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System 7.5 Update 2.0: FAQ-Benefits&Improvements (2 of 6) (8/96)

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TOPIC -----

This article provides the answers to commonly asked questions about System 7.5 Update 2.0. Specifically, this article provides information about the key features and benefits, system software stability improvements, and performance improvements included with the update.

DISCUSSION -----

Key Features and Benefits

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1) Will System 7.5 Update 2.0 include any new features?

There are a number of new features that System 7.5 Update 2.0 delivers. One feature that is especially important to large business and education customers is the ability to create a universal System Folder. This will allow creation of a System Folder that can boot any system from a Macintosh Plus to currently shipping systems. These features are described in detail below.

- There is a space for you to put comments in a text window when you select "Get Info" from the File menu in the Finder. With this update, these comments are retained after rebuilding the desktop file.

- For Power Macintosh systems, when a file is dragged from within the Finder, the icon is now translucent instead of a simple outline. This will allow customers to better see what they are moving.

- A few changes have been made that affect components in the System Folder. A number of components in the System Folder have been consolidated into other pieces. In addition, Apple is providing documentation that will describe the Apple system software components in the System Folder, Control Panels folder, and Extensions folder. After System 7.5 Update 2.0 has been installed, these will be located in the What's in Mac OS Folders? in the Apple Extras folder. For more information on new features provided with this update, please refer to the documents distributed with the update entitled New in this Update.

2) What is a "universal" System Folder and how can I create one?

With System 7.5 Update 2.0, you'll be able to create a universal System Folder that can be used to start up all currently supported Macintosh computers—from the Macintosh Plus to all Power Macintosh, PowerBook, and Performa computers shipping today. Support professionals responsible for a variety of Macintosh computers find it very useful to create a universal System Folder on an external drive. They can then use this drive to boot any of the systems they support. Directions on how to create a universal System Folder are included with System 7.5 Update 2.0 in the document titled Installing This Update. To create a universal System Folder, you'll need the original version of System 7.5 and System 7.5 Update 2.0.

3) Is there anything in this update to reduce the number of files in the System Folder?

More than 20 items have been eliminated from the System Folder (the actual number will vary depending on which Macintosh it is installed). Several stand-alone files are now merged into the System 7.5 or 7.5.2 Update enabler. In addition, several stand-alone files have been merged into, or been replaced by, various other system components. For more details, please refer to the New in This Update documents included with the update.

4) Will this update install anything new on my computer?

Yes. Two system software technologies—PlainTalk and Open Transport—are included in this update. The "Easy Install" option will install them onto your system if they are not already installed. We believe our customers want these technologies, so we've made them readily available. If you don't want these technologies active because of concerns of performance or RAM requirements, there are very simple ways to disable them. These are clearly described in the Installing This Update document that is included with the update.

5) Will this update allow other types of computers to access data on hard drives that are larger than 4GB?

Prior to the release of System 7.5 Update 2.0, only PCI-based Macintosh systems had the ability to read and write on hard drives that have more than 4 GB per volume. This is not changed with System 7.5.3.

System Software Stability Improvements

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1) What are some of the major bugs addressed with this update?

While there are several hundred bugs addressed with this update, a few key ones are worth highlighting. For details on which bugs have been addressed, please refer to the document titled New in This Update distributed with the update. Some causes of Type 11 errors have been eliminated for Power Macintosh computers. In addition, several months ago, Apple published a Tech Note to our developers describing in detail many of the causes of Type 11 errors. This will help them write applications that are less prone to cause this type of error.

We believe these two actions will go a long way toward significantly reducing Type 11 errors, but some of the results may take a while to be seen by our customers. Apple has also improved the memory management so that customers are less likely to get out-of-memory errors. Corrections have been made to the General Controls panel to eliminate conflicts with several third-party products.

The Update Installer has been fixed so that control panels and extensions that were disabled using the Extensions Manager get properly updated. Many of the printing problems that were associated with PCI-based Macintosh computers (including the 7200, 7500, 8500, and 9500) have been addressed (these are the same improvements delivered with the 7.5.2 Printing Update).

2) Is the 7.5.2 Printing Update included with this update?

Yes. All of these components are automatically installed if "Easy Install" is chosen when you install the update. However, we've integrated some of these components into other parts of the system software, so you may not see the same components in your System Folder after you install the update.

Performance Improvements
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1) What type of performance improvement can I expect from System 7.5 Update 2.0?

Overall, the performance improvement you can expect to receive from System 7.5 Update 2.0 will depend on the Macintosh computer it's being installed on. Performance will range from no significant improvement to a modest improvement. Customers with Power Macintosh systems will generally see more improvement in performance.

2) Are launch times for large applications, with virtual memory turned on, improved with System 7.5 Update 2.0 for PCI-based Macintosh computers. If so, how much of an improvement?

We worked very closely with some of our key developers (most notably Microsoft) to identify the areas where we could improve the launch times for some applications with virtual memory on specific systems. Some of the testing we've seen indicates that launch times for large applications with virtual memory on for PCI-based Power Macintosh computers (including the 7200, 7500, 8500, and 9500) is several times faster. Other Macintosh computers will not experience this improvement.

3) Will Apple ship the new Dynamic Recompiling (DR) emulator, which first shipped with the PCI-based Macintosh computers with System 7.5 Update 2.0?

Yes. However, this feature is still only available for PCI-based Macintosh computers (including the 7200, 7500, 8500, and 9500). It could not be delivered with this update for other Macintosh computers in a way that would meet our

performance and RAM requirements. We will, however, evaluate making this feature available for other Macintosh computers in future system software releases.

4) I recently installed the PowerBook 5300 System Software Update. Should I also install the System 7.5 Update 2.0?

For customers who've installed the PowerBook 5300 System Software Update, the improvements delivered with System 7.5 Update 2.0 are not considered by Apple to be significant enough to recommend that it be installed by all customers. The vast majority of the improvements delivered with System 7.5 Update 2.0 are already included with the PowerBook 5300 System Software Update. There may be enough new benefits in System 7.5 Update 2.0, however, for some customers to consider installing it. It's important for customers to understand that after installing the PowerBook 5300 System Software Update, the system software version will be 7.5.2. After installing System 7.5 Update 2.0, the system software version will be 7.5.3. This may be important to organizations that want all of their systems on the same system software version, or for customers who simply want the latest version.

System 7.5 Update 2.0, includes the PowerBook 2300c Update 1.0, Open Transport v1.1, the Network Software Selector (to switch between classic AppleTalk and Open Transport), a new version of Apple Menu Options, a few minor improvements to the Finder, and several other minor improvements in stability. In addition, the RAM required for System 7.5 Update 2.0 is slightly higher than for systems with the PowerBook 5300 System Software Update installed.

Some third-party PC card Ethernet drivers have not yet been optimized for use with Open Transport. Customers may encounter configurations where classic AppleTalk performs better than Open Transport AppleTalk. The Network Software Selector provides a convenient mechanism for these customers to upgrade to Open Transport when they receive an Ethernet driver update.

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