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Microsoft Excel: Faster On Intel-Standard PC Or On a Macintosh?

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TOPIC -----

I'm having problems with Excel 4.0 running on a variety of Macintosh computers where the document size is in excess of 1MB. Opening the file using a 486 PC under Windows takes around 30 seconds, whereas on the Macintosh it takes 5 minutes. Have you heard of this problem?

DISCUSSION -----

According to Apple Competitive Analysis, Microsoft Excel is optimized for Windows, so sometimes you'll find it runs faster than the Macintosh version. Also, depending on which functions you're using in Excel, the results can be different. Some functions run faster on the Macintosh, others run faster on PC.

Here's a response from Microsoft's Customer Support Answerline regarding their reasoning about the performance issue.

Some calculation routines are faster on the Macintosh, and others are faster on the PC, so benchmark results are highly dependent on the routines used. Excel on the PC is written entirely in C, whereas Excel on the Macintosh is partially p-code, which could run more slowly than its C counterpart. Microsoft says that only seldom-used routines are in p-code.

A completely C version of Excel would increase the disk space used by about 2MB, which would be more like the PC version. Excel on the PC (application only) takes up about 4MB (according to Microsoft), and the Macintosh version takes 1.8MB. Despite the projected increase in size, Microsoft is exploring the possibility of writing the next version of Excel entirely in C code.

Microsoft says that "most Macintosh users have smaller hard drives than DOS users," and for this reason the Macintosh version should remain smaller.

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06/03/93 - Revised to provide details of Macintosh and PC implementations of

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