

Photo 2. Different-sized paper and forms. A big plus for the Malibu.

thought. Comparing the dependability of the two is difficult at this time since I've only been operating the Malibu for a few weeks. Due to the small number of moving parts, I'm confident the Malibu will come out shining in this area.

Printing is done at an incredible 165 characters per second! (Memories of the Teletype surely fan my enthusiasm on this point.) Much of the speed results from the unique combination of hardware and software which allows printing in both directions and determines the shortest distance the printhead has to go to begin printing. This feature is called bidirectional printing.

For example, if a line of 120 characters has just finished printing, and the next line to be printed is 80 characters long, a line feed will be initiated and the 80-character line will be printed backwards—while the printhead returns to the leftmost (home) position. In many other printers a line feed and head return will take place before the second line is printed—resulting in a lot of wasted time.

The print quality and character set were two important considerations in my choice of the Malibu. Several of the printers I looked over during the shopping stage produced very light printouts in comparison. One of the reasons the Malibu provides such dark, high-contrast printing is due to the self-inking ribbon used. Another factor is the Hydra printhead (more on that later).

One of the features I disliked most on other printers I looked at was the absence of descenders (the "tails" of certain lowercase letters actually *descending*). The Malibu character set provides for these descenders—as all the others should. Fig. 1 is a sample printout.

I'm not particularly thrilled that the unit is a dot matrix, rather than impact printer, but my wallet is happier that I didn't go with the latter.

I've asked several of my customers what they think of the new invoices they have been getting. Generally, the response is that, though they prefer not to get invoices at all, the new ones are quite an improvement over the old (gen-

erated by the Teletype). When I press them for an opinion on the actual characters—and how they are generated (with dots)—the usual response is, "Gosh, I hadn't noticed." So much for the shortcomings of dot-matrix print.

Miscellaneous Considerations

I dislike reading equipment reports that contain numerous dry specifications. But there are several features of this printer that really should be

mentioned.

The maximum line length is 132 characters, one of the considerations that made me decide on the printer. Several low-cost printers provide 72-character width, but I find that some monthly and quarterly reports practically demand the wider paper. Invoices are prepared on 8½ × 11-inch paper, and the mailing labels I generate for customer mailings are approximately 4½ inches wide. The variable width tractors are a

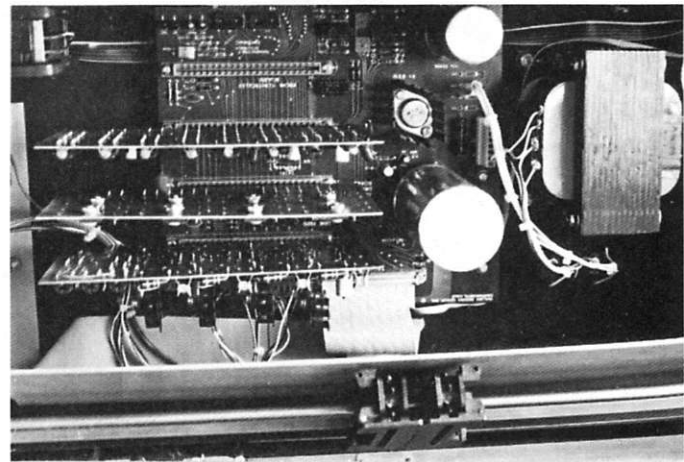


Photo 3. Inside the Malibu, the three main printed-circuit boards.

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./0123456789:;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMNopqrstuvwxyz[\]`_'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}*!"#$%&'()*+,-./
/0123456789:;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMNopqrstuvwxyz[\]`_'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}*!"#$%&'()*+,-./
0123456789:;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMNopqrstuvwxyz[\]`_'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}*!"#$%&'()*+,-./0
`_'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}*!"#$%&'()*+,-./01
!"#$%&'()*+,-./0123456789:;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMNop
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}*!"#$%&'()*+,-./01
BCDEFGHIJKLMNopqrstuvwxyz[\]`_'abcdefghijklmnopqr

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Fig. 1. Sample printout showing normal and expanded characters. Also note the lowercase characters with descenders.

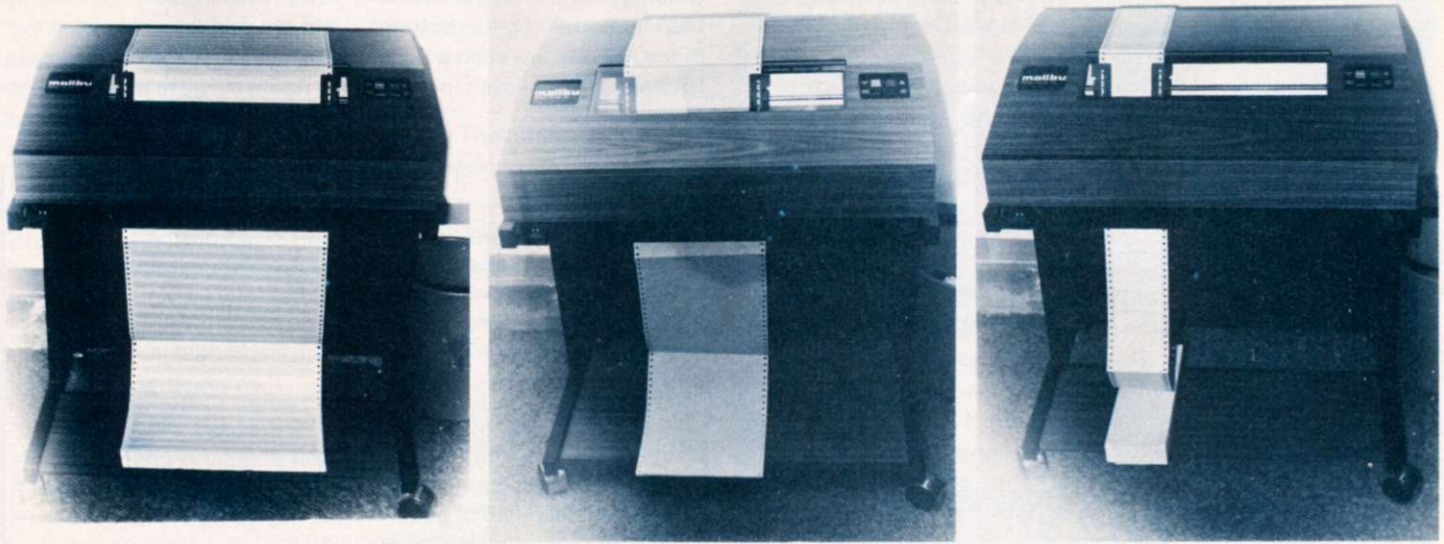


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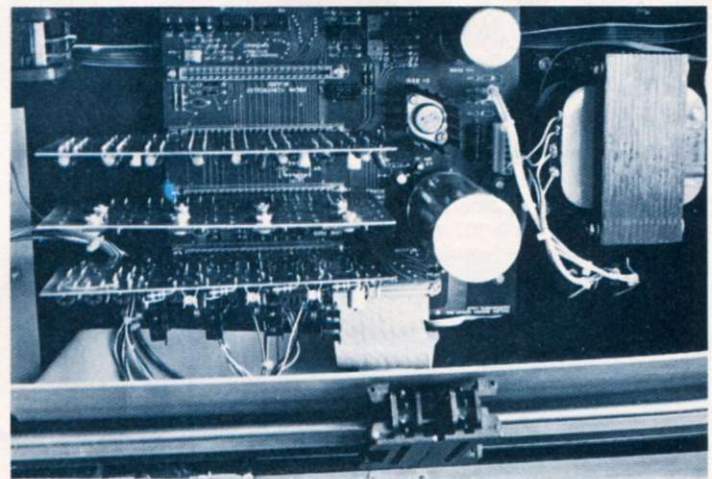


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./0123456789; <=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMN0PQRSTUVWXYZ[\ ]_`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /
./0123456789; <=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMN0PQRSTUVWXYZ[\ ]_`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /
0123456789; <=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMN0PQRSTUVWXYZ[\ ]_`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /0
  _`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /01
! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /0123456789; <=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLMN0P
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{~}! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . /01
BCDEFGHIJKLMN0PQRSTUVWXYZ[\ ]_`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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