

# Multics



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Multics A Research of an OS An Introduction to Multics Multics (Multiplexed Information and Computing Service) was a very influential early time-sharing operating system (OS), designed to be used as a telephone service or electricity service, with multi-users (" Multics," n. d.). The project was started in 1964 and the last installation was closed in the year 2000. Originally, the project was started by MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), together with GE (General Electric) and Bell Labs. Bell Labs pulled away in 1969 and in 1970 GE sold his computer division, and therefore also Multics, to Honeywell (" Multics," n. d.). Multics wasn't very loved in its time, but due to all the new and valuable ideas, it had a big impact on the future operating systems. Multics was marketed as an information service for thousands of academics and administrative users. At one point about 85 sites were ran by Multics (" Multics," n. d.). Multics Influences on the Future One of Multics remarkable features was that the OS was written in a high-level language (PL/I). The idea was also that it was supposed to be an open-source system, which meant " for any purpose and without fee" (" Multics: General Info," n. d.). Other features were the dynamic linking, management of shared memory, its multiple language support (like BASIC, COBOL and Pascal) and the fact that the security-level was very high (" Multics: General Info," n. d.). Several basic ideas from Multics are found in all modern OS, like Windows, Unix or Mac. One of those ideas is the hierarchical file system: directories can contain files as well as (sub)directories. Multics was also a very big influence on the development of Unix, none the less due to the fact that the two ' inventors' of Unix, used to work on Multics until Bell Labs dropped out of the project. Several ideas of Multics were further developed for Unix. The reason Unix became more popular than Multics was mainly because Unix was better and

sooner available for actual use (“ Multics: General Info,” n. d.). Most of Multics’ starting targets were met eventually and the end of Multics might have been that Multics didn’t adapt very well to the new inventions of the 80s and 90s. The development was cancelled by Honeywell in 1985 and the sales was stopped in 1988 (“ Multics: General Info,” n. d.).

References

Multics. (n. d.). MIT, Information Services and Technology (IST). Retrieved from [http:// web. mit. edu/multics-history/](http://web.mit.edu/multics-history/). Multics: General Info. (n. d.). Multicians. Org. Retrieved from [http://www. multicians. org/ general. html](http://www.multicians.org/general.html).