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Macintosh: Menu Bar Emulation for Multiple Monitor System

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TOPIC -----

Can you create a Macintosh application that puts the menu bar on all of the monitors of a multiple monitor workstation, or does that break an "Inside Macintosh" rule? If you can, what is the maximum number of monitors?

DISCUSSION -----

The Macintosh Toolbox does not provide a method for placing actual menu bars on multiple monitors. Only one monitor can have the menu bar.

It is possible to write an application that creates pop-up menus at the top of each monitor that emulate the menu bar while that application is running. Information on pop-up menus is on pages 241 and 242 of "Inside Macintosh Volume V" and "Tech Note #156."

An easy solution would be a third-party product, like POWERmenus from Magic Software. With it, you can display a hierarchical pop-up menu containing the same items as the real menu bar anywhere on any screen. This utility works with all applications.

There is another INIT utility called "Tear-Off Menus" (TOM) from AIP (Advanced Interface Programming). With TOM, a user can tear off either "pull-down" menus or the titles of the menus, which then can be activated in the same manner as standard menus. Menus also can be dragged across multiple monitors. You can also set TOM to automatically disable with applications that "misbehave". Some of these applications are specified (hard-coded). You can expand the list to include other applications that don't work correctly.

The product incorporates a serialization scheme for counting users on the network. So, if, for example, you want to have five people running TOM on one network, you need to buy a "large" enough license to support that number.

For more details, search the Tech Info Library under "Magic Software" and "Advanced Interface Programming."

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