

Potter Instrument, Memorex and Century Data Systems are trying to take a big bite of the multi-million dollar tape cassette market with their new floppy disc drives.

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AJ Montevecchio, sales vice-president for leading cassette drive and system supplier sites Datatronics (Rochester, NY), does not expect to see floppy discs replacing cassettes but concedes that they will bite into some of the market, particularly where high transfer rate and random access are desirable. Floppy disc makers expect this type of application – in minicomputer systems, remote batch terminals, key-to-entry devices, and point-of-sale registers – to turn into rich markets. The independents have been forced into the search for OEM business as IBM makes the plug-compatible market even tougher, but the whole floppy disc industry was given a big boost by IBM's recent introduction of the 3740 diskette key-to-floppy disc system in Europe, thereby making the product 'respectable.' Mohawk Data Sciences (Herkimer, NY) may also join the floppy disc brigade.

RJ Chartbrand, national sales director of Century Data Systems, sees a possible \$5 mil of shipments in 1973 with the market doubling in the following year. Independent studies, he says, have projected sales of 300-400,000 units over the next four years with a requirement for high-speed transfer, random access, 1 mil bits or more of storage and low-price comparable to tape cassettes.

Memorex and Potter forecast a slow start, with pickup at the end of 1973 and substantial growth in 1974-75. The cassette people see the impact as being further down the line.

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