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AOCE: Messaging Services (10/93)

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TOPIC -----

This article describes the Messaging Services of Apple Open Collaborative Environment (AOCE).

DISCUSSION -----

The most obvious use of messaging services is electronic mail, exchanging letters and documents between two end users. However, electronic mail is just one example of the possible messaging services offered by AOCE technology.

- IPM
AOCE software supports InterProgram Messaging (IPM) a way of sending messages between applications as well as between electronic mail users. IPM is different from InterProgram Communication (IPC) in that IPM messages are delivered in a store and forward manner and that they can be addressed to a group of addresses. IPC messages must be delivered in real time and can have only one destination per message.

- Mail vs. messaging
The AOCE toolbox distinguishes between electronic mail and other AOCE messages through the use of message families. Any message of family 'file' or 'mail' will be treated as an electronic mail message and delivered to the System Mailbox. Messages of the 'file' family are direct display files, meaning that the file can be displayed as an image without any application software required.

The AOCE toolbox does no special handling for messages of different families. All messages, whether destined for the system mailbox or another application, are delivered in the same manner.

- Store and forward messaging
All AOCE messages are delivered in a store and forward manner. When a message is created on an AOCE system, the message is placed in an outgoing queue and delivered when the destination is available. Once the message has been placed in the outgoing message queue, the message originator need not worry about checking to see when the destination is available. The AOCE Toolbox will attempt to contact the destination and deliver the message.

In a server-based environment, messages are delivered to the server and then to their eventual destination. In a server-less environment, messages remain in the local outgoing message queue until they are delivered.

There is a timeout period associated with message delivery. If an AOCE system is unable to deliver a message for 5 days, a problem report will be sent to the message originator informing them that the message could not be delivered. The 5 day period was chosen to take into account situations where a message could not be delivered because the destination was unavailable over a 3 day weekend.

The 5 day timeout period is not user modifiable in the initial release of PowerTalk and PowerShare.

All AOCE users gain the benefit of store and forward messaging, whether they are in a server-based or server-less environment.

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