

EMI.

Electric and Musical Industries Ltd (EMI) was formed in 1931 from a merger of two gramophone (phonograph) companies. From its beginning, EMI was involved in the manufacture of audio recording and playback equipment, in sound recording facilities at its famous Abbey Road studios in London and in the provision of records to play on its gramophones. During and after the Second World War, the EMI Laboratories in Hayes, west London, developed electronic equipment for both defence projects and, at the end of hostilities, for television.

EMI started to investigate digital computers in 1954. A one-off computer known as CP407 was delivered to the British Motor Corporation for payroll processing in 1958. By 1958 separate teams within EMI had begun working on two substantial new projects: the EMIDEC 1100 computer and the more powerful EMIDEC 2400 computer. The first EMIDEC1100 was delivered in 1960 and the first EMIDEC 2400 in late 1961 or early 1962. Work on a third project, the EMIDEC 3400, was started in 1960 but was run down after the July 1962 take-over of EMI's computer interests by ICT. After this point, the EMIDEC 1100 was re-badged as the ICT 1101. The EMIDEC 3400 was never completed.

Turning to other electronic products, EMI was noted for its provision of high-quality colour television cameras and, in the 1970s, for CAT scanners and medical imaging. Towards the end of the 1970s, EMI's manufacturing activities were run down and EMI became much more of a media organisation. In due course EMI became known to music enthusiasts as one of the world's Big Four recording companies. In 2010 EMI reported substantial pre-tax losses and at the time of writing (2011) it seems likely that the company will be broken up and sold off.

The EMI computers featured on the *Our Computer Heritage* site are:

Group	Computers	Dates first working	Relative size	Initial target applications
M1	EMIDEC 1100	1960	Large	Commercial data processing
M2	EMIDEC 2400	1962	Large	Commercial data processing

Within the *Our Computer Heritage* time-frame of 1950 – 1965, the only production EMI computer not specifically mentioned is the one-off CP407 (the BMC Payroll computer).