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HyperCard: Telephone Interface and Auto-Dialing Packages

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TOPIC ---

I want to use a Macintosh to keep telephone directories of people and click on
a button to dial their phone numbers.

My office (in a school) has a AT&T Merlin telephone system. Is there any
hardware (other than HyperDialer) that can do this?   Will it support multiple
lines?

Other than HyperDialer or using a modem to do the dialing, what other kinds of
products exist to do dialing from the Macintosh?

DISCUSSION --

There are a few other hardware phone interface products, but none with built-in
support to connect and arbitrate among multiple lines. However, none is
prevented from using different lines if used with the appropriate interfacing
module. Being able to choose multiple lines is usually a function of the
telephone system and the handsets or interfacing modules connected to it.

The only interfacing module available for the Merlin System to connect modems,
facsimiles, autodialers, or answering machine-type devices is the General
Purpose Adapter sold by AT&T. (AT&T also sells expansion modules for
creating modem pools.)

You could use one of the HyperDialer-type products to connect to the General
Purpose Adapter. When combined with a HyperCard stack or database of your own
design or one of the commercial programs available, you could do what you
describe.

Some programs and products are listed below, but many other programs, including
high-end and sophisticated products (these telemarketing products can cost
thousands of dollars), are listed in the various buyers guides and on AppleLink

(in the electronic buyer's guides).

Here are some products worth looking into:

School Administrator's Assistant from Chancery Software, Ltd.

The School Administrator's Assistant is a HyperCard stack that helps a user
manage routine tasks.

The School Administrator's Assistant maintains staff information (including job
descriptions, certification, objectives, and appraisals); prints a variety of
reports; documents pupil behavior incidents and streamlines suspension
paperwork; plans daily, weekly, and monthly activities with a reminder system;
maintains an address and telephone directory; dials telephone numbers and keeps
a record of calls; links information to word processing applications via
mail-merge capabilities; searches and browses through data maintained in the
stack; maintains memos and notes; sets password access to sensitive
information; maintains a pool of pupil information; searches, sorts, organizes,
and prints transportation information; and launches frequently-used programs
and documents from within the stack.

HyperCable from Caseys' Page Mill

HyperCable is an audio connector that lets you dial a telephone from a
Macintosh. It plugs into the audio output jack on the rear of a Macintosh and
into the telephone jack. HyperCable works with HyperCard.

HyperDialer from DataDesk International

HyperDialer is an automatic telephone dialing device that autodials any
telephone number from HyperCard or from HyperCard stackware. It connects to
the audio port on any Macintosh and can be connected to any telephone,
including multi-line business phones, in less than a minute. HyperDialer
eliminates the need for a modem or dedicated phone line for automatic dialing.

The BTM HyperCard Hands-Free Phone Dialer System from Business Technology
Manufacturing, Inc.

Directly connects the "real world" of telephones and telemarketing to the
Macintosh and programs, like HyperCard, FocalPoint, Microsoft Excel, and
Microsoft Works; used with a telephone or headset. The system has two modes of
operation: Hands-Free and HeadSet. It comes with all hardware and stackware
needed.

In the Hands-Free mode, users simply touch the telephone icon, and they will
hear the dialtone, the touch-tones as they are dialed out, and the ringing or
busy signal--all without picking up the handset. When contact with the dialed
party is established, picking up the handset automatically disconnects the
dialer from the line and normal operation of the phone continues.

The addition of an operator-type headset turns the dialer into a complete
telephone. In this mode, complete control of the dialer is from the Macintosh
screen with many added features, such as Mute, Hold, Flash, Auto Redial,

Dialer-On and Dialer-Off.

The dialer connects directly to the phone line using a standard RJ-11C phone jack, which is provided with the unit. Multi-line pushbutton and ComKey adapters are available as an option.

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