

After Thoughts

AfterThoughts is an occasional publication of After Hours Macintosh Consulting. An independent Apple Macintosh™ service firm in North Carolina's Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill). For subscription information via email: info@afterhoursconsulting.org <http://www.afterhoursconsulting.org/> (919-271-7479 voice, 810-816-6707 fax)

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NEWS

Apple's Airport technology has really begun to change how office computers intercommunicate -- with wireless communication between networks now easily managed, facilities which could not previously network their systems inexpensively have a cheap and sturdy solution. With that in mind, we'd like to take this AfterThought as an opportunity to review some basics about what networks are and how they help your productivity.

Simply put, a "network" is a collection of computers and peripherals connected together in a way which lets them share information. Networks are generally named based on the type of communication language the computers speak & physically how the systems are connected -- terms like AppleTalk, TCP/IP, EtherNet, 10baseT and LAN (local area network). The obvious benefit of networked computers is the sharing of resources: one or several printers can support an entire office, a networked fax/modem can permit shared use of fax software or Internet connections (email and web surfing) through one telephone line, and file and database servers can be central repositories of information available to all users simultaneously (no floppies!).

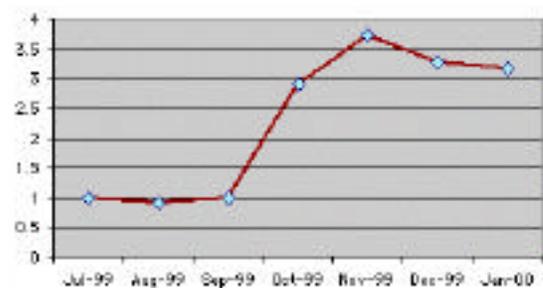
Apple's original network was a LocalTalk network using AppleTalk -- very stable but very slow. Later, AppleTalk could be used over 10baseT Ethernet (10 Mbps or about a 1 Mb file transferred per second, 40x faster than LocalTalk) and 100baseT Ethernet (10x faster than 10baseT). In the mid-90s, Apple transitioned from AppleTalk to TCP/IP as a network protocol (language). With each improvement, our networks became faster and more robust. But, up until now, all computers on a network had to be hardwired together to share files and resources. With the Airport, you get network connections at 11 Mbps without the wires, up to 30 meters from the Airport base-station -- just as if you were hard-wired to the network. Airport transceivers are built into the latest G4s, iMacs and Powerbooks, with adapter cards available for older systems, too. §

Frequently Asked Questions

- **FAQ:** I sometimes get out-of-memory errors like a **Type 1, 2 or 11**. How can I fix this?
- **AH:** Normally, these errors occur when there is too little RAM memory assigned to an application. If your Mac has sufficient RAM memory installed, this is a simple fix: Find the application which gave you the error. Make sure you have **Quit** from the application, then single-click to highlight its icon. Select **Get Info** from the **File** menu. For older systems, you will be able to increase the **RAM allocation** by increasing the **Preferred Memory** value (say, by 25%). For newer OS versions, there is a pulldown menu within the Get Info window to display this setting.

More information is posted on our website **FAQ** page: (www.afterhoursconsulting.org/faq.html) §

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RAM pricing continues to be abnormally high after the Taiwan earthquake price hike in October. From what our sources tell us, there is no reason for this other than some speculative price gouging on the part of producers and distributors. We recommend holding off on any RAM purchases for a few months if you aren't constrained now. Naturally, we'd be happy to quote for your needs -- just call us with your model. (graph: RAM pricing \$/Mb for a 32 Mb DIMM) §