



Tech Info Library

Hard Drive SCSI Termination Power

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TOPIC -----

I'm experiencing a startup problem with Mass Microsystem's DataPak attached to my Macintosh. Sometimes I could start up fine with or without the DataPak turned on. Other times, the system hung until the DataPak was turned on.

What's going on?

DISCUSSION -----

The SCSI bus requires termination power on the bus to provide clean, quality SCSI signals. Mass Microsystems' DataPak supplies its own termination power to the SCSI bus. (This characteristic is also common to early SuperMac DataFrames.) Other SCSI devices that we checked use the termination power provided by the Macintosh.

When a SCSI device provides its own termination power, the SCSI bus signals may be corrupted when that device is powered down because it leaves the SCSI bus unterminated. An unterminated SCSI bus can cause startup problems because of noise on the bus.

Sometimes when a SCSI device that supplies its own termination power is powered down, the Macintosh will still start up because the SCSI bus signal is clean enough for the startup process to take place. However, there is no assurance that the bus signals will stay clean and uncorrupted since the SCSI bus is not properly terminated in this situation.

SCSI devices that use the termination power provided by the Macintosh do not have to be powered on for the SCSI bus to be properly terminated. The termination power from the Macintosh provides the correct termination to the SCSI bus.

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