

[AmiWest 2009: The Year of Change](#)

Amiga Events

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Posted on : 2009/10/21 23:07:01

I think [AmiWest 2009](#) will be most remembered as the year everything changed. For starters, the show was extended to two full days on Saturday and Sunday. Friday night before the show was changed from the usual vendor gathering to a full blown repair centre with all sorts of Amiga equipment being soldered and fixed. Seminars were also added to the show this year where attendees could learn about specific topics of interest related to the Amiga. Hyperion Entertainment changed their corporate structure. AmigaOS changed owners. The show will be changing venues next year. The restaurant we frequented closed down. Change was definitely in the air.

I think show attendance was down this year but it was not as bad as it could have been given the worldwide economic uncertainty. The banquet had over 40 people which was up from last year. The show was free again this year thanks to the show sponsors but this also means we cannot get an accurate count. I would guesstimate we had around 80 people total throughout the show from Friday to Sunday.

Around the show floor we had the following vendors:

[Inertial Computing](#)

[AmigaKit](#)

[Individual Computers](#)

[AMUC](#)

Efficient by Design

[TryTerra Computers](#)

[AUGN](#)

[SACC](#)

Representatives for [Hyperion Entertainment](#), [DiscreetFX](#) and [PageStream](#) were also at the show although they did not have exclusive vendor tables.

I asked the show organizers why we didn't have the complete list of vendors on the AmiWest web site and it seems many vendors just would not commit to coming until the last minute.

Friday night was the new "Classic Clinic" where attendees were treated to free food (courtesy of [Computer Connection](#)) and free Amiga technicians. Where else can you get experts like SACC and AmigaKit working on your hardware with plenty of computer parts around the room at no cost?

Soldering irons burned pretty late into the night until the hotel kicked us out of the room. For public safety reasons, I was not allowed near the soldering irons. This new event was such a success it is planned for next year as well.

Saturday the show opened with a seminar or two which I did not attend. I glanced over and saw Bill Borsari showing off AmigaOS 4.x. I didn't see if the AROS and MorphOS seminars which were planned made it or not.

The "juicy news" from Hyperion Entertainment was delivered on time at 14:00 on Saturday by me since I was the representative this year. The big news was that [Amiga Inc. and Hyperion had settled](#) out of court and that all litigation will come to a close. Essentially, Hyperion has secured AmigaOS and Amiga Inc. will no longer interfere with its development now or in the future. Given how much Hyperion managed to accomplish with AmigaOS while lawyers drained away already precious resources, you can imagine how much they will be able to accomplish now!

Following Hyperion's big announcement was a demonstration of the current state of the AmigaOS 4.1 update delivered by Paul Sadlik who is also a beta tester. The update is planned to be delivered before the end of the year. At the AMUC table I had a [Sam440ep-flex](#) setup which was also running the latest 4.1 update where users could try their USB memory sticks, etc. and see how things have improved or not as the case may be. A special show version of [Blender](#) was also installed thanks to [Andy Broad](#) which Alex Carmona was more than willing to toy with. Alex certainly knows what he is doing and had Blender doing all sorts of cool stuff on my 667 MHz flex.

Around the room I noted [MorphOS](#) running on [Apple's Mac Mini \(PPC\)](#) which a lot of people are excited about. There was a Bodega Bay on the show floor, a Toaster Flyer system and all sorts of 68k hardware. At AmigaKit's table you could find all sorts of new stuff to expand your 68k systems or even buy brand new AmigaOS hardware. The [Minimig](#) and [LimePC](#) were there as well. I didn't have the time to peruse everything but I think it would be safe to say every bit of hardware was at the show in some form.

Saturday night included a prime rib banquet which was well received. Vintage computers was the topic of the evening with a small panel tasked with driving the discussion. [Sellam Ismail](#) was the special guest with an outsider's perspective on the Amiga situation. Bill Borsari, Matt Leaman (AmigaKit) and myself rounded off the panel. Sellam pointed out that pretty much every vintage computer has a similar community which follows a pattern of rise and fall. With the recent AmigaOS news I think we are still on the rise so I know I'm going to enjoy the long ride.

Some time after the banquet we were notified that the hotel had mistakenly double booked our show room on Sunday. In the spirit of Amiga, everybody pulled together and moved all the equipment to another room, found power and internet services and made the best of the situation. After that fiasco, many moved to the bar to close off the evening. As luck would have it, the air conditioning unit leaked water during the evening and could have caused a lot of damage to our equipment had we not moved out.

Sunday morning was a tad chaotic with everybody scrambling to get their tables setup for the last show day. I managed to deliver a seminar on Amiga Python which was mostly led by the attendees. The AmigaOS 4.1 update contains a more polished implementation of [Python](#) and I demonstrated how to write a Python module to access AmigaOS functionality. Material from the seminar including source code is now available from [my web site](#) so go have a look. I believe Bill Borsari also delivered

a seminar but I missed out on it. AmigaDave (Dave Morris) continued the games competition which concluded with Bill Borsari taking first prize. There was cash involved with the prizes but I was busy helping Alex in an [OpenVRML](#) debug session to find out the details of what happened. Hopefully, Dave will provide us with the games competition details in another show report.

Sunday evening we adjourned to the [Sacramento Brewing Company](#) which turned out to be its last day in business. Another victim of the downturn it seems which is a real shame.

Truly, 2009 is the year of change for everyone and especially AmigaOS. I'm already looking forward to next years show and yet more change as Hyperion takes the creative reigns. MorphOS is taking a different route and moving to Apple's retired PPC hardware. I didn't notice any [AROS](#) at the show but it may have been there and I just missed it. The 68k platforms continue to receive attention with new USB adapters, flicker fixers and more. The Amiga community continues to be alive and well.

See you there next year!

--Steven Solie