications packages available with the Astra series.



Astra series peripherals include magnetic tape drives, band printers and letter-quality serial printers.



The Astra Series Has Quite a Future.

As Astra helps your business grow, it grows right along with you.

Currently, the NEC Astra is available in four basic models: the 210, 230, 250, and 270. These four models offer an almost infinite range of configuration alternatives, ranging from a small, single-user system to a very large multi-user system. You can expand memory, add new peripheral devices such as high-speed line printers, and best of all, increase the number of operator stations to a very substantial 32.

The system can also be connected with other Astra series systems at a remote location such as a warehouse or branch office, allowing you to easily transfer information from one location to another.

And, because all four models of Astra use the same operating software, your work can be moved to a larger system as required without having to change it in any way.



Astra series offers four models expandable up to large multi-user systems.



A serial printer may be attached to any local or remote station as required.

A partner you can depend on.

Reliability is a very key concern when you turn the administrative details of your business over to a new partner. The Astra, again demonstrating its business aptitude, was designed to be as reliable a system as modern technology can provide. All of the electronics, including the semiconductor circuit chips, are made by NEC, as well as almost all of the other devices associated with the system. This in-house design has produced specialized electronics with an exceptionally high degree of integration, which vastly reduces the number of interconnections and correspondingly reduces the chance for failure. And the NEC printers and disk drives supplied with Astra are world-renowned for their superior quality and reliability.

There's more.

In this brochure we've given you a basic idea of what the NEC Astra is, and most of all, of what it can do for you.

If you have any questions, or would like to know more about the Business Partners from NEC, please don't hesitate to call or write....



Single station Astra Model 210 is ideal for first-time computer users.



Astra series applications use a tutorial approach to simplify operation.



The operator may easily choose the desired job by selecting from the menu.



NEC

NEC Information Systems, Inc.

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