CD-ROMs and Startup Volume's Desktop File

Article Created: 14 May 1991
Article Last Reviewed: 27 May 1991
Article Last Updated:

TOPIC ---

I am told that the Desktop on the startup volume is updated every time the
Finder sees an icon it doesn't already have on its own Desktop . . . but
that this doesn't apply to CD-ROMs, due to the amount of info they carry.

That must mean that in the case of exploring a couple of very large
capacity hard drives (like 600MB) that are SCSI-chained to a Macintosh, the
desktop file on the boot volume must get really huge. And the only way to
bring it back to "normal" is to rebuild it after you unchain the external
drives.

Also, if there are a number of SCSI drives chained to your Macintosh that
are up and running and visible on your Macintosh desktop, and then you
restart the Macintosh while holding down Option-Command, what desktop files
get rebuilt? Only the boot volume or the other ones as well? How would
you rebuild the desktop on a non-startup external SCSI volume? (Doing it
to a 3.5-inch disk is easy, but a big MacInStor won't fit in the diskette
slot!)

DISCUSSION ---

You're right, the Desktop file on the volume can be huge, depending on what
storage devices are attached it. On the other hand, how many of these
zillions of files are actually unique? The actual file information (where
it is physically, how long it is, etc.) is stored in the Desktop on that
volume, not the startup volume. Only the icon (and other related) info is
stored in the startup volume's Desktop.

Anyway, you can have a googleplex worth of MacWrite II documents, but the
startup volume's Desktop will have only the one icon entry for all of them.
So yes, it can get really large--but probably not as big as you think.

The CD-ROM drivers have patches that keep the Finder from going bonkers
over the file information there.

As for rebuilding the Desktop: the Finder looks for the Option and Command

keys only during the "moment of mounting" -- which is why you can hold down
the two keys while you insert a diskette, and get them rebuilt.

To rebuild attached hard drives, it's safest to just hold the keys down all
the way through the startup. To do multiple drives, just keep holding the
keys down until all of them are done; you'll actually get separate dialog
boxes for each volume, and you can either okay (to rebuild) or cancel (to
skip) -- just keep holding the keys down. It really does work. All this
also means that the Finder will attempt to rebuild the volumes in mounted
order, whatever that may be.

Keywords: <None>

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19960215 11:05:19.00
Tech Info Library Article Number: 8174