



INTRODUCING

**FirstClass®**

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## Message from the President

*Dear Computing Professional,*

Welcome to FirstClass, SoftArc's progressive group communication package. FirstClass has been solving real-world communication needs in organizations like yours since 1990. We're confident you'll be pleasantly surprised with the way FirstClass combines a very powerful, feature-rich interface with an ease of use and administration that is absolutely unequaled.

You'll also see why millions of users worldwide use and trust our technology every day. Their businesses demand dependable communication, and FirstClass delivers. SoftArc is a technically focused organization, rather than a marketing-driven one, and we are dedicated to providing the best client/server communication solution available.

We realize the decision to put in a communication system repre-

“The longer I work with computers, the less I’m impressed with splashy graphics, thundering multimedia presentations, and benchmark figures that zoom off the chart. What impresses me more is ease of use, a near-zero learning effort, and immediate pay-back in productivity. SoftArc’s FirstClass meets these requirements, and it’s flashy, too.”

**BYTE,**  
**September, 1993**

sents a major decision; the actual cost to your organization might be many times the cost of the software. SoftArc will stand beside you in this effort. Through our policies of free upgrades, free tech support, and free client distribution, we’ll ensure a long-term partnership between your company and ours.

Sincerely,



Steven Asbury  
President,  
SoftArc Inc.



# Introduction

## What is FirstClass?

FirstClass is a high performance multiplatform communications system that integrates full fledged e-mail with workgroup communication services—and offers the exact same ease of use, functionality, and high performance over network or remote connections.

Traditional e-mail systems only offer simple point-to-point messaging.



FirstClass integrates powerful group collaboration with cross-platform industrial-strength messaging. And because the FirstClass architecture was conceived with both network and remote access in mind, external access to FirstClass is second to none.

More and more organizations are discovering the unique features of FirstClass, with its configurable, multitasking graphical interface, and outstanding performance and stability.

One FirstClass Server provides all of the following features in one integrated solution:

- complete office electronic mail
- workgroup collaboration for electronic discussions, file sharing, and conferencing
- access to critical corporate data from existing databases
- remote access and online information services with an intuitive, multitasking interface

"FirstClass blends conferencing and mail together under a remarkably clean interface that goes far beyond the capabilities of most mail systems... I can't stress how much a well-designed system like FirstClass can boost productivity over simple e-mail."

**BYTE,  
September,  
1993**



## E-mail

FirstClass matches other popular mail products function for function, and breaks dramatic new ground with its innovative client/server architecture. Users enjoy an easy-to-use, feature-rich communications environment.

In FirstClass, electronic mail administrators discover a flexibility of

control, ease of configuration, and server integrity that becomes a standard to measure by.

## Conferencing

FirstClass is a full-featured communication environment for individuals and groups needing to share information. Workgroup collaboration is offered through the same low-footprint, easy-to-



use graphical interface that users send mail with.

Powerful message tracking and extensive security options form the cornerstone of a high-performance mechanism for sharing data throughout the organization.

### ***Database access***

Rather than import sensitive corporate data into proprietary groupware for enterprise distribution, FirstClass lets users access an organization's critical corporate data from where it normally resides, and view it within the product's cross-platform graphical interface.

With FirstClass, organizations retain critical data where it belongs: on the corporate database.

### ***Remote connections***

Remote connectivity to FirstClass is handled elegantly with full support for asynchronous communication in clients and servers.

FirstClass supports dozens of conventional modems per server and provides for client/server connections over the Internet. Seamless remote access makes FirstClass the world's easiest, most customizable, and most secure system for communication with field staff, vendors, or even customers.

# Features and Benefits

## Complete electronic mail facility

FirstClass offers easy-to-use, powerful, person-to-person messaging. E-mail is the cornerstone of both personal and group communication in FirstClass.

### Mailbox

- ✶ Incoming private mail arrives in users' private mailboxes. Copies of outgoing mail are automatically retained in users' mailboxes.



- Users may create and name any number of hierarchical folders where mail may be filed. All mail is stored on the FirstClass Server, accessible from any client.
- FirstClass tracks the status of every message for every user; unread messages may be easily identified by a red “unread” flag.
- Users can save messages without sending them, to allow for later work. Unsent messages are marked with a white flag.

### *Easy addressing*

- Users may type a partial name of a recipient into a

To or Cc list, and the name is validated and inserted instantly.

- Users may specify an unlimited number of message recipients.

### *File attachments*

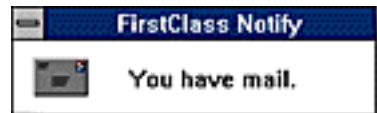
- Users may attach any number of files of any type to FirstClass messages.



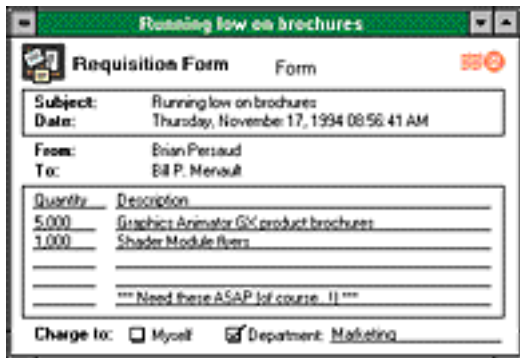
- FirstClass automatically translates popular file creator and DOS extensions across platforms.
- Users can view text, bitmap picture or sound attachments online before downloading them. Other attachments may be launched upon download. Files are downloaded or viewed in the background, allowing users to perform other tasks.
- Users can resume file transfers that have been interrupted.
- FirstClass uses a proprietary file transfer protocol, so users don't have to worry about traditional file transfer protocol issues.

### *Notification & delivery*

- Network users may be notified with a sound and/or message when new mail has arrived, even if they are not connected to the FirstClass Server.



- The server provides instant notification of received mail—clients do not poll for new mail. This reduces network background noise.
- FirstClass delivers any message in milliseconds, even across platforms, regardless of the number of addressees or file attachments.



**Running low on brochures**

**Requisition Form** Form

**Subject:** Running low on brochures  
**Date:** Thursday, November 17, 1994 08:56:41 AM  
**From:** Brian Persaud  
**To:** Bill P. Mervault

Quantity	Description
5,000	Graphics Animator GX product brochures
1,000	Shader Module Riers
*** Need these ASAP (of course) !! ***	

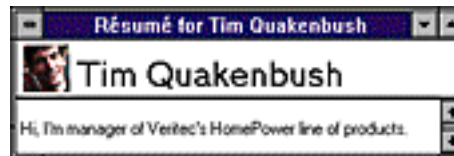
**Charge to:** ☐ Myself ☒ Department: Marketing

## Electronic forms


- Users create and send messages using electronic forms that resemble real-world envelopes, phone message pads, requisition forms, and so on.
- Forms are useful when combined with gateways: for example, if you have the optional fax

gateway, you can use a “fax” form to send complete faxes (including your cover page or letterhead) to other fax machines.

## Résumés



**Résumé for Tim Quakenbush**

 **Tim Quakenbush**

Hi, I'm manager of Veritec's HomePower line of products.

- All users have a résumé, a document describing themselves to others, which they may edit. Double-clicking on a user name anywhere in FirstClass reveals the résumé of that user.

### **Searching**

- Users can search current or filed mail for text, addressees, or attachment names.
- Searches are performed in the background, freeing the user to read mail, participate in chats, or use other FirstClass features.

### **Advanced mail features**

- Users can forward and reply to mail.
- Users can set up automatic replies (for example, if they are on vacation), or they can automatically forward their mail.
- Users can revoke sent messages from conferences or

recipients' mailboxes with the "unsubscribe" command.

- Users can set the priority for messages they send. Urgent messages appear in bold in message lists.
- Users can set the sensitivity for messages they send.
- Senders can request that receipt notifications be generated when a message is read, routed or delivered. Receipts travel over FirstClass gateways.
- FirstClass supports individual and global mail lists.

### History tracking

- At any time, users may check the history of a message or conference posting for a complete list of who has read, replied to, or forwarded it. History information is tracked automatically for every FirstClass message.

### Gateway support

- A FirstClass Server routes mail to other FirstClass Servers using built-in server-to-server gateway technology. Therefore, you may create networks of linked FirstClass systems for private mail, workgroup conference and file exchange.



- Gateway connections can use modems or any licensed network protocol (including TCP/IP).
- Optional gateways provide connectivity to other mail systems, such as the Internet, fax

machines, or even other communication technologies (such as pagers).

- A published toolkit allows the creation of custom FirstClass gateways.

### ***Directory synchronization***

- FirstClass Servers in large distributed mail systems may automatically exchange user directory information. Additions or deletions of user accounts on individual servers are automatically propagated to the directories of all servers in the system.

### ***Multi-hop mail routing***

- Users can send mail to other servers without a direct gateway to that server. FirstClass stores a list of all known systems automatically, and will select the proper route for mail to take.



## Workgroup Conferencing

- Conferences are forums that users may read and send messages to. They appear as icons on users' desktops or may be nested within other conferences, and are perfect for sharing information among large groups. Users may send to a conference simply by addressing mail to it... as if it were another user.



### *Unread item tracking*

- New items in conferences are tracked on a per-user, per-item basis with red flags, similar to private mail.
- The icons of conferences containing unread items are themselves flagged. Users know at a glance when there are new items.

### *Threaded conversations*

- Users can navigate replies in discussions on given topics with “forward and backward in thread” palette buttons or key-strokes.
- Threading is supported in local or replicated FirstClass conferences and Internet newsgroups within FirstClass. (For access to Internet newsgroups, you require optional gateway software.)

### *Fully customized structure*

- The administrator may create conferences within conferences.
- Each conference has a unique name, and may be given a customized icon.

### *Moderation*

- The administrator may set up moderated conferences. In a moderated conference, new submissions must be approved before users may read them.

### *Conference Security*

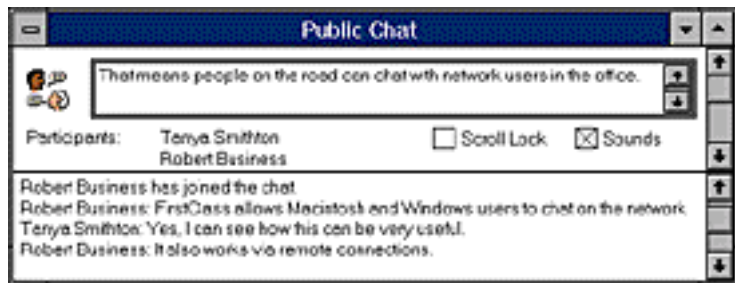
- The administrator may assign varying levels of access to conferences.
- The administrator or another designated person may create conferences that only a select group of users can read. Other users might not be able to open messages in that conference. They need not even know the conference exists.

### *Real-time chatting*

- Users may participate in public and private real-time typed discussions (or “chats”) even across different platforms.
- Users may save transcripts of chats.

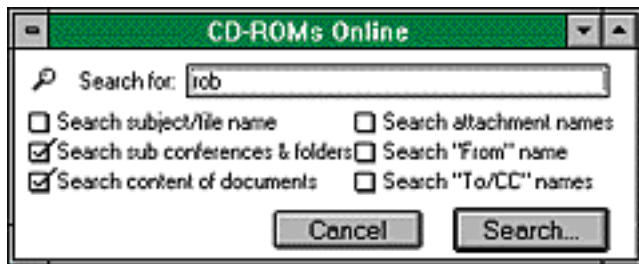
### *CD-ROM and external volume access*

- Any FirstClass Server volume or CD-ROM may be offered to FirstClass users.
- Users may search mounted volumes and download files.
- Similar links may be made to network volumes or parts of volumes. Access may be controlled using privilege groups.



### Database access

- Third party software allows users to browse content on back-end databases.
- Data continues to reside on the database server.
- Search criteria entered on graphical forms are issued as SQL queries. Results populate additional FirstClass forms.



## **Access Methods**

- FirstClass Client and Server connections may be made using IPX, TCP/IP, AppleTalk, modems, or even the Macintosh Communications Toolbox... all simultaneously. The architecture of the FirstClass Server provides for concurrent multiple connection support.

### ***Network protocol support***

- Windows clients connect to FirstClass using the default network protocol, IPX.
- Macintosh users connect to FirstClass using AppleTalk. FirstClass supports multiple

AppleTalk zones, AppleTalk Remote Access, and multiple servers per network zone.

- Clients may also connect to FirstClass Servers over TCP/IP or other protocols. TCP/IP support allows for client/server or server/server connections over the Internet.
- Simultaneous support for all these protocols allows cross-platform real-time chatting.

### ***Encryption***

- All transmissions between client and server may be encrypted for security.

### *Modem access*

- Client users may connect to FirstClass with any Hayes-compatible modem, including the latest high-speed modems offering data compression features.
- Modem connections may be made with the same First-Class Clients used on the network. A special remote mail client is not required.
- FirstClass allows users who connect over the network to connect remotely, at no extra charge.
- FirstClass Servers may accommodate dozens of modems with no perfor-

mance degradation... even while clients connect simultaneously over network.



## **Macintosh Communication Toolbox**

- Full support for the Communications Toolbox in the FirstClass Macintosh Client and Server allows logins over physical connections such as ISDN, X.25, or ADSP.

## **VT100 interface**

- If you have the optional Command Line User Interface installed on your FirstClass Server, users may access their FirstClass accounts and take advantage of a full-screen editor for messages when connecting with a terminal emulating VT100.

- Users connecting by VT100 type “1” to enter their mailbox, “2” to open conferences, and so on, navigating the same content they would see if connected with a FirstClass Client.

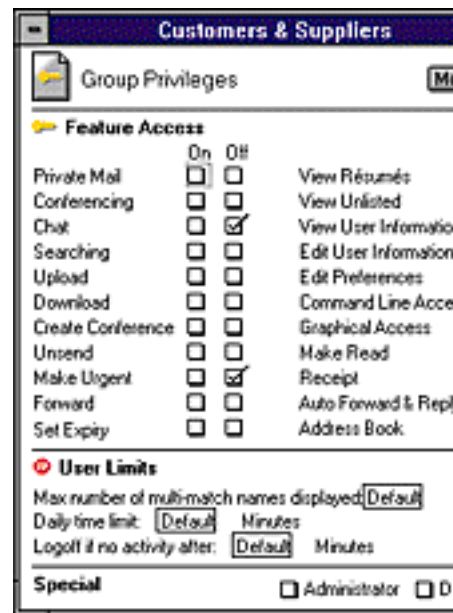
## System control & administration

- Other electronic mail and groupware packages are difficult to install and administer. FirstClass installs easily and takes care of itself with little intervention.

to multiple servers with only a single client application.

### Easy installation

- FirstClass Servers install in less than five minutes with only two diskettes. Client applications can install in seconds from a single diskette.
- Connection specifics (network zones, user IDs, and so on) are retained in Settings Documents for individual servers. Thus, users can easily connect





### *Single copy architecture*

- Only a single copy of each message and attached file is stored by the FirstClass Server, regardless of the number of destinations or addressees. This results in a reduction in disk use, greater storage efficiency, and increased speed.

### *Automatic expiry*

- Upon creation, messages are assigned a deletion date. On that date, they are automatically removed by a routine server house-keeping task.

- Expiry dates may be set on individual conferences and overridden on individual messages, if desired.
- Disk space isn't wasted by out-of-date messages and files.

### *Security control*

- Administrators may create privilege groups and use them to control their members' access to conferences.
- Administrators may easily add users to, or remove them from, groups. Users may belong to any number of groups.
- Users' desktops may be influenced by their membership in

privilege groups. Certain users may access confidential areas others do not know about.

- Administrators may override a user's access individually, regardless of his or her privilege group membership.

### ***Remote administration***

- Whether administrators connect locally or remotely, they perform their tasks with the same FirstClass Client used by all other users.
- System managers may perform all normal administrative duties from anywhere.

- Remote administration simplifies configuration of server-to-server gateways when building worldwide networks.

### ***Automatic account creation***

- An “automatic registration” option allows new users to fill in an information form and establish their own accounts without administrator intervention.
- Batch processing allows administrators to create user accounts from information exported from other mail or database systems.

### *Low memory requirements*

- The FirstClass Server runs on 1.5 MB of RAM (more if accommodating large numbers of simultaneous users). The FirstClass Clients only require 1 MB of RAM.

### *Easy upgrades*

- The latest FirstClass Client and Server upgrades are available free of charge for download from SoftArc Online.
- Formal update kits including new manuals are available for nominal fees.



## FirstClass graphical interface

- The FirstClass graphical interface adheres closely to graphical interface standards as found in Windows and Macintosh—users double-click to open items, drag items, and so on. The system is intuitive and easy to learn for

anyone who has used a Windows or Macintosh computer.

## *Multi-window multitasking*

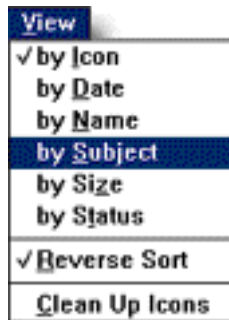
- Users may open multiple windows to view multiple items or

conduct any number of operations simultaneously.

- All file transfers between the client and server take place in the background. Users may continue to read and compose mail or chat with others, even while transferring multiple files.
- Users can easily cut and paste text between any number of open messages.
- Users may always initiate new actions whenever they like, and rarely see “hourglass” or “watch” cursors.

## ***Viewing modes***

- FirstClass can display folders, conferences, and their contents either by icon or in list views. Forward or reverse sorting quickly changes the order of displayed items.
- Views may also show items listed by date, name or subject.



### *Palette*



- A floating palette offers easy access to commonly-used commands (creating a message, sending a message, browsing forward and backward through message threads, and so on).

### *Online help*

- A complete online help system is available to users.
- You can customize the help files to add help text specific to your organization.

### *Printing*

- Users may print any window in FirstClass.

### *Color*

- FirstClass provides full support for color in custom icons and background pictures. It also supports styled and colored text in messages.
- Icons and graphics may be customized globally by the administrator or locally by end-users.

### ***User preferences***

- Users may configure their own preferences, including sort order and mailbox window sizes.

### ***Multi-language support***

- The FirstClass Client is available in 12 languages, including Japanese, French Canadian, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish.
- FirstClass supports Windows and Macintosh international-language operating system versions.

# Real World Use

## Business

SoftArc's FirstClass is a leading group communications product. Millions of people rely on FirstClass for their critical communications.

FirstClass is a popular choice among organizations augmenting or migrating from traditional messaging, or companies adopting a communication system for the first time.

FirstClass offers powerful personal messaging integrated with group discussion functions. Its scalability, robust architecture, and real-world performance make it a logical choice for corporate communication backbones. FirstClass offers:

- local office e-mail plus replicable discussion areas
- distributed wide-area communication features including



"FirstClass does everything. Not only does its implementation of e-mail include all the features you could want, it also offers conferencing and bulletin board facilities. The software is comprehensive and flexible enough to expand to most organizations' needs."

**MacUser UK,  
Awards Issue,  
October 28th,  
1994**

directory synchronization and multi-hop mail

- discussion threading even in replicated multi-server discussions
- remote access integrated in the same graphical client interfaces
- powerful Internet connectivity
- graphical access to data on corporate backbone databases
- client software available in twelve languages

More and more companies are discovering the benefits of industrial-strength collaborative discussion and conferencing as implemented in FirstClass. When combined with optional enterprise

database access, organizations can leverage investments in existing information structures, yet allow users to efficiently share common resources and files on the FirstClass network.

Powerful remote access functionality allows users to send and receive e-mail when out of the office, participate in the same discussion conferences, or access the same resources that they would at their desks.

FirstClass puts e-mail, conferencing, and even enterprise database access at the fingertips of everyone in an organization, regardless of where they connect from and the platforms they use.

## KPMG Peat Marwick

*"We needed a cost-effective system that combined full fledged e-mail with robust work-group functionality."*

**Allan Frank,**  
*partner in charge of enabling technology, KPMG*

**Challenge:** To create and maintain an electronic knowledge base accessible by professionals in geographically dispersed areas.

**Solution:** FirstClass presented a unified front end for the firm's various information sources. KPMG's 17,000 North American employees use its massive in-house FirstClass groupware system, dubbed Knowledge Manager, by clicking on icons to access information in FirstClass or from enterprise SQL databases. KPMG's offices worldwide are



starting their own systems and connecting them to the network.

"KPMG had several requirements in the selection of a group collabo-

ration package on which to base Knowledge Manager,” explained the partner in charge of enabling technologies, Allan Frank. “We needed a cost-effective system that combined full-fledged e-mail with robust workgroup functionality. We needed it to be easy to administer and to use, especially for our vast numbers of remote users. We needed it to be easily scalable, as we’re continuously adding new consultants. Most of all, we needed a system that was friendly and fun... a system that people would use regularly; an application to which our consultants could trust their hard-won data. FirstClass met all of these needs—in one package. One application, one interface, no fuss.”

FirstClass has proved to be so successful for the company’s internal use that it is sparking considerable interest among KPMG customers. As a result, KPMG’s Strategic Services Consulting practice has begun offering a new consulting area to its clients: knowledge management services based on FirstClass.

**Results:** Reduced the time and improved the quality of proposals.

## Manufacturing

“We can’t live without it, both for communicating internally and with customers. If somebody took it away from us, we’d be in trouble. It’s also very easy to use and administer and doesn’t take a whole lot of time.”

**Jack Ranieri,**  
**MIS Manager,**  
**TSB International**

FirstClass encourages communication between all divisions of an organization. Group conferencing can encourage workgroup discussion in the manufacturing process. Conferences tracking phases of a product’s design help everyone in the organization understand their part in a process and allow employees to access reference materials on given projects.

Wide-area support allows FirstClass to tie together factories and offices worldwide.

### **TSB International**

**Challenge:** With sales and service locations in England,



Australia, and the United States, voice network hardware firm TSB International required internal electronic communication, resource sharing, and a mechanism for customer feedback.

**Solution:** TSB established FirstClass Servers at its offices worldwide and connected them for electronic mail and directory exchange, and discussion database replication. Any employee may now send mail to any other, or access the same company resources courtesy of FirstClass conference replication.

Store-and-forward workgroup features enable teams on different continents and in multiple time zones to work concurrently on projects. A single FirstClass Internet gateway gives all users at all locations Internet mail capability.

In addition, the ability to establish electronic links with customers

through the software's remote access capabilities allows TSB to post product information, such as release notes and technical specifications, for dial-in access at each of the company's locations.

**Results:** Powerful internal and external communication with minimal administrative overhead and maximum return.

## Education

*"The state of Maine is very quickly moving toward a unified FirstClass network. We are adding approximately 2 to 3 servers per week, each and every week."*

***Roger J. Fuller,  
Oak Hill High  
Network Admin***

FirstClass has emerged as a communications standard among schools and school districts worldwide. Some sites use FirstClass for curriculum discussions among teachers and distribution of learning materials. Some use it for communication among students. Others use it for both.

Because FirstClass Servers may gateway together by network or modem to exchange private mail and replicate conferences, the product is ideal for school boards spanning large geographic areas.

SoftArc offers special discounted educational pricing.

- FirstClass links teachers together with electronic mail and private conferencing.
- Internet access allows teachers to correspond with colleagues around the world and participate in Usenet groups.
- Students can be given the opportunity to correspond among themselves or with Internet pen pals.
- Built-in security control restricts students' access to sensitive areas, and can serve as a firewall to sensitive content on the Internet.

## ***Maine Center for Educational Services***

**Challenge:** To encourage faculty communication and to help students develop writing skills through electronic correspondence.

**Solution:** FirstClass was introduced in Oak Hill High School in Sabattus, Maine in 1991. Other schools in the state, inspired by the pilot's success, also adopted it for internal communication.

By setting up FirstClass gateways to each other and the Internet, faculty and students have established a pervasive network for communicating both among themselves and with the rest of the world.

**Results:** A mature, secure electronic mail and group communications system that addresses the needs of the education community.

# Specifications & Requirements

## The FirstClass Client

One of the most compelling aspects of FirstClass is its cross platform functionality; FirstClass Servers and Clients are almost identical across platforms.

SoftArc's graphical FirstClass Client front-end software is available for a number of platforms. Users may log in from any client and check their mail

if the server is licensed to accommodate their platform.

Sites installing FirstClass on multiple platforms can be assured of a consistent user experience throughout the organization.





**FirstClass Client for Windows** will run on any Windows computer. It offers native support for IPX, TCP/IP, and asynchronous connections to servers.

Hardware:

Any 386 CPU (or later)

Operating System:

Windows 3.1, Windows NT, or Windows 95

Memory:

4 MB memory minimum

Modem Support:

Any Hayes-compatible modem



**FirstClass Client for Mac OS** will run on any Macintosh. It includes built-in support for AppleTalk, TCP/IP, and asynchronous connections.

Hardware:

Any 68000-series or Power Macintosh

Operating System:

System 6.0.4 (or later)

Memory:

4 MB memory minimum

Modem Support:

Any Hayes-compatible modem

```

Each user has the following in their home directory:

MailBox      Contains your incoming and outgoing mail.  Open this to:
              read your mail and to compose new messages.

News         A common conference containing ideas of interest to all
              users.

Conferences   Contains the conferences available.  After opening
              "Conferences" open the conference that is of interest
              to you.

For help, type HELP at the > prompt.

=====
Last logged on at: 12/15/98 7:17 PM
Time remaining today: 185 minutes.
[More]
    
```

The **FirstClass Text Services** option allows users to access their FirstClass account using conventional terminal software.

Hardware: Any computer with ANSI or VT100 emulation

Operating System: Any operating system

Memory: Dictated by terminal emulator software

Modem Support: Any Hayes-compatible modem

FirstClass Clients may be copied to multiple machines, given to colleagues or even distributed on online services. They are freely distributable and license-

free. Updates are made available at no cost for download from any number of public sources.

## The FirstClass Server

*"FirstClass never misses a beat... Its reliability astounds me."*

**Bryce Ralph,  
Advanced  
Communications,  
New Zealand**

FirstClass Servers for all platforms share the same functionality. Choose the server or servers most appropriate for your environment, and license them for the platforms and protocols used at your site. FirstClass Servers offer hassle-free, multi-server communication and administration.

Exact specifications and requirements from platform to platform differ only as indicated here.



FirstClass Servers using any platforms will communicate for mail and conference exchange. Connect over modem, ISDN, X.25, or network protocols such as IPX, AppleTalk, or TCP/IP (communicating servers must be licensed for appropriate protocols.)

The **FirstClass Server for Windows** will run on any 386 (or later) computer capable of running Windows NT. Other applications may be run on the same server as FirstClass when running Windows NT.

Hardware:  
Any 386 CPU (or later)

Operating System:  
Windows NT 3.5 (or later).

Memory: 10 MB memory minimum

Serial Expansion:  
DigiBoard multiport hardware

Maximum concurrent sessions: 250

The **FirstClass Server for Mac OS** will run on any Mac OS CPU, but will offer better performance and accommodate more simultaneous users on higher-end computers. FirstClass Servers on Mac OS machines should be run as dedicated applications. The Mac OS server is both 68K and Power Macintosh-native.

Hardware:  
Any Macintosh or Power Macintosh

Operating System:  
System 6.04 (or later)

**Memory:**

5 MB memory minimum

**Serial Expansion:**

Keyspan, Creative Solutions or  
QuadraLink

Maximum concurrent sessions: 100

Total RAM requirements for FirstClass Servers, regardless of platform, are influenced by the number of simultaneous user sessions configured on the server. Servers require approximately 100 KB of RAM for each concurrent user session to be accommodated.

## **Dial-up modem support**

FirstClass accommodates multiple modems or other asynchronous devices per server, regardless of platform. Servers for Windows and Mac OS may be configured with dozens of modems, and support ISDN and X.25, in addition to normal LAN connections at the same time.

While FirstClass can offer useful client/server performance even over 2400 bps connections, higher-speed modems or ISDN channels yield performance similar to network connections.

FirstClass offers users the same feature set and interface when

connecting remotely over asynchronous links. FirstClass Clients and Servers both offer native

modem support, and are shipped with drivers for hundreds of popular models.

## Internet connectivity

“With every day that passes, more and more of our intellectual capital is being shared freely. FirstClass is helping KPMG put the pieces of the information puzzle together.”

**Art Serafine,  
Client Service  
Technology  
Partner, KPMG  
Peat Marwick**

Like most mail systems, FirstClass accommodates SMTP messaging. With an Internet gateway configured, FirstClass users may send and receive personal mail to and from Internet users. Sites may make connections to the Internet through full-time or periodic UUCP connections. A number of Internet gateways available also allow users to read Usenet newsgroups and mail lists replicated within FirstClass conferences.



"A complete electronic mail, group conferencing and database access package that provides sophisticated workgroup functionality in an easy-to-use environment."

**Cdn. Computer  
Reseller,  
September 21, 1994**

In addition, FirstClass Clients may connect to FirstClass Servers over the Internet by means of direct support for TCP/IP in the client, and optional support in the server.

Client/server connections over the Internet require Internet con-

nections at both client *and* server. SLIP, PPP, and faster connections are supported.

Higher-bandwidth connections yield higher performance and support for more concurrent TCP/IP sessions on FirstClass.

## Database access

Access to data on existing corporate databases is provided through a number of complementary products available for FirstClass.



## **Building distributed networks**

Like other mail and conferencing systems, FirstClass accommodates a given number of simultaneous users connected to a server. Unlike other mail and conferencing systems, multiple FirstClass Servers may be easily replicated and scaled to form a large distributed communications system.

Built-in gateway capabilities, directory synchronization, and conference replication allow organizations to build multi-server FirstClass systems to simultaneously accommodate the e-mail and group communication needs of thousands of people.

Remote administration, batch import of users, and reliable error-checking multiprotocol LAN/WAN/modem connections between servers simplify large network setup. All distributed administration features are supported by all FirstClass Servers.

In large distributed FirstClass systems, users may send mail to each other without having to know the “post office” on which they reside—they simply address mail to users’ real names. Mail delivery, even in large multi-server networks, can still be almost instantaneous.

## **Technical support**

SoftArc's technical support policies are among the most progressive in the industry.

SoftArc offers free, unlimited technical support to registered owners of FirstClass. Users may communicate with support staffers by voice, fax, e-mail, or any of the online forums SoftArc monitors daily.

# Competitive Landscape

## Why FirstClass?

FirstClass is an exceptionally powerful, flexible tool that can fulfill a number of communications needs simultaneously.

FirstClass fits several product niches, and offers a wealth of integrated functionality not found in other products.

FirstClass addresses information, communication, and management needs that have traditionally been served only by a variety of unrelated and difficult-to-interface products.

When comparing FirstClass to other products, the following themes recur:

*"We at A&M studios are thoroughly enjoying our First-Class system, and in fact, business could not go on without it here."*

***Stephen Barncard,  
A&M Studios, LA.***

**FirstClass offers integrated group conferencing along with full e-mail.**

Most e-mail programs don't provide for group discussions or shared mailboxes. If they do, there's no provision for threaded discussions or unread tracking for individual users, as exists within FirstClass.

**Thousands of user accounts may reside on a single FirstClass Server.**

Actual figures depend on server platform, but even low-end First-Class Servers accommodate upwards of 5,000 users accounts per server. Most communication products can only manage sev-

eral hundred people per mail center or post office.

**FirstClass accommodates large numbers of concurrent remote users.**

An individual FirstClass Server can accept dozens of modems in addition to TCP/IP sessions and internal LAN connections, and still offers useful performance. If remote access is a priority for your organization, no other product approaches the feature set and scalability of FirstClass.

**FirstClass offers remote access capability at no extra charge.**

Remote FirstClass users may connect to FirstClass Servers with the

*"Its excellent features and fantastic reliability make FirstClass shine as the premier groupware application."*

***MacUser,  
January, 1995***

same client application they normally use on the network, and at no extra charge. Other packages require separate remote software with less functionality or only offer remote connectivity through the World Wide Web.

### **Multiplatform FirstClass sites do not require a file server.**

The FirstClass Server can accommodate logins via IPX, AppleTalk, TCP/IP, and others. Multiplatform mail delivery is instantaneous, and PCs and Macintoshes may communicate in real time. Other mail packages induce delays in mail delivery because of file server polls and translation.

### **FirstClass is easier to administer than other similar products.**

All administration in FirstClass is performed with the same client software others use. Administration may be performed remotely or locally from any Windows or Macintosh computer. Other communication products are often administrative nightmares, which translate into higher IS staff costs.

### **FirstClass is competitively priced compared with traditional e-mail.**

User licensing in FirstClass is priced on par with traditional mail-only products, with deep discounts when purchased in quantity. A second tier of "remote" user licenses

allows organizations to purchase large numbers of external accounts for one tenth the price of normal accounts.

**FirstClass is a proven, robust, real-world product.**

Shipping since 1990, SoftArc's FirstClass is a mature application used by millions of people worldwide for mission-critical communications. Large corporate and educational sites running FirstClass systems with thousands of users testify to the rock-solid integrity of FirstClass.

## **FirstClass vs. cc:Mail**

*The following is an excerpt from a white paper available from SoftArc, contrasting FirstClass with popular mail software cc:Mail.*

Lotus' cc:Mail is one of the world's most popular LAN e-mail products, offering a respectable range of features at a reasonable price.

Despite this, cc:Mail has several shortcomings which discount it as an ideal solution for many communications problems:

- Unlike FirstClass, cc:Mail does not provide a wide selection of options for sorting, handling, and organizing mail

"You've blown the socks off of my previous e-mail system (Lotus cc:Mail) and have brought a new era of communication for my company that has brought me a ton of praise and thanks."

***Roland Combes,  
Challenger  
Center for  
Space Science  
Education***

within personal mailboxes and conferences.

- cc:Mail's learning curve is steep for both users and administrators. Maintenance duties multiply with more than one post office.
- The licensing structure of cc:Mail does not easily provide for unified client access via LAN, WAN, and modem. Users' multiple mailboxes are hard to reconcile, and separate remote software must be purchased.
- cc:Mail scales up clumsily in large installations.

FirstClass offers sophisticated, extensible multiplatform communi-

cation with extremely efficient and functional remote access features.

Users may view and file personal messages in FirstClass far more elegantly than in cc:Mail. FirstClass offers very strong built-in server-to-server connectivity, remote, and batch administration features, and full directory and conference synchronization to support any number of systems in a distributed network. Finally, the FirstClass licensing structure also allows for full-featured remote access at no extra cost.

FirstClass is less expensive than cc:Mail, and is considerably easier to implement, learn, and administer.

## FirstClass vs. Notes

“FirstClass really outshines Notes as a group communications system for e-mail, conferencing and bulletin-board functions.”

**MacUser,  
November, 1993**

*The following is an excerpt from a white paper contrasting FirstClass with venerable groupware software Lotus Notes.*

Industry pundits, recognizing the impact of good communication on workgroups, at one time hailed Lotus Development Corporation's Notes as the future of corporate communication. Aside from workflow functionality, Notes actually offers very little that products like SoftArc's FirstClass do not.

While no one disputes the benefits of good group communication, there are those who wonder whether Notes is the best tool

for the job. Critics cite a number of shortcomings:

- Installation is difficult. The complicated Notes server installation procedure usually requires outside help, or internal staff dedicated to the product.
- Training is time-consuming and costly. Some Notes features are intuitive, while others are esoteric. Training often requires breaking learned e-mail habits.
- The Notes client requires significant memory and CPU power. The Notes clients—even the scaled down versions—require high-end machines.



Many long-time Notes consultants now recommend FirstClass as an alternative to both traditional e-mail and Notes.

FirstClass offers sophisticated personal and group communication capabilities, and database access, for a fraction of the price of Notes.

FirstClass installs painlessly from two diskettes, often requires no training, and the client occupies a small enough footprint to run on any Windows or Macintosh computer.

Most importantly, FirstClass is many times less expensive than Notes, and is dramatically easier to implement.



# FirstClass Product Line

## FirstClass Server

*A single application at the heart of your organization's communications.*

FirstClass is a client/server communication system. To run FirstClass, you need at least one FirstClass Server licensed for the number of users who will maintain an account on your server. You also need to purchase optional services to accommodate the



types of users that will connect to your server. FirstClass Servers are available for a number of platforms. SoftArc's FirstClass Client

software is included with FirstClass Server, and is freely distributable—even if you do not own a server.

## Regular user licenses

*Once installed on a FirstClass Server, regular user licenses allow your server to accommodate a given number of user accounts.*

A FirstClass Server has the ability to accommodate thousands of users per server, but sites must purchase user licensing and configure it to do so. User licenses install on the FirstClass Server in moments and are recognized as soon as the server is restarted.

Any regular user in FirstClass can connect to a FirstClass Server using the network protocols licensed on the server, or by modem connections for no extra charge.

Regular user licenses are available in a variety of quantities. They are less expensive per user when purchased in large quantities.



## Remote user licenses



*Once installed on a FirstClass Server, remote user licenses allow servers to accommodate a given number of remote-only user accounts.*

Regular users may connect to FirstClass by modem or other remote connections for no extra charge. However, special “remote” user licenses are a low-cost way of allowing remote users to access a FirstClass Server with the same graphical interface and feature set as normal LAN users.

Remote user licenses are useful for companies with field representatives, suppliers, or customers,

or for school districts that would like to communicate with parents at home.

Remote user licenses install on FirstClass Servers, and are one tenth the price of regular user licenses. Administrators may assign different security and access control to remote users, or allow them the same permissions and privileges as normal LAN users.

Remote user licenses are available in different quantities. They are less expensive per user when purchased in large quantities.

FirstClass Servers for different platforms accommodate varying

levels of concurrent users. See [Specifications & Requirements](#).

## FirstClass Services



FirstClass Servers only ship with the ability to accept connections from FirstClass Clients of the same platform. Sites need to purchase services for user connections of other types.

A FirstClass Server for Windows only accepts logins from Windows clients unless the site purchases and installs optional FirstClass service licenses for other platforms (for example, Mac OS). Similarly, only Mac OS users may log into a FirstClass Server for Mac OS unless the site pur-

chases and installs other services (for example, Windows).

Optional text services allow users to connect to FirstClass with the FirstClass Client for DOS or terminal programs emulating VT100.

FirstClass services are one-time purchases. Any combination of services may be accommodated simultaneously by any FirstClass Server.

## Remote port expansion hardware & licenses



*Serial cards and remote port upgrade licenses boost the number of modems or remote TCP/IP sessions servers accommodate simultaneously.*

FirstClass Servers ship with support for up to two remote ports. Remote ports can be occupied by modems or non-LAN connections made over TCP/IP networks such as the Internet.

To increase the number of modems accommodated by a FirstClass Server, add serial expansion cards and Four Remote Port Upgrade licenses. Multiple cards and licenses can be installed on any FirstClass Server.

Multiple modems on a FirstClass Server may share the same telephone number for ease of access. Your telephone company can set up a “hunt group” for your multiple lines, allowing you to distribute a single number for a FirstClass modem pool.

To increase the number of simultaneous non-LAN remote sessions for TCP/IP connections to your server, purchase and install additional port licensing. Configuration of remote ports as TCP/IP sessions takes only a moment.

Both serial expansion cards and remote port upgrades install easily in FirstClass Servers.

## Optional gateways



*Optional add-on software connects FirstClass to the Internet, and to other mail systems and technologies.*

Gateways from SoftArc and third parties extend connections into other communication technologies.

Full time or batched connection Internet gateways allow FirstClass users to send mail to and receive mail from the Internet. These same gateways provide for the replication of Usenet newsgroups and mail lists within FirstClass conferences.

An optional fax gateway lets FirstClass users send faxes anywhere

in the world simply by addressing a FirstClass message to a destination phone number, followed by a comma and the word “fax”.

Other gateways connect FirstClass to personal pagers and personal digital assistant devices.

Further gateways can automate file transfers with FirstClass, allowing companies to build automated information transmission systems.

Powerful third-party database extension software connects FirstClass to databases, allowing users to query corporate data through the FirstClass forms system.



"Your system meets all the requirements my users had and seems to have been made for them, *and* has good response times. I congratulate your company on a job well done and I look forward to using FirstClass for a long time."

**Michelle Hart,  
Ayuda Network,  
Mariana Islands**

A gateway toolkit available from SoftArc allows organizations with programming skills to create custom FirstClass gateways for virtually any communications need.

FirstClass gateways work with any FirstClass Server, regardless of platform.





## For More Information

This publication is intended to answer most questions about FirstClass and its features. On the other hand, it's often difficult to explain all facets of such a versatile product. For answers to specific questions, contact your local FirstClass distributor. In North America, contact SoftArc directly:

**By mail** 100 Allstate Parkway, Markham, Ontario, CANADA L3R 6H3

**By telephone** 1-800-SOFTARC or 905-415-7000

**By facsimile** 905-415-7151

**By E-mail** [info@softarc.com](mailto:info@softarc.com)

**On the World Wide Web** <http://www.softarc.com>

### ***On SoftArc Online***

For detailed product information, support documents, testimonials, and competitive analysis, browse SoftArc's public FirstClass system SoftArc Online.

Call 905-415-7070 with the FirstClass Client or a VT100-compatible terminal. You'll find a wealth of product information in the "About FirstClass" conference on your desktop.

If you have Internet access, connect to SoftArc Online over the Internet at IP address 198.133.37.10, port 3004.

## Beyond the Demo Server



If you have not yet done so, evaluate the FirstClass Demo Server, a full-fledged server populated with content that accommodates logins from FirstClass Clients of all platforms over all protocols. Demo Servers for various platforms are available from SoftArc Online as detailed above.

After examining the Demo Server, purchase a full FirstClass Server. FirstClass Servers contain administrator and client documentation and software, plus limited licensing for a very low price. Add licenses and gateways at any time as required. SoftArc offers free technical sup-

port and product upgrades, even on purchases of simple FirstClass Servers.

Contact your local FirstClass reseller, or SoftArc directly.

## Complementary Products

The products listed here represent a sample of the dozens of add-on solutions for SoftArc's FirstClass e-mail and group communications product. Contact the individual vendors identified for more information on their products.

- Gateways
- Database Access
- Client Applications
- Services
- Hardware

## Gateways

**TFS Gateway** is the collective name of a series of sophisticated software products that connect different electronic mail and groupware systems. TFS Gateways are modular, allowing them to be adapted and configured in a variety of ways. Modules are available for FirstClass, Lotus cc:Mail, Lotus Notes, Microsoft Mail, WordPerfect Office and Novell GroupWise. In addition, there are MCI, UUCP and SMTP modules to connect to public messaging services.

By [TenFour Sweden](#),  
contact [TenFour USA](#),  
Voice: 703-716-8364

**HoloGate** is a modular gateway connecting FirstClass to other electronic mail systems such as the Internet, CE Software's QuickMail, Microsoft Mail for Macintosh, and Casaday & Greene's Snap Mail. HoloGate is licensed for an unlimited number of users.

By [Information Access Technologies, Inc.](#), Voice: 510-704-0160

**Gateway Pro FC • cc:Mail** is a gateway that integrates SoftArc's FirstClass e-mail and group collaboration software with PC-based electronic mail product cc:Mail from Lotus Development Corp. FC • cc:Mail gateway allows for unlimited users on either mail system to exchange



mail and attachments between FirstClass and cc:Mail servers.

[By Softbahn Inc.,](#)

[Voice: 416-590-1590](#)

**Gateway Pro FC • QM** is a full-featured, robust and cost-effective gateway between FirstClass and CE Software's QuickMail servers. Gateway Pro FC • QM can be used locally or remotely. FirstClass and QuickMail users exchange messages and attachments using the gateway features of their respective systems.

[By Softbahn Inc.,](#)

[Voice: 416-590-1590](#)

**FC • Pager Gateway** is a gateway that integrates SoftArc's FirstClass e-mail and group col-

laboration software with popular pager systems. The FC • Pager Gateway will direct mail from either a Macintosh- or Windows-based FirstClass server to the user's alphanumeric pager.

[By Softbahn Inc.,](#)

[Voice: 416-590-1590](#)

**fcCustodian Gateway** is a gateway that allows widely dispersed company personnel to be paged with critical portions of a FirstClass e-mail message. FirstClass messages are displayed on an alphanumeric pager.

[By Concentrics Communications,](#)

[Voice: 902-468-5397](#)

**Beehive Messaging System** is a complete set of custom FirstClass

forms and gateways designed for the specific needs of prepress houses or image-setters. When installed onto a FirstClass server, the Beehive System offers custom forms and pre-addressed stationery to help desktop publishers submit files by modem for output.

By [Pine Island Software](#),  
Voice: 317-570-0641

**Download Gateway** is a gateway that monitors and extracts form data, message text and file attachments from messages in a given FirstClass mailbox. Messages can be pre-addressed to the Download Gateway using the Forms Stationery feature of FirstClass.

By [VIZ • Soft](#),  
Voice: 510-210-0600

### **Upload and Download Gateway**

is a gateway that takes a message header text file, message body text file, and attachments from an administrator-defined source folder and sends them to a given destination as a FirstClass message. Useful for creating custom receipts, delivering customer-ordered files and creating custom offline clients.

By [VIZ • Soft](#),  
Voice: 510-210-0600

### **Database Access**

**FirstConnect/DAL** is a full-featured, graphical database interface that adds powerful functionality to FirstClass. Together, FirstConnect and First-

Class allow an unlimited number of users to manipulate databases remotely via LAN, modem or TCP/IP. FirstConnect supports full search, add and delete functionality. FirstConnect/DAL for Macintosh accesses all DAL-compliant databases including: Informix, Ingres, SQL/400, P.INK, Sybase, Butler, Netware SQL, Rdb, DB2-SQL/DS and Oracle.

By TGF Technologies,  
Voice: 802-860-5162

**FirstConnect/ODBC** is a database access product that boasts new features such as simple configuration and exceptional performance. FirstConnect/ODBC for Windows NT ushers in

a new generation of database access for FirstClass. An unlimited number of text, numeric and graphic fields can be displayed. FirstConnect also supports searching for downloadable archive files of any type and allows users to search different database tables simultaneously. FirstConnect and the FirstClass user interface are 100% cross-platform, giving both Windows and Macintosh FirstClass client users access to database connectivity.

By TGF Technologies,  
Voice: 802-860-5162

**FirstAccess** is a database access product that allows FirstClass end-users to query





Server, Butler, FoxPro, Sybase and other DAL and SQL compliant databases. FirstAccess uses AppleScript (Apple's scripting language) to retrieve data stored with Macintosh applications.

By [Networkx](#),

Voice: +43-1-606-9607

### Client Applications

**WelcomeMat** is an application that runs on the FirstClass server. WelcomeMat substitutes customizable color ANSI graphics for the default welcome message sent by FirstClass to users connecting through the optional Command Line Interface.

By [The MoneyTracker Corporation](#),

Voice: 706-592-5299

**FirstClass Retriever+** is a First-Class client for Newton PDAs that allows users to check their mail on FirstClass servers, upload new mail composed offline and navigate FirstClass conferences using the Newton's select-and-tap interface. Offering an easy-to-use graphical interface, FirstClass Retriever+ can dial a Newton modem or connect to a FirstClass server by network, download a batch of waiting mail and/or conference postings and transmit any new messages or replies that have been composed offline.

By [Black Labs Inc.](#),

Voice: 303-938-8580

### Drag and Drop Forms Client

is an application that allows the

user to drag files over the program icon, automatically opening a message window (or a custom form). When the user finishes filling out the forms, the application will log in to the FirstClass server and deliver the message and attachments to the appropriate address. The application may also be launched by double-clicking, in which case files may be attached and deleted using attach and delete buttons.

By Pine Island Software,  
Voice: 317-570-0641

## Services

**First!** is one of several custom-tailored newsfeeds offered by

Individual Inc. for organizations needing timely, relevant pre-filtered information. Individual scans hundreds of publications and daily news sources for information relevant to your business. This news is then delivered as abstracts or in its entirety by fax or e-mail. If these feeds are directed to FirstClass conferences, users can browse this information with full unread tracking and search capabilities.

By Individual Inc.,  
Voice: 617-354-2230

**WavePhore Newscast** is a real-time news & information service linked directly to corporate First-Class systems. WavePhore Newscast allows individuals to

define an interest profile using key words. Each day, hundreds of news sources are scanned for items matching the interest profile. All relevant items are automatically “clipped” and delivered into a FirstClass conference.

By WavePhore Newscast,  
Voice: 801-584-2869

**Newsbytes News Service** is an award-winning electronic computer and telecom industry wire and digitized picture service now available in a customized format for FirstClass. Newsbytes News Network’s more than 30 daily reports, summaries and digitized photos are available to FirstClass systems via gateways

from Newsbytes FirstClass servers in London and Minneapolis.  
By Newsbytes News Service,  
Voice: 612-430-1100

## Hardware

**Digi Nu/8i** is an eight serial port expansion for Macintosh using the NuBus slot and octa break-out cable. For expanding the number of modems an individual FirstClass server may accommodate at any given time.  
By Digi International,  
Voice: 612-943-9020

**Digi PC/8e** is an eight serial port expansion for Windows using an internal card and octa break-out cable. For expanding

the number of modems an individual FirstClass server may accommodate at any given time.

By Digi International,  
Voice: 612-943-9020

**Digi PC/8em** is a sixteen serial port expansion for Windows using an internal card and octa breakout cable. The “em” family features expandable, modular, intelligent serial communications solutions with high-speed, accelerated performance.

By Digi International,  
Voice: 612-943-9020

**Hurdler HQS** is a four serial port expansion using the NuBus slot on a Macintosh. The traditional Macintosh NuBus workhorse serial expansion card resold by SoftArc.

By Creative Solutions Inc.,  
Voice: 410-766-4080

**Smart Serial 6** is an intelligent PCI multiport serial communications card which provides six high speed serial ports for use with modems or other serial devices.

By Keyspan,  
Voice: 510-221-0131

**SEQS and HUSTEX External SCSI Serial Expansion** are two and four Macintosh serial port expansions using the SCSI port on a Macintosh. Does not require NuBus or PCI slots. Multiple units may be chained together.

By Creative Solutions Inc.,  
Voice: 410-766-4080

**Hustler** is a two high-speed, accelerated serial port expansion using the NuBus expansion slot on a Macintosh. Rated for use with high speed serial devices (28.8 kbps modems or other units.)

By Creative Solutions Inc.,

Voice: 410-766-4080

**Planet ISDN Card** is a communication board which provides connection to the worldwide Integrated Services Digital Network. The Planet ISDN card is available for the NuBus and PCI architectures for Macintosh and Power Macintosh.

By Synapse,

Voice: 312-871-1466

**NuBus NB4** is an expansion chassis that provides additional NuBus slots for NuBus Macintoshes. Also available is the PCI-to-NuBus Bridge, which allows PCI slots to be adapted through a bridge to accept NuBus cards.

By Second Wave,

Voice: 512-329-9283