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68LC040 Processor: SoftwareFPU Compatibility Statement (1/95)

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TOPIC -----

I understand that some 68LC040 microprocessors will not function with the SoftwareFPU software which emulates a floating point unit in software. Is Apple planning any upgrade to the chip to provide this compatibility?

DISCUSSION -----

An incompatibility exists between the shareware utility SoftwareFPU developed by John Neil & Associates and the Motorola 68LC040 microprocessor installed in certain Macintosh computers. SoftwareFPU is a control panel that is intended to allow most applications expecting a math coprocessor to work properly on Macintosh computers without one.

The Motorola 68040 microprocessor has an integrated hardware math coprocessor built into it. The 68LC040 microprocessor is a low cost version of the 68040 and does not have the integrated hardware math coprocessor included.

SoftwareFPU may not be compatible with Macintosh models which utilize the 68LC040 microprocessor. It has never been Apple's intention for the 68LC040-based Macintosh computers to have math coprocessor capability. The incompatibility between SoftwareFPU and the 68LC040 is unfortunate, but does not affect the normal functionality of the computer as marketed by Apple.

Customers who wish to add hardware math coprocessor capability to their 68LC040 equipped desktop Macintosh computer have three alternatives:

- a) replace their 68LC040 microprocessor with a 68040 microprocessor;
- b) obtain a third party upgrade that utilizes a 68040 microprocessor;
- c) upgrade to a 68040 equipped Macintosh.

At this time it is not possible for PowerBook customers to upgrade to a 68040 microprocessor.

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