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From the Editor

The Mac II, launched on March 2, 1987, cost \$5,500 and was the first computer with a colour graphical interface. Three years earlier Apple bad begun selling the LaserWriter. Combined with WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) software, the world was waking up to the marvels of desktop publishing.

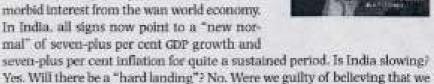
Steve Jobs, who said everybody wants to go to heaven but nobody wants to die, did both on October 5 - at least it must be computing heaven - almost exactly 10 years after the iPod was launched, "a breakthrough MP3 music player that packs up to 1,000 cm-quality songs into an ultra-portable, 6.5 ounce design that fits in your pocket". The Aughts were engarged with Apple delights, and you only had to watch toddlers use the touch screens on iPhones and then iPads intuitively and insouciantly to understand how far we have travelled from the Mac II and its one megabyte of standard memory. Oddly enough the Macintosh was launched with an Orwellian commercial. "1984", where a young woman smashes a screen projecting Big Brother, while a roomful of human robots - a.k.a. Androids - look on aghast. Today, Google's Android open-source platform looks like a serious threat to Apple's iOS mobile operating system.

But back to the late 1980s, when Vinod Vohra. Chairman of Repro India, remembers producing what he believes to be India's first CD-ROM. Its title? The

Kama Sutra. Repro was trying to sell Macs. bundled with the CD-ROM, which you played off an external drive. Suddenly people began to hear the word "multimedia" and were captivated. "I was fascinated; I was in awe: I was consumed by this thing," Vohra remembers. Right from then, he says. Apple products were aspirational. Think of the kids who queued up to buy the iPad, which has up to 64 gigabytes of storage. That is 64,000 times the storage on the Mac II at one-eleventh its price.

Steve lobs's passing momentarily diverted morbid interest from the wan world economy. In India, all signs now point to a "new normal" of seven-plus per cent GDP growth and

had a divine right to 10-per cent growth? Undoubtedly,



Which is why the third Business Today Business Confidence Index (page 58) should be as much part of your archives as the earlier two quarterly surveys were. It shows that business is pessimistic, and that hiring may also be decelerating; this trend is additionally underlined in the BT-TeamLease Employment Outlook Survey on page 124. And as for our exports, which seem to hop about with the same abandon as the Energizer Bunny, you must read our sober assessment starting on page 64 of why they might just fall off the cliff.

"Cognizant" means "aware of something". Our cover story this fortnight unfolds the story of a 15-year-old company with lower margins, relentless customer focus and wide-open eyes, led appropriately by a borderless CEO, which is snapping at the beels of India's No. 2 software company (page 46).

Good business journalism is about telling you gobsmacking tales, Special Correspondent Sunny Sen, who worked on the Cognizant story, also describes how the Chinese are about to invade India - with five car models unleashed by their local partner General Motors (page 78).

And there is so, so much more...

