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X.400 Solutions for the Macintosh

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Security: Everyone

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Article Change History

1/19/93 - UPDATED
 • Touch Communications, Inc. now SAIC.
6/8/1990 - REVIEWED
 • For accuracy.

TOPIC -----

My company has a growing number of customers in Europe, and we need to communicate (E-mail) with them via the Macintosh. Our corporate backbone already has an X.400 gateway, but we need a front-end, much like AppleLink, to facilitate national and international communication. Is there such an application?

DISCUSSION -----

Apple used RetixMail for a Macintosh demonstration in Hanover.

Apple Europe demonstrated the WOPODA developer tool at the last Hanover fair. It is based on the ODA (Office Document Architecture) standard and lets you do conversions from any word processor to ODIF (Office Document Interchange Format), a standardized format for documents. We needed an X.400 product to send the ODIF documents to the other vendors (including DEC, IBM, Sun, HP, and so on) and used RetixMail for the Macintosh. Here is some information about Apple's forthcoming solution:

The Apple X.400 product is an X.400-compliant MTA (Message Transfer Agent) that runs on any modular Macintosh under System 7. It includes the seven layers of the OSI model. It works either over X.25 (on top of the MacX25 product) or over 802.3 (this is the most used link in the U.S.). It lets Macintosh users gain access to public X.400 networks or to connect to their private X.400

backbone.

Note that APDA is the distributor for the Apple X.400 product to give developers the opportunity to write client software for it.

There are two existing X.400 solutions for the Macintosh, to our knowledge, from Retix and SAIC (formerly Touch Communications). They are similar in their design: the MTA (Message Transfer Agent = the X.400 server) runs on a PC and the UAs (User Agents = the clients) run on a Macintosh. So, you need one PC, at least, to access the X.400 backbone.

- Retix did a PC-based MTA and created two versions of their own client: RetixMail for the PC and RetixMail for the Macintosh. You have to buy both client and server software to use it.

- Touch took another approach: they did an X.400 gateway for Microsoft Mail and one for QuickMail. Macintosh users who use Microsoft Mail or QuickMail today can keep their existing client software. They just have to buy a PC with Touch X.400 software plus either the Microsoft Mail gateway or the QuickMail gateway to connect to the X.400 backbone.

To locate a vendor's address and phone numbers, use the vendor name as a search string.

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