
Applied Digital Data Systems (ADDS): Company Profile



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Company History

Applied Digital Data Systems Inc. (ADDS) was founded in 1969 as a terminal manufacturer. In 1979 ADDS became a wholly owned subsidiary of NCR Corporation and began selling a system based on the NCR Tower.

ADDS' relationship with NCR is somewhat unique in the computer industry. To sell a system that differs from the NCR Tower, ADDS fine-tunes the hardware and uses the Pick operating system, instead of the Tower's UNIX operating system. ADDS benefits from the resources of NCR, including hardware development, research and development, and customer service and support. ADDS concentrates its efforts on software research and development, specifically on enhanced operating systems.

Product Line Overview

Since its acquisition by NCR, ADDS has manufactured the Mentor Series of multiuser computer systems based on the NCR Tower platform in addition to its complete line of terminals. The Mentor 6000 and 7000 are supermicrocomputers designed for a range of office functions.

ADDS also develops the Pick-based Mentor operating system for its computer systems.

Installed Base

The Mentor 6000 has an installed base of 8,500 systems. Figures are not available for the new Mentor 7000.

Sales and Marketing Strategies

ADDS does not support a direct sales force. Instead, its systems are sold entirely through value-added resellers (VARs).

The Pick operating system is best suited for standalone processing; therefore, the target markets for the Mentor Series include the manufacturing, wholesale trade, and services industries. Applications such as standalone office automation, wholesale distribution, and direct mail are appropriate.

For more detail on the Pick operating system, refer to the Pick report in Volume 3 of *Datapro Reports on Minicomputers*.

Market Position

ADDS' Mentor Series competes with a variety of supermicrocomputer systems, including products from IBM, Altos, Alpha Micro, Prime, and McDonnell Douglas. One competitive advantage ADDS has is that it is also a terminal vendor and can offer substantial price breaks on terminals to Mentor customers.

Financials

Specific financial information for ADDS is unavailable. Its parent company, NCR, reported net income for 1989 of \$412 million, 6 percent lower

than 1988 figures. Revenue was \$5.956 billion, down 1 percent. Per-share earnings were \$5.38.

Service and Support

NCR provides all hardware service and support to Mentor customers through its worldwide network of 1,200 service locations and 16,000 service engineers.

Terms and Conditions

Mentor systems are available for lease or purchase through VARs. A one-year warranty is provided for both systems and peripherals.

Other Unique Vendor Facts

ADDS' relationship with NCR results in unique advantages for the Mentor line. When major enhancements are made to the NCR Tower Series, they will most likely also be made to the Mentor Series, providing they enhance performance. Also, since NCR takes most of the responsibility for research and development of new hardware, ADDS is able to concentrate on development of its Mentor operating system. The latest enhancement to the system represents something of a breakthrough; the Mentor M/ix operating system, which runs on the 7000, runs both Pick and NCR UNIX on the same system. ■