

From: Dave Ruske

Comment:

I run a website, cosmacelf.com, an informational resource about an early computer chip. This microprocessor has historical significance because of its extensive use in early space probes, including Voyager, Viking and Galileo. The Voyager probes are the first man-made objects to venture into interstellar space, and the microprocessors at their cores continue to operate several decades later.

Unfortunately, it has also been decades since commercial software was available for this chip, and most of the companies who sold such software have long since vanished. Software which has been preserved by various individuals cannot be legally distributed because of U.S. copyright law, and more often than not there is no way of finding, let alone contacting, the copyright holder.

Besides historical significance, the simplicity of this early microprocessor makes it an excellent teaching platform. That usefulness is diminished when software is unavailable.

Please consider amending copyright law to permit legal distribution of such abandoned software, in a reasonable balance with the legitimate rights of copyright holders.