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Macintosh II: Sharing Monitors & Keyboards

Revised: 7/2/92
Security: Everyone

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Article Created: 1 September 1987
Article Last Reviewed: 25 June 1992
Article Last Updated:

TOPIC -----

There is no way for several Macintosh II computers to share both a single keyboard and a single monitor. A switch for a monitor should be relatively easy to make, since you are only supplying the monitor with a stream of bits. A switch for the keyboard is more difficult, because you must deal with the Apple Desktop bus (ADB).

DISCUSSION -----

The first time a keyboard is recognized, it receives an ID number from the computer and retains this ID number. When the multiple computers started up, one after the other, they would all get the same Keyboard ID. The problem is that when the keyboard is subsequently addressed, it assumes it is communicating with just one computer and forgets its ID number. So when a second computer attempts to communicate with it, nothing happens.

Conceivably, you could implement a program that echoed all the keyboard information out from one "master" Macintosh II, over AppleTalk, but still you would have to rewrite quite a bit of lower level code.

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Tech Info Library Article Number:2386