Multiple System Files on One Macintosh: An Update (12/94)

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TOPIC --

Under Macintosh Operating Systems 5.x and 6.x, multiple system files on a single
volume virtually guaranteed file structure and performance problems. However,
under 7.x it doesn't seem so demonstrable. Moreover, utilities like System
Switcher suggest that there are now toggles to enable and disable a system file.
I've seen a number of users who archive, sometimes deliberately, multiple system
files on a volume, with or without such utilities. Are there known risks in
doing this, and does Apple have a position regarding this practice?

DISCUSSION ---

We still recommend only one System Folder per volume. We are aware of some
potential risks involved with multiple System Folders on one volume. They are:

• Confusion - It is very easy to become confused, either for the user or
  for a third party application, with the presence of more than one System
  Folder on the hard drive.

• Disk Cache - In rare instances, information in the Disk Cache may not
  get written to the hard disk before restarting. If you were blessing a
  System Folder before restarting, then your Macintosh may not recognize
  that it has a System Folder.

• Hard Disk Problems - In some instances, users have experienced low level
  hard disk directory problems, which were heightened by having multiple
  System Folders. In these cases, a Macintosh typically tried to load
  Extensions, Control Panels, and Preferences from an unblessed folder,
  and not from the blessed System Folder.

• Third Party Utilities - Third party utilities for blessing or unblessing
  multiple System Folders alter information in the hard disk directory's
  boot blocks. This is not supported by Apple and may cause problems.

If a user, for whatever reason, needs to have multiple System Folders, it is
critical that the other System Folders be deblessed correctly, as follows:

1) With System 7.0 and later, move the System file to the Preferences
   Folder (hiding the System file in this way deblesses the System

Folder).

2) Close the System Folder and verify its state before restarting. A
   blessed System Folder has a Macintosh in its icon. A non-blessed System
   Folder does not.

3) Rename the deblessed System Folder to any name other than "System
   Folder".

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