

Viva la Difference

As you have seen in the previous two chapters TeleFinder and FirstClass offer different ways to do the same thing. A personal observation, though, is that for some reason FirstClass lends itself to a more friendly, less restrictive type of atmosphere that seems to invite the user to contribute to the system in ways other than just uploading software, whereas TeleFinder seems to be a real software processing device.

Each sysop (System Operator) has his own agenda on what he would like for his BBS systems and I know that from the very beginning of telecommunications to the present there has been varied gimmicks for having a user contribute to the board. The most common way of doing this with most PC based boards is an up/download ratio that the sysop can set to force the caller into either uploading software or contributing to the message bases before the caller would be able to download any of the software that the system has to offer. The common ratio that I have noticed is in the neighborhood of a 10 X 1 (this means that the caller, by uploading one message or file will be allowed to download 10 from the system).

This is the problem that I faced when I was running my TeleFinder system. I would try to create interesting message bases but it seemed that the caller would simply logon and go directly for the file that they wanted, download it and get off. Now some sysops want this, some MUG's (Macintosh User Groups) would prefer that the caller get in and out as soon as possible so as to not tie up the line for the next caller. This, however, was not my cup of tea. I wanted people to look at the work that I had done and make comments about what I can do to improve the system, etc. I wanted people to be able to ask questions and be able to receive answers from the first person who read the question, but this never seemed to happen in the two years that I have been running my TeleFinder system.