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Macintosh: Mysterious Bombs May Be SCSI or RAM

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TOPIC -----

I have a problem with my Macintosh bombing frequently at startup. My system also bombs at other times, such as when booting or quitting a program, but generally, most bombs occur at startup.

When opening DBase Mac, I get a message that the program has been corrupted. Open the program again and it runs fine. I get a variety of system errors such as ID-04, ID-01 and ID-25.

QuarkXPress 2.12 freezes on the screen while opening, yet an exact copy of QuarkXPress will install and run just fine on another Macintosh. Also, PageMaker 4.0 bombs when trying to "Place" a document or a graphic, as does Excel 2.2 when opening or closing.

I am using all standard Apple equipment, including an 80MB Quantum hard drive with a corrected EPROM and 5MB of RAM.

I have installed System 6.0.5 from the original Installer disks and have removed all INITs.

I have run Macintosh SE/30 diagnostics on the computer and Apple HD diagnostics on the hard drive--and all tests pass.

DISCUSSION -----

Even though your system has passed its diagnostics, you could still be experiencing a RAM or SCSI problem.

RAM problems can show up after warm-up. For example, a marginal SIMM's speed may be fine when cool but slow down after warming up. All SIMMs do

this to a certain extent, but you may have a SIMM that crosses the Macintosh SE/30's tolerance threshold when warm. The only fix for this is to replace the offending SIMM or SIMMs. A similar problem could be happening within the memory manager's circuitry on the logic board, the only possible fix being a complete logic board replacement.

More likely, this is a SCSI problem, particularly if you have external SCSI devices attached. We have seen this problem most often when there are external SCSI devices attached but not turned on. All SCSI devices must be powered on before starting the Macintosh and they must be left on until the Macintosh is turned off. Doing otherwise can introduce garbage onto the SCSI data line. Improper termination of the SCSI chain will also cause this problem.

If your SCSI chain is found to be the source of your problem, be aware that your hard drive's format may be corrupted (the garbage on the SCSI chain having corrupted the format). You'll need to reformat your hard drive with either all the external SCSI devices removed or powered on.

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