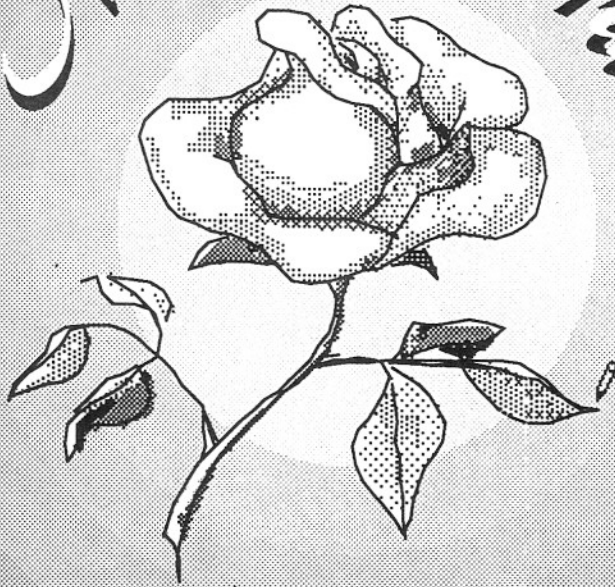


Macintalk

THE NEWSLETTER OF MACINTERESTEDS - NASHVILLE'S MACINTOSH USER'S GROUP

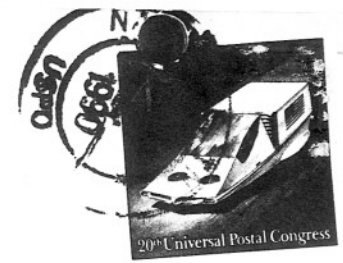
Motherboard



May

General Meeting: May 7 at Northern Telecom. Planning Meeting May 21 at Clark's.

235 LAUDERDALE ROAD, NASHVILLE, TN 37205



Wheat Williams, III
3054 Franklin Road
Nashville, TN 37204

Renew: September '90

StartupScreen, SuperPaint; writes MacPaint, PICT, StartupScreen, SuperPaint.

Glossary

bit-mapped – A file format in which a graphic is coded as a pattern of pixels.

Encapsulated PostScript – (see *PostScript*) A pure PostScript file with a screen description attached.

GIF – (Graphics Image Format) A *bit-mapped* file format, invented by the folks at CompuServe, for use on many different computer systems.

MacPaint – The original Macintosh graphics program.

object oriented – A file format in which a graphic is coded as a mathematical description of the shapes desired.

page description language – Any standard method of describing an image to a printer.

PICT – A Macintosh *object oriented* file format used for interchange between many different programs.

pixel – The smallest unit that a given device can display.

PostScript – The page description language, invented by Adobe, popularized by the Apple LaserWriter family of printers. It is also used in many other laser printers and high resolution typesetters. A pure PostScript file is a plain text file of commands that a PostScript printer device interprets in order to image the file.

QuickDraw – Apple's method of describing images to the screen.

RIFF – (Raster Image File Format) A *bit-mapped* file format, used by ImageStudio, which allows for 256 colors or gray levels

TIFF – (Tag Image File Format) A *bit-mapped* file format now used as a standard for scanned graphics.

The Dove MarATHon 030 for the Mac Plus: or The No-Free-Lunch Card

by Wheat Williams of MacInterests, Nashville, Tennessee

Recently I, a three-year Mac Plus owner, was overjoyed to learn that Dove Computer Corporation, long known and respected for its Mac hardware upgrade products, had released the MarATHon 030 — a 16Mhz 68030 CPU upgrade, for the Mac Plus. The product lists for \$649.00, and I have seen it retailed at \$475.00 mail-order.

"Wonderful," I thought. "Now I can keep my old Plus, snap an inexpensive daughterboard on top of my CPU, and have the equivalent of the processing speed of a IIcx, without the price! I can crunch numbers with the big boys!"

It was not to be.

A toll-free call to Dove got me the product literature and the spec sheets, and a candid conversation with a kind tech-support person who told me the real story.

It seems that if you snap a 16Mhz 030 into a stock Mac SE, you do indeed get a machine that is almost five hundred percent (500%) faster. But the same upgrade in a Plus yields a machine that is only *thirty* percent (30%) faster. And it's nobody's fault — certainly not the good people at Dove Computer. It seems that the Mac Plus (and, by analogy, an upgraded 128K or 512K machine) just can't be adequately accelerated.

"One problem," said the lady over the phone, "is the Mac Plus' slow SCSI interface. Even with a 16Mhz, 32-bit processor, the Plus still reads from the hard disk at the same slow speed. In fact, you need to keep your hard disk formatted at the same 4:1 or 3:1 interleave that you used on an unaccelerated machine. Using a hard drive with a fast access time won't make a significant difference, either. We hooked up a 19ms Quantum drive to our 030 Mac Plus, and it booted up just a little bit faster, but that was about it.

"Furthermore," she continued, "The Plus' architecture accesses RAM very slowly as well, and no amount of CPU speed is going to affect that significantly. Therefore, the highest overall speed increase you will experience after installing our board is about 30%."

I felt deflated. "So why are you selling this accelerator board, anyway?" I asked.

"We are not billing it as a *accelerator board*," replied the lady, candidly. "We are marketing it as a *processor upgrade* which will enable Mac Plus users to run System 7 more effectively. Support for virtual memory and the on-board data cache will make it worth the while of those who just can't afford a new machine."

I guess she was right. But what I thought was the Fountain of Youth for my aging Mac turned out to be just a cost-effective face-lift.

I still think that there are those who would be very interested in this product, and that's why I wrote this article. After all, there are many of us who would like to fully utilize and be compatible with System 7, but who do not need tremendous speed.

In closing, let me mention that Dove has thrown in a very attractive bonus: Symantec's SUM II and SAM 2.0, hard-disk management and virus protection packages, respectively, come free with every MarATHon card. That's a \$250.00 value.

For more information, contact Dove Computer Corporation, 1200 N. 23rd Street, Wilmington, North Carolina 28405. Phone 1-800-622-7627.

Wheat Williams is a Nashville musician and free-lance journalist who has written numerous articles on Macintosh MIDI and music applications for several national electronic music and recording industry trade publications.