

Cape man keeps vintage PC working

By Laura Ruane

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When a client offered to give David Keller a very early model of the IBM PC about a year ago, Keller didn't hesitate.

It's now enthroned on a sleek, modern computer desk — right across from his office's cutting-edge tech tools.

The 24-year-old PC with the 6-pound keyboard — and a 12-inch, green monochrome monitor that Keller bought on eBay for about 10 bucks — still boots up readily.

"I wanted one because this is how it all began," said Keller, the founder of Compu-Doctor, a Cape Coral-based computer consulting company. He estimates his vintage PC was manufactured less than a year after the original 5150 model was announced.

"It brought me back to my roots."

During the IBM PC's infancy, Keller worked for a firm that developed software that enabled microcomputers, the early personal computers, to seek and access data from a much-bigger mainframe computer. "This was back when the mainframe (computer) people ruled the world."

In the early years, a business decision to buy PCs "was very political, with people debating about what to do with them, and who would control them," Keller said. The first PC at his workstation: An IBM XT with a color monitor, one floppy disk drive and a 5 MB hard drive.

"At the time we thought, 'Oh, my God: What on earth will you do with all of that storage?'"



Stephen Hayford/*The News-Press*

David Keller, aka Compu-Doctor, of Cape Coral has had his "museum piece" original IBM Personal Computer for about a year. The computer, known by IBM as the 5150 model, will celebrate its 25th anniversary Saturday.