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Macintosh: Troubleshooting System Bombs (3 of 3)

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TOPIC -----

Here are some troubleshooting tips regarding the major causes of system bombs.

DISCUSSION -----

Incompatibility in Software

Verify that your application is the most current version available and fully compatible with your Macintosh model. Check with the software manufacturers for information on the latest revisions, what version of the system should be used with what version of the application, and incompatibilities.

All INITs, programs, and System files must be compatible with each other. You need to know the EXACT version of applications and INITs. For example, Microsoft uses version numbers in the following sequences: 2.0; 2.00a; 2.00b; 2.00c; 2.00d. These represent Microsoft Works versions. Microsoft Works 2.00a is a problem in the System 6.0.7 environment. Microsoft Works 2.00b is compatible with System 6.0.7. It isn't enough to state that Microsoft Works 2.0 is a problem. The version numbers need to be EXACT.

Corrupt Files

Any type of software may become corrupted. It can be very difficult to find out which piece of software may be causing your problem. Following the steps outlined in the "Troubleshooting System Bombs" section may be the only way to discover the corrupted software.

Viruses

The best way to combat viruses is with one of the many virus detection and correction programs available today. Viruses haven't caused problems on computers with the latest copy of a virus protection program installed. You'll need to start your computer from a floppy disk containing a virus detection program to fully check and "vaccinate" your hard disk. The

System file and other software may not be diagnosed or fixed if they are running when the hard drive is checked. Once the hard drive has been checked and cleared of any offending viruses, an INIT file that scans each floppy disk as it is inserted will keep your system virus free. See the discussion of "Co-processor not installed!" errors for some information on the WDEF virus.

Hardware

If hardware is the problem, you should take your system to an authorized Apple dealer for a thorough diagnostic check. If problems continue after you've explored all software situations, look at hardware -- particularly memory or memory management.

It could be RAM or the logic board. RAM problems can show up after warm-up. For example, a marginal SIMM's speed may be fine when cool but slow down after warming up. All SIMMs do this to a certain extent, but you may have a SIMM that crosses the Macintosh computer's tolerance threshold when warm. The only fix for this is to replace the offending SIMM or SIMMs. A similar problem could be happening within the memory manager's circuitry on the logic board; the only possible fix is a complete logic board replacement.

You may also have a SCSI problem, particularly if you have external SCSI devices attached. This problem occurs most often when you have external SCSI devices attached, but not turned on. You must turn on all SCSI devices before starting the Macintosh, and you must leave them on until you turn the Macintosh off. If you don't take these precautions, you can introduce garbage onto the SCSI data line.

Improper termination of the SCSI chain also causes this problem. If your SCSI chain is the source of your problem, be aware that the garbage on the SCSI chain may have corrupted the hard drive's format. You'll need to reformat your hard drive with either all the external SCSI devices removed or all of them turned on.

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