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AOCE Brief Description (7/93)

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TOPIC ----------

This article provides a brief describes of the Apple Open Collaboration Environment (AOCE).

DISCUSSION ----------

With AOCE, collaboration services are integrated into the System 7 operating system, enabling users to consolidate many forms of electronic correspondence common today such as voice mail, electronic mail, and faxes. In addition, third-party developers will be able to build on AOCE's foundation to create and deliver new kinds of applications for integrated personal communications, team productivity, and affordable workflow systems, such as forms processing.

The first two versions of AOCE based software products, one that will reside on an individual end user's desktop Macintosh or Apple PowerBook, and one that provides additional server-based collaboration services for AppleTalk networks. The end-user product, PowerTalk, includes collaboration services for the individual, such as a universal mailbox for integrated electronic correspondence, an easy drag-and-drop method of sending documents, a rich catalog capability for easy access to all kinds of information, and a digital signature capability, which enables electronic approval of documents.

The server product, PowerShare Collaboration Servers, provides services for small or large groups of PowerTalk users. These services include a shared store-and-forward facility for electronic messaging, server-based authentication and privacy for secure network communications, and centralized administration of shared catalogs that are distributed across multiserver networks for optimal performance. PowerShare catalogs that are distributed across multiple servers can be replicated and synchronized for reliability.

The PowerTalk and PowerShare products are based on AOCE's architecture, which has open application programming interfaces (APIs) so that third-party developers can easily take advantage of AOCE services from within their products. In addition, Apple and third-party developers can create software modules that provide plug-and-play access from AOCE based applications to existing and future messaging and directory services.

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