



Tech Info Library

Sound Manager 3.1: ReadMe File (7/95)

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TOPIC -----

This article contains the Read Me file for the Sound Manager 3.1 extension.

DISCUSSION -----

WELCOME TO SOUND MANAGER 3.1

The Sound Manager 3.1 software consists of

- the Sound Manager system software extension
- a new version of the Sound Control Panel
- a technical note explaining some of the new features

Available since the introduction of the Macintosh II in 1987, the Sound Manager is Apple's digital audio software solution that allows any application to play and record sounds using the built-in sound hardware found on Macintosh computers. Sound Manager 3.0, released in 1993, added support for 16-bit CD-quality audio, redirection of sound to third-party hardware cards, and plug-in audio compression/decompression software (codecs).

Sound Manager 3.1 adds two new audio codecs, significant performance increases on the Power Macintosh line of computers, better integration with QuickTime, and asynchronous alert sounds. It is completely backwards compatible with previous versions of the Sound Manager.

INSTALLING SOUND MANAGER 3.1

To install Sound Manager 3.1:

1. If you received a floppy disk labeled "Sound Manager", insert it into your computer and open it. If you downloaded Sound Manager 3.1 electronically, make sure the Sound Manager files you downloaded are visible.
2. Drag the Sound Manager and Sound control panel icons from the Sound Manager disk onto your System Folder icon (not into the open folder).
3. Click OK in the dialog box that appears.
4. Restart your Macintosh.

NEW FEATURES OF SOUND MANAGER 3.1

1.) New audio codecs

The Sound Manager previously supported only MACE audio compression at ratios of 3:1 and 6:1. Sound Manager 3.1 adds two new compression formats: IMA and uLaw.

The IMA 4:1 audio compression format is based on a standard proposed by the Interactive Multimedia Association, and is used to compress 16-bit sound with a ratio of 4:1. It is particularly good at compressing CD-quality music and is fully integrated into QuickTime.

The uLaw 2:1 format (pronounced "mu-law") is an international standard for compressing voice-quality audio (typically 16-bit, 8 kHz speech) with a ratio of 2:1. It is often used in telephony applications, and also on the Internet as the encoding format for ".au" sound files.

2.) Better performance on Power Macintosh

Sound Manager 3.1 is much faster on Power Macintosh computers --in many cases 4-7 times more efficient than previous versions. This means that your application can do more while sound is playing or recording. Sound Manager 3.1 is also more robust: many bugs have been fixed and a number of commonly requested features have been added. Refer to the Technical Note for more information.

3.) Improved integration with QuickTime

QuickTime 2.1 uses the new audio codecs included in Sound Manager 3.1 to allow compressed audio capture in the IMA and uLaw formats and compressed audio export from a movie to an AIFF file. QuickTime 2.1 will also use Sound Manager 3.1 to directly import common audio file formats such as ".wav" and ".au".

4.) Support for asynchronous alert sounds

The Sound Manager previously tied up your Macintosh while playing an alert sound, forcing you to wait until the sound was done playing before you could continue. Sound Manager 3.1 removes this limitation by playing alert sounds asynchronously, so alert dialogs and other interface elements can continue processing while the alert sound is playing.

Support Information Services

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