

SCREENING ROOM RISING STARS

Madam, I'm ADAM

Ever get the urge for a big, juicy burger, but you only have a few cents? A lot of people lately have had an indescribable urge to buy a computer, but they only have a few hundred bucks. Coleco's ADAM may be for them. It's a complete home computer package that retails for only \$750 and is aimed at those people who don't want to spend their life savings on a computer. Plus, you can upgrade your ColecoVision into an ADAM for less than \$500.

ADAM's features already are well known, but we'll list them here once more, for all of you who've been vacationing on the island of Borneo for the past six months.

There's a Memory Console (with 80K, expandable to 144K) that utilizes a "high-speed digital data drive." This means you load data-pack cartridges instead of floppy disks (the data packs load more slowly than disks but faster than cassettes). The keyboard has 75 keys and looks as professional as more expensive models. The printer rattles out 10 characters per second and can work as an electric typewriter. (It's definitely noisy, but it's letter-quality.)

There's also the good ol' ColecoVision game system that's built right in, two joystick controllers, and three free data packs. One is the *Buck Rogers* game, another is a SmartBasic program (compatible with Applesoft BASIC), plus you get a blank data pack. BASIC is one of the easiest computer languages to learn, and since ADAM's version is closely compatible with Applesoft, almost all Applesoft programs that have been published anywhere can be typed directly into ADAM, with very minor changes, the company says. (Plus ADAM's savvy BASIC won't let you input an incorrect programming line!) ADAM is designed to be CP/M compatible, too, and many popular CP/M programs will be available on data packs. Coleco will provide users with short guides to learning BASIC, as well as SmartLOGO.

ADAM has a built-in word-processing program for easy typing, editing, and rewriting. Plus, Coleco is planning a whole bunch of expansion modules (like a disk drive and a memory expander) to keep them competitive with the rest of the industry.

Coleco promises a lot in the way of software, too. In answer to parents' requests and demands for educational software, there will be Dr. Seuss and Smurf stuff for the ADAM Easy Learning Series. Add that to the *COLORFORMS Electronic Crayons*, the *Homework Helper* series, and all the other goodies Coleco promises (nobody can forget how they bought up every arcade license they could find a few years ago, many of which no one had heard of), and you're bound to have fun with it.

ADAM really is the Big Mac of the computer biz. It's not the best system on the shelves (it's also not claiming to be), but it's versatile and possibly just right for a large number of computer users. Especially right for those of us who like to open one big package and get computing, and still have enough money left to buy a burger.

Available soon at computer stores or through the manufacturer: Coleco Industries, Inc., 999 Quaker Lane S., West Hartford, CT 06110.

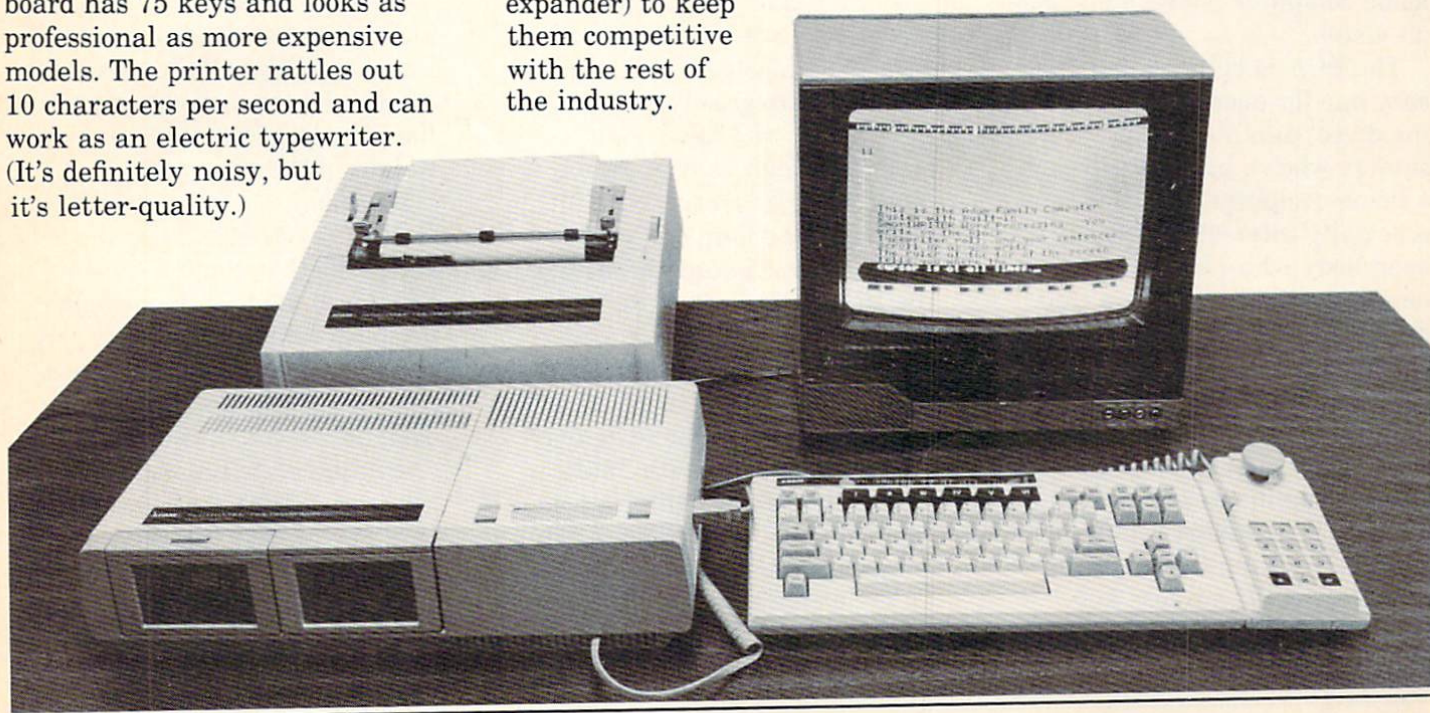


Photo: Stephen Shames