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Disk Cache: Saving Files is Slow (5/93)

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Security: Everyone

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TOPIC -----

I have an Excel (4.0) spreadsheet that took forty seconds to save on my Macintosh IIfx. The same spreadsheet takes two minutes and five seconds to save it on my Quadra 900. The software on the Quadra is identical to that on the IIfx. I have removed all my extensions, File Sharing and Virtual Memory settings are off, and I have the disk cache set to 512K.

DISCUSSION -----

The slowness is caused by the time it takes to search the large disk cache, in this case, 512K. Disk cache is a portion of the computer's random-access memory (RAM) that is set aside for programs to store frequently used instructions. It's function is to speed certain operations, but in some cases, such as this, it can actually slow down an operation when set to large. It takes longer to search the cache than it would to simply read the instructions from the disk.

Apple recommends a default value of 32K of disk cache per 1MB of physical RAM installed in your Macintosh. However, you should experiment with the disk cache settings to find the value which is best for your specific needs.

This behavior is independent of the computer model and System Software versions, System 6.0.x or 7.x.

- In System 6 the disk cache is set in the "General" Control Panel.
- In system 7 the disk cache is set in the "Memory" Control Panel.

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