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Macintosh PC Exchange: Troubleshooting Overview (7/96)

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TOPIC -------------------------------------------------------------

Macintosh PC Exchange is a control panel that lets you format, read, or write
DOS-format floppy disks in a Macintosh computer.

Formatting a disk prepares the disk to receive data. PC and Macintosh computers
format disks differently. The term "DOS" describes disks formatted using DOS,
Windows, or OS/2. Macintosh PC Exchange doesn't provide data translation.


DISCUSSION --------------------------------------------------------

REQUIREMENTS
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Be sure you have the proper software and hardware to use Macintosh PC Exchange:

• System software version 7.0 or later

• An Apple SuperDrive (formerly called FDHD), or equivalent third-party
  drive that reads DOS high-density disks

• At least 3 MB of random access memory (RAM)

WORKING WITH DOS DISKS
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After you install Macintosh PC Exchange in your Control Panels folder and
restart your computer, DOS-format disks appear directly on your Macintosh
desktop when you insert them into the floppy disk drive.

Formatting Disks
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Formatting erases all data on a disk. Be sure the disk you want to format
doesn't contain information you need. Click on the disk icon once to select it,
and then choose Erase Disk from the Special menu. A format pop-up menu includes
these options:

• Standard Macintosh format
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Formats high-density disks at 1440K, and low-density disks at 800K.

- PC-DOS format

  Formats high-density disks at 1440K, and low-density disks at 720K.

- Apple II ProDOS disks

  Formats 400K, 800K, or 1.4MB 3.5 inch Apple II ProDOS disks.

Unreadable Disks

When you insert a floppy disk into a Macintosh, you may see a message saying the disk isn't readable, and asking whether to initialize it. This might happen for the following reasons:

- In the past, many DOS users formatted low-density disks for use as high-density disks. On a DOS computer, always format standard double-sided disks in the 720K capacity, and high-density disks in the 1440K capacity. The Macintosh doesn't recognize an improperly formatted disk.

- An unreadable disk might be damaged. Don't try to repair a DOS-format disk with a Macintosh repair utility program. This may destroy information on the disk. If the disk requires repair, use a disk repair utility on a DOS computer.

- If a disk has never been used, you just need to initialize it.

- If you don't see more than one disk format choice, your computer needs an Apple SuperDrive. You can't use Macintosh PC Exchange in a Macintosh SE or a Macintosh II computer without a SuperDrive upgrade. You can't use Macintosh PC Exchange on a Macintosh Plus computer.

- Macintosh PC Exchange might not be properly installed. The PC Exchange icon must be in the Control Panels folder, and you must restart the computer after installation. Read the installation instructions in the Macintosh PC Exchange User's Guide.

Extension (INIT) Conflicts

The Macintosh loads system extensions, often called INITs, into system memory when the computer starts up. When they aren't compatible with other software on your computer, you have an INIT conflict. Here are some typical symptoms of INIT conflicts:

- System won't accept a correctly formatted DOS disk.

- System freezes when you insert a correctly formatted DOS disk.

- You can't open the Macintosh PC Exchange control panel to make changes.

If you suspect an INIT conflict, call the Apple Fax Info System at

1-800-505-0171 and order fax document number 20242 for instructions.

WORKING WITH DOS DOCUMENTS
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DOS Documents Won't Open

Sometimes you might double-click a document's icon, and see a message saying
that the application program couldn't be found. An MS-DOS or Windows document
may not open when you double-click the icon for the following reasons:

* The Macintosh doesn't know which application program to launch. You
  can follow the steps in the "Opening a Document from within a
  Program" section. You can also follow the instructions under
  "Assigning Document Type."

* You may be trying to access the document over a network. PC Exchange
  assignments don't work for documents over a network. Assignments work
  only for documents on DOS-format floppy disks and documents copied from
  DOS-format floppy disks.

* The disks currently available on your computer don't have the
  application. Find the disk that contains the application, and copy
  the application to your hard disk.

Sometimes the application program launches, but the document doesn't open. Here
are some reasons this may happen:

* The application program may not be able to open DOS documents when
  you double-click the icon. Follow the instructions in the "Opening a
  Document from within a Program" section.

* The document may have been assigned a document type that the program
  can't open. Follow the instructions in the "Assigning Document Type"
  section to change the document type. Refer to the table in the
  "Assigning Macintosh Programs to DOS Documents" section of the
  "Macintosh PC Exchange User's Guide" to find types that a program can
  open.

Incorrect Document Format

Sometimes you can open a document, but find the format is wrong. It may contain
incorrect characters and strange codes. This can happen when an application
program recognizes the document's type, but doesn't interpret the document's
file format (the way the information in the document is encoded).

Check the application's documentation for document opening and saving procedures
with different file formats, or open the document with another program.

You can also try assigning a different document type. Follow the
instructions"Assigning Document Type" section of this article. Refer to
"the table in the "Assigning Macintosh Programs to DOS Documents" section of the
Macintosh PC Exchange User's Guide" to find types that a program can open.

Opening a Document from within a Program

To open a document using an application program, follow these steps:

1) Launch a Macintosh application.

2) Choose the Open command from the File menu.

3) In the dialog scroll box, select the DOS document and click Open.

Here's why the document you want may not be listed in the directory dialog box when you choose Open in an application program:

• The program can't recognize the document type assigned to the
  document. Try to open the document with another application program.
  Or reassign a document type following the instructions in the
  "Assigning Document Type" section to change the document type. Refer
  to the table in the "Assigning Macintosh Programs to DOS Documents"
  section of the "Macintosh PC Exchange User's Guide" to find types
  that a program can open.

• You may be trying to access the document over a network. PC Exchange
  assignments don't work for documents over a network. Assignments
  work only for documents on DOS-format floppy disks and documents
  copied from DOS-format floppy disks.

Assigning Document Type

The Macintosh PC Exchange control panel lets you map file types. A three-letter DOS suffix maps to a corresponding document type on the Macintosh. Here's how to designate a specific Macintosh application for opening MS-DOS documents:

1) Choose Control Panels from the Apple menu.

2) Double-click the PC Exchange control panel to open it.

3) Click on Add.

4) In the DOS Suffix box, type a period and the three-letter DOS suffix
   (for example, .TXT). The suffix is required. There is an error in the
   manual which states that a suffix is NOT required. This is incorrect.

5) In the lower part of the dialog box, select the Macintosh
   application.

6) Choose a document type from the Document Type pop-up menu (for
   example, TEXT).

7) Click OK.

Once you make this assignment, you can double-click the icon of the DOS document to open it.

When assigning document types, you must specify the type of document the application supports. If you're unsure of which document type to use, TEXT is the safest.

Once you've made assignments, documents appear on the disk with the icon representing application and document type. Documents with an unassigned DOS suffix appear as generic DOS documents.

So that all network users are consistent, make a master list of assignments on one Macintosh. Also, place a copy of the PC Exchange Preferences file in the Preferences folder, within the System Folder, of each licensed user's Macintosh.

WORKING WITH MACINTOSH DOCUMENTS
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Document Types

Choose Save from the File menu to save documents onto a DOS-format disk. When saving documents created or modified on the Macintosh, be sure to save the document in a file format that the DOS application can read. Refer to the application's documentation to find out what file formats the program can open, import, and save.

The Macintosh also creates two new files for each document, to keep track of such things as the location of icons and windows. You'll need to leave about 5K of extra disk space for each document to accommodate these files.

Document Name Length

While the Macintosh supports document names up to 31 characters long, DOS supports up to eight characters plus a three-character suffix. Macintosh PC Exchange truncates a longer name used on the Macintosh when saved to a DOS disk. To preview what the shorter name looks like:

1) Click on the file to highlight it.

2) Choose Get Info from the File menu.

3) Click on the document name in the Info dialog box. This switches
   between the Macintosh and DOS (truncated) version of the name.

If this procedure doesn't work, make sure the File Sharing Extension is in the Extensions folder.

Non-English Word Processors

When you create a document with a non-English word processor on the Macintosh, the special accent characters (diacritical marks) may change when you open the document on a DOS computer. DOS computers may not support all characters displayed on a Macintosh.

This article is one of many available through the Apple Fax center. For a complete list of available fax documents, search the Tech Info Library for Apple Fax Document Index or call the Apple Fax line at 1-800-505-0171 and select document number 20000 (Apple Fax - Document Index - Product Support Literature). The Apple Fax center is available free of charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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09 Feb 1994 - Added more troubleshooting information and retitled.

Support Information Services

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