# Computer Nostalgia Contest Team:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. In 1982, young Richard Skrenta secured his place in computer history by creating a program called Elk Cloner. What made Skrenta's program noteworthy?

2. The manufacturer didn't call it a computer because it was thought at the time that few individuals would be interested in owning a comuter or able to afford one -- at a typical cost of $1 million -- if they wanted it. DEC's PDP-11, sold in 1970 for $10,800, is one of the most famous computers in history. What does "PDP" stand for?  
a. Personal Data Processor  
b. Programmed Data Processor  
c. Personal Digital Processor

3. In 75 years of operation, the telephone system expanded to reach 50 million users. How long did it take the Internet to reach that number?

4. Time magazine broke with tradition for their 1982 "Man of the Year" award. What up and coming newcomer did they chose?

5. In 1972, ARPANET contractor Ray Tomlinson borrowed a symbol from the business world that you probably use many times a day.

6. "There are two major products that came out of Berkeley: LSD and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We don't believe this to be a coincidence." What operating system was Jeremy Anderson talking about? Hint: It originated at Bell Labs in 1969 as an interactive time-sharing system.

7. The first personal PC to attract a substantial number of users appeared on the cover of the January 1975 issue of Popular Electronics. Was it:  
a. the Analytical Engine  
b. the Altair 8800  
c. the Commodore 64

8. In 1976, then-Atari president Joe Keenan dispatched the developers of a new personal computer from his office, saying "Get your feet off my desk, get out of here, you stink, and we're not going to buy your product." To whom was this speech addressed?

9. What year saw the first example of a widely-distributed spyware program bundled with freeware?  
a. 1989 b. 1995 c. 1999

10. Born in 1815, she was the daughter of the Romantic poet Lord Byron and an accomplished mathematician. She's often credited as the first computer programmer and even has a programming language named for her.

**Computer Nostalgia Contest Answers**

1) Elk Cloner was the first computer [virus](http://searchSecurity.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid14_gci213306,00.html) known to have spread [in the wild](http://searchSecurity.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid14_gci511204,00.html). In 1982, Richard Skrenta, then fifteen years old, wrote the virus for the [Apple](http://WhatIs.techtarget.com/definition/0,,sid9_gci1002515,00.html) II operating system, which was stored on floppy [diskette](http://searchStorage.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid5_gci211964,00.html)s. When a computer [boot](http://searchWinIT.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid1_gci211696,00.html)ed from a floppy disk infected with Elk Cloner, the virus would start, and would subsequently copy itself to any uninfected floppy disk that was accessed. Because computers of that time had dual floppy disk drives, and because diskettes were often passed around among friends, the virus was frequently copied. After contagion, every 50th time that a computer booted up, it would display the following text:

Elk Cloner: The program with a personality

It will get on all your disks

It will infiltrate your chips

Yes it's Cloner!

It will stick to you like glue

It will modify ram too

Send in the Cloner!

Elk Cloner was not intended to cause damage, but was created as a practical joke. According to WorldHistory.com, the adolescent Skrenta had a penchant for modifying programs so that they stopped working after some code-specified time period had elapsed, at that point displaying some joke text that Skrenta had written. Not surprisingly, the young programmer's friends grew leery of allowing him access to their diskettes. Elk Cloner's capacity to copy itself (the major criterion of a virus) made it possible for Skrenta to continue to annoy his friends without requiring physical access. The virus is reported to have spread widely among his fellow students (and also to his math teacher), thus ensuring Elk Cloner's place in history.

2) PDP-11 (Programmed Data Processor-11) is one of the most famous computers in computing history, one of a series manufactured by Digital Equipment Corporation ( [DEC](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci213887,00.html) ) from the early 1960s through the mid-1990s. PDP-11, which was sold in 1970 for $10,800, was the only 16-bit computer ever made by the company.

The PDP-11 had a number of other features that distinguished it from most of its contemporaries, including multiple (eight) [register](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212882,00.html) s; multiple [addressing mode](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212882,00.html) s; a [hardware stack](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212882,00.html) ; processor [error trap](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci212882,00.html) s; and a separate communications path for memory and peripherals (called the *UNIBUS* ) that could move data independently of the processor. Many early developers and users of the [UNIX](http://searchenterpriselinux.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid39_gci213253,00.html) operating system ran it on the PDP-11 after the original [Multics](http://searchenterpriselinux.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid39_gci213556,00.html) system was no longer available.

Before the 1970s, computers were not thought to be something that the average person would buy or use. At about $1,000,000, they were prohibitively expensive. Furthermore, computers of the time were so large and complex that a computer center was required to house one and a sizable staff was required to look after it. To dissociate their product line from these public perceptions, DEC didn't refer to the PDP as a computer at all, but used its name, the Programmed Data Processor, as a generic term. DEC's first model, PDP-1 sold for $120,000 - about 40 times the price of a good computer today, but a bargain at the time.

DEC was acquired by [Compaq](http://searchenterpriselinux.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid39_gci213556,00.html) Computers in 1998.

3) The telephone wire, as we know it, has become too slow and too smallto handle Internet traffic. It took 75 years for telephones to be usedby 50 million customers, but it took only four years for the Internet toreach that many users.  
*- Lori Valigra*

4) The advent of the era of the personal computer was acknowledged by Time magazine in 1982, when they broke with tradition by choosing the PC as their "Man of the Year."

5) Tomlinson....became better known for a brilliant (he called it obvious) decision he made while writing [the e-mail] programs. He needed a way to separate, in the e-mail address, the name of the user from the machine the user was on. How should that be denoted? He wanted a character that would not, under any circumstances, be found in the user's name. He looked down at the keyboard he was using, a Model 33 Teletype, which almost everyone else on the Net used, too. In addition to the letters and numerals there were about a dozen punctuation marks. "I got there first, so I got to choose any punctuation I wanted," Tomlinson said. "I chose the @ sign." The character also had the advantage of meaning "at" the designated institution. He had no idea he was creating an icon for the wired world.

6) Unix

7) The Altair was the world's first personal computer ( [PC](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci214279,00.html) ) to attract a substantial number of users. When it appeared on the cover of the January 1975 issue of *Popular Electronics* , the Altair 8800 ignited the (still accelerating) personal computer boom. A company called MITS (Micro Instrumentation and Telemetry Systems) in Albuquerque developed the Altair and sold it for $395 as a kit or $495 assembled. In the first three months after its debut, MITS received 4000 orders for the new computer, which it referred to as a "minicomputer."

The first Altairs shipped without an operating system with an Intel 8080 [processor](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci212833,00.html) (the first [8-bit](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci212833,00.html) [chip](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci211780,00.html) ) on the [CPU](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci213867,00.html) [card](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci211746,00.html) , 256 bytes of [memory](http://searchmobilecomputing.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid40_gci212546,00.html) , and toggle and switch [LED](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci213613,00.html) panels on the front.

8) Get your feet off my desk, get out of here, you stink, and we're notgoing to buy your product.  
*- Joe Keenan, President of Atari, in 1976 respondingto Steve Jobs' offer to sell him rights to the new personal computer heand Steve Wozniak developed*

9) Many Internet users were introduced to spyware in 1999, when a popular [freeware](http://searchEnterpriseLinux.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid39_gci212159,00.html) game called "Elf Bowling" came bundled with tracking software.

10) Augusta Ada King, countess of Lovelace, *nee* Lady Byron, was an English mathematician often credited as the first computer programmer for her writings about [Charles Babbage](http://searchcio-midmarket.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid183_gci213713,00.html) 's [Analytical Engine](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci213714,00.html) . She was born in 1815, in Middlesex (now part of London) and died in London in 1852.