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System 7.5: PowerBook Utilities And Enhancements (2/95)

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TOPIC -----

This article provides an overview of utilities and enhancements for mobile computing contained in System 7.5.

DISCUSSION -----

System 7.5 includes a new set of utilities that extend PowerBook battery life, synchronize files between laptop and desktop systems, and offer convenience features that make mobile computing easier and faster.

- Extended battery life. The PowerBook Assistant gives users increased hours of battery life by providing automatic power management – switching to full performance if the PowerBook is plugged in, and full conservation if it's not. It also provides for quick and easy configuration of the PowerBook for either performance or battery conservation.

Battery management features include automatic backlight dimming and a permanent RAM disk feature that saves information between restarts and shutdowns.

The PowerBook Control Panel consolidates power-management features.

- Consolidated Control Strip. Because PowerBook control panels are now combined into a single control strip, you have simpler access to controls and can more easily customize your PowerBook systems. The Control Strip can be moved anywhere on the screen. The whole Strip or portions of it can be hidden and you can arrange the modules to fit your preferences. It includes the following modules:
 - AppleTalk Switch: Lets you switch AppleTalk on or off without going to the Chooser.
 - Battery Monitor: Provides a visual indication of present battery charge

levels, rate of battery consumption, and a digital read-out of battery time remaining. It also displays whether one or two batteries are being used and includes icons that let you know if the batteries are charged, charging, or draining.

- File Sharing: You can switch File Sharing on or off and change the sharing set-up.

- Hard Disk (HD) Spin Down: Lets you spin down the hard disk drive with a single click.

- Power Settings: Using the PowerBook tool bar, you can set your PowerBook system for better conservation or better performance or open the PowerBook Control Panel.

- Sleep Now: Lets you put the PowerBook into sleep mode with a single click.

- Sound Volume: By clicking on the Control Strip's sound icon and selecting the volume, you no longer need to resort to the Control Panels.

- Video Mirroring: Lets you switch video mirroring on or off without going to the Control Panels. (Icon available only when a PowerBook is attached to an external monitor.)

- File synchronization. The PowerBook File Assistant automatically synchronizes files between PowerBook computers and other Macintosh systems. It gives you the freedom to work with your PowerBook whenever and wherever you want without worrying about whether you have the most current version of a document. The PowerBook File Assistant keeps any two files, folders, or disks synchronized - locally, over a network, or using a floppy disk. It provides "drag and drop" setup and lets you select automated or manual synchronization of data. Synchronization can be one-way or bi-directional.

- Convenience features. Other built-in utilities queue up documents to print as soon as the PowerBook is connected to a printer, and improve mouse tracking by enhancing cursor visibility. A sleep key puts the PowerBook into sleep mode when not in use to preserve battery life. When it comes out of sleep, hard disks and servers are automatically remounted.

Article Change History:

14 Feb 1995 - Reviewed for technical accuracy.

13 Dec 1994 - Added keyword and made several minor technical changes.

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