Museum of Computer Science, Digital Culture and Video Games
Sponsorship and patronage
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Musée Bolo
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Association aBCM
IBAN: CH98 0900 0000 1771 7276 2
BIC POFICHBEXXX
A museum looking to the future

With its very rich collection of machines and objects related to information technology and its history, Musée Bolo is preserving a unique heritage in Europe. It's with an original and innovative concept that it stands out today. Illustrated by historic pieces, its permanent and temporary exhibitions aim to explain the past and present technological prowess and anticipate those of tomorrow. The Musée Bolo restores these computers and their software and makes sense of the digital revolution that has invaded the existence of each and every one of us.

Musée Bolo has been supported and run since 2001 by an association and managed since 2007 by Mémoires Informatiques foundation, both recognized as being of public utility. The members of the foundation and the association are all volunteers.

Musée Bolo is part of the Swiss Museums Association (VMS/AMS) and has become one of the most important computer museums in Europe. Its presence today extends far beyond Switzerland’s borders, not only to computer enthusiasts but also to a wider public confronted daily with digital tools and their avatars.

A unique heritage

Today, Musée Bolo’s collections include historic computers, peripherals (printers, drives and monitors), game consoles and calculators. They are accompanied by a very large quantity of software, documentation as well as numerous publications, several thousand books, magazines, newspapers and archives, not forgetting video games.

Objects designed or made in Switzerland have an important place in these collections. Musée Bolo exhibits the first commercially available Swiss computer, the Cora 1 (1963), the complete family of Smaky microcomputers, designed at the EPFL, the first mice behind the success of the Logitech company, as well as the Lilith workstation created by Niklaus Wirth, the inventor of the Pascal language.

This rich and varied heritage tells the whole story of micro-computing, from the pioneers (Altair, IMSAI, Commodore PET, Apple II) to the most recent, including the multitude of brands from the 1980s. The museum’s collections include the great classics, such as the Commodore 64, as well as commercial failures, failed attempts and machines from countries less known for their computer developments. In addition, there are supercomputers (Cray, IBM), more professional workstations (DEC, Sun), large minicomputers, the first Hewlett-Packard from 1968, and electromechanical machines (keypunches, for example).

An innovative concept

The ambitions of Musée Bolo are commensurate with its collections. The origins of information technology and its development over the last fifty years help to understand the current digital revolution and anticipate its evolution.

The exhibitions visible at the museum, such as Programmed Disappearance, explain the stages that led to the digital revolution (see History of Musée Bolo below). The temporary exhibition Accessible deals with the technological daily life of people with disabilities. Other exhibitions will explore key themes such as computers and science fiction, supercomputers and the brain, digital literacy in today’s society, interfaces as artefacts of the five senses or computers and the environment.

A skill center

The Mémoires Informatiques foundation, which oversees the museum, is helped by Les Amis du Musée Bolo association. The association brings together a team of computer enthusiasts and professionals who restore and bring back the machines to life. They organize exhibitions and tours in addition to animating several annual events.

Their skills are unique in Switzerland, whether it involves recovering data from obsolete media or operating a giant computer whose once prosperous manufacturer has fallen into oblivion. Companies, museums and other institutions in Switzerland and abroad are relying on the association’s expertise.
15,000 books and magazines

8,000 softwares

5,000 computers and video game consoles
We need you

The Mémoires Informatiques foundation, whose objective is to preserve and save computer-related items, is at risk. The economic balance of the museum is fragile. Its exhibition is located in a public space, without the possibility of generating ticketing revenue.

Currently run entirely by volunteers, the museum must be able to hire professionals fully devoted to its proper functioning.

The museum also needs to fund storage spaces in order to preserve its valuable heritage. Despite a selective choice of the acquisitions, this heritage grows thanks to many donations from collectors.

The museum is looking for generous partners who are aware of the challenges of the digital age. Help the museum pursue its ambitious project while boosting and reinforcing your brand image.

Consolidated annual budget
Foundation + Association

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* = To achieve

Help the museum pursue its ambitious project while boosting and reinforcing your brand image.

“...To understand the digital shift affecting our societies today, it is essential to place it within a long story of technique and cultural practices. As such, French-speaking Switzerland is fortunate to have an institution as Musée Bolo, which understood before many others the issues related to patrimonialization of computing devices. Within their collection of national significance can be found sets of computer games which have nothing comparable elsewhere, and which constitutes valuable material for researchers from Switzerland and abroad.”

UNIL Gamelab, Lausanne

Thank you to all our future sponsors

Thank you to all our future patrons
Join our partners' circle

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Official partners

Associative partners

Cultural partners

Sponsors

Take part in the adventure!

You are a public administration, an organization dedicated to education and teaching.
You are a company active in computer science, in digital technology or in various other economic areas and wish to enhance your image,

become our sponsor

You are a private individual nostalgic for the machines you have used, you are enthusiastic about today's digital technologies, you are a collector,

become our patron
Musée Bolo, decoder of the digital age, offers an educational and dynamic image. By taking part in its projects, you will make your company shine alongside your customers, prospects and employees.

### Image and exposure
The museum’s exhibitions are located in the heart of EPFL. They are visited by more than 6,000 people (not including students) per year.

Your presence through individual brochures or an inscription on the sponsors’ wall gives you an excellent visibility.

The museumbolo.ch website has 10,000 visitors per year and offers several spaces where your logos can appear.

Every year, the museum participates in four major events, including the Night of the Museums of Lausanne and Pully. The museum’s partners appear on all the printed material produced for each occasion.

### Guided tours
We organize guided tours of the museum and temporary exhibitions for your employees, customers and prospects. Alternatively, you can visit the museum’s computer storage rooms, a real Ali Baba’s cave!

### Exhibition on your premises
Our team can also organize, on your company’s premises, a mini-exhibition of the computers it has designed and/or used in the past.

### Sponsorship
Temporary exhibitions can be sponsored. We also have the skills to restore and bring back rare and unique computers to life. Sponsorship of an exhibition or of a restored machine are very visible because they are widely publicized in the media.

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## Your benefits

- **Image and exposure**
- **Guided tours**
- **Exhibition on your premises**
- **Sponsorship**

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Certain forms of partnership are tax deductible.
History

The history of Musée Bolo starts in 1995, with a young computer science student who picked an Apple II computer up in the street. The very first item of a collection that quickly becomes a passion for Yves Bolognini. With the help of his friends, he creates an association and starts a first exhibition in the School of Computer and Communication Sciences from the EPFL. There the adventure of Musée Bolo begins.

In 2007, the fundation Mémoire Informatiques is created with the aim of safeguarding and developing this computing heritage. The founding members are chosen from among the pioneers of the discipline. Their mission is the management of the museum and the preparation of various museum projects.

In 2011, Programmed Disappearance renews the museum’s image. With its provocative title, this exhibition addresses the history of computer science from a playful angle, without being reduced to a simple chronology. The five tracks of the investigation tell the story of why and how the computer is getting smaller and smaller, and how it is being hidden, being forgotten, dissolved into the cloud, competes with the human being. Paradoxically, it has never been so present in a world where computers are everywhere and nowhere.

A similarly named book, Programmed Disappearance, bilingual French-English, makes the exhibition permanent.

The exhibition inaugurates a series of projects developed around the same concept: decoding the digital revolution and its technological achievement of today and tomorrow in the light of objects from the past.

“In 2009, for the 20th anniversary of the WWW, CERN called on the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo to overhaul the first web server. Without the skills of their team we would not have been able to boot up this historic machine. Knowledge preservation and a stock of totally irreplaceable and impossible to manufacture parts are fundamental. The museum therefore plays an essential role in this area, not only for Switzerland but for all of Europe and the world.”

Robert Cailliau, Word Wide Web pioneer

Find out more about the museum
The current situation of Musée Bolo

The collections of Musée Bolo are constantly broadening. Some acquisitions are singular, such as Cray’s or IBM Blue Gene’s supercomputers, the only witnesses to a wild race for performance. Some collectors donate us almost new computers in their original boxes. Sometimes a unique collection joins the museum, such as the Bonnell collection, which illustrates 24 years of the French video game company Infogrames’ history.

Ubiquitous on the Swiss stage...

As the first permanent museum in Switzerland dedicated to the history of computer science, Musée Bolo has been a member of the Swiss Museum Association (VMS/AMS) since 2004. Every year, during the Nuit des Musées in Lausanne, it welcomes nearly a thousand visitors. Musée Bolo is also involved in events that attract many young (and not so young) people, such as the Numerik Games in Yverdon organized by Maison d’Ailleurs.

The museum’s specialists are the key contacts for the media, newspapers, radio or TV, when information related to computer science makes the headlines.

... and abroad

The reputation of Musée Bolo extends far beyond Swiss borders. Its specialists, such as Yves Bolognini, are invited to international conferences. Other museums, such as Centre Mondial de la Paix in Verdun, have requested loans from Musée Bolo. As for European collectors, they wish to keep their own treasures safe in Musée Bolo.

The website museebolo.ch

Completely redesigned, the museum’s website is its digital showcase. Internet users can find all the information about the museum, follow the activities of the association and its agenda, reread newspaper articles, watch videos of interviews with the pioneers, admire photos of the historical objects that make the pride of the museum.

A skill center

Thanks to technical achievements, the association Les Amis du Musée Bolo has given new life to prestigious machines, such as the Blue Gene/P donated by IBM to the museum. Another IBM RS/6000 computer was refurbished and then loaned to CERN as part of a World Wide Web heritage conservation project. The association’s team of enthusiasts made an entirely handcrafted copy of the Apple 1, a mythical machine of which only a few copies remain in the world. Students in preservation/restoration carry out projects with objects taken from our collection. These are some examples of what can be achieved by the museum through unique skills of those who animate it.

The reputation of Musée Bolo extends far beyond Swiss borders
The future of Musée Bolo

Exhibit its collections in larger areas to better showcase them. Prepare temporary exhibitions that will decipher the present and future of digital technology. These goals can only be achieved by professionalizing the museum and hiring competent staff for management, repairs, maintenance, security, inventory and marketing of the museum.

The priority is, first of all, to ensure the financing of the storage facilities needed to safeguard the digital heritage. The museum’s collections grow each year thanks to donations from collectors or companies looking for a place to house their obsolete computers.

A heritage which, thanks to the innovative concept adopted by the museum and its unique centre of expertise, fully justifies Musée Bolo becoming the museum of digital culture.

"The field of computer science being relatively young, the conservation of its heritage has not yet received the attention it deserves. Musée Bolo became aware long before any of us of the need to work towards this preservation and has been able, for more than 20 years, to gather a collection that is unique in Switzerland and with worldwide exposure."

Patrick Amaru, Head of the IT Department, Canton de Vaud
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Photos: © Sébastien Monachon
Project Pomme One - Programmed Disappearance - The items of the museum