

Handwriting On The Wall

10.7 Lion Drops Support For PowerPC Applications

I checked out website sources like 9to5Mac.com and I learned that indeed the introduction of Lion will change the way we use our Macs. According to Macworld magazine, "Apple is getting back to basics, making significant changes and adding new features that are all focused on making the Mac easier to use and more accessible to both new and longtime users." It will also leave behind some older PowerPC applications.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying an article from 9to5Mac. The article title is "10.7 Lion drops support for PowerPC applications". Below the title, there is a sub-header "Mark Gurman | Discussion (46)" and social media sharing icons for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. The article text begins with "Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard was the writing on the wall for Apple to completely drop PowerPC support. Snow Leopard was the first Mac operating system to not work on PowerPC machines, yet it still ran PowerPC software through Rosetta. Even more, Rosetta was an optional download in Snow Leopard. Now in 10.7 Lion, Rosetta has vanished and Apple's operating system launching this Summer will not support software built for PowerPC Macs." A small image shows a dialog box with the message: "You can't open the application VLC because PowerPC applications are no longer supported." Below the article text, there is a note: "This change will surely upset some longtime Mac users, but through our research it seems that many modern, supported Mac applications have been rebuilt to work on Intel machines. Also, every app on the new Mac App Store will work seamlessly with 10.7 Lion as they are all compiled, by default, for the Intel computing architecture. Users on Mac OS X 10.7 Lion who attempt to run a PowerPC application will get the alert shown above. Thanks, anonymous".

Some folks will hide their heads in sand and pretend that they can just get along doing things the same old way but, in my humble opinion, may not be the best choice. If your Mac dies and you are forced to buy a new one, guess what? If it happens later this year after Lion is introduced, all new Macs will be delivered with Lion OS 10.7.

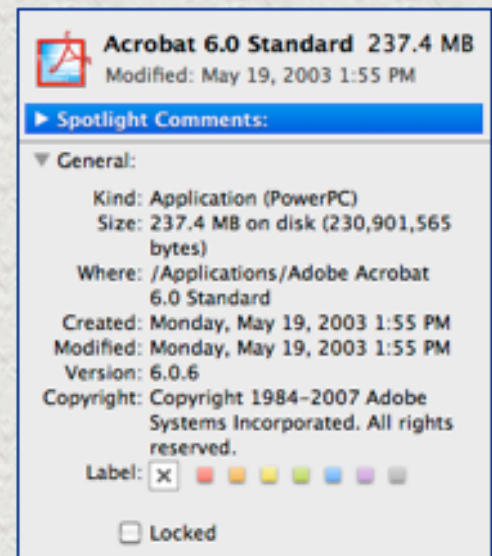
Randy Singer, one of the Mac gurus that contributes on the iomug@vahoogroups.com says that "if you are currently running any applications that require Rosetta, now is the time to start looking for updates or alternatives, and to start migrating your data to the new application(s) if you plan on updating to 10.7 this summer. Note that this means that AppleWorks and Eudora, two much-loved (but discontinued and unsupported) applications that many are clinging to, won't run in 10.7." Not great news for many of us.

I decided to find out how many of my applications would be affected. I looked again to Randy Singer and here is what I learned: "You can easily tell if your applications are PowerPC applications by highlighting their icons in the Finder, and choosing File>Get Info. In the resulting Get Info window, under General, if your application is a PowerPC application in will say so under Kind."

Under General they indicate they are "PowerPC," i.e. applications running under Rosetta and that will not be supported. Here are two that I found that I will not be using when I switch to Lion (which I will this summer).



The screenshot shows the 'FileMaker Pro Info' window. At the top, it says 'FileMaker Pro' with a size of '19 MB' and a modification date of 'Sep 4, 2009 3:56 PM'. Below this is a 'Spotlight Comments' section. Under the 'General' tab, the following information is displayed: 'Kind: Application (PowerPC)', 'Size: 19 MB on disk (15,487,015 bytes)', 'Where: /Applications/FileMaker Pro 5.5 Folder', 'Created: Friday, November 2, 2001 10:56 AM', 'Modified: Friday, September 4, 2009 3:56 PM', 'Version: FileMaker Pro 5.5v2 Copyright 2001 FileMaker, Inc.', and 'Label: [X] [Color icons]'. There is also a 'Locked' checkbox which is currently unchecked.



The screenshot shows the 'Acrobat 6.0 Standard 237.4 MB' info window. At the top, it says 'Acrobat 6.0 Standard' with a size of '237.4 MB' and a modification date of 'May 19, 2003 1:55 PM'. Below this is a 'Spotlight Comments' section. Under the 'General' tab, the following information is displayed: 'Kind: Application (PowerPC)', 'Size: 237.4 MB on disk (230,901,565 bytes)', 'Where: /Applications/Adobe Acrobat 6.0 Standard', 'Created: Monday, May 19, 2003 1:55 PM', 'Modified: Monday, May 19, 2003 1:55 PM', 'Version: 6.0.6', and 'Copyright: Copyright 1984-2007 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved.'. There is also a 'Label: [X] [Color icons]' and a 'Locked' checkbox which is currently unchecked.

You can check several applications at the same time by holding down the shift key and clicking on all of the applications that you want to check to select all of them, and then choosing "Get Info."

If you choose not to move to Lion you will be okay as long as you are willing to live with the possibility that your Mac might die and being forced to deal with Lion when you buy a new Mac. Or if your Mac dies, you could also shop around for a used Mac and take your chances.

As for me, I will move my Filemaker files to my Mac Address Book like I've been meaning to for months. I will find other applications to cover the few tasks that I used Acrobat 6.0 Standard. Then I will start enjoying the wonders of Lion, which Apple promises to be a major OS upgrade.

Offered by Dan Bellack, SCUM webmaster & Apple Ambassador