



### GS/OS

### #9: Interrupt Handling Anomalies

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This Technical Note discusses anomalies in the way GS/OS handles interrupts.

**Changes since May 1990:** Added discussions about changes to GS/OS interrupt handling since System Software 5.0.2.

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### Problems Installing Interrupt Handlers

If your application calls `ALLOC_INT` to install an interrupt handler for an external interrupt source, it works fine **unless** the SCSI Manager (GS/OS file `SCSI.Manager`) is installed, in which case the system eventually grinds to a halt with a message about 65536 unclaimed interrupts.

#### The Problems

If any interrupt handlers are bound (using `BindInt`) to reference number \$17 (`IRQ.OTHER`), the unclaimed interrupt count gets incremented if none of the `BindInt` routines claims the interrupt, even though any handlers installed with `ALLOC_INT` routines still need a chance to claim it. The 5.0.2 `SCSI.Manager` triggers this problem because it calls `BindInt` with vector reference number \$17.

In addition, if one or more interrupt handlers are bound to the `IRQ.OTHER` vector (VRN \$17), the interrupt is passed to the `ALLOC_INT` handler even if it was already claimed by a `BindInt` routine. If no `ALLOC_INT` routine claims the interrupt, the unclaimed-interrupt count is incremented. As documented in Apple IIGS Technical Note #18, *Do-It-Yourself SCC Interrupts*, you cannot successfully call `BindInt` with vector reference number \$0009.

#### The Solution

An application may install **both** a `BindInt` routine and an `ALLOC_INT` routine. If they both claim the external interrupt, the unclaimed count does not get incremented. The solution is compatible with future System Software releases, since it does not depend upon the `ALLOC_INT` routine ever getting called.

Your application's `BindInt` routine sees the interrupt before your `ALLOC_INT` routine does, so the `BindInt` routine should figure out whether the interrupt was caused by your external device, and claim it if so. Your `ALLOC_INT` routine should claim an interrupt it sees if and **only** if your `BindInt` routine claimed the last interrupt it saw.

Starting with GS/OS version 3.2 (released with the Apple II High-Speed SCSI Card), the system no longer treats too many unclaimed interrupts as a fatal error. However, before version 6.0, it still counts the unclaimed interrupts so it can do something like display a dialog asking you to restart even though choosing "restart" returns you to the application unharmed (GS/OS version 3.2), or

sometimes display a dialog box sending you to your dealer and sometimes not (version 3.3), or do nothing about it at all (version 4.0 and later). This is obviously as confusing to most of us as it was to the system itself, so fortunately GS/OS now ignores unclaimed interrupts and doesn't even bother counting them.

## Problems Removing Interrupts Handlers

The *GS/OS Reference* suite says that device drivers may make `BindInt` and `UnbindInt` calls, noting this as an exception to the general rule that drivers may not make GS/OS system calls. What the references fail to note is that these calls may fail for an incredibly annoying reason—the OS may be busy.

GS/OS takes special pains to avoid this while starting and while switching to ProDOS 8, but it does not avoid this condition during an `OSShutdown`—a real shutdown of the OS, not a switch to ProDOS 8.

Driver authors can work around this problem by using a new system service call provided in GS/OS version 3.2 and later. The call, named `UNBIND_INT_VECTOR`, provides the functionality of `UnbindInt` to FSTs and drivers **only** to avoid the OS reentrancy issue. The vector is at `$01/FCD8` and takes an interrupt identification number (as returned from `BindInt`) in the accumulator.

## Further Reference

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- *GS/OS Reference*
- Apple IIGS Technical Note #18, Do-It-Yourself SCC Interrupts