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System Software: What Up your FCBs Does (3/93)

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TOPIC -----

I have System 7 installed, and there's an extension licensed to Apple called "Up your FCBs." What is this, and is it necessary?

DISCUSSION -----

A file control block (FCB) is used for any file that's open. If a file has both a data fork and a resource fork, it needs two file control blocks. The system needs a number of files open all the time. Examples of these are the System, the Finder, and the Desktop Database.

When you mount hard disks or floppy disks, they use three FCBs for their Desktop files and other needed information. When you mount an AppleShare volume, it uses one FCB. When you open a file from within an application, it depends on the application as to whether it will use an FCB. It needs to open the file to get the data out of it, but some applications (like AppleLink) close the file after reading the data, and no longer use that FCB.

Under system software 6.0.x, the number of FCBs the system could have open at one time was set in the boot blocks. The "Up your FCBs" INIT allowed you to modify this number in the boot blocks.

System 7 doesn't work this way. Under System 7, the number of free FCBs changes dynamically. When the system needs more FCBs, the number increases, and there's no need to change it in the boot blocks. The maximum number of FCBs, however, is 346.

The bottom line, then, is that under System 7, "Up your FCBs" isn't any benefit. Under system software 6.0.x, "Up your FCBs" is useful to increase the number of free FCBs because it doesn't happen dynamically.

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