**About The Control Panel**

All versions of the Macintosh Operating System previous to system software version 7.0 provide a desk accessory called the **Control Panel**. The **Control Panel** allows users to control certain system features, such as speaker volume, date and time, and desktop pattern. With the release of System file version 4.1, documented in Volume V, the **Control Panel** became extensible by the addition of control panel files (of file type <u>'cdev'</u>) to the System Folder.

In System 7.0, the **Control Panel**, as a discrete desk accessory, has been eliminated. Instead, the Finder can now open each file of file type <u>'cdev'</u>. Each control panel file is now displayed as an independent dialog box rather than as a panel in the **Control Panel** desk accessory.

This and related topics describes how to write a control panel file that is compatible with both the earlier **Control Panel** and version 7.0 , and how to write an extension for the Monitors control panel file.

The dialog box defined by a file of file type <u>'cdev'</u> is referred to as <u>control panel</u> (as opposed to *the* **Control Panel**), and the file itself is referred to as a control panel file.

Only the manufacturer of a video device should write an extension to the Monitors control panel for that device. Therefore, if you are not developing a video card for the Macintosh computer, you do not need the information given here on the Monitors control panel.

Choosing **Control Panel** from the     menu displays a scrollable list of control panel devices, or **cdevs**, that control the status of system-wide configuration preferences. There are a number of cdevs that can come with the standard System Software, and it is expandable.

When you open the **Control Panel** by selecting it from the menu, it looks into the System Folder,  pulls out the control panel devices and puts their names and icons into a list along the left margin of the Control Panel window. If you've got more items than can be displayed in the list all at once, you can scroll down until you either find the icon you want or run out of items. The General cdev always tops the list and the settings available through General fill the remainder of the Control Panel window.

Cdevs are standalone items, with their own standard structure and interface. The **Control Panel** takes care of managing the overall Control Panel window, finding out if a particular machine is capable of using a given cdev, responding to user requests for one cdev or another, paying attention to what users do with a chosen cdev,  drawing a cdev's dialog items, telling the cdev when it's time to perform a particular function, and both displaying errors and drawing active and inactive rectangles in the cdev's part of the window if the cdev wants.

The cdev takes care of giving the **Control Panel** the standard resources it needs to execute the cdev's instructions, drawing and responding to actions by the user, handling errors, starting up and shutting down when told to do so by the **Control Panel**, handling updates, responding to user activity and, ultimately, performing the actions it's designed to perform.