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File Assistant Synchronizer: Key Features (7/95)

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TOPIC -----

This article describes these key features of the Synchronizer software that is part of File Assistant:

- Drag and Drop Setup
- Smart Merge
- Optional Automatic Operation
- One and Two Way Links

DISCUSSION -----

Drag and Drop Setup

The first step in setting up a synchronization environment is to establish the link between the documents. Synchronizer assumes that the pair of files already exist. The internal clocks of the two computers must be set to the same time.

To establish the link, drag the icons directly from the Finder into the Synchronizer window. The Synchronizer makes sure that the files are truly a matching pair (same Name, Type, Creator, and Modification Date) before establishing the link. It can link any two folders, except when one is within the other. It can link folders with different names or containing different files using the "Allow non-matching folder names" choice in the Preferences dialog box.

NOTE: You need system software 7.1 or later to use the Drag and Drop Setup feature.

Smart Merge

Most file synchronization packages merge two folders by copying every file that

is in either folder into the other folder. This has the undesirable side effect of creating folders that grow over time unless you manually delete files on both computers simultaneously.

Smart Merge tracks your folders, and if you make a change to one folder, it makes the same change to the linked folder. If you delete a file on your PowerBook, the Synchronizer merge moves the file on your Macintosh into a "deleted files" folder.

Optional Automatic Operation

Once a link is established, you can synchronize any two files or folders by selecting the Synchronize Now item from the Synchronize Menu or by clicking on the arrow between the two links.

Optionally, you can select automatic linking by selecting the Automatic item when a link is selected in the main Synchronizer window.

The uses of the Automatic attribute increase when combined with AutoRemounter. For example, you can plug a PowerBook 160 into a LocalTalk network, and assume that the files on the PowerBook will be updated without interaction.

One and Two Way Links

Ordinarily, when using Synchronizer to maintain the most current sets of files, it establishes a two-way link. However, in situations where a master file is going to be updated to a network of local and remote users, you can establish one-way links by selecting the link and choosing the appropriate direction. This is also the best way to use Synchronizer when mirroring a computer's hard disk to a backup volume.

Article Change History:

20 Jul 1995 - Corrected misspelling; reviewed and reformatted.

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