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EtherTalk Card: Problems with Macintosh IIcx/IIci

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TOPIC -----

This article discusses the EtherTalk card (Revisions J and earlier) and its timing problem with Macintosh IIcx and IIci units.

DISCUSSION -----

Revisions J and earlier of the EtherTalk card have a timing problem with Macintosh IIcx and Macintosh IIci units.

Symptoms of the problem are intermittent, and include: system hangs on boot, serious system errors, and exceedingly poor network performance.

Revisions K and later of the EtherTalk card have been modified so that they will not exhibit this problem.

The capacitance of a six-slot NuBus was factored into the timing mechanism of the EtherTalk card. Consequently, the capacitance level in a three-slot NuBus is lower, thereby effecting the EtherTalk card's timing.

As additional NuBus cards are installed into a system, the capacitance level is raised on the NuBus. As a result, the problem is less likely to present itself.

The most likely Macintosh IIcx and Macintosh IIci candidates for having the symptoms mentioned above are units with a single EtherTalk card installed and no other NuBus cards in the remaining two slots. This is a configuration that would be commonly used for routers, file servers, mail servers, and so on.

The only current solution is to use EtherTalk card revision K or later.

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