

ICL 2900 Series

Product Enhancement

In November 1982, ICL announced the 2957 as an addition to the 2900 product line. A powerful central-processor-oriented computer, the 2957 is for the medium sized organization that requires a centralized system with considerable communications and networking potential. The 2957 is marketed in single, dual and "super-dual" versions, as are the 2958 and 2966. A dual system is a doubled up version of the main components of a single system, with, of course, two processors. A "super-dual" system is the same as the dual, but with the addition of the most modern disks sold by ICL, MDSS range. ICL's intention in marketing this super-dual configuration is not for the "non-stop" market (although with perhaps more "resilience" this market could be tackled) but to provide more flexibility when the 2957 and its elder brothers are used in networked configurations. A typical 2957 configuration would cost about £190,000 in the U.K.

The 2957 belongs to the same family as the 2958, 2966 and 2988. The 2900 line now consists of six machines: the 2946 and 2955 (compatible at processor level), and the 2957, 2958, 2966 and 2988 (also compatible at processor level, but not with the 2946 and 2955). The 2957 is, in fact, a somewhat down-market version of the 2958. It has a slowed down version of the same processor, but otherwise is virtually identical to the 2958 except that its maximum main memory size in the single processor version is 8 megabytes. The 2958's maximum memory is 16 megabytes in the same single processor configuration.

In millions of instructions per second (MIPS), the processors in the 2900 range now offer: 2946—0.25 MIPS, 2955—0.35 MIPS, 2957—0.5 MIPS, 2958—0.7 MIPS, 2966—1.3 MIPS, 2988—2.3 MIPS. The 2957 is now the "entry-level" model to the upper range of the 2900 series.

With compatibility at processor level, software for the highly successful 2966 will run without change on the 2957, 2958 and 2988 under VME 2900.□