TSSnet: DECnet for the Macintosh

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Overview

TSSnet is DECnet for the Macintosh. The documentation is fairly
straightforward, but installation is somewhat complex. The package includes
three applications (NCP, NET Copy, and NET Mail) and a DECnet driver. The
driver is copied into the System Folder, and the the Macintosh is reset
to load the driver. DECnet is alive in background even when the Macintosh
is in another application, permitting access from other systems at any time.

The documentation includes the source calls to implement DECnet in programs
to allow true peer-to-peer program use.

NCP

The first time you run NCP, you must know the DECnet node number being
assigned to the Macintosh. You must then contact Thursby Software to get a
key for the system. The key sets the node number and is the copy protection
for the software. On DECnet, the node number is assigned by the Network
Manager when the system is first put onto DECnet. DECnet does not
automatically assign nodes or broadcast node information. NCP is where you
set up the line and circuit information and establish the node table for
other DECnet nodes. The user can also restrict access to your node through
a user name and password and toggle the network on and off.

NET Copy

NET Copy provide the basic functionality of DECnet End Nodes. The user can
view remote directories, type remote files, or print files to a local printer.
File transfer is supported for text files or image files. Image files are
stored in MacBinary format and will transport to another Mac with full
resouce and data forks.

NET Mail

NET mail, compatible with VMS Mail, lets the user create, read, and send
mail. A new mail folder may also be created from within the program. Up
to 32K can be written into a single memo, with larger documents converted
automatically to text files on the disk.

Conclusion

TSSnet makes DECnet available to the Macintosh. Its shortcomings are really
the shortcomings of DECnet (such as having to define all the nodes to use
them), and it will solve any objections large VAX sites might have to
supporting additional protocols.

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Thursby recently announced support of the Kinetics EtherSC and EtherPort SE
as well as terminal emulation through the DECnet connection.
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