

THE IBM RAMAC 305

The IBM RAMAC 305 is one of the most advanced electronic computing systems at work in America today. It makes possible a record-keeping concept known as continuous accounting, whereby all affected records are adjusted immediately after a transaction occurs.

This data processing system is built around a magnetic disk "memory" unit having a storage capacity of 5,000,000 digits. Information in the form of magnetic spots is stored on both sides of fifty metal disks, arranged in a vertical stack which rotates at 1,200 revolutions a minute. An access arm moves rapidly up and down, reaching between the spinning disks to retrieve the stored data. After processing, the information obtained is reproduced by the printer unit or punched into IBM cards. RAMAC can record or recall information from magnetic disks in milliseconds, and in any sequence.

Here are some typical RAMAC 305 applications:

The U.S. Coast Guard in New York is using a RAMAC to compute and update position data on merchant vessels on a continuous basis, thus increasing the speed and accuracy of the Coast Guard's search and rescue operations in a vast ocean area, stretching from Maine to Texas.

Montgomery Ward and Company, mail order and retail chain, applies a RAMAC 305 to maintenance of an up-to-the-minute inventory of 6,700 different types of merchandise, the processing of customer orders, and the spotting of customer preferences on colors, models, and price ranges.

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Speedier replacement parts service on the huge Boeing 707 and 720 jet transport planes is attained through use of a RAMAC in its Transport Division at Renton, Washington. Centralization of sales, inventory and billing data in the computer permits closer control of over-all operations.

General Outdoor Advertising Company in Chicago, Illinois, is using the first RAMAC 305 in the advertising field to process all of its accounting operations. In particular, the 305 steps up the flow of operational information from fifty-seven branches in the United States and Canada, serving some 1,725 communities.

Accounting processes for coast-to-coast operations are maintained on an IBM RAMAC by the Denver Chicago Trucking Company of Denver, Colorado. Among its many duties, the machine stores facts about the firm's 2,200 employees and 50,000 customers in cities throughout the United States.

At the American National Exhibition which opened in Moscow on July 25, RAMAC was set up as an "electronic encyclopedia" to answer Russian fairgoers' questions about life in the United States. Answers to any of 4,000 different questions about our culture, politics, economy, education and history were printed out -- in Russian -- at the touch of a button. Information stored in RAMAC's memory was one of the most up-to-date compilations of Americana anywhere in the world.

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