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System 6: Maximum Number of Fonts

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TOPIC -----

I am experiencing problems when using over 250 fonts with System 6.0.3 software on a Macintosh II. This is a standard system with Adobe fonts. Is this still a problem? I thought the maximum number of fonts problem was resolved long ago.

Are there any special precautions, like Font/DA version, to take into account?

DISCUSSION -----

A 'FONT' resource uses bits 7-14 for the font's resource ID and bits 0-6 for the font's point size. Thus, there are 256 (0-255) numbers available for font family IDs using a 'FONT' resource.

The 128K ROM introduced a new way of identifying fonts, using 'FOND' and 'NFNT' resources. This new strategy allows you to use all 15 (0-14) bits for font family IDs, giving you 32,768 possible IDs. Of these 32,768, there are 16,384 available for Roman systems.

However, in order to be compatible with the old way of identifying fonts, both 'FONT' and 'NFNT' resources can be used. There is still the limitation of 256 'FONT' resources. Therefore, the number of fonts you can install depends on which resource types the fonts use.

What seems to be the real problem, however, is that all fonts put into the System File should be installed using the Font/DA mover. The Font/DA mover will only support 200 fonts. You should use Font/DA Mover 3.8 (or later). Turning off virus detection utilities, setting RAM cache to off, and installing fonts under Finder are all prudent activities, but are rarely essential.

If you want to use more fonts you will need to use a resource-organization utility, like Suitcase II or Font/DA Juggler Plus, which allow you to organize groups of fonts in a variety of ways, including by families into files. Then you can open just those files when you need to access those

fonts. Suitcase should be able to give you as many fonts as you need. Each Suitcase file has a limit in the number of fonts you can install; however, you can have multiple Suitcase files.

For more details, search for "Fifth Generation Systems" and "3rd" or "Alsoft" and "3rd".

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