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Apple II SCSI Card: Interrupt Problem (11/96)

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TOPIC -----

This article discusses a potential problem with the Apple IIGS, Apple II SCSI card and programs using interrupts.

DISCUSSION -----

Apple IIGS system crashes may occur with programs using interrupts during access of SCSI disk drives connected to the Apple II SCSI card. Once interrupts are enabled, it is possible an interrupt may occur during a SCSI drive data transfer. Programs initiate data transfer by passing control to the SCSI card.

The SCSI card firmware places code in its own stack for executing. If taking an interrupt also places code on the same stack it may wipe out some or all of the previous SCSI firmware code. Returning from the interrupt, returns to the portion of the stack corrupted by the interrupt, which results in some kind of unidentifiable system crash.

Crashes are possible if BOTH of the following conditions apply:

- The SCSI card is used with an interrupt driven program, like AppleTalk.

- This application program calls the SCSI card directly, NOT using ProDOS.

To work around this possibility, make sure your applications use ProDOS to handle any interrupts. This may decrease SCSI disk data transfer rates but will help reduce system crashes.

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