

The OneNet Member network goal is to provide a Macintosh based distributed global nervous system of servers based on FirstClass, from SoftArc Inc., and using Macintosh computers from Apple Computer Inc. Its primary function will be to create the linkages and coordination needed to run a distributed and generally organic, non-rigid network of servers talking to each other in a dynamic and ongoing basis.

For those interested in creating a gatewayed system of OneNet Member servers across the Americas, Europe and Asia, we'd like to ask you to join this new Macintosh based distributed network system that is forming as you read this.

I. Why are we doing this?

The basic purpose of putting together this network is to create better access to Information, Tools and Community. It's about creating an organically formed global nervous system of distributed but connected electronic communities of people.

Similar networks operate in other areas of the computer world: FidoNet for DOS based systems; the InterNet for UNIX based systems. The OneNet Member network is growing as a similar grass roots approach by creating an easy to use, on-line community of individuals using Macintosh based BBS's & FirstClass software. FirstClass provides electronic mail, conferences (forums)—both local to a specific system and 'sharable' by replication over gateways, real time chats, databases, searching capabilities and a friendly, easy to use interface.

The OneNet Member network, to give us the access we want, is being designed to create better linkages among FirstClass systems. If done correctly, by intelligently overlapping systems' gateways, users could eventually send a message from Santa Barbara to New York without ever making a long distance call. They could also route calls overseas, saving the operators of the systems large amounts of money and providing better channels for gateway connections to even more systems such as in Europe and the Pacific Rim.

First Class system administrators have begun to notice, and experience, many of the same problems the FidoNet system had in its early days: looping of messages through the various systems (sometimes creating hundreds or thousands of copies of messages over several networked FirstClass servers), multiple feeds from a single system in one part of the world/country into several systems in a specific area (creating higher phone bills for all concerned) and, in general, a rather chaotic approach to gatewaying information.

Although setting up FirstClass gateways can be done with ease and fun, it has sometimes presenedt a disservice to users. Having to browse (or search) through a disorganized mass of information via gateways, much of it redundant, and from dozens of systems, overwhelms the system's users. These gatewayed conferences don't provide an effective or efficient context for spreading information & knowledge.

Many OneNet members feel it is time that a wider network, based on this outstanding FirstClass software and running on Macintosh computers, follow in the footsteps of the Macintosh's mission of making computers easier to use and (dare we say it—fun). The FirstClass software could do for information systems what Macintoshes gave to computers: ease and enjoyment.

The OneNet Member network's goal is to do the same for the people currently creating gateways between OneNet Member systems all over the world.

Our goal is not to become the only network for tying together FirstClass systems. We believe there may be many other networks developed. Some will be other FirstClass networks, but some will be schools, hospitals, universities, governments or companies wishing to use the framework of the OneNet Member network to send information to their sites in other states and countries. Some may even be other systems entirely (using gateways to go into other distributed systems such as the InterNet). As OneNet Members, we would like to foster a public system of servers all over the world that can be used for public, private and commercial gateway traffic without unnecessary limitations, restrictions, regulation or overhead.