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Computer centre grabbed imagination at exhibition

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NOSTALGIA and an unusual twist on computers helped a stand by the Centre For Computing History, from Haverhill, grab the imagination of nearly everyone visiting The Gadget Show Live, in London, recently.
And the exhibition may continue to prove fruitful for its founders, as they made a number of useful contacts which could further secure the unique centre's future.

Jason Fitzpatrick, one of the guiding lights behind the centre, said the stand was
packed with people all day and there had been a lot of praise on computing blogs since the event: "We had a fantastic response at the Gadget Show Live. The stand was inundated with people telling stories of how the computer they had changed their life, and that's exactly what the museum is about.

"It's about telling the story of the computer age and how it affected society."

The centre has a number of rare machines in its collection, including vintage games – which were available for members of the public to try out at the show.

Jason said: "We had dads coming up to the stand and telling their kids how it used to be."

Contacts made included MSN and Jason said it's hoped involvement with some of the companies which have machines within the museum's collection can help develop the centre: "The Centre For Computing History is a real labour of love.

"We have some great volunteers that help run and maintain the project, but sadly there's only so much that can be done for free.

"The centre really needs financial support from the big names in computing. After all, it's their history we're preserving."

And he set out just why the centre differs from other computing collectings, such as Bletchley Park (the National Museum of Computing, which houses the Enigma machine): "It's pretty much the only museum with the aim of telling people how these gadgets have changed our lives. We're trying to make people aware, for example, that once upon a time you had to send letters.

"The way we live our lives is unrecognisably different from what it used to be.

"You can't go shopping without computer watching what you buy."

For more information, visit www.computinghistory.org.uk