

HP to kill older 3000 server line

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Hewlett-Packard plans to announce Wednesday that it will discontinue the venerated 3000 server line after 30 years, CNET News.com has learned.

The Palo Alto, Calif., company, struggling with an economic downturn and an attempted acquisition of rival Compaq Computer, apparently decided the line was too expensive to continue, sources said. HP made an effort to [reinvigorate](#) the line, which runs the MPE operating system, but most of the company's server attention is directed at its 9000 Unix server line and its NetServer Intel server line.

HP plans to support existing customers for the next five years, two sources said. Sales of existing systems and upgrades will continue through the end of 2002.

HP declined to comment on the move, but said an announcement on the subject is planned for Wednesday.

The economic slowdown has spurred [layoffs](#) and [more layoffs](#) at HP as the company. The company is [grappling](#) with its proposed [merger](#) with Compaq and is focusing on [reclaiming](#) momentum in the Unix server market from Sun Microsystems and IBM.

The 3000 line was launched in 1972 to replace the HP 2000, according to author [Bob Green](#), who worked on early designs. The machine stepped in to fill a void after HP backed off an effort code-named "Omega" to compete with IBM mainframes.

In 1972 and 1973, the early versions of the HP 3000 were temporarily withdrawn from the market because of flaws in the operating system that led to frequent crashes and inferior performance. The Series II, introduced in 1975, was more successful, Green said.

Rumors of the move began [surfacing](#) at 3000 discussion sites last week.

The HP 3000 line of servers have been converging onto the same hardware as the company's 9000 line of Unix servers. The servers have a smaller but loyal following among tens of thousands of customers, in specific industries such as health care, credit unions and retail.

Those that have something to gain from the demise of MPE and the 3000 line have begun efforts to take advantage of their opportunity. [Sector7](#) and [Transformix Engineering](#) have begun touting services to help companies move from MPE to other operating systems.

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