MagiCMac: Frequently asked questions

Further questions and other information can be posted to the ASH
CompuServe E-mail account 100560,3376@COMPUSERVE.COM

ASH has a also BBS: phone +49-6221-303671. German user interface, sorry.

Contents

General

Q: What is MagiCMac?
A: MagiC is a preemptive multitasking operating system which was first developed for the Atari ST and TT series of computers. It there became very widespread. It is highly compatible with most Atari software packages. MagiCMac is MagiC for Apple Macintosh computers.

Q: Does MagiCMac include any hardware?
A: No. MagiCMac is solely a software package. (But look out for McSTout below)

Q: Is it very difficult to install MagiCMac?
A: No, not at all. MagiCMac consists of only one disk. After you have inserted the disk just double click the setup icon and the program does the rest.

Q: Which computers work with MagiCMac?
A: MagiCMac works with all Apple Macintosh computers using System 7 having a 68030, 68040 or PowerPC processor. For example: Quadra 700, PowerBook 150, Duo 270c, Performa 475 & 630, and all Power Macintosh computers. You should have at least 4 MB RAM available, which will give you about 1.5 MB free RAM under MagiCMac. We strongly recommend 8 MB or more RAM for best functionality. "RAM" implies physical "chip" RAM and not "virtual" RAM.

Q: Which software packages can be used under MagiCMac?
A: Generally speaking, it is very likely that any application which ran under MagiC on the Atari (and does not have any specific hardware accesses) will run under MagiCMac.

For example, Signum!Drei, Papillon and Phoenix. A file (MMAC_PRG.TXT) listing all the software packages that work with MagiCMac can be downloaded from the public section of the ASH BBS. MagiCMac does not emulate the hardware chip sets of the Atari computers, so software that needs to access the I/O registers will not work (exception: see McSTout below). This demo will help you to find out whether your programs will operate correctly on MagiCMac or not.

Q: Is the emulation fast enough for my software?
A: MagiCMac is not an emulation: it runs at the full speed of the host Macintosh's CPU. That is why software running on the Performa 630 is four times faster when compared to TT-speed. If you consider that most TOS applications run very well on a 68000/8 MHz processor, imagine what will happen if you run them on a 68040/33 MHz.

Q: Which monitor settings work with MagiCMac?
A: Almost all known Macintosh resolutions are supported. The standard version supports 2, 16 and 256 colours, and will automatically run in the current Mac resolution (if supported). With purchase of NVDI you get additional drivers for 32,768 or even millions of colours. Only the 4 color mode is currently not supported. For older programs expecting 640x400 monochrome (ST High resolution), MagiCMac supports a special monochrome emulation mode that is different from the current Macintosh resolution.

Q: Which desktop is used under MagiCMac?
A: The MagiCMac package includes Ease, a replacement desktop that will be familiar to Atari and Macintosh users alike - except more powerful, with greater speed and added capabilities.

Q: What about the second mouse button?
A: Usually a Mac mouse has only one button which becomes the "left" Atari mouse button. The right button can be simulated by holding down the Cmd-key before clicking. There are two-button mice from third party suppliers which can be used with MagiCMac as well. Currently, the Microspeed mouse and Logitech MouseMan are supported.

Q: What about the function keys, the help key ...(e.g. PowerBooks)?
A: Certain special keys are simulated through Cmd (Apple) Key combinations: Function keys F1 through F10 are simulated by Cmd-1 through Cmd-0, the Undo key by Cmd-U, the Insert key by Cmd-E, and the Delete key by Cmd-D. In addition, keyboard remapping is supported for users needing special characters.

Q: How do I eject floppy disks?
A: In this version of MagiCMac you have to switch back to the Apple menu (using Cmd-W) where you will find an Eject-Button as well as menu command. You can also press Cmd-Y within MagiCMac to eject a floppy disk. Future versions will support ejecting various media (Floppies, CD-ROMs and other ejectible media) via an Ease desktop command.

Q: How much does MagiCMac cost?

A: The Version running on 68030, 68040 and PowerPC computers costs DM 299. The 68K-only version (not for PowerPC) is DM 250.

Q: Where can I get MagiCMac?
A: Directly from Application Systems Heidelberg, P.O. box 102646, D-69016 Heidelberg, Phone +49-6221-300002, Fax +49-6221-300389 or a software dealer. In the U.K. the distributor is System Solutions, Brandt Fernandes Ltd., 17-19 Blackwater Street, London SE22 8RS, Fax +44-1816936948. Please contact System Solutions from other countries outside Europe, too.

Printing

Q: Can every application print from MagiCMac?
A: Every application that uses BIOS for printing can print from MagiCMac. If an application directly uses the Atari hardware, printing is not possible. However, there's an additional hardware named McSTout (see below).

Q: Can I use my Centronics printer with MagiCMac?
A: Yes. There are several options. The Macintosh is equipped with a fast serial interface which is able to send data at a speed of 56 kilobaud. You can connect the printer to your Mac via a special cable (about DM 100) with an integrated serial to parallel converter. The cable transforms the serial signal to Centronics compatible parallel, and therefore data can be sent at full speed to the printer. This procedure is faster than the direct use of the printer's built-in serial port because most printers only reach a speed of 19,200 baud. PostScript printers, such as the HP LaserJet 4MP, function extremely well using this method.

We highly recommend the software/cable package "Powerprint." This package includes more than 1,000 drivers for DOS printers as well as the serial to parallel cable. It costs DM 250 and is available through Application Systems. The advantage with PowerPrint is that you are also able to print from Mac applications. If you do not plan to print from the MacOS, you will not need to install the driver software, as it is not needed by the MagiCMac emulation. The most compatible and fastest way is to use McSTout (see below).

Q: Can I use an AppleTalk printer which only understands Quickdraw?
A: No, not with the current version of MagiCMac. The reason is simple: as nobody has been able to connect a special Apple printer to an Atari computer there is no application that includes a driver for this purpose. A special version of NVDI (a GDOS-driver and VDI accelerator) is available that will allow to print on such Apple printers when the printing application uses GDOS.

File system and data exchange

Q: How are files stored under MagiCMac?
A: Files are stored as usual on your Mac hard disk. We recommend creating a subdirectory and assigning it in the MagiCMac parameters to function, for example, as drive C: You can very easily exchange data with Mac applications. For example, scan a picture using a Mac application, store the file in the folder you chose as Drive C: and switch to MagiCMac. Now you can open the file in Papillon and edit it. It is also possible also to cut, copy and paste from the MagiCMac clipboard to the Mac clipboard and the other way round. This works, but only supports text at the moment.

Q: How can I transfer my Atari files to the Mac?
A: MagiCMac can read Atari formatted floppy disks in standard 720 KB and 1.4 MB formats. Problems with reading a disk may occur with exotic formats (e.g. 10 instead of 9 sectors, more than 80 tracks). Single-sided disks are not supported. In such cases the data must be copied onto a normally formatted Atari disk first. Additionally, when the host Mac is configured to read IBM-PC format floppy disks, this capability is also supported within MagiCMac. Once again, only standard DS/DD and HD formats are supported.

Q: What about SCSI devices?
A: SCSI harddisks can be connected directly to the SCSI-interface of the Mac. If the harddisk is formatted AHDI-compatible (that is mostly the case if your Atari can boot from it without a special floppy boot disk), it cannot be addressed by the Mac, but MagiCMac detects the device automatically and assigns it to the next free drive. You can instantly use the harddisk under MagiCMac without any further adjustment.

Please note: The demo version does not support this.

SYQUEST NOTE: Care must be taken with Syquest drives while in Mac mode: occassionally, if a cartridge is inserted while in Mac mode, the Mac will attempt to read an Atari AHDI format, and failing to do so, it will prompt you to format the disk - ABORT AT ONCE! Within MagiCMac, AHDI Syquest cartridges can be read and used normally.

Q: Am I able to make a network access?
A: A computer that is connected via AppleTalk appears as a directory under MagiCMac and can easily be assigned to a partition. Another computer can be addressed as a "drive" within MagiCMac or by any application running under MagiCMac.

Q: And what about filesharing?
A: Filesharing is possible, but the MagiC operating system does not yet support special file locking functions.

Q: Can I use a CD-ROM drive?
A: Yes, you can. On the Macintosh, a CD-ROM appears like any other device. You only have to assign it to a drive to access it as usual.

Q: Can I use an external SCSI-CD-ROM drive in a chain with an Atari harddisk?

A: Yes, devices like that can addressed from the Mac and MagiCMac without any special adjustment (of course, you need a CD-ROM driver for the Mac).

Q: Do I have to install a special driver software for MagiCMac to use CD-ROMs?
A: No. You can read CD-ROMs directly using the Mac operating system and its drivers.

Q: What about ARA?
A: ARA stands for "Apple Remote Access" and is used to connect Macintosh computers via modem to build a network between them, e.g, to access the other's hard disks. ARA works under MagiCMac, too. The remote Mac can be connected via ARA and appears as a directory. You just have to assign it to a drive and you have full access. Exchanging files using ARA is much easier than using a terminal program and special download software.

Hardware

Q: What kinds of monitors work with a Mac?
A: You can connect any VGA monitor to the Mac. You just need a special connector for about DM 50.

Q: What about the DMA interface and the ROM port?
A: Macintosh computers are not equipped with a DMA interface or a ROM port. Therefore you cannot use an application which needs the DMA interface or ROM port for a protection key (dongle). The Atari laser printer cannot be used with the Mac.

Q: What about Midi?
A: The midi interface is optional. At the moment it is not supported by the MagiCMac software.

Q: Is there a two-button mouse for the Mac available?
A: Yes, there is. Currently MagiCMac supports the Microspeed mouse and the Logitech MouseMan. Others may follow upon request.

Q: What is McSTout?
A: The German company Overscan has developed a board that contains some of the Atari I/O chips to provide MIDI, serial and Centronics ports. Currently, this board only fits into comuters with a LC 030 compatible PDS slot. NuBus and PCI boards may follow. Distributors are also in the U.K and the U.S (e.g. Compo). Contact: Phone +49-030-6238292, Fax: +49-030-6238347, E-Mail pj@contrib.de (or try pj@overscan.de).

The Mac side

Q: Do I need any extensions or control panels?
A: No. MagiCMac is 100% clean. No additional files - neither system files nor control

panels - are needed.

Q: What does MacOS do when MagiCMac is active?
A: For MacOS MagiCMac is just another application. MagiCMac runs parallel with the Finder or any active application. You can switch from MagiCMac to another application and back at any time.

Q: Can I exchange data via clipboard?
A: With the current version you can cut pieces of text from MagiCMac applications and paste them into Mac applications and vice versa.

Q: Which Version of MacOS do I need to run MagiCMac?
A: MagiCMac runs under any System 7 (also 7.5).

Q: Can I use the Mac's virtual memory?
*A: Virtual memory can be active. But MagiCMac can only address the built-in memory. Anyway, when switching from MagiCMac to Mac or vice versa parts of the applications running may be moved into virtual memory. Note: Currently, you need to turn off virtual memory before starting MagiCMac on a Power Macintosh.

Q: Can I use RAM Doubler?
A: RAM Doubler is a very efficient virtual memory manager (it replaces Apple's VM) and can be used on the Mac side. But as mentioned before MagiCMac is only able to address physical (built-in) memory.

Q: Is MagiCMac already able to use the FPU?
A: Yes, if the FPU is a real coprocessor 68881 or 68882. Soft-FPU cannot be used by MagiCMac. The integrated FPU of the 68040 cannot be used with the current version of MagiCMac. On Power Macintosh computers, no FPU option is available.

Application compatibility

Q: Does NVDI run under MagiCMac?
A: MagiCMac requires a special version of NVDI. Contact System Solutions (see above) or Behne&Behne in Germany if you have already NVDI for Atari.

Q: Which fonts are supported by NVDI?
A: All the fonts that NVDI supported on the Atari, including TrueType fonts. Postscript is currently not supported. A special MagiCMac version of NVDI will allow to use TrueType fonts installed under MacOS.

Q: Does Gemini run with MagiCMac?
A: Simple Answer. Gemini runs under MagiCMac.

Q: Does Signum!2 run with MagiCMac?

A: This is the question we hear more frequently than any other. Much to everybody's surprise, the answer is : Yes! It does run, because under MagiCMac there is a special 640x400 monochrome mode which allows you to run these older applications. If you want to print from Signum!2 you need the program PEM_CENT.PRG, which is now a part of the Signum!2 package.

Q: Can I use Kobold under MagiCMac?
A: You can use Kobold in the fast Kobold-mode with an external AHDI-formatted harddisks (e.g. SCSI harddisks). You can also use it on the Mac's drive but just in the GEMDOS mode. You can also use applications like Semprini (harddisk optimizer) or disk monitors.

Q: Does Calamus run under MagiCMac?
A: Yes, and the speed is ASTONISHING!

Q: Can MagiCMac handle long file names?
A: Yes, it can. However, when displayed on the MagiCMac desktop, they are cut to 12 letters. MagiCMac has a modified file system which allows extended file names. FYI-Gemini 1.a can use these long file names already.