

AccessionIndex: TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.076

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Object name: Meiko CS1 Computing Surface

Vintage: c.1986

Synopsis: First commercial Transputer-based microcomputer. S/N: ???.

**Description:**

Transputers were manufactured by InMOS Ltd. In 1985 six ex-InMOS employees who had worked on transputer designs left to found Meiko and produce the first commercial Transputer-based microcomputer, the *Computing Surface* containing sixteen transputers interconnected by custom gate array switch chips.

Transputers are integrated processing elements that include a CPU, memory, event handling and communications. The transputer has a built-in kernel and stack-oriented RISC-inspired microcoded instruction set that runs its own process tree. Conceptually it is a process that communicates with peers via external channels (hardware links) while subprocesses communicate via internal channels (memory slots).

Initially the Computing Surfaces ran OPS, a derivative of the InMOS Transputer Development System (TDS), but later they ran MeikOS, a derivative of MINIX, a UNIX-like OS.

The Computing Surface in this collection has 16 <<< T800 ? >>> transputers, each with ??? MB of memory, and a floppy disk drive. A Link Extender buffered eight 20Mbps external links.

Ultimately Meiko were absorbed into Quadrics, where their switched interconnect technology evolved into QsNet.

Accession Index	Object with Identification
TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.076.01	Meiko CS1 Computing Surface. S/N: ???
TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.076.02	Meiko Floppy Disk Drive. S/N: ???
TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.076.02	Meiko TSI Link Extender. S/N: ???



*Figure 1: Meiko CS1 Computing Surface front view*



*Figure 2: Meiko CSI Computing Surface link extender closeup*