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Open Transport 1.1.1: General Information FAQ (10/96)

Article Created: 16 October 1996

Article Reviewed/Updated: 23 October 1996

TOPIC -----

This article is the Open Transport 1.1.1, General Information FAQ (frequently asked questions).

DISCUSSION -----

Question: What is Apple Open Transport?

Answer: Apple Open Transport is the modern networking and communications subsystem for the Mac OS. Open Transport is based on industry standards and brings a new level of networking connectivity, control, and interoperability to MacOS systems, while preserving and enhancing the hallmark of the Macintosh and MacOS - built-in support for easy-to-use networking.

Question: What long-range Apple goals are advanced through Open Transport?

Answer: Apple believes that communications and collaboration technologies are integral and fundamental to personal and workgroup computing. With Open Transport our goal is to provide the foundation to make MacOS the best desktop OS for multiprotocol networking, anywhere.

Question: What needs must be addressed to be "the best"?

Answer: Networking and communications technologies are mission critical thus reliability is a base-level requirement. Organizations require interoperability in heterogeneous environments; full compliance with standards is necessary.

High performance is also key. Increasing file sizes often related to the rich media types found in graphics and publishing, multimedia, video production, and technical markets create a demand for effective use of higher bandwidth communications technologies such as ISDN, FDDI, fast Ethernet and ATM.

Beyond these base-level requirements, network managers, end-users and developers each have additional needs.

- Network managers need networked systems to support a flexible model of

administration that accommodates both centralized and decentralized management models.

- Users are typically more interested in communications as a basis for productivity applications. As such, they want networking that is easy to set up and easy to use. This becomes even more important when users are mobile, needing access to networking services from wherever they may be without requiring complex reconfiguration for each connection type and location.
- Developers need to address the broadest possible markets with minimum incremental investment. In short, they need standards based, cross-platform APIs and development tools.

Question: What were some of the key goals driving the development of Open Transport?

Answer: Apple began with two key assumptions: that networking is inherently a multiplatform, multiprotocol proposition; and that customers should not have to start over to achieve networking interoperability. This led us to adopt five key design goals:

- Open Transport must protect customer and developer investments in existing network infrastructure and applications.
- Open Transport must be based on existing cross-platform industry standards.
- Open Transport must provide users with an easy to set-up, easy to use abstraction of the underlying complexity of multiprotocol networking.
- Open Transport must also provide a complementary abstraction of networking and communications services for applications developers.
- Open Transport must offer a flexible run time model - one that lets a specific protocol be configured and selected at run time, rather than linked at compile time.

Article Change History:

23 Oct 1996 - Changed distribution status.

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Keywords: kfaq

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19961023 16:31:12.00

Tech Info Library Article Number: 20550