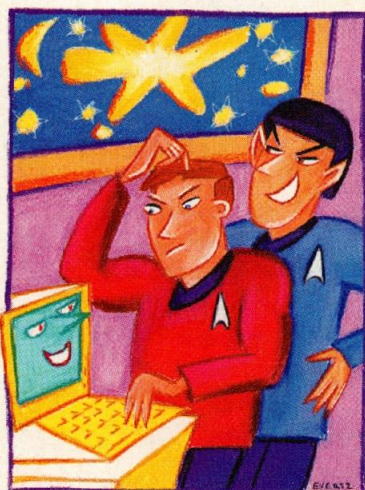# ould You Buy a PC from This Man?

Ten excursions into the wacky world of celebrity computer endorsements.

In the beginning, PC marketing seemed truly different. Here at last was a technology-driven market, one with no place for Mr. Whipple or Karl Malden. PC buyers looked for features, not names.

The first cracks in that sunny scenario appeared four or five years ago, when Ernest Borgnine's visage suddenly popped up in computer rags. Noble E. B., star of "McHale's Navy" and the cult classic *The Devil's Rain*, was shilling for a database.

More recently, the cracks have widened, loosing a flood of appearances in computer product advertising by the famous, the once-famous, the once-met-someone-famous, and the would-like-to-have-been-famous. In homage to this emerging trend, we present our ten favorite celebrity endorsements.

Unidentified mime for AT&T: Somehow it speaks volumes about AT&T that no one bothered to tell it that everyone hates mimes.

William Shatner for Tandy: Wait a minute—Mr. Spock was the one with the computer. Cap'n Kirk didn't even know how to turn the blasted thing on. And that was a completely voice-controlled, truly user-friendly computer. Does anyone really believe Kirk could handle a 101-key keyboard without the help of an army of Vulcans?

Dick Cavett for the Apple II: A bitter tale of how quickly two darlings of the intellectual set can become passé.

Frankie Avalon for Advanced Logic Research: Those FlexCache 33MHz 80386s sure do play a great game of beach blanket bingo. And just wait till you see Annette stuff a wild spreadsheet.

"King Kong" Bundy for Headstart: A classic of the "Repeat after me, 'this computer is easy to use,'

or else I'll triple-whirlybird-body-slam your budgets" school of advertising.

Alan Alda for IBM, formerly Alan Alda for Atari: Follow the bouncing Hawkeye as he oozes sincerity for the highest bidder.

John C. Dvorak for Everex: What does he know? He's only a writer.

William F. Buckley, Jr., for WordStar: Come to think of it, it's hard to imagine how Bill managed before WordStar incorporated an online thesaurus.

Terry Bradshaw and Roger Staubach for DacEasy Light: Nothing like a couple of aging quarterbacks to illuminate the joys of accounting.

Mark Twain for Bitstream Fontware, the Little Tramp for IBM, and Dr. Frankenstein and his monster for Canon Express Desktop Publishing: Posthumous praise is cheap. —*Paul Bonner*

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