

The story of my first laptop

the Toshiba DynaBook

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Publication date

2018

Document Version

Final published version

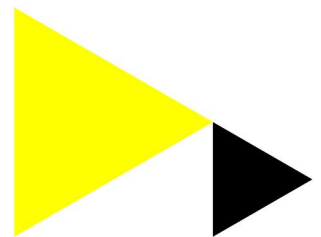
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Citation for published version (APA):

Lovink, G. (2018). The story of my first laptop: the Toshiba DynaBook. Web publication or website, Institute of Network Cultures. <http://networkcultures.org/geert/2018/01/15/the-story-of-my-first-laptop-the-toshiba-dynabook/?pdf=1500>

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During my first visit to Japan in 1990 I got acquainted with the Toshiba DynaBook. Unlike earlier laptops, this one was small, elegant and easily fitted into a backpack. A year later I was able to purchase one. This wonder of compact technology accompanied me during my travels to Berlin and Eastern Europe in the first part of the roaring 90s when I was writing for Mediamatic magazine. Our Agentur Bilwet (Adilkno) group composed The Media Archive and Datadandy books on this machine. The laptop assisted me in my move from Dutch to English as my main writing language. Even though it did not have a color screen, and ran MS-DOS (no Windows yet), I could pretty much do everything compared to what I do now. In 1992 a friend brought a new part over from Japan that could easily be installed next to the battery: the modem. From now on I was able to dial into bulletin boards. In 1993 I got access to the internet via hacktic, the forerunner of the xs4all provider. The rest is (my personal) internet history: The Digital City, desk.nl, nettime. The machine retired when I purchased an Acer in Taiwan, in 1999. No nostalgic feelings for a primitive technology. The Dynabook remains superior: a symbol of Japanese industrial supremacy, built before its downfall—in 1992.

The Dynabook is on display as part of the magnificent Rosebubs-Hidden Stories of Things exhibit in Leipzig:

<http://d21-leipzig.de/index.php/aktuell/212.html>.