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System 7.x: RAM Disk & Startup With Extensions Off (5/96)

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TOPIC -----

When I'm using a RAM disk and I startup with the extensions turned off, sometimes I get a message asking me if I want to initialize the RAM disk. If I hit Cancel, the message keeps coming back. What should I do? I do not want to lose any data that might be on the RAM disk.

DISCUSSION -----

What you describe can occur using any version of the Mac OS that supports a RAM disk, System 7.0 or later. The Memory control panel has certain resources which are needed to build a RAM disk, and when starting with extensions off, some of those resources are disabled.

This issue is purely cosmetic. No data loss will occur. This message is presented when the RAM disk needs to be built, or when the extensions are turned off at startup. Below are the occasions a RAM disk needs to be built:

- The first time after RAM disk is turned on in the Memory control panel and the computer is restarted.

NOTE: The RAM disk is not available until after restarting the computer.

- When the computer is turned on or started from an off or shut down position.

NOTE: A RAM disk does not get built when choosing Restarting from the Special menu because it is already present in RAM.

Data loss cannot occur during a RAM disk's initial build because you have not had a chance to access the RAM disk yet.

Data loss cannot occur when starting the computer after a shut down, because the shut down process erases the contents of the RAM disk. The system will warn you if you choose Shut Down while data is present on the RAM disk.

The Assistant Toolbox extension, which comes standard with PowerBook computers, can be used with desktop Macintosh computers. The Assistant Toolbox provides a persistent RAM disk, which saves the RAM disk contents to the hard drive before shutting down, and then reloads the saved data to the RAM disk when starting up.

However, if you start the computer with extensions off, you disable the Assistant Toolbox extension and the data will not get copied. You can find Assistant Toolbox on Apple Computer's software update locations.

If the initialize RAM disk message is annoying, use Restart instead of Shut Down when you want to restart your computer with extensions off and a RAM disk is present. After the initial build of the RAM disk (restarting after the first time it's turned on in the Memory control panel), choosing Restart with extensions off will not present this message.

If you are presented with the initialize message, you should click Initialize. A RAM disk initializes very fast.

These articles can help you locate the Assistant Toolbox mentioned here:

- "Where To Find Apple Software Updates" -- Lists online services for free Apple software updates.
- "Obtaining Apple Product Support in the USA" -- Lists 800 numbers and online services for software updates, Apple support information, and a subset of the Apple Tech Info Library.

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