

PLUS: A HyperCard Clone. By Tom Deasey

Is Plus the Hypercard upgrade you have been waiting for? It can't be disputed that the Plus is a definite upgrade from Hypercard. The main features that distinguish PLUS from Hypercard are the following:

- 1) 8-bit color and large screen support
- 2) Cards of any size up to 32000 by 32000 pixels
- 3) Six different window types
- 4) Irregularly shaped buttons (including word buttons)
- 5) Full text styling with several different fonts and sizes in "word processing" fields
- 6) Database fields where you can preformat your data
- 7) Several new graphic options
- 8) An unlimited number of objects
- 9) A set of object-oriented graphic tools
- 10) Color special effects, including sunbursts and shading
- 11) Color animation
- 12) Four levels of fatbits graphic editing
- 13) Full resolution, full page Laserwriter printing
- 14) The ability to import graphics in MacPaint, PICT, PICT2, and Encapsulated Post Script (EPS) formats
- 15) Multiple script windows open at the same time
- 16) "Automated scripting" with on-line reference to the scripting language.

All these features are greatly needed in Hypercard and PLUS fills that void. The system requirements for PLUS are a Macintosh Plus with 1MB of memory. To use color you will need a Mac II/IX/ICX/ICI/SE 30 (with an external color monitor) with a minimum of 2 MB of memory are also required for running under Multifinder. A hard disk is highly recommended. You need to be running System version 6.02 or later. If you are running an older version, go to your local Apple dealer and ask for the latest version of the System and Finder.

My first impressions of PLUS on my Macintosh Plus were that it looks exactly like Hypercard. The feel of PLUS is exactly like Hypercard which is a big advantage for PLUS. PLUS maintains the same editing and running environment that Hypercard uses. PLUS does not separate the two like Supercard with the Supercard application and editor application. So PLUS makes the create, test and modify cycle much faster and easier to manage.

After using PLUS for a month, I find that it is not a very smooth running program. PLUS does not move smoothly from one stack to another but on a 1 MB PLUS it has no memory problems like Supercard where you run out of memory after opening just two windows. PLUS does offer color and draw object which is a great advantage but Supercard offers a great deal more in the way of new features. PLUS offers new features and a familiar environment which make the transition for using HyperCard to PLUS easy. PLUS is good if you need external capabilities with PC systems but for more control over the Mac Supercard is better but for a dedicated HyperCard addict PLUS is a must.