



Tech Info Library

MacX25 1.0.1: Overview

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TOPIC -----

What is the latest version of MacX25, and what are its features?

DISCUSSION -----

MacX25 version 1.0.1 is updated software for linking Macintosh computers to packet-switched data networks (PSDN) supporting the international OSI and CCITT X.25 recommendation for enterprise-wide communication.

Apple's MacX25 1.0.1 runs on Macintosh computers running System 6 or System 7, supporting any Macintosh as an X.25 client and all Macintosh II computers as servers. System 7 offers a range of services for networking, including file sharing and interapplication communication. To ease your transition to using X.25 in the newer system software environment, MacX25 version 1.0.1 retains the same set-up configuration and does not alter the interface used in MacX25 version 1.0. Access to host computers and end-user services on the PSDN is distributed from a MacX25 server to Macintosh computers over the AppleTalk network system.

For improved communication with European networks, MacPAD (the client side of MacX25) now supports 8-bit characters. Support for 8-bit characters -- in which such symbols as the German umlaut, French cedilla, and Spanish tilde are encoded -- enables businesses on both sides of the Atlantic to transfer data files transparently and to communicate in the appropriate European languages.

The new MacPAD also offers new features for flexibility in communicating across the X.25 network, including the ability to negotiate throughput parameters and the size of packet windows. In addition, because it is implemented as a connection tool for the Communications Toolbox, MacPAD

lets third-party applications, including terminal emulators, connect to host systems over the X.25 networks.

The MacX25 Programming Library, available separately for third-party developers, works in conjunction with the MacX25 server to provide X.25 access to applications. This enables developers to create Macintosh solutions giving users access to PSDNs. The library, which remains unchanged in the new version of MacX25, consists of a toolkit for such routines as initiating and terminating contact with the MacX25 server, establishing and closing down a virtual circuit, and passing data across an established circuit.

For example, an application developed in Italy uses tools in the MacX25 Programming Library to provide Macintosh-to-host access across an X.25 network. List SpA developed a cost-effective interbank trading network for the Italian banking system that enables Macintosh computers in each bank to connect to the system's mainframe over the X.25 network.

Apple's MacX25 conforms to the Open Systems Interconnect (OSI) model and Consultative Committee on International Telephone and Telegraph's (CCITT) X.25 recommendation for communication with packet-switched data networks (PSDN). Because of their cost-effective use of leased lines to transmit information over long distances, X.25 PSDNs offer an increasingly popular means for electronic communication internationally.

MacX25 consists of server and client software. The MacX25 server software lets a Macintosh on an AppleTalk network be set up as a single entry point to the PSDN. Server-based access reduces the cost of global connectivity by maximizing use of expensive resources, like leased lines. MacPAD client software works in conjunction with the server software to provide packet assembler/disassembler connectivity to the PSDN.

MacX25 features a graphics-based administrator's application that facilitates configuration and administration of the server. An address service lets administrators set addressing details on the Macintosh server.

Running the server component of MacX25 1.0.1 under System 7 requires 4MB of RAM; the client side needs 2MB. To run MacX25 1.0.1 server software with System 6.0.7 requires 2MB of RAM; the client side needs 1MB.

MacX25 supports the following standards and recommendations: CCITT X.25 1980 and 1984 versions and Packet Assembler/Disassembler (CCITT X.3, X.28 and X.29).

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