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System 7: Features and Benefits

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- For technical accuracy.

TOPIC -----

This article describes the features and benefits of System 7, and the upgrade offers available.

DISCUSSION -----

System 7 works on all Macintosh computers from the Macintosh Plus on. System 7 is compatible with most of the more than 4,000 Macintosh applications currently shipping, and has inspired many new products.

Benefits

Customers who upgrade to System 7 will receive the immediate benefits of new features such as TrueType™ font technology, Virtual Memory, File Sharing, System 7 Finder®, Multitasking, Balloon Help™ and 32-Bit Addressing.

TrueType

System 7 offers all Macintosh users high-quality text at any size on any Macintosh screen and on the printed page with TrueType, Apple's outline font technology. TrueType is compatible with most existing applications and bitmap fonts and provides users with smooth type quality on the screen and on any output device such as PostScript® and non-PostScript printers, imagesetters, and film recorders.

Finder and Balloon Help

The System 7 Finder, also known as the user's desktop, has been simplified so that customers can quickly locate and use their information. All aspects of the Finder--including fonts, desk accessories, control panels

and even the System--can be opened by double-clicking on them. In addition, the new System 7 Finder facilitates system management and set-up: files, folders, and applications can now be added to the Apple Menu; users can have outline views of all files and folders; and fonts, system extensions, and control panels, can easily be installed by dragging them to the System Folder.

System 7 also provides Macintosh users with an interactive System-wide Help system. Apple's Balloon Help is non-modal, allowing users to get help while continuing to work. When customers turn on Balloon Help and point to any object on the screen, a balloon appears that describes the object they are pointing to and how to use it. Macintosh software application developers are also incorporating Balloon Help into new releases of their programs. This feature will enable users to learn applications more quickly by providing an easily accessible reference to more features.

Finder and File Sharing

The new Find capability offers users fast and easy access to their files. The user can select Find, then type a word or phrase, and the system searches the disk for files whose names include the word or phrase. Find also offers more advanced options so users can perform more detailed searches. For example, users can find all files that they worked on today or files that were labeled with a specific color.

File sharing allows any user to share designated items (files, folders, and even whole volumes of information) with any other user over the network, without a dedicated file server. File sharing follows Apple File Protocol (AFP) standards, which means that any System 7 user can share files with any Macintosh System 6 user, and--by using third-party products-- with DOS and Windows users. File Sharing includes a complete security model that lets users provide levels of access and password protection.

Aliases allow all Macintosh users to organize their systems the way they prefer and makes it easier to access information. An alias, usually about 2K in size, of a file, folder, application, or volume (even a file server), acts as a pointer to the original object. With aliases, users can have access to documents, folders, and applications from more than one location. For example, a user may work with a particular word processor each day and would like to have it on the desktop but also organized within an applications folder. With aliases, users can do both without taking up much additional space on the hard disk.

Aliases and file sharing work in combination to provide more capabilities. For example, Macintosh users can carry an "office on a disk" by making an alias of their hard disk, placing it on a floppy disk, and when the user goes to any system on a network (across the hall, downstairs, or anywhere else) the user has access to the hard disk by double-clicking on the alias and typing a password.

Memory and Multitasking: Virtual Memory and 32-Bit Addressing

Multitasking is a standard part of Macintosh System 7, allowing users to work on several tasks concurrently. For example, a user can recalculate a spreadsheet, print a file, sort a database, and upload a file to a network while continuing to work on a word processor document. System 7's Virtual Memory expands the Macintosh's memory through software so that Macintosh users can run more and larger applications. Virtual Memory uses the hard disk as an extension to RAM, providing users with more memory when it's needed. In addition, 32-bit addressing allows users to install and access more than 8MB of RAM. The additional memory users can access will provide additional power for large applications and tasks such as animation, computer-aided design, and scientific visualization.

Publish and Subscribe

In 1984, the Apple Macintosh introduced the concept of "copy and paste," allowing users to share graphics and text among different files within different applications. With System 7, Apple has taken "copy and paste" one step further with dynamic document links known as "publish and subscribe." Publish and Subscribe enables users to link any two documents--regardless of the application--to automatically update the information. This capability of System 7 even works over a network.

Apple Events

Apple events is the underlying messaging language that applications use for communication with other applications. It provides the foundation for applications to seamlessly work together sharing information and features on the same machine or over a network. Through new applications that support Apple events, users will be able to use features of a variety of applications while working in one application. For example, an accounting package can pass inventory data to a spreadsheet, instruct the spreadsheet to graph the data, and retrieve the graph for display in its own report.

Data Access Manager

The Data Access Manager, which ships as a standard component of System 7, provides Macintosh applications with the underlying technology that enables data access from remote host computers, regardless of the host computer, the connecting networks, or the database software.

Upgrade Path

System 7 offers all existing Macintosh users an upgrade path. Apple's design goals required that System 7 run on all Macintosh computers from the Macintosh Plus, Portable, and Classic on up to the latest, most powerful models. In addition, Apple has developed a suite of tools for customers that make the transition to System 7 as easy as possible.

Before You Install

Apple developed a HyperCard® stack called Before You Install, to give users a better understanding of System 7 and system compatibility. Before You Install features two sections of information: What's New in System 7, and

Compatibility Checker. What's New in System 7 helps customers find out more about System 7 and explore some of the new features before upgrading. The Compatibility Checker provides customers with an automated tool for checking application, desk accessory, and control panel compatibility before moving to System 7. The Compatibility Checker, available in the United States, includes information on over 650 products. A printed Compatibility Guide is also available.

Network Install

As part of the System 7 Group Upgrade Kit, Apple includes a network-install version of the software. Users will be able to upgrade multiple systems over a network with the Macintosh one-button install. This process will alleviate the network administrator's task of manually upgrading many systems in sequence.

Upgrade Kits

System 7 works with all Macintosh computers--from the Macintosh Plus, Portable, and Classic on up--with 2MB of RAM (though 4MB is recommended) and a hard disk. System 7 is available to users in two versions: the System 7 Personal Upgrade Kit, and the System 7 Group Upgrade Kit.

The Personal Upgrade Kit includes ten floppy disks containing System 7 software, the Before You Install stack, and HyperCard version 2.1. The kit contains 90 days of upgrade phone support, new user manuals, and the System 7 Compatibility Guide.

The Group Upgrade Kit includes everything that is in the Personal Upgrade Kit, plus a System 7 CD-ROM, 180 days of upgrade phone support, site license, and Group Upgrade Guide. The System 7 CD-ROM includes a System 7 configuration that can be installed over a network, an array of utilities, and on-line documentation. The Group Upgrade Guide offers network administrators a resource for upgrading small and large groups of users in varied network environments.

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