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System 7.5: Difference between Print Driver and Extension (2/95)

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TOPIC ---

This article differentiates between Printing Extensions and Printer Drivers when
used in conjunction with QuickDraw GX.

DISCUSSION --

Printing Extensions

Printing extensions are add-on software components that can be created to extend
the printing capabilities of applications. Printing extensions are used for
tasks such as supporting hardware additions, modifying the appearance of printed
pages, and allowing the provision of these capabilities without having to write
an entire printer driver. When you place a printing extension in the Extensions
folder (which is in the System Folder), the extension is available for use.

Printer Drivers

Printer drivers translate the instructions that compose QuickDraw GX shapes and
pictures into printed output on a specific output device. Each printer driver
sends data and instructions in a form specific to the device that it drives and
manages the physical communications with the device. A separate driver must be
developed for each hardware device that has different characteristics. Whenever
a desktop printer is created, the Macintosh system software loads and uses the
driver for that printer.

QuickDraw GX printing extensions and printer drivers are largely data-driven and
take advantage of the QuickDraw GX message-based printing architecture.

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