Macintosh: IBM Host File Transfer and EIS (8/94)

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TOPIC --

I have both an AS/400 and 3090. I want to extract information from a database
on the AS/400 and download it to the Macintosh, importing it into 4th
Dimension.

1) Do IBM mid-range machines support IND$FILE?

2) What is the "standard" way to download data from an AS/400? Does KMW (or any
other vendor) support this method? How can data be downloaded to the
Macintosh?

3) What types of 5250 terminals are there?

4) When the site has ASCII-attached terminals to the AS/400, are they still
doing 5250 emulation, or is it just TTY?

5) Are applications written for the Twinax-attached 5250 terminal compatible
with the ASCII-attached terminals?

6) I am also interested in using a Macintosh as an EIS, emulating a 3270-type
terminal to front-end their 3090. Does Avatar have HyperCard XCMDs to work with
their API to handle 3270 sessions? What is the extent of services offered by
these XCMDs? Can they be used to completely bypass the terminal emulation
software. That is, can they log on to the host, choose host menus, extract
data, and so on, through HyperCard?

DISCUSSION ---

1) The AS/400 doesn't support IND$FILE.

2) The standard way for an IBM PC or PC-clone to download files is via the
program PC Support, which offers LU62 connectivity for PCs.

Because there isn't a Macintosh equivalent offering a virtual disk attachment,
the typical way one transfers files is by using the IDEAssociates, KMW (now
Andrew Corp.), or Wall Data terminal emulators. Each has its own proprietary
file transfer capabilities. Some manipulation of the file delimiters may be
desired before downloading and importing into 4th Dimension. Such a report

typically would be set up by the AS/400 system programmer.

3) The terminal types are Models 2-4, color, but, in general, these 5250 terminal types are being replaced by the newer 319x types, referenced in articles in the Tech Info Library.

4) ASCII-attached terminals are probably still considered a 5250-type terminal while running a VT100 emulator.

5) The mainframe applications usually don't care whether you have a Twinax- or serial-connected terminal.

6) A number of terminal emulation manufacturers offer HyperCard-based API toolkits for 3090s, including Avatar (now DCA), Tri-Data (now DCA), and DCA, which would be ideal for an EIS (Executive Information System). All have the log on feature or are capable of logging on to hosts and providing the other features you request. Because they are HyperCard-based, they are more easily customized and extended to incorporate any specific features required.

Here are some general observations on KMW (now Andrew Corp.), IDEAssociates, PCI, and Wall Data.

To locate a vendor's address and phone numbers, use the vendor name as a search string.

Andrew Corp. provides products consisting of hardware and software to connect to both the AS/400 and System 3x computers. They call their system "Series II Twinax."

IDEAssociates provides connections between the AS/400 computers and the System 3x computers. IDEAcomm Mac is the name of the package from IDEAssociates.

PCI makes SmartLink 5250/MacCom, a hardware protocol converter (Twinax or remote) and software to connect Macintoshes to AS/400 and System 3x computers.

Wall Data provides products consisting of software to connect to both IBM midrange and mainframe computers. The SNA•ps product family provides both terminal and print emulators.

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30 Aug 1994 - Updated article to include Wall Data product line.
12 Feb 1993 - Updated KMW now Andrew Corporation.

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