ile No.8
Bring In The New
By Lee Foster

I suppose by now the majority of Mac users will have heard of, if not seen, the all new iMac. There will be those who oppose it, those who herald it and those who think, 'nearly, but not quite'. Being the usual pessimist I consider myself in the latter group.

I, like many other Mac users want to see Apple survive. And it's good to know that when you own a Mac, it was built by a company who prides themselves on high standards and implementing new designs and technologies. iMac certainly fits in there somewhere. But I didn't want to write this article without first seeing one in real life. So, my nearest and only outlet in a 30 mile radius who displays as well as sells them was my first port of call [although the Dixons Group Plc have again decided to sell the Mac in November in time for the Chistmas rush].

t was Bainbridges in Newcastle. When I saw it I thought, "Yes, it certainly stands out, and yes I do like it. Bondi blue? No, that's definitely green. Has to be. I just thought I'd seen poor colour photo's of it, but no, they were right." Anyway, as usual it had been left in a screen freeze state and I didn't know how to do a forced restart! I suddenly felt stupid. The right keys aren't there! I tried the two power buttons and they failed to work too. So I pulled the plug out the back and stuck it in again.

I turned it on. And as I expected, it was a Mac. But it was a Mac in the guise of a translucent portable telly. (If only it could work like a telly, it could have the potential to replace the portable as we know it for a more convenient PC/Telly.) So yes, so far I liked it. Nice, clean, solid design. I can see the convenience it would have for kids wanting to take turns of it in their rooms. But,

and many people say this, why no floppy?

Floppies do have a limited use, but they're still handy. I have an electronic CV on a floppy. Would you send a £15 disk off for a job? I keep the odd few files for safe keeping on floppies instead of a massive 100mb disk and some software still comes on floppies. To sell a computer with no secondary backup at that price is still to me, rather high and the CD drive is hardly a solid, kid proof build. This is where Apple saved the money. No one is going to back-up their drive to a server - internet age or not. No they'll have to fork out extra money for the drive Apple refused to supply. BUT, my point is this. Instead of Apple saying we don't need a floppy drive, why didn't they say, "Hey, why bother with a floppy drive, Apple and Imation have teamed up to install as standard the new SuperDisk which takes your regular floppies and 120mb disks. We wanted to take high capacity storage into the next generation." But no, they cheaped out for a higher return.

he mouse also seems like an after thought. It is very small and uncomfortable to use. What's wrong with the old mouse? The iMac's does not, no matter how much you try, fit comfortably in your hand. The keyboard too seems weird once you've got used to the regular design. So, I conclude by saying the iMac is very good but with poor adoption of a new storage solution. Poor mouse and keyboard. It's still on the expensive side when identical specced PC's are around £200 cheaper.

My other gripe is the dire advertising they produce. Huge posters saying, "Sorry no beige or say hello to iMac" is hardly a wow, must have factor. The Mac is even switched off, just like when PC World and Dixons displayed them! And where is this $100m budget being spent. Not the daily tabloids, the ones most people read. Not prime time TV between the popular programs. Just every now and then and once you've realized what it is, it's finished.

What Apple needs to do is produce such a stupid advert that it gets banned. Then at least we might get to see a really good Mac advert on programs like Tarrant on TV!
That's it, I could go on but I want your feed back. Agree or disagree, let me know.

Comments to:
🔥Lee Foster
Assistant Editor 1984 OnLine Magazine
<lee@1984-online.com>