



New Features in Apple Qmaster 2

There are some new features, enhancements, and changes in this version of Apple Qmaster, the most significant of which are introduced below.

For more information on these features and their use, see the *Apple Qmaster 2 User Manual* and the *Distributed Processing Setup* guide.

Shared Cluster Storage

The new Cluster Storage feature in Apple Qmaster 2 offers automated and simplified setup of shared storage devices. Cluster administrators can select a directory to be used for cluster storage and computers in the cluster will automatically access this location, as needed. Compressor users have additional options for how data is stored and transferred.

QuickClusters and Unmanaged Services

Apple Qmaster QuickClusters offer a simple and automated way to create and configure clusters, and an alternative to creating and configuring clusters manually with Apple Qadministrator. QuickClusters simplify the distributed processing setup process for beginners. They also offer a powerful solution for more advanced distributed processing through extended node clusters.

QuickClusters with enabled unmanaged support auto-configure themselves and use any available unmanaged services. An unmanaged service will remain dedicated to its QuickCluster only long enough to finish the current job. Once the current job is complete, the unmanaged service is once again a “free agent,” and will advertise its availability to all QuickClusters. You can open a calendar interface and schedule the availability of any particular computer as a processing node in your distributed processing system.

Generic Render Command Plug-in

Apple Qmaster 2 has a Generic Render Command plug-in for the distributed processing of projects from other frame-based rendering applications (such as After Effects and LightWave). The plug-in dialog provides you with a convenient way to adjust common settings and to add more command-line options to each job.

Preflight Scripts

The preflight script feature in Apple Qmaster 2 allows you to run a script on each node of a cluster prior to actually processing a batch. These scripts are sent with every distributed segment of a job. Preflight scripts are an enhancement to the Environment Variable feature which you can use to set or change an environment variable for submitting certain batches or jobs, such as setting directory paths for Apple Qmaster jobs.

Serialized Jobs

You can now specify that some jobs in a batch are dependent on others. This “serialize” feature executes jobs in exactly the order in which they appear in the batch list. For example, if you have a Shake script that requires the output of a Maya script, you can ensure that the Shake script does not execute until the Maya script is done.

Distributed Rendering of QuickTime Output Nodes With Shake

Apple Qmaster 2 builds on its Shake-to-QuickTime conversion capability by now offering Shake-to-QuickTime distributed rendering that results in a single QuickTime output file.

Persistent Queues

Apple Qmaster now stores batch lists on disk, so that, in the event of a restart, the queue of jobs is maintained.

User Interface Enhancements

Apple Qmaster 2 has visual consistency with the Final Cut Studio suite of professional media creation tools, as well as numerous interface enhancements, including:

- The Apple Qmaster pane in System Preferences has been completely revised for more flexibility and a streamlined workflow.
- An email notification button to set (or reset) an email address to which the status of a Batch completion or failure can be sent.
- A stepper tool in the Delay popup menu that allows you to enter a wider range of delay times.
- A new column in the History table that indicates progress of each history item.