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Macintosh and PCI Card Compatibility (9/94)

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TOPIC -----

Will the majority of the Intel machine PCI cards be able to run in Macintosh computers with the proper software driver? Where does Open FirmWare enter the picture?

DISCUSSION -----

Most PCI cards that do not need to be active on boot (video cards would need to be active at bootup, network cards wouldn't) will be able to function in our machines with the proper software driver loaded. Since the PCI standard is well-defined, there shouldn't be a problem with the hardware. So the answer to question #1 is: Yes, it is safe to assume that.

Open Firmware is required for boot registration services - in other words, in order for the card to be recognized before any OS software loads, a PCI card in our machine will have to be Open Firmware compliant. This would apply to cards such as video and hard drive controller cards.

Open Firmware compliant PCI cards are not necessarily the norm at this time, but that is changing. With the push for standards-based hardware and software, and Apple's evangelism of Open Firmware, vendors may see this as an advantage.

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