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Monday, Mar 10, 2014

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Leave Cali day 8

I clear out the lab and start to toss project folders months before the move to Florida.



My pal Dave Tamura has a concept-- *the chain of dependencies*. So to start to clear out the bedroom I was using as an electronics lab, I had to clear out the secretarial desk in the living room. I wanted to keep a small subset of stuff in the lab to take to Florida. Meanwhile I could take the test equipment to the [Silicon Valley electronics flea market](#).

Some equipment I sold on eBay. I made over \$10k, money that I used to defray the \$14k cost of the mover, much less all the other expenses.

I learned my house was no longer under water in February 2014. My goal was to leave California by the end of the year. It worked out perfectly.

I talked to an insane real estate agent that wanted me to list in April. Man, they deserve the bad reputation they get. Instead, I listed the house in July, and it was sold in September. Before I could sell the house, I sold a ton of stuff at [the eFlea](#), on Craigslist, and eBay. I learned I could put anything metal out on the curb, and it would be gone the next morning.



I started to clear off the desk in the living room, to transfer some stuff to it..



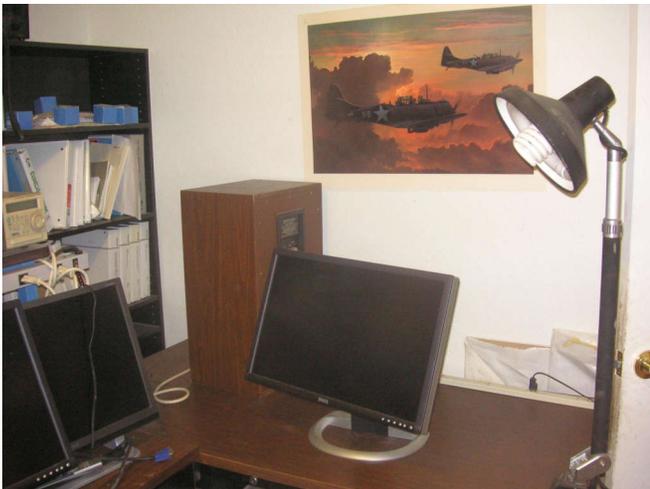
The third desk in the 9 by 11-foot bedroom used as a lab was for assembly and soldering.



Here is the electronics lab.



Next to it was this temperature chamber. This I sold off at the flea market, with a lot of stuff.



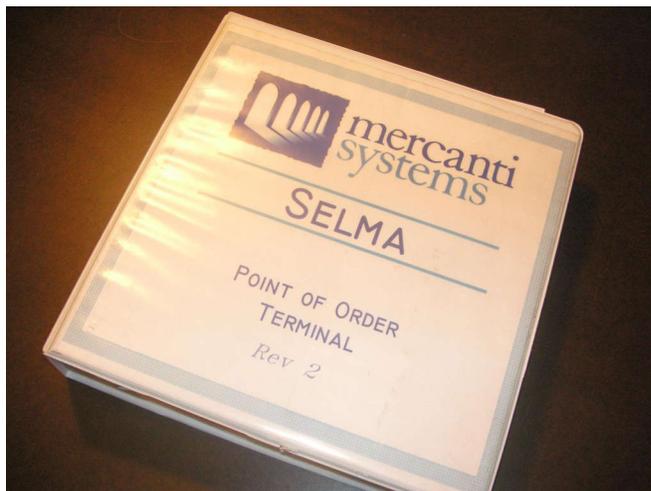
Turn towards the right and you can see another desk with speaker, where I used to have a computer.



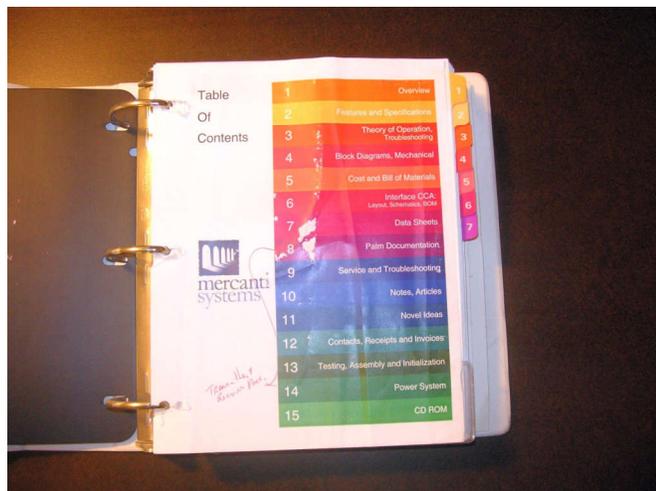
The shelves were filled with project books for designs I had done. Here are four from 2001.



Mercanti was a startup way ahead of its time. We were making hardware and software to order online, and pick up at the store (in 2001!).



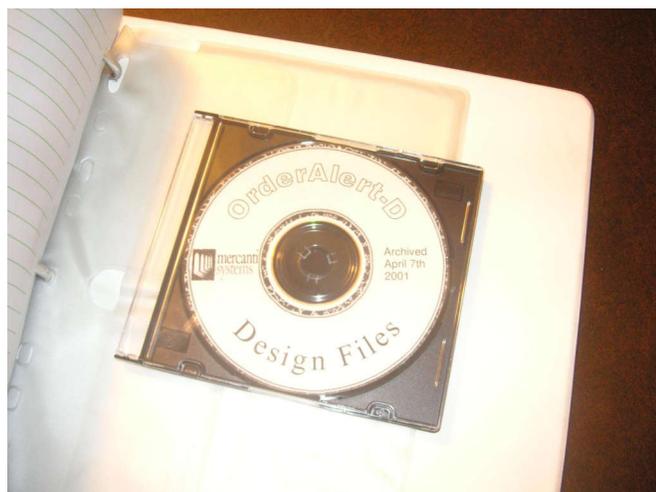
Here is another design. [Marv Rudin](#) taught me how [Andy Grove](#) said to always give things a name, hence the "Selma" designation.



I took great pride in clear and complete documentation. It impressed the funders.



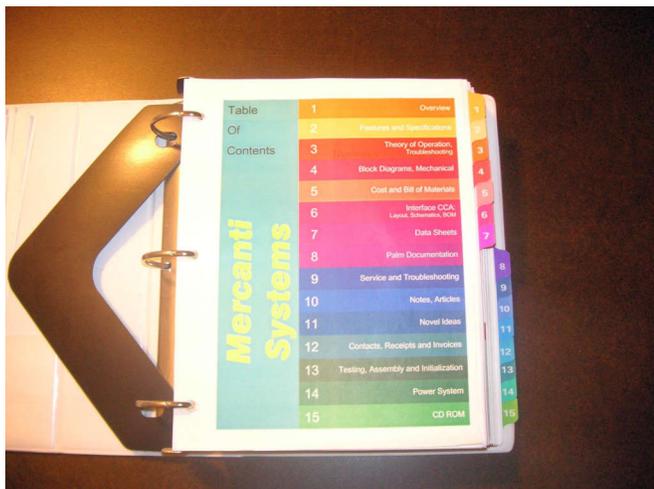
These notebooks have clear covers you can insert a printed sheet. I made two sets.



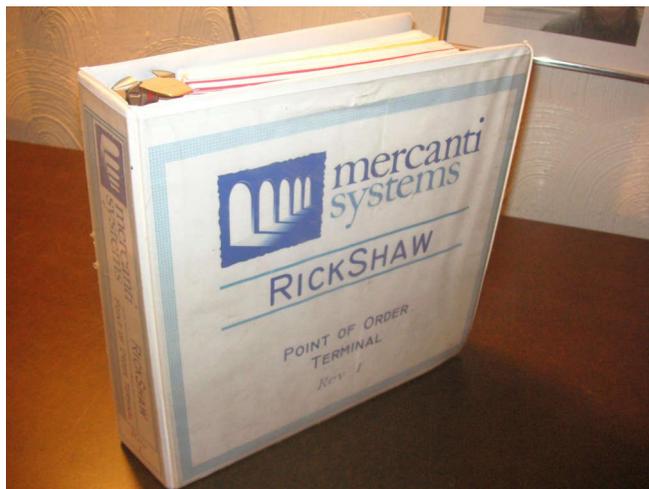
The books have a disk with all the material.



I even did covers for the back.



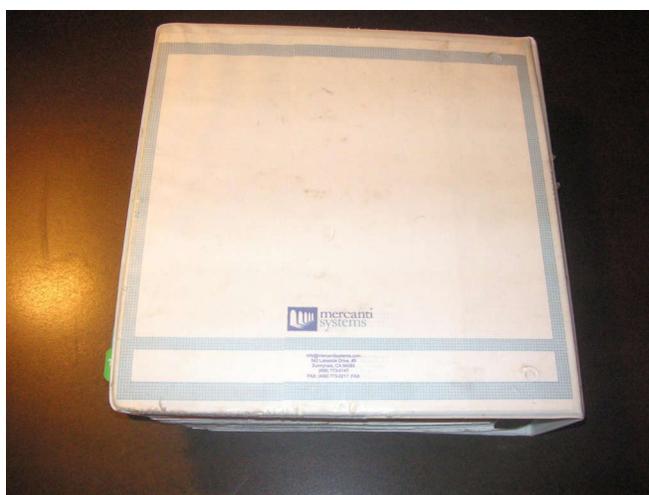
Another project book. A color printer can make documentation look really good.



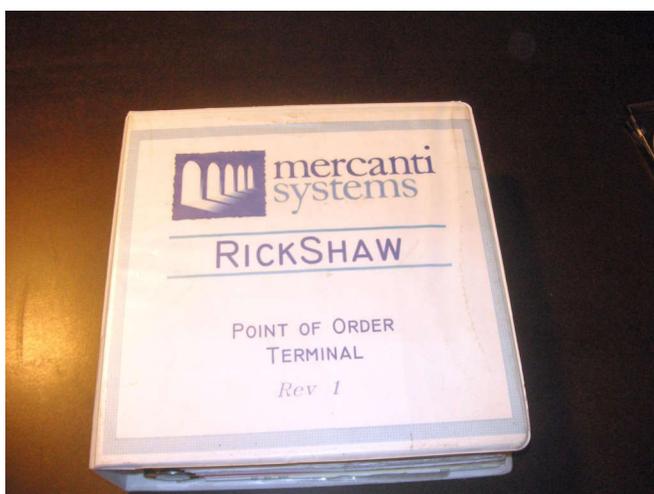
Thing is, I had resolved to not take any paper to Florida. If it was available in bits, I trashed it.



I made sure to copy all the files onto my Synology 213 network-attached storage drives..



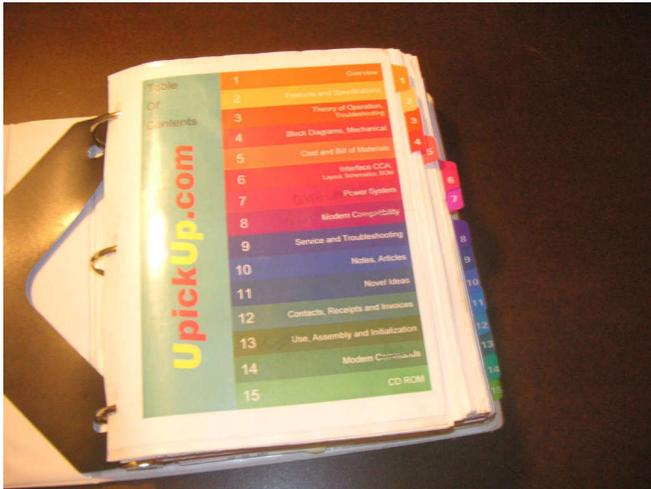
The back of this project folder. Fond memories.



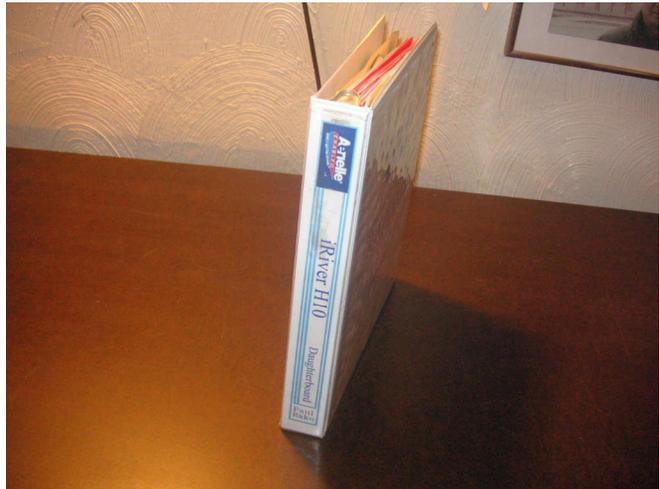
It pained me to toss these books, they were a great reminder of the work I did in the Valley.



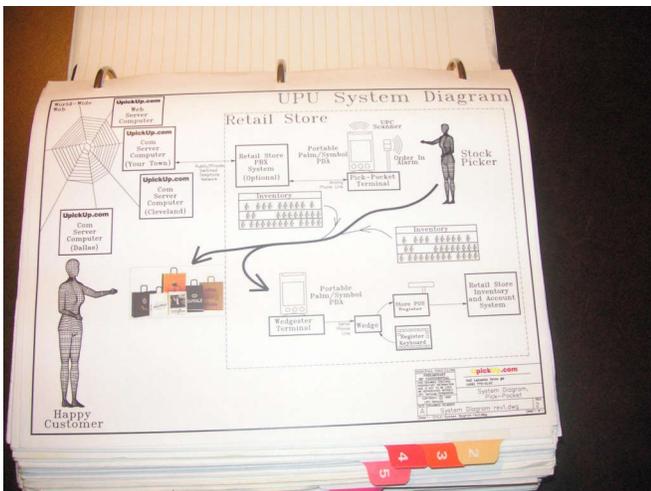
Note the revision number on the bottom. Every time we made a change, I bumped the rev number. It kept things straight.



This let me design and prototype a point-of-sale terminal in three months. Let's see NCR do that.



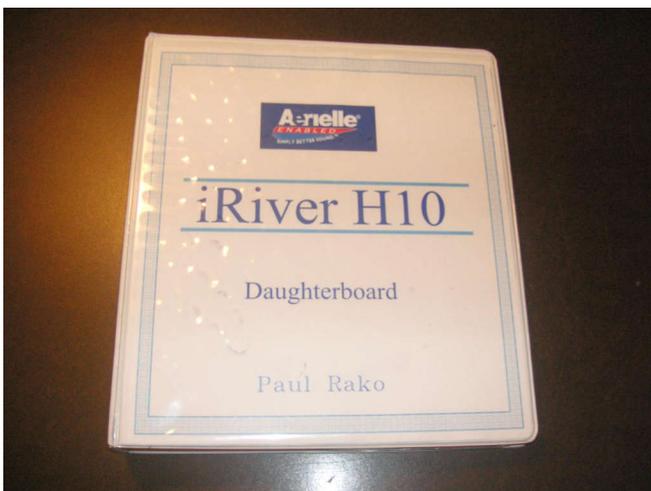
Even for small jobs, I printed up the covers for the binders.



I also liked to do block diagrams and drawings explaining the project. Investors loved it.



It was a professionalism that justified my rate.



This was a little 5-volt power supply I did for a pal. He loved the documentation.



OK, the desk out front is cleared off and I can start moving in stuff from the lab, primarily the computer I had in there.



All this paper went into the trash, once I was sure I had an electronic version of it on the NAS hard drive. I have dual drives mirrored for security. I have only lost one bit of work, a DOS video game I wrote in BASIC in 1985. Somehow it never made it off the giant 32MB hard disk to a backup drive.

You might notice the plywood covering the window in the picture above. This was sound deadening, because my house was across the street from the Brass Rail strip club. Every night at 2:00AM there was pounding music as drunks and druggies left the place. There was a murder and an another shooting in the parking lot during the seven years I lived there. This is in Sunnyvale, the lowest crime city in California. The fine Sunnyvale government saw fit to allow this because... brown envelopes?

I don't know the Rail was paying off politicians, but I do know that when a squad car parked outside, everybody was real quiet leaving at 2:00AM. I assume the city elite felt that was too chilling a policy, so they just let things go on every night. The two Greek owners died, and the son, an orthodontist, sold the place off. It is condos now, good riddance. If I had stayed until they closed the rail, my house would have been worth a lot more. Nevertheless, I was glad to leave the stress of Silicon Valley in 2014.